

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND & EASTER ROSS PLANNING
APPLICATIONS AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
13 MAY 2008

Agenda Item	3.1
Report No	19/08

08/00042/FULCA: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL BLOCK COMPRISING 4 TWO-BEDROOM HOUSES, AND 4 TWO-BEDROOM FLATS WITH ASSOCIATED DETACHED BIN STORE ON LAND TO SOUTH OF 4 TRAILL STREET, CASTLETOWN, THURSO.

Report by Area Planning and Building Standards Manager

SUMMARY

Application is made in detail to demolish an existing 2 storey building which has a vacant shop on the ground floor with a flat over accessed from an old concrete stair to the rear. This building has been extended several times, the extensions comprising rendered block work walls with concrete floors and pitched roofs finished in profile asbestos cement sheets. At the rear of this backing on to Traill Street is a stone building recently used for storage but originally part of a larger housing terrace.

The site lies to the south of 4 Traill Street, north west of the existing Drill Hall on Main Street. It is proposed to erect a 2 storey residential block comprising 4 2-bedroom houses and 4 2-bedroom flats. The application also includes a communal free standing bin store.

The proposals comply with the Caithness Local Plan but three letters of objection have been received, one of which is from Castletown Community Council. There is also a letter of support for the proposals. The grounds of objection do not merit refusal of the application and it is therefore recommended for approval.

The recommendation is to grant planning permission.

Ward Number 4 – Landward Caithness

Applicant: Norscot Joinery Ltd., Bower Workshops, Bower, Caithness.

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Application is made in detail to demolish an existing shop and various extensions thereto and a former redundant store on land to the south of 4 Traill Street, between Traill Street and Main Street in Castletown. The proposed building would present elevations to both streets. It is 2 storeys in height and has a 45° roof pitch clad in grey concrete interlocking tiles. The finish to the walls is proposed to be painted wet harl with smooth cement bands around the windows and door surrounds. As part of the proposals a new pavement is to be provided on Traill Street for the length of the building as far as it fronts the street.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 No record of any previous planning applications relating to this site.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 3.1 Three letters of objection have been received, one of which is from Castletown Community Council. The grounds of objection can be summarised as follows:

- a) The proposed development is not in keeping with the character of the village or surrounding area.
- b) The proposals make no reference to the Study carried out by the Princes Trust Initiative.
- c) There is a need for low cost housing units, not for houses for sale.
- d) Demand for houses in Castletown is low.
- e) The application does not contain any proposals for parking and this could lead to congestion.
- f) What is to happen to the re-cycling containers?

- 3.2 One letter of support for the proposals has been received on the basis that if the existing vacant building had to remain any longer it would very quickly become an eyesore, and also that the proposed housing units would hopefully allow some young people to get on the property ladder in the village.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 **Contaminated Land Unit:** No objections subject to a condition being attached to any consent issued.
- 4.2 **Archaeology Section:** No objections subject to a photographic record being made of the site.
- 4.3 **Area Roads and Community Works Manager:** No objections.
- 4.4 **Scottish Water:** No response.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 The following Policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal

Highland Structure Plan

- G2 Design for sustainability.

Caithness Local Plan (adopted September 2002)

- 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 the following relevant Scottish Planning Policies (SPP); National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPG); and Planning Advice Notes (PAN):

- SPP 3 Housing
- PAN 67 Housing Quality

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 applicant and objectors

6.3 The proposal is for the demolition and replacement of existing vacant and semi-derelict buildings. The proposed re-use of the site for residential use is in accordance with the provisions of the Caithness Local Plan. None of the consultees has raised any objections to the proposals.

6.4 With regard to the grounds of objection summarised in paragraph 3.1 above, I would respond to them as follows:

- a) It is difficult to argue that this proposed building is not in keeping with its surroundings. It has a 45° roof pitch, demonstrates vertical fenestration and is finished traditionally. Indeed, in many respects this proposed building demonstrates a higher quality of design and finish than some of the other buildings surrounding it, and in my view it represents a big improvement on what currently exists at the site.
- b) The study by the Princes Trust Initiative, whilst of interest and which will help inform the next Local Plan when it comes to be formulated, is not a statutory document. The relevant statutory document in this instance is the Caithness Local Plan and this proposal complies with that Plan.
- c) It may be the objector's view that the primary need in Castletown is for low cost rented houses. However this site is under the control of the applicant who considers that this development will be commercially viable and I have no reason to dispute this.
- d) I do not know what evidence the objector has for saying that there is no demand for houses in Castletown. For the last few years the contention in the Castletown area has been that there are insufficient development opportunities in the village. Obviously the developer in this instance thinks there is a market for these 8 units and again, I would not dispute that.

- e) The Area Roads and Community Works Manager has examined these proposals and, whilst acknowledging that there are no car parking facilities included as part of this application, he notes that there is an existing large car park immediately adjacent to the site. In his estimation that car park can adequately cope to serve the existing demand made of it and also the use which would be made of it by the residents of the proposed housing units. He, therefore, has no objections to these proposals.
- f) The recycling containers are purely a temporary and moveable facility and their presence adjacent to this site should not prejudice its redevelopment.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This proposal complies with the Caithness Local Plan and I am of the opinion that the redevelopment of the site will be of net benefit to Castletown and that the proposals are entirely appropriate to the village. I do not consider that any of the grounds of objection submitted merit refusal of the application and consequently this application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Except as otherwise provided by the terms of this permission, the developer shall construct the development in accordance with the plans and supporting information submitted with the application and docketed as relative hereto, including the proposed footpath along Traill Street, with no deviation therefrom, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to clarify the terms of this permission granted and to ensure that the development is implemented as approved.

2. Prior to commencement of development, a photographic record shall be made of the remains of old buildings and/or other features affected by the proposed development, in accordance with the attached specification, and shall thereafter be submitted to the Planning Authority. No site clearance work shall take place until confirmation in writing has been received from the Planning Authority that the record made has been lodged and is satisfactory.

Reason: To protect the historic interest of the site.

3. During site clearance works, monitoring shall take place on the site for any evidence of potentially contaminated material and if any such material is suspected to have been found the Planning Authority shall be contacted immediately.

Reason: In the interests of Environmental Health.

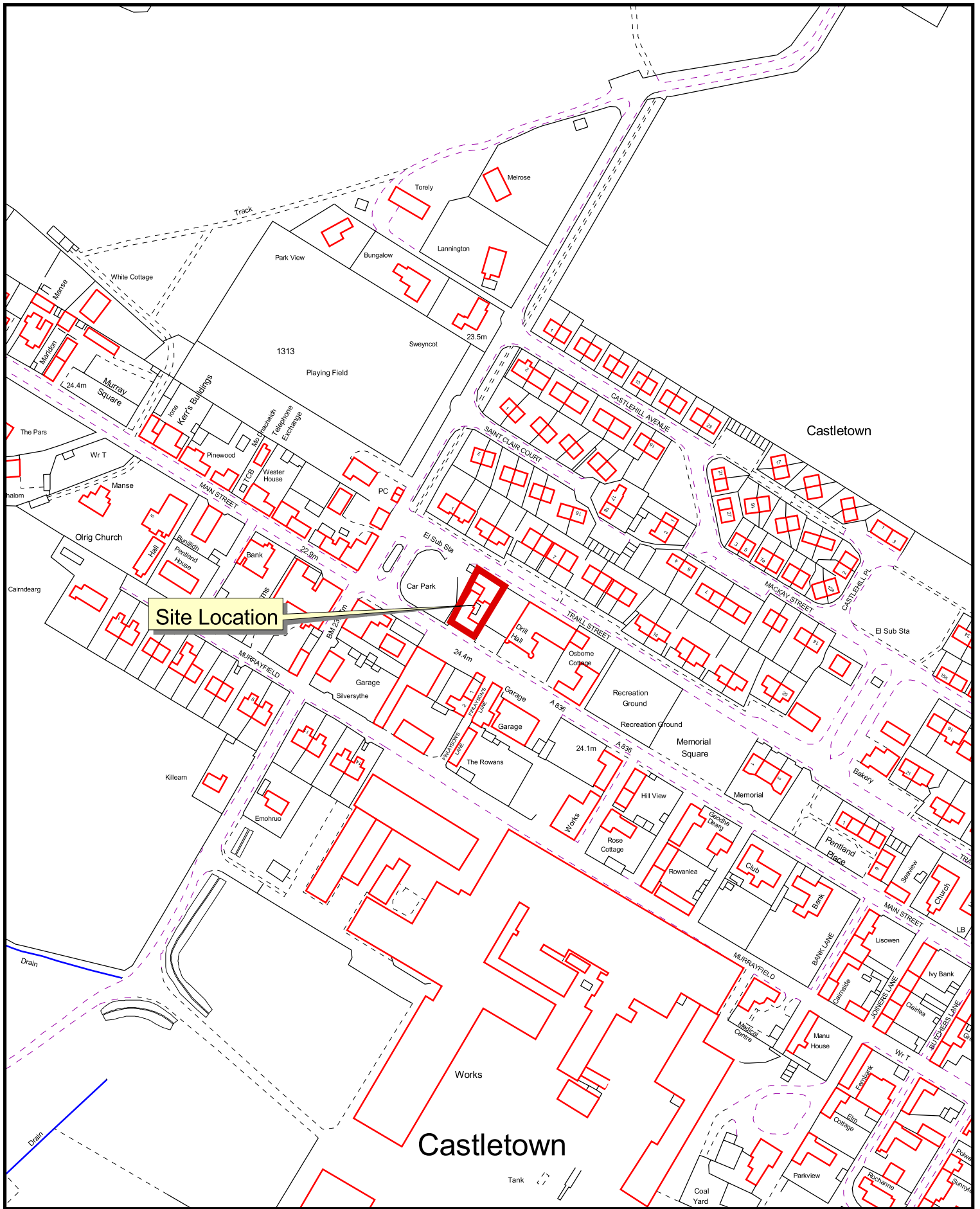
Signature: Allan J Todd

Designation: Area Planning & Building Standards Manager

Author: Iain Ewart 01955 607751

Background Papers: As referred to in the report above.

Date: 1 May, 2008



Site Location



08/00042/FULCA
 Demolition of existing buildings, erection of 8 no. 2 bedroomed flats at
 Land to south of 4 Traill Street, Castle town.

Norscot Joinery Ltd
 Bower Workshops
 Bower
 Caithness

Date: 01 May 2008

SUPPLIED BY THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL



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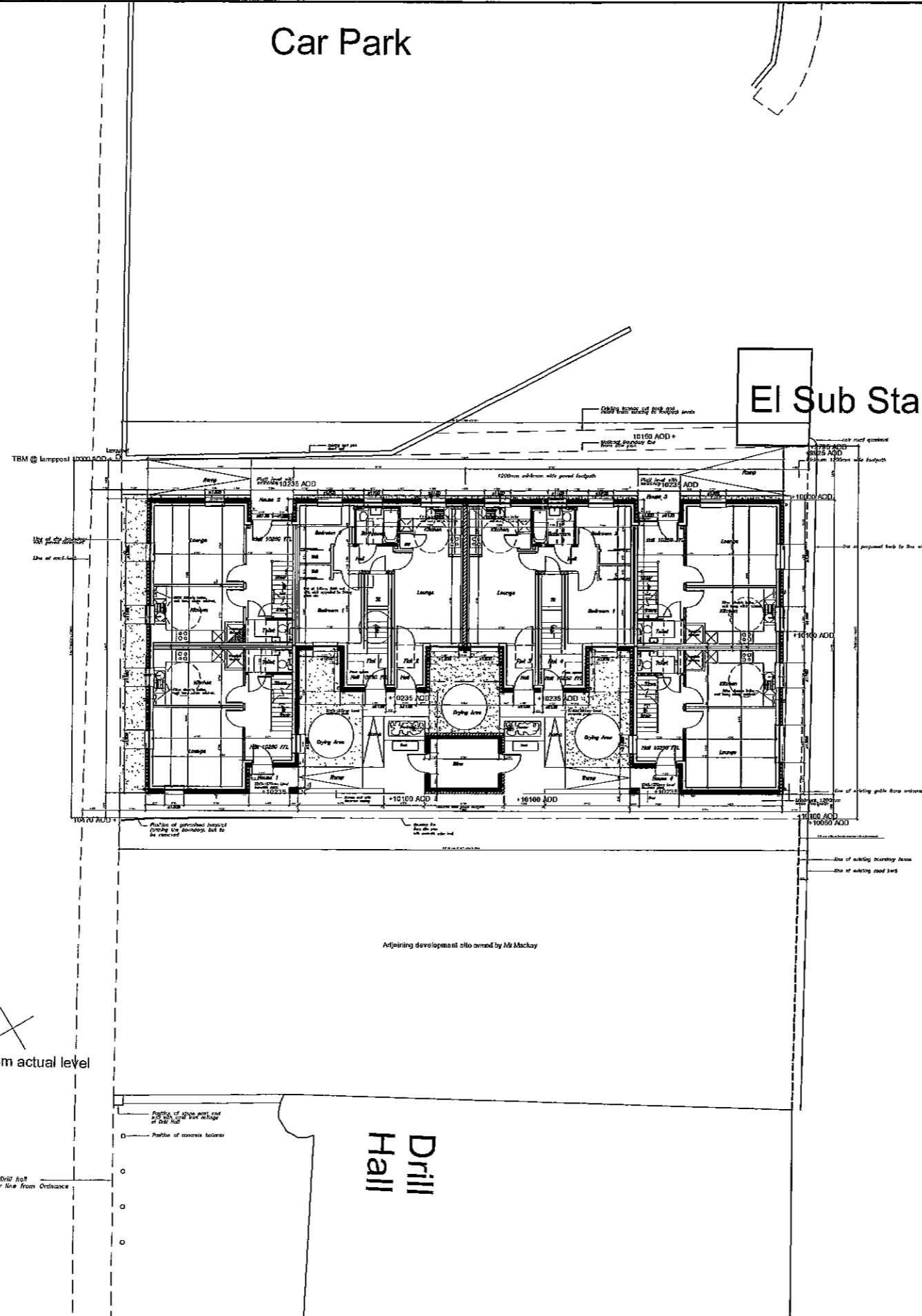


Car Park

El Sub Sta

MAIN STREET

TRAILL STREET

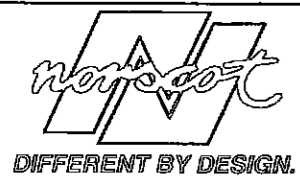


24.4m actual level

Drill Hall

Amended
HIGHLAND COUNCIL
1 OF 6 OF APPLICATION REFERENCE
08/42
RECEIVED 12/3/08

Site Plan



Customer:
Norscot Joinery Ltd.

Location:
Castletown shop site adjacent to Drill Hall,
Proposed new Housing,
Main Street, Castletown,
Caithness.

Drawn By: PW

Scale: 1:250

Drawing No: N07/60/001

Norscot Joinery Limited
Bower Workshops, Caithness, KW1 4TL
Telephone: 01955 641303
Fax: 01955 641207
Web site: www.norscot.co.uk
E-mail: info@norscot.co.uk

Checked By:

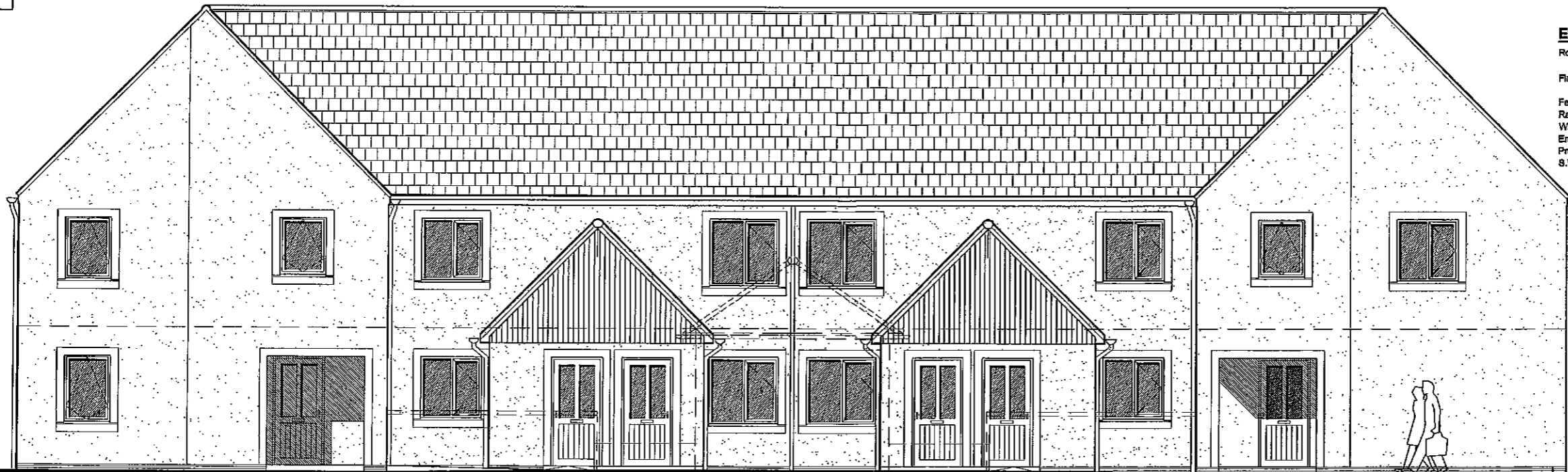
Date: 12/12/07

Revision

A

Customer Approval:

A - House 4 as 3 layout. 20/02/08.

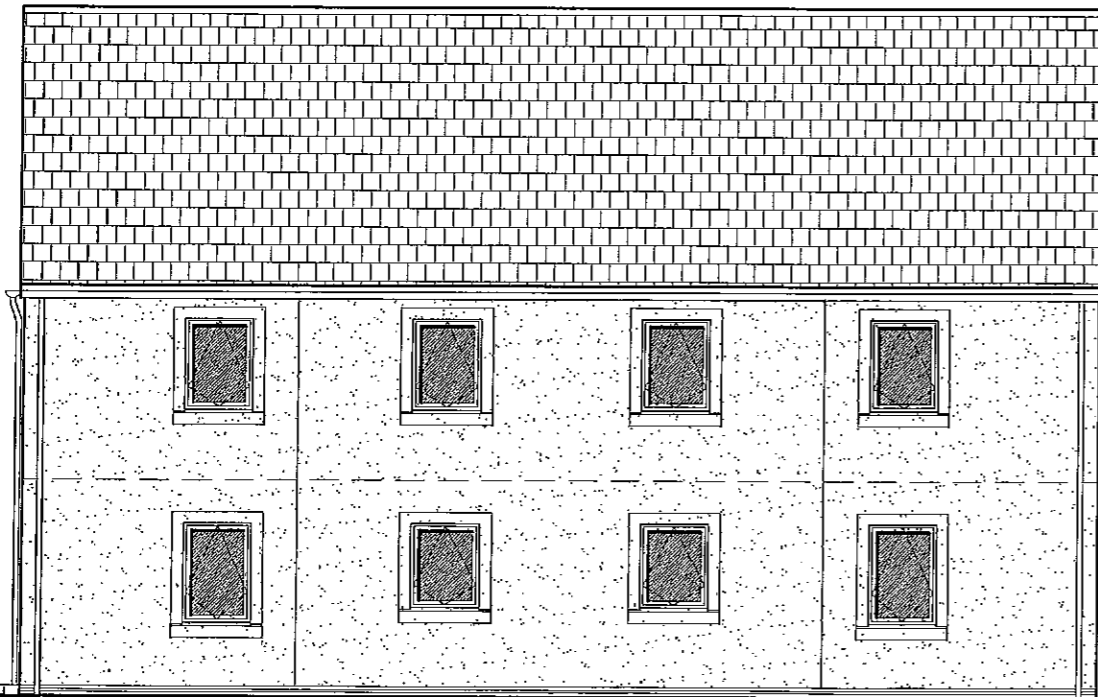


External Finishes:

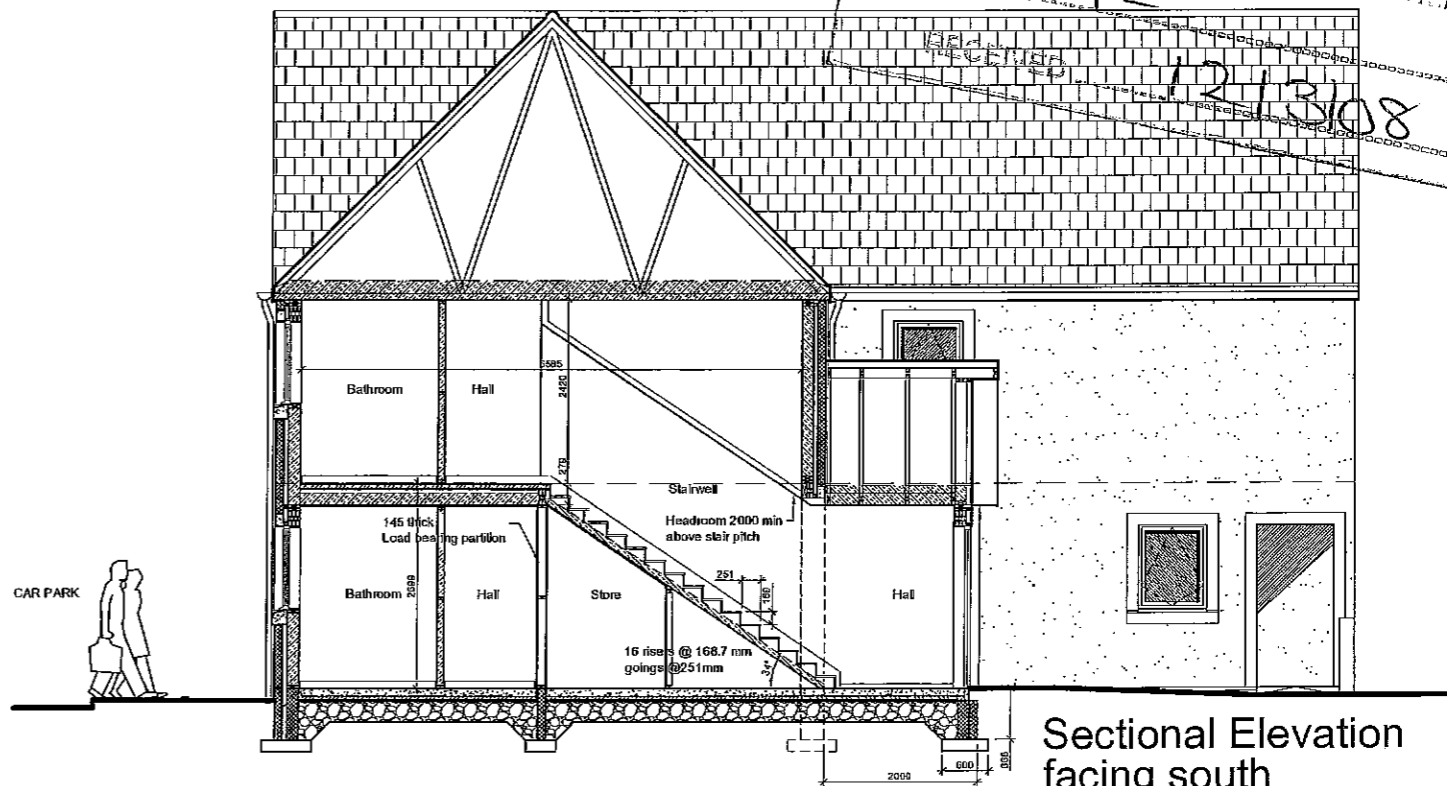
Roof covering: - 45° Smooth grey concrete interlocking roof tiles with matching dry ridge and verge.
 Finish to walls: - Wet dash harl for painting with smooth cement basecourse and raised door and window surrounds.
 Fascia and Soffit: - Painted redwood fascia with PVC over fascia vent.
 Rainwater Goods: - Black Marley deepflow or similar.
 Windows: - Rosewood PVCu & factory double glazing.
 Entrance Doors: - Rosewood PVCu & factory double glazing.
 Precast concrete cills to be deep profile units.
 S.W.V.P. to be taken to Marley ridge terminal.

East Elevation facing the Drill Hall

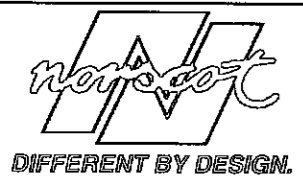
Amended
 5.10
 08/142
 RECEIVED 12/13/08
 OF APPLICATION



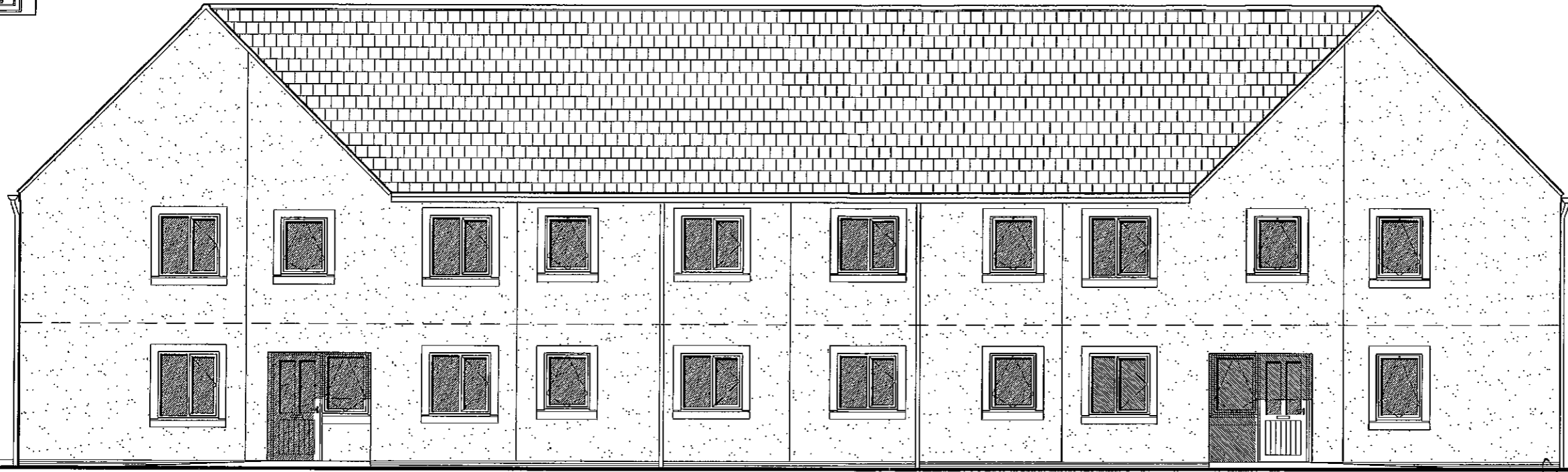
South Elevation to Main Street



Sectional Elevation facing south



Customer: Norscot Joinery Ltd.	Location: Castletown Shop site adjacent to Drill Hall, Proposed new Housing, Main Street, Castletown, Caithness.	Drawn By: PW	Scale: 1:100	Drawing No: N07/60/06	Norscot Joinery Limited Bower Workshops, Caithness, KW1 4TL Telephone: 01955 641303 Fax: 01955 641207 Web site: www.norscot.co.uk E-mail: info@norscot.co.uk
		Checked By:	Date: 14/12/07	Revision: A	
		Customer Approval:	A - House 4 as 3 layout. 20/02/08.		

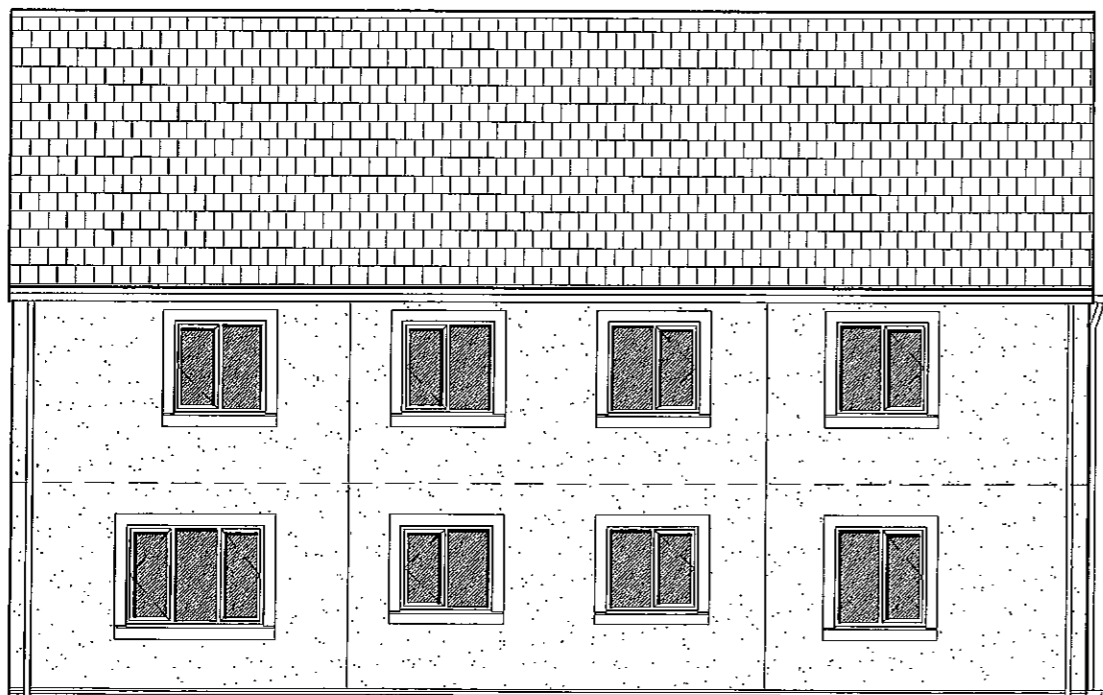


West Elevation to the Car Park

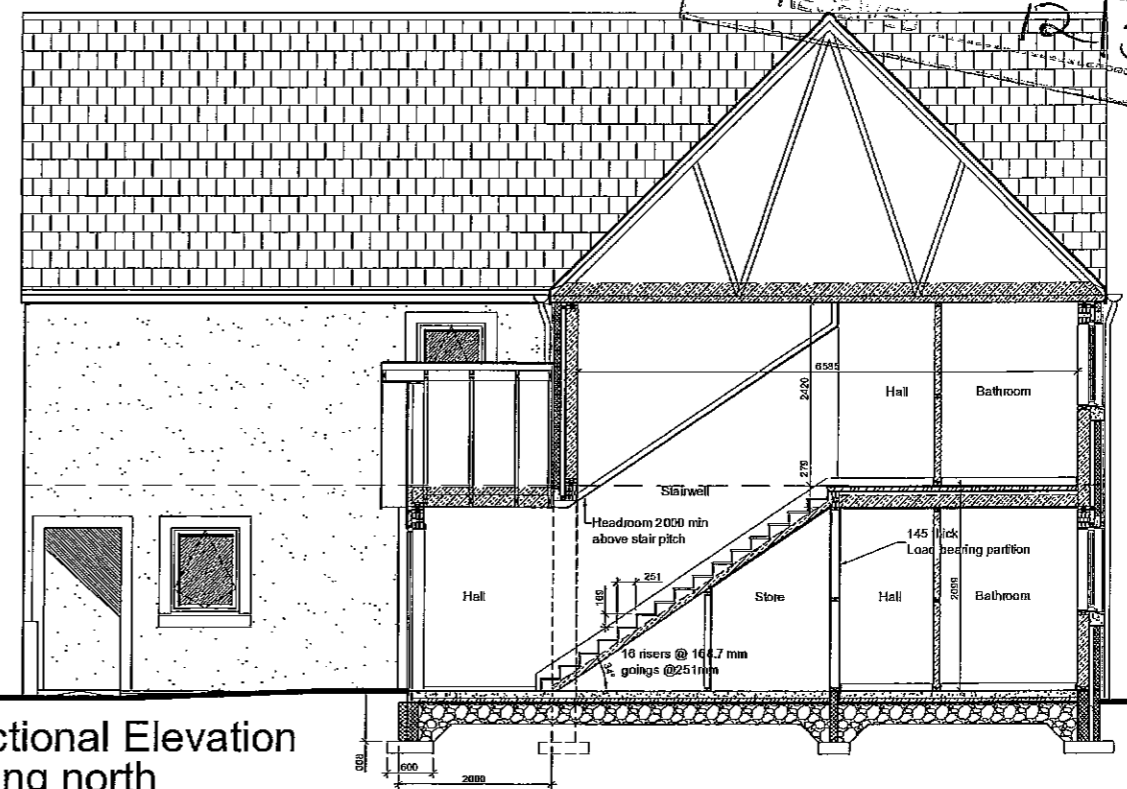
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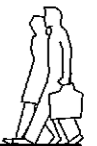
Handwritten: St Mon Road
 08/12
 APPLICATION REFUSED
 12/3/08



North Elevation to Trail Steet



Sectional Elevation facing north



Customer:
Norscot Joinery Ltd.

Location:
Catletown Shop site adjacent to Drill Hall,
Proposed new Housing,
Main Street, Castletown,
Caithness.

Drawn By: PW

Scale: 1:100

Drawing No: N07/60/07

Checked By:

Date: 14/12/07

Revision

A

Customer Approval:

A - House 4 windows as 3 layout. 20/02/08.

Norscot Joinery Limited
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