

F/YR11/0982/F

20 December 2011

Applicant : Mr J Fitt

Agent : K L Elener Architectural Design

Former Wisbech Vehicle Exchange, Land West of 22 Old Lynn Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire.

Erection of 9 x 2-storey dwellings comprising 6 x 2-bed and 3 x 3-bed dwellings

This proposal is before the Planning Committee due to the recommendation being in conflict with the views of the Town Council and the development comprises more than 2 dwellings.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located in a residential part of Wisbech, approximately 1.5km north-east of the town centre. The application site comprises an industrial building, which is currently being used for vehicle repairs. Part of the building has been demolished on the site frontage and this area is being used for car parking. The rest of the site is hard surfaced. There is a slight level change across the site from front to back. The total site area measures 0.14 hectares.

The site is surrounded by residential properties. A large detached house lies immediately to the east. There is a terrace of 4 inter-war houses in Jeffrey Avenue, whose gardens back onto the rear site boundary. Semi-detached houses with long rear gardens adjoin the western site boundary.

The area is characterised by a mix of house styles from different ages as well as some bungalows on the north side of Old Lynn Road.

2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| F/YR07/0076/F | - Erection of 11 dwellings comprising; 4 x 2-bed and 3-bed terrace houses, 5 x 3-bed terraced houses and 2 x 1 bed flats with associated parking – Granted 09/08/2007 |
| F/1719/88/F | - Use of land for stationing of lorries – Withdrawn 27/05/1988 |
| F/0424/85/F | - C/U of former petrol station etc to small plant hire and erection of dwelling and double garage (part retrospective) – Granted 11/07/1985 |
| F/0161/88/O | - Residential Development – Granted 14/04/1983 |

3. CONSULTATIONS

Wisbech Town Council:

Recommend approval as members have no objections in respect of this application and welcome the development of the site.

Local Highway Authority (CCC)

No objection but would like to see some amendments to the design of the vehicular access, to provide adequate visibility splays at the site entrance and also a turning space within the site. Also concerned about the potential shortfall of parking spaces – 2 per dwelling should be provided as per Council's adopted standards. Recommend a number of highway conditions.

CCC Archaeology

The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential – a programme of archaeological investigation is to be carried out before the development is commenced. This can be secured via a planning condition.

FDC Scientific Officer

Agree with findings in Phase 1 report submitted with the application - request a Contaminated Land Condition be attached.

Middle Level Commissioners

No comments received.

Local Residents/Interested Parties:

None received

4. POLICY FRAMEWORK

FDWLP Policy

H3

- Proposal for housing development within Development Area Boundaries will normally be permitted provided it is sympathetic to the character and amenities of the location and does not give rise to serious amenity or highway problems.

E8

- Proposals for new development should:
- allow for protection of site features;
- be of a design compatible with its surroundings;
- have regard to amenities of adjoining properties;

- provide adequate access, parking etc.

E7 - Where there is no over-riding case for the preservation of an archaeology site, there should be the satisfactory provision for the investigation and recording of remains.

TR3 - Proposed developments will normally be required to provide adequate car parking in accordance with Council's approved parking standards.

East of England Plan

ENV7 - Quality in the Built Environment

Emerging LDF Core Strategy (Draft Consultation) – July 2011

CS14 - This policy seeks to deliver and protect high quality environments across the district, within all new development proposals. This policy includes criteria relating to; the protection of natural features on the site, the need for new development to make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, is of a scale that is in keeping with the shape and form of the settlement pattern and does not adversely impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

5. ASSESSMENT

Nature of Application

Planning permission was granted in August 2007 (F/YR07/0076/F) for a housing scheme containing 11 dwellings – 4 x 2-bed and 3-bed terraced houses, 5 x 3-bed terraced houses and 2x1 bed flats. This permission has now lapsed.

The current application now seeks full planning permission for 9 dwellings - 6 x 2-bed and 3 x 3-bed - in a broadly similar building arrangement and layout to that previously approved.

The application is considered to raise the following key issues;

- Principle of Development and Policy Implications

- Design & Appearance and Impact on Amenity
- Access and Parking
- Archaeology
- Other Matters

Principle of Development and Policy Implications.

The site is currently occupied by a motor vehicle repair business, and is located within the DAB of Wisbech. It lies within an area which predominantly comprises residential properties, which surround the site. The loss of a non-conforming use and its replacement by residential development is, therefore, considered to be acceptable in development plan policy terms, and also given the fact that previously residential permission on this site was granted in 2008.

In principle the development of the site for residential use is, therefore, considered to be acceptable, subject to compliance with Policies H3, E7, E8 & TR3 relating to; design and appearance, the impact on adjoining residential amenities, that satisfactory access and parking is provided, and that archaeological matters are addressed. These matters are discussed below.

Design & Appearance & Impact on Amenity.

The design of the previously approved layout was driven to a large extent by guidance in earlier versions of PPG3/PPS3 (2000/2006), which sought to increase housing densities above 30 dwellings per hectare and to provide parking at a maximum rate of 150% per dwelling. These guidelines were superseded by amendments to PPS3 and PPG13 issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government in June 2010 and January 2011 respectively. These in turn have now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The aim is to achieve high quality and inclusive design for all development. Planning decisions should ensure that developments; function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place and create attractive and comfortable places to live and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Permission should, therefore, be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

It is not accepted that the 2008 permission and its accompanying design/layout sets a benchmark, which should drive the consideration of the current scheme, without addressing emerging policy in the NPPF. Instead, it is considered that policies on the design and density contained in the new NPPF, are key material considerations by which the current proposal should also be assessed.

The current layout has a number of features which raise concerns relating to; its overall appearance in the street-scene in Old Lynn Road, the cramped nature of the internal layout and its relationship to adjoining properties. These concerns are set out below:

- The front gardens of Plots 1-4 are totally hard paved and used as open plan parking areas, with limited landscaping or front boundary treatments. This layout conflicts with the character of adjoining residential properties, which in the main have front boundaries defined by fences and walls, plus some

planting, which together contributes towards creating a softer 'landscaped' appearance in the locality.

- Within the site itself the spacing between dwellings is very cramped. Garden depths are generally only between 5.0 metres and 6.0 metres in length, resulting in very small garden areas (c 30-40 sq metres max), which are considered to be unacceptable for use by family dwellings.
- The spacing between the rear elevation of Plots 3 and 4 and the gable end of Plot 5 (the central two-storey detached house) measures 6.4m, which is considered to be too close. As a result of the positioning of Plot 5, its resultant bulk, height and massing is considered to result in a over-bearing impact on the amenities of Plots 3 and 4 by reason of; the close proximity of this gable wall adjacent to what is a relatively small garden, the resultant loss of outlook, and overshadowing as well as impact on light received in the downstairs rear windows particularly in Plot 4.
- The south gable elevation in Plot 5 contains a bedroom window at first floor level. The distance from this window to the front elevations of Plots 8 and 9 to the south (which also contain principal rooms at both ground and first floor level) measures only 9.8m. This distance is not considered to be sufficient to avoid a serious loss of privacy. The bedroom window in Plot 5 also allows direct views into the rear garden of 22 Old Lynn Rd. The previous proposal recognized that this relationship may lead to an overlooking problem and specialized windows were incorporated into the design restricting views in this direction. A standard window design has been shown in the current proposal, resulting in a potential loss of privacy to the adjoining garden area.
- The rear elevations of Plots 6 to 9 measure 5.2m (at the shortest distance) to the rear site boundary. Beyond this there are gardens to the rear of existing houses in Jeffery Avenue. Given the fact that first floor windows in the rear elevations of Plots 6 -9 will be just over 5m from the boundary, it is considered that this will result in a significant loss of privacy and overlooking into the rear gardens of the existing residential dwellings, as well as an over-bearing impact on the gardens in Jeffrey Avenue, to an unacceptable degree.
- The general site arrangement is also considered to be poor. There is no bin collection area provided for the stationing of the Council's two refuse bins per property on collection days. This will undoubtedly result in bins being left on the footway. The main parking area is grouped in one area, with limited landscape opportunities, resulting in hard surfacing and car parking dominating the internal area. No opportunity for any landscaping along the side boundary to 20 Lynn Road, is available in the current proposal, which is also considered to be necessary.

For the above reasons, the proposal is, therefore, considered to demonstrate a poor design quality and also has a significantly detrimental impact on the amenities of the adjoining residential dwellings. The proposal is, therefore, considered to fail to accord with Policies H3 & E8 in the adopted Fenland Local Plan (1993), emerging Core Strategy Policy CS14 and the NPPF.

Access and Parking.

Access to the site is via a new 5m wide private driveway off Old Lynn Road. CCC Highways have not objected in highway safety terms, but require some amendments to the layout relating to; the provision of a satisfactory access road width, the provision of an acceptable turning area within the site, acceptable junction and pedestrian visibility splays and junction design. These matters could be dealt with via the submission of amended plans. They also raise concerns that

insufficient parking spaces (2 per dwelling) are provided in the scheme.

Subject to these matters being addressed to the satisfaction of CCC (Highways), the access and parking arrangements for this proposal are, therefore, considered to comply with Policy TR3 in the adopted Fenland Local Plan (1993).

Archaeology.

Cambridgeshire Archaeology has commented that the site lies within an area of high archaeological potential. They recommend that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation and historic building recording. They recommend that these works can be secured via a planning condition.

On this basis the proposal is considered to accord with Policy E7 in the adopted Fenland Local Plan (1993).

Other Matters

Officers requested that this application be withdrawn to allow a further consideration of the design and layout of this proposal to see if an acceptable solution could be reached. The applicant has requested that the scheme be presented to the Planning Committee in its current form, and wishes to highlight the following:

- The economic advantages of approving a development of this kind in a low market area
- The likelihood of development not proceeding should a lower density be proposed
- Developments which have been approved in similar circumstances
- The various minor alterations to parking, design and layout could easily be achieved
- The proposal would result in the re-use of a commercial site for residential purposes in a predominantly residential area.

It is considered by officers that some form of residential development on this site would be welcomed, as it removes a non-conforming use from this predominantly residential area, although the current proposal does raise some serious design and layout concerns. It is considered that a revised scheme, possibly containing a reduced number of dwellings, should be able to provide an appropriate solution to overcome the concerns raised above.

Conclusion

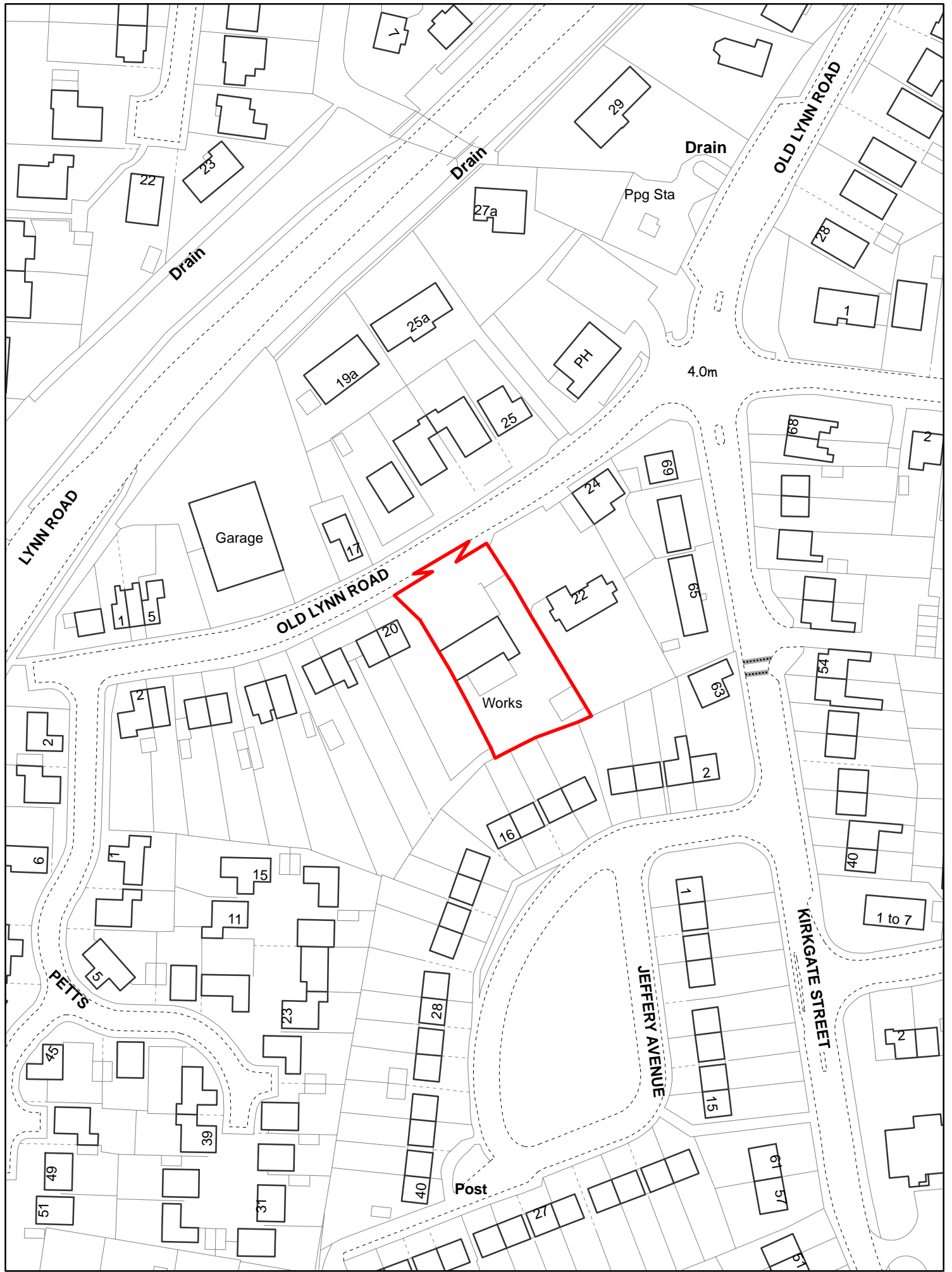
In conclusion, the proposal is recommended for refusal on the grounds of its unacceptable layout and design as well as unacceptable impact on the amenities of adjoining properties, for the reasons set out above.

6. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

- 1. The proposed layout and design of the development by reason of; its open and hard paved appearance provided along the Old Lynn Road site frontage which contains very limited mitigating landscape features, the cramped nature of the layout including the provision of relatively small private rear gardens, the close positioning of dwellings within the site, and the close proximity, height and massing of the proposed**

dwelling in relation to both proposed and existing dwellings within and adjoining the site, is considered to have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the locality as well as a significant loss of privacy and overbearing impact on existing and proposed dwellings in and around the site. The proposal, therefore, fails to accord with Policies H3 and E8 of the Fenland District Local Plan (1993) and national planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework relating to the design of new housing development.



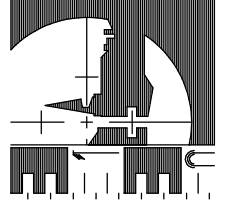
Created on: 03/01/2012

F/YR11/0982/F

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Scale = 1:1,250





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JOB
 LAND BETWEEN 20 & 22
 OLD LYNN ROAD WALSOKEN

CLIENT
 SCOTIA DESIGN

DRAWING
 TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

DWG. NO.
 LS315B/1

SCALE
 1:200

SITE
 AUG 2006



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Rev. E	X	X	X
Rev. D	X	X	X
Rev. C	X	X	X
Rev. B	X	X	X
Rev. A	X	X	X

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Project
 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
 SITE OF 22 OLD LYNN ROAD
 WALSOKEN
 WISBECH

Client
 FITT LTD

Title
 SITE LAYOUT-COLOURED

Ref
 F-3026A

Rev
 Sheet A1

Scale: 1:200 **DATE:** DEC 11



LEGEND

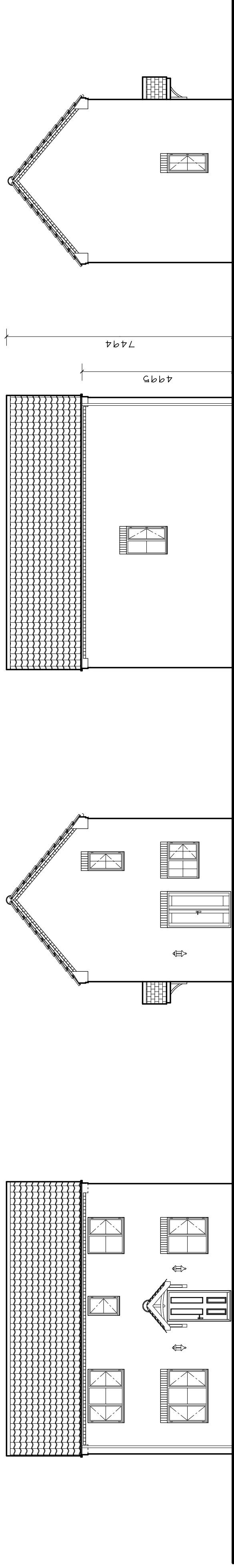
AV	Air valve
BE	Bell end
BI	Bollard
BS	Bus stop
BT	British Telecom
CC	Close circuit TV
CCV	Close circuit TV
CL	Cover level
CO	Control box
DP	Drain
ELP	Electrically hand post
EPP	Electrically hand post
EP	Electricity pole
FA	Fire hydrant
FF	Feeder post
FFS	Feeder post
FW	Full water sewer
GV	Gas valve
IC	Inspection cover
LC	Level
LB	Letter box
LP	Lamp post
LO	Lamp post
MO	Mast
MP	Mast
MP	Mast
RE	Rodding eye
RB	Road name board
RP	Road sign post
RS	Road sign post
RWP	Rain water pipe
SP	Sign post
SV	Sluice valve
SWS	Surface water sewer
TCB	Telephone coil box
TP	Telephone pole
U/C	Unusable to lift
WB	Waste bin
WW	Water meter
W	Waste out
W	Waste

NOTES:
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 Drainage pipe sizes (where shown) have been determined from the surface and should be regarded as approximate and subject to change.
 Any services (where shown) should be treated with caution and expert identification is advised.

LOCAL GRID COORDINATES

STN	EASTING	NORTHING	LEVEL	REMARKS
1	477.237	477.533	20.451	NAIL
2	500.000	500.000	20.400	NAIL
3	489.518	477.633	19.982	TEMP
4	485.517	482.773	19.328	NAIL
5	477.038	482.577	19.423	NAIL

All levels related to Stn2, arbitrary value 20.00 metres.

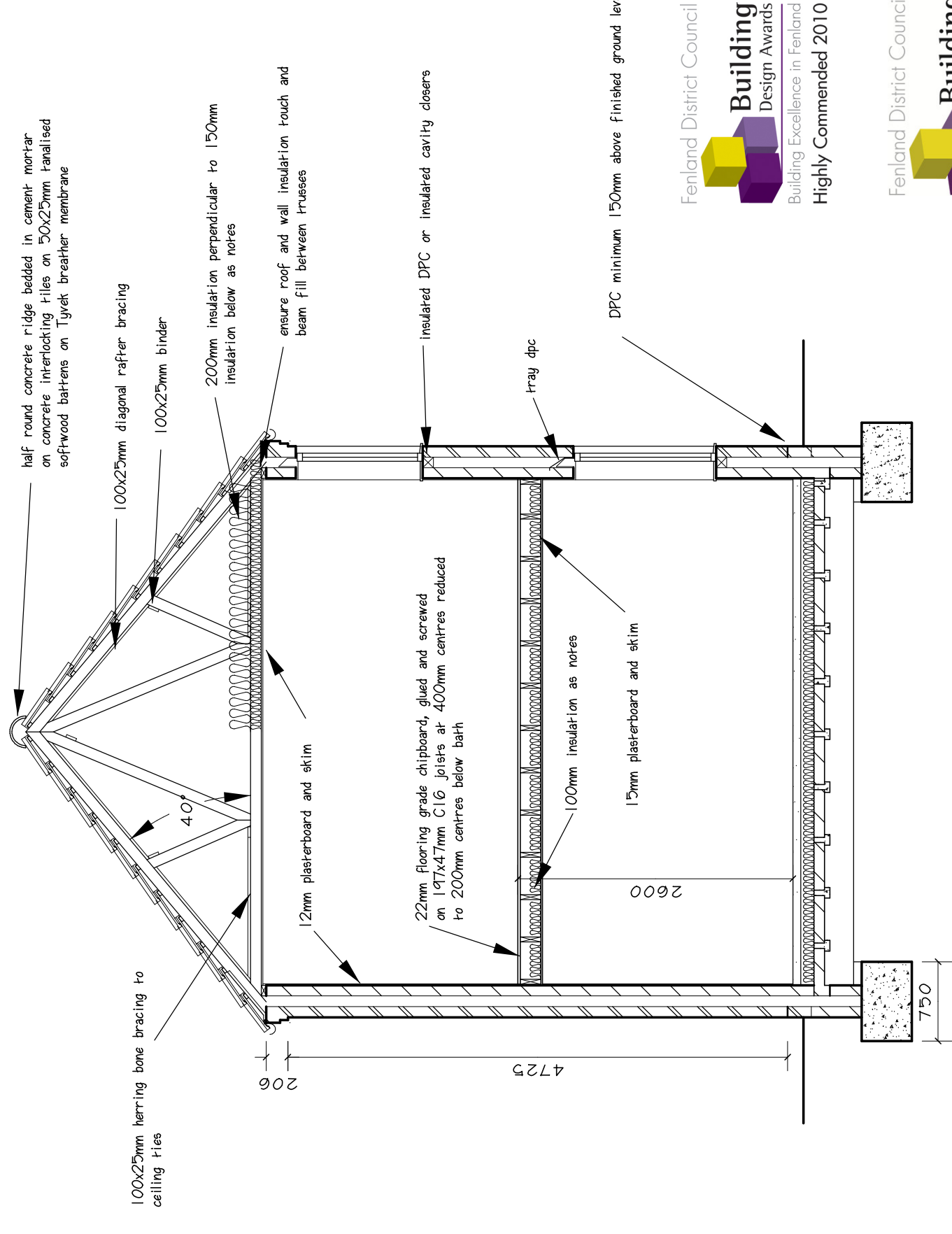


FRONT 1:100

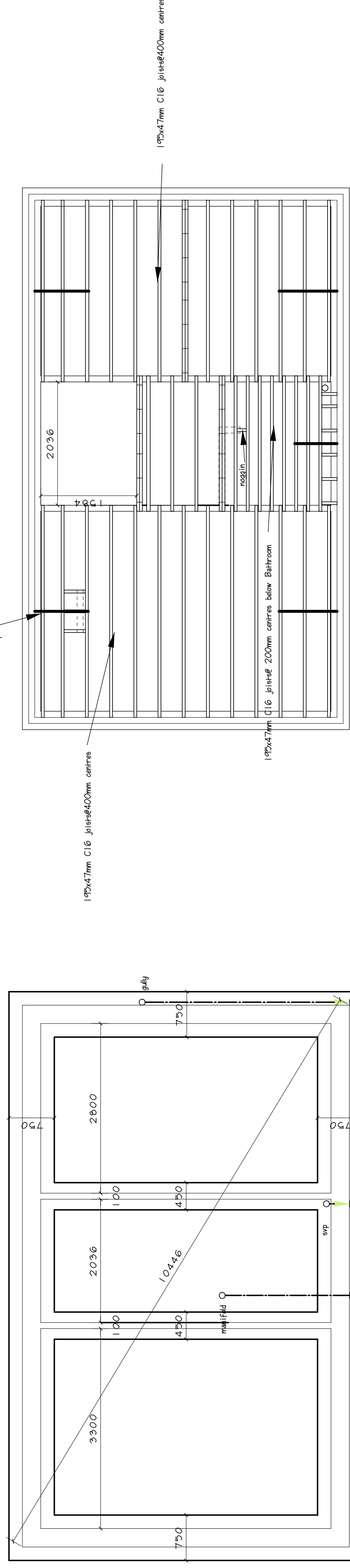
SIDE

REAR

SIDE

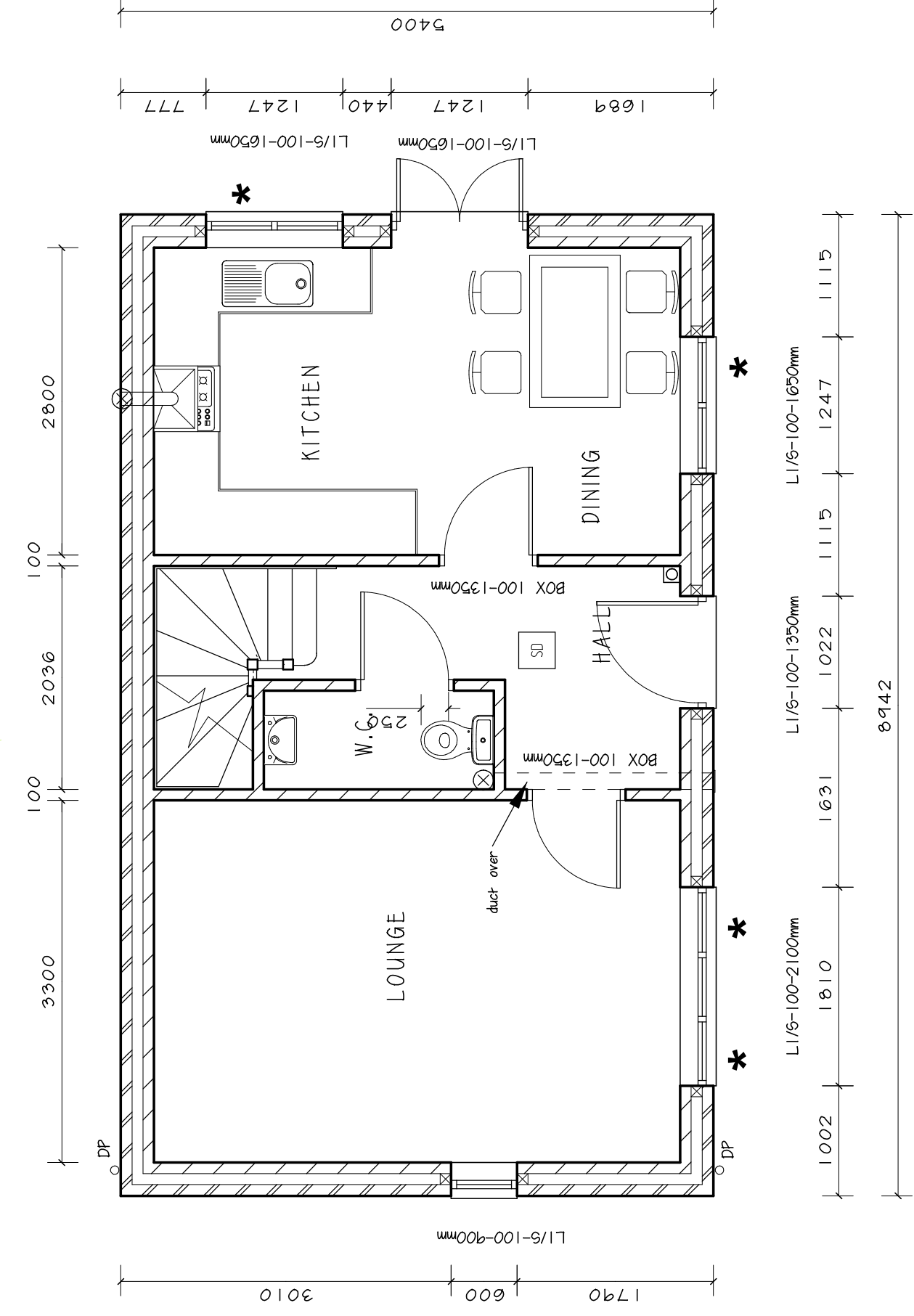


SECTION 1:50

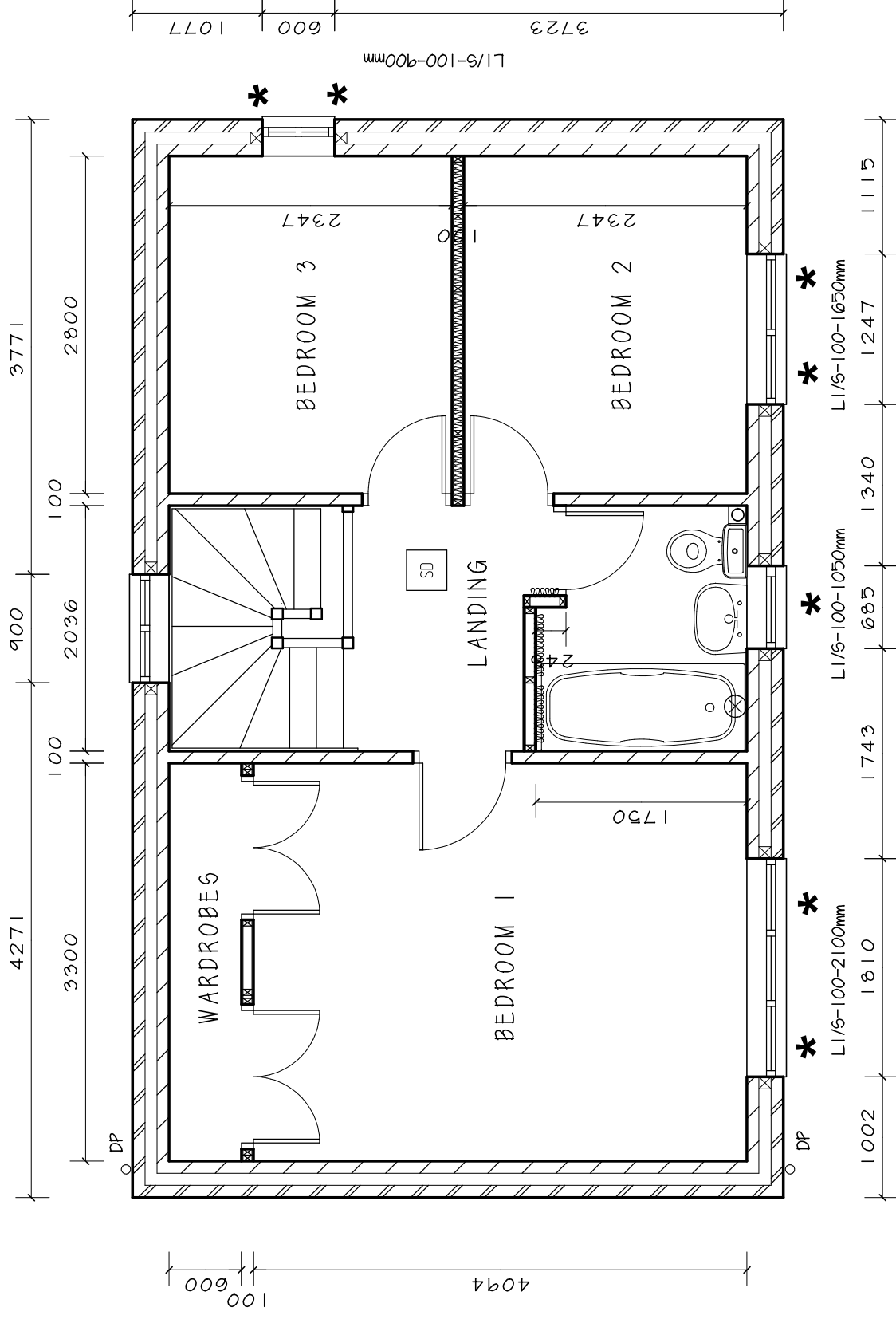
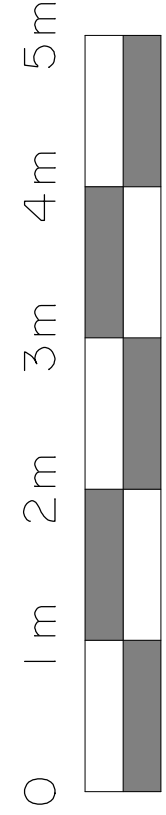


FOUNDATIONS

JOIST LAYOUT



GROUND FLOOR PLAN 1:50



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Rev.E	
Rev.D	
Rev.C	
Rev.B	
Rev.A	

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Project
THREE BEDROOM HOUSE
 PLOT 5
 OLD LYNN ROAD
 WALSOKE
 WISBECH

Client
FITT LTD

Title
WORKING DRAWING

Ref
F3026-6

Rev
 Sheet A1
 Scale: 1:50,100
 Date: OCT 2011

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