



NO. 7 SALTERNS WAY, POOLE, DORSET

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

Final Report

March 2024

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Executive Summary

This report has been prepared by CC Ecology Ltd on behalf of Vereley Homes who are submitting a planning application for the development of a property, 7 Salterns Lane, Poole, Dorset. The proposals for the Site include demolition of the existing buildings, comprising a house, garage building and 5 outbuildings, and construction of two new houses.

This report includes ecological information on 7 Salterns Way gathered during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) undertaken by CC Ecology Ltd. Two further phase 2 bat surveys, for the house, and one further survey for the garage building, have been recommended and will be carried out during the 2024 active bat season. This report includes an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposals on ecological features and recommendations for mitigation and enhancements for biodiversity are included. These recommendations are based upon the scenario where bats are found to be roosting in the property and will be appropriately modified in response to phase 2 bat survey results. Should bats not be found to be roosting in areas of the property affected by the works, no restrictions in relation to bats will apply other than the use of bat sensitive external lighting.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment of the house was carried out in February 2024 by CC Ecology Ltd. This noted a small number of gaps in the roof of the house under ridge tiles and lead flashing. No evidence of bats was found in the loft space of the house although it is suitable for roosting by void dwelling species. Additionally lifted roof tiles were noted on the garage. Due to the small number opportunities for roosting, as well as the location close to Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar site, which may provide good foraging habitats over mudflats and saltmarsh, the house was assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats, and the garage was assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats.

The most likely outcome, if bat roosts are found in the garage or house, is that they will be small day roosts of common and widespread species such as Common and Soprano Pipistrelles.

A mitigation strategy for bats has been designed which replaces like with like potential bat roost features. It would ensure that the impacts on bats are mitigated if they are found to be present. This strategy is subject to change depending on the results of the phase 2 surveys and is included to demonstrate how the discovery of the most likely type of bat roosts would be managed. The mitigation strategy includes the careful timing, phasing and supervision of works to potential bat roosting areas. Should bats be found to be roosting in any of the buildings a European protected Species (EPS) Licence in respect of bats will be required to undertake the works.

The house, garage, outbuildings and gardens have some potential to support nesting birds, and birds nests from previous seasons were noted. Therefore recommendations for carrying out works sensitively and timing works outside the nesting bird season are made within the report.

The site is located within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands statutory protected sites, and is within the Poole Harbour SPA recreation zone. Due to the increase in the number of dwellings resulting from the proposal, there is likely to be an increase in recreational pressure on these sites. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Borough Council requires payments to be made towards mitigating the impact of increased recreation pressure on these sites as part of the planning obligations. Two payments will be required, one for the Dorset Heathlands and on Poole Harbour SPA recreation zone. In addition the Site is located within a Nutrient Neutrality zone for the statutory protected sites in Poole Harbour. The increase in dwellings on site will result in an increase in nutrient inputs to the harbour and therefore will need to demonstrate that either the proposals are nutrient neutral or that impacts on the sites as a result of increased nutrient levels can be mitigated.

Under the Environment Act 2021 all activities requiring planning permission must include a strategy for a net gain in the biodiversity of the site of 10% as compared to the site pre-development. This is measured by the Biodiversity Metric 4 (BM4). Mandatory implementation of the BNG metric is currently being phased in. However, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council have brought forward the implementation of the BNG metric as detailed in their Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance Note: *'taking account of the impending requirements of the Environment Act, BCP Council will now expect all applications, where practical, to demonstrate a measurable contribution towards biodiversity net gain.'* Within Poole the requirement for BNG is not yet mandatory for small development sites.

Recommendations are made within this report to include enhancements for biodiversity although it is recommended that any more detailed information regarding how a 10% uplift in BNG would be possible is provided in an advice note to accompany a BNG metric calculation. Wider assessment of habitats outside the construction zone have taken place in order to ensure that recommendations for enhancements for biodiversity are bespoke to the Site and the surrounding landscape. The report includes enhancements to the site for biodiversity within a Biodiversity Enhancements Strategy designed to ensure that the proposals result in a Biodiversity Gain in line with local and national planning policy.

1. Introduction

Background and Brief

- 1.1 CC Ecology was commissioned by Rogan Duffy, of Bear Architects, on behalf of their client Vereley Homes to by undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of a proposed development Site, 7 Salterns Way, Poole, Dorset, and to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).
- 1.2 Number 7 Salterns Way is a detached residential property that is currently empty. A number of previous planning applications for the property have gone before including the erection of the garage and store at the front of the property, extensions and roof alterations to the existing house in addition to the construction of an additional dwelling at the front of the plot. The latter proposal for the additional dwelling was never implemented and the permission has now lapsed.
- 1.3 The purpose of the PEA is to identify the potential ecological constraints and opportunities that may be presented to the proposed development. Opportunities and constraints are identified so that recommendations on the enhancement of the site for biodiversity can be taken into account at the design stage, in addition recommendations for any further ecological assessment can be made and if required recommendations for mitigation and compensation measures.

Development Proposals

- 1.4 The proposals for No. 7 Salterns Way include the demolition of all the buildings on site and the construction of two new houses. The site currently has seven buildings comprising a house, a garage and five outbuildings.
- 1.5 Refer to **Map 1** for the Site Proposals.

Site Context

- 1.6 7 Salterns way is situated on the coast of Poole Harbour, southeast of the centre of the town of Poole, Dorset, at Ordnance survey grid reference SZ03838981. The Site covers an area of approximately 0.2ha and includes the house, garage building, three outbuildings, and surrounding garden.
- 1.7 The site is on the coast of the town of Poole. It is surrounded with well-maintained houses and gardens of a similar size. There appears to have been recent redevelopment of a number of properties on Salterns Lane. Poole Harbor is situated at the end of Salterns lane, southwest of the site. The surrounding landscape is mostly composed of Poole Harbour and urban/suburban areas of Poole and Bournemouth.

1.8 The closest statutory protected site is the Poole Harbour Special Protection Area, located approximately 105m southwest of the site. This is largely co-extensive with the Poole Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The closest point of Poole Harbour Ramsar site is also situated approximately 105m south west of 7 Salterns Lane. This Ramsar site covers intertidal zones and mudflats surrounding Poole harbour and covers parts of the SPA and SSSI. Other nearby statutory protected sites are included in Table 3.1.

1.9 7 Salterns Way is situated within the Dorset Heaths National Character Area.

‘Dorset Heaths National Character Area contains part of the larger Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as well as a major conurbation - the second largest in south-west England - consisting of the contiguous settlements of Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch. Historically the area was dominated by extensive blocks of heathland (the Egdon Heath of Thomas Hardy’ s novels) separated by river valleys and also by the two natural harbours of Poole and Christchurch.

This landscape, which pollen evidence suggests was established by the Bronze Age, saw rapid evolution in the last three centuries. The conurbation grew out of very small settlements. Improved technologies allowed first agriculture then conifer forestry to become significant land uses, more recently joined by open cast mineral working and military training.

Today the area contains some of the best lowland heath left in England, much of it managed as nature reserves by a variety of organisations and designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site. Specialised species include Dartford warbler, nightjar, woodlark, sand lizard, smooth snake, ladybird spider, Purbeck mason wasp, southern damselfly, marsh gentian and Dorset heath. The larger tracts, along with the often adjacent conifer plantations, can still provide a real sense of wilderness and tranquillity, despite the close proximity of a major conurbation. In recent decades substantial work has been undertaken to both improve the condition of the habitat on these sites and to extend some of them back onto former heathland sites that had temporarily seen other uses. This work continues with the objective of physically connecting some of the bigger heathland blocks. (Natural England, NCA Profile:135)

Relevant Legislation and Policy Implications

Relevant Legislation

1.10 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below, with further detail provided in **Appendix 1**.

- The Environment Act 2021
- The Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Badgers Act 1992

Biodiversity Action Plans

- 1.11 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Government's response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaces the previous UK Biodiversity Action Plan and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Within England Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 list species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.
- 1.12 In England, *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services* is the national biodiversity strategy, which has the stated mission "(...) to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people."

Planning Implications

- 1.13 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the planning system in the revised *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)* which states that plan policies and planning decisions should aim to maintain, and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests'. The key principles of the NPPF describe the importance of avoiding, mitigating and compensating for adverse effects.
- 1.13 7 Salterns Way is situated within the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council Area. The Poole Local Plan contains policies for determining planning applications within the borough. The Local Plan was adopted by the Council in November 2018. Policies PP32 and PP33 within the Local Plan are of relevance to biodiversity:

Policy PP32

Poole's nationally, European and internationally important sites

Development will only be permitted where it would not lead to an adverse effect upon the integrity, either alone or in-combination, directly or indirectly, on nationally, European and internationally important sites.

The Council will determine applications adversely affecting these sites in accordance with the recommendations of relevant Habitats Regulations Assessments and Supplementary Planning Documents.

(1) Dorset Heathland

To ensure that heathland sites are not harmed, residential development involving a net increase in dwellings or other uses such as tourist accommodation:

(a) will not be permitted within 400 metres of heathland as shown on the Policies Map, unless, as an exception, the type and occupier of residential development would not have an adverse effect upon the sites' integrity (e.g. nursing homes such as those limited to advanced dementia and physical nursing needs); and

(b) between 400 metres and 5 km of a heathland (everywhere else in Poole), will provide mitigation in accordance with the advice set out in the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework SPD or appropriate to the adverse effects identified.

(2) To avoid harm to Poole Harbour

(a) Nutrient neutrality

Development proposals for any net increase in homes, tourist accommodation or a tourist attraction, will provide mitigation in accordance with the advice set out in The Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD if they are connected to Poole Sewage Treatment Works or within the catchment of the Harbour.

(b) Recreational effects

Development proposals for any net increase in homes or tourist accommodation will provide a SAMM contribution for wardening, education and monitoring, to mitigate the adverse effects of recreation related pressures within Poole Harbour in accordance with the adopted SPD.

Development proposals may be required to contribute to the implementation of the Poole Harbour SPA European Marine Site Management Scheme where the identified effects can be best addressed.

(3) Mitigation

The Council will ensure that adequate mitigation is secured through the use of SAMM contributions and CIL/S106. Some developments will also be required to implement other

mitigation measures, determined on a case by case basis. The Council will work with neighbouring Councils, statutory bodies and landowners to implement the mitigation measures and secure them in perpetuity. The mitigation strategy includes the provision of:

(a) Upton Country Park SANGs;

(b) SANGs within the concept of the Stour Valley Park, linked to housing sites UE1 North of Merley, UE2 North of Bearwood and U2 West of Bearwood; and

(c) other SANGs and Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs) identified through updates of the Heathlands Planning Framework SPD.

The Council will review the Poole Local Plan by 2023. The review will need to assess whether the growth planned for 2023-2033 can be successfully mitigated. A study into the success of mitigation measures since 2007 will be a fundamental part of the evidence base. If there is no certainty that development will not have an adverse impact upon protected wildlife, the Council may not be able to grant planning permission for certain types of harmful development, such as housing.

Policy PP33

Biodiversity and geodiversity

(1) Development and biodiversity

Proposals for development that affects biodiversity, and any sites containing species and habitats of local importance, including Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), ancient woodland, veteran trees and species and habitats of principal importance must:

(a) demonstrate how any features of nature conservation and biodiversity interest are to be protected and managed to prevent any adverse impact;

(b) incorporate measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate disturbance of sensitive wildlife habitats throughout the lifetime of the development; and

(c) seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity through the restoration, improvement or creation of habitats and/or ecological networks.

Removal or damage of features of nature conservation/biodiversity interest will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances.

Where relevant, new development should seek to incorporate ecologically sensitive design features to secure a net gain in biodiversity as appropriate.

(2) Biodiversity appraisal

A biodiversity appraisal should be submitted where there are protected or important species and habitat features either within the site or in close proximity to it. The appraisal will need to demonstrate that the development will not result in any adverse impacts and secures a net gain for biodiversity

(3) Regionally Important Geological Sites

Development that would adversely impact upon Regionally Important Geological Site at Whitecliff will not be permitted.

2. Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 Methodology for the evaluation of the site and assessment of the potential impacts has been based on the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in the United Kingdom published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018). Methodology for the undertaking of targeted protected species surveys have been based upon Best Practice Guidelines for each species/species group and these have also been used to evaluate relevant features, in combination with additional CIEEM guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017).

Defining the Zone of Influence

- 2.2 In order to define the spatial scope of the ecological surveys at 7 Salterns Way it is necessary to predict the likely zone of influence of the development proposals. The zone of influence of a proposed development is defined by CIEEM's EclA guidelines as '*...the areas/(ecological) resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by a development, both in the construction and operational phases*'.
- 2.3 The types of activities that might occur as a result of the development at 7 Salterns Way and the likely biophysical changes (in the absence of mitigation) include:
- a. Demolition of the freestanding garage, outbuildings and the house, resulting in the destruction of roosts for crevice-dwelling species of bat and nesting birds, *if present*;
 - b. Injury or death of bats if roosting at the time of destructive works, *if bat roosts are present in parts of the property affected by the work*;
 - c. Clearance of garden habitats with potential impacts on nesting birds if present at the time of works;
 - d. An increase in dust and noise during the works including potential disturbance of designated sites ~100m away in Poole Harbour;
 - e. An increase in nutrient input to Poole Harbour during the operational phase;
 - f. Increased recreational pressure upon the Poole Harbour and Dorset Heathlands statutory designated sites;
 - g. Increase in lighting and light spill during the construction and operational phase.

Desktop Study

- 2.4 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was

undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory designated sites, non-statutory designated sites and priority habitats and species on the site and within the zone of influence. This involved searching the National Biodiversity Network website, assessing the known distribution of bats in Britain (Richardson, 2001), as well as interrogating Natural England's "Nature on the Map" (MAGIC) to establish protected sites and habitats within the zone of influence of the proposals.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)

- 2.5 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) Survey of the Site was undertaken on 9th February 2024 by Claire Clarke and Matthew Clarke of CC Ecology Ltd, both licensed bat workers. The survey is essentially an ecological appraisal of the site. The habitats and features within the site boundary were mapped and classified, in addition any evidence of or potential for protected species to be on the site or within the zone of influence was noted.

Land Use, Habitat Types and Vegetation

- 2.6 Within the Site boundary the habitat types and features were noted and mapped. A vegetation species list was made and the dominant vegetation communities recorded. Where possible the land use and management was noted and an assessment of each habitats structure and condition was undertaken. The appraisal of habitats within the Site boundary is based upon the UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

Bats

Overview

- 2.7 The bat surveys comprised a combination of an assessment of habitats within the zone of influence for bats during the PEA and PRA Survey which included a daytime inspection of the internal and external areas of the house and carrying out of targeted Phase 2 bat surveys.

Daytime Inspection of Buildings within the Site Boundary

- 2.8 The PRA survey of the Site was carried out by Claire Clarke (a licensed bat ecologist). The building was searched for evidence that bats may be using, or previously have used, the building for roosting. Such evidence may include:

- The presence of bats;
- Bat droppings within the building or on external surfaces on and/or immediately adjacent to the building; and
- Staining or scratch marks around suitable bat roost locations or suitable access points into the building.

- 2.9 All accessible loft voids were searched using a very bright torch. The external inspection of the building involved searching for evidence with the use of a torch and binoculars.
- 2.10 Features considered suitable for roosting bats (potential roost sites and potential access/egress points) were marked on a plan.

Phase 2 Bat Surveys

- 2.11 Based the number of bat suitable features present in the house two further bat surveys will be carried out during the peak active bat season 2024. One further bat survey will be carried out on the garage during this season.
- 2.11 Three surveyors in total will be required to survey the house. Two surveyors in total will be required to survey the garage. These will be positioned at locations identified as allowing good sight lines of the building and ensuring that all potential bat access/egress points are visible between the surveyors. Each surveyor will be equipped with either Petterson D240x, EM Touch and Iphone/android device, or BatBox Duet and an Edirol recorder. Each surveyor will also be equipped with an infrared (IR) camera with suitable IR lighting to capture video of the building. Unidentified calls will be recorded for subsequent computer analysis.
- 2.12 Each surveyor will be supplied with a plan of the site on which to mark bat activity. The following information will be recorded for any bats seen or heard:
- Species;
 - Time;
 - Behaviour (whether it was feeding, commuting, social calling or swarming);
 - If seen, direction of flight; and
 - If it emerged from the building.
- 2.13 Behaviour will be identified by flight patterns and bat morphology, and by call characteristics as heard on the bat detector. Weather conditions (temperature, wind speed, cloud cover, rainfall in the last hour) will be recorded at the start and end of each survey.
- 2.14 Bat call recordings will subsequently be analysed and processed following the surveys.

Timing

- 2.15 All phase 2 surveys will be carried out during the period of time considered to be the peak maternity season (May to August inclusive). Both surveys will be dusk surveys.

Reptiles

- 2.12 During the PEA survey, habitats within the site boundary were assessed for their potential to support reptiles and any habitats considered suitable were noted. In addition the surrounding landscape and adjoining habitats were appraised for their potential to support reptiles in order to ascertain the likelihood of reptiles being present.

Dormice

- 2.13 Habitats within and adjacent to the Site boundary were considered for their potential to support dormice. The species of any boundary and woody habitats were recorded and the composition of species, as well as links to other patches of suitable habitat in the surrounding area was considered. During the desktop study, aerial maps were referred to assess how well linked any suitable habitats on the site are to surrounding habitats in the wider landscape.

Amphibians

- 2.14 During the PEA the site was searched for any ponds. Ordnance survey maps and aerial photos were assessed for the presence of ponds within 500m of the boundary. The terrestrial habitats within and adjacent to the site boundary were assessed for their suitability for amphibian species and habitats were recorded and described during The PEA survey.

Badgers

- 2.15 The Site and its environs was searched for any evidence of badger activity as well as setts. Any signs were mapped and any holes were classified according to their use.

Birds

- 2.16 Any habitat features, for example buildings, scrub and trees, which could potentially be used by nesting birds were surveyed and any nesting activity was noted. The habitat was also assessed regarding its potential for bird activity.

Survey Constraints

- 2.17 The PEA and PRA took place on a day when the weather was dry with no weather constraints.
- 2.18 Bats will often roost in places that are inaccessible to the surveyor, such as under tiles and within soffits. During the inspection due regard was paid to the noting of features that have the potential to support crevice dwelling species.
- 2.19 Bats are nomadic and invariably move between roost sites, therefore any bat survey will only provide a snapshot of how bats are using a particular site at that time.
- 2.20 The PEA Survey is not particularly targeted to any species group rather an initial survey to determine the potential for protected species to be present within the zone of influence of the

proposals. A lack of records does not constitute absence of any particular species or species group.

- 2.21 As with all ecological surveys, conditions can vary across the seasons and change with time, however due to the nature of the Site and the lack of diverse natural habitats it is considered that sufficient information was gathered to enable an evaluation of the habitats and features present.

3. Survey results and evaluation

Designated Sites

- 3.1 The closest statutory protected site is the Poole Harbour Special Protection Area, located approximately 105m southwest of the site. This is largely co-extensive with the Poole Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The closest point of Poole Harbour Ramsar site is also situated approximately 105m south west of 7 Salterns Lane. This Ramsar site covers intertidal zones and mudflats surrounding Poole harbour and covers parts of the SPA and SSSI. Other nearby statutory protected sites are included in Table 3.1.
- 3.2 7 Salterns Way is located within an Impact Risk Zone for Poole Harbour SSSI, SPA and Ramsar site. However, the zone it falls within, places no restrictions on applications within, and not extending from, existing settlements.

3.3 *Table 3.1 Protected sites found within 5km of 7 Salterns Way*

Site Name	Designation	Distance	Direction
Poole Harbour	Ramsar site, SPA, SSSI	105m	Southwest
Luscombe Valley	SSSI	790m	West
Luscombe Valley	Local Nature reserve (LNR)	950m	Southeast
Dorset	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	1.1km	Southwest
Purbeck Heath	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	1.65km	Southwest
Dorset Heathlands	SPA	1.95km	Southwest
Poole Bay Cliffs	SSSI	2.0km	Southeast
Dorset Heaths	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	2.8km	Southwest
Branksome Dean Chine	LNR	2.98km	West
Studland & Godlingston Heaths	SSSI	3.1km	South
Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes	SAC		South
Bourne Valley	SSSI	3.77km	Northeast
Dorset Heathlands	Ramsar	3.77km	Northeast
Alder Hills	LNR	3.9km	Northeast
Rempstone Heaths	SSSI	4.1km	Southwest
Pugs Hole	LNR	4.13km	Northeast
Hatch Pond	LNR	4.67km	North west
Millfield Pond	LNR	4.97km	Northwest
Turbary Common	LNR	4.96km	Northeast

- 3.4 The site is located within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands statutory designated sites which the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 supplementary planning document

(available at: <https://www.bcpouncil.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-control/D1-Dorset-Heathlands-2020-2025-SPD-Adopted.pdf>) describes as follows:

'The lowland heaths in South East Dorset are covered by a number of international, European and national designations, in particular the:

- *Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA);*
- *Dorset Heathlands Ramsar Site;*
- *Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and*
- *Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (Purbeck and Wareham) and Studland Dunes.*

Collectively this SPD refers to these designations as the Dorset Heathlands. They host protected priority habitats and species including Dartford warblers, nightjars, woodlark, hen harrier, merlin, sand lizards and smooth snakes as well as other typical species of lowland heathland, wetlands and dunes. The Dorset Heathlands cover an extensive area of South East Dorset fragmented by urban development, forestry, agriculture and other land uses.'

- 3.5 7 Salterns way is within the Poole Harbour SPA Recreation Zone. Poole Harbour SPA contains habitats which are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) due to their ability to support breeding and migrating populations of nationally and internationally important bird species.
- 3.6 7 Salterns way is within the hydrological catchment for Poole Harbour.
- 3.7 Priority habitats situated within a 1km radius of the site include: 'Lowland Heathland', 'Mudflats', 'Coastal Salt Marsh', 'Saline Lagoons', 'Reedbeds' and 'Deciduous Woodland'.

Site Overview: Broad Habitats and Features

- 3.8 Refer to **Map 2** which shows existing Habitats and Features.
- 3.9 The Site covers an area of approximately 0.2ha and is comprised of the house, garage building, and five outbuildings (described in more detail in the bat survey section below) and the front and rear gardens.
- 3.10 The Site is located on the southeast side of Salterns way on the coast of the town of Poole.

Hedgerows (h2)

- 3.11 The northeastern boundary of the site is a *Leylandii* hedge. A beech *Fagus sylvatica* hedge is located along the southeastern boundary and along the southern part of the southwestern boundary where some Laurel is also present which blends into *Leylandii* at the northern end of this boundary. The front of the Site, running alongside Salterns Way is fenced with close board fencing.

Built-up Areas and Gardens (u1)

- 3.12 The Salterns Way entrance opens onto an area of bare ground and rubble which leads to a garage building near the north boundary of the site. Behind this is another outbuilding, building 2. A south-west north-east fence divides part of this area from the remainder of the site.
- 3.13 Beyond this area is the house, which has two outbuildings to the southwest of it, buildings 3 and 4. Behind the house and outbuildings is a garden which contains two more outbuildings in its southwest half, buildings 1 and 5.
- 3.14 Northeast of this is a planted area. Species noted in this area include Heather *Calluna vulgaris*, Pampas Grass *Cortaderia selloana*, Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula*, Mexican Fleabane *Erigeron karvinskianus*, Bay *Laurus nobilis*, Privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, and Holly *Ilex aquifolium*. The gardens are tidy and well-maintained, with two small patches of mown lawns.

Bat Surveys

Pre-existing Records

- 3.15 Local bat records including those of Richardson (2001) occurring within a 100 km area show Greater Horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, Lesser Horseshoe bat *R. Hipposideros*, Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*, Natterer's bat *M. nattereri*, Bechstein's bat *M. bechsteinii*, Daubenton's bat *M. daubentonii*, Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*, Brown Long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, Grey Long-eared bat *P. austriacus*, Serotine bat, Noctule bat, Leisler's bat *N. leisleri* and Barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*.

Ground Level Tree Inspection

- 3.16 A ground level tree inspection for bats was undertaken at the same time as the PEA Survey. No trees with bat roost potential are located within the zone of influence of the proposals.

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 3.17 A daytime inspection of the house was undertaken on 9th February at the same time as the PEA walkover survey, this included a thorough internal and external inspection of the whole building.
- 3.18 The garage building (building 1) is a single storey detached double garage located at the front of the plot adjacent to Salterns Way. The building has a pitched and hipped roof and wooden soffits. The roof is clad with slate tiles and concrete tiled hips. The majority of the roof is tight although some areas of damage are present on the northern hip end with missing

hip tiles and a couple of slate roof tiles have also slipped. These have potential to provide bat access to crevices within the building.

- 3.19 The internal inspection of the garage found the building to be open to the roof, which is lined with wooden sarking board. No voids are present and no cracks and crevices within the garage are present and therefore suitable roosting opportunities for bats are located solely within crevices between the roof tiles and roof lining.
- 3.20 The outbuilding at the front of the house (building 2) is a derelict garage/store that is brick built and painted. Building two has a pitched and gabled roof, the roof covering used to be bitumen felt although this has disintegrated leaving parts of the building open to the elements and other parts covered by tarpaulin or plastic sheeting. No roof void is present and no cracks and crevices were noted that could be used by roosting bats and therefore this building was considered to be of negligible suitability for roosting bats.
- 3.21 Buildings 3,4, and 5 are a collection of wooden sheds that are largely single skin on the walls and the roof. These buildings have no internal or external features that could provide roosting opportunities to bats. They were classed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats.
- 3.22 The house is a brick built, two storey building with a slate tile clad roof (building 6). The house is composed of a central two-storey section with a 'T'-shaped footprint. This section has a pitched and gabled roof. Three brick chimneys are positioned within this roof. Wrapping the front and sides of the house is a single-storey extension with a pitched and hipped roof. The soffits and window frames are wooden. The house has open eaves in some areas.
- 3.23 The external inspection of the house found a small number of gaps, in the form of lifted ridge tiles and raised lead flashing. These have potential to provide bat access to crevices within the building, and into the loft space.
- 3.24 The internal inspection of the house found one loft void in the same 'T'-shaped footprint as the two-storey section of the house. This was insulated at joist level with fibre glass insulation. The majority of this was covered with boards except at the southeast corner. The loft was approximately 1.6m high at the apex, which had a ridge beam. It had no trussing and was lined with black bitumen felt. A water tank was situated at the angle of the 'T'. Dust and debris was noted in the loft. No evidence of bats was found in the loft space.

Phase 2 Bat Surveys

- 3.25 Two phase 2 bat surveys are planned for the peak bat maternity season (mid-May to August inclusive).

Bat survey interpretation and evaluation of results

- 3.26 No bat roosts have been discovered at this stage of the ecological survey programme. However, phase 2 surveys of the property have not yet been performed. The house has moderate suitability for roosting bats, and the garage has low suitability for roosting bats. The other outbuildings have negligible potential to support roosting bats.
- 3.27 Further bat surveys are recommended to meet Best Practice Guidelines (BCT, 2024)

Reptiles

- 3.28 During the survey the Site was assessed for its potential to support reptiles. The site lacks habitats and features which would make it suitable for reptiles such as tussock grassland, compost heaps, woodpiles or low scrub vegetation.
- 3.29 As areas within the zone of influence are of such limited suitability no further surveys are considered necessary.

Amphibians

- 3.30 During the survey the Site was assessed for its potential to support amphibians. The site lacks habitats and features which would make it suitable for amphibians such as tussock grassland, compost heaps, woodpiles, rockeries, ponds/standing water, or low scrub vegetation.
- 3.31 No ponds are noted within 500m of the Site.
- 3.32 As areas within the zone of influence are of such limited suitability no further surveys are considered necessary.

Hazel dormouse

- 3.33 Whilst some habitats on site may have limited suitability for hazel dormouse to disperse through, the site lacks connections to optimal habitats and known populations of this species. The surrounding land use is very urban and there is no suitable habitat within the area with the potential to support this species. It is unlikely that Dormice are present within the Site boundary.

Nesting Birds

- 3.34 Bird nests were found within the eaves of the house. It is probable that on-site vegetation and buildings provide further nesting opportunities for common and widespread species.

Other Protected and Notable Species

- 3.24 No Badger setts were noted during the survey. The site may support other species such as Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*. This species is of conservation priority listed under Section 41 of the NERC act. Habitat features within the zone of influence of the proposals were considered generally unlikely to support notable invertebrate assemblages.

4. Potential impacts in the absence of mitigation

Introduction

- 4.1 This section details the potential ecological impacts of the proposal in the absence of mitigation. The potential activities are identified with reference to the scheme, as identified in **Section 1**. Recommended mitigation and enhancements to ensure that the favourable conservation status of species is maintained, in compliance with the relevant legislation and planning policy, is detailed in **Section 5**.

Impacts to Sites and Habitats

- 4.2 The Site falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) which are used to identify risks to protected sites such as SSSIs, SPAs, and SACs as a result of development. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are asked to consult Natural England on developments that are located within the Impact Risk Zones that fall within certain categories. The Defra Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Map website (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) provides further advice and states that: ‘The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.’ The zone in which 7 Salterns Way is found places no additional requirements upon residential development within, and not extending outside of, existing settlements.
- 4.3 Given the small scale of the proposed development and location of the Site in relation to designated nature conservation sites, impacts to these sites are anticipated to be limited. The impacts result from the net increase in the number of dwellings resulting from the proposals and therefore an increased recreational pressure upon the Dorset Heathlands statutory protected sites, and the Poole Harbour SPA.
- 4.4 The Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) requires appropriate protection of internationally designated wildlife sites from nutrient enrichment resulting from wastewater and sewage discharge. The development site falls within the area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and is within the Poole Harbour Catchment. An increase in the number of dwellings is likely to result in an increase in nutrients within the river catchment and flowing into Poole Harbour SPA. The increase in development within the area results in a cumulative impact on this statutory protected site. The increase in the number of dwellings from 1-2 at 7 Salterns Way will result in increased nutrient inputs to the Poole Harbour SPA.
- 4.5 None of the habitats within the Site boundary are considered to be of value apart from their potential to support protected species.

Impacts to Fauna

- 4.6 The demolition of the house and garage will result in the destruction of potential bat roosting opportunities. If present these are most likely to be in the form of roosts for crevice-dwelling species under lifted roof tiles or in other small gaps on the buildings, or for void dwelling species in the loft space of the house. The works have the potential to disturb, injure or kill bats if roosting in the building at the time of the works.
- 4.7 The site is likely to be used by bats for foraging and/or commuting (phase 2 surveys will determine this). Increases in lighting levels or changes in the direction of outside lights could reduce the suitability of the site for these purposes. Additional artificial lighting may also impact on other nocturnal species.
- 4.8 If works are carried out during the nesting bird season it could result in the disturbance of nesting birds and destruction of nests, if present. This would be contrary to Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 4.9 Overall impacts on biodiversity as a whole may arise from an increase of lighting in the construction and operational phases of the development and changes to on-site structure.

5. Recommendations

Opportunities for mitigation and enhancement

Introduction

- 5.1 In order for the proposals to comply fully with applicable legislation and planning policy, it is necessary to mitigate or compensate for the ecological impacts as identified in **Section 4**. The NPPF also places an onus on developments to provide ecological enhancements and to meet local biodiversity objectives wherever possible. Within this section mitigation measures are recommended to ensure that sensitive habitats and protected species are considered during the construction and operation phases of the development, in compliance with applicable legislation and planning policy.

Mitigation for Impacts to Statutory Nature Conservation Sites

- 5.2 Developments within the Poole Harbour SPA Recreation zone that result in a net increase in dwellings require an additional payment to be made as part of the planning obligations. This is to mitigate for the increased recreational pressure on the SPA resulting from an increase in population near to the site. The mitigation will be in the form of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) scheme run jointly by Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council, and Dorset County Council. The payment is known as a SAMMs payment. As this site has a net increase of 1 house (1 house removed but 2 new houses) this payment will be, at the time of writing, £140. The council charges a separate administration fee of 5% of the SAMMs payment subject to a minimum value of £25. This payment will need to be paid to Bournemouth Poole and Christchurch Council.
- 5.3 Developments within 5km of Dorset Heathlands sites that result in a net increase in dwellings also require a SAMMs payment to BCP council, as part of the planning obligations. This pays for mitigation of the increased recreational pressure resulting from an increase in population near to the sites. The mitigation is run jointly by Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council, and Dorset County Council. The Dorset Heathlands SAMMs payment is in addition to the Poole Harbour SPA SAMMs payment. As this site has a net increase of 1 house (1 house removed but 2 new houses) and is within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands sites, this payment will be, at the time of writing, £394. The council charges an additional administration fee of 5% of the SAMMs payment, subject to a minimum payment of £75. This payment will need to be arranged with the local planning authority.
- 5.4 The Site is located within the catchment of Poole Harbour. It is a requirement to ensure appropriate protection of internationally designated wildlife sites, including those in Poole Harbour from nutrient enrichment resulting from wastewater and sewage discharge. As these proposals result in a net increase in dwellings, they are likely to result in an increase in wastewater and sewage production within the catchment. A nutrient budget calculation for the development scheme will therefore be necessary to ensure compliance with updated advice to LPAs regarding nutrient neutrality provided by Natural England in June 2020. More

information about the calculation and mitigation strategy can be found in BCP Councils 'Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document' available at: <https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/documents/planning-and-building-control/Nitrogen-Reduction-in-Poole-Harbour-Supplementary-Planning-Document-final.pdf>

Ecological Constraints

- 5.4 As the Site is subject to limited existing levels of light splay and bats are likely to commute and forage locally, any increase in lighting post development must be avoided (Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2018; Lacoeuilhe *et al.*, 2014). Any external security lighting should be directed to minimise light spillage on adjacent trees or hedgerows by the use of directional lighting hoods. All external lighting must be fitted with timing sensors to minimise the period of unnecessary illumination and reduce the potential for the lights to attract invertebrates. All on-site lighting must comply with the Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (GN01:2011), as outlined by the Institution of Lighting Professionals. Any luminaires or bollard lighting to be used must be designed to limit upward lighting to 0% above 90° to the horizontal plane. Lighting measures must ensure the following:
- Lights will not be aimed at boundary trees or vegetation;
 - Lighting must not be aimed at new bat roosting features associated with the buildings;
 - Light levels will be kept to below 1lux where possible;
 - Light hoods will be used to reduce light spillage; and
 - Timed / motion sensor security lighting will be used where external lighting is required

Mitigation and Compensation Measures

Bats

- 5.3 All species of bat and their roosts are protected under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The bat survey carried out on the buildings have found that they have potential to support small day roosts for crevice dwelling bats.
- 5.4 Should bats be found to be roosting in these areas, the most likely scenario is that the roosts are small day roosts of more common and widespread species such as Common Pipistrelles and Soprano Pipistrelles, or Brown Long-eared bats. The following mitigation strategy for bats demonstrates how the presence of one or more small day or transitional roosts for common species, found in affected areas of the property, would be managed. This is to demonstrate, for planning purposes, that a suitable mitigation strategy will be used to ensure bats and their roosts are protected during this development.
- 5.5 Should roosts be found in the garage or the house, the proposals would result in the destruction of these roosts. In this case a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL)

would be required to legally destroy these roosts. An EPSL must be granted prior to the start of any destructive works to bat roosts.

- 5.6 Prior to the start of works temporary roosting opportunities in the form of one woodcrete bat box suitable for a variety of species would be installed on mature trees within the site boundary to provide alternative roosting opportunities for bats whilst the work is being carried out.
- 5.7 The works that will affect bat roosts will be timed accordingly to avoid the sensitive times of year. No destructive works to the house or garage will be carried out during the hibernation season, which is generally considered to be from 1 November to 31 March (although this is dictated by weather conditions). As long as no maternity roost is discovered it would be acceptable to carry out works at any part of the active bat season (April-October inclusive). Works would be best timed in the Spring or Autumn window following the granting of a EPSL to avoid the possibility of use of the building by nesting birds.
- 5.8 Works to bat-sensitive areas (the roofs and loft) will be undertaken under the supervision of a licensed bat ecologist. All sensitive areas of the building such as roof tiles, ridge tiles and barge boards will be hand stripped, following a detailed toolbox talk to all site personnel. If any bats are found during the destructive works, they will be caught by hand by a licensed bat ecologist and transferred to the installed bat box within the Site boundary.
- 5.9 The loss of bat roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling species within the existing buildings will be compensated by installing features for these species within the new buildings. Integrated bat boxes are self-contained crevice features that when integrated into the structure of the building have longevity and require little to no maintenance.
- 5.10 The bat box on trees within the Site boundary will be retained post development to provide an enhancement to the Site for biodiversity.
- 5.11 Should the phase 2 survey indicate the likely absence of bat roosts in areas affected by the works, the proposed compensatory bat roost features would act as an enhancement to the Site for bats.

Birds

- 5.16 Old bird nests were noted in the eaves of the existing house. There is also potential for nesting birds to use both the buildings and woody vegetation within the Site boundary. To avoid the potential for active bird nests to be present at the time of works it is recommended that demolition works and vegetation clearance be undertaken outside the nesting bird season (May-September) or if this is not possible for the building to undergo a nesting bird survey to be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to the start of works. In the event nesting birds are encountered during development, all work should cease and the consulting ecologist should be contacted for further advice.

- 5.17 To enhance the Site for nesting birds it is recommended that bird boxes are installed on the new houses. Integrated bird boxes within the buildings such as Sparrow terraces and swift boxes would support red-listed species in addition to providing an overall enhancement for biodiversity.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

- 5.12 In addition to the ecological enhancements recommended areas of retained habitat as well as the creation of habitats can have benefits for biodiversity as a whole, in line with national and local planning policy.
- 5.13 Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council currently require all sites to meet Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Whilst BNG for small sites is not yet mandatory at a national level, BCP council has decided to bring its introduction forward in the BCP area. In order to meet these obligations, it is recommended that a BNG calculation is carried out for the proposals.
- 5.14 The gardens can be managed with biodiversity in mind. Recommendations include the planting of additional native, fruiting and nut bearing shrub and tree species within the gardens.

Residual Impacts

- 5.15 Provided the mitigation recommended above is implemented in full, there should be no residual impacts to protected species and habitats as a result of the proposed development at 7 Salterns Way.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- 6.1 A PEA/PRA Survey has been undertaken at 7 Salterns Way and this will be followed up with targeted Phase 2 bat surveys during the active bat season.
- 6.2 Within the construction area habitats are present that are considered to be of value within the zone of influence, and habitats within the Site boundary have been found to have the potential to support bats, all species of which are protected by UK law.
- 6.3 If phase 2 surveys confirm the presence of bat roosts within the garage or house the works will result in the destruction of these roosts. The most likely scenario involving the presence of bat roosts in these areas is the discovery of small day or transitional roosts for common and widespread species such as Common and Soprano Pipistrelles, and/or brown long-eared bats. A bat mitigation strategy is proposed that would mitigate the impacts resulting from this scenario. The strategy includes the installation of bat boxes on trees within the Site boundary, the careful timing and supervision of destructive works and the installation of compensatory bat roost features within the new houses.
- 6.4 If bat roosts are present in the house or garage then the works will destroy these roosts. In that case it would be necessary to gain a European Protected Species Licence to undertake the works.
- 6.5 Should no bat roosts be found in the areas of the building affected by the proposals then the works may go ahead without restrictions relating to bats other than the use of bat sensitive external lighting. However, the installation of integrated bat boxes in the new houses would still be recommended as excellent enhancements for biodiversity.
- 6.6 The Site is located within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands statutory protected sites and within the Poole Harbour SPA Recreation Zone. Contributions will need to be paid into mitigation schemes for both these zones, as part of planning obligations, to mitigate impacts of increased recreational pressure resulting from the additional dwelling.
- 6.7 The Site is also located within the Poole Harbour catchment and therefore a nutrient budget calculation for the development scheme will be necessary to ensure compliance with updated advice to LPAs regarding nutrient neutrality provided by Natural England in June 2020. A calculation will determine whether the development avoids harm to statutory protected sites and whether mitigation needs to be provided to ensure there is no adverse effect.
- 6.8 Recommendations for the integration of sparrow and swift boxes have been made, in addition to the planting of native fruiting hedgerows and trees within the gardens of the new properties.
- 6.9 Provided the mitigation measures recommended above implemented in full, there should be no residual impacts to ecological features as a result of this development.

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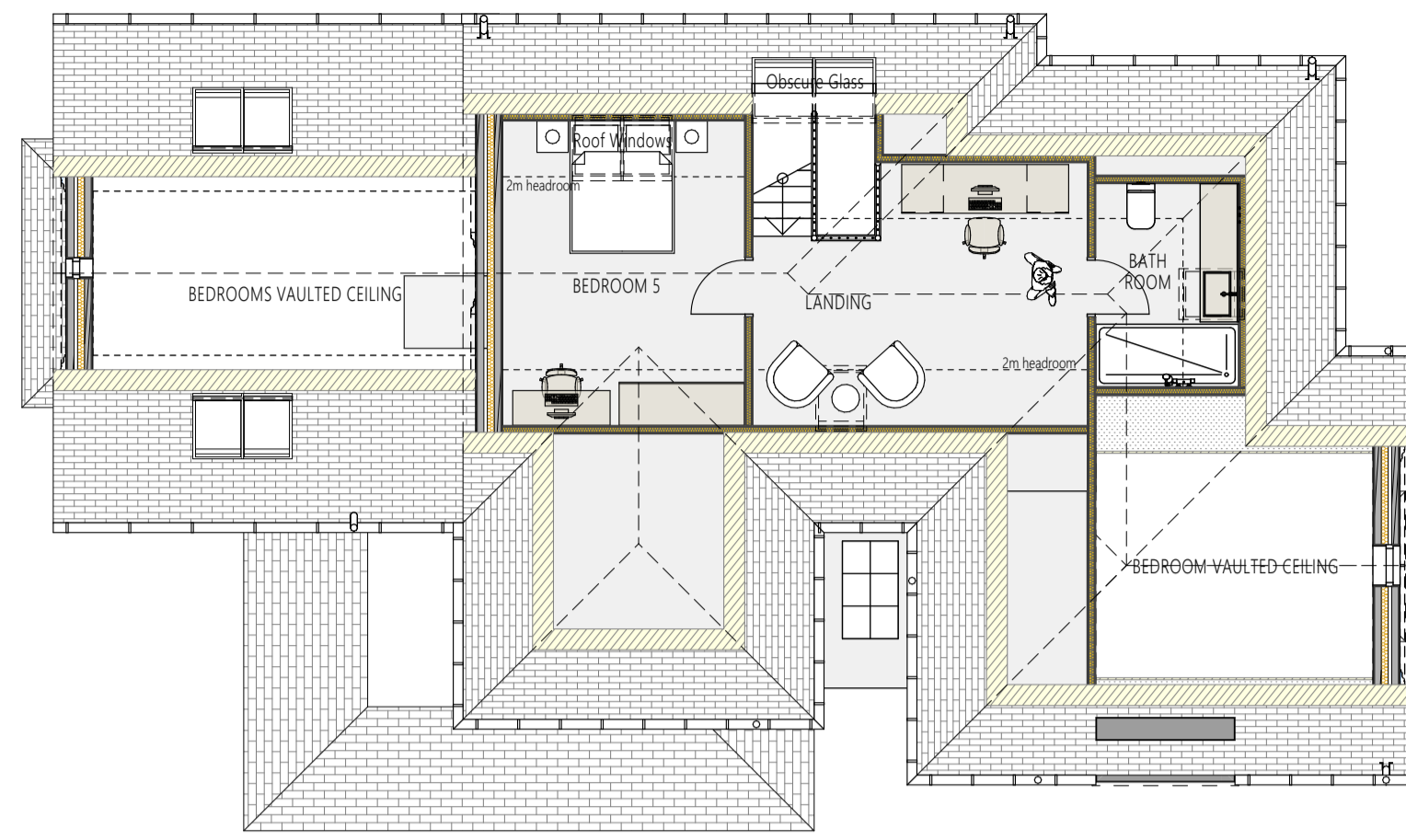
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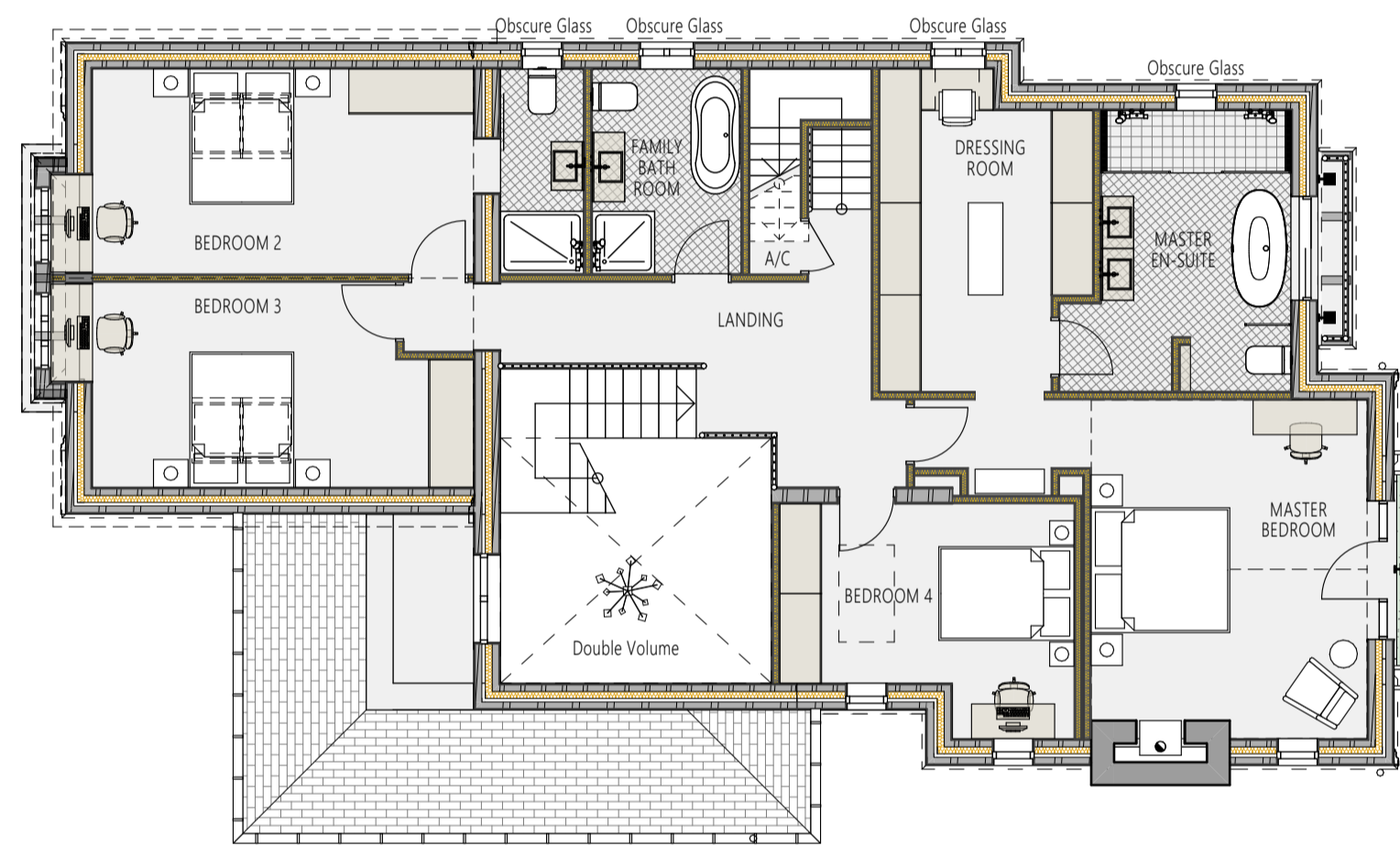
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Map 1: Proposals



SECOND FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED

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FIRST FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED

1:100



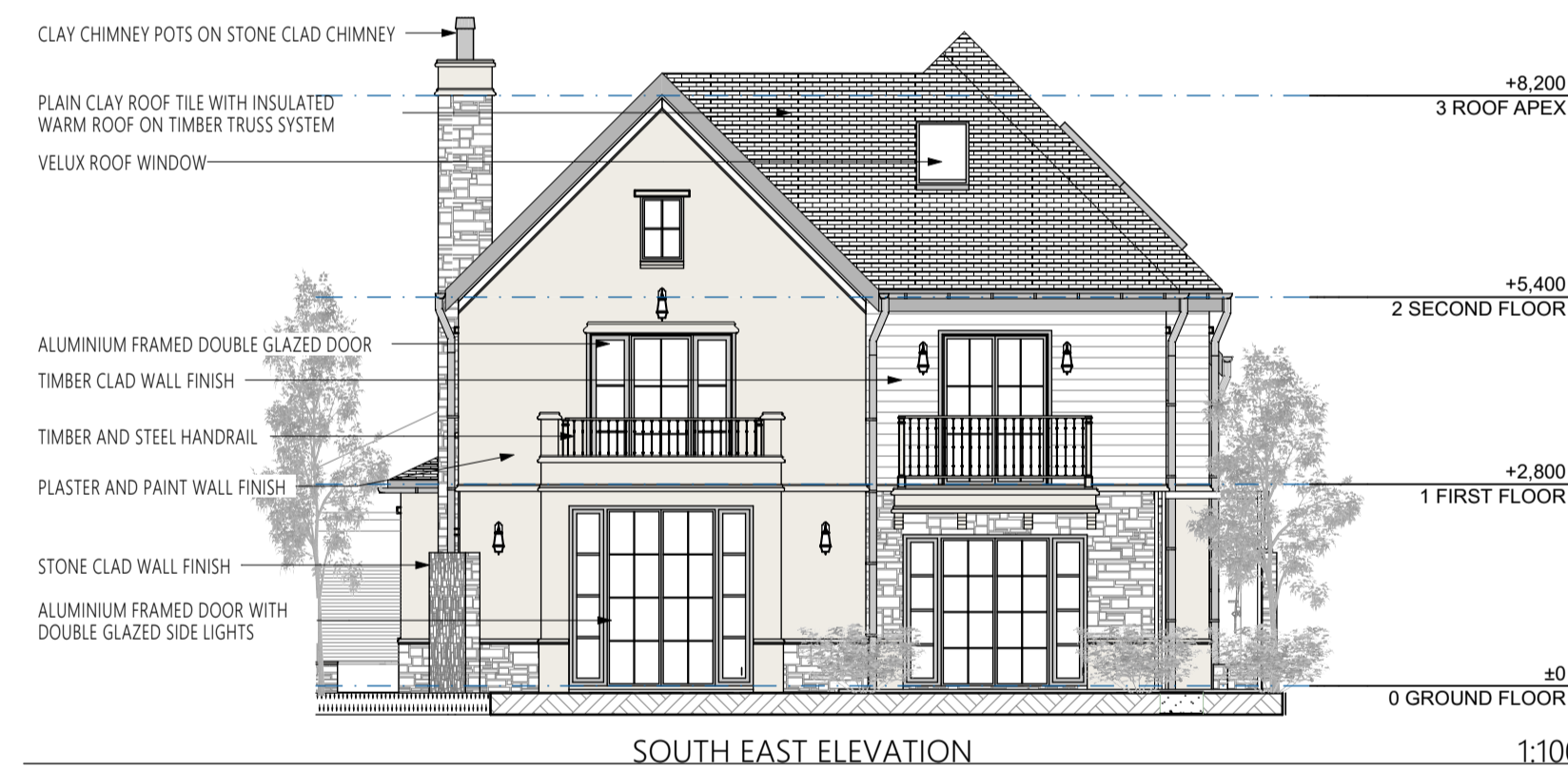
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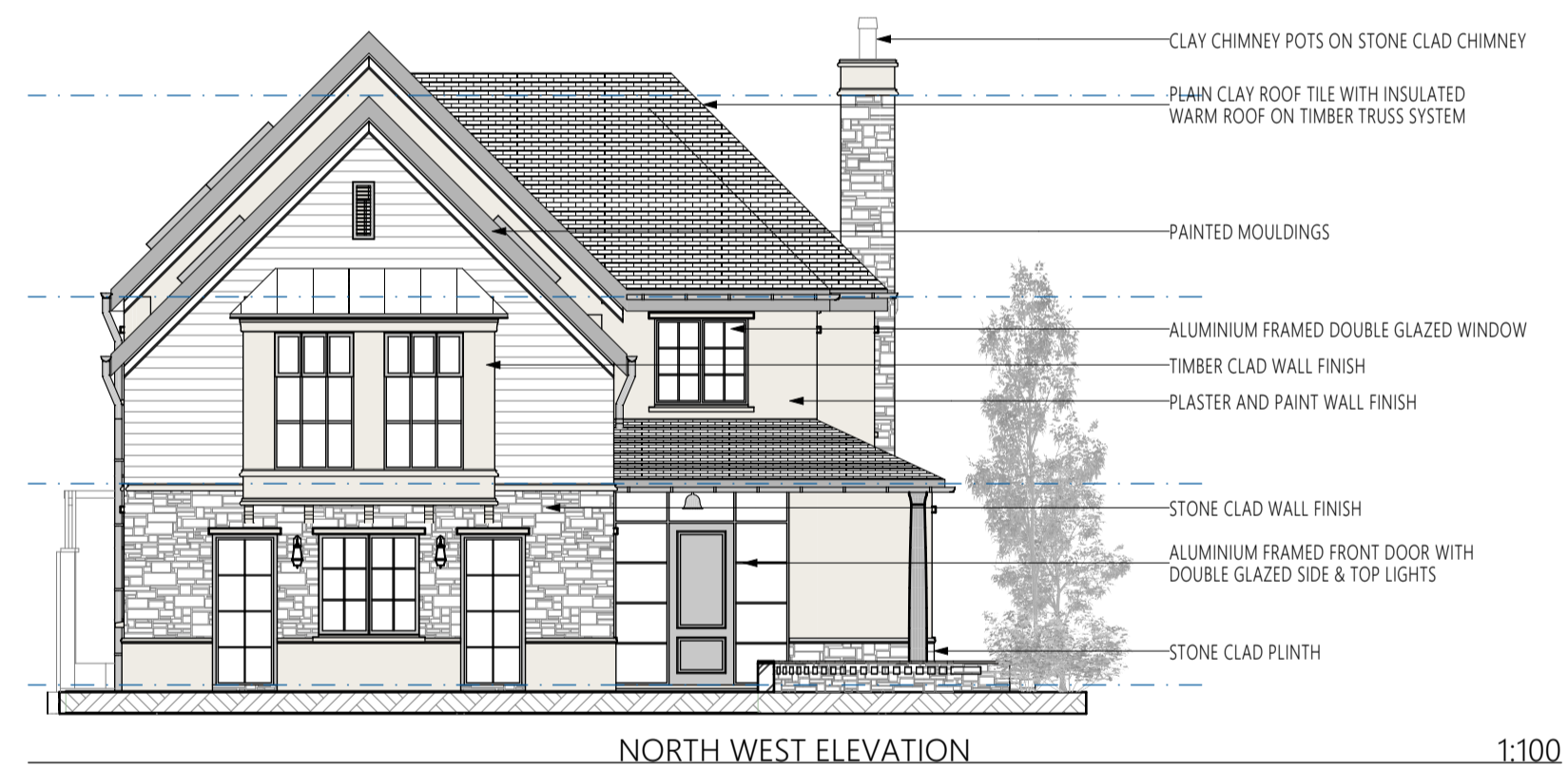
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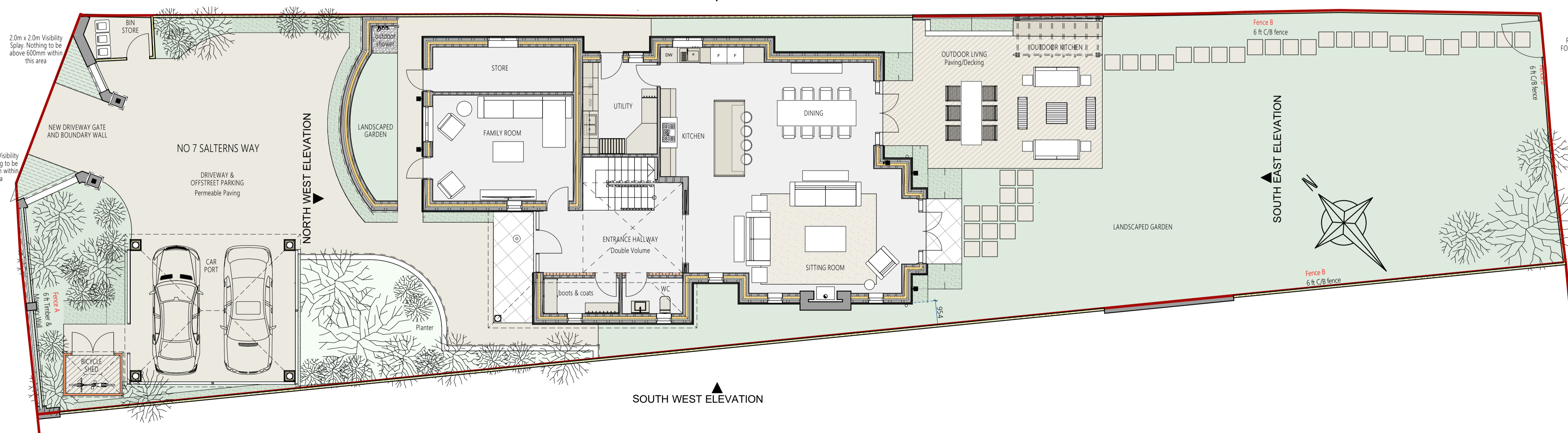
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NORTH WEST ELEVATION

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SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

GROUND FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED

1:100

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B	08/03/2024	ISSUED FOR COORDINATION
C	12/03/2024	ISSUED FOR COORDINATION
D	13/03/2024	ISSUED FOR COORDINATION

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CLIENT SIGNATURE:



PROJECT ARCHITECT: ROGAN DUFFY DRAWN BY: #Project Team Member

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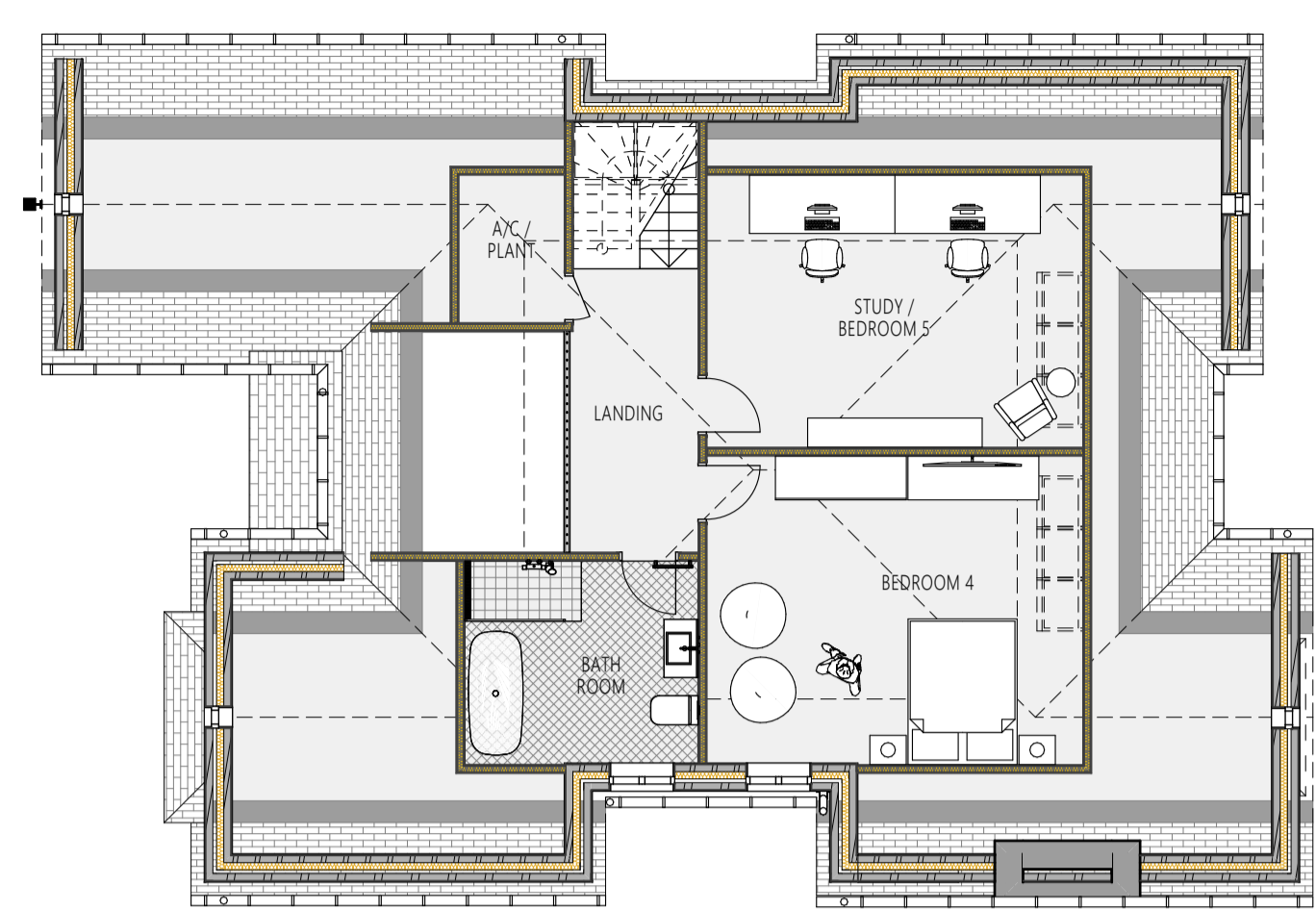
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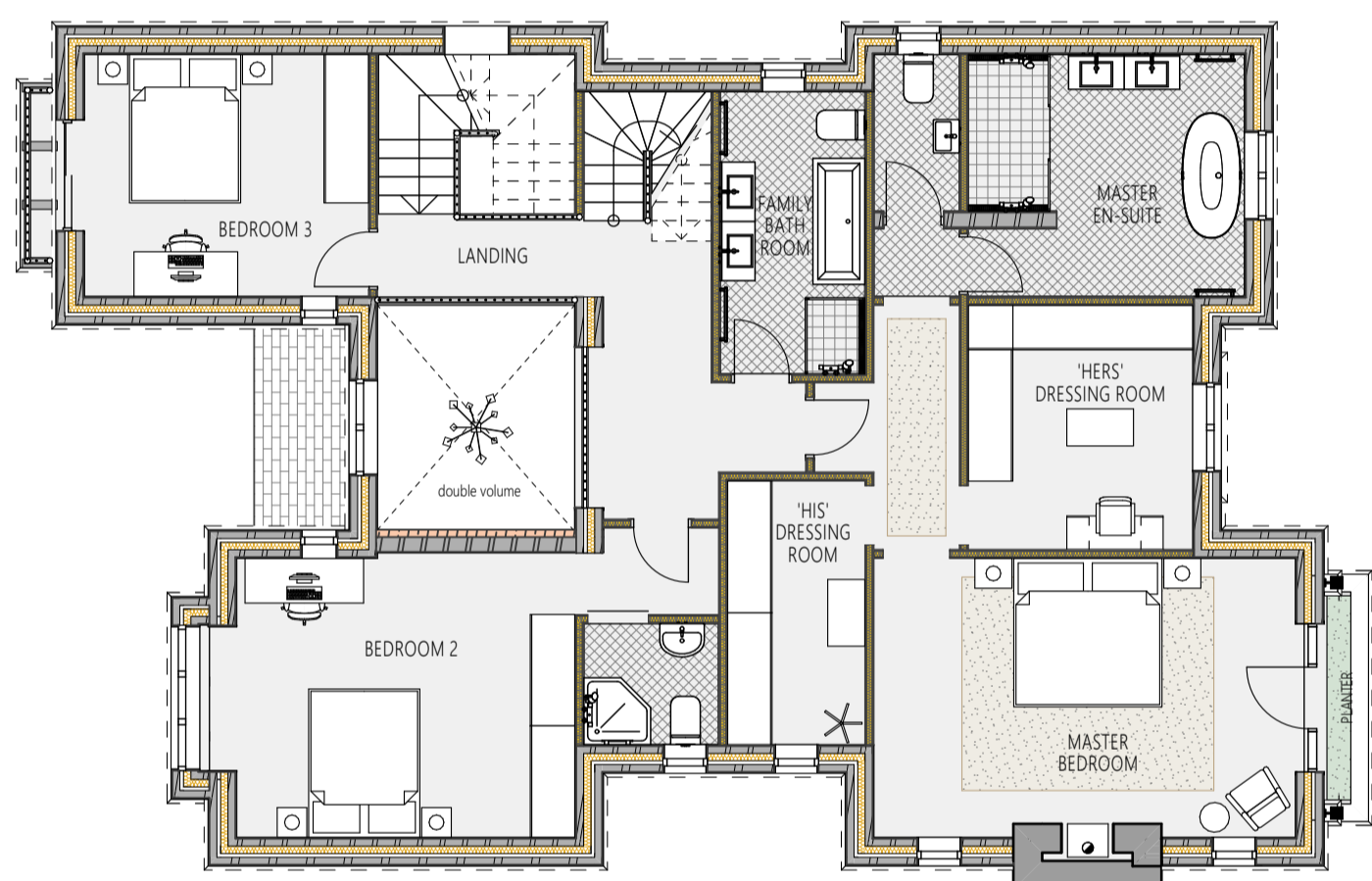
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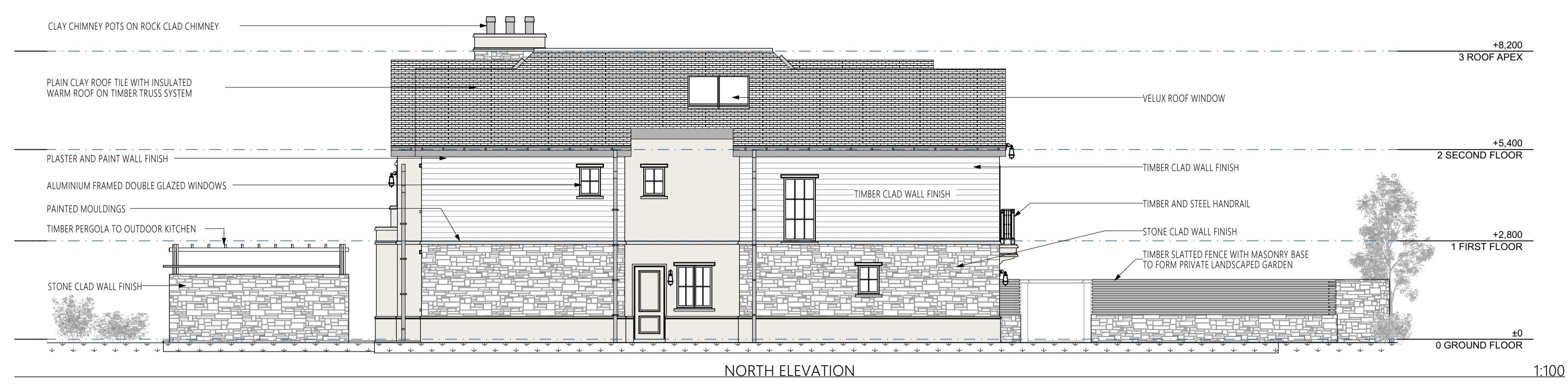
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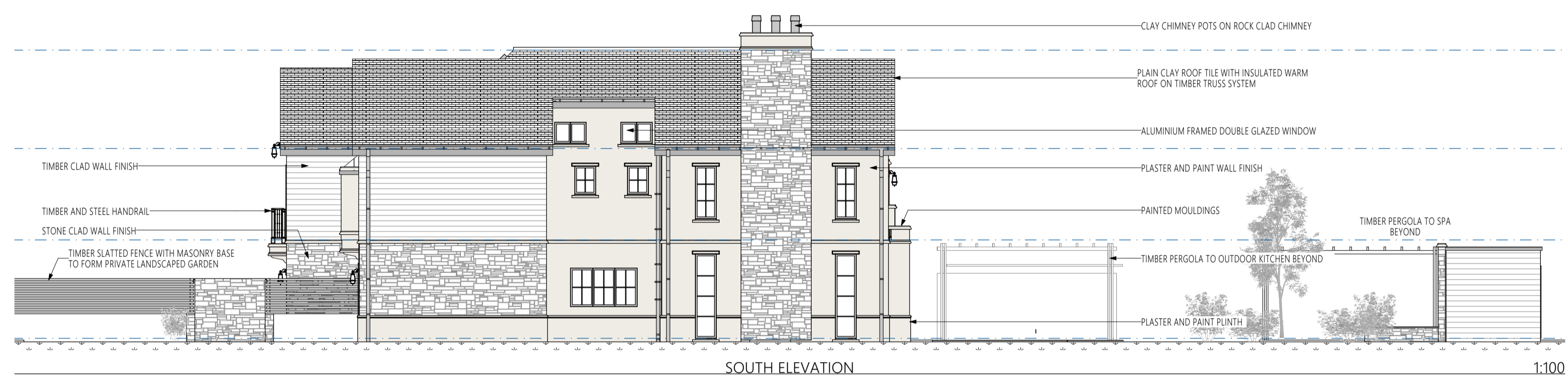
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED 1:100



NORTH ELEVATION 1:100



SOUTH ELEVATION 1:100



EAST ELEVATION 1:100



WEST ELEVATION 1:100

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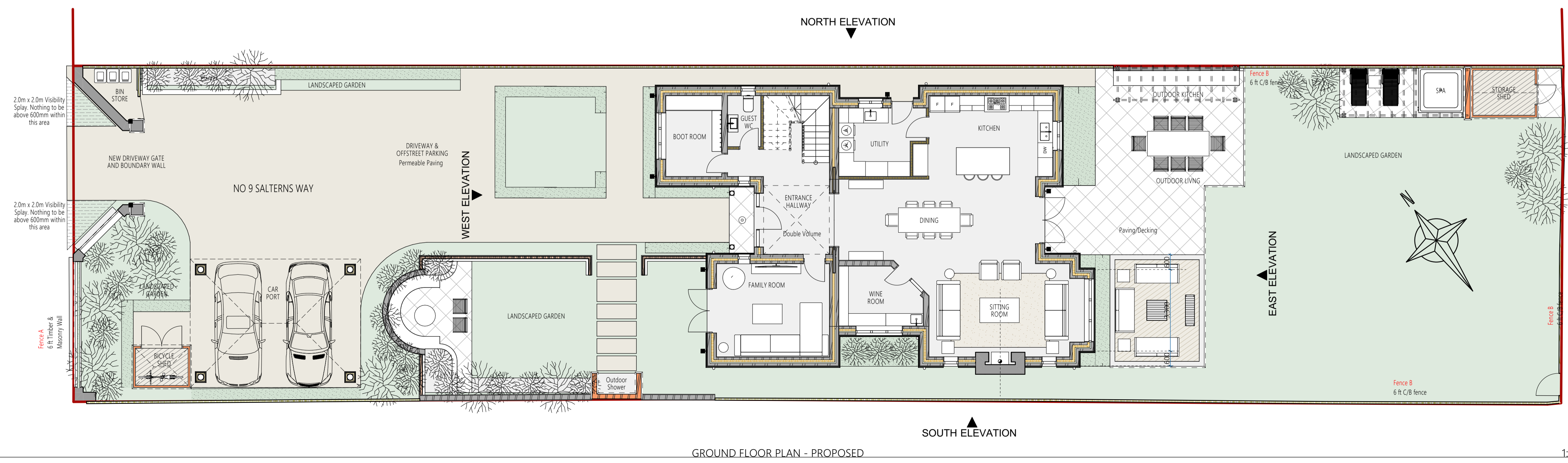
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 PROPOSED NEW RESIDENCE

DRAWING TITLE
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SCALE: 1:100 | DATE: 08/03/2024 | SHEET SIZE: A1

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GROUND FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED 1:100

Map 2: Habitats and Features



Key	
	Building
	Modified grassland
	Native hedge and trees
	Non-native hedge
	Hardstanding and bare ground

Appendix 1

Relevant Legislation

CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017

These **Regulations** consolidate the Conservation of **Habitats and Species Regulations** 2010 (S.I. 2010/490) with subsequent amending instruments. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose Habitats Directive into UK legislation. The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species. European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe.

European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations and include dormouse, great crested newt, otter and all species of bat. The regulations prohibit the deliberate capture, killing or disturbance of any EPS; it is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any of these species. In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. EPS Licences will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternative and that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principle piece of legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. The Wildlife and Countryside Act contains both habitat and species protection. Certain bird, animal and plant species are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are also included within the Act.

COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 adds to the protection afforded in the WCA to SSSI's and other important sites for nature conservation. In addition, under the Act it became a criminal offence to "recklessly disturb" Schedule 1 nesting birds and species protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It also enabled heavier penalties on the conviction of wildlife offences.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 improved wildlife protection by amending the WCA. The main function of the NERC Act was to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst public authorities. Section 40 (S40) of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL LEVEL - THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF, 2019)

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (2018) (available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Section 15 of the NPPF provides guidance on conserving and enhancing the natural environment through the planning system. This guidance replaces *Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*. Section 15, Paragraph 170, of the NPPF specifies that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

In consideration of habitats and biodiversity, Paragraph 174 states plans should:

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 175 states when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR 06/05: BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

The Government Circular 06/05 provides guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation. It was originally produced to accompany PPS9, and although some of the information contained within it is now out of date, paragraphs 98 and 99 of the document remain relevant.

Paragraph 98 states that *“the presence of protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitats”*

Paragraph 99 states that *“it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted”*

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The East Hampshire District Council Joint Core Strategy (Available at: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/adopted-local-plan>) sets out the long term spatial planning strategy for the region.