

A Grand Design

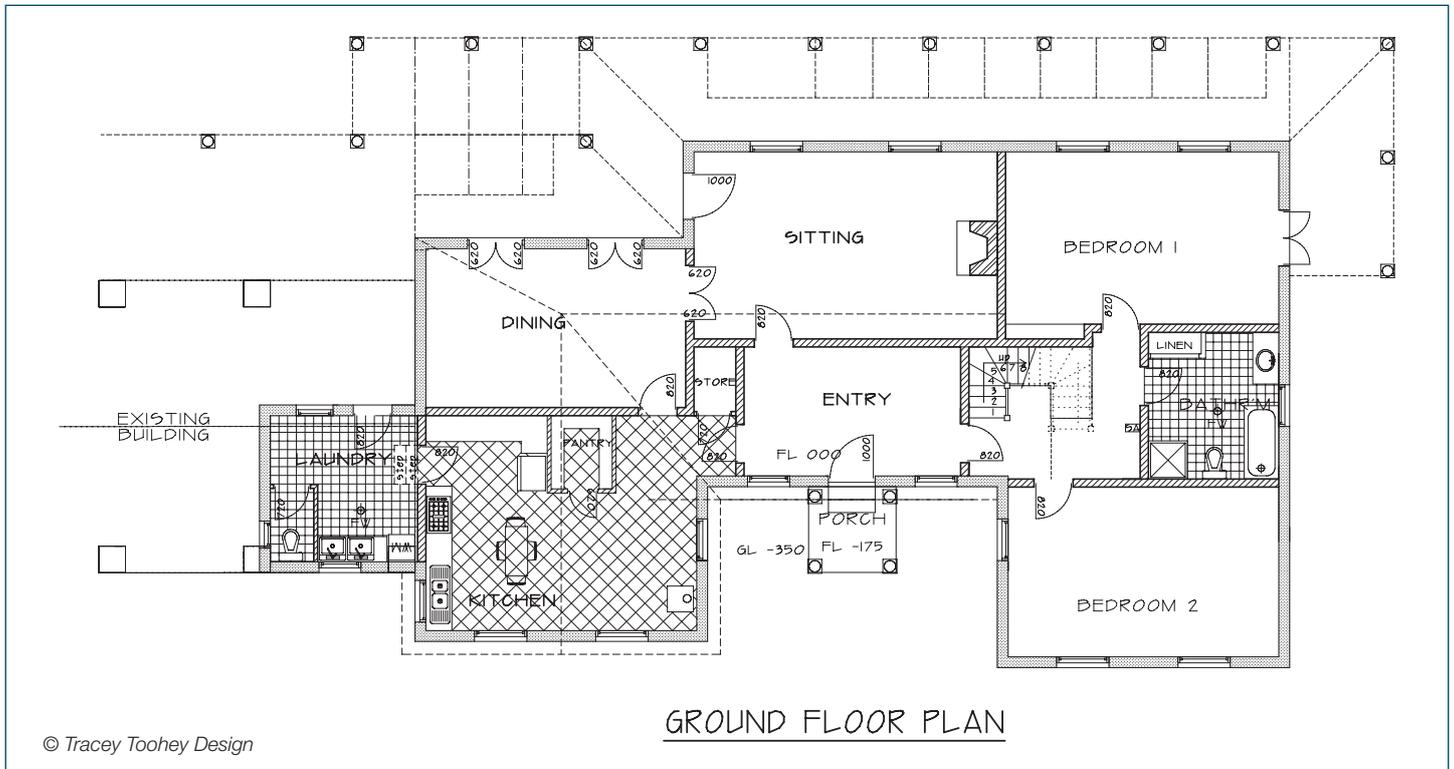
1992-2010



This house has been built in Whorouly, nearby to the Ovens River. Commenced in 1992, we have catered for the clients specific needs in staging the construction over a number of years. The final fitting out of the second stage is scheduled for 2010. Features include:

- Staged construction
 - First stage – One bedroom cottage
 - Second stage – Four bedrooms, two bathrooms, two storeys
- Solar passive design features included high thermal mass
- Concrete slab on brick footings, built above 100 year flood level
- Load bearing earth brick walls to lower floors
- Earth Brick Veneer to Upper storey
- 'Earthwerks' stabilized earth bricks inc. 250mm to lower walls, 125mm to veneer walls
- Internal masonry walls, rendered, using concrete block
- Prefabricated truss roof
- Concrete columns to Verandas, porch & pergolas
- Recycled Kauri pine floor over timber battens fixed to Slab in Cottage
- Ornate plaster cornice and ceiling roses.
- Cedar windows, custom made to clients specification

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A grand design, very much driven by the clients vision, this substantial project has been both challenging and rewarding. Much effort has been put into ensuring specific elements, such as joinery, are proportioned correctly so they are not lost in the scale of the building.

The main building features 11 foot (3.3 m) ceilings and cement rendered walls throughout the Entry, Sitting and Dining Rooms. The north facing verandas & pergolas provide for great outdoor living, complemented beautifully by deciduous creepers that provide shade in summer. The gardens around the building are already well established and a major feature to the property. Working around these gardens through the various stages of construction has been an important factor in our operations.

The two storey construction was a significant challenge. The first floor joists were fitted to top plates bolted down on top of the load bearing earth brick and concrete block walls. Fitted with a sheet floor for a working deck, prefabricated stud walls were then erected to support the roof itself.

The entire upper storey roof was constructed on the ground. This was done specifically to minimize the risk of injury to tradesman and reduce the time and cost of construction. The prefabricated roof trusses were assembled on a dummy frame of planks laid out 600mm off the ground. Bracing and battens were fitted to the dimensionally correct frame prior to the roof sheeting, fascias, barges and spout being fitted. Once clad, with an appropriate allowance for the brick chimney, the whole roof was put in position using a crane, a task that took only a few hours.

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To construct the external earth brick veneer for the Upper storey a heavy duty scaffold was erected to the perimeter of the building. Bricks and mortar were lifted into place using a materials handler with a telescopic boom, reducing manual handling and construction times.

The level of finish and the attention to detail has been of vital importance to the success of the finished product so far. The clients deserve full credit for their vision for the project and their patience in accepting an extended construction period. Ultimately this will mean they fully realize their own goals for their home in a comprehensive manner.

When complete, this house will be one of our best. The scale of construction and the use of earth as a primary building fabric mean that this will be an iconic house that inspires others for generations to come. It highlights the flexibility of earth as a construction medium in an aesthetic and a structural sense.