
F/YR18/1146/F

Applicant: Mr D Creese

**Agent : Mr Gareth Edwards
Swann Edwards Architecture Limited**

Land West Of 327, Norwood Road, March, Cambridgeshire

Erection of 2 x single-storey 3-bed dwellings with attached single garage

Reason for Committee: 6 or more unresolved written opinions from 6 or more separate sources have been received from within the ward area or adjacent ward area which differ from the officer recommendation.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposal is a full application for the construction of two dwellings on the land.

The site is located within March, on land designated as being at the lowest risk of flooding, and involves the development of a currently empty plot of land.

The proposal follows a previous withdrawn application that proposed the construction of 3 dwellings on the site.

The scheme relates appropriately to its surroundings and does not result in any impacts that justify its refusal.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is currently scrub grassland located to the rear of 325-329 Norwood Road, surrounded on three sides by existing closeboard timber fencing, with an existing store/stable on the fourth side. To the north of the site is a bungalow accessed from Smiths Chase, which faces out over the site from two existing windows (bedroom and living room), located approximately 1.5 metres from the site boundary.
- 2.2. The fence on the southern boundary of the site is supplemented by an evergreen conifer hedge located within the gardens of the adjacent properties, approximately 3m in height.
- 2.3. On the opposite side of Prospect Road to the west are three further bungalows accessed directly from the private road.
- 2.4. The site is located in Flood Zone 1.
- 2.5. Access to the site will be from Prospect Road.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The proposal is for the construction of two single-storey dwellings on the land, incorporating single garages and providing a turning space between the dwellings to allow vehicles to leave in a forward manner.

3.2. Access to the site is shown as being along Prospect Road, a private road with an existing access onto Wisbech Road.

Full plans and associated documents for this application can be found at:

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

4. SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR05/0680/O	Erection of 5 dwellings involving demolition of existing dwelling	Granted 28/7/05
F/YR18/0780/F	Erection of 1 x single-storey 3-bed with garage and 2 x 2-storey 3-bed dwellings	Withdrawn

5. CONSULTATIONS

March Town Council

5.1. Recommend approval

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority

5.2. *Turning head has the appearance of a parking space, could this be overcome? Prospect Road doesn't allow two-way vehicle flow at the access and could result in vehicles being sat stationary on Wisbech Road. Request amended plans.*

Senior Archaeologist (CCC)

5.3. *We do not object to development from proceeding in this location but consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative condition, such as the example condition approved by DCLG.*

Local Residents/Interested Parties

12 letters of objection to the proposal have been received from 7 distinct sources raising the following points:

- Additional traffic along Prospect Road
- Prospect Road is not designed for heavy traffic and should not be used to deliver materials to the site.
- Prospect Road is private and the applicant does not have the right to use it
- Exit of Prospect Road does not have good visibility
- Lack of visitor parking
- Development does not make allowance for turning for the existing properties
- Insufficient space proposed to manoeuvre into proposed parking spaces.
- Proposal will impact on light into living and bedrooms
- Loss of outlook, loss of privacy
- Do not want to suffer loss of light from any trees that will be planted.
- Don't see how private housing meets needs
- Benefits only the developer
- Solely undertaken for private profit
- Overdevelopment of the area
- Loss of this urban green space
- What mitigation is proposed to reduce the risk of surface water flooding
- No information on foul effluent disposal
- Dormice and bats reside in the field
- Japanese knotweed has been confirmed as growing on the land

- Will the proposals destroy the roots of the conifer trees present on the boundary of the site.
- The land has been used for the burial of fridges and freezers.
- Development of the site will impact on mental wellbeing and will have to consider moving house.
- Object to access from Norwood Road shown on plan SE-864-05A, noise from construction traffic would be horrendous, disturb the foundations of the neighbouring dwelling and exacerbate existing difficulties at the Maple Grove junction. Use of this access would also prejudice access to the neighbouring dwelling's gas box.
- Development would result in disturbance of the peace currently experienced at neighbouring dwelling.
- Wish to avoid impact on views, particularly sunsets.
- Town Council would only consider approving 1 bungalow
- Devaluation of neighbouring property
- Only supported by those with a vested interest in the site

Supporters

14 letters of support for the proposal have been received from 9 distinct sources noting the following points:

- Good central location, ample gardens and improvement of the road.
- Owner has lived and invested in March for over 3 decades.
- Looks like the best proposal so far
- Aren't the council in trouble for not delivering enough housing?
- Understood the Council had already granted permission
- Well considered layout and a welcome contribution to March
- Would bring benefits to March's economy
- Well-designed development with good access

6. STATUTORY DUTY

6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014).

7. POLICY FRAMEWORK

7.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

7.2. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Determining a planning application

7.3. Fenland Local Plan 2014

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

LP4 – Housing

LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland

LP15 – Facilitating the Creation of a More Sustainable Transport Network in Fenland

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

7.4. March Neighbourhood Plan 2017

H2 – Windfall development

8. KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design and Amenity**
- **Highway Safety**
- **Flood Risk**
- **Other matters**

9. BACKGROUND

- 9.1. The site has been subject to a preliminary enquiry in relation to development of the site for residential purposes. That enquiry provided two options for development, one of which was indicated as having the potential to gain a positive recommendation (proposing two new dwellings both accessed from Prospect Road), whilst the second was indicated as being unlikely to gain support, (also for two dwellings but both accessed between the existing host dwelling and 329 Norwood Road).
- 9.2. Subsequently, an application was made for the construction of a single bungalow and a pair of semi-detached dwellings, however this application was withdrawn prior to being determined.

10. ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 10.1. The application site is located within the town of March, identified in the Fenland Local Plan (2014) as being one of two primary market towns within the district, and one of the settlements within which the majority of the District's new housing is to be provided.
- 10.2. The site is within flood zone 1 and there are no historic or ecological designations that would indicate a presumption against the principle of residential development here.
- 10.3. Analysis of the patterns of development of the area make it clear that infill and backland schemes have been utilised to enable the development of the area for residential purposes, see the following section on Design and Amenity in this respect.

Design and amenity

- 10.4. The dwellings to the south and east along Norwood Road and Wisbech Road are mainly two-storey properties, and represent the historic development along these routes. The more recent infill development to the rear of these roads is almost exclusively single-storey by contrast, including the existing dwellings accessed from Prospect Road and Smiths Chase, which are most closely associated with the application site.
- 10.5. Policy LP16 requires proposals to deliver high quality environments, listing several contributory elements to meeting this requirement, which include (amongst other things) making a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, and not adversely impacting on the amenity of neighbouring users.
- 10.6. Extensive comments have been received in relation to the proposal on these matters and are considered as follows:
- 10.7. Privacy & Amenity Impact.
- 10.8. The two proposed dwellings to be built on the site are single-storey in nature, and the site is surrounded by closeboard fencing, noted on the site plan to be 1.8 metres in height. The dwelling immediately to the north of the

application site currently has the closest relationship, and that property benefits from two windows that look out over the land over the separating fence from a distance of approximately 1 metre due to variation in land levels between the two sites. The remaining dwellings adjoining the site have considerably less close relationships, with the properties on Prospect Road having a 15 metre separation from the front elevations of the proposed dwellings, and building-building separation distances of over 20 metres and over 40 metres respectively to the south and east of the site. Given those distances, only the dwelling immediately to the north is cause for concern. That concern must be tempered however by the following facts. Although the windows in this property look over the intervening fence due to variation in land levels, this fence could be reconstructed so as to be 2 metres high above the higher of the two land levels, without the need for a planning application. The neighbour would have no option but to accept such a fence and the impact it would have on the outlook from their windows, which would be considerably greater than the construction of the proposed dwelling, which in part mitigates the impact due to the location of its driveway along this boundary.

10.9. The original scheme has been amended at the request of officers to increase the separation distance between the front of the proposed dwellings and the properties on the opposite side of Prospect Road. As these dwellings are now separated by 15 metres it is considered that the relationship is within acceptable tolerances.

10.10. The views from the proposed dwellings to the rear (east) is, given the separation distances involved, not likely to result in unacceptable adverse impacts to residential amenity. The concerns regard noise coming from the use of the space is noted, however it is of the same character as the use of the existing land as ancillary domestic garden and would not therefore justify refusal of the scheme.

Character Impact

10.11. As noted earlier, the application site lies behind the historic line of development along Wisbech Road and Norwood Road and other developments in such areas, including both Prospect Road itself and Smiths Chase to the north, have been developed almost exclusively through the use of single-storey properties. The proposal continues this trend, with a pair of handed residential units, each accommodating 3 bedrooms. The application notes that materials of construction are to be agreed, and therefore an appropriately worded condition to ensure use of appropriate materials would be necessary. In scale and design terms therefore, the proposed dwellings would be completely in accordance with the character of development in the area

Highway Safety

10.12. The public comments received in relation to the application also make several objections with regard to the proposed access along Prospect Road and construction vehicle access and are considered as follows:

Intensification of the use of Prospect Road and access visibility

10.13. Prospect Road is an unadopted Private Road, with 3 addresses registered as gaining access from it. The proposal is for the construction of an additional 2 dwellings, resulting in 5 properties using the road for access. This is the normally

accepted upper threshold for numbers of dwellings accessed from a single private road, and on that basis the principle of the intensification of the use is not considered to be unacceptable. The access visibility is noted alongside the comments of the Highways Authority, however the boundary treatments flanking the access are beyond the applicant's control and Wisbech Road at this point benefits from a significant off-road parking bay that allows vehicles to pull off the road and wait to enter Prospect Road if required. On this basis the visibility is not sufficiently poor or dangerous to justify refusal of the application.

Right of access

- 10.14. Comments submitted alongside the application indicate that the owner of the site does not have permission to access the site from Prospect Road, however this is not a matter that is material to the planning decision reached on the site and is instead a matter for private negotiation between developer and the owners of the road.

Construction vehicle access

- 10.15. Comments have been received indicating that Prospect Road is not suitable for construction vehicles and also that use of the existing access alongside the host dwelling would result in unacceptable impacts on its living conditions. Given the relatively minor scale of the proposal, impacts from construction vehicles are likely to be extremely limited, both in scale and duration and there are no abnormal circumstances that would justify an attempt to control access routes.

Parking and turning provision

- 10.16. The site plan submitted alongside the application shows each of the proposed new dwellings benefitting from a single garage with two additional tandem parking spaces in front of the garage, with turning provided within Prospect Road. A separate turning head is provided between the two dwellings to allow turning of vehicles away from the driveways, which with a depth of over 9m off Prospect Road is sufficient to accommodate the likely turning requirements of the dwellings and most typical visitors.

Flood risk

- 10.17. The site is noted as being within Flood Zone 1 and therefore there is no 'in principle' opposition to its development for residential purposes. The Environment Agency website does note however that the site is at a medium to high risk of flooding from surface water; however no surface water drainage strategy accompanies the application. Given the identified risk, it would be appropriate to require such detail should permission be granted.

Other matters

- 10.18. Several other matters have been raised for consideration during the course of the application, which are considered as follows:
- 10.19. Devaluation of surrounding property and the presence of Japanese Knotweed are not material to the planning merits of the proposal, nor are the spoiling of views across the site from other properties, or the motivations of either the applicant for making the application or third parties for supporting it.
- 10.20. Ecological value – there is no evidence provided in the relevant objections to demonstrate that protected species are present on the site, and the site is within a residential curtilage at present. Any works would still need to comply

with the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and it would not be appropriate to attempt to duplicate the controls of those regulations as part of any planning permission granted on the site.

- 10.21. Burial of domestic appliances on the land – as a matter of principle this does not affect the granting of permission, however a condition to require an appropriate response should any unsuspected contamination be found on the site would be appropriate if the scheme is granted.
- 10.22. Services provision – there is no requirement for a property to have a connection to mains gas, and there is no indication that there is insufficient capacity for foul drainage within the public sewer at this location.
- 10.23. It is not understood where the comment regarding the Town Council only supporting a single dwelling on the site has originated as in their formal response to the application they recommended approval of the scheme.

11. CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1. In conclusion, the principle of the development is one that is not opposed by the relevant policies of the development plan. The design of the proposed dwellings and their impacts on amenity are within the thresholds that would be considered acceptable and would not justify refusal of the scheme. The impacts on highway safety and flood risk are manageable and there are no other matters that justify the refusal of the application.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Grant

- 12.1. From 1 October 2018 section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that planning permission for the development of land may not be granted subject to a pre-commencement condition without the written agreement of the applicant to the terms of the condition (except in the circumstances set out in the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018).
- 12.2. The applicant has been consulted on the proposed conditions and has confirmed their agreement to them in writing. Therefore, should the application be approved and the consent granted with the proposed conditions after 1st October 2018, it is considered that the requirements of section 100ZA(5) have been met.
- 12.3. The proposed conditions are as follows;

- 1 The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 No demolition/ development or preliminary ground works of any kind shall take place on the site [within the area indicated on the attached plan] until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme and timetable of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved programme shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable prior to any other works taking place on site.

Reason: To secure the provision of the investigation and recording of archaeological remains threatened by the development and the reporting and dissemination of the results in accordance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan.

To enable the inspection of the site by qualified persons for the investigation of archaeological remains in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.

This is a pre-commencement condition because archaeological investigations will be required to be carried out before development commences to ensure important findings can be recorded.

- 3 Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water drainage shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the relevant parts of the development are first brought into use and thereafter retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP14 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

A pre-commencement condition is necessary in order to ensure that surface water drainage is adequately dealt with and thereafter retained in perpetuity.

- 4 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with. The development shall then be carried out in full accordance with the approved remediation strategy.

Reason: To control pollution of land and controlled waters in the interests of the environment and public safety in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular paragraphs 178 and 179, and Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

- 5 Prior to the first occupation of the development the proposed on-site parking/turning area shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans, surfaced in a bound material and drained within the site. The parking/turning area, surfacing and drainage shall thereafter be retained as such in perpetuity (notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part A, Class F of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, or any instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order).

Reason

In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy LP15 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

- 6 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, (or any Order or Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order), planning permission shall be required for the following developments or alterations:

i) the erection of any walls, fences or other means of enclosure forward of the front elevation of the dwellings hereby approved (as detailed in Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A).

Reason: To ensure the open plan design of the development hereby permitted is maintained, in the interests of the character and appearance of the overall development in accordance with Policies LP14 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.

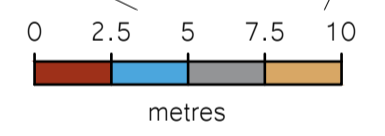
- 7 No development other than groundworks and foundations shall take place until full details of the materials to be used in the development hereby approved for the walls and roof are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details submitted for approval shall include the name of the manufacturer, the product type, colour and reference number. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014.

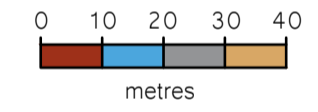
- 8 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents



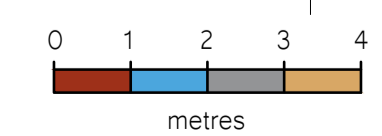
Site Plan
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Location Plan
Scale: 1:1250



Plot Relationship
Scale: 1:100



- General Notes
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SITE PLAN KEY

- Un-surveyed OS buildings
- Existing buildings surveyed
- Proposed buildings
- Proposed graveled areas
- Proposed grassed areas
- Site access
- Existing trees and vegetation
- Proposed trees and vegetation
- Structures to be demolished
- Existing lamp post

Revisions

A	Aug 2018	Clients Amendments
B	Oct 2018	Revised for planning
C	Dec 2018	Planning Amendments
D	Feb 2019	Planning Amendments

Status
FOR APPROVAL

SWANN EDWARDS
ARCHITECTURE

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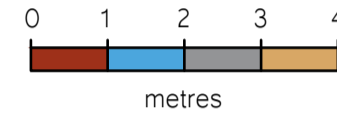
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Norwood Road, March		Sheet Size
For Creese Homes Ltd		A1
Drawing Title	Job No.	Drawn by
Site Plan & Location Plan	SE-864	M.N.
	Dwg No.	Revision
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Plot 1



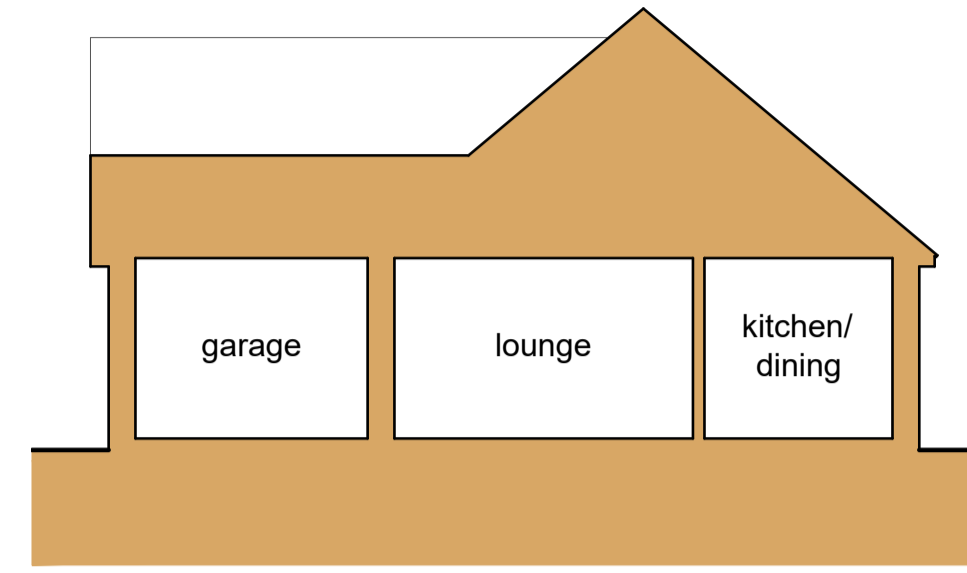
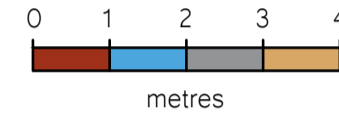
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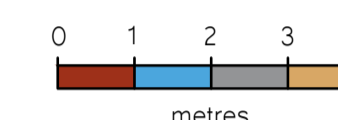
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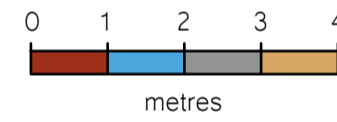
Section A-A

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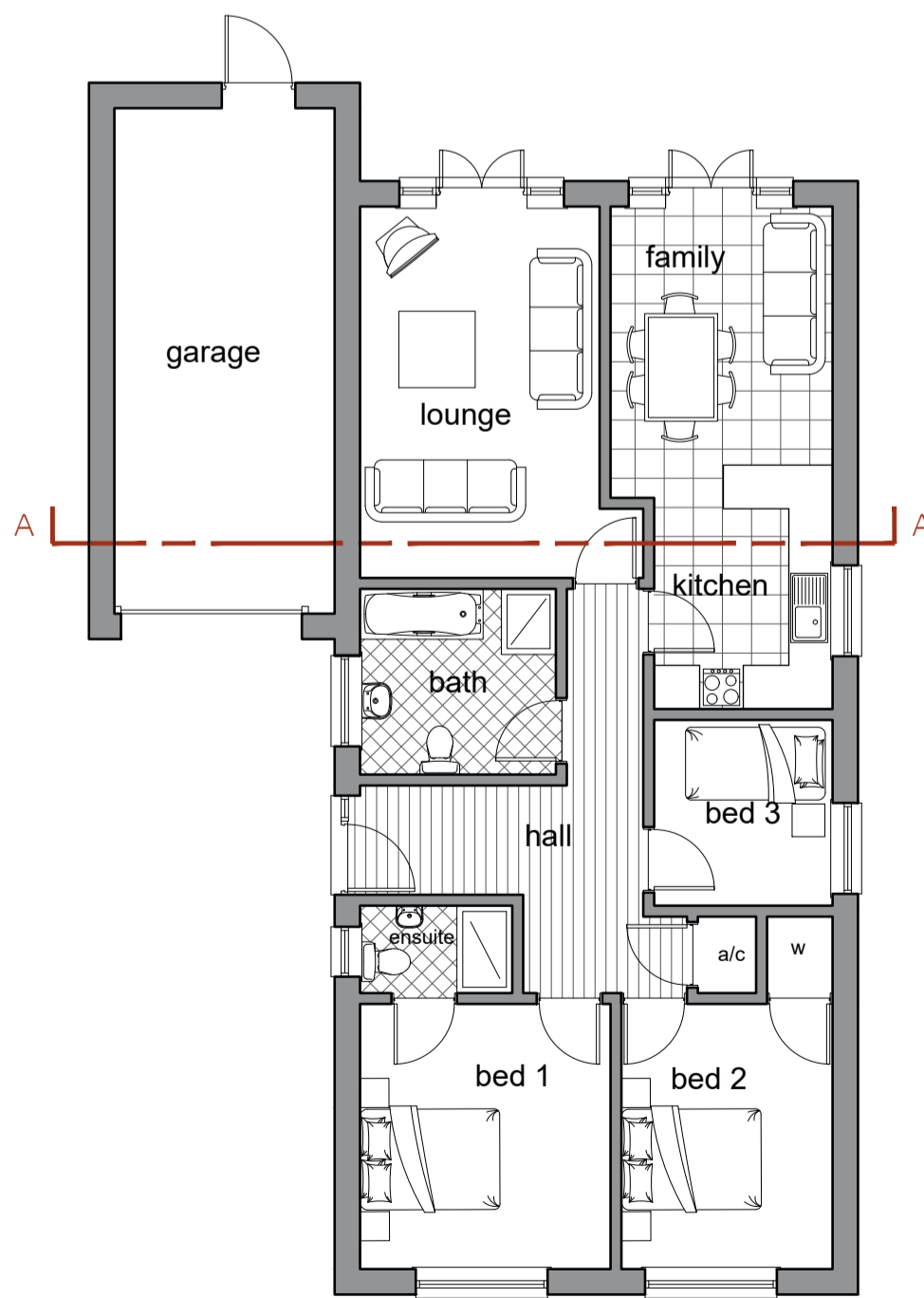
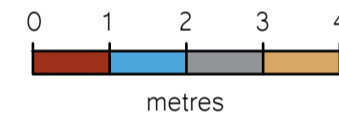
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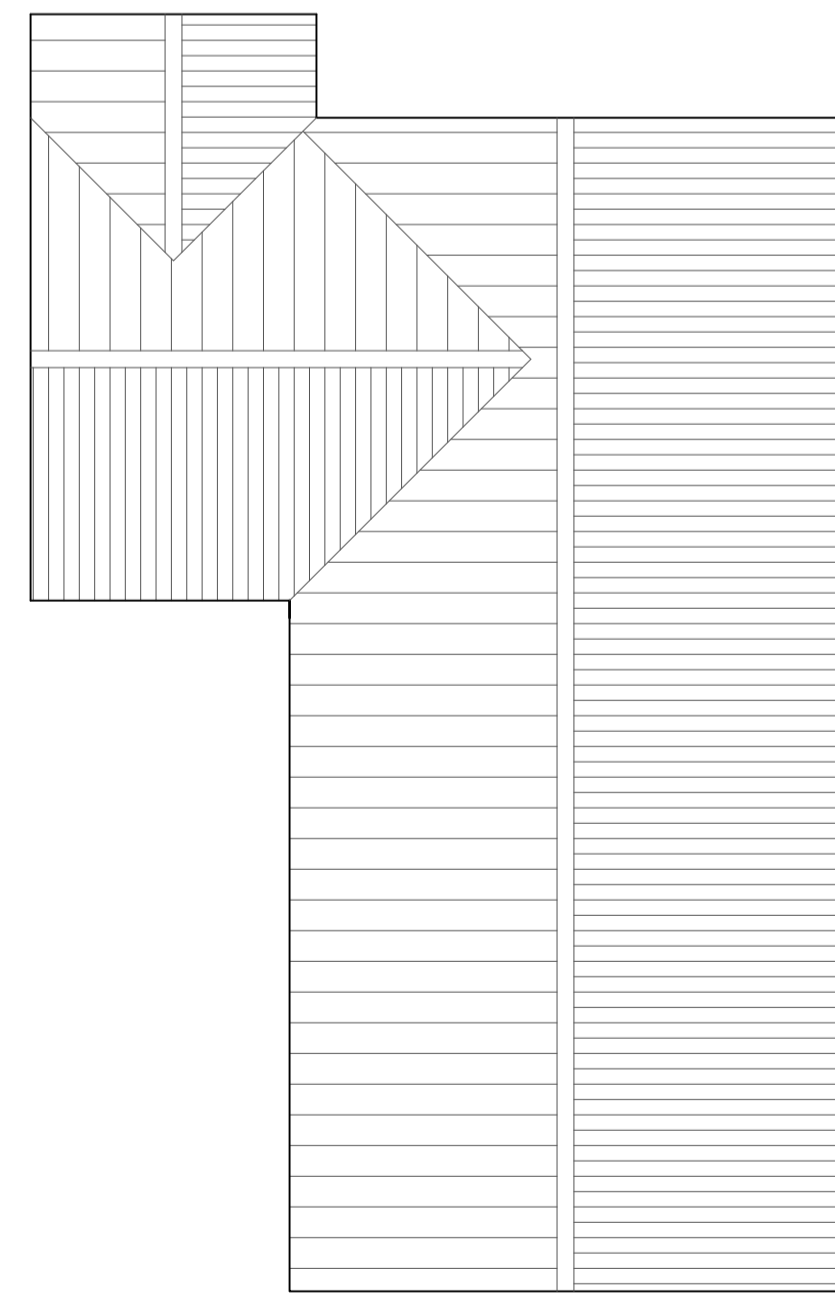
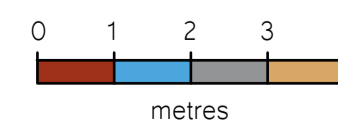
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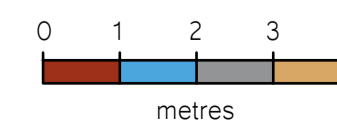
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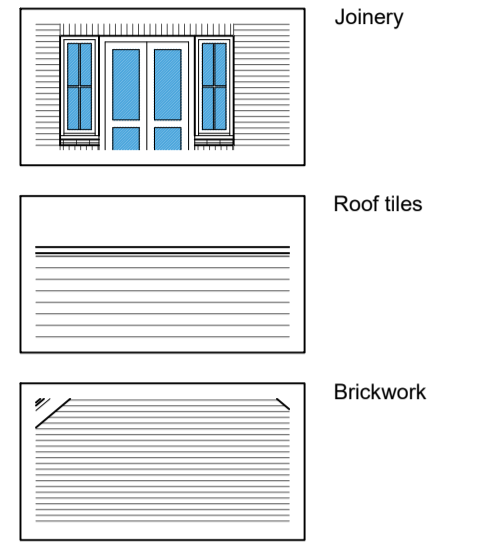
Roof Plan

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ELEVATION KEY



Revisions		
A	Dec 2018	Planning Amendments
B	Feb 2019	Planning Amendments

Status
FOR APPROVAL

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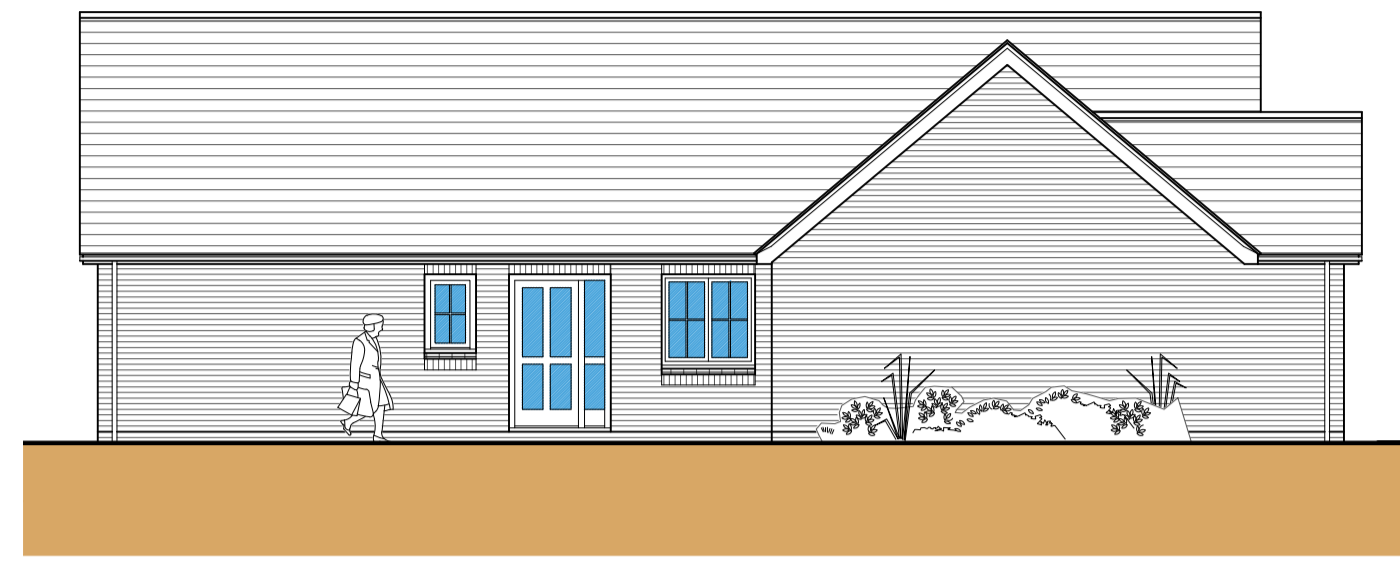
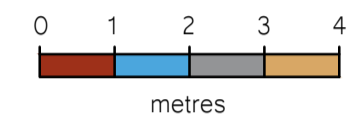
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Drawing Title Planning Drawing Plot 1 Floor Plans, Elevations & Section	Job No. SE-864	Drawn by M.N.
	Dwg No. 21	Revision B

Plot 2



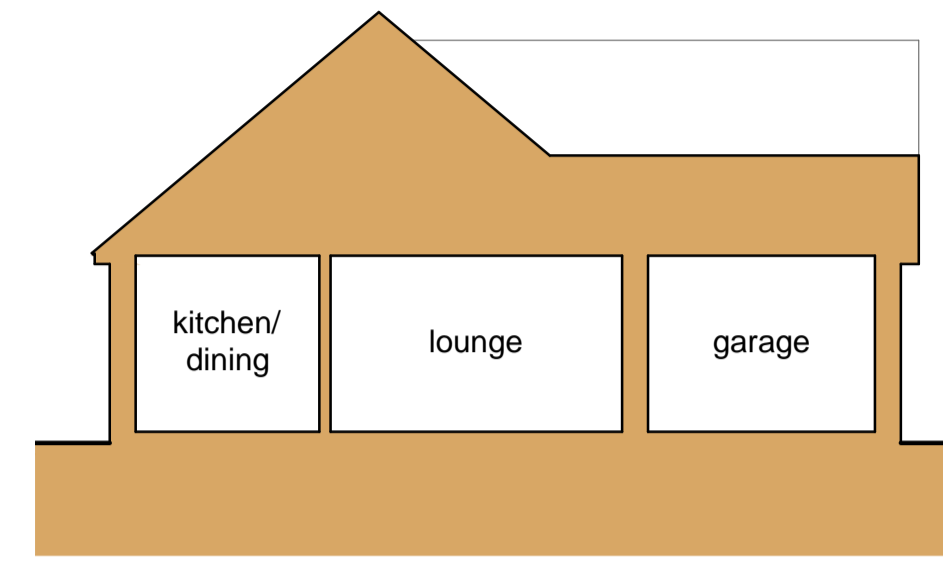
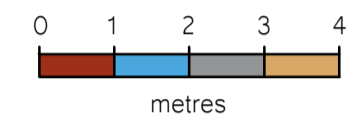
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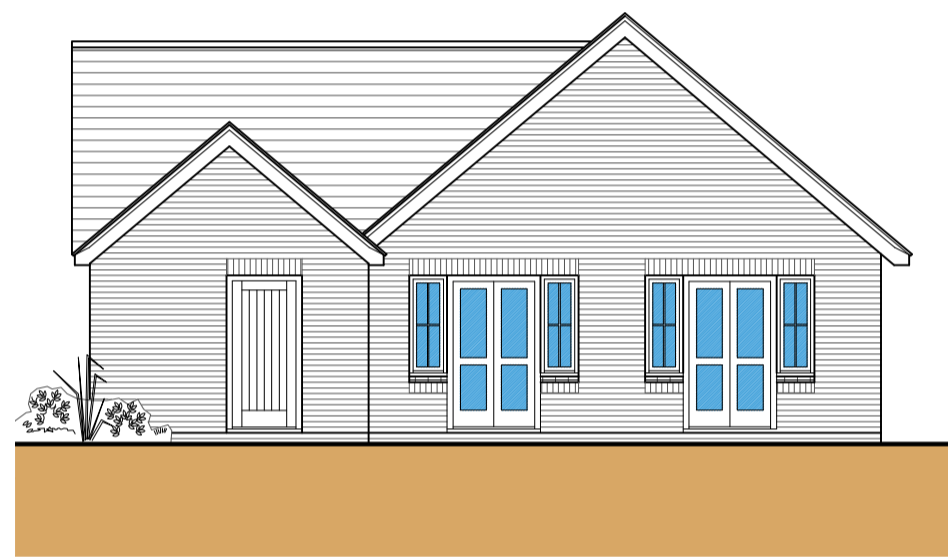
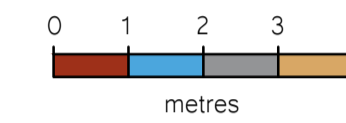
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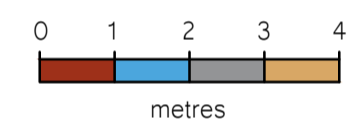
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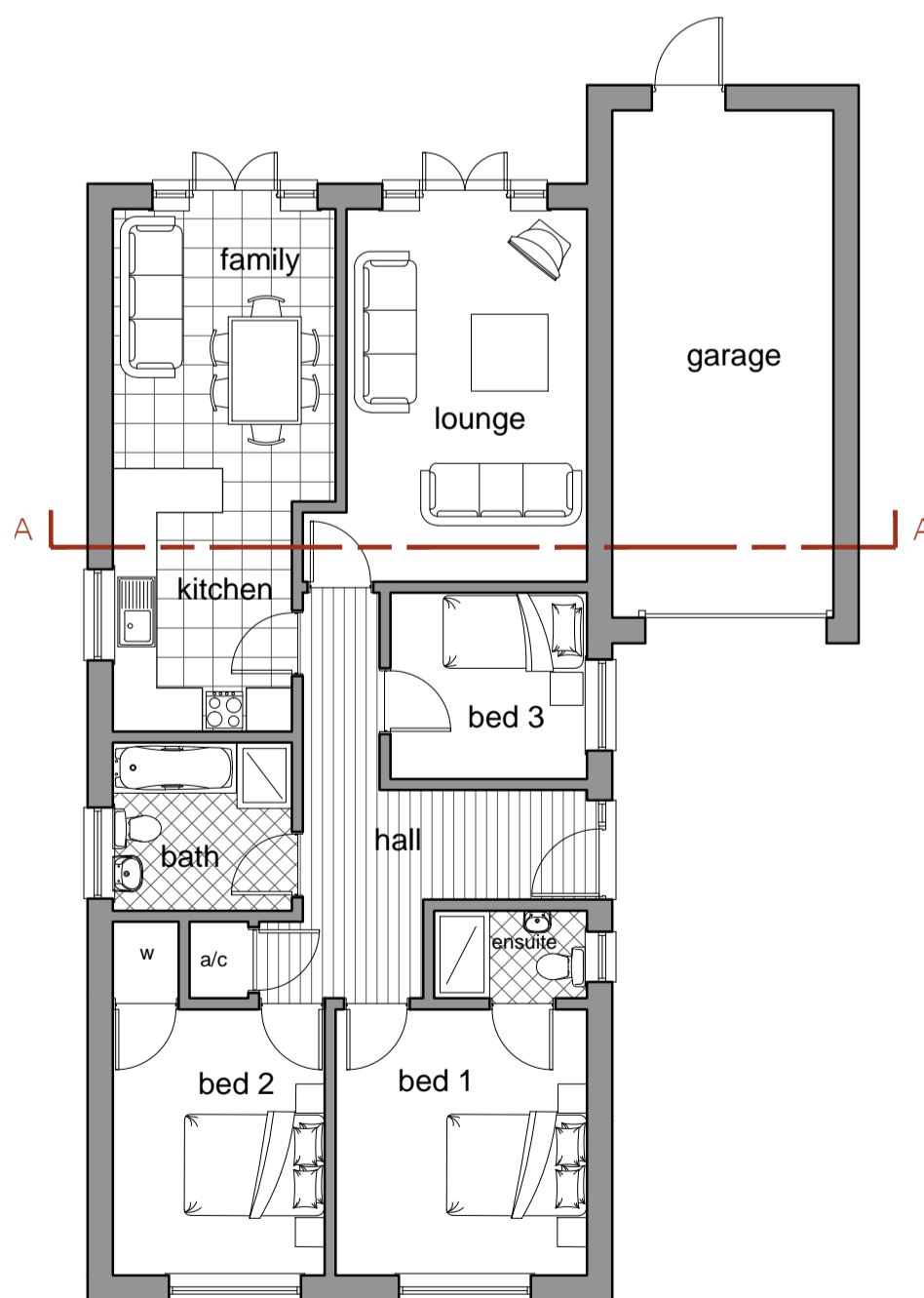
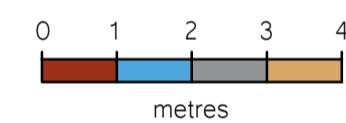
Rear Elevation

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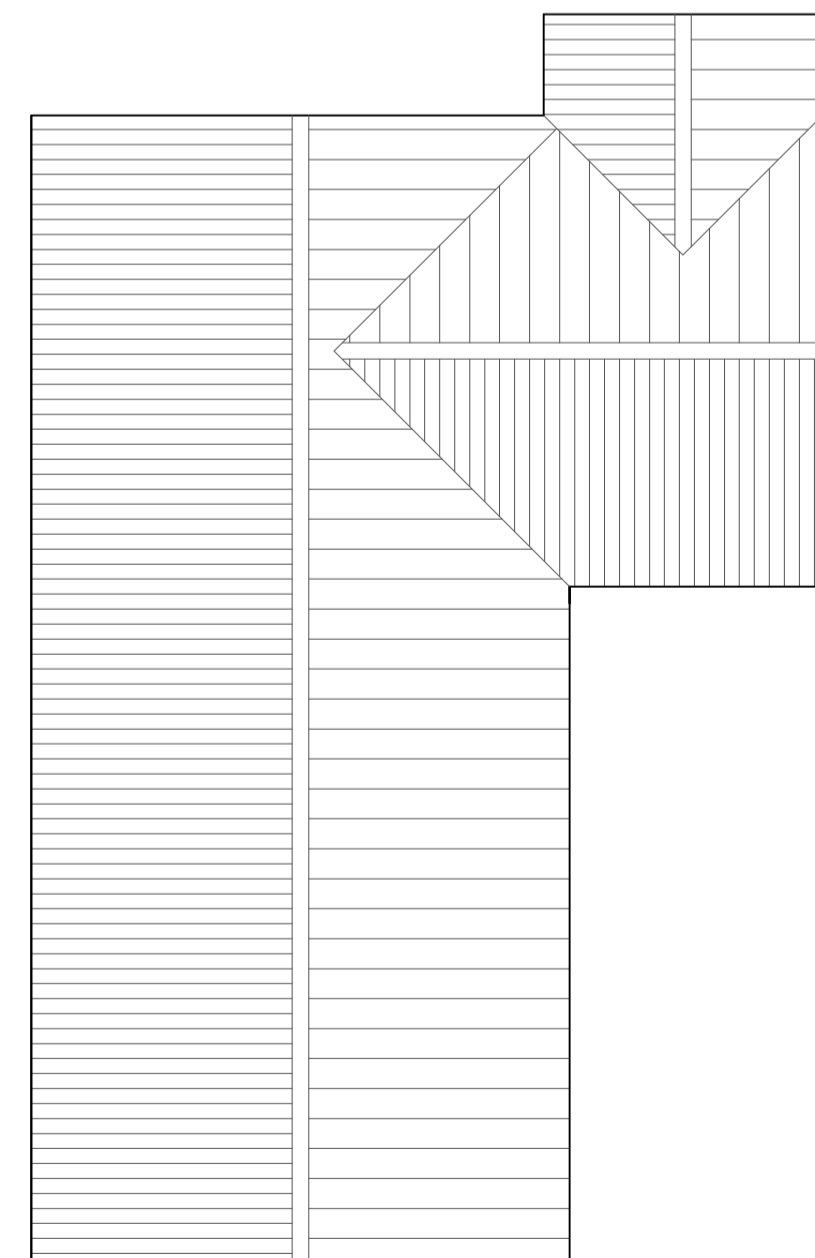
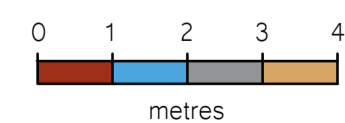
Side Elevation

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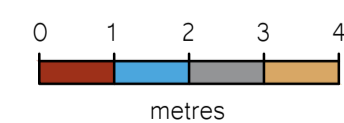
Ground Floor Plan

Scale: 1:100



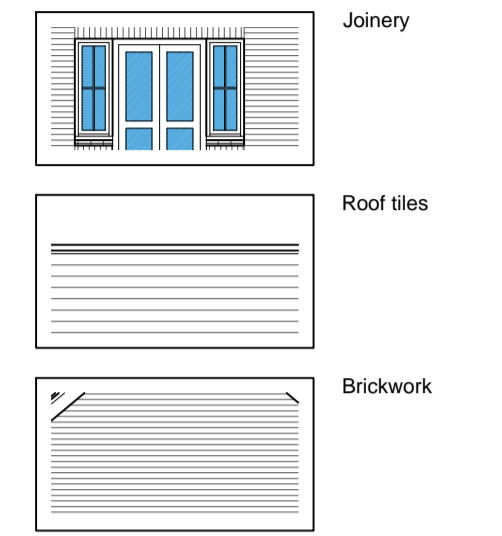
Roof Plan

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ELEVATION KEY



Revisions	
A	Oct 2018 Revised for planning
B	Dec 2018 Planning Amendments

Status
FOR APPROVAL

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Drawing Title Planning Drawing Plot 2 Floor Plans, Elevations & Section	Job No. SE-864 Dwg No. 22	Drawn by M.N. Revision B