Agenda Item	6.5
Report No	PLN/069/19

#### HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee

Date: 10 September 2019

19/00658/FUL and 19/00655/LBC: GEG Capital (North) Ltd

Report Title: Ambassador House, Earls Cross Road, Dornoch IV25 3NR

**Report By:** Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 **Description:** Demolition of former Earls Cross Cottage, erection of 12 detached

houses, remote paths connection to Earls Cross Road and formation of access road (full planning permission and Listed

Building Consent for demolition of Earls Cross Cottage)

1.2

**Ward:** 4 – East Sutherland and Edderton

**Development category:** Local

Reason referred to Committee: More than 5 objections.

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.

# 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to agree the recommendation to Grant planning permission as set out in section 11 of the report.

#### 3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application seeks consent for the demolition of Earl's Cross Cottage (a Listed Building) and the erection of 12 detached houses with associated infrastructure on land surrounding Ambassador House (a Category B Listed Building). Three different house types are proposed and are of largely traditional proportions being limited to 1.5 storeys in height with square gable ends with more contemporary features including projecting glazed gable frontages. The houses range from 2 to 4 bedrooms. These applications should also be considered in conjunction with the following applications which also relate to development of the grounds at Ambassador House 19/00657/FUL and 19/00654/LBC.
- 3.2 Members will recall these proposals were presented to the North Planning Applications Committee on a previous occasion in June 2018, with the applications approved subject to conclusion of a legal agreement. These revised planning applications seek to alter the access arrangements for the development, with vehicular traffic to now enter the site via Earl's Cross Gardens rather than through Earl's Cross Road. This change has arisen as the previously approved access arrangements proved to be problematic to implement.
- 3.3 No formal pre-application advice was sought prior to the submission of the applications however informal discussions took place between the applicant and the Roads Authority which were broadly supportive of the revised access arrangements in principle.
- The application is supported by a Planning Statement, Traffic Management Plan, Landscaping Proposals, Drainage Impact Assessment, Road Appraisal and Road Safety Review.
- Variations: The footpaths originally proposed as part of the access arrangements from Earls Cross Gardens have been removed from the proposals. Additional/amended drawings provided on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019 following Transport Planning comments and additional supporting information provided on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 (Road Appraisal and Road Safety Review) with updated supporting information submitted on 16th August 2019.

# 4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 The site is located to the north eastern edge of Dornoch in an elevated position with views towards Embo, Golspie and Dornoch beach and golf course. Ambassador House is located centrally within the site; this is a former school hostel of an Art's and Crafts design which is beginning to fall into disrepair. Topography across the site is varied generally sloping from east to west down towards Earl's Cross Gardens. The site is largely grass covered with areas of overgrown gorse. Agricultural land lies to the west and to the east is the Earl's Cross Gardens development of individually built detached houses. An area of hardstanding surround the listed building and associated caretaker's house – Earls Cross Cottage which it is proposed to demolish.

#### 5. PLANNING HISTORY 5.1 09/00362/LBCSU Conversion of Ambassador Permitted 03.11.2009 House to 9 apartments, demolition rear (Committee) extension (Listed Building Consent) 5.2 22.12.2013 09/00363/FULSU Conversion of Ambassador Permitted House to 9 apartments, demolition of rear (Committee) extension and demolition of Earls Cross Cottage. Erection of 11 detached houses, 4 flats and 2 semi-detached houses. Formation of new access road from Earls Cross Gardens 5.3 18.12.2018 17/02231/FUL - Conversion and alteration to Permitted form 9 apartments, demolition of existing flat (Committee) roofed extension, erection of 4 terraced houses and road improvements 17/02234/LBC - Conversion to 9 apartments, 5.4 18.12.2018 Permitted alterations to building and demolition of (Committee) extension, external fire stair and rear storage compound, erection of 4 terraced houses and road improvements 5.5 18.12.2018 17/02236/FUL - Demolition of former cottage Permitted and erection of 12 detached houses, formation (Committee) of new access road and remote paths and improvements 17/02239/LBC - Demolition of former cottage 5.6 18.12.2018 Permitted (Committee)

#### 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

6.1 Advertised: Unknown Neighbour

Date Advertised: 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (re-advertisement)

Representation deadline: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 and 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019

Timeous representations: 15

Late representations: 0

6.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

#### **Access Concerns:**

- The road from Dornoch Square is not suitable for the extra traffic especially construction traffic and is hazardous;
- Lack of traffic assessment
- Elizabeth Crescent/Earls Cross Gardens from an excessively long cul-desac – this further development would be contrary to the concepts of Designing Streets and other highway design publications;

- This development in addition to the allocated site at Bishopsfield would be unacceptable in terms of traffic flow on Elizabeth Crescent, Stafford Road and Grange Road
- Earls Cross Gardens is not adopted the new road therefore cannot be adopted as it would not form a continuous system with existing public roads which is Council policy in Roads and Transport Guidelines. As such public services cannot be provided;
- · Access should be via the Embo road

#### **Drainage:**

- Scottish Water have raised no objection in terms of capacity in the system to process sewage and supply water however the applicant has not assessed the suitability of the combined sewer which has experienced problems in the past;
- The 2017 applications proposed a new sewer this is not part of this current proposal;
- Details on drawing PL026 are wrong in terms of sewer location
- The paths in Earls cross Gardens are not suitable to accommodate pedestrians
- Visibility concerns the required splays cannot be met due to the presence of a hedge
- · Lack of footpath provision

# Impact on Amenity:

- The applications will have a substantial and damaging impact on the amenity of Earls Cross Gardens as a result of traffic generation
- Increased noise levels due to increased traffic
- Safety concerns due to increased traffic
- Inconvenience of construction phase

#### **Conversion of Ambassador House**

- No assessment has been carried out as to the suitability of this building to be converted i.e. structural information;
- This redevelopment should be substantially completed before work commences on new housing;

#### Layout, Sting and Design:

- House number 14 and 1 are incongruous and should form part of the grassy strip of land particularly since the core path is on the west side of house 1
- The development appears like as many houses as possible being crammed within the site without proper regard to an aesthetic vision of generous open space areas to compliment the dominating presence of Ambassador House;

#### Habitat

 It is assumed no clearance of gorse/broom will take place during bird nesting season due to the various varieties of bird that use the area as their habitat. Non-material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- Land ownership concerns in relation to servitude access rights
- The Deed of Servitude which permits access from Earls Cross Gardens does not include the right to lay a sewer connection;
- No justification for housing has been provided and there is already ample provision in the Local Plan.
- 6.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet <a href="https://www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam">www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam</a>.

#### 7. CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 **THC Development Plans:** No objections. Whilst the proposal is not within an allocated site in the adopted development plan, it is within the SDA which generally supports appropriate developments as long as they meet the requirements of all other applicable policies. The development will support the restoration of the B Listed Ambassador House which is on the Buildings at Ris register. There is a core path that follows the western and northern boundaries of the site and this should be safeguarded in line with Policy 77 of the HwLDP. The proposal broadly complies with the Development Plan and offers potential to support proposals to bring a building with importance to the historic environment back into use. Developer Contributions are required towards education provision (Dornoch Primary) and Community Facilities at a rate of £3612 per house and £2484 per flat totalling £79,107. 25% affordable housing should be provided on site as well as open space.
- 7.2 **THC Transport Planning: Objections resolved.** A total of 4 responses from Transport Panning have been received, reflective of ongoing discussion with the agent.

There are two previous sets of planning permissions for the site; 09/00363/FULSU (which proposed access from Earls Cross Gardens) and 17/02231/FUL – 17/02236/FUL (which proposed access from Earls Cross Road). The applicant has split the site into two but both applications share a common road (which is an extension to Earls Cross Gardens) to provide access and so this response is relevant to both current planning applications. The two applications are for a total of 25 units including 9 flats within the listed building of Ambassador House.

My understanding of the ongoing revisions to the access proposals differs from that given by the applicant in sections 2.19 to 2.21 of the design and access statement and is as follows;

• Planning permission was originally granted for 09/00363/FULSU which took access from Earls Cross Gardens. The advice to planners was given by the Local Roads Office at that time. In the intervening period both the Road Authority's structure and the Guidelines for New Developments changed. Transport Planning rather than the Local Roads Office now act as the consultee on roads and transport issues for planning applications.

- Following suitable consultation the Road Operations Manager for Caithness and Sutherland (ROM) confirmed to the applicant that Earls Cross Gardens would remain a private road as the majority of frontagers objected to the proposed adoption of the road by the Council.
- During ongoing discussions the planning officer advised the applicant that a formal submission for pre-application advice would be advisable in this instance due to the complexities of the case.
- The applicant's agents did not apply for formal pre-application advice but in isolation approached the ROM for informal advice on an alternative access via Earls Cross Road. The ROM indicated that this should be acceptable subject to certain restrictions and suitable upgrading of the route.
- Planning permission was granted to applications 17/02231/FUL and 17/02236/FUL which took access via Earls Cross Road subject to suitable upgrading of the road. This upgrading requires the developer to gain control of third party land.
- The developer has now submitted new applications reverting to the original proposals to gain access via Earls Cross Gardens.

#### Summary

On balance Transport Planning support the conclusions of the Road Appraisal that there will be no detrimental impact on the safety of the local road network due to the proposed development. Transport Planning also conclude that the temporary impact of the construction traffic can be safely managed by use of an agreed Traffic Management Plan during construction. Therefore Transport Planning have no objection to the granting of planning consent subject to the conditions and informatives requested.

# Road maintenance and refuse collection proposals

Road Construction Consent is required for this development, however, the road will not be adopted by the Council unless Earls Cross Gardens is also adopted. An informative making the applicant aware of these requirements and constraints is requested. The current applications take access as an extension to the existing Earl's Cross Gardens which was built with Road Construction Consent but remains a private road at the request of a majority of the current frontagers. In accordance with the Council's Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments section 3.3.2.1 roads will only be considered for adoption where they form a continuous system with existing public roads. Therefore the Council will not adopt this proposed extension to Earls Cross Gardens as a public road until such time as the requirements of section 16 of the Roads Scotland Act are met and a suitable condition will be placed on any related Road Construction Consent issued.

The developer has confirmed that the maintenance of the road in perpetuity will be undertaken by a factor as it will remain private (unless the requirements of section 16 of the Roads Scotland Act are met which is not within the control of the developer). A suitable suspensive planning condition (prior to occupation) relating to the factoring of the maintenance for the private road is requested. Detailed confirmation of the body which will act as the future road manager in perpetuity will be required before Road Construction Consent is granted.

Community Services refuse collection team caution that at present they are not aware of any private contractor undertaking household refuse collections in the whole of the Ross and Cromarty and South-East Sutherland area (although there are some private commercial collections). The householders on Earls Cross Gardens take their refuse down to the public road end for collection by the Council. This will not be acceptable for this development due to the number of additional bins required. Community Services have confirmed that the Council will not provide road side refuse collection on this proposed private road in accordance with current policy and practice. Section 2.5 of the updated Road Appraisal confirms that there are private refuse firms who will collect from the site (as opposed to the current arrangements for the existing private road where the residents take the bins to the public road end). A suspensive planning condition for the details of the private refuse collection for the properties to be submitted in writing and agreed by the Council prior to any occupation of the properties is requested. Related to this a condition requiring a factoring arrangement be set up to pay for the refuse collection arrangements for the private road is requested again this should be suspensive to be done prior to occupation (if the road was to be adopted the Council would then undertake roadside refuse collection).

# Footway proposals along the existing Earls Cross Gardens

Drawing 117951/101 Rev B now shows that the existing Earls Cross Gardens is proposed to remain as a shared use surface - as it is at present. No footway is to be constructed as the applicant does not have control of the land and the frontagers have indicated they would not give permission for any construction.

#### Clearance between carriageway and property boundaries

On drawing 117951/101 Rev B a minimum clearance of 0.5m between the edge of the carriageway and adjacent private boundaries is shown on the north side of proposed link between the proposed access road providing frontage access to the new housing and the existing private road at Earls Cross Gardens. A minimum service strip of width of 1.1m is shown on the South side increasing to 2m width at the existing turning head area. These distances are acceptable but are the minimum required. Any reduction would not be appropriate.

#### **Transport Statement and Road Safety concerns**

The Road Safety Review of the Access carried out by Road Safety Consultants Wyllie: Lodge concluded that the additional traffic generated by the development would not increase traffic to the level that would expose road users to an unmanageable or unacceptable risk (section 5.5). However a more rigorous test was requested by Transport Planning in this instance which was that there should be no net detriment to road safety (as set out in Transport Scotlands 'Transport Assessment Guidance').

Further information was therefore sought from the applicant and a revised Road Appraisal (Issue 2) was prepared by the Traffic and Transportation section of professional engineering firm Fairhurst to address the concerns raised by objectors and Transport Planning to the proposed development;

• The trip rate has been considered in section 4 of the Appraisal using the national database 'TRICS'. This predicted a total pm peak of 9 vehicular movements. Undertaking a coarse sensitivity test using estimated figures of 6 car trips per day with 10% of these during the peak hour gives a maximum of 15 movements in the peak hour; this remains a low level of traffic.

- Consideration is given in section 4.3 of the Appraisal to road safety and the collision history of the adjacent network. No road traffic collisions resulting in injury are recorded within a 5 year period. Two slight injury collisions are recorded within a 10 year period (on High Street and Shore Road); however, these are within the settlement centre (beyond the A949) and the traffic generated by this development will not be of significance on these routes.
- The impact of the increase in traffic from the development along the minor road network to the A949 on Road Safety is detailed in Section 4.3.5 which confirms that the proposed development will have no detrimental impact on the the local road network.
- Consideration is given in section 2.4 to the suitability of the proposed development access via Earls Cross Gardens. The visibility available within the private road boundary is confirmed as 2.4x19m; visibility is restricted by a hedge along the boundary of the adjacent property. This is less than the 25m visibility splay which is the stopping sight distance set out in 'Designing Streets' for a speed of 20mph. However Fairhurst assess the actual speed of vehicles approaching the proposed junction will be no more than 15mph. Transport Planning agree with this assessment based on the very short length of road extending beyond the junction to the north and the tightness of the bend (6m kerb radius) forming the proposed access. Designing Streets gives the required visibility for a speed of 15mph as 17m. This is available within the private road boundary. The Appraisal concludes that the proposed site access junction has appropriate geometry and suitable visibility for its location and the speed of vehicles approaching the junction (section 2.4.12). Transport Planning agree with this conclusion.
- Section 3.5 of the Road Safety Review considers the possibility of strengthening the gateway feature to the 'shared use' section of the existing Earls Cross Gardens. Section 2.3.7 of the Road Appraisal notes that minor alterations could be made. Transport Planning consider that alterations are required to improve the accessibility of the design and to strengthen the gateway into the 'shared use' section of Earls Cross Gardens and a suspensive condition for appropriate mitigation is requested below.

As appropriate mitigation for the increase in traffic on the existing shared use section of Earls Cross Gardens, Transport Planning request a suspensive condition that; prior to any development drawings showing the detailed design of a 20mph zone over the existing 'shared use' section of Earls Cross Gardens and including the new development road are submitted to the Council and approved in writing. This design shall include upgrading of the gateway feature to improve accessibility and provide suitable tactile paving warning pedestrians of the 'shared use' surface and shall increase the visibility of the transition into 'shared use' for motorised users. Thereafter, and a minimum of 12 months prior to occupation of any units, the developer shall formally request the Council to promote the required Traffic Order for the 20mph zone at the developer's expense. Prior to occupation of any of the development any works required to implement any approved Traffic Order over the existing length of Earls Cross Gardens shall be carried out in accordance with the Statutory Approval at the developer's expense.

The Road Appraisal demonstrates that the development traffic predicted to be generated is low and that the overall volume of traffic using Earls Cross Gardens would remain low if the development was constructed – this is accepted. However Transport Planning do not agree with the statements in the Appriasal Section 3

regarding the 'precedent set' by the shared use schemes quoted at North Kessock and Ness Castle. These serve a maximum of 27 units (this proposal is for 36) and it is considered that the road safety implications of the current proposals should be considered on their own merits – it is not considered that precedent is a useful concept in this case nor should this particular development be considered as setting a precedent.

Existing residents and objectors have raised concerns about the safety of a shared use design to serve a total of 36 units. The developer offered to construct a footway along the existing road and Transport Planning had no objection to this. However this proposal raised objections from some of the frontagers who had control of the land required and the footway cannot therefore be delivered by the developer. Considering the current proposal therefore;

- Although the number of units proposed will exceed the level of 20 units considered for a close or cul-de-sac it remains well below the level of 50 units which is the maximum given in the Council's Roads and Development Guidelines in table 4.1 for a minor residential road.
- The existing Earls Cross Gardens has been constructed as a purpose built 'shared use' road to current standards. The 5.5m shared carriageway width is sufficient to allow vehicles and pedestrians to safely negotiate each other. The design is suitable to restrict speeds to a level suitable for 'shared use'. Additional mitigation is to be conditioned to strengthen the traffic calming with a formal 20mph zone and an enhanced gateway.
- The road traffic collision record has been examined for the route and shows no existing history of incidents.
- The opinion of suitably experienced professional Traffic and Transport Engineers (Fairhurst) was sought by the applicant and they concluded the development would have no detrimental impact. A Review by the Road Safety Consultants Wyllie:Lodge raised no specific issues other than detailed design issues regarding the gateway into the existing shared use area. These can be addressed by condition (as requested).
- The scheme should be set in the context of the residential setting of Dornoch with a low level of road safety incidents. Planning permission was recently granted for the scheme to take access via the U3377 Earls Cross Road (17/00231/FUL and 17/00236/FUL). This approved design results in a shared use road serving 36 properties over an historic single track rural type road with improvements which give only a total width of 4m for pedestrians and vehicles to negotiate passage. In addition there is demand for on street parking along this route which serves a care home.

To conclude Transport Planning have no reason to challenge the findings of Fairhurst that the development will have no net detriment on the safety of the local road network and therefore accept that the 'shared use' road is appropriate in this instance to serve the proposed development of 25 units and the existing 11 units on Earls Cross Gardents.

#### **Road Layout and Earthwork Proposals**

Suitable longsections and cross sections have been provided to demonstrate the practicality of the earthwork design.

#### **Drainage Proposals**

Foul sewerage details will be required for RCC.

The submitted DIA dated 14/03/19 by Fairhurst shows a separate road drainage system which will be adopted and maintained by the Council which is acceptable. The level of treatment proposed for the road water is acceptable. Minor amendments will be required to details for Road Construction Consent for example;

 The swale cross section will require amendment to show a kerb upstand of 100mm and regular paved offlets; details of the maximum depth and width will require agreement.

Suitable testing has been submitted to demonstrate that infiltration is a viable solution. Further testing and adjustment of the infiltration values used will be required for Road Construction Consent as it is noted that the average value rather than the minimum has been used and only two tests rather than the three required by BRE digest 365 have been undertaken at many of the locations.

The Flood Risk Management Team are better placed to give advice on the flood storage proposed and have requested a suspensive condition which Transport Planning support and would request we are consulted regarding discharge of this condition. It is assumed the suds basin for the roads drainage only will be adopted by the Roads Authority and so amended plans and calculations will be required for Road Construction Consent to ensure that run off from the houses, flats and the courtyard area does not discharge into the road swale and roads suds basin. The applicant should note that the Council as Roads Authority will not adopt surface water systems which take both roads and curtilage drainage.

#### **Other Services**

Details of the proposed service routes for the statutory undertakers will be required at RCC. Concerns have been raised about the foul sewerage proposals but Transport Planning consider this would be best dealt with by the planning case officer.

#### **Parking Area Dimensions**

The dimensions of the parking court is shown on the layout plan 117951/101 Rev B. Although the dimensions of the driveways are not given it is clear that they provide the necessary parking allowance for the proposed dwellings (as per the Council's Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Development table 6.1). 20 shared spaces are required for the 9 flats and 4 houses and 22 spaces have been provided. There is provision for two accessible parking spaces. This is acceptable. A suitable suspensive condition similar to model condition TR08C is requested to provide and maintain the parking shown on plan 117951/101 Rev B.

## **Construction Phase Traffic Management Plan (Issue dated 04/09/18)**

Many of the objectors raise concerns about the impact of the larger vehicles required for construction of the scheme on the local road network.

The impact of the construction traffic from the development along the minor road network to the A949 on Road Safety has been assessed in section 5 of the Road Appraisal (Issue 2) which concludes that the local road network can safely accommodate construction traffic - as has been the case for the development of the existing Earl's Cross Gardens. Transport Planning accept this conclusion.

An outline Traffic Management Plan (TMP) has been provided. This gives little detail and a suspensive condition to provide a detailed Traffic Management Plan prior to commencement is requested. Minor improvements or traffic management proposals may be required at the tight bends and areas where there is undisciplined parking along the minor roads at present. The TMP shall detail the access route as far as the include any appropriate temporary traffic management requirements along the access route required and give details of the estimated quantity of materials required for the construction and the type and number of goods vehicle movements required together with an outline programme. A detailed photographic and/or video survey of the route undertaken by professional engineers with suitable annotation by them shall be submitted to the Council and agreed in writing prior to any work commencing. This condition survey shall be repeated at monthly intervals during construction (or other frequencies as agreed in writing with the Council) and submitted to and approved by the Council in writing. A final condition survey shall be undertaken within a month of completion of construction and submitted and agreed as above. For each of the surveys the Council shall be given a minimum of 5 working days notice to enable a joint inspection where appropriate. These surveys will enable the Council to establish if there has been extra-ordinary damage to the road due to the construction traffic and in this case the Council reserves the right to recover costs for repair of the damage under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. Model Informative TR04I is therefore requested to be included in any consent issued regarding damage to the public road.

- 7.2 **Historic Environment Team:** No objection. It is noted that while the cottage is listed it is unremarkable, not contemporary with the construction of the main listed building and of little architectural or historic value in its own right with the exception of a small number of internal doors. It is noted that the preference would be for the building to be retained however it is unlikely the demolition would result in an unacceptable loss to the architectural or historic significant of the sit, or diminish or significantly alter our understanding and appreciation of Ambassador House. The internal timber panel doors should be salvaged and retained and where possible re-used within the conversion of Ambassador House.
- 7.3 **Flood Risk Management Team:** No objections subject to the finalised surface water drainage designs being provided by condition.
- 7.4 **Forestry Officer:** There is scattered tree cover in the southern half of the site, with a more dense group of trees within a hollow to the north west corner of the site. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared which includes a Tree Protection Plan. A total of 13 trees have been identified for removal which are generally considered to be of low amenity value due to their size or condition. Two groups of trees have been identified; a dense group of mature trees within a hollow to the north west of the site and a more scattered group to the south west. Protection measures for the trees are detailed in the Tree Protection Plan, along with a schedule of supervision.

#### Landscaping

There is limited tree planting, most of which is concentrated around the car parking to the back of Ambassador House. The grounds to the east of Ambassador House previously contained a number of mature specimen trees but

these were felled a number of years ago. I would therefore wish to see some additional specimen tree planting to the front elevation of the main house to restore this feature, while maintaining the principle views. I would suggest a line of beech trees along the south side of the access road and a mixed group of trees on the lower ground in the south east corner of the site. In addition to the 5 year maintenance schedule, details of a factoring arrangement are requested. This must include a plan clearly defining the communal areas covered by the factoring arrangement. Beech hedging forms a large part of the landscape proposals and will be a key feature within the development. The majority of hedging is in the front gardens bordering the access road. In order to secure consistent management, it is essential that all hedging is contained within the communal areas and maintained under the factoring arrangement.

#### 8. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

# 8.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 28 Sustainable Design
- 29 Design Quality and Place-making
- 30 Physical Constraints
- 31 Developer Contributions
- 32 Affordable Housing
- 34 Settlement Development Areas
- 42 Previously Used Land
- 56 Travel
- 57 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
- 58 Protected Species
- 59 Other important Species
- 60 Other Importance Habitats
- 63 Water Environment
- 65 Waste Water Treatment
- 66 Surface Water Drainage
- 75 Open Space

# 8.2 Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan 2018

Within Dornoch Settlement Development Area

#### 8.5 Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

Access to Single Houses and Small Housing Developments (May 2011) Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)

Developer Contributions (November 2018)

Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)

Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)

Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)

Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)

Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

#### 9. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

#### 9.1 Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Scottish Planning Policy (June, 2014):

Paras 135-142 – Valuing the Historic Environment

Paras 109-122 – Enabling Delivery of New Homes

Paras 270-291 – A Connected Place

Designing Streets Policy Statement (2010)

#### 10. PLANNING APPRAISAL

10.1 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.

Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 requires the Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

# **Determining Issues**

This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

# **Planning Considerations**

- 10.3 The key considerations in this case are:
  - a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
  - b) any other material considerations.

#### **Planning History**

10.4 As noted in Section 5, there is planning history for re-development of the site dating back to 2009 with further permissions most recently issued last year. The original proposals concerned the conversion of Ambassador House to 9 apartments and the erection of an additional 4 flats, 2 semi detached houses and 11 detached properties totalling 26 residential units on the wider site. The 2017 applications amended the number of proposed units and concerned the conversion of Ambassador House and erection of 12 detached units and 4 terraced houses within the wider site. The main change between this proposal and the development approved last year relates to the proposed access arrangement. It is now proposed to access the site from Earls Cross Gardens to the east, which is a double track road which has been constructed under a Road Construction Consent. This reverts back to the access arrangements approved as part of the 2009 applications. This planning history is a material consideration in the determination of these revised applications however assessment against the updated policy position is required. In particular the application has been subject to detailed discussions between the developer and Transport Planning which has led to delays in the determinations of the applications. Although the revised access arrangements have been considered acceptable in principle throughout it has been important to ensure the detailed design is not only acceptable but able to be implemented fully within land which is within control of the applicant. As such, following initial comments from Transport Planning, amended plans were required to address initial deficiencies with the submitted information, as well as supporting information in the form of a Road Safety Review.

#### **Development Plan Policy**

- The site lies within the Dornoch Settlement Development Area in the adopted Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan however is not allocated for any specific uses. Therefore the proposal requires to be assessed primarily against the general policies of the Highland-wide Local Development and associated Supplementary Guidance. Since the previous applications were determined, the Council has adopted new Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance.
- As a site within the SDA, policy 34 is the key determining policy in the assessment of the proposals. This outlines a broad supportive approach to development subject to an assessment against detailed criteria which are also echoed within other general policies of the Plan. This includes compatibility with adjoining land uses and the site's ability to be serviced in terms of access and drainage. These matters are considered in the following sections. Key to the assessment of these applications in particular is the amended access arrangements.

#### Siting and Design including demolition of cottage

- 10.7 As with the previously approved applications, the development proposes the erection of 12 detached houses located in a U-shaped layout surrounding Ambassador House with plot sizes varying from 597sqm to 1456sqm. The design of the 12 houses remains unaltered from the previously approved applications and in fact remains unaltered since the original 2009 permissions. The three proposed houses types are largely of traditional style being limited to 1.5 storeys in height with largely square gable end. Features include chimneys, dormer windows and lean-to porches with more contemporary additions such as projecting glazed gable frontages. The design of the houses has been previously assessed as being acceptable and this remains of the case. The submitted Design Statement notes that slate will be used on the roofs and this is secured by condition given the proximity to the Listed Ambassador House.
- 10.8 Communal areas of open space are to be provided around Ambassador House which will be landscaped with provision of tree planting. Communal parking areas are also to be integrated into the development though landscape screen planting.
- The application also includes the demolition of Earl's Cross Cottage which is the former care takers house for the former school hostel. It is not considered that the building is an original building associated with Ambassador House; it was likely built as an annexe to the building when its use changed to a school hostel. The building is considered to be of low and unremarkable historical architectural value

and its demolition is not considered to result in an unacceptable loss to the architectural or historic significance of the site, or diminish or significantly alter our understanding and appreciation of Ambassador House

#### **Access**

- 10.10 The proposed access arrangements have proved problematic to fully resolve and implement since the 2009 applications which proposed to take access from Earls Cross Gardens. This is an unadopted road but constructed to a double width and fully surfaced standard, with an existing turning head which could be continued to allow access into the Ambassador House site. These arrangements did not progress as, at the time, it was considered that it would require Earls Cross Gardens to be adopted – something which its residents do not give their consent to as indicated in the objections received to the current applications. As such, the 2017 applications proposed revised access arrangements via Earls Cross Road; an existing single track into the site from its south western boundary. It is rural in nature and constrained in that it cannot be fully widened however a number of improvement measures were proposed including installation of passing places and a pedestrian priority strip. Permission was granted subject to a condition requiring the developer to provide evidence that it was able to implement these proposed improvements - the developer has been unable to comply with this condition due to lack of control over some of the land over which to undertake the identified measures. As such, these applications now seek to revert back to the original proposal of access via Earl's Cross Gardens following discussions with Transport Planning which have confirmed that Earl's cross Gardens itself does not have to be adopted to allow the developer long term access to the Ambassador House site. The developer has a legal right of access over Earl's Cross Gardens and the proposed access, along with Earl's Cross Gardens, will both be privately owned and will not be adopted by the Council unless the majority of home owners with frontages onto the road agree to it being adopted. In principle, Transport Planning are supportive of access being taken via Earls Cross Gardens and a sufficient level of information has now been submitted to allow a full assessment of the proposal to be made.
- 10.11 A Safety Review of the Access has been submitted in support of the application which assesses road safety implications of the proposed route to the site. This concluded that the additional traffic generated by the development would not increase traffic to the level that would expose road users to an unmanageable or unacceptable risk. However a more rigorous test was requested by Transport Planning in this instance which was that there should be no net detriment to road safety (as set out in Transport Scotlands 'Transport Assessment Guidance'). Further information was therefore sought from the applicant and a revised Road Appraisal was prepared to address the concerns raised by objectors and Transport Planning to the proposed development;
  - The trip rate has been considered; this predicted a total pm peak of 9 vehicular movements. Undertaking a coarse sensitivity test using estimated figures of 6 car trips per day with 10% of these during the peak hour gives a maximum of 15 movements in the peak hour; this remains a low level of traffic.

- Consideration is given to road safety and the collision history of the adjacent network. No road traffic collisions resulting in injury are recorded within a 5 year period. Two slight injury collisions are recorded within a 10 year period (on High Street and Shore Road); however, these are within the settlement centre (beyond the A949) and the traffic generated by this development will not be of significance on these routes.
- The impact of the increase in traffic from the development along the minor road network to the A949 confirms that the proposed development will have no detrimental impact on the local road network.
- Consideration is given to the suitability of the proposed development access via Earls Cross Gardens. The visibility available within the private road boundary is confirmed as 2.4x19m; visibility is restricted by a hedge along the boundary of the adjacent property. This is less than the 25m visibility splay which is the stopping sight distance set out in 'Designing Streets' for a speed of 20mph. However the assessment of actual speed of vehicles approaching the proposed junction will be no more than 15mph. Transport Planning agree with this assessment based on the very short length of road extending beyond the junction to the north and the tightness of the bend forming the proposed access. Designing Streets gives the required visibility for a speed of 15mph as 17m. This is available within the private road boundary. The Appraisal concludes that the proposed site access junction has appropriate geometry and suitable visibility for its location and the speed of vehicles approaching the junction. Transport Planning agree with this conclusion.
- The Road Safety Review considers the possibility of strengthening the gateway feature to the 'shared use' section of the existing Earls Cross Gardens. Section 2.3.7 of the Road Appraisal notes that minor alterations could be made. Transport Planning consider that alterations are required to improve the accessibility of the design and to strengthen the gateway into the 'shared use' section of Earls Cross Gardens and a suspensive condition for appropriate mitigation is added.
- 10.12 The proposals as initially submitted included a footway along the west side of Earls Cross Gardens into the site to connect the new road with the footway at the start of Earls Cross Gardens near Elizabeth Crescent. During processing of the applications when this was queried by the Planning Authority, it became evident that the developer does not have the necessary legal rights to provide this. As such, this matter is also considered in the Road Safety Review which outlines that such a footpath is not considered necessary or essential in terms of safety this is due to the width of the road which totals 5.5m. This is sufficient to allow a car and service vehicles to pass (this requires 4.8m) and should there be an occasion where there are two vehicles passing each other at the same time at the same location as pedestrians there is ample forward sightline for drivers to take the appropriate action to avoid any possible conflict.
- 10.13 As appropriate mitigation for the increase in traffic on the existing shared use section of Earls Cross Gardens, Transport Planning request a suspensive condition that; prior to any development drawings showing the detailed design of a 20mph zone over the existing 'shared use' section of Earls Cross Gardens and including the new development road are submitted to the Council and approved in writing. This design shall include upgrading of the gateway feature to improve

accessibility and provide suitable tactile paving warning pedestrians of the 'shared use' surface and shall increase the visibility of the transition into 'shared use' for motorised users. Thereafter, and a minimum of 12 months prior to occupation of any units, the developer shall formally request the Council to promote the required Traffic Order for the 20mph zone at the developer's expense. Prior to occupation of any of the development any works required to implement any approved Traffic Order over the existing length of Earls Cross Gardens shall be carried out in accordance with the Statutory Approval at the developer's expense.

- 10.14 The Road Appraisal demonstrates that the development traffic predicted to be generated is low and that the overall volume of traffic using Earls Cross Gardens would remain low if the development was constructed this is accepted.
- 10.15 Existing residents and objectors have raised concerns about the safety of a shared use design to serve a total of 36 units. Although the number of units proposed will exceed the level of 20 units considered for a close or cul-de-sac it remains well below the level of 50 units which is the maximum given in the Council's Roads and Development Guidelines in table 4.1 for a minor residential road. The existing Earls Cross Gardens has been constructed as a purpose built 'shared use' road to current standards. The 5.5m shared carriageway width is sufficient to allow vehicles and pedestrians to safely negotiate each other. The design is suitable to restrict speeds to a level suitable for 'shared use'. Additional mitigation is to be conditioned to strengthen the traffic calming with a formal 20mph zone and an enhanced gateway. In addition:
  - The road traffic collision record has been examined for the route and shows no existing history of incidents.
  - The opinion of suitably experienced professional Traffic and Transport Engineers was sought by the applicant and they concluded the development would have no detrimental impact. A Review by the Road Safety Consultants raised no specific issues other than detailed design issues regarding the gateway into the existing shared use area. These can be addressed by condition.
  - The scheme should be set in the context of the residential setting of Dornoch with a low level of road safety incidents. Planning permission was recently granted for the scheme to take access via the U3377 Earls Cross Road (17/00231/FUL and 17/00236/FUL). This approved design results in a shared use road serving 36 properties over an historic single track rural type road with improvements which give only a total width of 4m for pedestrians and vehicles to negotiate passage. In addition there is demand for on street parking along this route which serves a care home.

#### **Construction Traffic**

10.16 Many of the objectors raise concerns about the impact of the larger vehicles required for construction of the scheme on the local road network. The impact of the construction traffic from the development along the minor road network to the A949 on Road Safety has been assessed in the Road Appraisal which concludes that the local road network can safely accommodate construction traffic - as has been the case for the development of the existing Earl's Cross Gardens. Transport Planning accept this conclusion.

- 10.17 An outline Traffic Management Plan (TMP) has been provided. This gives nominal detail and a suspensive condition is therefore included to provide a detailed Traffic Management Plan prior to commencement of development. Minor improvements or traffic management proposals may be required at the tight bends and areas where there is undisciplined parking along the minor roads at present. The TMP shall detail the access route including any appropriate temporary traffic management requirements along the access route required and give details of the estimated quantity of materials required for the construction and the type and number of goods vehicle movements required together with an outline programme. A detailed photographic and/or video survey of the route undertaken by professional engineers with suitable annotation by them shall be submitted to the Council and agreed in writing prior to any work commencing. This condition survey shall be repeated at monthly intervals during construction with a final condition survey to be undertaken within a month of completion of construction. These surveys will enable the Council to establish if there has been extra-ordinary damage to the road due to the construction traffic and in this case the Council reserves the right to recover costs for repair of the damage under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.
- 10.18 Overall, whilst the full detail of the proposed access arrangements has taken time to fully resolve with Transport Planning, it is considered that the revised proposals present a preferable option in road safety terms as well as being deliverable by the developer with finalised details sought by suspensive condition where required.

#### **Road Maintenance and Refuse Collection**

- 10.19 Road Construction Consent is required for this development; however, the road will not be adopted by the Council unless Earls Cross Gardens is also adopted. The current applications take access as an extension to the existing Earl's Cross Gardens which was built with Road Construction Consent but remains a private road at the request of a majority of the current frontagers. In accordance with the Council's Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments roads will only be considered for adoption where they form a continuous system with existing public roads. Therefore the Council will not adopt this proposed extension to Earls Cross Gardens as a public road until such time as the requirements of the Roads Scotland Act are met.
- 10.20 The developer has confirmed that the maintenance of the road in perpetuity will be undertaken by a factor as it will remain private (unless the requirements of section 16 of the Roads Scotland Act detailed above are met noting that this is not within the control of the developer). A suspensive planning condition relating to the factoring of the maintenance for the private road is therefore attached. This matter will also be confirmed as part of the Road Construction Consent also.
- 10.21 The Road Appraisal confirms that there are private refuse firms who will collect from the site (as opposed to the current arrangements for the existing private road where the residents take the bins to the public road end). A suspensive planning condition for the details of the private refuse collection for the properties to be submitted in writing and agreed by the Council prior to any occupation of the properties is requested. Related to this a condition requiring a factoring arrangement be set up to pay for the refuse collection arrangements for the

private road is requested – again this should be suspensive to be done prior to occupation (if the road was to be adopted the Council would then undertake roadside refuse collection).

# **Parking**

The dimensions of the parking court is shown on the layout plan 117951/101 Rev B. Although the dimensions of the driveways are not given it is clear that they provide the necessary parking allowance for the proposed dwellings (as per the Council's Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Development). 20 shared spaces are required for the 9 flats and 4 houses and 22 spaces have been provided. There is provision for two accessible parking spaces. This is acceptable. A condition is attached to ensure parking is provided and maintained in accordance with these submitted details to provide and maintain the parking shown on plan 117951/101 Rev B.

# **Drainage**

- 10.23 A revised Drainage Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application This outlines that new sewers will be laid within the site to collect the foul water from the proposed development; these will connect into the existing Scottish Water sewer on Earls Cross Gardens. Concerns have been noted in objections about the suitability of this existing sewer however Scottish Water have confirmed there is sufficient capacity within the existing system to accommodate the proposed development. This process is subject to Scottish Water's consenting regime and capacity can only be confirmed at that time. Any upgrades that may be required to Scottish Water infrastructure as a result of the development will be a matter for the developer to progress through discussion with Scottish Water however on the basis of the information currently available it is considered that the proposal can be adequately serviced.
- 10.24 A number of measures are proposed to deal with surface water. At the junction to the development the adoptable roads water will be collected via traditional gullies and passed into an infiltration basin. The remainder of the site will have a flush channel kerb with over the edge drainage into a shallow swale and infiltration trench. To reduce flows into the existing combined sewer the roof water from Ambassador House will discharge into an infiltration trench within garden grounds. The roads water from the private car parking areas will flow to permeable paving parking bays to attenuate and discharge to ground.

# **Landscaping and Trees**

In the first instance it is noted that the revised access arrangement prevents the need for any impact on the well established trees and hedges alongside Earls cross Road, as was previously proposed, therefore this is welcomed. The applications now propose the removal of 13 trees which are generally considered to be of low amenity value to their size of condition therefore this is acceptable. The Forestry Officer notes that there is limited tree planting proposed to replace mature specimen trees felled within the last few years and therefore requests additional planting to restore this feature. It is suggested that mature specimen trees could be planted along the south side of the access road and on lower

ground in the south east of the site; this would allow seaward views from Ambassador House to be maintained. A revised Landscaping Plan is therefore sought by condition.

10.26 A condition also been added to secure details of the proposed factoring arrangement with regards landscaping. This ensures maintenance of communal areas will be the responsibility of a factoring company. For the avoidance of doubt the condition requests that the proposed beech hedging which is intended to be a key feature within the development will also be within the remit of the factoring company.

#### **Protected Species**

- The submitted Bat Survey shows that, as with the previous applications, there are bat roost sites within Earl's Cross Cottage. As such the Planning Authority must be satisfied that a licence can be issued by Scottish Natural Heritage under Regulation 44(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats and c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended). This requires an assessment of three licensing tests:
  - Test 1 The licence application must demonstrably relate to one of the purposes specified in Regulation 44(2). In this case, the relevant purpose is likely to be for the 'purpose of preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'
  - Test 2 Regulation 44(3)(a) states that a licence may not be granted unless the Scottish Government is satisfied that 'there is no satisfactory alternative'. The alternative to not undertaking the development and obtaining a bat licence could result in the complete loss of a protected building, and habitat for bats. Mitigation measures are in place in order to maintain the population which currently reside at the site outlined in Test 3 below.
  - Test 3 Regulation 44(3)(b) states that the Scottish Government cannot issue a licence unless it is satisfied that the action proposed 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range'. Mitigation measures identified in the bat survey will be controlled by condition which will provide new roosting opportunities for any bats utilising the building, as such the population should be maintained. These measures include the siting of bat boxes, timing of works and hand stripping of the buildings.

#### **Developer Contributions**

10.28 The affordable housing element to be met through commuted sum payments as agreed with the pervious applications. This, and the remainder of the required contributions, will be secured via Section 75 Agreement.

#### Matters to be secured by Section 75 Agreement

- 10.29 A Section 75 Agreement is required in order to secure:
  - A commuted sum towards affordable housing provision

- Developer Contributions are required towards education provision (Dornoch Primary) and Community Facilities at a rate of £3612 per house and £2484 per flat totalling £79,107.
- 10.30 The applicant has four months from the date that the Council's solicitor writes to the Applicant/Applicant's solicitor indicating the terms of the legal agreement, to deliver to the Council a signed legal agreement. Should an agreement not be delivered within four months, the application shall be refused under delegated powers.

#### 11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 As noted throughout this report, the site has established planning history dating back a considerable number of years including extant planning permissions issued in 2018. These revised proposals relate to an alternation in the proposed access arrangements. On the whole, the revised access through Earls Cross Gardens presents a more preferable solution in road safety terms through the use of an existing access constructed to an approved Road Construction Consent standard. In addition, it has now been satisfactorily demonstrated that these revised arrangements, including provision of servicing, is within the control of the applicant to deliver.
- 11.2 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.

#### 12. INTELICOATIONIS

- 12.1 Resource Notappidiable
- 12.2 Leggal Niol bappidia a lege
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- 12.6 Gaeledic Notappidia elele

#### 13. RECOMMENDATION

Action	required	before	decision	Υ
issued				

Notification to Scottish Ministers N

Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation Y To secure developer

contributions

Revocation of previous permission N

**Subject to the above**, it is recommended that planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the following:

#### **Conditions and Reasons**

1. No development shall commence until full details of proposed surface water drainage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Such details shall include a detailed layout of the proposed Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) basin alongside details of proposed maintenance. Thereafter, only the approved details shall be implemented and all surface water drainage provision, as it relates to, or is relied upon by, an individual phase, shall be completed prior to the first occupation of any of the development within that phase.

**Reason**: To ensure that surface water drainage is provided timeously and complies with the principles of SUDS; in order to protect the water environment.

No development shall commence until full details of a factoring arrangement covering maintenance of the private road have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the factoring arrangement shall be implemented as approved and shall remain in place until or if such a time as the road becomes adopted by Highland Council.

**Reason**: As it is intended for the access road to remain private rather than being adopted by Highland Council.

3. No development shall commence until full details of proposed private refuse collection have been submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall progress in accordance with the approved details with the private refuse collection made available in occupation of the houses/flats hereby approved.

**Reason**: To ensure refuse collection can be adequately provided for the approved development.

4. No development shall commence until full details of the design and promotion of a 20mph zone along Earls Cross Gardens from the traffic calming build out close to the existing junction with Elizabeth Crescent to the end of the proposed new road have been submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The design shall include upgrading of the gateway / build out feature to improve accessibility and provide suitable tactile paving warning pedestrians of the 'shared use' surface and shall increase the visibility of the transition into 'shared use' for motorised users. Thereafter, and a minimum of 12 months prior to occupation of any units, the developer shall formally request the Council to promote the required Traffic Order for the 20mph zone at the developer's expense. Prior to occupation of any of the development any works required to implement any approved Traffic Order over the existing length of Earls Cross Gardens shall be carried out in accordance with the Statutory Approval at the developer's expense.

**Reason**: In the interests of road safety, and that the works involved comply with applicable standards.

No development shall commence on site until a construction phase Traffic Management Plan (including a routing plan for construction vehicles) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The approved traffic management plan shall be implemented prior to development commencing and remain in place until the development is complete. For the avoidance of doubt, the TMP shall detail the access route as far as the site and include any appropriate temporary traffic management requirements along the access route required and give details of the estimated quantity of materials required for the construction and the type and number of goods vehicle movements required together with an outline programme. A detailed photographic and/or video survey of the route undertaken by professional engineers with suitable annotation by them shall be submitted to the Council and agreed in writing prior to any work commencing. This condition survey shall be repeated at monthly intervals during construction (or other frequencies as agreed in writing with the Council) and submitted to and approved by the Council in writing. A final condition survey shall be undertaken within a month of completion of construction and submitted and agreed as above. For each of the surveys the Council shall be given a minimum of 5 working days notice to enable a joint inspection where appropriate. These surveys will enable the Council to establish if there has been extra-ordinary damage to the road due to the construction traffic and in this case the Council reserves the right to recover costs for repair of the damage under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. Construction traffic shall not use Earls Cross Road since this road is only single track and is not of a suitable construction to support the traffic generated (use of this route risks extra-ordinary damage to the road and high repair / reconstruction costs for the developer). This requirement shall be clearly stated in the Traffic Management Plan and appropriate measures to ensure compliance with this restriction shall be included in the TMP.

5.

**Reason**: In order to ensure that the development does not have a significantly detrimental impact on the local road network in the interest of road safety.

6. No development shall commence until full details of all street lighting have including a plan of the location and specification for lighting has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority and Area Lighting Engineer.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that the development is adequately serviced in the interest of safety and to comply with the applicable standards

7. No development or work (including site clearance) shall commence until a programme of work for the evaluation, preservation and recording of any archaeological and historic features affected by the proposed development/work, including a timetable for investigation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The approved programme shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed timetable for investigation.

**Reason:** In order to protect the archaeological and historic interest of the site.

8. No development shall commence until a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement has been submitted and subsequently approved in writing by the planning authority, in accordance with BS5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction). This information must be prepared and supervised by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant, approved by the

planning authority. Stages requiring supervision are to be agreed with the planning authority and certificates of compliance for each stage are to be submitted for approval. No development shall commence until a work instruction has been issued to the arboricultural consultant to enable them to undertake the necessary supervision unhindered for the duration of the project.

Reason: To secure tree protection measures around Ambassador House.

9. No development including any demolition shall commence until a planned works timetable has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage. For the avoidance of doubt no works shall take place between April to September inclusive (or as may be amended by the required Scottish Natural Heritage 'Works Affecting Bats' Licence).

**Reason:** In order to ensure disturbance to bats which are a European Protected Species is minimised.

10. No development shall commence until details of the location and design of bat roosting boxes or details of provision, including a timescale for provision, of an alternative roosting site shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority, in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage. Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with these approved details. For the avoidance of doubt the bat roosting boxes or any alternative provision, duly approved to provide an alternative roosting site shall be provided before any other development commences on site.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that the boxes are suitable for their proposed use and appropriately located within the development site in order to ensure that there is no loss of habitat for bats which are a European Protected Species.

11. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, the car parking and access arrangements detailed on approved plan ref. 117951/101 Rev B shall be completed in full and made available for use. Thereafter, all car parking spaces shall be maintained for this use in perpetuity.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that the level of off-street parking is adequate.

12. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the maintenance in perpetuity of all on-site green spaces and/or woodland features or parts of the development that are not the exclusive property of any identifiable individual house owner such as communal parking areas, landscaping within the adopted carriageway, the common entrances to flatted developments and estate lighting, and those elements of surface water drainage regimes not maintained either by the Highland Council or Scottish Water shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The agreed scheme, which shall accord with the Highland Council's adopted standards, contained within 'Open Space in Residential Development', Roads and Transportation Guidelines and the provisions of the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011, shall be implemented thereafter to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

**Reason**: In the interests of amenity and to ensure that open space and recreational facilities are maintained in accordance with the Council's standards.

#### **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.

#### TIME LIMIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLANNING PERMISSION

In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the development to which this planning permission relates must commence within THREE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period, then this planning permission shall lapse.

#### **FOOTNOTE TO APPLICANT**

# **Initiation and Completion Notices**

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires all developers to submit notices to the Planning Authority prior to, and upon completion of, development. These are in addition to any other similar requirements (such as Building Warrant completion notices) and failure to comply represents a breach of planning control and may result in formal enforcement action.

- 1. The developer must submit a Notice of Initiation of Development in accordance with Section 27A of the Act to the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
- On completion of the development, the developer must submit a Notice of Completion in accordance with Section 27B of the Act to the Planning Authority.

Copies of the notices referred to are attached to this decision notice for your convenience.

#### **Accordance with Approved Plans and Conditions**

You are advised that development must progress in accordance with the plans approved under, and any conditions attached to, this permission. You must not deviate from this permission without consent from the Planning Authority (irrespective of any changes that may separately be requested at the Building Warrant stage or by any other Statutory Authority). Any pre-conditions (those requiring certain works, submissions etc. prior to commencement of development) must be fulfilled prior to work starting on site. Failure to adhere to this permission and meet the requirements of all conditions may invalidate your permission or result in formal enforcement action

#### Flood Risk

It is important to note that the granting of planning permission does not imply there is an unconditional absence of flood risk relating to (or emanating from) the application site. As per Scottish Planning Policy (paragraph 259), planning permission does not remove the liability position of developers or owners in relation to flood risk.

#### **Scottish Water**

You are advised that a supply and connection to Scottish Water infrastructure is dependent on sufficient spare capacity at the time of the application for connection to Scottish Water. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee a connection. Any enquiries with regards to sewerage connection and/or water supply should be directed to Scottish Water on 0845 601 8855.

#### **Roads Informative**

The Roads Authority advise that a road is required to provide access to this development. Road Construction Consent in accordance with section 21 of the Roads Scotland Act is therefore required from the Council prior to any construction of the road or dwellings. However the new road will not be adopted by the Council unless it is contiguous with the existing adopted road network. A condition reflecting this constraint will be placed on any Road Construction Consent issued.

# Damage to the Public Road

Please note that the Council, under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, reserves the right to recover all costs for repairing any damage to the public road (and/or pavement) which can be attributed to construction works for this development.

#### **Local Roads Authority Consent**

In addition to planning permission, you may require one or more separate consents (such as road construction consent, dropped kerb consent, a road openings permit, occupation of the road permit etc.) from the Area Roads Team prior to work commencing. These consents may require additional work and/or introduce additional specifications and you are therefore advised to contact your local Area Roads office for further guidance at the earliest opportunity.

Failure to comply with access, parking and drainage infrastructure requirements may endanger road users, affect the safety and free-flow of traffic and is likely to result in enforcement action being taken against you under both the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Further information on the Council's roads standards can be found at: <a href="http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport">http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport</a>

Application forms and guidance notes for access-related consents can be downloaded from:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads and pavements/101/permits for w orking on public roads/2

#### Mud and Debris on Road

Please note that it an offence under Section 95 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to allow mud or any other material to be deposited, and thereafter remain, on a public road from any vehicle or development site. You must, therefore, put in place a strategy for dealing with any material deposited on the public road network and maintain this until development is complete.

Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities: You are advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on

Saturdays or at any time on a Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

#### **Protected Species – Halting of Work**

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and Scottish Natural Heritage must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from SNH: <a href="www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species">www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species</a>

**Subject to the above,** it is recommended that Listed Building Consent 19/00655/LBC be **GRANTED**, subject to the following:

#### **Conditions and Reasons**

1. No work shall commence until further detail on the retention of timber panel doors within Earls Cross Cottage, and their re-use within Ambassador House have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt this shall include photographs of the condition of existing timber panel doors and a Floor Plan of the proposed re-siting of the doors within the main Ambassador House Listed Building.

Reason: In order to retain and/or protect important elements of the existing character and amenity of the site.

2. No development including any demolition shall commence until a planned works timetable has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage. For the avoidance of doubt no works shall take place between April to September inclusive (or as may be amended by the required Scottish Natural Heritage 'Works Affecting Bats' Licence).

Reason: In order to ensure disturbance to bats which are a European Protected Species is minimised.

# **IMPORTANT INFORMATIVES**

Please read the following informatives and, where necessary, act upon the requirements specified:

# TIME LIMIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

In accordance with Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), the works to which this listed building consent relates must commence within THREE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If work has not commenced within this period, then this listed building consent shall lapse.

#### **Listed Buildings**

Both planning permission and listed building consent are required for these works. You are not authorised to commence development until you have both consents in place. Furthermore, both consents and their respective conditions must be read, and complied with, in tandem.

# **Protected Species - Halting of Work**

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and Scottish Natural Heritage must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected

species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from SNH: www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species

#### **Building Regulations**

Please note that Building Regulations and/or a Building Warrant may be applicable to some or all of the works described in this decision notice. You must check with the Council's Building Standards service prior to work commencing to establish what compliance or approval is necessary. If a warrant is required, you must not commence work until one has been applied for and issued. For more information, please contact Building Standards at Building.Standards@highland.gov.uk or on 01349 886608.

# Land Ownership/Planning Permission

For the avoidance of doubt, the existence of planning permission does not affect or supersede an individual's ownership or other legal rights. Please be advised that this permission does not entitle you to build on, under or over ground outwith your ownership or to enter private ground to demolish, construct or maintain your property.

# **Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities**

You are advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays or at any time on a Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Designation: Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

Author: Gillian Pearson

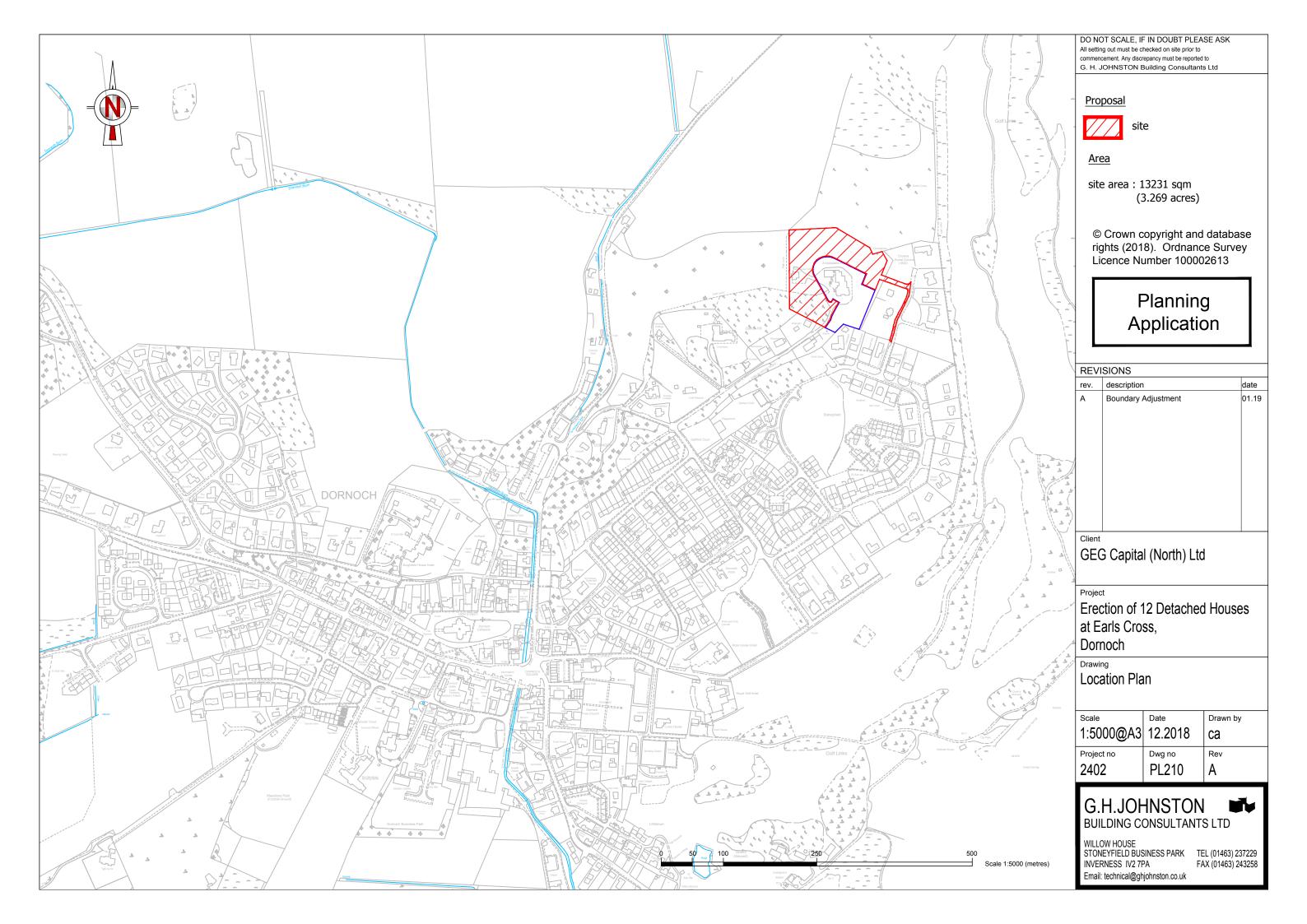
Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

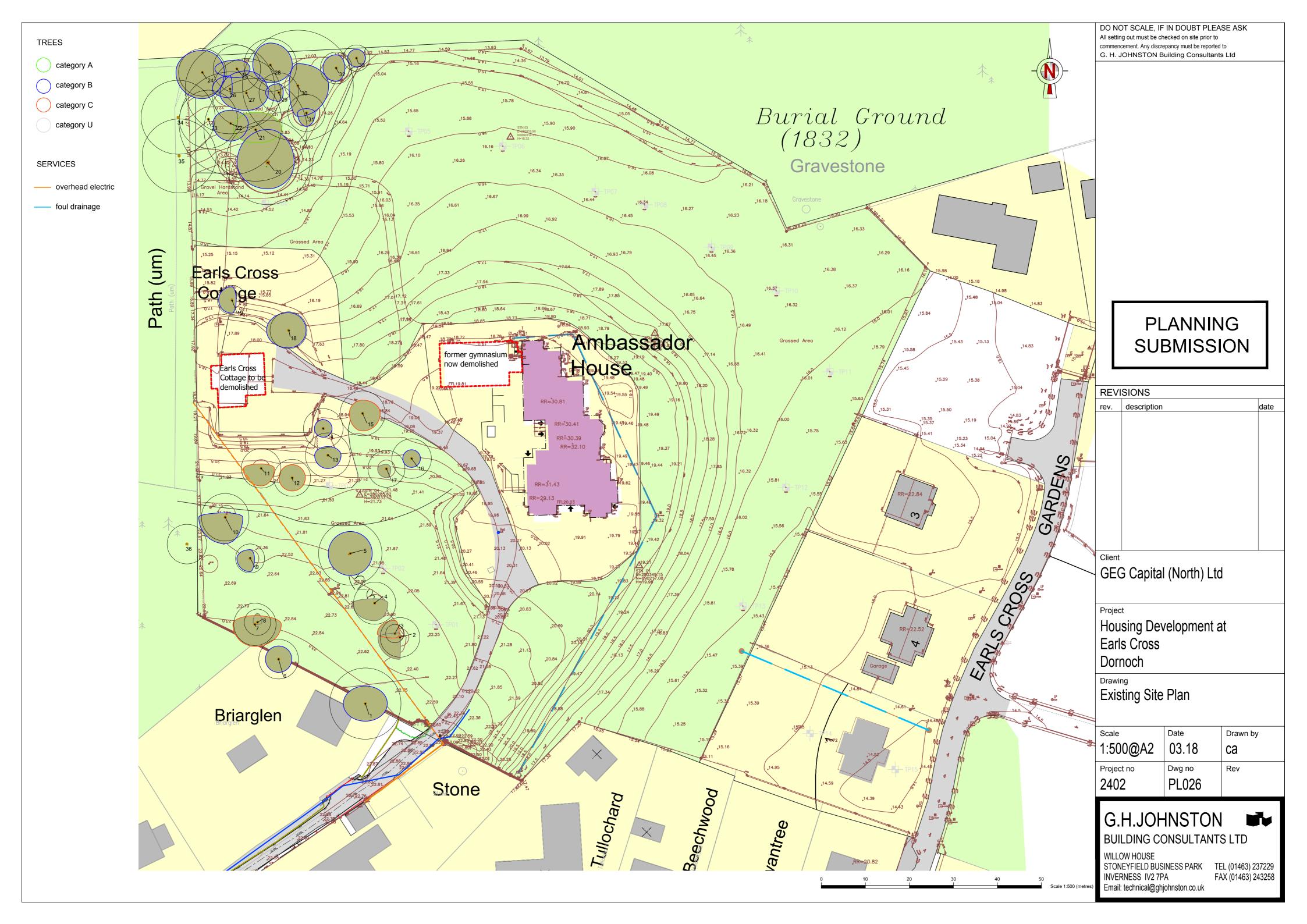
Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - Location Plan

Plan 2 - Existing Site Layout Plan

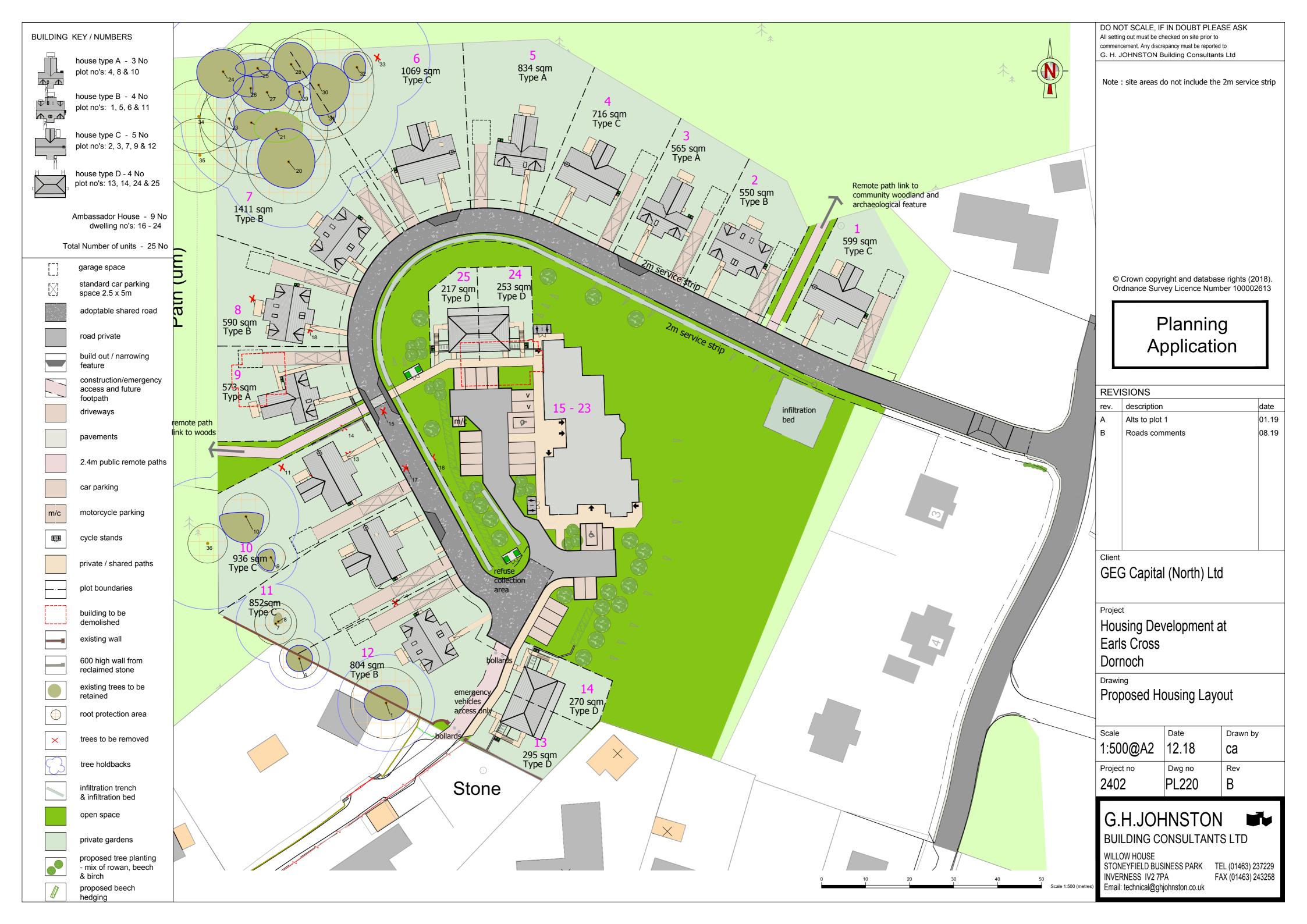
Plan 3 - Overall Site Plan

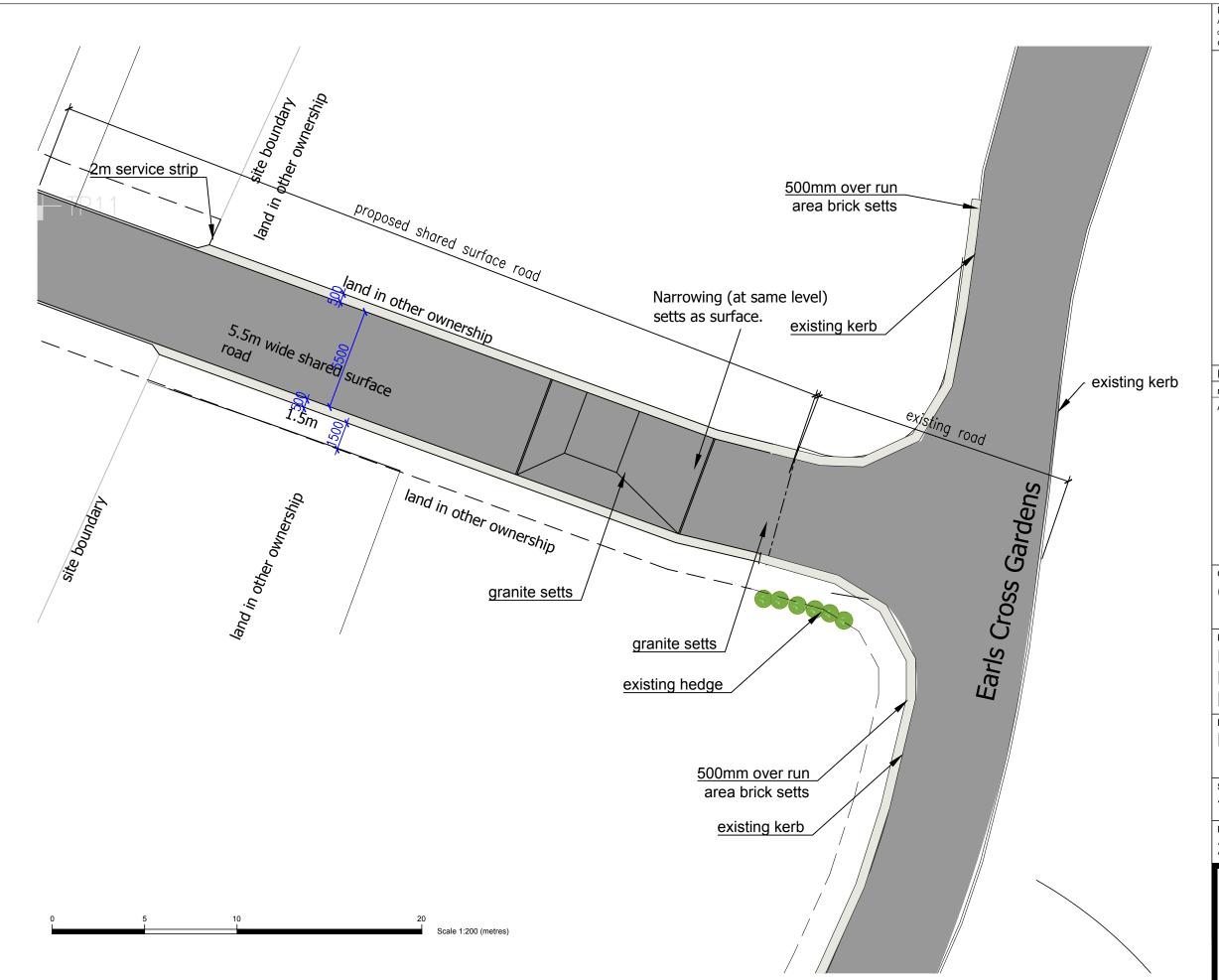
- Plan 4 Housing Layout
- Plan 5 Road Entrance
- Plan 6 Elevations House Type A
- Plan 7 GF Plan House Type A
- Plan 8 FF Plan House Type A
- Plan 9 Elevations House Type B
- Plan 10 GF Plan House Type B
- Plan 11 FF Plan House Type B
- Plan 12 Elevations House Type C
- Plan 13 GF Plan House Type C
- Plan 14 FF Plan House Type C
- Plan 15 Road and Site Sections
- Plan 16 Finished Floor Levels
- Plan 17 Tree Protection Plan
- Plan 18 Road Adoption Plan
- Plan 19 Road Long Sections
- Plan 20 Drainage Layout
- Plan 21 Landscaping Plan











DO NOT SCALE, IF IN DOUBT PLEASE ASK
All setting out must be checked on site prior to
commencement. Any discrepancy must be reported to
G. H. JOHNSTON Building Consultants Ltd



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# Planning Application

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GEG Capital (North) Ltd

Project

Housing Development at Earls Cross
Dornoch

Drawing

Road Entrance

Scale 1:200@A3	Date 12.2018	Drawn by
Project no 2402	Dwg no PL222	Rev

# G.H.JOHNSTON

BUILDING CONSULTANTS LTD

WILLOW HOUSE STONEYFIELD BUSINESS PARK TEL (01463) 237229 INVERNESS IV2 7PA Email: technical@ghjohnston.co.uk







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# matheson mackenzie ross

ARCHITECTS

ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS HIGH STREET DINGWALL ROSS & CROMARTY IV15 9HA TEL 01349 863352 FAX 01349 865746

Hugh M. Ross, DipArch, RIBA, FRIAS, Ma.P.S. Neil H Ross, DipArch, RIBA, ARIAS, www.mmross.co.uk

#### project

Proposed Housing Development Earls Cross Dornoch Sutherland

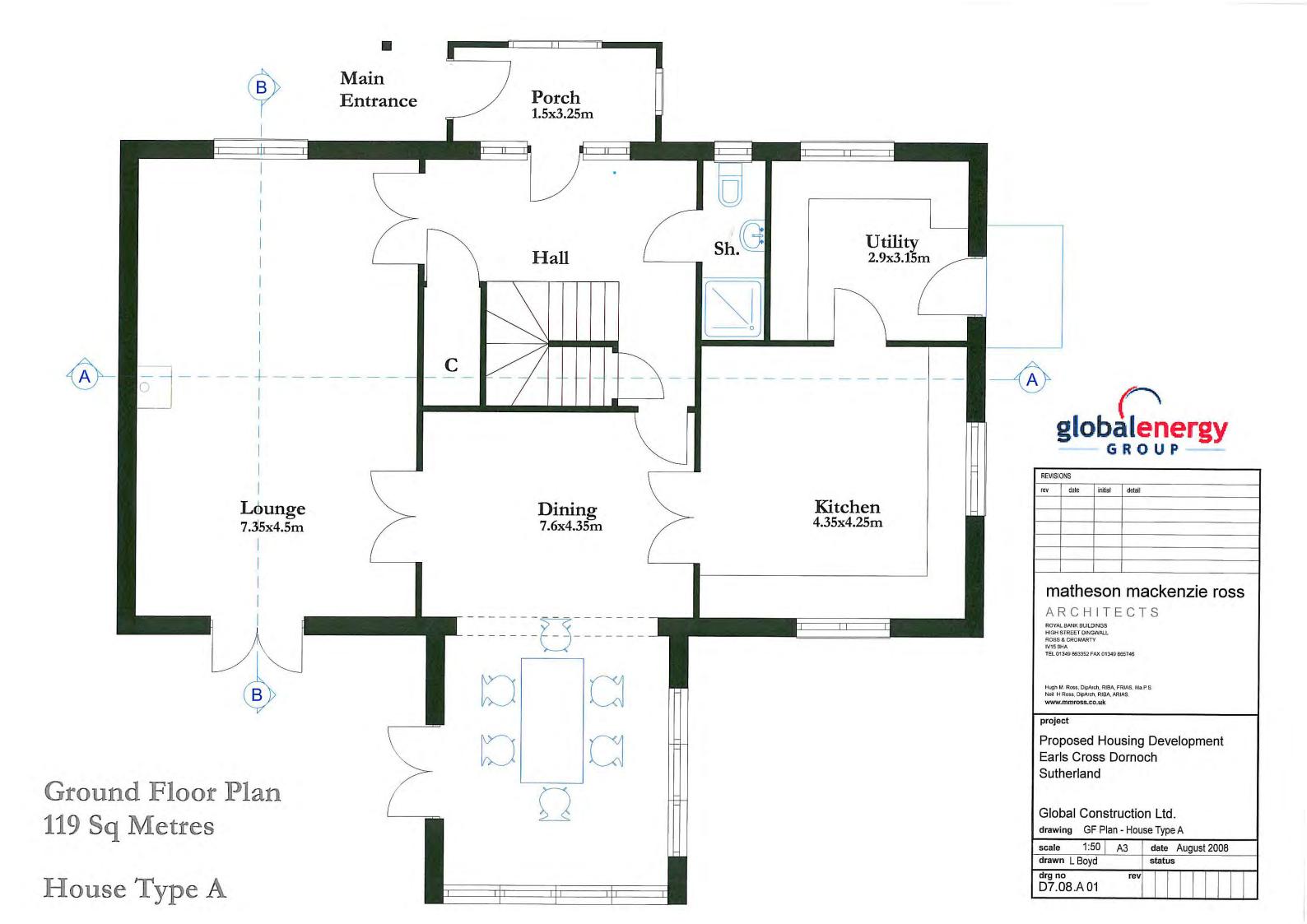
Global Construction Ltd.

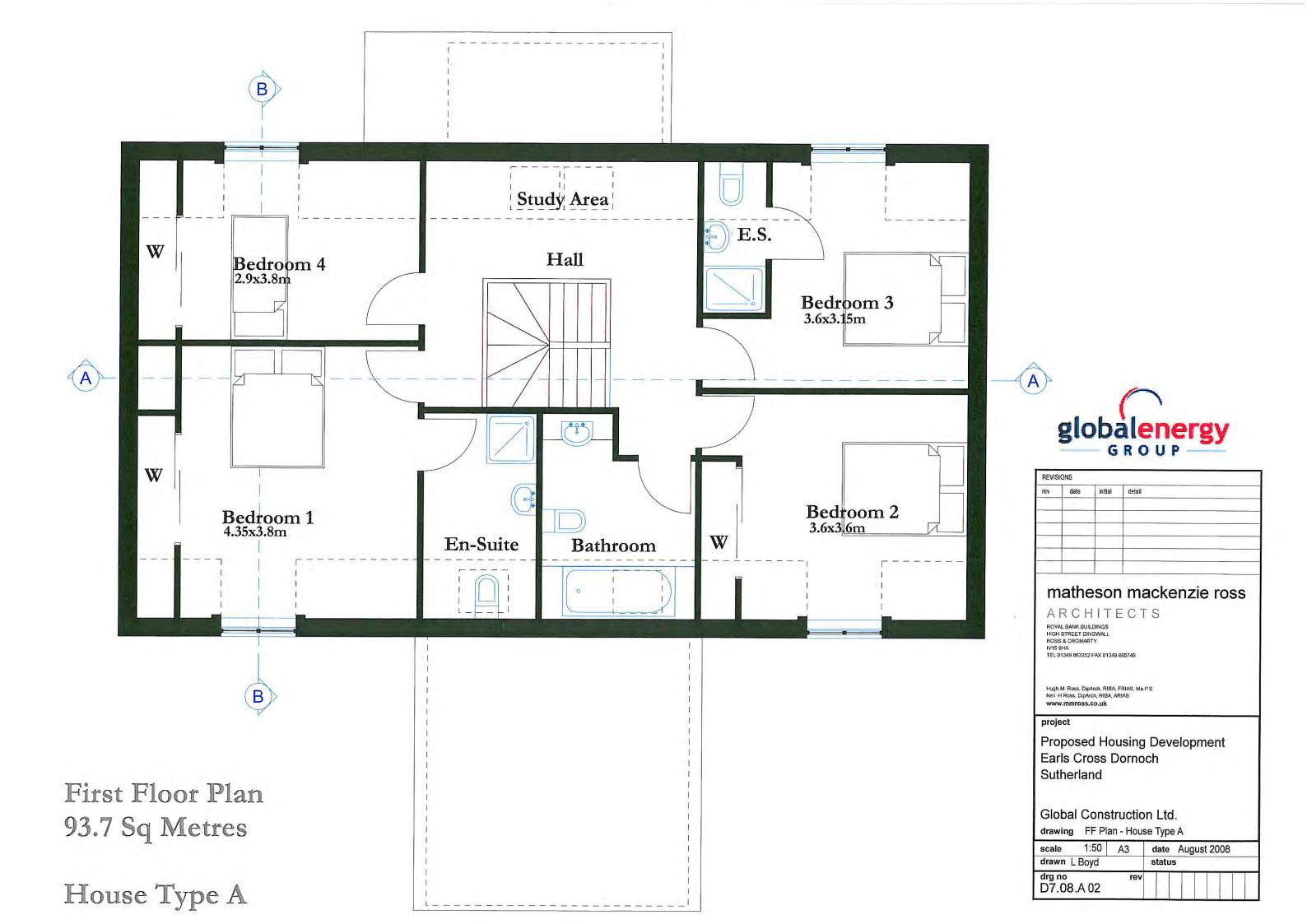
drawing Elevations - House Type A

drawn L Boyd	A3	status
drg no D7.08.A 03	rev	

Elevations

House Type A









North Elevation



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# matheson mackenzie ross

ARCHITECTS

ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS HIGH STREET DINGWALL ROSS & CROMARTY IV15 9HA TEL 01349 863352 FAX 01349 865746

Hugh M. Ross, DipArch, RIBA, FRIAS, Ma.P.S. Neil H Ross, DipArch, RIBA, ARIAS. www.mmross.co.uk

Proposed Housing Development Earls Cross Dornoch Sutherland

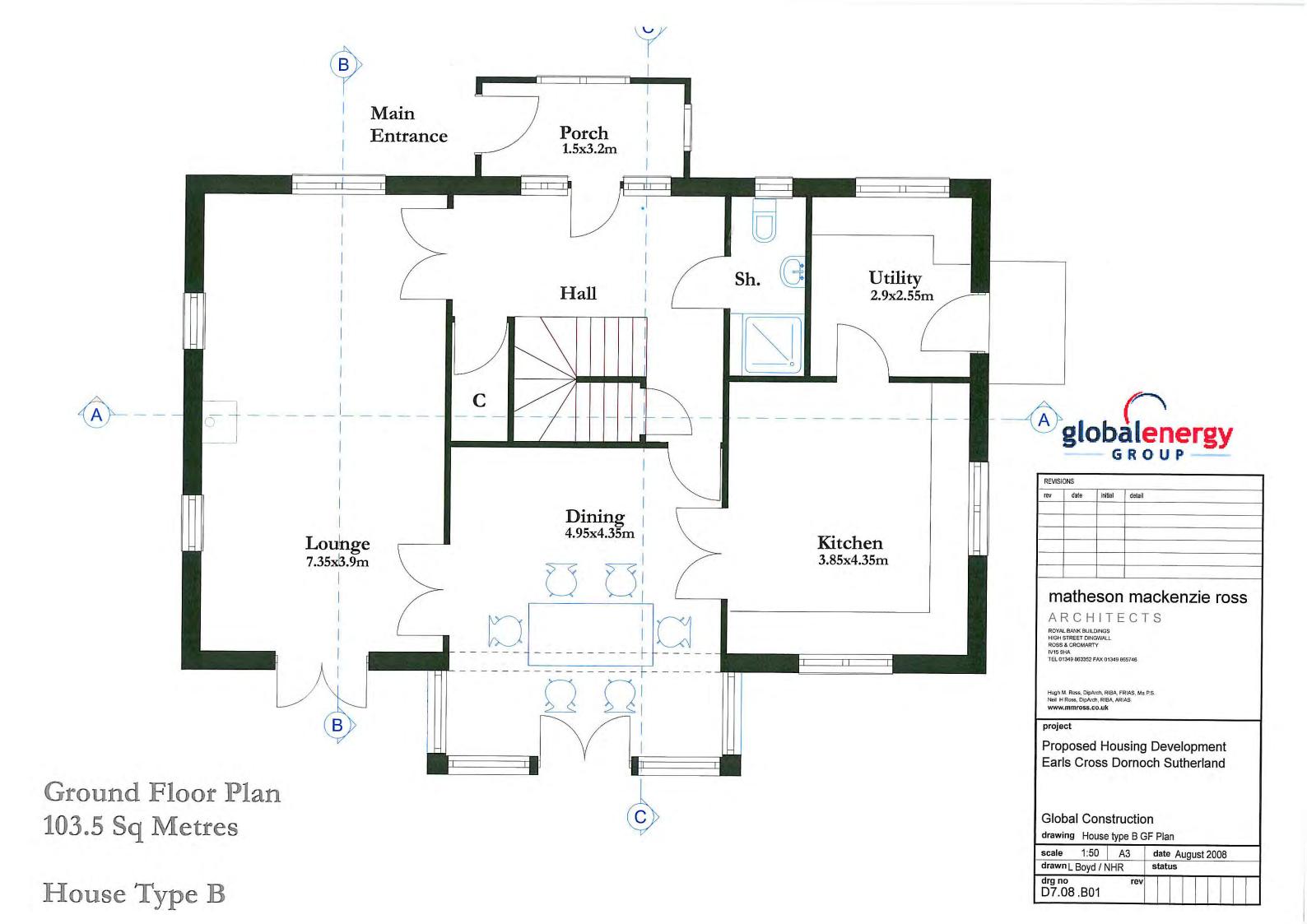
# **Global Construction**

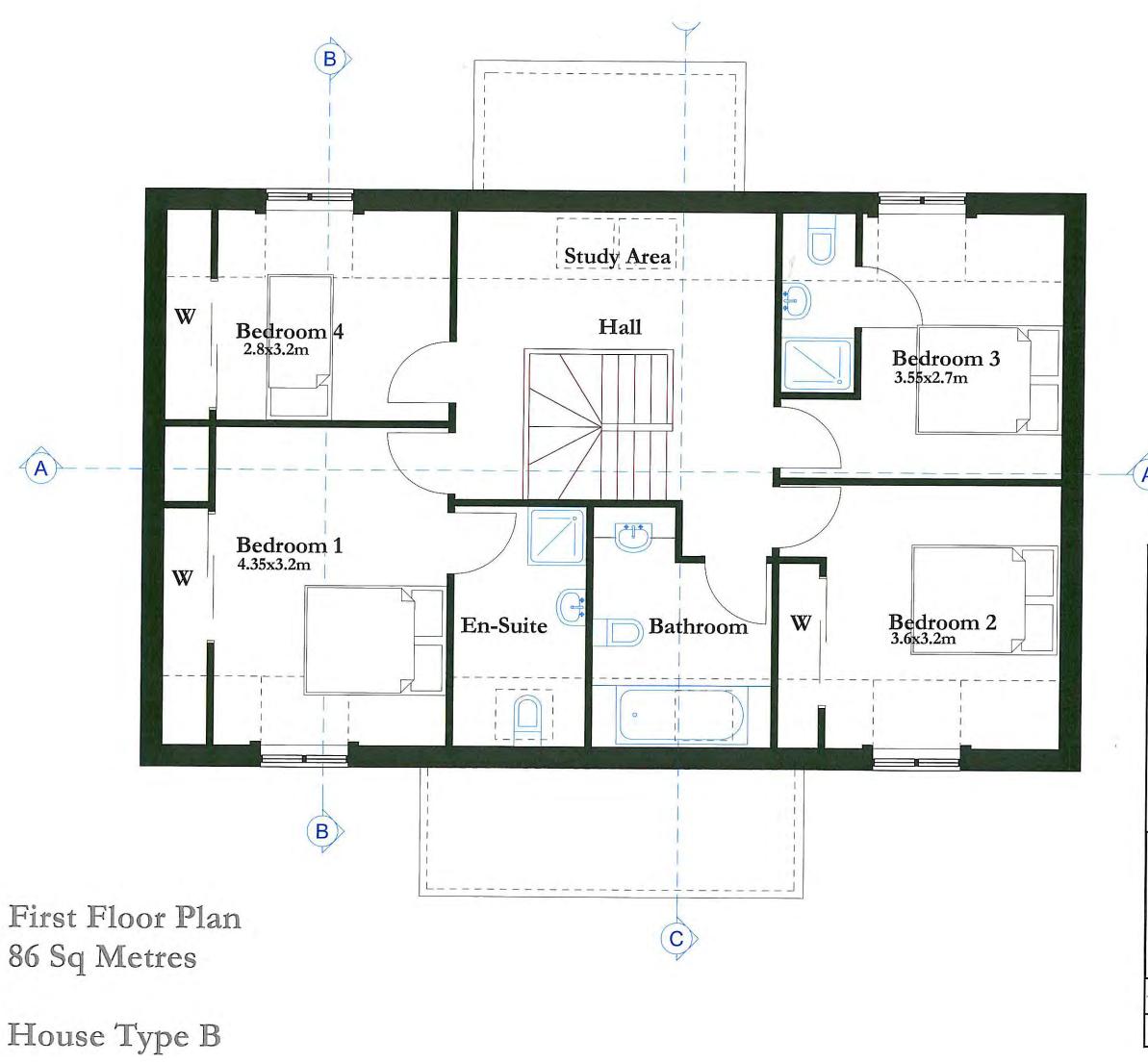
drawing House type B Elevations

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Elevations

House Type B







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# matheson mackenzie ross

ARCHITECTS

ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS HIGH STREET DINGWALL ROSS & CROMARTY IV15 9HA TEL 01349 863352 FAX 01349 855746

Hugh M. Ross, DipArch, RIBA, FRIAS, Ma.P.S. Neil H Ross, DipArch, RIBA, ARIAS. www.mmross.co.uk

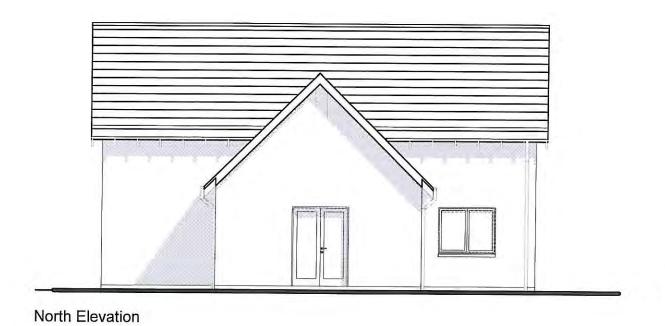
### project

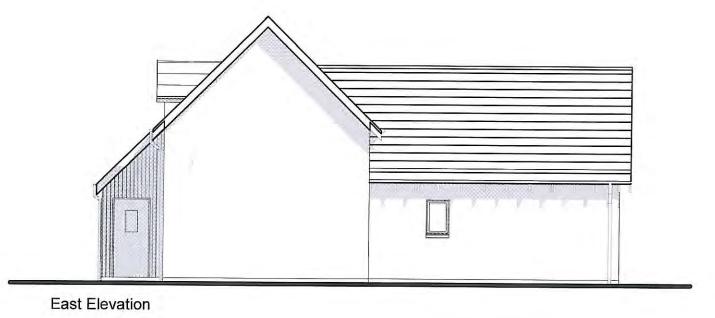
Proposed Housing Development Earls Cross Dornoch Sutherland

## **Global Construction**

drawing House type B FF Plan

scale 1:50	А3	date August 2008
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West Elevation



matheson mackenzie ross

date initial detail

ARCHITECTS
ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS
HIGH STREET DINGWALL
ROSS & CROMARTY
IV15 9HA
TEL 01349 863352 FAX 01349 865746

Hugh M. Ross, DipArch, RIBA, FRIAS, Ma.P.S. Neil H Ross, DipArch, RIBA, ARIAS. www.mmross.co.uk

REVISIONS

Proposed housing development at Earls Cross, Dornoch.

## **Global Construction**

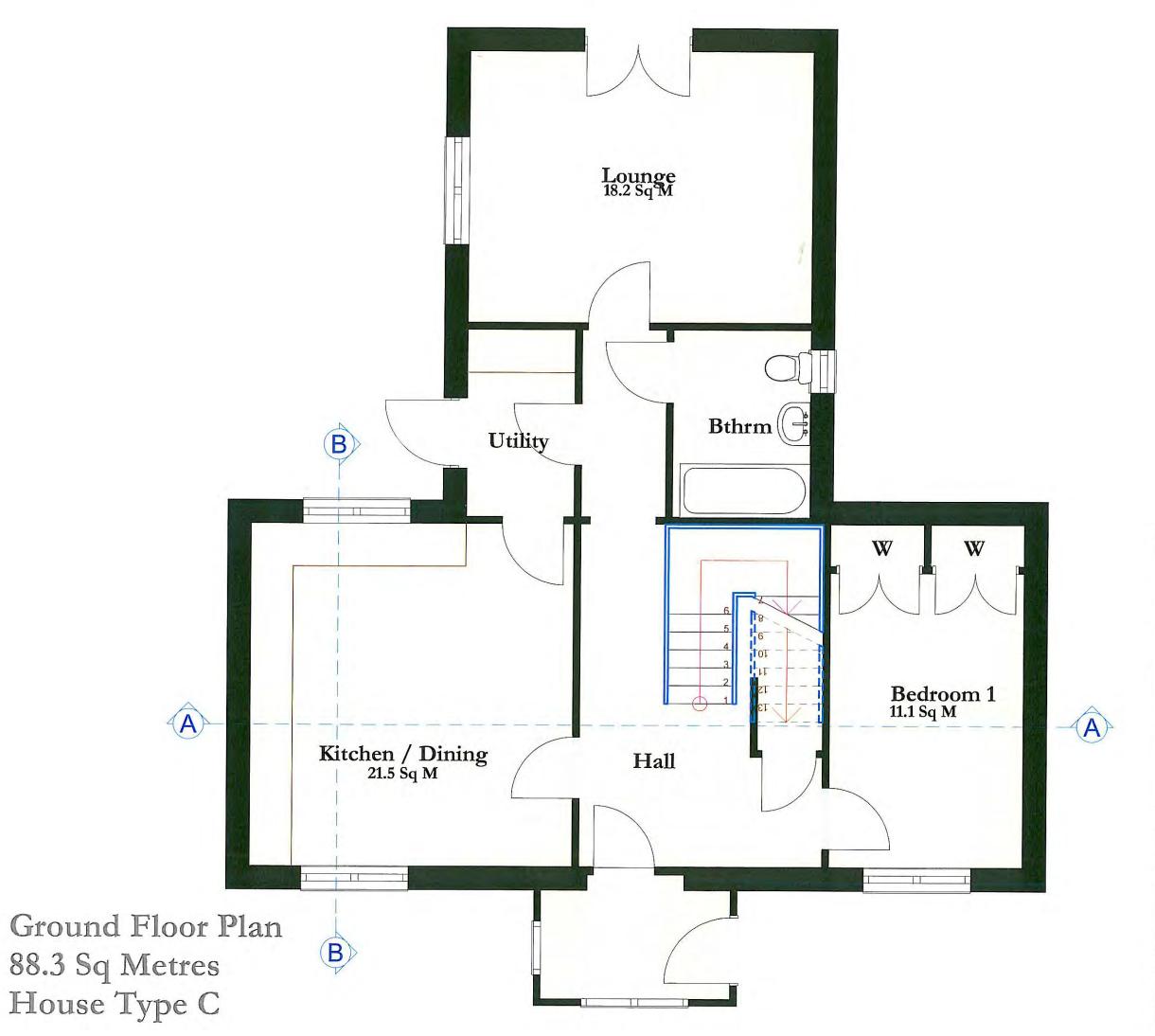
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Elevations

South Elevation

House Type C



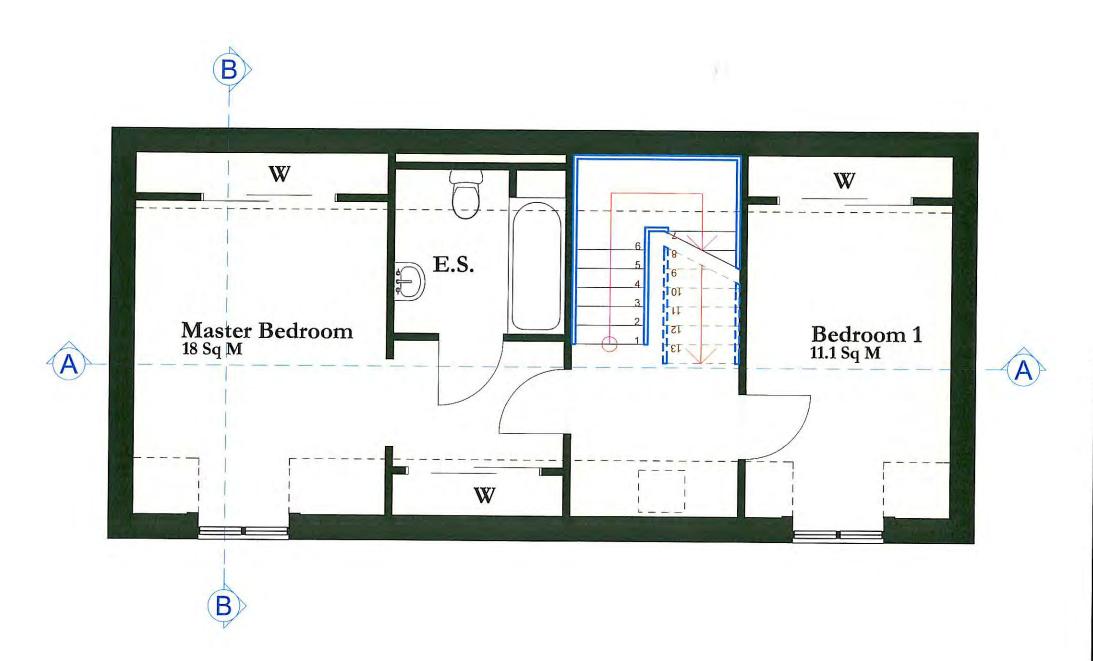


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Global Construction

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House Type C



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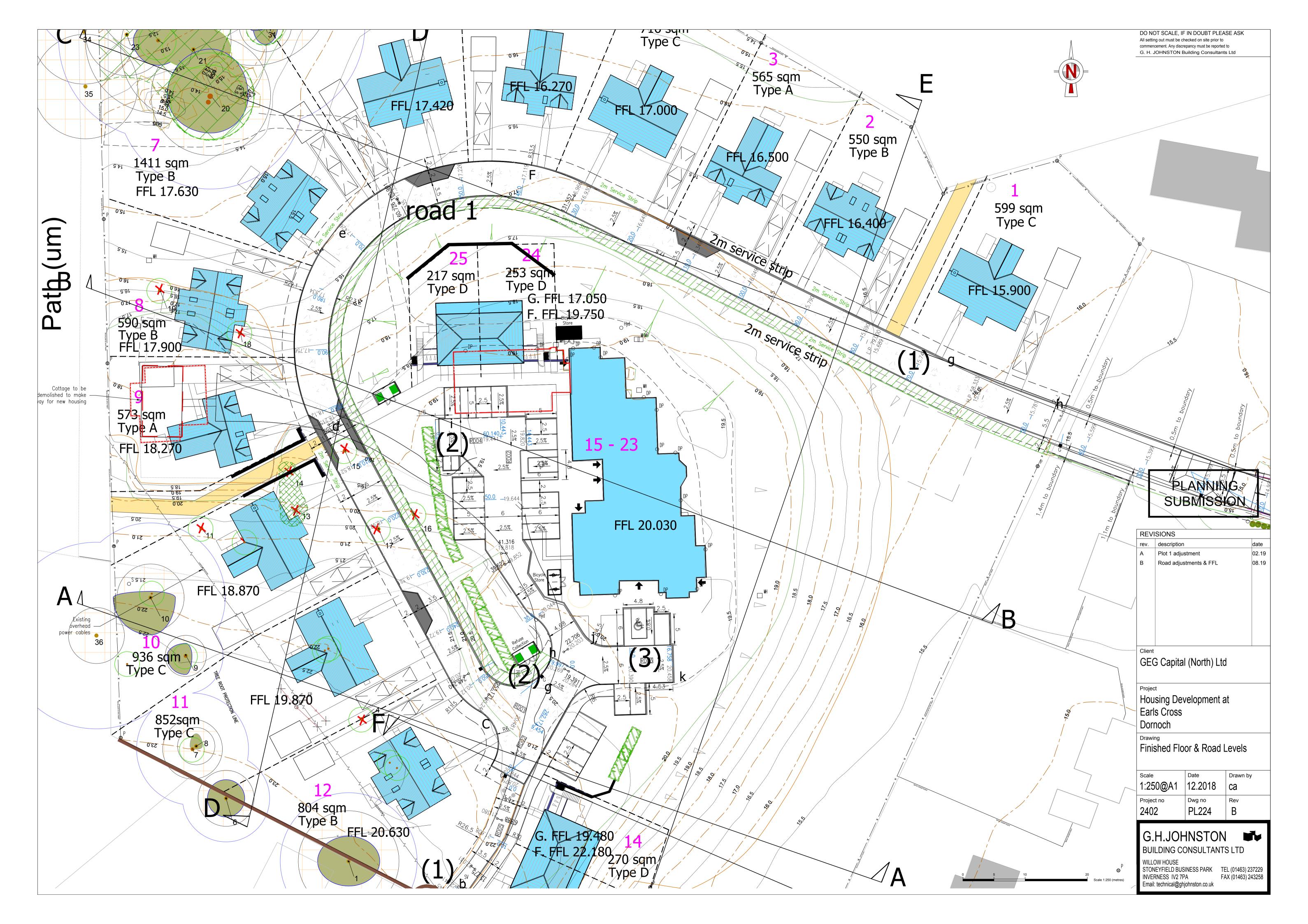
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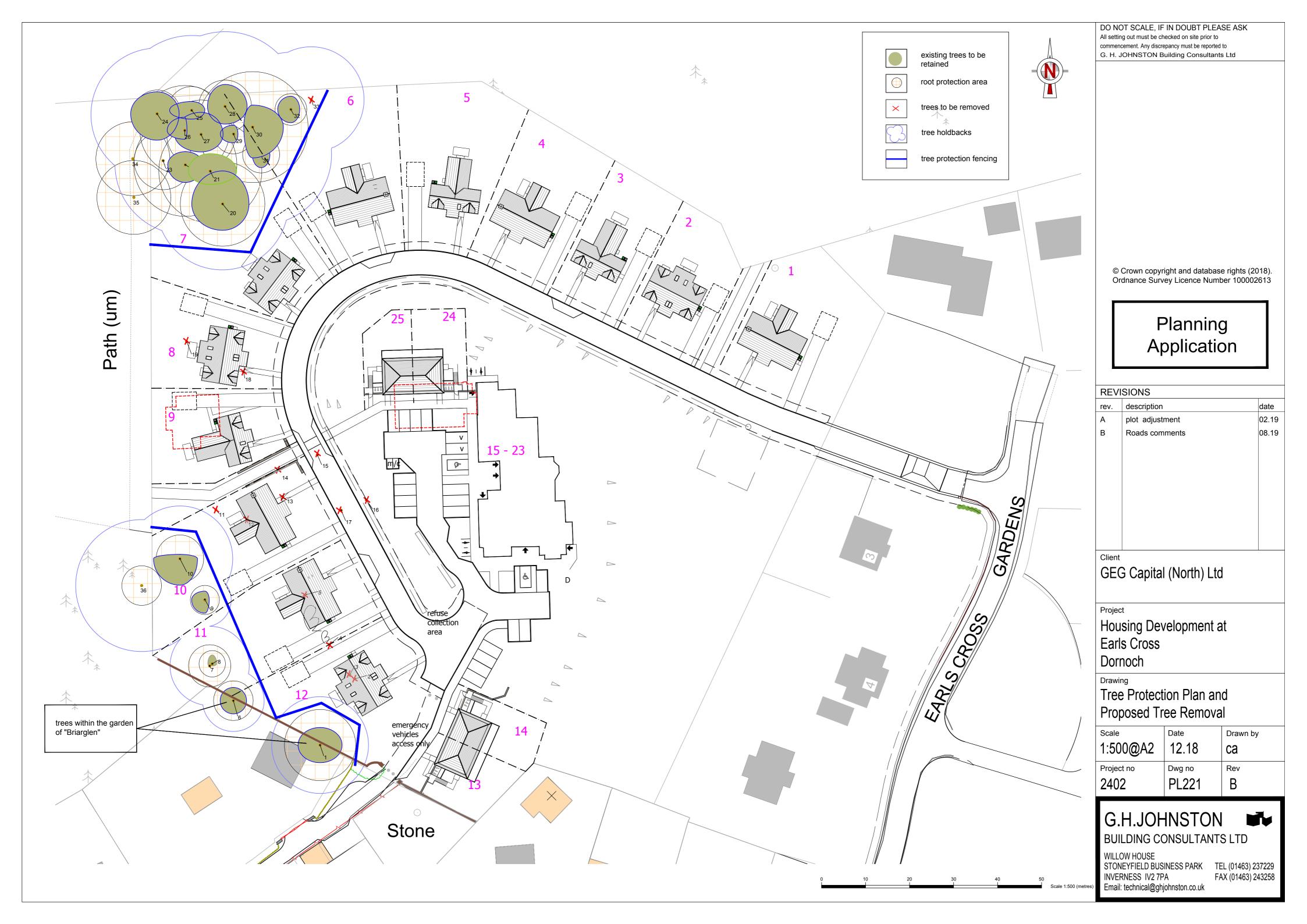
Global Construction
drawing House type C FF Plan

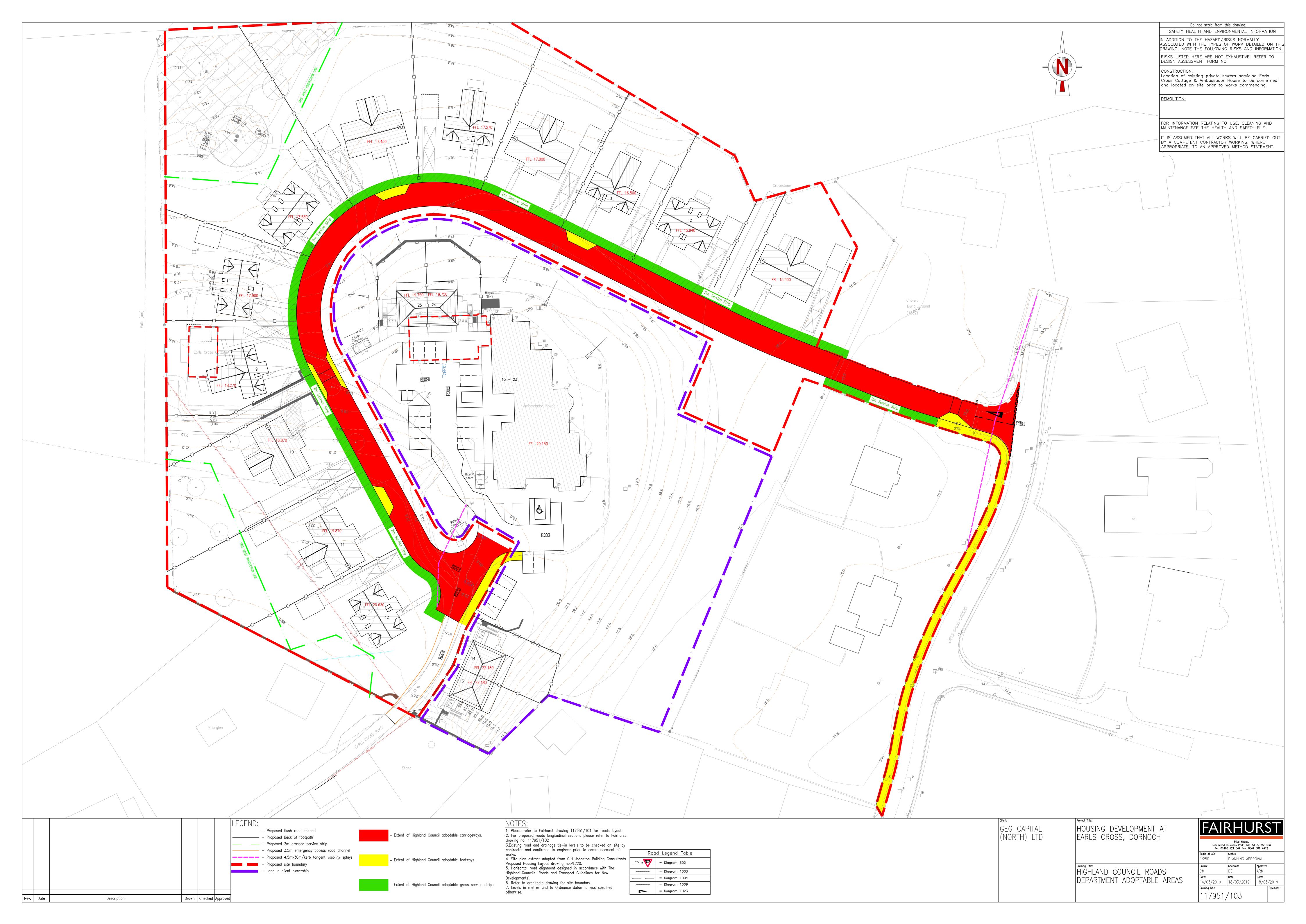
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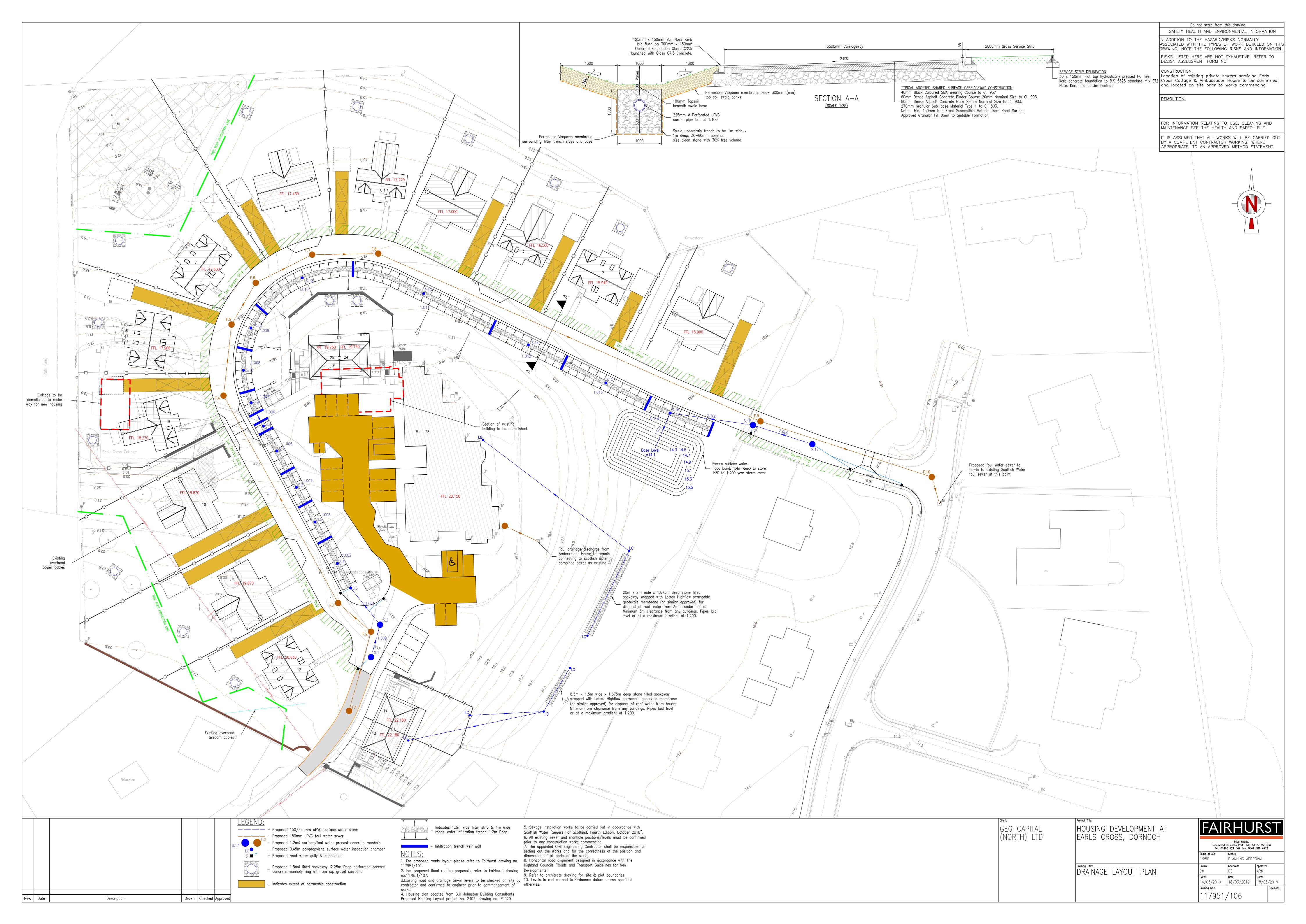
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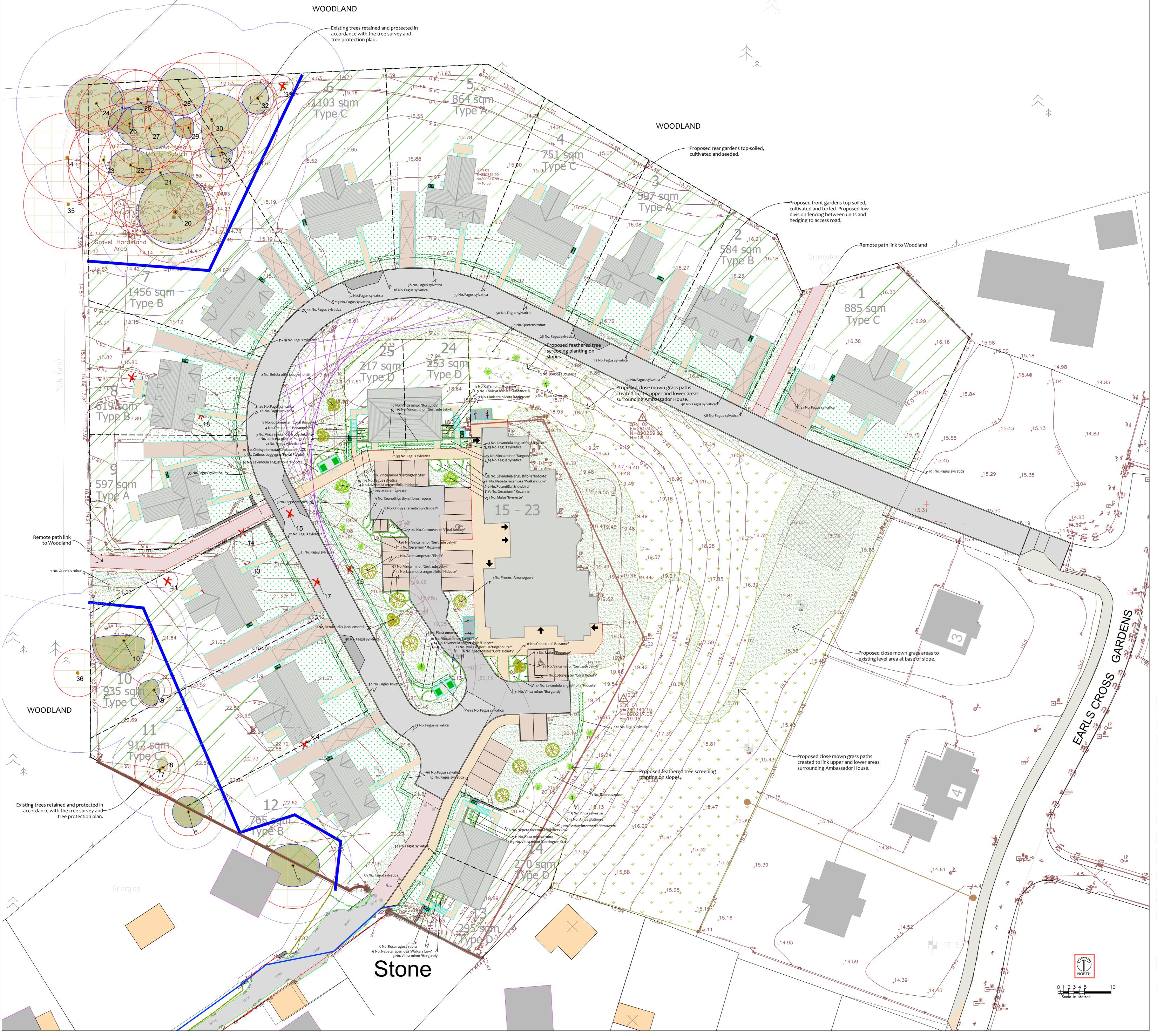












HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT EARLS CROSS, DORNOCH- SOFT LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS 1:250

HLD-GEG CAPITAL (NORTH) LTD- EARLS COURT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, DORNOCH - PLANTING SCHEDULE 30.11.18

Trees						
Species	Height	Girth	Pot Size	Specification	Density	Number
Quercus robur	250-300cm	8-10cm	rootballed	Standard :3 brks :2x	Counted	3 No.
Sorbus aucuparia	175-200cm		Bare root	Feather :5 brks :2x	Counted	2 No.
Sorbus intermedia 'Brouwers'	300-350cm	10-12cm	rootballed	Selected Standard : 3/5 brks : 2x	Counted	3 No.
Alnus glutinosa	175-200cm				Counted	3 No.
Malus 'Evereste'	175-200cm		Rootballed	Feather :5 brks :2x	Counted	3 No.
	300-350cm			Selected Standard :4 brks :2x	Counted	1 No.
Betula utilis jacquemontii	200-250cm	Triple stemmed			Counted	3 No.
Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'	300-350cm	10-12CM	bare-root	Selected Standard :4 brks:2x	Counted	3 No.
Fagus sylvatica	80-100cm		bare-root	1+2 :Transplant :3 brks	5/m	1581 No.

Species	Height	Pot Size	Specification	Density	Number
Vinca minor 'Burgundy'	15-20cm	9cm	Several shoots	6/m <sup>2</sup>	103 No.
Cotoneaster 'Coral Beauty'	30-40cm	3L	Several shoots	3/m <sup>2</sup>	51 No.
Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'	20-30cm	2L	Bushy:5/6 brks	3/m <sup>2</sup>	84 No.
Vinca minor 'Gertrude Jekyll'	15-20cm	9cm	Several shoots	6/m <sup>2</sup>	145 No.
Choisya ternata Sundance ®	30-40cm	3L	Bushy:3/5 brks	3/m <sup>2</sup>	23 No.
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus repens	30-40cm	3L	Several shoots	3/m <sup>2</sup>	9 No.
Vinca minor 'Dartington Star'		9cm	Several shoots	6/m <sup>2</sup>	48 No.
Cotinus coggygria 'Royal Purple'	80-100cm	20L	Bushy:3/5 brks	1/m <sup>2</sup>	5 No.
Lonicera pileata `Maigreen'	40-50cm	3L	Several shoots	3/m <sup>2</sup>	14 No.
Potentilla 'Snowbird'	30-40cm	3L	Bushy:4 brks	3/m <sup>2</sup>	10 No.
Rosa rugosa rubra	50-60cm	3L	Bushy:3 brks	3/m <sup>2</sup>	16 No.

Conifers Species

Pinus sylvestris 125-150cm r'balled Leaders and laterals :4x Counted 8 No.

Picea omorika 125-150cm r'balled Leaders and laterals :4x Counted 4 No.

LANDSCAPE

All areas to be soft landscaped to be litter picked and all site debris / stones etc to be removed from site. All subsoil to be thoroughly de-compacted to ensure that they are free draining.

Subsoil areas to be top-soiled will be inspected by the landscape architect prior to topsoil being spread. Supply and spread premium quality topsoil to proposed grass areas, shrub beds and tree pits.

Shrub planted areas to be formed with a minimum 300mm depth of premium quality topsoil laid on a clean de-compacted subsoil layer. Supply and spread a 35mm deep layer of GREEN TREE PAS 100 soil improver over top-soiled areas and work into planting pits.

Selected standard trees to be pit planted into 1000 x 1000 x 450mm deep pits with base broken up for a further 150mm. Standard and conifers to be pit planted into 900 x 900 x 450mm deep pits with base broken upfor a further 150mm. Pits to be backfilled with premium quality topsoil mixed with PAS 100 soil improver and 150g of Everris Ficote Total 17-19-10+2MgO +TE -12-14 month. Small feathered trees pit planted as above in 600 x 600 x 450mm deep pits, including 75g of Ficote fertiliser. All trees to be secured with a single 50mm diameter machine rounded stake, driven into base of pit and finished 500m above ground level. Selected standard trees secured to stakes with Green-Tech HB2 Holdfast rubber blocks and 38mm heavy duty belting, twice nailed to posts-50mm down from top of stake. Small feathered trees- HB1 Holdfast and HP25 25mm heavy duty rubber belting.

Proposed hedging plants to be protected as follows: Clear spirals: Rainbow; 60 x 38mm dia, with a single 12-14mm bamboo cane - 1 each per plant.

R M Welsh and Sons T 7 low fertility and limited topsoil mix, sown at 50g/m2.

Any failures in planting in the first five years after planting will be replaced by the client with plants of a similar species / size (in the next planting season.)

Refer to Maintenance schedule for details of the proposed maintenance regime for the site to be undertaken for the first five years.

Close mown grass areas to proposed communal areas to be weed-killed, cultivated and sown with Blec 2 pass technique using

Existing Gorse covered slopes below Ambassador House to be cut back and roots grubbed up and disposed off at a recycling facility.

Treat cleared areas with an approved non-residual herbicide, allowing sufficient time to elapse prior to soil stripping and topsoil storage works.

Proposed species rich long grass areas to be weed-killed (twice prior to seeding) with R M Welsh and Sons 'Species Rich

Front gardens to be weed-killed, cultivated and stone picked prior to laying 'Rolawn Medallion' or equivalent quality turfing. Rear gardens to be weed-killed, cultivated, stone picked and grass seeded.

Scottish Robust Mix' sown at 20g/m2 ( Areas to be maintained as long grass areas - 1no. annual cut, following establishment

REVISIONS

A: 30.11.18 Landscape proposals amended to Client's requirements. Planting details, planting schedule and specification added for Planning Issue. Landscape Maintenance Schedule prepared.KW

ΕY

Existing trees to be felled and roots grubbed up- as per the Tree Survey Report.

Existing trees to the site boundaries to be retained and protected in accordance with the Arborist's recommendations.

Proposed 3-3.5m tall, selected standard tree planting.

Proposed 2-2.5m feathered trees.

Proposed 1.5m high feathered conifer trees.

Proposed 1.5-1.75m high feature conifer trees.

Proposed hedging- maintained at 0.9m high.

Proposed ground cover shrub planting.

Proposed open spaces: top-soiled, cultivated and grass seeded.

Proposed front gardens: top-soiled, cultivated and turfed.

Proposed rear gardens: top-soiled, cultivated and grass seeded.

Open space areas: proposed long grass areas to be top-soiled, cultivated and sown with a wildflower / grass seed mix.

(Areas of extensive Gorse cover to be grubbed up and

roots treated with approved herbicide, minimum 2 applications.)

Existing tree copse- Plots 6 and 7: existing grass areas

below trees to be cut back, with clippings, fallen branches and leaves removed to a recycling facility.

Narrow strips at buildings to be cleared out and a 50mm deep washed gravel laid on a weed control fabric.

ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE
WORK TO FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY
REPORT DISCREPANCIES TO THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
AT ONCE BEFORE PROCEEDING



MORVEN, CAROLINE STREET,
FORRES, MORAYSHIRE,
SCOTLAND, IV 36 1AN.
TEL: 01309 692005
jim@highlandlandscapedesign.co.uk

GEG CAPITAL (North) Ltd

PLANNING

KEITH L WOOD BA (HONS) CMLI LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

1, Old Branziet Cottage, Balmore, By Torrance, Glasgow, G64 4AH. Tel: 01360 620358 Mob:07584 054586 email: keith.l.wood@btopenworld.com

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, EARLS COURT, DORNOCH, IV25 3PJ.

Drawing Title

SOFT LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Scale 1:250@A0 Date 12.10.18

Drawn k wood Approved J Legge

Drawing No. Rev.

HLD K339.18/SL-01 A