Agenda Item	6.4
Report No	PLN/093/21

#### HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** North Planning Applications Committee

**Date:** 7 December 2021

Report Title: 21/03237/FUL: The Glenmorangie Company Ltd

Land 700M NW Of Tower View, Fearn

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

# **Purpose/Executive Summary**

**Description:** Erection of whisky maturation warehouses, cask filling and disgorging

facility with associated tank farm, tanker filling bay, welfare facilities, car

park and associated infrastructure.

**Ward:** 07 – Tain and Easter Ross

**Development category:** Major

Reason referred to Committee: Major Development

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.

#### Recommendation

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

#### 1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The application seeks planning permission for a whisky maturation facility. The application has been submitted due to the applicant's current warehouses, located at the Glenmorangie distillery in Tain, being at capacity. The applicant has stated that additional warehousing is required to safeguard the future growth in stock. The proposed development will be operated to provide long-term storage of alcohol spirit and Scotch Whisky produced at the Glenmorangie distillery in Tain, and as required, other distilleries elsewhere in Scotland.
- 1.2 The proposed development comprises of 16 warehouses, and associated infrastructure. Key elements of the development as assessed within its supporting Environmental Impact Assessment Report include:
  - 12 palletised warehouse buildings with a ridge height of 10.5m;
  - 4 racked warehouse buildings with a ridge height of 14.1m;
  - Processing building;
  - Laydown area for cask storage;
  - Office:
  - Welfare building and facilities;
  - Internal access roads;
  - 'Tip and Fill' facility building with associated processing building, tank farm and bay area; and
  - Electrical switch room
- 1.3 The applicant has set out a programme of construction for the proposed development that will be undertaken over a 5 year period:
  - 2022 Three warehouses and site utilities;
  - 2023 Three warehouses;
  - 2024 Three warehouses and welfare buildings;
  - 2025 Two warehouses;
  - 2026 Two warehouses; and
  - 2027 Three warehouses, cask laydown storage areas and tip and fill facility.
- 1.4 Site access will be via the existing junction to the B9166, which also serves the adjacent potato storage buildings (ref. 10/04991/FUL) granted planning permission in 2011.
- 1.5 The applicant utilised the Council's Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments. The advice provided set out that while the development is supported in principle there were some concerns in relation to the design and layout of the development. Furthermore, as these types of development are directed towards sites already allocated for such uses (business / industry) and are located within existing settlements supporting evidence would be required that clearly demonstrates why this site has been chosen. If these issues were satisfactorily addressed, then the proposed development could be supported.

- 1.6 The applicant undertook public consultation in the form of an online webpage that was open to the public from 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The applicant also engaged with a number of community councils in vicinity of the site including, Fearn, Balintore and Hilton, Nigg and Shandwich Community Councils.
- 1.7 The application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which contains chapters on Landscape and Visual Impacts; Archaeology and Cultural Heritage; Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology; Ecology and Biodiversity; Noise and Vibration; Air Quality and Odour; Major Accident and Disasters; Climate Change and includes a Schedule of Mitigation. The application is also accompanied by a Planning Statement and a Transport Statement.
- 1.8 There have been no variations to the proposals since the application was lodged.

#### 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located on land 700m to the south of the village of Fearn, 1.4km to the west of the seaboard village of Balintore, approximately 8km from Tain and around 10km from Glenmorangie distillery. The site area lies within the historic military airfield at Fearn and covers an area of around 20.5 hectares. The site and immediate surrounding area is characterised by relatively low-lying, flat undulating plain. The site has a number of military buildings in various states of disrepair. There are a number of trees and native bushes within the site. Most notably an area to the northwest of the site which includes 'Native Woodland'.
- 2.2 The site and its wider surrounds comprise the remains of a Second World War airfield, originally used by the Royal Air Force and subsequently by the Royal Navy, along with an associated nearby accommodation camp (located 1.9km east of the proposed site). Within the existing site there remains 11 hangars and several associated buildings. These are dispersed across the north side of the site. Only 1 of the hangars survives intact and is being used as a barn which will be demolished in a controlled manner to facilitate the proposed development. This building is described as a 'Mainhill type' hangar in the form of a large, corrugated iron shed, with a sliding door on its southern side. Blast protection banks, of earth and now overgrown with gorse, surround the other three sides. The blast protection banks are virtually all that survive of the remaining 10 hangars. The associated buildings comprise of bomb shelters, storehouses, a firing range, water tanks and other buildings of uncertain function. Of these buildings 8 structures remain varying in condition, with some only consisting of concrete floors and scattered brick rubble is mostly all that remains of them. These 8 structures will be demolished and removed in a controlled manner.
- 2.3 The former airfield is now utilised as a business/industrial estate (Fearn Drome) which is allocated for development within the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan and agricultural ground, with the remains of the former WWII use/buildings still evident, including the C(s) Listed Control Tower to the South of the application site. The former control tower (to the south east) for the former airfield has been converted

to residential use. Further to this range of brick, concrete and metal structures, runways, taxiways and earthworks remain within vicinity of the site. Further south beyond the former military airfield lies a small private operational airfield - Easter Airfield.

- 2.4 Within the site there are two existing turbines located to the eastern edge and planning permission for a further turbine approximately 20m east of the site (ref. 11/03944/FUL). The turbines are considered to be of a small scale, with a blade tip height of 27m. The neighbouring farm to the south-east operates as a large potato farm, which includes a substantial storage and packing building, beyond which is the Fearn Drome Industrial Estate.
- 2.5 This development will utilise the existing new access that was installed for the potato farm. The access will require some upgrading works and the inclusion of a passing place. The access road joins the existing B9166 road around the airfield perimeter, with the proposed development situated north and south of this road.
- 2.6 The north of the site will principally contain the warehouse buildings, whilst the smaller southern part of the site will comprise the 'Tip and Fill' facility, tank farm, hardstanding area for cask storage and tanker movements, and offices and welfare facilities.
- 2.7 There are no statutory nature conservation designations relevant to ecology within the boundaries of the proposed development. The proposed development area is within 10km of the following designations:

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Moray Firth SAC

Special Protection Area (SPA)

- Moray Firth SPA
- Loch Eye SPA
- Cromarty Firth SPA
- Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet SPA

Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)

- Talich SSSI
- Rosemarkie to Shandwick Coast SSSI
- Loch Eye SSSI
- Calrossie SSSI
- Morrich More SSSI
- Dornoch Firth SSSI

- 2.8 The site is identified as lying adjacent to the medium likelihood (0.5% annual probability or 1 in 200 year) flood extent of the SEPA Flood Map, and may therefore be at medium to high risk of flooding. There is also a risk of surface water flooding at the site. In addition, there is a small watercourse running through the site partially culverted as well as several watercourses adjacent to or along the site boundaries.
- 2.9 The site is approximately 1km southeast of Fearn Abbey which dates to the early 14<sup>th</sup> century and is category A listed.
- 2.10 The applicant provided a comprehensive review of available sites within a 45 minute radius from their Glenmorangie distillery site at Tain. The assessment includes a number of sites, including Fearn Drome Industrial Estate. Fearn Dome Industrial Estate was assessed as not being suitable for the proposed development, due to a number of the units being occupied and it would be difficult to identify a single contiguous site that could be development. This would result in the proposed development being spread over a wider area than that proposed. Generally, the proposed site has been selected mainly due to the proximity to their existing site at Tain, size and security offered.

## 3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 07.12.2020 20/03919/PAN Erection of whisky maturation Case Closed

warehouses, cask filling and disgorging facility with associated tank farm, tanker filling bay,

welfare facilities and car park

3.2 21/04514/HSC Hazardous Substance Consent Pending

for use and storage of distilled spirit

Consideration

## 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: EIA and Unknown Neighbour

Date Advertised: 06.08.21 and 24.09.21

Representation deadline: 24.10.21

Timeous representations: 0

Late representations: 0

#### 5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Contaminated Land Team** do not object to this application, subject to the recommended condition being attached to ensure further investigations are carried out prior to development to ensure there is no contamination issues. An asbestos survey of the existing buildings is also recommended prior to their removal.
- 5.2 **Development Plans Team** do not object to this application. It identifies that the site is considered brownfield land and therefore Policy 42 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) 'Previously Used Land' applies. It explains that Policy 42 supports the principle of bringing such sites back into active use. It notes that this

development is dependent on contaminated land remediation and accordance with other relevant planning policies. It explains that the principle of the development is supported by the Development Plan.

5.3 **Environmental Health Officer** does not object to this application. The main concerns are that noise or odours from the proposed development could have an adverse impact on any nearby sensitive properties or the proposed development could have an adverse impact on local air quality. Any construction noise based activities will be mitigated through the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and anticipated working hours. It has states that although the applicant has assessed the construction impacts as having no significant effects, the working hours should be from 08:00 – 19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 – 13:00 Saturday rather than the 07:00 start proposed by the applicant. Standard provisions should be applied for construction working activities not taking place on Sunday or public holiday.

In terms of operational noise, it highlights that the applicant predicts the noise level at the nearest noise sensitive property as being low and between 31 – 32dB and that the internal noise levels for the nearest noise sensitive receptor will comply with Noise Rating 20 Curve (NR20). Further, it highlights that the applicant has not identified night-time noise sources within the EIAR. Provided that the mitigation measures are implemented in accordance with those outlined in the EIAR, it considers that it is unlikely that the operational noise will result in loss of amenity or breach of legislation otherwise enforced by Environmental Health. It considers that as full details of specific plant to be used on site are not available yet, to prevent any potential future loss of amenity, it recommends that a noise condition regarding night-time operations is included in any planning permission granted.

It requests that dust mitigation measures should be secured through the CEMP due to the volume of earth works as set out within the EIAR.

Based upon the information in the EIAR, Environmental Health understand that there will be no distilling within the proposed development. It considers that the main source of odour will be from the transfer of finished spirit from tankers to cask which will take place internally within the process building. It notes that the EIAR has concluded that the proposed development will result in a negligible risk of odour. It explains that the EIAR undertook a screening exercise which confirms that the proposed development will not trigger any need for a detailed assessment of potential air quality impacts as the potential impact would be negligible.

Flood Risk Management Team (FRMT) do not object following submission of further information related to flood risk. It highlights that SEPA's online strategic mapping shows that the site lies adjacent an indicated area of fluvial flooding during a 1 in 200-year return period storm event. This suggests that the flood risk from this source may be medium to high.

It explains that the site is shown to lie within / adjacent to a large area of artificial drainage, ultimately connected to and draining through the Fearn Canal. Initially, the applicant did not provide enough information to demonstrate that the risk of fluvial flooding, adjacent to the site's northwest corner is low. Further information was requested and subsequently submitted that demonstrates the risk was low, resulting in FRMT removing their objection.

It sought confirmation of the future management and maintenance of the Fearn Canal following the applicant stating that that that the drainage network (or parts of it) managed or maintained by the 'Fearn Farmer's Community'. It has stated that the applicant should be aware that there may be an element of commercial risk from flooding, should the maintenance of the Fearn Canal drainage system not be appropriate. It recommends that any construction is formed using flood resistant and flood resilient materials and techniques.

It indicates that SEPA's online strategic mapping shows that the site lies within and adjacent to areas of indicted pluvial flooding during a 1 in 200-year storm event. It suggests that the flood risk from this source may be medium to high. Given the small indicated size of the areas shown within the site and the lack of connectivity with other areas of indicated pluvial flooding, the FRMT is content that any on-site pluvial flood risk can be managed by a suitable drainage strategy.

It accepts the drainage proposals, subject to the use of recommended planning conditions including the provision of a finalised Drainage Impact Assessment inclusive of soakaway testing.

- 5.5 **Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)** do not object to this application subject to an appropriate planning condition to secure an archaeological evaluation and photographic records of the structures, survey of impacts to structures and associated features as well as demarcation and protection in situ where possible. It considers that the EIAR includes a comprehensive assessment of the historic environment baseline. It agrees with the recommendations within the EIAR for mitigation in relation to Cultural Heritage.
- 5.6 **Transport Planning Team** do not object to this application following the submission of details of the visibility splays at the junction with the public road with a set-back distance of 4.5m and visibility of 215m in each direction.
- 5.7 **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** do not object to the application. HSE's response is limited to their role in the land use planning system on the control of major industrial hazards involving dangerous substances. At this stage it was not clear to HSE if the proposed development will store or process hazardous substances in quantities relevant to the potential for industrial major accidents with respect to the Town and Country Planning (Hazardous Substances) (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations 2015. Although such major accidents are of low likelihood, it could have significant effects on the population at the proposed development and on local populations. As such the applicant has submitted an application for Hazardous Substances consent and HSE have been reconsulted.

HSE confirmed that the development is not located within a safeguarding zone of an Explosive site licence under the Explosives regulations 2014 or Dangerous Goods in Harbour Area Regulations 2016. Neither is the site located within HSE's land-use-planning consultation zones for major-accident-hazard pipelines and hazardous substances consented sites.

HSE would advise that whilst the applicant is not expected to include a general health and safety at work assessment, it may be beneficial to undertake a risk assessment as early as possible to satisfy themselves that their design and operation will meet requirements of relevant health and safety legislation as the project progresses.

- 5.8 **Highlands and Islands Airport Ltd (HIAL)** do not object to the application. The calculations show that at the given position and height, this development would not impact the safeguarding criteria for Inverness Airport.
- 5.9 **Historic Environment Scotland (HES)** do not object to this application. It welcomes that an assessment for Fearn Abbey has been provided and note that the proposed development is considered to have a negligible impact on the setting of this site. It is content to agree with this finding and therefore have no further comments to offer.
- 5.10 **National Air Traffic Systems (NATS)** do not object to this application. It has examined the proposal from a technical safeguarding aspect and the proposal does not conflict with their safeguarding criteria.
- 5.11 **NatureScot** do not object to this application and has no comments to make.
- 5.12 Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) do not object to this application. It notes that surface water and foul drainage will be addressed through a Building Warrant and SEPA regulations. It explains that surface water from potential high-risk sources of pollution will be collected and directed to an underground containment tank. It recognises that the proposed containment tank has been sized to have a capacity to contain any potential spillage in the tanker loading bay (outdoors) and tip and fill facilities (indoors). It has a concern that there is a potential in the event of a spillage that the SuDs system may become contaminated due to the close proximity of the surface water drainage line especially in the tanker loading bay area. It requests that if traditional soil floored warehouses are proposed then information should also be provided on how impacts on groundwater will be minimised.

In relation the control of major industrial hazards involving dangerous substances, the operator will need to:

- Take all measures deemed necessary to prevent major accidents and limit their consequences to persons and the environment; and
- Regulation 5 (1) requires preparation of Major Accident Prevention Policy (MAPP) within 3 months of becoming COMAH established.

It has advised that the site should be fenced during groundworks and construction in order to ensure that the development is safe and any risks are mitigated. Potential radioactive contaminants due to the sites previous use must be considered under health and safety legislation during the works and in working procedures for ongoing maintenance. It notes that monitoring may involve walkover surveys prior to undertaking the works and screening during any excavation works undertaken. It sets out that any radioactive waste arising from the works should be managed in accordance with the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018.

5.13 **Scottish Water** do not object to this application. It highlights that there is no public Scottish Water, Waste Water infrastructure within the vicinity of the proposed site and private treatments are required. It explains that there is currently capacity in Assynt Water Treatment Works to service the development but further investigations may be required to be carried out. It notes that a minimum level for water pressure is 1.0 bar or 10m head at the customer's boundary and if this cannot be achieved from the available pressure a private pumping arrangement may be required.

As the proposed development has the potential to impact on existing Scottish Water rising sewer main within the site boundary, the applicant should contact Scottish Water to identify any potential conflicts.

5.14 **Transport Scotland** do not advise against granting planning permission.

#### 6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

# 6.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- 28 Sustainable Design
- 29 Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 Physical Constraints
- 31 Developer Contributions
- 36 Development in the Wider Countryside
- 41 Business and Industrial Land
- 42 Previously Used Land
- 51 Trees and Development
- 52 Principle of Development in Woodland
- 56 Travel
- 57 Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
- 58 Protected Species
- 59 Other important Species
- 60 Other Importance Habitats
- 61 Landscape
- 63 Water Environment
- 64 Flood Risk
- 65 Waste Water Treatment
- 66 Surface Water Drainage
- 72 Pollution
- 73 Air Quality

# 6.2 Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) 2015

## Policy 2 – Delivering Development

Although the proposed development site is just outwith the industrial allocation at Fearn Aerodrome which is identified as a Strategic Employment Site in the IMFLDP, Policy 2: Delivering Development is relevant.

# 6.3 Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

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)

Physical Constraints (March 2013)

Public Art Strategy (March 2013)

Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)

Special Landscape Area Citations (June 2011)

Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012)

Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

# 7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Highland-wide Local Development Plan is currently under review and is at Main Issues Report Stage. Similarly, the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan is also currently under review with the proposed plan being published in March 2022.
- 7.2 In addition to the above, The Highland Council has further advice on delivery of major developments in a number of documents. This includes Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects.

# **Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance**

- 7.3 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) advances principal policies on Sustainability and Placemaking, and subject policies on A Successful, Sustainable Place; A Low Carbon Place; A Natural, Resilient Place, and A Connected Place. It also highlights that the Development Plan continues to be the starting point of decision making on planning applications. The content of the SPP is a material consideration that carries significant weight, but not more than the Development Plan, although it is for the decision maker to determine the appropriate weight to be afforded to it in each case.
- 7.4 Other Relevant National Guidance and Policy
  - National Planning Framework for Scotland 3.
  - PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise.
  - PAN 58 Environmental Impact Assessment.
  - Circular 1/2017 Environmental Impact Assessment
  - PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage
  - PAN 61 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
  - 2/2011 Planning and Noise
  - Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) 2019

#### 8. PLANNING APPRAISAL

8.1 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.

# **Determining Issues**

8.2 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**

- 8.3 The key considerations in this case are:
  - a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy;
  - b) economic benefits;
  - c) construction impacts;
  - d) roads and transport;
  - e) water, flood risk and drainage;
  - f) soil, contamination and pollution;
  - g) ecology and biodiversity;
  - h) built and cultural heritage;
  - i) design, landscape and visual impact;
  - i) noise, dust and odour;
  - k) decommissioning and sit restoration; and
  - I) any other material considerations.

#### Development plan/other planning policy

- 8.4 The Development Plan comprises the adopted Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) and Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP). There are no site specific allocations for this site within the IMFLDP. The application therefore requires to be assessed primarily in terms of the policies listed at 6.1 of this report, but principally Policies 28 (Sustainable Development), 29 (Design Quality and Placemaking), 31 (Developer Contributions), 36 (Development in the Wider Countryside), 41 (Business and Industrial Land), 42 (Previously Used Land), 56 (Travel), 57 (Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage), 61 (Landscape and 64 Flood Risk).
- 8.5 The application site is not located within a town or local centre as defined in the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP). As such the site is located within the 'wider countryside' and so Policy 36 (Wider Countryside) of the Highland wide Local Development Plan applies (HwLDP). Policy 36 requires development to be judged to the extent to which they are not detrimental in respect of the following criteria
  - are acceptable in terms of siting and design;

- are sympathetic to existing patterns of development;
- are compatible with landscape character and capacity;
- avoid incremental expansion of one particular development type within a landscape;
- avoid where, possible the loss of locally important croft land; and
- would address drainage constraints and can otherwise be adequately serviced, in particular in terms of foul drainage road access and water supply, without involving undue public expenditure or infrastructure that would be out of keeping with rural character of the area.

Policies 28 (Sustainable Design), 29 (Design Quality and Place-Making) and 66 (Surface Water Drainage) reinforce the requirements for development to be considered in terms of siting, design and the impact on landscape qualities as well as their compatibility with public service provision and the impact on individual and community residential amenity.

- Policy 41 (Business and Industrial Land) is concerned with business and industrial land, whilst Policy 42 (Previously Used Land) is concerned with previously used land. HwLDP Policy 41 (Business & Industrial Land) requires in the first instance, that new business developments are located on sites already allocated for such a use. The Council will support the principle of business and industrial proposals outwith these sites if the developer demonstrates that the proposal cannot reasonable be accommodated on existing allocated industrial and business sites. Whilst the proposed site is in close proximity to the IMFLDP FE1 (Fearn Aerodrome) allocation, the whole site lies out-with the allocation. Therefore, as noted in paragraph 2.9 the developer has undertaken an extensive site search within 45 minutes drive of their distillery in Tain and no allocated business or industrial site within that area would accommodate the proposed development given its anticipated scale. This is considered sufficient justification for the proposal not to be delivered on an allocated site.
- 8.7 While not an allocated site, the site is considered brownfield land and therefore Policy 42 (Previously Used Land) of the HwLDP applies. This policy states that the Council will support the principle of bringing previously used land back into active use. It is also noted that the site is located within the Ross-Shire Growth Area as identified within the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. This seeks for the area to have a "Strengthened role as an industrial heart of the Inner Moray Firth and gateway to the Highlands for commerce, retail, transport connections and culture."
- 8.8 Subject to ensuring that the developments meet the requirements of the above policies, then the proposal would accord with the development plan.

#### **Economic Benefits**

8.9 The proposed development will be phased over a 5 year period and as such will offer significant investment to the local economy including to businesses ranging across construction, haulage, electrical and service sectors. In addition, it will support the growth of the whisky industry in the area which is an important contributor to the Highland and Scottish economy. The applicant has confirmed that local contractors will be primarily utilised for the construction works. During the operation of the

project, it is anticipated that the proposed development will provide 9 full time jobs. Although the proposed development does not have a pre-determined operational lifespan, it is likely to be operational for at least 50 years and possibly more.

## **Construction Impacts**

- 8.10 It is anticipated that the construction period for the development would be phased over a 5 year period, with construction works expected to start in 2022. Working hours on site will be restricted to be 08.00-19.00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 - 13:00 Saturday with no Sunday or Bank Holiday working. This is inline with standard working hours which are dictated via the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended). The project anticipates the deployment of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in association with the successful contractor engaged. This should include site specific environmental management procedures which can be finalised and agreed through appropriate planning conditions with the local Planning Authority and relevant statutory consultees. For the avoidance of any doubt submissions are expected to be "plan based" highlighting the measures being deployed to safeguard specific local environmental resources and not simply re-state best practice manuals. SEPA has advised that due to the scale of the development they will directly control pollution prevention measures relating to surface water run off via a Controlled Activities Regulations Construction Site Licence.
- 8.11 Developers have to comply with reasonable operational practices with regard to construction noise so as not to cause nuisance. Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 sets restrictions in terms of hours of operation, plant and equipment used and noise levels etc. and is enforceable via Environmental Health.

# **Roads and Transport**

- 8.12 The application was accompanied by a Transport Statement that considers the transport impacts associated with the proposed development. The development will utilise the existing access onto the B9166 that serves the potato farm building. The B9166 leads to the B9165 which meets the A9 at a priority junction 3km south of Tain. The road network around the proposed development are all single carriageway roads with one lane in each direction. The roads are generally subject to 60mph speed limit, reducing to 30mph when passing settlements.
- 8.13 It is proposed that the existing access linking the site to the B9166 will be widened at the junction in order to provide enough width to allow two HGVs to pass through the junction and clear the public road. A section of the private access road (approximately 100m west from the junction with the B9166) will be widened to allow two HGVs to pass. The applicant has confirmed that visibility splays of 4.5m by 215m can be achieved at the site access.
- 8.14 During operation vehicle movements to and from the proposed development would be minimal with up to 2 -3 site deliveries / off-takes per day at its peak. The applicant has clarified that on-site staff numbers are expected to be no more than 5 10 per shift maximum. Furthermore, some staff may travel between Tain Distillery and the Proposed Development during the day but daily car movements are not expected to exceed 20 per day.

- 8.15 Parking for 19 cars will be provided, no details of electrical vehicle charging points for vehicles have been included therefore this will be secured through planning conditions. However, the applicant has identified an area for a Fork Lift charging bay within the north side of the site. The applicant has stated that parking for 2 bicycles in the form of a 'Sheffield' stand would be provided. Given the scale of the development and the rural location an appropriate condition will be applied to ensure that a covered bicycle shelter is provided for a minimum of 4 bicycles.
- 8.16 No concerns have been raised by either Transport Planning or Transport Scotland in relation to roads and transport. The information in the Transport Statement is therefore accepted and appropriate conditions will be applied to ensure the access to the public road is upgraded, visibility splays are maintained and that there is sufficient parking within the site for both cars and bicycles along with provision made for electric vehicle charging.

# Water, Flood Risk and Drainage

- 8.17 The EIAR is clear that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be in place to ensure that potential sources of pollution on site can be effectively managed throughout construction and in turn during operation.
- 8.18 The CEMP needs to be secured by planning condition. This will ensure the agreement of construction methodologies with statutory agencies following appointment of contractors and prior to the start of development or works.
- 8.19 In order to protect the water environment a number of measures have been highlighted by the applicant for inclusion in the CEMP including the adoption of sustainable drainage principles, and measures to mitigate against effects of potential chemical contamination and sediment release. This includes setbacks from water courses. SEPA support this approach however conditions are sought to secure further details of these matters.
- 8.20 No Ground Water Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTEs) were identified within or adjacent to the site during the phase 1 habitat survey works.
- 8.21 The applicant has assessed watercourses and private water supplies within 1km of the site boundary within the EIAR. The site's historic use has resulted in changes to the natural watercourse routing in the area. The watercourse around the boundary of the site is linked to a local network of watercourses that have been historically routed around field boundaries and drain to the Fearn Canal. In this case the EIAR states that a review of the available mapping indicates that the site is bounded to the north and east by an unnamed channelled watercourse. However, following a drainage survey it was confirmed that there are no watercourses or culverts within the site. The only drainage features on site consist of several land drains installed by farmers, which discharge to the adjacent man-made field ditches.
- 8.22 Most of the land drains flow towards the ditch located to the southwest of the site, through two pipe outlets. The ditch is identified as the Fearn Canal and is regularly maintained by the Fearn Farmer's Community. The Fearn Canal, which has an

- overall classification by SEPA of "bad" discharges into the Outer Cromarty Firth approximately 3.4km south-west of the proposed development. The Outer Cromarty Firth is classified by SEPA as having a "good" overall condition.
- 8.23 Whilst outside the site boundary, Fearn Canal is the closest source of fluvial flooding. The EIAR indicates that the north west and north east boundaries are some 75m from the extents of flooding and will be separated by the retained tree belt. The proposed raised landforms / embankments are proposed along the northern and eastern boundaries which will create protection berm from any potential flooding of the Fearn Canal.
- 8.24 The site has the potential for surface water flooding (pluvial) in times of heavy rainfall events that may result in areas where cohesive materials are present, surface water runoff may pond in localised depressions and cause local flooding. The applicant will improve the onsite drainage system with the installation of two surface water drainage detention basins, one to the north of the site and one to the south. Furthermore, roof drainage from the warehouses will be directed to deep swales located in front of them, and from here conveyed to the proposed north detention basin. Roof drainage from the Processing Building will be taken view underground pipes to the south detention basin. Drainage from the road will be directed to adjacent swales and from here conveyed to the south detention basin. Both detention basins will be connected so that there will only be one discharge point to the Fearn Canal at no greater than existing run off rates.
- 8.25 Whilst the EIAR concludes that the proposed development is at no significant risk of flooding, the applicant had not provided a Flood Risk Assessment to demonstrate this. The Council's FRMT had raised some concerns with the applicant's assessment and lack of information and further information was sought. The applicant undertook a detailed level survey to provide site-based information to allow a detailed understanding of the flood risk which may be posed in the site's NW corner. The survey presents the adjacent site levels and flow paths. This demonstrated that the levels with and outwith the site are similar, through there are a number of connected lower areas outwith the site. Furthermore, the areas of indicated flooding on SEPA's strategic mapping, during a 1 in 200-year return period are contained by slightly higher ground that itself would be typically more than 200mm that the lower proposed floor level of 7.45m AOD. The information provided demonstrates that the site would be outwith the 1 in 200-year return period flood plain of the Fearn Canal. The applicant will however need to accept that maintenance of the Fearn Canal will be required.
- 8.26 Any surface water from potential high-risk sources of pollution will be collected and directed to an underground containment tank. The proposed containment tank has been sized to have capacity to contain any potential spillage in the tanker loading bay (outdoors) and tip and fill (indoors). In case of spillage, the volume of contaminated liquid will be taken off site and disposed of in line with current regulations.
- 8.27 The EIAR presented the results for surface water testing which identified exceedances of multiple contaminants in the adjacent watercourse. The contaminants identified are copper (toxic), zinc (toxic), and aliphatic hydrocarbons

were identified at concentrations which may pose a risk to the surface water environment. However, further analysis of these results demonstrated that the proposed development is not considered to pose an additional significant risk to the water environment.

- 8.28 The foul drainage will be through a private treatment plant (Biodisc or similar) discharging to land via soakaway. Given the location of the proposed development and lack of adjacent infrastructure this is acceptable.
- 8.29 The applicant has set out that any requirements for pre-development, construction and post-development groundwater sampling and monitoring will be agreed with SEPA at the post-planning stage via the required Pollution Prevention Control licence.

## Soil, Contamination and Pollution

- 8.30 The EIAR notes that after a review of the British Geological Survey (BGS) maps, the underlying superficial geology at the proposed development comprises entirely of marine deposits of Holocene age consisting of gravel, sand and silt. The ground investigations which the applicant undertook broadly concur with the published geology from BGS. The soils were noted to generally comprise topsoil, underlain by variable strength granular and cohesive deposits, which are considered to be representative of the indicated raised beach/raised marine deposits.
- 8.31 The EIAR notes that site investigation included the analysis of potential contaminations to confirm the nature of the made ground deposits, along with the underlying natural soils. This identified one exceedance at concentrations above the recommended guideline values: phytotoxic zinc was found to exceed the recommended level in one borehole at 1m depth. Vegetation growth was noted to be vigorous within the proposed development site, and given that phytotoxic zinc was recorded to only be marginally elevated above the screening value and was only recorded at elevated concentrations within one of 40 samples tested, the identified exceedance was not considered to represent a significant risk.
- 8.32 The EIAR concludes that no significantly elevated contaminants of concern were recorded in the samples from the site and taking into the account the nature of the proposed development, contamination was assessed as not being a significant risk. Whilst this may be the case the Council's Contaminated Land Team have recommended an appropriate planning condition is attached to ensure there is no contamination issues as the area of the site investigation only covered approximately two thirds of the development site. It had concerns that much of the northern part of the development site had not been investigated. Furthermore, there were only 4 samples of made ground analysed for contaminants. It is not clear whether any of the hangar bunds were investigated. Each hangar bund should have at least one trial pit (and soil sample) to determine the composition of the bund soil, and whether it can be reused on site.
- 8.33 Contaminated Land Team highlighted that a report of Fearn Airfield from July 1999, commissioned by the Highland Council states that the building materials of each structure to contain asbestos. Where these structures have since been demolished.

surface soil sampling for asbestos is required. Where the structures are still present, a refurbishment/demolition survey is required which shall accurately record the type, location and extent of asbestos containing material. One of the buildings is described as a "Stop Butt" which was used for "range testing aircraft cannon". There is some impact damage from cannon shells. Contaminated Land Team are satisfied that these issues can be addressed through an appropriate planning condition being attached to any planning permission granted.

8.34 As the site was a former military airfield there is the potential for radioactive contaminates as such, SEPA highlighted that the site should be fenced off during groundworks and construction in order to ensure that the development is safe and any risks are mitigated. Potential contaminants must be considered under health and safety legislation during the works and in working procedures for ongoing maintenance. Some monitoring works will be required, this includes walkover surveys prior to undertaking works and screening during any excavation works. Any radioactive wastes arising from the works should be managed in accordance with the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018.

# **Ecology and Biodiversity**

- 8.35 The EIAR has identified and assessed impacts on protected species, ornithology, ecology and designated sites. As the development has the potential for habitat restoration, improvements were sought. These include habitat enhancements that have been integrated into the design with the establishment of four lochans with diverse riparian zones, other wetlands and wildflower meadows. The existing woodland will be retained. This can be secured through planning conditions.
- 8.36 Further enhancements include hedgerow and tree planting around the perimeter of the site, themed wildflower meadows to promote butterfly and bee activity, an orchard and planting area for local/home produce. In addition to this footpaths and pedestrian orientated areas will be created in which people can interact with the natural environment. The applicant has confirmed that a landscape gardener will be engaged to create and maintain these spaces through the lifetime of the development. The applicant has indicated that the biodiversity enhancements will take place in the later phases of construction, however it would be expected that the enhancements will also be on a phased basis and this can be secured through planning conditions.
- 8.37 The woodland on the north-western site boundary is comprised of native woodland plantation and is estimated to be 40 50 years old. A 200m long footpath is proposed within the woodland to the north-western boundary and the two small grassland areas surrounded by the woodland. No tree felling is proposed; instead the proposed 2m footpath will meander around the existing trees and the perimeter of the site. No construction details of the proposed path have been provided, this will be secured through an appropriate planning condition.
- 8.38 The proposed development has embedded mitigation that has been secured through the design process. This includes the retention of the woodland habitat, including the native woodland on the north-western site boundary and the woodland in the north of the site where a buzzard nest was recorded.

8.39 While no protected species have been identified as being present on the site at this stage, the applicant will carry out pre-construction survey for legally protected species, these should be carried out at an appropriate time of year, at a maximum of eight months preceding commencement of construction. The applicant will employ Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during construction works. The ECoW will be present on a regular basis to oversee site clearance and construction activities.

## **Built and Cultural Heritage**

- 8.40 The applicant has undertaken an assessment on built and cultural heritage within the outer study area which extends 3km from the boundary of the proposed development and inner study area of the proposed development which includes the proposed site. This concluded that there are no designated heritage assets within the Inner Study Area and two undesignated heritage assets within the Inner Study Area. These comprise part of Fearn Airfield (MHG 19584), and a pattern of field boundaries recorded on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1881 (HA1). These features are poorly preserved, therefore the EIAR has assessed them as being of low sensitivity.
- 8.41 Although a number of designated heritage assets were found within the outer study area, Historic Environment Scotland indicated that it agrees with the EIAR conclusion that the proposal is unlikely to have any significant adverse impacts on the nationally important heritage assets, such as Listed Buildings.
- 8.42 The site has potential for the survival of buried, possibly prehistoric, remains to survive that could be impacted by the development. As such it is considered that a scheme for the investigation, preservation and evaluation of archaeological remains is agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development and the mitigation set out in the EIAR is implemented. This can be secured by condition.

## **Design, Landscape and Visual Impact**

- The proposal development will introduce a group of modern buildings which includes 16 warehouses. The proposed 12 palletised warehouses each measuring 60m x 32m, with a height to eaves of 7.85m and height to ridge of 10.5m. Approximately 2.4m up from the ground level will be constructed from blockwork then roughcast in grey. Similarly, the 4 racked warehouses measures 60m x 40m with a ridge height of 14.1m and eave height of 10.5m.
- 8.44 All the warehouses within the site have been designed to appear as agricultural within the landscape. Given the nature of the development, the design of these buildings is of a fairly limited standard but are characteristic of other large warehouses common to the whisky industry across much of rural Scotland. Furthermore, the buildings are similar to agricultural buildings in the area, particularly the building at the adjacent potato farm, albeit not at the same scale.
- 8.45 The welfare facility is a modest building measuring 30m wide x 10m in length, with a height to the highest point of 4.95m. The building includes a meeting room, office, and welfare facilities. The building has been designed to represent the original hangars within the site with the curved roof. The external materials will be secured

through planning conditions. The tip and tilt facility has 4 sections, 2 of which includes the tip and fill facility, 1 includes the process building then the other the tank farm. Each section has a curved roof to represent the original buildings that were on the site. Again, the external materials will be secured through planning condition to ensure they are sensitive to the site.

- 8.46 Due to the scale of the proposed development and the nature of the nature of the surrounding physical landscape, warehouse façade colour options were appraised as part of the design process. It is considered that the main body of the warehouses will be green, with camouflage gables to match the local vernacular which includes the adjacent potato farm building. The submitted elevation plans show the buildings in primarily be finished with metal cladding to the walls and roof areas in Basalt grey. The applicant has presented a number of submissions to best illustrate the impact of the development on the surrounding landscape and impacts on receptors using the countryside, viewing the development from local roads and nearby communities. It is considered that the use of sympathetic natural colours could be supported in design terms and this will be secured through an appropriate planning condition to comply with the colour scheme presented within the EIAR.
- 8.47 The host landscape for the proposed development is Lowland Farmed Plan Landscape Character Type (LCT), this is characterised by the large scale landscape with dispersed built elements and occasional tree cover. Views are principally open across plains, however views can be shortened due to the subtle landform changes.
- 8.48 A total of 6 viewpoints across a study area of 5km have been assessed with regard to landscape and visual impact. This is a proportionate approach that has been informed by the analysis of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and an appraisal of potential effects for a proposed development of this scale in the context of the local landscape character and conditions. These viewpoints are representative of a range of receptors including recreational users of the outdoors, road users and residents. The expected impact of the development in isolation can be seen with the ZTV to maximum building height of 14.1m, with Viewpoints (Drawing 10.1) in the EIAR.
- The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment generally 8.49 follows that set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3). The applicant sets out that significant landscape and visual effects relate to all those effects that result in a Major or Major/Moderate effect as indicated in Table 10.A.6 of the EIAR Appendix 10.1. This methodology is in line with para 3.32 of GLVIA 3 that states the "LVIA should always distinguish clearly between what are considered to be significant and non-significant effects". The EIAR Appendix 10.1 Table 10.A.6 shows a Significance Matrix that sets out the indicative level of effect diagrams which the applicant has used to attribute significant effects. The applicant has applied a threshold of anything being of moderate impact or below as being not significant. The applicant has stated that there are some circumstances where moderate levels of effect also have the potential to be considered as significant, subject to the assessor's opinion. The Highland Council is of the view that Moderate effects can also be significant, but this needs to be considered on a viewpoint by viewpoint basis using professional judgement.

- 8.50 The applicant has sought to minimise visibility of the new buildings particularly from designated landscapes, sensitive character area and human receptor locations through the design process and the building forms. The warehouse buildings will form a large cluster to the north side of the site laid out in a grid pattern. The 'tip and fill' facility and associated infrastructure is located to the south side of the site.
- 8.51 Landscape mitigation has been incorporated within the design, this includes the introduction of sculptured landform at the eastern and northern edges to provide visual interest and reduce the impact of the warehouses. Around the peripheral areas a species-rich wildflower meadow will be created, that will add a natural context to the proposed buildings. The retention of the woodland and the hedgegrow and tree planting around the perimeter of the site will provide some screening, reducing the visual impact.
- 8.52 As set out above, the applicant has assessed the landscape and visual impact from six separate viewpoints. A brief appraisal of the applicant's assessment is included below:

## **Viewpoint 1: Loans of Tullich**

8.53 This viewpoint is situated approximately 445m to the east of the proposed development. It is located on the B9166 road and represents views experience by road users and is located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT. This is a close range view, the warehouses would be visible in the foreground. The proposed development would introduce a substantial change to the view, however with the proposed landscape screening, the colour and materials of the proposed buildings the landscape and visual effects have been reduced. It is agreed that the visual effects would be significant, however due to the proposed mitigation the proposed development is considered be acceptable.

## **Viewpoint 2: Fearn Abbey**

8.54 This viewpoint is situated approximately 736m to the north west of the proposed development, located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT. It is located at Fearn Abby and is representative of close proximity views experienced by residents and visitors/tourists. At this viewpoint the warehouses would be visible in the background and represent a notable new element within the landscape. However, there will be some level of screening from the retained woodland and bunding that will be formed reducing the visual impact. Furthermore, the proposed development only occupies a small part of the view it is therefore considered that the visual effects would be moderate but not significant.

## **Viewpoint 3: Broomton**

8.55 The viewpoint is situated approximately 1.26km to the south east of the proposed development, located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT. It is representative of views experienced by road users and cyclists. This is a more open view from an elevated position, the proposed development is visible beyond the airfield. The proposed

development would appear as a cluster of farm buildings that will blend in with the existing development. It is not considered that the visual effects would be significant from this viewpoint.

## Viewpoint 4: Minor road near Clay of Allen

8.56 The viewpoint is situated approximately 1.9km to the north west near Clay of Allen on the minor road which runs between Arabella and Hill of Fearn, located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT. It is representative of views by road users. The proposed development would appear as a cluster of farm buildings in the distance from this viewpoint. It is accepted that the visual effects would not be significant.

## **Viewpoint 5: Hilton of Cadboll**

8.57 The viewpoint is situated approximately 2.6km to the north east of the proposed development, located on the National Cycle Route 1 at the junction of a core path. The viewpoint is located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT and representative of views experienced by road users and recreational users. It is not anticipated that the proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint, therefore the visual effects would not be significant.

## Viewpoint 6: B19175 near Arabella

- 8.58 The viewpoint is situated approximately 2.87km to the south west of the proposed development, on the B9175. The viewpoint is located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT and representative of views experienced by road users. Similar to Viewpoint 4: Minor road near Clay of Allen, the buildings would appear as a cluster of farm buildings, absorbed by the surrounding landscape. It is not considered that the visual effects would be significant from this viewpoint.
- 8.59 Although it is anticipated that there will be some significant visual effects, the applicant has considered these thoroughly during the design process. The significant visual effects are acceptable as the applicant has put forward a scheme of mitigation through landscaping that will reduce the visual effects.

#### **Lowland Farmed Plain LCT**

8.60 All the viewpoints are located within Lowland Farmed Plain LCT as it is not predicted that there would be any significant visual effects beyond this landscape character. The EIAR did not predict any significant effects on Lowland Fared Plain LCT and on balance, this is agreed subject to the mitigation that is set out within the EIAR to reduce any effects.

## Noise, Dust and Odour

8.61 In terms of construction noise, the application is accompanied by an assessment which demonstrates that predicted noise levels will meet Environmental Health recommended criteria and it is expected that the developer will employ the best practical means to always reduce the impact of noise form construction activities.

Working hours are no longer controlled by planning condition and are regulated through the Control of Pollution Act. An informative has been added to remind the developer of their obligations under this legislation.

- 8.62 Environmental Health has advised they have no objection to the application subject to the mitigation measures being implemented in accordance with those outlined in the EIAR. However, as the plant information is not available yet, it is recommended that a noise condition regarding night-time operations is attached to any planning consent.
- 8.63 In terms of dust mitigation this will be secured through the CEMP as set out in the EIAR.
- 8.64 As there will be no distilling within the proposed development the main source of odour will be from the transfer of finished spirit from tankers to cask which will take place internally. As such it is unlikely that the proposed development will affect air quality.

# **Developer Contributions**

- 8.65 Planning obligations are sought to mitigate the impact of any development which cannot be mitigated through the planning process or through the use of planning conditions. The assessment is made against the HwLDP Policy 31: Developer Contributions. Business developments are exempt from education, community facilities and affordable housing contributions and as such the proposed development has been assessed against Transport, Green Infrastructure, Water and Waste and Public Art/Realm contributions.
- 8.66 In terms of making a contribution to the Public Realm, Development Plans have suggested that high quality boundary and landscaping treatments are sought. It is considered that the proposed development has provided this and this will be secured at an early stage. No financial contributions are required as the impacts of the development are mitigated either by design or by direct provision of infrastructure.

## Other material considerations

- 8.67 The application has raised no concerns with regard to aviation interests in relation to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Highland and Islands Airport Ltd (HIAL).
- Although it is anticipated that the proposed development will have an operational lifespan of 50 years or greater, it is appropriate to consider the decommissioning of the site to secure restoration following the cessation of activities. The applicant has confirmed that an appropriate Decommissioning Plan will be prepared at the end of the proposed developments operational life. A Decommissioning and Restoration Plan (DRP) will be secured through planning conditions that should be submitted to and approved in writing by The Highland Council in consultation with SNH and SEPA no later than 18 months after operations cease. The final decommissioning and restoration of the detailed DRP would be implemented within 12 months of the approval of the DRP unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

There are no other material considerations.

# Matters to be secured by Section 75 Agreement

8.69 a) None.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Policy 36 (Wider Countryside) of the HwLDP requires development to be assessed to the extent to which it will impact on the pattern of development, landscape character and the capacity of the area whilst avoiding the incremental expansion of one particular development type within a landscape. Policy 28 (Sustainable Design) and 66 (Surface Water Drainage) requires development to avoid having a negative impact on the residential amenity and the wider road network. The application did not attract any third party representations. All consultees are content with the information provided and have offered no objections subject to the conditions set out below.
- 9.2 In conclusion, whilst is it recognised that the proposed development is of a substantial scale, the development has been designed sympathetically so it can be absorbed by the landscape it will lie within, characterised by farming. The buildings will appear as a cluster of agricultural buildings, which is considered to reflect the existing pattern of development in the area without negatively impacting on the wider character and visual amenity. The siting of the buildings will not adversely alter the level of amenity currently enjoyed by the residential properties in the vicinity of the site. It is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of landscape impact and visual amenity as well as service provision and neighbouring residential amenity and consequently show conformity with the Development Plan
- 9.3 The proposed development is likely to give an economic boost to the area through the construction period and the operational period. It will provide additional employment in an area identified as the industrial heart of the Inner Moray Firth which should be strengthened. Further the proposal will bring an area of previously used land back into meaningful use.
- 9.4 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.

# **REASONED CONCLUSION**

9.5 The Council is in agreement with the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report that the erection of whisky maturation warehouses, cask filling and disgorging facility with associated tank farm, tanker filling bay, welfare facilities, car park and associated infrastructure is unlikely to give rise to any new or other significant adverse impact on the environment. The Council is satisfied that all environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through Conditions 6 of this permission

#### 10. IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Resource: Not applicable
- 10.2 Legal: Not applicable
- 10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable
- 10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not significant. Electric vehicle charging facilities will be secured.
- 10.5 Risk: Not applicable
- 10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

## 11. RECOMMENDATION

# Action required before decision issued 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 a Phasing Plan outlining details of the phasing of the development has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, development shall be undertaken in accordance with this approved Phasing Plan.

**Reason:** To ensure that topsoil is not removed from future phases of the proposed development until it is absolutely necessary and that undeveloped phases are properly maintained; in the interests of visual amenity and the prevention of dust-related pollution.

2. No development shall commence until a detailed specification for all proposed external materials and finishes (including trade names and samples where necessary) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt all buildings will be constructed using flood resistant and flood resilient materials and techniques. Thereafter, development and work shall progress in accordance with these approved details.

**Reason:** To ensure that the development is sensitive to, and compatible with, its context and local architectural styles.

- 3. No development shall commence until the site access has been upgraded in accordance with the approved details and comply with:
  - i. the junction formed to comply with drawing ref. EC21423:PL:005; and

ii. visibility splays of 4.5m x 215m (the X dimension and Y dimension respectively) in each direction formed from the centre line of the junction.

Within the stated visibility splays, at no time shall anything obscure visibility between a driver's eye height of 1.05m positioned at the X dimension and an object height of 0.60m anywhere along the Y dimension.

**Reason**: To ensure that an adequate level of access is timeously provided for the development; in the interests of road safety and amenity.

4. 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.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the safety and free flow of traffic on the public road.

5. No development shall commence until full details of a covered and secure communal bicycle storage/racking system for 4 bicycles have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the storage/racking system shall be installed in accordance with these approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

**Reason:** In order to facilitate the use of a variety of modes of transport.

6. No development shall commence until full details of electric vehicle (EV) charging hub to accommodate a minimum of two vehicles has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the EV infrastructure shall be installed in accordance with these approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

**Reason:** In order to facilitate the use of a variety of modes of transport.

- 7. There shall be no Commencement of Development unless the Planning Authority has approved in writing the terms of appointment by the Company of an independent Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA. The terms of appointment shall;
  - a. Impose a duty to monitor compliance with the ecological and hydrological commitments provided in the environmental statement and other information lodged in support of the application, the Construction and Environmental Management Plan, the Ecological Enhancement Plan in accordance with condition 7, [any species or habitat management plans identified in the Environmental Statement] and other plans approved ("the ECoW works");

- b. Require the EcoW to report to the Company's nominated construction project manager any incidences of non-compliance with the ECoW works at the earliest practical opportunity;
- c. Require the ECoW to submit a monthly report to the Planning Authority summarising works undertaken on site;
- d. Have power to stop to the job / activities being undertaken within the development site when ecological interests dictate and/or when a breach or potential breach of environmental legislation occurs to allow for a briefing of the concern to the Company's nominated construction project manager; and
- e. Require the ECoW to report to the Planning Authority any incidences of non-compliance with the ECoW Works at the earliest practical opportunity.

The EcoW shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the period from Commencement of Development, throughout any period of construction activity and during any period of post construction restoration works approved.

No later than 3 months after operations cease for 18 consecutive months, the Company shall submit details of the terms of appointment by the Company of an independent ECoW throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development to the Planning Authority for approval in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA. The ECoW shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development.

**Reason:** To secure effective monitoring of and compliance with the environmental mitigation and management measures associated with the Development.

- 8. No development shall commence until a finalised Construction Environmental Management Document is submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA and other appropriate consultees as appropriate. The document shall include provision for:
  - An updated Schedule of Mitigation (SM);
  - ii. Processes to control / action changes from the agreed Schedule of Mitigation; and
  - iii. The following specific Construction and Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs):
    - Details of the construction works, construction methods and surface treatment for all hard surfaces and tracks;

- II. details of watercourse crossings designed to 1 in 200 year flood risk event plus 20% for climate change;
- III. Details of the temporary site compounds, for the storage of materials and machinery, including the areas designated for offices, welfare facilities; fuel storage and car parking;
- IV. details of all soil stripping, excavation, storage and reuse of material. This should also highlight how any contaminated soil will be stored or disposed of (including ratioactive contaminants);
- V. Water Quality Management Plan highlighting drainage provisions including monitoring / maintenance regimes, water crossings, surface water drainage management (SUDs) and development and storage of material buffers (50m minimum) from water features, unless otherwise agreed in writing by SEPA and The Highland Council's Flood Risk Management Team;
- VI. Public and Private Water Supply Protection Measures Plan;
- VII. Watercourse Management;
- VIII. Dust Management;
  - IX. Noise and Vibration Mitigation;
  - X. Pollution Prevention Plan;
  - XI. Emergency Response Plan;
- XII. Site Waste Management Plan;
- XIII. Construction Noise Mitigation Plan;
- XIV. Habitat Protection Plan;
- XV. Species Protection Plan(s): including badger, bat and buzzard; and
- XVI. Other relevant environmental management as may be relevant to the development.

The pre construction survey for legally protected species is carried out at an appropriate time of year for the species, at a maximum of 8 months preceding commencement of construction, and that a watching brief is then implemented

by the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW) during construction. The species that should be surveyed for include, but are not limited to, breeding birds, badger and bats for example.

Provision of a communication plan to ensure all contractors are aware of the possible presence of protected species frequenting the site and the laws relating to their protection;

The notification and a stop the job commitment requirements set out below:

Should a badger set be found during construction, all works within 250m of the set shall stop immediately and the NatureScot Golspie office be notified and asked for advice.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority the development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved CEMD.

**Reason:** To secure the final detailed information on the delivery of all on-site mitigation projects and to protect the environment from the construction and operation of the development.

9. There shall be no Commencement of Development unless a habitat management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA. The habitat management plan shall set out proposed habitat management during the period of construction, operation, decommissioning, restoration and aftercare of the site, and shall provide for the maintenance, monitoring and reporting of sward height across any permanent, long term, open areas.

The approved habitat management plan will include provision for regular monitoring and review to be undertaken to consider whether amendments are needed to better meet the habitat plan objectives. In particular, the approved habitat management plan will be updated to reflect ground condition surveys undertaken following construction and submitted to the Planning Authority for written approval in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA.

Unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing with the Planning Authority, the approved habitat management plan shall be implemented in full.

**Reason:** In the interests of good land management and the protection of habitats.

No development shall commence until an Outdoor Access Management Plan, has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority. The plan should ensure that public access is retained in the vicinity of development during construction, and thereafter that suitable public access is provided during the operational phase of the wind farm. The plan as agreed shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise approved in writing with the Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In the interests of securing and enhancing public access rights.

11. 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, all in accordance with the attached specification, 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.

- 12. No development shall commence until a scheme to deal with potential contamination on site has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
  - i. the nature, extent and type of contamination on site and identification of pollutant linkages and assessment of risk (i.e. a land contamination investigation and risk assessment), the scope and method of which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by with the Planning Authority, and undertaken in accordance with PAN 33 (2000) and British Standard BS 10175:2011+A2:2017 Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites - Code of Practice;
  - ii. the measures required to treat/remove contamination (remedial strategy) including a method statement, programme of works, and proposed verification plan to ensure that the site is fit for the uses proposed;
  - iii. measures to deal with contamination during construction works;
  - iv. in the event that remedial action be required, a validation report that will validate and verify the completion of the agreed decontamination measures;
  - v. in the event that monitoring is required, monitoring statements shall be submitted at agreed intervals for such time period as is considered appropriate by the Planning Authority.

Thereafter, no development shall commence until written confirmation has been received that the scheme has been implemented, completed and, if required, monitoring measurements are in place, all to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that the site is suitable for redevelopment, given the nature of previous uses/processes on the site.

13. No development, site excavation or groundwork shall commence until a suitably qualified Landscape Consultant has been appointed by the developer. Their appointment and remit shall first be approved in writing by the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, the Landscape Consultant shall be appointed as a minimum for the period from the commencement of

the development until the completion of the approved landscaping work and their remit shall, in addition to any functions approved in writing by the Planning Authority, include:

- i. Ensuring that the approved Landscape Plan (ref. EC21423:PL004 REV C) is implemented to the agreed standard; and
- ii. The preparation of Certificates of Compliance for each stage of work involved in the development, which shall be submitted to the Planning Authority upon completion of the stage to which they relate. Prior to the commencement of development, site excavation or groundwork commencing, details of each stage of work (including a general description of the type and extent of work to be carried out within that stage) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that a high standard of landscaping is achieved, appropriate to the location of the site.

14. No development, site excavation or groundwork shall commence until all retained trees have been protected against construction damage using protective barriers located beyond the Root Protection Area (in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition & Construction, or any superseding guidance prevailing at that time). These barriers shall remain in place throughout the construction period and must not be moved or removed during the construction period without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the protection of retained trees, which are important amenity assets, during construction.

15. No development shall commence until the finalised Drainage Impact Assessment has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, only the approved details shall be implemented and all surface water drainage provision shall be completed prior to the first occupation of any of the development.

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

16. No development shall commence until full details of all foul drainage infrastructure (including treatment plant and soakaway locations) have been submitted, to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, development shall progress in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that private foul drainage infrastructure is suitably catered for, in the interests of public health and environmental protection.

17. No trees within the application site shall be cut down, uprooted, topped, lopped (including roots) or wilfully damaged in any way, without the prior written permission of the Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order to ensure the protection of retained trees, which are important amenity assets, both during construction and thereafter.

18. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, parking spaces (excluding garages) for a minimum of 19 cars shall be provided within the application site in accordance with The Highland Council's Roads Guidelines for New Developments, and shall thereafter be maintained for this use in perpetuity.

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

19. All plant, machinery and equipment associated with this development shall be so installed, maintained and operated such that any associated operating noise does not exceed NR 20 curve when measured or calculated within any noise-sensitive property with windows open for ventilation purposes, between the hours of 23:00hours – 07:00hours.

**Reason**: In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties and occupants.

20. All surface water drainage provision within the application site shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and, 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.

- 21. No development or works (excluding preliminary ground investigation which shall be permitted) shall commence until an Interim Decommissioning and Restoration Plan (IDRP) for the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA. Thereafter:
  - i. if the development ceases operation for a period of 18 consecutive months, then unless otherwise agreed, the development, along with any ancillary equipment and infrastructure, shall, within 12 months of the end of the said continuous 18 month period, be dismantled and removed from the site and the surrounding land fully reinstated in accordance with this condition; and
  - ii. not later than 3 months from the date of cession prior to the decommissioning of the Development, the IDRP shall be reviewed by the Developer, to ensure that the IRDP reflects best practice in decommissioning prevailing at the time and ensures that site specific conditions, identified during construction of the site, and subsequent

operation and monitoring of the Development are given due consideration. A copy shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for its written approval, in consultation with NatureScot and SEPA.

**Reason:** To ensure that all wind turbines and associated Development are removed from site should the wind farm become largely redundant; in the interests of safety, amenity and environmental protection.

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

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.

#### **Reasoned Conclusion**

The Council is in agreement with the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report that the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to any new or other significant adverse impact on the environment. The Council is satisfied that all environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through Conditions 6 and 20 of this permission.

#### 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.
- 2. 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 & 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.

#### Septic Tanks & Soakaways

Where a private foul drainage solution is proposed, you will require separate consent from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Planning permission does not guarantee that approval will be given by SEPA and as such you are advised to contact them direct to discuss the matter (01349 862021).

## **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 working on public roads/2

#### Mud & 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 <a href="mailto:env.health@highland.gov.uk">env.health@highland.gov.uk</a> 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: www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species

Designation: Area Planning Manager North

Author: Claire Farmer – Planner, Strategic Projects Team
Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - EC21423:PL001 REV B Location Plan

Plan 2 - EC21423:PL003 REV C Proposed Site Layout Plan
Plan 3 - EC21423:PL004 REV C Proposed Site Layout Plan

Plan 4 - EC21423:PL005 REV A Access Layout Plan

Plan 5 - EC21423:PL005 REV A Elevations
Plan 6 - EC21423:PL006 Ground Floor Plan

Plan 7 - EC21423:PL007 Section Plan

Plan 8 - EC21423:PL009 Ground Floor Plan

Plan 9 - EC21423:PL010 Section Plan Plan 10 - EC21423:PL011 Elevations

Plan 11 - EC21423:PL012 Elevations

Plan 12 - EC21423:PL013 REV A Drainage Layout Plan

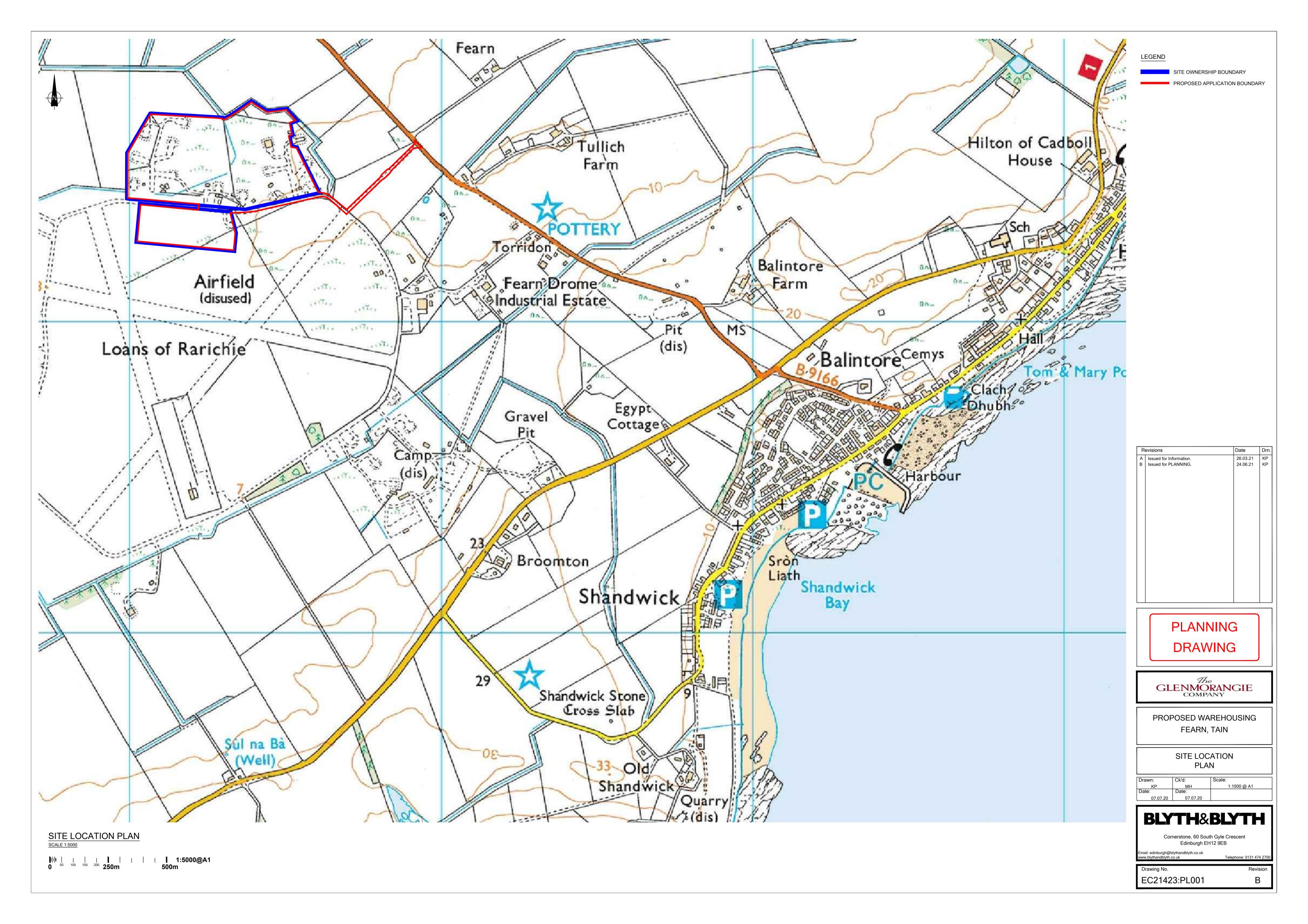
Plan 13 - EC21423:PL014 Drainage

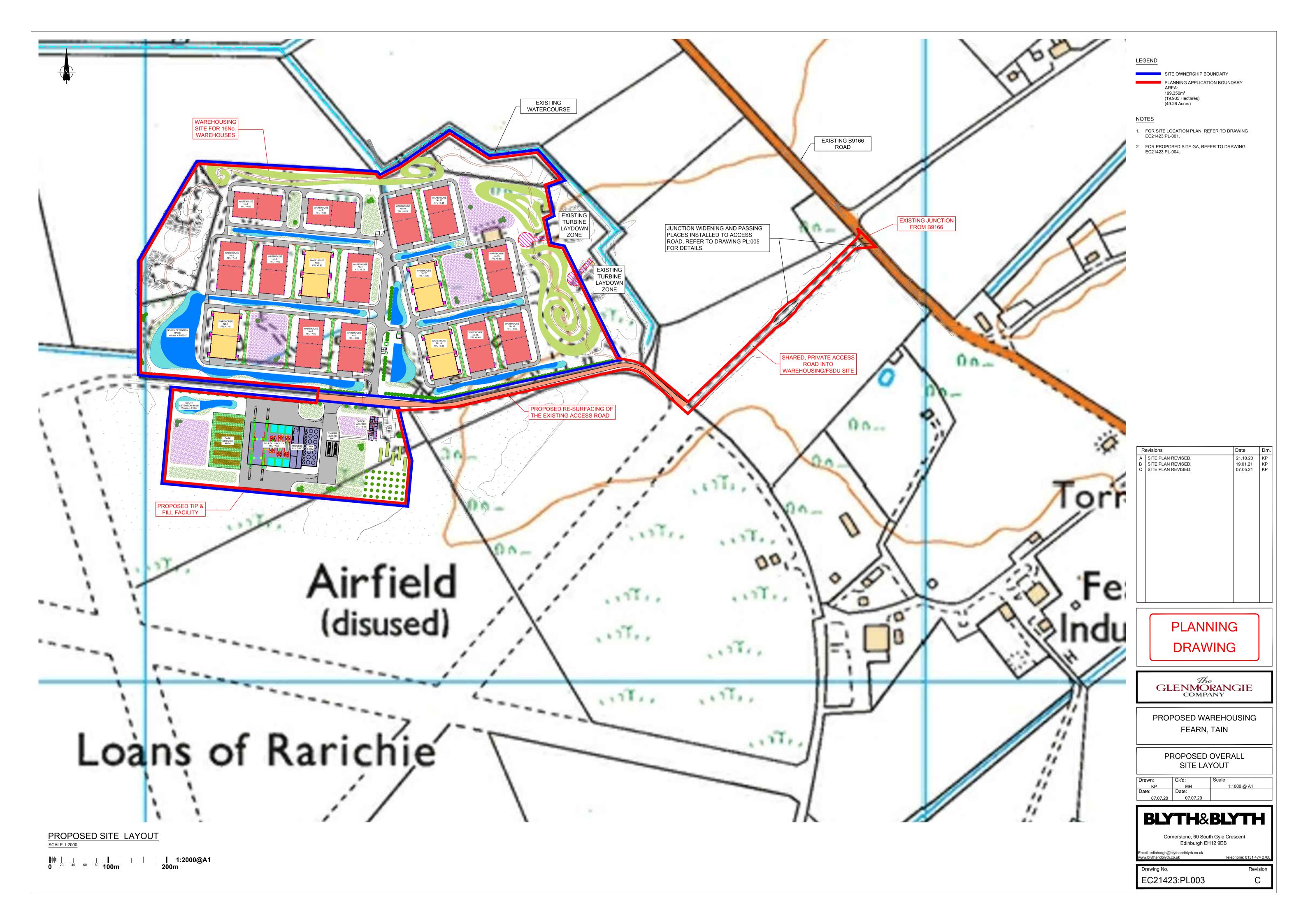
Plan 14 - EC21423:PL015 Drainage Construction Details

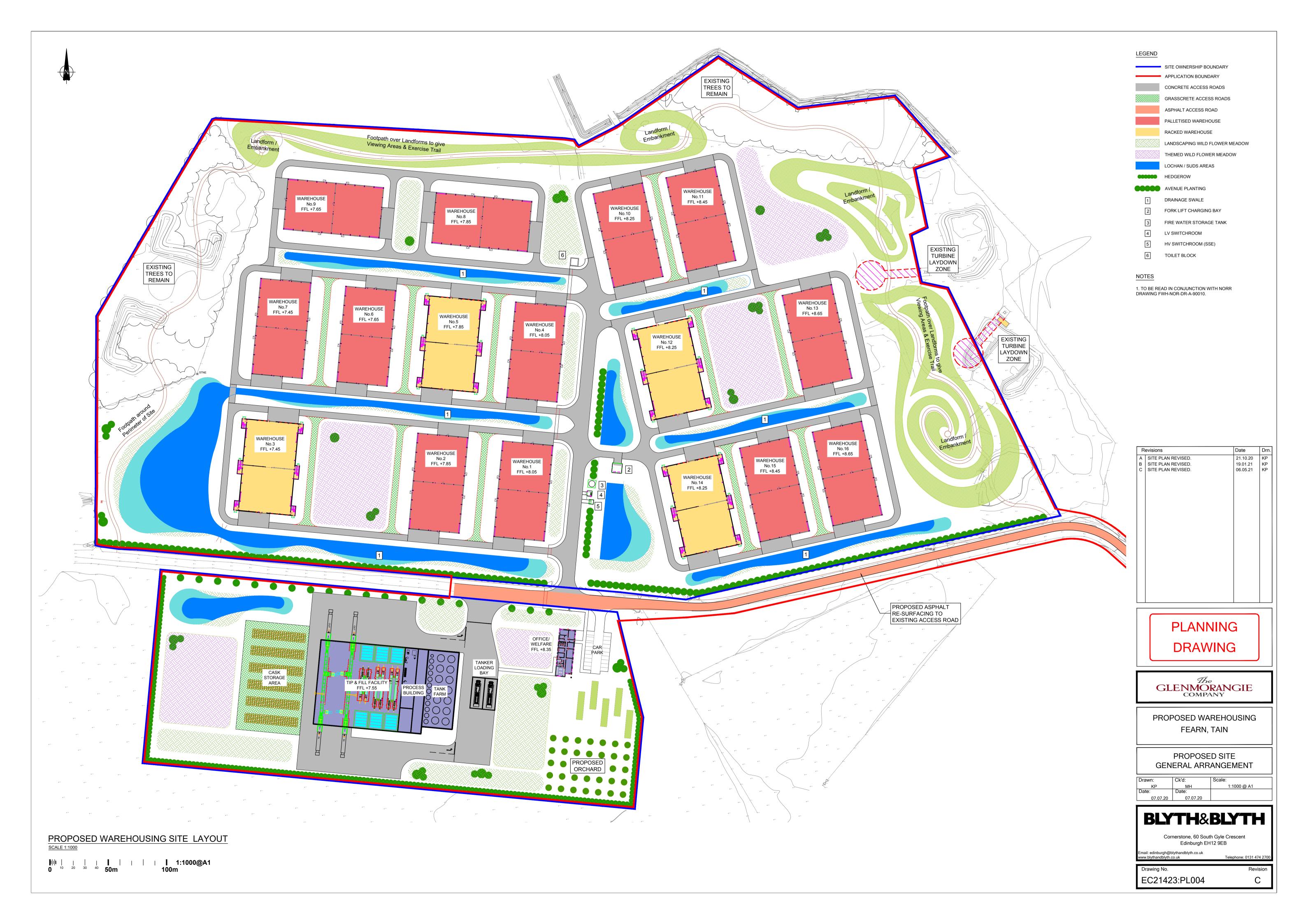
Plan 15 - EC21423:PL016 Drainage Construction Details

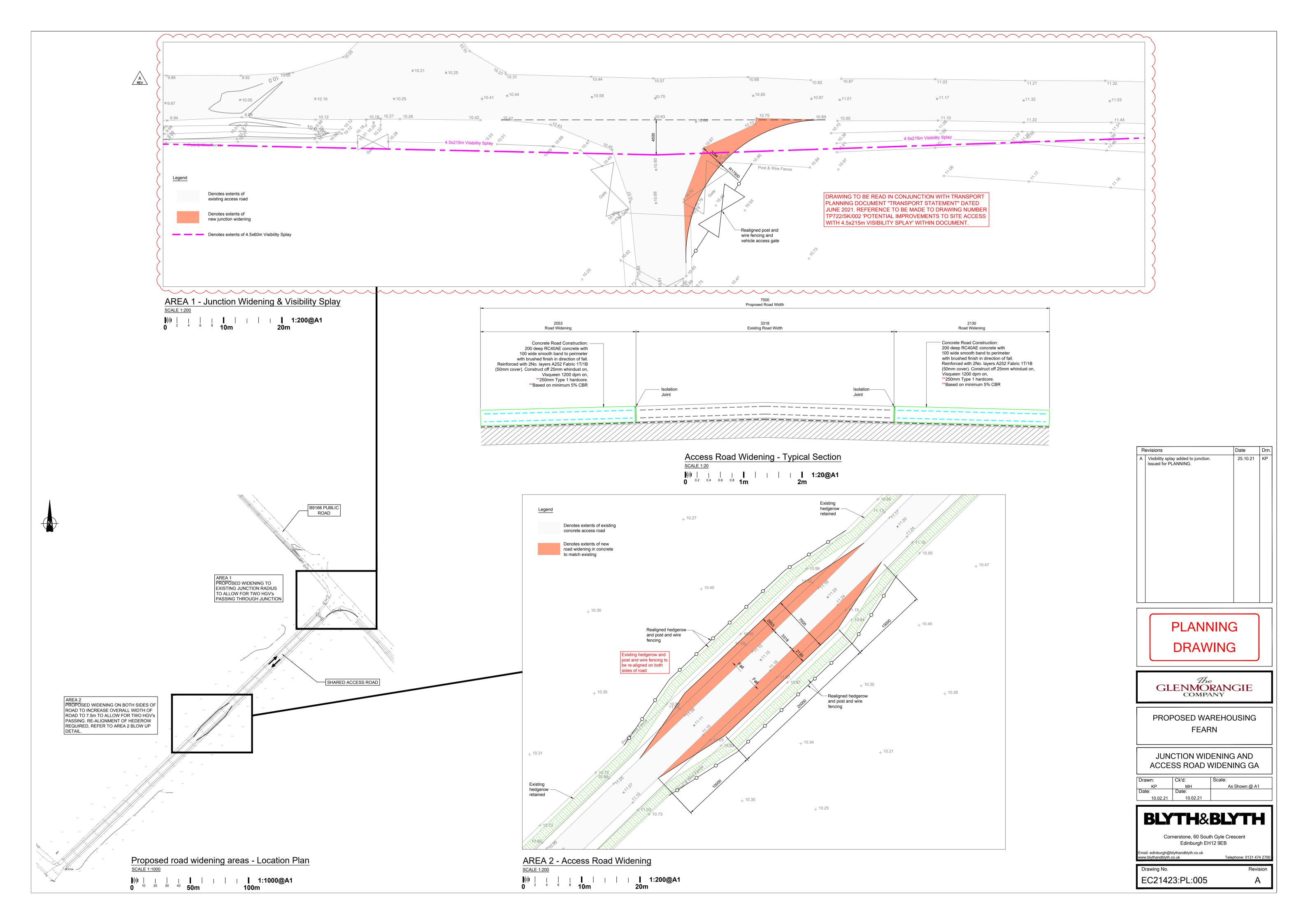
Plan 16 - EC21423:PL019 Elevation/Floor Plans - Office / Welfare Building

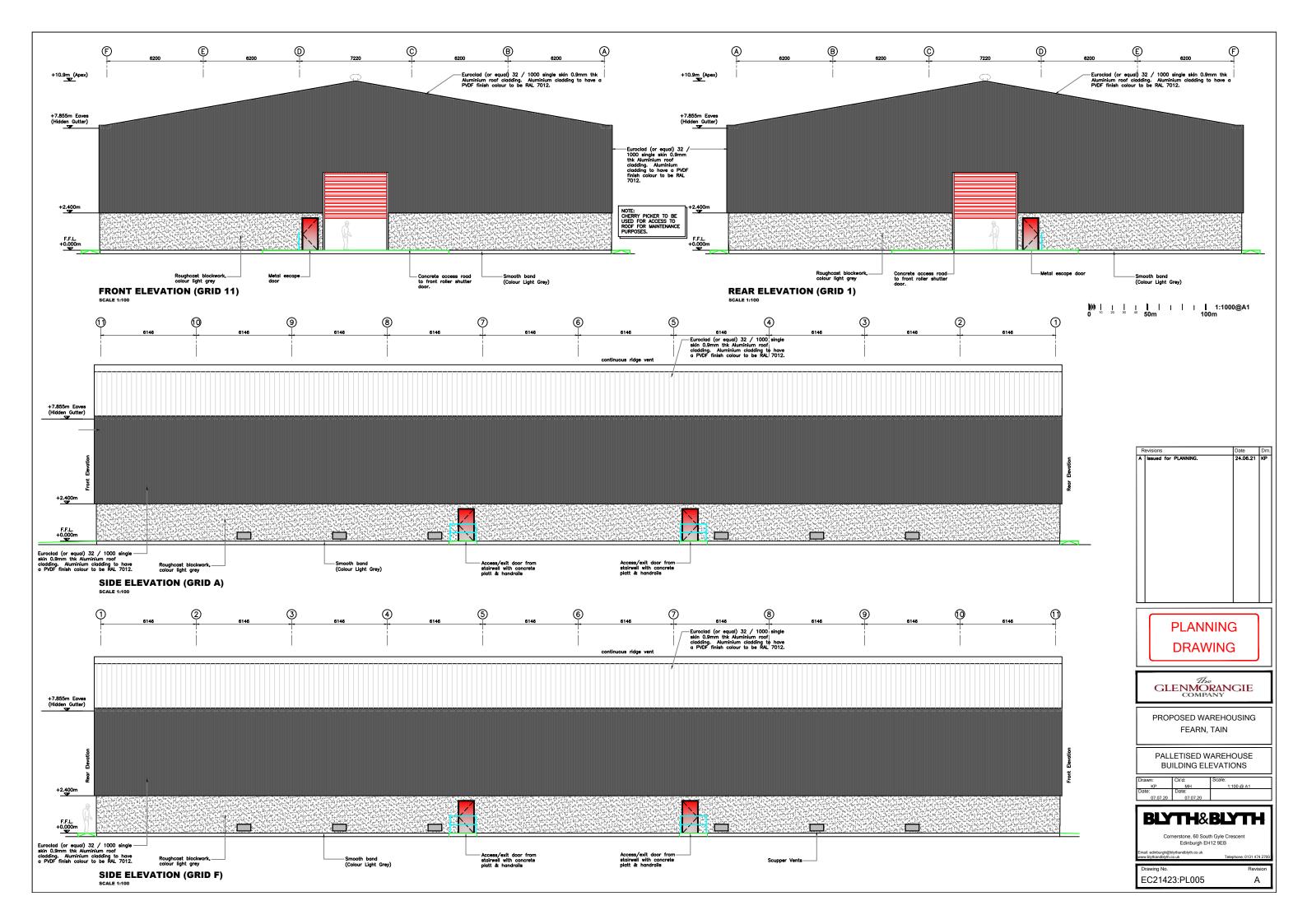
Plan 17 - EC21423:PL020 Elevation/ Floor Plans - Tip and Fill Facility

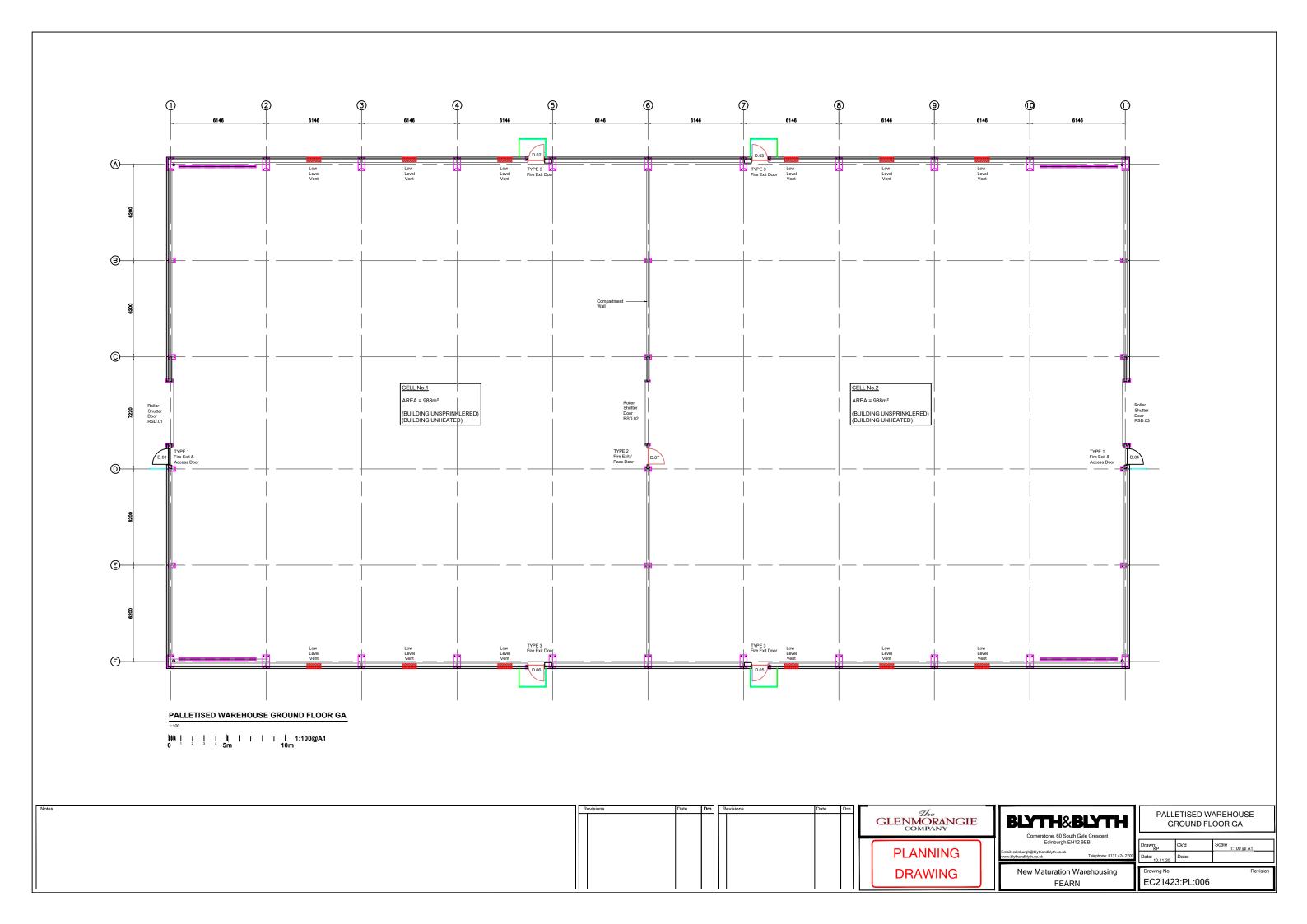


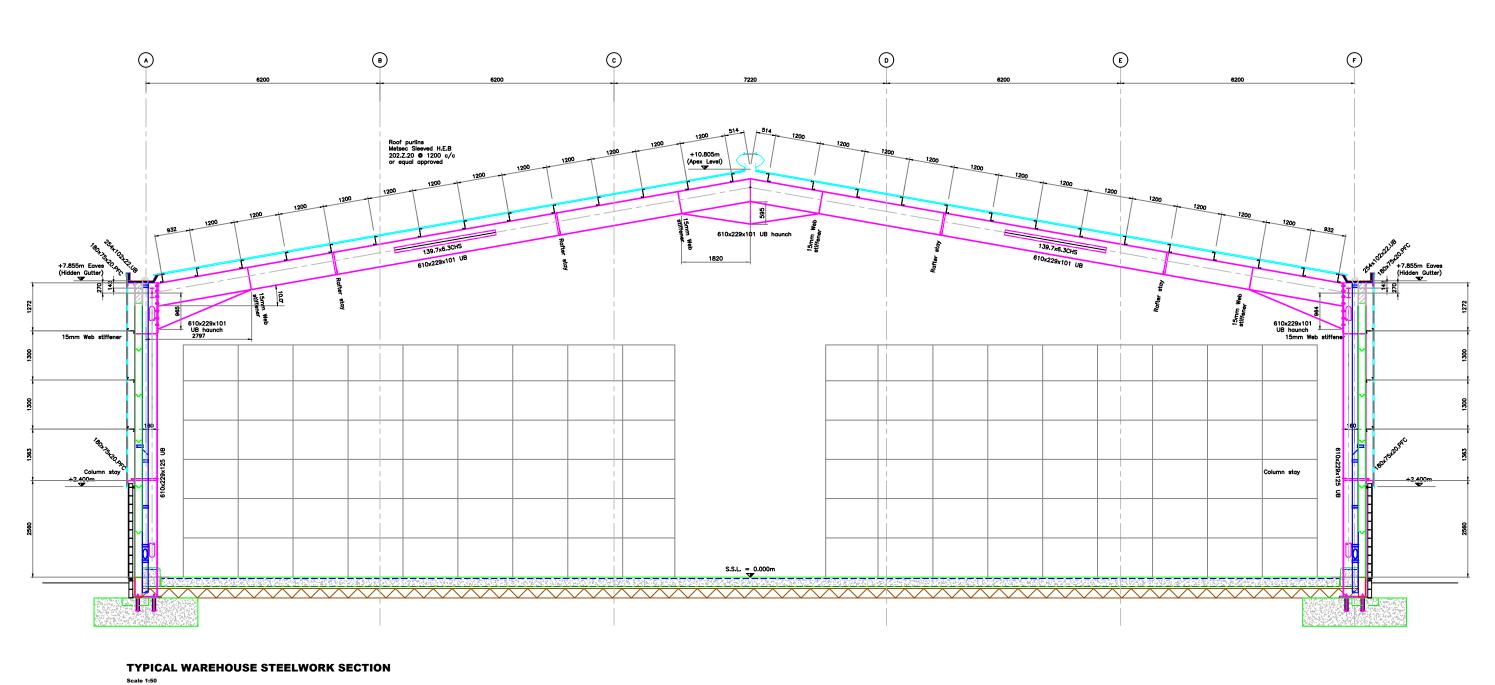


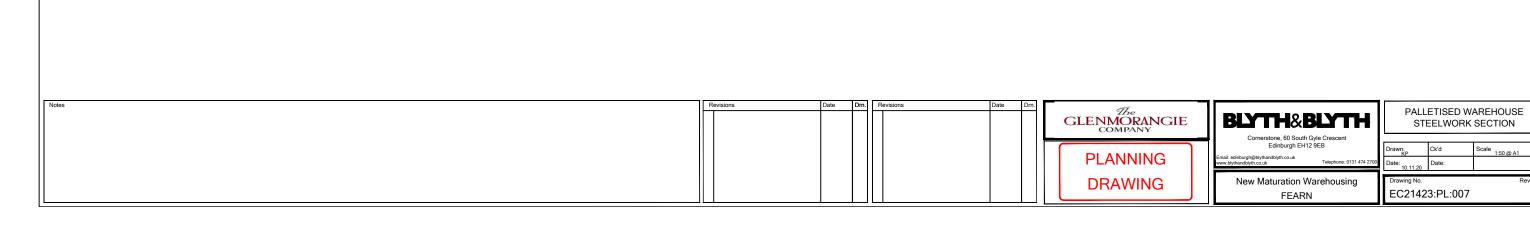


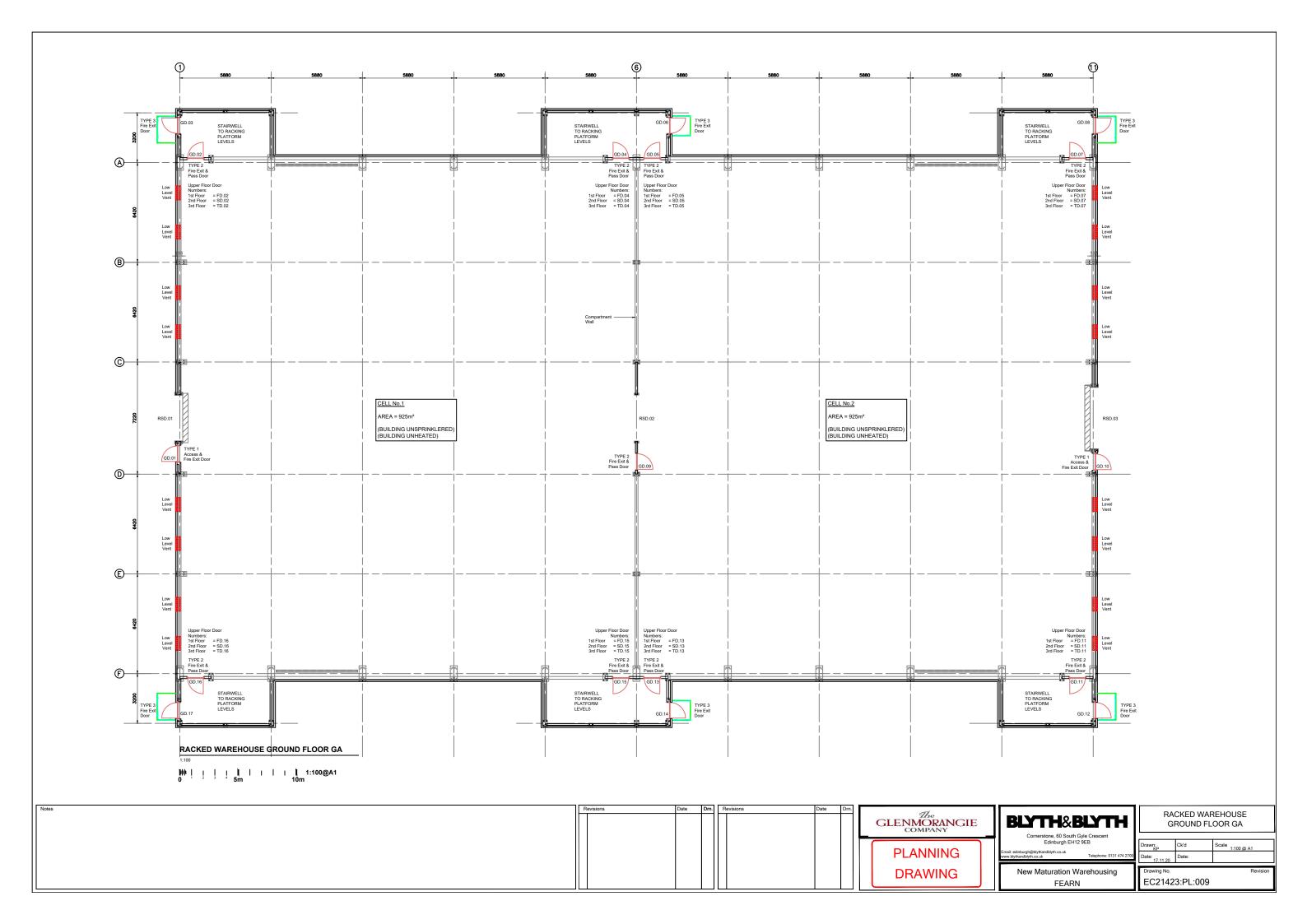


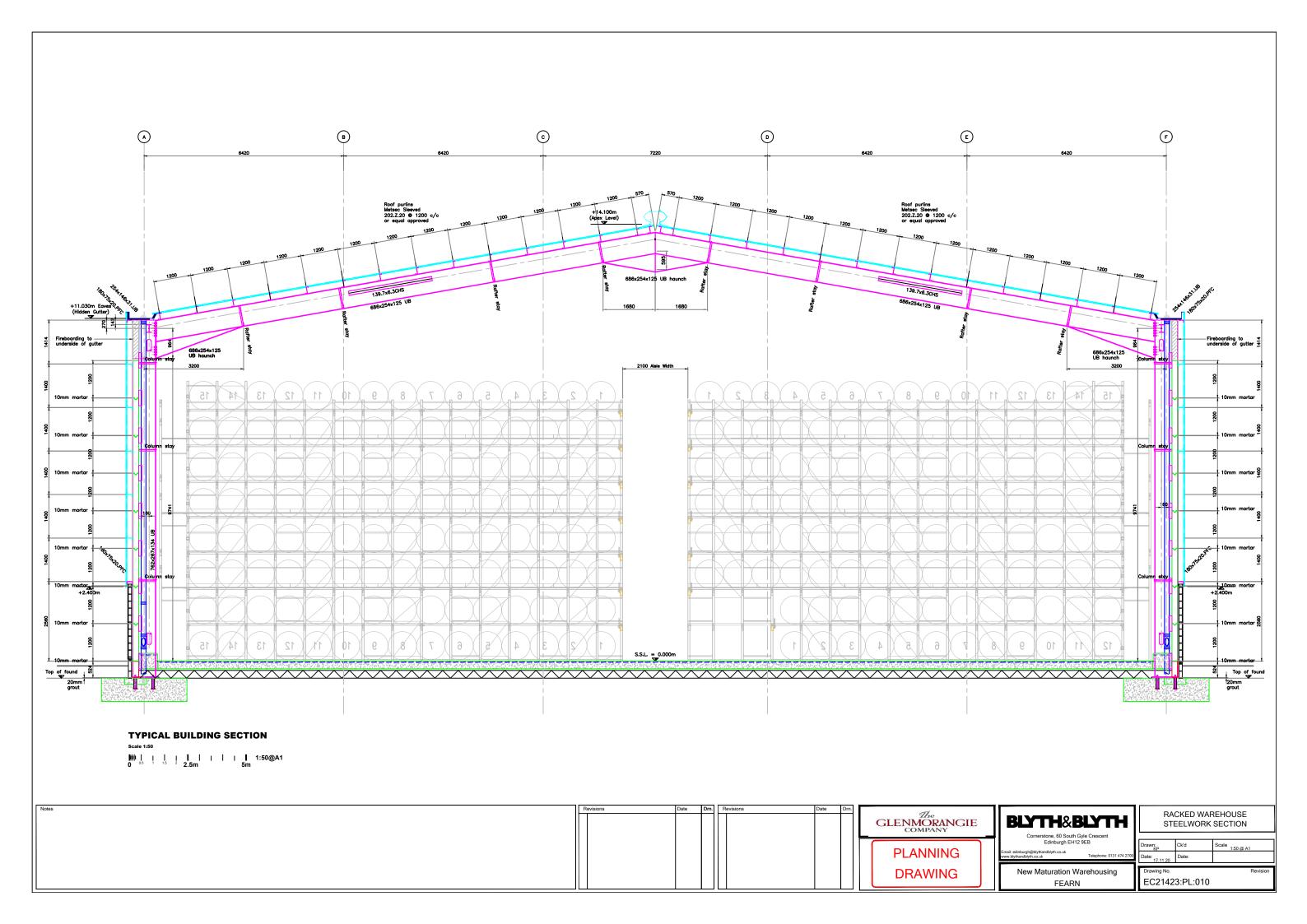




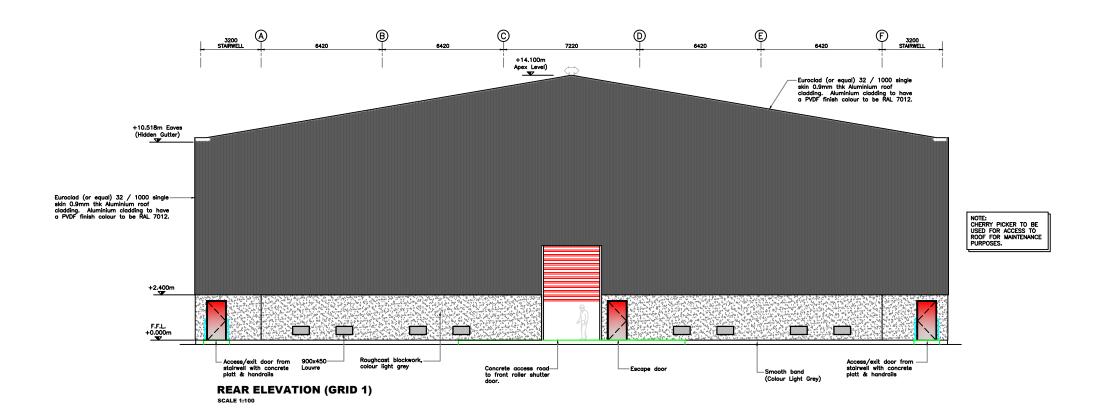


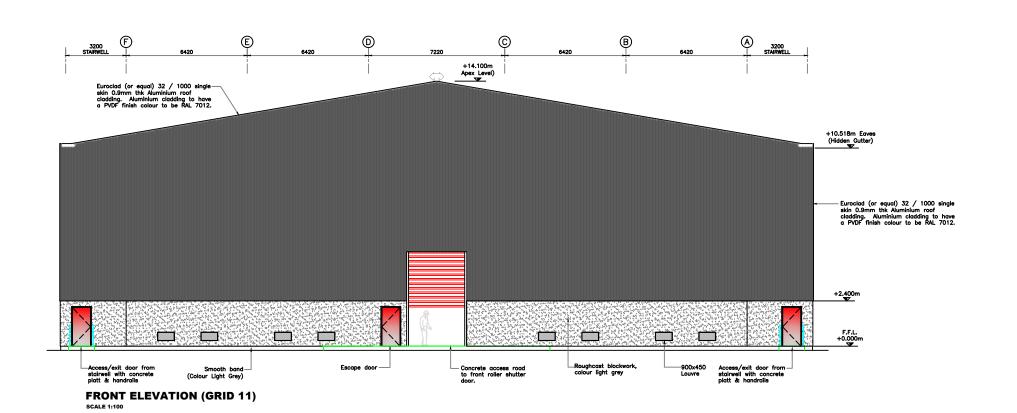


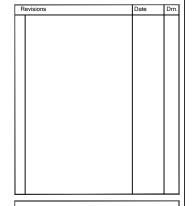




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PLANNING DRAWING



PROPOSED WAREHOUSING FEARN, TAIN

TYPICAL RACKED WAREHOUSE BUILDING ELEVATIONS - SHEET 1

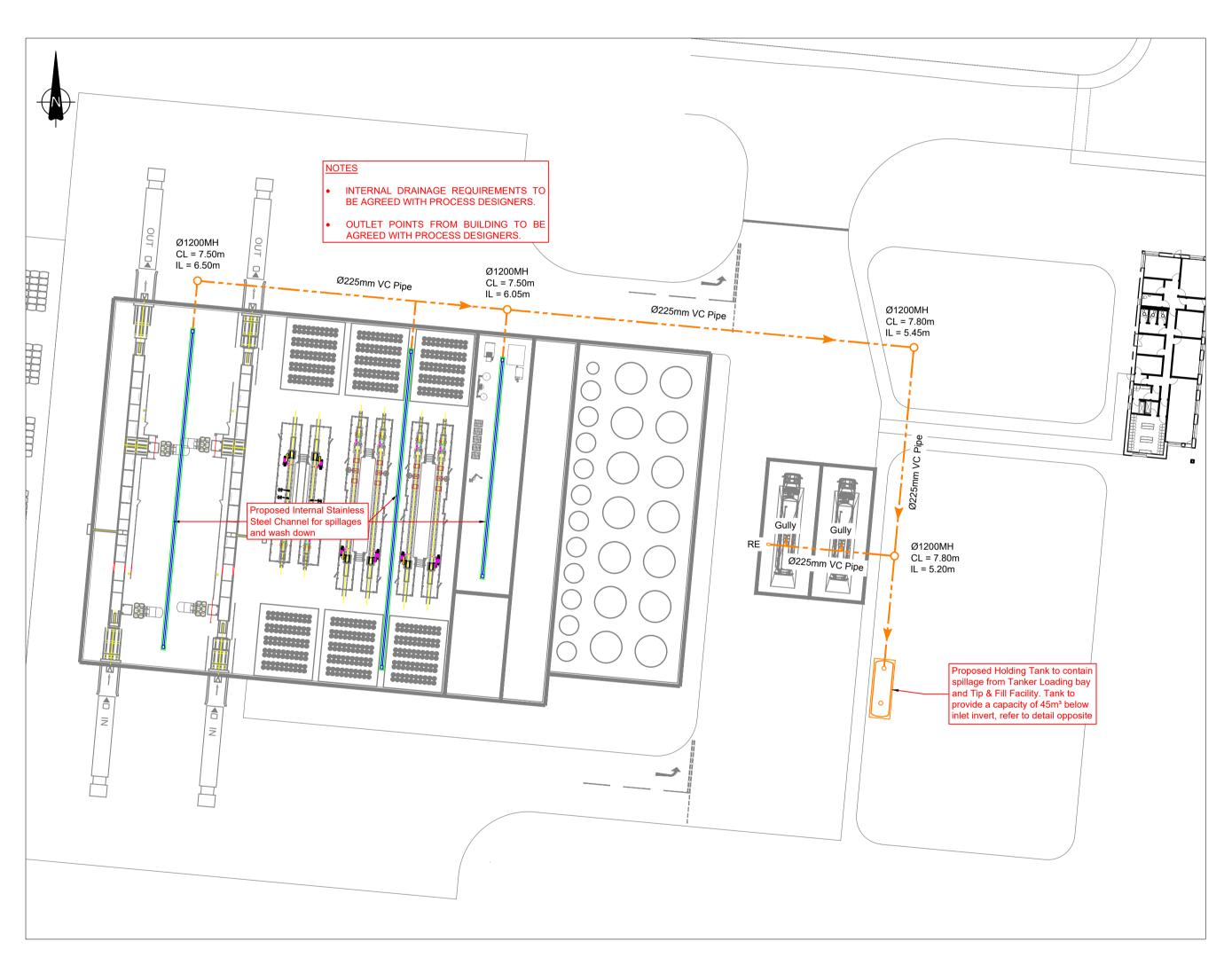
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BLYTH&BLYTH

Cornerstone, 60 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB

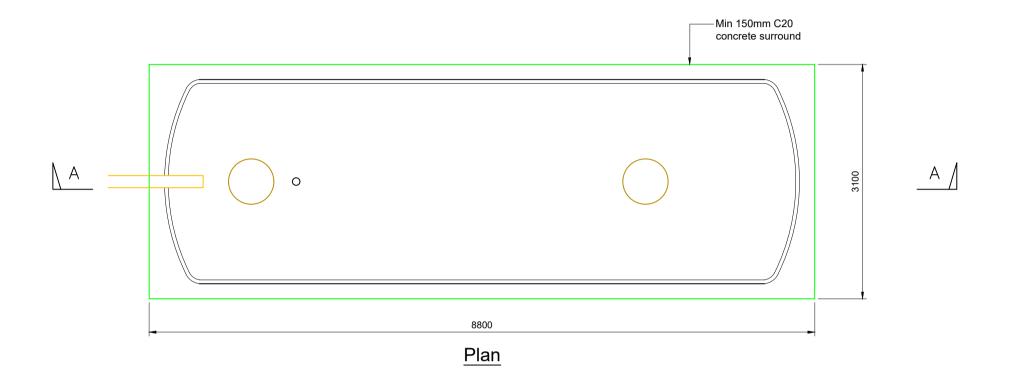
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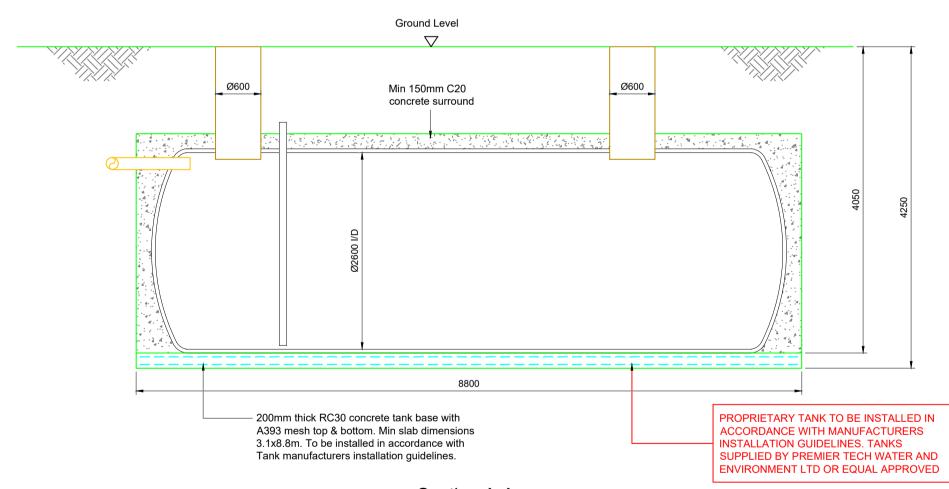




PROPOSED SITE SERVICES - EFFLUENT DRAINAGE

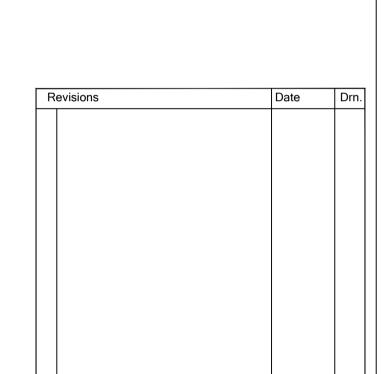
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## Section A-A

Spillage Containment Tank
General Arrangement



PROPOSED SERVICES

E600 loading covers.

<u>NOTES</u>

Proposed Effluent Drainage

 All drainage pipes to be Vitrified Clay unless noted otherwise. All pipework to be adequately sealed.

All pipes with differing Ø to be set crown to crown.
 Contractor to investigate existing services prior to commencement and to agree and obtain instructions in regard to any protection and/or diversion works necessary. All existing services information obtained from Public Utilities, Design Team and other sources cannot be guaranteed for accuracy and shall be verified by Cat Scan or trial digging prior to commencement. The contractor shall be responsible for damage/ disruption to existing services caused by his operations and should make due allowance in his

program and costs in this regard.

5. Drawing to be read in conjunction with Process Designer drawings and specifications.

2. All manhole and Rodding eye covers to be heavy duty

PLANNING DRAWING



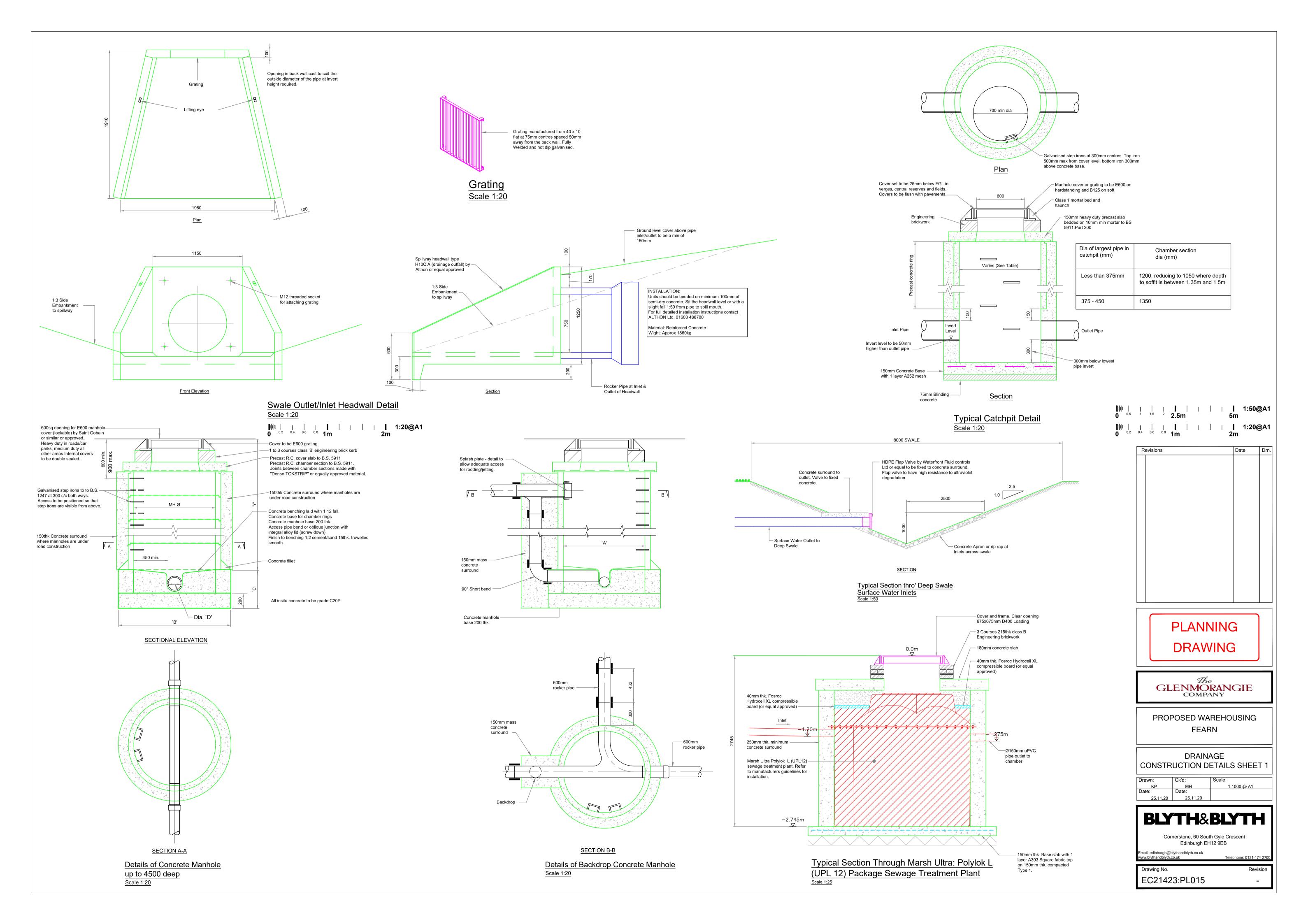
PROPOSED WAREHOUSING FEARN

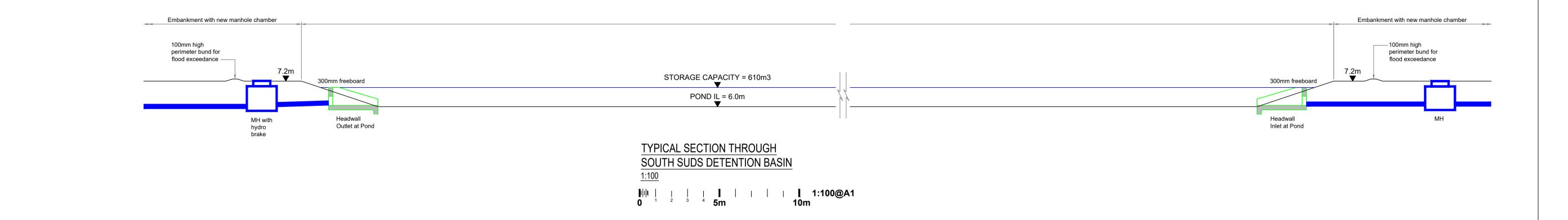
PROPOSED EFFLUENT DRAINAGE
GA & DETAILS

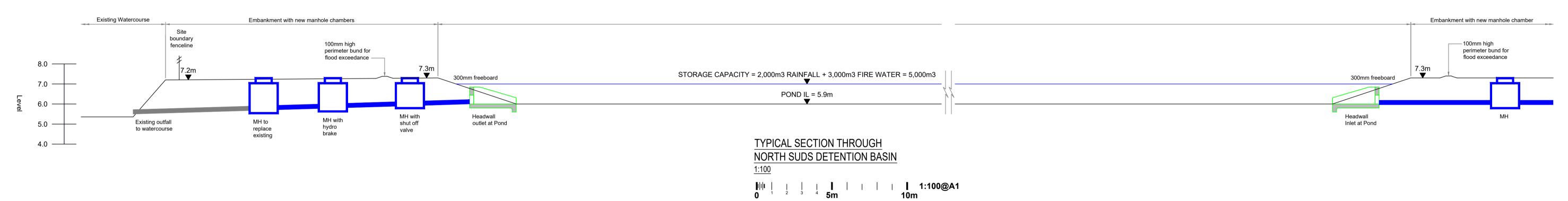
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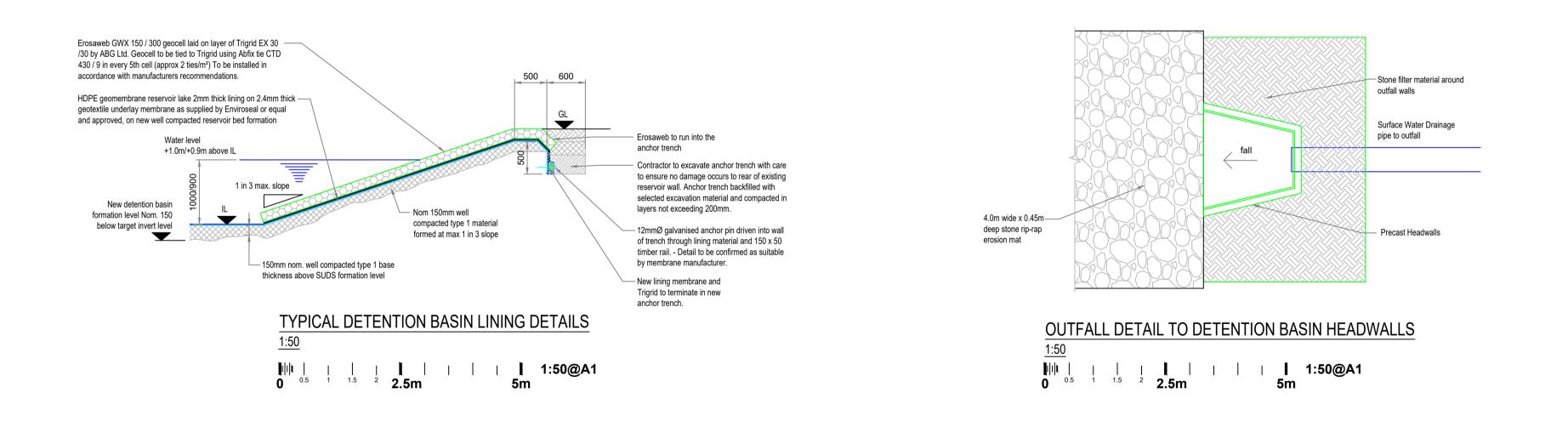


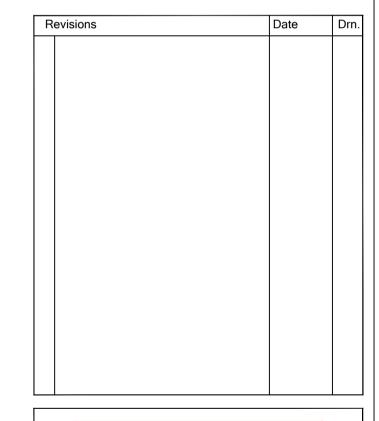
www.biytnanubiytn.co.uk	Telephone: 0131 474 2700
Drawing No.	Revision
EC21423:PL014	_















PROPOSED WAREHOUSING FEARN

DRAINAGE
CONSTRUCTION DETAILS SHEET 2

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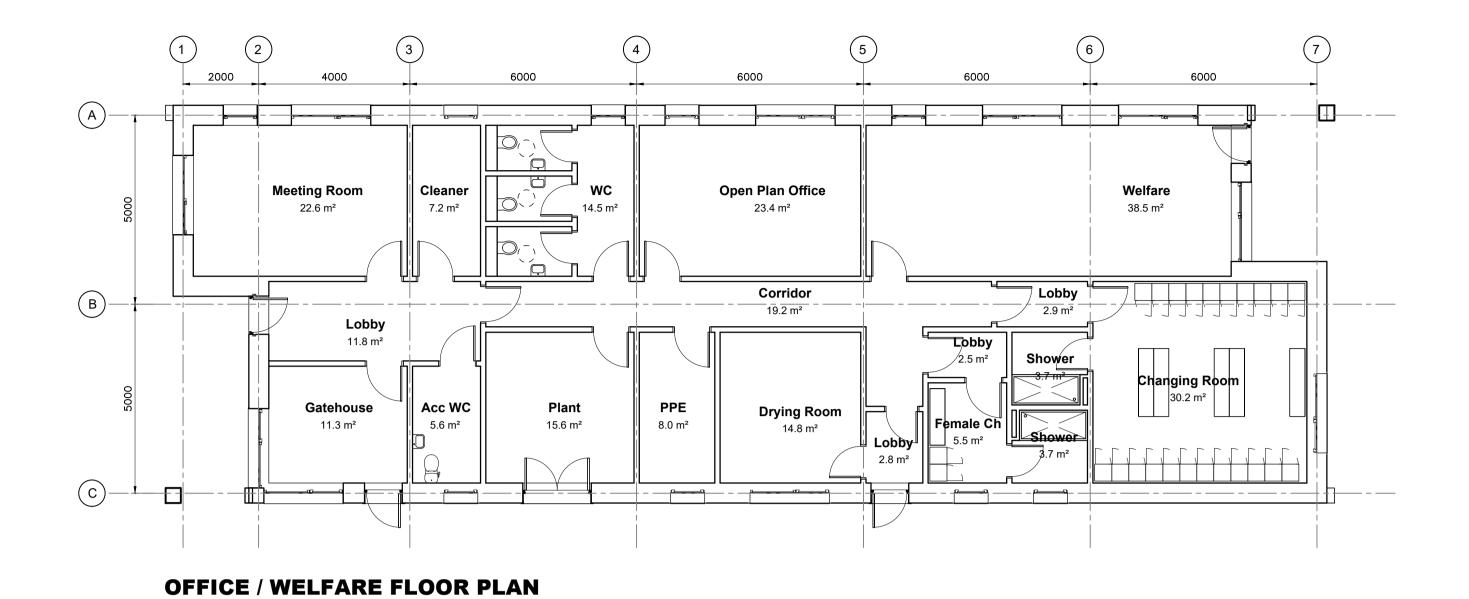
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BLYTH&BLYTH

Cornerstone, 60 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB

Drawing No. Revision EC21423:PL016 -

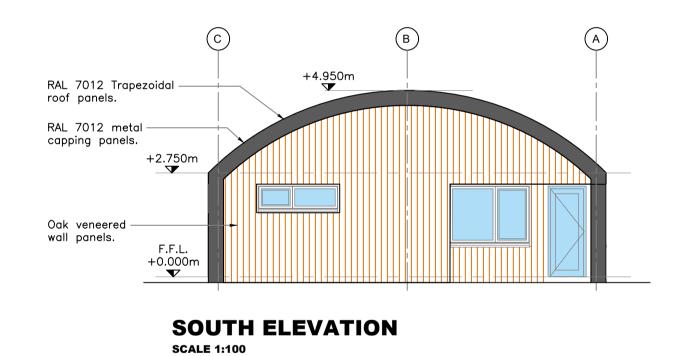
Email: edinburgh@blythandblyth.co.uk www.blythandblyth.co.uk

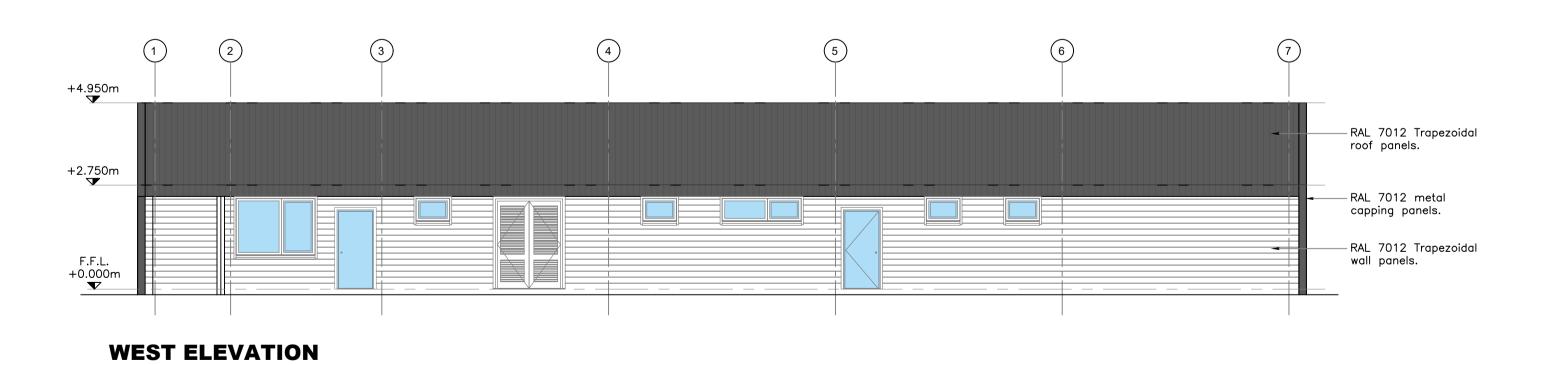


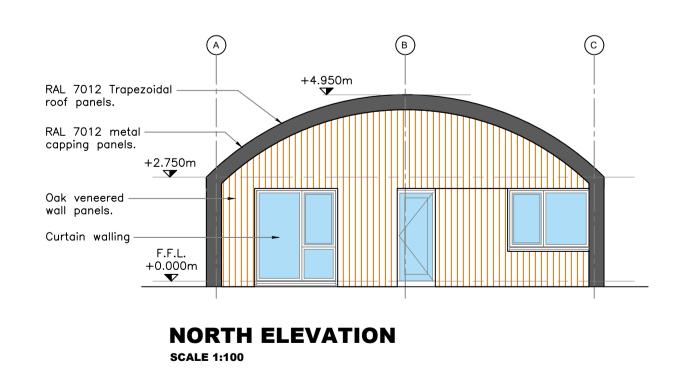
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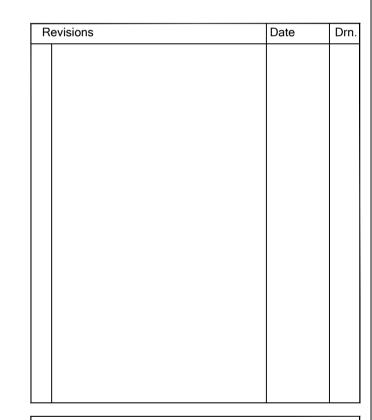
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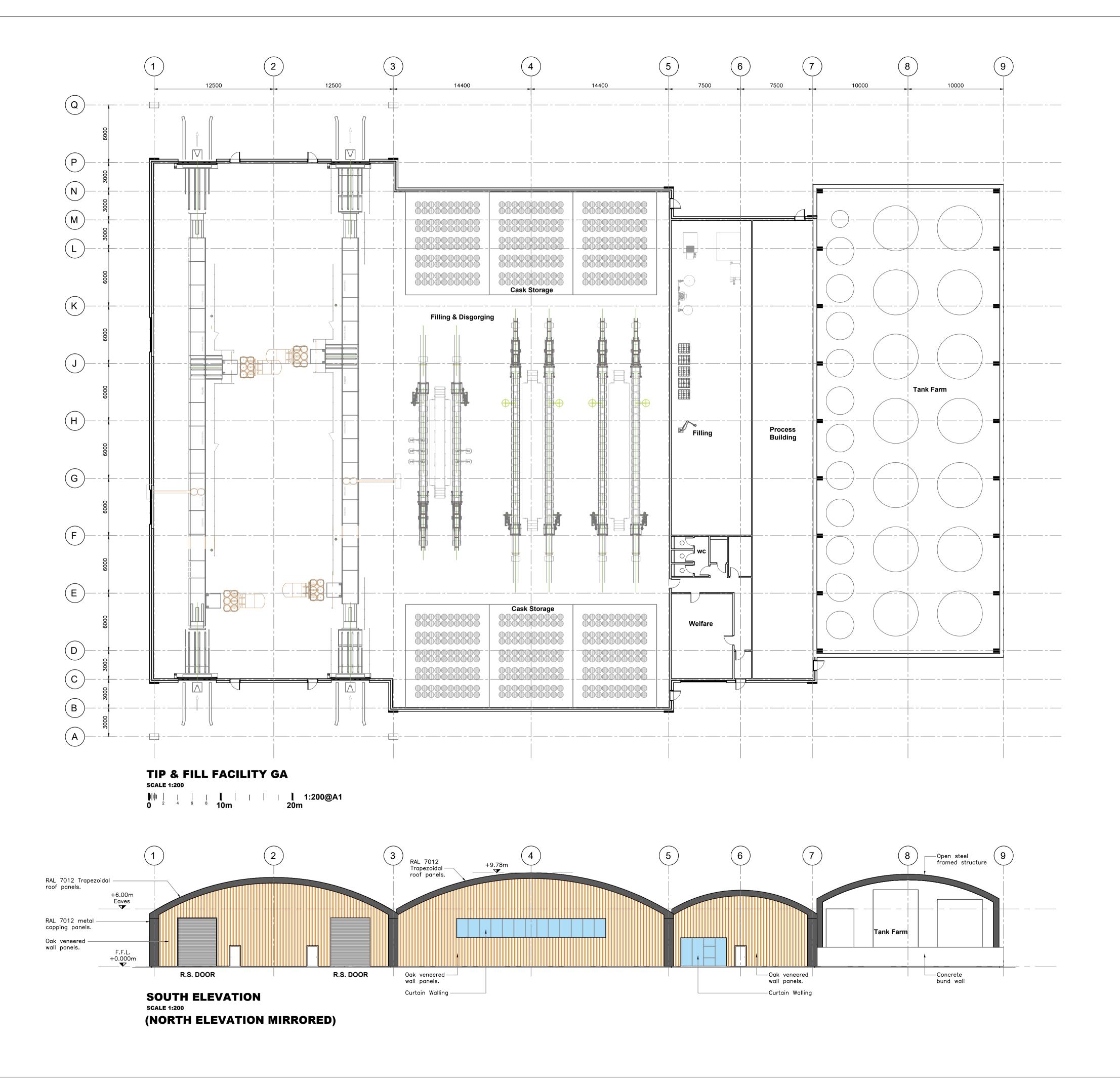
PROPOSED WAREHOUSING FEARN, TAIN

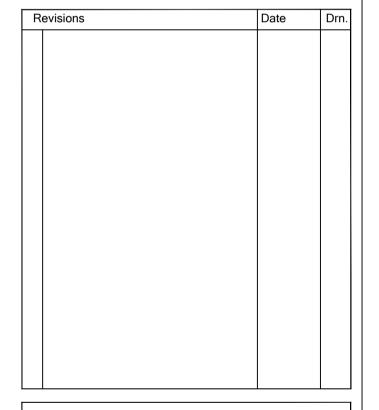
OFFICE / WELFARE BUILDING GA & ELEVATIONS

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BLYTH&	BLYTH	
Cornerstone, 60 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9EB		
Email: edinburgh@blythandblyth.co.uk www.blythandblyth.co.uk	Telephone: 0131 474 2700	

Drawing No.	Revision
EC21423:PL019	-





PLANNING DRAWING



PROPOSED WAREHOUSING FEARN, TAIN

TIP & FILL FACILITY GA & ELEVATIONS

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Drawing No.	Revision
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