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14<sup>th</sup> January 2019

To:

South African Heritage Resources Agency

Application to do interior insertions to the east wing of the rampart artillery rooms at the Old Fort, Constitution Hill, Johannesburg. The space is to be used as a professional recording studio facility.

**CONSTITUTIONHILL**

FOR THE CACHE STUDIO PROJECT, CONSTITUTIONAL HILL,  
JOHANNESBURG



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Please consider this application for interior fit-outs for a series of small rooms located in the East wing of the Ramparts of the Old Fort Precinct at Constitution Hill.

Constitution Hill is a Provincial heritage site and these rooms have previously been renovated under heritage supervision and approval as temporary exhibition spaces. We would like to apply to do a reversible and non-intrusive interior fit out in these rooms in order to use the space as a recording studio with a strong developmental programme.



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## 2. HISTORY

The oldest building at Constitution Hill is the Old Fort, where today's grass-covered ramparts and simple exterior belie the artillery that was once mounted on the rampart walls and the atrocities that occurred within them. These walls are enormously thick and strong, built against attack from the outside and escape from the inside.

The Ramparts of the old fort were built by Paul Kruger from 1896 to 1899, to protect the Zuid Afrikaanse Republiek (ZAR) from the threat of the British invasion, and to keep watch over the miners flocking to find gold in the village below. The Fort was designed by Netherlands-born state architect Sytze Wierda, and took three years to build at a cost of £40 000.

The Old Fort – formerly the Johannesburg Jail – is just seven years older than the city itself. Originally established to house the criminals produced by the rising mining town, the prison became the city's first military fort after the Jameson Raid in 1896, when the British attempted to overthrow the Boer government. This led to the Boers building the fort's ramparts between 1896 and 1899, only to lose these lookout points – and the rest of the prison – to British hands in 1900 during the South African War (the Second Anglo-Boer War). When the war ended in 1902, the fort became a prison once again, though this time under British control, with Boer soldiers imprisoned within their former fort. Despite South Africa's changing political landscape in subsequent years, the site remained a site of incarceration and abuse.

The Old Fort always housed white male prisoners, both political and common law. This continued after the National Party came into power in 1948, bringing with it apartheid, a political system defined by segregation and oppression. Although quarters were overcrowded and unhygienic, and the isolation cells (the oldest cells on the site) terrifying and traumatic, white prisoners were not physically brutalised in the same way that black prisoners were. All male prisoners passed through the foreboding tunnel beneath the ramparts, but only whites were held in the fort itself. On exception was Nelson Mandela, who was given a bed in the hospital section on his arrest in 1962.

On 27 November 1964, amid a great deal of controversy, the Old Fort was proclaimed a national monument. The Johannesburg City Council opposed the motion, believing that the fort's historical significance was scant and the property more useful for Hillbrow's swelling residents.



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But those who supported the fort's status as a national monument argued that it was the most important remaining structure from the Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek, the Johannesburg equivalent of Cape Town's Castle. The latter succeeded, though not without infuriating the City Council.

Today, Constitution Hill – the whole precinct – is a provincial heritage site.

### OLD FORT TIMELINE

1892: The first High Security prison is commissioned, sanctioned by Paul Kruger (President of the Zuid Afrikaanse Republiek (ZAR). Prison labour is used to construct the Prison.

1893: The prison opens.

1896: The prison becomes a military fort. The fort takes three years to build and is completed in June 1899.

1899: After the outbreak of the South African War the Old Fort is used by the military for a variety of purposes.

1902: When the war ends the Old Fort is placed under the control of the Public Works department as a temporary prison.

1964: The prison complex becomes a National Monument amongst much controversy.

1983: The prison complex closes.

1996: Constitution hill is chosen as the site for the Constitutional Court.

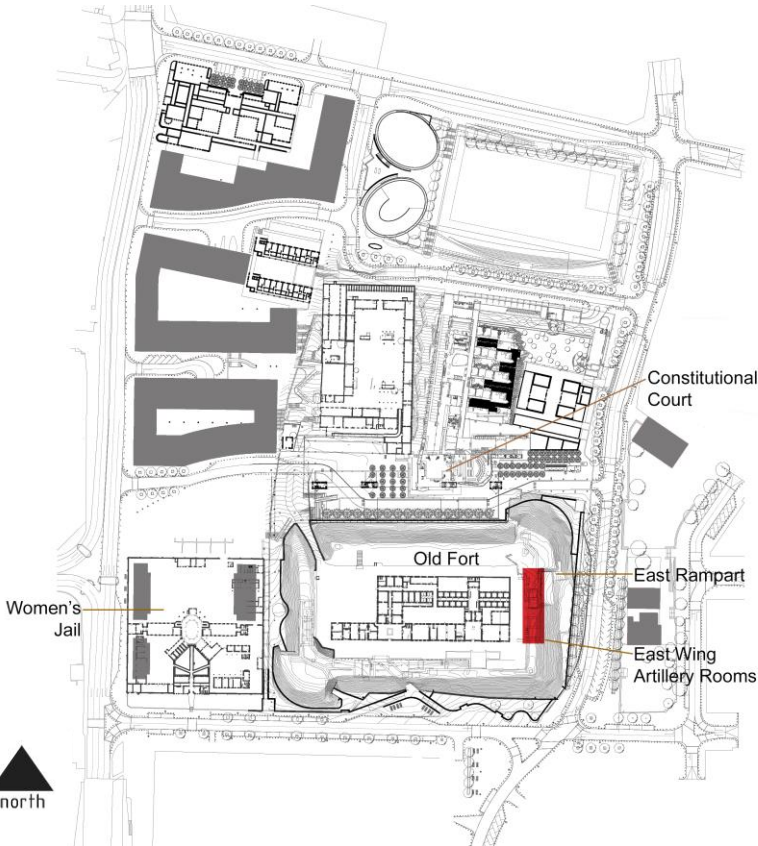
2001: The court and precinct are developed. The fort precinct under heritage supervision receives stop the rot maintenance. The precinct is declared a National Heritage site.

2004: The precinct opens to the public as a museum.



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3. SITE PLAN



LOCALITY PLAN





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#### 4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EAST WING ARTILERY ROOMS UNDER THE OLD FORT RAMPARTS

##### HISTORICAL VALUE

Beneath the ramparts lay a warren of tunnel-vaulted chambers designed for military use, from accommodation and stabling to food and ammunition storage. These underground rooms were serviced with electricity and a telecommunication network.

Please note that these rooms are currently used as temporary exhibition space and are not part of the Male prisoner processing tunnel referred to in the history summary. Also note these artillery room spaces are not linked to the two most significant Old Fort inmates Nelson Mandela and Joe Slovo.



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## 5. PHOTOGRAPHS AND ELEVATIONS

### AESTHETIC VALUE

The space comprises seven-barrel vaulted rooms and two passages. The barrel vaults, the arched doors, the deep inset windows with prison bars, the patina of history read through the layers of exposed paint and the wear and markings on the concrete floor all contribute to the unique aesthetic of these military and later prison spaces.

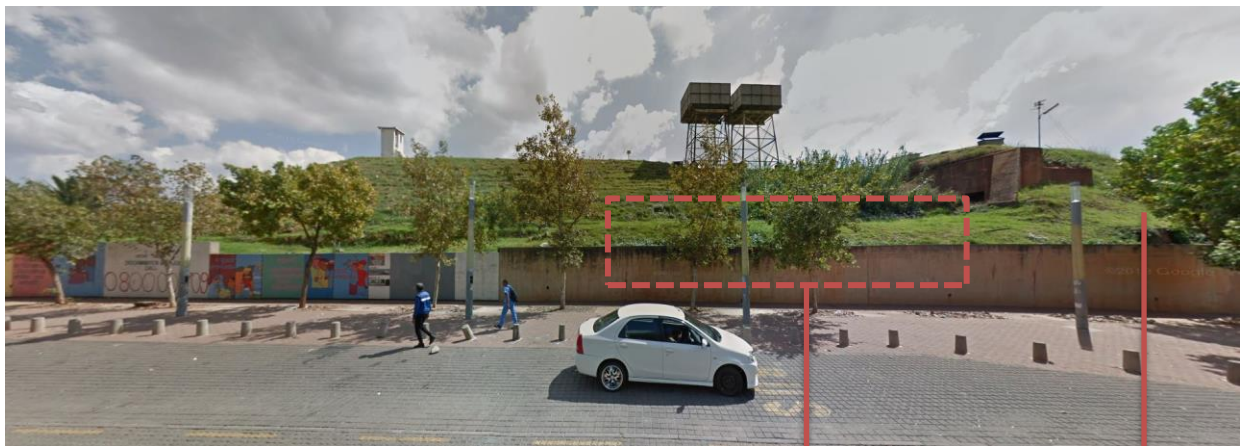
### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

The area for this application is 260 m<sup>2</sup>. The room are barrel vaulted and recent upgrades comprise:

- A general stop the rot maintenance
- Functioning Distribution board and electrical points on a wall mounted trunking.
- A picture rail to allow for exhibitions
- Central functioning lighting track and spot lights
- Internal glass panels at window openings to keep the rooms weather sealed.

The walls have not been restored, they have exposed weathered paint layers.

The floors are in the original concrete finish with markings of wear and use.



1. East Street Elevation

East wing artillery room behind

East rampart





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1. West Elevation looking North



2. West Elevation looking South



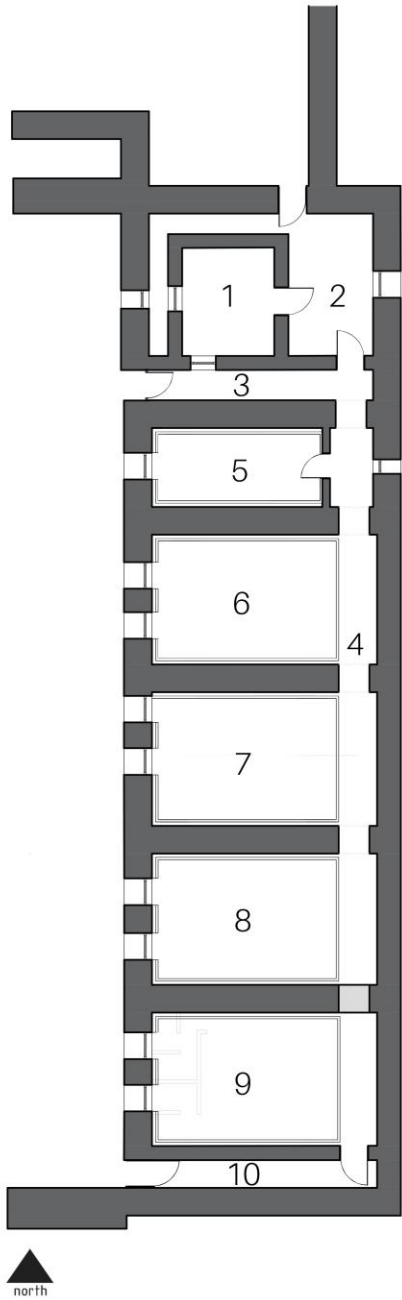
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3. Entrance door on West Elevation



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East Wing Ramparts Plan



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Room 1



Room 2



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Room 3



Room 4



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Room 5



Room 6



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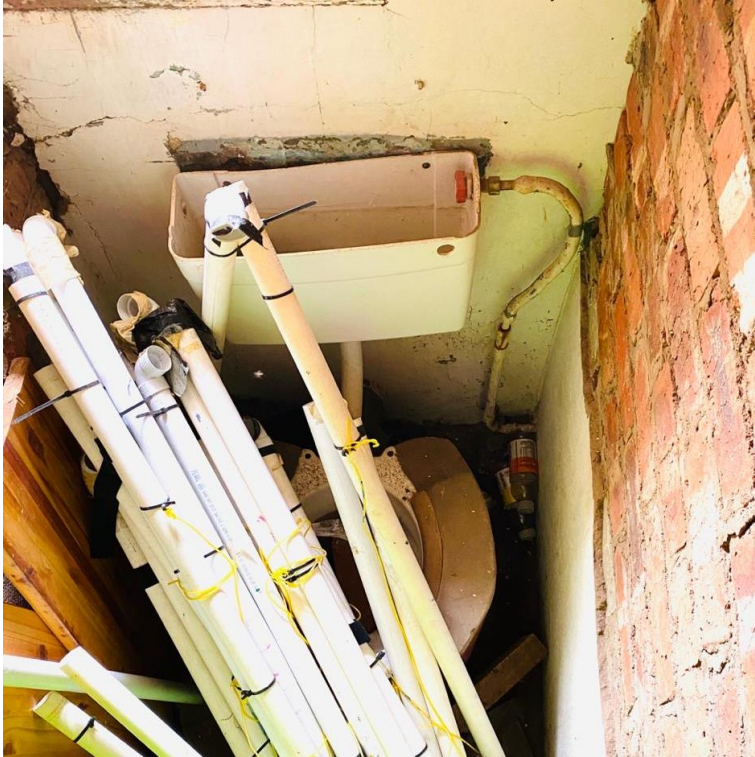
Room 7



Room 8



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Room 9



Room 10





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## 6. PROPOSED NEW USE

The proposal is to use these spaces as a music studio of national reach:

- To create an inspirational, world-class music recording studio facility at Constitution Hill.
- To re-invigorate a unique, historical Old Fort space in line with long term Constitution Hill objectives.

The studio will facilitate the ongoing integration of Constitution Hill with the surrounding communities of Hillbrow and Braamfontein.

Music is and will always play a unique and crucial role in uniting South African society. Now music has a huge role to play in re-igniting South Africa's soul.

This studio facility will play a strong supporting role for existing Constitution Hill events, such as Basha Uhuru, the Human Rights festival and Afropunk. A recording studio provides a physical facility to literally record history to record the sound of South Africa's future.

The studio will develop affiliate programs with renowned international studios, such as Abbey Road Studios in London and The Sanctuary at Albany in Bahamas.

The studio will be a not-for-profit entity - but can be hired out for professional commercial recordings should the opportunity arise. Music that is recorded for non-commercial reasons must have purpose, and it must live somewhere. The purpose can be that recording projects must be inspired by the music of the struggle for human rights, specifically in South Africa but also globally. A music and content store will then be created in the form of a digital archive. This content cache will be accessible to Constitution Hill for marketing and educational purposes and serve as a resource for the future.

The National and developmental nature of this programme is fitting for a National heritage site such as the Old Fort at Constitution Hill.

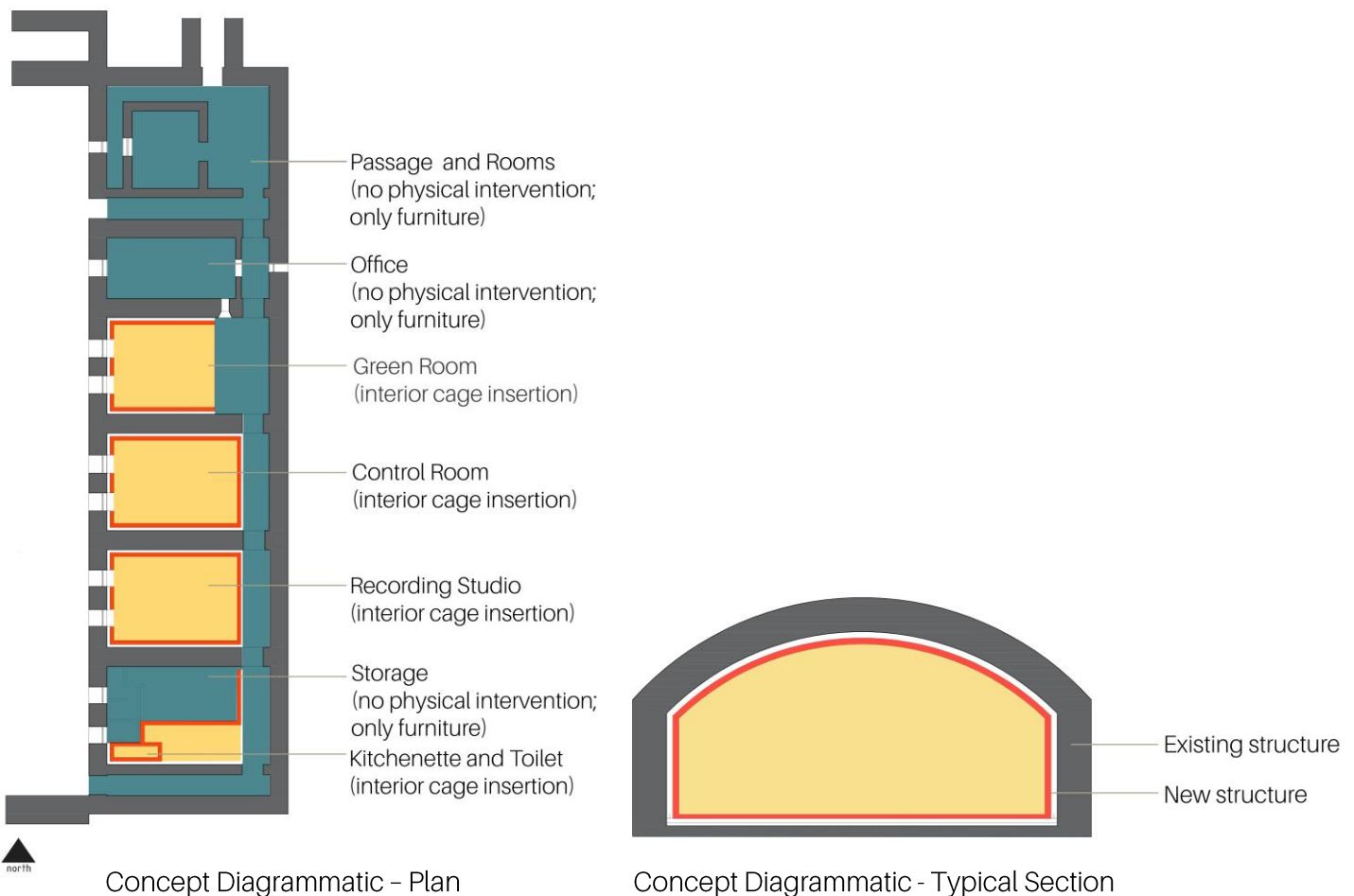


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## 7. SCOPE OF WORK

### 7.1. PRESERVATION BAND

The heritage concept is to leave the east passageway length open without any new interior intervention. This will preserve the existing texture and quality of space so that new insertions into the space are clearly read as new, as insertions and as reversible. This 'passage' also acts to manage circulation and fire escape routing.





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7.2. NO FIXINGS

To achieve a result where we won't attach anything to the building structure, walls, floors or soffit, we have a structural engineer designing a steel cage that will fit inside the vaulted rooms. These steel structures will "sit" on the floor with rubber pads. All of the interior finishes, including acoustic panels will attach to this steel framework.

In addition to the steel frame, we will be using a rubber sprung timber floor - rubber pads with rubber shims will be placed on the floor, levelled and an engineered timber floor will be placed on top of the batten system. Our drywall structures (for bass control and a surface for our acoustic treatment, will be fixed to the top of this floor and to the steel frame

This allows for the interior insertion to be reversible in the future, and with no fixings the heritage structure is fully preserved.

7.3. WINDOWS

We wish to replace the glazing in the existing timber window frames, but we will do so carefully in order not to damage the existing frames. As some of those timber frames are not in good condition they will be renovated.

To achieve our acoustic requirements for the windows, we are placing an acoustic window in our internal drywall skin with a reveal back to the existing windows. This interior window will be larger than the exterior window so that the heritage window is clearly seen. There will be no fixing, the dry wall and the new supporting steel cage will hold the window reveals. Two window frames are missing and will require reconstruction to match the existing.

7.4. DOORS

All existing doors are to be kept in place and renovated where required.

7.5. AIR CONDITIONING

The HVAC consultant is to use a chilled beam system in the studios, control rooms and the Green room. This would mean no structural work to the existing building. The HVAC piping will run on the floor of the passage. Fresh air will distribute through existing original vent pipes that exist between rooms.

REQUEST:

We would place the Air Conditioner Condenser Unit outside along the west facade and caged within a timber lattice screen. We would like permission to connect the AC Unit into the interior via one 50 mm diameter cored hole. We would also like to have a total of five fresh air vents fixed within the glazing of windows.



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7.6. ELECTRICAL

The rooms already have electrical points, plugs and lights. We would like to request removing these recent fittings and to replace with new fittings. This is not to affect the existing electrical reticulation, there will be no new holes or fixings, just new light and plug fittings that will be fixed onto the new interior skin.

REQUEST:

We would like to request permission to move the distribution board that was recently fitted to a new position within the East wing. The current electrical reticulation runs through five 30mm diameter cored holes between rooms, in order to move the Distribution board we would like to increase two of these existing cored holes from 30mm to 60mm.

7.7. PLUMBING

A sewage point and two toilets and a shower that are existing are to be preserved. We would like to install a new toilet adjacent to the existing toilets, that discharges into the existing waste pipes. In addition, we would like to have a kitchen sink. Both would discharge into the existing waste pipe. This bathroom will not fix to the existing structure, all fixings will follow the same principle of being only fixed to the new interior skin that is fixed to a freestanding steel cage.

REQUEST:

We would like to request permission to install a water supply pipe to the ablution room. This will require one 25mm hole cored from the exterior.

7.8. DISABLED ACCESS

Solid Timber ramps that are freestanding and removable are to be used to make the floor accessible where there are level changes.

7.9. RE-OPENING ARCHWAY

One of the passage openings has been bricked up. This brickwork is not plastered and is clearly a later and recent addition. We would like to restore the archway by carefully removing the infill brickwork. We will set aside the bricks.

7.10. EXTERIOR

The Exterior of the east wing of the rampart artillery rooms is to remain intact.

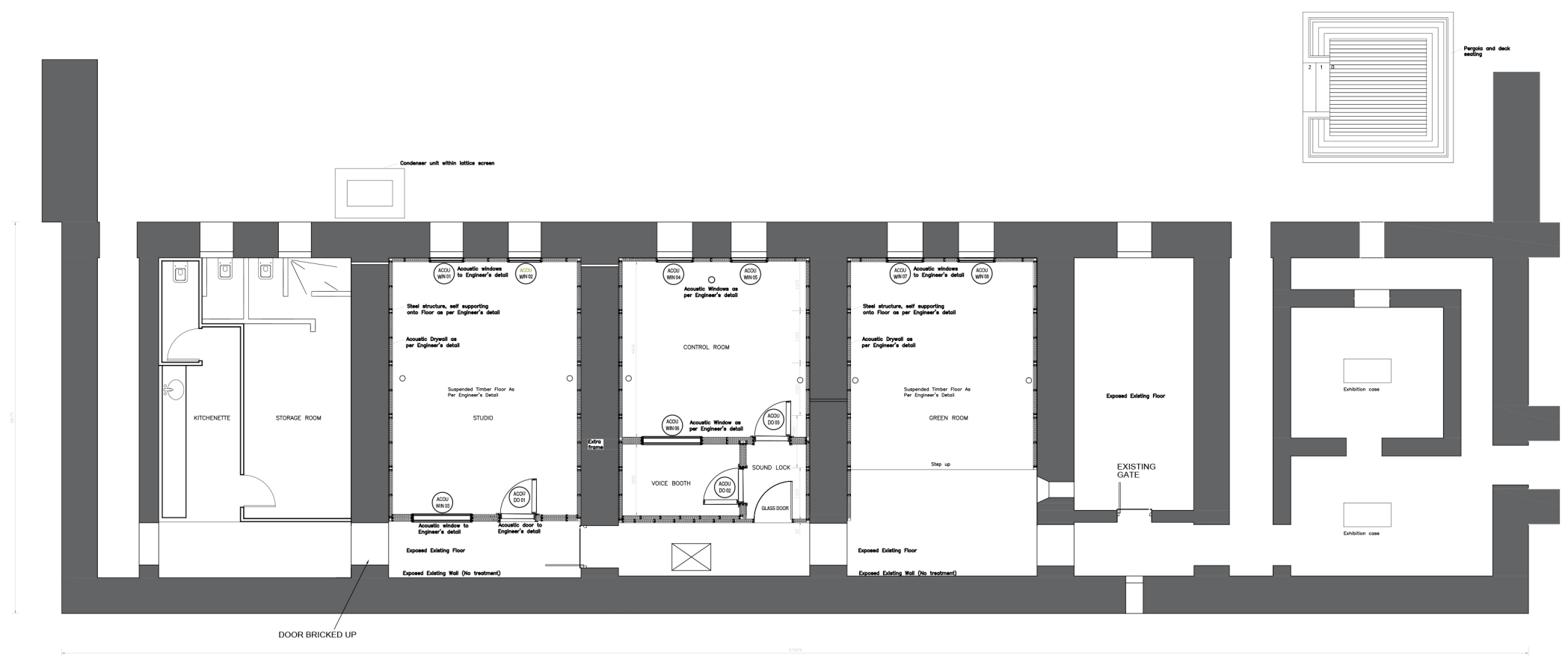
We would like permission to do artwork on the recently paved area in front of the façade. This is not a heritage surface. We would also like to have a shading pergola structure that is freestanding from the facade.



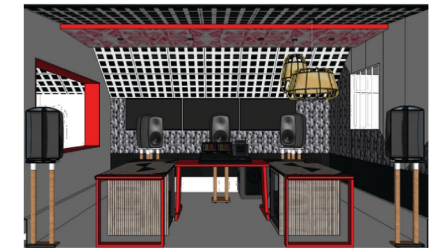
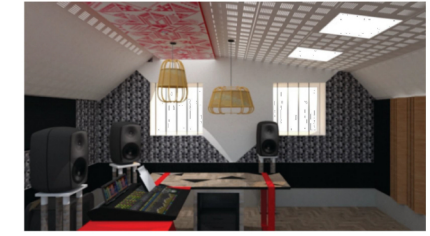
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## ANNEXURE A - DRAWINGS

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The Cache Studio Control Room Renders



Recording Studio (Acoustic Cloud Panel Option)



Please read notes and detail references.  
 Read in conjunction with these drawings.

DRG.	TITLE / DISCUSSION

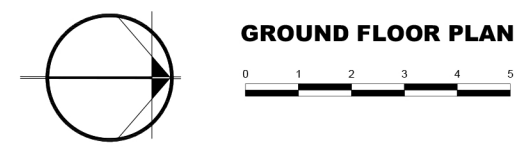
DATE	REV.	INITIALS	NOTES
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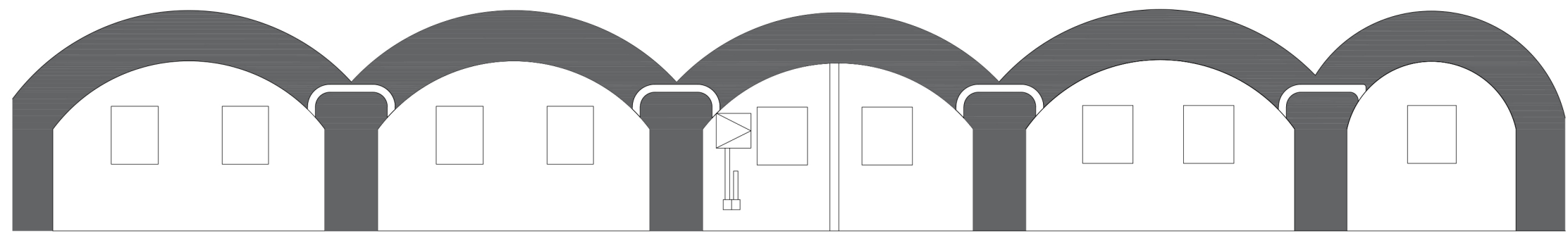
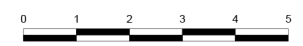
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TITLE: THE CACHE STUDIOS  
 DISC.: GROUND FLOOR PLAN, SECTION AND PERSPECTIVES

Date: Jan '20	Dwg by: L. NGCOBO	Job No: XXXX	Drawing: 1 of 1
Designed by: B. GELDENHUIS	Scale: A1 - N.T.S.	Revision: 0	
Checked by: B. GELDENHUIS	Dwg No: XXXX-100-001		



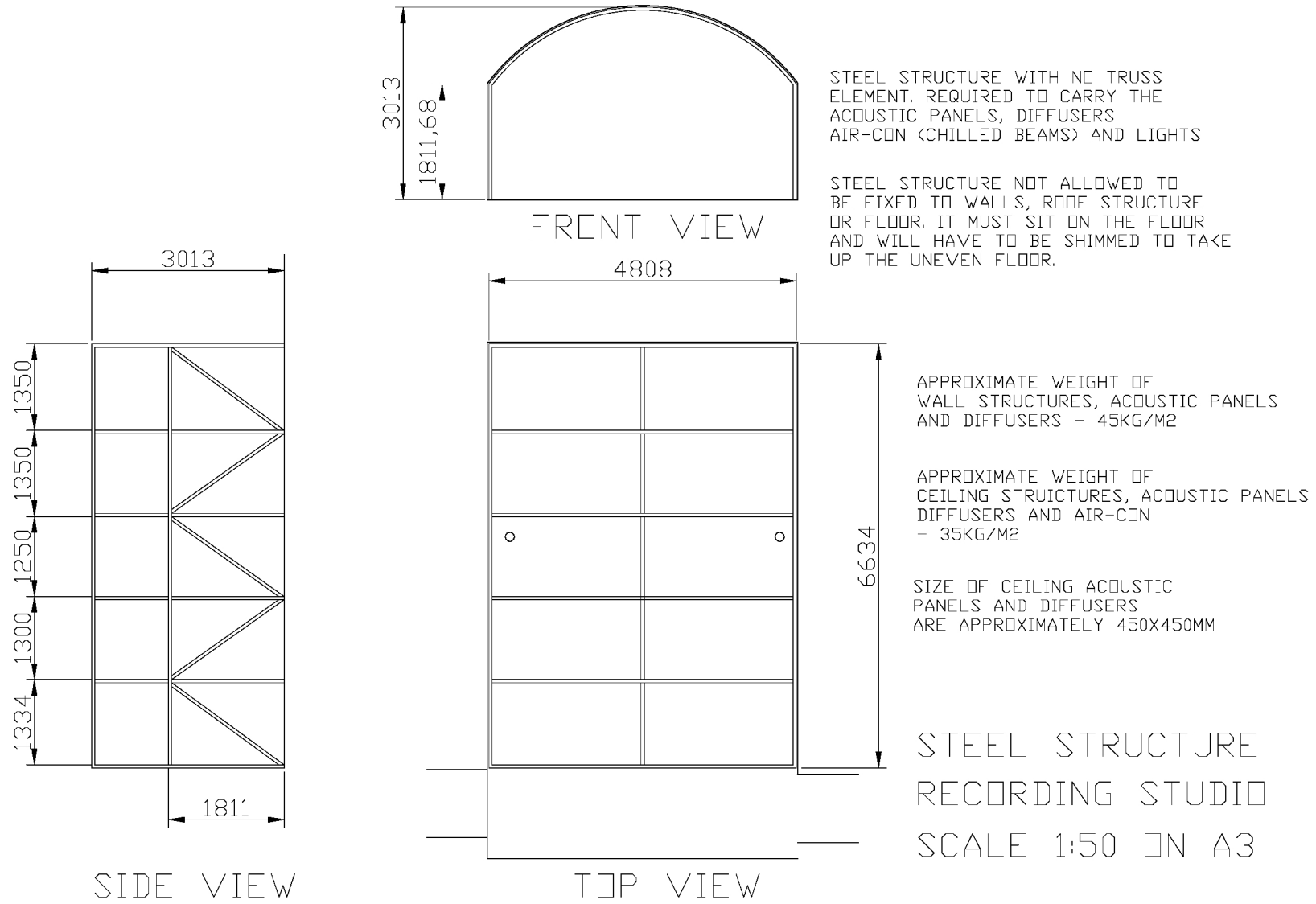
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



SECTION



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TITLE: THE CACHE STUDIOS

DISC.: TYPICAL STEEL CAGE STRUCTURE SYSTEM

Date: Jan '20	Dwn by: L. NGCOBO	Job No: XXXX	Drawing: 1 of 1
Designed by: B. GELDENHUIS	Scale: A1 - N.T.S.	Revision: 0	
Checked by: B. GELDENHUIS	Dwg No: XXXX-100-001		