



Planning Committee
4th February 2025

Application No	:	24/01723/FUL Full Application
Location	:	Dovedale Sports Centre Vicarage Road Chelmsford CM2 9BP
Proposal	:	Single storey extensions to form new reception area and enable internal alterations. Installation of 3 No. Air Source Heat Pumps.
Applicant	:	Chelmsford College
Agent	:	Mrs Cheryl Peel
Date Valid	:	17th December 2024

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Appendices:

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1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This application is for two modest infill extensions to Dovedale Sports Centre. The proposal also includes the installation of three air source heat pumps, which would be located on the southwest elevation of Dovedales. The City Council has a Joint Use agreement with the College to enable community use. It therefore has an interest in the application site. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the application is presented to the Planning Committee for a decision as a public objection has been received (see Appendix 2).
- 1.2. The development would modernise the facility for the College students and the local community. The extensions are minor in size and form and are located between two existing buildings. The design is acceptable and would result in no harm to the character of the area.
- 1.3. Access and vehicle parking to the site are not affected by the proposal and remain acceptable.
- 1.4. The air source heat pumps are located close to the rear boundaries of residential properties in Rothesay Avenue. The residents have raised concerns in relation to noise and pollution. A noise report has been submitted as part of the application to determine the ambient noise level. A condition is attached to this recommendation to ensure that the air source heat pumps do not emit noise above this level. The units would not emit unacceptable levels of CO₂. The impact of the pumps on the living conditions of the neighbouring properties is considered to be acceptable.
- 1.5. The application is recommended for approval.

2. Description of site

- 2.1. The site is located within the Chelmsford Urban Area. Dovedale Sports Centre is part of the Chelmsford College complex of buildings. It is separated from the College by a 3.6 metre gap. The reception area for the Centre is located within this gap between buildings.
- 2.2. The car park for Dovedales is located to the south of the building and is accessed from Vicarage Road.
- 2.3. The rear gardens of residential properties in Rothesay Avenue back onto the southwest side elevation of the Sports Centre.

3. Details of the proposal

- 3.1. The current reception area for the Sports Centre is located within the small gap between the College and the Sports Centre buildings. The proposal is to extend the reception area northwards by 8.5 metres and southwards by 5.6 metres. The extension would allow for the expansion and modernisation of the gym and changing rooms and the creation of a new studio space. The materials would match the existing.
- 3.2. Three air source heat pumps are proposed on the south-west facing elevation of Dovedales.

4. Other relevant applications

- 4.1. None

5. Summary of consultations

Leisure & Heritage Services

- Support the application

Public Health & Protection Services

- A condition is required to ensure that the noise from the air source heat pumps will not exceed the relevant noise limit criteria set out within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment

Local residents

- Concerns relate to the noise and operation of the air source heat pumps, traffic and construction and the use of the area close to the air source heat pumps. A summary of all of the comments received is provided in Appendix 2

6. Planning considerations

- 6.1. The site is located within a residential area and is an established Sports Centre. The City Council has an agreement with Chelmsford College which enables the use of the Sports facilities for the Community. The proposal is part of an update to the existing facilities.

Extensions to Dovedale Sports Centre

- 6.2. Policy DM20 of the Chelmsford Local Plan states that permission will be granted for extensions to existing facilities which support the local community where:
- i. there is access to adequate public transport, cycling and walking links for the benefit of non-car users; and
 - ii. vehicle access and on-site vehicle parking would be provided to an appropriate standard commensurate to the scale of the development; and
 - iii. the development would be compatible with its surroundings; and
 - iv. there would be no unacceptable impact on the character, appearance or local environment; and
 - v. adequate access to and between the facilities and/or services would be provided for people with disabilities commensurate to the scale of the development.
- 6.3. The site is located in the city centre where there is good access to public transport and pedestrian and cycling links. The development would not affect the current parking provision.
- 6.4. The proposal is for two small extensions which would be located between two buildings. The simple design and matching materials would be compatible with the existing centre and would result in no harm to the character and appearance of the area. The amenities of the neighbouring residents would not be affected by the additions.

- 6.5. The proposal satisfactorily complies with Policy DM20.

Air source heat pumps

- 6.6. Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan seeks to safeguard the living environment of the occupiers of any nearby residential property. Developments must be compatible with neighbouring or existing uses in the vicinity of the development by ensuring that the development avoids unacceptable levels of polluting emissions by reason of noise, light, smell, fumes, vibrations or other issues, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and permanently maintained.
- 6.7. The proposed air source heat pumps would be located to a discreet side of the building and would not be readily visible from public vantages.
- 6.8. The pumps would be located on an elevation closest to the rear gardens of No.s 21, 23 and a small block of flats in Rothesay Avenue (No.s 25, 25A and 27). At the nearest points, the pumps would be approximately 22 metres from No.21, 20 metres from No.23 and 16 metres from the flats.
- 6.9. A noise impact assessment has been submitted with the application. The noise survey was completed between the 22nd and 23rd August 2022. The survey measured representative noise levels at the southwestern boundary of the site. The results of this survey have then been used to set a “noise rating limit” for the air source heat pumps. In other words, the noise from the air source heat pumps must not exceed the prevailing background noise level to protect the adjacent residents from adverse noise impacts. The noise rating limit is to apply at 1 metre from the closest residential facades to the site. A comment has been received from a resident concerned that the noise survey was carried out during the summer holidays, when the college would not be very busy or noisy. By carrying out the survey during a quieter period, this gives the “worst case” scenario and results in a lower ambient noise level that the air source heat pumps should not exceed. The noise impact assessment recorded the dominant noise level as 42 decibels by day and 33 decibels by night. The required ambient noise level for the air source heat pumps is recommended as 5 decibels below the dominant noise level, being 37 decibels by day and 28 decibels by night.
- 6.10. Concerns have been raised regarding the timings of when the air source heat pumps will be in operation. Air source heat pumps are designed to keep a building at a constant temperature and therefore will run when the outside temperature is low and/or demand for heating is high. Provided that the noise emission from the air source heat pumps is below 37 decibels during the day and 28 decibels at night, this is considered acceptable.
- 6.11. A condition is attached to ensure that the air source heat pumps meet the requirements of the noise impact assessment.
- 6.12. Concerns have been raised that the air source heat pumps could result in air pollution. Air source heat pumps use the same kind of technology that keeps a fridge or freezer cool, but in reverse. They City Council’s Public Health and Protection team have advised that there are no air quality issues associated with air source heat pumps. Carbon dioxide emissions from them are lower than from standard boilers or other heat generation.

Other matters

- 6.13. Concerns have been raised regarding traffic management and construction. The site has its own car parks adjacent to the areas for construction, which will be suitable for construction workers to use for their vehicles and to store materials. An informative is attached in relation to guidelines for acceptable working hours.
- 6.14. Concern has been raised about the use of the area where the pumps will be sited by children and vulnerable adults. The air source heat pumps are located in an area adjacent to "The Secret Garden" which is used by the on-site children's nursery. The Secret Garden is fenced off from the area where the air source heat pumps will be located. There will be no conflict between users of the garden and the area of the plant. The maintenance of the pumps will be the responsibility of the Sports Centre Management
- 6.15. A request for the measurement of the distance from the pumps to the rear boundary fences of No.21 and No.23 Rothesay Avenue has been made. The closest point between the pumps and the rear boundary to No.23 is 3.5 metres and to No.21 is 6.1 metres.
- 6.16. Neighbouring residents have requested the timescale of when the works will be carried out. The planning application grants permission for the development to be carried out within 3 years from the date of the decision.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The proposed extensions to the Sports Centre are minor in size. They would provide an improvement to the existing facilities and would result in no harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal complies with Policy DM20.
- 7.2. The proposed air source heat pumps are located close to the garden boundaries of neighbouring residential properties. A condition is attached to ensure that the noise from the units would be below the ambient noise level. With the provision of this condition, the living conditions of the neighbouring residents will not be adversely affected. The proposal therefore complies with Policy DM29.

8. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 8.1. This development is not CIL liable

RECOMMENDATION

The Application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:-

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason:

In order to comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and conditions listed on this decision notice.

Reason:

In order to achieve satisfactory development of the site

Condition 3

Prior to first use of the air source heat pumps hereby permitted details of the methods to ensure that the noise emission from the units does not exceed the recommendations of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment reference PC-22-0184-RP1 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The units shall then be installed in accordance with those approved details and shall remain so.

Reason:

In the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Notes to Applicant

- 1 In order to cause minimum nuisance to neighbours, the applicant is strongly advised to follow guidelines for acceptable working hours set out by the Council's Public Health and Protection team.

Noisy work

- Can be carried out between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday
- Limited to 0800-1300 on Saturdays
- At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, no work should be carried out that is audible beyond the boundary of the site

Light work

- Acceptable outside the hours shown above
- Can be carried out between 0700 and 0800; and 1800-1900 Monday to Friday

In some circumstance further restrictions may be necessary.

For more information, please contact Chelmsford City Council Public Health and Protection Services, or view the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/construction-site-noise

Positive and Proactive Statement

The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

Plans to be listed on any Decision Notice:

DSPEXT-IWD-XX-ZZ-DR-A-2510/P02
 DSPEXT-IWD-XX-ZZ-DR-A-2402/P01
 DSPEXT-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-2400/P05
 DSPEXT-IWD-XX-00-DR-M-4200/P01
 DSPEXT-IWD-XX-00-DR-A-2010/P02
 PC-22-0184-RP1 – Noise Impact Assessment
 CAHV-R450YA-HPB – Ecodan Air Source Heat Pump

Appendix 2 – Consultations

Leisure & Heritage Services

Comments
<p>Leisure & Heritage Services declare an interest in this application as although Dovedale Sports Centre is owned by Chelmsford College it is operated in partnership with the Chelmsford City Council via a Joint-Use Agreement to enable public and community access to the facilities.</p> <p>We support the application as the new facility will help to improve the range and quality of sports facility provision in the City.</p> <p>The proposal meets the ambitions of Chelmsford City Council's Our Chelmsford: Our Plan and particularly the priorities to:-</p> <p>G: Improve opportunities for adults and children to live well, reducing health inequalities and social isolation, so that they can enjoy a healthy, safe and fulfilling life.</p> <p>H: Help create a network of amenities and community facilities providing opportunities and access for people of all backgrounds to engage in healthy, active and socially connected lifestyles.</p> <p>And the aim to promoting physical and mental wellbeing and reducing social isolation and provide access to sport, leisure and recreational activities that encourage healthy, active lifestyles.</p> <p>The facility was constructed in 1973 and although having had some minor upgrades during that time has remained a generally functional centre. The facilities are now very dated and the current standards of the building have fallen, especially compared to the other council leisure centres. Ongoing maintenance and repair costs are also increasing. The current configuration and size of facilities does not enable usage to be maximised and daytime use for the community in term-time is not currently available. It clearly requires investment to meet the needs and expectations of customers.</p> <p>The new works comprise modest infill extensions to form a new reception area and an expansion to the existing gym (fitness room). Refurbishment and remodelling works extend to all existing changing facilities,</p>

circulation spaces and staff areas. The works will see the creation of a new additional studio space. Utilities and services will also be upgraded. In addition to current access as a result of the improvements the fitness facilities (gym and studio) will become available to the local community in the mornings during term-time.

The primary aims and benefits of the proposal include:

- o Upgrade an ageing joint use community leisure centre to benefit both College students and the local community
- o Increased number of total attendances and customer and community groups participating in health & wellbeing activities.
- o Enable morning use of the fitness room/studio for the local community (not currently available)
- o Create a modernised, good quality alternative option for city centre customers with additional benefits of relieving pressure on the Council's other extremely popular fitness venues.
- o Improved energy efficiency and carbon reduction

South Essex Parking Partnership

Comments

No response received

Public Health & Protection Services

Comments

The installation of air source heat pumps (ASHPs) has the potential to cause noise disturbance to nearby residents. However, the acoustic assessment submitted with the application has reviewed existing noise levels and identifies a relevant noise limit criteria that the new ASHPs should meet to ensure no undue disturbance is caused. The assessment has been carried out correctly and obtained background/ambient noise levels at times when levels are likely to be lower, thus resulting in a lower noise limit criteria. I would suggest that a condition is imposed to require a further assessment is submitted for approval to demonstrate the ASHPs to be installed will be meet the relevant noise limit criteria.

Local Residents

Comments

Two representations received. Comments are summarised as follows:

- No traffic management plan to manage construction traffic on Vicarage Road
- Will a Construction Logistics Plan and Construction Environmental Plan be submitted
- The noise impact assessment was conducted outside term time and does not take account of the noise of students
- Concerned the gardens of 21 and 23 Rothesay Avenue will be affected by the noise of the pumps
- There are no timescales of when the work will be carried out
- No timescales of when the pumps will be running
- Will there be air pollution from the pumps
- How often will they be maintained
- There is no measurement from the pumps to the fences of 21 and 23 Rothesay Avenue on the drawings
- Will there be restriction on Nursery School children and vulnerable adults accessing the current area where the pumps will be



0 15 30 60 Metres

1:1,500



Planning Committee
24/01723/FUL

Planning & Development Management
Directorate for Sustainable Communities

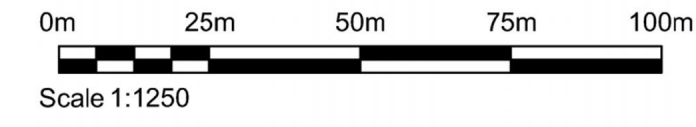
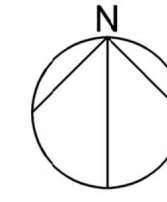
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KEY:

-  Indicates site boundary - 15038m²
-  Indicates area of works - 1391m²

P05	Planning Issue	29/11/24	AM	MC
P04	Planning Issue	13/10/23	AM	MC
P03	Updated layout	06/10/23	AM	MC
P02	Reduced Scheme	03/08/23	AM	MC
P01	Information	18/07/22	XX	XX
Rev	Description	Date	Chk	Az
Project No:	Scale @ A2:	Drawn By:		
502489	As Indicated	AP		



Vision, form and function

Project:
Dovedale Sports Center Extension
Vicarage Road
Chelmsford
CM2 9BP

Client:
Chelmsford City Council

Title:
Site Location Plan

Drawing Number:	
DSPEXT-IWD-XX-XX-DR-A-2400	
Status:	Purpose of Issue:
A1	PLANNING
Revision:	P05

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P01 Planning	29/11/24	AM	SV
Rev/Comment	Date	Cnk	Apr
Project No: 502489	Scale @ A1: 1:200	Drawn By: SvM	

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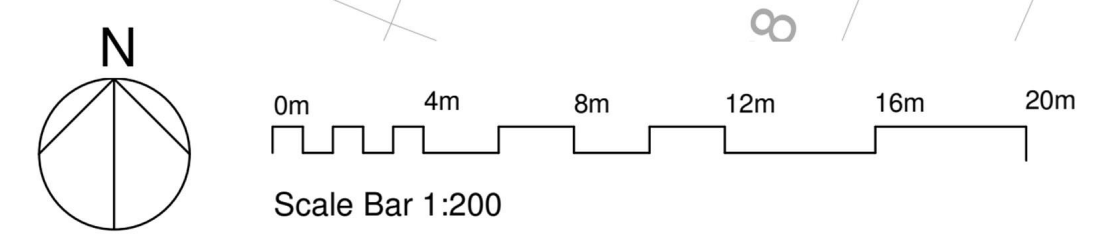
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 Dovedale Sports Centre Extension
 Vicarage Road,
 Chelmsford,
 CM2 9BP

Client:
 Chelmsford City Council

Title:
 Block Plan

Drawing Number:
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Sheet:	Purpose of Issue:	Revision:
S4	PLANNING	P01

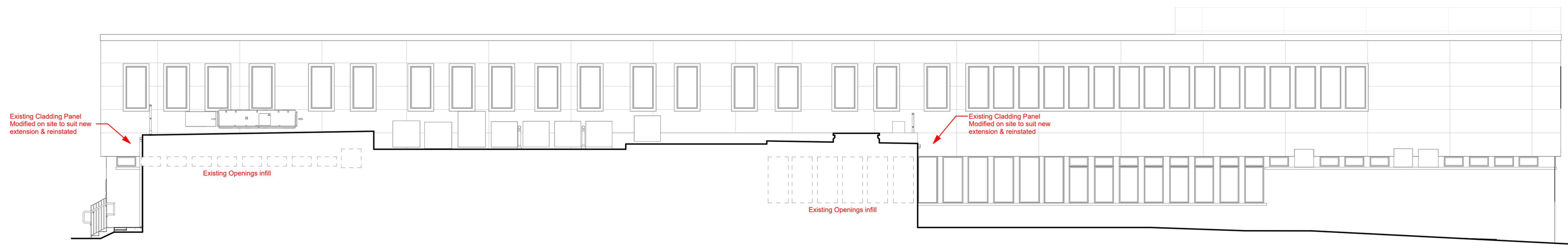


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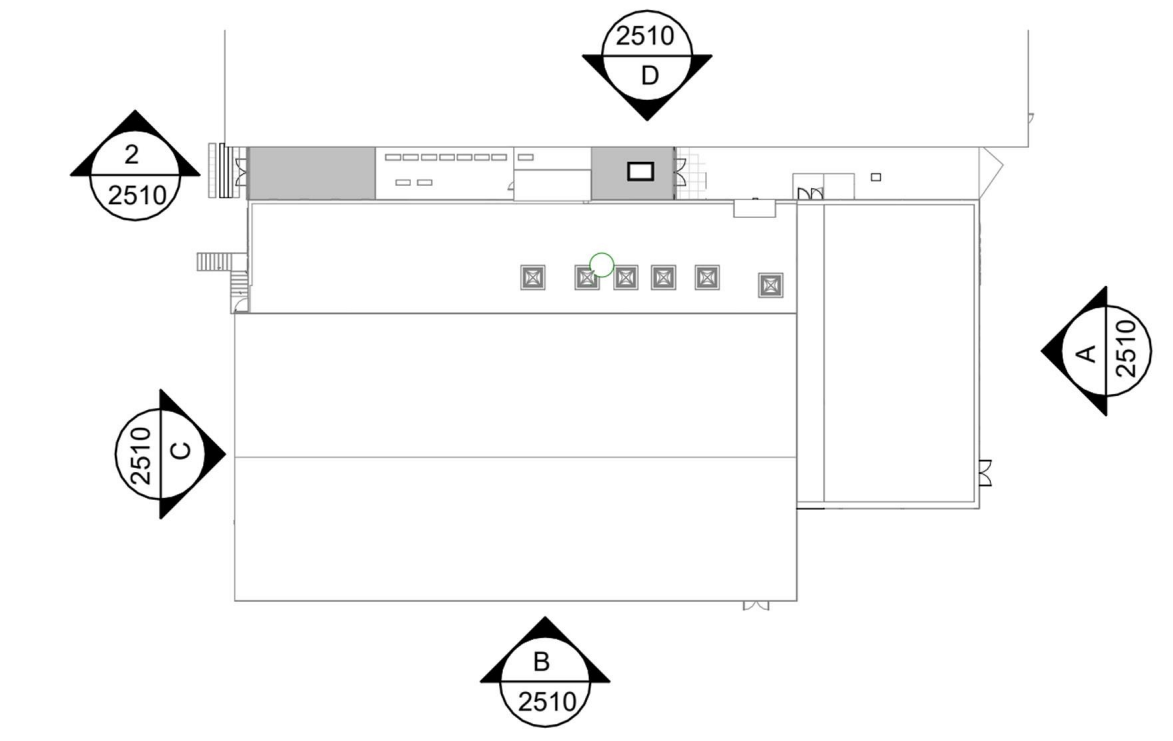
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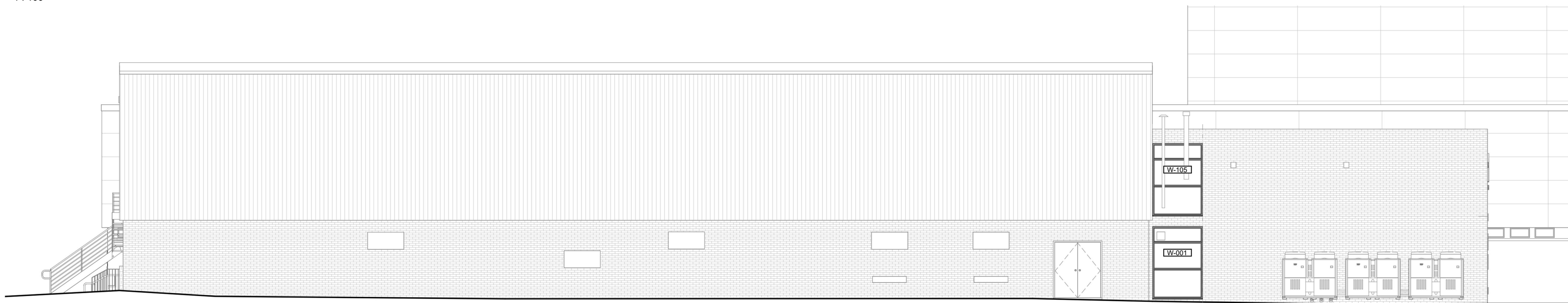
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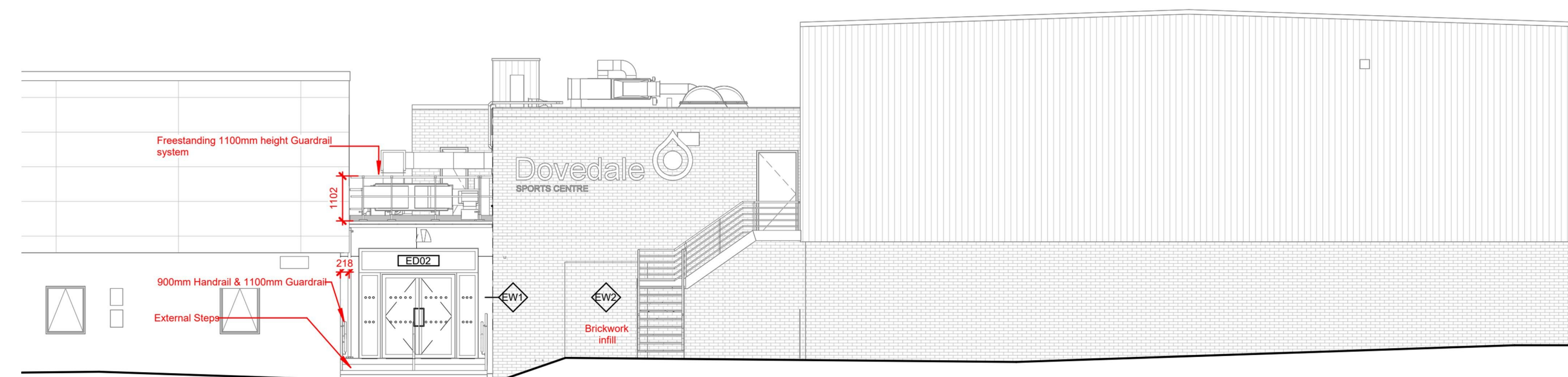
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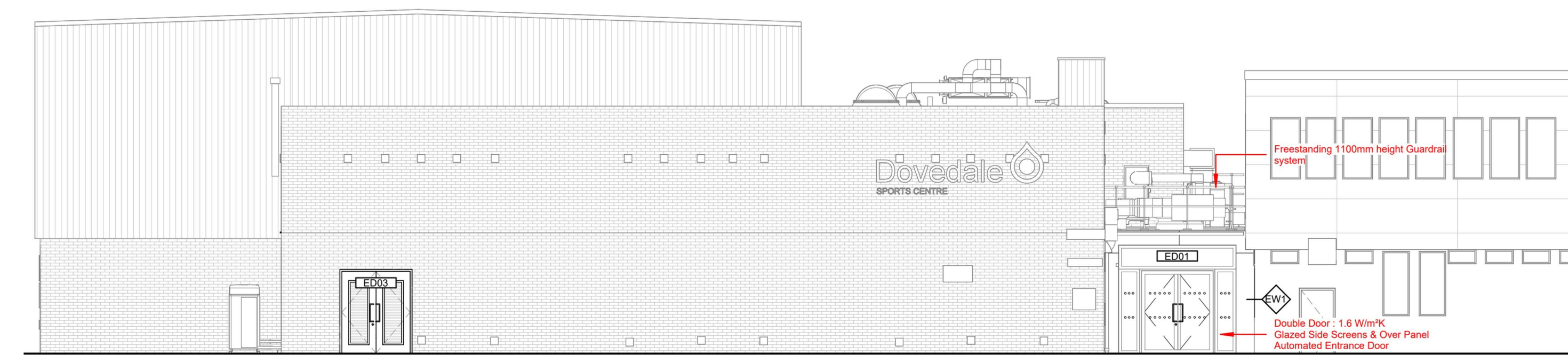
Key Plan (Elevations)
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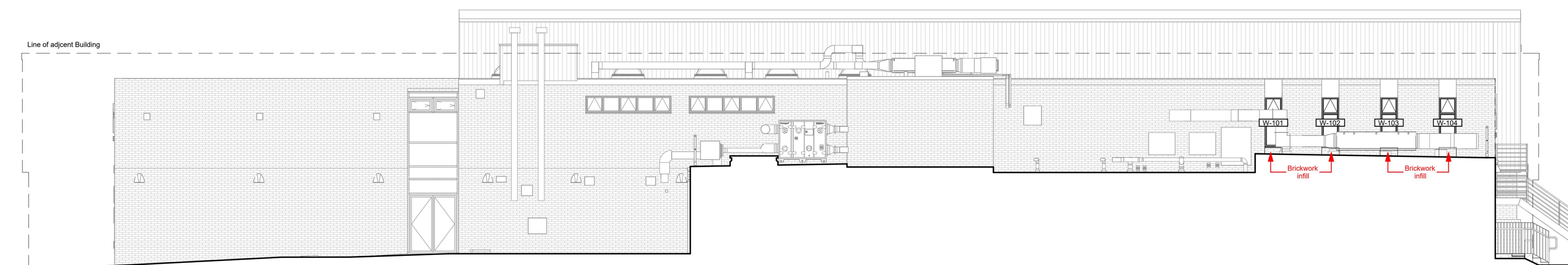
South West Facing Elevation (B)
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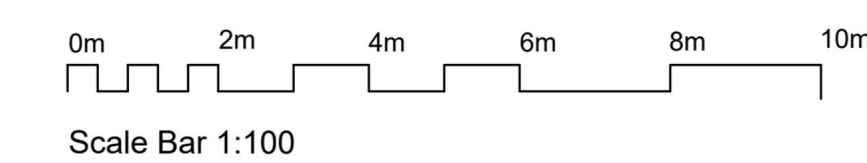
North West Facing Elevation (C)
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South East Facing Elevation (A)
1 : 100



North East Facing Elevation (D)
1 : 100



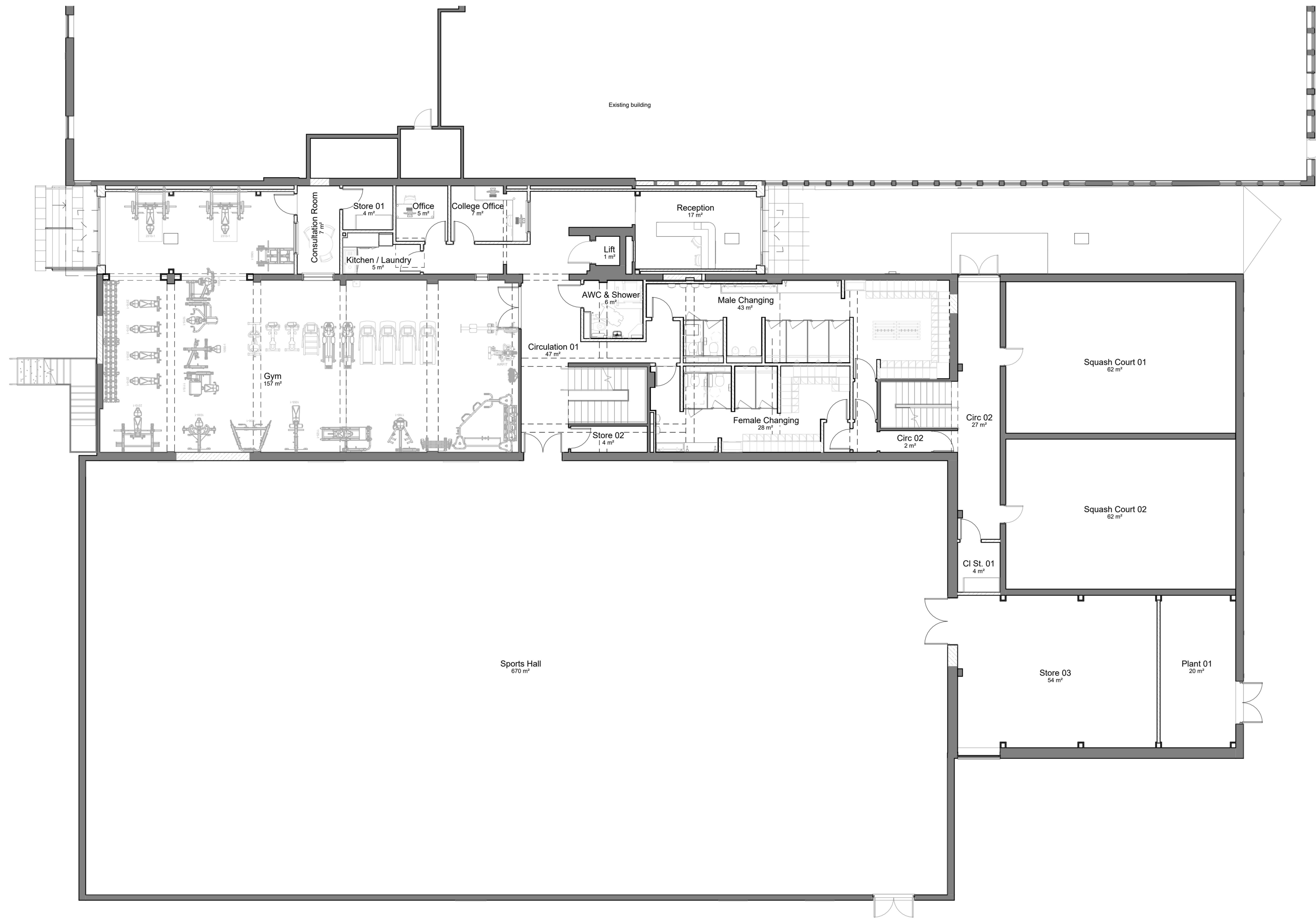
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P01 Planning	29/11/24	AM	SV
Rev / Comment	Date	CHK	APP
Project No: 502489	Scale @ A1: As indicated	Drawn By: RS	

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Client:
Chelmsford City Council

Title:
Elevations

Drawing Number: DSPEXT-IWD-XX-ZZ-DR-A-2510	Revision:
Status: S2	Purpose of Issue: PLANNING
	P02



P02 TENDER Issue	03/05/24	AM	SV
P01 First Issue	21/03/24	AM	SV
Rev Comment	Date	Chk	Appr
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Client:
 Chelmsford City Council

Title:
GAGroundFloorPlan

Drawing Number: DSPEXT-IWD-XX-00-DR-A-2010	Status: S4	Purpose of Issue: TENDER	Revision: P02
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