

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND & EASTER ROSS  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE – 28 AUGUST 2007**

Agenda Item	4.7
Report No	PLC/13/07

**07/00326/FULRC**

**Report by Area Planning and Building Standards Manager**

**SUMMARY**

This detailed application is for a total of 9 houses (3 pairs of semi-detached and one terrace of 3), to be erected on land to the north of Chapel Place, Portmahomack. All of the units are to be 'affordable'

Ward 8

The applicant is Albyn Housing Society Ltd.

**The recommendation is to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.**

**1. PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 The site is located at the top of Chapel Street, and opposite the end of Chapel Hill and Chapel Place, in Portmahomack. It adjoins playing fields to the north, and farmland to the east. It is open in nature and currently grassland, with a shrub area to the west and clump of trees adjacent to the road between Chapel Hill and Chapel Place.
- 1.2 The proposal is for the erection of 9 houses, comprised of 3 pairs of semi-detached and one terrace of 3 houses. Since the applicant is Albyn Housing Society Ltd, all of the houses will be on an 'affordable' basis.
- 1.3 The scheme comprises a mixture of single and 1¾ storey houses. The existing clump of trees to the southern boundary will be partially retained as an island at the access into the site, with the semi detached housing arranged around the resultant cul-de-sac. The terrace of 3 houses will front the existing access road to the playing field changing rooms.

**2. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 None

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- 3.1 The application was advertised under Section 34 and as development affecting the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 3.2 32 standard letters have been received, of which 2 of the signatories have contacted me claiming they never signed them. An additional 4 individually written letters have been received (2 from the same individual).
- 3.3 Objections include:
- \* Access – Chapel Hill is narrow with no pavements and blind bends, and includes an access point to a playground, and is unsuitable for further development.
  - \* Surface water drainage via within curtilage soakaways will lead to water finding a lower route onto adjacent land at Chapel Hill / East Lynne, which already experiences high levels of water seepage during autumn and winter, and could make the bank unstable as well as wetter.
  - \* Inadequate parking provision – more than 2 spaces per household are required.
  - \* Loss of parking for existing properties who park within the site.
  - \* No off road parking for service and delivery vehicles.
  - \* Adjacent to the Conservation Area – appropriate designs are required.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 TEC Roads – No objections. Road construction consent and road bond are required.
- 4.2 SEPA – The surface water drainage is acceptable in terms of water quality. The water quantity aspect has not been considered.
- 4.3 Contaminated Land – No objections.
- 4.4 Scottish Water – No objection, but need to assess the impact of the development on their existing infrastructure. There could be issues within their water and waste water networks.
- 4.5 Tarbat Community Council – Offers general support and acknowledges need for affordable housing in Portmahomack. Requests that the affordable housing is restricted to people with local connections. Expresses concern over the access to the site which is narrow, and potentially dangerous, and requests advice sought from Roads.
- 4.6 Archaeology – No condition requested.

#### **5. POLICY**

- 5.1 The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal
- **Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan**  
Portmahomack Housing Policy 3: Capacity of 4 – 6 amenity / elderly housing units.

- **The Highland Structure Plan**  
Policy G2 design for sustainability.

5.2 The proposal also requires to be assessed against the following relevant Scottish Planning Policies (SPP); NPPG; and Planning Advice Notes (PAN).

- PAN 67 - Housing quality.
- SPP3 - Planning for housing.

## **6. PLANNING APPRAISAL**

6.1 **Determining issues** - Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The proposal requires to be assessed against the appropriate policies of the Development Plan, supplementary guidance, and National Planning Policy and Guidelines as referred to in the Policy section. In particular, the proposal requires detailed assessment of the following fundamental issues:

- whether the principle of development is appropriate in terms of policy
- whether the layout of development is appropriate
- the impact on the amenity of the area and residents
- other material issues raised by the objectors

6.3 The site is within the residential allocation in the Local Plan and, although exceeding the 6 units indicated in the Local Plan, proposes a good layout which integrates into its surroundings. There is little amenity space provided for some of the units, but this high density is often associated with traditional fishing villages, and is acceptable within this context. Similarly, the design of the housing is acceptable.

6.4 There are no objections from consultees.

6.5 The site is separated from the existing housing within the Conservation Area by the road, and presents gables to this road, as does the existing housing. This helps to minimise any impact on the existing housing. Furthermore, the designs utilised and layout proposed reflect the grain of the existing development in the adjoining area, and make provision for 2 off street parking spaces per dwelling, in accordance with TEC Roads specifications.

6.6 Some local residents currently park within the grassed area of the application site. There is, however, no formal agreement in place for parking in this location.

6.7 The objectors have noted that the access to the site via Chapel Hill is poor, being single width with bends, no pavements, a steep gradient, and with an access to the play area. The applicant has pointed out that there is another access to the site, via Chapel Place, which is intended as the main access.

There is no objection from TEC Roads.

- 6.8 Permeable pavements are proposed for the new road areas, and surface water soakaways within each plot for the roof water. The rain water should therefore continue to soak into the site as existing and not be channelled to adjacent land down hill, as objectors fear. Although there are known problems with water egress / natural springs / underground water channels within Portmahomack in general, I am not aware of any problems of this nature affecting the application site.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The layout and house design integrates into the area, and should provide an attractive street scene and living environment. There are no objections from consultees. The proposed development is acceptable.

### RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. No development shall commence until Road Construction Consent has been obtained and a Road Bond has been received.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

2. Prior to the commencement of development, details for the proposed maintenance of all areas of open space (including the permeable paved areas) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, and any costs thereby identified for their adoption and / or maintenance shall be identified and paid in full.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, to ensure that open spaces are adequately maintained.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This shall accommodate a 30 year storm with a 200 year storm check to ensure no property flooding or safety risk.

Reason: In the interests of health and safety, in order to protect against flood risk.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the proposed means of protecting the retained trees shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. These measures shall thereafter be implemented and retained in full during the course of construction.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, in order to protect the retained trees against damage.

5./

5. Prior to the commencement of development, a landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The scheme thereby agreed shall be implemented in full during the first planting season following the completion of development, and thereafter retained in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

6. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the existing and proposed ground and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

7. Construction hours on site shall be limited to 8:00am to 6:00 pm Mondays to Fridays; 8:00 am to 1:00 pm Saturdays and not at all on Sundays.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, given the proximity of the site to existing housing.

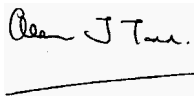
8. Prior to the first occupation of each of the houses, 2 off street parking spaces shall be provided for and thereafter retained for the use of each dwelling.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

Informative Note:

Scottish Water advise that a planning approval does not guarantee a connection to their infrastructure. There may be issues within their Water Network and their Waste Water Network. The development may also involve building over or in such a way as to obstruct access to an existing public water main. You are advised to contact Scottish Water to discuss (0845 601 8855).

Signature:



Designation: Area Planning & Building Standards Manager

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2007

Author: Susan Hadfield

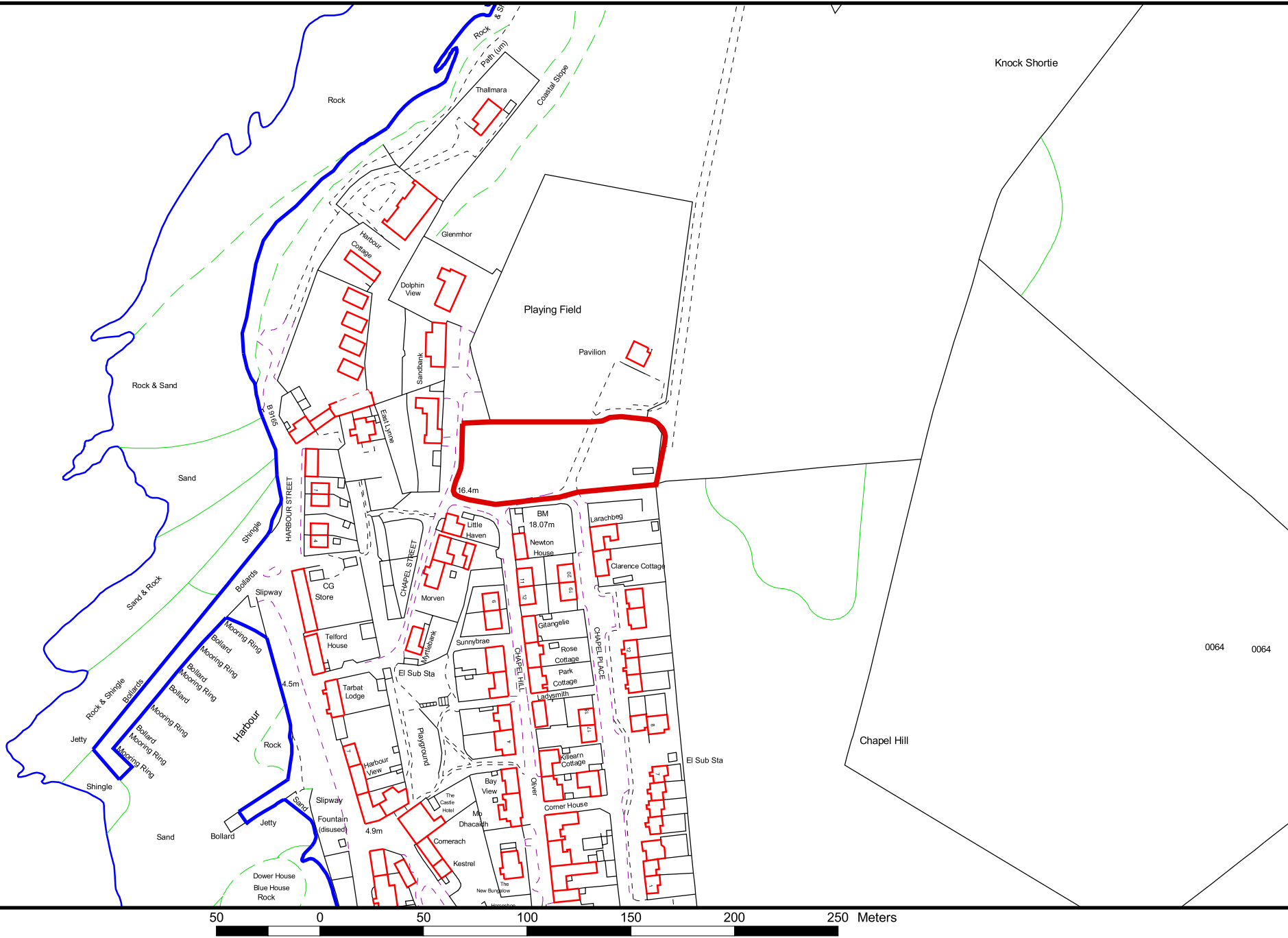
Background Papers:

Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan

The Highland Structure Plan

PAN 67

SPP3



**07/00326/FULRC Erection of nine houses (Detail) at land to north of Chapel Place Portmahomack**

**SUPPLIED BY THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

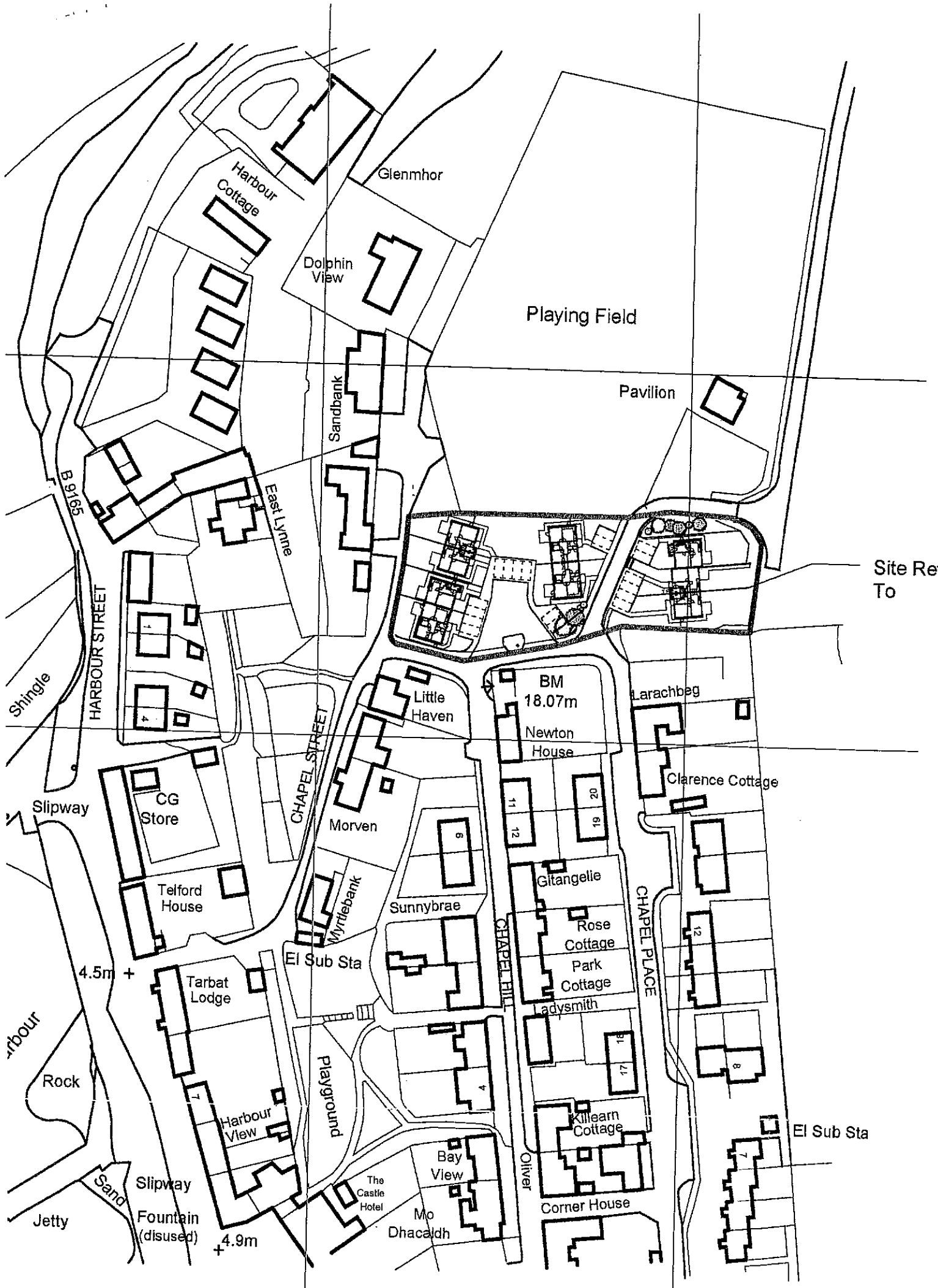
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15 August 2007



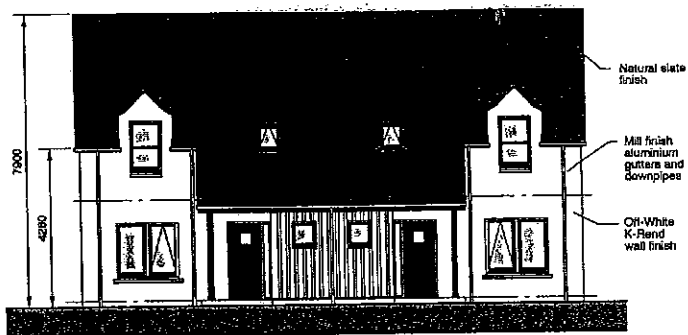
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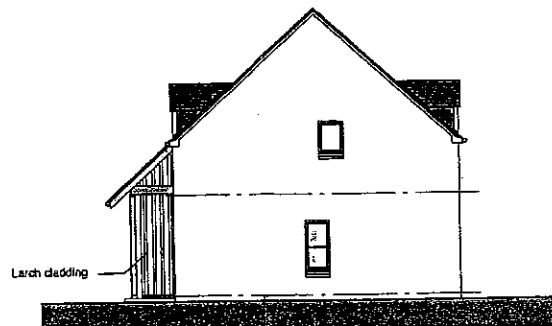
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# Proposed House Elevations



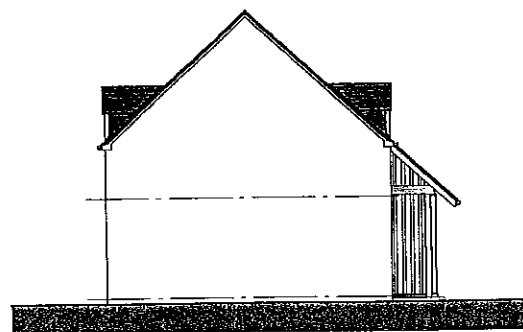
FRONT ELEVATION



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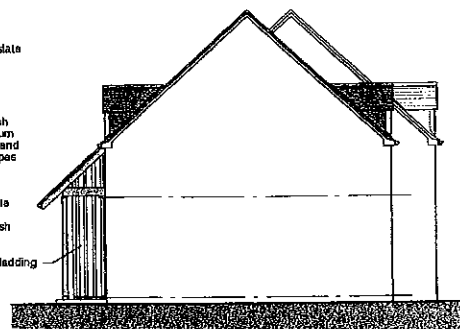
REAR ELEVATION



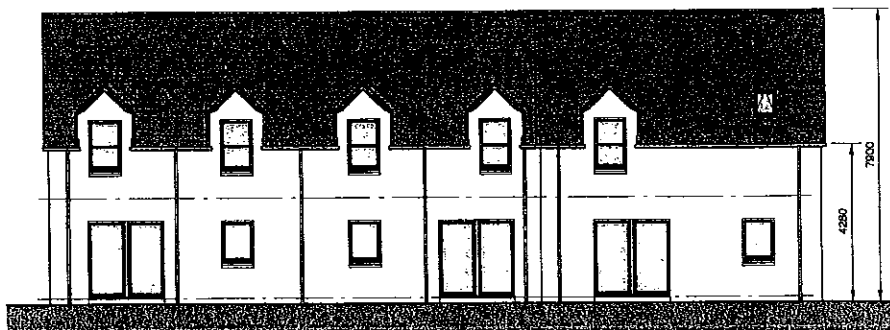
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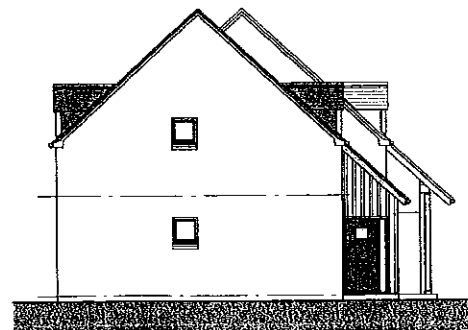
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REAR ELEVATION



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# Proposed House Elevations

