



daylight&sunlight

Daylight and Sunlight Report
for the Proposed Development at
273 Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, RG4 5BL

Prepared for: AS Design Studio
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Scope of Service

- 1.1.1 We have been instructed by AS Design Studio to consider the potential impact upon the amenity of the surrounding residential properties, which may arise from the proposed development at 273 Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, RG4 5BL.

1.2 BRE Assessment Criteria

- 1.2.1 To ensure that this assessment has been appropriately considered, daylight and sunlight assessments have been undertaken in accordance with the Building Research Establishment Report 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice' 2022 (the "BRE guide"). It is intended to be used with BS EN 17037, and its UK National Annex, which gives specific minimum recommendations for habitable rooms in dwellings in the United Kingdom.
- 1.2.2 The standards and tests applied within this assessment are briefly described in Section 3.

1.3 Daylight and Sunlight

- 1.3.1 The proposed development is fully in accordance with the BRE guidelines for daylight, sunlight and overshadowing.
- 1.3.2 There are no valid grounds to challenge the proposed development with regards to daylight and sunlight amenity.
- 1.3.3 It seems the Local Authority has fallen far below what we consider to be reasonable standards in dealing with this application, incorrectly applying the relevant criteria, and citing a reason for refusal, which is frankly impossible.

1.4 Generally

- 1.4.1 When considering the numerical results, it is important to approach and interpret the BRE guidelines flexibly along with the following material mitigating factors:

*The BRE guidelines recognise that it is important to consider whether the adjacent building is itself a good neighbour, standing a reasonable distance from the boundary and taking no more



than its fair share of light. In these circumstances, a greater reduction in daylight or sunlight may be unavoidable and so the local authority may wish to apply different target values.

*Where buildings match the height and proportions of existing surrounding buildings some transgressions will be inevitable.

* Also, where the sites are undeveloped or are infill sites, again a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable, leading to a higher frequency of non-compliance

*Kitchens and bedrooms are given less weighting than that of a living room.



2. INTRODUCTION

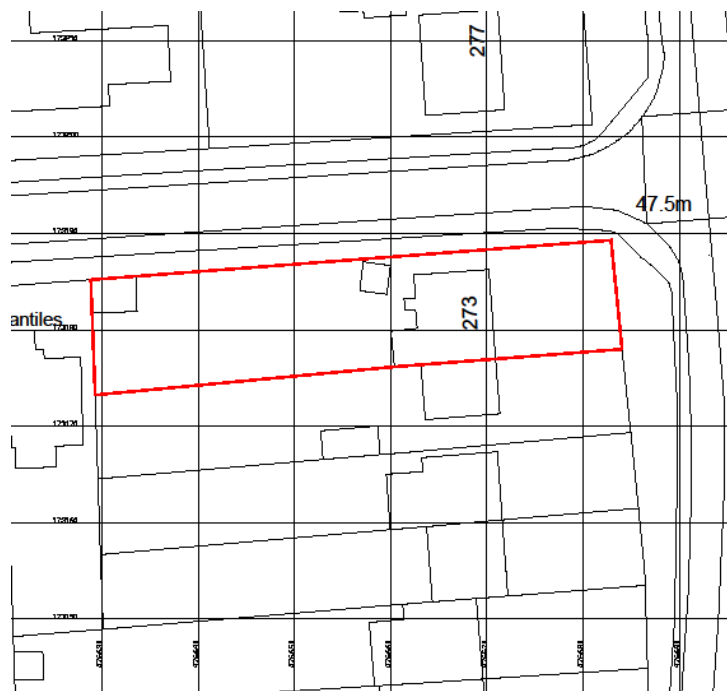
2.1 Scope of Service

- 2.1.1 We have been instructed by AS Design Studio to consider the potential impact upon the amenity of the surrounding residential properties, which may arise from the proposed development at 273 Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, RG4 5BL.

2.2 Assessment

- 2.2.1 To ensure that this assessment has been appropriately considered, daylight and sunlight assessments have been undertaken in accordance with the Building Research Establishment Report 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice' 2022 (the "BRE guide"). It is intended to be used with BS EN 17037, and its UK National Annex, which gives specific minimum recommendations for habitable rooms in dwellings in the United Kingdom.
- 2.2.2 The standards and tests applied within this assessment are briefly described in Section 3.
- 2.2.3 The existing buildings adjacent to the site are shown on the Site Location Plan below.

Site Location Plan





- 2.2.4 The existing buildings adjacent to the site considered for this report are listed in the following table. Some of these buildings may not require a comprehensive assessment with the reasons for these findings given later in this report under section 3: Results and Consideration.

Adjacent Building Summary Table		
Name/Address of Building	Assumed Use of Building	Position in Relation to the Proposed Development
271 Loddon Bridge Road	Residential	South

2.3 Limitations

- 2.3.1 Our assessment is based on the proposed development drawings by AS Design Studio.
- 2.3.2 Topographical survey information was not provided. Where buildings were not surveyed, the locations and heights were derived from site photographs and oblique aerial photography.
- 2.3.3 We refer you to the drawings which accompany this report for a list of the third party information relied upon which our 3D computer model and resultant analyses are based.



3. BRE CRITERIA AND MITIGATING FACTORS

3.1 BRE Daylight Criteria

- 3.1.1 The BRE guide target value for the Vertical Sky Component Assessment (VSC) is 27%. However, where the values are lower than this in the existing situation, the BRE allows a reduction of 20%, *subject to mitigating factors*.
- 3.1.2 For Daylight Distribution, namely, sky visibility at table level, the BRE allows a reduction of 20%, *subject to mitigating factors*.

3.2 BRE Sunlight Criteria

- 3.2.1 The BRE guide target value for the Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH) to a living room, is 25%, 5% of which should be enjoyed during the winter months. However, where the values are lower than this in the existing situation, the BRE allows a reduction of 20%, again, *subject to mitigating factors*.
- 3.2.2 The overshadowing assessment is undertaken on 21 March, the spring equinox. This assessment shows areas of a subject amenity area where less than 2 hours of sunlight will be available during the winter period, however, the subject area may still receive some sunlight during the summer. If an open amenity area, is more than 50% in shade for more than 2 hours in either existing or proposed situations, and is reduced by more than 20% of its existing value of a new development, then that loss is likely to be noticeable.
- 3.2.3 These criteria are, however, numerical guidelines and not to be construed as absolute rules. The BRE guidelines state at the beginning and throughout that it is “to be interpreted flexibly”; “not intended to constrain but help the designer”; and “not to be used as an instrument of planning policy.”
- 3.2.4 A loss of greater than 20% implies that the loss may be noticeable by its occupants, but noticeable does not mean significant or adverse. It merely means that it should be considered in the broader context, namely, whether the development is acceptable in respect of all the surrounding circumstances. This leads us on to the mitigating factors.



3.3 Mitigating Factors

3.3.1 Mitigating factors are to be considered in conjunction with the numerical data, particularly with regards to the specific surrounding circumstances. They should be applied as a balancing exercise to the material planning considerations, namely, to have neighbouring amenity protected and for developers to utilise adjacent land in a reasonable manner.

Mitigating Factor #1

3.3.2 The main mitigating factor is, whether the adjacent building is itself a good neighbour, standing a reasonable distance from the boundary and taking no more than its fair share of light. In these circumstances, a greater reduction in daylight or sunlight may be unavoidable and so the local authority may wish to apply different target values.

Mitigating Factor #2

3.3.3 Where sites are undeveloped or are infill sites, again a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable leading to a higher frequency of non-compliance. So, for example, where a developer wishes to fill this gap, or indeed reinstate a previous building, it would certainly be acceptable in planning terms, regardless of the potential impact upon surrounding buildings.

Mitigating Factor #3

3.3.4 The BRE guidelines also recognises that where buildings match the height and proportions of existing surrounding buildings a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable, leading to a higher frequency of non-compliance.

Mitigating Factor #4

3.3.5 Additionally, kitchens and bedrooms are generally given less weighting than that of a principal room such as a living room.



4. RESULTS AND CONSIDERATION

4.1 Daylight and Sunlight

4.1.1 Detailed test results are shown in Appendix A.

4.2 Our Approach

4.2.1 We have assessed the surrounding residential buildings that are most likely to be affected by the proposed development. Other properties are either not residential, aligned at an oblique angle, or are considered to be too far away to be affected. They have therefore not been assessed.

4.2.2 We have also considered the windows and the rooms of each building listed. With some buildings, we generally obtain floor plans from the local authority planning portal, or sales brochures. Where building plans are not readily available, generally, we designate the windows and rooms as habitable within the BRE framework, unless there are obvious clues that would suggest otherwise.

4.2.3 Things such as opaque glazing, soil pipes, stairwells etc., suggest toilets, bathrooms or circulation spaces, which in accordance with the BRE guidelines need not be assessed.

4.2.4 For habitable rooms, we look for paraphernalia in the windows, blinds, flue pipes, which might suggest a kitchen, smaller windows with net curtains which suggests bedrooms and say larger windows for living rooms etc.

4.3 Our 3D Model

4.3.1 We have constructed our 3D model using the data provided by AS Design Studio's proposed planning drawings.

Existing Baseline

4.3.2 The site is situated to the west side of Loddon Bridge Road at the junction with Cobham Road. It is currently a 2- storey family dwelling with a small single storey rear extension, see accompanying drawing 2195/DSO/01.



Proposed Development

- 4.3.3 The proposed development will replace the aforementioned rear extension with a much deeper single storey rear extension, see accompanying drawing 2195/DSO/01.
- 4.3.4 We have considered and/or assessed the habitable windows and rooms of the adjacent buildings at that are most likely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 4.3.5 In accordance with the BRE guidelines, circulation space, hallways, storerooms, toilets and bathrooms need not be assessed.

271 Loddon Bridge Road

- 4.3.6 This dwelling is situated immediate adjacent to the south side of the common boundary with the development site, see accompanying drawing 2195/DSO/01.
- 4.3.7 The closest window to the rear elevation at ground floor level is a French window that serves a habitable room, most likely a kitchen area or a rear reception room.
- 4.3.8 Turning now to the assessment results, the windows and habitable rooms were assessed for Vertical Sky Component (VSC), Daylight Distribution (DD) respectively.
- 4.3.9 Regarding VSC, the French window comfortably meets the BRE criteria.
- 4.3.10 Regarding Daylight Distribution, the rear habitable room comfortably meets the BRE criteria.
- 4.3.11 The same is true of sunlight (APSH).
- 4.3.12 Regarding overshadowing, the proposed development is situated north of the amenity area immediately outside the French window and so it is physically impossible for it to cause any loss of light.
- 4.3.13 Regarding outlook/overbearing/enclosure, a negligible change in skyline as evidenced by the results would naturally follow that there would be a negligible increase of enclosure.
- 4.3.14 Overall, the proposed development will result in a negligible loss of light, remaining well within the tolerances prescribed by the BRE Guidelines. This is primarily due to its oblique orientation relative to the rear French window, which will continue to receive substantial daylight via the unaltered rear garden.



The daylight and skyline assessments measure the difference between the existing and proposed massing. The presence of dense vegetation in the immediate vicinity effectively screens the development from the skyline. Consequently, although the proposed structure may be closer, only a limited portion extends above the existing massing and vegetation, producing a negligible change in skyline.

Reasons for refusal – Delegated Officer Report dated 9 June 2025

4.3.15 The Officer's Report contains a number of errors and unfounded assumptions, which have led to the incorrect conclusion that the proposed development would result in a material loss of light to 271 Loddon Bridge Road.

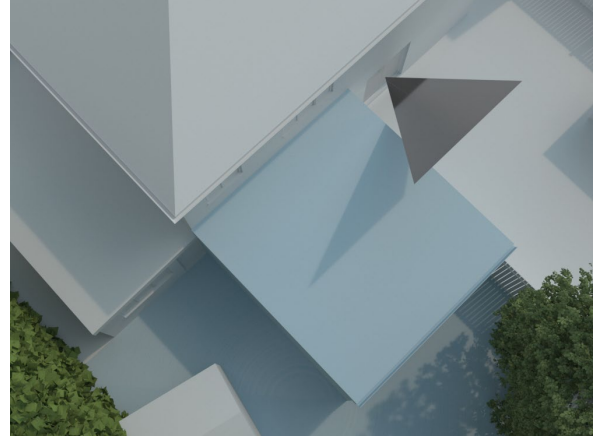
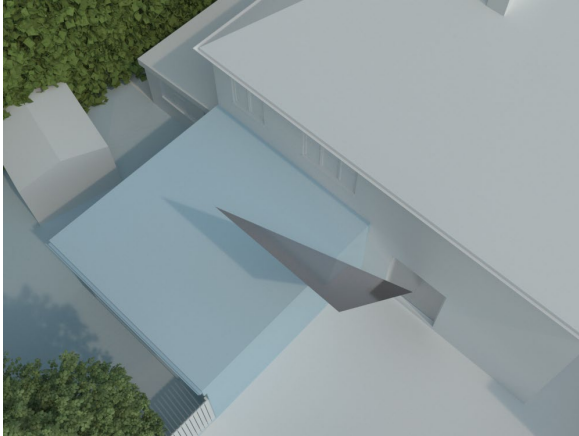
4.3.16 The errors are as follows:

- Incorrect application of the 45 degree rule
- Incorrect assumption that the rear French window will be adversely affected
- Incorrect and frankly impossible assumption that the rear patio area will be adversely affected
- Incorrectly focusing on a small portion of a rear garden rather than the garden as a whole.

Incorrect application of the 45 degree rule

4.3.17 Regarding the 45 degree rule, it is important to clarify how it should be interpreted. First, it is a rule of thumb, to help designers quickly and easily consider whether their proposals are more or less likely to impact adjacent windows. Second, the correct application of it is not only in plan, but in elevation as well i.e. in 3 dimensions. Third, the 45 degree rule is only applicable to rear windows of adjacent dwellings. Fourth and last, the 45 degree rule of thumb is superseded by more detailed tests such as the VSC, Daylight Distribution and Sunlight assessments. So, even if a proposed development were to protrude beyond the 45 degree line in plan and elevation, more detailed assessments are required, which may show that any potential impact is only minor. Obviously, the more a proposed development protrudes beyond the 45 degree line, the more potential impact is likely, which may lead to an adverse effect.

4.3.18 The correct application may be shown on the following images:



Images 1 and 2: The 45 degree rule line shown in 3D from the centre point on the outside face of the lowest adjacent window at 271 Loddon Bridge Road

4.3.19 When applied correctly, it shows that the proposed development meets 45 degree rule.

Incorrect assumption that the rear French window will be adversely affected

4.3.20 Accordingly, any assumptions drawn as a result of an incorrect application of the 45 degree rule would also be incorrect. Moreover, as we have already explained above, the French window sees plenty of light from down the garden, which will remain unaltered.

Incorrect and frankly impossible assumption that the rear patio area will be adversely affected

4.3.21 Amenity areas are assessed using sun on ground assessments. Given that the proposed development is situated *north* of the rear garden of 271 it would be impossible for the development to affect it in any way.

Incorrectly focusing on a small portion of a rear garden rather than the garden as a whole

4.3.22 The correct assessment of an amenity area requires consideration of the rear garden as a whole, except where substantial areas comprise tarmac or other non-functional surfaces. Examples of recognised amenity areas include waterways, balconies, or terraces within blocks of flats. Conversely, isolated features such as a cluster of plant pots on a fire escape or a narrow side path do not constitute amenity areas. Nor does a single portion of a garden, such as a patio, qualify in isolation.

4.3.23 To illustrate this, if a neighbour were to object based on limited morning shade affecting a patio, while the remainder of an expansive garden received uninterrupted sunlight throughout the year, such a



complaint would be wholly unreasonable. In accordance with established overshadowing criteria, at least 50% of the amenity area must receive two hours of direct sunlight on 21 March. It is therefore inappropriate to isolate a minor section e.g., 10% of the garden such as a patio, and claim adverse overshadowing, where the remaining 90% is adequately lit.

4.3.24 Overall, it seems the Local Authority has fallen far below what we consider to be reasonable standards in dealing with this application.

4.3.25 Last, we have avoided naming the authorised officer in the hope this experience will prompt reflection, and these kinds of basic errors will not happen again.



5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Daylight and Sunlight

- 5.1.1 The proposed development is fully in accordance with the BRE guidelines for daylight, sunlight and overshadowing.
- 5.1.2 There are no valid grounds to challenge the proposed development with regards to daylight and sunlight amenity.
- 5.1.3 It seems the Local Authority has fallen far below what we consider to be reasonable standards in dealing with this application, incorrectly applying the relevant criteria, and citing a reason for refusal, which is frankly impossible.

5.2 Generally

- 5.2.1 When considering the numerical results, it is important to approach and interpret the BRE guidelines flexibly along with the following material mitigating factors:

- *The BRE guidelines recognises that it is important to consider whether the adjacent building is itself a good neighbour, standing a reasonable distance from the boundary and taking no more than its fair share of light. In these circumstances, a greater reduction in daylight or sunlight may be unavoidable and so the local authority may wish to apply different target values.

- *Where buildings match the height and proportions of existing surrounding buildings some transgressions will be inevitable.

- *Also, where the sites are undeveloped or are infill sites, again a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable, leading to a higher frequency of non-compliance

- *Kitchens and bedrooms are given less weighting than that of a living room.

Appendix A

Daylight/Sunlight Results



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Vertical Sky Component (VSC) Assessment/ Sunlight (APSH) Assessment

Floor Ref.	Room Ref.	Room	Use.	Window Ref.	Scenario	VSC	Difference	Condtn	Total VSC for Room			Available Sunlight Hours				Total APSH for Room			Meets BRE Criteria	Pr/Ex	Total Suns per Room Winter	Meets BRE Criteria
									Room VSC	Pr/Ex	Meets BRE Criteria	Annual %	Diff %	Condtn	Winter %	Diff %	Condtn	Total Suns per Room Annual				
271 Loddon Bridge Road																						
Ground	R1	Kitchen	W1		Existing	25.76	0.98	YES				41.00	1.00	YES	12.00	1.00	YES					
					Proposed	25.17						25.76	0.98	YES	41.00							

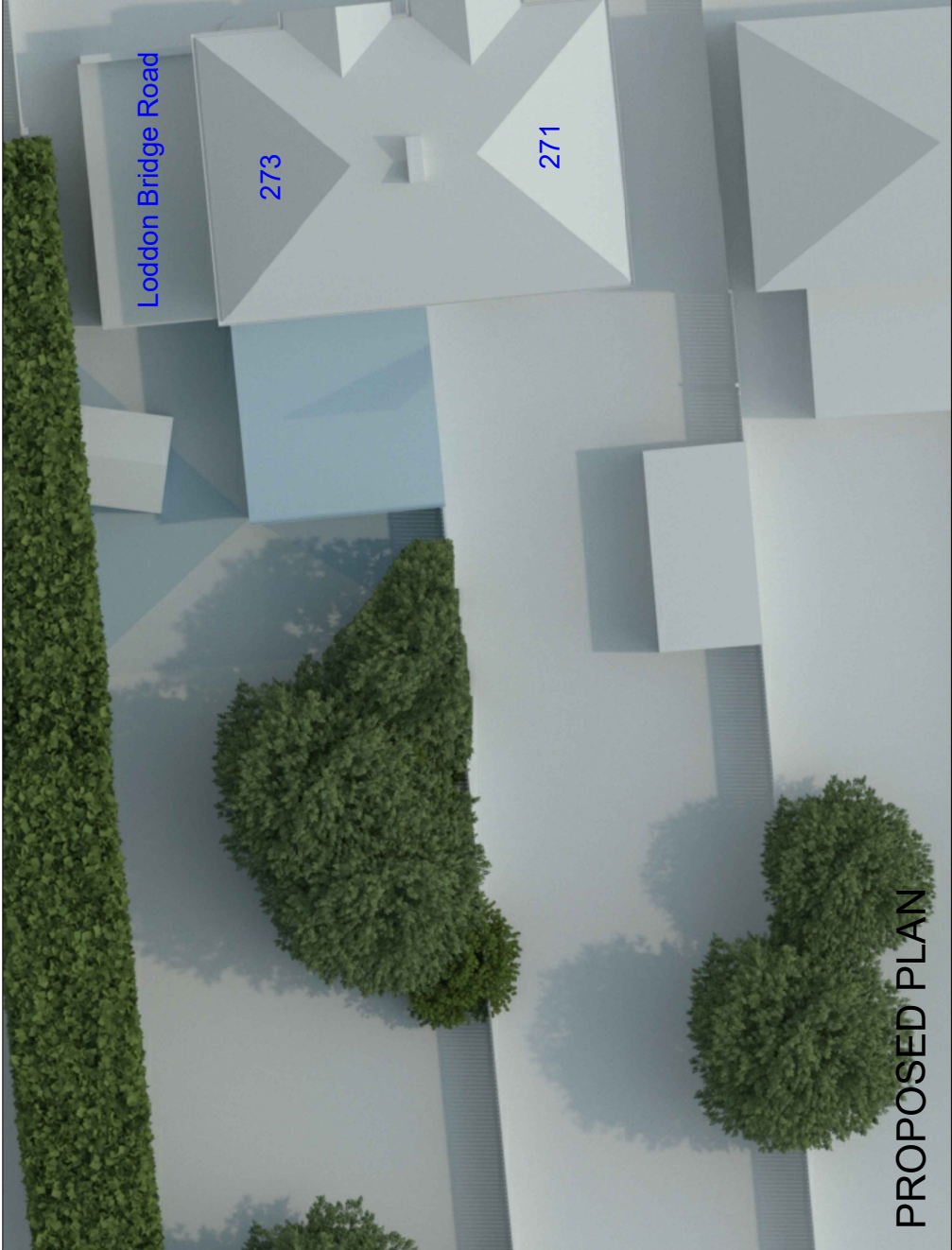
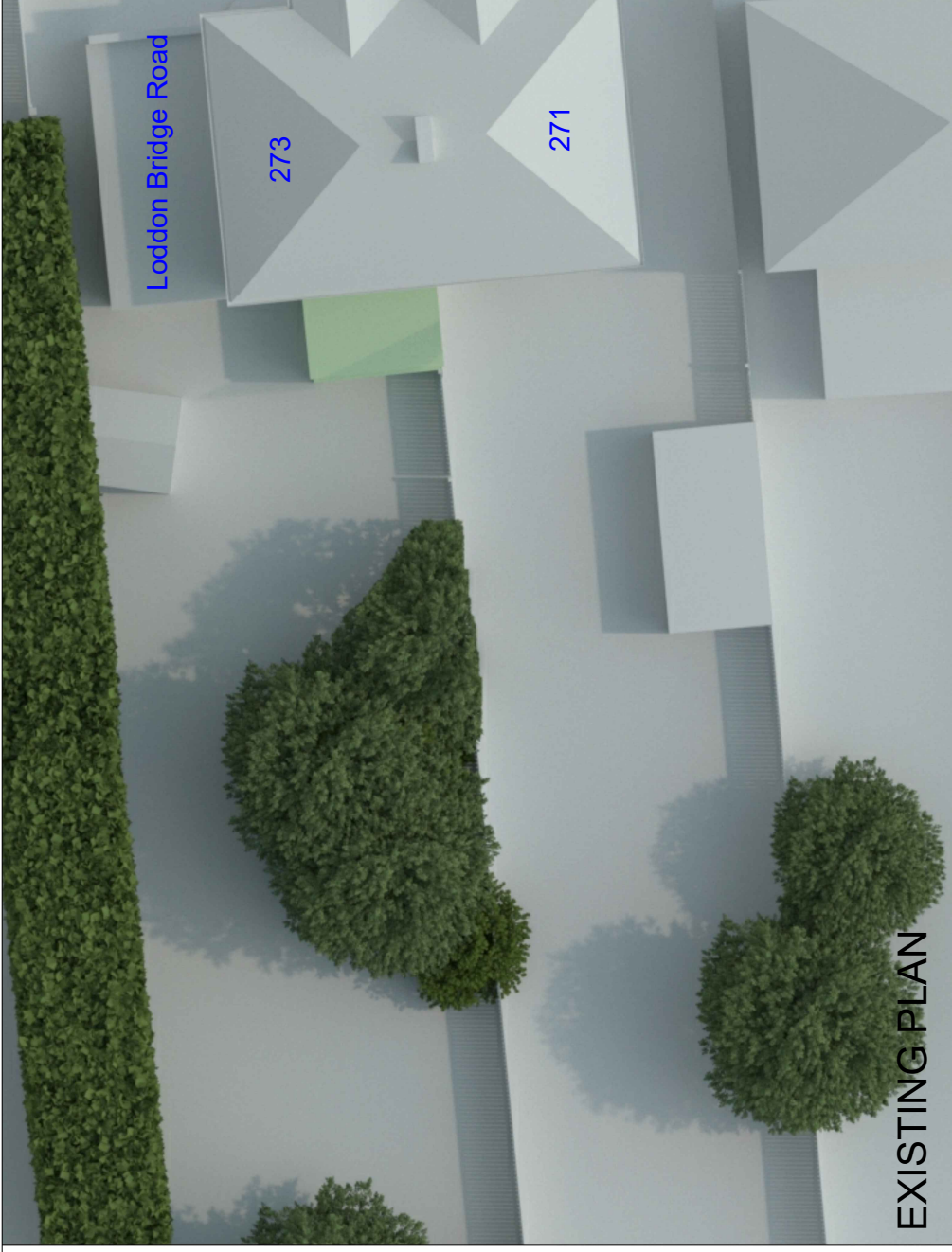


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Daylight Distribution (DD) Assessment								
Floor Ref.	Room Ref.	Room Use	Property Type	Room Area	Lit Area Existing	Lit Area Proposed	Pr/Ex	Meets BRE Criteria
271 Loddon Bridge Road								
Ground	R1	Kitchen	Area m2 % of room	19.86	16.27 81.91%	15.51 78.11%	0.95	YES

Appendix B

Context Drawings



1) ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE AND NOT 2) DAYLIGHT AND SUNLIGHT SHALL BE INFORMED 3) ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MMS		SOURCES OF INFORMATION		KEY		TITLE		CLIENT		PROJECT		DRAWN BY		DATE		SCALE		CHECKED		RELEASE NO.	
AS Design Studio Proposed Planning Drawings Received June 2025				EXISTING BUILDING PROPOSED BUILDING EXITING BUILDING PROFILE		Plan Existing and Proposed Buildings		AS Design Studio		273 Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, RG4 5BL		JN		July 2025		NTS				2195/D&S/03	
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