Agenda Item	**7.9**
Report No	**PLS/72/26**

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 2 December 2026

Report Title: 26/03822/FUL: Wellmont Ltd

Rollerball, 167 Culduthel Road, Inverness IV2 4BQ

Report By: Area Planning Manager - South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Change of use to self-storage facility

Ward: 15 – Inverness Ness Side

Development category: N04B – Business and Industry- Local

Reason referred to Committee: Community Council Objection

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** the application as set out in section 11 of the report.

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.1 The development seeks detailed planning permission to change a former bowling alley into a self-storage unit.

1.2 The unit is proposed to be open from 7am-10pm. Access to the site will be controlled via an automated gate and will not be accessible to the public.

1.3 Pre Application Consultation: None

1.4 Supporting Information: Supporting Statement

1.5 Variations: None

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is located at the closed Rollerbowl ten pin bowling centre in Culduthel, Inverness. It is in proximity to the Inverness Royal Academy which lies to the southwest; Inverness Caledonian Thistle Community Trust building and sportsgrounds to the south; Inverness Gaelic Primary School to the east; the Academy houses which also lie to the south; and an area of accessible greenspace to the north. The site is surrounded by a landscaped bund with trees and mature shrubs. The building is surrounded by a large car park with back-of-house area.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 None

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: Unknown Neighbour

Date Advertised: 25.09.2026

Representation deadline: 09.10.2026

4.2 Timeous representations: None

4.3 Late representations: None

4.4 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

a) None

4.5 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet https://www.highland.gov.uk/planning/view-comment-planning-applications.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Lochardil and Drummond Community Council:** Objects to the proposal, stating it is not compatible with the area and not on an allocated site; there are a lack of

community facilities in Inverness; impact on amenity by noise and operation of a storage facility; impact on trees; health and safety.

5.2 **Transport Scotland:** Do not advise against the granting of planning permission.

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

6.1 The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

National Planning Framework 4 (2023) (NPF4)

6.2
Policy 1 - Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises
Policy 2 - Climate Mitigation and Adaptation
Policy 3 - Biodiversity
Policy 6 - Forestry, Woodland and Trees
Policy 9 - Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings
Policy 13 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 14 - Design Quality and Place
Policy 15 - Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
Policy 23 – Health and Safety

Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012 (HwLDP)

6.3
28 - Sustainable Design
29 - Design Quality and Place-making
34 - Settlement Development Areas
41 - Business and Industrial Land
51 - Trees and Development

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (2024) (IMFLDP2)

6.4
Policy 1 – Low and Zero Carbon Development
Policy 2 – Nature Restoration Protection and Enhancement
Policy 7 – Industrial Land

Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

6.5
Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)
Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 **Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance**

Designing Streets
Creating Places

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) siting and design

c) compatibility and neighbouring amenity

d) Impact on infrastructure

e) any other material considerations

Development plan/other planning policy

8.4 NPF4 Policy 9 (Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land and Empty Buildings) states that development proposals that result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings, will be supported, along with proposals for the reuse of existing buildings, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition will be regarded as the least preferred option.

8.5 IMF2 Policy 7 (Industrial Land) states that proposals for new industrial development on land not allocated within the plan will be supported if it can be demonstrated that it is a sustainable location and accords with the relevant policies set out in the development plan.

8.6 NPF4 Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) states that development proposals will be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in rural or urban locations and regardless of scale. The policy also states that development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places and will not be supported if they are poorly designed and are detrimental to the six qualities.

8.7 There is support in principle for the development within the development plan including the policies listed above and NPF4 Policies 6, 15, HWLDP Policies 28, 29, 34, 51, and IMFLDP2 Policies 1 and 2.

8.8 Subject to the proposal demonstrating that the proposed location is suitable, has the potential to support sustainable travel, does not adversely impact the amenity of neighbouring properties or the environment it would comply with the Development Plan.

Siting and Design

8.9 The proposal would bring back into use a vacant building on a developed site within the settlement development area of South Inverness. The building has a relatively

large footprint and is considered to be suitable for conversion to a self-storage unit because of its connectivity to the Southern Distributor Road, the surrounding uses, and the nature of a self-storage facility. There would be no significant changes to the external appearance of the building. Part of the boundary of the site would be fenced, and a condition is proposed to control the detail of this.

8.10 The proposal does not raise any issues regarding design. Reusing the entire building with minor alterations including a signage change, installation of a gate and erection of a fence, which matches the existing V mesh fences in the area are considered to be in keeping with the character of the area.

Compatibility and Neighbouring Amenity

8.11 The self-storage unit which will utilise an automated gate system to control access to the site. The nature of this type of development is not considered to be noise generating or likely to result in detrimental impacts to amenity such as pollution or increased frequency of commercial vehicles using the site.

8.12 The surrounding area is primarily open space with sport, education, and residential uses further beyond. The Academy houses are the nearest properties however and are a pair of semi-detached houses approximately 37m from the proposed storage facility and separated by a bund with trees. They have their own access and curtilages which are unaffected by the proposal. Currently, the site car park is utilised during school drop off and pick up times. Repurposing the use of the site may result in additional parking on the main road. That is not a matter under the applicant's control and would be for the Council as Roads Authority to consider if any additional traffic control measures in the vicinity of the school were necessary.

8.13 It is not expected that the operational activity at a storage unit would result in unacceptable noise levels, a significant increase in traffic, or an increase in pollution compared with other commercial uses or the existing assembly and leisure use. The site is considered suitable due to its proximity to its intended customer base. The make-up of users to the facility are primarily householders and have different needs than that of traditional industrial storage often located within industrial estates. The site has the potential to support sustainable travel with bus and cycle links, however it is recognised that this would not be the likely mode of transport for users of the site.

8.14 The applicant has provided data from other storage facilities, and it is expected that this one will operate in a similar fashion. The number of trips is expected to be around 230 per week; this is based on the busiest estimates from the applicant's storage facility in Yoker. The share of larger vehicles (vans and larger goods vehicles) is 25% with the remaining 75% being regular sized cars, and this is considered acceptable. No lorries are expected to use the facility on a regular basis. This level and variety of traffic is broadly in line with that of the existing leisure use and would be similar if the site was to be taken up by another commercial business.

8.15 This demonstrates that the proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the surrounding amenity in terms of traffic volume and type and is considered acceptable. The applicant has provided more information and has reduced the

operating hours to only include 7am-10pm in recognition of the Community Council's concerns. This can be controlled by condition.

8.16 For the reasons above it is considered that the proposal complies with the development plan, is compatible with the area and is not expected to result in unacceptable impacts to amenity.

Impact on Infrastructure

8.17 The proposal will utilise existing water and drainage connections and the existing site access arrangements will remain.

Other material considerations

8.18 There are no other material considerations.

Non-material considerations

8.19 It is recognised that the loss of a leisure use facility is not supported by the community. However, there is no policy basis to withhold planning permission for this proposal. The site is not safeguarded from a change to what is proposed and the application can only be considered on its own merits against the Development Plan and any other relevant material considerations. The loss of leisure use is not a material consideration.

8.20 All other issues raised by the Community Council are not material planning considerations.

Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement / Upfront Payment

8.21 None.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 In conclusion, the proposed change of use is compliant with the Development plan. The site is considered to be suitable, as it is more suited to its intended customer base and has the potential to promote sustainable travel. The proposal is not expected to have a detrimental impact on residential amenity and is compatible with the surrounding land uses in the area. The traffic uses generated are broadly in line with that generated by assembly and leisure uses.

9.2 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.

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 applicable

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued	N
Notification to Scottish Ministers	N
Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation	N
Revocation of previous permission	N

Recommended to **GRANT** the application subject to the following conditions and reasons:

1. 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.

   Reason: In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

2. No development shall commence until full details of the boundary fence and its position relating to existing trees are submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

   Reason: To ensure the protection of existing trees on site in the interest of amenity.

3. The development hereby approved shall not be open to customers, and no customer shall be allowed on the premises, outwith the hours of 07.00am and 10.00pm, Monday to Sunday inclusive.

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

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.

INFORMATIVES

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.

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.

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: http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport

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 and 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 env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Protected Species – Halting of Work

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and NatureScot 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 NatureScot: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-species

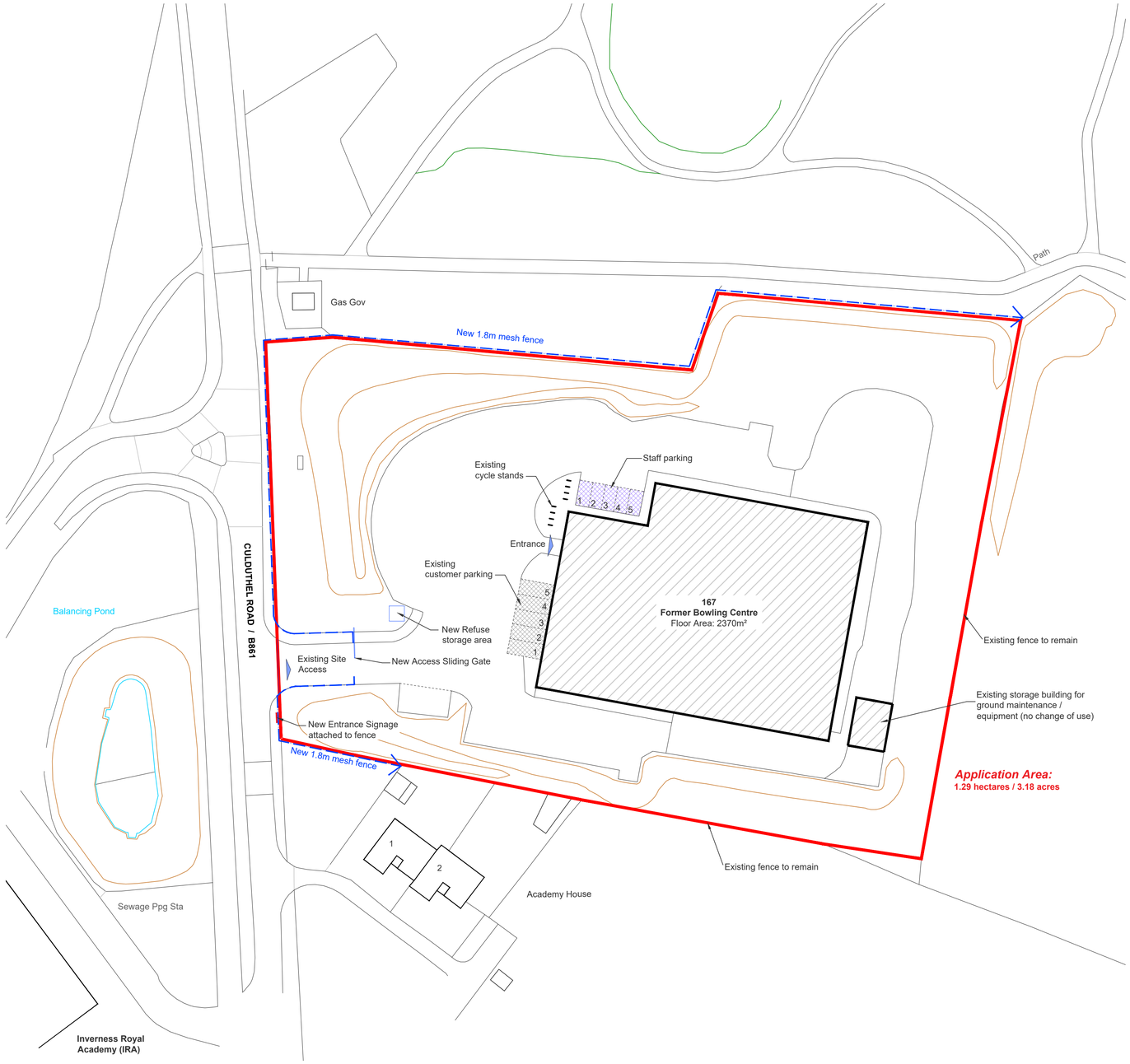
Signature: Bob Robertson

Designation: Area Planning Manager South

Author:	Ross McAteer
Background Papers:	Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans:	Plan 1 - F1375 / PL01 - Location/Site Layout Plan
	Plan 2 - F1375 / PL02 – Ground Floor Plan Proposed
	Plan 3 - F1375 / PL03 – Proposed Floor Plan Mezzanine
	Plan 4 - F1375 / PL04 – Proposed Elevation Plan

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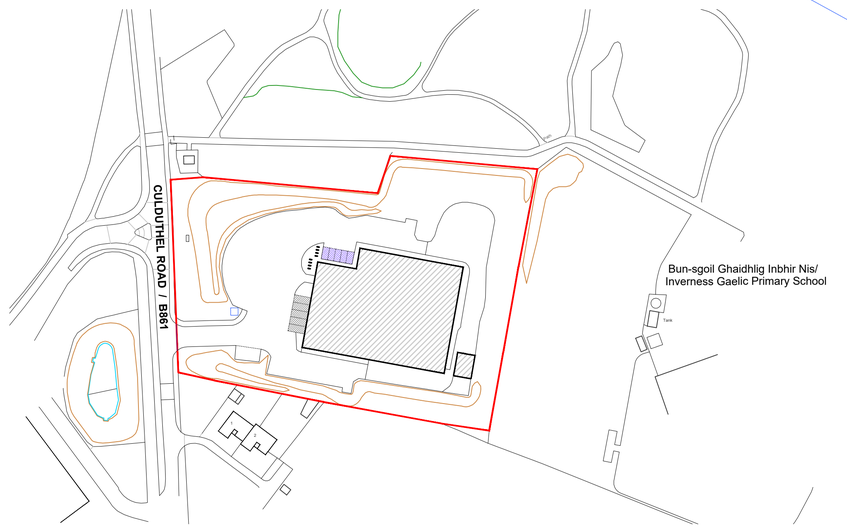
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Site Plan

Scale 1:500

0 5 10 25 50m



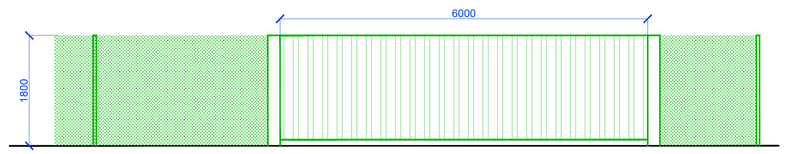
Location Plan

Scale 1:1250

0 25 50 75 125m

N

INVERNESS



New Access Gate and Boundary Fence Elevation

Scale 1:50

0 1 2 3 4 5m



New Entrance Sign

Scale 1:25

0 0.5 1 2

PLANNING

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19 HIGH STREET | TAIN | ROSS-SHIRE | IV19 1AB
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Client	Wellmont Ltd	Scale	noted
Project	Change of use from Bowling Centre to Self Storage Facility at 167 Culduthel Rd, Inverness IV2 4BQ		
Title	Site Plan and Location Plans	Size	A1
Drawing No.	F1375 / PL01	Rev	

0 10 Millimetres 100

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Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Area: 2370m²)

Scale 1:100

0 1 2 3 4 5 10m

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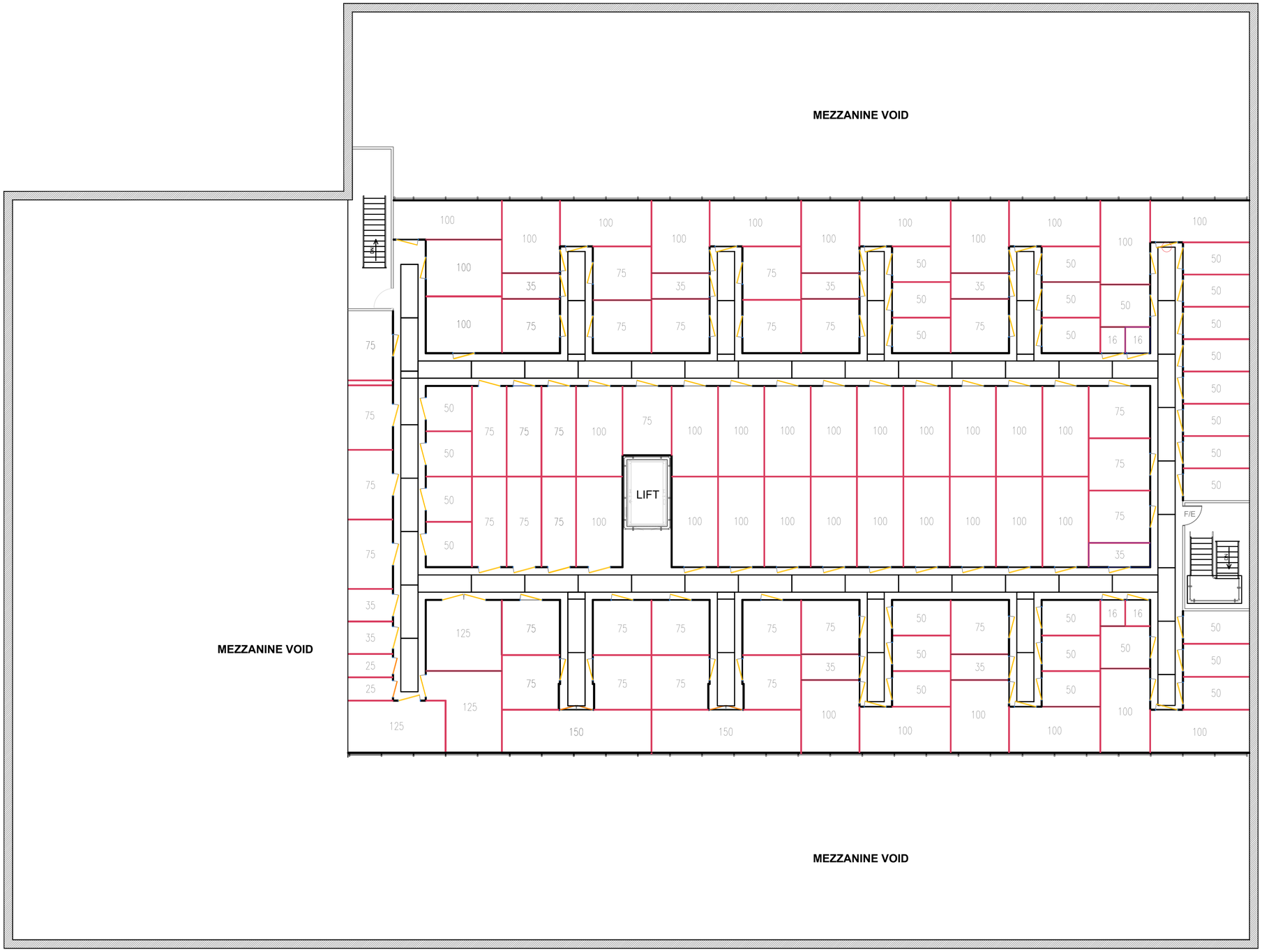
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Client	Wellmont Ltd	Scale	1:100
Project	Change of use from Bowling Centre to Self Storage Facility at 167 Culduthel Rd, Inverness IV2 4BQ		
Title	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	Size	A1
Drawing No.	F1375 / PL02	Rev	

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Proposed Mezzanine Plan (Area: 1095m²)

Scale 1:100

0 1 2 3 4 5 10m

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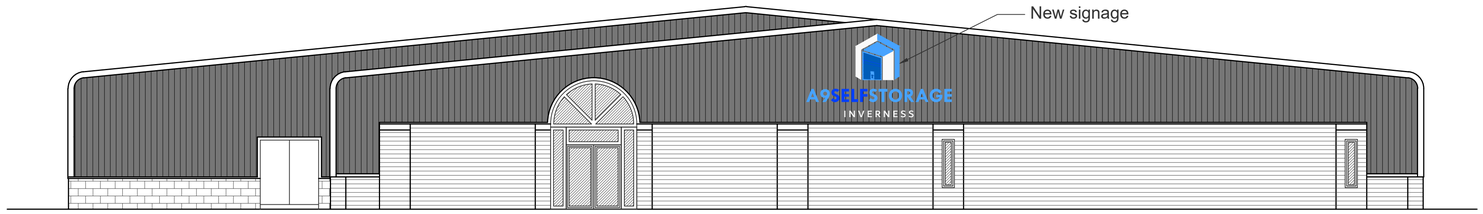
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Client	Wellmont Ltd	Scale	1:100
Project	Change of use from Bowling Centre to Self Storage Facility at 167 Culduthel Rd, Inverness IV2 4BQ		
Title	Proposed Mezzanine Plan	Size	A1
Drawing No.	F1375 / PL03	Rev	

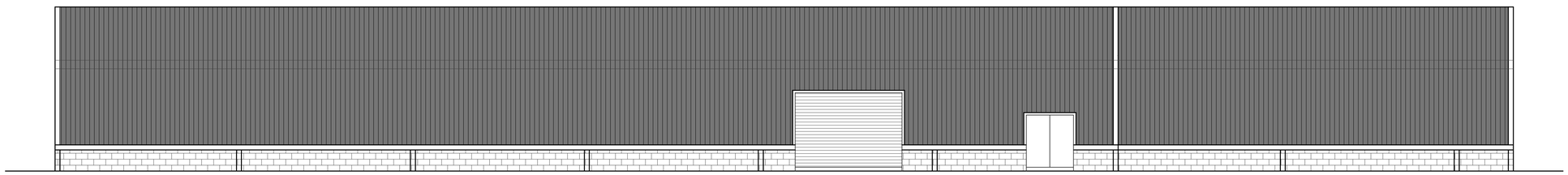
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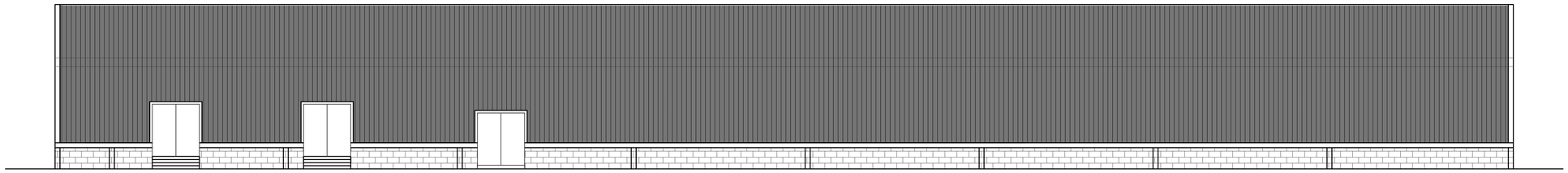
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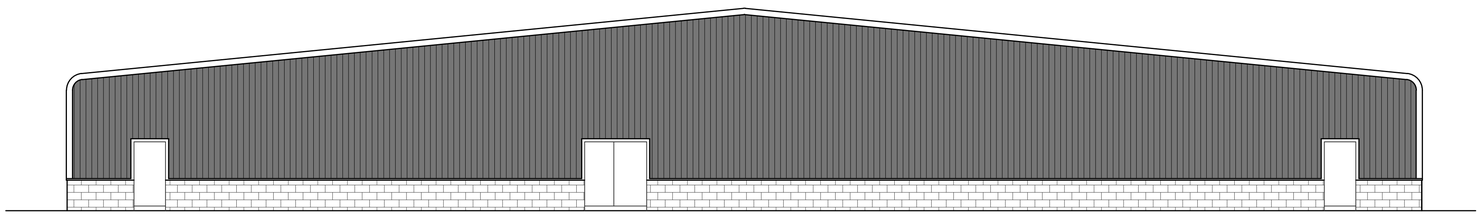
Front (West) Elevation (Scale 1:100)



Side (North) Elevation (Scale 1:125)



Side (South) Elevation (Scale 1:100)



Rear (East) Elevation (Scale 1:100)

Scale 1:100

0 1 2 3 4 5 10m

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Client	Wellmont Ltd	Scale	1:100
Project	Change of use from Bowling Centre to Self Storage Facility at 167 Culduthel Rd, Inverness IV2 4BQ		
Title	Proposed Elevations	Size	A1
Drawing No.	F1375 / PL04	Rev	

0 10 Millimetres 100