

Application Number: F/YR12/0495/F

Minor

Parish/Ward: Wisbech Town Council/Peckover Wisbech

Date Received: 29 June 2012

Expiry Date: 24 August 2012

Applicant: Mr J Negus

Proposal: Erection of a 2 storey 4 bed-detached dwelling with attached double garage and 1.2 metre high post and rail fence

Location: Land East of Triple Acre, Lords Lane, Wisbech

Site Area/Density: 0.22 ha

Reason before Committee: The application has been called in by Councillor Oliver acknowledging that the application is a departure from policy, but believes the proposal should be supported, due to the fact that the proposal is for a dwelling for a family member to assist with the running and security of the associated small holding

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a 2 storey chalet style dwelling with an attached double garage on land east of Triple Acre, Lords Lane, Wisbech.

The site is a grassed meadow with an established hedge along the road frontage and lies within an area characterised by sporadic residential, commercial and leisure development.

The key issues to consider relate to the principle of development particularly in relation to need and justification for a dwelling in this location, beyond the established settlements of Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary, and its impact upon the character and appearance of the area.

As the site lies well beyond any built up settlement and no detailed supporting information has been submitted to justify the need for an additional dwelling in this location the recommendation is to refuse the application.

2. HISTORY

2.1 There is no planning history relating to this site.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17: Seek to ensure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.

Paragraph 55: Avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.

Paragraph 109: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

3.2 **Draft Fenland Core Strategy:**

CS1: Spatial Strategy, The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside.

CS2: Growth and Housing.

CS10: Sustainability and no harm to the wide open character of the countryside.

CS14: High Quality Environments

3.3 **Fenland District Wide Local Plan:**

H3: Development should be within existing settlement

H16: Dwellings required for the efficient management of local agriculture and horticulture.

E1: Protection of the unique open character of the Fenland Landscape

E8: Landscape and Amenity Protection

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 4.1 <i>Parish/Town Council</i> | Recommend Approval |
| 4.2 <i>Local Highway Authority (CCC)</i> | No objections |
| 4.3 <i>Environment Agency:</i> | Awaited |
| 4.4 <i>FDC Scientific Officer (Land Contamination)</i> | No observations or comments. |
| 4.5 <i>Local Residents</i> | No observations received. |

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The site lies to the north east of Lords Lane between properties known as Triple Acre and Bramble Tye and is associated with Triple Acre. The site is part of a larger field which appears as rough grassland and has an established native hedge along the road frontage. There are no discernable rear boundary features to the site.
- 5.2 Lords Lane lies well beyond the built up settlements of Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary and represents an area of isolated, sporadic development within the open countryside.
- 5.3 The site is of irregular shape with a curved rear boundary and fronts onto Lords Lane which is an unclassified highway. It lies within Flood Zone 3.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The site lies well outside the built up settlements of Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary. There is sporadic residential, commercial and leisure developments on either side of Lords Lane, however, there are no areas that could be regarded as continuous built up frontages.
- 6.2 Pre-application advice was sought by the applicant in 2011 and early 2012 concerning the principle of a dwelling on the application site. At the time it was considered that the site was situated in open countryside where Policy H3 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan (FDWLP) seeks to restrict housing development unless there is a genuine need for a new dwelling which is required for the effective management of local agriculture, horticulture or forestry (Policy H16 – FDWLP). This position has been re-affirmed in the new policy regime, particularly in the emerging Core Strategy in Policies CS1 and CS10. Part E of Policy CS10 requires the applicant to provide robust supporting evidence as part of any application. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes sustainable development and seeks to avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances to support their development.
- 6.3 This application seeks planning permission for a two storey, chalet style dwelling with an attached double garage and a 1.2 metre high post and rail fence along the frontage. No special circumstances have been put forward to indicate that it is required for the effective management of a local rural enterprise, as required by adopted and emerging policies. The application has been called in on the basis that the proposal is for a dwelling for a family member to assist with the running and security of the associated small holding so this matter is being clarified with the agent and will be the subject of an update at the committee meeting.
- 6.4 The site has an attractive frontage hedge, which is characteristic of the established natural landscaping present in the vicinity of the site. The application seeks permission to remove this hedge and replace it with a post and rail fence and access driveway. The removal of the hedge will detract from the rural character of the area and has the potential to be detrimental to the habitat of breeding birds. The effect of the removal of the hedge has not been considered in the application submission and no surveys have been undertaken in relation to biodiversity issues. The NPPF places great importance on conserving and enhancing the natural environment by minimizing impacts on biodiversity and as a result the proposal is at odds with this advice. Furthermore, the removal of the hedge will be detrimental to the character of the area where the opening up of the site will appear at odds with the present leafy appearance of this part of the lane.
- 6.5 Due to the sporadic nature of development along Lords Lane and the lack of justification for the proposed dwelling it is likely that if the proposal is supported, this will encourage the submission of further applications for residential development in the locality. As there are many sites with similar characteristics to this proposal it could result in sprawl leading to a coalescence of development situated in an unsustainable location beyond the established limits of any settlement. This would be in direct conflict with the core principles of the NPPF and the policies of the emerging Core Strategy, which seek to achieve

sustainable development and direct new development to the edges of established settlements, which by definition can be considered as sustainable due to the nature of the facilities within the settlement.

- 6.6 The NPPF requires development to be sustainable and to avoid isolated homes in the countryside. The special circumstances required to override these principles relate to the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside or for the design of the dwelling to be truly outstanding or innovative. The current proposal meets neither of these criteria as no justification for the dwelling has been submitted and the design of the dwelling cannot be considered outstanding or truly innovative.
- 6.7 Consultees have raised no particular objections to the proposal and it has the support of Wisbech Town Council, however, these responses do not outweigh the strong policy and principle reasons which indicate that the proposal cannot be supported.

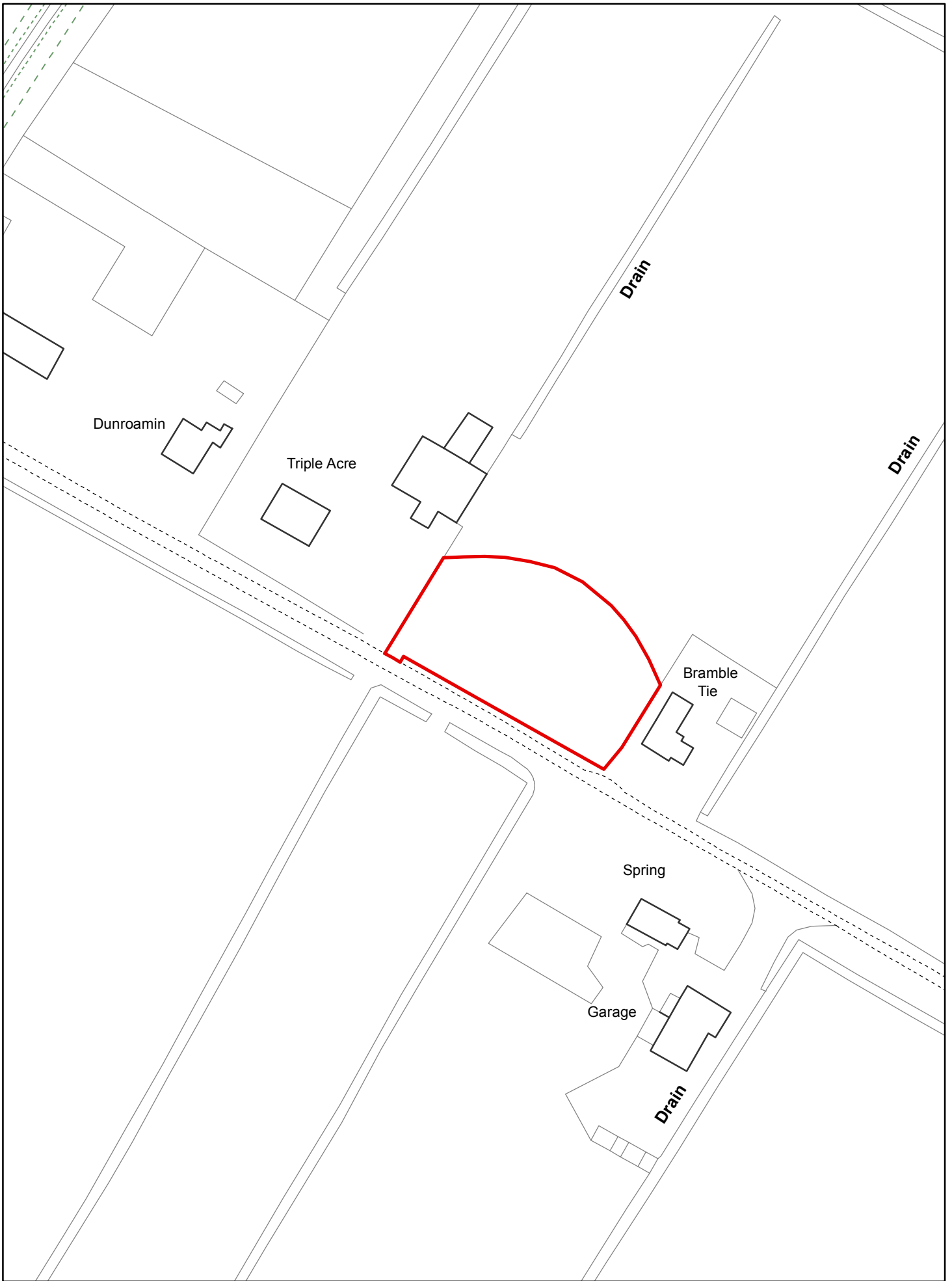
7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The site is located beyond the built up settlements of Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary, within the open countryside. There is an element of confusion about whether or not the proposed dwelling is required to provide housing for an essential rural worker, however, no information has been submitted to justify the approval of a dwelling in this location.
- 7.2 As adopted and emerging policy only allows support for dwellings when related to essential, rurally based enterprises or dwellings of an exceptional quality it is considered that the proposal is inconsistent with the principles of the NPPF, Policies H3 and H16 of the adopted FDWLP and Policies CS1 and CS10 of the emerging Core Strategy.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reasons –

- 1 The proposal is contrary to Policies H3 and H16 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan, Policies CS1 and CS10 of the emerging Core Strategy and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework in that no justification has been provided for the introduction of an additional dwelling in an isolated, unsustainable location beyond the established settlements of Wisbech and Wisbech St Mary.**
- 2 The proposal would result in the loss of an established hedge which contributes to and characterises the rural setting of the area. Furthermore, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that all biodiversity issues have been addressed in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.**



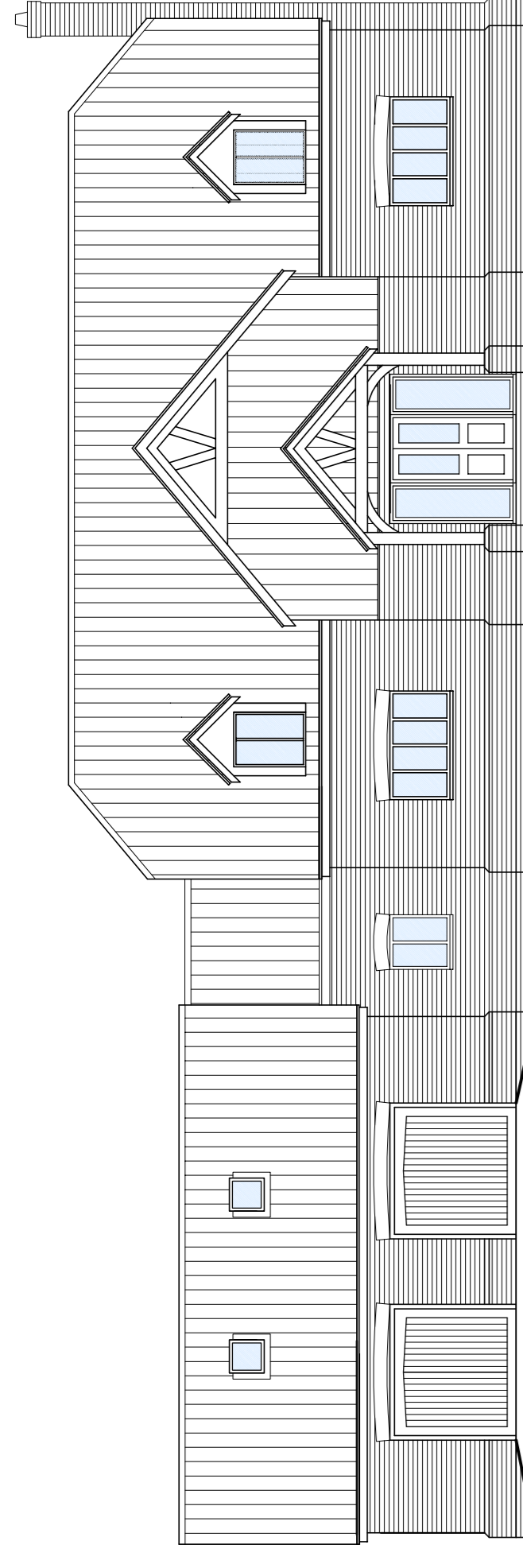
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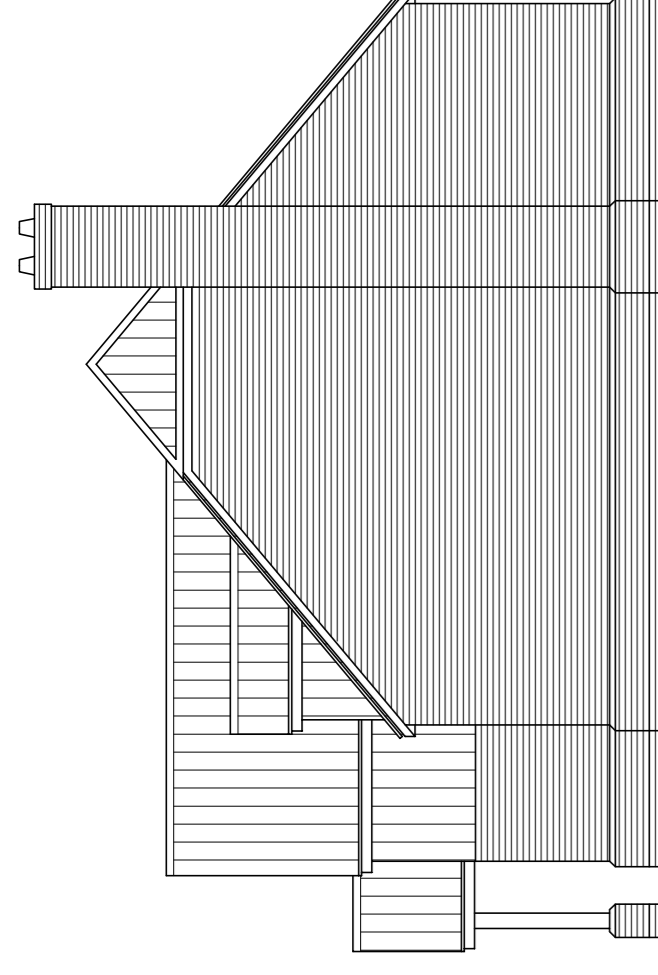
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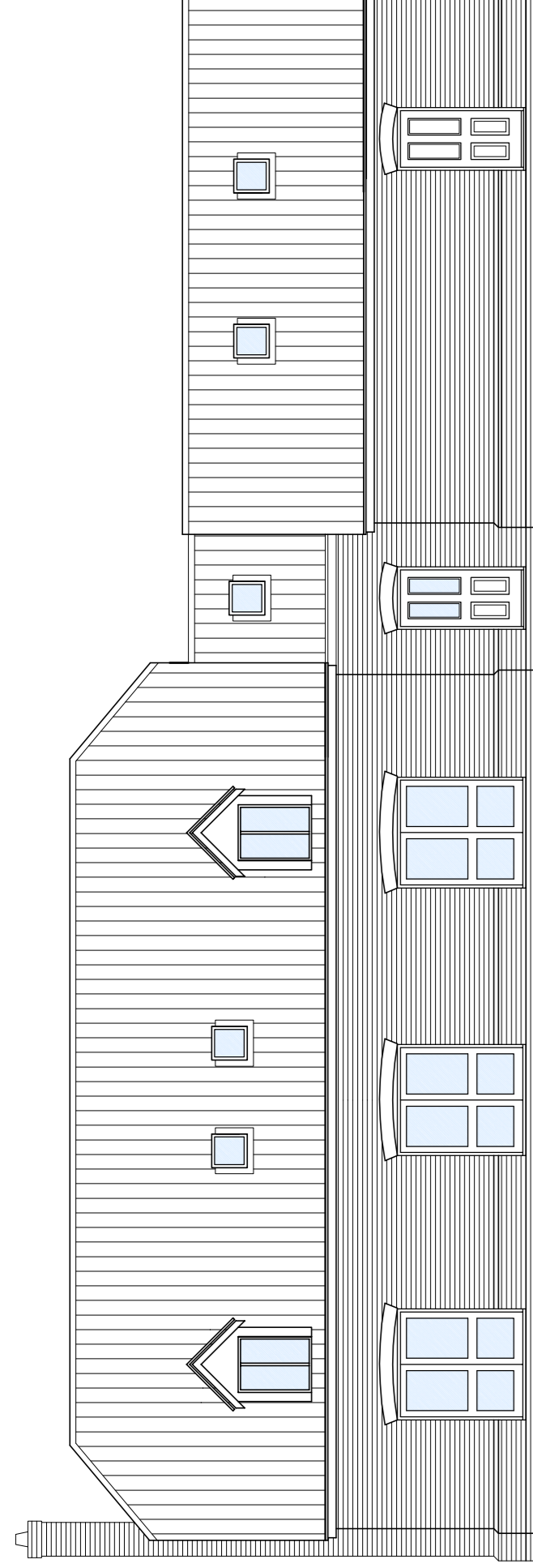




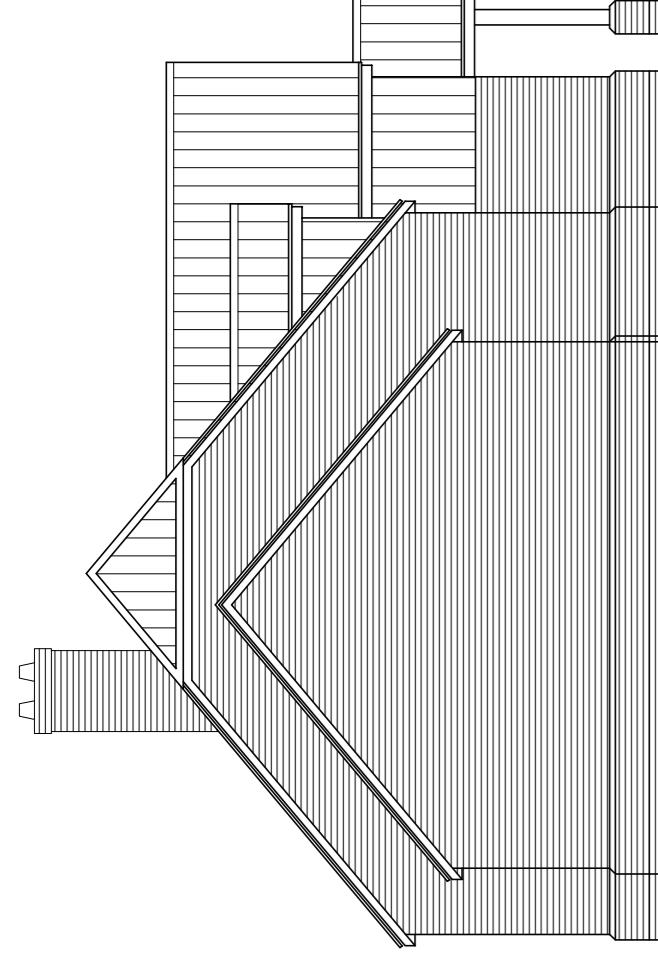
Proposed Front Elevation 1:100



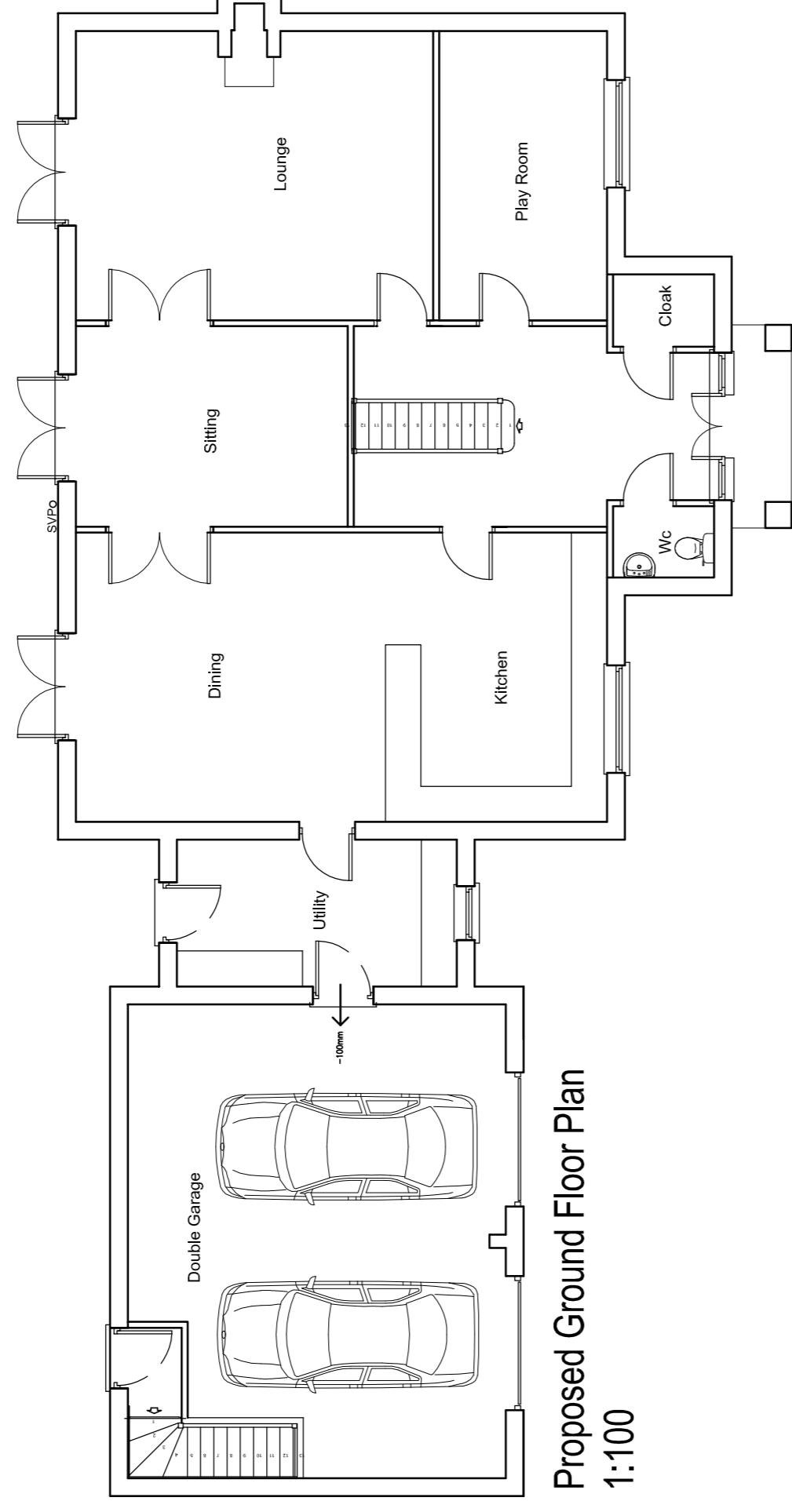
Proposed Side Elevation 1:100



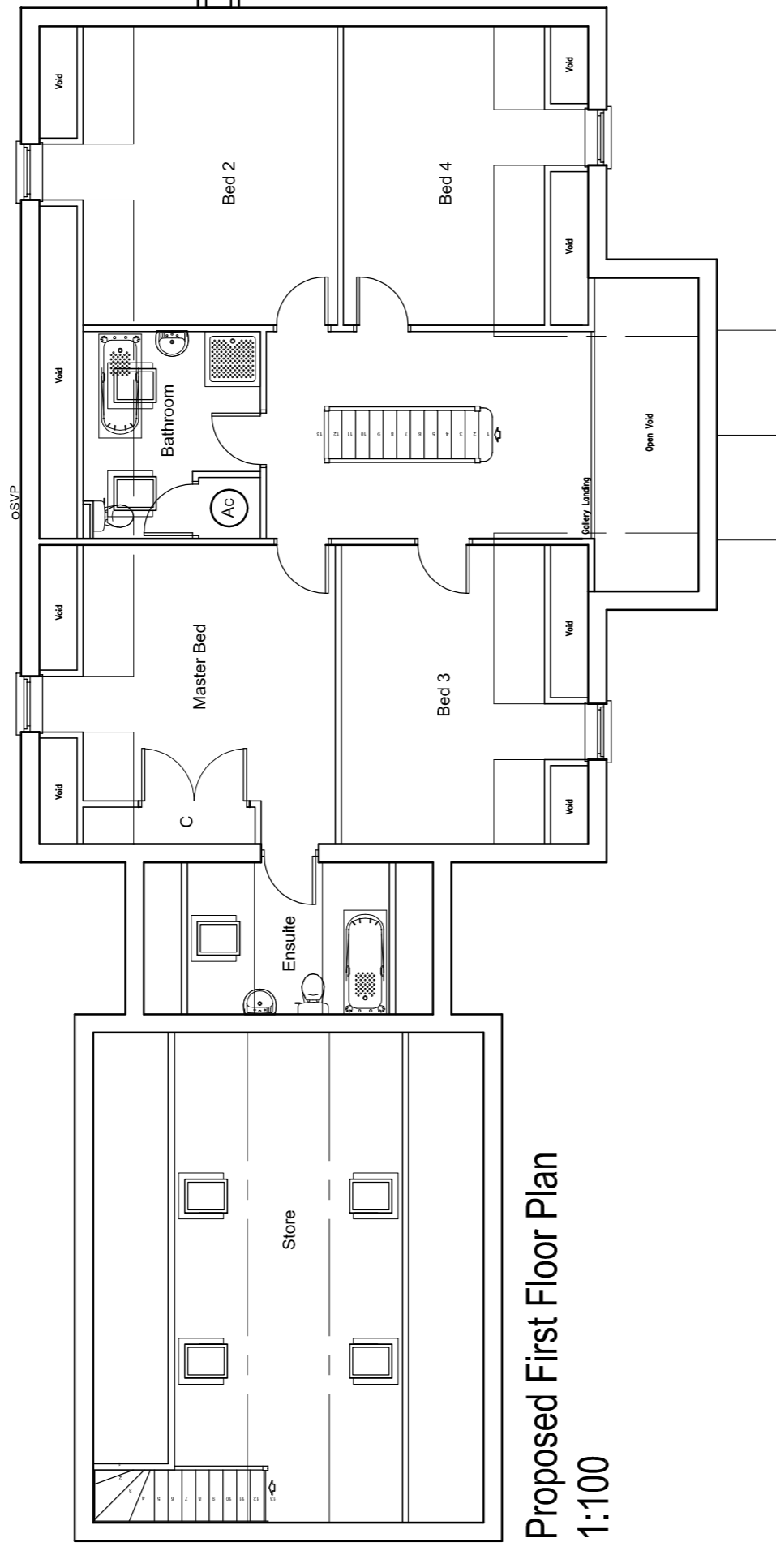
Proposed Rear Elevation 1:100



Proposed Side Elevation 1:100



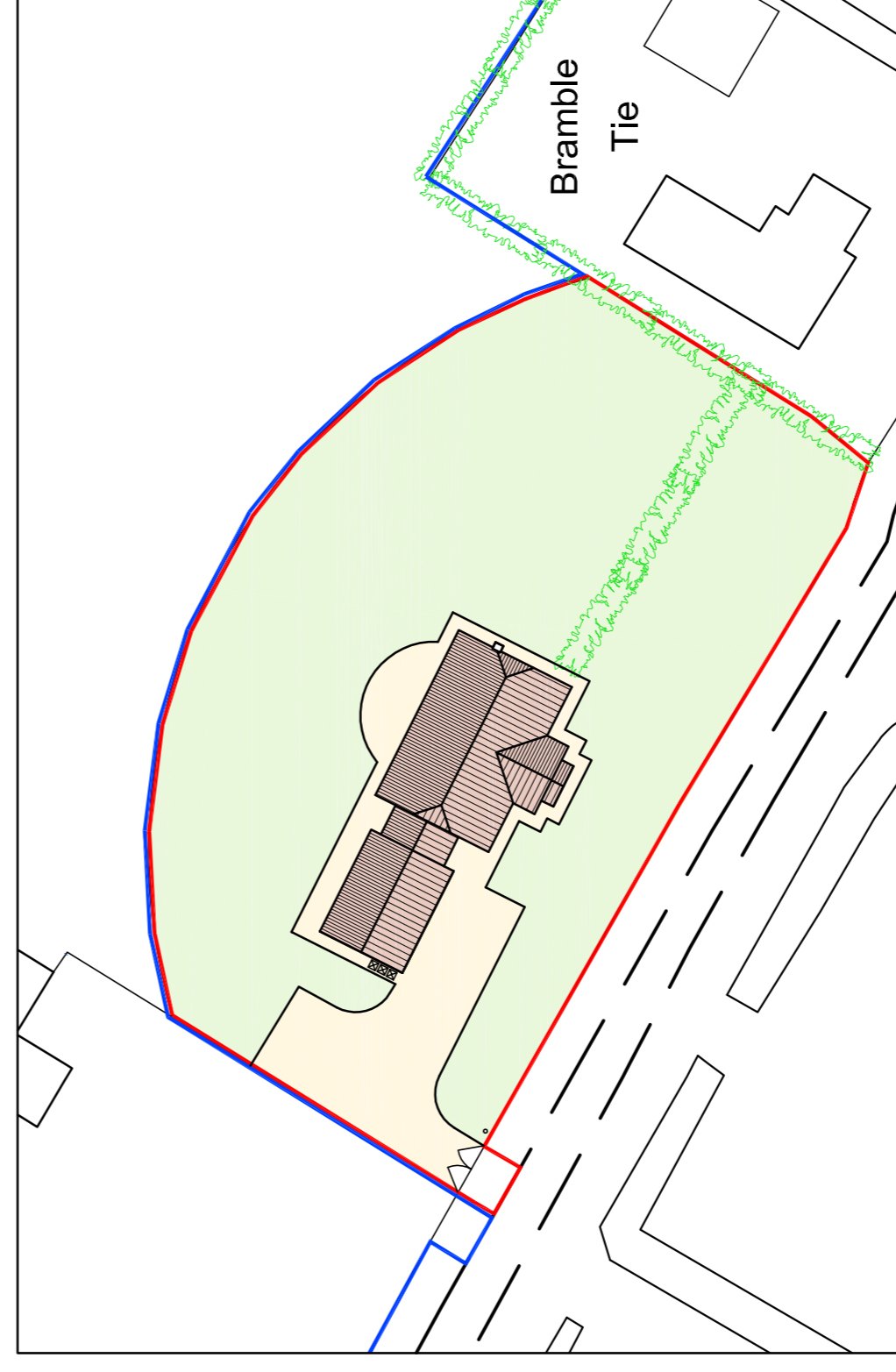
Proposed Ground Floor Plan
1:100



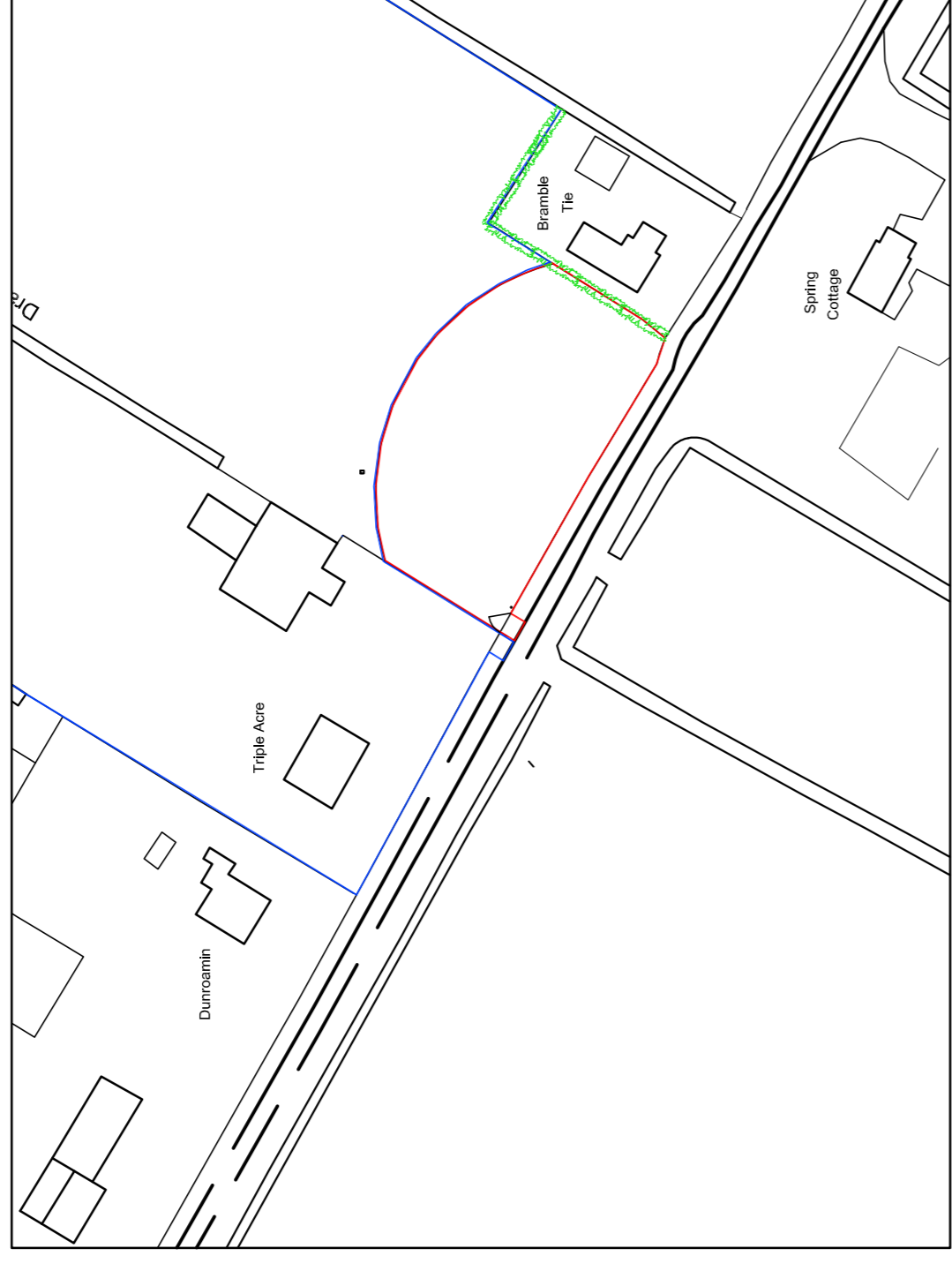
Proposed First Floor Plan
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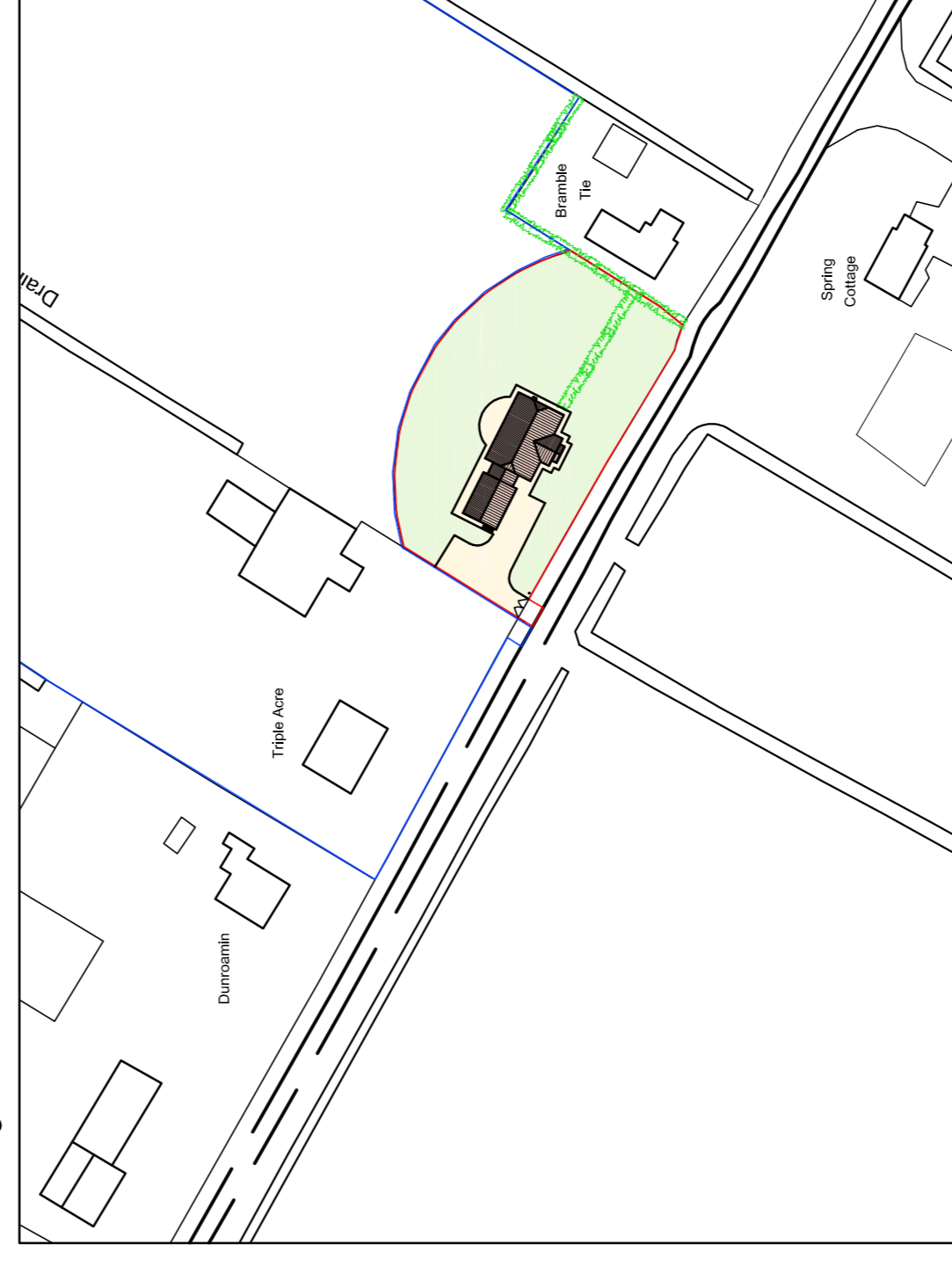
Existing Site Plan 1:500



Proposed Site Plan 1:500



Existing Location Plan 1:1250



Proposed Location Plan 1:1250

Amendments highlighted from client feedback
Amendments: new scheme floorplans as client sketch

Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd.
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND BUILDING

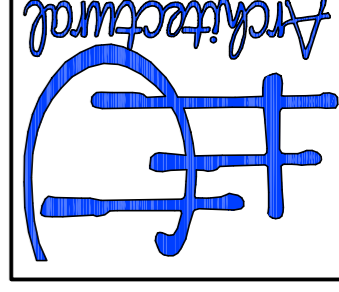
PROJECT
PROPOSED CHALET BUNGALOW

**LAND ADJACENT TO TRIPLE ACRE
LORDS LANE
WISBECH**

CLIENT
MR AND MRS NEGUS

DATE: APRIL 2012 SCALE: as shown JOB No. **4844/PL01**

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