

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 29 MARCH 2018  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND  
GOVERNANCE)

6/2017/2930/HOUSE

66 BROOKMANS AVENUE, BROOKMANS PARK, HATFIELD, AL9 7QQ

ERECTION OF TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION, GARAGE CONVERSION,  
REPLACEMENT OF FRONT PORCH AND ALTERATIONS TO OPENINGS AND  
ROOF

APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs S & G Kumar

(Brookmans Park and Little Heath)

**1 Site Description**

1.1 The application site is situated on the south side of Brookmans Avenue and consists of a detached two storey dwelling with integral garage and front and rear gardens. Brookmans Avenue is an established residential location characterised by large plots containing detached dwellings built in a variety of architectural styles and materials. There has been much redevelopment in the area, where large plots have been sub-divided or smaller dwellings have been extended or replaced by larger dwellings. As a result, architectural styles and materials vary considerably. In terms of visual appearance, the variety present within the surrounding streetscene allows some flexibility in the design of new additions. Large front gardens consisting predominantly of soft landscaping remain a principal feature of the streetscene where lawns, planting beds and trees add to the character of the area and soften the appearance of the built development.

**2 The Proposal**

2.1 This application is similar to that granted planning permission under delegated powers, reference 6/2016/1651/HOUSE, for 'erection of two storey front & rear extension and garage conversion following the removal of existing porch'. This permission remain extant and could be implemented. It is important to note that the current proposal is smaller than that approved under 6/2016/1651/HOUSE because it is proposed that the front porch would be single storey, and not two storey as approved, and the two storey rear projection would only project 2m, instead of the 4m approved.

2.2 The proposed development would see changes to the front elevation of the property with changes to the fenestration style, positioning and size. The front porch would be changed from being a small porch with a gable pitched roof to a larger porch with a flat roof and increased glazing in each elevation. The roof would be re-tiled with natural slate tiles, with two new roof lights in the front elevation. To the rear the proposal include a two storey extension, which would extend across the whole rear of the property, with two mono pitched roofs,

sloping away from the boundaries on both sides, and a gap between each roof slope in the centre. The proposed fenestration would be substantially different to the existing, with the ground floor rear elevation being almost entirely glazed and the first floor level having three sets of equally sized three pane windows. In addition, the proposals include the installation of six skylights in the rear roof slope, changes to the window positioning in the side elevation of the building and the change in the external finish of the building from brick to white painted render.

- 2.3 The proposed scheme is the result of negotiations between the applicant and officers. These negotiations have resulted in the applicant changing the proposed roof design of the rear two storey extension from a flat roof to the proposed mono pitched roofs and changing the proposed roof materials from metal to natural slate tiles.

### **3 Reason for Committee Consideration**

- 3.1 This application is presented to the Development Management Committee because North Mymms Parish Council has objected.

### **4 Relevant Planning History**

- 4.1 Application Number: 6/2016/1651/HOUSE  
Decision: Granted  
Decision Date: 11 October 2016  
Proposal: Erection of two storey front & rear extension and garage conversion following the removal of existing porch

### **5 Relevant Planning Policy**

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)  
5.2 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 (Local Plan)  
5.3 Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016 (emerging Local Plan)  
5.4 Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (SDG)  
5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards 2004 (SPG)  
5.6 Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes 2014 (Interim Car Parking Policy)

### **6 Site Designation**

- 6.1 The site lies within the specified settlement of Brookmans Park as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

### **7 Representations Received**

- 7.1 The application was advertised by means of neighbour notification letters and a site notice. Two representations have been received, both objecting to the application. These are summarised below:

- Concern that the proposal would introduce materials and design features that would be out of keeping with the character of the streetscene
- The proposal would be overly dominant and visually obtrusive, as a result of the poorly conceived design and proposed finishes
- Use of the flat roof to the rear would be used as a balcony
- The new roof would be higher than the existing
- Front skylights could result in overlooking

7.2 It is important to note that the above comments were all received before the amended scheme that is now proposed was submitted. Following the revised scheme being submitted, a further consultation was undertaken but no new comments have been received from neighbours to date.

## **8 Parish Council Representations**

8.1 North Mymms Parish Council has objected with the following: *“this application is totally out of keeping with the character and visual amenity of the existing street scene at this location. The choice of materials is unsuitable for a rural village location with slate not being a local material. The window treatment would be at great variance with neighbouring properties. Whilst there is a variety of styles in Brookmans Avenue this proposal would be visually obtrusive as a result of the poorly conceived, unsympathetic design, the proposed finishes and be over dominant in the street scene at this point in the road.”*

8.2 North Mymms Parish Council did not object to 6/2016/1651/HOUSE.

## **9 Analysis**

9.1 The main planning issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:

- 1. Quality of the design and impact on the character and appearance of the area (D1, D2, GBSP2, SP9 & NPPF)**
- 2. Impact on living conditions and the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours (D1, SADM11, SDG & NPPF)**
- 3. Parking provision and highway safety (M14, SADM2, SPG, Interim Car Parking Policy & NPPF)**
- 4. Other considerations - Drainage**

- 1. Quality of the design and impact on the character and appearance of the area**

9.2 Local Plan Policies D1 and D2, Emerging Local Plan Policies SP9 and the Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG), seek to ensure a high quality of design which relates to the character and context of the dwelling and surrounding area. The policies require extensions to complement and reflect design and character, be subordinate in scale, and not look cramped within the site in regards to bulk. These policies are in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) section 7 in that planning should require good design. Of particular relevance in this instance is the policy contained in paragraphs 60 and 61 of the NPPF, which states, amongst other things, that design policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiatives through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to

certain development forms or styles. However, it does then state that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

- 9.3 Brookmans Avenue has mixed character and context, with large individually designed dwellings maximising the width of the plot utilising varying materials. Brookmans Park, Cuffley and Digswell are described within the Supplementary Design Guidance Statement of Council Policy (2005) as:

*“Large villages in the north and south of the district, which grew mainly during the 20<sup>th</sup> century as commuter settlements as based around railway stations. They are generally characterised by detached housing on large plots, albeit within a variety of different settings”*

- 9.4 Some of the houses in the immediate vicinity appear to be long-established, probably dating from the inter-war period. In many cases, their design, proportions and materials draw upon the style of houses that were inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement. With these houses, decorative embellishments, brick walls and tiled roofs in warm colours predominate. This creates the illusion of sameness among the older, traditional properties. However, most areas such as this evolve over time and now, interspersed among the 20<sup>th</sup> century houses, are some 21<sup>st</sup> century buildings with a different aesthetic. One of these is No.46, which has a strong contemporary feel. It has an imposing scale; crisp, clean lines; and uses modern materials and finishes in cool colours.
- 9.5 The application building as it currently exists is of no significant architectural merit and its contribution to the character of the area is considered to be neutral at best. The variety present within the Brookmans Avenue allows some flexibility in the design of new additions where contemporary architectural styles and materials would not result in a scheme that would harm the character of the area.
- 9.6 Whilst the appearance of the extended and remodelled dwelling would not reflect the existing dwelling directly, some features, such as the spacing and location of most of the fenestration detailing, as well as the width and height of the dwelling, including the roof pitch would remain unchanged. These features would be reflective of the existing dwelling. The proposed mono pitched roofs at the rear of the property would not be visible from the street scene and would therefore not increase the perceived depth or massing of the dwelling from this perspective, with the result that they would not impact on the character of the Brookmans Avenue. It is considered that the dwelling which would result from the various proposed additions and alterations would not increase the bulk of built form which sits within the plot to the extent where it would appear cramped. By virtue of the size and scale of surrounding dwellings in the immediate locality, and built in the wider area, the proposals would respect and reflect the size and scale of built form in the immediate area.
- 9.7 The use of natural slate tiles, white render and the proposed changes to the fenestration style, including floor to ceiling windows that would replace the existing garage door and the box window at first floor level, as well as proposed replacement porch, would introduce new features and architectural detailing. Having regard to Paragraph 60 of the NPPF, the proposal would complement the existing dwelling to some degree, and whilst some architectural detailing would not be reflective, it would not impinge upon local distinctiveness by virtue of the varied character and individual designs within the immediate locality. This is because the use of white render is already present within the immediate streetscene and permission (6/2016/2684/HOUSE) has recently allowed for the

use of white render and slate tiles at No. 91 Brookmans Avenue. In this context, it is considered that the proposed development would add to the characteristic variety in a manner that would not be discordant. The proposal thereby conforms to both local and national planning policy.

9.8 Furthermore, it should be noted that this application is similar to that approved under 6/2016/1651/HOUSE and that this permission is still extant. It is important to note that 6/2016/1651/HOUSE allows for the applicant to build materially larger extensions at both the front and rear of the property than those currently proposed. For reference the main differences between the current application and that approved under 6/2016/1651/HOUSE are summarised below:

- It is proposed that the front porch would be single storey and not two storey as approved.
- The two storey rear extension would extend by 2m instead of 4m.
- At first floor level the rear extension would not include a balcony but would instead contain three sets of three standard room windows.
- To the sides, the north-east elevation would see no new windows being created from the existing, whereas the approved would have seen a new window being created at first floor and ground floor levels. On the south west elevation the same numbers of windows would be created but these would be in different locations.
- There would be six skylights in the rear roof slope, instead four, and two skylights in the front roof slope, instead of one.
- The materials in external materials in the proposed scheme are the same as those approved.

9.9 Given that the current proposal represents materially smaller additions to the existing dwelling than previously approved and the proposed works remain acceptable with respect to the character of the host dwelling and established character of the surrounding area, it is considered that the proposed development would be of a scale and design that is appropriate.

## **2. Impact on living conditions and the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours**

9.10 With regard to the impact on the amenity of adjoining neighbours, Policy D1 and the SDG states that any extension should not cause loss of light or appear unduly dominant from an adjoining property. Policy SADM11 aims to preserve neighbouring amenity. Furthermore, guidance in paragraph 17 of the NPPF is to always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings.

9.11 In terms of privacy, views from windows within the rear elevation of the extension would predominantly be to the rear garden of the application site. Whilst there is potential for overlooking to parts of the rear gardens of neighbouring properties, the degree of overlooking would be consistent with a neighbouring relationship generally expected between residential properties. It is considered that given the separation distances between the front elevation of the property and properties

on the other side of the road that the proposed skylights in the front elevation would not unacceptably impact on the privacy or amenity of these properties.

- 9.12 In terms of light, the rear elevations of the application dwelling and the adjacent properties face broadly south and will continue to receive direct sunlight for a large part of every sunny day. The proposal will result in only a very limited degree of shadowing for a short period of time which would not significantly harm the neighbouring occupier's enjoyment of their property.
- 9.13 The dwellings at Nos. 64 & 70 Brookmans Avenue adjoin the application site and benefit from generous plot sizes with rear gardens measuring approximately 32m in depth and between 17m and 22m in width. The flank boundaries of the application site are screened by a mixture of close boarded fencing, brick walls and mature planting, which are approximately 1.8m, at their lowest height. The flank wall of the proposed extension would be approximately 5.2m in height and maintain the existing separation distance from the site boundary - approximately 1.2m. For these reasons, and in the context of such spacious gardens, it is considered that the proposed 2m two storey rear extension would not appear dominant or overbearing to such an extent that would result in significant harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
- 9.14 In summary, giving consideration to the scale of the proposal, the siting of windows in the adjoining properties, the orientation of the dwelling, the size of neighbouring plots, separation distance and boundary screening, it is considered that the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on light amenity or the level of privacy afforded to the neighbouring residencies and would not appear visually overbearing. Overall it is considered that the amenity of the adjoining occupiers would be maintained to an acceptable level. In this respect, no objections are raised with regard to Local Plan Policy D1, Emerging Local Plan Policies SADM11 and the SDG or the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

### **3. Parking provision and highway safety**

- 9.15 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that if setting local parking standards authorities should take into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development, availability of public transport; local car ownership levels and the overall need to reduce the use of high emission vehicles. Policy M14 of the District Plan and the Parking Standards Supplementary Parking Guidance use maximum standards and are not consistent with the NPPF and are therefore afforded less weight. In light of the above, the Council have produced an interim Policy for Car Parking Standards that states that parking provision will be assessed on a case by case basis and the existing maximum parking standards within the SPG should be taken as guidance only.
- 9.16 No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements. In addition, the development does not propose the creation of further bedrooms in the property but it is proposed that the existing garage will be converted into a habitable room which would result in the loss of one off-street parking space. As a consequence, it is important to consider the Council Supplementary Parking Guidance and Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards.
- 9.17 Given that the proposed development is for a dwelling with six bedrooms, the Council's Policies require that a minimum of three off-street parking spaces. It is not proposed that the hardstanding to the front of the property would be changed

as part of this proposal. As this hardstanding is sufficiently large to provide three off street car parking spaces, it is considered that the proposed development meets the Council's policies for parking provision on site.

- 9.18 Whilst cycle storage has not been shown on the submitted drawings, it is noted that a side access to the rear garden of the dwelling would be retained within which a shed (or similar) could be provided. It is therefore not necessary for a planning condition requiring details of cycle storage to be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

#### **Other considerations - Drainage**

- 9.19 Application 6/2016/1651/HOUSE included a condition regarding to surface water drainage. As the Environment Agency flood map indicates that the site is located within an area at very low risk of flooding, it is considered that it would not be reasonable to add such a condition to this application because it is materially smaller than that approved under 6/2016/1651/HOUSE.

### **10 Conclusion**

- 10.1 The proposed alterations and enlargements would be of good quality design which would not add bulk to the extent where the resulting dwelling would look cramped within its site, would not impinge on the character and context of the area and would maintain the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining dwellings. Accordingly, the proposal complies with Policy D1, D2, GBSP2 and M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SP1, SP9, SADM11 of Emerging Local Plan 2016, Supplementary Design Guidance Statement of Council Policy 2005, Supplementary Planning Guidance Parking Standards 2004, Interim Policy for Care Parking and Garage Sizes 2014 and relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

### **11. Recommendation**

- 11.1 It is recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the following condition:

1. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby granted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

<b>Plan Number</b>	<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Received Date</b>
12462-P007-D		Proposed Plans & Elevations	22 February 2018
12462-S001		Existing Plans and Elevations	19 December 2017

## **SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:**

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

### **Informatives:**

1. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water interest etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.
2. Any damage to the grass verges caused by the development/works hereby approved is the responsibility of the applicant and must be re-instated to their original condition, within one month of the completion of the development/works. If damage to the verges are not repaired then the Council and/or Highway Authority will take appropriate enforcement action to remedy any harm caused.


William Myers, (Development Management)

Date 09/03/2018

Expiry Date: 23/03/2018

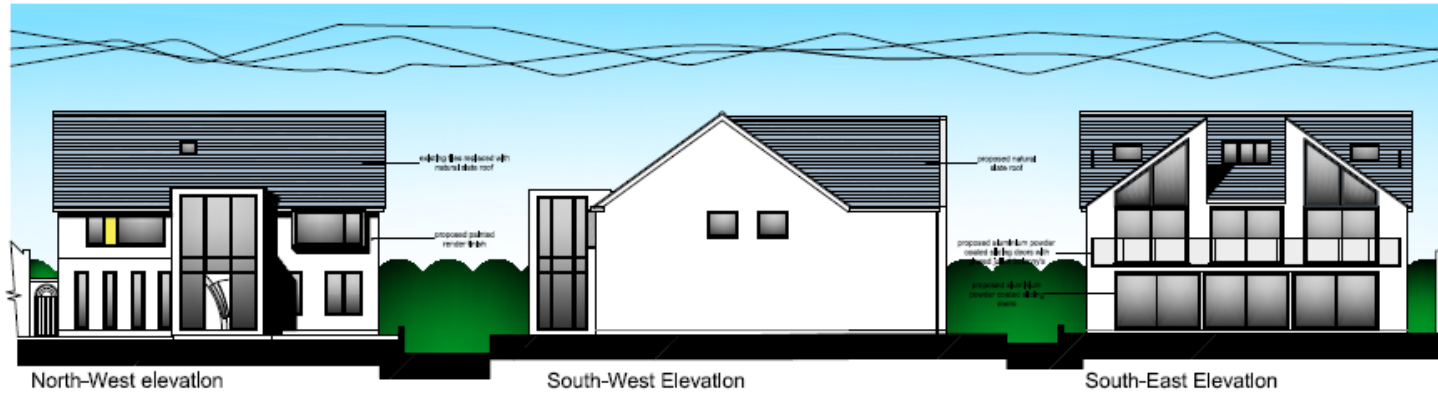




 <p><b>WELWYN HATFIELD</b></p> <p>Council Offices, The Campus Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE</p>	Title: 66 Brookmans Avenue Brookmans Park Hatfield		Scale: DNS
			Date: 2018
	Project: DMC Committee	Drawing Number: 6/2017/2930/HOUSE	Drawn: Ida Moesner
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**Appendix 1**

**Approved drawings for previously approved planning application  
6/2016/1651/HOUSE**



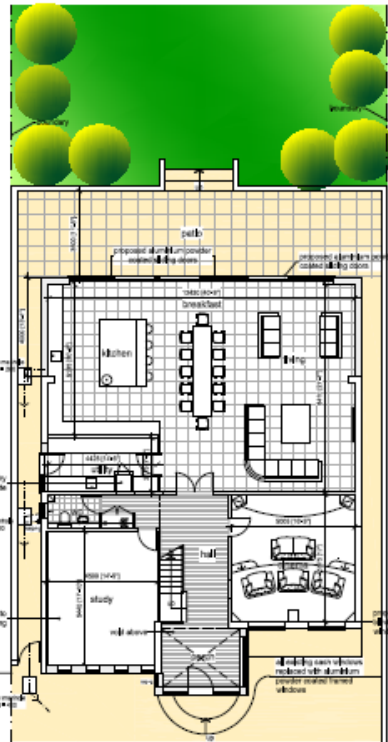
North-West elevation

South-West Elevation

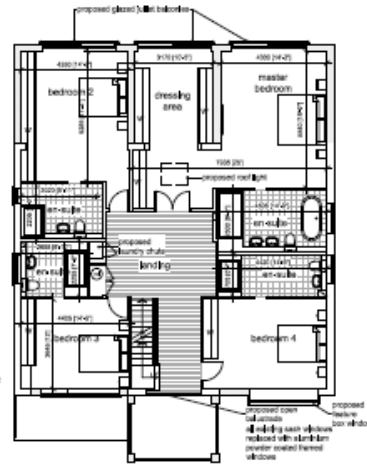
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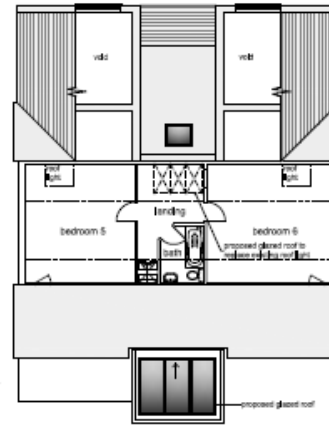
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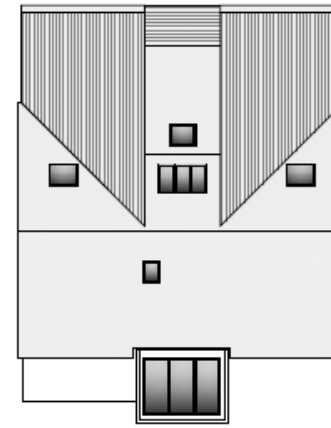
Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



Roof Plan

notes

any discrepancies should be reported immediately

all dimensions should be checked on site prior to commencement of work

information based on contractor survey information provided by project systems etc. (www.promax.co.uk) project does not guarantee that all listed elements, uses or features will be identified in the product

the product does not give details about the actual state or condition of the site nor should it be used or taken to indicate or reduce actual liability or unsuitability of the site for any particular purpose, or relied upon for determining suitability or value, or used as a substitute for any physical investigation or inspection

drawings to be read in accordance with the drawing execution note (denote) schedule, the building must be built in accordance meeting the criteria set for all permitted

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**hps** Hertford Planning Service

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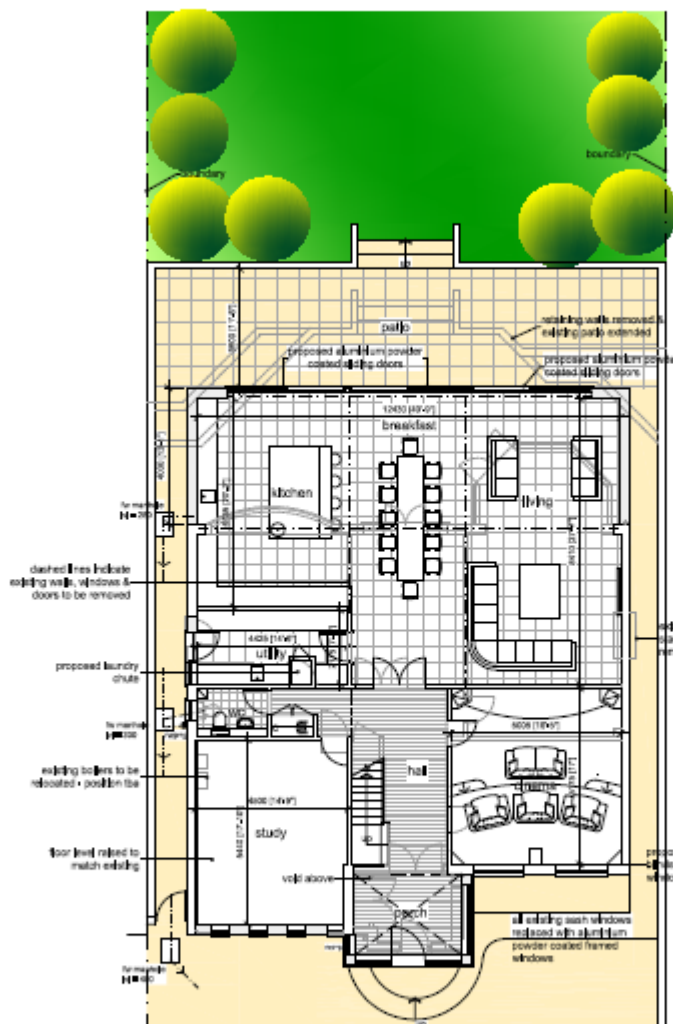
Client Mr S & Mrs G Kumar

Project 65 Brookmans Avenue Brookmans Park AL5 7QQ

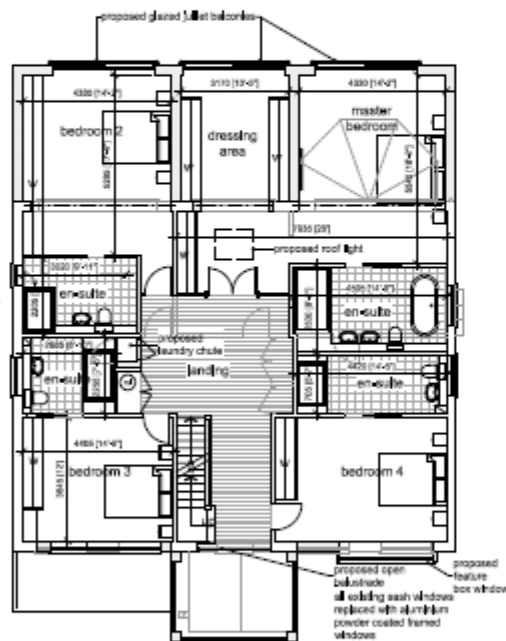
Drawing PROPOSED Plans & Elevations

Date 27/06/2016  
Scale 1/100  
Sheet size A1  
Drawn GPS

12462-P001-C



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



notes:

- any discrepancies should be reported immediately
- all dimensions should be checked on site prior to commencement of work
- the survey based on Ordnance Survey information provided by Prodat Systems plc, (www.promap.co.uk) Prodat does not guarantee that all past or current uses or features will be identified in the product
- the product does not give details about the actual state or condition of the site nor should it be used or taken to indicate or exclude actual suitability or unsuitability of the site for any particular purpose, or relied upon for determining suitability or value, or used as a substitute for any physical investigation or inspection.
- drawings to be read in accordance with the building regulations (as they) apply, the building must be built in designed meeting the criteria set for its permeability.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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Client: Mr S & Mrs G Kumar

Project: 66 Brookmans Avenue  
Brookmans Park  
AL9 7QQ

Drawing: PROPOSED PLANS  
Showing Removed

Date: 27/06/2016  
Scale: 1:100  
Sheet size: A2  
Drawn: GPS

12462-P002-C