

Report to Planning Committee

7 September 2022

Application Reference	DC/22/67197
Application Received	23 June 2022
Application Description	Retention of existing garage with 2 No. side dormers to be used as storage and administration building for adjacent residential development.
Application Address	Beechwood Court 435 - 437 Halesowen Road Cradley Heath B64 7JD
Applicant	Northway Developments Limited
Ward	Cradley Heath & Old Hill
Contact Officer	Carl Mercer carl_mercer@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

1.1 That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions relating to:

- (i) External materials;
- (ii) All glazing at first floor to be obscure and retained as such (altered within three months of decision);
- (iii) Use to remain ancillary to the existing residential block;
- (iv) Not to be used for residential; and



- (v) Hours of office use limited to between 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday with no office use on bank or public holidays.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The proposal raises no significant concerns from a design perspective and the use would not harm the amenity of the surrounding area subject to appropriately worded conditions.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

N/A.

4 Context

- 4.1 The application is being reported to your Planning Committee because it has received three objections.
- 4.2 To assist members with site context, a link to Google Maps is provided below:

[Beechwood Court, Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath](#)

5 Key Considerations

- 5.1 The material planning considerations which are relevant to this application are:

Government policy (NPPF);
Design, appearance and materials;
Loss of privacy;
The proposed use; and
Noise.



6. The Application Site

- 6.1 The application relates to an existing outbuilding within the grounds of an apartment block situated on the northeast side of Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath. The character of the surrounding area is predominantly residential.

7. Planning History

- 7.1 None.

8. Application Details

- 8.1 Retrospective consent is sought for works to an existing outbuilding; namely, rendering the side walls, replacing the roof and inserting two dormer windows. The applicant intends that the ground floor of the building would be used as storage space and the first floor as office space in association with the existing residential block.
- 8.2 Amended plans have been received which show both dormers to be obscurely glazed.

9. Publicity

- 9.1 The application has been publicised by neighbour notification letter with three objections being received.

9.2 Objections

The main points of objection may be summarised as follows:

- i) Design – out of character with the surrounding area and roof raised;
- ii) Loss of privacy;
- iii) Noise from use; and



iv) Uncertainly over proposed use/office hours/employee numbers.

These points will be discussed further in paragraph 13 below (Material Considerations).

10. Consultee responses

10.1 None received - as the development is minor in nature and the proposed use would be ancillary to the existing apartment building.

11. National Planning Policy

11.1 National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development but states that local circumstances should be taken into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities for each area.

12. Local Planning Policy

12.1 The following policies of the council's development plan are relevant:

BCCS

ENV3 – Design Quality

SADD –

SAD EOS 9 - Urban Design Principles

12.2 As discussed below, the proposal raises no significant concerns in respect of design and is therefore compliant with policy ENV3 and SAD EOS 9.



13. Material Considerations

13.1 National and local planning policy considerations have been referred to above in sections 11 and 12. With regards to the other material considerations, these are highlighted below:

13.2 Design, appearance and materials

The footprint of the building has not altered; however, the external appearance has arguably been improved. Whilst an objector has stated that the roof has been raised, a comparison of Google Maps images at street view shows that the rise in roof height, if any, is negligible:



Fig 1 – 2022



Fig 2 - 2021

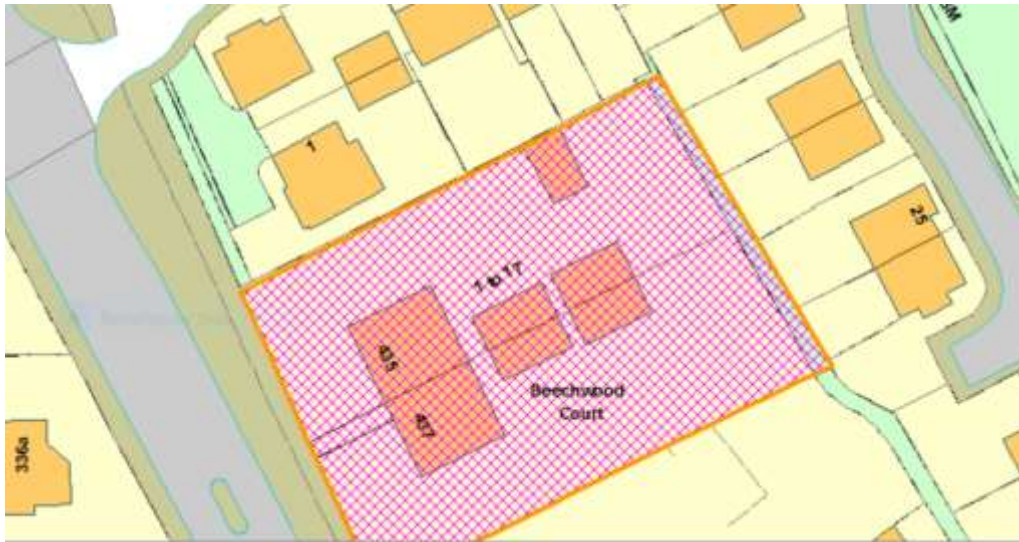
The materials used are of an acceptable appearance and, whilst they depart from the red brick character of the area, the building is not highly noticeable from the public realm and causes no harm to the visual amenity of the area. The dormers are proportionate to the existing roof slope and assimilate into the existing roof as per council design guidance.

13.3 Loss of privacy

The greatest impact on privacy would be to the rear of 1 Haden Cross Drive. Other surrounding properties are either at a higher land level or



the dormers do not face those properties. The closest comparable separation distance in the council's design guidance between rear facing elevations is 21 metres. However, the rears of the buildings do not directly face each other and therefore it is a judgement call as to how significant the occupier of no. 1 is affected.



Given that the distance between the front elevation of the application building and the rear of no.1 is approximately 17.8 metres, that it is at a lower land level than no.1 and is not directly to the rear, if the window were to be obscurely glazed as noted on plan there would be no appreciable impact on privacy. Such glazing has been shown on the amended the plans and this can be reinforced by condition.

13.4 The proposed use

Concerns have been raised over the proposed use of the building and that it was previously proposed to be a gym for the use of residents of Beechwood Court. The agent clarifies: *'The Building Regs application which predates this application was generated after complaints about the state of the building by the residents, so initially it was refurbished with the intention that they could use as gym, games room area. Upon reflection, and having sought feedback from the residents, there would appear to be no demand for this, so will be retained by the applicant for*



the purpose below [storage/office] and access will be provided only to staff and letting agents with use of a keypad access control.'

13.5 Regarding hours of use, the agent continues: '*... the building will be used by site operatives when working onsite or on the 40 flats. It will have a limited amount of people, max 4 onsite at any one time and as well as providing welfare and administration it will also be used to store materials. When the letting agents are on site, they may use the building to carry out administrative duties etc. The hours of operation will be normal Monday – Friday, 8am - 4pm on an infrequent basis subject to when its use is required.'*

13.6 **Noise**

The existing building could have been used for storage in any case and an office use raises no significant concerns regarding noise. Indeed, office and residential are often viewed as acceptable co-uses. The hours of operation can be conditioned to alleviate any further concerns.

13.7 **Conclusion**

Given the explanations provided above, I am of the opinion that the external alterations and proposed use are acceptable and cause no harm to the residential or visual amenity of the surrounding area.

14 **Alternative Options**

14.1 Refusal of the application is an option if there are material planning reasons for doing so. Given that no significant objections are raised to the proposal which cannot be addressed by condition, it is considered that refusal of the application would not be easily defensible at appeal.



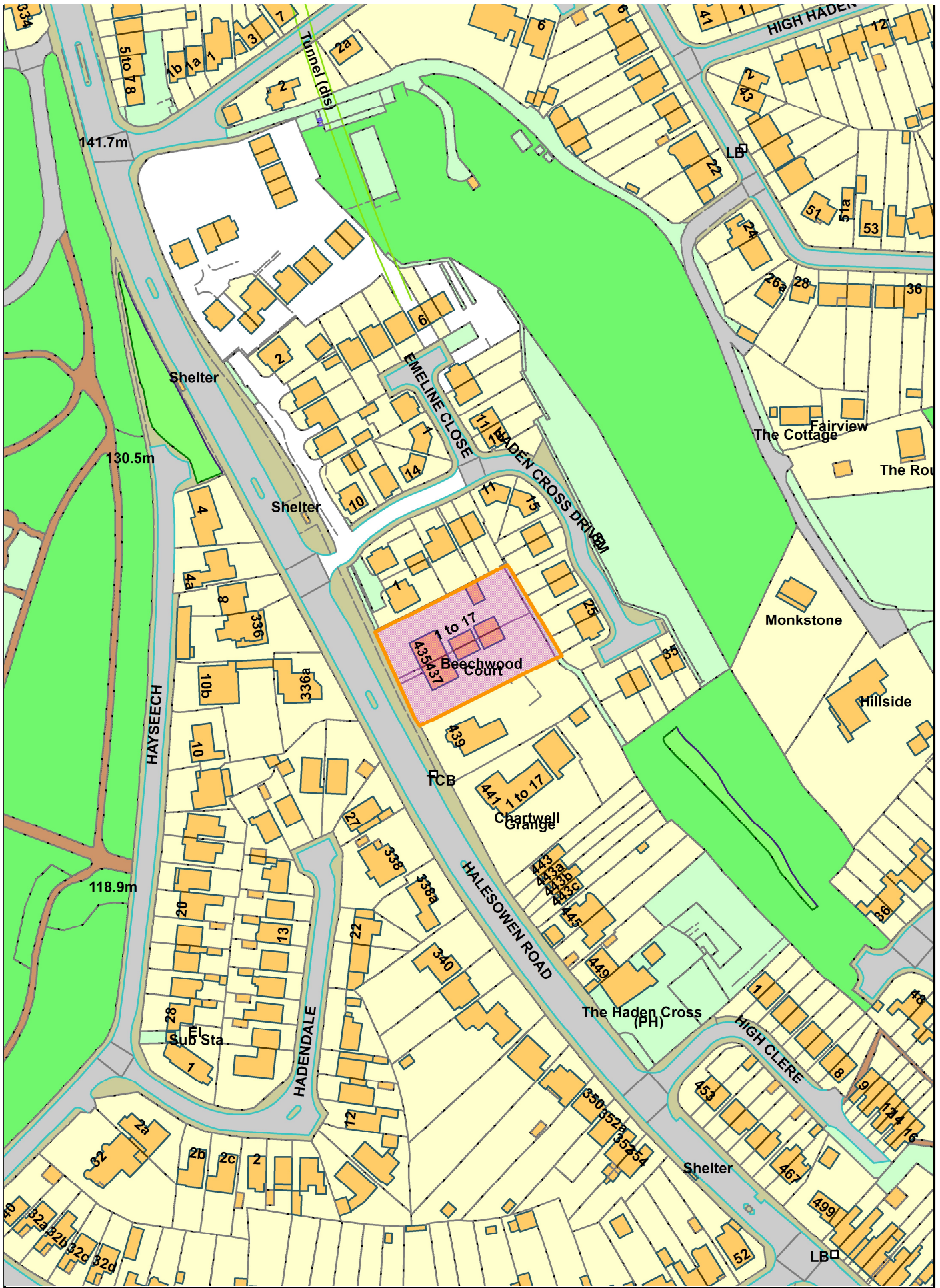
15 Implications

Resources:	When a planning application is refused the applicant has a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, and they can make a claim for costs against the council.
Legal and Governance:	This application is submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
Risk:	None.
Equality:	There are no equality issues arising from this proposal and therefore an equality impact assessment has not been carried out.
Health and Wellbeing:	None.
Social Value	None.

16. Appendices

Site Plan
Context Plan
P-002 Rev 2





This Drawing is a Copyright of
CRONIN DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANCY LIMITED
 Do Not Scale from this Drawing.
 Use figured dimensions ONLY. If in doubt ASK!
 ALL dimensions to be checked on site before work commences.
 ANY discrepancies are to be reported immediately.
 This drawing to be read in conjunction with all Project and Consultants Performance Specifications, Structural / Civil Engineers drawings / calculations, and any Specialist Sub-Contractors Designed Element drawings.



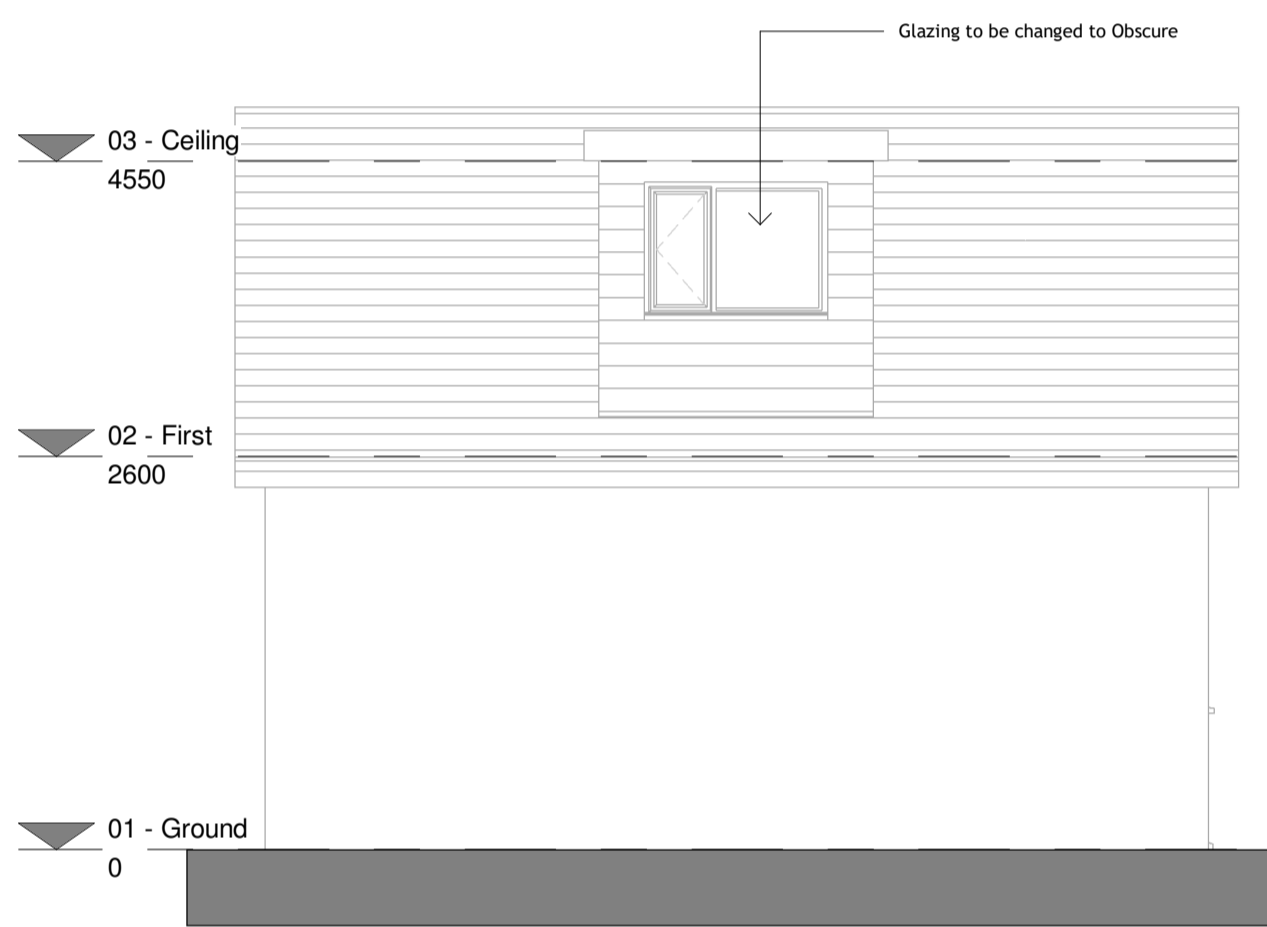
View of Front Elevation



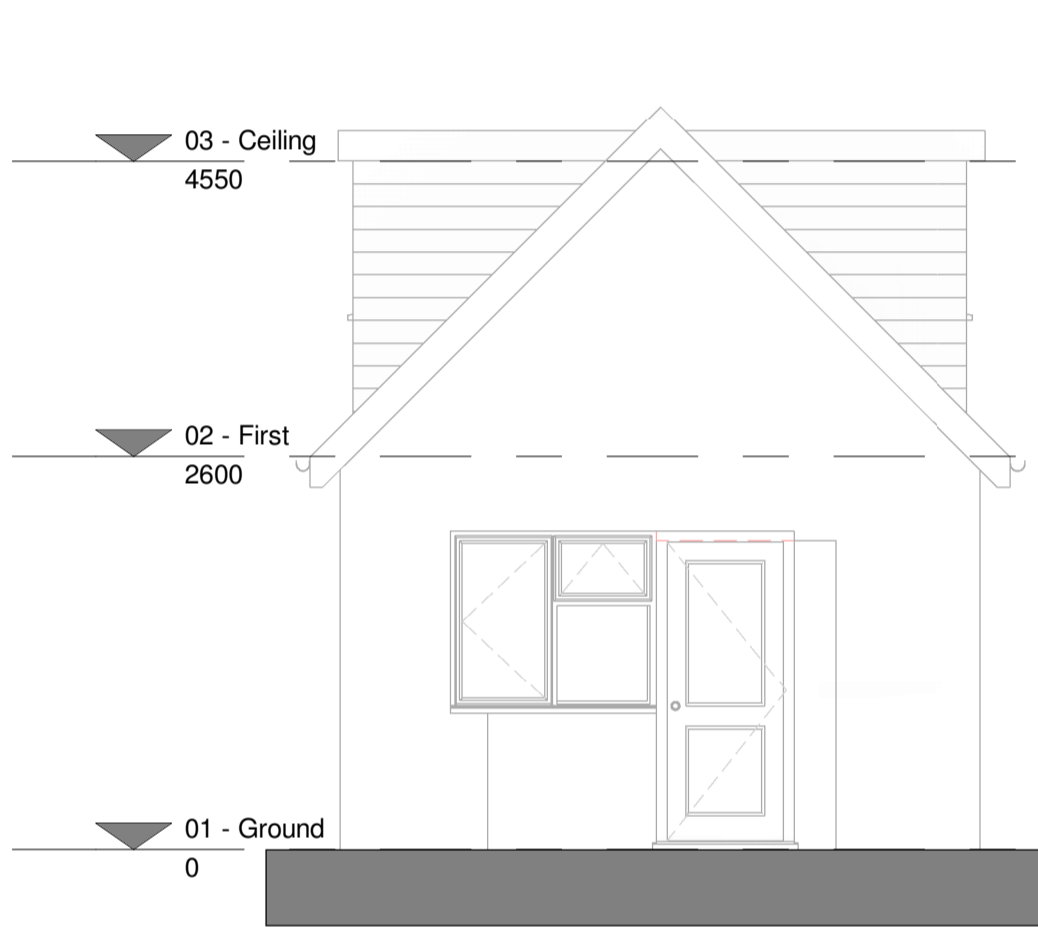
Internal View of Ground Floor



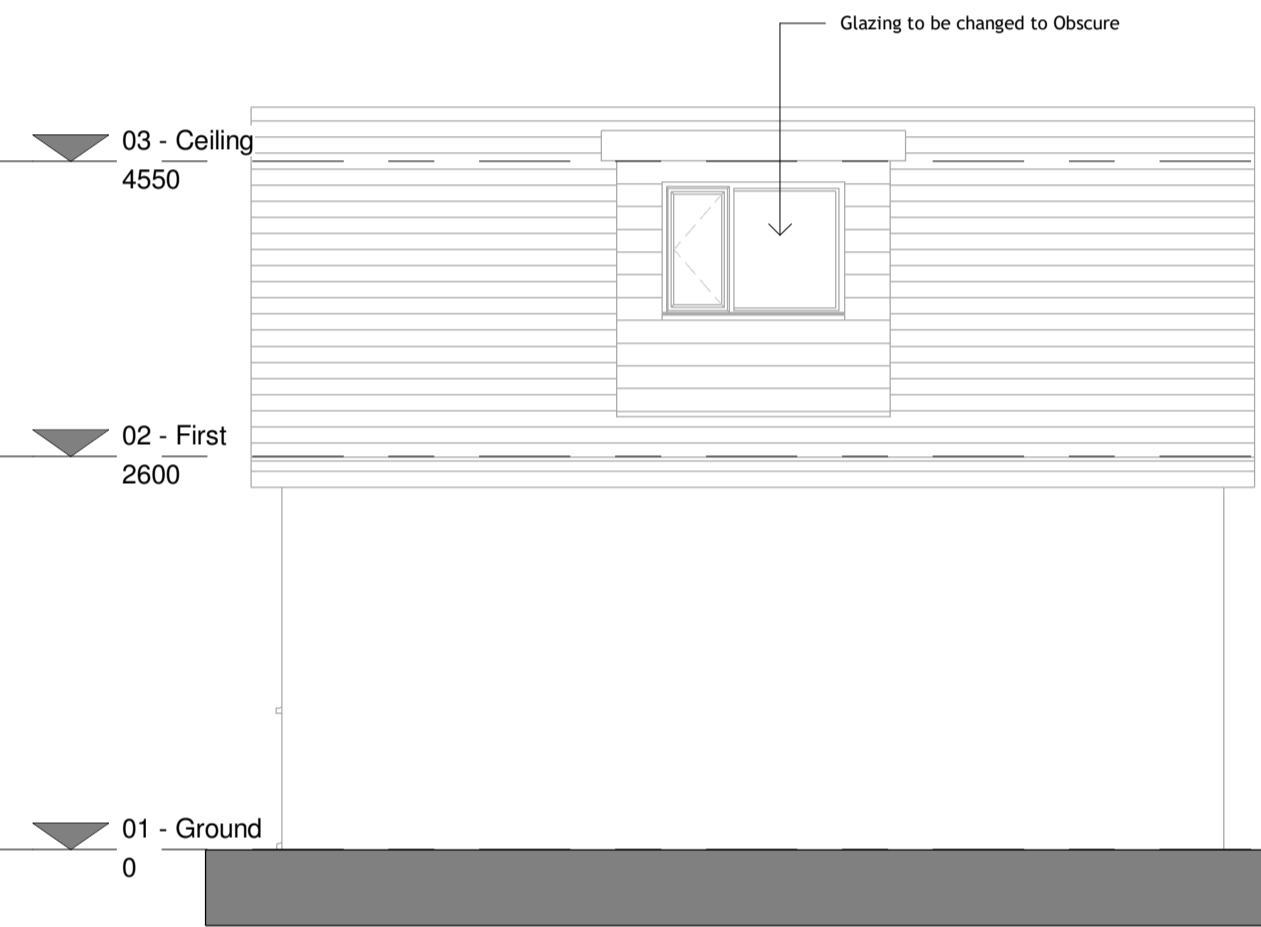
Internal View of First Floor



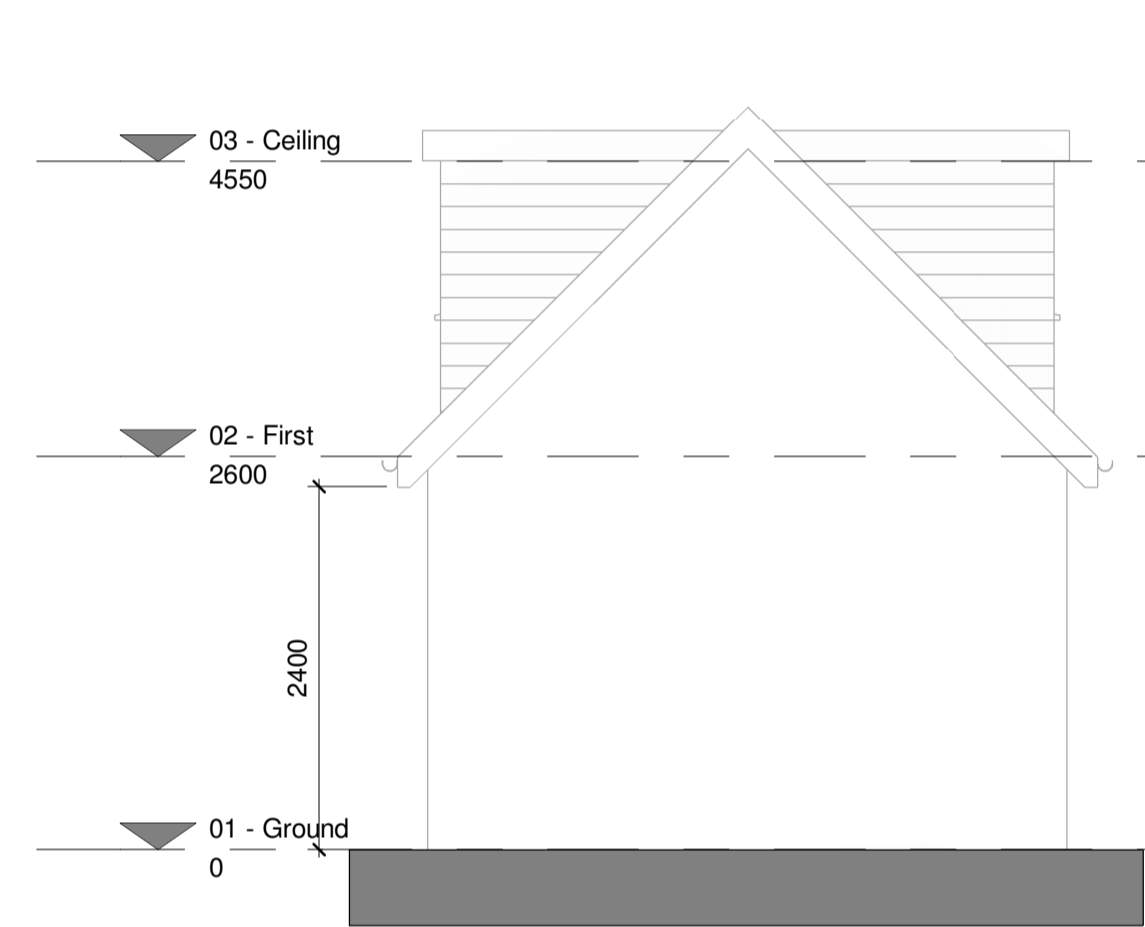
Front Elevation - Proposed
1 : 50



RH Side Elevation - Proposed
1 : 50

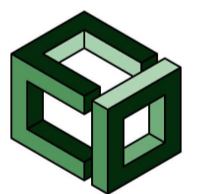


Rear Elevation - Proposed
1 : 50



LH Side Elevation - Proposed
1 : 50

Rev	Date	Description	Issued by
2	25/07/22	Obscure glazing note added to Front elevation as per Planning Officer request dated 25th July 2022	AJC
1	22/06/22	PLANNING APPLICATION	AJC



Cronin Development Consultancy Limited
 53 Springfield Crescent, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield,
 West Midlands, B76 2SS
 t: 0121 240 7730 m: 07957 465624
 e: andy.cronin@cronindc.co.uk

PROJECT
**Beechwood Court,
 435 437 Halesowen Road,
 Cradley Heath, B64 7JD**

TITLE
**PLANNING - Proposed Plans,
 Elevations and Photomontage**

CLIENT
Northway Developments Ltd

STATUS
PLANNING

DRAWN BY
 AJC

CHECKED BY
 AJC

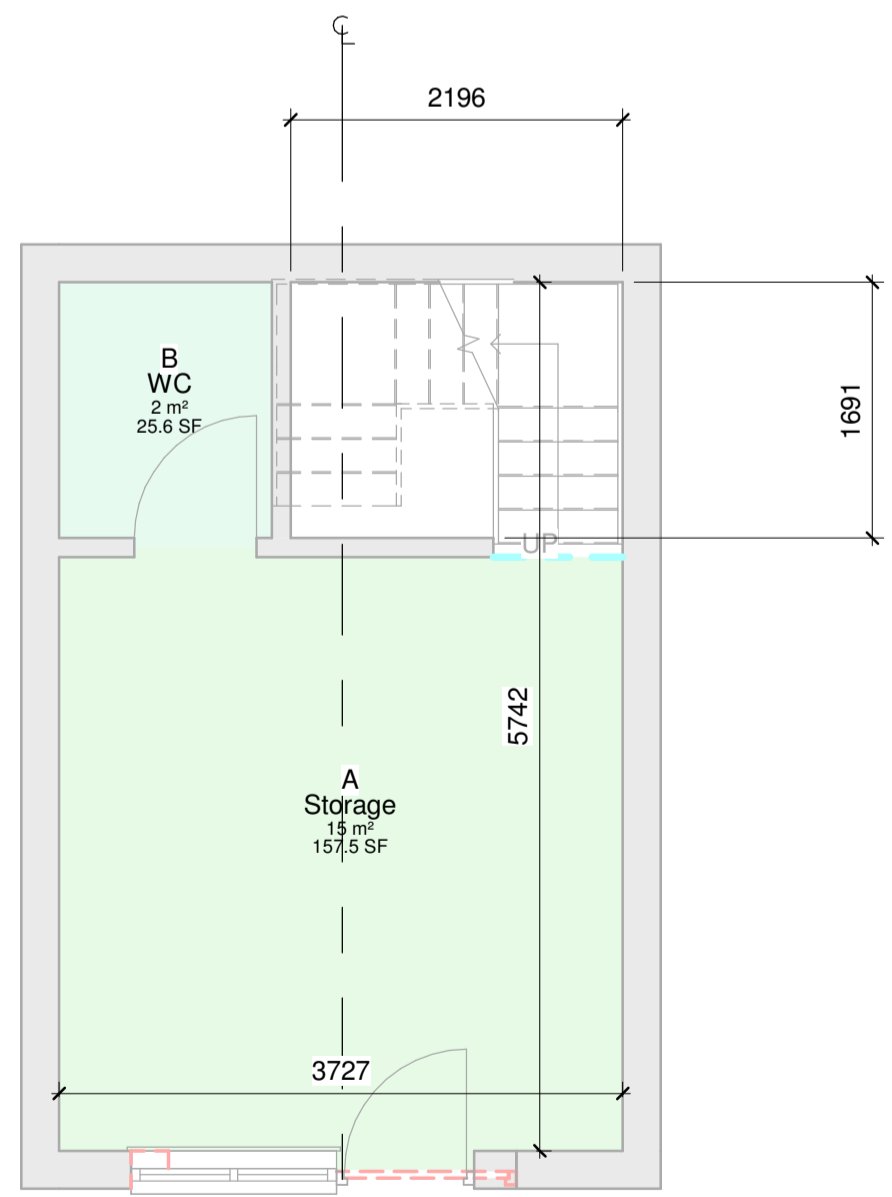
DATE
 06/14/22

SCALE (to A1)
 1 : 50

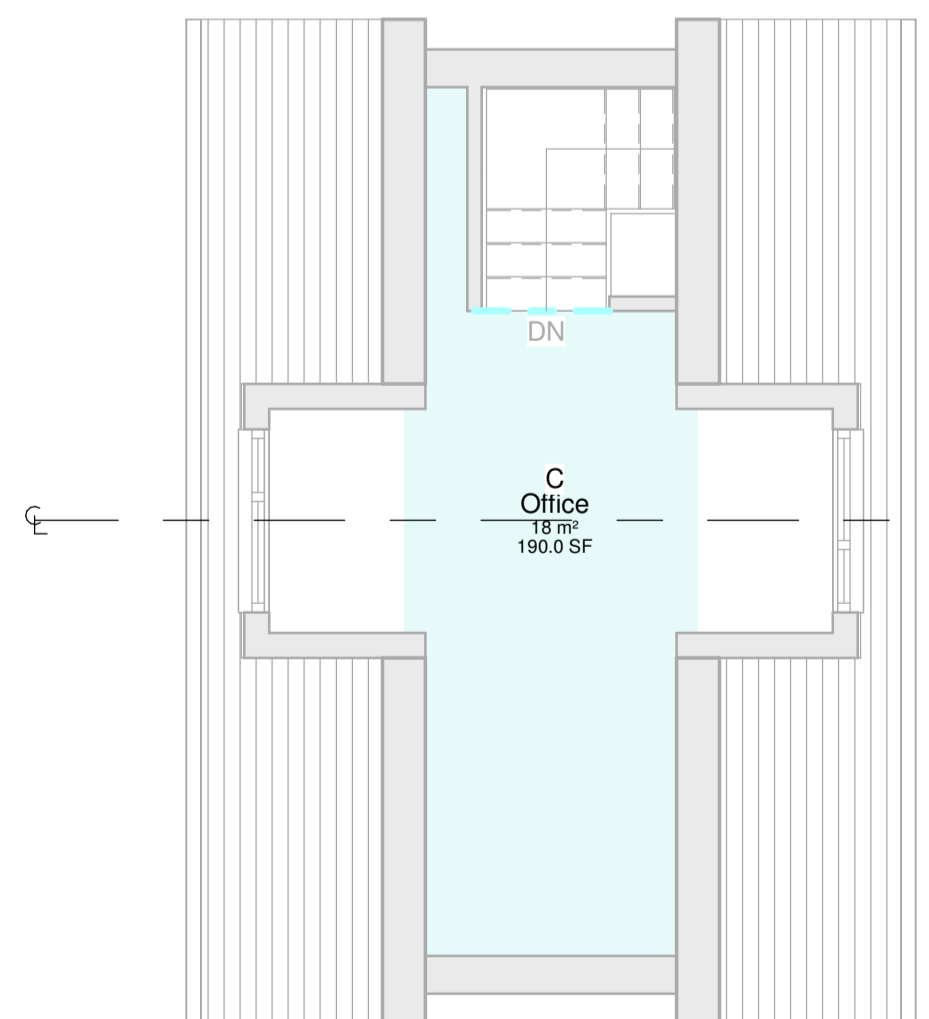
PROJECT NUMBER
 22-007

DRAWING NUMBER
P-002

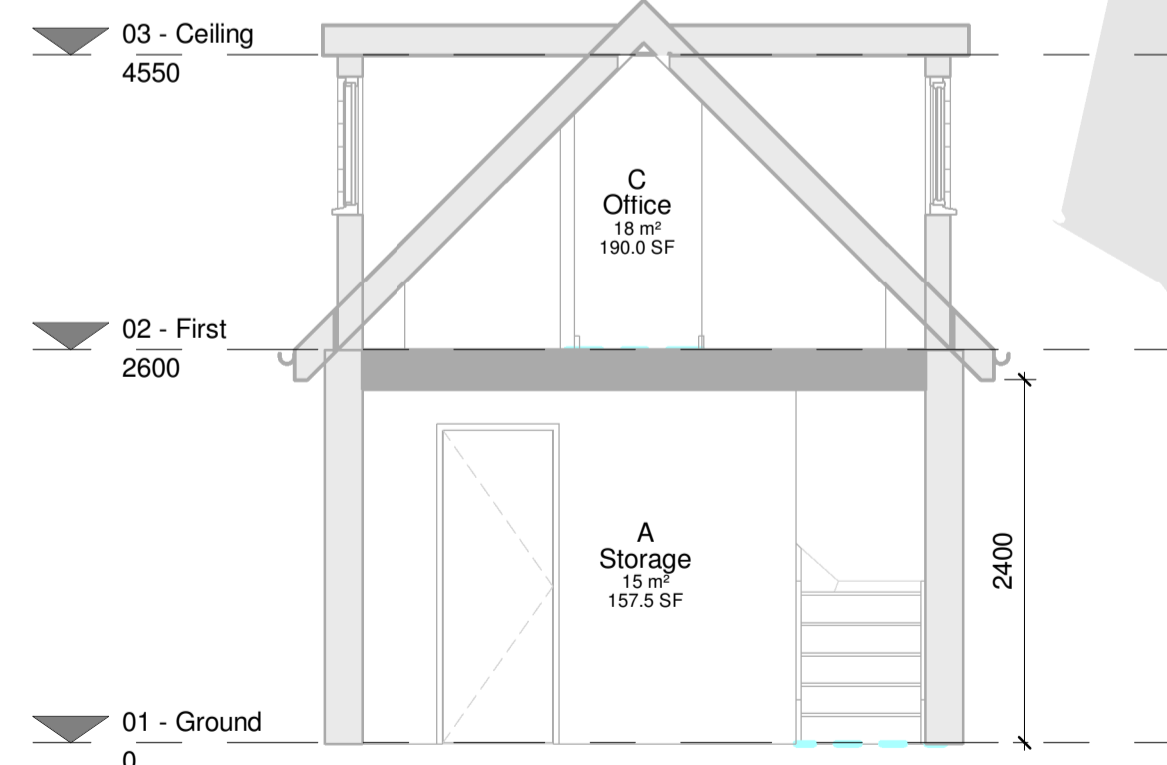
REV
2



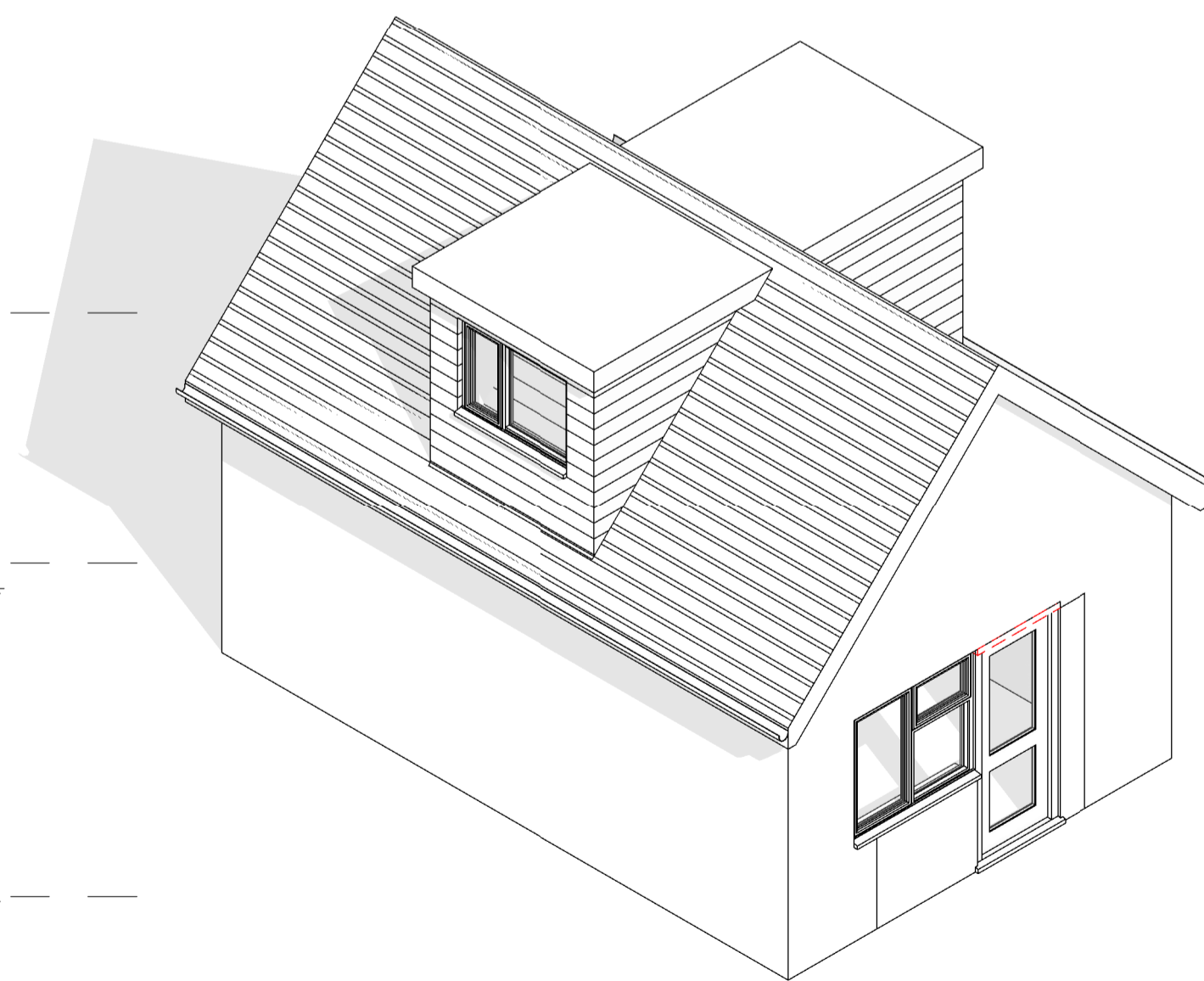
01.1 - Ground Proposed
1 : 50



02.1 - First Proposed
1 : 50



Typical Section - Proposed
1 : 50



3D Proposed