



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

Date: 18th April 2013

Subject: 13/00369/FU – Single storey front extension at 2 St Peter’s Garth, Thorner, LS14 3EE

APPLICANT

Mr and Mrs Leadbeater

DATE VALID

28th January 2013

TARGET DATE

25th March 2012

Electoral Wards Affected:

Harewood

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE PERMISSION for the following reason:

The Local Planning Authority consider that the proposed front extension by virtue of its overall height, scale, siting and roof pitch represents a poorly proportioned, overdominant and visually intrusive addition which would overwhelm the front elevation of the property and harm its character and appearance. It is also considered that due to the visual prominence of the dwelling the inappropriate nature of the extension will harm the character of the wider streetscene. The proposal is thus contrary to the aims and intentions of policies GP5 and BD6 of the Unitary Development Plan, policy HDG1 of the Householder Design Guide as well as guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is brought to Panel with a request for a site visit by Councillor Rachael Procter due to the impact on the streetscene and the support of local residents.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The applicant seeks permission to construct a single storey front extension. This will measure approximately 3.0m in depth, 7.0m in width and its monopitched roof will be approximately 2.6m and 3.5m to eaves and ridge.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

3.1 The application relates to a detached, two storey dwelling constructed of brick with horizontal cladding to a portion of its front elevation. The roof is gabled and constructed of concrete tiles. A flat roof detached garage lies to the side of the property. The property has a small rear garden.

3.2 The dwelling is located on St-Peter's Garth, a residential cul-de-sac set to the east of Thorner village core. This is part of a small mid twentieth century estate of approximately sixty similarly designed and scaled dwellings which have a simple shape and form and are broadly reflective of the gabled vernacular of the village. The houses are usually set back from the highway behind shallow, open front gardens and some small front extensions are in evidence. A large, flat roofed side and front extension granted planning permission in 1974 has been constructed at 4 St Peter's Garth.

3.3 The property lies close to the entrance to the cul-de-sac and is situated in a prominent location, with its front elevation and the upper portion of its side gable visible as the land rises from the lower level of Kirkhills.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

4.1 None

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

5.1 No pre-application advice was sought.

5.2 During the course of the application the possibility of constructing a small front extension has been offered by officers. The applicant did not find this acceptable.

5.3 During a meeting with Councillor Rachael Procter officers have suggested the following:

- Building a rear extension. The applicant did not find this acceptable.
- Building a smaller front extension and a small rear extension. The applicant did not find this acceptable.
- Constructing a side extension. The applicant did not find this acceptable.
- Constructing a flat roofed front extension. The applicant did not find this acceptable.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

6.1 The application has been advertised by neighbour notification letter.

6.2 The Parish Council raise concerns regarding the design of the extension noting that it is forward of the original building line and will bring the property closer to the road.

6.3 No responses were initially received from neighbours.

4 St Peter's Garth who note that the family do not have enough space in the house, that a front extension will not affect their views, and will not affect the open aspect of the street. Attention is also drawn to the large extension to the front of 4 St Peter's Garth which is visually unattractive and the proposed extension would help improve the streetscene.

The occupants of 17 Kirkhills who note that there are other front extensions on the estate and that matching materials are proposed.

The occupants of 1 St Peter's Garth who note that there are other front extensions on the estate. Attention is also drawn to the fact that the family support the village play group and that the extension will not affect highway safety.

The occupants of 5 St Peter's Garth who consider the extension will enhance the building and allow the family more room. Attention is also drawn to a similar extension at 4 St Peter's Garth.

The occupants of 3 St Peter's Garth who support the scheme.

The occupants of 15 Kirkhills who express support for the scheme and note that it will not affect them.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

7.1 None

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

8.1 The development plan is the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006).

8.2 The Publication Draft of the Core Strategy was issued for public consultation on 28th February 2012 and the consultation period closed on 12th April 2012. The Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 14th November 2012 Full Council resolved to approve the Publication Draft Core Strategy and the sustainability report for the purpose of submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination pursuant to Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Full Council also resolved on 14th November 2012 that a further period for representation be provided on pre-submission changes and any further representations received be submitted to the Secretary of State at the time the Publication Draft Core Strategy is submitted for independent examination.

8.3 As the Council have resolved to move the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the next stage of independent examination some weight can now be attached to the document and its contents recognising that the weight to be attached may be limited by outstanding representations which have been made which will be considered at the future examination.

8.4 UDP Policies:

GP5 Refers to proposals resolving detailed planning considerations (access, landscaping, design etc), seeking to avoid problems of environmental intrusion, loss of amenity, danger to health or life, pollution and highway congestion and to maximise highway safety.

BD6 All alterations and extensions should respect the scale, form, detailing and materials of the original building.

8.5 Householder Design Guide SPD:

Leeds City Council Householder Design Guide was adopted on 1st April and carries significant weight. This guide provides help for people who wish to extend or alter their property. It aims to give advice on how to design sympathetic, high quality extensions which respect their surroundings. This guide helps to put into practice the policies from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan which seeks to protect and enhance the residential environment throughout the city.

HDG1 All alterations and extensions should respect the scale, form, proportions, character and appearance of the main dwelling and the locality/ Particular attention should be paid to:

- i) The roof form and roof line;
- ii) Window detail;
- iii) Architectural features;
- iv) Boundary treatments
- v) Materials;

HDG2 All development proposals should protect the amenity of neighbours. Proposals which harm the existing residential amenity of neighbours through excessive overshadowing, overdominance or overlooking will be strongly resisted.

8.6 With regard to front extensions it is noted they are often very difficult to accommodate. Whilst very small additions may be possible larger additions are unlikely to be acceptable especially where a row of properties display a uniform character. Single storey extensions may be acceptable where:

- The house is well set back from the front boundary;
- There is a lack of uniformity within the streetscene;
- Where the proposal will not harm the character of the locality.

8.7 National Planning Policy Framework

This document sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system and strongly promotes good design.

9.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

- 1) Design and Character
- 2) Representations

10.0 **APPRAISAL**

Design and Character

10.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that "good design is indivisible from

design”, and that which “fails to take the opportunities available for the improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted”. Leeds Unitary Development Plan Policy GP5 states that “development proposals should seek to resolve detailed planning considerations including design” and should seek to avoid “loss of amenity. Leeds Unitary Development Plan Policy BD6 states that “all alterations and extensions should respect the form and detailing of the original building”. This advice is elucidated and expanded within the Householder Design Guide.

- 10.2 As has been outlined above the existing property is a simple, gabled dwelling which is located within an estate of similarly designed and scaled houses. Properties are often set back from the street behind open front gardens and their front elevations are lightly articulated, with little decoration or adornment. Some properties have small, single storey front projections and porches and canopies are also in evidence. Because there is some variety within the streetscene it is likely that some form of extension to the front of the house will be possible. The main question is whether an extension of the size, scale, proportions and design proposed is an acceptable addition to the front of the house.
- 10.3 The extension which is proposed does raise significant concerns in respect of its overall design and size, and will have a negative impact upon the character of the house and the wider streetscene. The extension which is proposed is a very large addition, and with a projection of 3.0m in depth and 7.0m in width is the size and scale of single storey rear extension. It would therefore be a very large and very obtrusive addition which would wholly dominate the front elevation of the property. The impact of the extension is best illustrated by the fact that the upper portion of its roof finishes only 10cm beneath the cill level of the first floor window and thus all but a small strip of upper floor walling would be obscured by the extension and the overall balance of the property would be harmed. As is noted by the Design Guide extensions to the front of properties are often very difficult to accommodate as the front elevation is the most visible and prominent part of the house and has a key role to play in defining its character. To be considered acceptable an extension to the front of the house should be a small addition which allows the existing building to remain visually dominant. In this instance the extension is so large and so dominant that it would obscure almost all of the existing front elevation and become an inappropriately dominant visual feature.
- 10.4 The extension is also poorly designed and fails to respect the basic proportions of the dwelling. Its eaves line is oddly high and has an undue amount of built material above the ground floor window heads which gives the extension a poor sense of proportion. The window detailing is also poor, with the front door removed only a small, single pane opening proposed in its place. The majority of other dwellings retain a very balanced front elevation with their first and ground floor openings well proportioned and aligned. It is also of concern that the width of the extension means it will sit tight against an existing ground floor window. The fact that the extension does not give existing features of the house sufficient space means that the extension will appear cramped within its context and further emphasize its inappropriate size and scale. All these concerns mean that the extension will harm the character of the house.
- 10.5 The proposed roof pitch is, however, the most concerning aspect of the detailed design of the extension. This is excessively shallow and contrasts poorly with both the flat roofed extensions of surrounding houses and the more steeply pitched roof of the existing house. This shallow roof pitch is driven by the excessive 3.0m

roof to an extension of this size and scale. These design compromises are usually acceptable to the rear of a house where they will not harm the appearance of the wider area, but not to a principal elevation. The prominence of the house within the street means that this issue is even more critical. The extension will be highly visible within the wider streetscene. It faces the junction with The Close, will be visible for all traffic entering St Peter's Garth and also visible from Kirkhills. It's inappropriate size, scale and design of the extension therefore not only harm the character of the house but the wider locality.

- 10.6 The applicant has drawn attention to some large front extensions which have been constructed on other houses within the estate and neighbours have also drawn attention to the extension at number 4 St Peter's Garth. The applicant considers that these set a precedent for a large front extension to their own house. Officers do not share this view. As is noted by the owner of 4 St Peter's Garth the front extension which has been constructed is visually unattractive. This extension was granted permission in the 70's and is not a form of development which would gain support now. To judge planning applications against poor forms of development from the past is not the positive approach to design which is advocated by current national and local policies. Such an approach would mean that the character of areas is not improved and is a very negative approach. It is also noted that whilst a handful of houses do have large front extensions the majority of the sixty or so houses on the estate do not and the character of the area is not one where large front extensions are the predominant form. To add a large front extension to the house would harm its appearance and the character of the wider estate and as the NPPF notes applications which do not take the opportunity to improve the character of an area should be refused.
- 10.7 This said, as noted above, the presence of front extensions within the estate does suggest that a well designed front extension could be acceptable. An extension of approximately half the depth with a lowered eaves and ridge line would allow a more appropriately pitched roof to be added, would be significantly less visually prominent and would allow the main house to retain its visual dominance. The applicants were concerned that this would not provide sufficient additional space. Officers therefore suggested that a rear extension be constructed however the applicant's were concerned that this would result in a very small rear garden. Officers therefore suggest that a small front and a small rear extension be constructed however the applicants were concerned about an internal fireplace. Officers therefore suggested that some form of development to the side of the house however the applicants were concerned about the possible impact on a neighbour. As a final suggestion the possibility of a slightly reduced front extension with a flat roof was proposed, however the applicants did not consider this good design. Whilst flat roofs are not normally encouraged given that the prevalence of flat roofed structures within the street, a flat roofed extension would not be out of character in this instance.
- 10.8 The desire of the applicants to extend their dwelling is understood and their support of village amenities and the support of neighbours is noted. However, as recently noted by an Inspector when dismissing an appeal planning permission relate to land and property and not the current occupiers. The personal circumstances of residents will seldom outweigh general planning considerations. For the reasons outlined above the application is considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality and thus is recommended for refusal for the reason set out at the head of this report.

10.9 All material considerations which have been raised through representations have been discussed above.

11.0 CONCLUSION

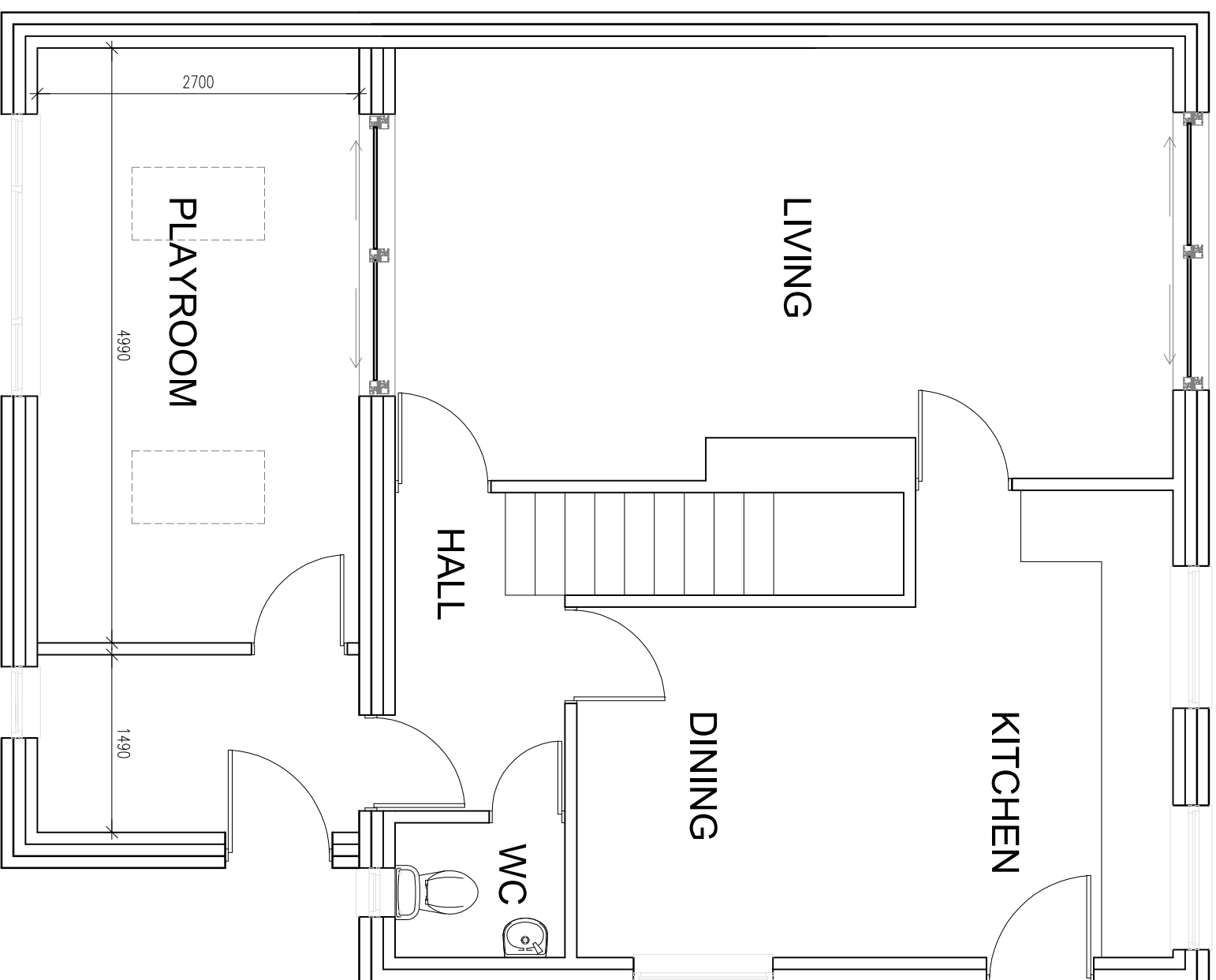
11.1 The application is therefore considered to be unacceptable. Although the extension will have no harmful impact upon neighbours nor harm highway safety this does not outweigh the substantial harm which will be caused to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the streetscene.

Background Papers:

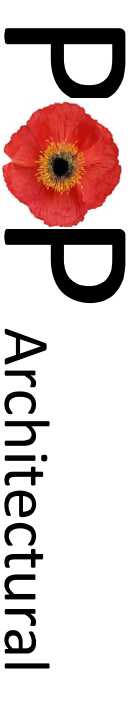
Application files 13/00369/FU
Certificate of ownership: Certificate A signed by agent

NOTES
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Report any discrepancies before commencing work to the Architect. If this drawing exceeds the quantities taken in any way, the architects are to be informed before the work is initiated.
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Amendments:
Rev: Description: Drawn: Date:



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



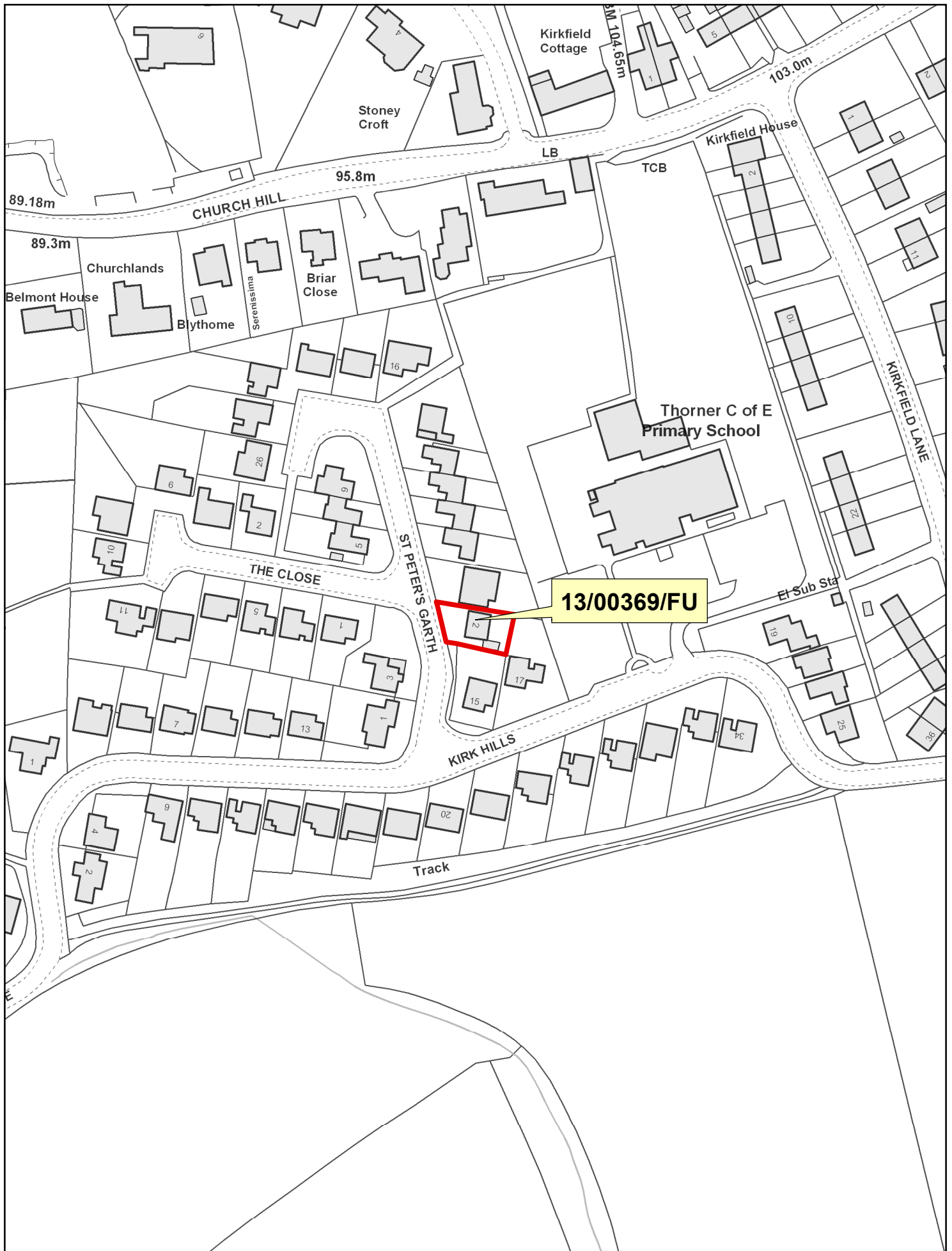
Project:
St Peters Garth, Thorner

Drawing Title:
Proposed Plans

Scale:	Date:	Drawn:	Checked:
1:100@A3	Jan 2013	SB	CD

Drawing number:	Revision:
34-2012-004	

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NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

