

Gas Works Park – Cracking Tower Work/Repairs

September 9, 2025

Introduction

As requested by Landmarks Board staff, below is a brief overview describing work by SPR on the fence surrounding the Cracking Towers at Gas Works Park and other actions to deter climbing of the towers. This is cursory and not intended to be a thorough history of the site. The timelines are approximate and based off memory.

Background

The fence around the Cracking Towers is considered an Institutional Control as part of the Consent Decree for the upland cleanup work and maintenance and improvement, if necessary, of the fence is required. Pursuant to the Consent Decree, Seattle Parks & Recreation (SPR) Staff inspect the soil cover and fence on a regular (approximately weekly) basis, needed repairs are typically handled through SPR's work order system, minor work that can be done by the grounds crew in the regular course of their activities at the park may not generate a work order. In addition, the Northeast District maintenance staff are at the park on a daily basis and also call-in work orders if they see issues with the fence or gates.

Timeline (approximate)

June 26, 2015 – Landmarks Preservation Board (LPB) – Architectural Review Committee (ARC) briefing to discuss removing some or all of the stairs and landings to deter climbing of the south towers. ARC suggested starting with more focused removals of obvious access points.

2016 - SPR hires PSM Consulting Engineers to undertake a Climbing and Safety Evaluation of Towers 1 & 2 (southerly large towers).

August 7, 2019 – LPB issues Certificate of Approval (CoA) to allow SPR to perform selective removal of climbable features and undertake limited alterations to Towers 1 & 2 to deter climbing.

2019-2023 – SPR Metal Shop Crew undertakes approved work on Towers 1 & 2. Ongoing repairs were also being made to the fence and gates intermittently, as it was cut or otherwise manipulated/vandalized, ostensibly to gain access into the restricted area.

2023 – SPR hired All City Fence to do a complete restoration of the chain-link fence, restore the barbed wire on top of the fence, add steel mesh panels over the chain-link and reconstruct the gates with the steel mesh to resist cutting and strengthen the gates.

2023 – SPR hired a landscape contractor to remove all vegetation and trees that were growing around and amongst the towers to make the area more open and remove potential access point(s) to the towers. Note that SPR crews have been and continue to remove blackberries and mow the lawn areas around the towers within the Cracking Tower fenced area. They generally avoid working directly under the towers due to safety concerns/potential falling metal.

2024 – A leaning support element within the Cracking Tower area, between the North and South Towers, was removed with a CoA from LPB issued on June 26, 2024

2023-2025 – SPR facilities continues to address access points; 3 of the 4 gates have been welded shut; area(s) under the gates have been paved to strengthen the gates and limit the possibility of digging under a gate.

Incidents

The following is a list of incidents at the Cracking Towers since 2008. This list is based on aid calls that Seattle Fire Department (SFD) responded to and has been provided by SFD:

Date and Time	Victim Details	Description	Outcome
10/11/2008	Male, age 22	Climbed fenced-off structure; catwalk gave way, fell onto another catwalk.	Non-life-threatening (possible dislocated shoulder)
0400 hours			
12/13/2009	Female	Fell off structure.	Life-threatening injuries; survived
0023 hours	(age 25)		
5/25/2012	Male, age 19	Fell off towers. Was visiting Seattle from Massachusetts.	Death
0010 hours			
3/29/2013	Male	Fell off structure; unconscious with liver and head injuries.	Life-threatening injuries; survived
0517 hours	(age 19)		
7/19/2014	Female, 19	Fell 35 feet while writing graffiti.	Multiple broken bones; survived
0322 hours			

Date and Time	Victim Details	Description	Outcome
1/25/2015	Male	Fell off structure.	Life-threatening head and internal injuries; survived
0033 hours	(age 21)		
2/1/2015	Male	Fell off structure but remained conscious.	Injuries; transported to HMC
2210 hours	(age 19)		
12/11/2016	Male	Fell off structure while intoxicated after he missed a hole in catwalk; rescued by SFD.	Open femur fracture, possible pelvic fracture, etc.; survived
2213 hours	(age 23)		
1/1/2019	Male	Climbed while intoxicated; fell.	Significant injuries; survived
2213 hours	(age 40)		
2/21/2022	Male	Fell off structure; rescued by SFD.	Broken leg, head laceration; survived
0117 hours	(age 26)		
9/17/2022	Female	Fell through an opening in the walkway while climbing with friends on the south towers. They had all been drinking.	Death
0242 hours	(age 20)		
	Only known female victim.		
11/23/2023	Male	Fell off refinery; unconscious, no pulse.	Survived with brain damage.
0030 hours	(age 16)		
3/29/2024	Male	Fell 60 feet; walking and talking.	Injuries; treated at HMC
2318 hours	(age 19)		
7/10/2025	Male	Fell off towers after a classical music concert in the park.	Death
2230 hours	(age 15)		

Gas Works Park Cracking Towers Tower Photographs

David Graves, Strategic Advisor | September 10, 2025



Seattle
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GAS WORKS PARK "CRACKING TOWERS": EMERGENCY SELECTIVE DECONSTRUCTION

1901 N NORTHLAKE WAY 98103



VICINITY MAP
GAS WORKS PARK - NOT TO SCALE

PROJECT TEAM

OWNER
SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATIONS
100 DEXTER AVE N, SEATTLE, WA,
98109
CONTACT: MIKE SCHWINDELLER
PHONE: 206.615.1165
EMAIL:
MIKE.SCHWINDELLER@SEATTLE.GOV

ARCHITECT
OSBORN ARCHITECTS INC., PS (OAI)
1001 SW KLINKITAT WAY, STE 204
SEATTLE, WA 98134
CONTACT: JERRY OSBORN
PHONE: 206.920.6348
EMAIL: JOSBORN@OAIPS.COM

HAZMAT CONSULTANT
CONTACT: RYAN HUNTER
PHONE: 484.269.2138
EMAIL: RYAN.HUNTER@PBSUSA.COM

SITE INFORMATION

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1901 N NORTHLAKE
WAY 98103
OWNER: SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION
ZONING: UI U/45
PARCEL NUMBER:124970-0005

SCOPE OF WORK

SELECTIVE REMOVAL OF PIPING, CATWALKS,
LADDERS AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS FROM
TOWER STRUCTURES LOCATED WITHIN GAS
WORKS PARK.
EMERGENCY SECURITY LIGHTING SYSTEMS.

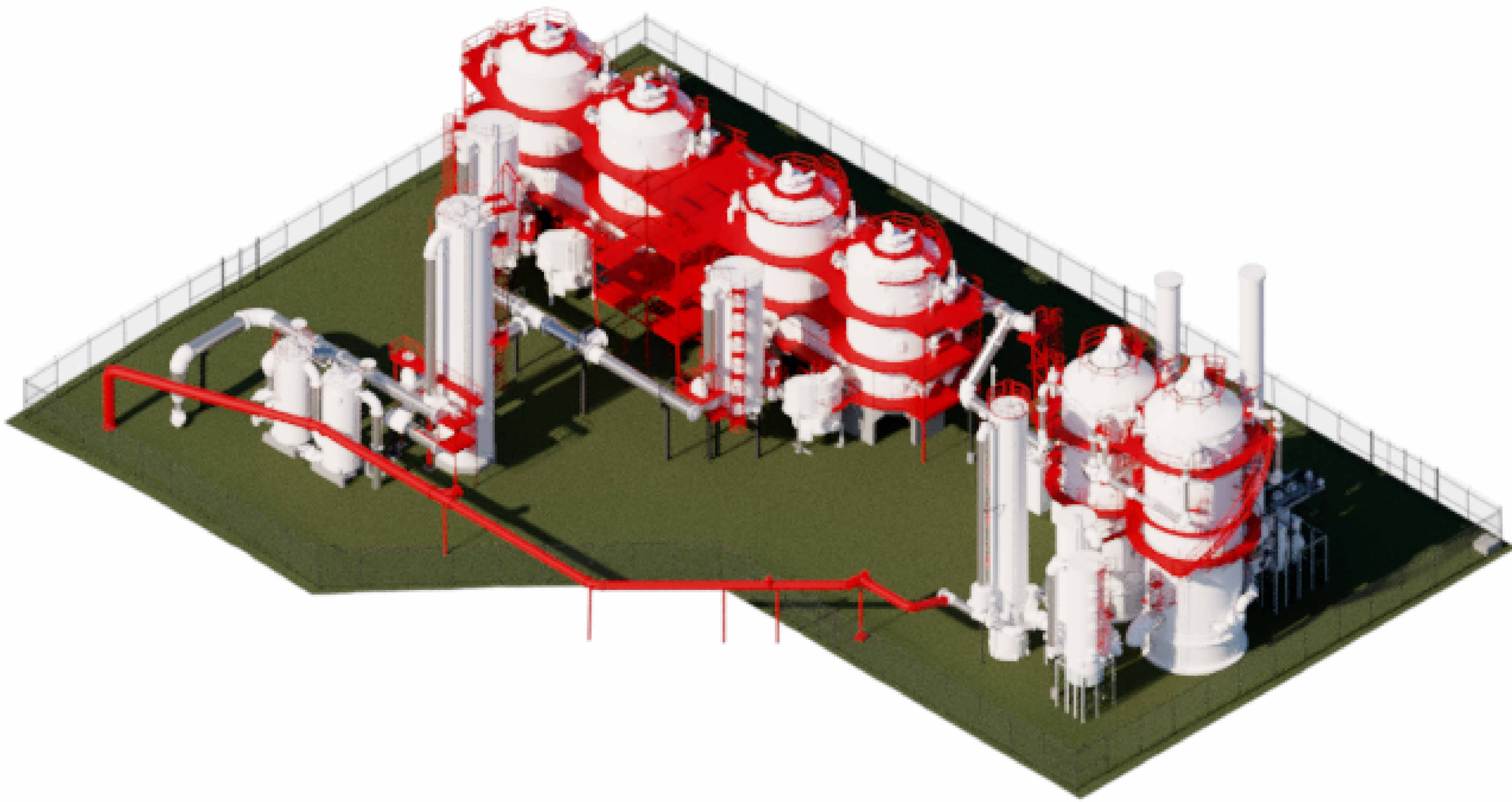
SHEET LIST

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|-------|---------------------------------------|
| G1.00 | COVER SHEET |
| D1.01 | DECONSTRUCTION PERSPECTIVE RENDERINGS |
| D1.02 | SELECTIVE DECONSTRUCTION PLAN |
| D1.03 | WEST DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION |
| D1.04 | NORTH DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION |
| D1.05 | SOUTH DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION |
| D1.06 | EAST DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION |

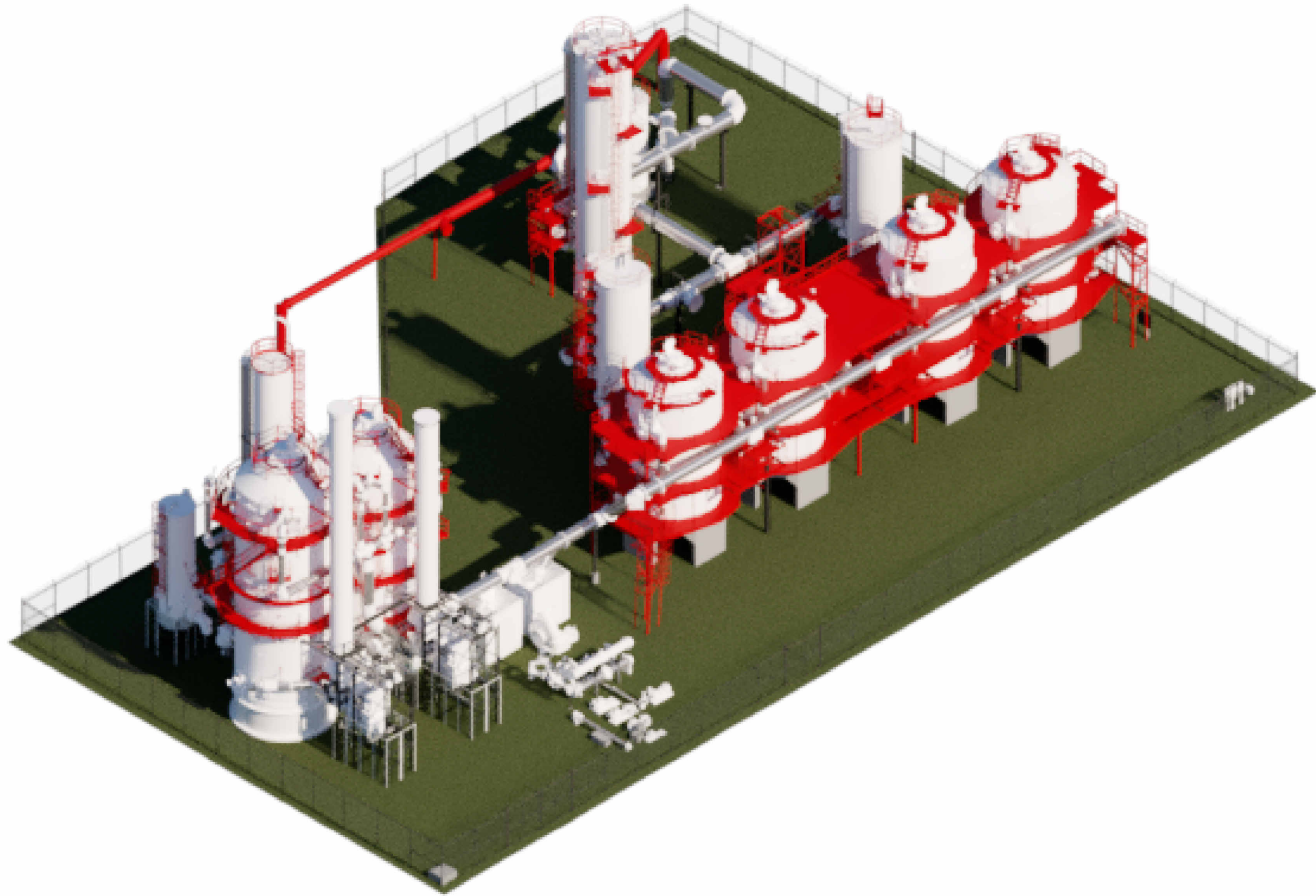
GENERAL NOTES

1. (E) PAINT COATINGS CONTAIN LEAD. REFER TO HAZMAT SURVEY FOR WORKER SAFETY AND DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS.
2. EXISTING SOILS ARE CONTAMINATED. NO SOIL DISTURBANCE IS ANTICIPATED.
3. (E) TANKS OR PIPING MAY CONTAIN REMNANTS OF HYDROCARBONS. CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR CUTTING EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED TO ENSURE WORKER SAFETY.

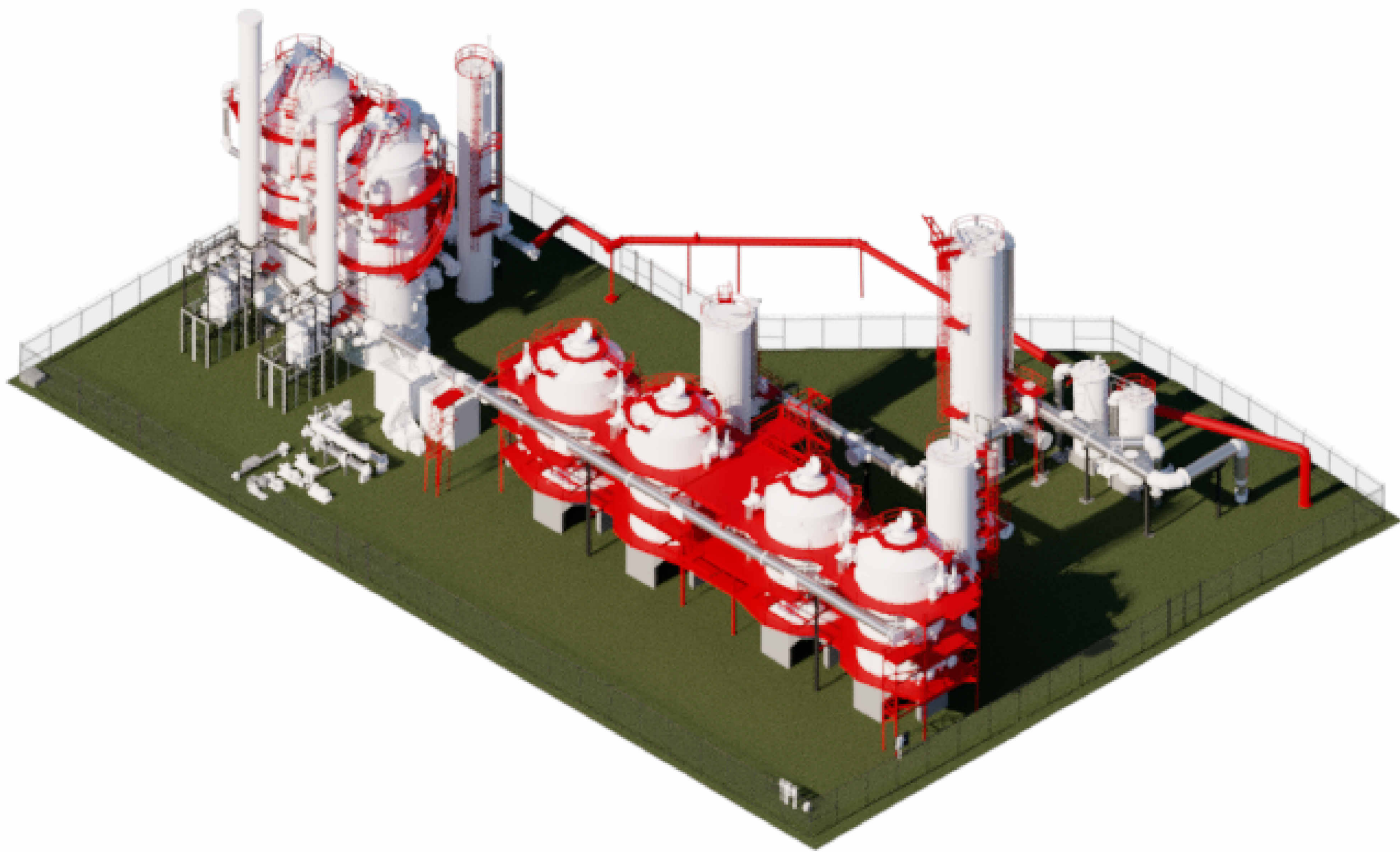
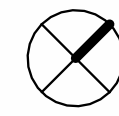
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Seattle, Washington	Date 20	
Signature:	Director, Purchasing & Contracting	
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NO.	REVISION - AS BUILT	DATE
REVIEWED: PARK ENGINEER DATE		
All work done in accordance with the City of Seattle Standard Plans and Specifications in effect on the date shown above, and supplemented by Special Provisions.		
<div>6273 REGISTERED ARCHITECT JERRY D. OSBORN STATE OF WASHINGTON</div>		
<div>OAI ARCHITECTURE + PLANNING</div> <div>1001 SW Klickitat Way, Ste #204 Seattle, WA 98134 p. (206) 631-8442 http://www.oaips.com</div>		
<div>Seattle Parks & Recreation</div>		
GAS WORKS PARK		
EMERGENCY DEMOLITION		
COVER SHEET		
DESIGNED Author	DATE	08/07/25
DRAWN Designer		
CHECKED Checker	SHEET OF	
ORDINANCE NO.		
CONTRACT NO.		
SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0" (U.N.O.)	G1.00	



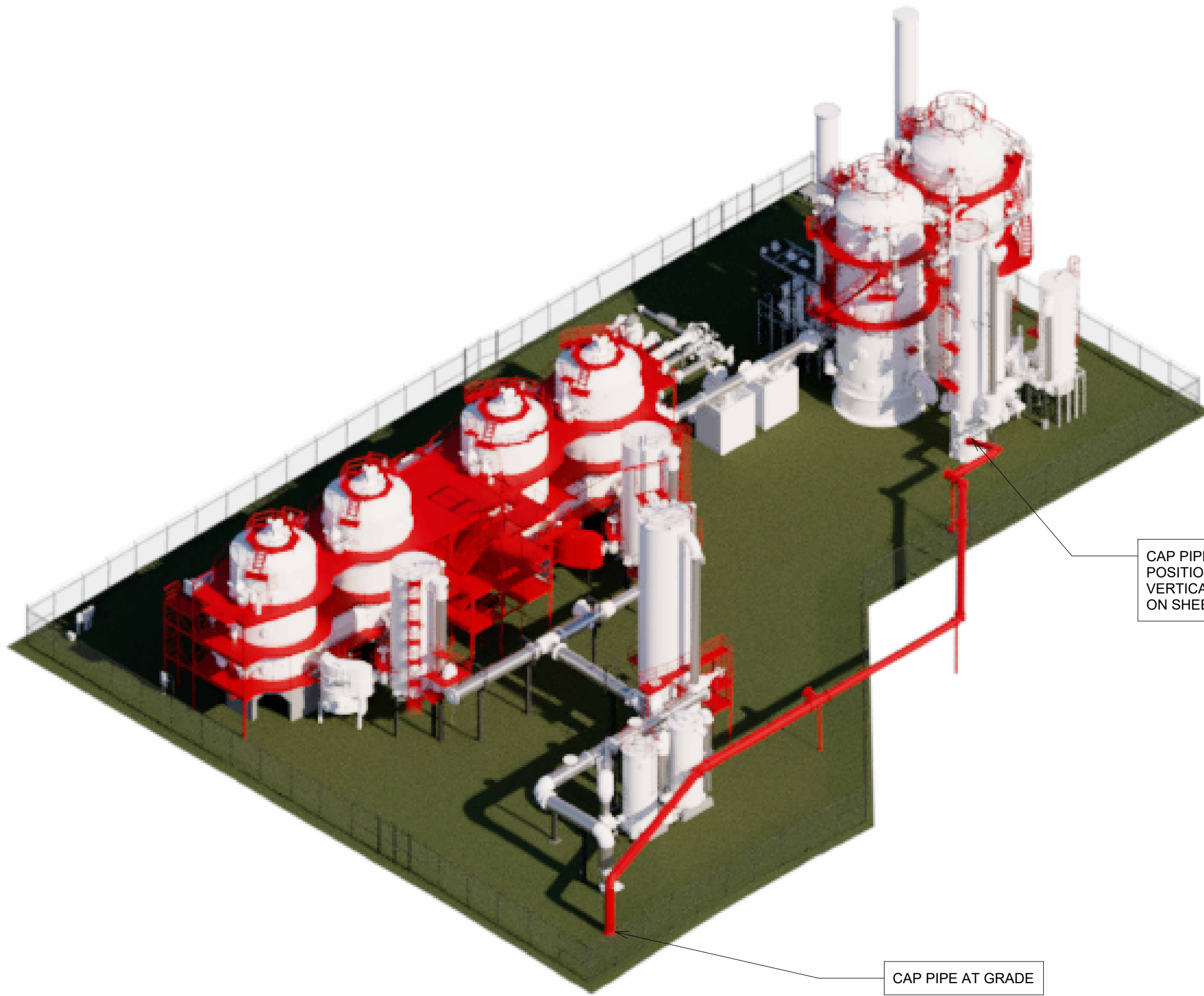
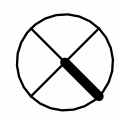
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NTS



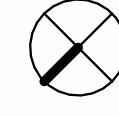
2 SE PERSPECTIVE
NTS



3 NE PERSPECTIVE
NTS



4 NW PERSPECTIVE
NTS



GENERAL NOTES

- ITEMS RENDERED IN RED ARE SELECTED FOR REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL (TYP.)
- CUT-OFF VERTICAL FRAMING AT GROUND LEVEL
 - SOIL DISTURBANCE IS EXCLUDED FROM THIS PROJECT.
- CAPPING OF UTILITY PIPING IS INCLUDED IN THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT.

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GAS WORKS PARK

EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

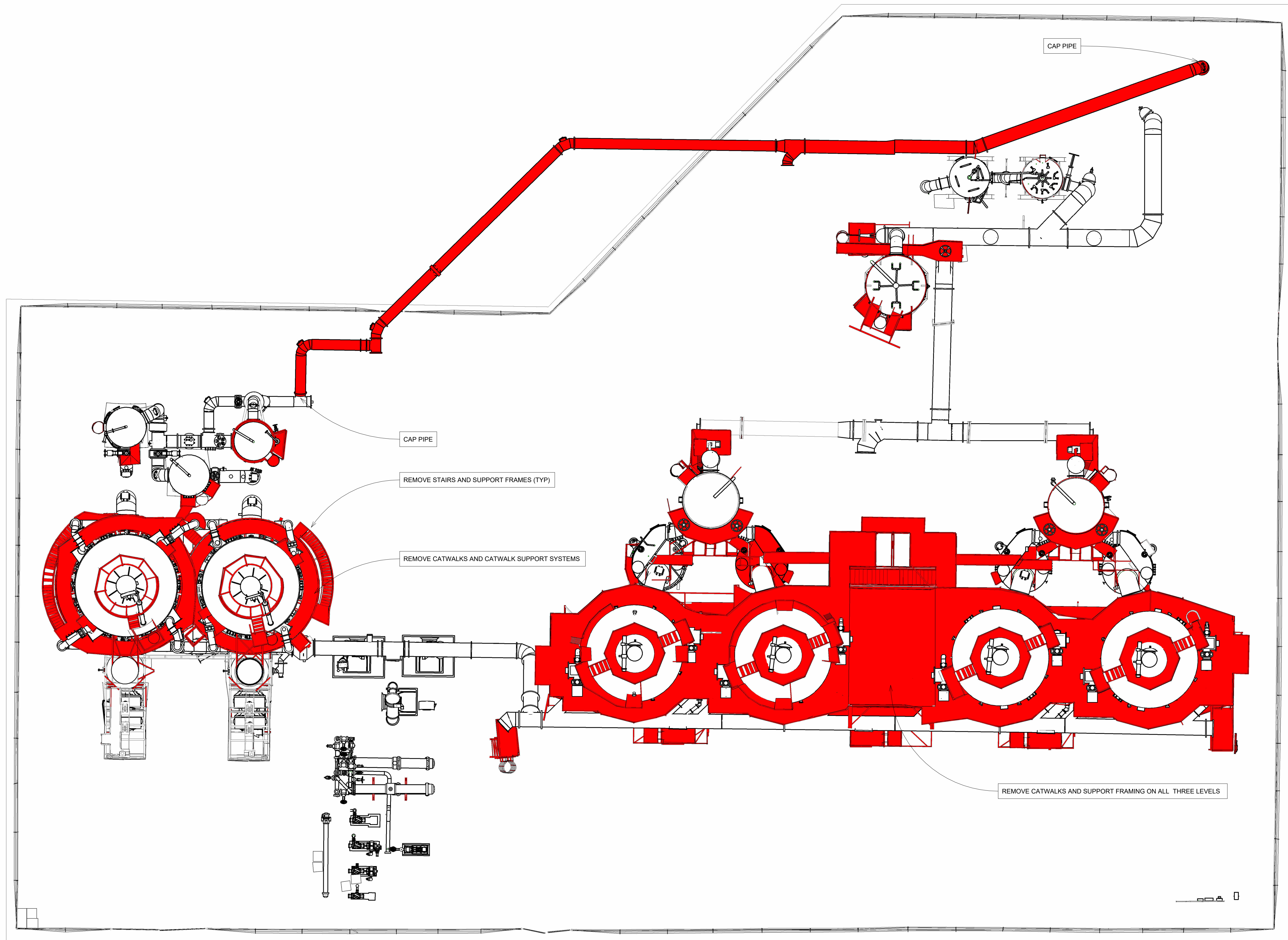
**DECONSTRUCTION
PERSPECTIVE RENDERINGS**

DESIGNED	Author	DATE	08/07/25
DRAWN	Designer		
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ORDINANCE NO.			
CONTRACT NO.			
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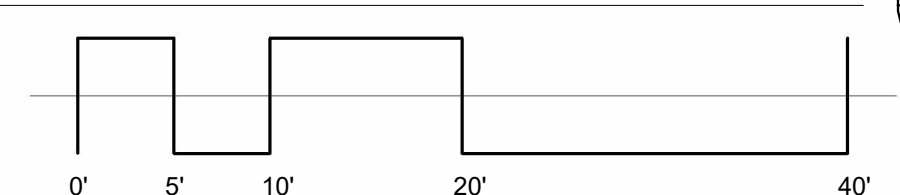
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1 SELECTIVE DECONSTRUCTION PLAN
AS NOTED



GENERAL NOTES:

1. DECONSTRUCTION SHOWN ON THIS PLAN DOES NOT REPRESENT THE COMPLETE SCOPE OF DECONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS.

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6273 REGISTERED ARCHITECT

Jerry D. Osborn

JERRY D. OSBORN
STATE OF WASHINGTON

OA ARCHITECTURE + PLANNING

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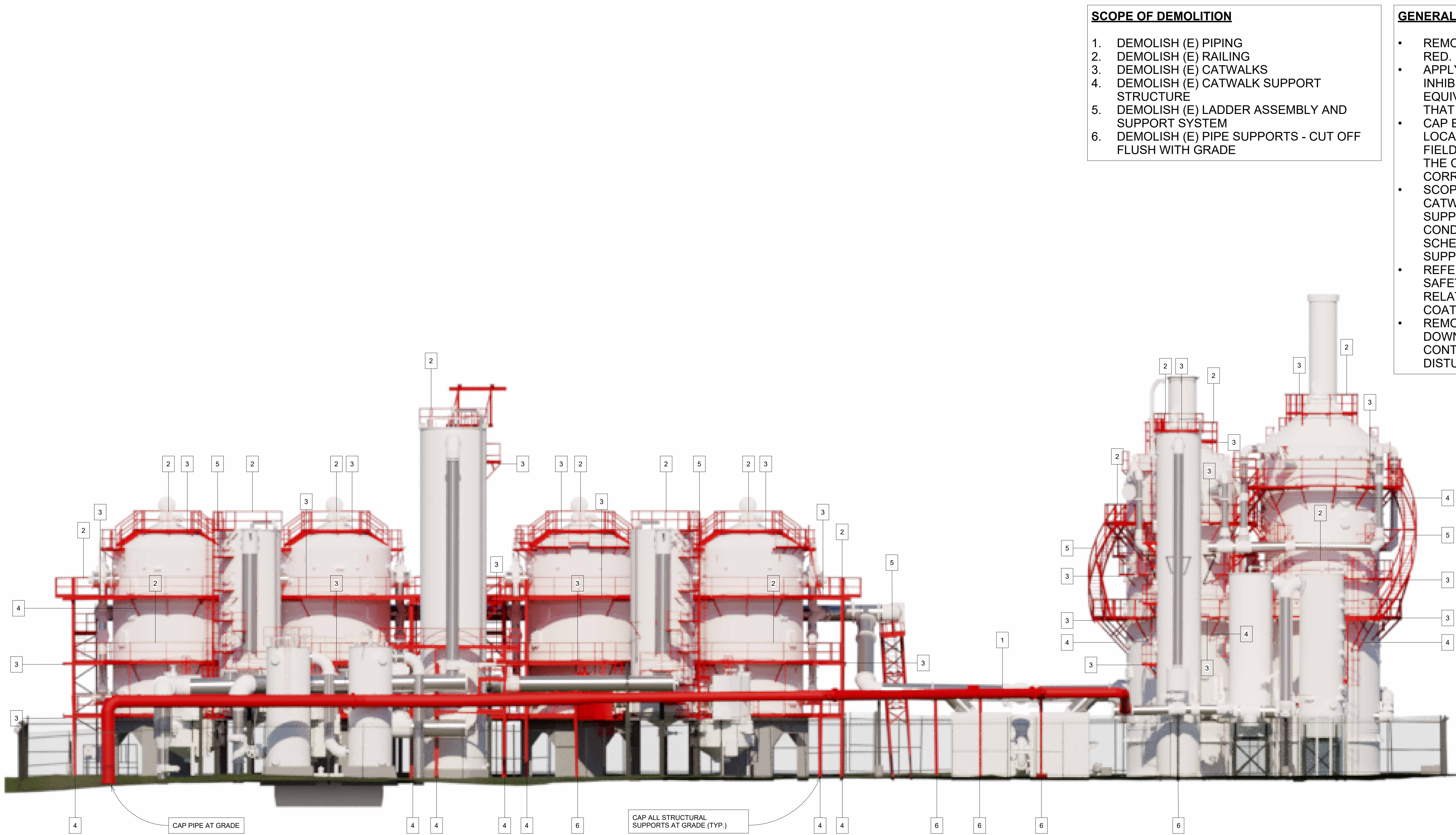
GAS WORKS PARK

EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

SELECTIVE DECONSTRUCTION PLAN

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ORDINANCE NO.			
CONTRACT NO.			
SCALE	AS NOTED (U.N.O.)		

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1 WEST DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION
AS NOTED

SCOPE OF DEMOLITION

1. DEMOLISH (E) PIPING
2. DEMOLISH (E) RAILING
3. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALKS
4. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALK SUPPORT STRUCTURE
5. DEMOLISH (E) LADDER ASSEMBLY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM
6. DEMOLISH (E) PIPE SUPPORTS - CUT OFF FLUSH WITH GRADE

GENERAL NOTES

- REMOVE ALL ELEMENTS INDICATED IN RED.
- APPLY "CORROSIONX HD" CORROSION-INHIBITING COATING (OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT) TO ALL EXPOSED STEEL THAT HAS BEEN CUT OR TORCHED.
- CAP EXISTING PIPE AT CUT/TORCH LOCATIONS USING A 1/2" STEEL PLATE, FIELD-WELDED TO THE PIPE END. PAINT THE CAP AND WELDS WITH THE SPECIFIED CORROSION-INHIBITING COATING.
- SCOPE INCLUDES REMOVAL OF CATWALKS, LADDERS, AND ASSOCIATED SUPPORT FRAMING. REVIEW IN-FIELD CONDITIONS WHERE PIPING SYSTEMS NOT SCHEDULED FOR REMOVAL MAY BE SUPPORTED BY CATWALK STRUCTURES.
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GAS WORKS PARK

EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

**WEST DECONSTRUCTION
ELEVATION**

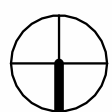
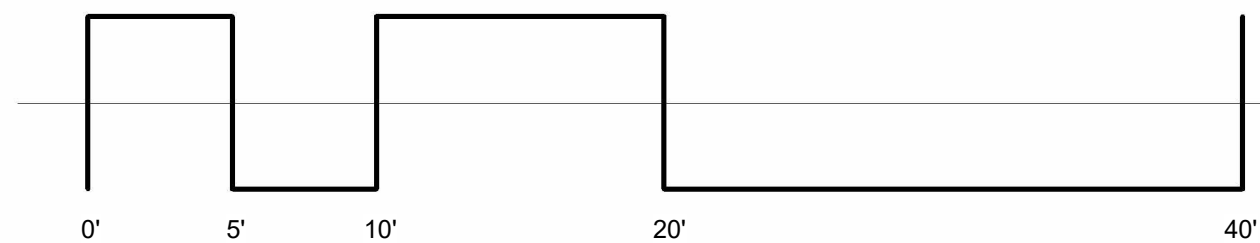
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1 NORTH DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION
AS NOTED



SCOPE OF DEMOLITION

1. DEMOLISH (E) PIPING
2. DEMOLISH (E) RAILING
3. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALKS
4. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALK SUPPORT STRUCTURE
5. DEMOLISH (E) LADDER ASSEMBLY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM
6. DEMOLISH (E) PIPE SUPPORTS - CUT OFF FLUSH WITH GRADE

GENERAL NOTES

- REMOVE ALL ELEMENTS INDICATED IN RED.
- APPLY "CORROSIONX HD" CORROSION-INHIBITING COATING (OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT) TO ALL EXPOSED STEEL THAT HAS BEEN CUT OR TORCHED.
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- REMOVE ALL STRUCTURAL SUPPORTS DOWN TO GRADE. NOTE: EXISTING SOILS CONTAIN HYDROCARBONS—DO NOT DISTURB NATIVE SOIL.

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EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

**NORTH DECONSTRUCTION
ELEVATION**

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2 SOUTH DECONSTRUCTION ELEVATION
AS NOTED

SCOPE OF DEMOLITION

1. DEMOLISH (E) PIPING
2. DEMOLISH (E) RAILING
3. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALKS
4. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALK SUPPORT STRUCTURE
5. DEMOLISH (E) LADDER ASSEMBLY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM
6. DEMOLISH (E) PIPE SUPPORTS - CUT OFF FLUSH WITH GRADE

GENERAL NOTES

- REMOVE ALL ELEMENTS INDICATED IN RED.
- APPLY "CORROSIONX HD" CORROSION-INHIBITING COATING (OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT) TO ALL EXPOSED STEEL THAT HAS BEEN CUT OR TORCHED.
- CAP EXISTING PIPE AT CUT/TORCH LOCATIONS USING A 1/2" STEEL PLATE, FIELD-WELDED TO THE PIPE END. PAINT THE CAP AND WELDS WITH THE SPECIFIED CORROSION-INHIBITING COATING.
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Date

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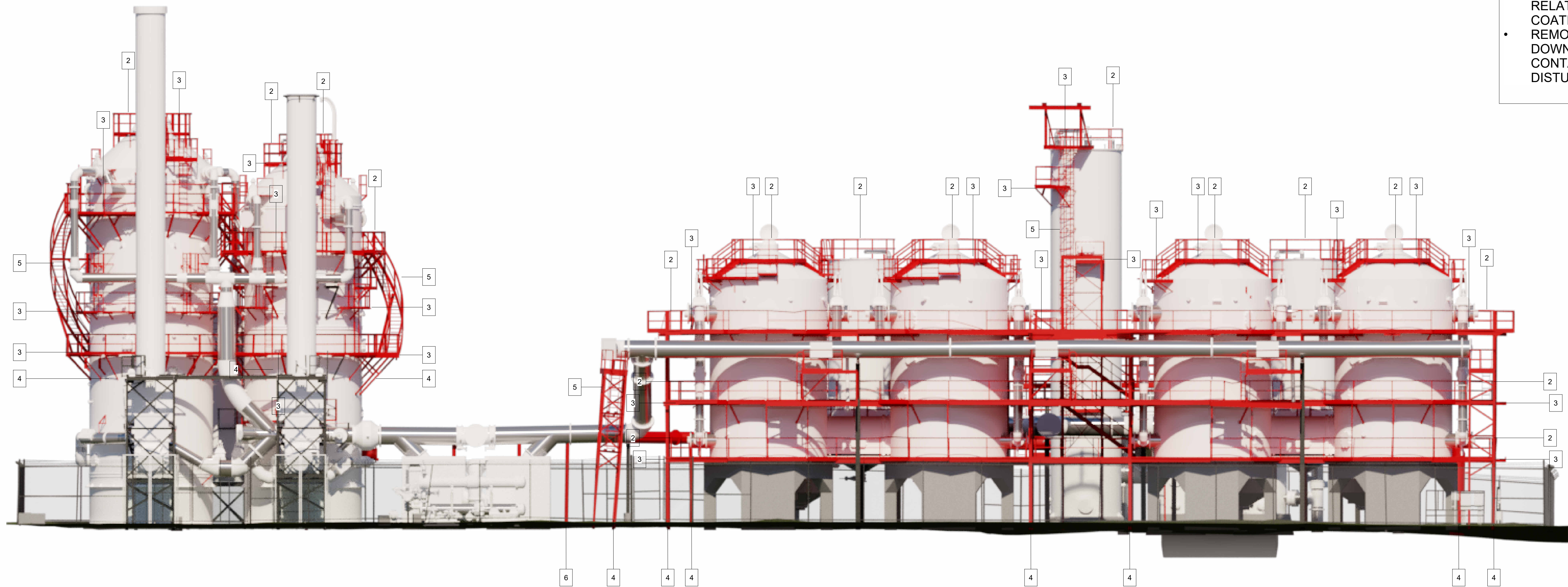
GAS WORKS PARK

EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

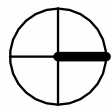
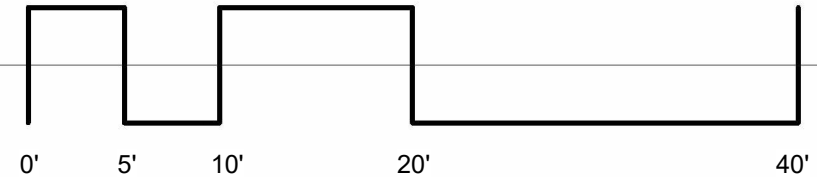
SOUTH DECONSTRUCTION
ELEVATION

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CHECKED	Checker		
ORDINANCE NO.			
CONTRACT NO.			
SCALE	AS NOTED (U.N.O.)		

D1.05



② EAST ELEVATION
AS NOTED



SCOPE OF DEMOLITION

1. DEMOLISH (E) PIPING
2. DEMOLISH (E) RAILING
3. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALKS
4. DEMOLISH (E) CATWALK SUPPORT STRUCTURE
5. DEMOLISH (E) LADDER ASSEMBLY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM
6. DEMOLISH (E) PIPE SUPPORTS - CUT OFF FLUSH WITH GRADE

GENERAL NOTES

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Seattle, Washington _____ 20_____
Date

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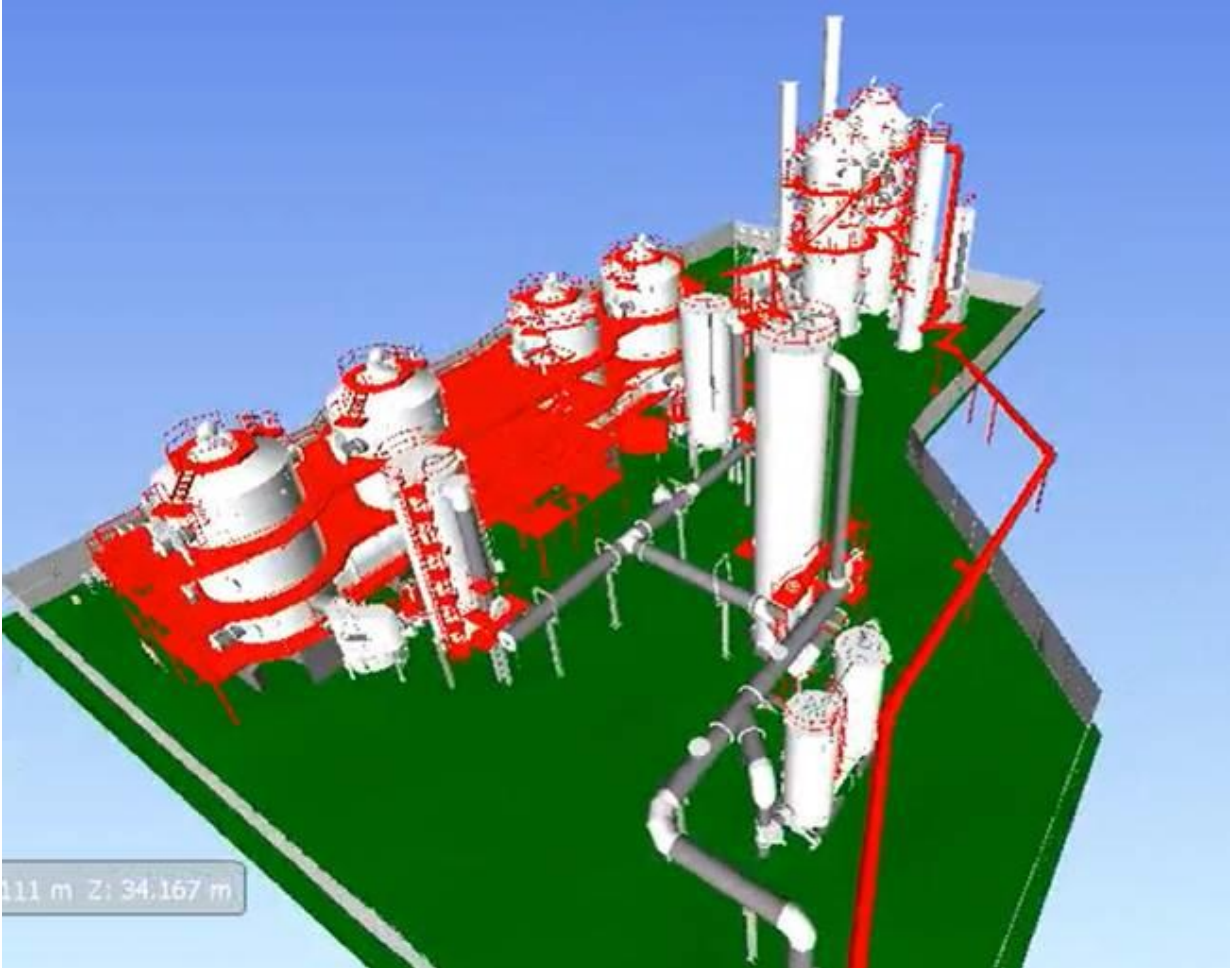


GAS WORKS PARK

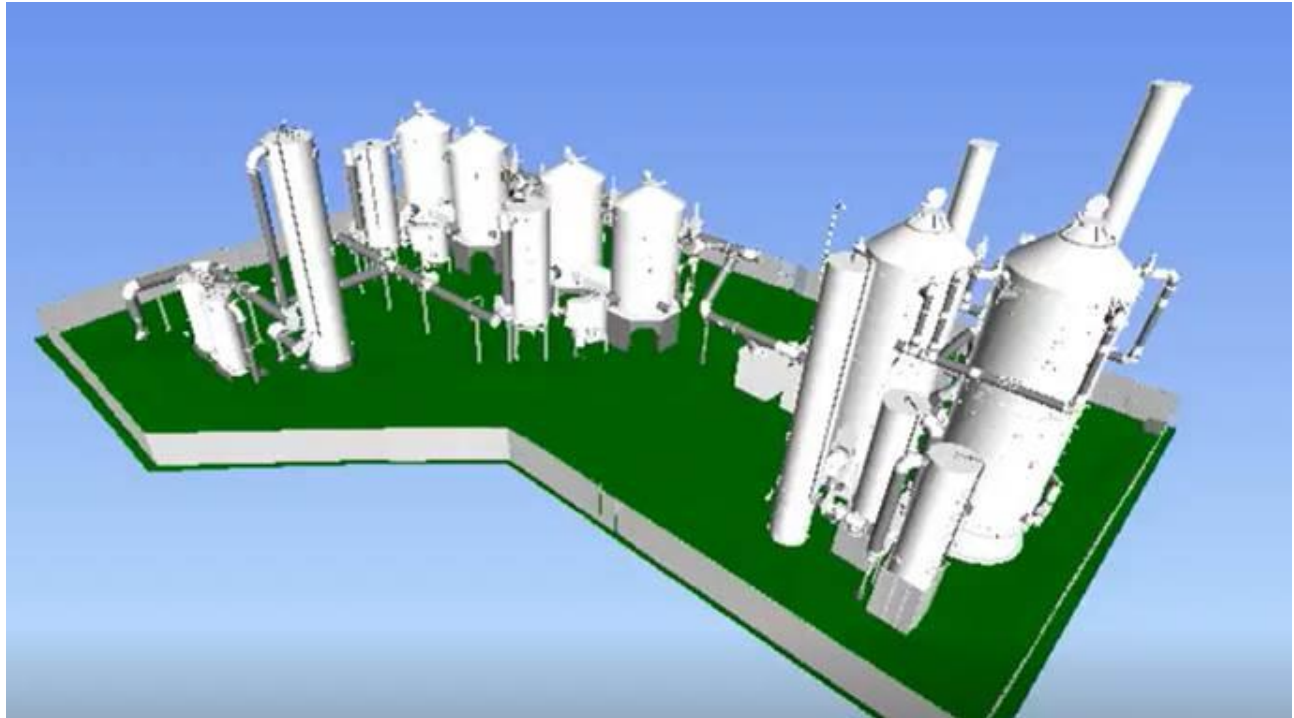
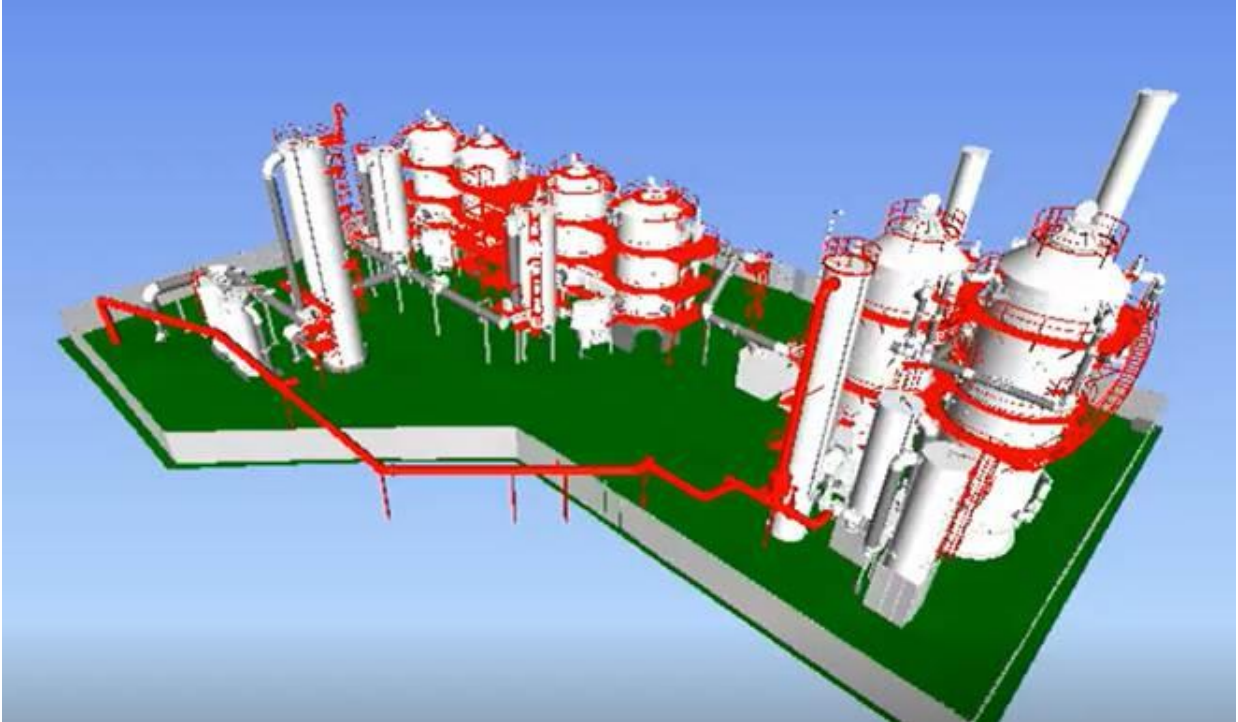
EMERGENCY DEMOLITION

**EAST DECONSTRUCTION
ELEVATION**

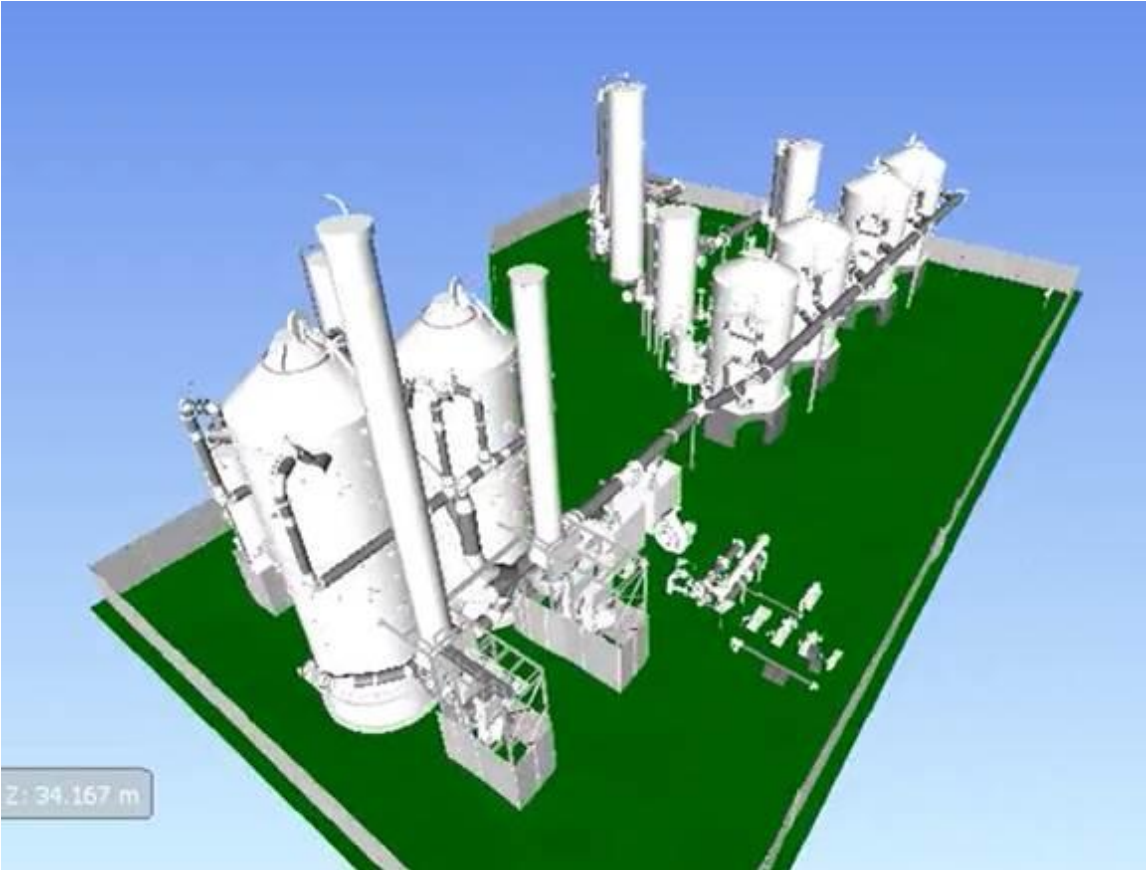
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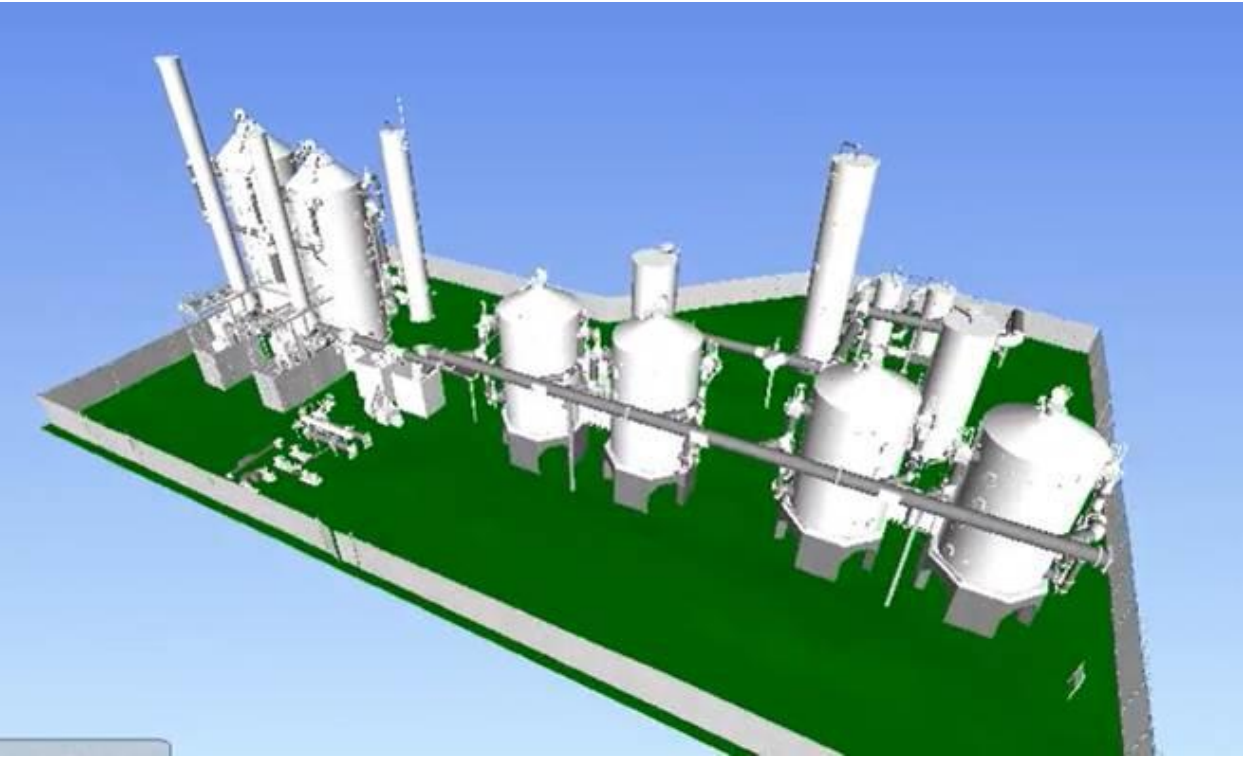
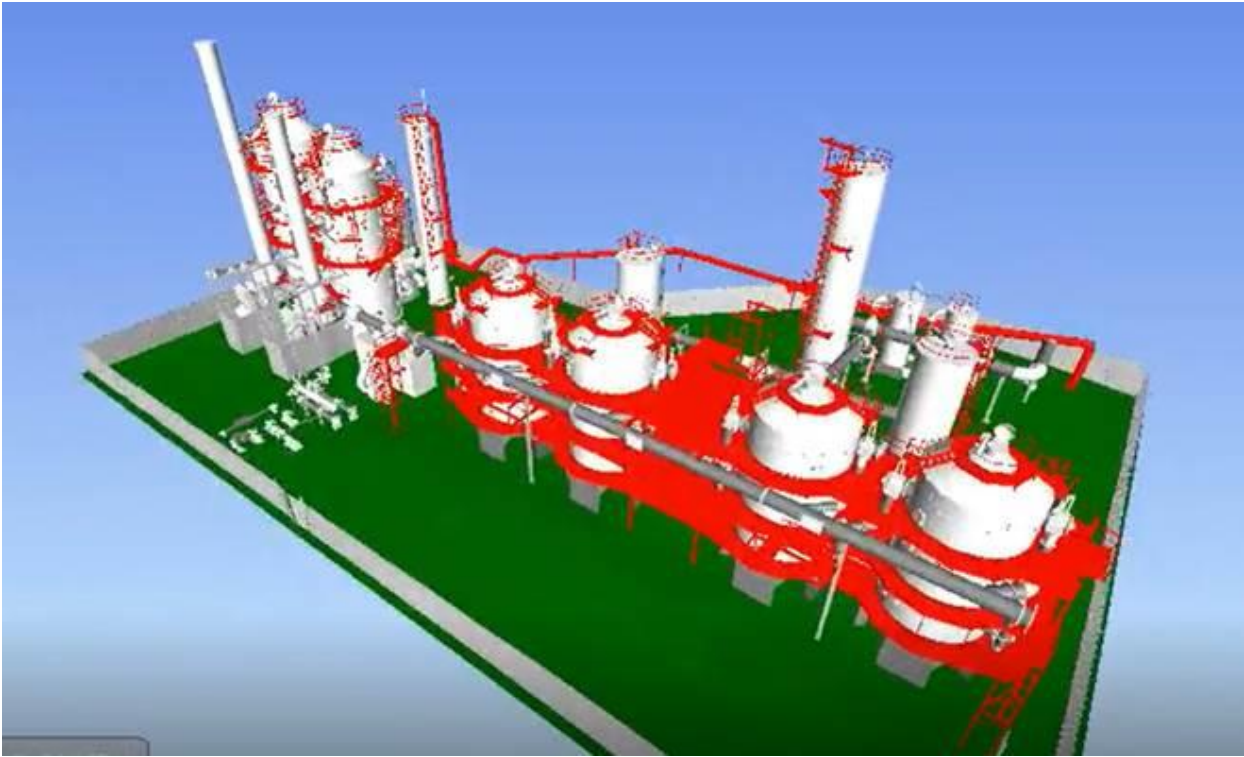
Looking Southeast (before and after)



Looking Northeast (before and after)



Looking Northwest (before and after)



Looking Southwest (before and after)