

REVISED DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT FOR  
KIMPTON PLAYERS REPLACEMENT PLAYHOUSE  
IN THE CAR PARK OF  
KIMPTON MEMORIAL HALL, HALL LANE, KIMPTON,  
HITCHIN, HERTS SG4 8RD



## Scope of Work

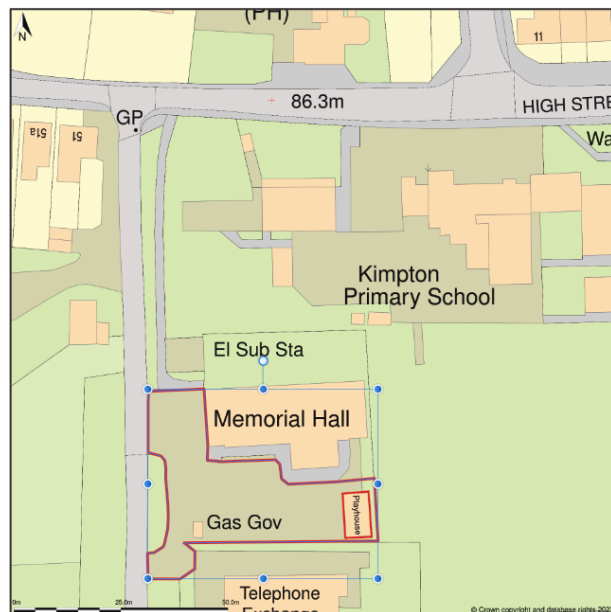
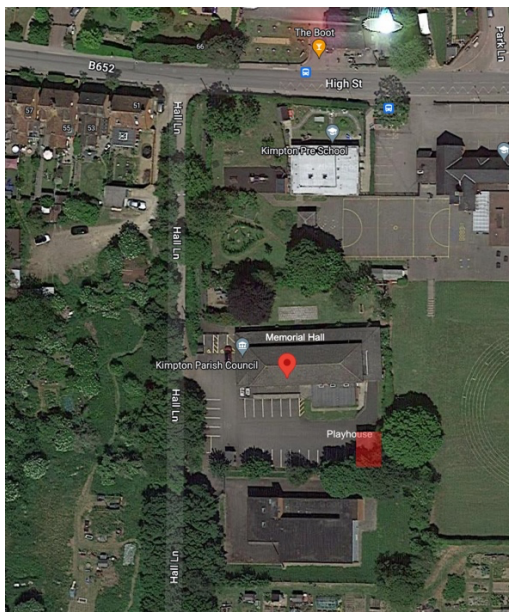
It is proposed to demolish the existing Kimpton Players Playhouse and replace it with a like-for-like modern insulated building on the existing foundations. The current building is owned by the Kimpton Players amateur dramatic society, a registered charity, and used for rehearsals and costume storage. Its use will be unchanged. The building is sited in the car park of, and on the land belonging to, the Kimpton Memorial Hall. In discussion with Mr Thomas Howe, NHDC Planning, on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 we were advised that a full planning application would be required. This revised document incorporates an improved design. This removes the coping stone surround and builds out to the perimeter of the brick plinth foundation with cladding covering both the building and the brick plinth. This is both visually and functionally superior.

## Existing Building

The current property was erected in 1970. It is a proprietary garage-type structure with a footprint of 30' x 20'. Its construction is of precast concrete pillars enclosing horizontal precast concrete panels. The building is covered by a shallow pitched steel trussed roof clad with corrugated asbestos sheeting. The original design and block plan are detailed on the drawing submitted to Hitchin Rural Council on 1/7/1970 – document 12125624-EOD refers.

The inner face of the walls is clad with prefinished fibre board which provides a limited level of heat loss insulation. The concrete floor was laid with thermoplastic tiles which had subsequently been covered with a Caberfloor interlocking flooring.

The building has been set on a brick and concrete constructed base which varies in height to accommodate the change in levels across the site.



In the left image from Google Maps the Playhouse is shown in red. In the right image from the Location Plan the Playhouse is shown together with the site outlined in red with access to Hall Lane.

Over time the building has deteriorated. More recently a series of events such as a leaking roof, squirrel infestation attacking the electrical wiring and a mains water leak has made the building unusable.

## Refurbishment

The remedial work cited in an initial survey in March 2022 (document 12125624-EIS refers) influenced the KP committee to explore a replacement building. Concerns from Building Control over the reuse of existing foundations and the proximity of trees caused us to reconsider refurbishing the existing building. We commissioned a structural survey of the existing building by David French Partnership (DFP), Luton.

The DFP report (document 1215624-ESR refers) was most helpful in identifying potential structural problems and remedies. It addressed the proximity of trees and the expected subsoil (chalk) as follows:

*27. With the expected subsoil, means that there is a low risk of subsidence at this property and the trees located close to the property should have no effect on the building. There was nothing I saw to suggest there was any historic or on-going subsidence movement and no action is required.*

Finally, it concluded:

*62. If you are going to repair and upgrade the building, the costs are likely to be quite high and it may be a better option to knock it down and rebuild it. If you want a long-term solution, then building in brick or blockwork may be best but this is likely to be quite expensive. It could be built in timber studwork which can achieve a long life particularly if it is clad with a cement board which does not rot.*

At DFP's recommendation we commissioned an asbestos survey by C. Wood & Son (Luton) Ltd. Their report (document 12125624-EAS refers) found low level asbestos in roof panels and thermoplastic floor tiles that could be removed by general building contractors as long as it was disposed of properly.

A local builder who was undertaking work on the Kimpton Sports Pavilion provided a very thorough and comprehensive quote for the refurbishment of the Playhouse. Sadly, this was double earlier replacement quotes and committee decided to proceed down the replacement route.

We presented Building Control with the DFP report and original (1970) Playhouse drawings that details the building's foundations. They stated that we could reuse the existing foundations for a replacement building subject to proving out both the foundations and non-cohesive subsoil. They requested we dig a 1m cube test hole midway on the eastern

side of building. The test hole has been dug and inspected by a structural engineer – his onsite feedback was positive on both the foundations and soil. We await his report.

## Replacement Proposal

The proposal is for the safe demolition and removal of the existing building and the erection of modern timber frame building. The existing brick/concrete foundation will be reused.

The proposed replacement building addresses the following requirements:

- Like-for-like replacement
- Fireproof
- Insulation & Solar
- Security
- Good Ceiling Height
- No Memorial Hall Impact
- Disabled Facilities
- Single Entrance
- Low Maintenance
- Robust & Long Lasting
- Improved Drainage

**Like-for-like replacement** – as can be seen in figures 1-10 the replacement building has the same footprint, visual appearance and elevation as the original building. It is expected that the lightweight materials used – timber frame and fibre/cement cladding - will significantly reduce the load on the existing foundations. The proposed cladding colour will be Slate.

**Disabled Facilities** – we want to encourage disabled participation in Kimpton Players. At a minimum we are incorporating an entrance ramp with a slope of 5° - to enable non-assisted access. The building will also incorporate a disabled WC.

**Fireproof** – The walls will incorporate fireproof external sheathing – such as Magply – that is fire rated A1 non-combustible – see figure 11. This can be used in the roof if required. The exterior fibre/cement cladding is non-combustible. The traditional pent roof with timber rafters, fire resistant fibre glass insulation and plasterboard ceiling is fire retardant and typically 30 minute fire rated. The proposed timber and metal web rafter construction is less combustible and offers a better fire rating than a conventional timber rafter solution. In addition, we will position fire extinguishers by the entrance and in the opposite corner by the electrical consumer unit.

**Single Entrance/Exit** – The existing building has an entrance on the Southern end of the West facing wall. It also has a fire exit in the North facing wall leading to some exposed brick steps with 1.3m drop. We are seeking approval to remove the fire exit for the following reasons.

- Usage – the Playhouse is used for rehearsals by the Kimpton Players. It is not for public use. Rehearsals have a maximum of 20 people – usually much less. Kimpton Players put on three productions per year each with a rehearsal period of 10 weeks. There are two rehearsals evenings per week from 7.30 pm-9.30 pm and very little impact on other Memorial Hall activities/parking. So, the total annual usage is very low:  $3 \times 10 \times 2 \times 2 = 120$  hours.

- Precedence - there are examples of similar single storey buildings, such as Scout Huts, that have single access.
- Cost/Complexity – Even without disabled provisions, the existing fire escape will need upgrading with handrails, etc. Making the fire exit suitable for disabled use will require ramps with additional handrails. This will further encroach into the Memorial Hall car park. This will need the Hall's approval and add significant cost and complexity.
- Car Parking – the Memorial Hall trustees have indicated that were the fire exit to be removed then they would require the removal of the fire escape steps to create additional car parking.

**Insulation & Solar** – Electric heating is our largest operating cost. We want to take this opportunity to have a fully insulated building. The proposed SIPs wall and floor insulation combined with conventional fibre glass insulation in the ceiling cavity will deliver this. As a future project, the virtually flat roof could accommodate west facing solar panels which, together with battery storage and inverter, could further reduce electricity costs.

**Low Maintenance** – Being a charity, Kimpton Players needs to minimise operating costs. Also, the very low usage of the Playhouse means the building is empty and unattended for a large proportion of the time. It is therefore very important to minimise building maintenance – The Hardie Board cladding, uPVC windows and door and the EPDM rubber roof with PVC trim deliver this. It is also planned to use external conduit, surface mounted switches and mains sockets combined with lighting cable trays to simplify electrical maintenance.

**Security** – As mentioned, the building is largely unattended. To improve security and minimise vandalism we plan to install motion detection security lights and cameras utilising the Memorial Hall's wifi. This will also allow us to remotely monitor and control the heating – helping to minimise heating costs. Another security measure would be the removal of the old fire escape steps.

**Robust & Long Lasting** – The current Playhouse has lasted 50 years and we need its successor to have the same longevity. A quality timber frame construction, the Hardie Board cladding, the timber and metal web rafters and the EPDM rubber roof coating will deliver a quality long lasting building. Furthermore, the Caber Board flooring will provide a robust floor necessary for the dance rehearsals for the Panto and Old Time Music Hall productions.

**Good Ceiling Height** – For dance rehearsals good ceiling height is important. The existing Playhouse, with its pitched roof, had a 2.25m-2.45m ceiling height. The proposed design delivers a ceiling height of 2.30m – 2.45m. The floor insulation and timber and metal web rafters this has resulted in the maximum roof height rising from 2.87m on the existing building to 2.92m for the replacement building. For contingency we request permission to go to 3m.

**Improved Drainage** – The existing building's drainpipes vent directly onto the ground by the southern wall – the original drawings show a soakaway under the Memorial Hall car – there is no evidence of this. The replacement building will take rainwater to a soakaway beneath

the lawn between the Playhouse and Memorial Hall – see fig 13. The Memorial Hall trustees have approved this soakaway.

**Memorial Hall Impact** – As the Playhouse is sited in the car park of the Memorial Hall we are keen ensure the replacement building construction has minimal impact on the Memorial Hall. During the estimated 1 week demolition and the 4 week construction phase we estimate we will need up to 3 parking spaces for contractors vehicles and materials. On the upside, should the single entrance be approved, then the Memorial Hall have requested that the Kimpton Players remove the existing fire escape steps to allow for the creation of additional car parking.

## Kimpton Memorial Hall

As the Playhouse landowner, Kimpton Memorial Hall is an important and supportive stakeholder. Kimpton Players regularly brief the Hall's trustees on the condition of the existing Playhouse and the plans for its replacement.

## Submitted Documents

Forming the full planning application the following documents have been supplied in PDF format. The documents listed in red are revised. All documents are A4 unless stated:

- |     |               |                                                              |
|-----|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | 12125624-LP   | 1:1250 scale Location Plan                                   |
| 2.  | 12125624-BP   | 1:500 scale Block Plan                                       |
| 3.  | 12125624-EOD  | Existing building 1970 original drawings – Index format      |
| 4.  | 12125624-EEL  | 1:50 scale existing building side elevations (A3)            |
| 5.  | 12125624-REL2 | 1:50 scale revised replacement building side elevations (A3) |
| 6.  | 12125624-EPV  | 1:50 scale existing building plan view                       |
| 7.  | 12125624-RPV2 | 1:50 scale revised replacement building plan view            |
| 8.  | 12125624-RXS2 | 1:50 scale revised replacement building cross-sectional view |
| 9.  | 12125624-ESP  | 1:50 scale existing building site plan showing trees (A3)    |
| 10. | 12125624-RSP2 | 1:50 scale revised replacement building site plan (A3)       |
| 11. | 12125624-IEB  | Existing building image                                      |
| 12. | 12125624-ISAT | Satellite image of existing building                         |
| 13. | 12125624-ICB  | Cladco fibre/cement cladding marketing image                 |
| 14. | 12125624-IRS  | Holwell Primary School classroom reference site image        |
| 15. | 12125624-ICBF | Existing building close boarded fence image                  |
| 16. | 12125624-ISG  | Existing building side gate image                            |
| 17. | 12125624-ISEW | Existing building south external wall and boundary images    |
| 18. | 12125624-IEEW | Existing building east external wall and boundary images     |
| 19. | 12125624-EIS  | Existing Building Initial Surveyors Report                   |
| 20. | 12125624-ESR  | Existing Building Structural Report                          |
| 21. | 12125624-EAS  | Existing Building Asbestos Survey Report                     |
| 22. | 12125624-CL   | Covering letter                                              |
| 23. | 12125624-DAS2 | Revised Design & Access Statement                            |
| 24. | 12125624-OC   | Signed Ownership Certificate                                 |

# 12125624-DAS2: Revised Design & Access Statement for the KP Playhouse Replacement

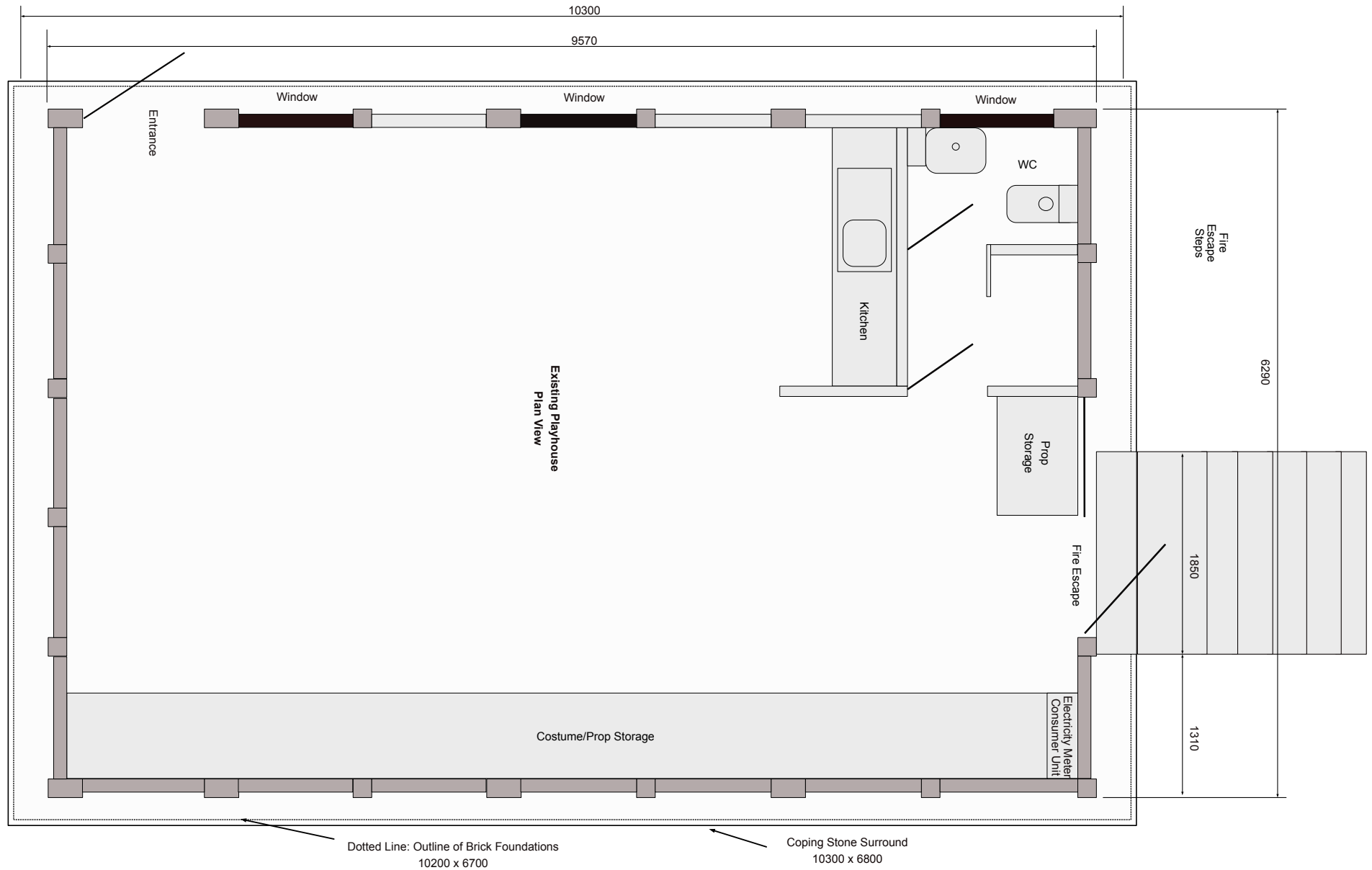


Figure 1. Existing building plan view

12125624-DAS2: Revised Design & Access Statement for the KP Playhouse Replacement

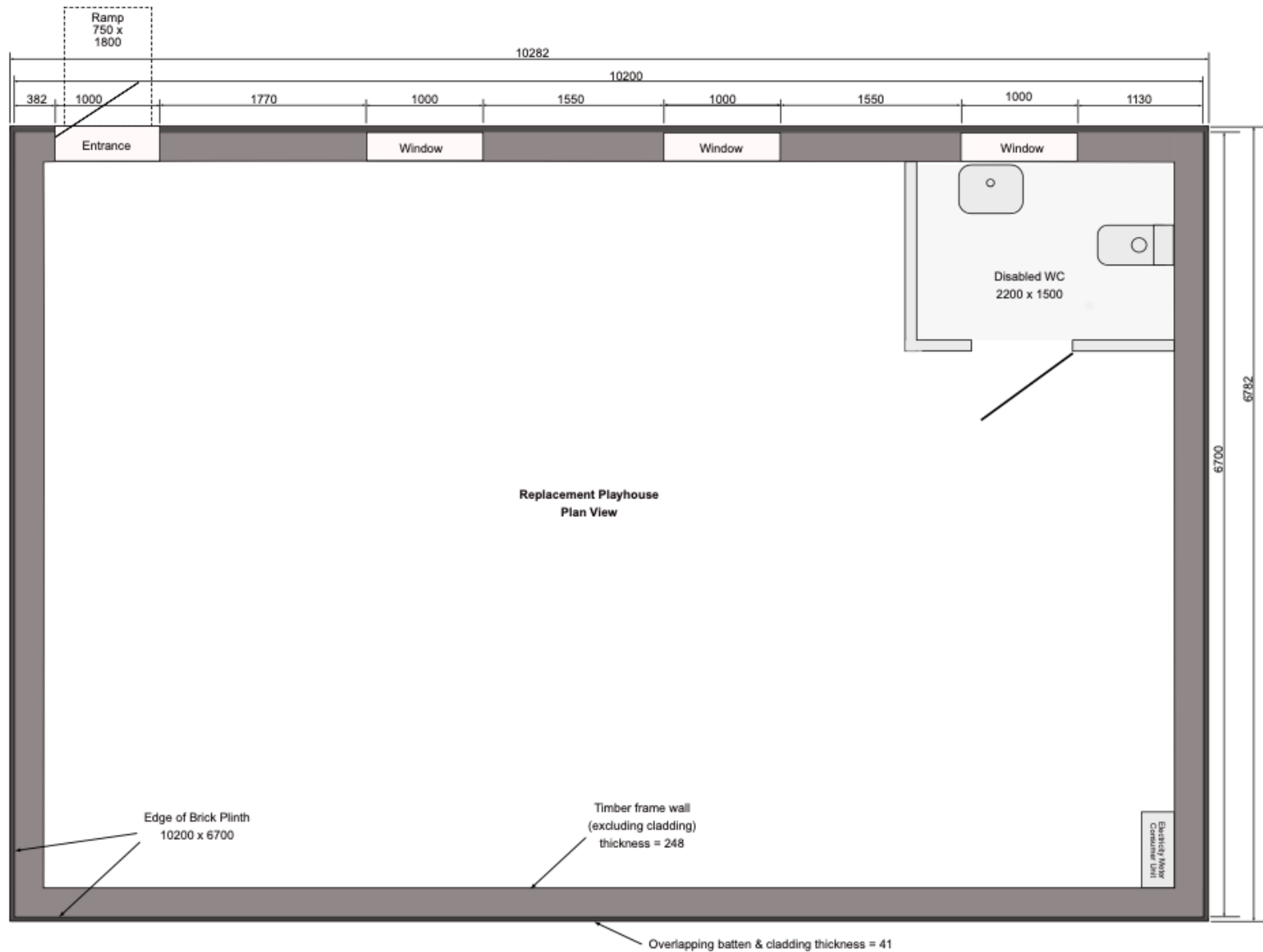


Figure 2. Replacement building plan view

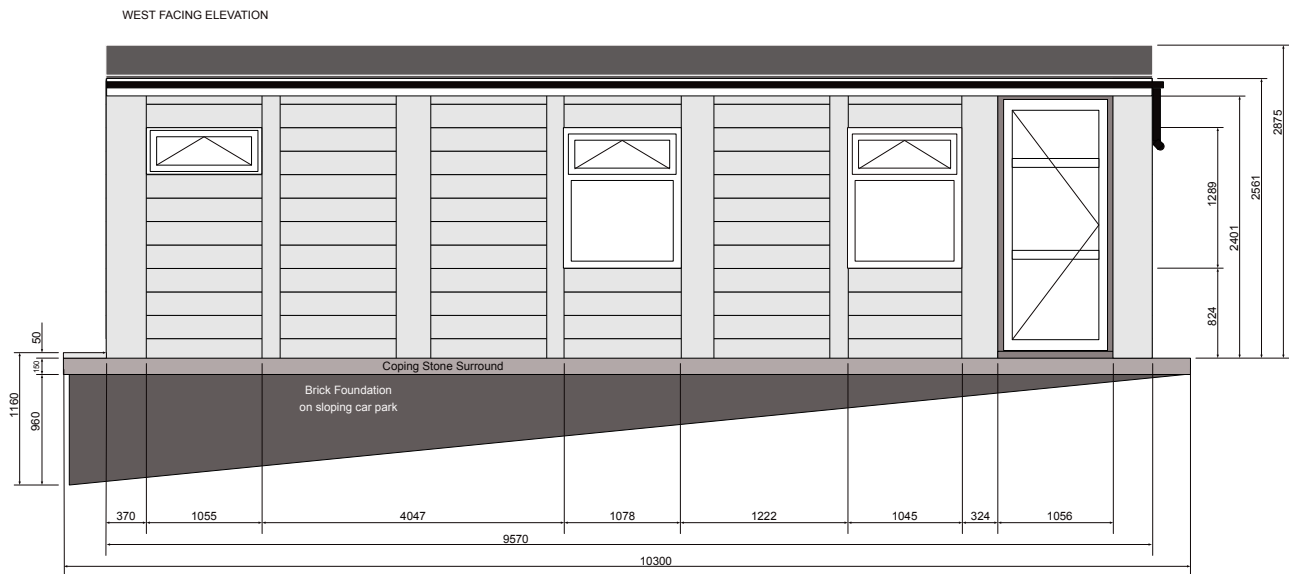


Figure 3. Existing building west facing elevation

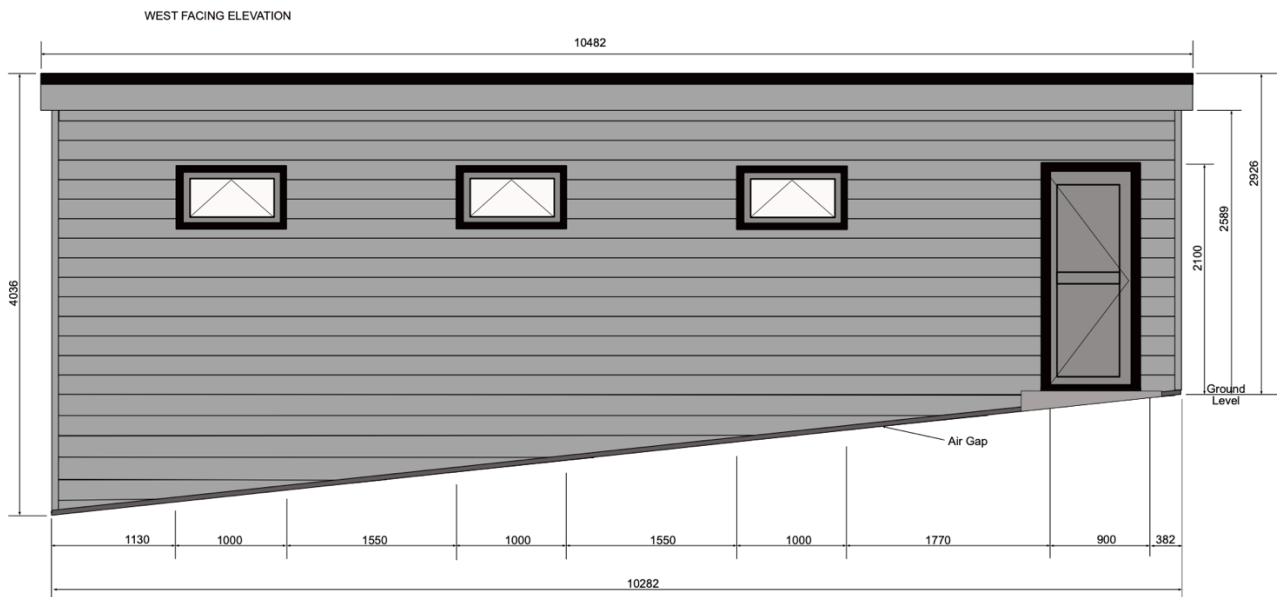


Figure 4. Replacement building west facing elevation

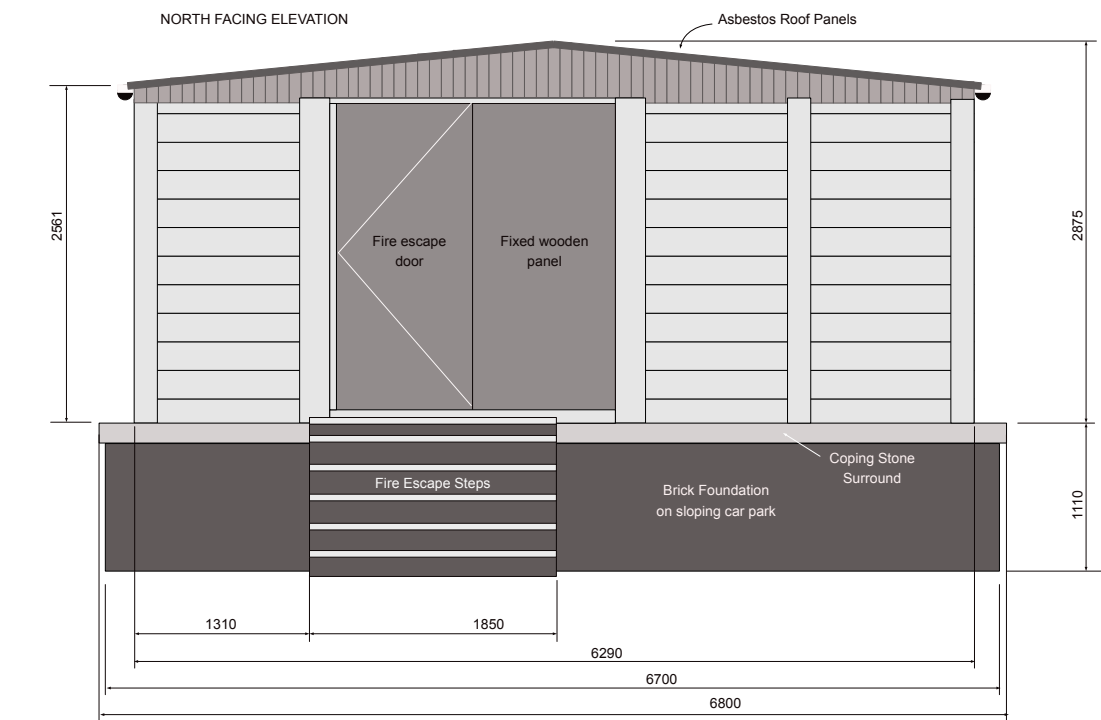


Figure 5. Existing building north facing elevation

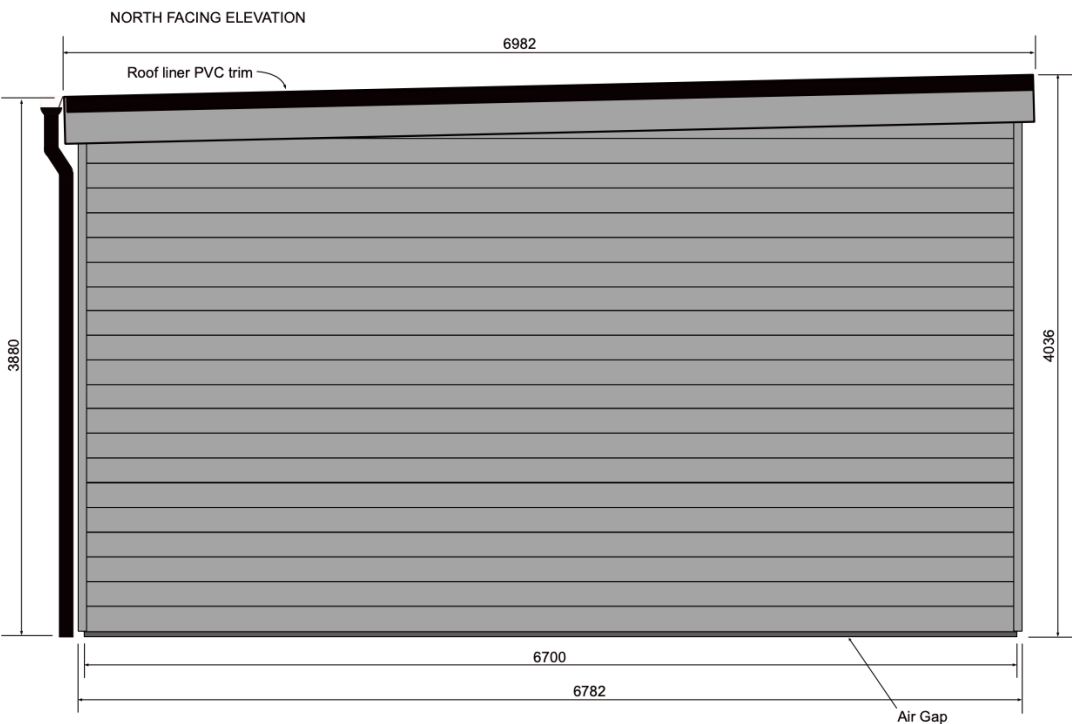


Figure 6. Replacement building north facing elevation

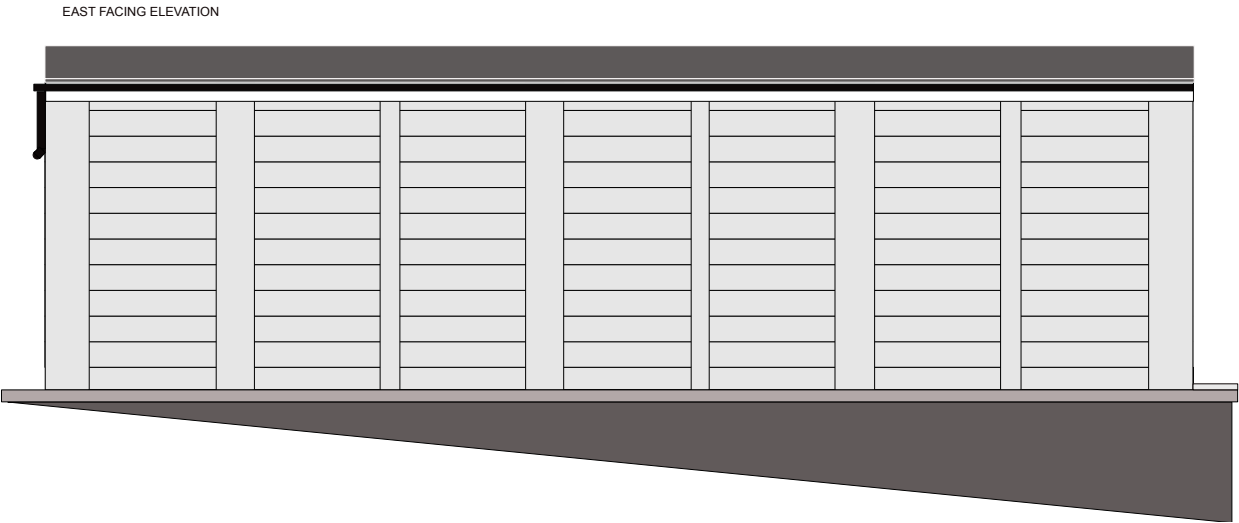


Figure 7. Existing building east facing elevation

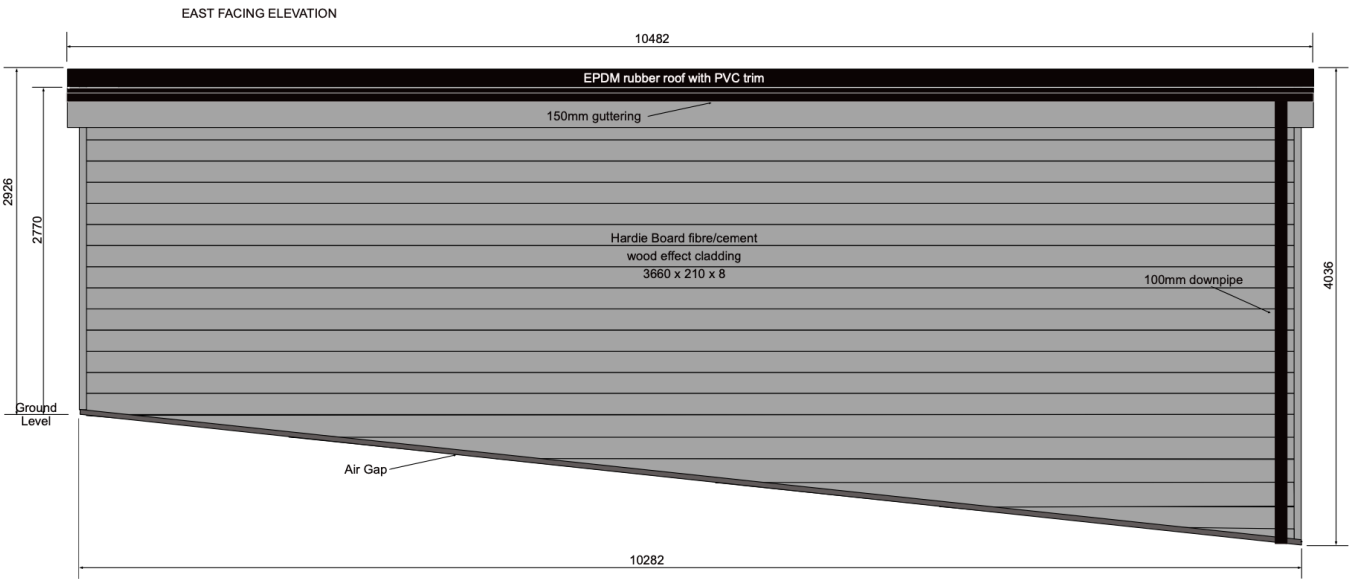


Figure 8. Replacement building east facing elevation

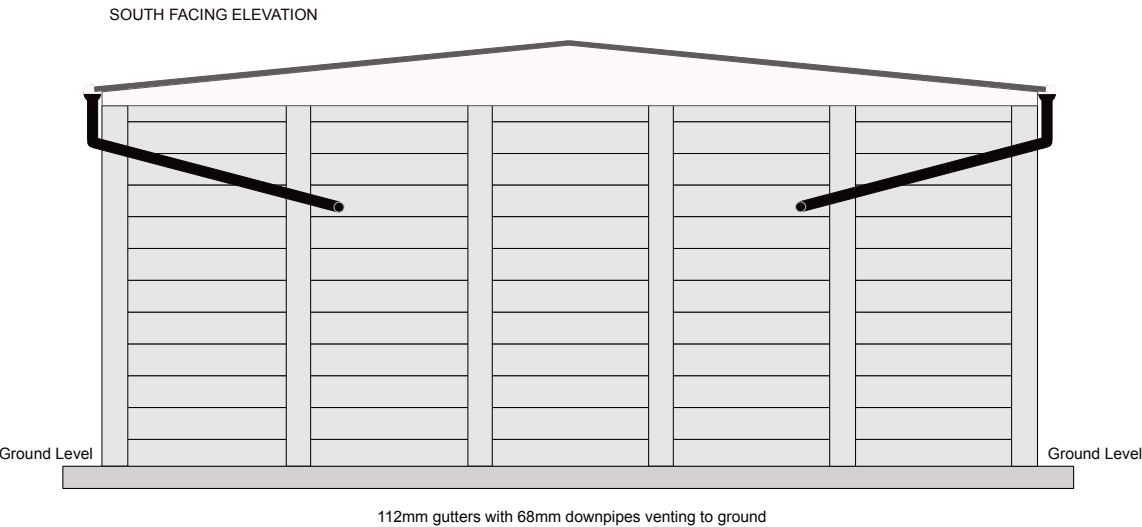


Figure 9. Existing building south facing elevation

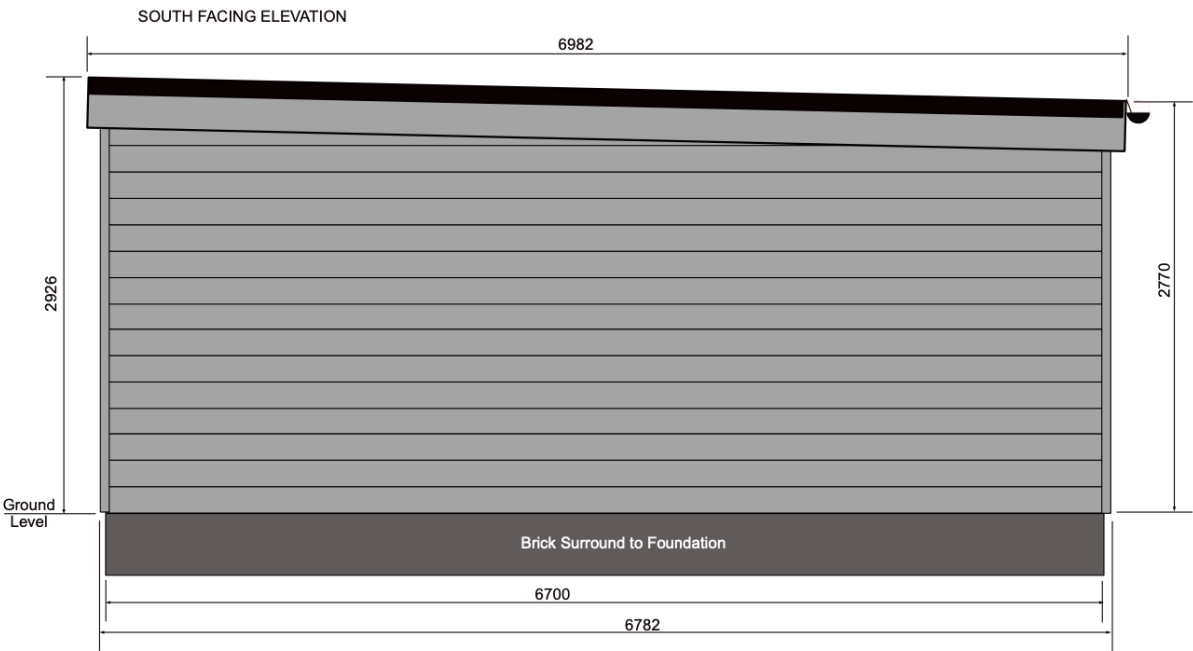


Figure 10. Replacement building south facing elevation

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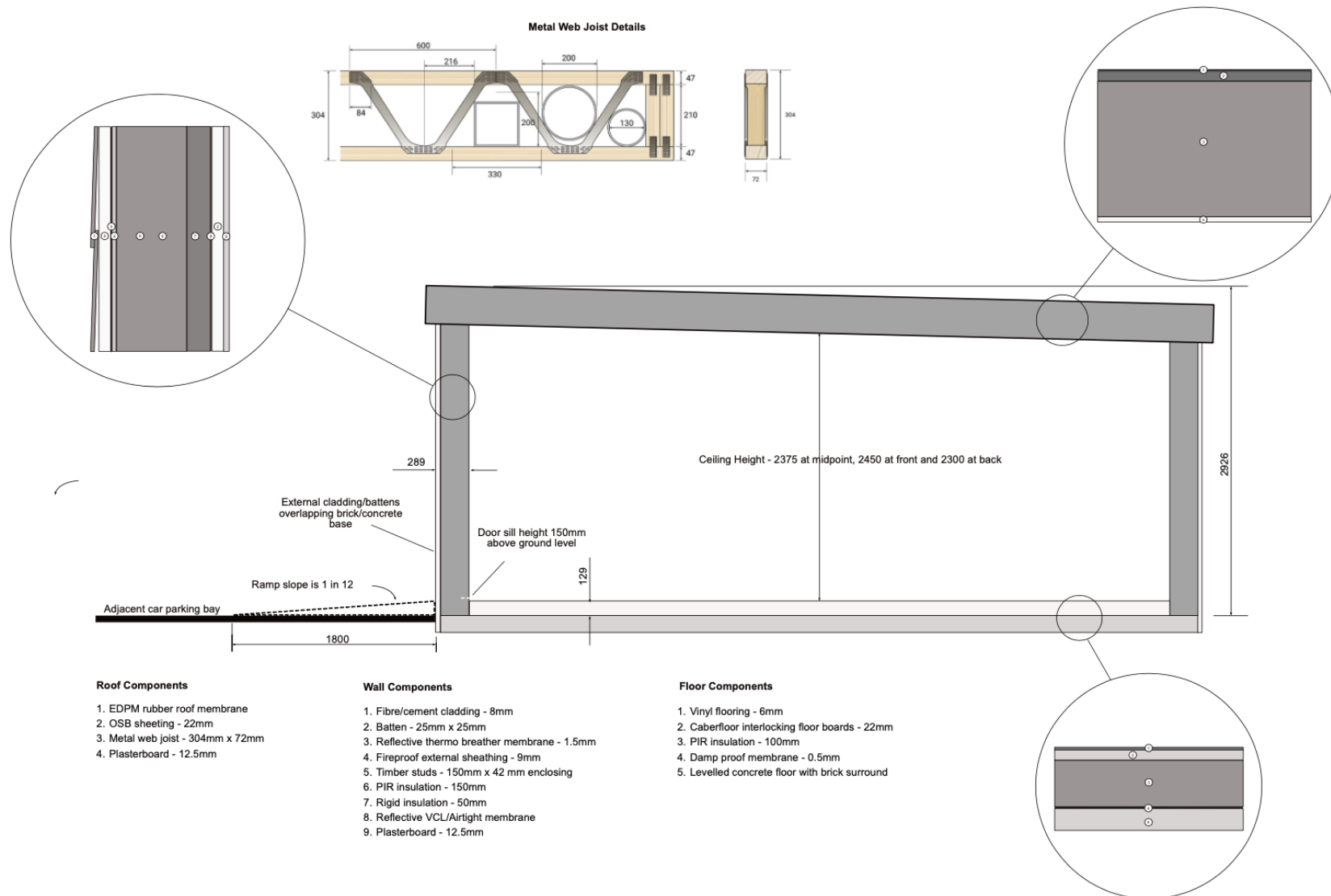


Figure 11. Replacement building cross-sectional view

# 12125624-DAS2: Revised Design & Access Statement for the KP Playhouse Replacement

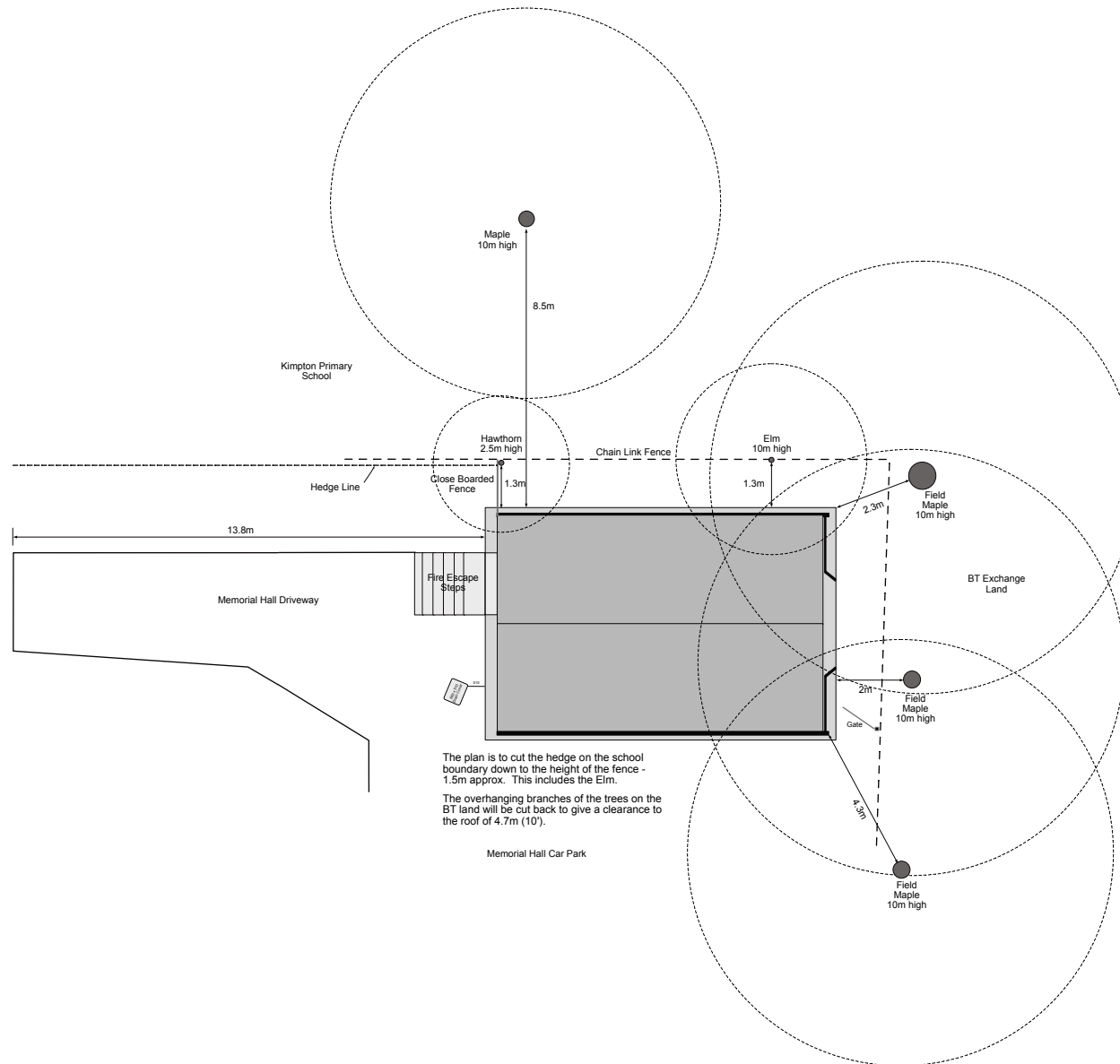


Figure 12. Existing building site plan

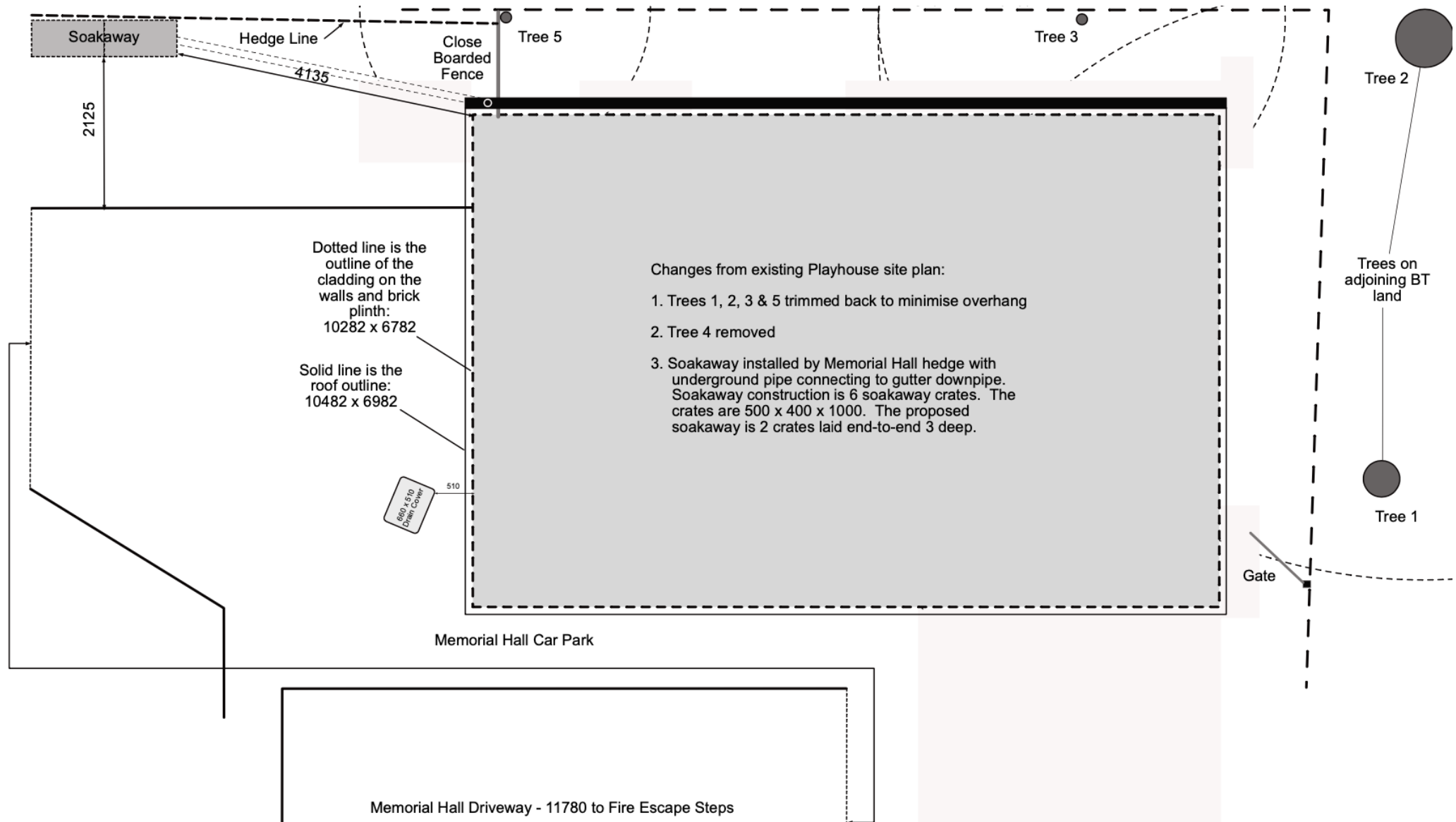


Figure 13. Replacement building site plan