

F/YR15/0978/F

Applicant: Mr A Fletcher

**Agent : Mr Paul Hage
Siddle Grimley Hage Ltd**

Princes Food Limited, Lynn Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire

Installation of a 11.00 metre high (max) water storage tank and pump house

Reason for Committee: Called in by Councillor Mrs Bucknor to enable members to consider the visual impacts of the scheme in the context of the surrounding residential street scene against the business case for the installation of the water tower

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposal seeks planning permission for a water storage tank and pump house to serve an established factory premises.

Whilst the scheme will undoubtedly change the outlook of some residential occupiers within the immediate vicinity and will impact on the existing character of the streetscene these impacts are not considered so significant as to warrant refusal of the scheme. Furthermore the likely heritage impacts have been considered with regard to Policy LP18 and it has been concluded that no tangible impact has been found to result from the proposal.

There are no highway or other issues arising from the scheme which will deliver industry enhancements to the on-site operation which in itself achieves compliance with Policy LP6 and fully accords with the aims of the NPPF with regard to supporting business.

Given the above the recommendation with regard to the proposal is on balance one of approval.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site hosts the Princes Foods Limited operation and its appearance within the street scene is one of a commercial factory complex comprising a range of buildings of varying scales and design. Whilst the factory has road frontages to Lynn Road and Mount Pleasant Road, with independent accesses from both these highways the proposal will primarily be visible along the Mount Pleasant site frontage. Adjoining the site is a number of residential properties; again of varying styles, designs and outlooks, whilst immediately to the north is the Mount Pleasant cemetery with its associated Cemetery Cottage, Chapel, wall and gate piers, these being Grade II Listed buildings.

The front boundary of the site is formed by close boarded fencing, which has supplementary reinforcement through concrete posts with wire between. The frontage whilst having a grassed highway verge is relatively stark in the street scene with no on site landscaping.

3 PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the installation of a 11 metre high water storage tank, the tank which is proposed to be sited immediately to the front of an existing recycling building will have a diameter of 11 metres. It will feature a conical steel roof and will be light grey. Also proposed is an associated pump house, which will have a footprint of 6 metres wide x 3 metres deep with a mono-pitched roof (max height 3 metres) being constructed of profiled metal cladding in goose wing grey.

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

The sites planning history dates back to 1948 and encompasses the evolution and growth of the factory over time, permissions range from new buildings, extensions to existing factory buildings, various portable units and boiler chimneys etc. More recent history is as follows:

F/YR15/0355/F	Removal and raising of roof structure and external wall cladding to east elevation of existing production building	Granted 30/06/2015
F/YR13/0752/F	Erection of an Energy Centre incorporating 3no gas fired boilers a CHP unit and 20.3m high chimney involving the demolition of existing boiler house 5 chimneys and turbo scrubber flue	Granted 29/11/2013
F/YR13/0222/F	Erection of detached locker room (renewal of planning permission F/YR10/0149/F)	Granted 24/05/2013
F/YR12/0080/F	Erection of a building and relocation of Mechanical equipment and washing facilities for Waste materials	Granted 26/03/2012
F/YR10/0640/F	Erection of a trailer canopy to existing effluent plant erection of loading dock and office to west elevation and insertion of roller shutter door to north elevation of existing warehouse building and erection of extension to east of existing can store building	Granted 14/10/2010
F/YR07/0438/F	Erection of 2 x 21.05 metre high hydro towers involving raising the height of existing roof and erection of 5 silos	Granted 31/05/2007
F/YR06/1123/F	Installation of a 22.0 metre high flue for gas scrubber unit	Granted 14/11/2006

5 CONSULTATIONS

Town Council: Recommend that the application be supported in principle but would prefer the location of the installation to be further from the side boundary of the site.

Valuation & Estates Officer (FDC): No Objections- Subject to the following observation. Whilst it is considered that the proposal creates no direct detriment to nearby FDC-owned/maintained assets, the proposed height of the tank may appear to

be visually intrusive when viewed in the context of existing surrounding structures. One questions whether a larger tank footprint could result in a slightly reduced overall tank height.

Anglian Water Services Ltd: Anglian Water would have no comments to make on this application

Environment Agency: The site is situated within Flood Zone 3 (high risk) of the EA's Flood Map. We have no objection to the proposed development but make advisory comments relating to flood proofing measures and flood warning.

FDC Environmental Protection: No objections to the principle of the development. The location of the pump house is noted, no details of the potential impact from noise from the pump house have been provided. The applicants need to consider if the proposal will have a significant adverse effect on existing dwellings.

Conservation Officer (FDC): The Conservation Team have "no comment" to make against this application. It relates to development with an existing factory site and although there are listed buildings (associated with the Victorian cemetery) to the north of the factory site the proposed development is not going to cause tangible further harm to their setting than the presence of the factory already does.

Local Residents/Interested Parties: Two emails have been received from a nearby resident which may be summarised as follows:

- This is a monstrous construction that will dominate the view from Mount Pleasant Road
- Consider if wider consultations undertaken and visualisations more apparent within the submitted documents there would be considerably more objections
- Existing views will be horrendously blighted
- tower not necessary or aesthetically acceptable and will degrade the overall impression of the town and locality
- Princes has made no effort to acknowledge the surrounding architecture and its buildings are completely out of character
- existing boundary treatment does not screen it from view and the site would benefit from landscaping, and Princes should acknowledge their environmental responsibilities
- tower is a back up for when the mains water fails but no evidence is provided as to how often this happens
- the Chapel and Cemetery House have underground cisterns that capture rainwater could the factory contrive access to these resources or indeed constructing their own cistern fed from the roof of their existing buildings a more cost effective and environmentally sensitive solution.

6 POLICY FRAMEWORK

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Para 11 – Applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise

Para 17 – support sustainable economic development

Para 56 - Good design

Para 128-129 conserving and enhancing the historic environment

6.2 Fenland Local Plan

LP1 – A presumption in favour of sustainable development

LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP6 – Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail

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

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

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

LP18 – The Historic Environment

7 KEY ISSUES

This proposal seeks planning permission for a water storage tank and associated pump house associated with a long established factory complex situated within the town of Wisbech. The scheme seeks to be evaluated in accordance with the above policy framework and as such the economic and business benefits need to be considered alongside the visual, residential amenity and heritage impacts. Key issues are therefore:

Background

Justification

Heritage impacts

Visual and residential amenity

Highway safety and Other issues

8 ASSESSMENT

8.1 Background

This submission which follows on from a pre-application enquiry to which positive feedback was given. The supporting heritage statement which accompanies the application notes that in order to limit the visual impact of the tank on both the listed assets and the neighbouring residential properties it has been positioned as far as possible from the north and west site boundaries, whilst still being in a location which is practical to meet with the operational needs of the site.

To further reduce the visual impact the tank will be finished in a light grey colour. The tank will be located 50m from the Princes Foods northern site boundary on Mount Pleasant Road, being; 80m from the Cemetery Chapel, 85m from the Cemetery Entrance and 100m from the Cemetery Cottage.

The site boundary along Mount Pleasant Road consists of a 1.8m high close boarded timber fence. The fence and the fact that the site sits approximately 0.7m below the level of Mount Pleasant Road already offer significant screening to the site. The tank will not be higher than other structures on the existing Princes site but it is noted to be nearer to the listed assets. The scheme will enable the site to continue its manufacturing operations in the event of a failure or interruption to the mains water supply. This will reduce the reliance on the site for an uninterrupted water supply, which will reduce cost and help to maintain the profitability of the site which is a significant local employer.

8.2 Justification

At pre-application stage the site operator provided background information relating to the need for the reservoir facility to replace an outdated reservoir building within the site which was not to current industry compliance standards and was poorly located in terms of the established operation, i.e. in the middle of the logistics delivery yard. It was further highlighted that the group Technical and Water Industry Standards required the reservoir to be improved to meet audit compliance with internal standards, food standards and their key customers. The new water holding tank will have capacity for 6 hours of production water

usage and the new water distribution pipe work across the site will supply the site with food quality water at the required capacity to meet demand across the site thereby moving the water supply criteria from un-interruptible to industrial interruptible.

The existing reservoir only has 20% of the site water usage flowing through it and the remainder is drawn directly from two local main water pipes. When the factory demand is at its highest the surrounding residents could experience low pressure.

To overcome this, the Anglian Water distribution network is run at a higher pressure to ensure supply, however this leads to increased leakage rates and also pipe bursts in the area. Pipe bursts cause major disruption to the local roads and traffic whilst the bursts are being repaired. The new water tank will supply 90% of the site water requirement (all but canteen and drinking water) the high surge demands on the incoming water supplies to site will be eliminated by the holding tank. The tank will even the water demand by the site, allowing Anglian Water to reduce the risk of bursts by reducing water pressure in the mains. It may also aid in the reduction in leakage rates. Both of these will have a positive impact on the local residents and the environment.

In addition the agents for the scheme have provided a plan which illustrates the distance of the tower from residential boundaries, which will be available at committee; they have also given an overview of the rationale behind the site as selected; this being as follows:

A number of factors have been considered when siting the tank;

- New water supply to the tank & minimising the pipes from the mains to the tank.
- Design of the new distribution system from the tank to the existing site water connections.
- Compliance to Legionella legislation (L8) to minimise pipe runs and dead legs.
- Aesthetics and minimising the impact on neighbours.
- Ground conditions to accept the tank.
- Future factory development & expansion.

Locations considered:

- **Location in front car park;** Rejected as too close to neighbours, visible from the park, takes away from the site front elevation with listed buildings, major disruption during installation (digging up the main road in front of the factory) and a new car park would be required at the rear of the site behind the warehouses.
- **Location at the rear of the site behind the current warehouses;** Rejected as much too close to neighbours, furthest from incoming water supply and feed to the factory, also poor ground conditions.
- **Location at rear of site next to Re-Cycle Centre;** Current proposal as this meets all of the considerations, with the minimum impact on the design integrity and legislative compliance as well as planning considerations.

It is clear therefore that careful consideration has been given to the optimum siting of the tower and that there is a strong business case for the development which complies with Policy LP6 and Para 21 of the NPPF with both these frameworks seeking to support existing business sectors. In addition there may be positive benefits accruing to residential occupiers in the area with regard to the existing

water supply.

8.3 Heritage impacts

In accordance with Policy LP18 the impact of the proposal needs assessment with specific regard to the heritage assets within the vicinity of the site. The Princes site is established and lies to the south of the Mount Pleasant Cemetery with its associated cemetery chapel, entrance gates and walls and cottage which are all listed buildings. Specialist advice has been sought from the Council's Conservation Officer who identifies that the installation per se will not cause tangible further harm to the setting of these heritage assets when considered against the backdrop of the existing factory complex as such there are no issues arising with regard to Policy LP18.

8.4 Visual and residential amenity

The consultation comments regarding the scale of the tower, its position on site and the likely impact of the development proposal on the character of the area per se and residential amenity in terms of outlook are acknowledged. Officers are mindful of the existing on site presentation of the wider complex. There are a range of structures and buildings within the site boundaries and some evidence of tall structures within the site environs. Whilst undoubtedly the tower will have a certain degree of prominence within the street scene the visualisations contained within the heritage statement submitted appear to over emphasise their impact on the streetscene by virtue of their rendition.

In real terms the tower will be sited circa 40 metres from the front boundary against the backdrop of an existing factory building some 7.5 metres in height. It is noted that its location is currently used for pallet storage and at the time of site inspection the pallets although stacked at some height were only partially visible from a limited number of public vantage points; and indeed a significant proportion of the recycling building was screened by the existing boundary treatment with only the upper section of the building immediately visible. Whilst it is appreciated that the tower will exceed the height of this building the impact of this height increase is not considered so significant as to warrant refusal of the scheme on visual amenity grounds

Similarly whilst the outlook of certain residences may change as a result of the placement of the tower any adverse impacts are restricted to views into the site and do not extent to encompass overlooking, overshadowing or loss of light -and as such on balance, having given due weight to the business requirements outlined by the agents for the scheme, any residential amenity impacts are not so significant as to warrant refusal of the scheme.

Officers have fully considered the residential amenity issues raised during the consultation process however mindful that the tower will be sited circa 30 metres from the nearest residential occupier (and circa 80 metres from the residential occupier who has indicated their opposition to the scheme) and situated against a backdrop of an established factory complex it is not considered that the tower will dominate in terms of existing outlook and as such a recommendation for refusal, especially when measured against the business benefits could not be sustained.

Based on the above evaluation the scheme is considered to accord with Policy LP16 of the FLP.

8.5 Highway safety and other issues

No alterations are proposed to the existing access/servicing requirements of the site and the proposal neither impacts on or raises further requirements for on-site parking as it does not create operational floor space.

Suggestions made during the consultation process have been considered by the applicant's agent and further justification has been provided, these justifications being captured in the report. The agents have also advised that an increase in tank diameter, as suggested by a contributor, could only be achieved by extending the tank into the existing staff car park. This would affect site operations and would result in the tank being closer to the site boundary and existing properties than currently shown. They further note that the existing waste recycling building next to the proposed tank is only 3.5m lower than the proposed tank.

Noise Impacts: In response to the comments received from the FDC Environmental Protection team the applicant's agent has advised that the pump set to be used for the new tank will be relocated from the existing reservoir pump house. The applicant has confirmed that these pumps are 'very quiet, noise output within the existing pump house is only 64DbA and with the door shut you cannot tell from outside if the pumps are running'. The new pump house will be constructed from blockwork walls and have an insulated metal clad roof which give similar sound insulation to that of the existing plant room. Sound levels at the site boundary are not expected to exceed the existing background noise levels. The further observations of the FDC Environmental Protection team are awaited in this regard, and will be reported to committee; however it would appear from the response given that there are no noise impacts arising from the scheme.

Flood Risk: The comments of the Environment Agency will be conveyed to the applicant by way of informative.

9 CONCLUSIONS

The proposal seeks to facilitate on-site operational enhancements to serve an established factory; whilst it is appreciated that there may be some visual impacts arising from the scheme in the locality and with regard to the outlook from some residences these impacts when balanced against the business case put forward are not considered so significant as to warrant refusal of the scheme which is therefore favourably recommended.

10 RECOMMENDATION: Grant

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

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

Case Officer Date:	Team Leader Date:
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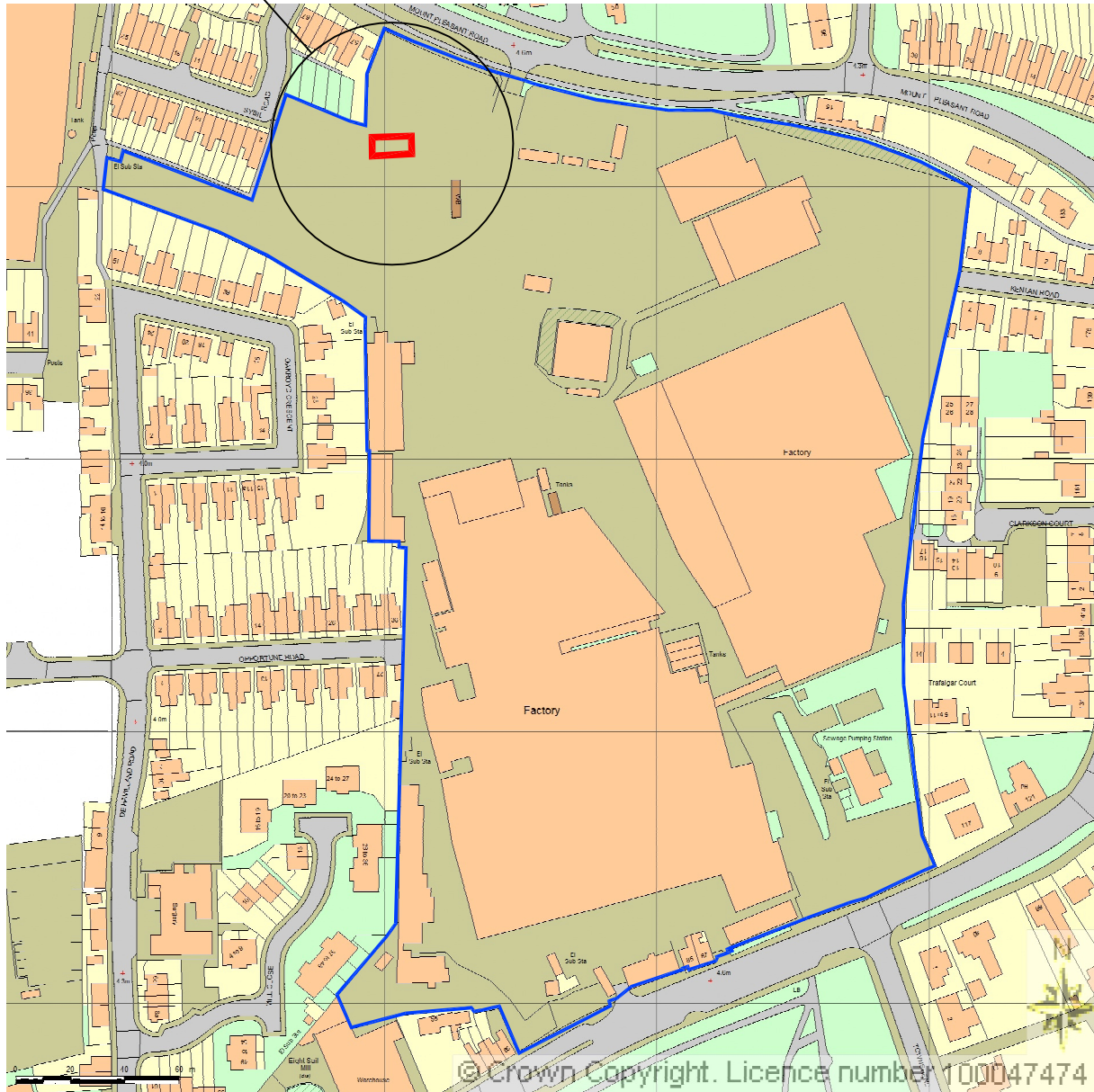
SITE LOCATION PLAN

AREA 16 HA

SCALE: 1:2500 on A4

CENTRE COORDINATES: 546461 , 310267

Location of proposed development.



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Client / Project Title

Princes Foods, Wisbech – Proposed Water Storage Tank

Drawing Title

SITE LOCATION PLAN

Siddle Grimley Hage



Consulting Engineers

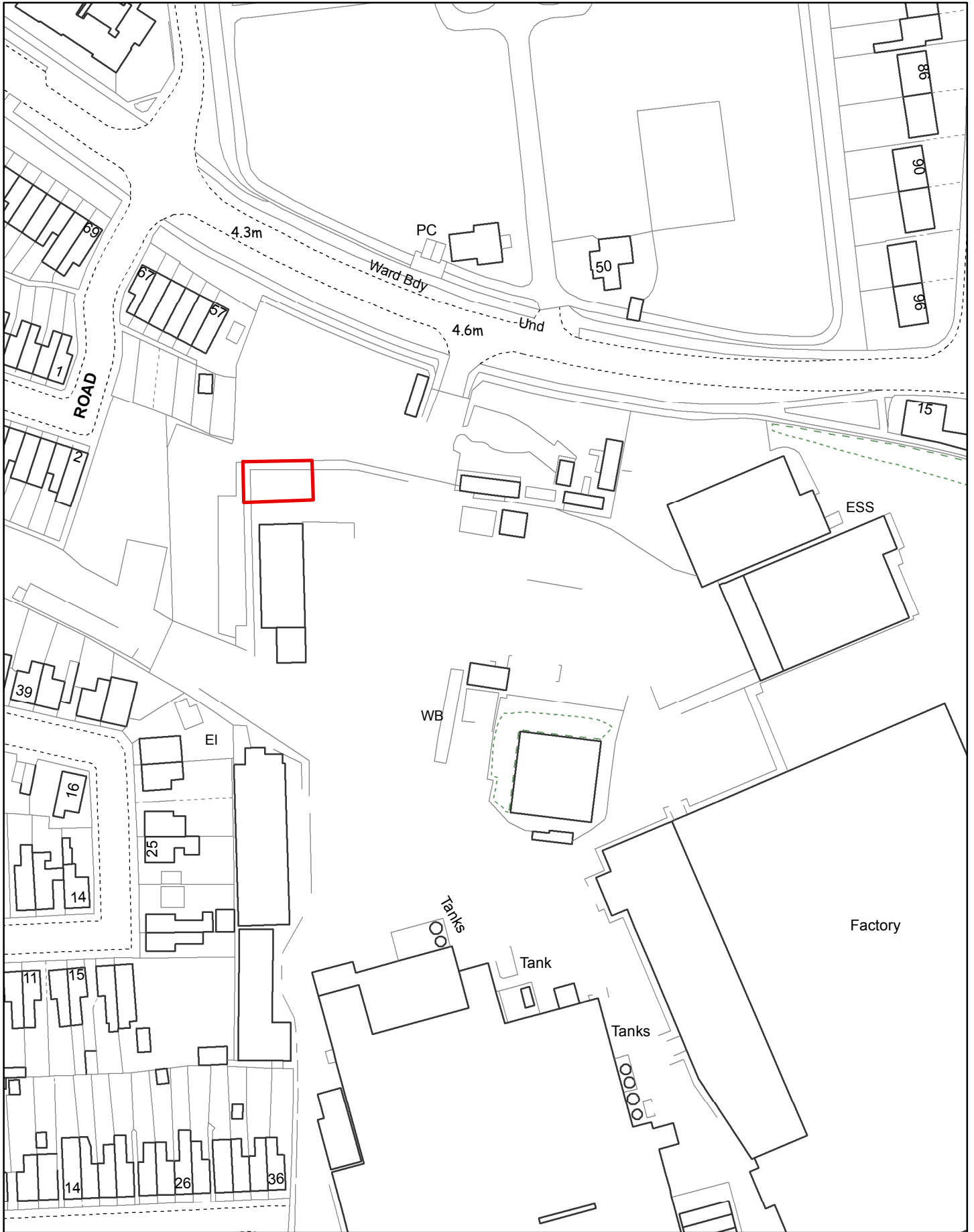
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SG	PH	PH	Oct 15	1:2500	Draft

Job Number / Drawing Number	Rev
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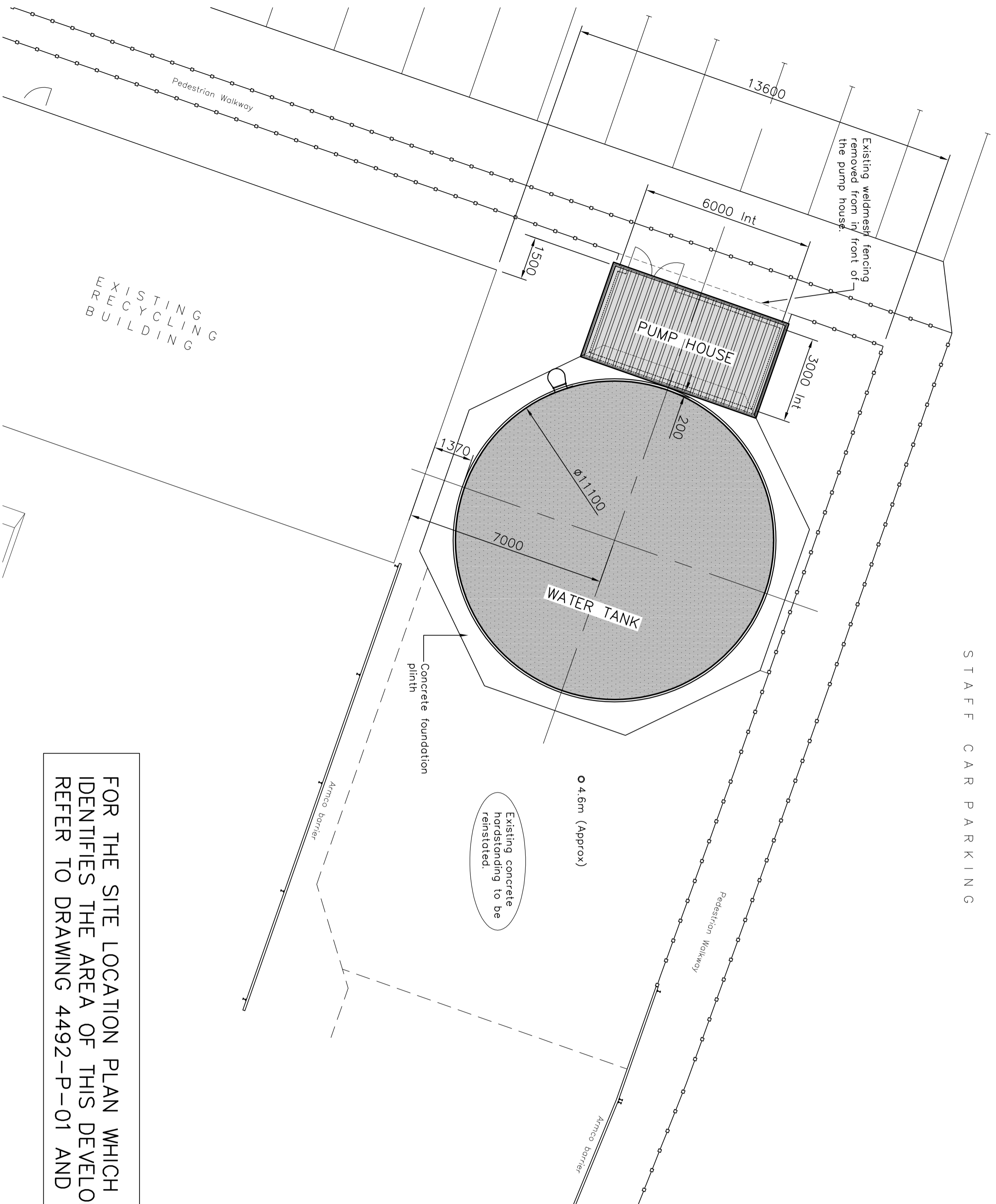
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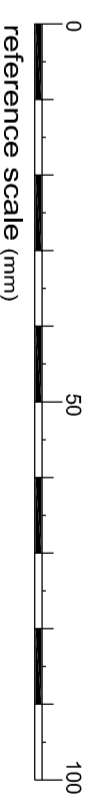
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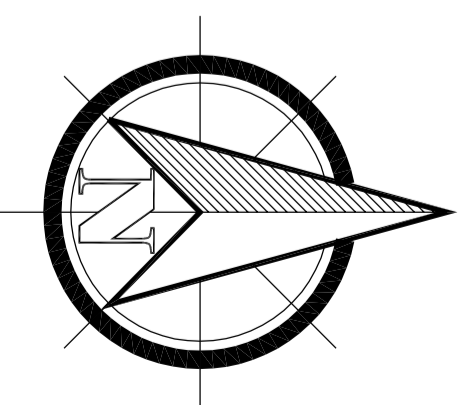
S T A F F C A R P A R K I N G

FOR THE SITE LOCATION PLAN WHICH IDENTIFIES THE AREA OF THIS DEVELOPMENT REFER TO DRAWING 4492-P-01 AND P-02.



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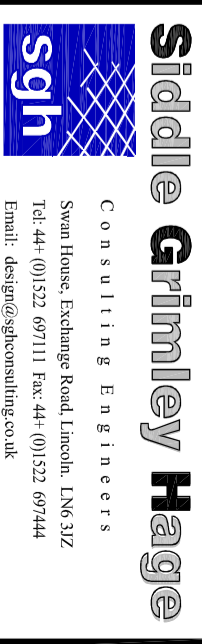
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Client
Princes Foods – Wisbech

Project Title
Proposed Water Storage Tank (Reservoir)

Drawing Title
PROPOSED (PART) SITE PLAN

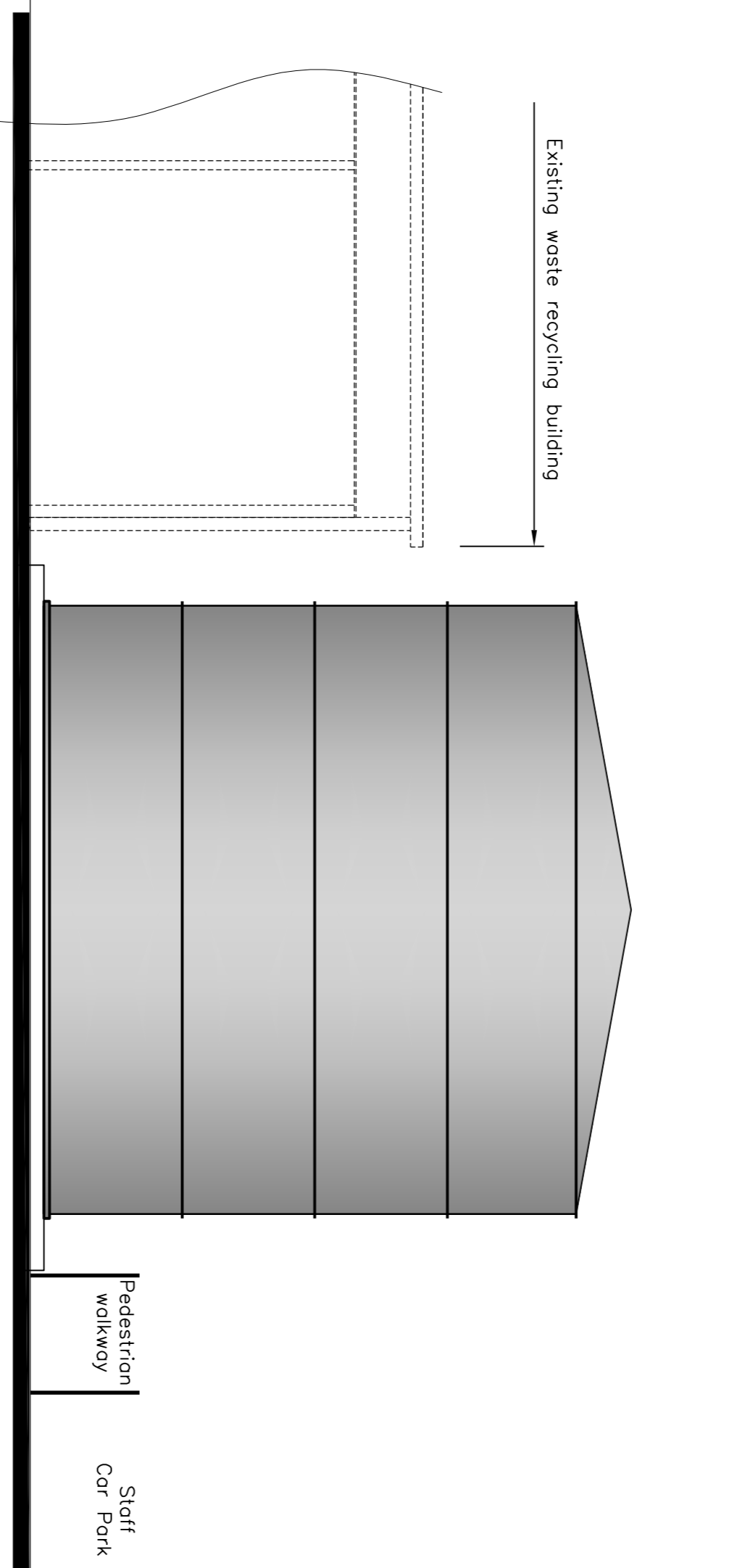
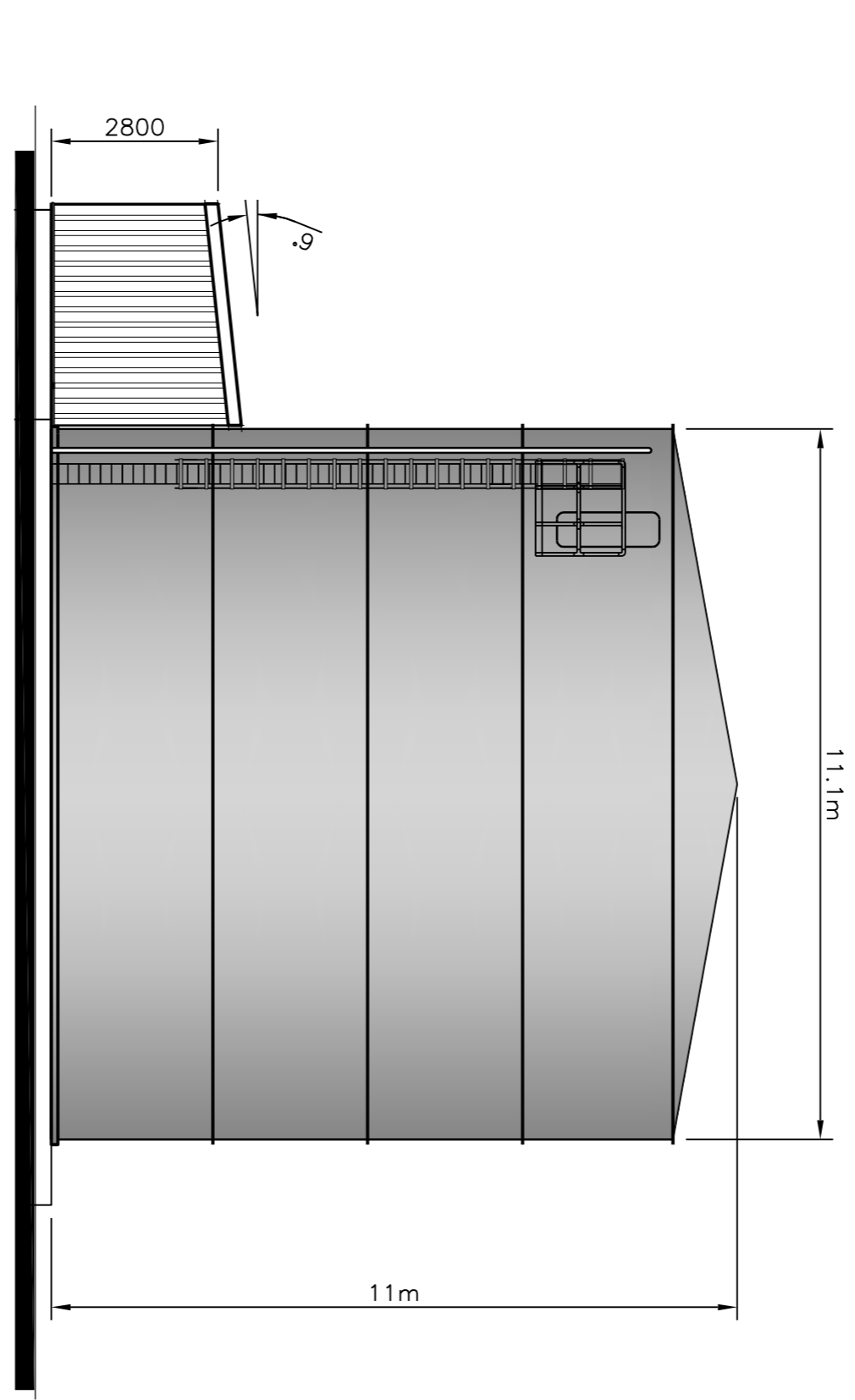
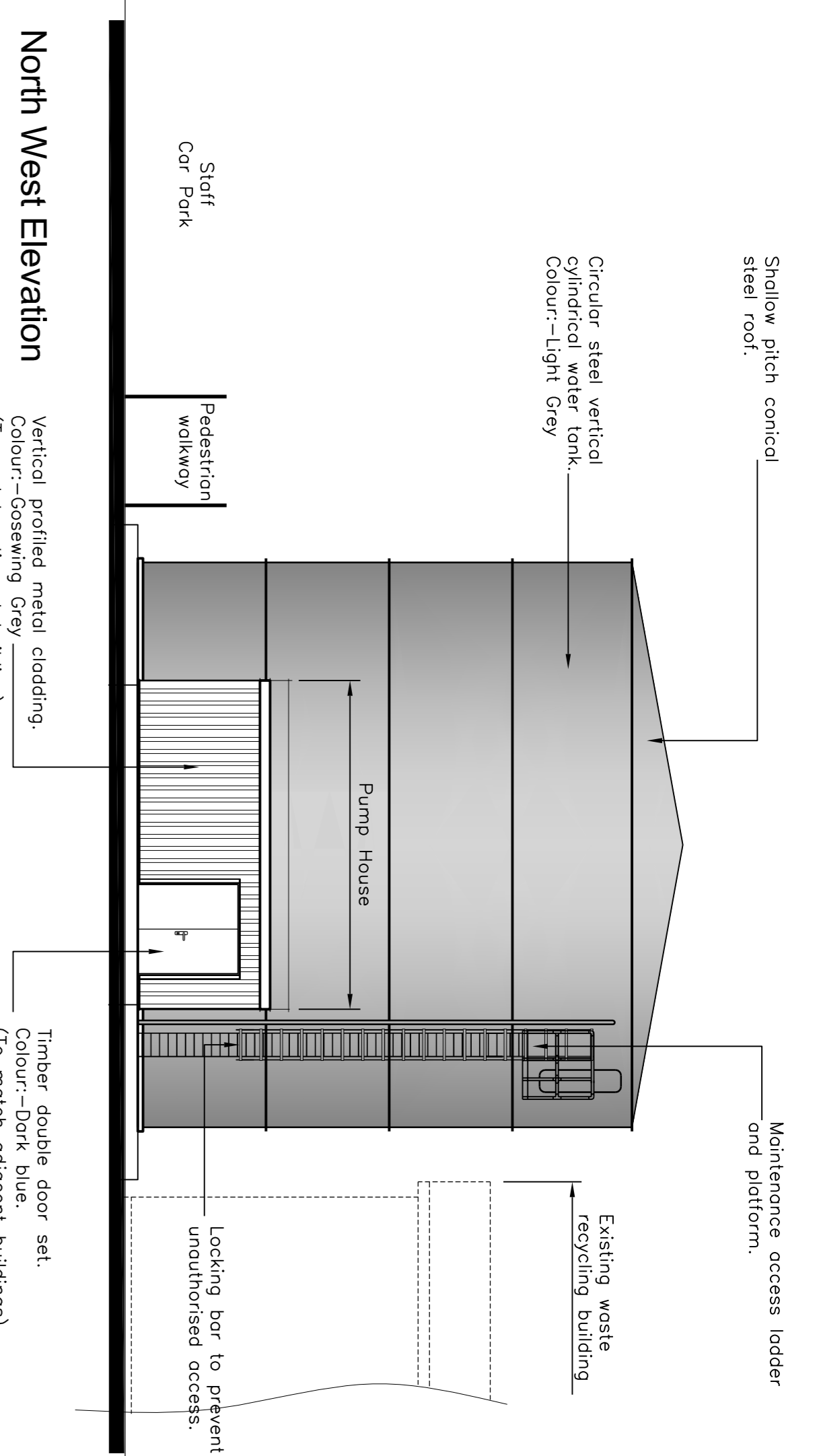
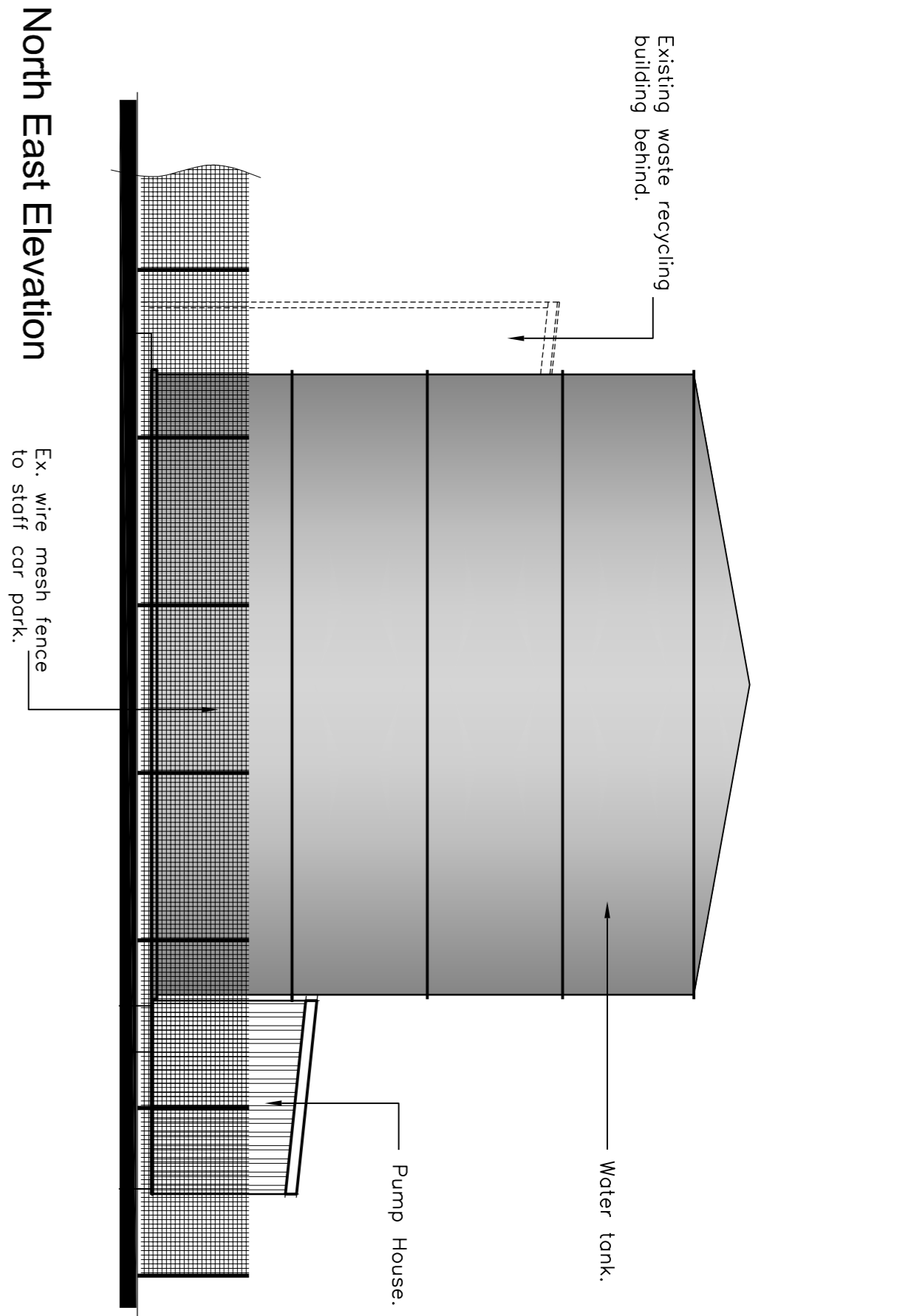
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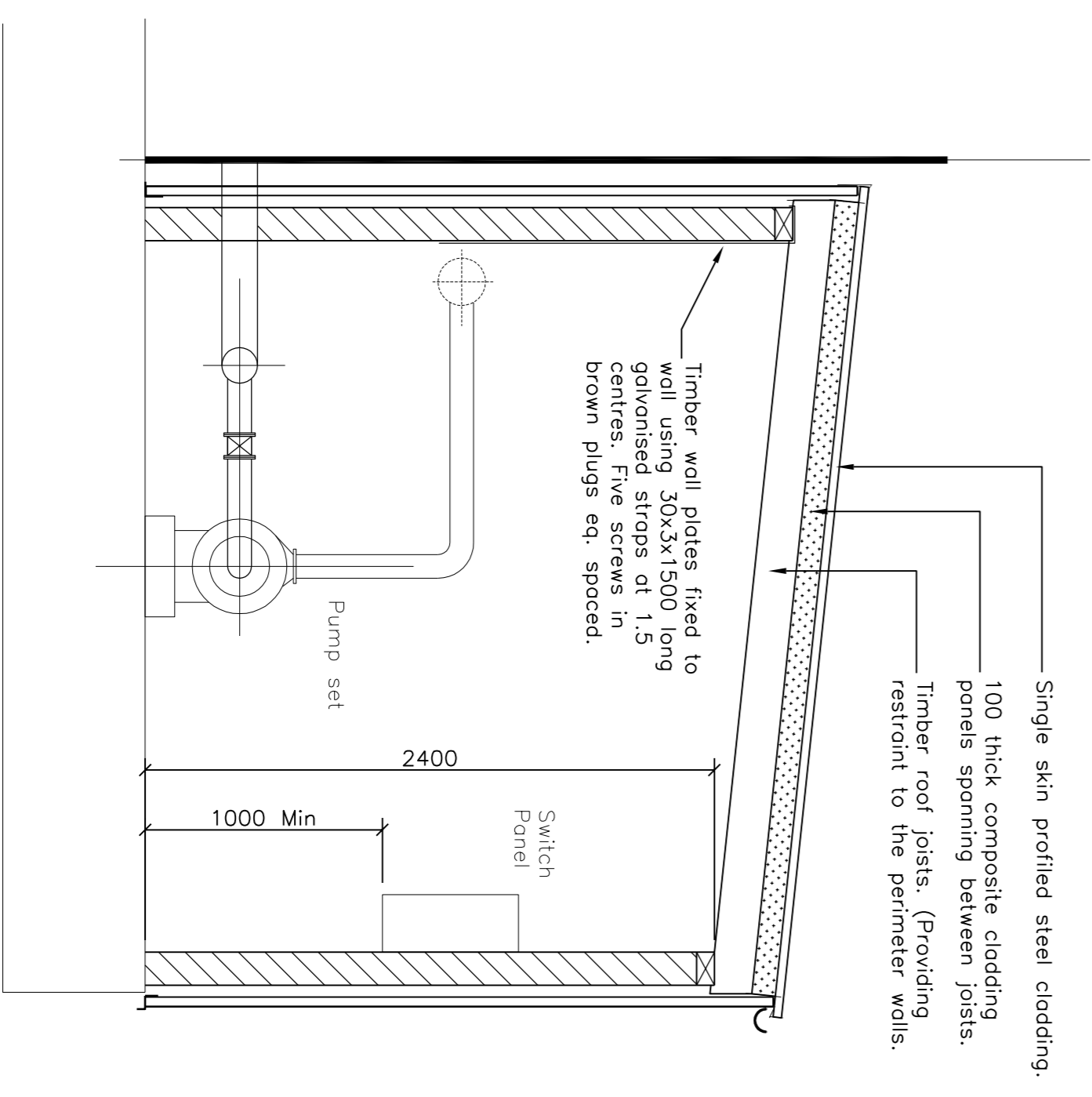
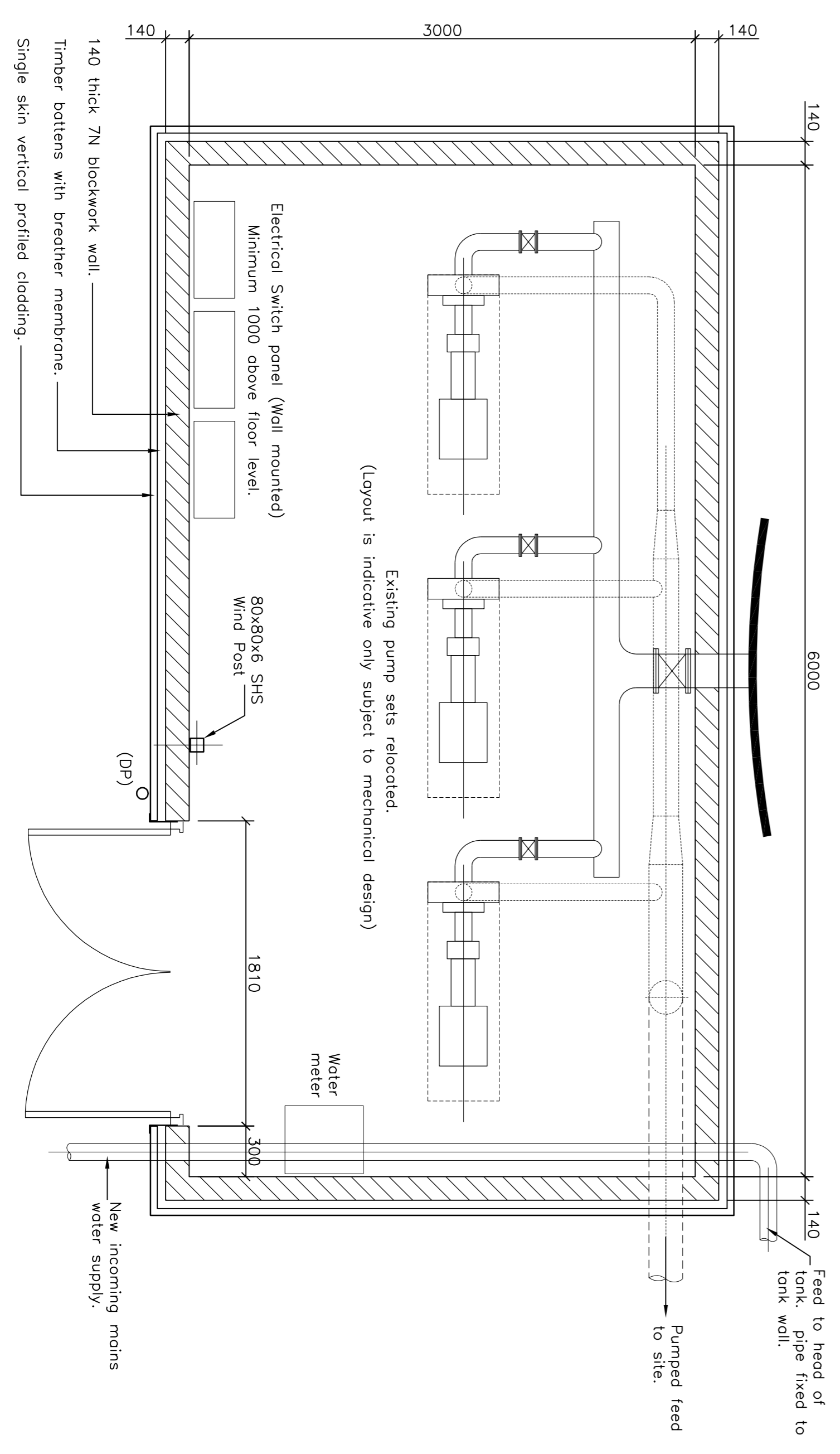
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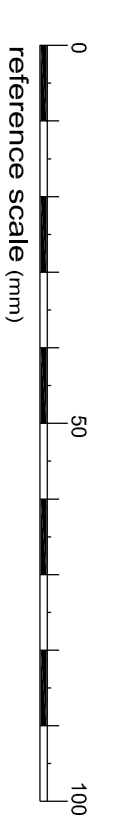
South West Elevation

South East Elevation



Pump House Floor Plan

Typical Section Through Pump House



Rev	Date	Drawn By	Checked By	Reviewed By
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Project Title Proposed Water Storage Tank (Reservoir)				
Drawing Title WATER TANK & PUMP HOUSE Plans and Elevations				
Scale @ A1	1:100, 1:50	Status	Planning	
Date	Oct 15	Drawn By	Checked By	Reviewed By
		SC	PHH	PHH
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Job Number /Drawing Number	4492-P-04			Rev