

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**SOUTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE –
1 March 2016**

Agenda Item	6.7
Report No	PLS 017/16

**15/03384/MSC: Robertson Homes Ltd
Westercraigs, Inverness**

Report by Head of Planning and Building Standards

SUMMARY

Description: Erection of 51 houses and associated works

Recommendation: **APPROVE**

Ward: 14 - Inverness West

Development category: Local

Pre-determination hearing: None

Reason referred to Committee: More than 5 objections.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 This application is an application for matters specified in conditions imposed on the outline planning permission for the development of 550 houses on land associated with the former hospital at Craig Dunain, Inverness and relates to the development of housing within two sites - Sites 5 and 11 - for a total number of 51 units.
- 1.2 It is proposed to develop 29 detached units within Site 5. The majority of the houses will be accessed directly from a single loop road, with the remainder accessed from shared private driveways. An area of open space is provided between the development and the estate road.
- 1.3 Within Site 11, 22 units are proposed. Four of these are semi-detached units, with the remainder terraced in 6 groups of three houses. All of these units will face onto the distributor road. The units to the east side of the road are accessed directly from the road. For those situated on the west side, which are arranged in a semi-circular fashion facing onto the internal roundabout and rear of the listed building, vehicular access is from the rear and provided within parking courtyards. The houses on the west side of the roundabout will face onto a grassed amenity space.
- 1.4 The architectural detailing of the housing is consistent with the existing buildings on Sites 2A and 4 with elevations in a combination of render and reconstituted stone. Roofs are finished in concrete tile. All units will be connected to the public sewer

network and water supply. The ground water treatment will utilise the existing SuDS infrastructure which discharges to a detention basin on the west side of Leachkin Road. A localised SuDS feature is proposed between Plots 8 and 9. This is effectively a depression within a landscape area designed to be dry except in high rainfall conditions. A number of mature trees surrounding Site 5 will be retained and landscaping includes further hedge planting along the road side boundary.

- 1.5 On Site 5, the topography of the site is such that the land falls to the south and east. In addition, on the east and north boundary the ground falls steeply. This necessitates the need for retaining features at certain points across the site. Within the housing plots these will be formed in block walling and finished in render to match the houses. Along the southern edge, where the fall is steepest, a timber crib wall system is proposed.
- 1.6 **Variations:** A minor variation to the layout of houses within Plots 1 and 30 to 33 has been made to address proximity issues with trees that have been identified for retention within and adjacent to Site 5. In addition, access and parking arrangements for Plots 34 to 36 and 43 to 45 have been redesigned with all vehicles entering/exiting from the existing roundabout spur rather than directly from the distributor road.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The development sits within two sites identified for development within the estate of the former Craig Dunain hospital.
- 2.2 Site 5 is the area of ground associated with the house known as Ruighard; a former managers house associated with the hospital. Ruighard is a traditional stone built house which is now in a considerable state of disrepair. The grounds associated with the house extend to 2.4 hectares (5.8 acres). A power line runs along the west boundary of the site and there are a number of mature trees on both the boundary and within the site.
- 2.3 Site 11 encompasses four parcels of land that are situated adjacent to the internal distributor road, fronting onto the roundabout that the rear elevation of the Craig Dunain hospital building faces. These spaces are currently grassed areas.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 **09.08.2005** - Outline Planning Permission for residential development and associated infrastructure based upon submitted Master Plan (as amended) (550 houses) granted (03/00676/OUTIN).
- 3.2 **04.05.2006** - Matters Specified in Conditions application for 107 houses (Site 2A and Site 2B) approved (05/00645/REMIN).
- 3.3 **09.06.2006** - Matters Specified in Conditions application for redevelopment of listed building to form 118 flats approved (05/00879/REMIN).

- 3.4 **09.06.2006** - Listed Building Consent for redevelopment of listed building to form 118 flats granted (05/00891/LBCIN).
- 3.5 **06.05.2008** - Planning permission and listed building consent for refurbishment of former hospital to form 32 apartments (Phase 1) granted (07/01169/FULIN & 07/01172/LBCIN).
- 3.6 **22.07.2009** - Application for non-compliance with Condition 14 of 03/00676/OUTIN granted (08/00657/FULIN).
- 3.7 **22.01.2009** - Planning permission and listed building consent for refurbishment of former hospital to form 54 apartments (Phase 2) granted (08/00670/FULIN & 08/00671/LBCIN).
- 3.8 **28.06.2013** - Planning permission for 94 semi-detached, terraced & flatted dwellings (Site 2B) granted (13/01297/FUL).

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: Unknown Neighbour

Representation deadline: 30.10.2015

Timeous representations : 32
Late representations : 3

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- Loss of trees
- Impact on wildlife
- Loss of open space/ child play space
- Overdevelopment
- Proximity to roundabout issue for road safety
- Impact on amenity (incl. invasion of privacy)
- Reduce access rights

4.3 Non-material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- Developer hasn't satisfied existing conditions
- Developer must improve local road network and west drive
- Poor condition of listed building
- Impact on views
- Impact on house prices
- Lack of community facilities

4.4 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Inverness West Community Council** identify a number of matters discussed relating to the development proposals at Westercraigs including the current state of the listed building and west drive (estate road). In respect of this development, the Community Council object on the basis that in its view, the three housing groups within Site 11, and the four houses to the north side of Site 5, constitute overdevelopment and remove valuable open space.
- 5.2 **Flood Team:** The Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the application covers a wider area than the sites under consideration. The Flood Team still is in discussion with the applicant on the content of this assessment but is content to support the proposals for Sites 5 and 11.
- 5.3 **Transport Planning:** Initial concerns regarding the detail of the road layout have been addressed. No objection.
- 5.4 **Historic Environment Team:** No response received.
- 5.5 **Forestry Team** has expressed concern at the number of trees to be felled on Site 5 but has no objection on the basis of the minor amendment to positions of houses to accommodate trees.
- 5.6 **Access Panel:** No response received.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

- 6.1 The development plan comprises of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012), the Inner Moray Firth Local Plan (2015) and Statutory Supplementary Guidance.
- 6.2 The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application:

Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 6.3 Policy 28 Sustainable Design
Policy 29 Design Quality and Place Making
Policy 56 Travel
Policy 57 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage

Inner Moray Firth Local Plan 2015

- 6.4 IN20 Westercraigs

7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment
Open Space
Highland Historic Environment Strategy

8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 8.1 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.

Determining Issues

- 8.2 - Do the proposals comply with the development plan?
- If they do, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?
- If they do not, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

Assessment

- 8.3 In order to address the determining issues, Committee must consider whether the proposal a) is acceptable in principle, b) would have adverse impact on the natural and historic environment, c) would adversely impact on amenity and/or road safety, d) is of acceptable design quality and e) raises other material planning issues.

Principle

- 8.4 The site lies within an area identified within the Inner Moray Firth Local Plan (IN20) for development in accordance planning permission 03/00676/OUTIN. The Master Plan/Phasing Plan, and its successive iterations, have identified these sites for housing development.
- 8.5 While Site 11 has been maintained as amenity space for a number of years, and a number of residents claim that they were not made aware of this at the time of buying their property, this does not preclude the development of this land in itself. In principle, the submission is consistent with the Development Plan. Providing the development would not result in a significant detrimental impact to road safety, individual and community amenity and the natural and historic environment then it could be said that the proposal is compatible with the Development Plan. These are consider further below.

Natural and Historic Environment

- 8.6 Representations highlight that the development will significantly impact on the natural environment, specifically mentioning the impact on trees and the mammals that use them. A significant number of trees will be felled to accommodate the development on Site 5. However, many of these have naturally regenerated and are not of particular quality. The intention is to retain as many of the more mature trees along the boundary as possible but it is inevitable that the development will result in the removal of others. The applicant's decision to amend the position of housing to provide further protection to those trees to be retained has resulting in the Council's Forestry Officer raising no objection. Species surveys were conducted for the whole of the Westercraigs site as part of the outline planning permission and appropriate mitigation measures to protect wildlife remain in place.

- 8.7 The property known as Ruighard will be demolished to make way for this proposal. Although this is disappointing nevertheless it was anticipated at the outset. Some material will be salvaged and re-used in the construction of feature walls where appropriate or recycled. The proposals do however provide an opportunity to support the redevelopment of the Craig Dunain listed building; the plans for which are also currently under consideration (15/03910/MSC & 15/03911/LBC). It is the intention of the applicant to convert the building into 68 units, which is significantly less than the 118 originally envisaged. This results in higher development costs. However, by phasing the redevelopment of the listed building, with the second phase progressing at the same time as development on Sites 5 and 11, not only is significant progress achieved on the listed building but the associated costs become more manageable.

Amenity and Road Safety

- 8.8 In the main, the representations received, including those from the Community Council, highlight that the proposals for Site 11 will result in a loss of open space in an area that has limited open space, particularly for use by children. As set out above however, Site 11 was always identified for development. The reason for there being limited open space within each development Site within the Westercraigs Master Plan area is that the area benefits from a substantial area of open ground and woodland. This is part of the wider character and amenity of the area. Site 5 provides an opportunity for useable open space but it is acknowledged that other areas need to be developed as part of the overall site development proposals. Key areas for this are above Sites 2A and 2B and below the SNH building adjacent to Site 4 where a MuGA pitch is to be provided. Delivery of larger areas of enhanced open space will be pursued through conditions attached to the planning permission in principle (as amended).
- 8.9 It is accepted that the developments will result in an increase in traffic and activity than currently experienced. This change will be most evident for those whose properties lie adjacent to the development Sites - particularly Site 11. The number of units proposed here is however substantially reduced from earlier plans that was for flatted development. At a nodal point such as this, a higher density development would usually be considered more appropriate. However, 22 units as proposed is not considered high density nor is it overdevelopment. The proposed houses will maintain an active road frontage (albeit mainly pedestrian) and therefore respect the character of existing housing along the distributor roads. Appropriate separation distances will be achieved between plots, and importantly windows and gardens, such that the proposals will not have a significantly detrimental impact on the privacy of existing occupants.
- 8.10 The proposals raise no issue regarding road safety. Having no direct vehicular access onto the distributor road, instead utilising parking courtyards, reduces potential for vehicular and pedestrian conflict. Transport Planning has no objection.

Design and layout

- 8.11 The layout of Site 5 is efficient and appropriate to the site which in some ways has a challenging topography and constraints such as the powerline running through it. The layout proposed addresses these constraints and results in a layout that will provide a high level of amenity. In many ways it would be preferable to have more of a statement development on Site 11, particularly to the west side of the roundabout, given that this forms a nodal point. However, the lower density development is equally appropriate given the location. The development will retain the open nature of the site at the roundabout.
- 8.12 The design of housing is consistent with that developed so far within the wider Westercraigs site. Through the retention of many of the larger trees and the repair of existing and planting of new beech hedging, the applicant has taken the opportunity to consolidate the character of the site. The proposal to use stone feature walls at various points within the development will assist further in creating a high quality environment. In doing so, the proposals will respect the setting of the Craig Dunain listed building.
- 8.13 The design and layout of the proposals are considered appropriate.

Other Considerations

- 8.14 There are no other material considerations. The material planning considerations relevant to the proposal are addressed above.
- 8.15 Having said that, a number of other matters have been raised, many of which relate to the wider development and are connected to the matter of open space, in particular a perceived lack of community facilities. It should be noted that the applicant proposes to lease a considerable extent of the overall Westercraigs site to the community to form a Community Woodland. The applicant is also required to reprovide a full sized rugby pitch and changing facilities. However, as there is no appropriate location for such facility within the site, a commuted sum will be made payable to the Council and directed either towards the Sport Hub associated with Stage 2 of the West Link or alternative sports provision on the west side of the canal. In addition, the former chapel building to the north of the listed building is identified for community use within the original plans. However, there has not been an expression of interest from the community to date on this and it has therefore not progressed. Should there be interest from the community then this building is still available.
- 8.16 The issues raised with regard to compliance with existing conditions including improvement to the estate road and redevelopment of the Craig Dunain listed building are considered within separate Reports to this Committee.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable

material considerations.

10. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the application **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. No development shall commence on site until details of the final location, design and materials of any proposed retaining structures and/or feature walls, has be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented.

Reason: In order to consider this/these matters in more detail in the interest of amenity.

2. No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the provision of play facilities (including specifications, protection measures, boundary treatments and timescales for implementation) on the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved scheme shall be implemented in full and in accordance with the timescales contained therein.

Reason: In order to secure high-quality open spaces in compliance with Council Supplementary Planning Guidelines.

REASON FOR DECISION

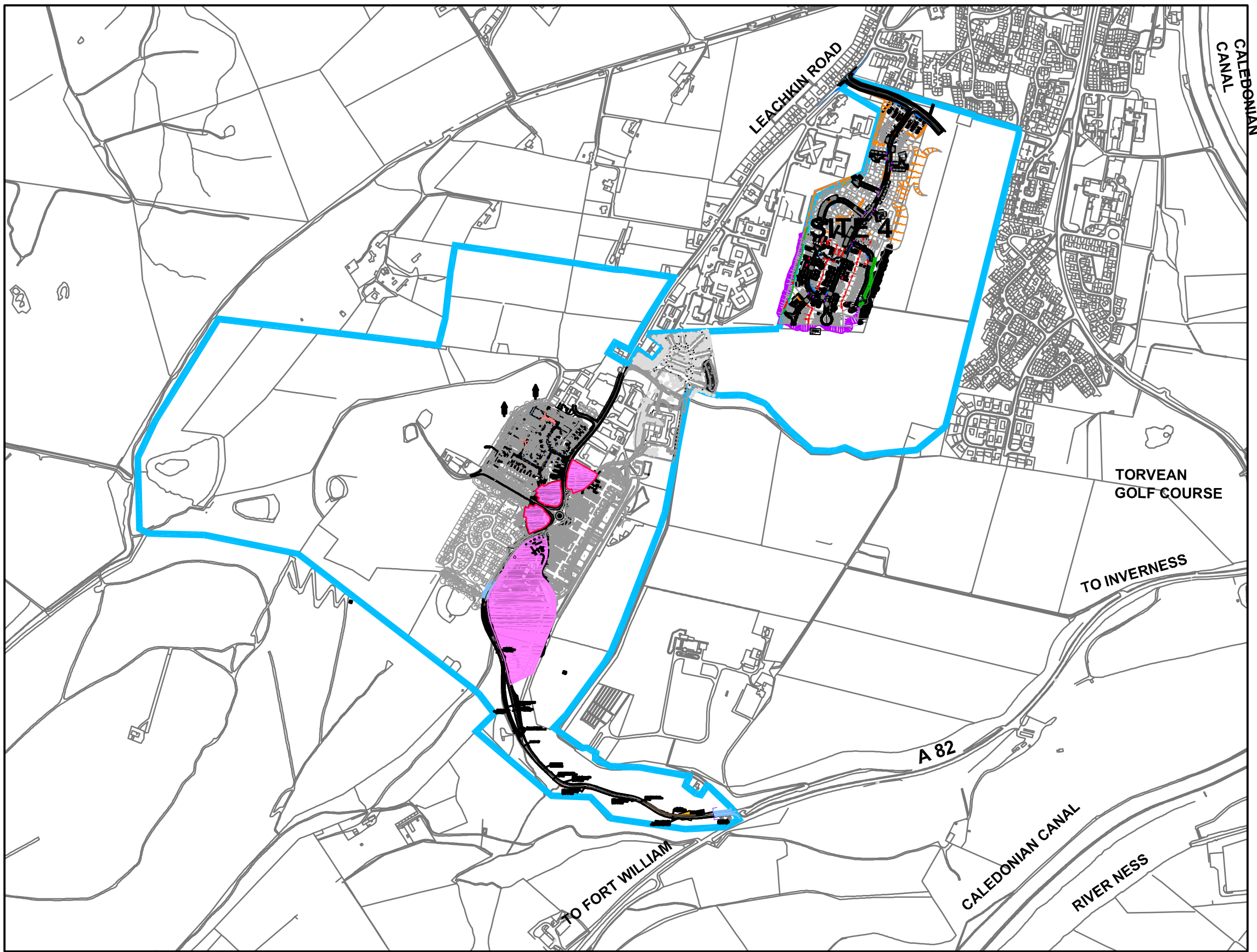
The proposals accord with the provisions of the Development Plan and there are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of the application.

Designation: Head of Planning and Building Standards

Author: David Mudie, Team Leader - Development Management

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans:



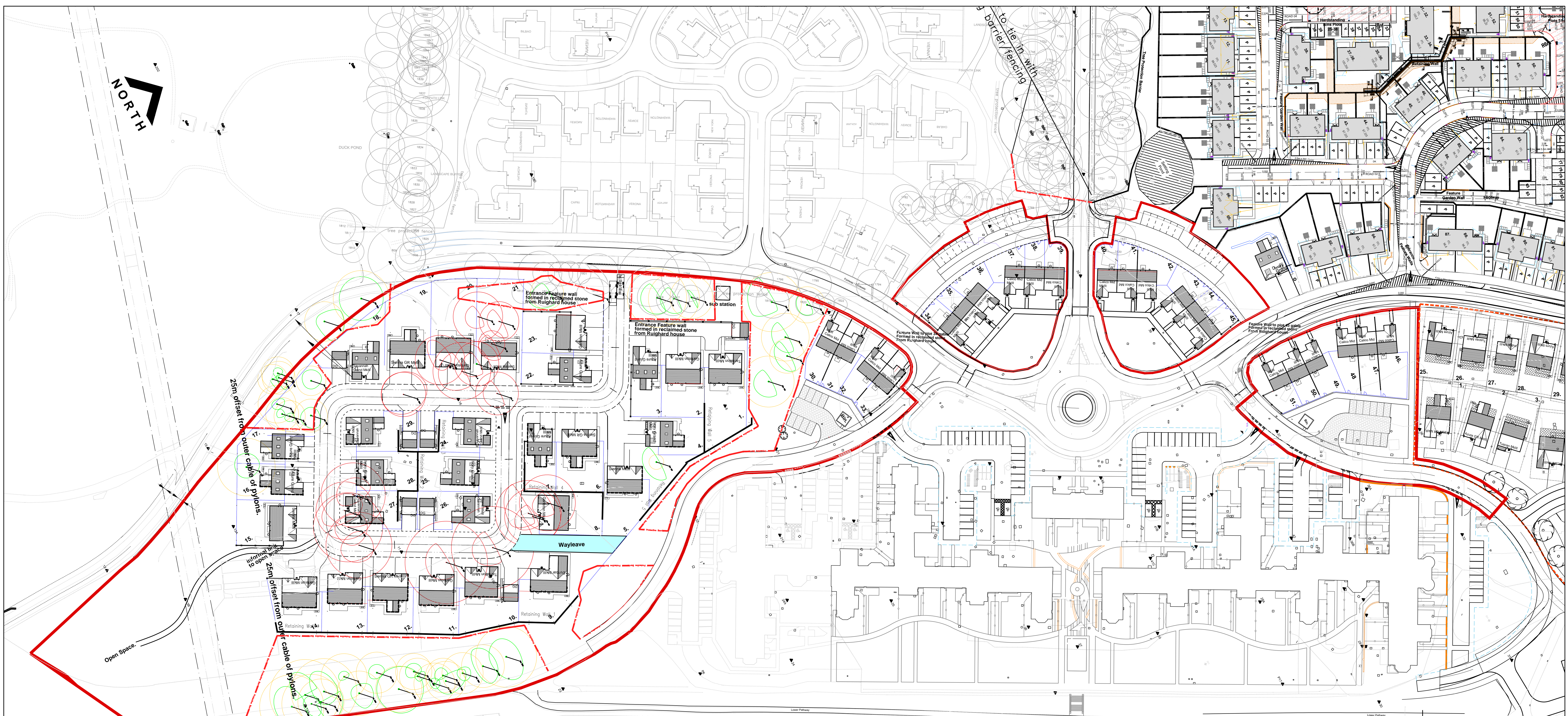
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Project
**WESTERCRAIGS DEVELOPMENT
 LEACHKIN ROAD
 INVERNESS**

Drawing
**SITE 5 and SITE 11
 LOCATION PLAN**

Scale Drawn By Checked
NOT TO SCALE
 Date Drawing No
 AUG 2015 WC_S5_11_LP_01

Issue	Date	Detail
AMENDMENTS		



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Road Centreline
- Road
- Footpath
- Plot/Fence (for code refer to sheet 100)
- Wall/Fence (for code refer to sheet 100)
- 1800 High Timber Screen Fence
- 1100 Post & Wire Fence
- Drainage Swale
- Wayleave Service Strip
- Landscaping
- Plot Number
- Tree to be Retained
- Tree to be Removed

Site 5, Westercraigs - 03/04/15 (Boutique Mill Range)							
No.	Group	House Type	VARIANT	CODE	Beds	Area M ² R	Total R.
0	0	Detached and terrace (right gable)	Det. Terr	DH-R	3 bed	953.0	0.0
0	0	Detached and terrace (left gable)	End Terr	DH-L	3 bed	988.0	0.0
0	0	Detached mid terrace	Mid Terr	DH-M	3 bed	963.0	0.0
5	5	New 2 Garden House	GR	S-GR	2 bed	189.4	0.0
0	0	Carli's (attached to garage)	Basic	CO	1 bed	105.1	0.0
0	0	Carli's (separate to garage)	Basic	CO-S	1 bed	105.1	2702.2
0	0	Carli's (separate to garage)	Basic	CO-S	1 bed	105.1	0.0
0	0	Taxican	Basic	TN	4 bed	1288.4	0.0
0	0	Seawanh	Basic	SH	4 bed	1964.0	0.0
0	0	Seawanh & Garden Room	GR	SH-GR	4 bed	1718.0	0.0
0	0	Seawanh Grand	GRGR	SH-GR	5 bed	2167.0	1053.5
0	0	Ivy	Basic	IV	4 bed	1474.8	0.0
0	0	Ivy & Garden Room	GR	IV-GR	4 bed	1453.0	0.0
0	0	Ivy Grand	GRGR	IV-GR	5 bed	2074.4	832.2
0	0	Aspen	Basic	AS	2 bed	707.0	0.0
0	0	Aspen & Garden Room	GR	AS-GR	2 bed	710.0	0.0
0	0	Aspen Grand	GRGR	AS-GR	3 bed	210.0	1666.0
0	0	Aspen	Basic	AS	2 bed	707.0	0.0
0	0	Glenis & Garden Room	GR	G-GR	2 bed	714.0	648.0
0	0	Excite	Basic	EX	2 bed	758.0	208.0
0	0	Excite	Basic	EX	2 bed	758.0	0.0
0	0	Excite	Basic	EX	2 bed	758.0	0.0
0	0	Taxican	Basic	TN	5 bed	2272.0	474.0
0	0	Total Units					
Grand Total SQ Ft					8687.0		
Site Area (Gross)					8.890		
Site Area (Net)					8.890		
Coverage (H. spaces)					1058		

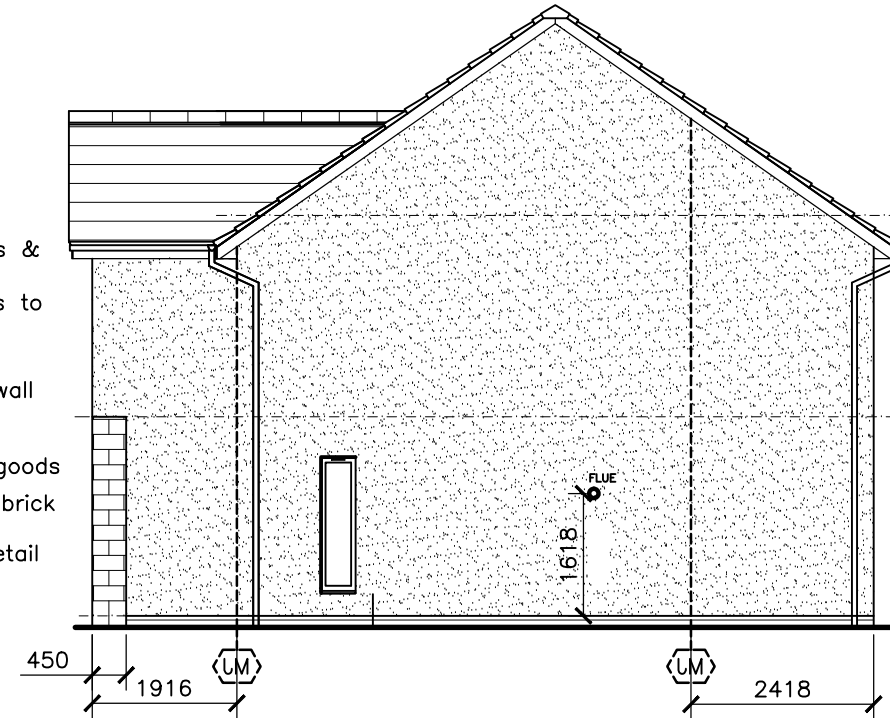
AMENDMENTS

Rev.	Date	Detail
A	15/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
B	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
C	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
D	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
E	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
F	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
G	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
H	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
I	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
J	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
K	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
L	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
M	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
N	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
O	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
P	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
Q	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
R	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
S	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
T	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
U	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
V	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
W	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
X	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
Y	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31
Z	05/02/16	Final design to be 3D-annotated and include walls at plots 24,26,27,28 (note fence position and details) 28 & 31

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 16/09/14
 W/C_SP_05_01



FRONT ELEVATION

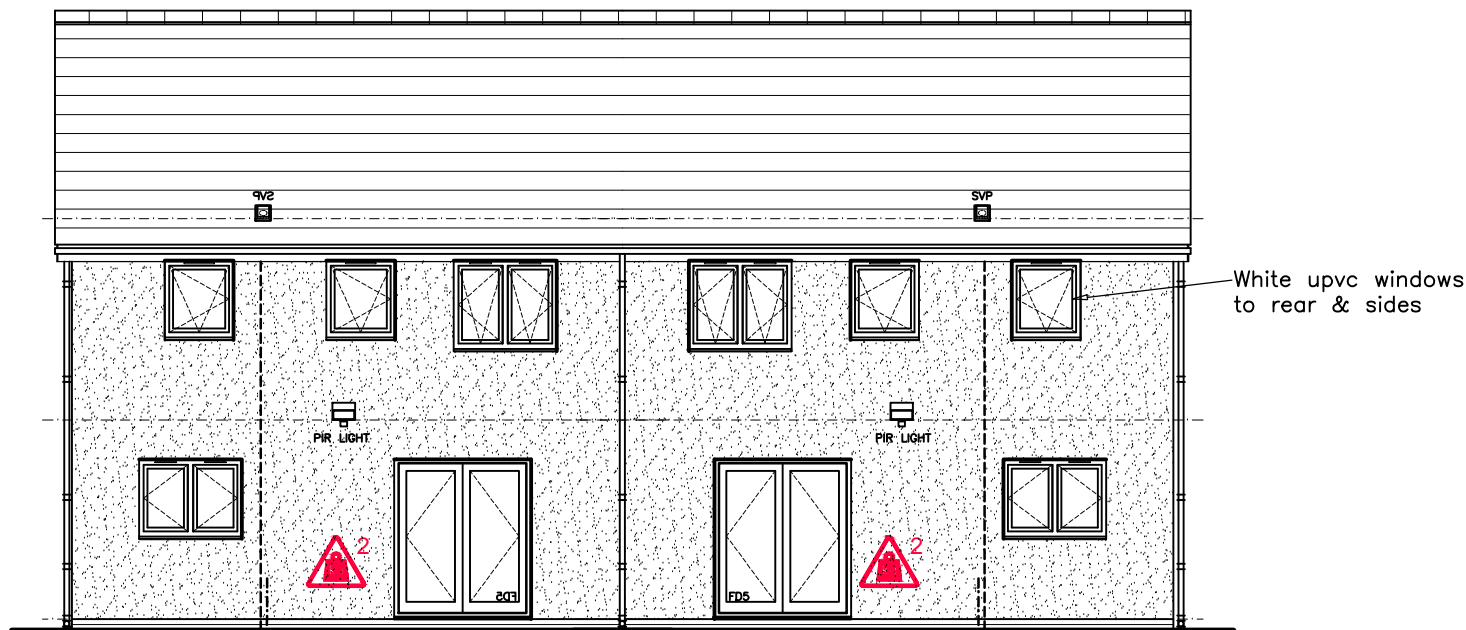


RIGHT GABLE ELEVATION

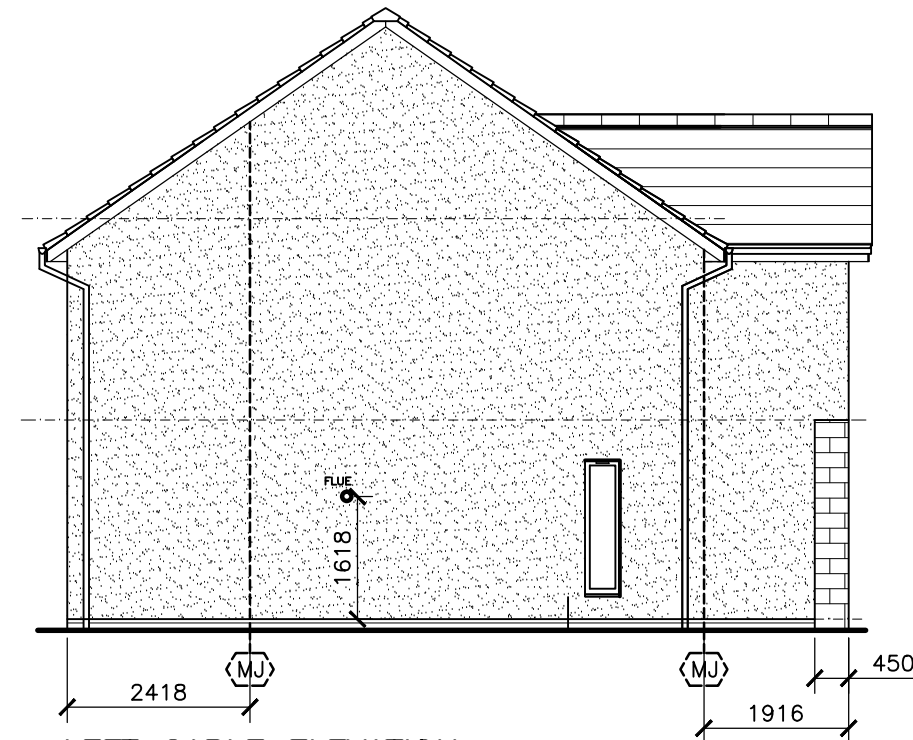
2 Denotes Health & Safety item highlighted by Designer. Please refer to Standard Detail 00-03 for weights of glazed units

WIRING FOR SATELLITE DISH TO BE TAKEN TO SOUTH EAST (28°) ELEVATION FOR DISH INSTALLATION AND STOPPED AT BLANKING BOX. REFER TO AV WIRING DIAGRAMS

5 Denotes Health & Safety item highlighted by Designer. Please refer to Standard Detail 00-01 for details and actions for hazards highlighted.



REAR ELEVATION



LEFT GABLE ELEVATION

Discharge from unvented cylinder to tundish and taken to ground level max 100mm above ground with pipe turned back and wire cage fitted

CALICO SEMI DETACHED

Notes:

No.	Revision	Date	By
E	Juliet Balcony and Concrete cill omitted from feature window	Aug15	JM
D	Juliet Balcony and Concrete cill added to feature window	Jun15	JM
C	Bed 1 Window Depth increased, Transom height amended following NHBC comments	Mar15	JM
B	Notes revised for AV installation	Sept14	PH
A	Media hub installation notes revised	Apr14	PH

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Drawing Title
 Elevations



Scale 1:100	Date Mar 14	Drawn
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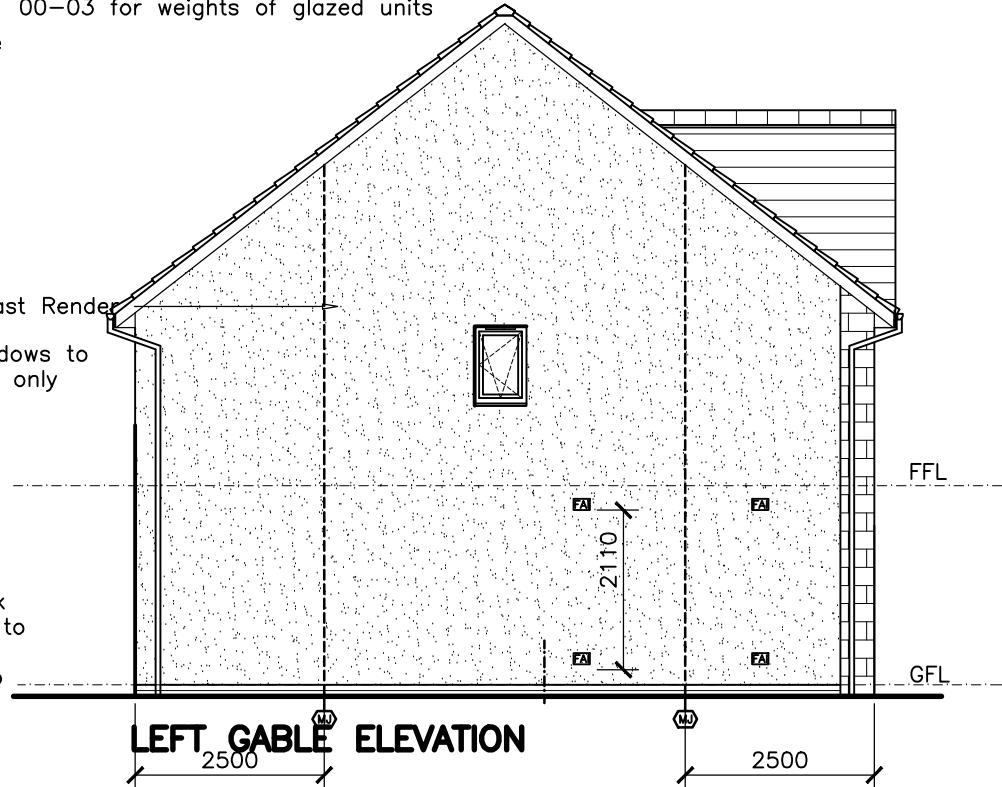
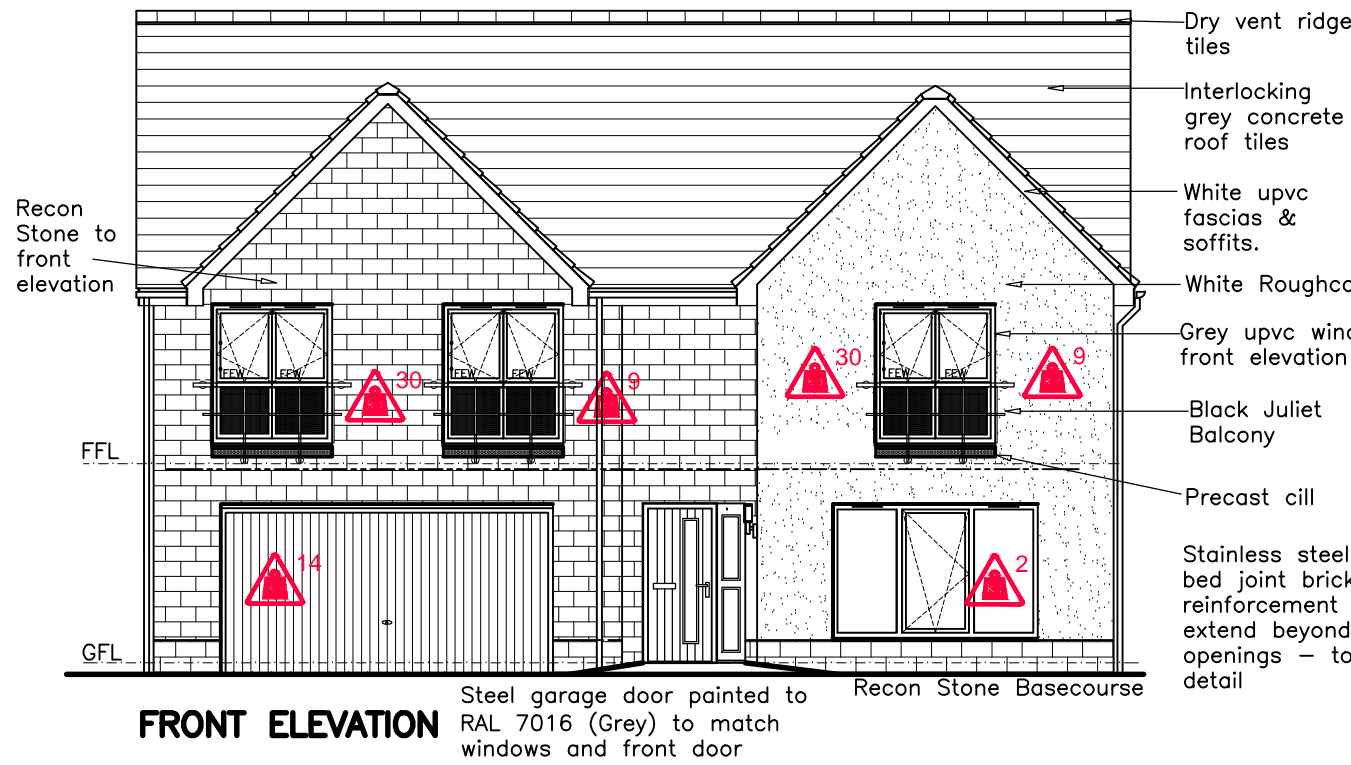
House Name
CALICO SEMI DET

✦ Boutique MkIII Range ✦

Drawing No. CO-SD-06	Rev. E
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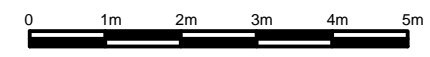
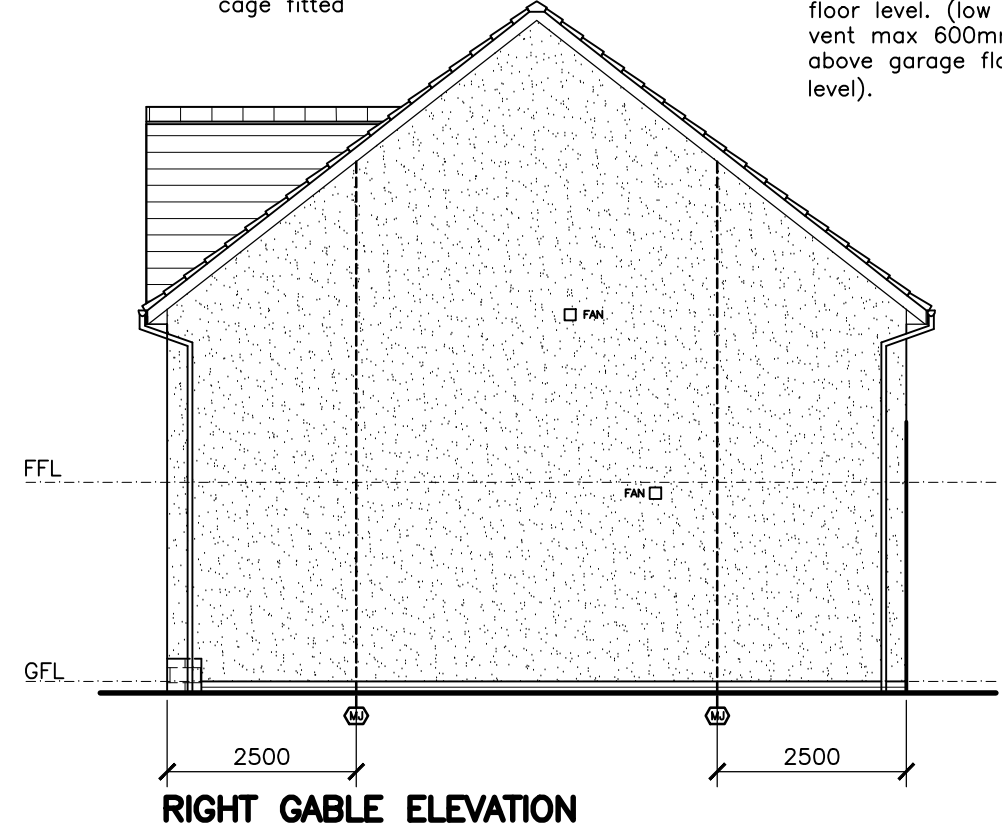
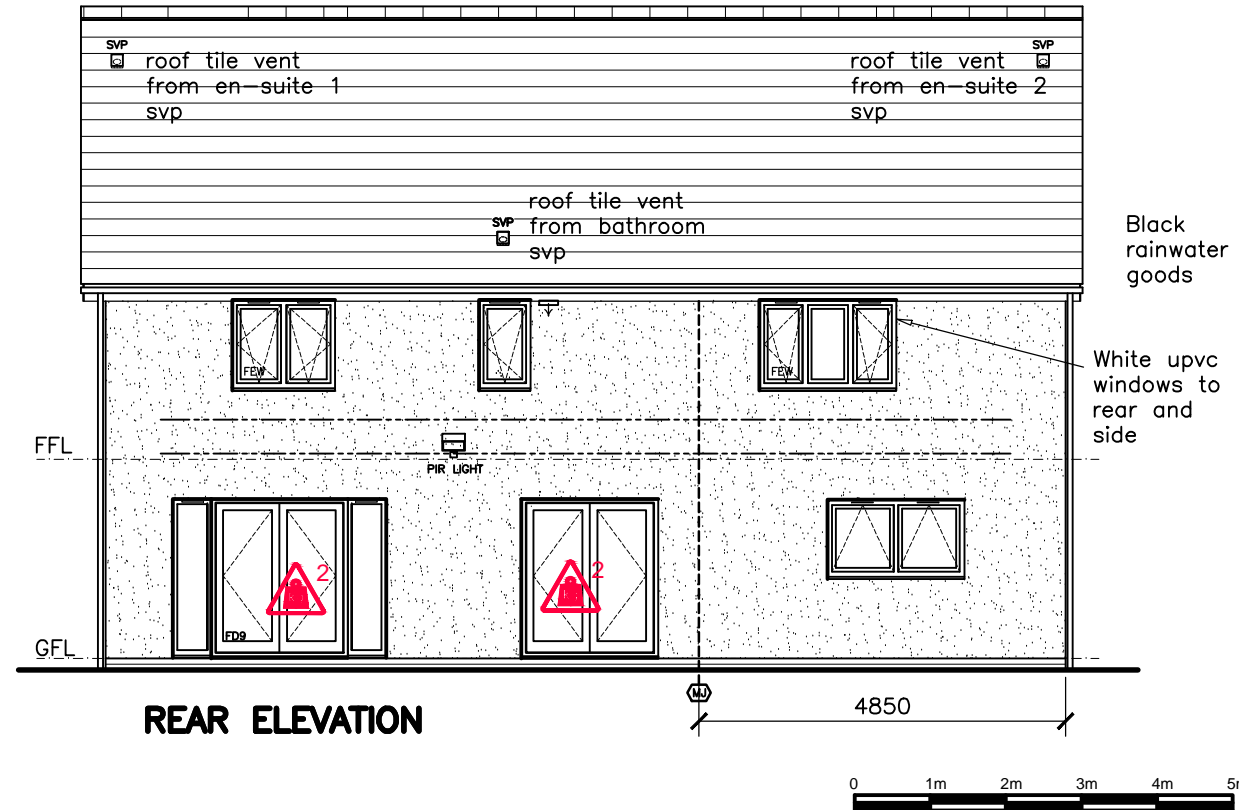
WIRING FOR SATELLITE DISH TO BE TAKEN TO SOUTH EAST (28°) ELEVATION FOR DISH INSTALLATION AND STOPPED AT BLANKING BOX. REFER TO AV WIRING DIAGRAMS

-  5 Denotes Health & Safety item highlighted by Designer. Please refer to Standard Detail 00-01 for details and actions for hazards highlighted.
-  2 Denotes Health & Safety item highlighted by Designer. Please refer to Standard Detail 00-03 for weights of glazed units



Discharge from unvented cylinder to tundish and taken to ground level max 100mm above ground with pipe turned back and wire cage fitted

4 No. 215x150m FAI vents at 75mm & 2110m above house floor level. (low level vent max 600mm above garage floor level).



Notes:

H	Side screen to patio french doors to be fixed pane.	Apr15
G	Bed 1, 3, 4 window increased in depth; transom height amended to reflect NHBC comments	Mar15
F	Notes revised for AV installation	Sept14
E	Rear elevation revised in line with amended ground floor plan, side entrance door removed	Aug14
D	RWP added to front of dwelling, Stone return added to left gable elevation	Aug14
C	Hub installation notes revised	Apr14
B	Movement joints added, media hub installation added	Feb14
A	Rear security light added, H&S hazards updated	Nov13

No.	Revision	Date



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Drawing Title
Elevations

Scale 1:100	Date August 13	Drawn
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House Name
SIENNA

⊕ Boutique MkIII Range

Drawing No. SI-06	Rev H
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