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**F/YR20/1013/F**

**Applicant: Mr P Purse**

**Agent : Mr Lee Bevens  
L Bevens Associates Ltd**

**Land North Of Meadowcroft, Silt Road, March, Cambridgeshire**

**Erect a building for storage of vehicles and machinery in association with groundworking business and personal use, including, 1.4 metre high (approx) timber gates and 1.2 metre high (approx) post and rail fencing, and formation of hardstanding and 1.5 metre high (approx) grass bunding**

**Officer recommendation: Refuse**

**Reason for Committee: Number of representations contrary to officer recommendation**

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of building for storage of vehicles and machinery in association with a groundworking business and personal use, including, 1.4 metre high timber gates and 1.2 metre high post and rail fencing, and formation of a formal access, hardstanding and 1.5 metre high grass bunding.
- 1.2 Planning permission has been refused three times for the erection of a storage building on this site, though the descriptions have differed slightly each time, the current scheme is essentially an iteration of the previously refused applications, however the building proposed has a slightly larger footprint and is 0.5m higher.
- 1.3 The application site is considered to be 'Elsewhere' in relation to the settlement hierarchy; in such a location a proposal must clearly demonstrate that it is essential for the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services. The applicant's proposal does not constitute an 'agricultural' operation or any of those identified within LP3 as above.
- 1.4 The proposed development is considered an alien urban feature in a tranquil rural setting. Furthermore, it is considered that if planning permission were to be granted the operation of a site of this scale has potential to result in significant disturbance to the amenity of the occupiers of Medway Cottage opposite and of the use of this quiet county lane.
- 1.5 Consequently, the recommendation is to refuse the application.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site is located close to the railway line on the eastern side of Silt Road, a single-track tarmac road, devoid of passing places and footpaths with grass verges either side and serving two existing dwellings. This site was formerly a grassed paddock area with no formal access (as visible on Google Maps) and has since been cleared and laid to hardcore, a number of vehicles and building materials are parked/stored, lighting and CCTV installed, stable/shed erected and gated access has been created without the benefit of planning permission. The area to the north of the site contains an unauthorised mobile home which is excluded from the application. To the south is Meadowcroft, a detached 2-storey dwelling, with extensions/alterations nearing completion.

## **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission to erect a building for storage of vehicles and machinery in association with the applicant's ground working business, part of the building will also be used to store hay bales. This building measures 18.5m x 9.75m and 6.1m in height, to be constructed Moorland Green vertical plastic coated box profile cladding with concrete panels below and natural grey fibre cement roof.
- 3.2 Also proposed is a formal access, which is gated, tarmac for the first 6m leading to a tarmac chipping drive and hardstanding area within the site, concrete apron in front of the building and 1.5m high grass bund to the south west of this hard landscaping. The site incorporates an area of land previously given permission for domestic purposes and is proposed to separate this with a 1.2m post and rail fence. The shed/stable does not form part of this application.
- 3.3 Full plans and associated documents for these applications can be found at:

<https://www.publicaccess.fenland.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QIK581HE01U00>

#### 4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/YR18/0344/F	Change of use of land for domestic purposes and erection of a 2-storey rear extension and detached triple garage to existing dwelling involving demolition of existing garage and store	Granted 4/6/2018
F/YR17/0818/F	Erection of a 5.6 metre high building for the garaging/parking of applicant's vehicles and storage of hay/straw/tack; retention and extension of existing hardstanding (including change of use of part paddock to additional residential curtilage); erection 1.5 metre high (max) fencing to enclose retained and extended paddocks (including change of use of former residential curtilage to paddocks)	Refused 07/12/2017
F/YR17/0060/F	Change of use of site from agricultural land to B1(c) business use involving the erection of a 5.6m high storage building and the siting of a temporary mobile home (whilst works are being carried out to modernise Meadowcroft) (part retrospective)	Refused 28/04/2017
F/YR16/0863/F	Change of use of site from agricultural land to B1(c) business use involving the erection of a 5.6m high storage building and the siting of a temporary mobile home (whilst works are being carried out to modernise Meadowcroft) (part retrospective)	Refused 16/11/2016

#### 5 CONSULTATIONS

##### 5.1 Environmental Health (FDC) (14/11/2020)

*A site visit hasn't been made and this response is based on a desk-top study.  
Documents considered are: -*

*Planning Application dated 29 September 2020.  
Location Plan  
Site Plan  
Aerial photo*

*This proposal will not have any adverse effects on the local air quality climate.*

*This proposal won't have any issues concerning noise.*

*Ground contamination isn't an issue.*

*Consequently, there are no objections to this proposal.*

## **5.2 Environmental Health (FDC) (28/1/2021)**

*A site visit hasn't been made and this response is based on a desk-top study.*

*Documents considered are: -*

*Design and Access Statement – Rev. A - L Bevens Associates Ltd*  
*Location Plan*  
*Site Plan*  
*Response by Environmental Health – dated 14 November 2020*  
*Various neighbour responses since previous response by Environmental Health*

*There are issues to raise and our comments in the response on 14 November 2020 still stand.*

*Consequently, there are still no objections to this proposal.*

## **5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways (16/11/2020)**

*Will this application result in a material increase in vehicle movement along Silt Road, or will the proposed building simply provide ancillary storage of plant and material that is currently being stored on the adjacent site? If you are unable to answer this question, can you request the agent provides further clarification of any additional trips that will be generated as a result of the development?*

*The highway access crossover should be drained into a soakwell if it cannot be piped into an adjacent ditch/drainage system. I have no issues with the private access surface water discharging to the unbound material on the driveway.*

*What is the largest/longest vehicle to use the access? The gate setback distance should accord with the access design vehicle.*

*Defer for amended plans.*

## **5.4 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways (7/1/2021)**

*Based on the information the applicant has submitted, the development will not result in a material increase in traffic along Silt Road or any unacceptable harm to the highway network.*

*No highway objections subject to the following condition recommendations.*

*1.) Prior to the commencement of use of the access hereby permitted, the means of vehicular access will be laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved plans.*

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site.*

*2.) Prior to the first use of the vehicular access onto Silt Road, all vegetation shall be cut back to the highway boundary along the frontage of Silt Road and maintained in perpetuity.*

*Reason - To ensure adequate access visibility onto the public highway and to achieve compliance with Policies LP15 and LP16 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2017.*

*Advisories*

1.) This development involves work to the public highway that will require the approval of the County Council as Highway Authority. It is an OFFENCE to carry out any works within the public highway, which includes a public right of way, without the permission of the Highway Authority. Please note that it is the applicants responsibility to ensure that, in addition to planning permission, any necessary consents or approvals under the Highways Act 1980 and the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 are also obtained from the County Council. Public Utility apparatus may be affected by this proposal. Contact the appropriate utility service to reach agreement on any necessary alterations, the cost of which must be borne by the applicant.

2.) The applicant should note that the nature of the highway works proposed will necessitate the completion of a Section 184 Highway Works Agreement between the developer and the LHA prior to commencement.

## **5.5 Town Council**

*Recommend approval.*

## **5.6 Environment Agency (10/11/2020)**

*Please note that this application falls under Advice Note 6 of your Local Flood Risk Standing Advice.*

### *Environment Agency Position*

*We consider that the main source of flood risk at this site is associated with watercourses under the jurisdiction of the relevant Internal Drainage Board (IDB). As such, we have no objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds.*

### *Advice to LPA*

*In accordance with paragraph 158 of the National Planning Policy Framework, development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. It is for the local planning authority to determine if the Sequential Test has to be applied and whether or not there are other sites available at lower flood risk. Our national flood risk standing advice reminds you of this and provides advice on how to do this.*

*The IDB should be consulted with regard to flood risk associated with watercourses under their jurisdiction and surface water drainage proposals.*

*In all circumstances where flood warning and evacuation are significant measures in contributing to managing flood risk, we expect local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions.*

## **5.7 Environment Agency (8/1/2021)**

*We have reviewed the amendments submitted and have no further comment to make on this application.*

### *Environment Agency Position*

*We consider that the main source of flood risk at this site is associated with watercourses under the jurisdiction of the relevant Internal Drainage Board (IDB). As such, we have no objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds.*

### *Advice to LPA*

*In accordance with paragraph 158 of the National Planning Policy Framework, development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. It is for the local planning authority to determine if the Sequential Test has to be applied and whether or not there are other sites available at lower flood risk. Our national flood risk standing advice reminds you of this and provides advice on how to do this.*

*The IDB should be consulted with regard to flood risk associated with watercourses under their jurisdiction and surface water drainage proposals.*

*In all circumstances where flood warning and evacuation are significant measures in contributing to managing flood risk, we expect local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions.*

## **5.8 Network Rail (30/11/2020)**

*Thank you for consulting Network Rail regarding the above application. Network rail own, operate and develop Britain's railway infrastructure. Our role is to deliver a safe and reliable railway. All consultations are assessed with the safety of the operational railway in mind and responded to on this basis.*

*The developer must ensure that their proposal, both during construction and after completion does not:*

- encroach onto Network Rail land at all*
- affect the safety, operation or integrity of the company's railway and its infrastructure*
- undermine its support zone*
- damage the company's infrastructure*
- place additional load on cuttings*
- adversely affect any railway land or structure*
- over-sail or encroach upon the air-space of any Network Rail land*
- cause to obstruct or interfere with any works or proposed works or Network Rail development both now and in the future*

*Network Rail strongly recommends the developer complies with the following comments and requirements to maintain the safe operation of the railway and protect Network Rail's infrastructure.*

### *Future maintenance*

*The applicant must ensure that any construction and subsequent maintenance can be carried out to any proposed buildings or structures without adversely affecting the safety of/or encroaching upon Network Rail's adjacent land and air-space.*

*Therefore, any buildings are required to be situated at least 2 metres (3m for overhead lines and third rail) from Network Rail's boundary. This requirement will allow for the construction and future maintenance of a building without the need to access the operational railway environment. Any less than 2m (3m for overhead lines and third rail) and there is a strong possibility that the applicant (and any future resident) will need to utilise Network Rail land and air-space to facilitate works as well as adversely impact upon Network Rail's maintenance teams' ability to maintain our boundary fencing and boundary treatments. Access to Network Rail's land may not always be granted and if granted may be subject to railway site safety requirements and special provisions with all associated railway costs charged to the applicant. As mentioned above, any works within Network Rail's*

land would need approval from the Network Rail Asset Protection Engineer. This request should be submitted at least 20 weeks before any works are due to commence on site and the applicant is liable for all associated costs (e.g. a l l possession, site safety, asset protection presence costs). However, Network Rail is not required to grant permission for any third party access to its land.

#### *Plant & Materials*

All operations, including the use of cranes or other mechanical plant working adjacent to Network Rail's property, must at all times be carried out in a "fail safe" manner such that in the event of mishandling, collapse or failure, no plant or materials are capable of falling within 3.0m of the boundary with Network Rail.

#### *Landscaping*

Any trees/shrubs to be planted adjacent to the railway boundary these shrubs should be positioned at a minimum distance greater than their predicted mature height from the boundary. Certain broad leaf deciduous species should not be planted adjacent to the railway boundary as the species will contribute to leaf fall which will have a detrimental effect on the safety and operation of the railway. Network Rail wish to be involved in the approval of any landscaping scheme adjacent to the railway. Any hedge planted adjacent to Network Rail's boundary fencing for screening purposes should be so placed that when fully grown it does not damage the fencing or provide a means of scaling it. No hedge should prevent Network Rail from maintaining its boundary fencing. If required, Network Rail's Asset Protection team are able to provide more details on which trees/shrubs are permitted within close proximity to the railway.

Permitted: Birch (*Betula*), Crab Apple (*Malus Sylvestris*), Field Maple (*Acer Campestre*), Bird Cherry (*Prunus Padus*), Wild Pear (*Pyrs Communis*), Fir Trees – Pines (*Pinus*), Hawthorne (*Cretaegus*), Mountain Ash – Whitebeams (*Sorbus*), False Acacia (*Robinia*), Willow Shrubs (*Shrubby Salix*), Thuja Plicatat "Zebrina"

Not Permitted: Alder (*Alnus Glutinosa*), Aspen – Poplar (*Populus*), Beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus Avium*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*), Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia Cordata*), Oak (*Quercus*), Willows (*Salix Willow*), Sycamore – Norway Maple (*Acer*), Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus Hippocastanum*), Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea Sativa*), London Plane (*Platanus Hispanica*).

## **5.9 Network Rail (11/1/2021)**

In addition to the above, the following was provided:

Thank you for consulting Network Rail on the above planning application and providing us with the opportunity to comment. It is imperative that the developer contacts Network Rail's Asset Protection and Optimisation (ASPRO) team via [AssetProtectionAnglia@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:AssetProtectionAnglia@networkrail.co.uk) before works commence on site.

#### *Fencing*

In view of the nature of the development, it is essential that the developer provide (at their own expense) and thereafter maintain a substantial, trespass proof fence along the development side of the existing boundary fence, to a minimum height of 1.8 metres. The 1.8m fencing should be adjacent to the railway boundary and the developer/applicant should make provision for its future maintenance and renewal without encroachment upon Network Rail land. Network Rail's existing fencing / wall must not be removed or damaged and at no point during or post construction should the foundations of the fencing or wall or any embankment therein, be

*damaged, undermined or compromised in any way. Any vegetation within Network Rail's land boundary must not be disturbed. Any fencing installed by the applicant must not prevent Network Rail from maintaining its own fencing/boundary treatment.*

#### **5.10 Network Rail (2/2/2021)**

*Please see the below for additional comments.*

*All works, both temporary and permanent, should be designed and constructed, so that they will have no influence on the stability of NR's existing structures and adjoining land. Methodology adopted in the development should not import undue settlement and vibration on NR infrastructure and assets.*

*The developer is responsible for a detailed services survey to locate the position, type of services, including buried services, in the vicinity of railway and development site. Any utility services identified shall be brought to the attention of Senior Asset Protection Engineer (SAPE) in Network Rail if they belong to railway assets. The SAPE will ascertain and specify what measures, including possible re-location and cost, along with any other asset protection measures shall be implemented by the developer.*

*Any scaffold which is to be constructed adjacent to the railway boundary fence must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles fall within the platform and 2.75m from the live OHLE and protective netting around such scaffold must be installed.*

*If there is hard standing area near the boundary with the operational railway, Network Rail would recommend the installation of vehicle incursion barrier or structure designed for vehicular impact to prevent vehicles accidentally driving or rolling onto the railway or damaging the railway lineside fencing.*

#### **5.11 Middle Level Commissioners IDB**

No comments received.

#### **5.12 Local Residents/Interested Parties**

Nine supporting comments have been received (1 from Creek Fen, 6 from Upwell Road, 1 from Smiths Drive, 1 from Badgeney End, all in March) in relation to:

- Belongings are better out of site to help reduce rural crime/for security
- No visual impact and would not look out of place
- In keeping with area and practical for welfare of livestock
- No increase in traffic or noise in the 4 years the applicant has been on site
- Wider site has been transformed
- Building would tidy up outside storage
- Building is needed; trailer and agricultural machinery currently stored elsewhere

One objection has been received from the lead trustee of the Family Trust for Medway Cottage, Silt Road in relation to:

- Three previous applications have been refused
- Impact on the environment and quality of life is potentially worse than previous schemes



- Discrepancies with the submitted design and access statement and application form
- Large external storage area, no details in relation to use and concerns over visual impact
- Site not well screened
- Proposed landscaping would take time to provide benefit
- Existing hedge blocks visibility
- Concerns over control of the use

Reference was made to previous comments still being relevant, however these have not been provided with this application and as such are not referred to.

## **6 STATUTORY DUTY**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted Fenland Local Plan (2014).

## **7 POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

### **National Design Guide 2019**

Context – C1

Identity – I1

Built Form – B2

### **Fenland Local Plan 2014**

LP1 – A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

LP2 – Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents

LP3 – Spatial Strategy, the Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside

LP6 – Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail

LP12 – Rural Areas Development Policy

LP13 – Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District

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

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

LP16 – Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District

LP19 – The Natural Environment

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document 2016

### **March Neighbourhood Plan 2017**

There are no specific policies relating to developments such as this, however the visions, aims and objectives of the Plan is that the quality of the built and natural environment is improved.

## 8 KEY ISSUES

- **Principle of Development and Economic Growth**
- **Design considerations and visual amenity of area**
- **Residential Amenity/Health and wellbeing**
- **Highways**
- **Flood Risk**
- **Ecology**

## 9 BACKGROUND

9.1 Planning permission has been refused three times for the erection of a storage building on this site, though the descriptions have differed slightly each time, the current scheme is essentially an iteration of the previously refused applications, however the building proposed has a slightly larger footprint and is 0.5m higher. The most recent refusal F/YR17/0818/F was refused by the Planning Committee for the following reasons:

1. *The development proposed is located outside the established settlement limits of March and is considered to be in the open countryside. The proposed building by reason of scale and appearance and associated activity, will result in an urbanising impact which is considered to be out of character with the tranquil character of the open countryside. The proposal is considered contrary to adopted policy LP2 and LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014) in that it fails to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and the character of the area and adversely impacts on the landscape character of the surrounding area. The proposal is also considered contrary to the aims of The March Neighbourhood Plan in that the proposal fails to improve the quality of the built and natural environment, and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework*

2. *The proposed development would likely result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of disturbance from large commercial vehicles and visits from employees accessing the site. It is also likely to lead to traffic conflict on a quiet narrow country lane with limited access and with no passing provision, which is considered inappropriate to serve commercial vehicles. It is therefore considered contrary to policy LP2 and LP16(e) of the Fenland Local Plan (2014), and the vision of The March Neighbourhood Plan in that it is likely to lead to adverse impact to the amenity of the occupier of Medway Cottage in this isolated countryside location.*

9.2 Subsequently, permission has been granted at Meadowcroft for the change of use of land for domestic purposes and erection of a 2-storey rear extension and detached triple garage to existing dwelling involving demolition of existing garage and store, which was approved under planning application F/YR18/0344/F. This application proposes to utilise part of the domestic land approved.

9.3 The description of development and information submitted have been amended during the course of the application to ensure this accurately reflects the proposed use of the site/building.

## 10 ASSESSMENT

### **Principle of Development and Economic Growth**

- 10.1 This site is considered to be in open countryside, whilst located close to the edge of March 'as the crow flies', it is however not considered to be easily accessible due to the constraints of Silt Road and the gated railway crossing. The appearance and narrowness of Silt Road is in keeping with the status of a countryside location and as such is considered to be an 'Elsewhere Location' in the Settlement hierarchy (Policy LP3) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.
- 10.2 For development to be acceptable in 'Elsewhere' locations, the proposal must clearly demonstrate that it is essential for the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation, transport or utility services. The applicant's proposal does not constitute an 'agricultural' operation or any of those identified within LP3 as above. Whilst it is acknowledged that equestrian use is considered 'outdoor recreation' and part of the building is used for the storage of hay and other equestrian paraphernalia, however there is no evidence of equestrian use necessary for a building of this scale and this is not the primary purpose of the building as can be attributed to the design of the building, information submitted with the application and the previous applications submitted.
- 10.3 The NPPF recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and seeks to support thriving communities within it. The key consideration is whether the type and scale of the proposal undermines the key objectives of LP2 and LP16, and whether the use is appropriate to the site and its locality.
- 10.4 The development could provide a degree of local employment during construction which would support the continued sustainability and economic growth. Whilst Economic Development is of utmost importance to the Council, it should not result in inappropriate development being located on the open countryside in isolated unsustainable locations. The application asserts that the building is for the storage of vehicles and equipment associated with the applicant's ground working business, however it is asserted that no business would be run from the site nor would any customers or employees use the site for work or visit. It is therefore difficult to demonstrate economic benefit would occur from the development.

#### **Design considerations and visual amenity of area**

- 10.5 Generally, Silt Road is considered to be characterised as a relatively tranquil country lane, even taking account of the proximity to the railway line. By way of a comparison, photographs of the site before the unauthorised development indicates a verdant site with what appears a tranquil location and in use for purposes in keeping with the rural area. Silt Road itself being such a narrow route contributes to the retention of its tranquil status by limiting access by large vehicles.
- 10.6 The unauthorised development has removed trees and established a vehicular access, a mobile home and stable/shed (excluded from this application) and a large hardstanding area resulting in a harsh appearance more in keeping with an industrial character. This proposal seeks to reduce the gravel hardstanding, provide grass bunding and additional planting in an attempt to mitigate the impact on visual amenity, however the addition of a building of such scale and appearance, which would compete with the dwelling itself, and constructed in concrete wall, cladding and cement fibre roofing will result in a harsh urban environment. There is a lack of detail submitted regarding external storage on the proposed hardstanding, the appearance of this would be mitigated to some extent by the proposed bunding and a condition could be imposed limiting the

height of any external storage. Similarly, due to the requirements of Network Rail and a lack of detail in relation to the proposed additional landscaping it would also be necessary to impose a notwithstanding condition in this regard.

- 10.7 Reference is made to the proposal being similar to buildings of agricultural character. However, such buildings, by definition, relate to agricultural operations considered acceptable in the countryside, which accords with Policy LP3, and are often a necessary requirement of modern farming. However, this proposal is not an agricultural use, and therefore not necessary for activities appropriate to the countryside. Indeed, the key tenet of planning policy is to limit such buildings to only where they are necessary because of their visual impact.
- 10.8 It has been confirmed that the building is needed in this form to enable the large vehicles to access requiring such a height clearance. However, the resulting building, would compete with the dwelling it is associated with and is industrial in character and design. It is likely that CCTV and lighting will be required which would further urbanise the site, details of these elements have not been submitted but could be secured by way of a condition.
- 10.9 It is considered that the proposal will result in an urbanising impact upon this part of the open countryside. The proposed building by reason of height, scale and appearance will be an alien feature to the character of the area and therefore contrary to Policy LP16 (d) and the aims of the March Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Residential Amenity/Health and wellbeing**

- 10.10 The proposal would result in the loss of an area of land which has had change of use for domestic purposes serving Meadowcroft, however the property still retains a large area of amenity space and as such this is not considered to be significantly detrimental. Concerns have been raised in respect of the potential for the proposed use and building to become standalone (separated from Meadowcroft), however due to the potential impacts on and relationship with the host dwelling it would be reasonable to impose a condition to ensure that this link was retained to avoid adverse impacts.
- 10.11 To the west of the site is the single-storey detached dwelling of Medway Cottage, the only other dwelling located along Silt Road, and the two dwellings enjoy a peaceful level of amenity in this rural location. Whilst there are no significant issues in relation to loss of privacy, light or outlook, overlooking and over shadowing, the applicant seeks to accommodate commercial vehicles and equipment, which would not normally be located within a building associated with a residential property (Meadowcroft). The extent and frequency of movements and storage of such machinery cannot be reasonably controlled and is considered likely to result in disturbance to what, apart from occasional train movements, is a tranquil location.
- 10.12 The unsuitable and impassable nature of this quiet country lane for larger vehicles to access the site, together with possible disturbance from activities within the site of such scale will lead to a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupiers of Medway Cottage. The cumulative impact of these adverse factors is considered to be contrary to Policy LP2 and LP16(e) and the vision of the March Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Highways**

- 10.13 The gates to the access are to be set back 6m; it is understood that the largest vehicle to use the access will be a 7 ½ tonne lorry which is a maximum of 6m in

length, as such the location of the gates is considered to ensure that Silt Road can be cleared by the largest waiting vehicle.

- 10.14 The LHA do not have any objections to the proposal subject to conditions and do not consider, on the basis of the information submitted, that there would be an unacceptable harm to the highway network. Therefore, although no evidence of harm to highway safety has been identified, nevertheless the impact of the development on the use of the highway and the resulting harm on the character of the countryside is considered elsewhere in this report.

### **Flood Risk**

- 10.15 The application site is located in Flood Zone 3, the highest risk of flooding. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which advises that the site is at risk of surface water flooding at a depth of 0.3m – 0.9m; mitigation proposed is a water enter and exit strategy and provision of 0.9m of flood resilient construction above finished floor level. Recommendations are also made in relation to registering for flood warnings and surface water drainage requirements. A condition can be imposed to ensure the recommendations are adhered to.
- 10.16 The Environment Agency have no objections to the proposal, subject to consultation of the relevant IDB (this has been undertaken and no response received) and consideration of the sequential test. The application has not provided any information in relation to the sequential test, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal will be used in association with Meadowcroft, no evidence has been provided regarding the necessity for this to be the case, as such the sequential test is not considered to be passed.
- 10.17 This site has been the subject to three applications for a similar proposal where this has been the case, however at no point was this included as a reason for refusal, as such it would be unreasonable to introduce this.

### **Ecology**

- 10.18 The previous two applications refer to an ecology survey having been undertaken which identified bats, small numbers of reptiles and other wildlife/fauna on the site. Given the length of time since this report was undertaken it is considered that an updated report would be required to establish the current situation on site and relevant mitigation measures. Such a report would be required pre-determination, however given that the overall development is considered unacceptable it is not considered reasonable to put the applicant to additional cost and as such this has not been requested.
- 10.19 If members are minded to grant the application this would be required to be undertaken and could not be conditioned; it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision

## **11 CONCLUSIONS**

- 11.1 Planning permission has been refused three times, for the erection of a storage building on this site, the latter two applications (F/YR17/0060/F and F/YR16/0863/F) refused by Planning Committee and there has been no change

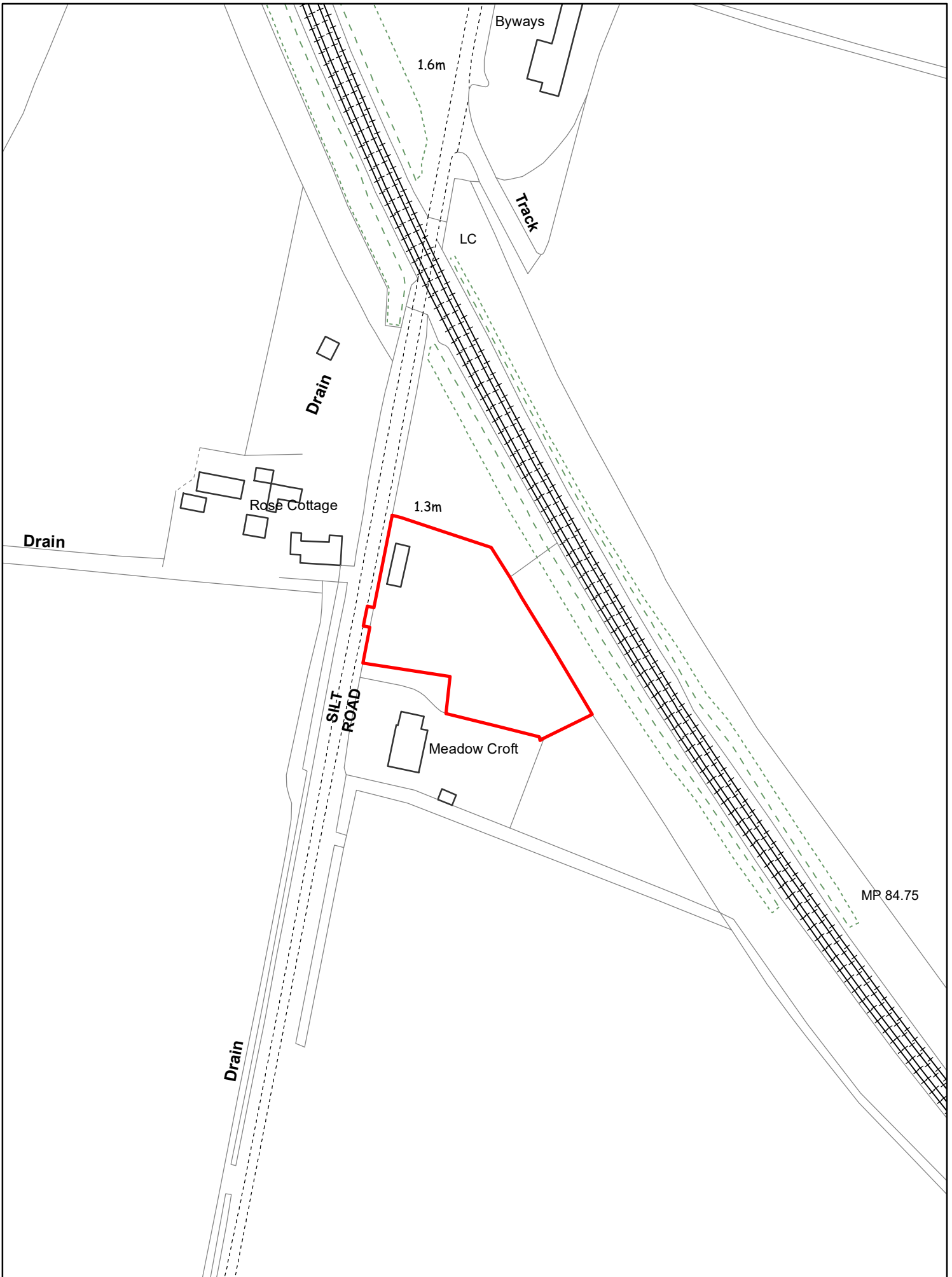
in circumstances since the refusal of these permissions. Though the descriptions have differed slightly each time, the current scheme is essentially an iteration of the previously refused applications, however the building proposed has a slightly larger footprint and is 0.5m higher. The proposed development is considered an alien urban feature in a tranquil rural setting. Furthermore, it is considered that if planning permission were to be granted the operation of a site of this scale has potential to result in significant disturbance to the amenity of the occupiers of Medway Cottage opposite and of the use of this quiet county lane.

## 12 RECOMMENDATION

**Refuse for the following reasons:**

**Reasons for refusal;**

1	<p>The development proposed is located outside the established settlement limits of March and is considered to be in the open countryside. The proposed building by reason of scale and appearance and associated activity, will result in an urbanising impact which is considered to be out of character with the tranquil character of the open countryside. The proposal is considered contrary to policy LP2 and LP16(d) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 in that it fails to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness and the character of the area and adversely impacts on the landscape character of the surrounding area. The proposal is also considered contrary to the aims of The March Neighbourhood Plan in that the proposal fails to improve the quality of the built and natural environment, and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework</p>
2	<p>The proposed development would likely result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of disturbance from large commercial vehicles. It is also likely to lead to traffic conflict on a quiet narrow country lane with limited access and with no passing provision, which is considered inappropriate to serve commercial vehicles. It is therefore considered contrary to policy LP2 and LP16(e) of the Fenland Local Plan 2014, and the vision of The March Neighbourhood Plan in that it is likely to lead to adverse impact to the amenity of the occupier of Medway Cottage in this rural countryside location.</p>



Created on: 05/11/2020

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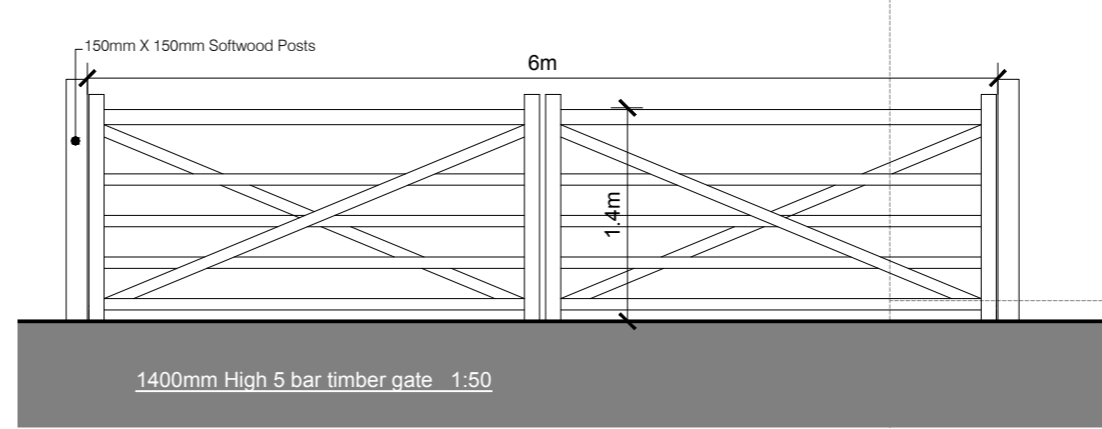
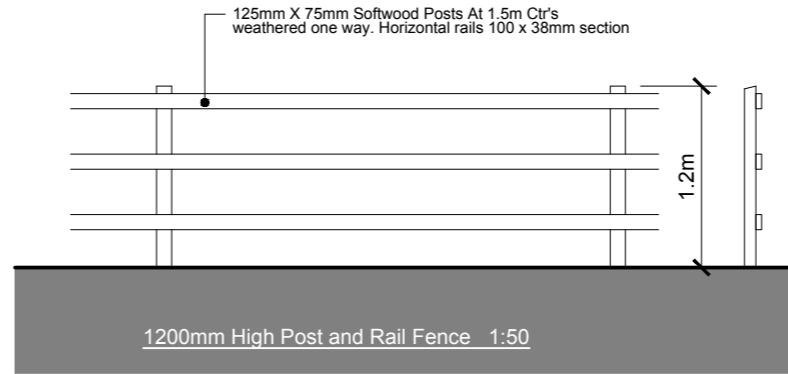
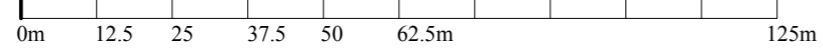
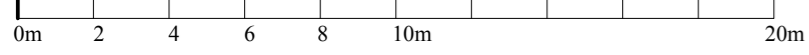
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Scale: 1:200

Scale: 1:1250



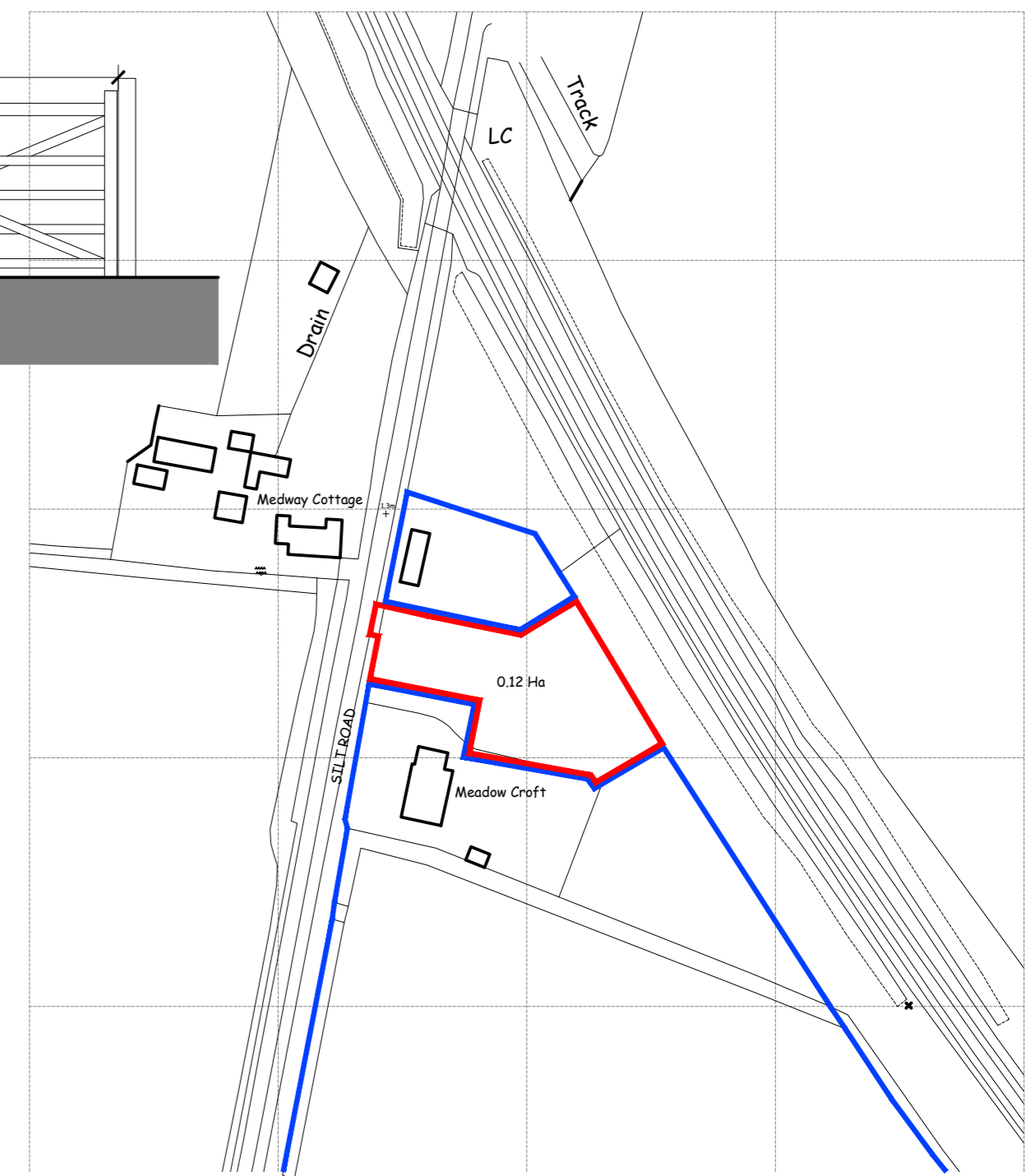
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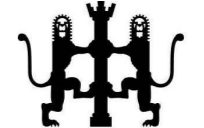
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- Rev C Dec. 2020 Red/blue line amended to suit revised application description.
- Rev B Sept. 2020 Amended to suit client comments.
- Rev A Sept. 2020 Amended to suit client comments.



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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CLIENT  
Mr P Purse

PROJECT  
Proposed Storage Building at Meadowcroft, Silt Road, March, Cambridgeshire.

DRAWING TITLE  
Location Plan  
Proposed Site Plan

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN	CHECKED
1:200 & 1:1250 @ A2	Sept. 2020	LB	
DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION		
CH20/LBA/551/FP-1-100	C		

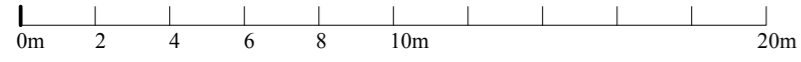


House Sparrow Bird Box    Starling Bird Box    Robin Bird Box

**NOTE: FOR SPECIFIC LOCATION OF BIRD BOXES PLEASE REFER TO STORE ELEVATIONS**



Scale: 1:200



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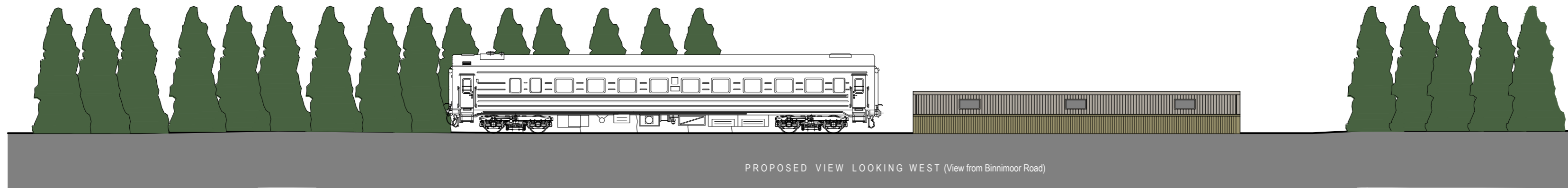
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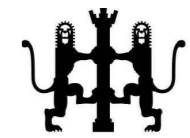
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PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION THROUGH SITE LOOKING NORTH



PROPOSED VIEW LOOKING WEST (View from Binnimoor Road)



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CLIENT

Mr P Purse

PROJECT

Proposed Storage Building at Meadowcroft,  
Silt Road, March, Cambridgeshire

DRAWING TITLE

Proposed Site Sections

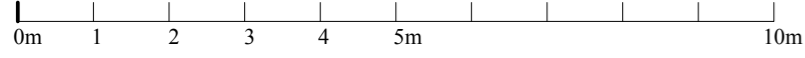
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1:200 @ A2 Sept. 2020 LB

DRAWING NUMBER REVISION

CH20/LBA/551/FP-1-102

Scale: 1:100



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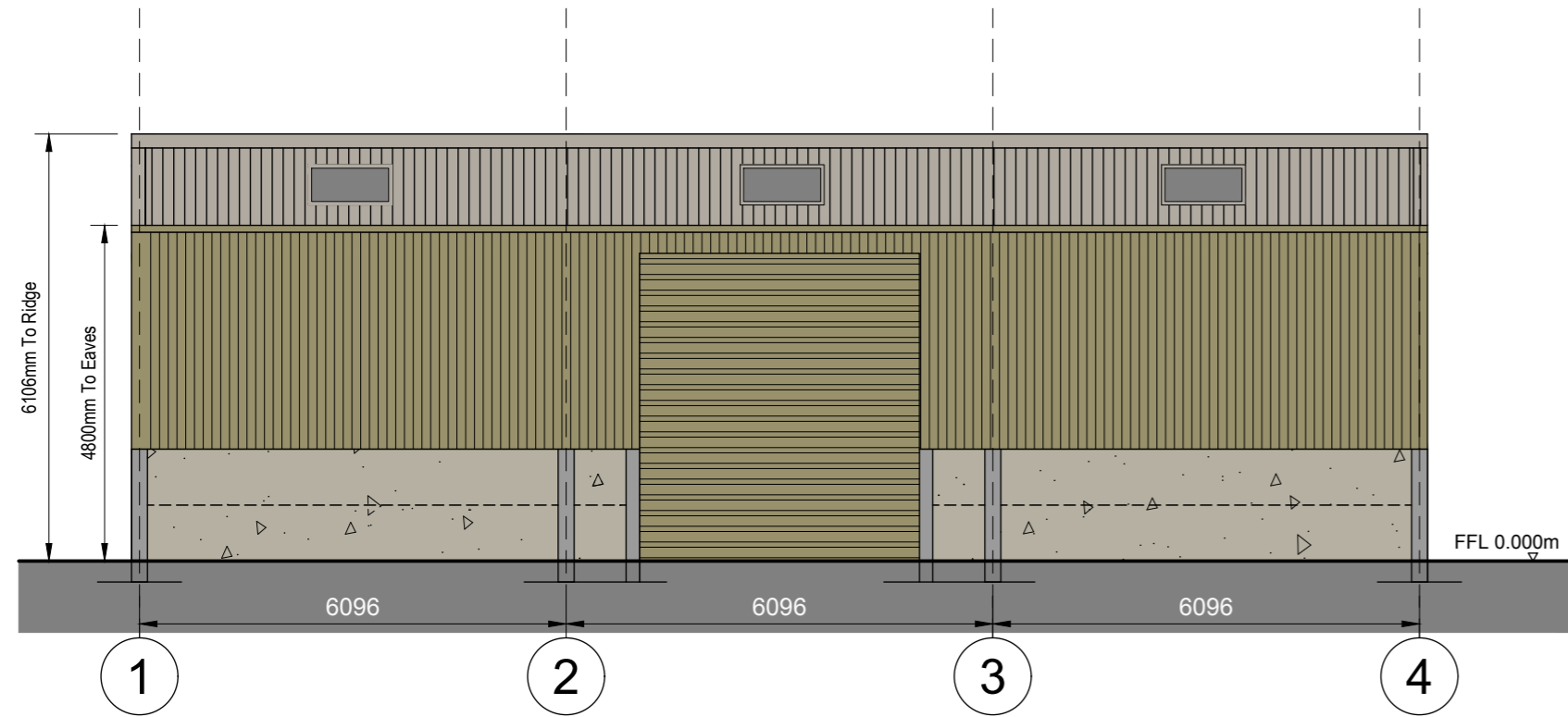
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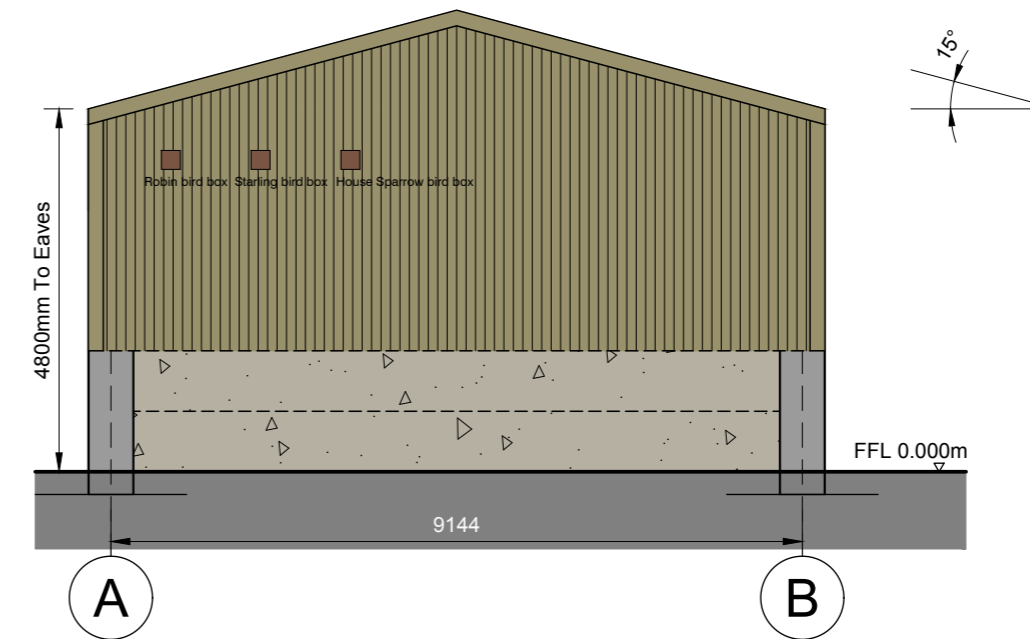
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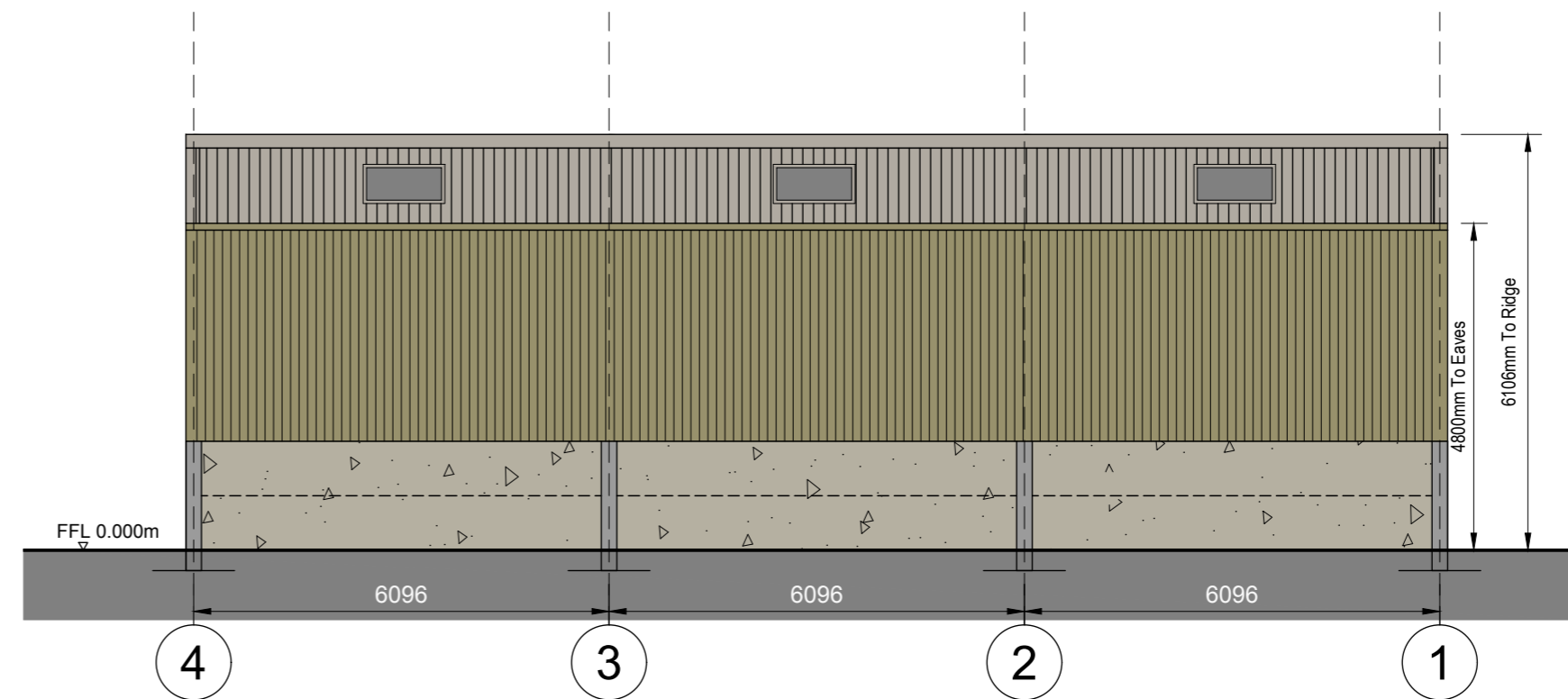
Roof cladding in natural grey P6R fibre cement with a closed ridge and fibre cement eaves closures. All rainwater goods i.e. galvanised gutters and black PVC downpipes.  
Side cladding down 3200mm below eaves level in Moorland Green vertical 0.5mm plastic coated box profile with UltraZED side rails. Spill plates included. 1600mm high x 145mm thick concrete panels.



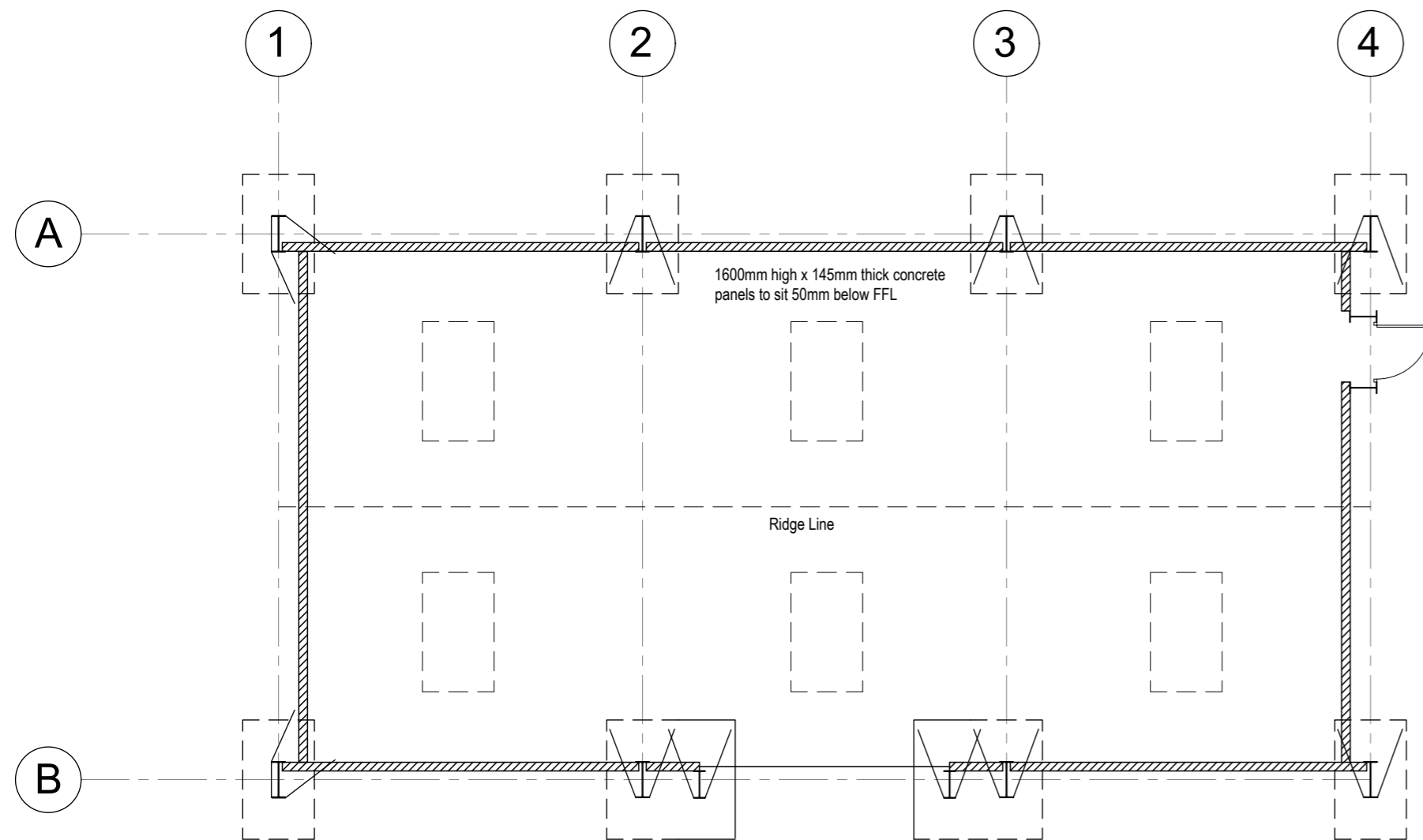
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



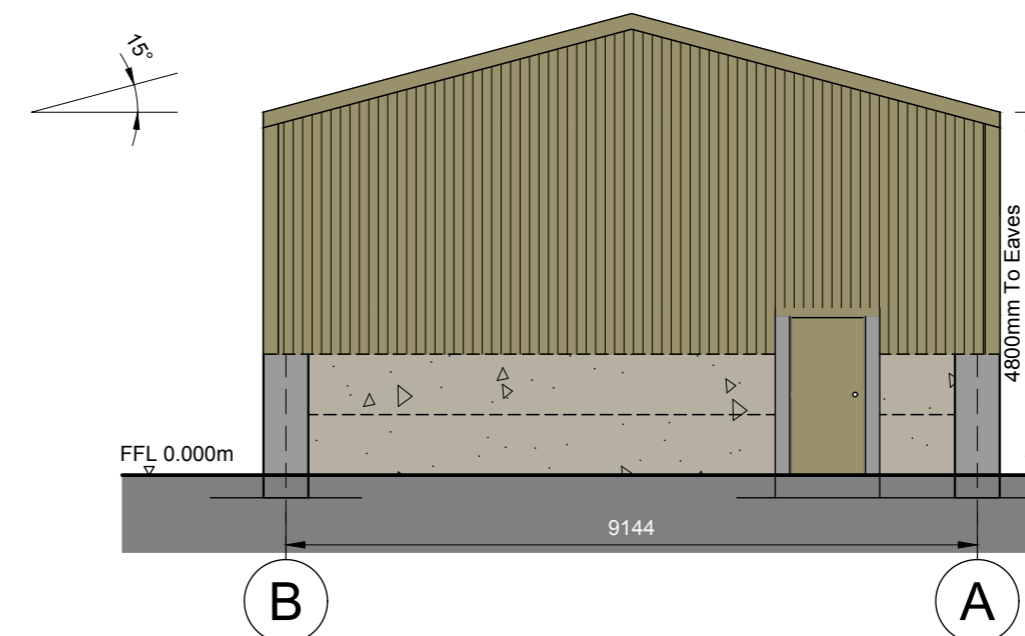
PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



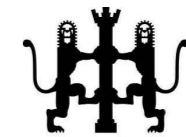
PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



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CLIENT: Mr P Purse

PROJECT: Proposed Storage Building at Meadowcroft, Silt Road, March, Cambridgeshire

DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Plan and Elevations

SCALE: 1:100 @ A2 DATE: Sept. 2020 DRAWN: LB CHECKED:   
DRAWING NUMBER: CH20/LBA/551/FP-1-101 REVISION: