

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND & EASTER ROSS PLANNING
APPLICATIONS AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
15 APRIL 2008

Agenda Item	3.2
Report No	14/08

**08/00029/FULCA: ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO HOUSE AT LARGO,
NEWTON ROAD, WICK, KW1 5SA.**

Report by Area Planning and Building Standards Manager

SUMMARY

Application is made to erect a two storey extension to the rear of a bungalow called "Largo" at Newton Road, Wick. It would be considerably higher than the existing house and bears no resemblance to it in scale or design and would be an incongruous and inappropriate form of extension.

The recommendation is to REFUSE planning permission.

Ward Number 3 – Wick

Applicant: Mrs. A. Durrand per D. A. Renwick Associates Ltd., 5 Langley Park, Wick.

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Application is made to erect a two storey extension to the rear of a bungalow at Newton Road, Wick. The bungalow has an existing conservatory to the rear and it is proposed to remove the back of the conservatory and attach the extension to it with the conservatory forming a link between the house and the extension. The proposed extension has a bedroom and shower room/WC on the ground floor and a sitting room on the upper floor.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 None.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1 No representations received.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 None required.

5. POLICY

5.1 The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposals:

Highland Structure Plan (2001)

G2 Design for Sustainability

Caithness Local Plan

General Policy H. The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the established character of residential areas and will encourage appropriate development.

5.2 The proposal also requires to be assessed against relevant Scottish Planning Policies (SPP); National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPG); and Planning Advice Notes (PAN). In this instance, in particular

- SPP 1 The Planning System.
- SPP 3 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

6.3 Whilst I appreciate that the proposed extension has been designed to satisfy the applicant's needs, I am concerned that the form of extension appears to be quite alien to the form and proportions of the existing house. The agent has rightly pointed out that it will not be easily seen from the public road, but it will nevertheless be seen and, being so unexpected and incongruous, it would be liable to draw attention. The agent has pointed to a new house under construction in Wick to which he draws parallels in terms of the height and relationship of the building to its neighbours. However, the present application is for an extension to an existing house where the need to achieve a compatible solution is, in my view, greater. In any case, notwithstanding the other development, this application must be considered on its individual merits.

- 6.4 As requested by the agent, copies of his two letters and one from the applicant are appended to this report.
- 6.5 I consider that the proposal is inappropriate and that a better solution could be found, and accordingly recommend that the application should be refused.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE planning permission for the following reason:

1. In the interests of the visual amenity and character of the area in that the proposed extension, by virtue of its height and massing, would be out of keeping with the character of the existing house and would appear to be an alien and incongruous feature in the area.

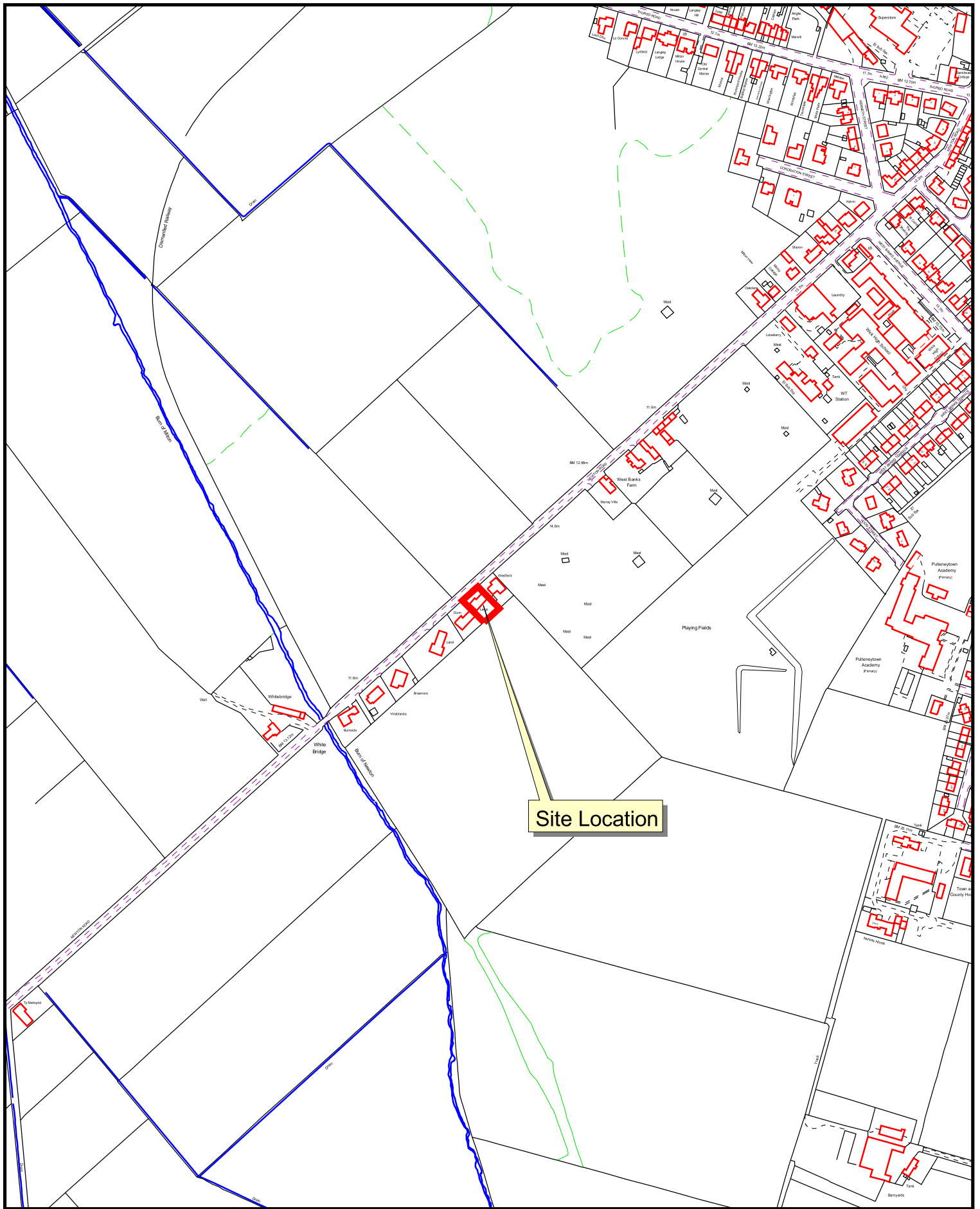
Signature: Allan J Todd

Designation: Area Planning & Building Standards Manager

Author: Iain Ewart, Team Leader (01955 607751)

Background Papers: As referred to in the report above.

Date: 4 April 2008



Site Location



08/00029/FULCA
 Alterations and extension to house at
 Largo, Newton Road, Wick.

Mrs A Durrand
 per D A Renwick Associates
 Chartered Architects
 5 Langley Park,
 Wick

Date: 03 April 2008

SUPPLIED BY THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

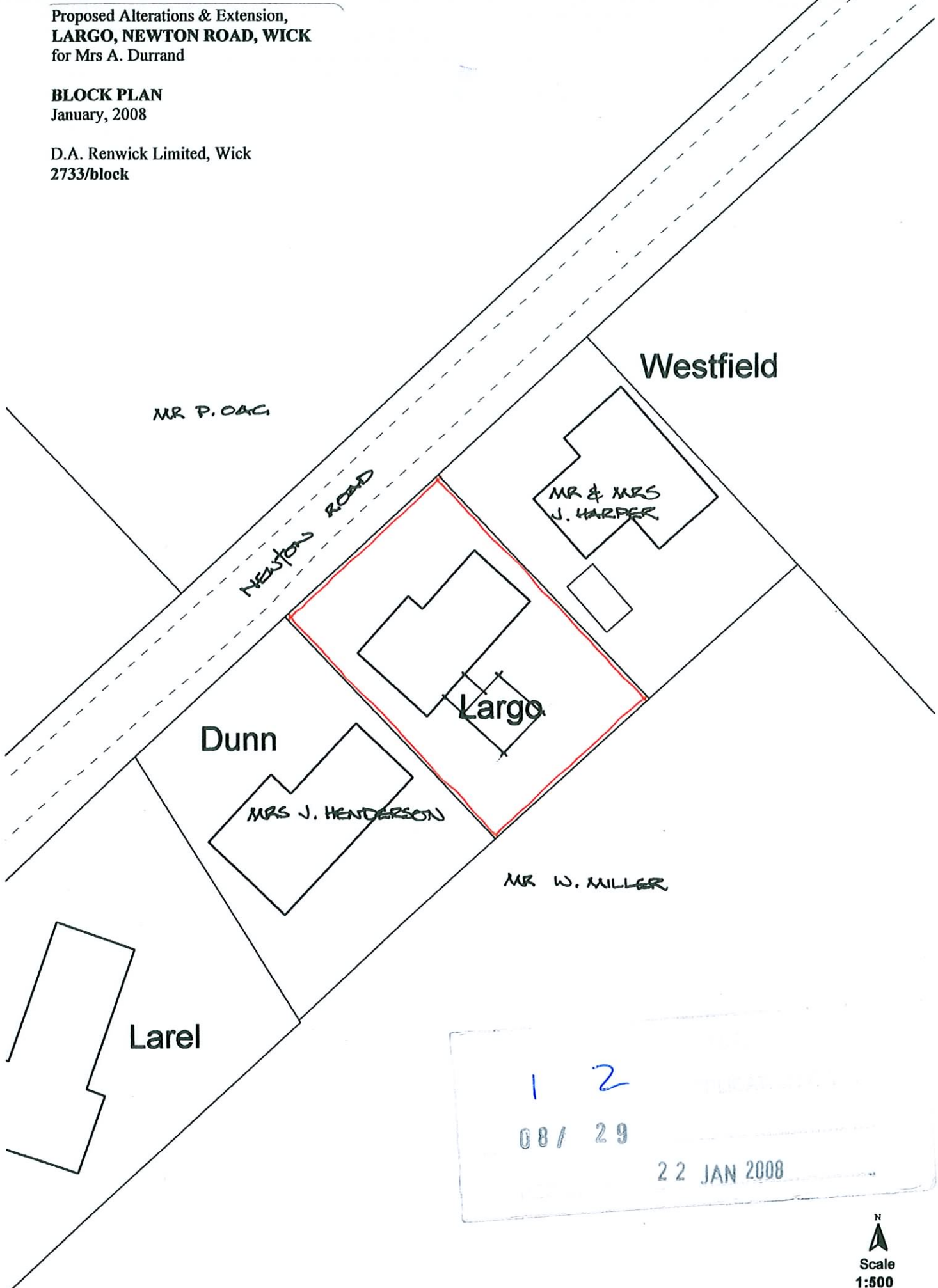


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Proposed Alterations & Extension,
LARGO, NEWTON ROAD, WICK
for Mrs A. Durrand

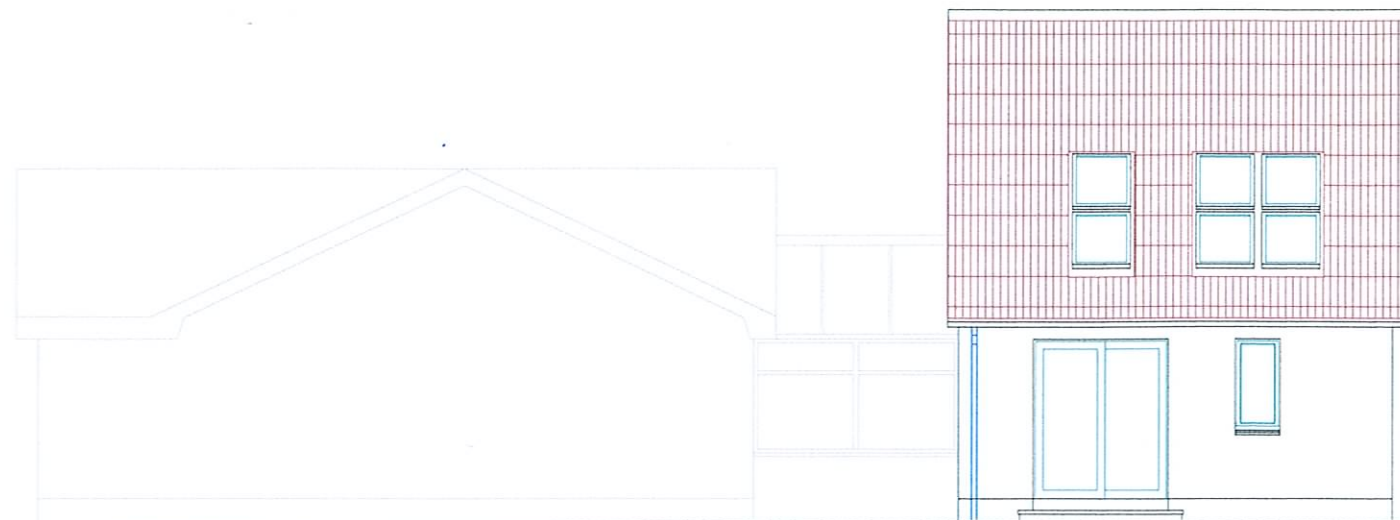
BLOCK PLAN
January, 2008

D.A. Renwick Limited, Wick
2733/block



1 2
08 / 29
22 JAN 2008

N
Scale
1:500



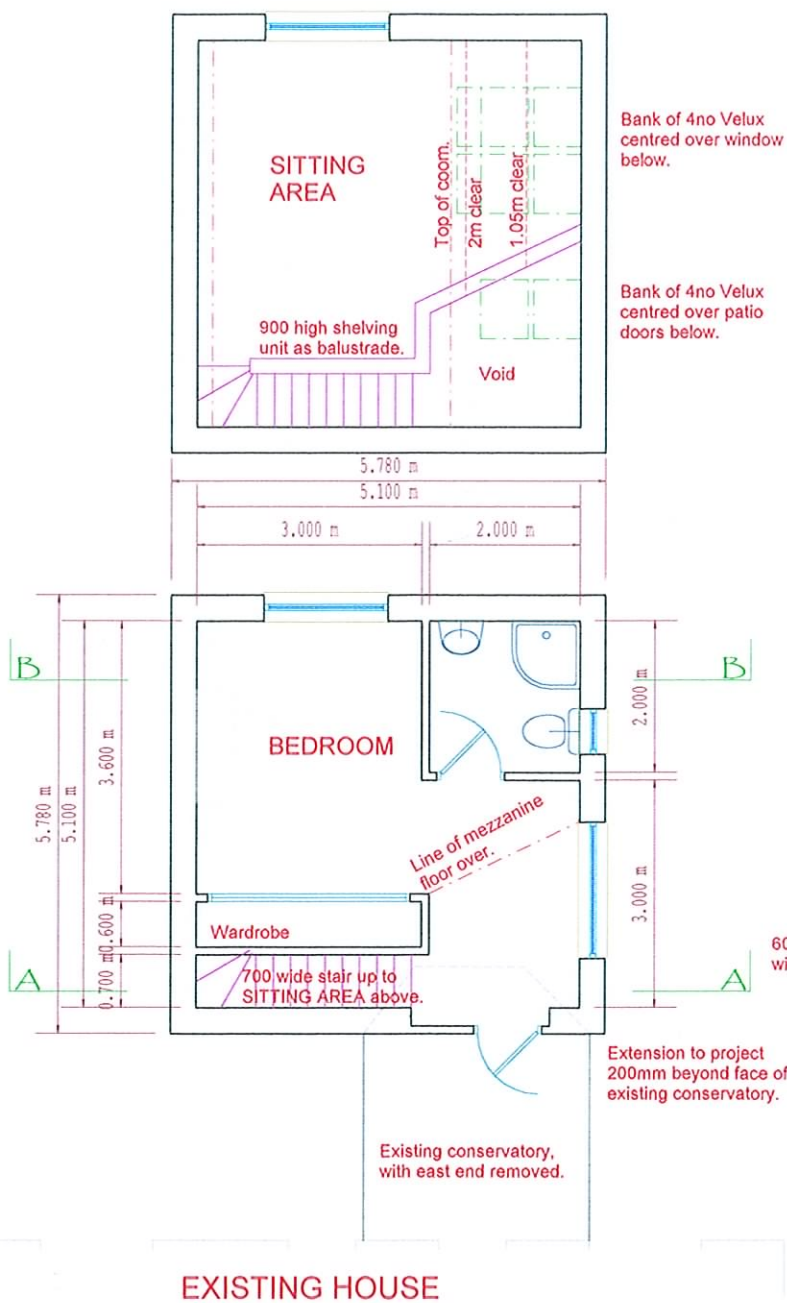
SOUTH ELEVATION

Ridge to match existing.
 Concrete tiles to match existing.
 45 degree roof pitch.
 Velux roof windows (780 x 980 with proprietary flashings between).
 Brown rectangular pvc gutters and drd rw eaves to match main house.
 Double glazed windows to match main house, with matching patio doors.

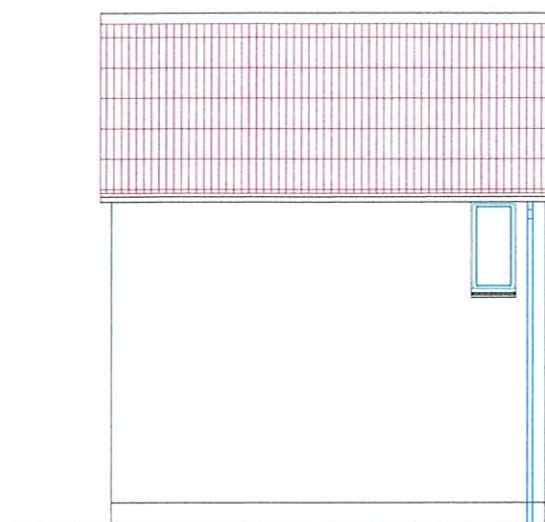


EAST ELEVATION

Verge detail to match main house.
 Overhangs to match main house.
 Drydash, including baseband, to match existing.

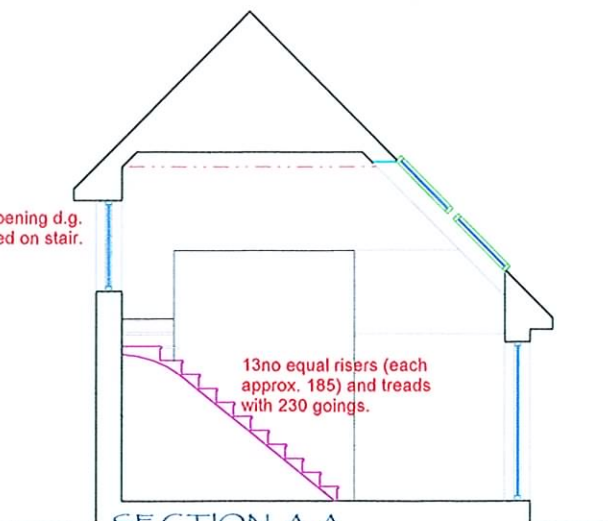


EXISTING HOUSE

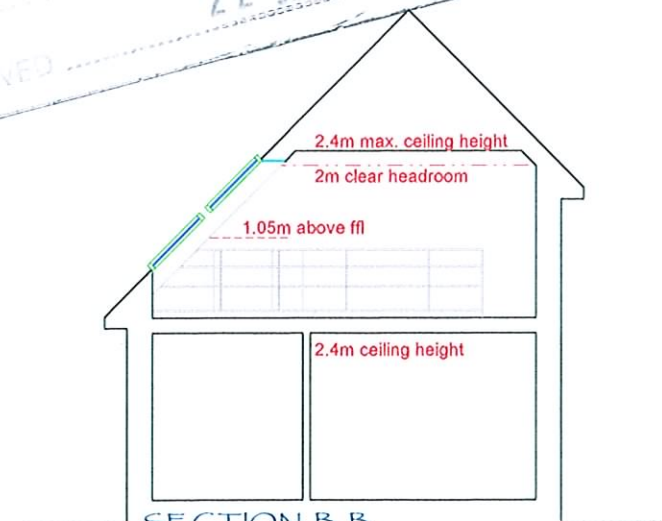


NORTH ELEVATION

600 x 1200 opening d.g. window centred on stair.



SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B

Proposed Extension to "Largo",
 Newton Road, Wick
 for Mrs A. Durrand.

DESIGN PROPOSALS
 1 : 100
 January, 2008

D.A. Renwick Limited,
 Chartered Architects,
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2733/02

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26th March, 2008
Ref: 2733

Iain Ewart Esq.,
Department of Planning & Building Control,
The Highland Council,
Wick.

Dear Iain,

Proposed Extension.
Largo, Newton Road, Wick:
08/00029/FULCA.

I am disappointed to know that, despite my letter of 18th February supporting my design for "Largo", you feel a need to refer the application to committee. We (the architectural profession) are encouraged to produce designs other than the standard mundane forms that most kit houses seem to take these days, but here, where I believe I have produced something slightly more interesting, I meet resistance.

It may be that your height concerns are justified, or that my design is simply poor but, as you know from my last letter referring to the house in Willowbank, I certainly cannot support the former notion. The latter is of course subjective, but I think it significant that no objections have been lodged to the proposals. The neighbours appear not to share your concerns.

Clearly, my hope is that the committee will acknowledge your reservations but approve the design. To support our cause, but not wishing to cause embarrassment to anyone, I asked your staff if my client had a right to approach local members of the committee to try to ensure their support. I was advised that she could, and that the two local members were Graeme Smith and Katrina McNab. However, when she made contact, she discovered that Mrs McNab is not in fact on the committee, and that Mr Smith understands it to be inappropriate for applicants to make direct contact with him. In these circumstances, my client has sent me a letter (attached) stating why she wants the extension. I realise that the letter may not be significant in strict Planning terms, but I nonetheless think the committee should be made aware of its content. I trust, incidentally, that the committee will also be given *all* paperwork relating to the application, including my letter of 18th February and this letter.

The new committee format is unfamiliar to me. Please confirm when and where the committee will meet, whether I or my client can be present and whether we would have a right to speak if we do attend, and also that all the paperwork referred to above will be circulated to all committee members.

Yours sincerely,

D.A. Renwick, Dip. Arch., RIBA, ARIAS.

Directors:
D.A. Renwick, Dip. Arch., RIBA, ARIAS
K.M. Renwick

Company No: 268118
VAT Registration Number: 361 1693 60

D.A. Renwick Limited

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18th February, 2008
Ref: 2733

Iain Ewart Esq.,
Department of Planning & Building Control,
The Highland Council,
Wick.



Dear Iain,

Proposed Extension,
Largo, Newton Road, Wick:
08/00029/FULCA.

I write to you partly because I know that Jane is on holiday and partly because I suspect that you will in any case be involved in the decision making that my letter will necessitate.

I received a phone call, backed up by a letter, from Jane regarding the above and asking that I revise the design of the proposed extension to reduce its height. Before I argue my case, I feel that I should emphasise, firstly, that I do appreciate the fact that members of the Planning Department are showing concern for the environment and, secondly, that they have the nous to let me know of their concerns rather than simply issue a Decision Notice without any consultation.

That said, I hope you may appreciate that I did not arrive at the proposals without giving considerable thought to the visual impact they might have on the area in general and the immediate neighbours in particular. Only after concluding that the impact would not be excessive did I develop the design. It is worth emphasising immediately that no neighbour objections have been lodged.

My contention is that the proposed extension is at the rear of the existing house and is substantially screened by the existing building. Anyone passing in a car is hardly going to see the extension, and even the few pedestrians who pass the house on the far-off pavement will only see the top of the proposed roof. My drawing 2733/03, of which four copies are attached, shows this. Moreover, the orientation of the two immediate neighbouring houses is such that neither is significantly affected by the extension – which is presumably why neither party objected.

In contrast to my application, I am extremely aware of a new house being constructed in Broadhaven Road. All the surrounding houses are single storey with low pitched roofs, and many are not gable-on to the road. Conversely, the new infill house is storey-and-a-half, has a roof pitch of 50%, and is very obtrusively gable-on to the road. Being on approximately the same building line as its neighbours, the visual impact of that gable and high roof is huge – and yet the design was, presumably, approved. Photos of the Broadhaven house are attached, though I suspect you will have not need of them. I simply cannot see any way that my proposals can be considered remotely comparable with this house, and yet the height of my roof has been questioned.

I ask you to reconsider the application in the light of the attached drawing and my above reasoning, and approve the proposals. Having said that, I would be very pleased to meet you, in your office or at one or both sites, to discuss the proposals if you think it would assist you.

Directors:
D.A. Renwick, Dip. Arch., RIBA, ARIAS
K.M. Renwick

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