



Report on the proposed Installation of Permanent Dugouts and Rainwater Drainage at Irnham Recreation Ground by Minehead AFC

Background

Minehead Football Club has been a part of the town's sporting and community life for generations. The club currently runs three senior men's teams and has a strong youth section offering football from tots right up to under-18s. In a major step forward for inclusivity, next season will see the club field its first-ever women's team, a landmark moment that reflects the club's ongoing growth and ambition.

The club plays its home fixtures at Irnham Recreation Ground, where the two senior men's sides, the new woman's side, the under-18s, and occasionally the under-15s and under-16s make regular use of the pitch. In doing so, the club provides valuable sporting opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds, offering both a physical outlet and a sense of community.

Over the years, the club has used various types of dugouts, once having permanent brick-built ones in place. However, as the club's non-league status changed and with adjustments to the site, these were replaced with more temporary solutions. In recent seasons, the dugouts have mostly been lightweight plastic ones, some of which had to be assembled before every game. Unfortunately, these have proven to be easy targets for vandalism and generally don't stand up well to repeated use or harsh weather.

The club holds a lease agreement with Minehead Town Council for use of the pitch and also rents the community centre on weekends, which acts as the clubhouse. Under the guidance of a new chairman and board, the club is going through a period of renewal and positive change, with an emphasis on improving its facilities, strengthening community links and securing its long-term future. Their approach to the Town Council to request formal permission for these improvements is part of a broader commitment to working collaboratively for the benefit of the wider community.

Needs

The current dugouts are simply no longer fit for purpose. They're not secure, they don't withstand the elements, and they've been vandalised on multiple occasions. As a club dependant entirely on volunteers, Minehead FC has clearly worked hard to pull together local support to find a better, longer-lasting solution. Thanks to help from local tradespeople and businesses, the club is now in a position to build permanent, brick-built dugouts, at minimal cost.

The new dugouts have been designed by a local architect and will be solid, weatherproof and although not on the submitted plans, will be lockable to prevent unauthorised access when not in use. They'll provide proper shelter for teams on matchdays and will significantly improve the look and professionalism of the ground. Importantly, the work will be carried out by local builders, using materials sourced from the local area, reinforcing the community driven nature of the project.

At the same time, the club has raised a concern about water runoff along the top edge of the pitch, near the community centre. In recent years, with increasingly wet winters, water has been collecting in this area and seeping onto the pitch, affecting its condition and making it harder to maintain. The club is proposing to install a simple drainage solution, a soakaway, drain, or trap, along this boundary to help divert the water away. It's a small but effective improvement that will make a noticeable difference in keeping the pitch playable and reducing long-term damage. Ultimately, this will help protect the council-owned pitch and ensure it remains in good condition for all users.

Financial and legal considerations

All costs for the proposed works—including materials, labour and waste removal—will be covered entirely by the football club. If any spoil or excess soil is generated during the works, it will either be responsibly disposed of or reused to level out existing dips and divots on the pitch, helping improve the surface at the same time.

The club is not asking for any funding from Minehead Town Council. It is simply seeking permission to access the site and carry out the improvements as outlined in the attached plans. The local architect has confirmed that planning permission is not required for the works. As the pitch is already covered by an existing lease agreement with the council, there are no legal considerations beyond what's already in place.

That said, the club is happy to commit, in writing, to reinstating the site should the structures ever need to be removed or if the lease ends. This has already been agreed in principle.

Recommendation

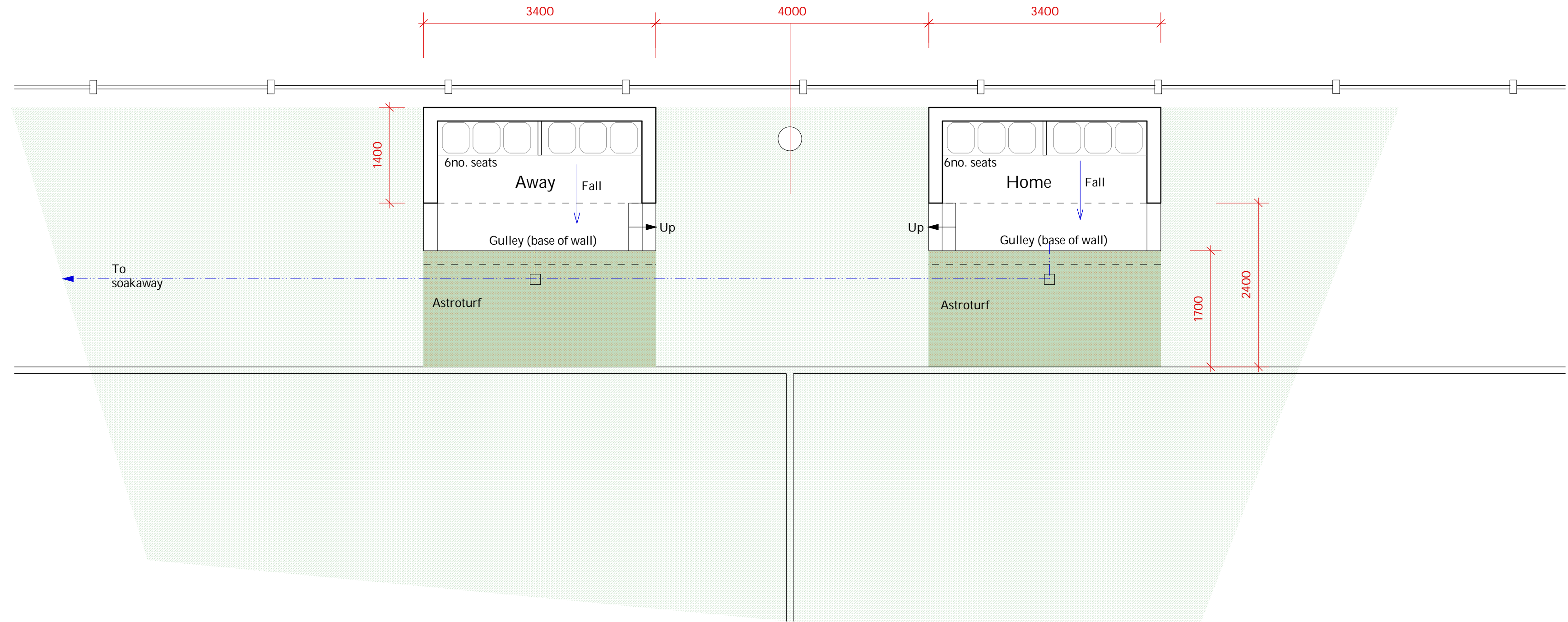
It is recommended that Minehead Football Club's request to install two permanent brick-built dugouts at Irnham Recreation Ground be approved, in line with the submitted plans. It is also recommended that the club be granted permission to install a rainwater drainage solution along the upper edge of the football pitch near the community centre.

These improvements will make a real difference to one of the town's most used community sports facilities. They're practical, low-cost (to the council), and fully funded and delivered by local volunteers and businesses. They show the football club's commitment not only to its own future but to the community it serves.

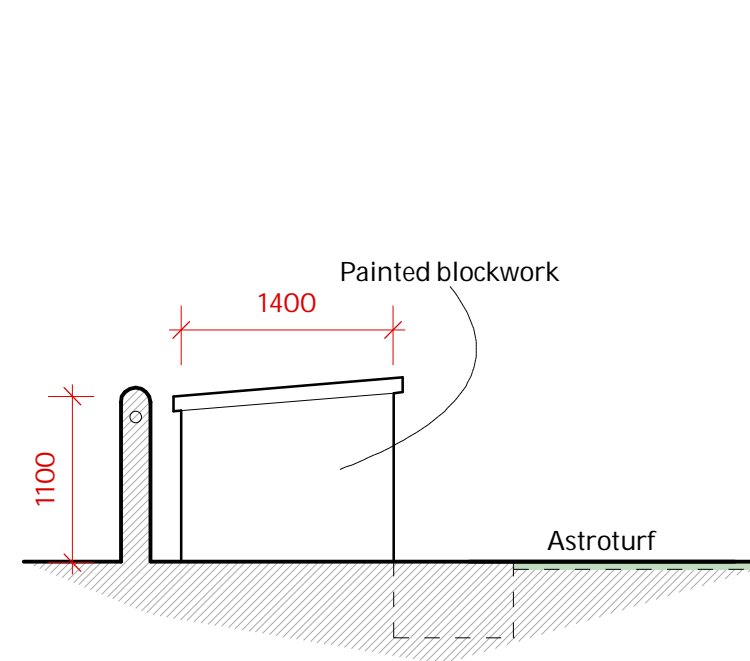
Ben Parker

Town Clerk

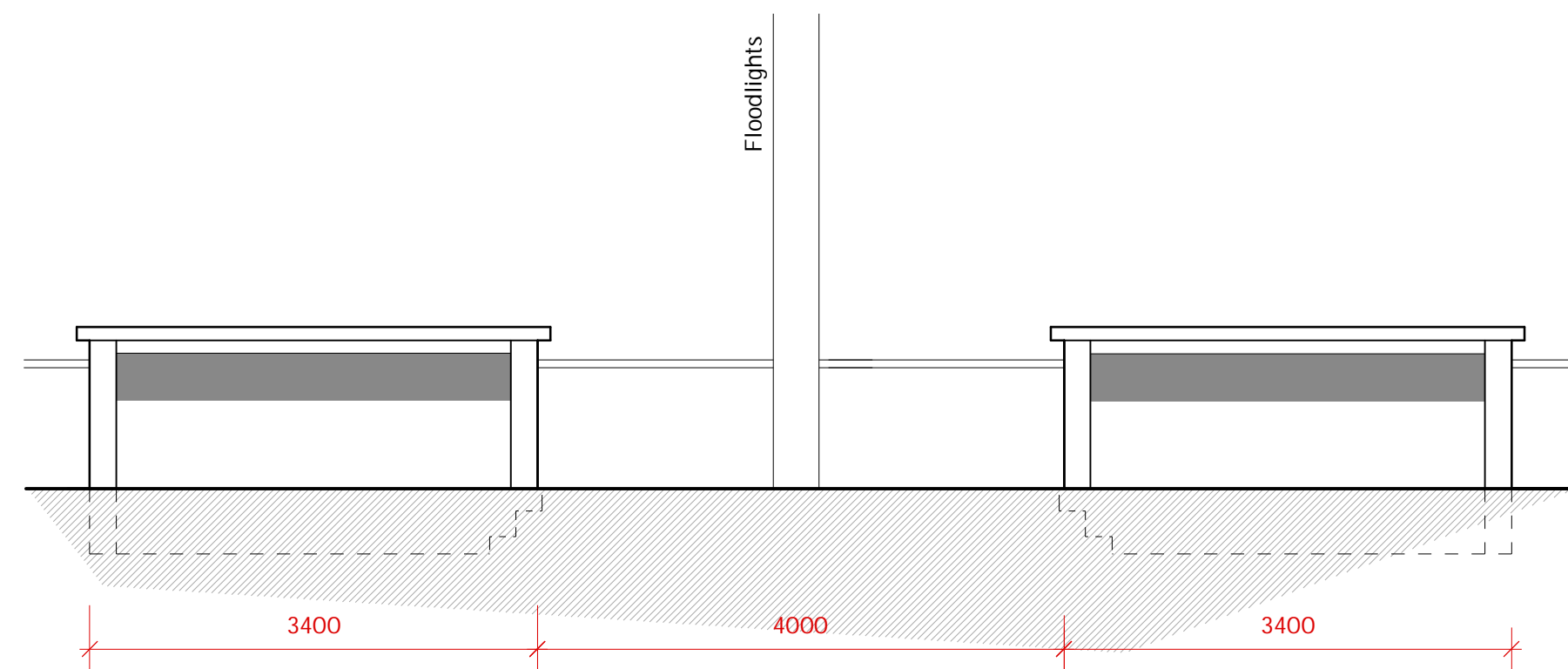
July 2025



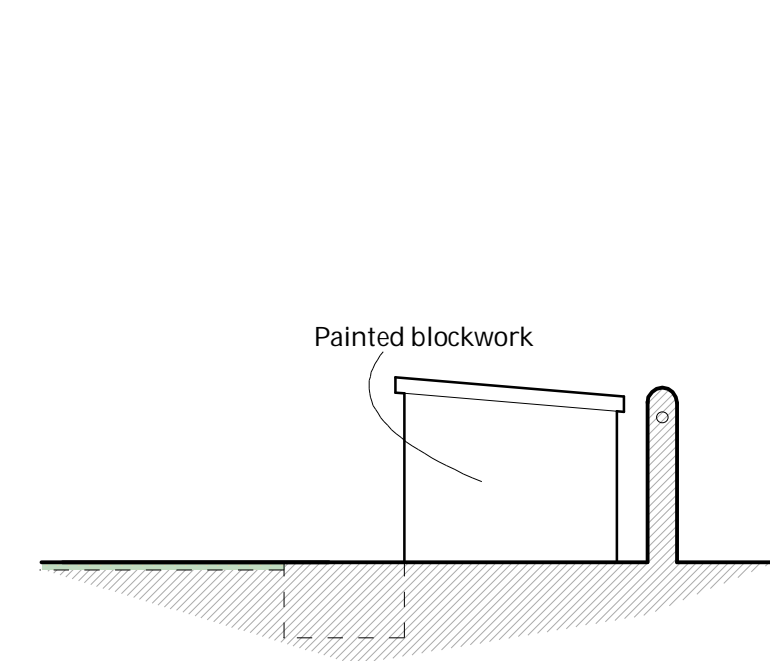
Ground Floor Plan



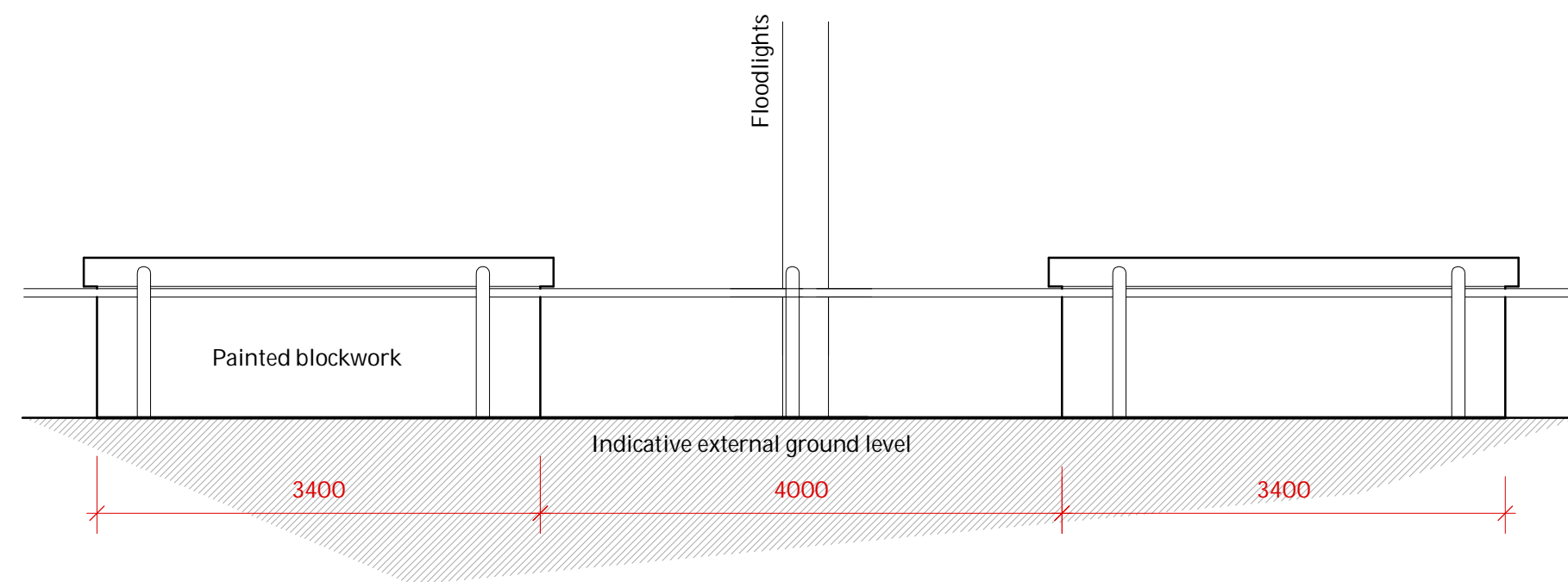
South Elevation (Side)



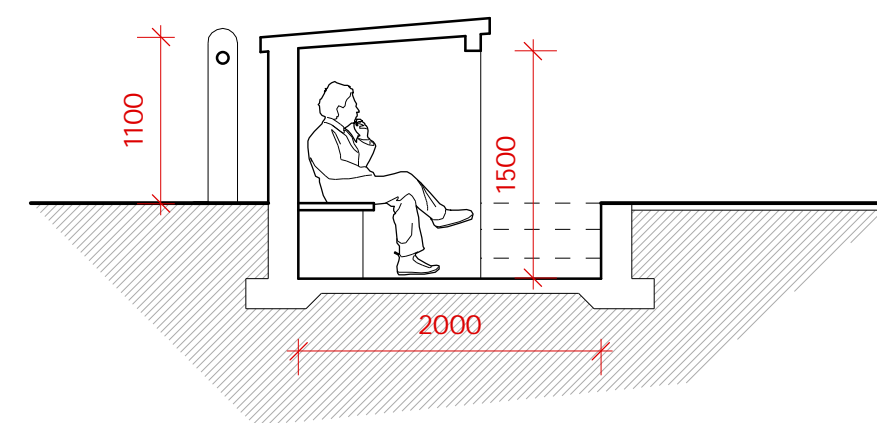
East Elevation (Front)



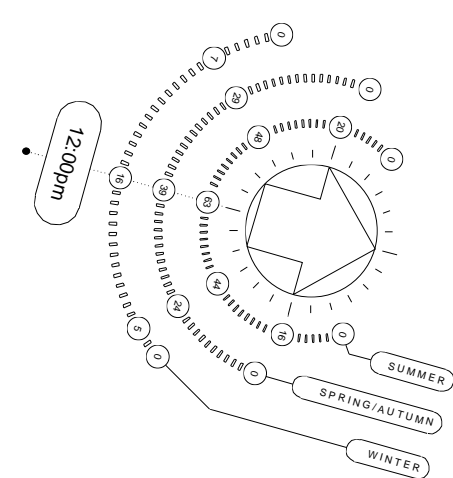
North Elevation (Side)



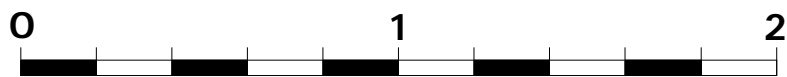
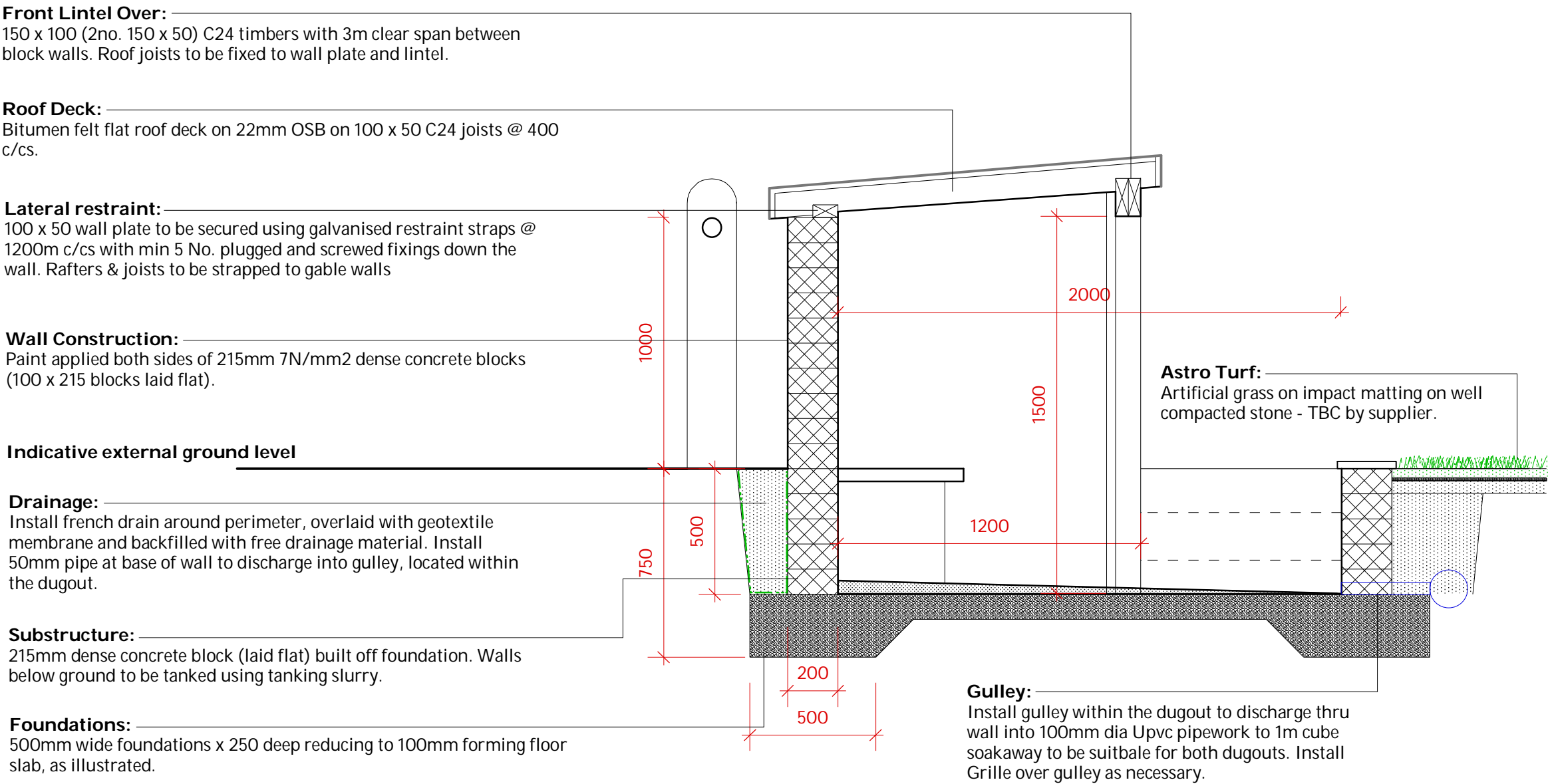
West Elevation (Rear)



Typical Section



Title:	Minehead Football Club	Architectural Studio 26 Friday Street Minehead Somerset TA24 5UE
Drawing:	Prop Plans & Elevations	
Number:	3200/201	
Date:	May 2025	01643705275
Scale:	1:50 @ A1 & 1:100 @ A3	07813164567
Drawn By:	CB	design@architecturalstudio.co.uk www.architecturalstudio.co.uk
		Architectural Studio South West

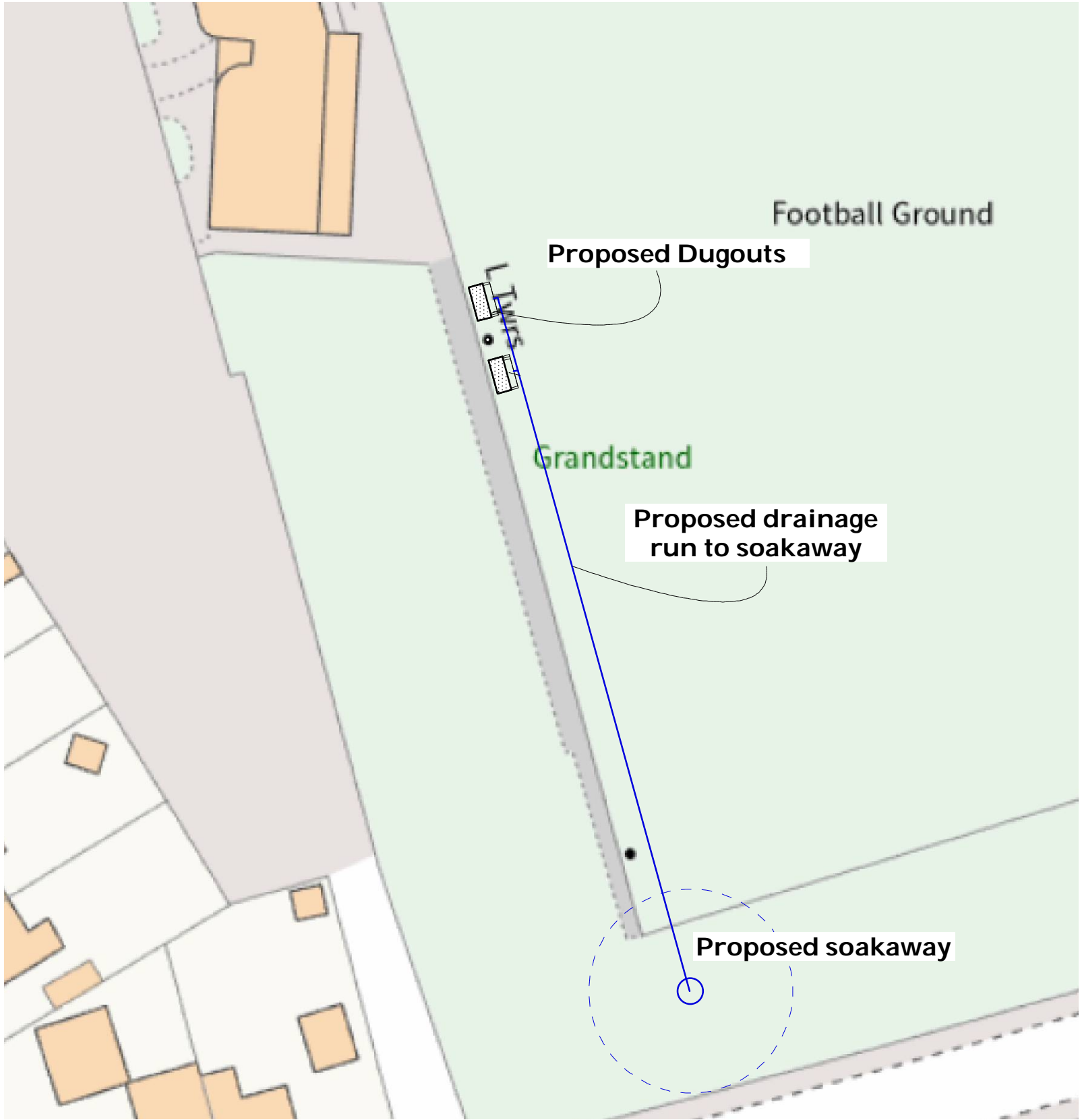


Title:	Minehead Football Club	Architectural Studio
Drawing:	Prop Section	26 Friday Street
Number:	3200/202	Minehead
Date:	June 2025	Somerset
Scale:	1:20 @ A2	TA24 5UE
Drawn By:	AGE	01643705275
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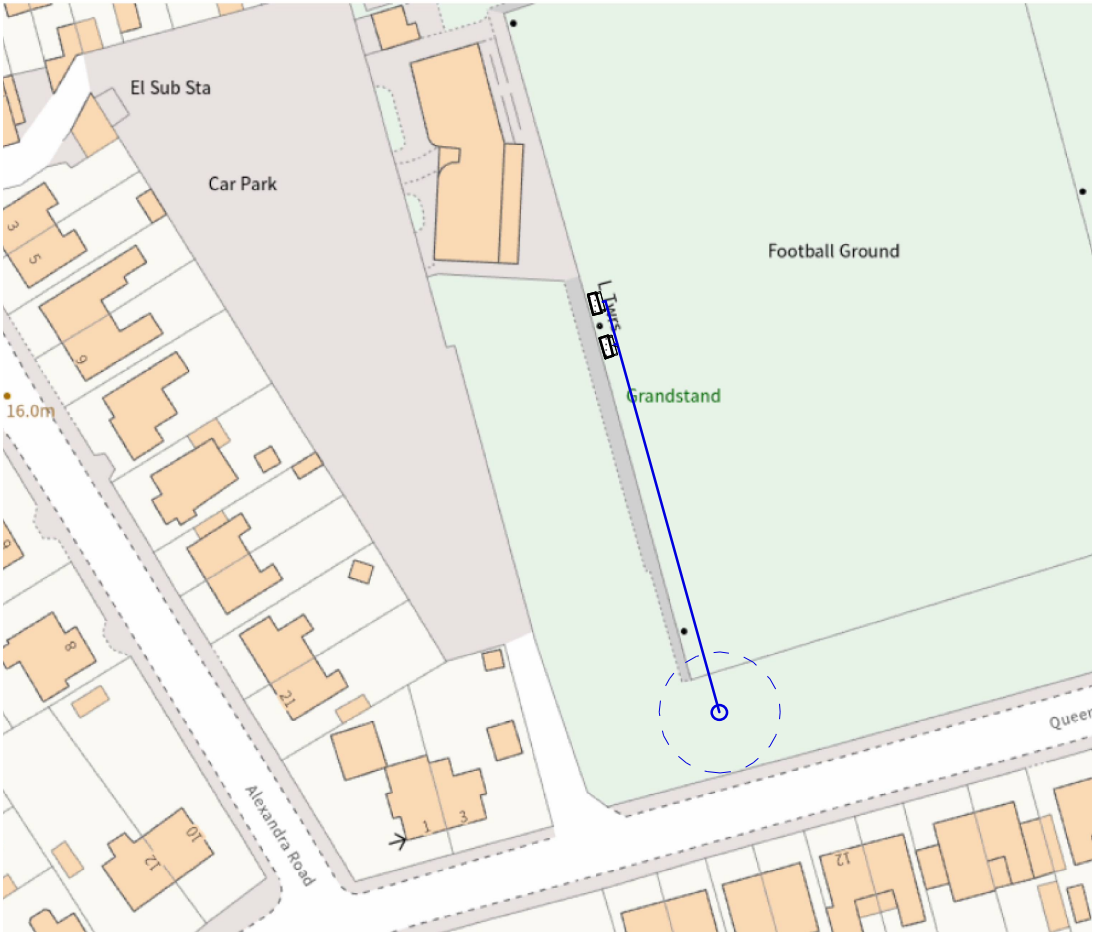
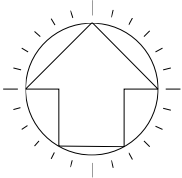
PRELIMINARY

Architectural Studio
South West

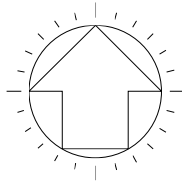
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Site Block Plan @ 1:500



Site Location Plan @ 1:1250



Title:	Minehead Football Club	Architectural Studio 26 Friday Street Minehead Somerset TA24 5UE
Drawing:	Proposed Site Plans	
Number:	3200/200	01643705275 07813164587 design@architecturalstudio.co.uk www.architecturalstudio.co.uk
Date:	July 2025	
Scale:	1:500 & 1:1250 @ A3	<div><div></div><div><i>Architectural Studio</i> South West</div></div>
Drawn By:	AGE	

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