Lake District National Park

2

Report from the Head of Development Management to Development Control Committee

---

Application number: 7/2026/2086
Application type: Full Planning application
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Richardson
Location: 6 Borrowdale Road, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5DB
Grid reference: 326674, 523235
Proposal: Proposed renovation and conversion of an office to room only serviced holiday accommodation and associated change of use
Report prepared by: Phil Nicholls, Area Planner
Report agreed by: Kevin Richards, Planning Manager

Recommendation: DELEGATE to Head of DM to APPROVE

1 About this report

1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.

1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning

Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).

1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations, following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.

1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

2.1 6 Borrowdale Road, Keswick, is a four-storey Victorian property with a basement, located on the edge the town centre. It falls within Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service), used last as the offices for a solicitor's firm.

2.2 Planning permission is sought to change the use of the building to room only serviced holiday accommodation. Associated physical alterations are proposed including the addition a dormer window on the rear elevation roof slope.

2.3 The application is being referred to committee because the recommendation of approval is contrary to the views of the Town Council and representations received on the application.

2.4 The recommendation is to delegate to the head of Development Management to approve the application following receipt of a Credit Certificate securing Nutrient Neutrality Mitigation.

3 Representations

3.1 Keswick Town Council – Object – KTC fully appreciate the need for renovation and adapting the existing building to a new use as it is no longer in use as offices. KTC object to the principle of ‘’room only serviced accommodation’’ with no on-site control. This is different to previous applications for guest houses applying for Change of Use to holiday lets as it is not currently any type of holiday accommodation. Local Plan Policy 18 does apply in the section dealing with Holiday letting in advising that LDNPA will only support proposals where re- use of existing buildings for short term holiday letting would not utilise a building that is suitable for providing local or affordable needs housing. It is evident with the type of conversion proposed that it could be converted for local needs housing which is in far greater demand.

3.2 This proposal creates 7 new bedrooms which could result in 14 people being accommodated with no on-site supervision. The approach proposed by the applicant of visiting the property on a daily basis, does not provide the level of supervision necessary as those intent on causing anti social behaviour always target times when there is no comeback from property owners or public authorities who are never able to react in time. As currently proposed, this could be used as an HMO (House of Multiple Occupation). KTC are aware special protective conditions are imposed in such situations, and this should also apply here as safeguard.

3.3 This is a substantial building over 5 floors built or converted at a time when fire safety considerations were less stringent. KTC have concerns about the practicality of meeting current fire escape standards on a restricted site when considered against what has been necessary on the adjoining property, Windsor House. It should also be noted that there is currently no parking available for this property which is also on a double yellow lines section of a constrained Borrowdale Road which is also a

one way traffic system. This is a highly vulnerable location for people using it as a drop of point given its proximity to the Derwent Street junction. The nearby Central Car Park referred to may be in close proximity but does involve a long detour around the one way system going to and from.

3.4 KTC have provided a compilation of anti – social behaviour reports over recent years which shows the impact it can have on any property affected in this way noting it is only a small proportion of actual complaints as many go unreported due to the failure of the system to protect them. This house is large enough to provide on site management accommodation which is essential.

3.5 Environmental Health Officer – No objections. It is recommended that a condition is attached to any approval requiring the applicant to submit a noise management plan.

3.6 10 letters of objection have been received which raise the following concerns:

- The accommodation is of a hostel nature and dues to its proximity to bars and restaurants is likely to be used as a party house or staff accommodation.
- The accommodation has no kitchen or dining areas, no provision for bin stores, no parking and no outdoor space.
- Limited parking will lead to fly or illegal parking.
- There is no on-site management and therefore no means of controlling behaviour. The use will result in antisocial behaviour which impacts on the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings.
- In comparison to the existing use the proposed accommodation would generate activity throughout the day, into the evening and night.
- No acoustic assessment has been carried out to understand the noise impacts on the adjoining residents.

- With no restrictions on the length of stay the accommodation has the potential to become staff accommodation or a HMO.
- Permitting the use would set a precedent for future similar developments to take place.
- The creation of this type of development will not be in keeping with this quiet part of the local conservation area.
- The building could be converted into accommodation for local people.
- Insufficient information has been submitted to understand the fire safety measures being put in place.

4 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

4.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:

- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035

4.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
- Policy 02: Spatial strategy
- Policy 04: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy 06: Design and development
- Policy 07: Historic environment
- Policy 16: Job creation and employment space
- Policy 18: Sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation

4.3 The policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are material considerations which must be taken into account in decision-making. Development plan policies materially inconsistent with NPPF policies should be given very little weight. The following NPPF decision-making policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

- DM3: Determining development proposals
- DM6: Use of planning conditions and obligations

- DM7: Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- S4: Principle of development within settlements
- E4: Rural business development
- P3: Living conditions and pollution
- HE8: World Heritage Sites
- HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
- HE9: Conservation areas

4.4 There is no community plan in this area.

5 Main issues and assessment

5.1 The main issues in this assessment are:

- Principle
- Amenity of neighbours
- Character and appearance of the area
- Highways and parking
- Nutrient neutrality

Principle of development

Loss of employment space:

5.2 Policy 16 (Job creation and employment space) seeks the growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprises. As a priority the policy seeks to support higher paid full-time jobs and seeks to make provision for 2,850 new jobs by 2035 by supporting a range of employment sectors. This will be enabled through policies 16, 17 (Retailing and town centres) and 18 (Tourism and holiday accommodation).

5.3 The policy goes on to set out that existing land and buildings in employment use (excluding retail and tourism use) with a floorspace above 100 square metres or site area above 0.2 hectares will be retained to maintain employment development opportunities. We will only permit a change of use to a non-employment use where it can be demonstrated that:

- they are unsuitable for employment uses, including other types of employment creating uses such as retail and tourism; and
- there is no demand for employment space in the locality resulting from an appropriate marketing exercise and other evidence; or
- exceptionally, viable alternatives are readily available in the locality.

5.4 Policy 16 recognises that retail and tourism are considered as employment creating uses and as such, policies 17 and 18 are relevant here. Policy 18 seeks to support proposals which deliver high quality, sustainable tourism experiences for the diverse range of visitors to the Lake District. The proposals would align with the broad intentions of Policy 18 in this respect and have been found elsewhere in this assessment to align generally with the requirements of Policy 18 in respect of the nature of the development and its location.

5.5 The application building has an internal floorspace in excess of 250sqm and its previous use was as a solicitor's office. No specific information about how many people the business employed has been provided but the floorplans show multiple offices over three floors. The previous use as a solicitor's office aligned directly with the aims of policy 16 by providing for higher paid employment. That use as an office fell within Use Class E. Class E is broad and would allow a range of uses within the building, including retail, cafes and restaurants without the need for a planning application. Given the edge of town centre location such other uses would not be possible but whilst there are a variety of uses the building could be put to without the need for planning permission, there is no guarantee that such uses would lead to the same level or nature of employment as its previous use as offices.

5.6 The proposed holiday accommodation use would result in direct and indirect employment through its management, as well as regular cleaning and maintenance. Given the limited facilities within the accommodation, its occupants would support other employment generating uses within the town such as restaurants and cafes.

5.7 I also acknowledge that in comparison to the most recent use, the proposals would result in less direct employment, and a reduction in the type of higher wage employment encouraged by policy.

5.8 A marketing exercise has been conducted by Edwin Thompson; the property was marketed as an office with an asking price of £360,000. The building was marketed in this way for six months. Information provided by the estate agents only shows interest for the reuse of the building for tourist accommodation purposes and no interest in its advertised former use as an office.

5.9 In further support of the application the applicant has set out the constrained nature of the building, its town centre location and the absence of parking. They consider that these factors make the building less suitable for a modern-day office use. I do not disagree.

5.10 The proposals would result in direct and indirect employment, but in comparison to the most recent use of the building this employment would likely support fewer jobs and would be less well paid, neither of which align with the aspirations of Policy 16. However, even in its current use there is no way to guarantee the level and nature of employment and the marketing exercise which has been undertaken has shown no interest in the existing use of the building as offices.

5.11 Policy 16 recognises the employment-creating role of tourism uses and the proposals have broad support through Policy 18. I also afford weight to the marketing which has been carried out, and its results. On balance

I am satisfied that the proposals accord with the Local Plan when read as a whole.

Acceptability of proposed use:

5.12 Policy 02 (Spatial Strategy) outlines that Keswick as a rural service centre should be the focus housing, employment and retail development.

5.13 Policy 18 (Sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation) supports proposals which deliver a high quality, sustainable tourism experience for the diverse range of visitors to the Lake District, and ensure proposals benefit local communities and businesses.

5.14 Sustainable tourism proposals will be supported where they amongst other things are within or well related to the settlement form of a Rural Service Centre. Specifically proposals for hotels and guest houses will be supported where they:

- are located within or well related to a Rural Service Centre or Village; or
- appropriately and sympathetically reuse a building of archaeological or historic interest; or
- are located within or adjacent to an existing visitor accommodation site; and
- are commensurate with the level of suitable housing and dedicated accommodation for staff which is available locally and accessible to the development by sustainable transport opportunities; and
- do not introduce inappropriate levels of use to the location.

5.15 There has been extensive discussion within the representations surrounding the precise intended use of the building. The statement of intent provided by the applicant sets out that they seek to create seven holiday letting bedrooms which would be serviced on changeover days. Access to the bedrooms would be via a self-check in system and key

boxes. The proposed floorplans show en-suite bedrooms approximately 20sqm in size with the exception of the third-floor room which is marginally larger. No cooking or washing facilities are shown and only the top floor room has space for a small lounge area. Storage rooms are shown within the basement.

5.16 The scale and nature of the use proposed would fall within Use Class C1 which covers hotels, aparthotels and guest houses. The accommodation would be let on a nightly, short-term basis, would not contain facilities for day to day living and there are no shared spaces.

5.17 In principle Policies 02 and 18 support the creation of new hotel/apart-hotel use within Keswick. A condition to secure the use and ensure it remains for short term holiday purposes would be required. This would prevent it becoming an HMO or other form of residential accommodation.

Impact on the amenity of neighbours

5.18 Policy 06 outlines that development must not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjoining residents and users of the proposed development, due to visual intrusion, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts.

5.19 The National Planning Policy Framework states that development proposals should not give rise to, or contribute to unacceptable levels of noise or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site.

5.20 The attached building to the south, no.8 Borrowdale Road (Windsor House) was converted into four flats in 2002 (ref: 7/2002/2288). These flats are not subject to any occupancy restriction and all appear to be let out as holiday accommodation.

5.21 Attached on the other side is the George Fisher outdoor shop. Beyond this to the northwest is Balmoral House which contains several flats which have no occupancy restriction. Other properties are located to the front and rear of the application building but are physically detached.

5.22 The existing office use would have had a degree of activity associated with it, with regular comings and goings, particularly during the day. Alternative uses within the same use class could see the building be used more intensively without the need for planning permission.

5.23 The proposed use would result in a more intensive use of the building; one which focuses activity in the morning and evenings, as occupants leave and return to the accommodation. The nature of the use is that occupants are likely to be single people or couples not associated with each other. The absence of any shared internal spaces and minimal outdoor space would limit interaction between guests. Whilst I consider that there is likely to be a perceptible change in the nature of the use of the building, and that this may involve an increase in noise and activity at certain times of the day, I do not consider that this would be to the extent that it would harmful to the amenity of neighbouring properties having regard to the existing context and nature of the proposals; the town centre location of the building where there is already a pre-existing level of noise and activity, the small size of the proposed rooms, the absence of any shared spaces, together with the nature of the uses in the attached buildings and their physical relationship with the application building.

5.24 Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed development would be unlikely to bring about unacceptable adverse impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring properties or businesses. As such the proposals are in compliance with Policy 06 and the NPPF.

Character and appearance

5.25 Policy 06 seeks to ensure that development contributes to local distinctiveness and reinforces local character with regard to scale, height, density, layout, appearance and materials.

5.26 Policy 07 seeks to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets including the character, authenticity, integrity, setting and views of the historic environment. This test is derived from the legal requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5.27 Only two alterations are proposed; the creation of a dormer window in the rear roof slope and the replacement of the timber sash windows with UPVC units.

5.28 The dormer window would have a dual pitched slate roof with extensive glazing and a Juliet balcony. The dormer would be sizeable and the glazing would have a contemporary appearance however it is positioned next to a large flat roof dormer on the adjacent building and faces onto a yard which is not prominent to public views. I therefore consider in this context that the dormer would be an acceptable addition.

5.29 The remaining change would be the replacement of the timber single glazed sliding sadh windows with UPVC units. The existing windows are of a simple design which in my view could be adequately replicated with a high quality UPVC unit. A condition to secure the precise details is recommended.

5.30 I am satisfied that the development proposed is acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area and would preserve the character of the Keswick Conservation Area, satisfying the requirements of Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 06, 07 and the NPPF.

Highways and parking

5.31 The building currently has no off-street parking provision. Those working within the office and any visiting clients would be reliant on the parking provision within the town centre.

5.32 The proposed accommodation would be operated without any designated parking provision, though the applicant has stated that they are exploring purchasing passes for nearby public car parks.

5.33 The building is located close to the town centre (a rural service centre as defined in the Local Plan), which is served by regular public transport links and a number of public car parks. Given this town centre location, I am satisfied that the accommodation would be able to operate without the need for dedicated parking spaces, would not have an unacceptable impact on local highway conditions and that the lack of parking provision is not a reason to refuse planning permission.

Nutrient neutrality

5.34 The application site lies within the catchment of the River Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake Special Area of Conservation identified by Natural England as a European protected site requiring nutrient neutrality strategic solutions.

5.35 We are required as the Competent Authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Regulation 63) to carefully consider the nutrients impacts of any new development proposals on habitats sites to avoid adverse effects occurring as a result of the release of nutrients into this catchment.

5.36 The development proposed generates additional wastewater from overnight use, which will be discharged to the main sewer which leads to the sewage works which in turn is discharged into the designated SAC.

The submitted Nutrient Neutrality Statement and calculator confirms that a total Annual Nutrient Budget of 0.1 kg/TP/year needs to be mitigated.

5.37 An Appropriate Assessment is therefore required to determine whether it can be concluded that the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site, in view of its conservation objectives. There is no prescribed format or content for an Appropriate Assessment. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposals together with their impacts and proposed mitigation this assessment should be read as our Appropriate Assessment as Competent Authority.

5.38 The applicant has provided evidence that they have entered the Cumbria Nutrient Credit Scheme, though the final agreement is being finalised. Once agreed the applicant will purchase the required credits and a credit certificate will be issued, evidencing that sufficient credits have been secured to offset the additional inputs into the catchment.

5.39 Though no credit certificate has been issued I am satisfied that there is every likelihood that one will be issued, ensuring that adequate mitigation is secured to conclude that the development, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would avoid an adverse effect on the integrity of the River Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake Special Area of Conservation in accordance with Policies 01 and 04, the NPPF and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

<u>Other matters</u>

Fire safety:

5.40 The response from Keswick Town Council raises concerns about the suitability of converting the building from a fire safety perspective. Fire safety is controlled by the Building Control regulations. Regulation 6 of the Building Control Regulations 2010 requires that where there is a

material change of use of a building that such work be carried out in accordance with applicable requirements, including fire safety.

5.41 National Decision-Making Policy DM7 sets out that planning decisions should not seek to duplicate or extend controls imposed by separate regulatory regimes other than where there is a development plan policy in place applying optional technical standards for the development proposed.

5.42 In this instance there are no specific development plan polices relating to fire safety. Such matters are therefore covered by separate legislation and not relevant to this decision.

Bin storage:

5.43 A further issue raised through representations received relates to bin storage and the need to ensure adequate provisions are in place. The plans show storage areas in the basement and a small yard to the rear. Given the commercial nature of the use proposed, adequate waste removal would also need to be in place. I am satisfied that no further information is required in this instance.

Noise assessment:

5.44 Whilst raising no objections to the application, the consultation response from Environmental Health recommends that an operational noise management plan is secured to avoid impacts on nearby dwellings. No further reasons have been given as to why specific noise management is required in this location.

5.45 As set out in my assessment above, taking account of the edge of town centre location and neighbouring existing uses, I do not consider that the resultant noise or activity associated with the proposed use would be harmful to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. I therefore do not

consider a condition requiring the submission of a noise assessment would be reasonable of necessary in this instance.

6 Conditions

6.1 Together with standard time limit and plans conditions, conditions securing the use of the building together with window details are recommended.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 04, 06, 07, 16 and 18, and other material considerations (including the provisions of the NPPF), the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

Recommendation: DELEGATE to Head of DM to APPROVE

Conditions/Reasons

1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of THREE years from the date hereof.

REASON: Imposed in accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:
- Loccation plan - Drawing no. 126-119-01
- Proposed plans - Drawing no. 126-119-04 Rev A
- Proposed elevations - Drawing no. 126-119-05 Rev A

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

3 The development hereby permitted shall be operated as a single planning unit containing holiday letting bedrooms and for no other purposes (including any other purpose in Class C1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order).

The accommodation shall only be occupied for the purposes of short-term holiday letting, and shall not be occupied by any one individual, family or group for a period exceeding 35 days in any calendar year.

A register of occupants shall be maintained by the owner, the content of which shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority within 14 days of a written request by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is secured as holiday accommodation consistent with the development proposed and to ensure that other uses are subject to formal control by the Local Planning Authority to protect the amenity of neighbouring uses in accordance with Policies 06 and 18 of the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035.

4 Prior to their insertion into the building, details of the windows, their specification and colour, shall be submitted to the Authority for agreement.

Thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy 06 and 07 of the Lake District National Park

Local Plan 2020-2035 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application by requesting additional information.

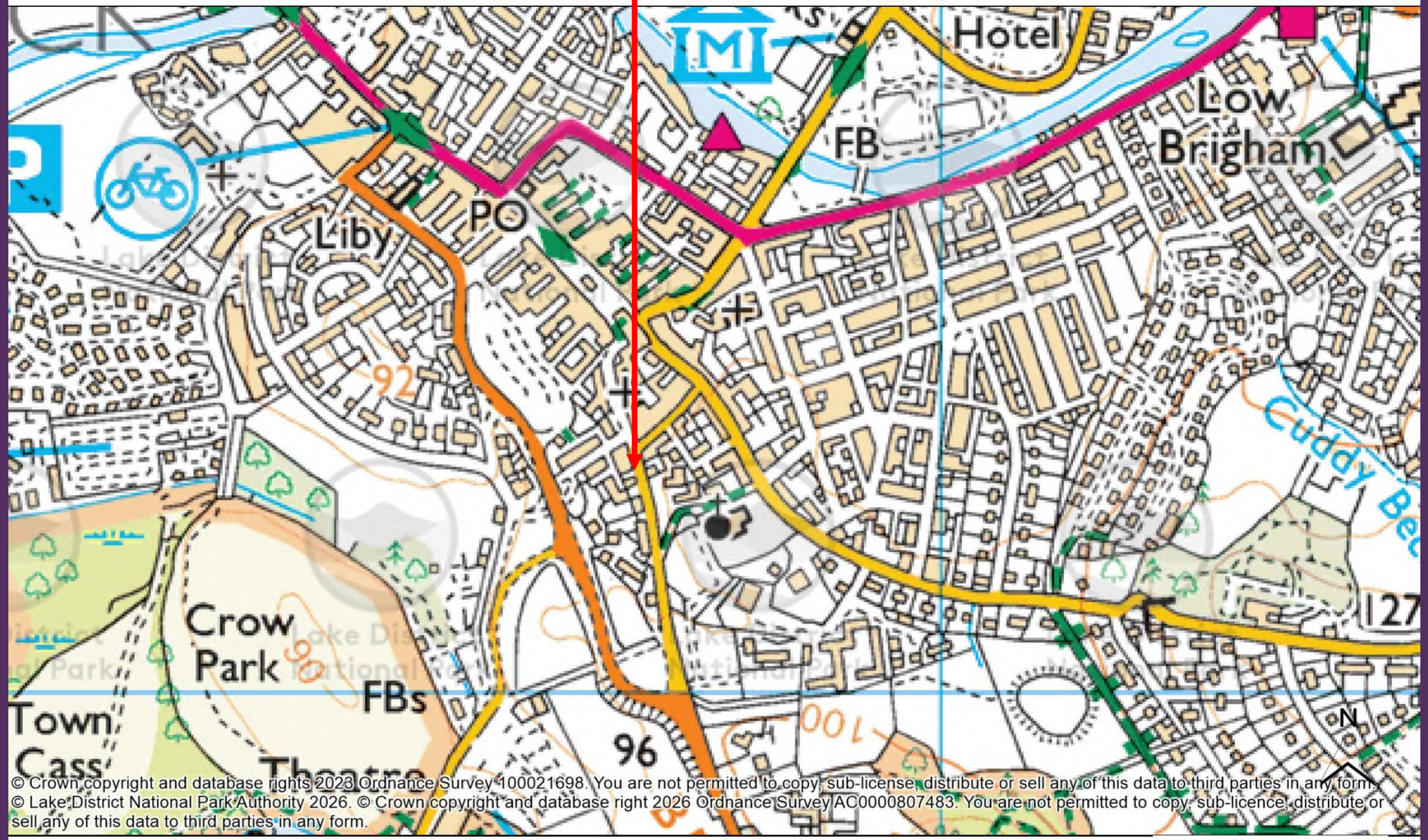
Background papers

Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7/2026/2086

6 Borrowdale Road, Keswick, CA12 5DB

Proposed renovation and conversion of an office to room only serviced holiday accommodation and associated change of use



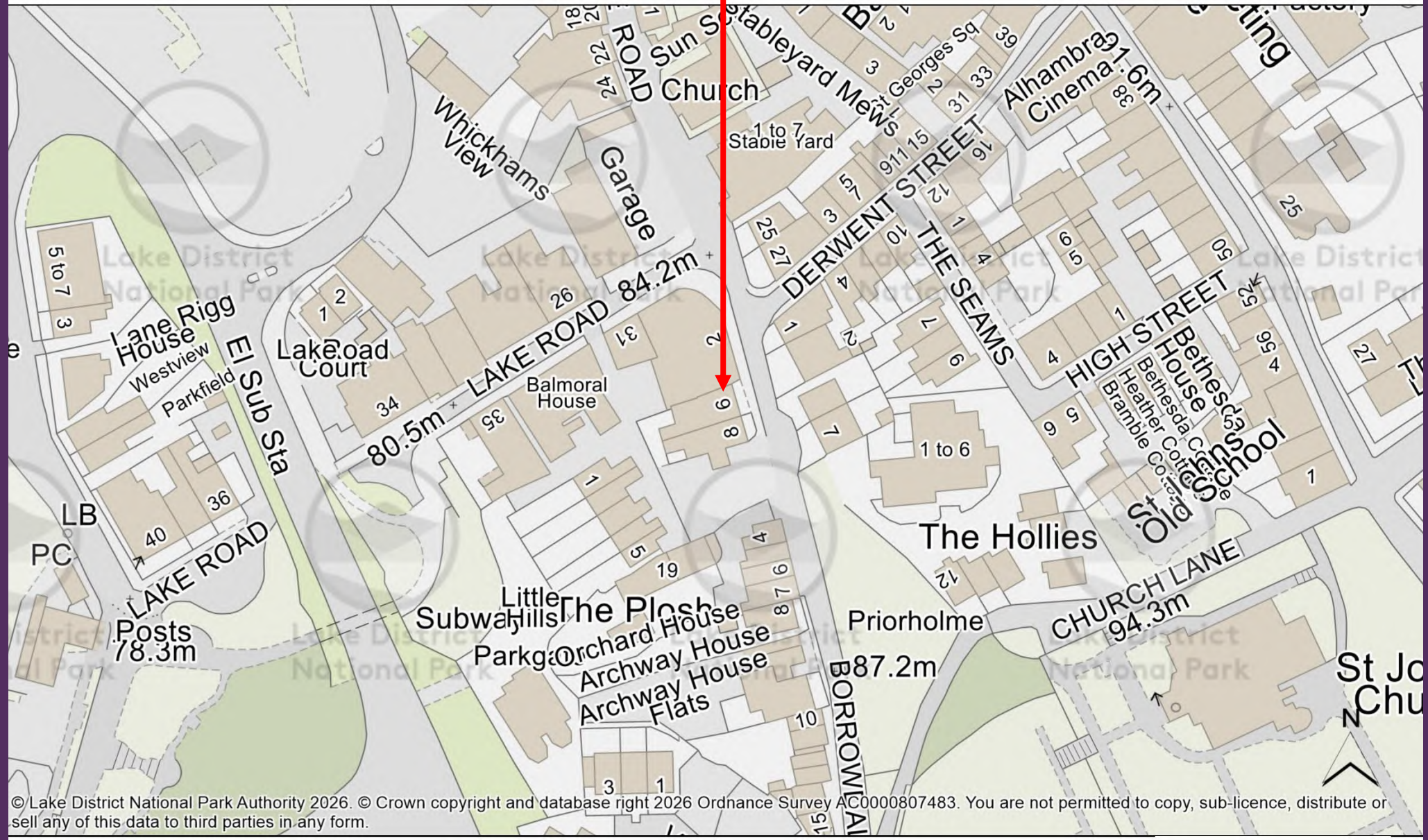
© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100021698. You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.
© Lake District National Park Authority 2026. © Crown copyright and database right 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000807483. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Produced by Phil Nicholls for Development Control Committee planning presentation only.

You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Lake District
National Park Authority

Site



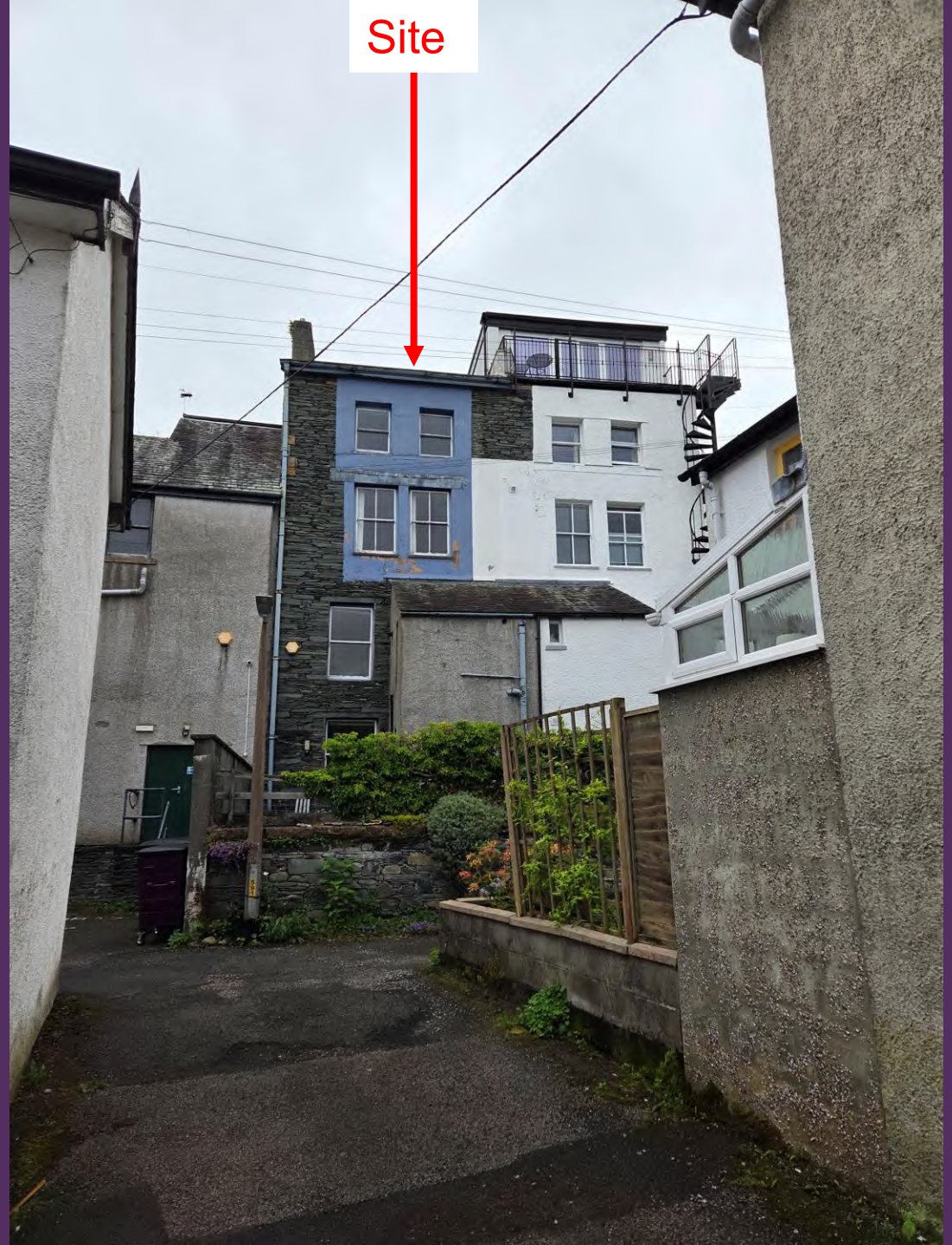
© Lake District National Park Authority 2026. © Crown copyright and database right 2026 Ordnance Survey AC0000807483. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Produced by Phil Nicholls for Development Control Committee planning presentation only.

You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Lake District National Park Authority


7 Borrowdale Rd
Keswick, England
Google Street View
Sept 2025 See more dates
Borrowdale Rd
Google Maps


Site


ISUZU

Walls

New walls to the dormer to the West (rear) elevation to finished in proprietary composite cladding, fixed verically in accordance with the manufacturers guidance, colour: grey/ blue.

Windows

Existing windows to be replaced with propritary upvc double glazed sash windows to match existing, colour: white/ grey

Juliet Balcony

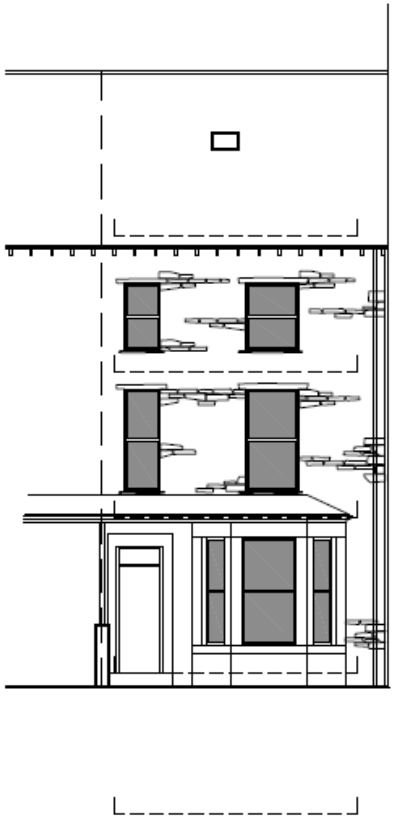
Proposed doors to dormer window to be fitted with proprietary frameless glass Juliet balcony

Roofs

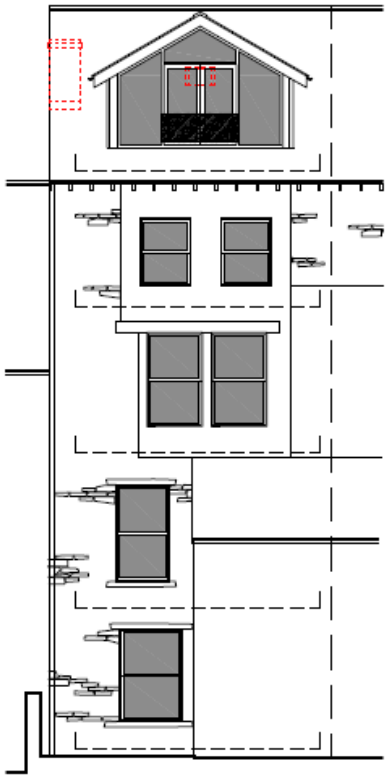
Proposed roof to the dormer window to be finished with matching salvaged Westmorland green slate laid in the traditional manner with diminishing courses, colour: blue/ green.

Rainwater Goods

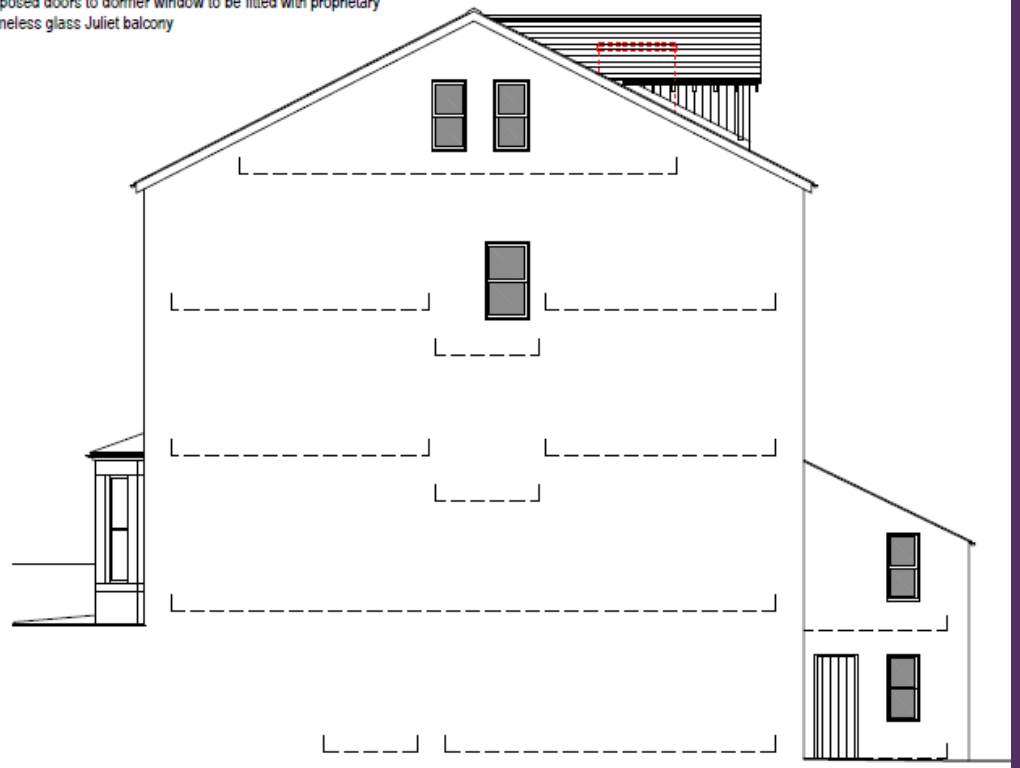
Existing cast iron rainwater goods to be refurbished/ replaced like for like as necessary, colour: dark grey



East Elevation scale 1:100



West Elevation scale 1:100



North Elevation scale 1:100

revisions
A 13-04-26 Dormer amended. WJC

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT©

Graham K Norman Architect
CHARTERED PRACTICE
UNIT 4 MERESIDE
GREENBANK ROAD
EDEN BUSINESS PARK
PENRITH, CUMBRIA, CA11 9FB
01768 868274
mail@grahamknorman.co.uk
www.grahamknorman.co.uk
RIBA

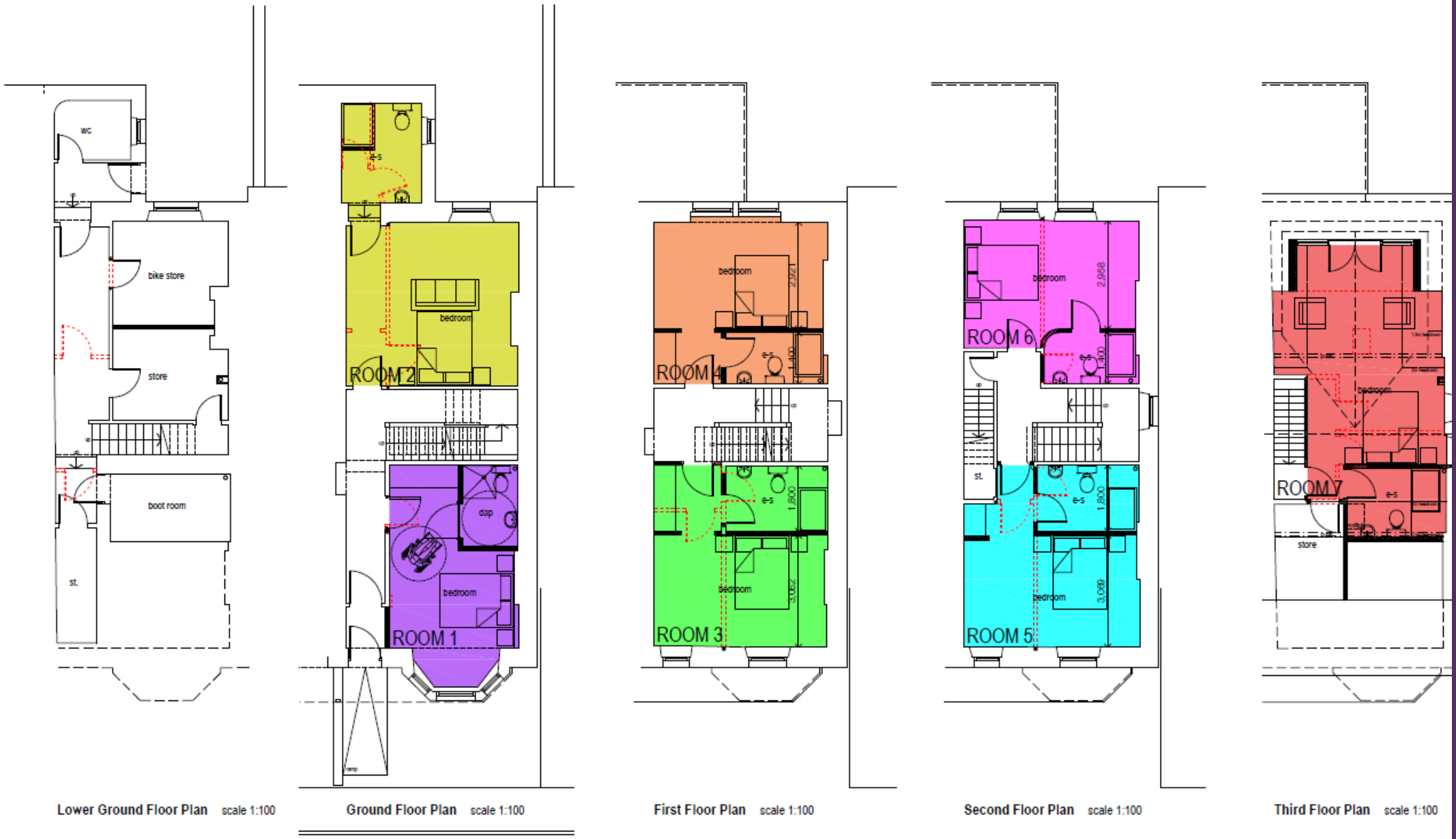
AS PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

08-04-26
WJC
1-100@A3

PROPOSED CONVERSION
6 BORROWDALE ROAD, KESWICK

MR AND MRS RICHARDSON

126-119-05 A



DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT©

revisions
A 13-04-26 Dormer amended. WJC

Graham K Norman Architect
CHARTERED PRACTICE
UNIT 4 MERESIDE
GREENBANK ROAD
EDEN BUSINESS PARK
PENRITH, CUMBRIA, CA11 9FB
01768 868274
mail@grahamknorman.co.uk
www.grahamknorman.co.uk
RIBA

AS PROPOSED PLANS

08-04-26 WJC 1-100

PROPOSED CONVERSION
6 BORROWDALE ROAD, KESWICK

MR AND MRS RICHARDSON

126-119-04