

3 Somerset Close

Bat Roost Assessment

June 2025



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Report Ref: DFA25046

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Derek Finnie Associates Limited was commissioned by Rosie Skinner to undertake a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of a property known as 3 Somerset Close, Woosehill, Wokingham. There is currently a proposal to undertake works to the building that may impact upon the roof and roof void, principally of the adjoining garage. The scheme would involve the construction of a second storey extension above the garage which would tie into the existing roof (see Appendix 1 for plans). Therefore, in line with current legislation and policy, the level of bat activity, if any, within the building needs to be assessed as it is a material consideration in the planning process.
- 1.1.2 To this end, a preliminary bat roost assessment was undertaken during June 2025. The following report describes the methodology employed throughout the assessment, presents the results and evaluates the likely impact based on the information gained to date.

2 LEGISLATION

- 2.1.1 All species of British bat are afforded full protection under UK legislation, specifically under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states:

9. Protection of certain wild animals.

(1) Subject to the provisions of this Part, if any person intentionally or recklessly kills, injures or takes any wild animal included in Schedule 5, he shall be guilty of an offence.

(4) Subject to the provisions of this Part, a person is guilty of an offence if intentionally or recklessly

(a) he damages or destroys any structure or place which any wild animal specified in Schedule 5 uses for shelter or protection;

(b) he disturbs any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or

(c) he obstructs access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

- 2.1.2 As all species of British bat are included on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, the above Section applies.

- 2.1.3 Further protection is given under Regulation 43 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which states:

Protection of certain wild animals: offences

43.—(1) A person who—

(a) deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,

(b) deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,

(c) deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or

(d) damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,
is guilty of an offence.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 A review of aerial photography and the Government's Multi-Access Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was undertaken to assess the extent and quality of potential roosting and foraging habitat within 1km of the property.

3.2 Field Survey

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- 3.2.1 An external inspection of the building was undertaken on the 10th June 2025 during good weather, with access being available to all aspects of the buildings. Leica 10 x 32 BGA binoculars, a CluLite 1 million candlepower torch and a 4m telescopic ladder were used to assist in the search as necessary. The external features of the building, particularly the roof and ridge lines were inspected for potential ingress/egress points.
- 3.2.2 After the external inspection, a detailed inspection of the internal void space of the main dwelling and attached garage was undertaken. Evidence of droppings, scratch marks, staining, feeding remains, urine stains and bats themselves were sought throughout the void spaces. Particular attention was paid to the areas underneath the ridge and joists, especially where the two meet. Evidence of gaps in the roof, indicating access to the outside, was sought, as well as gaps into any cavities that may be present. Again, a CluLite 1 million candlepower torch was used to assist in the search.
- 3.2.3 The potential of the building to support bat was assessed against the criteria in Table 1 (after BCT 2023).

Table 1. Assessment criteria for bat roost evaluation.

Suitability	Description
None	No features that could be exploited by bats
Negligible	Negligible features likely to be used by roosting bats
Low	A structure or feature with one or more potential roosts sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due its size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by a large number of bats on a more regular basis.

3.3 Survey Constraints

- 3.3.1 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year. Access was available to the entire building, with clear sight of all aspects of the roof available. Hence, confidence in the results is high.
- 3.3.2 The survey was undertaken in line with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023), the latest sectoral guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and BS 42020: 2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development*.
- 3.3.3 All survey work was undertaken by Derek Finnie MSc DipCons CEnv MEnvSc MCIEEM, Director of Derek Finnie Associates who has over 30 years as a practicing ecologist.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1 The MAGIC website identifies several areas of broad-leaved woodland, which have been classified as a Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat, near to the property, with the nearest being some 85m to the south west; parts of the woodland have also been classified as ancient in origin.
- 4.1.2 The property is also close to other areas of open countryside which may provide additional foraging and roosting opportunities.
- 4.1.3 The house lies within Wokingham Borough Council's '*Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Model*', although it is unclear on what grounds as many of the neighbouring properties are excluded.
- 4.1.4 The MAGIC map does not identify any mitigation licences for bats within 1km of the property.

4.2 Field Survey

External Features

- 4.2.1 The dwelling is a detached, two storey property located in Somerset Close in an area of existing residential development constructed in the late 1980s. The property is currently occupied and in a sound condition throughout.
- 4.2.2 The roof is of a gable design with the ridge line running more or less north to south; a lower gable roof is present on the garage (Plate 1). A single storey shed roof runs along the front of the dwelling that contains an inaccessible void (Plates 2 & 3). A heating vent exits through the south western aspect of the roof. There are no hanging tiles on any aspect of the dwelling.
- 4.2.3 The roof of the house is finished with Spanish style, interlocking, concrete tiles which support a moderate build-up of moss. The tiles are good condition with no broken or loose tiles noted (Plate 4). The ridge lines are intact, as is the lead flashing around the heating vent.
- 4.2.4 The soffits are constructed from concrete boards, whilst the fascia are wooden (Plate 5). They are in good condition. There appears to be a gap between the juncture of the soffit boards, however, there is a lining board behind which eliminates any potential ingress points. There is a negligible gap between the soffit and adjoining brick work.
- 4.2.5 Externally, no potential ingress points were noted into the main dwelling or garage.

Internal Conditions

- 4.2.6 Internally, the trusses are of a Fink design. Nail plates are present at the major junctions eliminating any potential gaps. A moderate build-up of cobwebs is present around the junctions and throughout the void spaces in general, suggesting a lack of bat activity (Plates 6 - 7). No staining or scratch marks were noted along any of the beams, and

there was no evidence of feeding remains. No droppings were noted despite a thorough inspection and the distinct smell often associated with bat roosts was absent.

- 4.2.7 The roof lining is intact throughout. The gable end walls are constructed from breezeblock, with the occasional area of missing mortar which is typical. However, none of the resulting gaps was deemed of sufficient size or depth to offer potential roosting opportunities. A grilled vent is located on the southern wall.
- 4.2.8 The roof void within the garage is open and exposed, although a roof lining is present (Plate 8).
- 4.2.9 No evidence of bat activity was encountered within the roof void of the house was noted.

Summary

- 4.2.10 In summary, no ingress /egress points were found into the property, and no physical evidence of bat presence within the building in the form of scratch marks, stains or droppings was encountered. Overall, the dwelling was assessed as having a negligible potential to support roosting bats.

5 EVALUATION

5.1 Bat Potential

- 5.1.1 The property was assessed as having negligible potential to support bats and, as no evidence of bats, or of current or past bat occupancy, was encountered throughout the preliminary roost assessment, additional surveys are not deemed necessary. Due to the presumed absence of bats, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development would result in any infringement of either the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) or the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* in so far as either piece of legislation relates to bats.
- 5.1.2 However, in the highly unlikely situation a bat is encountered throughout the construction process, all works should stop immediately and advice sought from Natural England.

PLATES



Plate 1. General view of the front of the property.



Plate 2. General view of the shed roof at the front of the property.



Plate 3. View of the sealed void space.



Plate 4. Typical view of the roof tiles.



Plate 5. Typical view of the soffit and fascia.

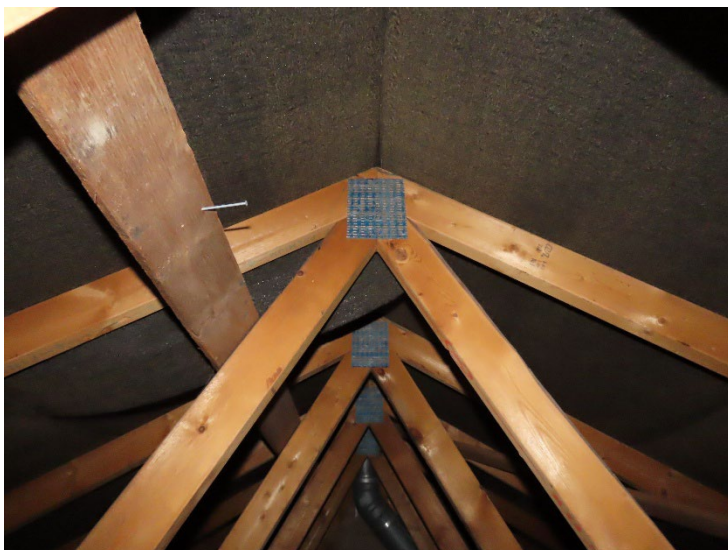


Plate 6. Typical view of the internal trusses of the main house.



Plate 7. General view of the void space.



Plate 8. General view of the internal void space of the garage.

Appendix 1

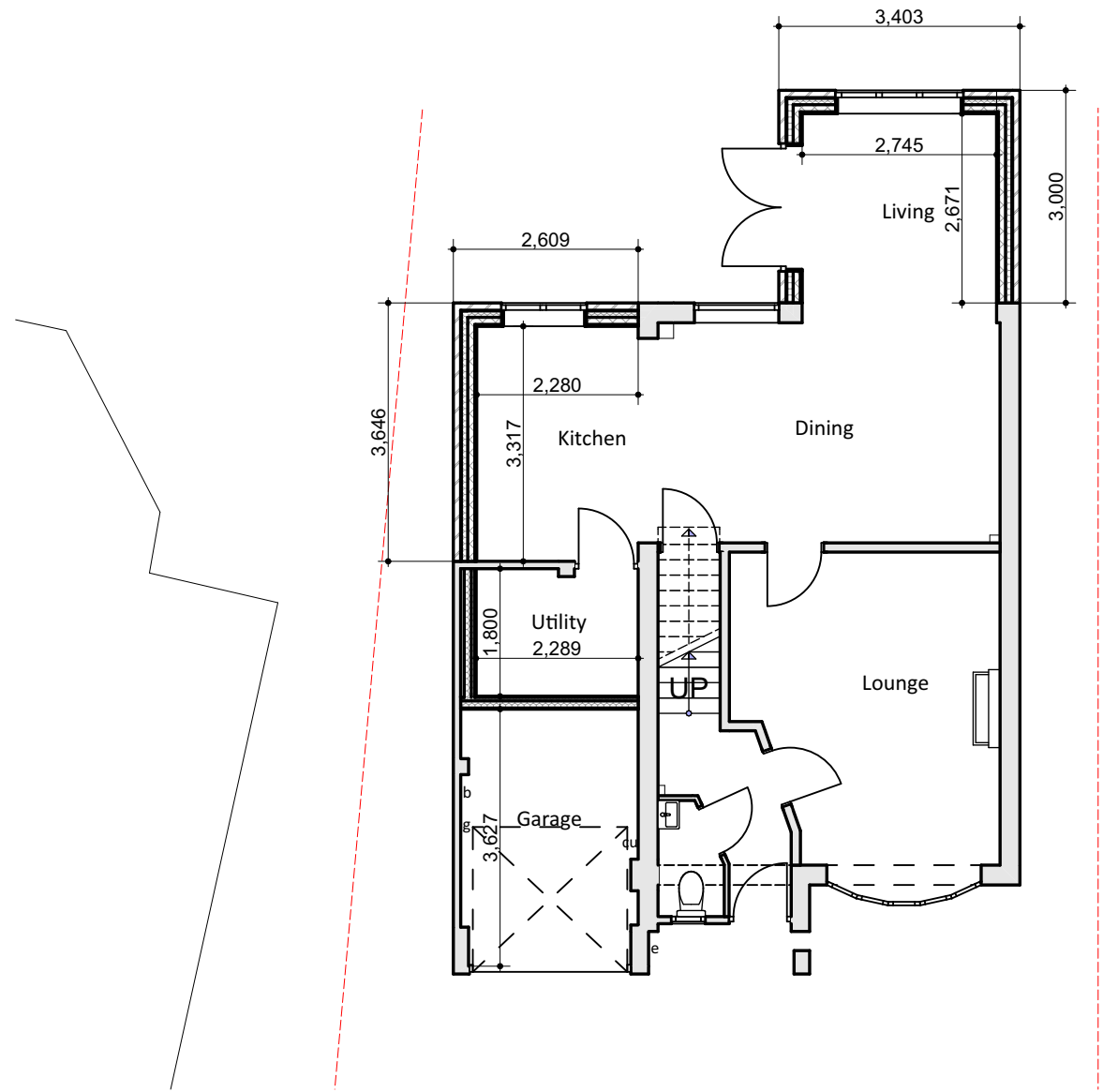
Existing and Proposed Plans

GENERAL NOTES

1. All materials to match existing unless otherwise stated
2. Do not scale from this drawing (other than for Planning purposes).
3. The Contractor is to verify all dimensions & levels before setting out, commencing work or placing orders.
4. Any discrepancies to be reported to M3 Architectural Design Ltd.
5. Drawings & design are the intellectual property of M3 Architectural Design Ltd, must not be used or reproduced without consent.
6. Issued drawings must be read in conjunction with entire contract set.
7. Ensure all work is undertaken using the most recent issue of documentation (refer to revision issue & date)
8. Comply with all applicable building code/ regulations.

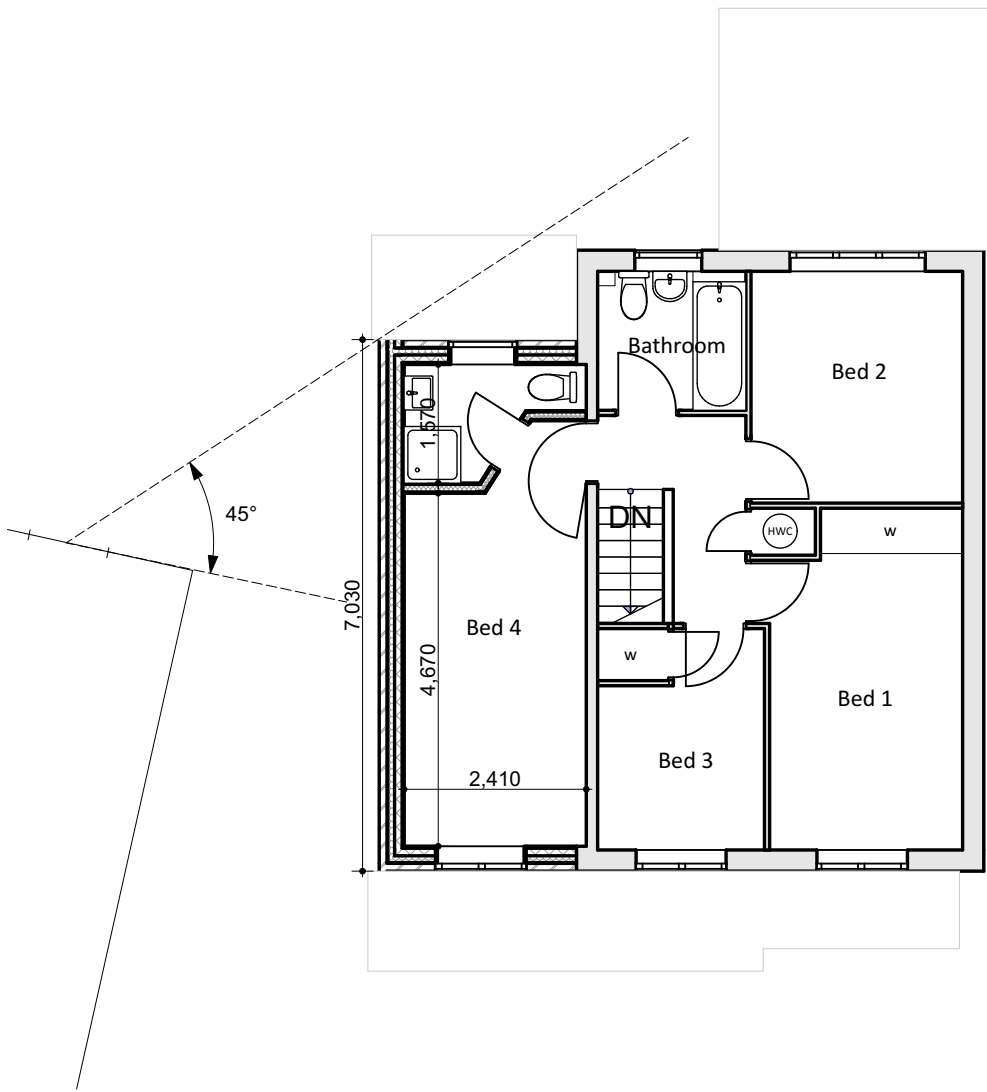
Proposed Ground Floor

1:100



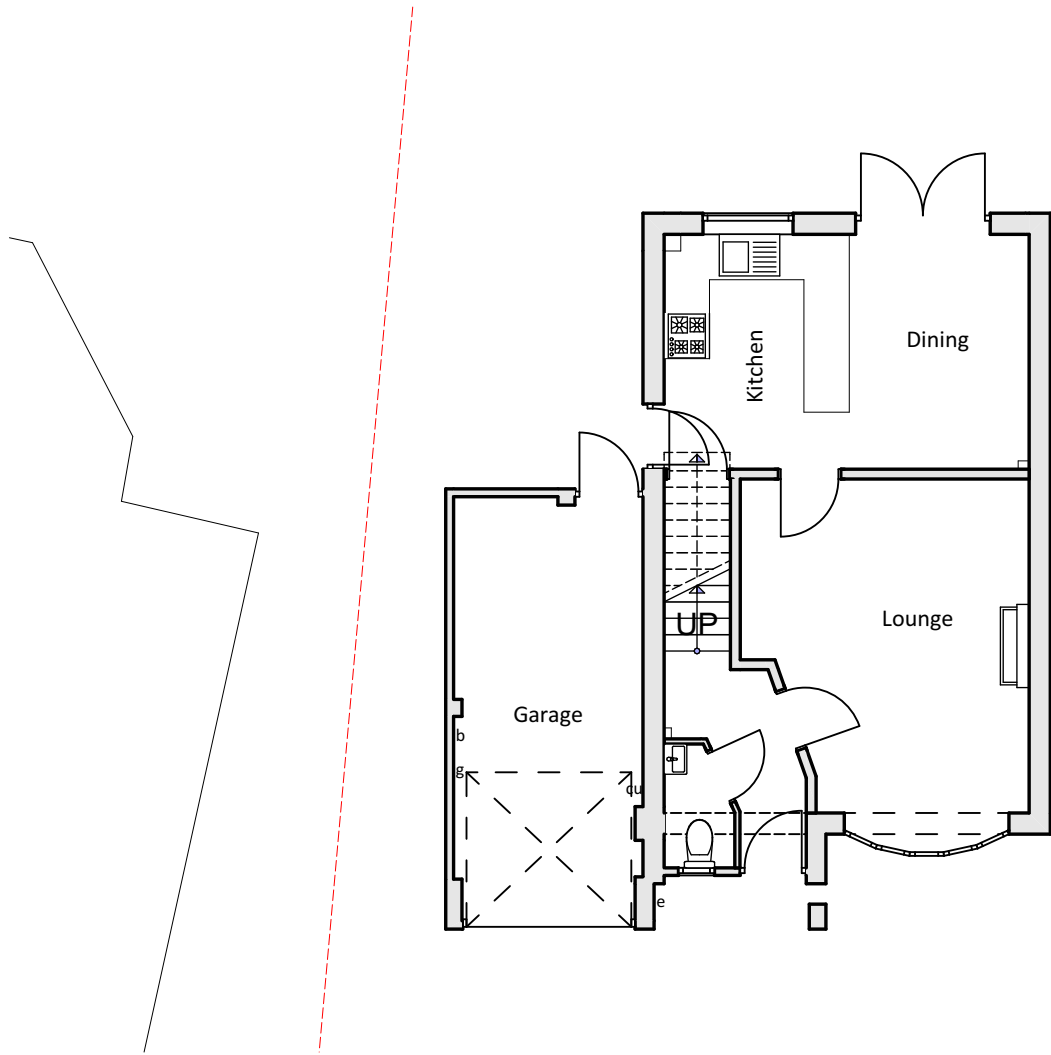
Proposed First Floor

1:100



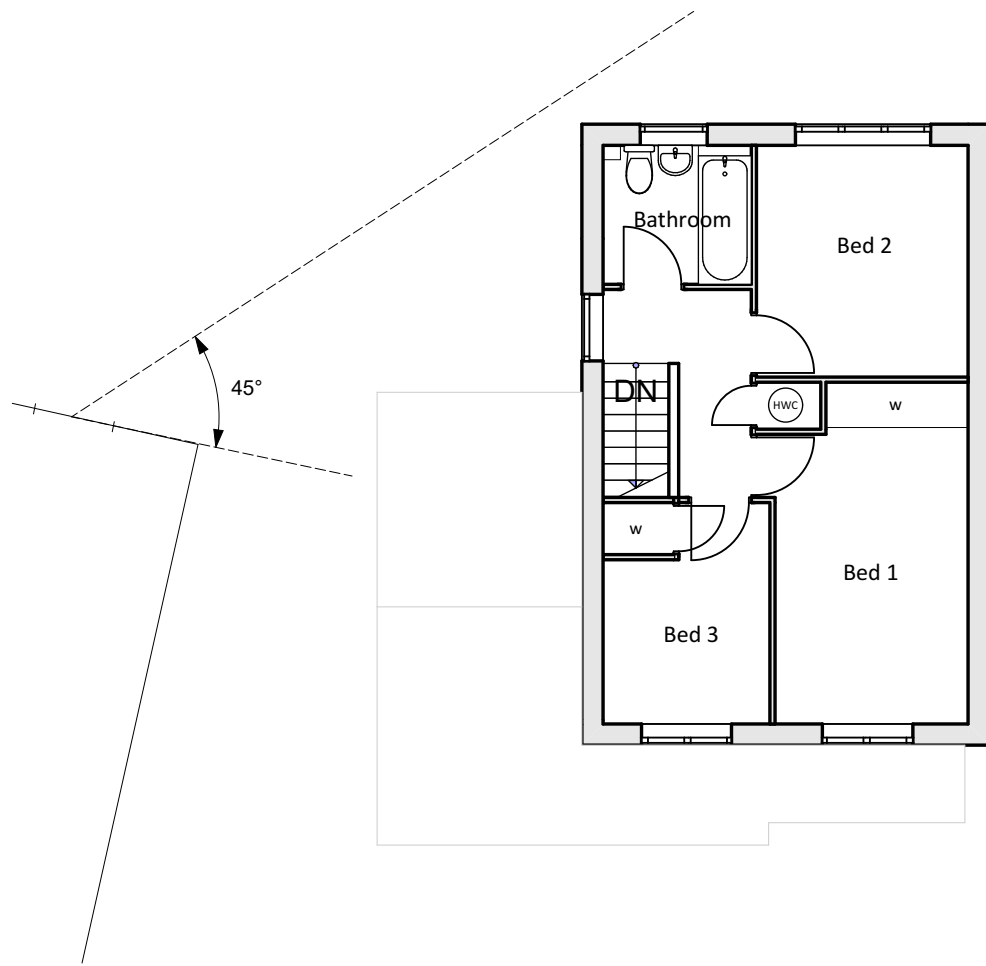
Existing Ground Floor

1:100



Existing First Floor

1:100



Proposed Roof

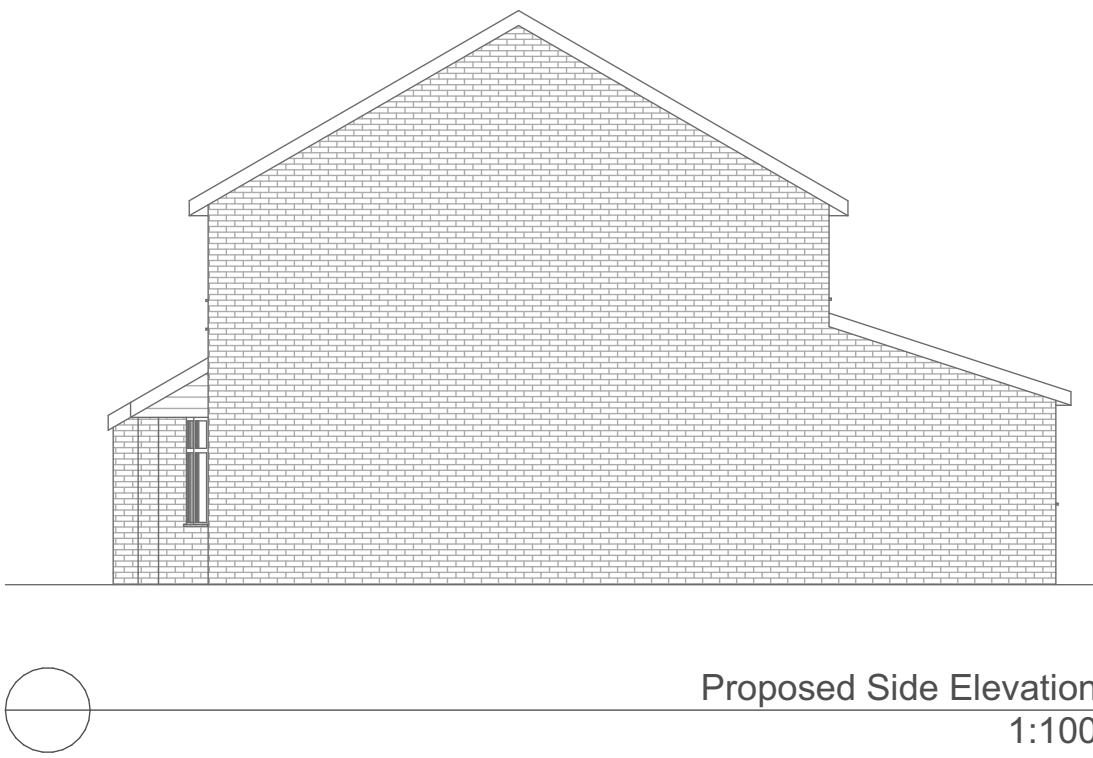
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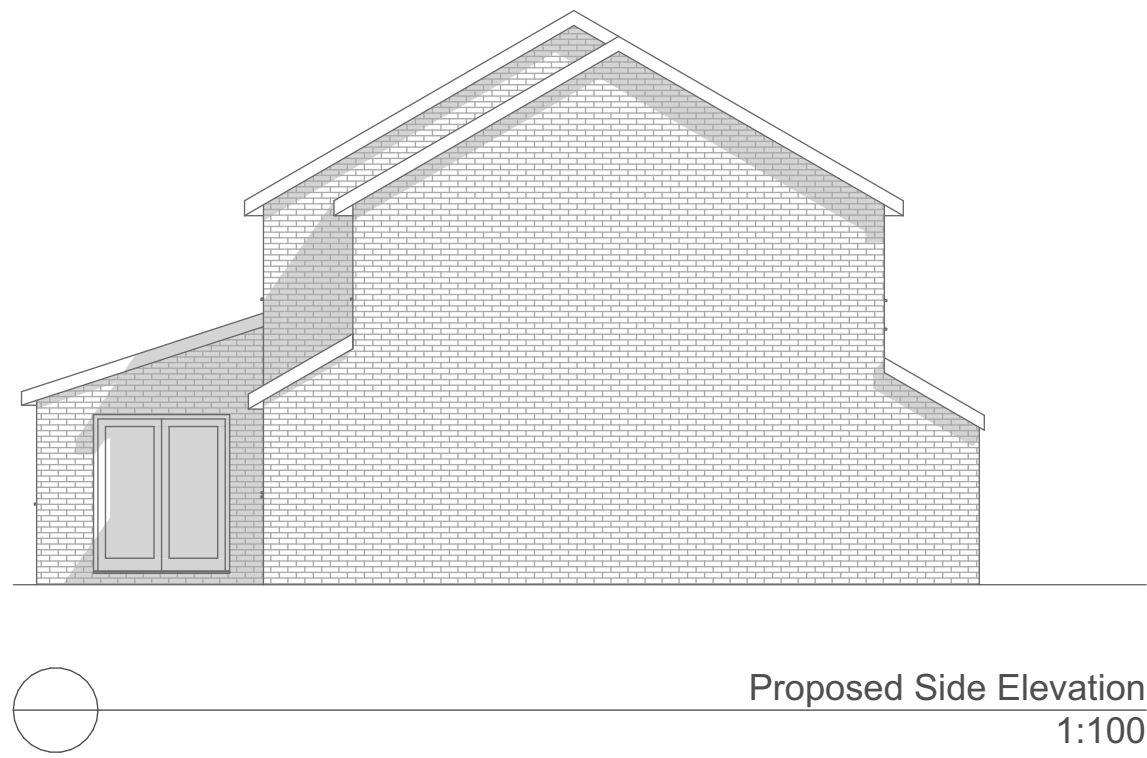
Proposed Front Elevation
1:100



Proposed Rear Elevation
1:100



Proposed Side Elevation
1:100



Proposed Side Elevation
1:100

Legend

- w - Wardrobe
g - Gas Meter
b - Boiler
e - Electric Meter
cu - Consumer unit

RevID	Revision	Date
01	Transmittal Set	02/05/2025
02	Transmittal Set	13/05/2025
03	Transmittal Set	29/05/2025
04	Transmittal Set	02/06/2025

Existing Roof

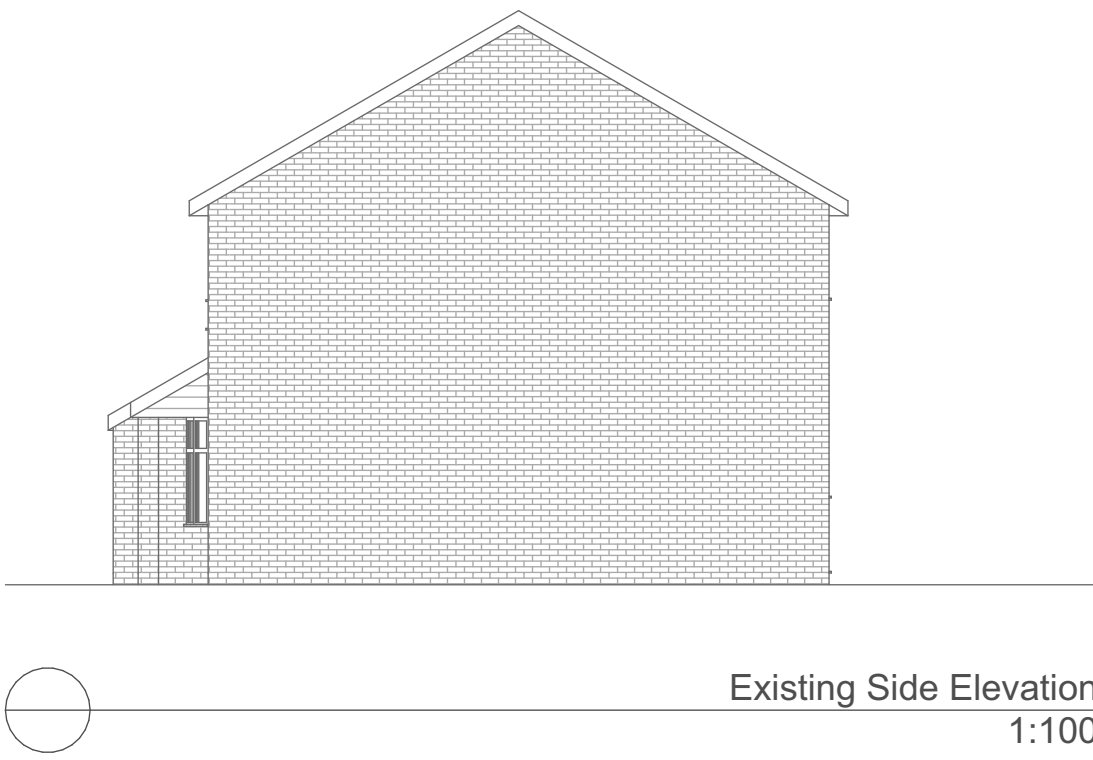
1:200



Existing Front Elevation
1:100



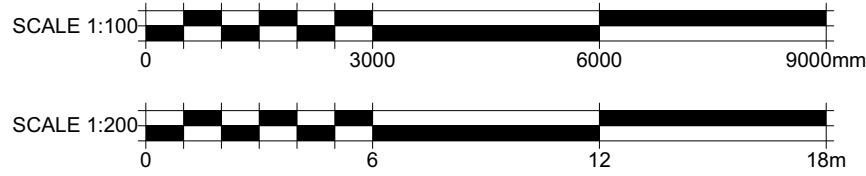
Existing Rear Elevation
1:100



Existing Side Elevation
1:100



Existing Side Elevation
1:100



Project

Proposed side and rear extensions

3 Somerset Close Wokingham RG41 3AJ

Client

Drawing Title

Existing/Proposed Plans And Elevations

Project Ref	Layout Id	Rev.
4058	A.01	04
Date	02/06/2025	Scales @ A1 1:100

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