

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
IN RESPECT OF THE YAU MA TEI THEATRE PHASE 2
AT YAU MA TEI, KOWLOON**

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON THE
REVISED DESIGN OF THE YAU MA TEI THEATRE PHASE 2**

The purpose of this supplementary paper is to present the revised design of the captioned Yau Ma Tei Theatre (“YMTT”) Phase 2, located next to the YMTT, a Grade 2 historic building, according to the advice and comments of the Antiquities Advisory Board (“AAB”) given at the meeting held on 11 June 2020.

2. Some Members appreciated the design as the proposed high block had been set back from Waterloo Road and located at the rear portion of the Project Site which could minimise the visual impact to the main façade of YMTT. Some Members expressed concern on the visual impact of YMTT Phase 2 on YMTT, a Grade 2 historic building, which is summarised as below –

- a) the frontage of the low block elevation was aligning the site boundary and the pedestrian pavement along Waterloo Road, which would block a front corner of YMTT when viewing from Waterloo Road;
- b) the staircases and lift core of the proposed low block had occupied a lot of area on G/F;
- c) whether the proposed low block could be removed and compensated by adding two more storeys to the proposed high block; and
- d) whether there was the need to re-provide the public toilets at the Project Site and adjacent to a Grade 2 historic building.

THE REVISED DESIGN

3. Taking into account Members’ comments on a) and b) of para. 2 above, the design is revised with the major amendments as follows –

- a) set back the frontage of the proposed low block by approximately 1.1m to expose more of the corner and front elevation of YMTT when viewing from Waterloo Road **(Figures I, II and IV)**;
- b) relocate the theatre toilets from previous M/F to G/F, and thus remove the need of internal staircases and lift core of the proposed low block to provide more space on G/F **(Figure I)**;

- c) replace the internal staircases of the proposed low block with an external open staircase leading from G/F to landscape roof for better appreciation of the east elevation of YMTT **(Figures I and II)**;
- d) reduce the massing and lower the building height of the proposed low block by approximately 0.7m for better appreciation of the pitched roof and roof feature of YMTT **(Figures III and IV)**; and
- e) enhance the visibility of the east elevation of YMTT by the circulation design and the use of glass wall with various transparency in the low block **(Figures I, IV and V)**.



Figure I. Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Low Block) - (a) the frontage of the proposed low block is set back by approximately 1.1m; (b) & (c) the internal staircases and lift core are removed and replaced with an external open staircase leading to landscape roof to provide more space on G/F; (e) the circulation is designed to enhance the appreciation of the east elevation of YMTT.

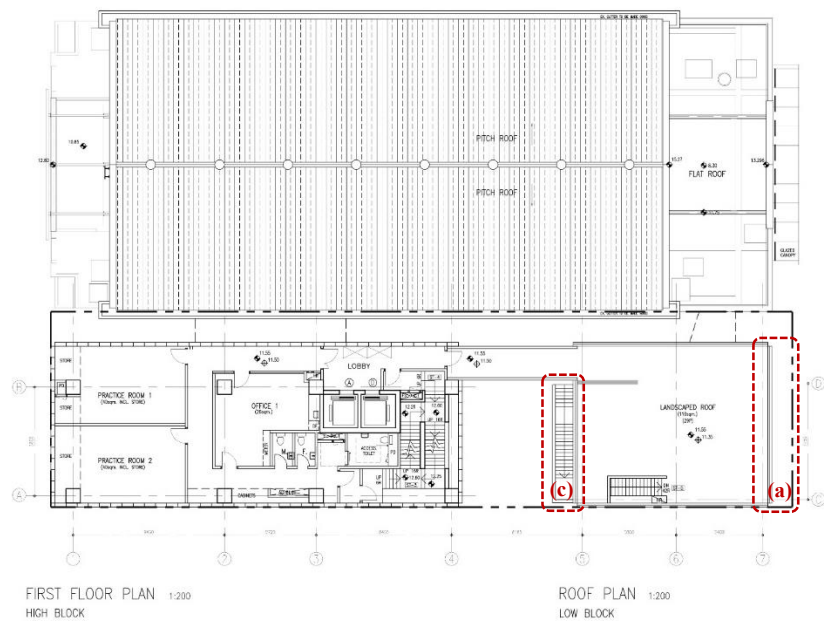


Figure II. Proposed Roof Plan (Low Block) - (a) the frontage of the proposed low block is set back by approximately 1.1 m; (c) the internal staircases are replaced with an external open staircase leading to landscape roof for better appreciation of the east elevation of YMTT.

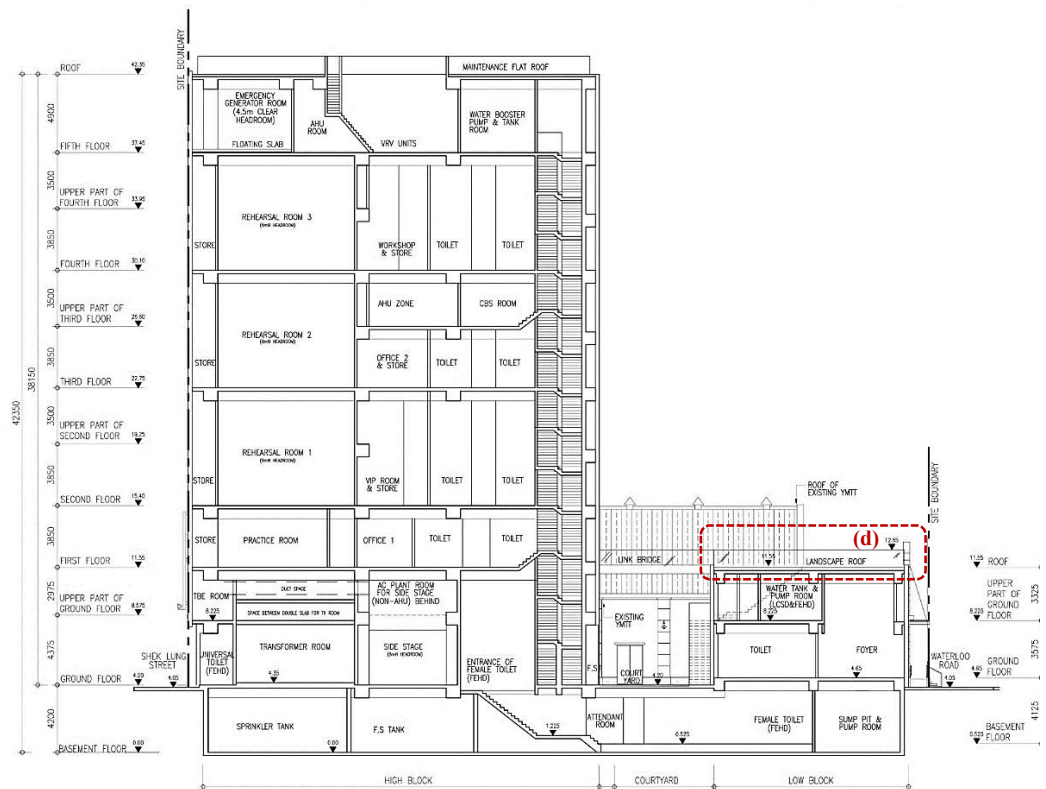


Figure III. Proposed Section C-C - (d) the building height of the proposed low block is lowered by approximately 0.7m for better appreciation of the pitched roof and roof feature of YMTT.



Figures IV and V. Artist's Impression, view from Waterloo Road - (a) the frontage of the proposed low block is set back by approximately 1.1m; (d) the massing of the proposed low block is reduced and the building height is lowered by approximately 0.7m for better appreciation of the pitched roof and roof feature of YMTT; (e) glass with various transparency is used to enhance the visibility of the east elevation of YMTT in the proposed low block.

4. In response to the comment on whether the proposed low block could be removed and compensated by adding two more storeys to the proposed high block (para. 2c), the project team considers it appropriate to keep the design of a high block and a low block due to the following reasons –

- a) the function of the proposed low block is to provide a foyer extension required for expanding the existing small foyer of YMTT, this function cannot be achieved in the proposed high block area;

- b) the floor-to-floor height of G/F, 2/F, 3/F & 4/F of the proposed high block is around 7.35m to 7.7m due to the high headroom requirement of the side stage and the three rehearsal rooms for Cantonese opera performances and rehearsals. Further increase in building height or number of storeys of the proposed high block shall have significant impact to the neighbourhood buildings; and
- c) as the Outline Zoning Plan (“OZP”) has restricted the height of the proposed high block to a maximum of six storeys, application for relaxation shall have significant time implication.

5. It was also mentioned at the last AAB meeting whether the public toilets at the basement could be removed or re-provided in other nearby areas (para. 2d). Given that the existing public toilets are frequently used by the public and workers of the Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market, and that there is no suitable site in the vicinity where the public toilets can be relocated, re-provisioning at the basement of YMTT Phase 2 is considered an appropriate resolution to maintain the toilet service for users in the local community. In order to respect the cultural precinct, design of the public toilets and the toilets entrance on G/F would be holistically integrated with the overall design of YMTT Phase 2.

CONCLUSION

6. The HIA has concluded that the impact of the proposed development of the YMTT Phase 2 on the YMTT, the Former Pumping Station and the Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market acceptable from the heritage conservation perspective. Insignificant impact is anticipated during the construction stage with the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures implemented.

7. The proposed development of the YMTT Phase 2 would create a better cultural ambience, enhance the overall setting of the area and significantly enhance the operation of YMTT. We, therefore, appeal for Members’ support and endorsement of the HIA Report for the captioned project.

8. The updated salient points of the HIA report are included in **Appendix**.

**REVISED HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN RESPECT OF
THE YAU MA TEI THEATRE PHASE 2
AT YAU MA TEI, KOWLOON**

BACKGROUND

A project has been proposed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department to use the vacated area after the relocation of the existing public facilities adjacent to Yau Ma Tei Theatre (“YMTT”), i.e. the Shanghai Street refuse collection point (“RCP”) and the street sleepers’ services units (“SSSU”), for the development of YMTT Phase 2. A new venue will be provided to support the development of Cantonese opera and promote the valuable intangible cultural heritage. Demolition of the existing building of the Shanghai Street RCP, the SSSU and the public toilets and relocation of the Shanghai Street RCP and the SSSU are not under the project scope. The public toilets under the management of Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will be re-provided in-situ in YMTT Phase 2.

2. YMTT was completed in 1930. It is the only surviving pre-World War II purpose-built cinema theatre in urban area. It ceased operation in 1998. The location plan and project area are shown in **Figure 1**.

3. YMTT is a rectangular structure, occupying a footprint measuring around 18 x 45 meters. It is composed of three sections that are recognisable from its external appearance. The front section houses a lobby with a ticket booth and a snack shop on the ground floor, and a projector room on the upper floor. The middle section houses an auditorium and a screen stage under a pitched roof whilst the rear section houses a back stage flanked by male and female toilets.

4. YMTT was accorded Grade 2 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board on 18 December 2009.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

A. Historical and Social Significance

5. Completed in 1930, YMTT is the only surviving pre-war cinema theatre in the urban areas of Hong Kong. The theatre has found itself in the heart of the prosperous urban area in the well-developed West Kowloon. Stood on a spot of the new strip of land formed after the area’s 1904 reclamation, YMTT was part of the construction that shaped the new streetscape along the seashore.

B. Architectural and Aesthetic Significance

6. YMTT is a unique example of purpose-built cinema theatre in Hong Kong. Originally equipped with 980 seats, it was positioned as a cinema theatre serving the working class in the neighbourhood as reflected in its humble architectural design. The

theatre building possesses a simple form with architectural elements and ornamentations of mixed classical and Art Deco Style. The most glamorous feature on the exterior is the main façade displaying components of classic Greek order, which at the same time carry Art Deco influence expressed in the use of geometric shapes, clear lines, and simplified ornamentation.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7. In accordance with Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 6/2009, a Heritage Impact Assessment (“HIA”) has been carried out to examine the impact of the proposed YMTT Phase 2 on the heritage sites concerned with an objective to avoid or minimise the adverse impact of the proposed works, and to devise mitigation measures if adverse impact is unavoidable.

A. Conservation Principles to Conserve the Cultural Significance of the Former Yau Ma Tei Theatre

8. The HIA in respect of the conservation principles for devising and implementing necessary mitigation measures to conserve YMTT are as follows –

a) Building Fabric

- (i) The key character defining elements (“CDEs”) on the affected east façade should be preserved, repaired or reinstated with minimum interventions, including -
 - the pilasters spaced at regular intervals on east and west elevation; and
 - the cornice atop the pilasters on east and west elevation.
- (ii) All new works should be properly placed to minimise physical damage to the original structure and visual impact. New elements should be of compatible design and distinguishable from the existing building fabrics.

b) Documentation and Monitoring

- (i) Cartographic and photographic surveys to record the exterior of YMTT will be conducted before the works. A set of record drawings will be prepared and furnished to the Antiquities and Monuments Office after the works; and
- (ii) any renovation works during the conversion and in future operation should be properly documented for record and should follow the principles laid down in the HIA report.

B. Key Design Proposals

9. The key proposed works for development of the YMTT Phase 2 are as follows–

a) Project Scope

- (i) The new venue to support development of Cantonese opera and promote the valuable intangible cultural heritage; and enhance the augment of operation of YMTT through expansion of side stage, foyer and rehearsal facilities to overcome the constraints of the historic building. Artistic impressions and proposed floor plans are at **Figures 2 to 13**;
- (ii) YMTT Phase 2 includes a new high block and a new low block linked by a footbridge. The project comprises the following facilities:
 - a foyer extension;
 - a side stage extension;
 - rehearsal rooms and practice rooms;
 - open space / sky piazza;
 - auxiliary facilities including toilets, coffee corner, office, meeting cum VIP room, audio / video / lighting workshop, store rooms and electrical & mechanical room(s), etc.;
 - modification works at the foyer of YMTT; and
 - Food and Environmental Hygiene Department's public toilet facilities, with male, female, accessible and universal toilets.

b) Conversion Works to Comply with Operational Needs of the Users

- Provide spatial connections between the lobby of existing YMTT and the entrance foyer of YMTT Phase 2; and
- provide spatial connections between the main stage of existing YMTT and the side stage of YMTT Phase 2.

C. Mitigation Measures for the Conversion Works

10. For areas where possible impact of the conversion works could not be avoided, the following mitigation measures will be implemented based on the conservation principles stated above as well as the comment and advice of the AAB –

- a) structural study will be carried out to ensure that the structural integrity of YMTT will not be affected by the works;
- b) temporary structural supports and protection will be installed prior to the commencement of construction works to safeguard YMTT;

- c) close monitoring to the structural integrity of YMTT, Former Pumping Station and Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market will be implemented prior to the commencement of construction works in accordance with an agreed monitoring proposal;
- d) the condition of YMTT, Former Pumping Station and Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market will be inspected regularly during the course of construction, in particular during demolition and foundation works;
- e) the bulk of building mass of the new development should be away from the main façade of YMTT as much as possible;
- f) the height of the façade of the new building along Waterloo Road should be lower than the classic pediment of YMTT to minimise the visual intrusion;
- g) disturbance to the historical fabrics, for example granite masonry walls, of YMTT should be kept minimal as far as technically feasible;
- h) the façades of new development should be of compatible design and be distinguishable from YMTT; and
- i) an interpretative display should be incorporated in the new development to present the significance of the surrounding built heritage and historical environment.

CONCLUSION

11. The HIA has concluded that the proposed development of the YMTT Phase 2 is considered acceptable from the heritage conservation perspective on the YMTT, the Former Pumping Station and the Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market. Insignificant impact is anticipated during construction stage with the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures implemented. In addition, the works also create a better cultural ambience and enhance the overall setting of the area and enhance the operation of YMTT.

Architectural Services Department
September 2020

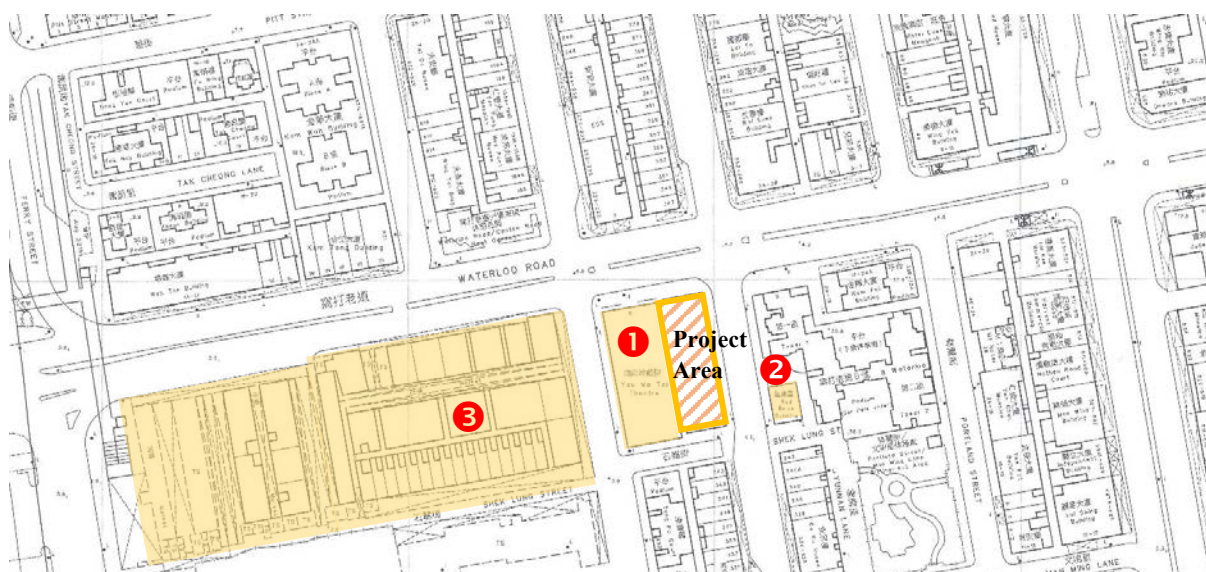


Figure 1. Location Plan

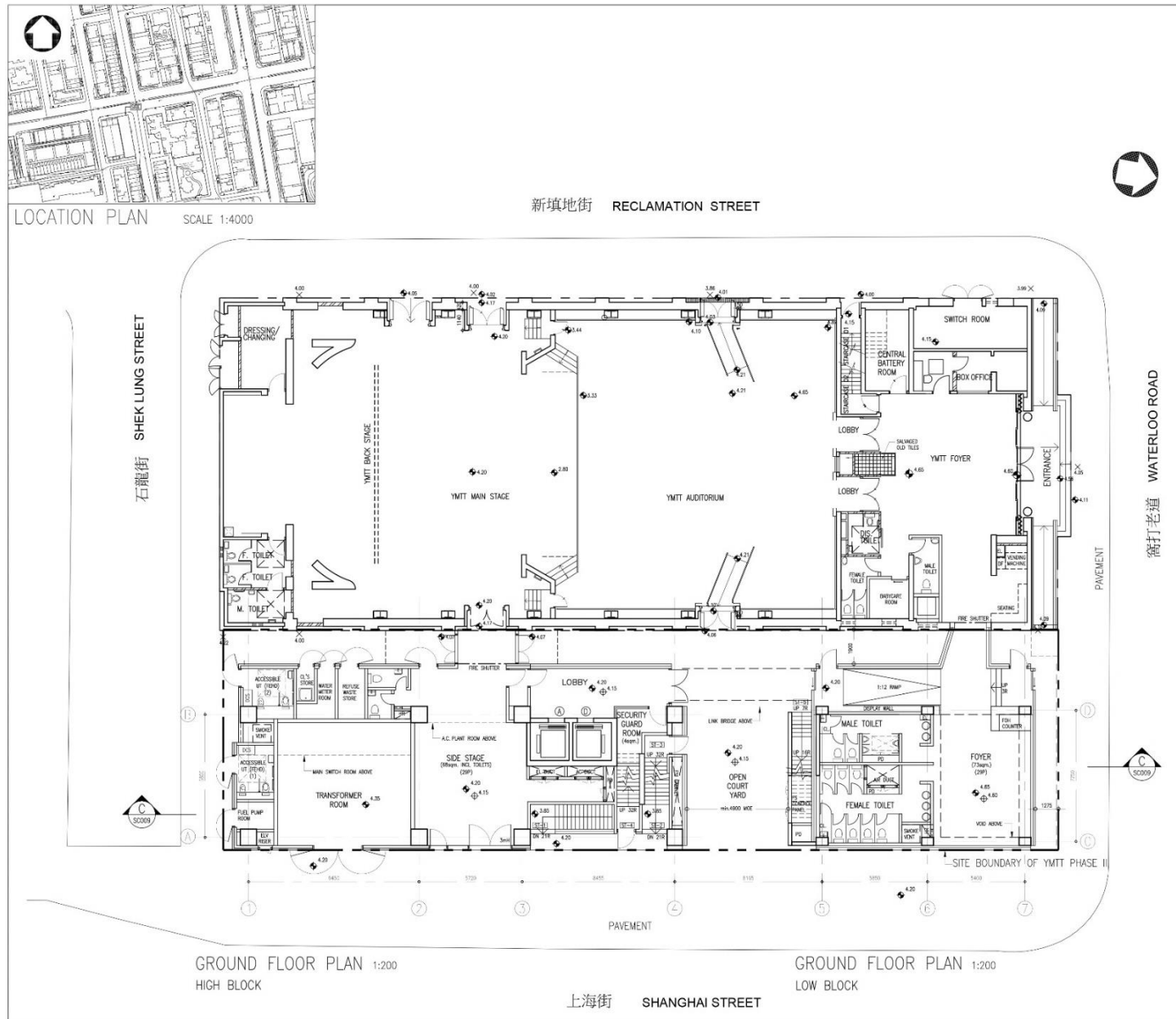
- (1) Yau Ma Tei Theatre
- (2) Former Pumping Station of Water Supplies Department
- (3) Yau Ma Tei Wholesale Fruit Market



Figure 2. Artistic impression, view from Waterloo Road



Figure 3. Artistic impression, view from Waterloo Road



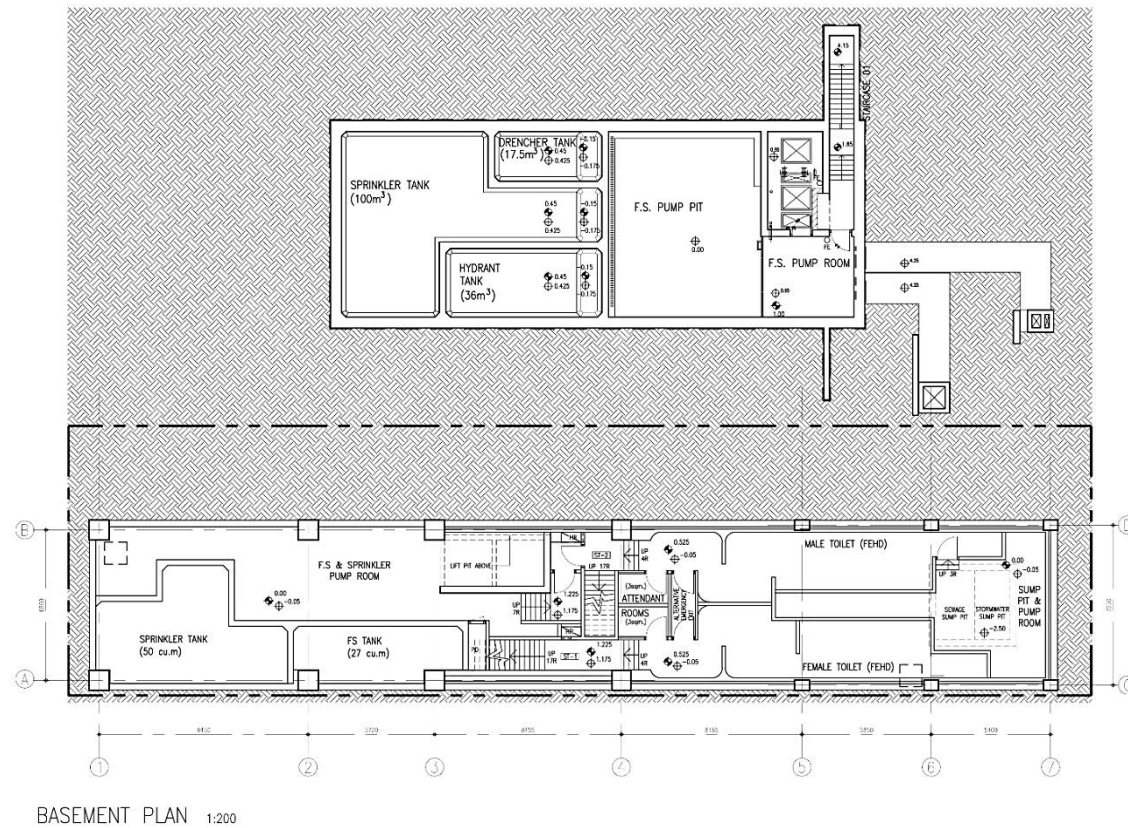
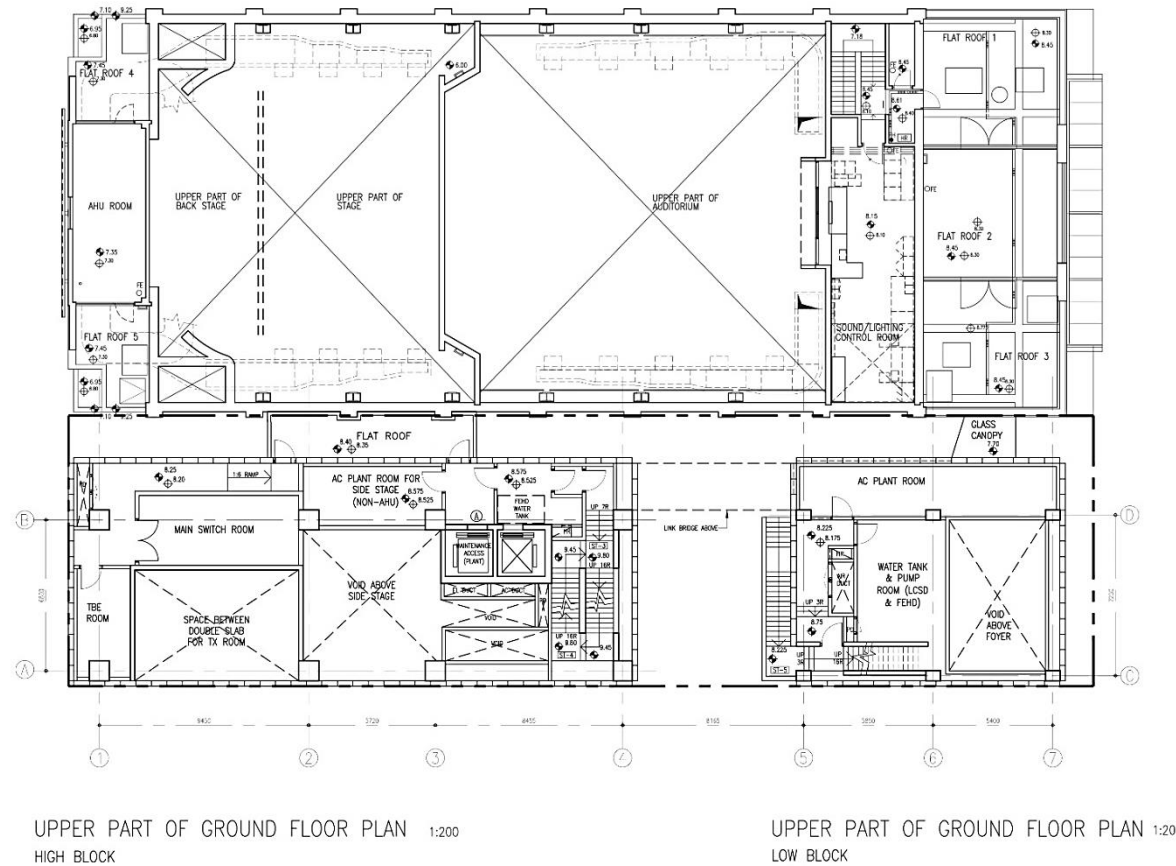
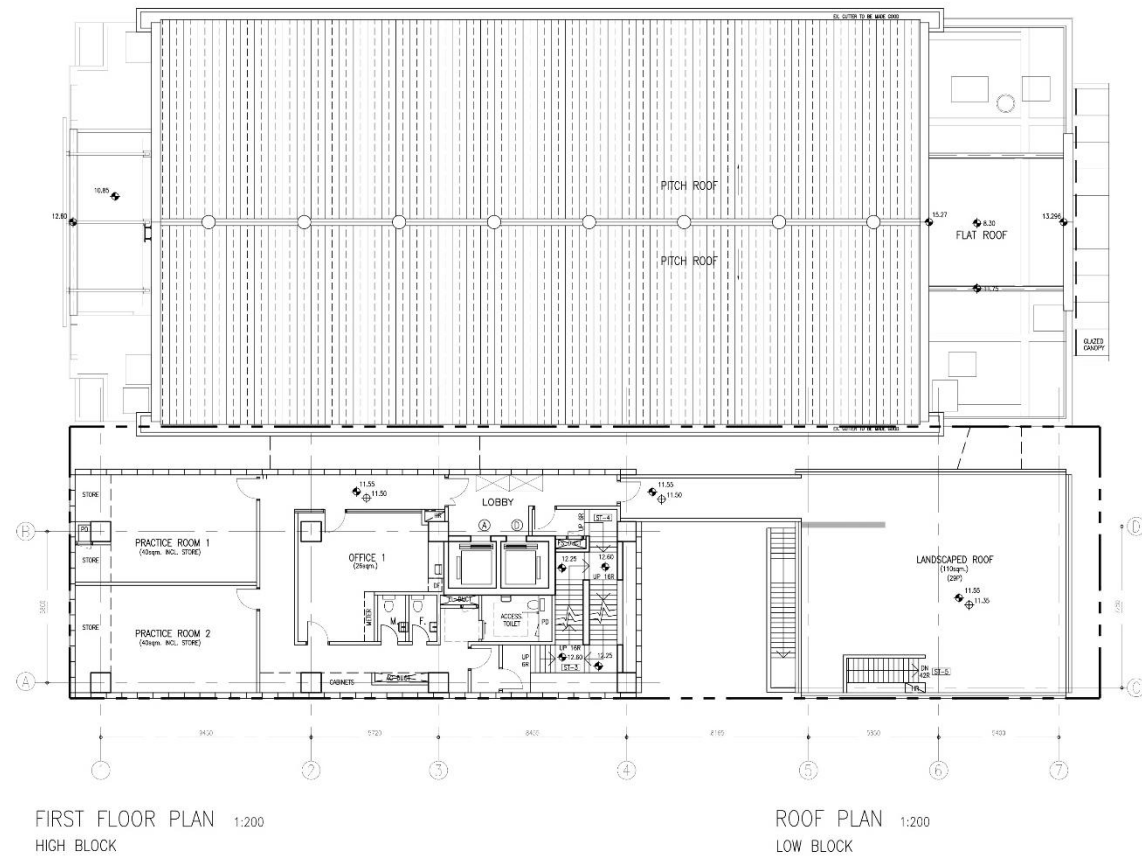
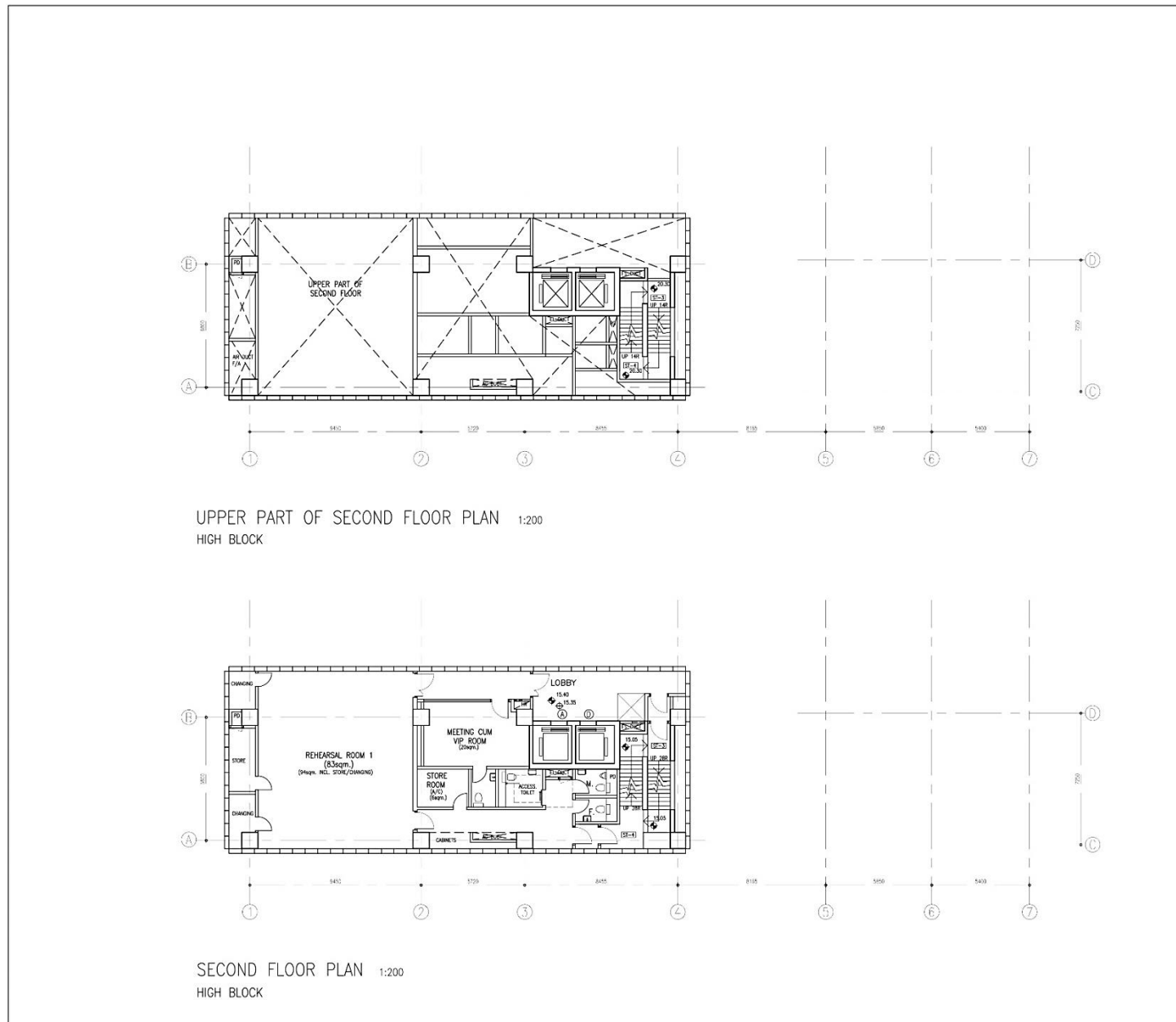
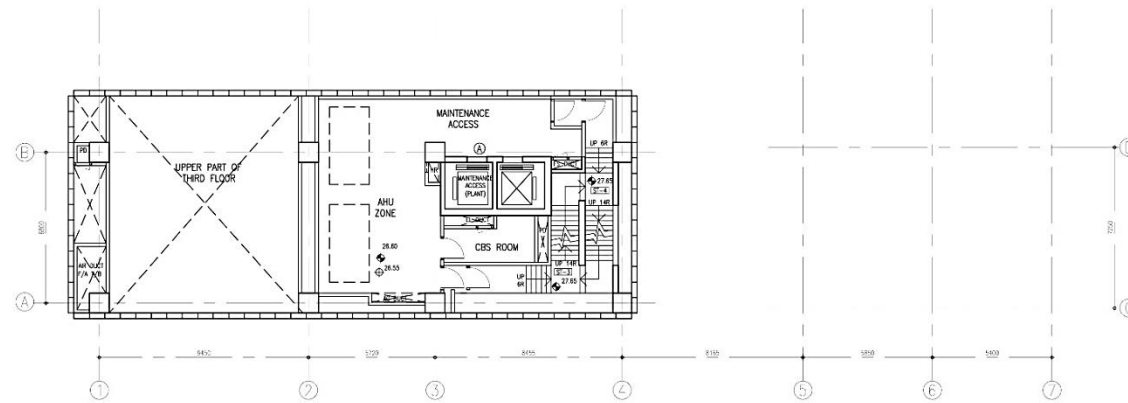


Figure 5. Proposed Basement Plan

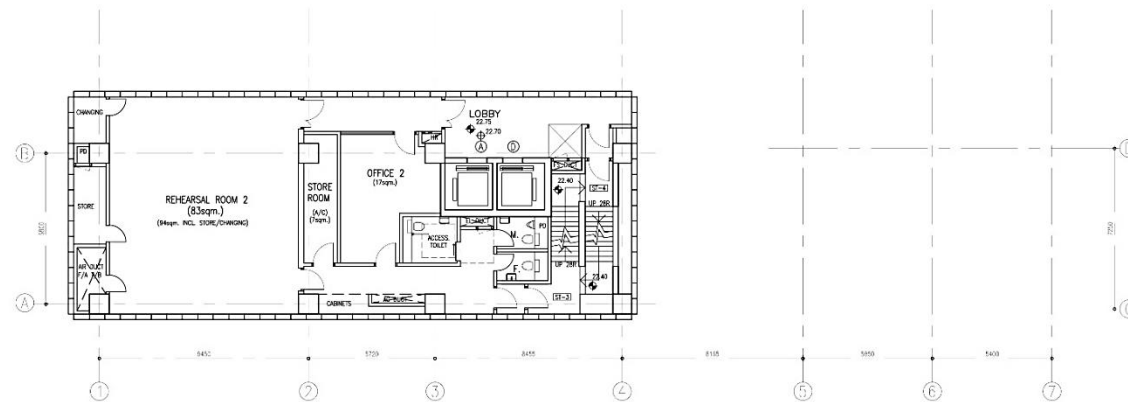
**Figure 6. Proposed Upper Part of Ground Floor Plan (High Block and Low Block)**

**Figure 7. Proposed First Floor Plan (High Block) and Roof Plan (Low Block)**

**Figure 8. Proposed Second Floor Plan and Upper Part of Second Floor Plan (High Block)**

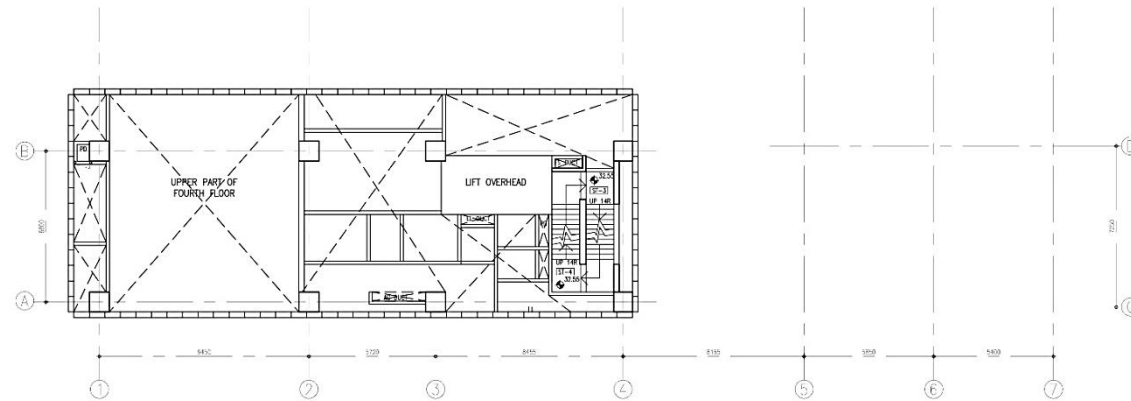


UPPER PART OF THIRD FLOOR PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK

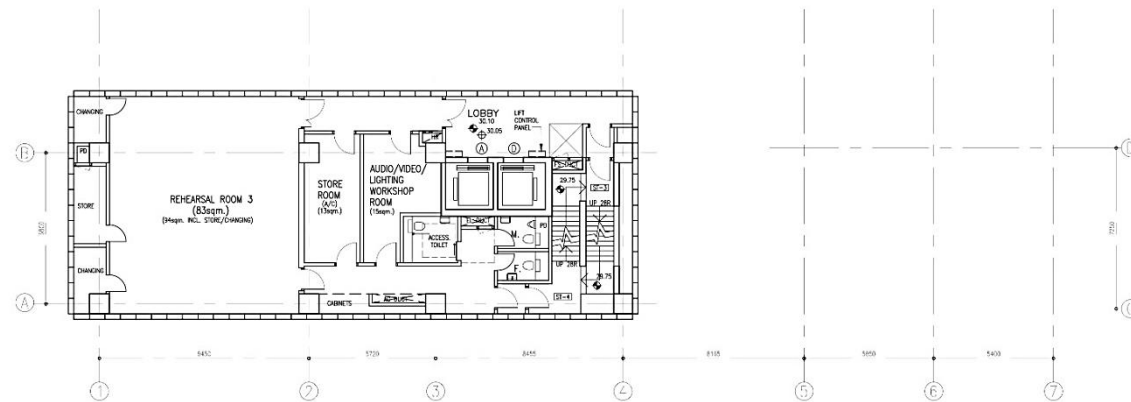


THIRD FLOOR PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK

Figure 9. Proposed Third Floor Plan and Upper Part of Third Floor Plan (High Block)

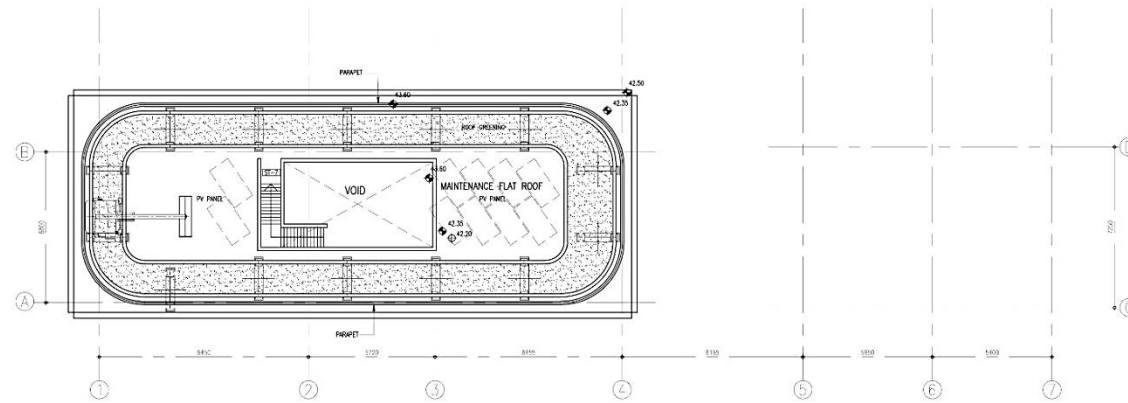


UPPER PART OF FOURTH FLOOR PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK

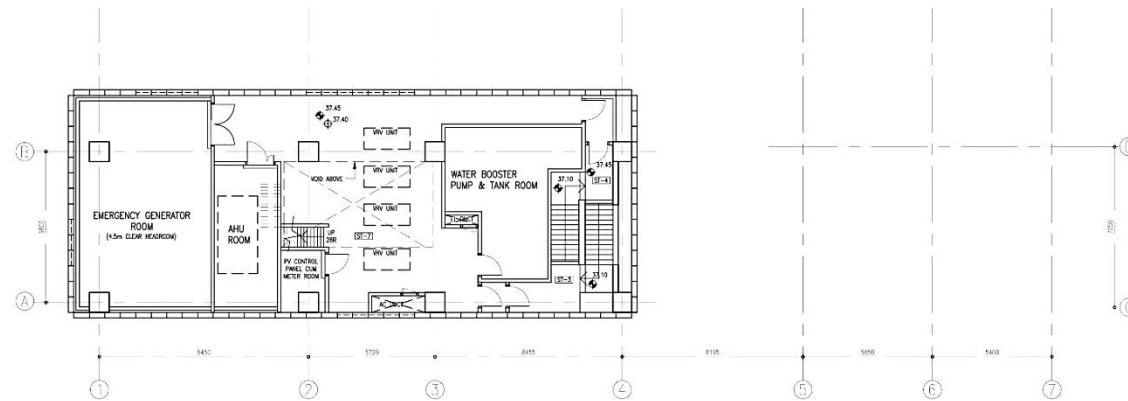


FOURTH FLOOR PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK

Figure 10. Proposed Fourth Floor Plan and Upper Part of Fourth Floor Plan (High Block)

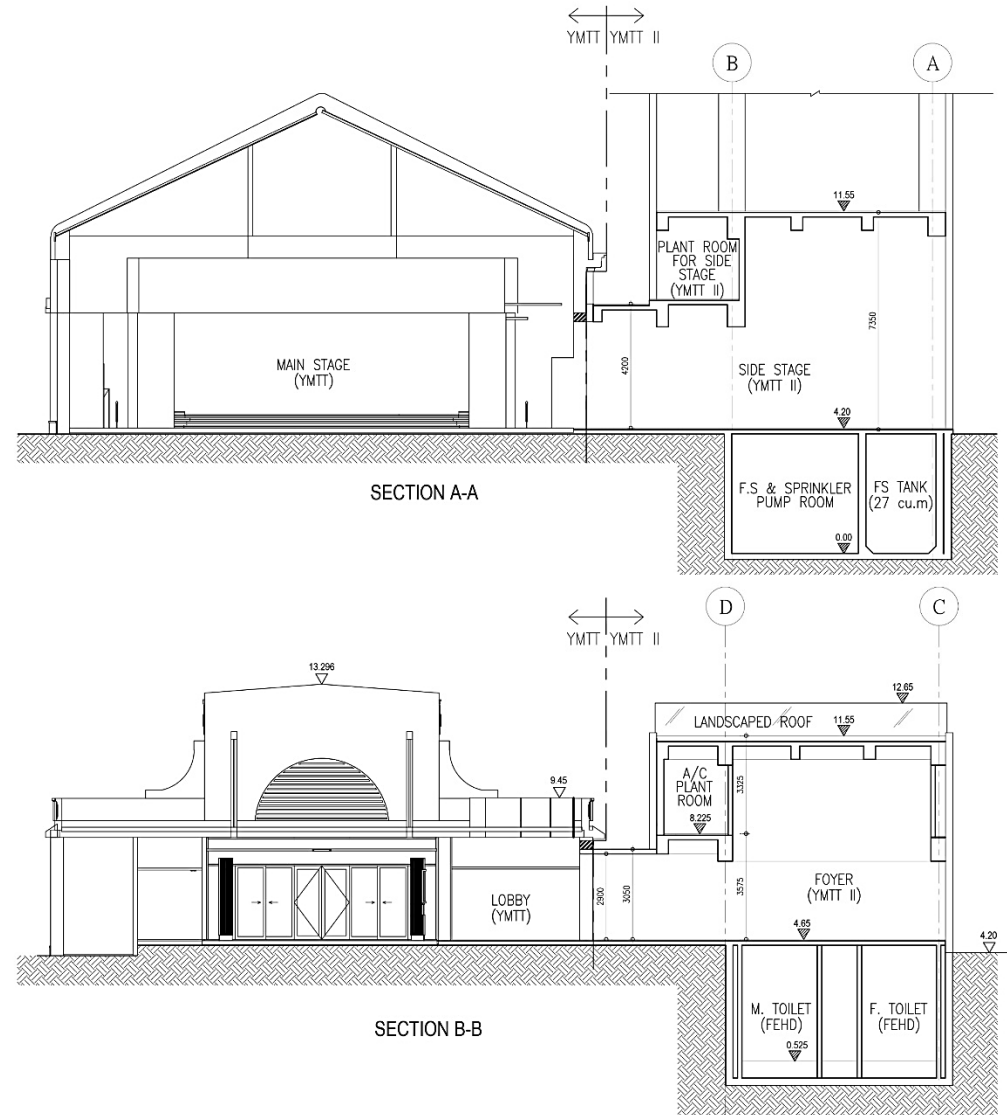


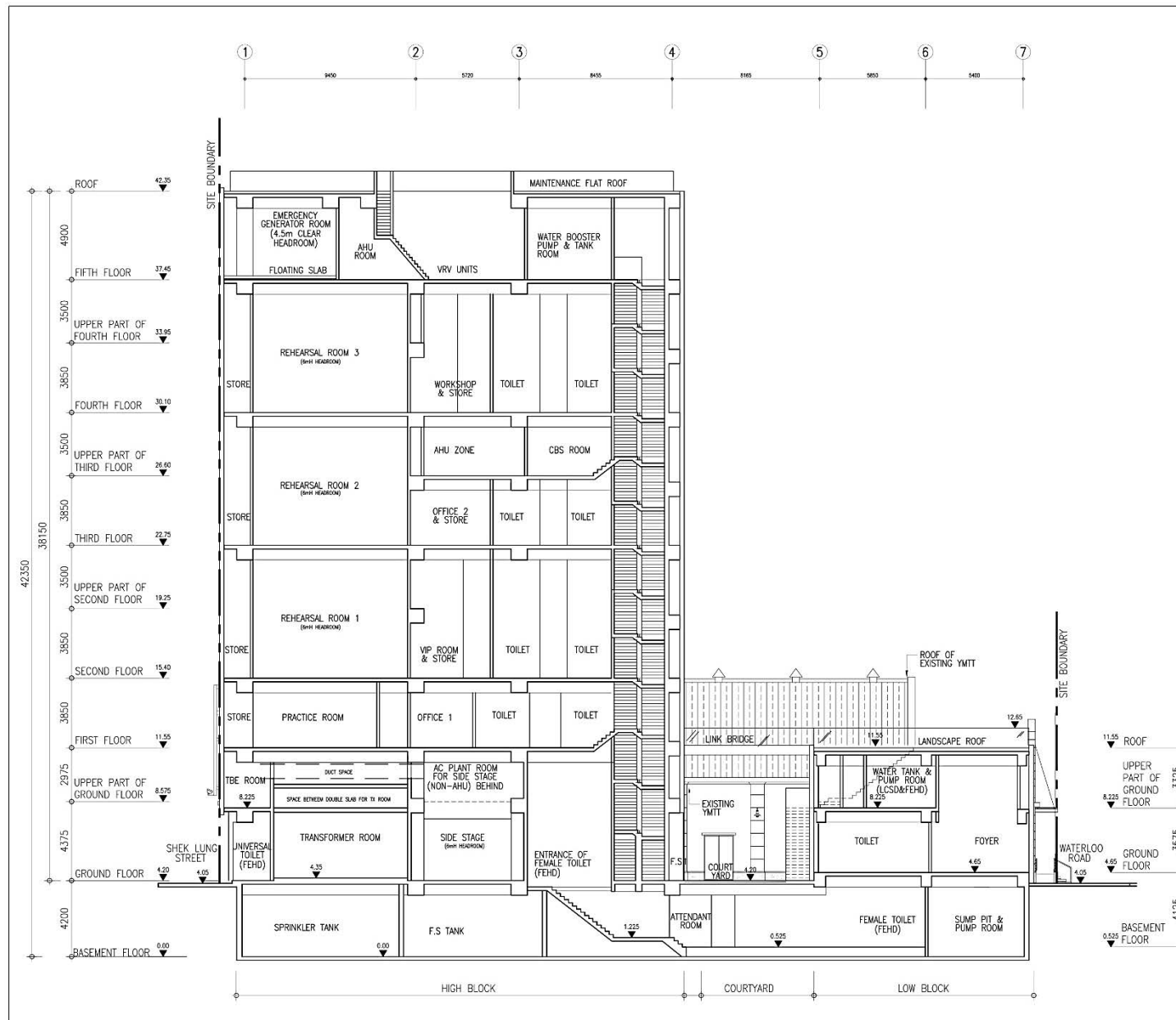
ROOF PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK



FIFTH FLOOR PLAN 1:200
HIGH BLOCK

Figure 11. Proposed Fifth Floor Plan and Roof Plan (High Block)

**Figure 12. Section A-A and Section B-B**

**Figure 13. Section C-C**