

**Application Number: F/YR12/0579/F**  
**Minor**  
**Parish/Ward: Leverington Parish Council**  
**Date Received: 30 July 2012**  
**Expiry Date: 24 September 2012**  
**Applicant: Mr C Crowson**  
**Agent: Swann Edwards Architecture**

**Proposal: Erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with integral garage**  
**Location: Land South of Rocksworth, Roman Bank, Leverington**

**Site Area/Density: 0.01 ha**

**Reason before Committee: This proposal is before the Planning Committee due to the level of support for the proposal, which is at variance to the officer recommendation.**

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION**

This application seeks full planning permission to erect a 2-storey, 4-bed detached house on an open parcel of land located on the east side of Roman Bank. The site lies between two existing properties, within an isolated group of 6 properties in the open countryside, approximately 1.0km from Leverington village.

The site is located outside the built-up limits of Leverington. Under criteria contained in Policy H3 in the Fenland District Wide Local Plan (1993) the principle of development in such locations is normally unacceptable. Policy H16 restricts development in the open countryside unless associated with agriculture, horticulture or forestry. Policy CS1 continues the policy approach set out in Policy H3 and seeks to restrict development that falls outside of the above locations, unless it is demonstrably essential to the effective operation of the above rural uses.

Policy CS10 requires applicants for proposals that are located in areas away from the market towns and villages identified in Policy CS1, to provide supporting evidence to explain the existing functional need for the dwelling. No evidence has been provided by the applicant, which could allow a consideration of this proposal against the criteria contained in Policy CS10. The proposal, therefore, fails to comply with this policy and would result in the introduction of a new dwelling in an unsustainable location in the countryside.

The proposed access is located close to a sharp bend in the highway in Roman Bank, which starts just after the site boundary. The advice from the County Highway Officer is that the proposal should be refused on the grounds that inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access to Roman Bank, which would be detrimental to highway safety.

Consequently the proposal is in conflict with contrary to Policies H3, H16 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and Policies CS1, CS13 and CS14 of the draft Fenland Core Strategy (July 2012).

## 2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

- |     |             |                                 |  |
|-----|-------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 2.1 | F/99/0371/O | Erection of 1 x 3-bed bungalow. | Refused 10.11.1999<br>Appeal dismissed<br>13.09.2000 |
|-----|-------------|---------------------------------|--|

## 3. PLANNING POLICIES

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

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

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17: Take account of the different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it. Seek to ensure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.

Paragraph 32: Decisions should take account that a safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people.

### 3.2 East of England Plan 2008:

ENV7: Quality in the Built Environment

### 3.2 Draft Fenland Core Strategy:

CS1: Spatial Strategy & Settlement Hierarchy

CS2: Growth and Housing

CS10: Rural Areas Development Policy

CS13: Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

CS14: Delivering High Quality Environments

### 3.3 Fenland District Wide Local Plan:

H3: Development Area Boundaries/Protection of Character and Amenity/Highway Safety

H16: Agricultural Dwellings

E8: Landscape and amenity protection

TR3: Car Parking

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

### 4.1 *Parish/Town Council*

Awaited

### 4.2 *FDC Scientific Officer*

Please attach unsuspected contamination condition to this application

### 4.3 *Cambs CC Highways*

- Roman Bank is a Class III classified road in the CCC hierarchy. The carriageway is of varying width along the frontage of the site – in places relatively narrow. The horizontal alignment is such that along the frontage of the site and for approximately 70.0m to the south the carriageway runs in a straight line on a north west/south east axis. Some 70.0m to the south of the site the carriageway bends further towards the east

and at the north west corner of the site the carriageway bends sharply to the north east.

- The horizontal alignment of the carriageway to both the north and south of the site results in vehicle to vehicle visibility appropriate for the speed of vehicle within Roman Bank being unachievable.

- Whilst I acknowledge the existence of an existing access to Roman Bank from the application site, the access is an historic agricultural one used to serve the orchard. The use of the access in association with a dwelling will result in significant additional vehicular movements over and above that which would be anticipated to be generated by agricultural use of the land.

I recommend that the proposal be refused;-

Inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access to Roman Bank. The proposed development would therefore be detrimental to highway safety.

**4.5 Middle Level Commisioners**

No objections

**4.6 Local Residents:**

7 letters of support raising the following points:

- land has been derelict and unused for past 20 years. A dwelling would be an attractive addition to our rural area
- living close by, feel that the building would enhance the local area. The design is attractive and in keeping with the rural location and sympathetic to surroundings
- fully support proposal
- any inward investment and improvement would be most welcome to the Roman Bank area
- concern that land could fall prey to misuse and a mini 'Dale Farm' could develop.

1 letter of objection from an adjoining householder raising the following concerns:

- the road access at this point is extremely dangerous. There have been a number of road accidents on the bend in question in the last 30 years. The existing agricultural access has only ever been used intermittently until about 12 years ago.

- the current plans show windows facing our property, which result in clear views between properties.

## **5. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The application site comprises an open parcel of land located on the east side of Roman Bank. The site lies between two existing properties, within an isolated group of 6 properties in the open countryside, approximately 1.0km from Leverington village.

The site is currently vacant and was previously used as an orchard, although the trees have recently been felled. There is an existing access into the site off Roman Bank. There is a 1.8m high close boarded fence along the southern site boundary. The northern site boundary is marked by a 1.0m high post and rail fence. The rear boundary is open.

The site is fairly level and is approximately 0.4m lower than the level of the carriageway on Roman Bank.

The site lies within Flood Zone 1.

Roman Bank is classified as a Class C highway.

## **6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

### **6.1 Background**

This application seeks full planning permission to erect a 2-storey, 4-bed detached house on this land, which comprises a site within an isolated group of 6 properties in the open countryside, approximately 1.0km from Leverington village.

Planning permission was previously refused for 1 x 3-bed bungalow on the same site in November 1999 (F/99/0371/O) on the grounds that was contrary to Policies H3 and H15 of the Fenland Local Plan; in that it would result in development in the countryside that was not considered essential to local agriculture, would result in housing development outside of a development area boundary, and would result in a form of residential development which was inappropriate to the site within a small housing group in the open countryside. This decision was upheld at appeal in September 2000 (APP/D0515/A/00/1042282).

The main features of the proposal are as follows:

- The proposed house has an 'L-shaped' floor plan with first floor rooms in the roofspace, lit by a series of dormer windows. It measures 3.7m in height to the eaves on the main part of the building and 7.5m to the ridge. Half-hips and bonnet hips are used to reduce the massing of the dwelling.
- The house is positioned in the centre of the site, with the new 4.5 access located at the northern end of the site frontage, close to the existing dropped kerb. A turning head is provided within the site, leading to two integral garages within a wing on the front part of the dwelling.

- A new native hedge with some trees is proposed to be planted along the site frontage, alongside the existing shallow ditch.

The application is considered to raise the following key issues;

- Principle and policy implications
- Character and density
- Amenity
- Access.

## 6.2 Principle and Policy Implications

The site is located outside the built-up limits of Leverington. Under criteria contained in Policy H3 in the Fenland District Wide Local Plan (1993) the principle of development in such locations is normally unacceptable. Policy H16 restricts development in the open countryside unless associated with agriculture, horticulture or forestry

The emerging Fenland Core Strategy – Further Consultation Draft (July 2012), seeks to concentrate new housing development in the most sustainable locations, principally in the main market towns, to a lesser extent in the growth villages and very limited amounts in either Limited Growth Villages or Small Villages. Policy CS1 continues the policy approach set out in Policy H3 and seeks to restrict development that falls outside of the above locations, unless it is demonstrably essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation etc.

Policy CS10 requires applicants for proposals that are located in areas away from the market towns and villages identified in Policy CS1, to provide supporting evidence to explain the existing functional need for the dwelling, (including details of the number of workers who will live in the dwelling, the length of time in operation and the viability of the enterprise, and the availability of other suitable accommodation in the area to house the worker(s)).

No evidence has been provided by the applicant, which could allow a consideration of this proposal against the criteria contained in Policy CS10. The proposal, therefore, fails to comply with this policy and would result in the introduction of a new dwelling in an unsustainable location in the countryside.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be unacceptable in terms of its location and thus contrary to Policies H3, H16, CS1 and CS14.

### ***Character and Design***

As discussed above, the site lies within an isolated group of 6 properties in the open countryside.

The overall design and appearance of the proposed house is considered to be acceptable in this location. However, it would result in the introduction of another element of built form in what is generally a loose knit collection of buildings in the open countryside. It would thus begin to change the fairly open and fragmented nature of development in the immediate vicinity, causing serious harm to the character and appearance of the locality – an issue that was identified by the Inspector in the 2000 appeal decision.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the locality and thus contrary to Policies H3, E8 and CS14.

### ***Amenity***

The proposed dwelling is sited in the centre of the plot and reasonably spaced between it and adjoining dwellings to the north and south. The only first floor windows facing northwards (above the garage projection) are positioned 12m from the site boundary. This distance is considered adequate to avoid loss of privacy to the garden area of the property immediately to the north. There are no windows in the first floor of the elevation facing south.

### ***Access***

The proposed access to the site is located close to the north-west corner of the site, which provides a direct access onto the adopted highway (Roman Bank).

The plans show an access width of 4.5m extending into the site. There is a satisfactory turning head within the site to allow vehicles to leave in a forward gear. Two parking spaces are available within the garages and sufficient space is also available within the forecourt to allow further parking.

The proposed access is located close to a sharp bend in the highway in Roman Bank, which starts just after the site boundary. There are also significant amounts of trees and vegetation to the north (some within the verge) which block visibility to the north for vehicles leaving the site. Some visibility is available to the south for vehicles leaving the site, before another bend is encountered approximately 70m to the south.

The advice from the County Highway Officer is that the proposal should be refused on the grounds that inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access to Roman Bank. The proposed development is considered, therefore, be detrimental to highway safety and thus contrary to Policy H3, of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and Policy CS13 of the draft Fenland Core Strategy (July 2012).

Note. Amended plans have recently been received, which show the position of the proposed access further south on Roman Bank. The comments of the Highways Officer are awaited and will be reported verbally. However, in the light of earlier discussions it is considered unlikely that these will overcome this element of concern.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 This site is, therefore, not considered to be an appropriate location for residential development being in the open countryside and some distance from the nearest sustainable settlement (Leverington Village). In addition, it would result in the introduction of another element of built form in what is generally a loose knit collection of buildings in the open countryside. It would thus begin to change the fairly open and fragmented nature of development in the immediate vicinity, causing serious harm to the character and appearance of the locality

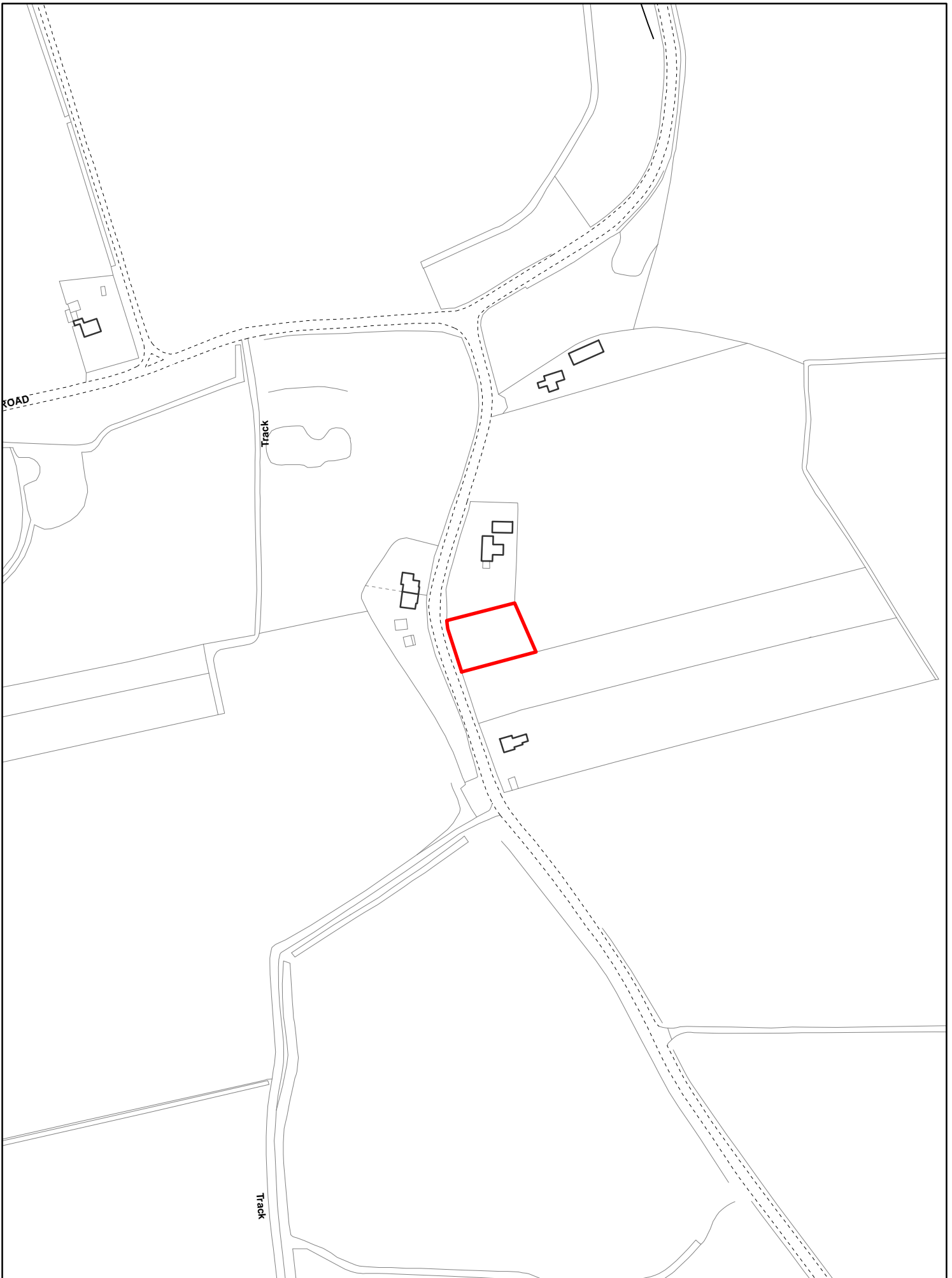
The proposed development would also be detrimental to highway safety on the grounds that inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access to Roman Bank.

Consequently the proposal is in conflict with Policies H3, H16 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Development Plan and Policies CS1, CS13 and CS14 of the draft Fenland Core Strategy (July 2012).

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

**Refuse for the following reasons:**

- 1. The proposed development is located in an unsustainable location in the open countryside where residential development is not normally supported unless justified. Development in this location would also harm the distinctive character of the locality as a result of the introduction of another element of built form in what is generally a loose knit collection of buildings in the open countryside, and would thus begin to change the fairly open and fragmented nature of development in the immediate vicinity. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies H3, H16 and E8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and Policies CS1, CS10 and CS14 of the draft Fenland Core Strategy (July 2012).**
  
- 2. The proposed development would also be detrimental to highway safety on the grounds that inadequate visibility is available each side of the vehicular access from the site to Roman Bank. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy H3, of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan and Policy CS13 of the draft Fenland Core Strategy (July 2012).**



Created on: 09/08/2012

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Scale = 1:2,500



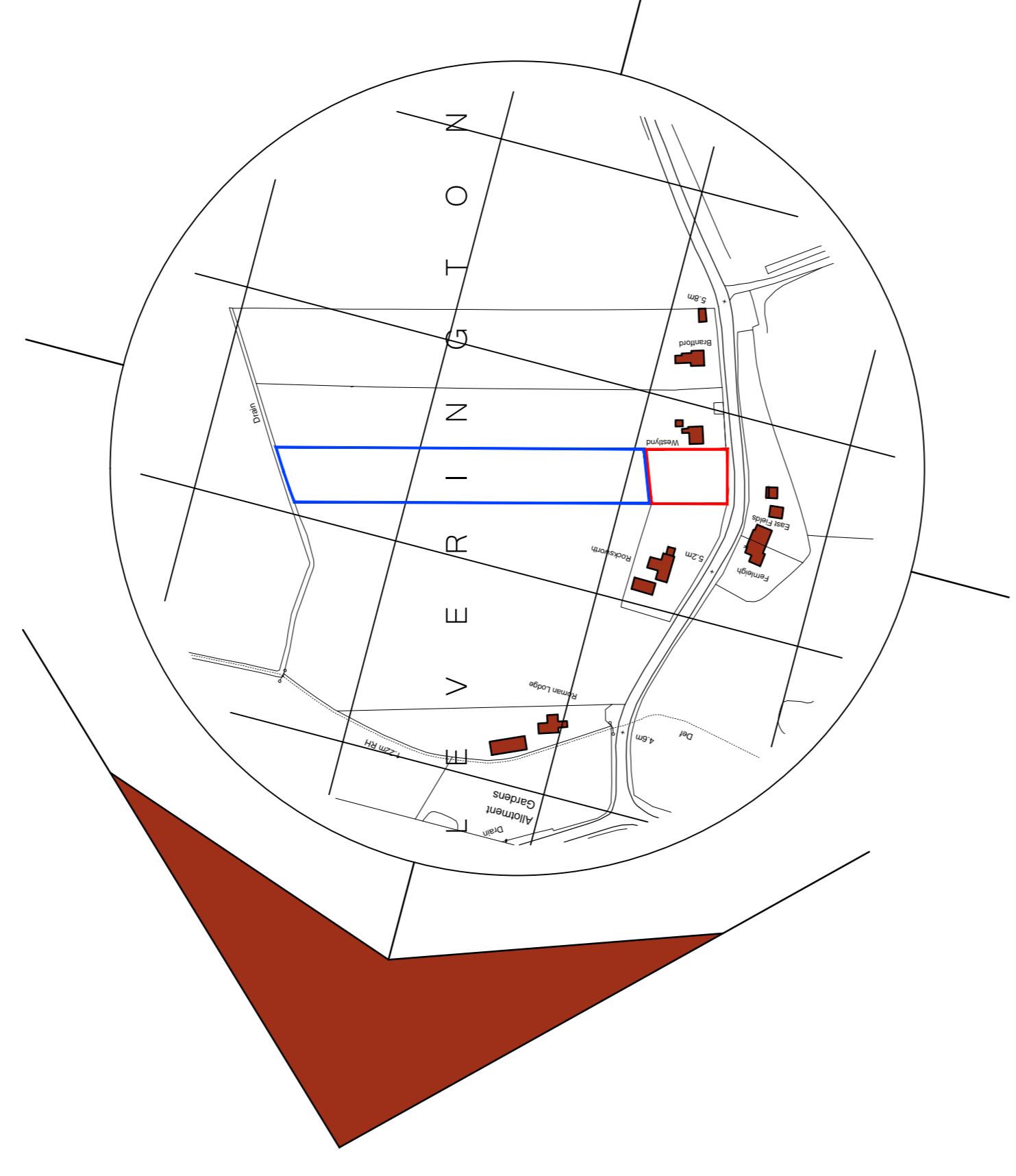


**General Notes**

- This drawing shall not be scaled, figured dimensions only to be used.
- The contractor, sub-contractors and suppliers must verify all dimensions on site prior to the commencement of any work.
- This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant engineers and other drawings.
- Any discrepancies are to be brought to the designers attention.

**SITE PLAN KEY**

	Indicates trees and hedges surveyed		Indicates site access point		Indicates areas of new paving
	Indicates trees and hedges to be removed (approximate)		Indicates site boundary line		Hatch indicates new block paved private driveways
	Indicates proposed specimen trees		Indicates neighboring properties from Ordnance Survey location plan		Hatch indicates new grassed areas
	Indicates site levels		Indicates position of proposed building		Indicates new private footpaths (50x450mm paving slabs)



Revisions

A	Aug 2012
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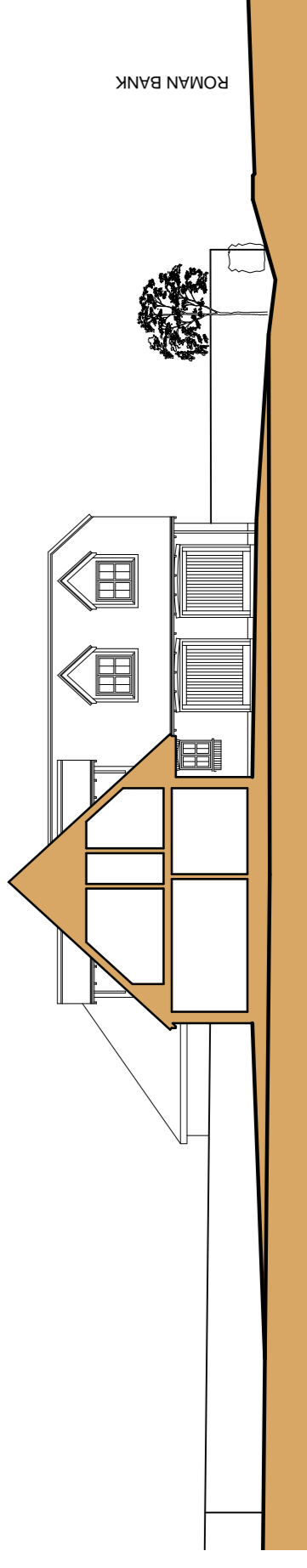
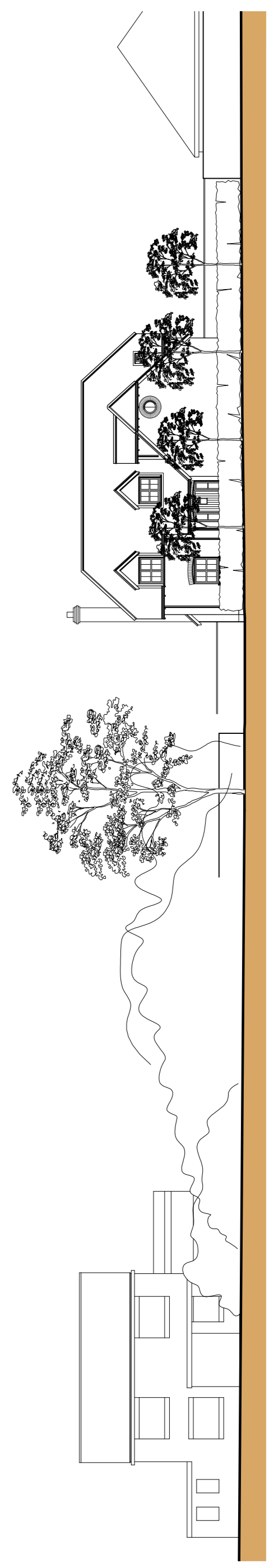
Bin Store and Tree Numbers



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Job Title	Proposed Development	Scale	Various	Drawn By	RS
Date	February 2012	Sheet Size	A1	Revision	A
Job No.	SE-071				
Drawn No.	10				

Scheme Drawing  
Site and Location Plans  
Section and Street Elevation

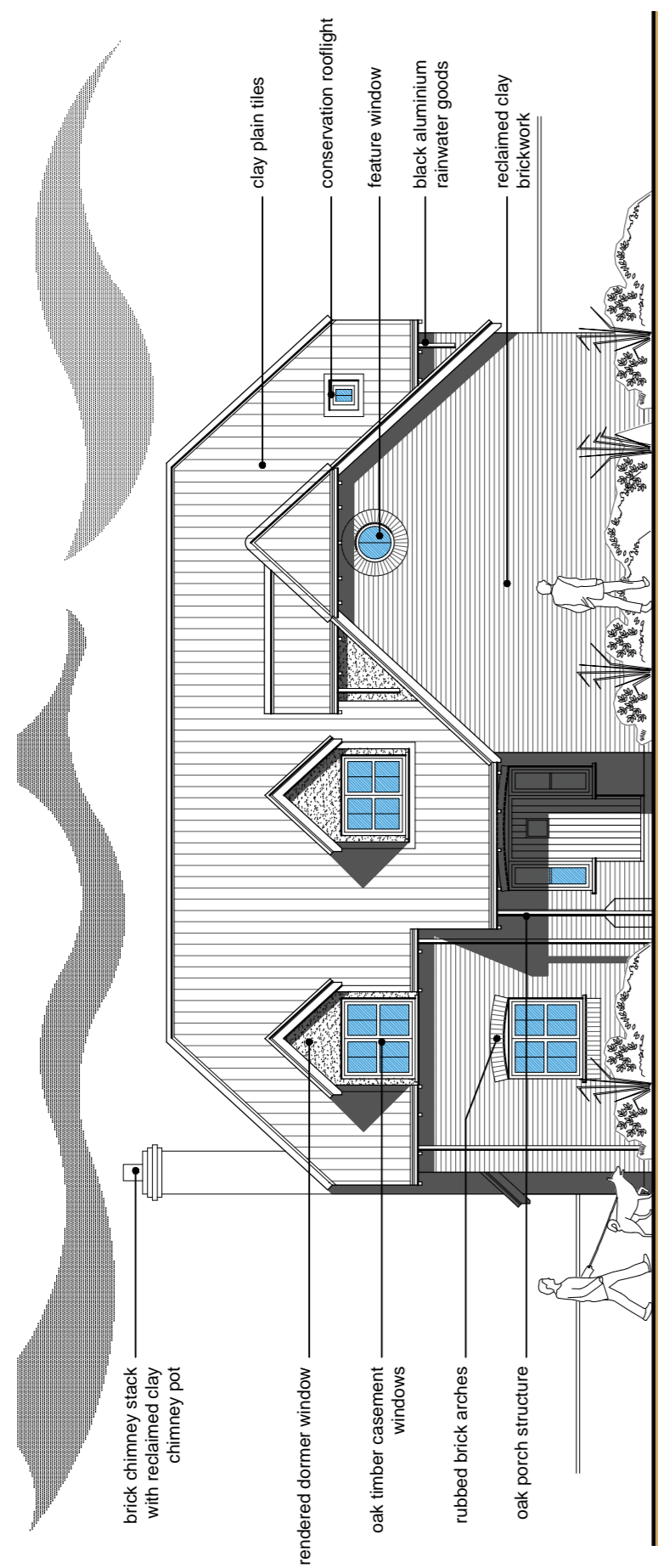


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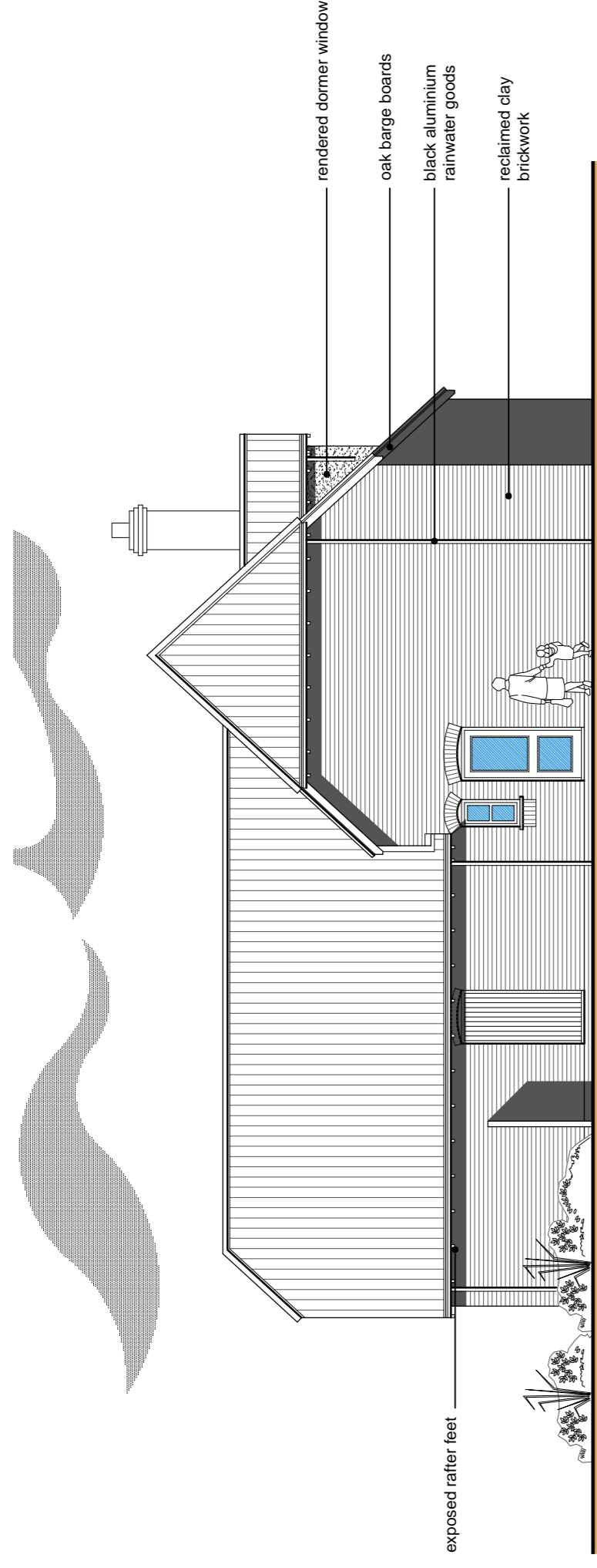
**Schedule of Sizes**

Internal Floor Areas	
Dwelling	
Ground Floor (inc Garage)	123.6m <sup>2</sup>
First Floor	104.5m <sup>2</sup>
Total	228.1m <sup>2</sup>
Maximum Dimensions (exc roof overhangs)	
Dwelling	
FFL to Top of Ridge	7.415m
FFL to Front Eaves	3.630m
Width	13.370m
Depth	15.515m



**Front (SW) Elevation**

Scale: 1:100



**Side (SE) Elevation**

Scale: 1:100



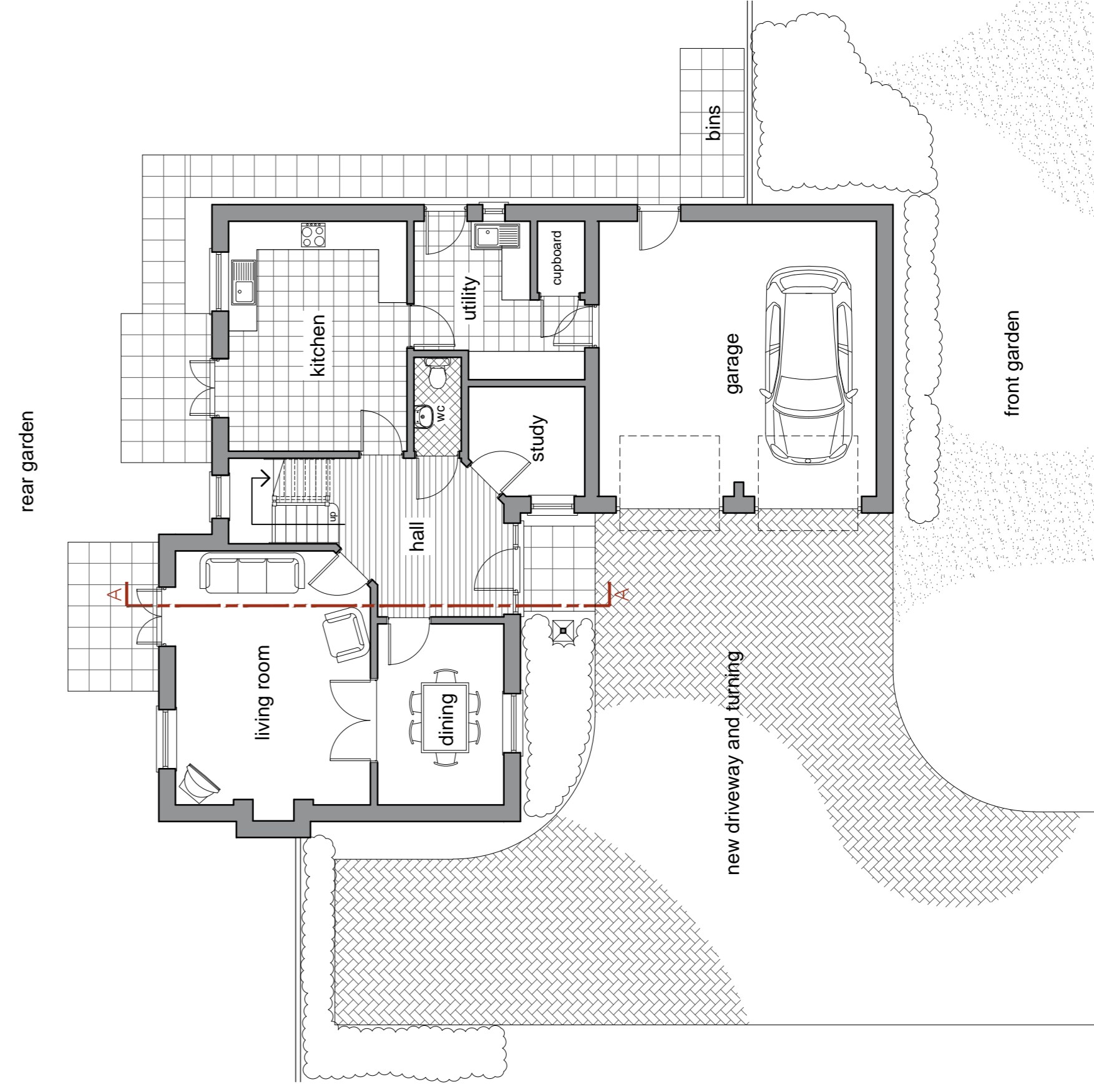
**Rear (NE) Elevation**

Scale: 1:100



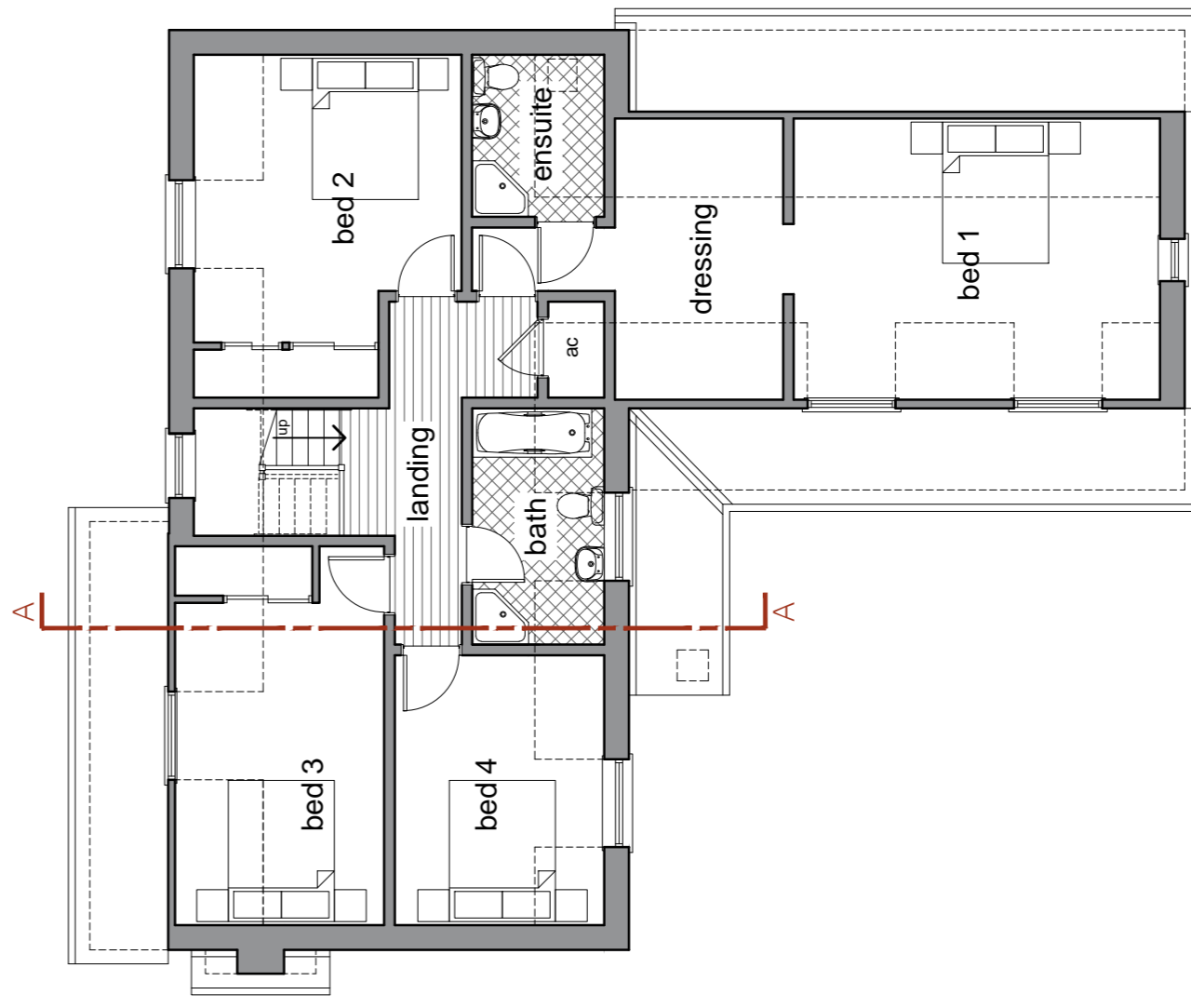
**Side (NW) Elevation**

Scale: 1:100



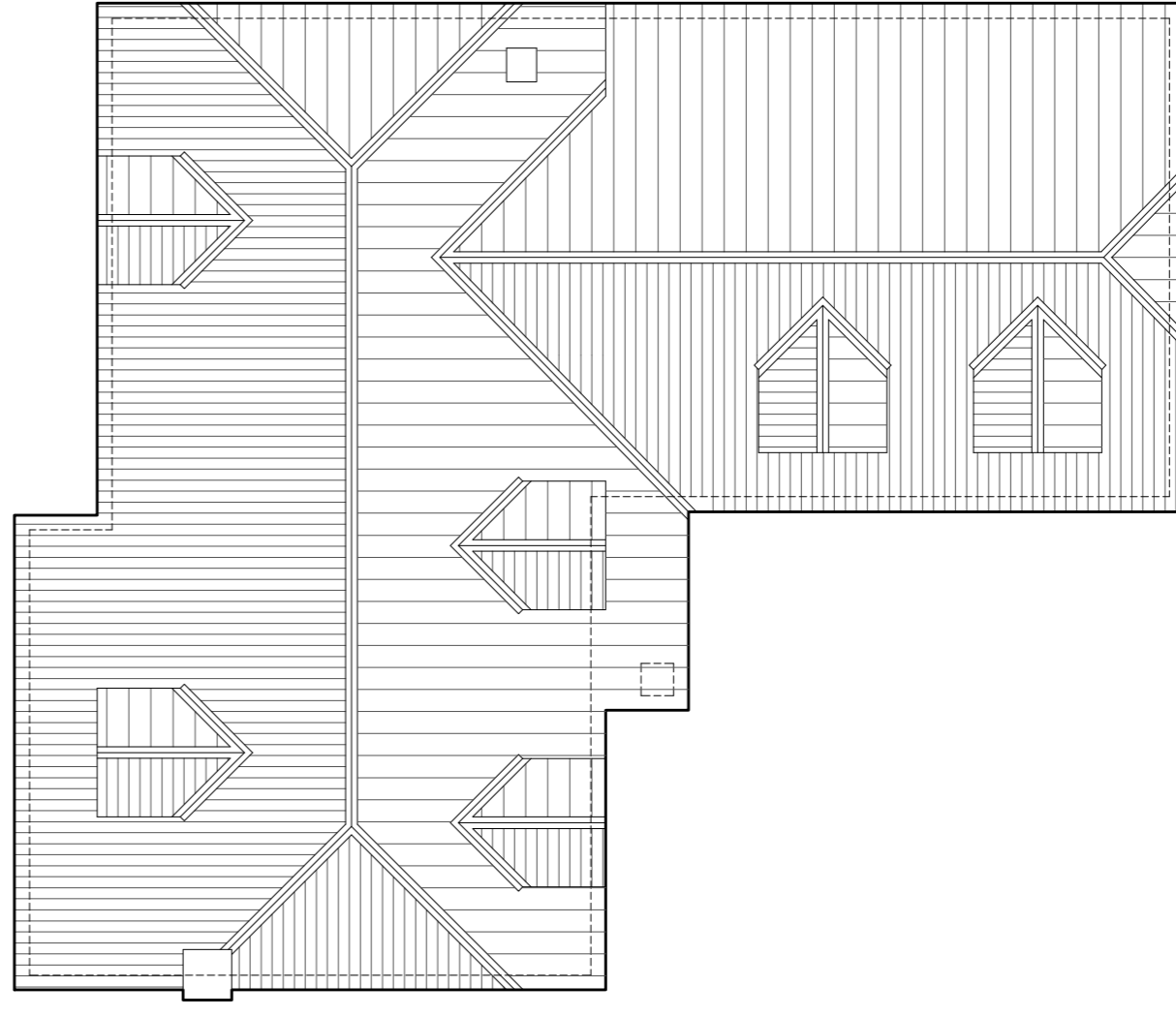
**Ground Floor Plan**

Scale: 1:100



**First Floor Plan**

Scale: 1:100



**Roof Plan**

Scale: 1:100

Revisions

A	Aug 2012	Bin Store
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Date	February 2012	Scale	Various
Job Title	Proposed Development Land Adjacent Rocksworth, Roman Bank, Levington for Mr C Crowson	Sheet Size	A1
Job No.	SE-071	Drawn By	RS
Drawn File	SE-071	Revision	A
Client	Plans and Elevations	Dep No.	11