



RIBA STAGE 1-3

Design & Access
Statement

Southview, East Grinstead

// Mr P Pomfrett

2808F

This document has been designed to be a record of key objectives, decisions and outcomes from each stage of the RIBA Plan of Work, building to provide you with a complete narrative of the life of your project.

Whilst we have made every effort to ensure that all of the principle criteria are covered with the document, it should not be regarded as exhaustive and must be read in conjunction with all drawings, schedules, specifications, reports and other project documentation.

Scene Ref.	2808F	
Drawing no.	STHV-SCN-XX-XX-RP-A-90.001-A3	
Rev no.	PL01	10.04.26
Prepared by:	MM	
Checked by:	DAP	

Revision Notes

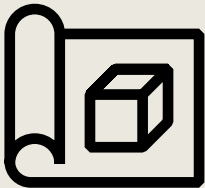
PL01	MM	Planning Issue
------	----	----------------

Copyright @ Scene Architects. 2026

Scene Architects has asserted its right under the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988 to be identified as the author of this work.

RIBA STAGE 1-3

Design & Access Statement



Contents

1	Introduction	2.2	Design Principles
1.2	Site Location	2.3	Proposed Internal Layout
1.3	Photographic Survey	2.4	Internal Layout
1.4	Local Area	2.5	Elevations
1.5	Environmental	2.6	Sustainability and Services
1.6	Planning Policy	3.0	Conclusion
1.7	Planning Context		
1.8	Local Character		
1.9	Opps & Cons		
2.1	The Proposal		

Introduction1

Summary

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the following application:

“Construction of a three-storey, five-bedroom residential dwelling.”

A Design & Access Statement provides a framework to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users. This design & access statement is broken down into three sections which reflect the structure of how we work at Scene:



// Stage 1 - Site Analysis

This section highlights and summarises the features, context and unique conditions of the site and surrounding area to consider, as part of the design process.



// Stage 2 - Concept Design

This section demonstrates how the evidence from the previous stage has been pulled together and considered to help inform a concept for the development.



// Stage 3 - Spatial Co-ordination

This section explains the final design and provides further information relating to use, amount, layout, scale, appearance, landscape and access.

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted planning drawings as well as associated technical reports.

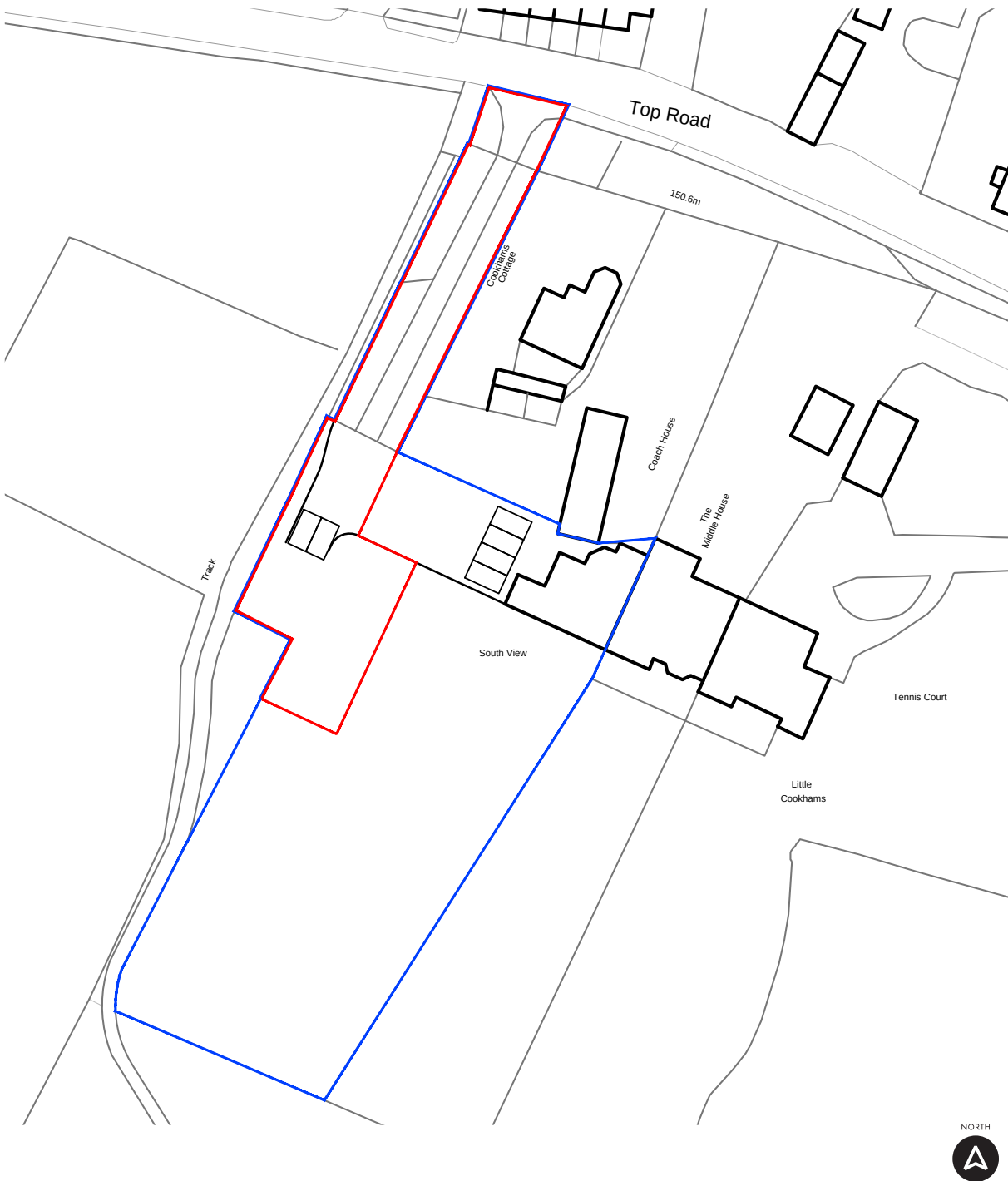


Fig 1.1 // Site Location Plan

Map Key

— Site boundary

Site Location 1.2



Fig 1.2.02 // Site Location

— Site Location



Fig 1.2.03 // Aerial view of Southview, Sharpthorne

Photographic Survey 1.3



Fig 1.3.01 // Local cafe



Fig 1.3.02 //Top Road, Neighbourhood dwellings opposite the site



Fig 1.3.03 // Aerial View to the South of the site



Fig 1.3.04 // The existing dwelling



Fig 1.3.05 // The Fox Bar, Sharpethone



Fig 1.3.06 // Cookhams the Complex Neighbouring Dwelling



Fig 1.3.07 // Map of South View Site

Local Area

1.4

Located south of Sharpthorne within the jurisdiction of the Mid Sussex District Council, this site location is nestled within the scenic High Weald Area of Natural Beauty, characterized by its blend of open green spaces, woodlands, and residential areas.

Currently, the site is home to a residential dwelling divided into two apartments, accompanied by several outbuildings, a garage, a swimming pool area, and hard-standing for parking. Flanked by two neighbouring residential properties to the east and north, the site remains discreetly concealed from Top Road by dense vegetation, which forms natural boundaries along the western and southern edges.

Sharpthorne offers an array of local amenities, including a school situated to the west of the site, various places of worship, and inviting pubs and restaurants. For essential shopping needs, a supermarket is conveniently located just a 9-minute drive away, approximately 4 miles to the northeast.

The site is within proximity to neighbouring villages and towns, each boasting their own assortment of amenities and educational institutions. For instance, Ardingly College, a prominent educational establishment, is a 12-minute drive away, which is easily accessible both by car and public transportation. Notably, Top Road features the convenient presence of the number 84 Bus Stop, facilitating access to East Grinstead Town.

In close proximity to the site lies the renowned Bluebell Railway, a cherished heritage attraction offering steam railway journeys. Kingcote Station, a stop along this historic route, is conveniently reachable with just a short 7-minute drive, further enhancing the accessibility and allure of the area.



Fig 1.4.01 // East Grinstead Town Centre



Fig 1.4.02 // Kingscote Station, East Grinstead



Fig 1.4.03 // Sharpthorne Tunnel, Bluebell Railway

Environmental

1.5

A thorough assessment of relevant policies, landscape characteristics, and visibility factors was conducted to evaluate the proposed development. Informed by the management objectives for the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment guidance, the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) recommended various mitigation measures.

These measures include preserving mature trees along the western boundary of the site to maintain landscape character and partially screen views from the Sussex Border Path. Additionally, it proposes planting species-rich native hedges and trees along the shared driveway to serve as a buffer for potential adjacent developments, increase tree cover along Top Road, and enhance ecological connectivity.

Such measures aim to enrich the site’s character and that of Sharpthorne while minimizing visual impacts and enhancing ecological value. Evaluation against the AONB objectives indicated only negligible changes to landscape character and visual amenity, which can be effectively mitigated.

Visual assessments revealed limited visibility of the site due to topography and wooded landscape. Views from the Sussex Border Path and western vantage points are partially obscured by existing vegetation. Even at the most open viewpoint approximately 1km to the south, proposed effects are deemed negligible.

The proposed development is projected to have minimal impact on landscape resources and visual amenity within the High Weald AONB. With the implementation of recommended landscape mitigation measures, the development is expected to offer beneficial effects on the landscape while maintaining visual harmony. Consequently, there are no landscape-related grounds to oppose planning permission.



Fig 1.5.01 // View south of site facing Sussex Downs



Fig 1.5.02 // Deciduous Woodland West of the site location

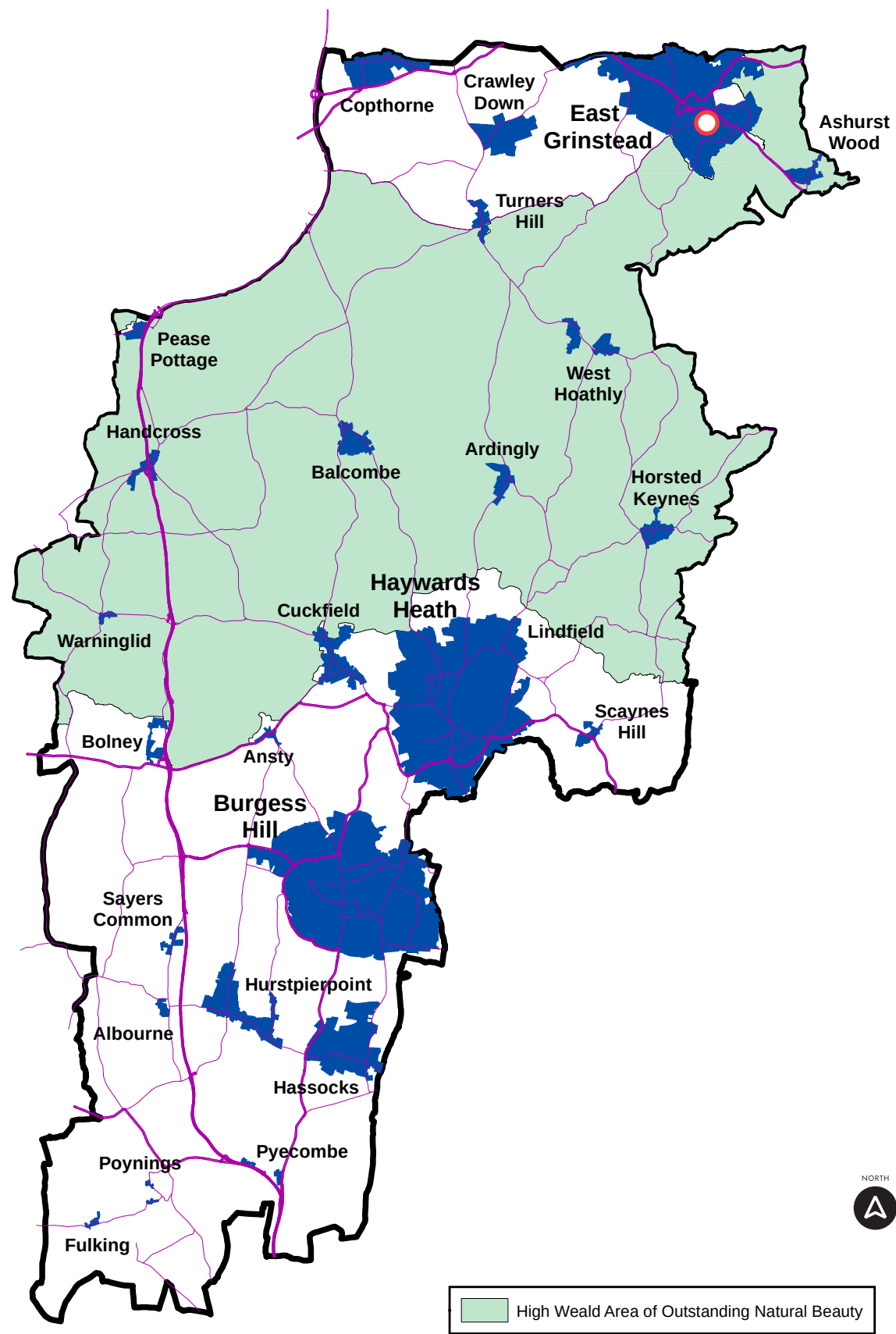


Fig 1.5.03 // Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Mid Sussex District Council, 2018

Planning Policy

1.6

National and Local Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023);

Planning Practice Guidance and National Design Guide (2021);

- / Mid Sussex District Plan (adopted March 2018)
- / DP12 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- / DP16 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- / DP21 Transport
- / DP26 Character and design

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (made December 2016)

- / Policy E9 - Design
- / Policy H9 - Residential Extensions

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)



Fig 1.6.01 // Haywards Heath Town Council & Mid Sussex Design Guide

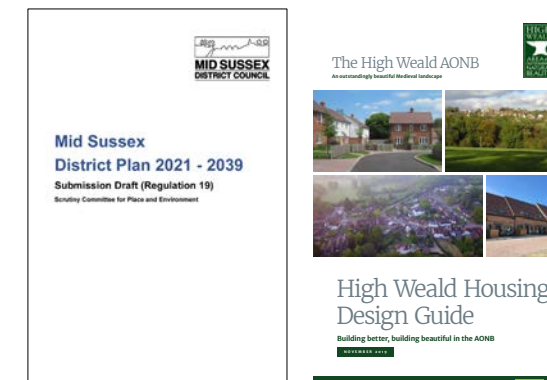


Fig 1.6.02 // Mid Sussex District Plan & High Weald Housing Design Guide

Neighbouring Planning Approvals



DM/23/2144

Moonrakers 22 Paddockhall Road Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 1HH

Proposed double storey front extension with porch and double storey rear extension with associated roof works.



Fig 1.6.03 // Proposed Front Elevation of the granted Application Ref No. DM/23/2144

Planning Context1.7

DM/22/1384 - 2022 - Pending

Proposal is for the erection of a total of 13 dwellings, consisting of 3 detached 4 bedroom houses, 7 semi detached 3 bedroom houses, 1 semi detached 2 bedroom houses, 2 mid terrace 2 bedroom houses. Plans received 19.04.2022.



Fig 1.7.04 // Proposed Front Elevation Plot 10-13 - Application Ref No. DM/22/1384

DM/23/0827 - 2023 - Pending

Full planning application for the demolition of existing structures and redevelopment of the site to provide 108 residential dwellings (Class C3) and associated works, including the provision of an on site SANG, access, landscaping and parking.

Plans received 24.03.2023



Fig 1.7.05 // Proposed Street Scene Plots 68-71 - Application Ref No. DM/23/0827

DM/19/4538 - 2019 - Granted

Erection of 2 detached dwellings with garages. Access via Station Road.

Plans received 31.10.2019



Fig 1.7.06 // Proposed South Elevation - Refused Application Ref No. PP-09287367

DM/20/2987 - 2020 - Granted

Erection of 3, 4 bedroom dwellings with 3 carports.

Plans received 11.08.2020



Fig 1.7.07 // Proposed South Elevation - Refused Application Ref No. PP-09287367

Planning History

PP-08617591 - 2020 - Granted

Single storey rear extension of the existing property and associated raised rear terrace to house, the addition of a roof over the pool, and associated shower room and store room provision. Amended plans received 13.05.2020.

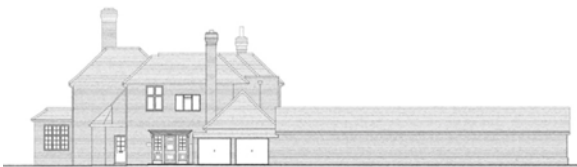
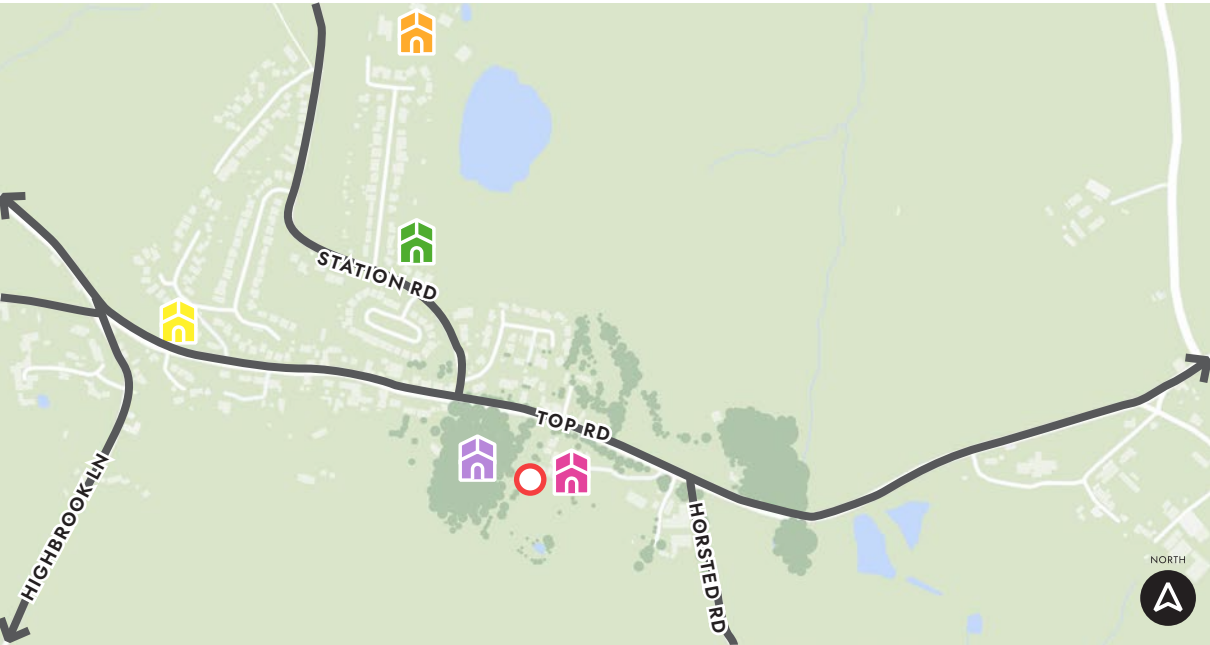


Fig 1.7.08 // Proposed Ground Floor - Granted Application Ref No. PP08617591

Conclusion

Asymmetrical proportions with traditional materiality and detail have been applied in contemporary approvals within the AONB (DM/19/4538 & DM/20/2987) and local area around the proposal. In order to minimise impact on the AONB aspects such as tile hung first floor, asymmetrical proportions and



Reference to DM/23/2144

Fig 1.7.10 // Planning History Location Map

Local Character 1.8

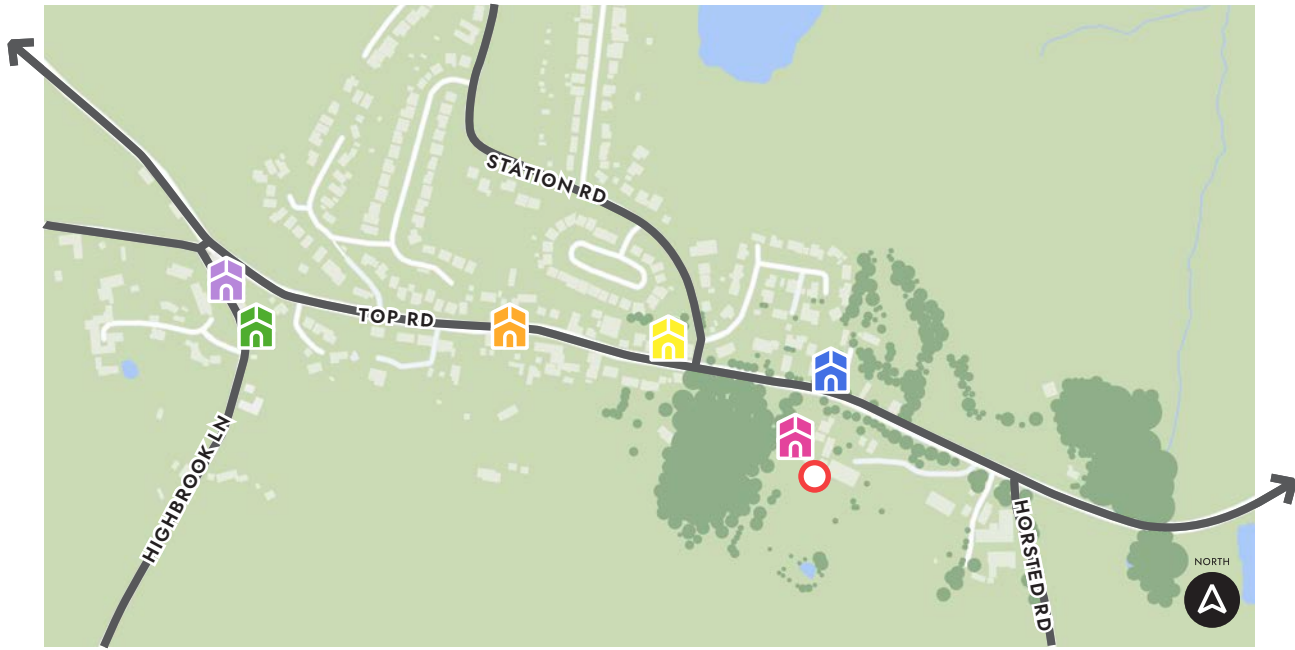


Fig 1.8.01 // Local Character Locations

Built Form

The local area of Sharpthorne was built out in the Victorian era. Victorians design with elaborate ornamentation buildings were adorned with intricate details, including decorative carvings, mouldings (Fig 1.8.10), and patterns. Façades were often embellished with features such as brackets, finials, and gingerbread trim. The use of ornate ironwork, stained glass, and terracotta was is common in the area.

Victorian buildings typically exhibited asymmetrical designs. Towers, turrets, and dormer projections were commonly incorporated, creating a picturesque and dynamic appearance. Irregular floor plans, steeply pitched roofs, and an abundance of gables added to the asymmetrical aesthetic. (Fig 1.8.09)

Roofs were often steeply pitched and covered with elaborate patterns of slate or tiles. Decorative cresting, finials, and dormer windows frequently adorned the roofline.

Many Victorian structures featured towers and turrets, providing vertical emphasis and a sense of grandeur. These architectural elements were not only decorative but often served functional purposes as well.

Bay windows are a popular feature in Victorian architecture. These projections added depth to the facade, allowed more natural light into the interior, and often featured intricate detailing.

In addition to colourful paint, Victorian buildings exhibited polychromatic brickwork. The use of different coloured bricks in patterns or contrasting bands added visual interest to the exteriors. (Fig 1.8.08)

Victorian houses frequently had large, inviting verandas or porches. These outdoor spaces served as places for socializing and reflected the Victorian emphasis on a connection between indoor and outdoor living.

Local Character



Fig 1.8.02 // The Hutch, Highbrook Lane

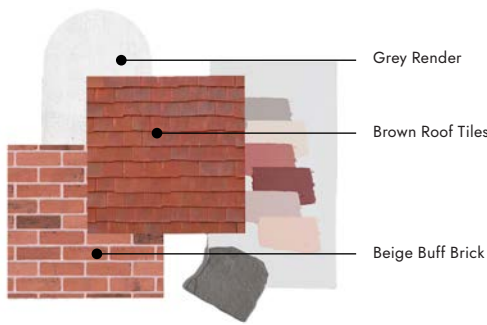


Fig 1.8.05 // The Hutch, Highbrook Lane



Fig 1.8.03 // Existing South View Building Material Palette

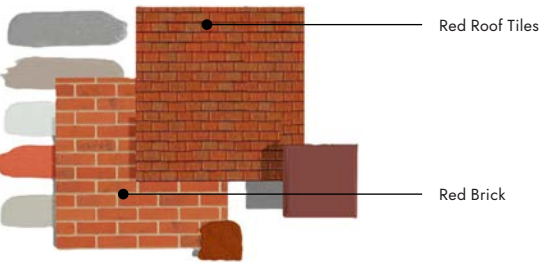


Fig 1.8.06 // Existing South View Building Material Palette



Fig 1.8.04 // 3 Top Road, Material Palette

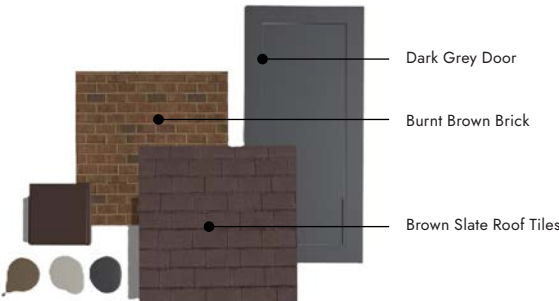


Fig 1.8.07 // 3 Top Road, Material Palette

Local Character 1.8



Fig 1.8.08 // The Hutch, Highbrook Lane



- The Hutch close by to the proposed dwelling, has traditional features fitting to the context.
- It features:
- / Pediment gable ends protruding into the roof pitch.
 - / Exposed timber structure
 - / Brick plinth and ground & string coursing between storeys



Fig 1.8.09 // 4 Top Road, Sharpthorne House



- Under 200m from the proposal 4 Top Road is on the highway.
- The main features are:
- / Tile hung gable ends
 - / Symmetrical design with a central entrance



Fig 1.8.10 // 1 & 2 Sharpthorne Villas, Top Road



- Top Road has a variety of building typologies.
- / Asymmetric tile hung facade
 - / Pediment gable ends protruding into the roof pitch

Opps & Cons 1.9

- This section highlights the problematic issues that may require mitigation or a bespoke design solution.
- // High Weald a recognisably distinct and homogenous area for at least the last 700 years
 - // New development should reflect the historic density and grain of the area in which it is being proposed
 - // To the West of the site is a large wooded area concealing the site as you approach from the main access road
 - // The site faces the main highway, however, due to the age of the dwelling there have been infill developments between the highway and the dwelling concealing it from the North.
 - // The site has a large amount of vegetation to the North West and South West which will screen any proposal.

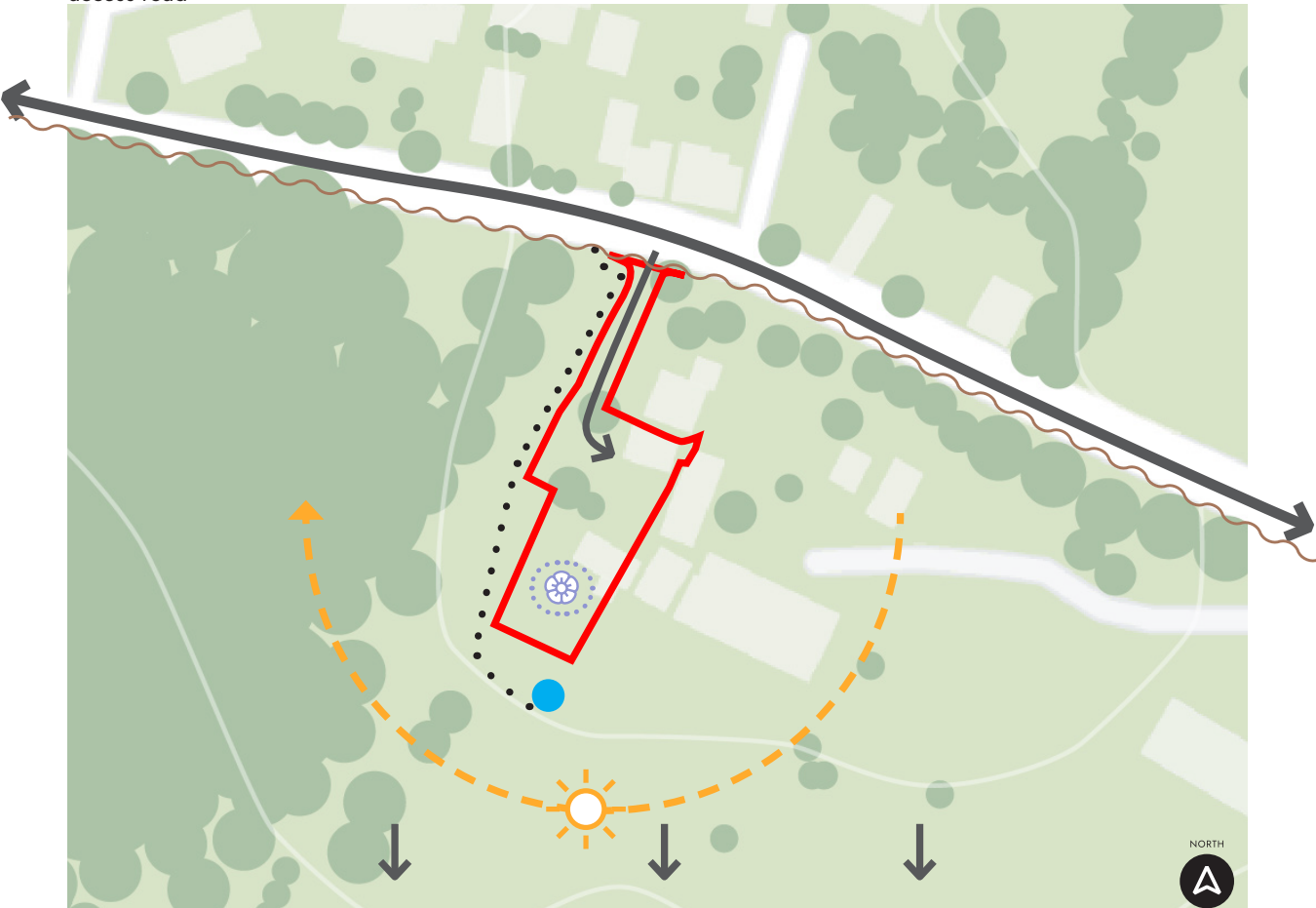


Fig 1.9.01 // Existing Site Opportunities & Constraints Plan

- Site Boundary
- Main Road
- Trees & Vegetations
- Topography
- Sun Path
- Private Garden
- Hedgerow
- Public Right of Way (PRoW)
- Views

The Proposal

2.1

Design Approach

The design approach responds carefully to the site and its context, ensuring the proposal integrates with the surrounding character. The form, scale, and materials reflect the local vernacular, while the use of the roof space allows for efficient accommodation with minimal visual impact.

Internally, the layout prioritises functionality, natural light, and clear circulation, creating a comfortable and adaptable living environment.

Design Principles

2.2

Amount

The proposal seeks to provide 1 , 5-bed dwelling. This represents a modest addition to the local context, in line with the character and scale of neighbouring properties.

Access

There are no changes proposed to the existing access arrangements to the site. Parking provision is in compliance with Parking Standards.

Layout

The internal layout has been carefully designed to create a logical and comfortable arrangement of spaces. The living room is dual aspect, maximising natural light and providing strong visual connections to the surrounding context, while circulation routes are clear, direct, and efficient.



Fig 5.1 // Site Plan

Proposed Internal Layout

2.3

Design Principles

The proposed internal layout has been designed to provide a clear and functional arrangement of spaces suitable for modern family living. The ground floor is organised around a central entrance hall, which provides access to the principal living areas. These include a generous living room, an open-plan kitchen and dining space, and additional ancillary spaces such as a utility room, WC, and storage.

The layout prioritises natural light and spatial quality, with key habitable rooms oriented towards the rear garden where possible. The overall arrangement balances openness in shared living areas with more private, enclosed spaces for bedrooms and services.

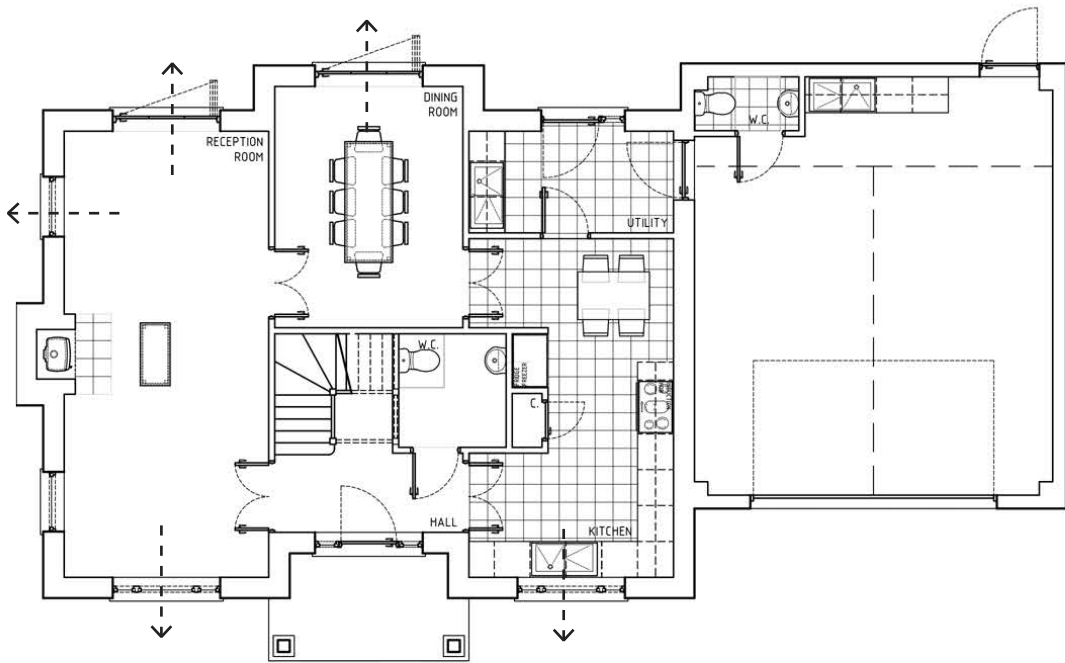


Fig 2.4.01 // Proposed Ground Floor Layout

--> Views

Internal Layout

2.4

First Floor

The first floor accommodates the primary sleeping areas, comprising five bedrooms arranged to maximise privacy and outlook. The principal bedroom benefits from an en-suite bathroom, while the remaining bedrooms are served by a family bathroom. Circulation spaces are designed to be efficient, ensuring a logical flow between rooms.

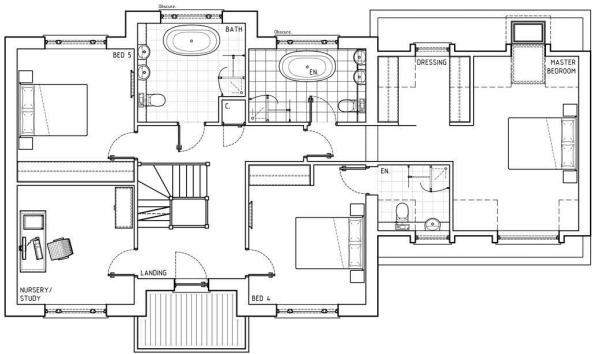


Fig 2.4.02 // Proposed First Floor Layout

Second Floor

The second floor is accommodated within the roof space and is designed to maximise the use of the building's upper volume. This level typically comprises additional bedroom accommodation, providing flexible space suitable for guest rooms, home offices, or ancillary living. Rooms on this floor benefit from dormer windows and/or rooflights, which provide natural daylight and ventilation while maintaining the overall roof form. Due to the sloping ceilings, the layout has been carefully arranged to ensure adequate head height within the principal usable areas, with lower eaves spaces utilised for built-in storage.

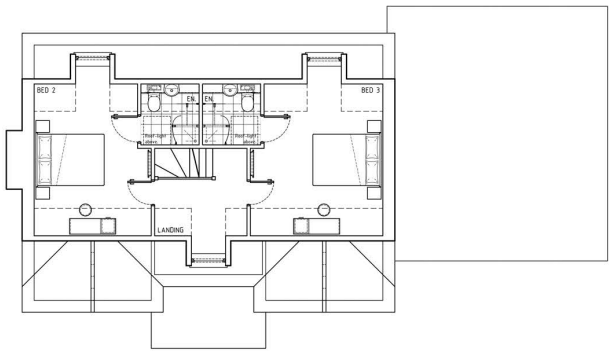


Fig 2.4.03 // Proposed Roof Plan

Elevations2.5



Fig 2.5.01 // Proposed Frount Elivation



Fig 2.5.02 // Proposed Street Sceen

Proportions

The proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure a low visual impact on the existing street scene. The scale, massing, and overall height of the dwelling are consistent with the surrounding built form, allowing it to integrate comfortably within its context.

The use of a pitched roof with dormer elements reflects the prevailing architectural character of the area, maintaining a familiar and appropriate appearance. The building line and proportions align with neighbouring properties, avoiding any sense of overdevelopment or visual intrusion.

Materiality

Materials such as brick and stone have been selected to complement the local vernacular, helping the development blend with its surroundings. Furthermore, the second floor is contained within the roof space, which reduces the perceived bulk of the building when viewed from the street.



Fig 2.5.03 // Proposed Rear Elivation

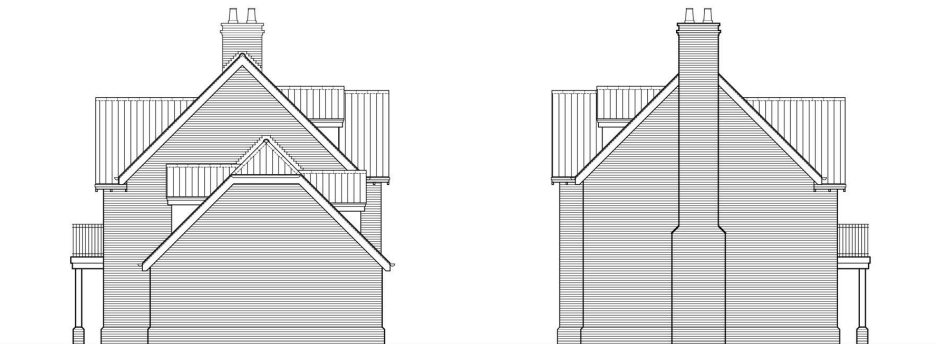


Fig 2.5.04 // Proposed Side Elivation

Sustainability and Services

The proposed development incorporates a range of sustainable design measures intended to enhance environmental performance and long-term energy efficiency. The scheme will achieve thermal performance compatible with future standards, ensuring compliance with current Building Regulations. Sustainable design principles have been integrated, reflecting a commitment to minimising environmental impact and supporting the transition to lower carbon development. These measures are consistent with national and local planning objectives relating to climate resilience and energy efficiency.

2.6

Conclusion

3

This document has set out a clear and considered response to the site and its surrounding context, carefully balancing opportunities with existing constraints. The proposed design has been developed with a strong emphasis on respecting neighbouring amenity, ensuring there is no harmful overlooking, while maintaining an appropriate scale and massing.

The scheme demonstrates a thoughtful and well-resolved approach, enhancing the functionality and quality of the dwelling while remaining sensitive to its setting. The incorporation of the upper floor within the roof form, alongside the use of appropriate materials, ensures the development sits comfortably within the established street scene.

Particular care has been taken to respond to the site’s constraints, including its relationship to the wider landscape and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This has resulted in a proposal that is both contextually appropriate and visually sympathetic.

Overall, the proposal represents a high-quality and sustainable design solution that respects its surroundings while delivering meaningful improvements. It is therefore considered that the development accords with relevant planning policies, and approval should be supported.

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Scene Architects on behalf of the applicant to form part of the planning application and accompany the other drawings submitted.

Copyright @ Scene Architects. 2026

Scene Architects has asserted its right under the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988 to be identified as the author of this work.

