

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date 14 October 2010

Report of Head of Planning Services

Subject 10/01208/F Baptist Church Silver Road Norwich NR3 4TE

Item
5 (2)

SUMMARY

Description:	Conversion of part of Baptist Chapel to 12 self contained apartments.	
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Objection – Major Application	
Recommendation:	Approve subject to conditions	
Ward:	Thorpe Hamlet	
Contact Officer:	Mr Rob Parkinson	Senior Planner, Development Management 01603 212765
Valid date:	21st July 2010	
Applicant:	Mr Martin Scott	
Agent:	Mr Rodney Furze	

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. This application relates to part of the Silver Road Baptist Church which is located at the junction of Silver Road and Mousehold Avenue. The Chapel sits on the southern side of Mousehold Avenue. The application site relates only to the western portion of the overall building, the eastern portion will be retained as a place of worship. The Chapel comprises of a substantial single-storey pitched roof building constructed in 1910 in a neo-Norman style. It has seven distinct brick bays on both the north and south elevations with vertical windows and curved brick arches. To the south, the complex is completed by modern apartments belonging to the English Churches Housing Association.
2. Silver Road is made up here of attractive two-storey Victorian terraces on either side. On the opposite corner to the chapel, on Beaconsfield Road is the Post Office whilst to the north on Mousehold Avenue there is a relatively new three-storey development of residential units. The site adjoins the woodland, open space, allotments and outdoor sports court south of Mousehold Avenue, accessed from Anchor Street.

Constraints

3. They are as follows:-

- The impact of any new alterations to the building as seen in the context of the merits of the existing building and townscape of the area;
- Potential impact on pedestrian and highway safety of increased parking and traffic on Silver Road and Mousehold Avenue;
- The size of the site in relation to any extensive conversion and the foreseen need to provide adequate on site facilities such as cycle/refuse storage areas, amenity space and landscaping;
- The potential impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties that could arise from the type of units, form and layout of any new development.

Topography

4. The application site is situated not far from Mousehold Heath to the east on rising land. Silver Road is at its lowest level at its junction with Barrack Street and rises to join Sprowston Road in the north.

Planning History

4/1989/1403/F - Conversion of part of rear of Church to provide one associated dwelling and erection of single storey extension at side of Church. (Approved - 25/01/1990)

4/1990/0911/D - Condition 3: Details of party walls to improve the resistance to the transmission of sound for previous permission 4891403/F "Conversion of part of rear of Church to provide one associated dwelling and erection of single storey extension at side of Church." (Approved - 22/10/1990)

4/1990/1048/D - Condition 6: Details of landscaping, planting and site treatment works for previous permission 4891403/F "Conversion of part of rear of Church to provide one associated dwelling and erection of single storey extension at side of dwelling." (Approved - 04/12/1990)

Pre-Application Advice

This proposal has been the subject of pre-application officer advice no. 280208.12.33.

The Proposal

5. The proposals involve the following:-

- Conversion of part of the building to provide, twelve residential units (10x two bedroom and 2x three bedroom);
- The conversion will involve dividing the main space within the building into four levels with two new floors and one mezzanine floor in the roof. The new floors will be inserted at the centre of the main windows; at eaves level and the mezzanine just above dormer window level;
- Two of the dormers in the roof will be repositioned whilst two new dormers will be added on the south elevation. Eight new conservation roof lights will also be inserted on the

south elevation to give light to the mezzanines;

- New ramped pedestrian access with lower ground covered cycle and refuse store;
- Landscaped area including main pedestrian access to the flats on the north side of the building.

Representations Received

6. Advertised on site and in the press. Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. No comments have been received.

Consultation Responses

7. **Environmental Health:** Feel there is little concern regarding noise issues. Regarding contaminated land issues, the historic mapping does not show evidence of any previous contaminative uses although the development is adjacent to a previous quarry and land fill site. No site investigation has been done on this adjacent site but it is currently considered to be of negligible risk to human health. Given the current risk rating, the fact that it is outside the application area and that the application does not include residential gardens, this is unlikely to be of any significance.
8. **Anglian Water Services:** Are obliged under the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide water and wastewater infrastructure for domestic purposes for new housing and employment developments within our area when requested to do so. Advice has been provided to effect this and the Service has requested a number of informative notes to be attached to any permission.
9. **Norwich Society:** There is no outside space or parking provision. Architecturally this is fine, but there are too many units and the development of the roof space is undesirable, creating apartments with no proper windows. Two storeys of flats would give much more 'breathing space'.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3 – Housing

PPG13 – Transport

PPG24 – Planning and Noise

Relevant Local Plan Policies

City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004

EP1 – Contaminated Land

EP16 – Water conservation and sustainable drainage systems

EP18 – High standard of energy efficiency

EP22 – High standard of amenity for residential development

AEC3 – Loss of building in Community Use

HBE12 – High quality of Design

HBE19 - Design for safety and security

HOU6 – Contribution to Community Needs by Housing Developers

HOU15 – Conversion to housing of vacant or underused parts of buildings
HOU18 – Conversion of larger properties to multiple occupation
SR7 – Children’s Playspace provision
NE9 – Comprehensive landscaping scheme and tree planting
TRA9 – Car free housing - criteria
TRA7 - Cycle parking standards
TRA8 - Servicing provision
TRA11 – Transport Contributions

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Conversion and development of houses in multiple occupation (Adopted June 2006)

Open Space and Play Provision (Adopted June 2006)

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (Adopted December 2006)

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

10. This site is not allocated for development within the Local Plan proposals map.
11. This proposal is for conversion of the Baptist Chapel to 12 residential properties. As the proposal involves the loss of a building in community use, saved policy AEC3 of the Replacement Local Plan (RLP) needs to be a consideration. Although the loss of this building as a place of worship is regrettable, it is considered acceptable as the remainder of the site will still be used by the church for community use.
12. With regards to the proposed use, saved policies HOU 6 and HOU 15 are of particular relevance. Policy HOU6 sets out a number of criteria to assess the proposals against. The main aspects of this policy that apply to this proposal are children’s playspace; accessibility to public transport and good pedestrian and cycle access routes to the site (Please see paragraphs 31 and 32). Provided that the relevant contributions are made, it is considered that the principle of the proposed use is acceptable. Policy HOU15 encourages the conversion of vacant buildings or parts of buildings provided the site is accessible to local shops, community facilities and public transport; provision of satisfactory defensible open space adjoining the property with appropriately located bin storage, cycle storage and drying areas; adequate separation, including sound-proofing.
13. Policy EP22 is also an important consideration and the application should only be permitted if there would be no detrimental impact on residential amenity or highway safety. (Please see paragraph 14). The proposal is for car free housing which is supported under policy TRA9. This policy also sets out a criteria to test the proposal against (See paragraph 20). This development is not in a location where car free housing would normally be expected as it is not within the highly accessible city centre, however in this instance it is considered acceptable.

Impact on Living Conditions

Noise and Disturbance

14. The Environmental Protection Officer has looked at the application and considers that there is little of concern regarding the potential for the conversion to cause noise issues to adjacent residents (RLP policy EP22). The nearest adjacent residential accommodation is to the south at Silver Havern which is a development of eight flats. Although the south side of the chapel is only (approximately) 3.5m from this development the proposed internal layout of the chapel has been designed so that only the bedrooms face the existing units.

Design and Conservation

Building Significance

15. The chapel is a significant building locally, although it is not listed as being of national importance. The building dates from 1910 and forms part of a larger complex of church buildings (most of which are still in use by the church). It combines elements of many architectural styles, including Arts and Crafts, neo-Norman and neo-Byzantine. Although much of the building is relatively simple there is some very fine architectural detailing, including stone capitals carved to include a squirrel and a hare. The building is positioned on a prominent corner (of Silver Road and Mousehold Avenue) and due to its scale dominates the local area.

Proposed Alterations

16. There is a strong presumption in favour of preserving and re-using the existing chapel building given its strong visual integrity and positive appearance in the street scene. The applicant has incorporated pre-application officer advice given in 2008 so that the conversion of this historic building will not require too many alterations to the exterior of the building. The main alterations are to the windows, with those to the north and south elevations being increased in length and sub-divided, with a tile-creasing detail to hide the new inserted first floor. There will also be new windows inserted into the brick 'tower'. Although the appearance of the building will be altered, it is considered that the changes will be in keeping with the architectural style of the building. It is considered that the existing door at the western end of the north elevation should be re-used in the new position and the new door at the eastern made to match this door. This will need to be conditioned. The existing north elevation also shows a round window above the door (western end). This is not actually a window but a stone plaque that states that the building was erected in 1910. Ideally this should be retained in situ. If moved it should be re-positioned to an agreed location elsewhere on the building.
17. The existing windows are characterised by the use of 'bottle-glass' – typical of its time. In order to allow views and light into the residential accommodation it has been accepted that it can be replaced with clear glazing on the north elevation but that the original glazing should be retained (or repaired like for like) on the south side, where privacy is required due to the proximity of neighbouring flats. Specific separate planning permission would be needed to change these windows as flats have no householder permitted development rights.
18. It is proposed that conservation rooflights will be added to the southern roof slope as well as photovoltaic panels. Although these will be visible, the roof slope is largely hidden by the roof of the adjoining building (Silver Havern). However details of the proposed photovoltaic panels should be conditioned so that a type that is as unobtrusive as possible can be agreed. This will need to be conditioned.

Transport and Access

Car Parking

19. These premises are situated in a reasonably sustainable location, and just within the existing Controlled Parking Zone. As newly built properties (albeit as part of a conversion), they will not be eligible for parking permits, but as the property is right on the edge of the CPZ, there will be nothing to prevent residents parking in nearby streets. That might change as and when the CPZ is extended, and the developer should be aware that in the

event that this happens, residents of this scheme will not be able to park any cars they own in that area.

Car Free Housing

20. Whilst a car-free development (policy TRA9 of RLP) would not normally be recommended in a somewhat out of centre location such as this, there are clear sustainability and heritage benefits to retaining the existing building in a viable and much needed residential use. Given the constrained nature of the site there is no realistic opportunity of providing any car parking on the site. Notwithstanding the above the site is not far from shops and services on Magdalen Road, or Magdalen Street, which are both well served by buses into the City centre. The site is also a relatively short walk or cycle ride into the City centre via Silver Road and Whitefriars.

Servicing

21. The proposal would see refuse and cycle storage provided in a new communal lower ground floor extension on the western side of the chapel underneath a modified ramp which gives pedestrian access to the existing flats to the south. Exact details of how this would be provided will need to be conditioned. It is considered that the size of the store is sufficient to provide for the number of bins needed to service this number of residential units. The store is located so that it is easily accessible from all the new units and from the main highway for collection purposes.

Cycling Parking

22. Cycle Storage within the communal lower ground floor area is covered and secure and provides for six Sheffield style hoops.

Transport Contribution

23. See paragraph 32 below.

Environmental Issues

Site Contamination and Remediation

24. The Environmental Protection Officer has considered contaminated land issues (RLP policy EP1) and has determined that the historic mapping does not show evidence of any previous contaminative uses on the site although the development is adjacent to a previous quarry and land fill site.

25. No site investigation has been done on this adjacent site but it is currently considered to be of negligible risk to human health. Given the current risk rating, the fact that it is outside the application area and that the application does not include residential gardens, this is unlikely to be of any significance.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

26. In accordance with policy EP18 (RLP), the applicants have submitted an energy efficiency statement. The statement suggests that:-

- Acknowledges that due to fixed orientation that passive solar radiation is restricted apart from roof accommodation;
- Building is in a highly sustainable location with good links to public transport and local facilities;
- Thermal insulation (mainly in the roof) considered to be the most efficient method of saving energy;
- Heating to be via highly efficient gas fired central heating to include mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (Efficiency ratings per dwelling are either equal to or

exceed level 3 of Code for Sustainable Homes; a B rating or higher). Air-to-air heat exchange pumps are considered to be too noisy in the area.

- There is insufficient space due to site size restrictions for rainwater / grey water harvesting;
- The site is considered too small for electricity generation or geo-thermal collection and unsuitable for wind generation;
- There is some scope for electricity generation via photovoltaic panels on the south facing roof (35sq.m. with potential to generate 4-6Kw).

27. Given the above the applicants propose to include high levels of insulation, provide energy efficient heating and lighting and to incorporate controlled ventilation with heat recovery. Appliances to meet energy rating A or higher, and water saving measures will be incorporated with low flush cisterns and spray taps. These will be required by condition.

28. Energy generation is possible via photovoltaic panels subject to the visual impact being acceptable, details and installation of which shall be required by condition.

Landscaping

29. The existing small landscaped area on the north side of the chapel would be retained and remodelled. The main pedestrian access to the flats is from this side and the ground level, particularly near to the eastern entrance would need to be remodelled to take account of the rising land at this point. A comprehensive landscaping scheme would need to be subsequently submitted to show the works and this would need to be conditioned.

Residential Amenity

30. There is very limited landscape space available, and in most cases an inadequate level of on-site amenity as the northern landscaped area and the podium above the cycle/bin store on the western boundary are the only areas available as communal amenity space for the residents of the scheme. However, given the limitations of the site and the preference to retain the landmark building, this is considered unfortunate but sufficient, although it will be important to ensure it is clearly detailed within a landscaping scheme, which will be required by condition. It will also be important to ensure that these areas are designed so that they are clearly for use by the residents without visually impairing the street view of the chapel.

31. The limited on-site amenity space is somewhat alleviated by the close proximity of both the allotments on Mousehold Avenue, sports facilities and open space off Anchor Close, and a children's play area and scout group on Mousehold Avenue, and of course Mousehold Heath. All these facilities can be freely accessed within short walking distance without the need to cross main roads.

Planning Obligations

Transport Improvements

32. As the number of residential units proposed exceeds ten, the proposal will attract a commuted payment for local sustainable transport improvements under Policy TRA11 of the Replacement Local Plan and the associated Transport Contributions Supplementary Planning Document. In this particular instance it has been calculated that the contribution will be £3385.80.

Play Space

33. Similarly, as the development involves in excess of ten child bed spaces the proposal will

involve the need to provide for children's play provision. Due to the constrained size of the site this cannot be provided on site so a commuted sum of £13,740 will be required to be used in lieu of play provision, at nearby play facilities within the same sector.

34. Both of the above contributions will need to be provided via a voluntary Section 106 Agreement.

Conclusions

35. The proposed conversion will provide an appropriate and acceptable quality of residential development design which enables the continued preservation, protection and active use of a landmark historic building significant to the character of the surrounding area. The high density of the scheme and the lack of any on-site car parking are considered, on balance, to be acceptable given the preference to preserve the fabric and character of the church building and the site's location in a sustainable and highly accessible part of the city close to local services and the city centre.
36. The loss of part of a community facility is mitigated by the ability to retain community activities within a large part of the building, and the absence of any meaningful on-site communal amenity space is offset by the site's close proximity and safe and easy access to open space and childrens play and recreation facilities.
37. Subject to the conditions and the completion of a satisfactory legal agreement, the scheme will avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring residential premises and will be able to provide sufficient improvements to local sustainable transport and play provision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To **approve** Application No 10/01208/F and grant planning permission, subject to:

(1) the completion of a satisfactory S106 agreement by 20th October 2010 to include the provision of contributions to child play space and local sustainable transportation contributions, and subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit;
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings;
3. Samples of materials;
4. Prior approval of the following details:
 - a. Joinery details for new doors and windows (including roof lights and door to the new bin and bike store);
 - b. Alterations to the window cills and new tile creasing at the new floor level;
 - c. How the new lower ground bin and cycle store is to be integrated into the existing ramp structure on west elevation;
 - d. Details of the proposed front railings and gates;
 - e. Details of any ventilation required to the new bin store;
 - f. Details of the position of new kitchen and bathroom flues / extracts.
5. Prior approval of the details of, and maintenance schedules for, the photovoltaic panels, which shall be installed and made available for use prior to first occupation, and maintained thereafter;
6. Energy efficiency measures shall be installed as described in the energy efficiency

- report, and retained thereafter;
7. Prior approval of details of retention or relocation of the stone date plaque on the north elevation;
 8. Re-use of the existing western entrance door on the north elevation in the new location;
 9. Details of Landscaping scheme to be agreed, and provided, prior to first occupation;
 10. Maintenance of Landscaping;
 11. Prior to first occupation the communal cycle and refuse storage facilities to be available for use and permanently retained;
 12. Details of any future fume extraction systems to be agreed prior to installation.

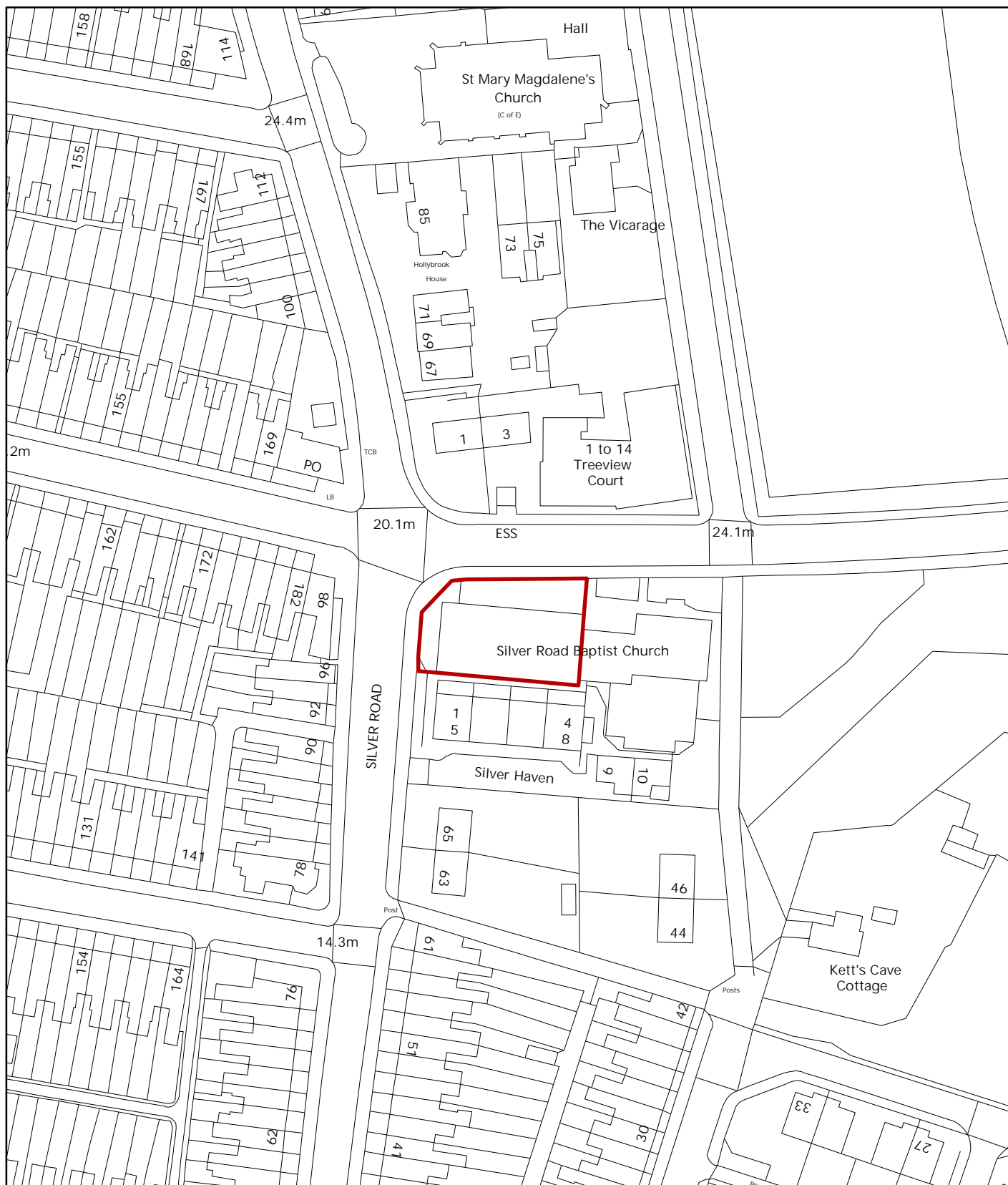
(Reasons for approval:

The proposed conversion will provide an appropriate and acceptable quality of residential development design which enables the continued preservation, protection and active use of a landmark historic building significant to the character of the surrounding area. The high density of the scheme and the lack of any on-site car parking are considered, on balance, to be acceptable given the preference to preserve the fabric and character of the church building and the site's location in a sustainable and highly accessible part of the city close to local services and the city centre. The loss of part of a community facility is mitigated by the ability to retain community activities within a large part of the building, and the absence of any meaningful on-site communal amenity space is offset by the site's close proximity and safe and easy access to open space and children's play and recreation facilities.

Subject to the conditions and the completion of a satisfactory legal agreement, the scheme will avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring residential premises and will be able to provide sufficient improvements to local sustainable transport and play provision. As such the development is considered acceptable and in accordance with national policies PPS1, PPS3, PPS13 and PPG24, and saved policies EP1, EP16, EP18, EP22, AEC3, HBE12, HBE19, HOU6, HOU15, HOU18, SR7, NE9, TRA9, TRA7, TRA8 and TRA11 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (November 2004).

(2) where a satisfactory S106 agreement is not completed prior to 20th October 2010 that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning Services to refuse planning permission for Application No 10/01208/F for the following reason:

In the absence of a legal agreement or undertaking relating to the provision of children's play and transportation contributions the proposal is contrary to saved policies SR7, TRA11 and HOU6 of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan.



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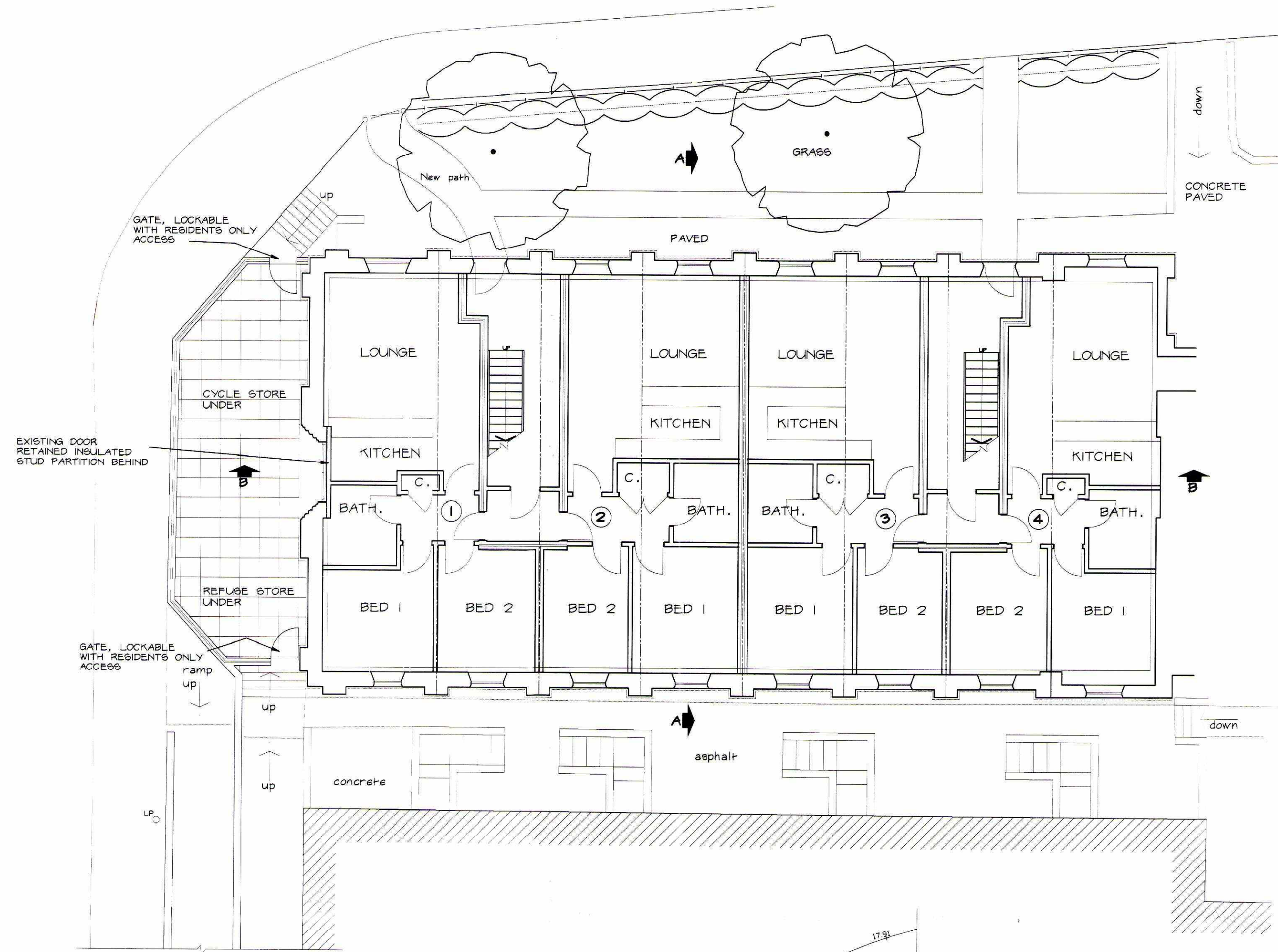
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 Site Address - Baptist Church Silver Road
 Scale - 1:1,000



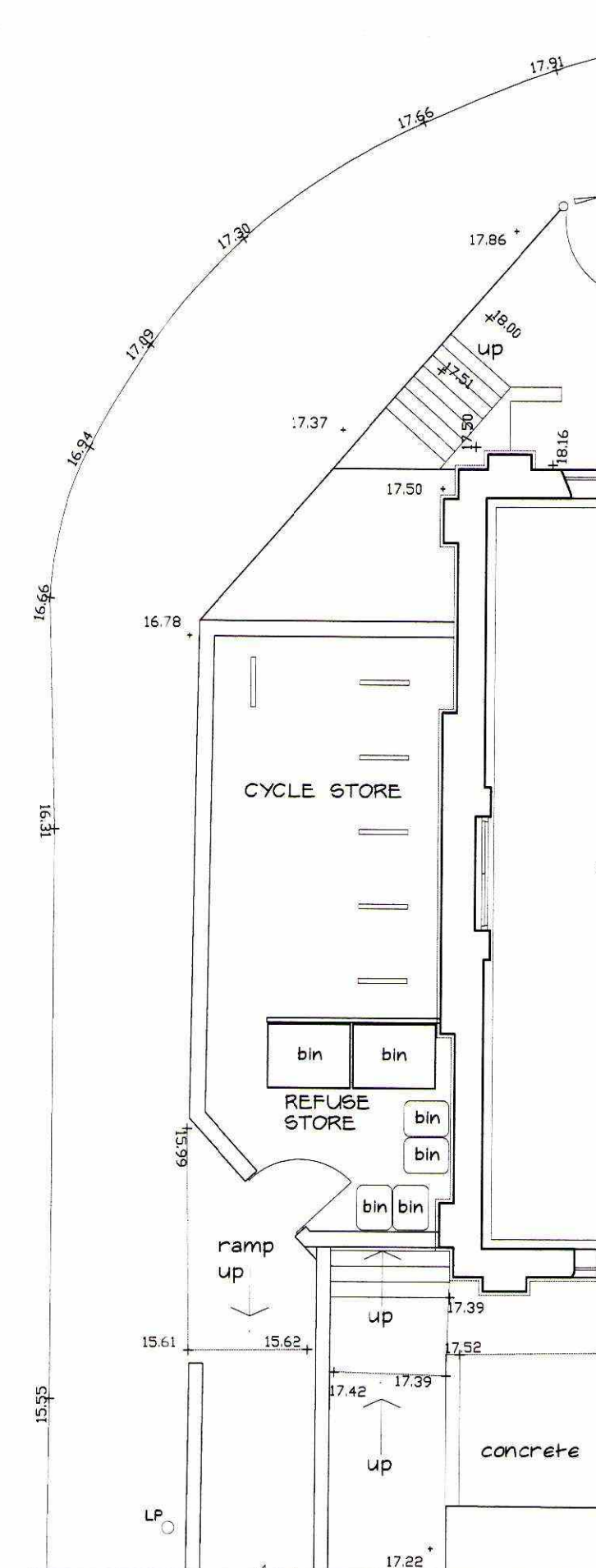
NORWICH
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PLANNING SERVICES

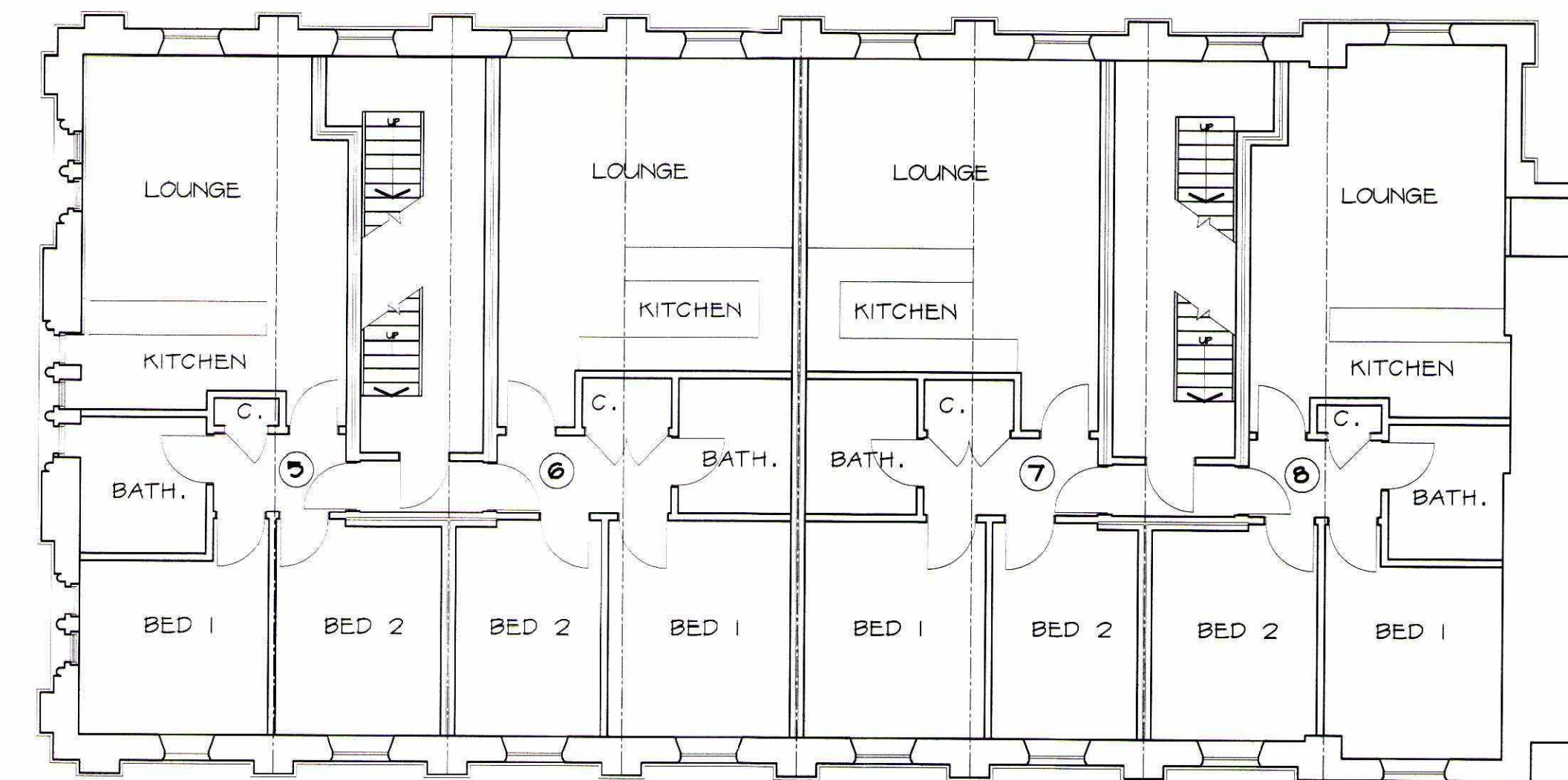




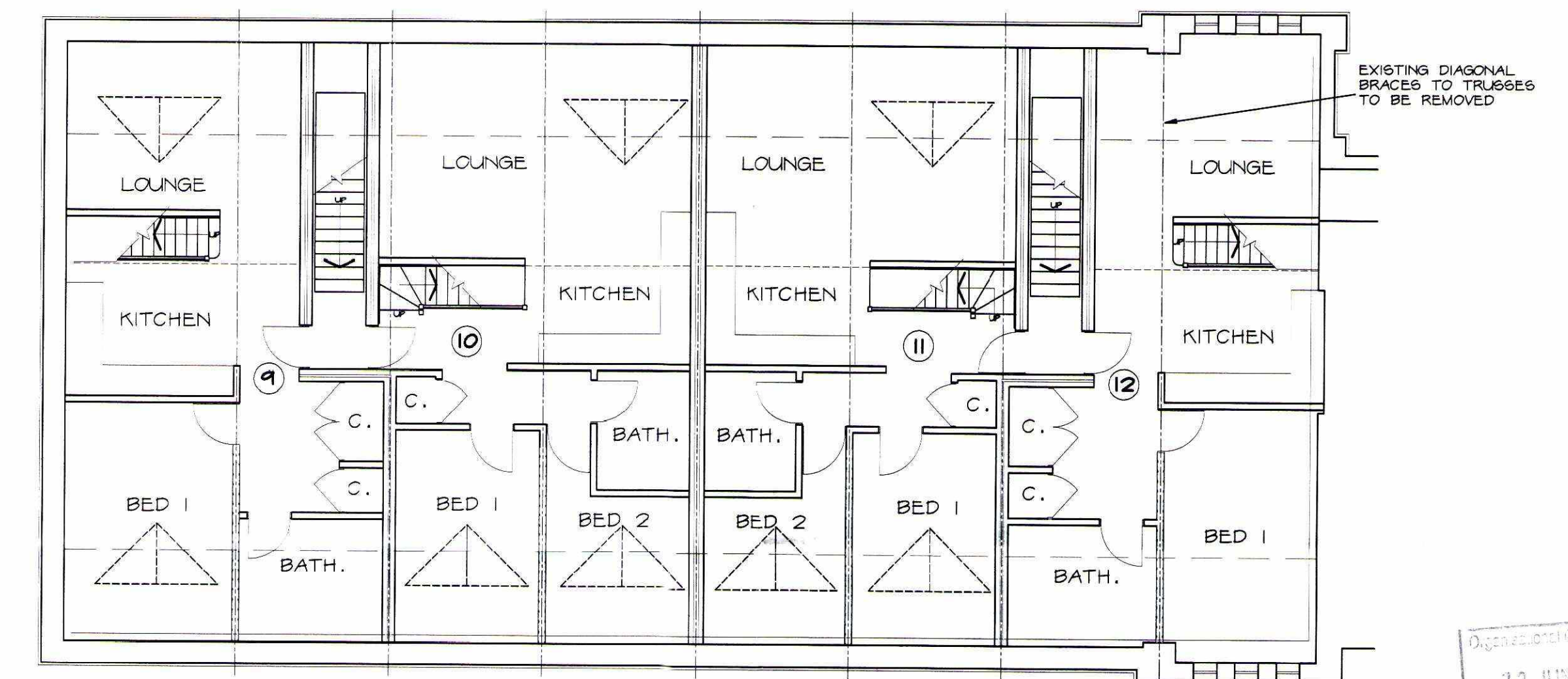
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



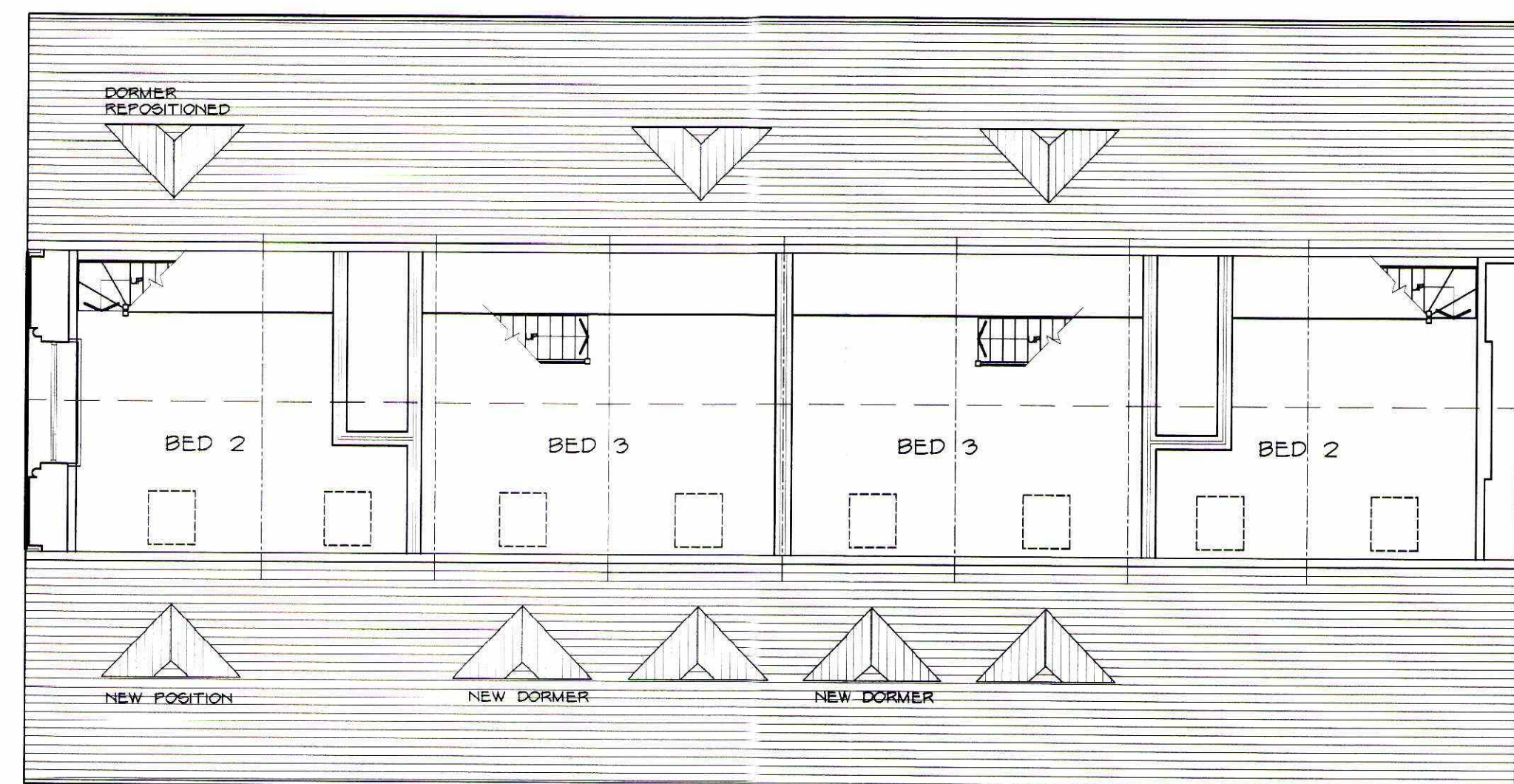
LOWER GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



THIRD FLOOR PLAN

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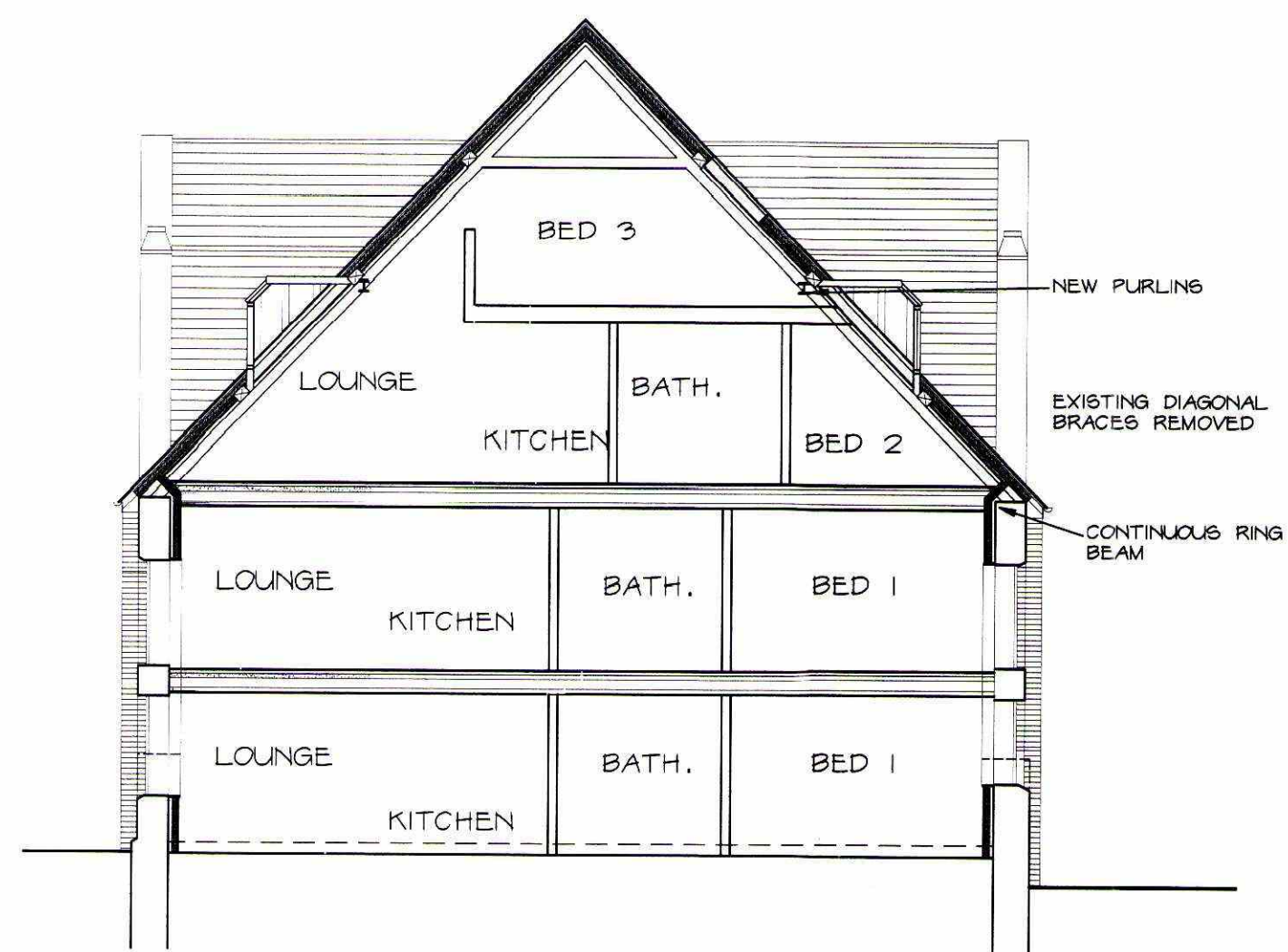
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Silver Road
Norwich

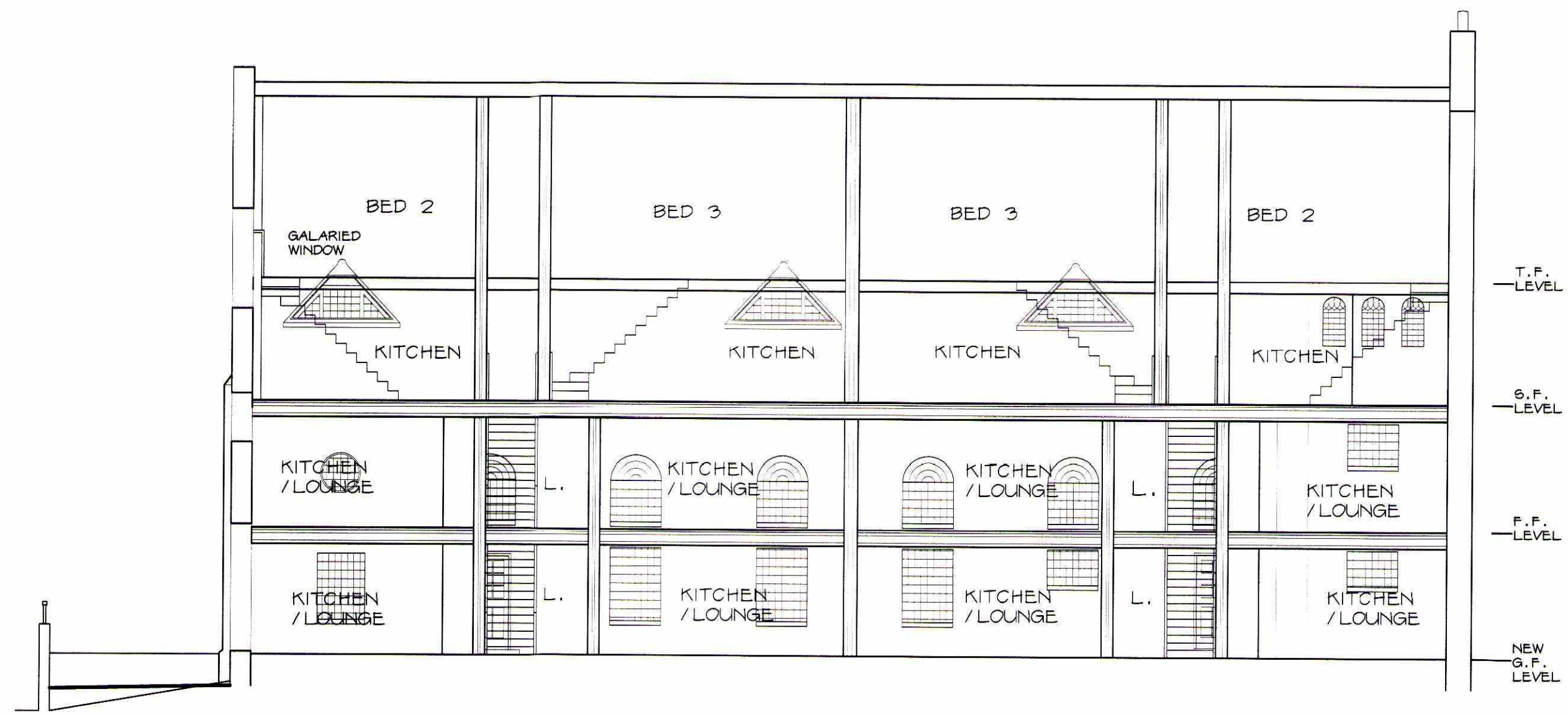
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PROPOSED PLANS

client
M Scott Properties LLP
RODNEY FURZE BA MA RIBA
ARCHITECT

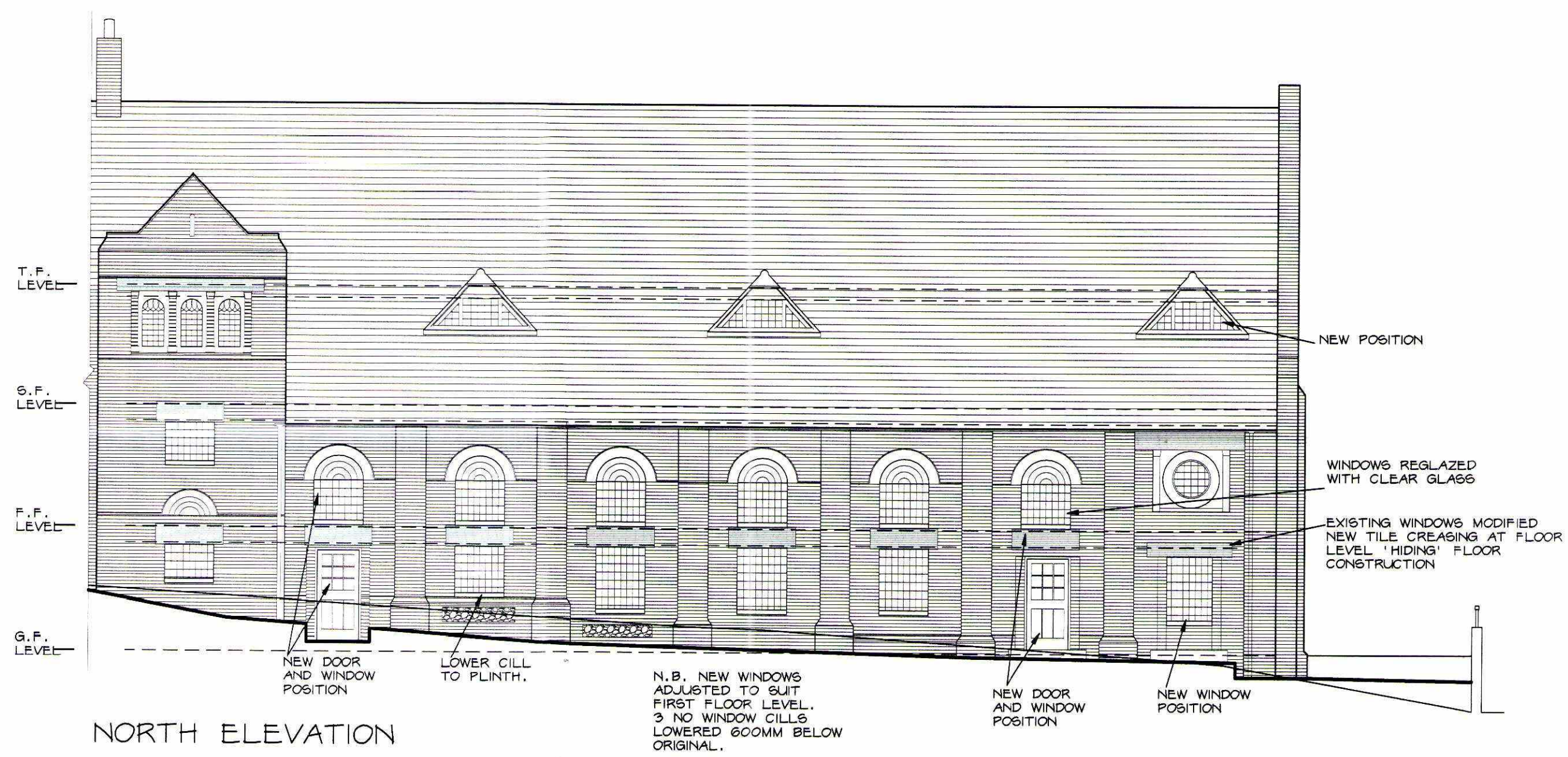
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TEL: 01953 604324



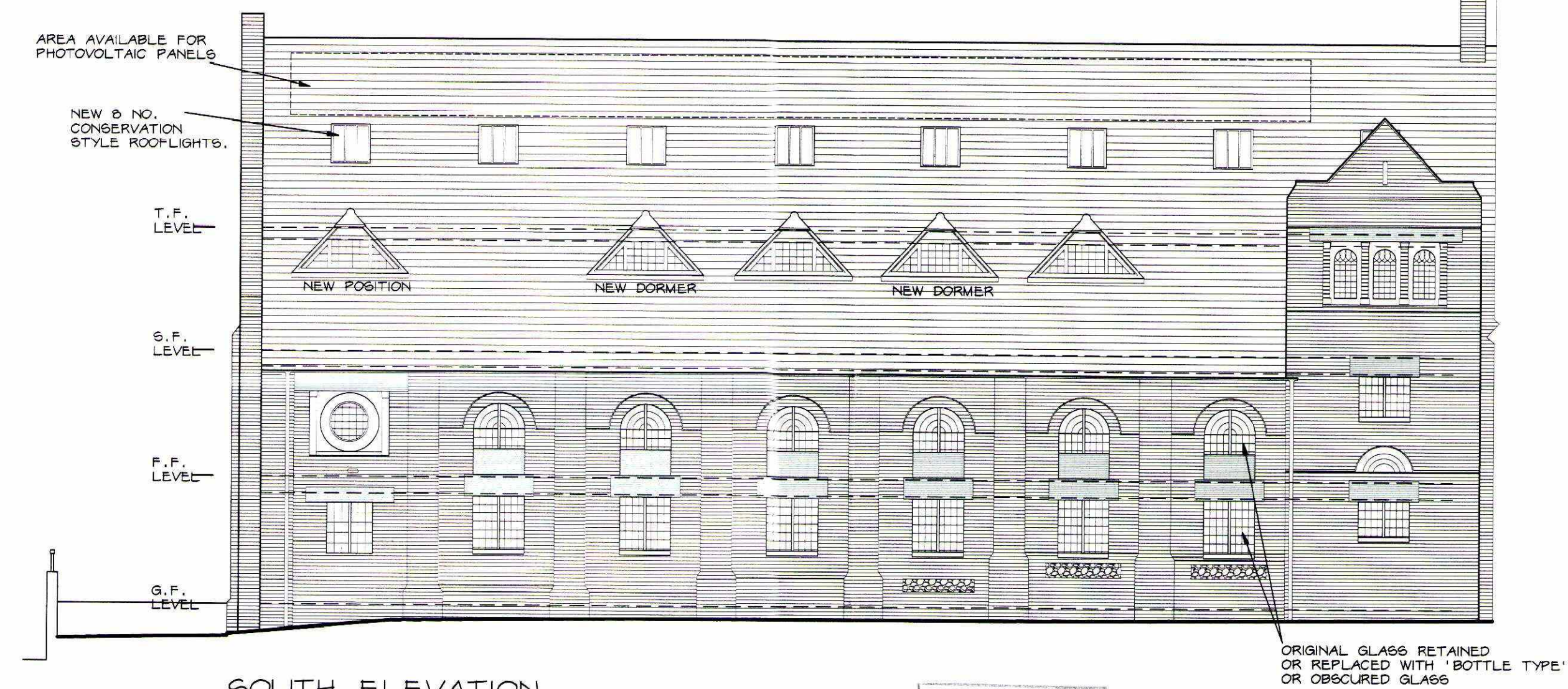
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SECTION BB

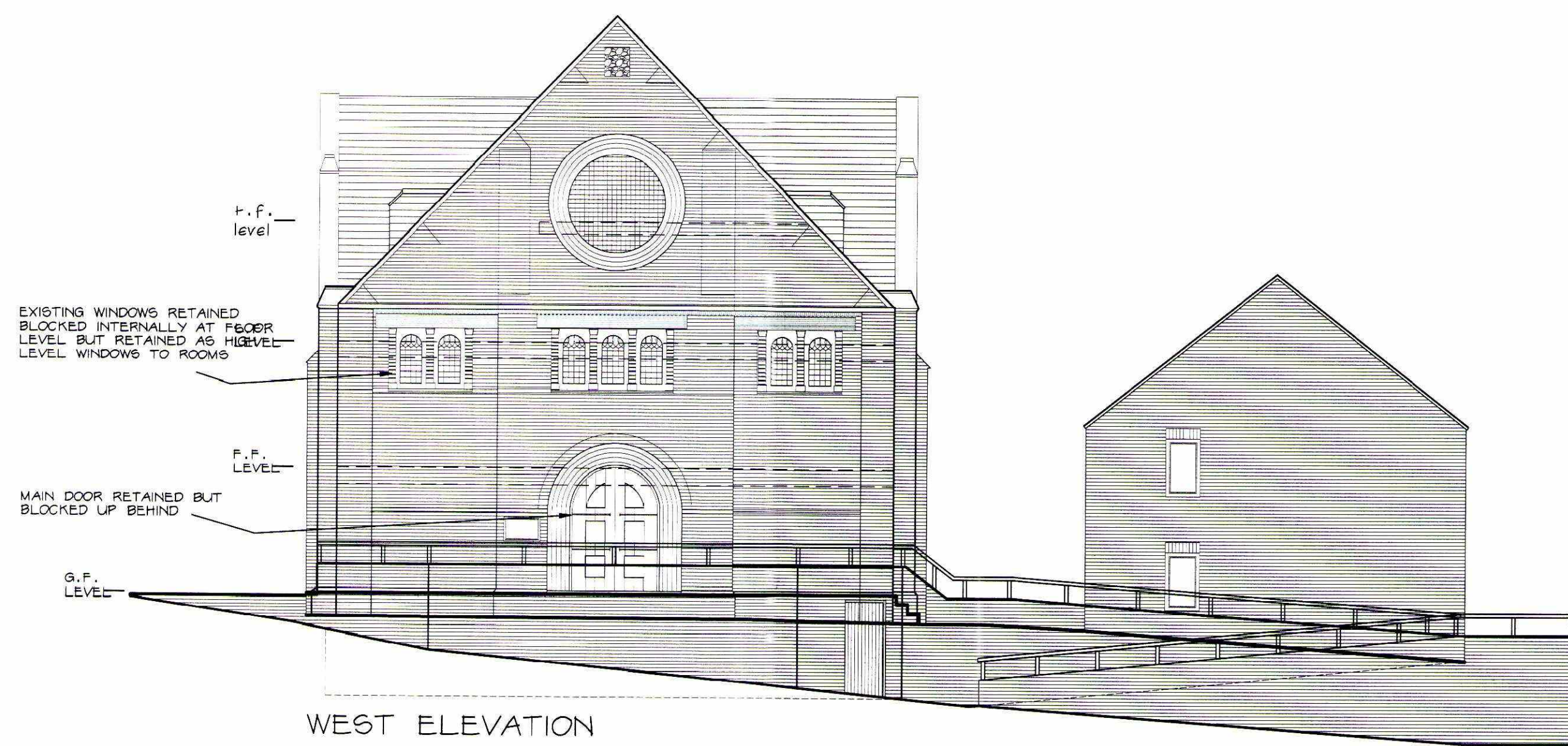


NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

Organizational Development
22 JUN 2010
Post Room



WEST ELEVATION

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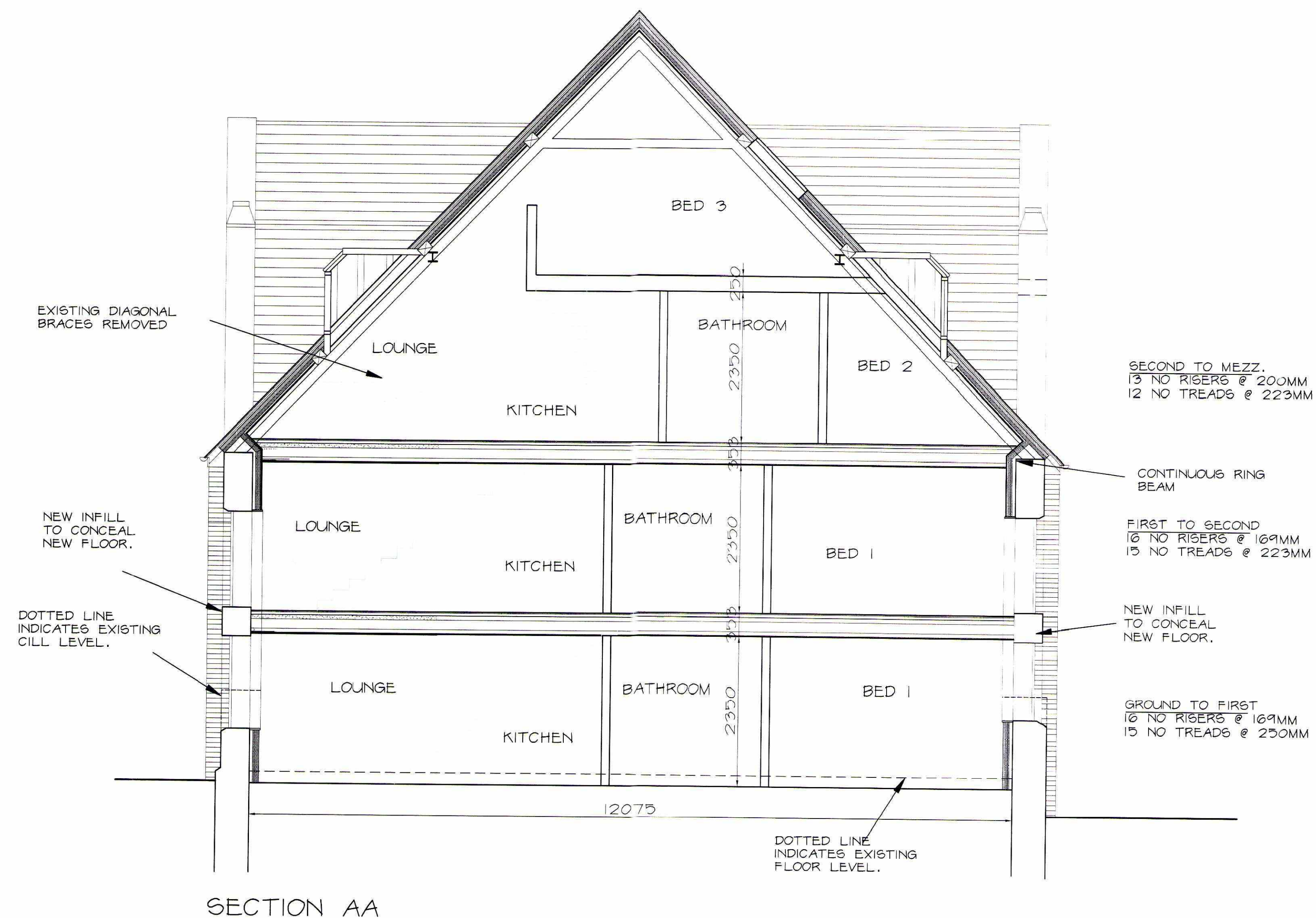
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS/SECTIONS

client
M Scott Properties LLP

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Organisational Development
22 JUN 2010
Post Room

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