

**Application Number: F/YR12/0459/F**  
**Minor**  
**Parish/Ward: Chatteris Town Council**  
**Date Received: 15 June 2012**  
**Expiry Date: 10 August 2012**  
**Applicant: Mrs P Harding**

**Proposal: Conversion of outbuilding involving erection of a single-storey rear extension to form a 1-bed 2-storey dwelling (retrospective) and the erection of a cycle/storage shed**

**Location: Outbuilding at 36A, New Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire**

**Site Area/Density: 0.03 ha**

**Reason before Committee: This proposal is before the Planning Committee due to a request from Cllr Melton who believes the proposal should be supported and that the previous highway objections are not relevant in this case.**

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION**

The site is located on the south side of New Road, within the built-up limits of Chatteris and in a predominantly residential area.

This application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of an existing two-storey outbuilding including the erection of a single-storey rear extension to form a 1-bed 2-storey dwelling, plus the erection of a cycle/storage shed. The application is retrospective as the development has already been completed and the property in the past has been occupied. The outbuilding is located in the grounds of 36a New Road, which comprises a large detached house containing an ample amenity space .

The application property and No. 36A is accessed via a private drive off New Road, running between the gable walls of Nos. 36 & 38 New Road.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the principle of its location for housing, and in terms of design and layout as well impact on adjoining residential amenity.

The Highway Authority are of the opinion that the existing access is not suitable (in geometric terms) to cater for the vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated now, and, therefore, recommend refusal for the intensification of the use of this access, on the grounds of the inadequate access width and lack of pedestrian visibility.

Whilst all other matters appear to have been addressed in the proposal, the concerns of the Highway Authority are strong material planning considerations that the Local Planning Authority must have regard to, due to the importance of highway safety. In this instance, it is considered that on balance, the identified highway safety concerns outweigh the other benefits of the proposal in terms of bringing a building within the town back into beneficial use.

The proposal is, therefore, recommended for refusal.

## 2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

- 2.1 F/YR02/0440/O          Erection of 1 no. cottage style house          Refused 07.08.2002
- F/YR02/0557/F          Erection of 2-storey extension to form a 2-bed dwelling          Refused 07.08.2002

## 3. PLANNING POLICIES

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17: Seek to ensure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.

Paragraph 32: Decisions should take account that a safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people.

Paragraph 128: LPAs should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made to their setting

Paragraph 131: In determining applications LPAs should take account of; the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make, and, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Paragraph 132: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation.

Paragraph 133: Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance to a designated heritage asset, LPA's should refuse consent.

Paragraph 134: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

### 3.2 East of England Plan 2008:

ENV7: Quality in the Built Environment

### 3.2 Draft Fenland Core Strategy:

CS1: Spatial Strategy & Settlement Hierachy

CS13: Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

CS14: Delivering High Quality Environments

### 3.3 Fenland District Wide Local Plan:

H3: Development Area Boundaries/Protection of Character and Amenity/Highway Safety

E8: Landscape and amenity protection

E9: Alterations and extensions to respect scale and character of building and amenity.

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

### 4.1 *Parish/Town Council*

Raise no objections.

### 4.2 *FDC Conservation Officer*

Concerned that appearance of access should be improved, as this element is within the conservation area. My preference would be to see a more traditional surfacing used at the entrance to the site, of the main road, such as cobbles or setts, rather than retaining existing poor quality tarmac.

### 4.3 *Cambs CC Highways*

- The access already currently serves the vehicular traffic generated by No 36 and 36A together with the pedestrian traffic associated with 36A.
- The width of the access from New Road at only 4.8m between frontage buildings is not of sufficient width to allow a vehicle to enter the access drive whilst another is waiting to exit to New Road. I accept that 4.8m is sufficient width to enable two vehicles to pass in a straight line but not sufficient when turning into an access of that width.
- The access does not have the benefit any pedestrian visibility.
- - In an attempt to provide very minimal pedestrian visibility, an exiting vehicle will be located centrally within the access which clearly will result in any vehicle wishing to enter the access having to wait within the carriageway of New Road.
- It is clear that the access is not suitable, in geometric terms, to cater for the vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated now. No information has been provided to justify the LHA overriding the normal requirements.
- I therefore have no option but to recommend refusal on the grounds of inadequate access width and lack of pedestrian visibility.

4.4 **Local Residents:** No comments yet received.

## 5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

5.1 The site is located on the south side of New Road, within the built-up limits of Chatteris and in a predominantly residential area. The outbuilding, which is the subject of this application, is located in the north-west corner of the grounds of 36a New Road. This property consists of a large two-storey detached house with ample amenity space.

The site lies immediately to the south of the boundary of the Chatteris Conservation Area, although the site access off New Road lies within the Conservation Area boundary. Nos. 38 to 48 New Road, whose gardens back onto the northern site boundary, comprise a group of Mid-Nineteenth Century cottages (Grade II Listed). Residential gardens adjoin the western boundary. There is a small car parking area (serving No. 36 New Road) immediately to the north.

The application property and No. 36A are accessed via a private drive off New Road, running between the gable walls of Nos. 36 & 38 New Road.

The proposal involves works to convert and extend an existing outbuilding, which has a floor plate measuring 7.5m x 5.0m and a height of 3.25m to the eaves and 5.4m to the ridge. A single-storey wooden rear projection has also been constructed. The property contains a living room, kitchen and bathroom on the ground floor and a bedroom at first floor level. A small garden area has also been subdivided off from the host dwelling's garden.

All of the above works, for which development is now being sought, have been completed.

## 6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of an existing two-storey outbuilding including the erection of a single-storey rear extension to form a 1-bed 2-storey dwelling, plus the erection of a cycle/storage shed. The application is retrospective as the development has already been completed and the property in the past has been occupied. The outbuilding is located in the grounds of 36a New Road, Chatteris.

### ***Background***

Planning applications for the conversion of the outbuilding (the subject of the current proposal) and an additional dwelling in the garden of No. 36A, were both refused in 2002, principally on highway safety grounds, but additionally additional noise and disturbance by reason of general comings and goings and general level of activity associated with the new dwellings.

### ***Principle of Development***

The application property lies within the built up area of Chatteris and in the main involves the conversion of an existing outbuilding, with only a fairly minor addition. The proposal is considered to be an appropriate re-use of an existing out-building within the urban area, close to the town centre.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with criteria for the location of new development as set out in Policy H3 of the Fenland District Local Plan and Policy CS1 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy.

### ***Design & Layout and Impact upon Amenity***

The work to convert and extend the existing outbuilding is considered to be acceptable and respects the original built form of the outbuilding. There is also sufficient amenity space provided in the form of an enclosed rear garden (6m x 5.5m), which is commensurate with a dwelling of this size.

The only windows at first floor level are roof-lights, and, therefore, any possible overlooking of adjoining gardens is avoided. A condition restricting 'permitted development can be attached to prevent any additional windows or extensions being added to this building, to prevent possible overlooking in the future.

Whilst in 2002, impact on amenity was also raised as an issue, the scale of development has now been reduced – only one bedroom is now proposed in the outbuilding – compared to the previous proposals by the same owner, which comprised 2-bedrooms in the outbuilding and a separate 3-bed dwelling. The level of activity will, therefore, be less in the current proposal than previously proposed.

The site adjoins the Conservation Area and is close to a number of Listed Buildings. Given that the proposal involves the use of an existing driveway and building, and that any extensions are on the far side of the building, it is not considered that the proposal would cause either substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of any nearby designated heritage asset.

The proposed rumble strip could be re-designed to create a strip of granite setts, which would provide an improved surface appearance of the driveway, within the Conservation Area.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with criteria for design and protection of amenity as set out in Policy H3 of the Fenland District Local Plan and Policy CS1 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy.

### ***Access and Parking***

The application property and No. 36A is accessed via a private drive off New Road, running between the gable walls of Nos. 36 & 38 New Road. It also serves a small parking area to the rear of 36 New Road. Therefore, this will increase the number of separate dwellings using this access from 2 to 3.

The gap between the two gable walls measures a maximum of 4.85m, although this does narrow further into the site. The footway is 2.95m wide on the south side of New Road, where the access crosses it.

The layout includes a new turning area and parking spaces for two cars, plus a small wooden shed for the storage of cycles.

The Highway Authority has raised an objection to the intensification of the usage of this access to serve an additional independent dwelling for highway safety reasons. This is on the grounds of an inadequate access width from New Road, which is considered to be insufficient to allow a vehicle to enter the access drive

whilst another is waiting to exit to New Road.

In addition, the Highway Authority considers that the access does not have the benefit any pedestrian visibility. In an attempt to provide very minimal pedestrian visibility, raised kerbing has been shown, which forces an exiting vehicle to be located centrally within the access, which will result in any vehicle wishing to enter the access having to wait within the carriageway of New Road.

The Highway Authority are, therefore, of the opinion that as the existing access is not suitable (in geometric terms) to cater for the vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated now, they have no option but to recommend refusal for the intensification of the use of this access, on the grounds of the inadequate access width and lack of pedestrian visibility.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be contrary to criteria set out in Policies H3 & E8 of the Fenland District Local Plan and Policy CS13 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy, which seek to ensure that a safe access/egress from the highway is achieved in new development.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 Whilst all other matters appear to have been addressed in the proposal, the concerns of the Highway Authority are strong material planning considerations that the Local Planning Authority must have regard to, due to the importance of highway safety. In this instance, it is considered that on balance, the identified highway safety concerns outweigh the other benefits of the proposal in terms of bringing a building within the town back into beneficial use.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

**Refuse for the following reason:**

- 1 The proposal to create an additional dwelling in this location is considered to be unacceptable on the grounds of the intensification of the use of this access, which is considered to have an inadequate access width at the highway boundary with New Road and also a lack of acceptable pedestrian visibility at this point. The proposal is, therefore, considered to be contrary to criteria set out in Policies H3 & E8 of the Fenland District Local Plan and Policy CS13 of the emerging Fenland Core Strategy, which seek to ensure that a safe access/egress from the highway is provided in new development proposals.**



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

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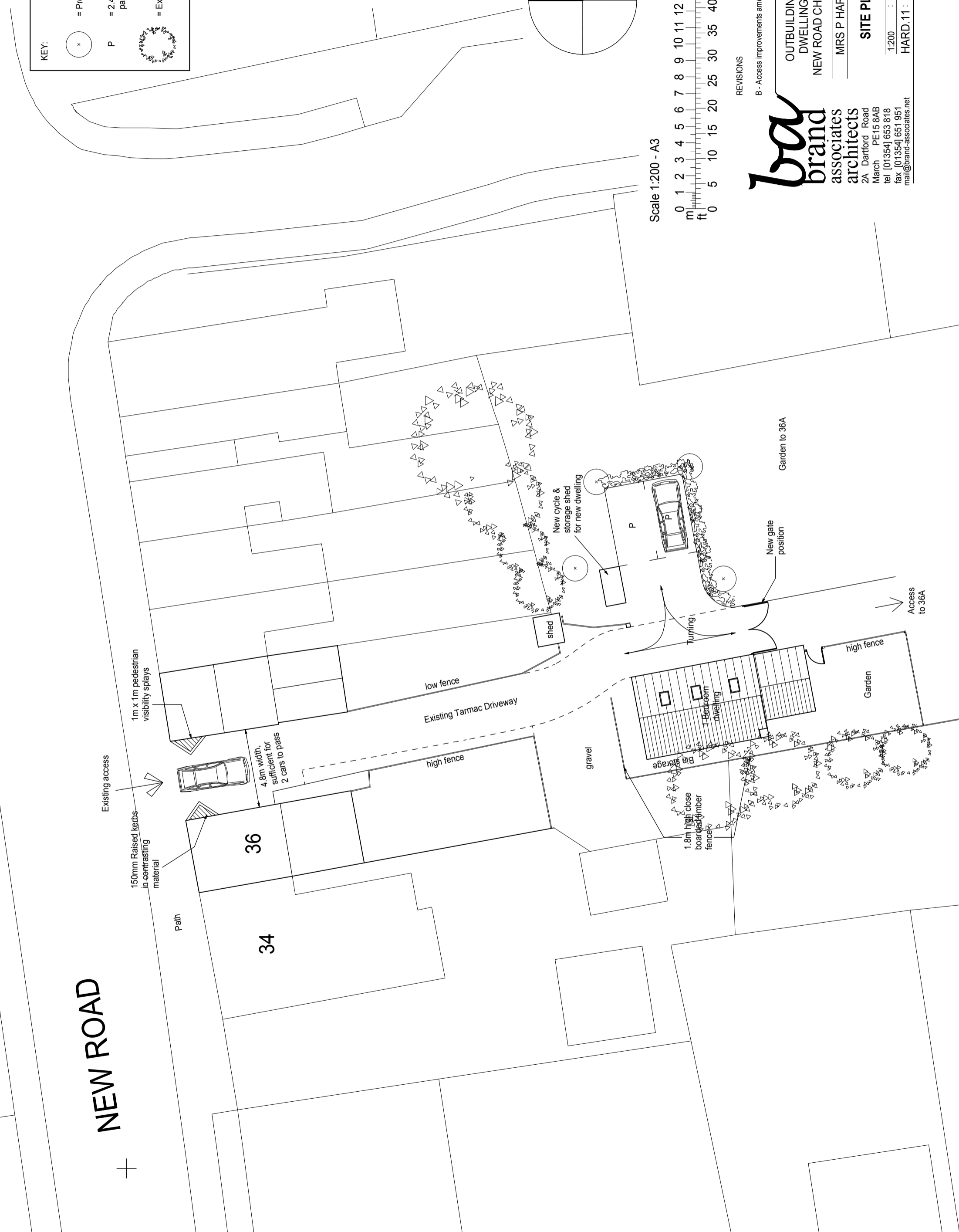
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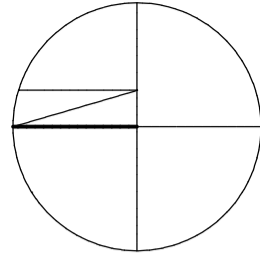
# NEW ROAD

KEY:

-  = Proposed new trees
-  = 2.4 x 4.8m parking spaces
-  = Existing trees



Scale 1:200 - A3



REVISIONS  
B - Access improvements amended

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OUTBUILDING TO  
 DWELLING 36A  
 NEW ROAD CHATTERIS  
 MRS P HARDING  
**SITE PLAN**  
 1:200 : HJC : NOV.11  
 HARD.11 : 1.2 : C



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OUTBUILDING TO  
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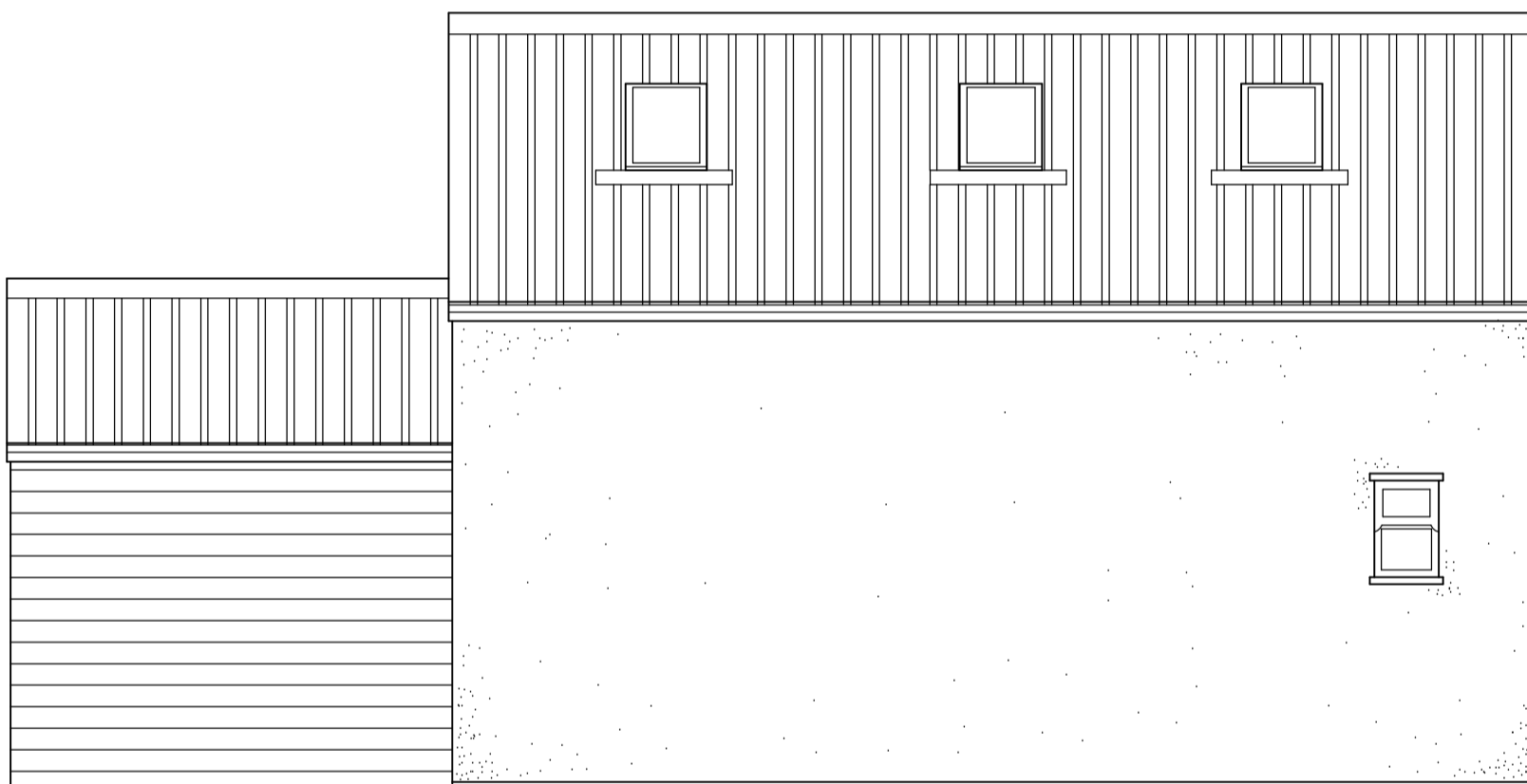
**PROPOSED  
ELEVATIONS**

1:50 : HJC : NOV.11

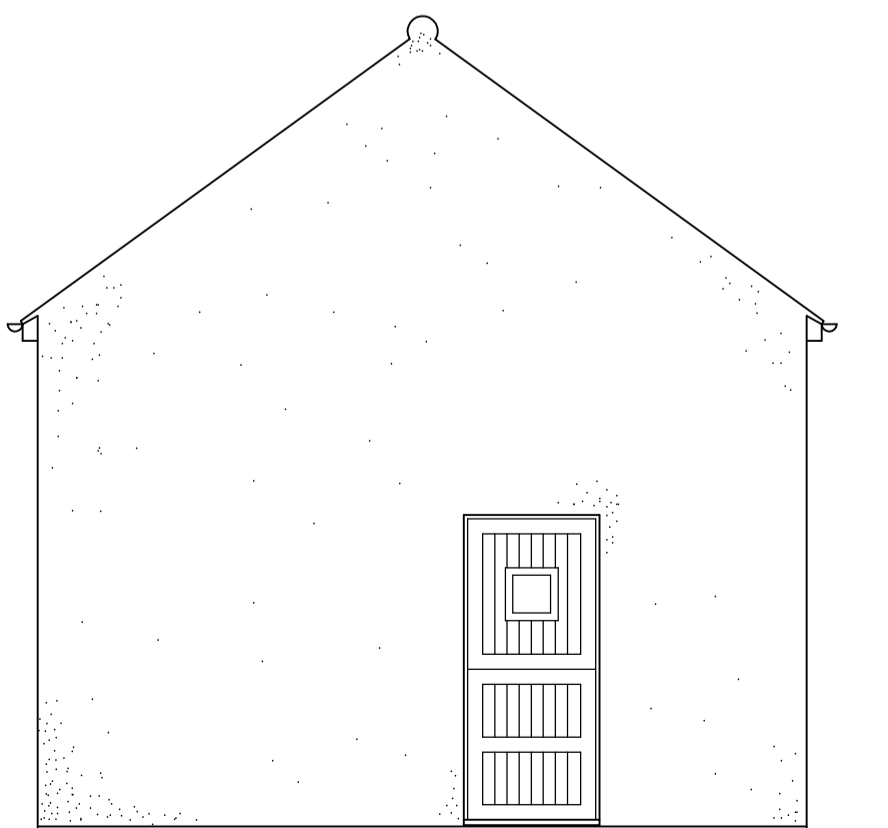
HARD.11 : 3.2 :



SOUTH WEST (SIDE)



NORTH EAST (SIDE)



NORTH WEST (FRONT)



SOUTH EAST (REAR)