



April 2025

227: 31 Manor Crescent

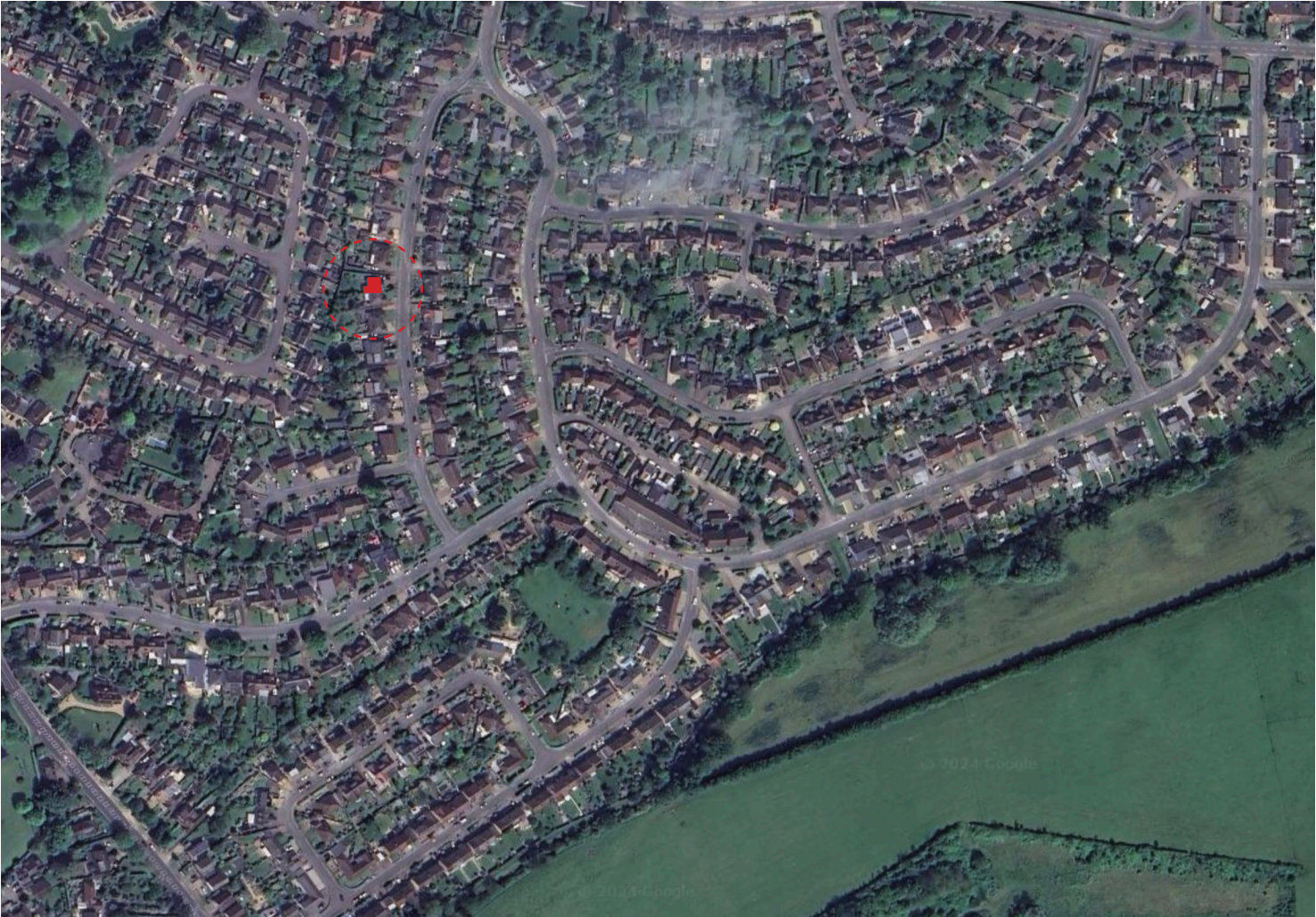
Manor Crescent, Hitchin
Design and Access Statement

Michael Collins Architects LLP

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Not to scale - Aerial Plan (C) Google 2024

This Planning Application Document relates to number 31 Manor Crescent, Hitchin.

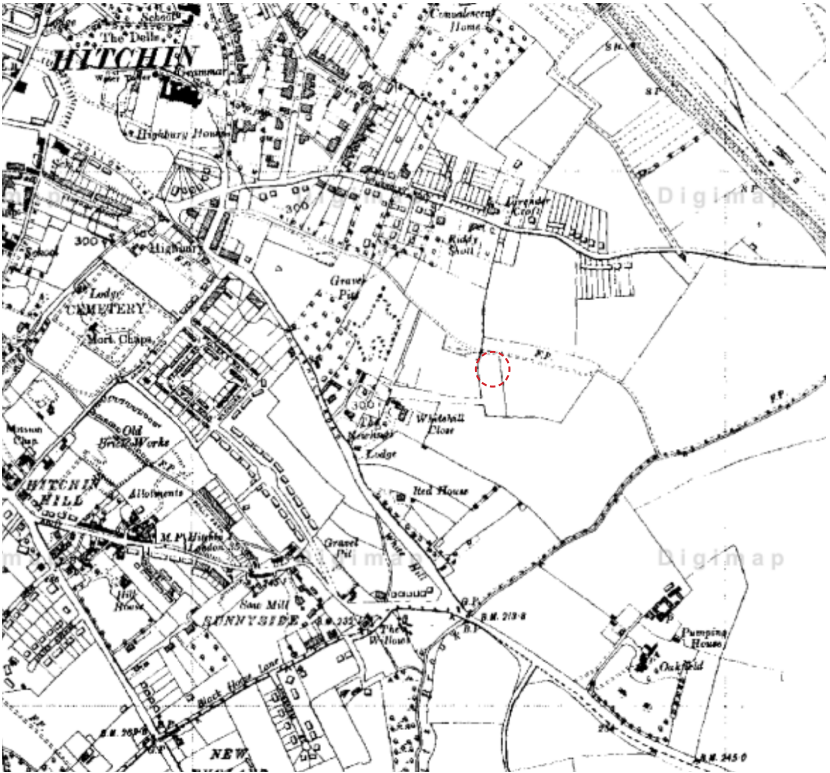
The description of the proposal is:
“New two-storey extension with internal and external structural openings/alterations reconfiguration of the existing internal spaces. New roof lights and roof extension, external alterations and replacement windows and doors to the existing building to all elevations. Erection of a new garden storage and bin store.”

1.0 Existing Building

1.0 The Existing Building

1.1 Existing Building and Use

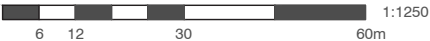
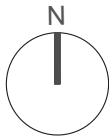
31 Manor Crescent is a semi-detached bungalow dwelling with an existing converted loft and single-storey rear and side extension. The applicant is the property (freehold) owner, and the property was recently purchased.



Circa 1938 (C) Digimap



Circa 1966 (C) Digimap



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Ownership boundary
(Indicative, refer to title deed)

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31 Manor Crescent

Job No. 227 Location Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

001

REVISION: Scale 1:1250 @:A3

1.2 Character Appraisal

The Local Character:

The site is set within the Oakfield estate area of Hitchin on the south eastern boarder of the town. This area of residential development emerged in the 1960’s as part of the post-war growth of Hitchin into the surrounding greenbelt.

The area is characterised by relatively homogeneous bungalows of several types. Two-storey dwelling types are also a feature on the eastern sides of Manor Crescent and Ninesprings Way. Many of the dwellings on Manor Crescent and surroundings roads have adapted these types over time, typically exhibiting hip to gable conversions, dormers, and rear and side extensions, to varying degrees of success.



Ariel image of Manor Crescent, illustrating numerous large rear extensions of varying forms, materials and massing. (C) Google

Unity amongst the types is characterised by steep sloping roof forms, both hipped and gable ended, and the consistent use of concrete roof tiles.

Extensions with contrasting materials typically employ hung terracotta/clay effect tiles, UPVC cladding and bituminous felt roofing. These generic building materials do not relate to the existing palette across the estate so as a result, have limited positive impact.

Dormers, both at the front and rear or properties are common along Manor Crescent. They are typically set back from the roof edge and often used in conjunction with rear ground floor extensions.

There are a number of examples of large rear extensions at both ground floor and first floor level.

Example types & adaptations along Manor Crescent:



17 Manor Crescent (C) Google



23 Manor Crescent (C) Google



4 Manor Crescent (C) Google

1.3 Existing Building Condition



a.



b.



c.

Externally:

- The front and rear of the property is composed of red facing brick with the existing extension and hip-to-gable conversion closely matching the original brickwork, both in a fair condition but with some localised areas of repair required.
- White UPVC windows and doors to all elevations and dormers.
- Existing eaves, fascias and soffits are white UPVC with matching soffit vents.
- Existing rainwater goods are black UPVC.
- The existing main roof pitches use concrete tiles, which are in a fair condition.
- The existing dormers are clad in white UPVC, which is in need of replacement.
- Both dormers and extension flat roof use a bituminous felt covering, which is in need of replacement.
- Existing Velux windows show signs of rot (visible internally), requires replacement.
- The existing access is private with access to the rear garden along the side of the property. Narrow pathway requires bins to be stored in the patio amenity area.
- There is a level change across the site of approximately 300-400mm, from the road level to the bottom of the garden.
- Existing storage shed has access issues due to site slope.

a. View of the Front facing west showing the adjacent property and Riddy Lane path.
Street View (C) Google 2020

b. View of the rear elevation from the bottom of the garden

c. View from the rear elevation to the garden facing south



d.



e.



f.



g.



h.



i.

Internally:

- Front entrance hall is inefficient with indirect access to main living areas, requiring a long doglegged hallway
- Dark living area due to room depth.
- Existing living area has no direct relationship to garden.
- Existing kitchen has limited access to dining room.
- Existing staircase is narrow and steep creating access issues.
- Step in bathroom causes access issues, particularly for a young family.
- Loft floorplan is reduced in efficiency due to position and orientation of the staircase.
- Existing en-suite arrangement is confused and in need of remedial works to make functional, including covering exposed pipework and electrical cables, and adequate ventilation to shower area.
- Differing floor and ceiling levels present in loft area.
- Difficult access to en-suite via narrow corridor with very limited headroom.
- Existing roof structure uninsulated.
- Existing roofing membrane damaged in places with light visible through.

d. Front entrance hallway

e. Living area, view from dining room

f. Staircase

g. Ground floor bathroom

h. Loft en-suite

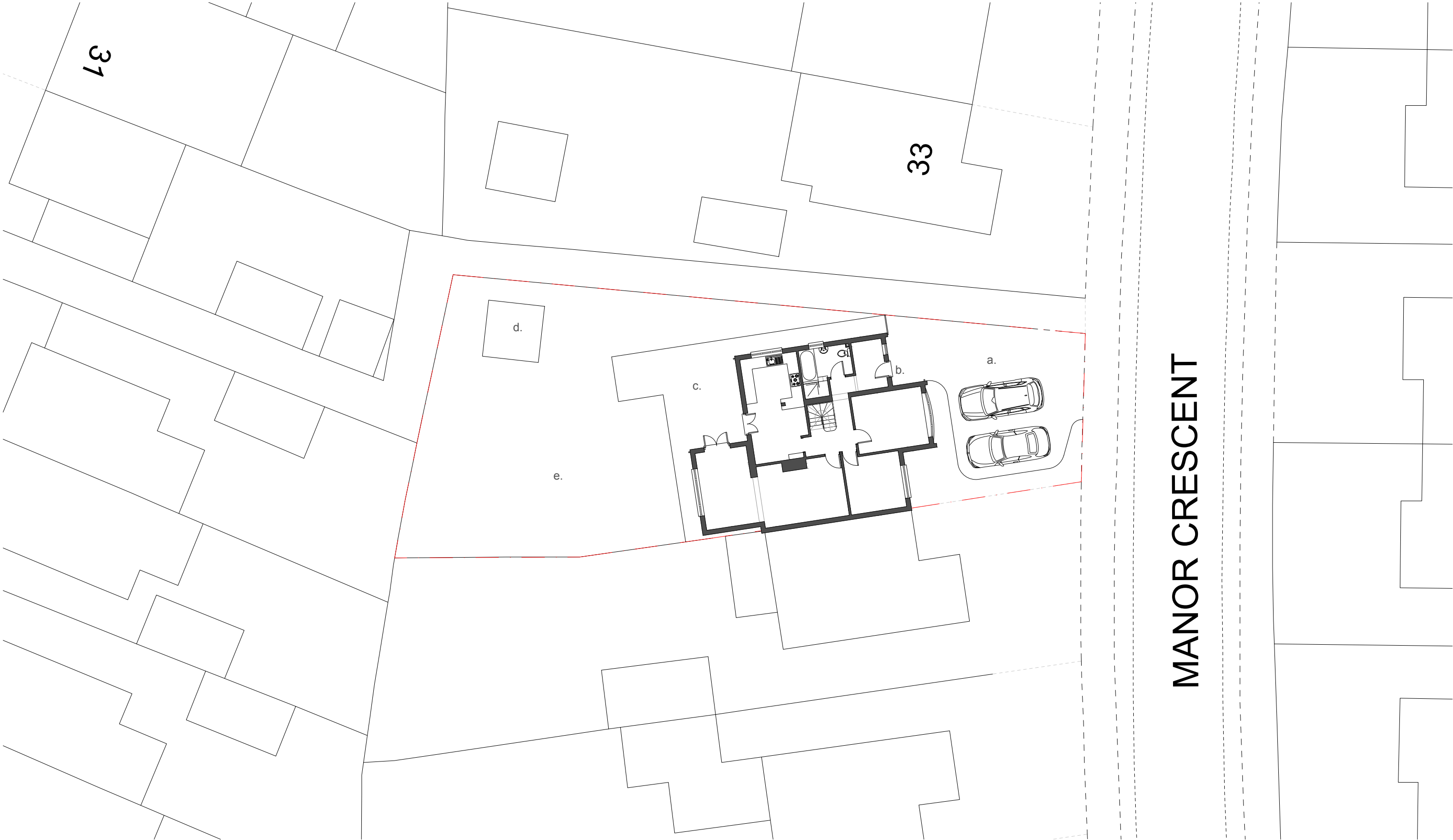
i. Corridor between loft bedroom & en-suite

j. Existing roof structure



j.

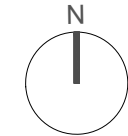
2.0 Existing Plans



MANOR CRESCENT

Notes:

- a. Driveway
- b. Entrance
- c. Patio
- d. Shed storage
- e. Sloped lawn



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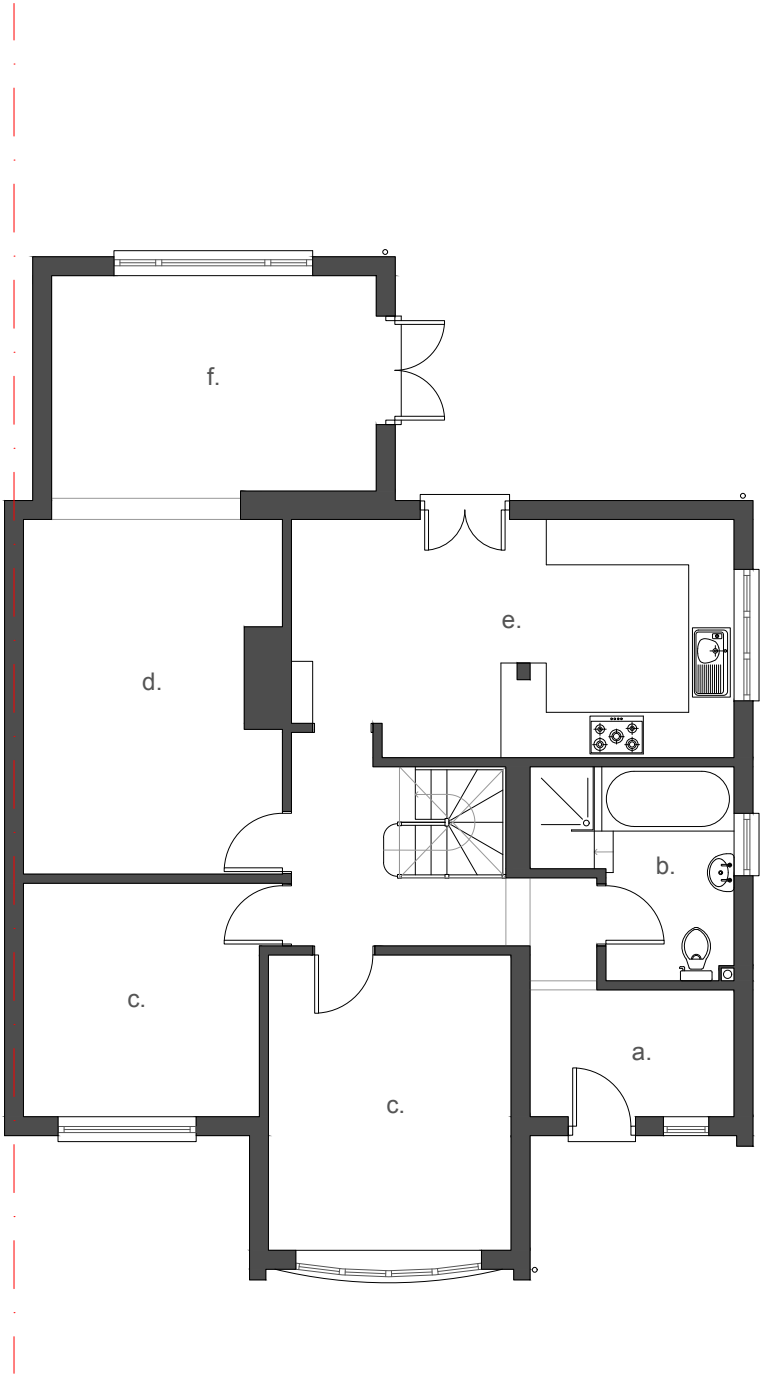
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31 Manor Crescent
Job No. **227** Existing Site Plan

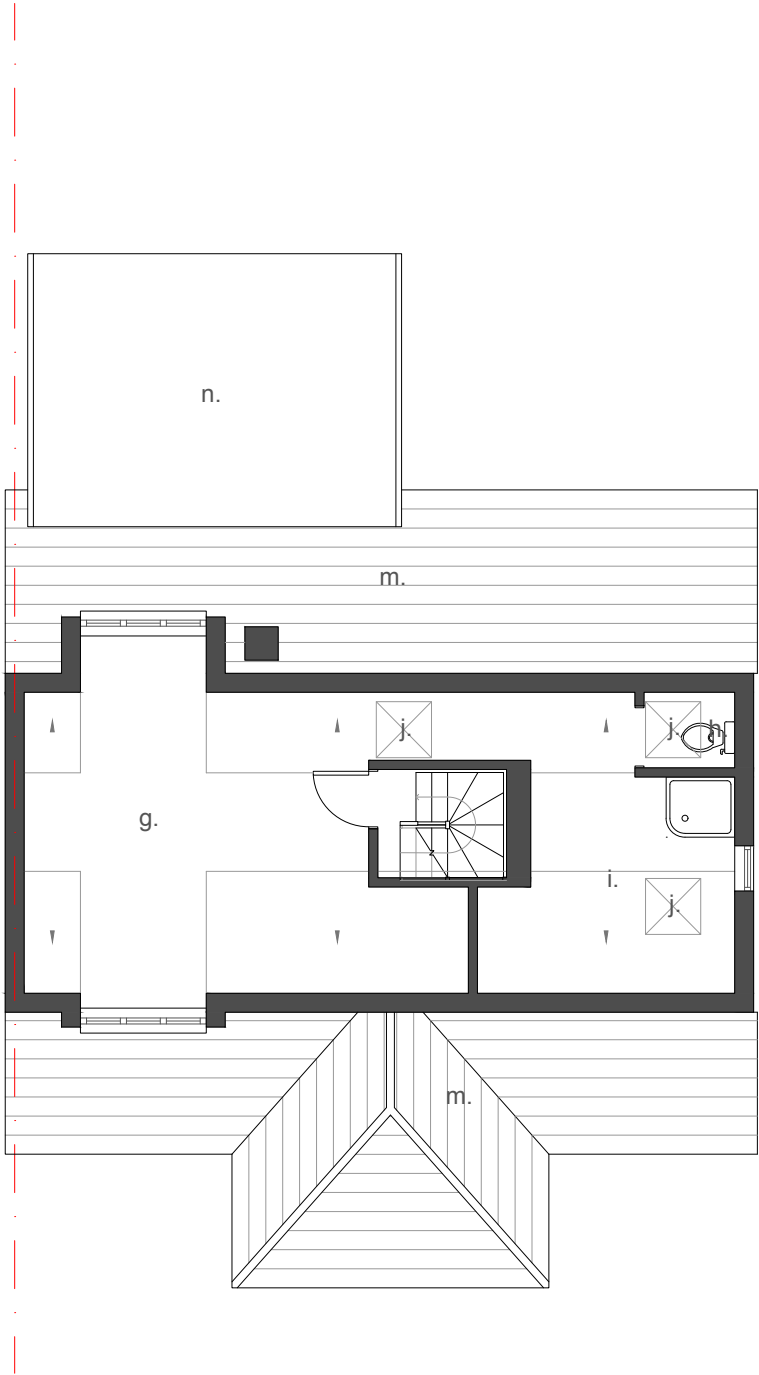
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

002
REVISION: Scale
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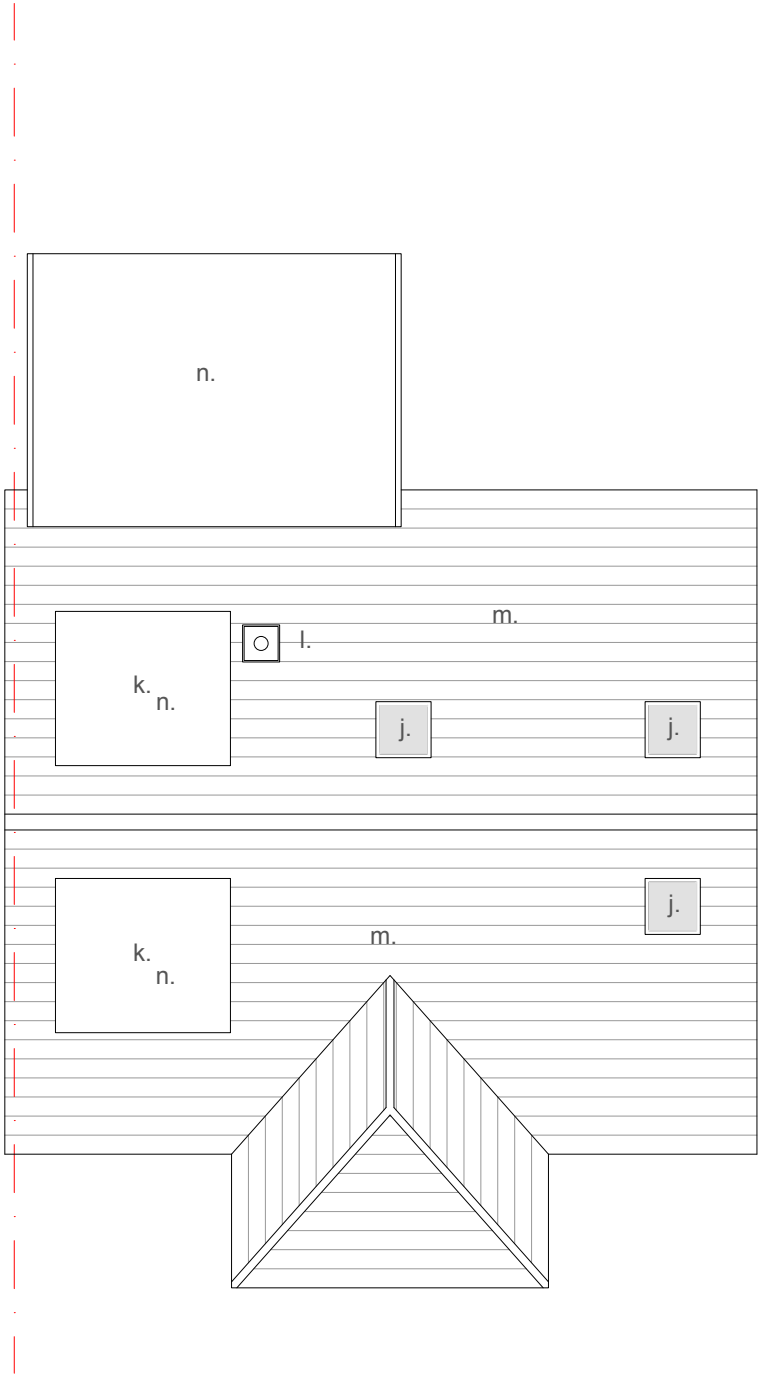
Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing Loft Plan

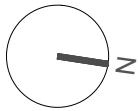
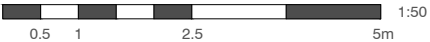


Existing Roof Plan



Notes:

- a. Entrance/lobby
- b. Bathroom
- c. Bedroom
- d. Living room
- e. Kitchen
- f. Dining room
- g. Office
- h. Toilet
- i. Dressing area
- j. Roof light
- k. Dormer
- l. Chimney
- m. Concrete roof tiles
- n. Bituminous felt roof



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31 Manor Crescent

Job No. 227 Existing GF, 1F & Roof Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

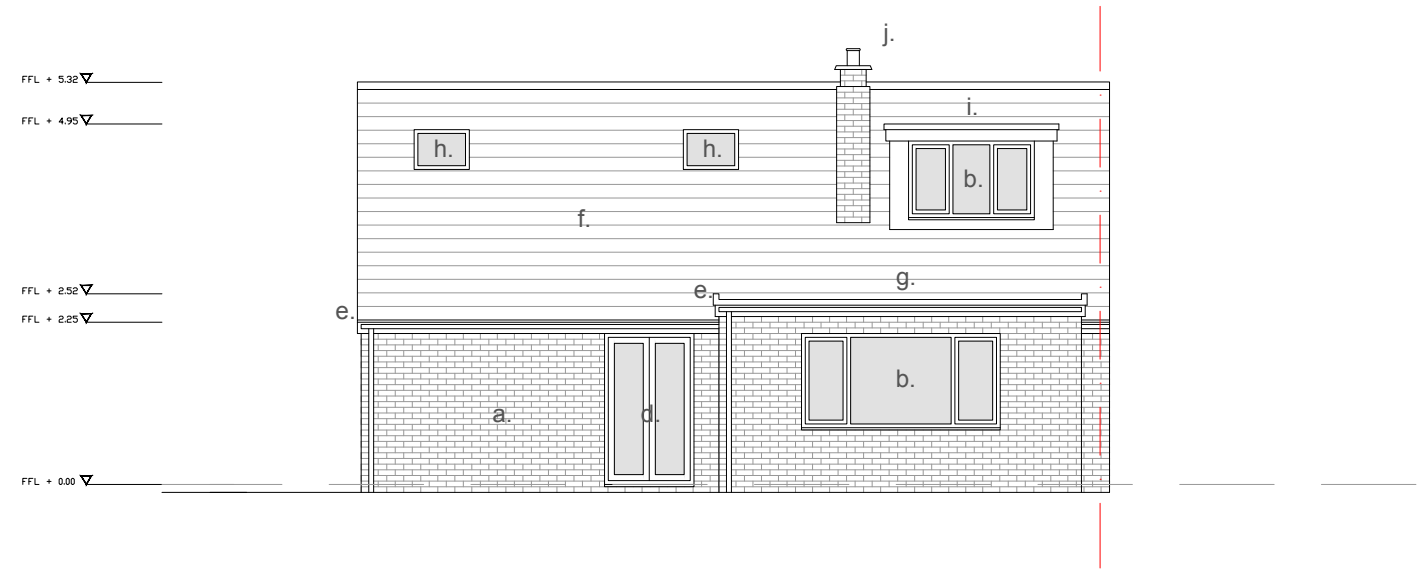
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Existing Front (East) Elevation



Existing Rear (West) Elevation

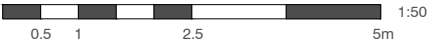


Existing Side (North) Elevation



Notes:

- a. Brickwork
- b. White UPVC window
- c. White painted timber framed portal window
- d. White UPVC doors
- e. Black UPVC rainwater goods
- f. Concrete tiled roof
- g. Flat felt roof
- h. White UPVC cladding
- i. Dormer
- j. Chimney



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31 Manor Crescent

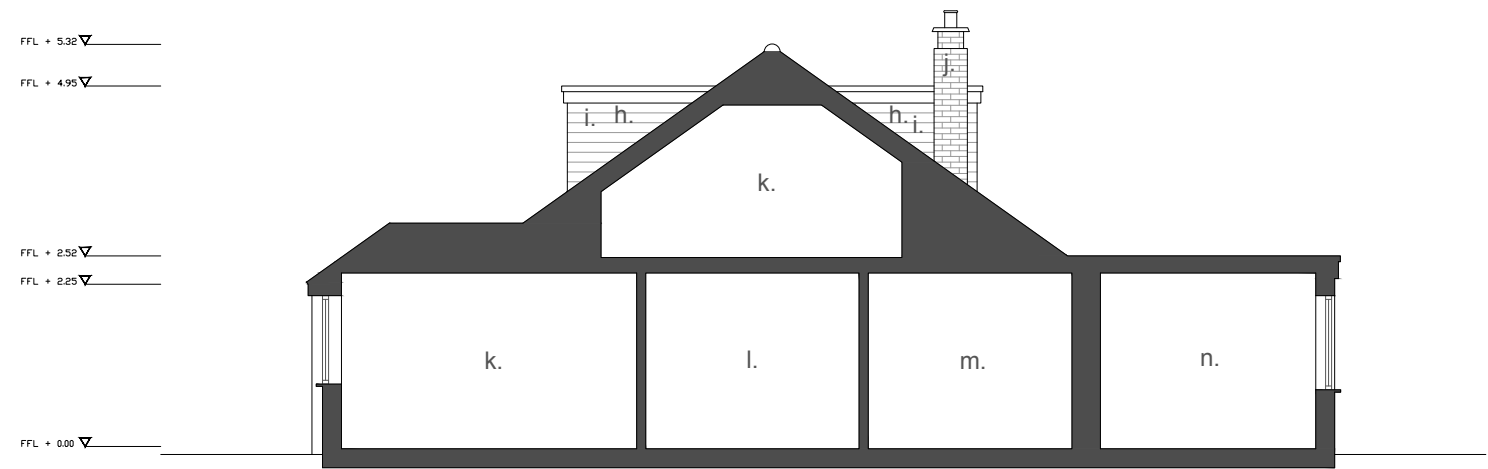
Job No. 227 Existing Elevations

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

004

REVISION: Scale 1:50 @:A1

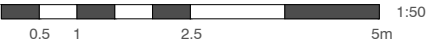
Existing Section AA



Notes:

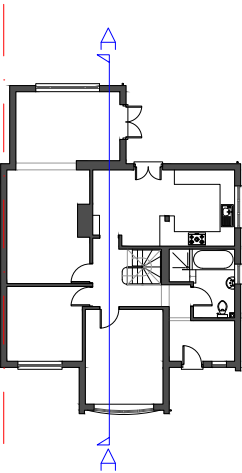
- a. Brickwork
- b. White UPVC window
- c. White painted timber framed portal window
- d. White UPVC doors
- e. Black UPVC rainwater goods
- f. Concrete tiled roof

- g. Flat felt roof
- h. White UPVC cladding
- i. Dormer
- j. Chimney
- k. Bedroom
- l. Hallway
- m. Kitchen
- n. Dining room



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Key plan (not to scale)

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31 Manor Crescent
Job No. **227** Existing Sections

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Preliminary

005
REVISION: Scale
1:50 @:A1

3.0 Proposed Design

3.1 Design Principals



Addressing existing conditions:

- 1. Limited connection from living areas to garden.
- 2. Existing extensions do not contribute positively to the composition of the rear facade.
- 3. Front entrance access creates convoluted internal circulation.
- 4. Existing rooflights in need of repair.
- 5. Under-utilised space to the side of dwelling.
- 6. Steep slope of garden prevents easy use, limited definition of functions for each garden area.
- 7. Garden storage is difficult to access.
- 8. Limited light into the centre of the dwelling plan, at ground and loft floor level.

Key design ideas:

The proposal is forthrightly a contemporary design that draws from the existing context but expresses honestly, through material choice and sharp detailing, that it is a modern addition.

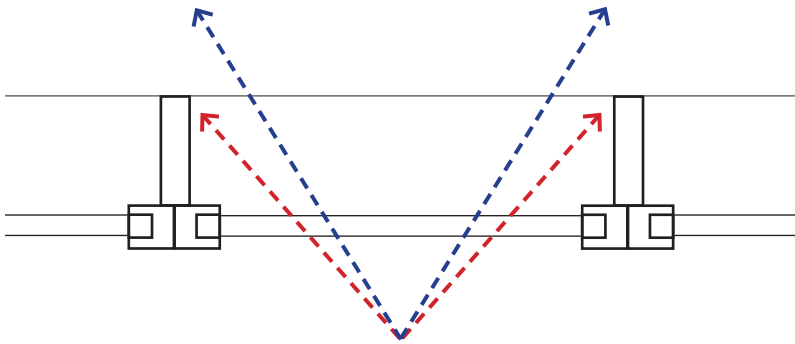
- a. The extension creates a stepped relationship to the existing gable reducing its mass when viewed from the street scape.
- b. Dormer set in to be read as a secondary element.
- c. The use of fiber cement board cladding blends with the existing roofscape whilst the use of timber and the fenestration presents a softer facade to the garden.
- d. Moving the staircase improves internal circulation and gallery space connects the first floor with living areas.
- e. A new side entrance to the utility room.
- f. A reconfigured garden-facing elevation that helps define the use of the rear garden area, incorporating: space to sit and view the garden from a sunken level in the dining area, level access from living area to the patio which terraces up the slope creating a series of areas for outdoor dining, relaxing and gardening

- g. Creating an open plan sequence of spaces, existing living space connected to a new kitchen / hallway.
- h. Garden storage relocated for better access, incorporating bin store.
- i. New tree planting to improve sense of privacy from Riddy Lane path.
- j. New/re-clad front dormers related to existing character in the area.
- k. British Larch mullion detailing around windows narrows viewing splays maintaining privacy for neighbouring dwellings and for internal spaces.
- l. Allowing light into the centre of the plan through the staircase/gallery.
- m. New seedum roofs to promote biodiversity and relate building form to the garden.

Relationship to neighbouring dwellings

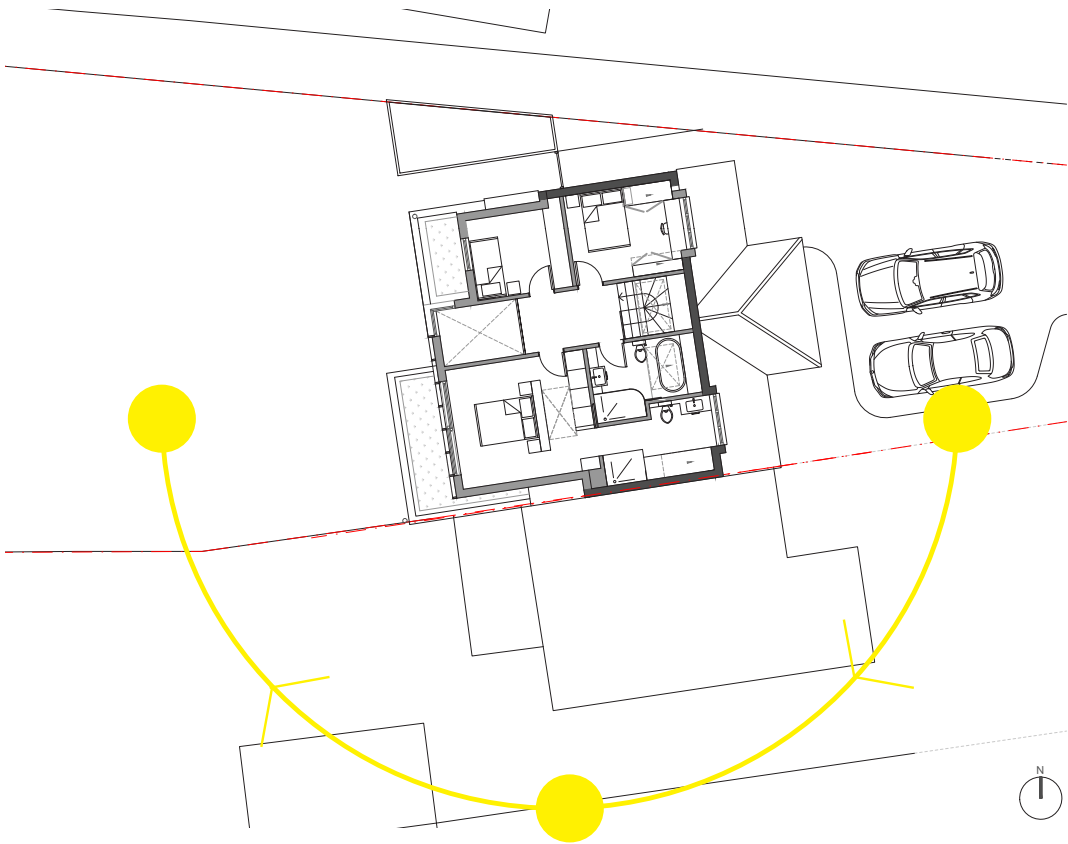
1. Privacy

In addition to creating a rhythm of bays that help to define the design, the larch mullion detail to the first floor windows narrows the visibility splay to ensure privacy to the neighbouring dwelling. This process also works in reverse. A limited amount of glazing will be viewable from the garden of the adjoining neighbour, or from Riddy Lane path.



2. Overshadowing

The orientation of the building prevents the extension overshadowing the neighbouring property. The dormer is also set back from the party wall line.



First floor site plan, not to scale



View from no. 29 garden, glazing is obscured by timber mullions

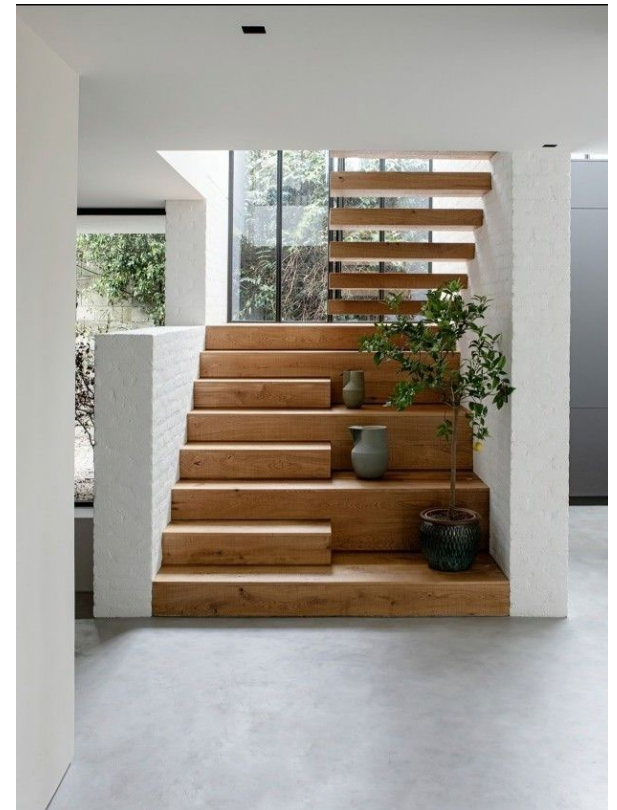


View from garden, looking South-East

3.2 Design Precedents

Key materials & structural ideas:

- Sharp, contemporary detailing of extension with aluminium parapets.
- Exposed timber & steel structure, honestly expressed through standard building materials.
- Light filled stair and gallery
- Framed views out to garden spaces, utilising window seats and timber mullions
- Larch cladding creates softness in contrast to brick and fiber cement



3.3 Material Palette



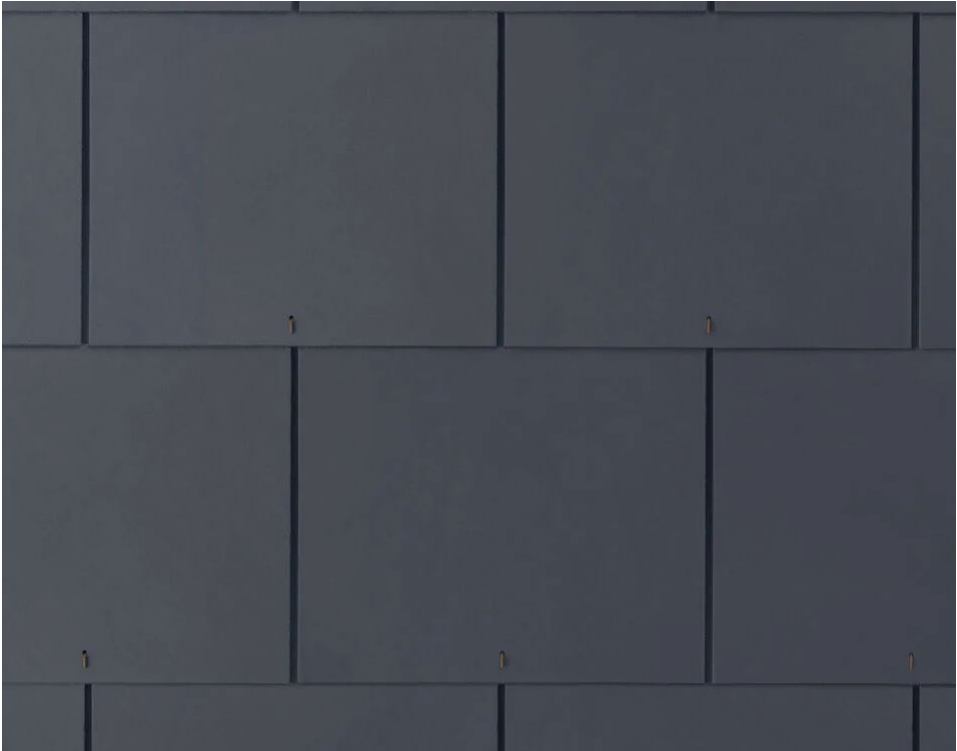
a.



b.



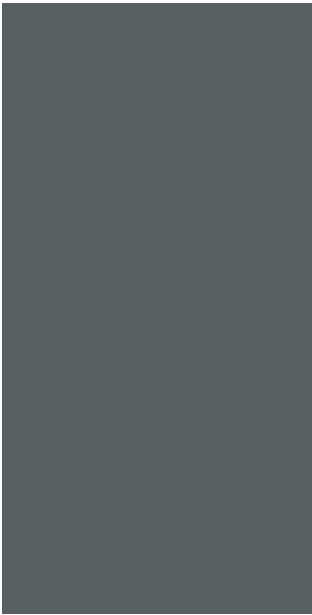
c.



d.



e.



f.



g.



h.



- a. British Larch cladding
- b. Aluminium cappings
- c. Fiber cement cladding boards
- d. Fiber cement tiles
- e. Glazing frame finish colours
- f. Exposed pine structural elements
- g. Porcelain/Limestone paving
- h. Green seedum roof and wildflower planting