

Planning Applications Report

**Planning Committee
23rd June 2022**

**Bolton
Council**

Bolton Council has approved a Guide to Good Practice for Members and Officers Involved in the Planning Process. Appendix 1 of the Guide sets down guidance on what should be included in Officer Reports to Committee on planning applications. This Report is written in accordance with that guidance. Copies of the Guide to Good Practice are available at www.bolton.gov.uk

Bolton Council also has a Statement of Community Involvement. As part of this statement, neighbour notification letters will have been sent to all owners and occupiers whose premises adjoin the site of these applications. In residential areas, or in areas where there are dwellings in the vicinity of these sites, letters will also have been sent to all owners and occupiers of residential land or premises, which directly overlook a proposed development. Copies of the Statement of Community Involvement are available at www.bolton.gov.uk

The plans in the report are for location only and are not to scale. The application site will generally be in the centre of the plan edged with a bold line.

The following abbreviations are used within this report: -

CS	The adopted Core Strategy 2011
AP	The adopted Allocations Plan 2014
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance
PCPN	A Bolton Council Planning Control Policy Note
PPG	Department of Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Guidance Note
MPG	Department of Communities and Local Government Minerals Planning Guidance Note
SPG	Bolton Council Supplementary Planning Guidance
SPD	Bolton Council Supplementary Planning Document
PPS	Department of Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Statement
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
EA	Environment Agency
SBI	Site of Biological Importance
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
GMEU	The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

The background documents for this Report are the respective planning application documents which can be found at:-

www.bolton.gov.uk/planapps

Date of Meeting: 23 June 2022

Application Reference: 12666/21

Type Of Application
Registration Date
Decision Due Date
Responsible Officer
Authorizing Officer

Full Planning Permission
22 November 2021
29 June 2022
Jackie Whelan

Location

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE NEW COLLIERS ROW
COLLIERS ROW ROAD BOLTON BL1 7PJ

Proposal

DEMOLITION OF OUT BUILDING AND PREVIOUS
EXTENSION TOGETHER WITH ERECTION OF SINGLE
STOREY EXTENSION AT REAR.

Ward

Smithills

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Leese-Weller

Agent: Mr C Buck

OFFICERS REPORT

Recommendation: Refused

Executive Summary

- * The proposal relates to planning and listed consent applications (12666/21 and 12667/21, both found on this agenda) and was requested to be considered at Committee by Cllr Roger Hayes on the basis that he considers the proposed changes would have a low impact on the external appearance of the building and that all the main features are to be maintained consistent with its improvement as a viable family residence.
- * The application relates to a grade II listed former school building sited in the Green Belt which has been converted into a dwelling house.
- * The application proposes the erection of a large single storey flat roofed rear extension, demolition of a stone outbuilding building in the rear garden area and a later flat roofed red brick rear extension. It is also proposed to provide a new access and turning area on adjacent land to the east.
- * Members are recommended to refuse the proposal by virtue of its design and size as it would detract from the appearance and setting of the listed building and harm the openness of the Green Belt.

Proposal

1. The application proposes a single storey rear extension 7.86m deep, 11.5m wide and 2.5m high. The existing stone built outbuilding and red brick bathroom extension would be demolished. The extension would provide for new living, kitchen, and dining area. The proposed extension would be flat roofed, with an aluminum capping to the eaves, and faced in natural stone with some timber cladding. The proposals were amended with small change in the depth of the extension.
2. Internally the former school hall currently in use as a lounge will be converted into a bedroom with further subdivision of the front former porch/kitchen into two bathrooms.
3. A new turning area and hard standing for parking is also proposed to be provided on land adjacent to the site.

Site Characteristics

4. The former school building is grade II listed and sited on the north side of Colliers Row. There is open land to the east and north of the site. To the west lies a row of stone cottages known as New Colliers Row and separated from the former school by a small, graveled lane which provides access to hard standing at the rear of the host building for vehicle parking and to the rear of the cottages. Opposite the site is Longshaw Road which leads down to Barrow Bridge.
5. The site lies within the Green Belt. There is a rear stone boundary wall, which delineates the original rear and side curtilage. Beyond the rear wall is additional open land which had been purchased by the applicant as an extended garden area. Land has also been purchased on the east side and has permission to be used as extended curtilage, this area is laid to grass.
6. The school building dates from the mid nineteenth century and has been constructed from coursed and squared sandstone in the Tudor gothic style, with gabled elevations decorated with stone finials. The Historic England listing describes the building below:

'School, now house. Dated 1841, with extensions of 1885 and 1898 also dated. Coursed and squared stone with Welsh slate roof. EXTERIOR: single storey, with central gabled porch added to the original building in 1885. Arched doorway and single window in each side of porch. 4-light mullioned and transomed windows flank the porch in the original building, and a separate room added on the left hand gable in 1898 has a large tiered mullioned and transomed window. All gables are coped with finials, and the Tudor Gothic style of the original building was also used in the extension.'

Policy

7. Development plan policies

- * Core Strategy Policies: P5 Transport and Accessibility; S1 Safe Bolton; CG1 Cleaner and Greener Bolton; CG3 The Built Environment; CG4 Compatible Uses; SC1 Housing; OA1 Horwich and Blackrod
- * Allocations Plan Policy CG7AP Green Belt

8. Other material planning considerations

- * National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): 2. Achieving sustainable development; 4. Decision-making; 12. Achieving well-designed places; 13. Protecting Green Belt. 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- * Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs): General Design Principles; Accessibility, Transport and Safety.

Analysis

9. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with policies in the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Applications which are not in accordance with Development Plan policies should be refused unless material considerations justify granting permission. Similarly, proposals which accord with Development Plan policies should be approved unless there are material considerations which would justify a refusal of permission. It is therefore necessary to decide whether this proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and then take account of other material considerations.

10. The main impacts of the proposal are:-

- * impact on character and appearance of the listed building and its setting.

- * impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- * impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

Impact on the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting

11. At the Statutory level, Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* require the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Policy CG3.4 of the *Bolton Core Strategy* (CS) reflects the statutory duty and seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.
12. Section 16 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) concerns the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Paragraph 199 makes it clear that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 202 says where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. The supporting heritage statement notes that the original building is of a significant historical importance to the area. The school was initially built by Mr Richard Ainsworth for the education of children and adults 'of the labouring and manufacturing and poorer classes' from the neighbouring moorlands farms and cottages. The building had been extended and the porch was added in 1885 and further gabled extension in 1900 to the east. In terms of the proposal the agent comments that various design options had been considered, but the chosen design aims to be subservient, less imposing, and primarily appear as a detached building when viewed from the east. The materials proposed are similar to those used on the existing building but arranged in a modern style, so that the new addition does not compete with the existing.
14. The former school building sits in an open setting, especially when viewed from Colliers Row travelling from the east. The side gable forms a prominent focus with the rear garden area being directly visible from the road. In the garden area sits the small stone outbuilding which complements the rural context and the listed building. Officers consider that the rural and open setting makes a positive contribution to the special interest and significance of the building and defines the asset as small rural school building typical of small hamlets in the nineteenth century. Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, its extent and importance is often expressed by visual considerations but not exclusively so. The assessment in this case relates both to impact on setting and character and appearance on the listed building.
15. The proposed flat roof single storey extension will extend over 7m from the rear of the listed building, with a small, glazed link proposed between the building and the extension. The proposed rear extension would extend nearly as far as the rear stone boundary wall of the garden area and at 11 metres wide would appear dominant when viewed from the side and rear. When viewed from the side, the extension would be of comparable width to the width of the side gable to the school building and would thereby appear as a sizeable addition. While the eaves height would be comparable with the eaves height of the school building, the large expanse of flat roof would also appear unsympathetic to the historic character and appearance of the listed building. The proposal would thereby appear as a dominant feature and detract from the setting of the heritage asset.
16. The Council's Conservation Officer considers that the introduction of an extensive flat-roofed, boxlike structure would be in stark contrast with the traditional pitched roof and stone-built appearance of the listed building. The extension's overall form, size and contemporary features combined would serve to emphasise its discordant appearance when viewed alongside the traditional character of the listed building, as well as fail to appear subservient. The proposal

would thereby have the effect of appearing overly assertive in the setting of the building, dominating the heritage asset and diminishing the heritage assets significance, thereby resulting in harm.

17. Some of the harm to setting and appearance would be mitigated by removing the small unattractive red brick bathroom extension, this would be a small benefit which does not outweigh the harm caused by the size and massing of the extension. The demolition of the stone outbuilding would also represent a loss of a historic structure associated with the former school resulting in further harm to heritage significance. The applicants were requested to consider further reductions to the extension but were unwilling to do so.
18. Internal changes proposed would subdivide the former hall area to provide a new fourth bedroom and extend an existing bedroom. This living space is a double height space with some attractive timber trusses and an important internal feature of the listed building. The character of the space would be altered by further sub-division, and the changes are considered to harm its special architectural and historic interest. Proposals to subdivide the front porch area to create ensuite bathrooms are not considered to be harmful as the division would correspond to a historic division.
19. The Local Authority is required to assess the harm to heritage significance from the proposals, which in Officers' opinion would amount to less than substantial harm given the extent of the proposals but which would not be outweighed by any demonstrable public benefits as required by paragraph 202 of the NPPF. The proposed development is thereby considered to detract from the special character, appearance and setting of the listed building which would fail to conserve or enhance the heritage asset, contrary to Policy CG3.4 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on the openness of the Greenbelt.

20. Policy CG7AP of Bolton's Allocations Plan states that the Council will not permit inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development includes any development which does not maintain the openness of land or which conflicts with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, and the erection of new buildings, except for [amongst other things] the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
21. Paragraph 147 of the NPPF makes it clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt subject to a number of exceptions such as modest extensions.
22. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. There is no definition of 'openness' in the NPPF, but it is commonly taken to mean the absence of built or otherwise urbanising development rather than being primarily about visual effects.
23. The proposed extension would represent a 20% increase in volume, which is the additional volume after having removed the volume of the demolished structures. This volume increase would normally fall within the generally accepted tolerance of 30% for extensions to dwellings within the Green Belt.
24. Officers however considers that the visual openness of the land surrounding the former school building would result in the proposed extension having a visual prominence which would be particularly visible travelling from the east along Colliers Row. The extension by virtue of its depth and massing would result in harm to the openness in the Green Belt. The harm would be

primarily visual as it would extend the building footprint by 8m as far as the rear stone boundary wall removing the open feel and landscape character of the site. Existing building structures within the curtilage such as the existing outbuilding have smaller massing and thereby appear subservient in the landscape. This would be further compounded by the creation of hardstanding and new access for parking to the land adjoining the curtilage and thereby resulting in an overall urbanising effect.

25. Officers consider that as a consequence there would be harm to the openness of the Green Belt, contrary to Policy CG7AP of the Allocations Plan and Paragraph 147 of the NPPF.

Impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

26. Policy CG4 seeks to protect the privacy and amenity of surrounding occupiers. The extension is set some distance away from the adjacent terraced properties along Colliers Row to the west and in excess of permissible tolerances for interface distances. There are no dwellings to the eastern side of the host dwelling. As such there would no impact on the privacy or amenity of neighbouring residential residents.

Impact on highways and parking.

27. According to the Council's Highway Asset Register, Colliers Row Road is a classified road under a 50mph speed limit. The highway officer has commented that the proposed new access to the east side of the property would have to ensure that the maximum visibility requirements indicated in national guidance (Manual for Streets) can be achieved from the proposed access onto the highway, with sufficient area to allow a vehicle to exit in forward gear and recommended conditions to this effect.

Other matters.

28. The Council's Greenspace Officer commented whilst the location is within the 'risk zone' for West Pennine Moors SSSI, the nature of this development is unlikely to have any impact upon the designated site. The officer noted that there may be likelihood of bats using the site and requested a bat assessment survey. No bat survey has been submitted
29. The Council's tree officer raised no objection to the proposal.

Conclusion

30. Members are recommended to refuse the proposal as it would detract from the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, harm its setting and would harm the openness of the Green Belt contrary to Policies CG3 and CG7AP.

Representation and Consultation Annex

Representations

Letters:- None.

Elected Members:- Councillor Hayes requested the application be considered at Planning Committee and commented: 'the proposed changes will have a low impact on the external appearance of the building and will maintain its low profile. I understand that there have been no objections from any neighbours, most of whom are very conscious of preserving the character of the local area. Internally, I understand that all the main features are to be maintained consistent with its improvement as a viable family residence. I am concerned that if too onerous conditions are imposed the work will not be viable and the building may become unoccupied and risk falling into disrepair.'

Consultations

Advice was sought from the following consultees: Highway and Engineering Services, Tree Officer, Greenspace Management, Urban Design and Conservation Officer. Comments are set out in the main body of the report.

Planning History

1976 Building Regulations approved for change of use and first occupied as a dwelling.

15410/80: Listed Building Consent for the formation of a bedroom in roof space of house by the installation of a window into rear elevation. APPROVED.

24823/85: Demolition of open- air toilets and erection of a double garage with removal of part of screen wall to improve access. REFUSED.

24864/85: Erection of a double garage at rear of house. REFUSED.

25540/85: Listed building consent for the erection of a double garage in garden. APPROVED.

25541/85: Erection of a double garage in garden. APPROVED.

57987/00: Listed building consent for internal alterations. APPROVED.

64462/03: Listed building consent for the erection of staircase within existing bedroom to allow installation of mezzanine level to form new bedroom and en-suite. Removal of two walls to outbuilding. APPROVED.

98103/16: Certificate of Lawful Development (s191) for retention of use of land as domestic garden. APPROVED

Recommendation: Refused

Recommended Conditions and/or Reasons

Subject to the following conditions, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

- 1 The proposed development by virtue of its size, siting and design would detract from the special character and appearance of the Listed Building and its setting, and is contrary to Policy CG3 of Bolton's Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Document 'General Design Principles'.
- 2 The proposed development by virtue of its siting and size represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt and the applicant has provided no very special circumstances to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the openness of the Green Belt, contrary to Policy CG7AP of Bolton's Allocations Plan and section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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Proposed - Single-Storey Extension

Demolished - Existing Rear Extension

Retained - Existing Rear Extension

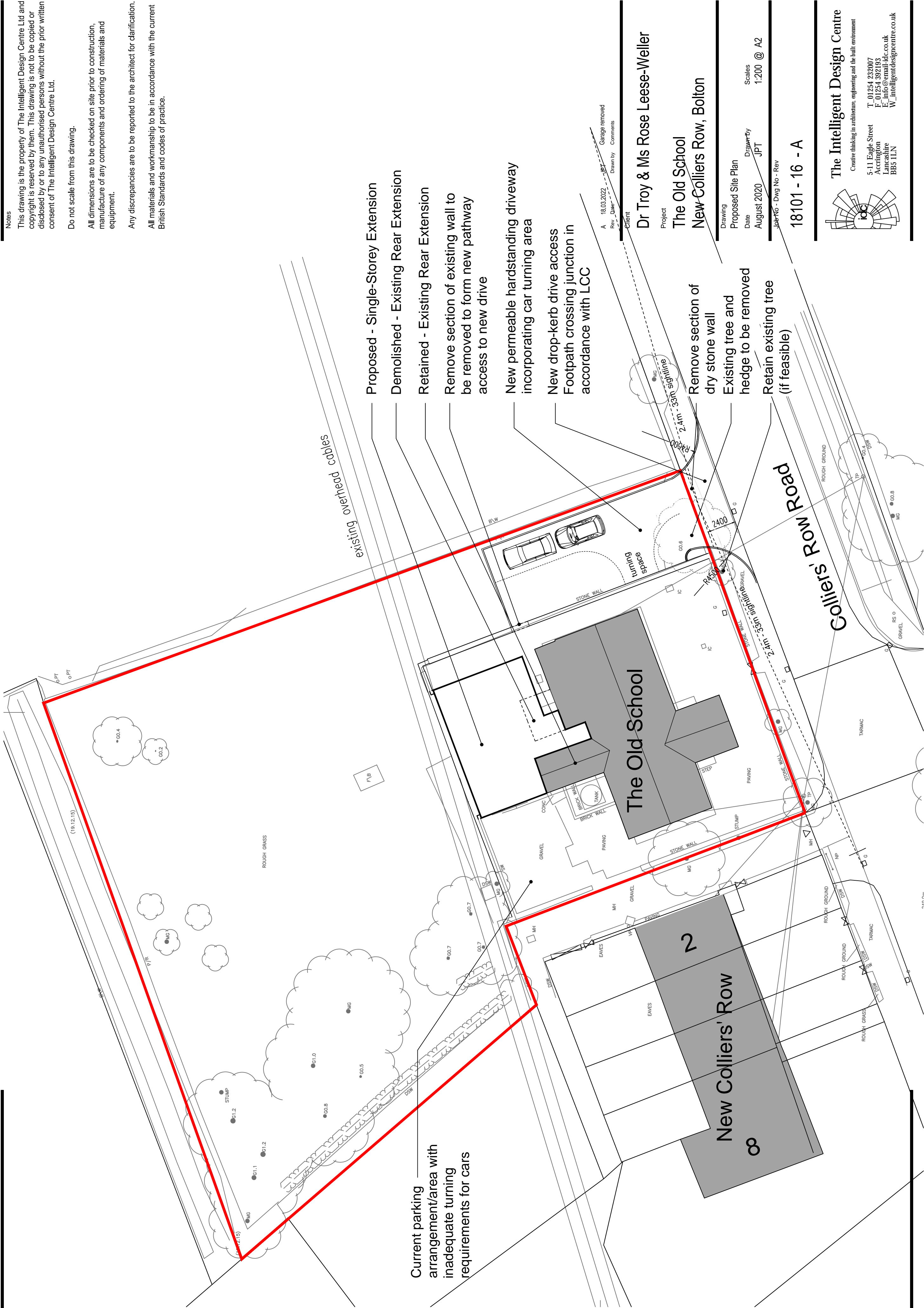
Remove section of existing wall to be removed to form new pathway access to new drive

New permeable hardstanding driveway incorporating car turning area

New drop-kerb drive access Footpath crossing junction in accordance with LCC

Remove section of dry stone wall Existing tree and hedge to be removed Retain existing tree (if feasible)

Current parking arrangement/area with inadequate turning requirements for cars



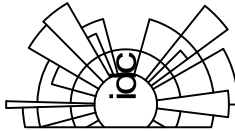
Rev	Date	Drawn by	Comments
A	18.03.2022	JPT	Garage removed

Client
Dr Troy & Ms Rose Leese-Weller

Project
**The Old School
New Colliers Row, Bolton**

Drawing	Proposed Site Plan	Scale	1:200 @ A2
Date	August 2020	Drawn by	JPT

Job No - Dwg No - Rev
18101 - 16 - A



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T_01254 232007
F_01254 392193
E_info@enai-lit.co.uk
W_intelligentdesigncentre.co.uk

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E	08.10.2023	JT	Updated Plans
D	15.11.2021	JT	Updated Plans
C	18.10.2021	CSB	Minor revisions
B	01.02.2021	CSB/JT	Updated Plans
A	10.07.2020	CSB	Initial proposals
Rev	Drawn by	Comments	

Client

Mr and Mrs T Leese-Weiler

Project

Old School, New Colliers Row
Bolton BL1 7PJ

Drawing
Ground Floor Plan as Proposed

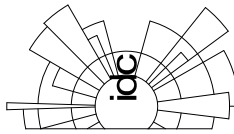
Date
April 2020

Drawn by
CSB/JPT

Scales
1:50 @ A1

Job No - Dwg No - Rev

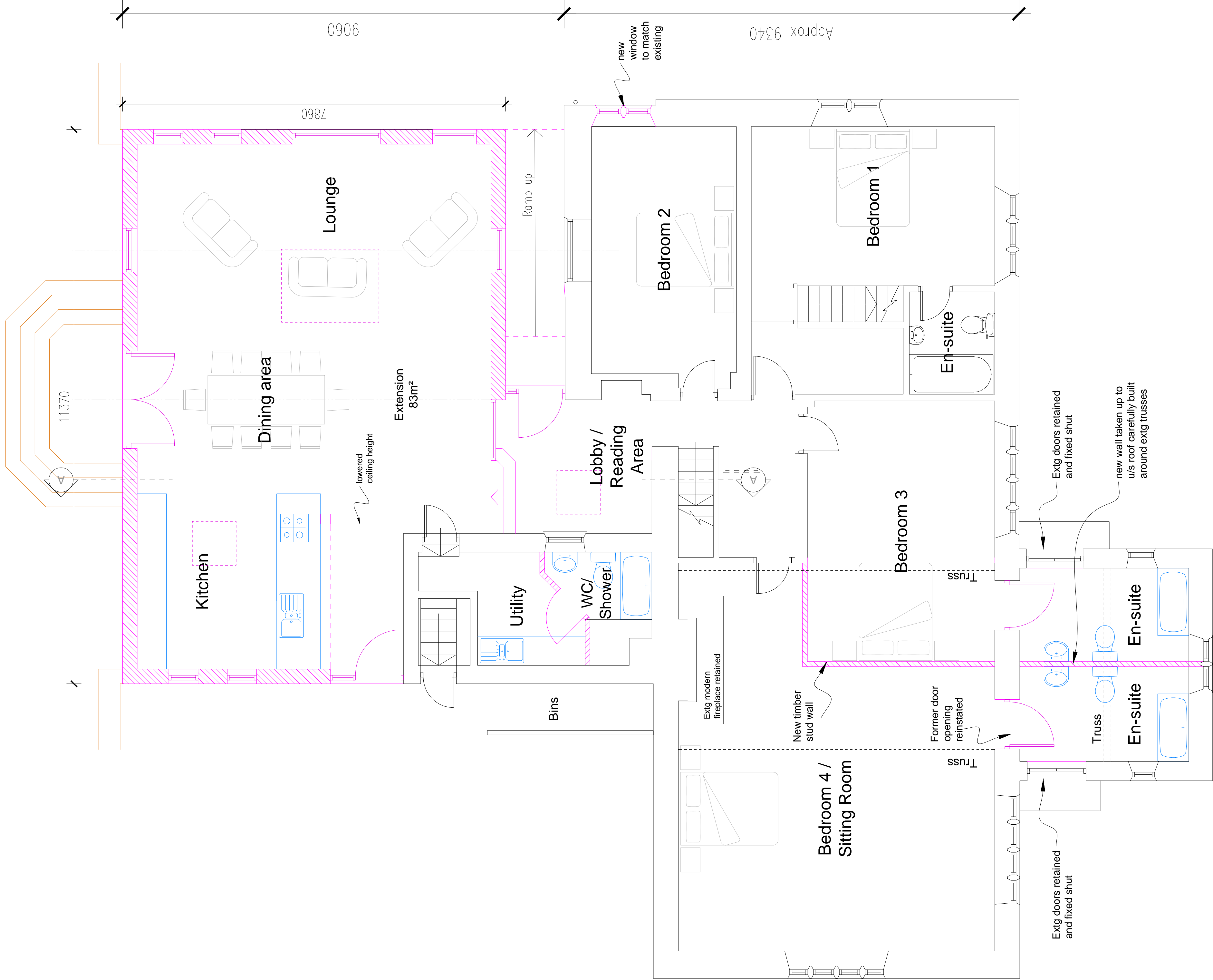
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Accrington
Lancashire
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T: 01254 232007
F: 01254 382193
E: info@idc.co.uk
V: info@idc.co.uk



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Notes

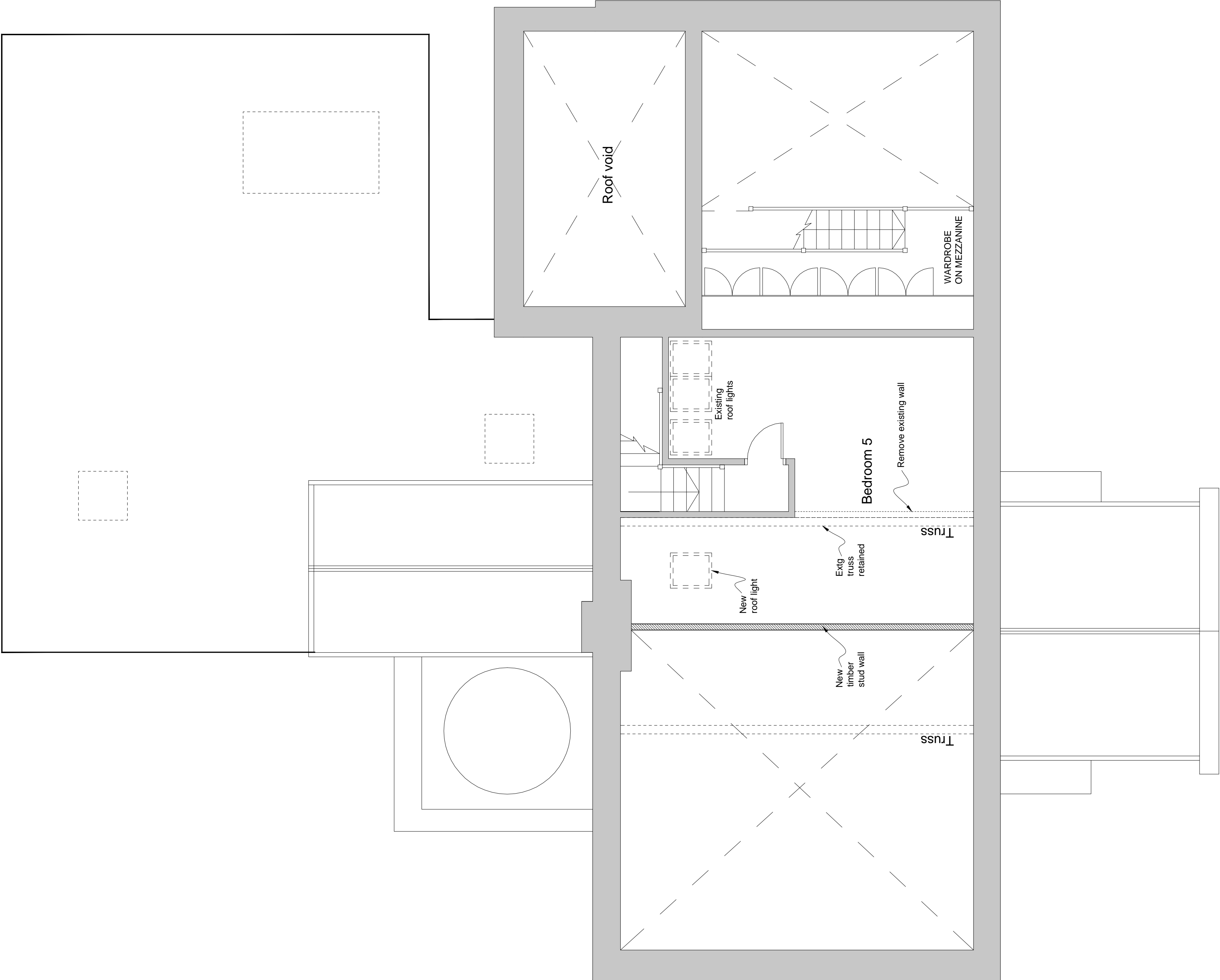
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

C	08.03.2022	JPT	Updated Plan
B	16.10.2021	CSS	Minor revisions
A	10.02.2021	JTCSS	Initial design
Rev	Date	Drawn by	Comments

Client

Mr and Mrs T Leese-Weiler

Project

Old School, New Colliers Row
Bolton BL1 7PJ

Drawing
First Floor Plan as Proposed

Date
April 2020

Drawn by
JPT

Scales

1:50 @ A1

Job No - Dwg No - Rev

18101 - 13 - C



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5-11 Eagle Street

Accrington

T: 01254 232007

F: 01254 382153

E: info@idc.co.uk

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W: www.idc.co.uk

Notes

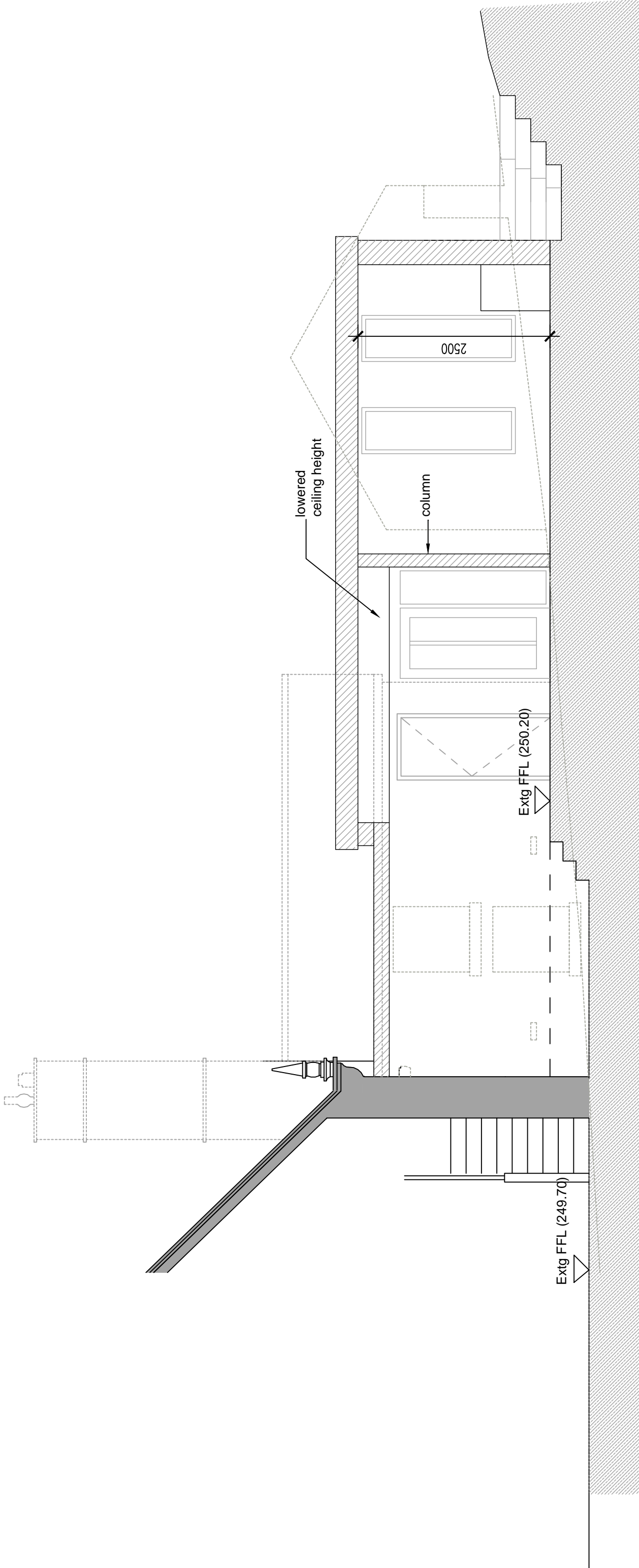
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Section A-A

A 08.02.2022 JPT Updated Plans				
Rev	Desc	Drawn by	Comments	
Client				
Mr and Mrs T Leese-Weiler				
Project				
Old School, New Colliers Row				
Bolton BL1 7PJ				
Drawing				
Proposed Section				
Date	Jan 2021	Drawn by	JT	Scales
				1:50 @ A1
Job No - Desg No - Rev				
18101-15-A				
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Notes

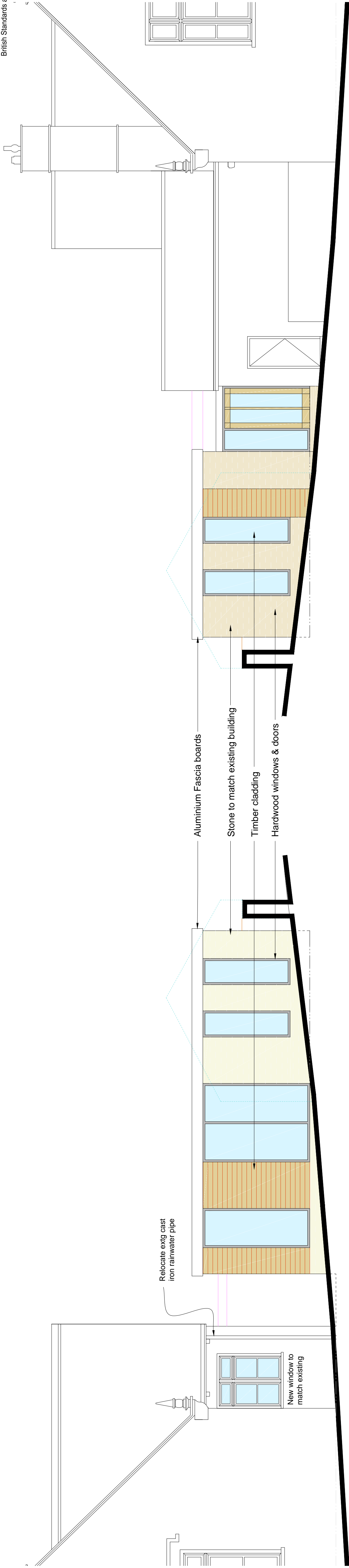
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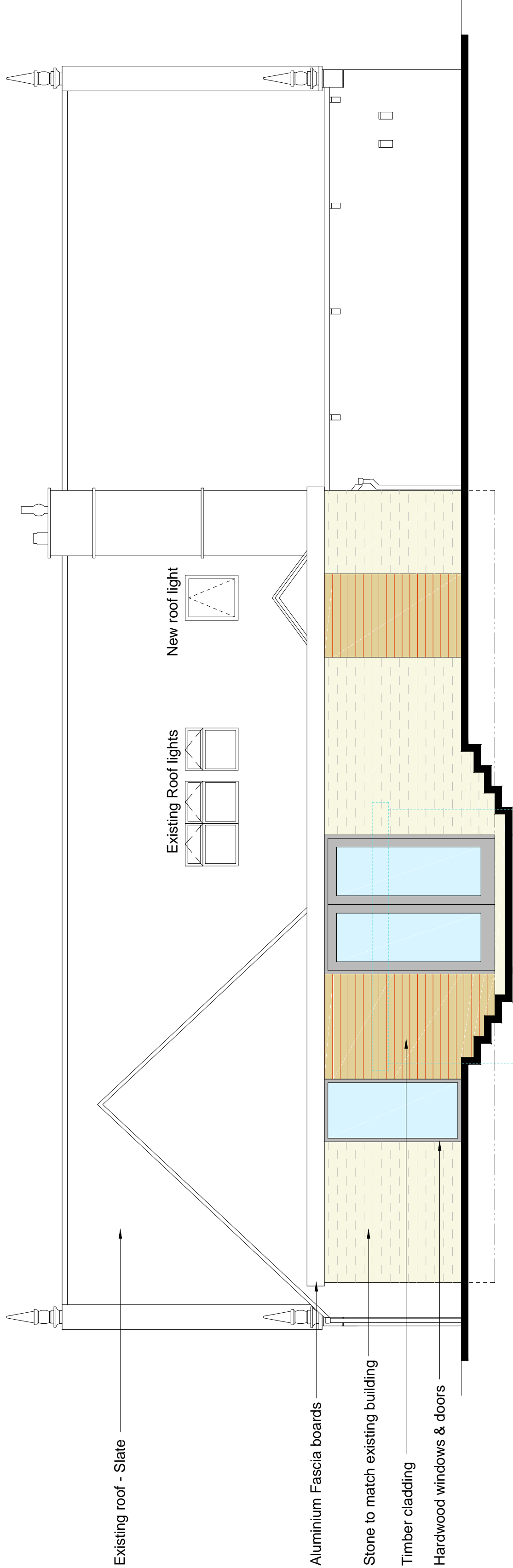
Any discrepancies are to be reported to the architect for clarification.

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Side Elevation (East)

Side Elevation (West)



Rear Elevation (North)

Rev	Date	Drawn by	Checked by	Comments
B	08/03/2022	JT	CSB	Updated Elevations
A	10/02/2021	CSB	JT	Revised Elevations

Client

Mr and Mrs T Leese-Weller

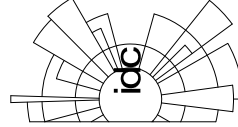
Project

Old School, New Colliers Row
Bolton BL1 7PJ

Drawing	Elevations as Proposed	Scales
Date	Drawn by	1:50 @ A1
June 2020	CSB/JPT	

Job No - Dwg No - Rev

18101 - 12 - B



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Lancashire
BB5 1LN
T: 01254 232007
F: 01254 382193
E: info@idc.co.uk
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