

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey
of Astley's Paints, The Former
Calcott Brothers Factory,
Far Gosford Street, Coventry
(SP 755 604)**

Gerwyn Richards

For: UNITE

<p>Checked by Project Manager</p> <p>Signed:Date:</p> <p>Name:</p>
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An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of Astley's Paints, The Former Calcott Brothers Factory, Far Gosford Street, Coventry (SP 755 604).

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by UNITE Integrated Solutions plc to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of the former Calcott Brothers Car factory on Far Gosford Street, Coventry. The factory has been described as the best example of a cycle turned car factory in Coventry, something which the survey has attempted to confirm and also provides a permanent record of the buildings in their complete form prior to partial demolition and redevelopment of the site.

There are two distinct elements to the site, with the formal offices fronting Far Gosford Street being retained and restored as well as the original 1896 cycle sheds, whilst the rear workshops and showroom are being demolished.

The standing building survey confirmed that the building complex has remained largely unaltered throughout the twentieth century.

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning Background

1.1.1 University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by UNITE Integrated Solutions Plc to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of Astley's Paints, the former Calcott Brothers factory, Far Gosford Street, Coventry, Warwickshire (SP 755 604). Outline planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the rearmost range of buildings and the construction of 6 student accommodation blocks and the conversion of the buildings fronting onto Far Gosford Street (Planning Application Ref 42919/E).

1.1.2 An archaeological desk-based assessment (ULAS Report 2003/114) identified the factory as being of architectural interest and probably the best-preserved cycle-turned-car factory in Coventry.

1.1.3 A history of the Astley's Site, Far Gosford Street, Coventry was prepared by Dr. Nathaniel Alcock (2006) on behalf of ULAS, which details the known historical development of the site. Details regarding the industrial development of the site were also given.

1.1.4 The Development Control Archaeologist for Coventry City Council recommended that a standing building survey be undertaken prior to demolition being carried out as a condition on the outline planning application. This report presents the results of that survey.

1.1.5 An assessment of the character of the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area, in which the proposed development lies, has been previously prepared by Mark Singlehurst, Conservation Officer with Coventry City Council. The document

contains many references to the Astley's building, although it looks at the area in a much wider context, and some of the information reproduced within this report.

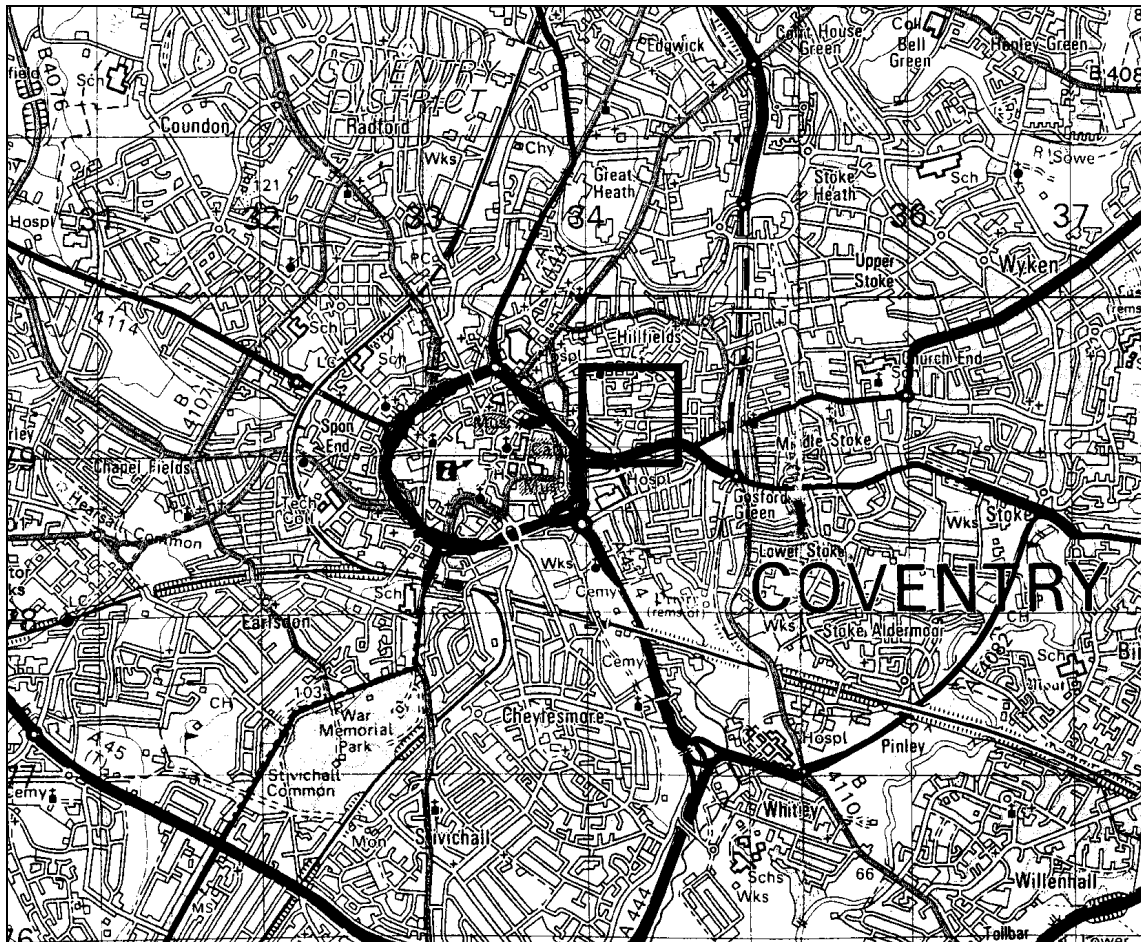


Figure 1: Location of proposed development area. Scale 1:50000

Reproduced from the Landranger OS map 140 Leicester, Coventry and Rugby area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002187.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 The photographic survey was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards and Claire Strachan of ULAS between December 9th 2005 and December 22nd 2005. Photographs were in 35mm monochrome negative and colour positive (slide) formats. Digital images were provided by Stephen George & Partners who undertook site visits on July 27th 2005 and August 15th 2005.

1.2.2 The objective of the standing building survey as defined by Coventry City Council was as follows:

- To seek to understand the history and development of a building or site.
- To compile a lasting record of the building ahead of demolition or alteration.
- To disseminate the results of the recording and analysis

1.2.3 The historic building recording and interpretation at the Astley's site has the following objectives:

- To use documentary research and the findings of the recording to interpret the use of space within the building, the functions of the building, changes to buildings, how buildings on the site relate to one another and how the workforce operated within the buildings.
- All periods of the factory's use are to be considered; Calcott Bros, Singer and the use by Astley's since 1939.

1.2.4 All work follows the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures*. The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification* (3rd edition, 1996) has been used as a basis for defining levels of recording.

1.2.5 Main sources consulted:

- Coventry City Archives (CCA)
- Coventry City Council Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Coventry Transport Museum (CTM)
- Astley's Archives
- Conservation and Archaeology Department, Development Projects, Coventry City Council (specifically Christopher Patrick and Mark Singlehurst)
- Stephen George and Partners (SGP – modern plans / development proposals)
- University of Leicester Library

2 Chronology of the Industrial Ownership and Development of the Site

2.1 *A summary of the development of the car manufacturing industry in Coventry*

2.1.1 Mechanical industry development in Coventry probably first came to light in the latter part of the 17th century with the first recorded watchmakers working in the city. By the first half of the 19th century it had perhaps become the main centre of watch and clock manufacture within England. The industry began to decline in the latter part of the 19th century with the influx of cheaper imports from Switzerland and America.

2.1.2 Adaptation to the change in fortunes of the watch making industry led to a diversification by manufacturers into the production of sewing machines, for example the Coventry Sewing Machine Company which was founded in 1863. The sewing machine industry suffered increasing competition from foreign producers, which prevented the industry from prospering, and manufacturers again looked to diversify.

2.1.3 The first 'safety bicycle' (with two equal sized wheels and a chain drive to the rear wheel) was invented in 1888 by John Kemp Starley in Coventry. The bicycle was called 'The Rover' and produced by 'Swift Cycles' (the company formerly called the Coventry Sewing Machine Company / Coventry Machinists). With the production of the pneumatic tyre for bicycles by John Boyd Dunlop the 1890s became a boom

time for bicycle production within Coventry, and it developed the largest bicycle industry in the world. A number of other former sewing machine manufacturers began to produce bicycles including The Singer Company and Hillman & Herbert Cycle Company.

2.1.4 By the turn of the century the demand for bicycles declined, and companies responded by changing over to the manufacture of motor cycles and motor cars. Coventry was the location of the first company to produce commercial motor cars. Although direct links cannot be made to the watch and clock industry, even a quick delve into the history of sewing machine production can unearth direct links with later car manufacturers: Singer, Rover, Hillman.

2.2 *Industrial development of the Far Gosford Street site*

2.2.1 Industrial development of the Far Gosford Street site begins in the latter part of the nineteenth century when it was occupied by Calcott Bros and was known as the XL Works. Initially the site was used to manufacture bicycles, and in 1886 the firm was known as Calcott Bros & West; Enoch West left the company soon afterwards founding firstly the Progress works on Foleshill Road (1899-1903) and then West-Aster (1904-1913) also on Foleshill Road. Calcott Bros became a limited company in the mid 1890s and began motorcycle manufacture in 1905, and with the financial assistance of William Herbert in 1913.

2.2.3 Without a doubt, being late comers to motorcar manufacture Calcott benefited from the innovations of other companies and the growing demand for light vehicles and by 1914, less than a year after beginning production Calcott were described as *'doing very well indeed'* and employed between 120 and 150 staff (Plate 2). The factory was extended in 1916 with the construction of the front workshop (Building 1c – see below; Plates 3 and 4). T. D. Griffiths, a well-known architect of the period, associated with a number of motoring buildings, designed the factory. The main stay of Calcott production was the Ten (Plate 5), a refined vehicle which more than held its own with its contemporaries and remained in production until the company ceased trading in 1927. Later 2 and 2.5 litre models were introduced in 1925, but neither proved as popular as the Ten.



Plate 1: 1913 Letterhead Showing Idealised View of Factory.

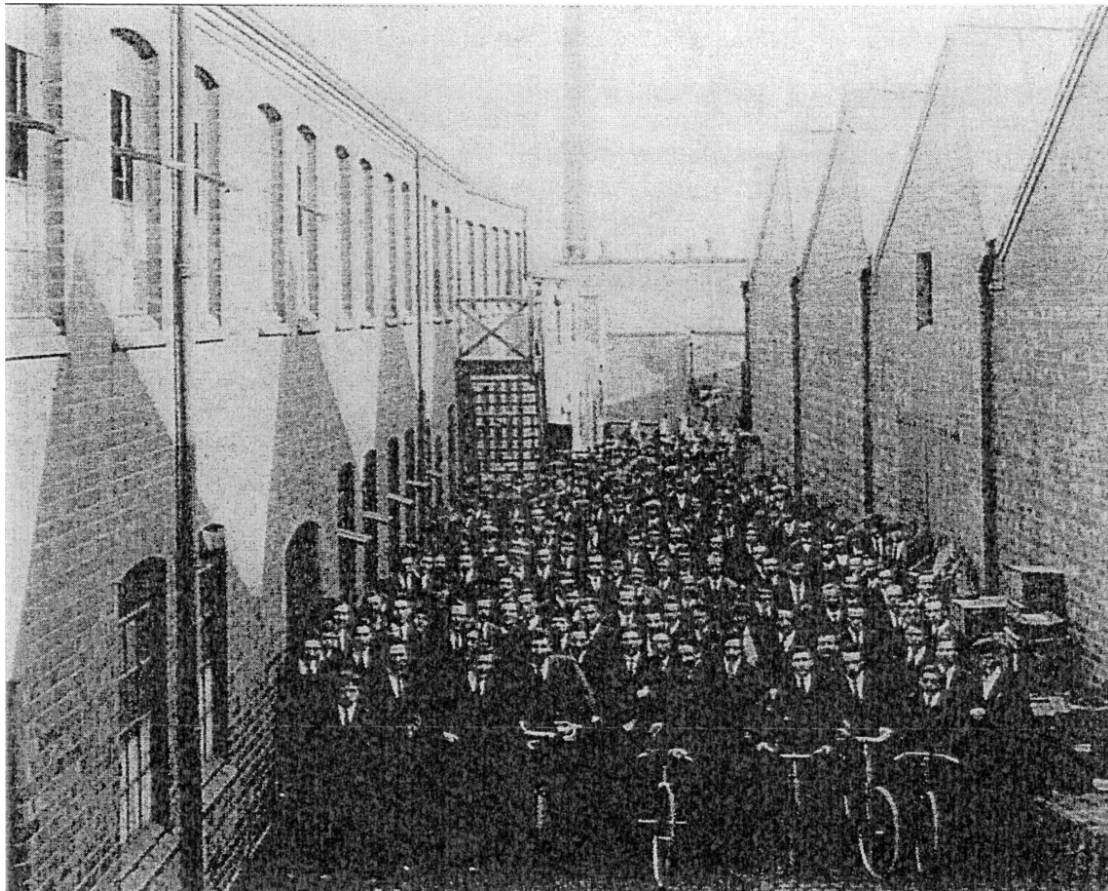


Plate 2: 1921 photograph showing the Calcott workforce assemble in the rear yard area, taken from rear window of Far Gosford Street office building (reproduced from Singlehurst 2004)

2.2.4 By the early 1920s the company was struggling and the decline had begun; the limited site confined the company. Chassis were still being made outside the city and brought in by train and horse-drawn dray, bodies were built by Thomas Pass with only final assembly taking place at Far Gosford Street. Other companies had already begun to abandon their city centre Victorian workshops in favour of purpose-built factories in the suburbs.

2.2.5 Limited cash flow prevented the replacement of antiquated machinery, which increased reliability problems and the death of William Calcott meant that by 1925 the company was in dire straits. In 1927 with the company making a loss of £26,000 the factory was put up for sale and bought by the Singer Motor Company. Calcott moved to smaller premises to sell spare parts for Calcott cars, this venture too, soon failed and Calcott Bros ceased trading completely.



Plate 3: Car assembly in the Calcott Works, 1921 (previously demolished CTM)



Plate 4: Car assembly in the Calcott Works, 1921 (Building 1c see below - CTM)



Plate 5: Car assembly in the Calcott Works, 1921 (Building 1c see below - CTM)



Plate 6: 1914 Calcott 10.5 HP Light Tourer

2.2.6 Under the ownership of Calcott Brothers, the site developed in three identifiable stages (*The Astley's Site, Far Gosford Street, Coventry. The History of the Site.* N.W Alcock). The first two acquisitions took place in December 1896 when construction of the original XL Works began with the building of the Far Gosford Street frontage and buildings 2 & 3 (Figure 13), in all likelihood, construction work had begun prior to the completion of the sale. The first expansion occurred in 1914 with the purchase of 166-172 Far Gosford Street and the construction of building 1c, further plans were drawn up for the addition of a three-storied extension fronting onto Far Gosford Street, although this never came to fruition (Figure 2). Further information on the development of the site is covered in more detail in *The Astley's Site, Far Gosford Street, Coventry. The History of the Site.* N.W Alcock.

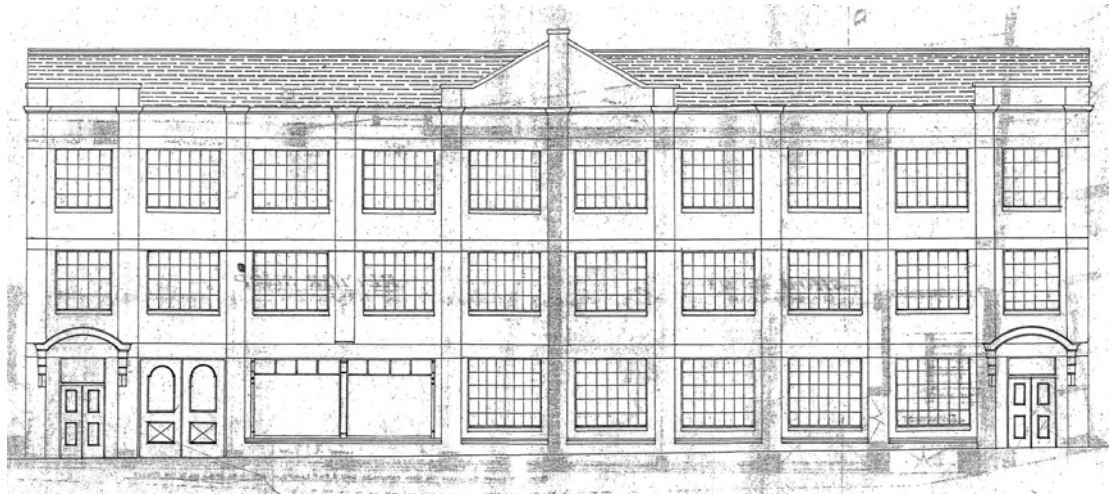


Figure 2: Proposed and approved 3-storey extension for Calcott
Far Gosford Street frontage elevation (never built)

2.2.7 Due to increased successes the Singer Motor Company were looking to expand in the mid 1920s and acquired the Far Gosford Street site in 1926 to operate as a repairs and servicing shop, with some limited manufacturing. Singer extended the site by the addition of the single storey showroom fronting onto Far Gosford Street in 1927; this had one of the first large neon signs in the country, which flashed in turn the letters Singer. There was even a car mounted on the roof for advertising purposes for a while. The extension was designed by T. R. J. Meakin and required the demolition of 166 through 172 Far Gosford Street, buildings Calcott Brothers had agreed to demolish as part of their planning consent for their 1916 extension (Figure 3). The buildings that were demolished were of three storeys, seemingly built in two blocks, all with 'topshops' (top floor workshops lit by long multiple light windows).



Plate 7: Former buildings fronting Far Gosford Street, demolished in 1916 as part of the planning permission for the three storey extension
(reproduced from Singlehurst 2004)

2.2.8 Singer only remained at the site for a decade before rationalisation closed the site and the "For Sale" notices went up. However, it was not until 1939 that the site was finally sold to Astley's for £20,000. The decline of the use of the site by the Singer company corresponds with the movement of many other car manufacturers to premises on the outskirts of the city.



Plate 8: Astley's Far Gosford Street Frontage.

2.2.9 Astley's are a well-established Coventry company having been trading in one form or another for over 275 years. During this time they have manufactured a range of products, including leaded windows, abrasive wheels and canvas. Far Gosford Street was used mainly for paint manufacture and later as an outlet for industrial consumables. Astley's also acquired, in 1998 the remainder of the site to the east of Shut Lane creating the site plan we have today. With the closure of Far Gosford Street in December 2005, paint manufacturing ceased and the industrial consumables business relocated to purposed built premises on Coventry Business Park. Citing both the age and location of the Far Gosford Street site as a hindrance to further growth; the exact causes which lead to the collapse of the sites original owners, Calcott Brothers Ltd.

2.2.10 The area on the Vequeray Street side of the site have a very different history to that of the main Far Gosford Street site. The history of this part of the site is included in detail in the History of the Astley's Site by Dr. Nathaniel Alcock. The major portion of the site east of Shut Lane was developed by Henry Burbidge as a wood-turning factory in 1914, the Victoria Works. In 1954 the site was acquired by Midland County Dairies. The site contained a number of twentieth century buildings, as well as a few others of earlier date mentioned below, all of which are to be demolished. As this part of the site was not associated with the car manufacturing works it has not been included in much detail within this report.

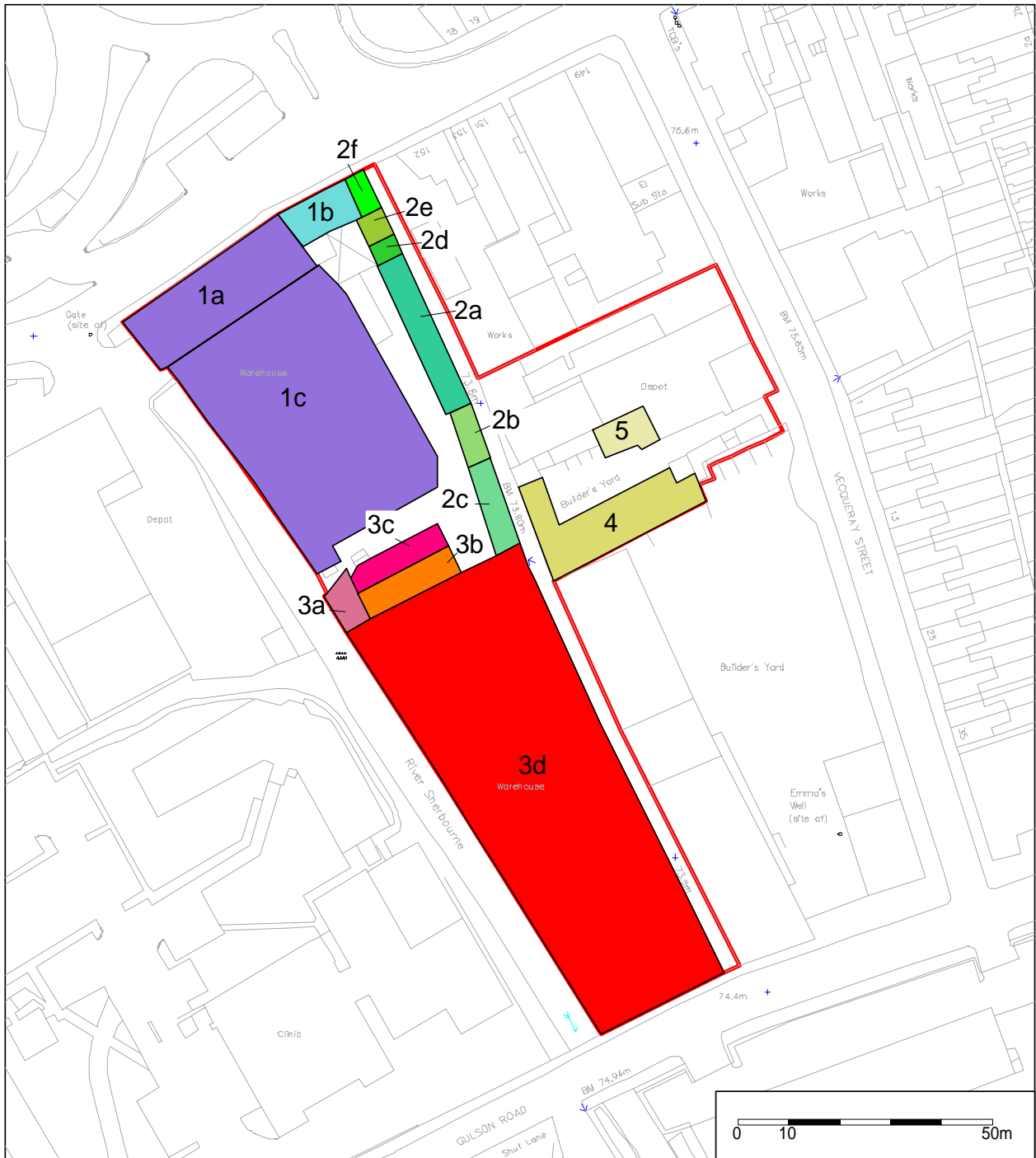


Figure 3: Layout of buildings and reference numbers as used in the text.

3. Standing Building Survey

3.1 The proposed development area currently consists of four significant buildings and a number of lesser buildings and structures. Each building has been allocated a number for identification purposes and a letter where internal sub-division is also required. The buildings are arranged in an approximate 'T' shape with Far Gosford Street to the north, in the following notes the 'front' elevation is that which faces Far Gosford Street. The terms 'left', 'right', 'rear' and 'back' are used in relation to the front elevation of each range.

3.2 *Building 1*

3.2.1 Building **1** consisted of three distinct elements; **1a** is a single storey showroom-type building to the right of the original Calcott Bros building (Plate 9). This addition was added by Singer in 1927 and is the final addition of historic interest to the site; the building itself consists of red brick-built structure with a flat roof; there are eight floor to ceiling windows and a central pedestrian entrance. The sills are of yellow terracotta, mimicking the decoration of the original building, next door; there is also a yellow terracotta lintel dressing running the full width of the building immediately above the windows. There is also a plinth, approximately 500mm in height at ground level, again with yellow terracotta dressing. Finally there is yellow terracotta coping atop the front wall, being out of sight the back wall has a simple brick coping.

3.2.2 Internally building **1a** is sparse having been originally constructed as a showroom and lately used as a shop floor, there is little of architectural merit, it appears that the most effort was placed upon blending the exterior with the original building, next door. The roof construction is of 500mm by 500mm re-enforced concrete beams supporting the flat roof. There is a substantial sliding door on the rear wall, probably providing vehicular access to the next building (Building **1c**), although any original ramp has since been removed. There is pedestrian access via a double wood and glazed door towards the back of the left wall into the Calcott Bros building (Building **1b**).



Plate 9: Building **1a** - single storey 1927 Singer Showroom building



Plate 10: Building **1b** (and **2f** – left hand side) – Calcott Brothers Office Buildings of 1896 Far Gosford Street frontage



Plate 11: Date stone and 'Calcott Bros Ltd' (defaced) on detail above doorway on Far Gosford Street Frontage

3.2.3 Building **1b** (and **2f**) is without a doubt the most visually striking of Astley's buildings and was originally built as company offices in 1896 (Plate 10). The building itself is of three storied brick construction with hipped slate roof and large gables, the epitome of a Victorian factory. The Far Gosford Street frontage is highly

decorated with yellow terracotta tracery and doors, the original entrance was the grandly decorated doorway on the right of the building (now bricked up), above which is an inscribed date stone, again of yellow terracotta (Plate 11). Original vehicular access is via a double door on the left of the building, again with decoration, but not as elegant, this access has been replaced by larger access to the right created by the removal of the original bay window and whatever rooms were originally behind it (there are plans to restore this window). The exact date of the removal of the bay window could not be ascertained, but is later than 1921 (original window visible on Plate 12) and is indicated as a passageway on the 1948 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 4). Presumably the passageway was inserted at a similar time to the construction of the showroom in 1927 when Singer bought the factory.

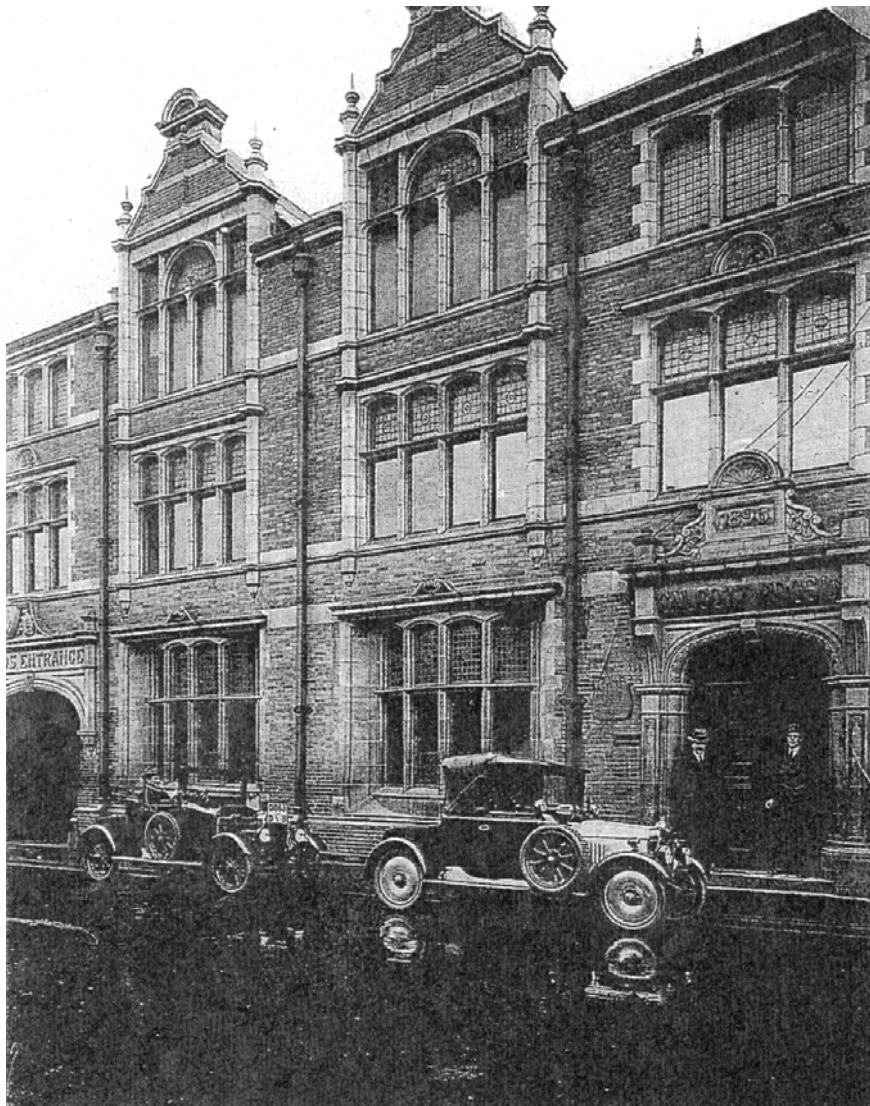


Plate 12: 1921 photograph of the Far Gosford Street façade showing original ground floor window (reproduced from Singlehurst 2004)

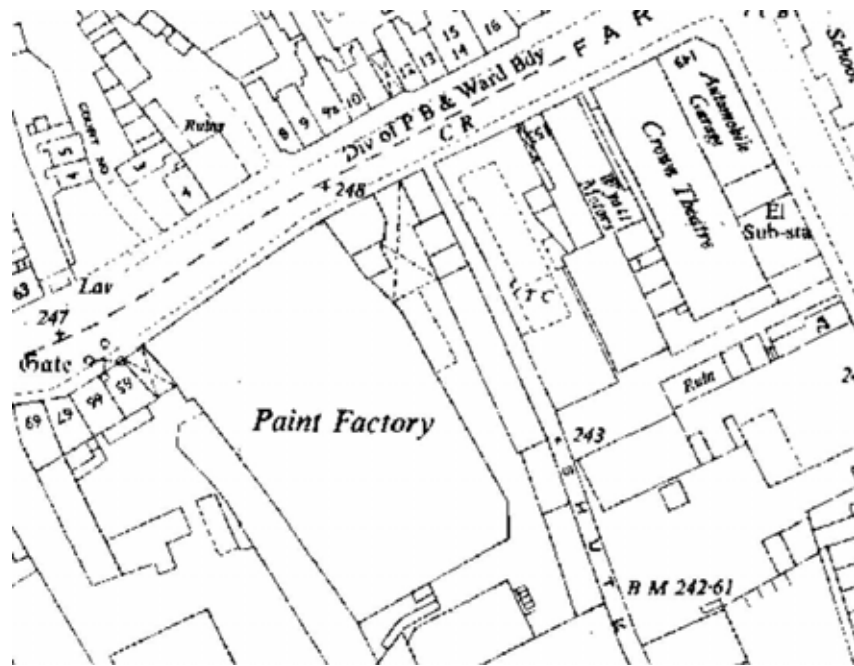


Figure 4: Extract of 1948 Ordnance Survey map showing passageway indicated through frontage former window of building **1b** on Far Gosford Street frontage

3.2.4 At first floor level there is yellow terracotta banding, the windows themselves are six pane with cambered arches with decorative lintels and sills of yellow terracotta; the two central bays are eight panes, but otherwise in the same style. At second floor level there are two central bays surmounted by Dutch gables with curved pediment heads of yellow terracotta, the windows themselves are four pane of a Venetian type with additional upper lights each side of the head, again with yellow terracotta tracery. The gables also have decorative terracotta work and brick piers at second floor level.

3.2.5 There is a pitched roof of Welsh slate with ornamental terracotta ridge tiles and finials. There is also an ornately moulded central chimney and highly decorative terracotta cornice.



Plate 13: Screen.

3.2.6 Although there have been some later alterations, the interior of *1b* still reflects the original grandeur of the building. Access from *1a* is via carved double half glazed doors, leading to a hallway with decorative mosaic floor, deep moulded skirting board, dado and picture rails. There is an ornate oak staircase leading to the first floor on the rear wall and two doors on the front wall leading to office space and another on the rear wall. One of which is a half glazed oak moulded door within a tripartite screen (Plate 13), the glass is decoratively etched and labelled Offices. Beyond this door is the original entranceway, now used for storage; again with mosaic floors and plaster cornices the original doorway from Far Gosford Street has since been blocked, there is an open door frame on the left hand wall, again with timber moulding.

3.2.7 It is possible that this screen is not in its original position; the upper part of the screen does not match the lower and there is no cornice above the screen, only plain plaster. The mosaic floor continues, unaltered also.

3.2.8 The second door is a five-panelled solid timber door with limited decorative moulding. There is the same decorative cornice work and picture and dado rail as elsewhere on this floor, on the left wall there is a blocked fireplace; the floor in this room is parquet, rather than mosaic. The room is currently in use as a storeroom.

3.2.9 The door on the rear wall is directly opposite the tripartite screen, the original door has been replaced by a modern fire door; the leaded stained glass of the surround

is still *in-situ* as are the overhead lights, the outer two are hinged at the base. Beyond this door is a corridor leading to a fire escape on the left wall and a wooden built mess room, both of which are later additions.

3.2.10 First floor access is via an ornate oak staircase on the rear wall. First floor accommodation consists of three offices along the frontage with a corridor, stairs and W.C to the rear. The offices are almost certainly the original Calcott Brothers offices, reused. All are largely unaltered and have the same deep moulded skirting boards, dado and picture rails seen on the ground floor, the doors are a mix of four and six panelled, half glazed and solid, most with original door furniture. There is access via a recently inserted door onto the flat roof of the showroom in the left hand office.

3.2.11 There are original slate fireplaces in two of the rooms and a more ornate marble fireplace in the left hand office, possibly indicating an originally higher status to this office. Modern electric fires have replaced the original grates. The partitions all appear to be original and although there is very little in the way of original fixtures and fittings the offices appear largely intact.

3.2.12 Second floor access is via an apparently modern staircase within building **2f**; the floor consists of two large open plan offices, a smaller office area in the rear right hand corner and small partitioned area in the rear left hand corner. Both offices are largely devoid of any architecturally significant details, the doors are all modern additions, although the windows are original and the decorative stained glass is still *in-situ*. There is a modern suspended ceiling of polystyrene tiles.

3.2.13 The offices are currently in use as the Accounts Department of Astley's, but the large windows and high ceilings suggest that these were originally the offices of the factory's draughtsmen.

3.2.14 The building immediately to the rear of offices and showroom is the factory building (**1c**) and is the first of the buildings scheduled for demolition. The building consists of single storey brick and slate construction with north light roof of eight bays; the bays themselves are 6 metres wide by 7 metres tall with concrete floors. The brickwork consisted of machine made 9 inch by 3 inch red bricks laid mainly in a Dutch Bond; the bricks of the rearmost bay are 8^{1/2} inch by 2^{3/4} inch and also a different colour. A study of the original architects plans indicates that this bay is contemporary and it appears, simply that, different bricks were used. The roof has been sealed with "lick & dick" bitumen; however, the slate below will almost certainly be Welsh.



Plate 14: 1921 View of Calcott Works, Building 1c. (Coventry Transport Museum)



Plate 15: 1921 View & 2005 View, Building 1c.

3.2.15 Internally the building is structurally unaltered, although a substantial timber mezzanine floor has been added to the front and right of the building and a series of prefabricated offices have been built in the front left corner of the building. The original timber floors seen in the 1921 photographic tour (Coventry Transport Museum; Plate 14) have been replaced with concrete (Plate 15). There are two

ramped access points from the rear of **1a** as well as a pedestrian access to the mezzanine level. There is a large vehicle entrance near to the front of the building on the left wall; this is apparently a recent insertion, or the enlargement of an earlier doorway. There is a blocked doorway on the same wall nearer the rear of the building.

3.2.16 The roof structure is of a steel construction, sat atop 4 inch (100mm) RSJ columns with both RSJ and angle iron beams being used, the ceiling beam is of 4 inch (200mm) RSJ attached to 12 inch (300mm) header beam, there are 200mm angle iron ribs. The majority of the steelwork appears to come from three sources (although, not every length was examined), the ceiling beams come from either the Port Talbot Steel C^o Ltd or Frodingham Iron & Steel C^o Ltd, formally of Humberside (no longer in existence); the Port Talbot Steel C^o became British Steel Port Talbot (now Corus). The header beams are from Dorman Long & C^o Ltd, Middlesbrough; this company has since become a worldwide concern and has built steel roofs as far away as Hong Kong, although they no longer produce the steel itself (<http://clevelandbridge.com/Dormanlong>).

3.3 *Building 2*

3.3.1 Building **2** is another of the retained buildings to the left of building 1 and like building **1b** is among the earliest of the XL Works buildings to be built (building **2f** is the left hand side of this Far Gosford Street frontage building). The rear of this building follows the line of the later-medieval Shut Lane, which still runs north-northwest south-southeast through the proposed development area. The building immediately to the rear of building **1b**, including **2f**, (building **2e**) is three storied while the remainder of the building elements (**2a**, **2b**, & **2c**) are only two stories high.

3.3.2 The buildings themselves are once again of brick and slate construction with original steel framed windows still retained in the northernmost buildings, (**2a**, **2d**, & **2e**). The brickwork itself consists of 8^{3/4} inch by 2^{3/4} inch machine made red brick in a mixture of Dutch Bond and Flemish Garden Wall Bond with decorative blue splay brick windowsills with cambered arches above. The windows are steel framed with the centre four paned opening and are being retained.

3.3.3 Internally the building is much altered and there are a multitude of partitions some of which are original and others more recent additions. The northernmost parts of the building, **2a**, **2d**, **2e**, & **2f** appear to be largely un-altered, while the southerly most buildings, **2b** & **2c** have been extensively modernised. The ground floor is largely empty of any identifiable architectural features, the floors consist of blue bricks laid on edge and plaster and lathe ceilings, the majority of plaster has fallen away leaving bare lathe. There are a number of modern concrete blockwork partitions and the whole of the ground floor is used for storage.

3.3.4 The first floor is similarly devoid of any identifiable architectural features; the roof is of king post with raking brace design.

3.3.5 There is evidence of timber replacement along the rear of the building and a number of steel RSJ beams have been inserted as strengtheners immediately below the original timber tie beam. Unlike the ground floor there appears to be no modern sub-divisions and the layout is likely to be original; there appears to be an internal chimneybreast on the rear wall, modern steel racking and asbestos prevented a closer

examination, although the top of a cast iron fireplace could be seen. The rooms are currently being used for document storage.



Plate 16: Building **2a**, First Floor.

3.3.6 The interior southern most buildings have been extensively modernized, there are a number of modern partitions and the walls have been clad in plasterboard, concealing any original architectural features. A suspended ceiling of polystyrene tiles conceals the roof construction, however, in all likelihood it is of the same king post design as the northern buildings. UPVC windows have also replaced the original windows. The same modernisation has occurred on the second floor of building *2e* where the offices of the Directors are located.

3.4 *Building 3*

3.4.1 Building **3** is again one of the earliest buildings within the XL Works and consists of a rectangular building (**3d**) with two smaller sheds adjoined to the front and appears to be of two distinct phases. The three bays on the Gulson Road frontage are a later addition. The building again is red brick and Welsh Slate construction with a north light roof; there is vehicle access on both the northern and southern walls and a number of pedestrian entrances throughout the building.



Plate 17: Replaced Roof Trusses (Building 3).

3.4.2 Internally, as with building 1c the interior has remained largely unaltered, with the exception of a range of laboratories and offices being built along the left hand wall in concrete blockwork, the bays themselves are 6 metres wide and 6.5 metres high at the apex of the roof. A modern partition in concrete blockwork within bay 8 creates a separate room; there is a second brick partition between bays 11 and 12, probably the original exterior wall, fronting onto Gulson Road. As with building 1c, it is the roof construction, which is the most diagnostic, the bulk of the roof is of timber beam construction atop cylindrical cast iron columns with square upper sections to carry line shaft bearings, however there are some later repairs, most notably the timber roof on the left of bays 10 and 11 has been replaced with a steel frame (Plate 17). Anecdotal evidence suggests this was caused by bomb damage during 1941 (Richard Astley *pers. com*).

3.4.3 The larger of the two sheds to the north (Building 3c & 3b) is of the same construction, but with a taller roofline and a wider bay, this larger size meant the roof timbers have an additional raking brace. There is a modern concrete blockwork wall dividing the bay length ways. There appears to have originally been vehicle access between 3b and 3d, which has been bricked up in a very rough fashion. Of particular interest is the remains of the original belt drive within 3b, probably first installed when this part of the factory was built in 1896. The architectural drawings for the 1916 building work identify this building as the enamelling shop.

3.4.4 The smaller room to the right has a mono-pitched roof and three gable windows and appears to constitute a different phase of building, the exact date is unclear. There are a number of letters contained within Coventry City Archives indicating that Calcott Brothers built a number of buildings without seeking proper planning consent. The building consists of a single storey brick built building with a wide pitched Welsh slate roof, there is a considerable bow in the roof and is identified as the sandblasting shed on the 1916 drawing.



Plate 18: Gulson Road Bays.

3.4.5 The final part of this building are the three bays on the Gulson Road frontage, these are a later addition and were built during the later 1920s replacing some earlier detached sheds and a chimney (possibly the site the original engine house). The bays are much larger than the earlier buildings (Figure 10), measuring 10 metres wide and 8 metres high at the apex of the roof. The roof is of a steel frame north light construction with an enclosed attic space within the bay fronting onto Gulson Road, built on 12 inch (300mm) RSJ pillars. Once again the interior appears largely unaltered. Structurally the building is of 9"by 3" machine made red brick with blue coping stones atop; the roof is of concrete roof tiles, possibly original. There are two double doors on the far right and left of the building with ramped access opening onto Gulson Road as well as a hoarding advertising Astley's as a producer of "*Industrial Paint, Canvas Products & Rope*".

3.4.6 Astley's has most recently used this part of the site for paint manufacture. Some of the equipment was still *in-situ* while other equipment, including the ball mills had already been removed and sold on to other paint manufactures. The mills themselves had been manufactured by Steele & Cowlshaw Ltd of Stoke-on-Trent; the company no longer produces mills although it continues trading under the name APV Baker of Peterborough.



Plate 19: Ball Mills.

3.5 *Building 4*

3.5.1 The final significant building of interest within the proposed development area is building **4**, an annexe to the left of building **3**. There is vehicle access from building **3** via a covered steel ramp, which crosses the line of Shut Lane as well as a large sliding vehicle door on the front opening onto a yard, which faces Vecqueray Street. The building itself is a single storey red brick and corrugated asbestos sheet construction with a steel framed pitched roof, with north facing sky lights sat atop 450mm by 450mm brick built columns.

3.5.2 The front of the building consists of 5 half-length steel framed windows, the brickwork below these windows does not match the brickwork within the remainder of the building, suggesting that this side may originally have been open. The rear wall has an interior skin of concrete blockwork and the exterior was not visible due to a neighbouring building abutting it.



Plate 20: Building 4.

3.5.3 The building appears to be post Second World War in date and was part of Henry Burbidge's wood turning works until Astley's acquired this part of the site in 1998 and it became part of the paint factory.

3.6 *Other Buildings*

3.6.1 As well as those covered in detail above, there are a number of buildings of lesser significance spread across the proposed development area, the majority of which are concentrated within the old wood turning works of Henry Burbidge, to the front of building 4 (including building 5). An examination of site plans spanning the twentieth century indicates that there has been considerable demolition and re-building within this part of the proposed development area. This part of the site was only acquired by Astley's in 1998; all the buildings predate this, and appear to be late twentieth century in date.

3.6.2 The buildings consist of a part brick, part corrugated asbestos sheet warehouse, open on two sides which is located towards the centre of the yard. There was also a steel framed building, clad with corrugated steel sheets, probably constructed during the 1980s, backing onto the eastern side of Shut Lane. Finally there was a two-storey extension currently used as offices on the left side of building 4, again this probably dated from the 1980s.

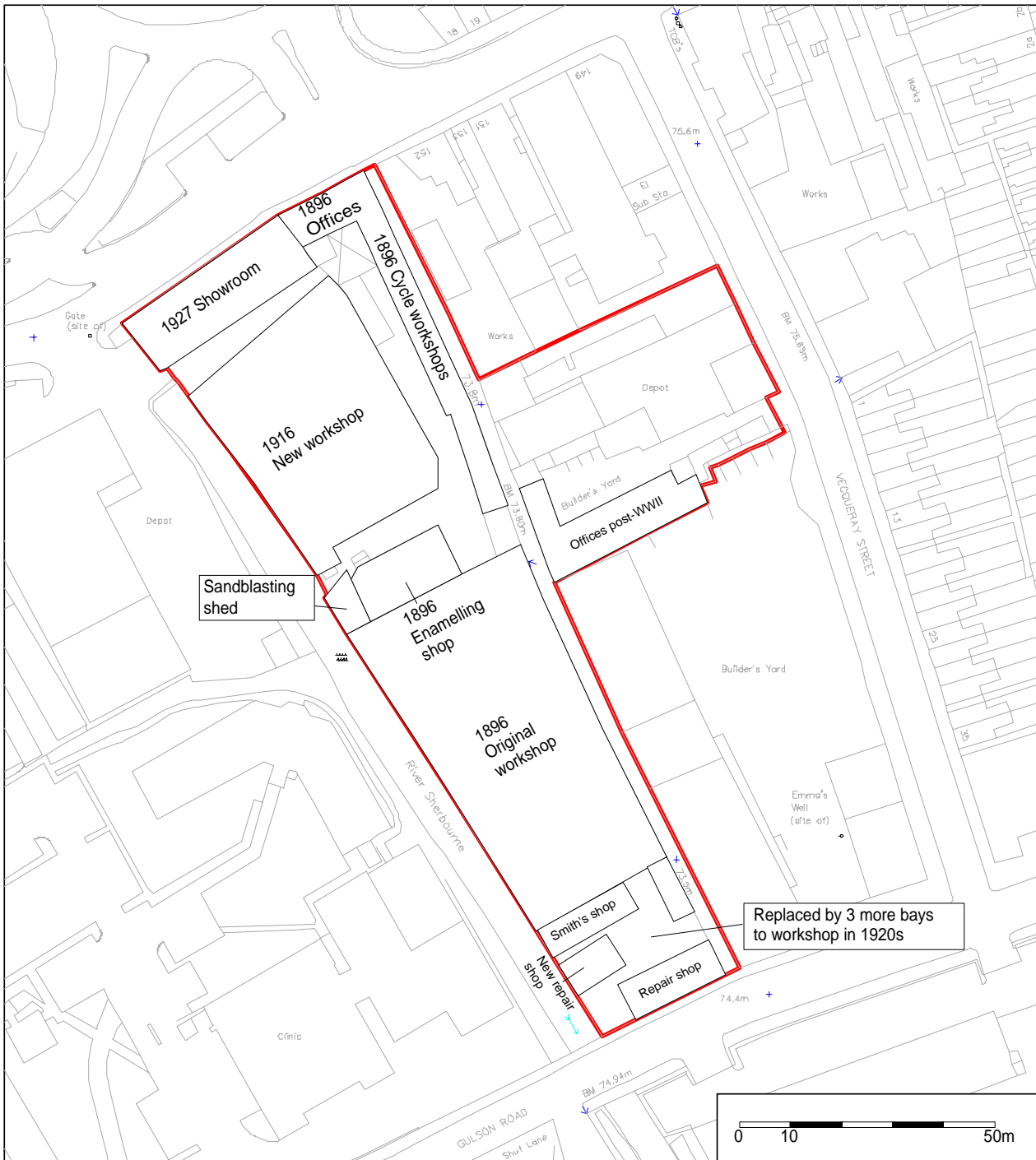


Figure 5: Layout of buildings showing probable dates of construction and usage where possible.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The aim of this standing building survey is to provide a permanent record of the building in their present state, prior to their conversion/demolition comprising both a written record and a visual record. The survey has confirmed that the works are the best-preserved example of an early automotive factory in Coventry, thanks in main to its location being unsuitable for further development. Its continued use as a paint factory for almost sixty years also ensured that it remained largely unaltered. Although it is within a Conservation Area, the building itself is not listed.

4.2 It is the very epitome of Victorian industrial architecture; the grand offices fronting onto Far Gosford Street portrayed the self-confidence of the era and the beginning of the motorised age. The factory buildings to the rear, however, were a drawback to a pre-industrial age, these were brought up to date with the construction of the two workshop blocks in the early twentieth century, even so the lack of space prevented further expansion. Calcott Brothers, without a doubt benefited from the pioneering work of other motor manufacturers and were indeed reported as doing well in 1914 but were never in a position to thrive; their production techniques were pre-industrial and were never in a strong enough position to compete with the larger companies.

4.3 While other car manufacturers were investing in new equipment and new out of town factories, Calcott Brothers failed to invest and stayed within the city centre. Calcott Brothers manufactured the same product throughout their history and became one a number of motor car companies who only lasted for the first twenty years of the twentieth century.

4.4 Singer did invest in the site, with the construction of the showroom in 1927. But they too recognised the limited potential of the site and moved on in 1927, tellingly the site remained empty for two years until Astley's arrival. As with a number of other car manufactures, the city centre sites were somewhat limited in their size and with no room for expansion to meet the increasing demand for vehicles, manufacturers invested in factories on the outskirts of the town. These new factories could be larger and purpose-built for mass motor vehicle production.

5. Photographic Index

Colour No	B&W No	Description	Building No
001	001	Front to Back General View.	01
002	002	Front to Back General View.	01
003	003	Roof Construction, Left to Right.	01
004	004	Roof Construction, Left to Right.	01
005	005	Detail of Steel Roof Truss.	01
006	006	Detail of Steel Roof Truss.	01
007	007	Single Bay, Detail.	01
008	008	Single Bay, Detail.	01
009	009	Detail of Steel Roof Truss.	01
010	010	Detail of Steel Roof Truss.	01
011	011	Back to Front General View.	01
012	012	Back to Front General View.	01
013	013	Detail of Steel Work.	01
014	014	Detail of Steel Work.	01
015	015	Lean-to Structure.	01
016	016	Lean-to Structure.	01
017	017	Left Wall Exterior.	01
018	018	Left Wall Exterior.	01
019	019	Blocked Doorway.	01
020	020	Blocked Doorway.	01
021	021	Back Left Corner, Exterior.	01
022	022	Back Left Corner, Exterior.	01
023	023	Stripped Out Ball Mixers.	
024	024	Stripped Out Ball Mixers.	
025	025	Right Wall Exterior.	02
026	026	Right Wall Exterior.	02
027	027	Makers Plate on Ball Mixers.	
028	028	Makers Plate on Ball Mixers.	
029	029	Front Right Corner Exterior	03a
030	030	Front Right Corner Exterior	03a
031	031	Outline of Lost Building.	01
032	032	Outline of Lost Building.	01
033	033	Blocked Arched Opening.	03a
034	034	Blocked Arched Opening.	03a
035	035	Front to Back General View.	03
036	036	Front to Back General View.	03
037	037	Right Front to Back Left.	03
038	038	Right Front to Back Left.	03
039	039	Left Back to Right Front.	03
040	040	Left Back to Right Front.	03
041	041	Detail of Roof Timbers.	03
042	042	Detail of Roof Timbers.	03

043	043	Original Iron Columns.	03
044	044	Original Iron Columns.	03
045	045	Detail of Column Top.	03
046	046	Detail of Column Top.	03
047	047	Back to Front General View.	03a
048	048	Back to Front General View.	03a
049	049	Left to Right General View.	03b
050	050	Left to Right General View.	03b
051	051	Right to Left General View.	03c
052	052	Right to Left General View.	03c
053	053	Original Belt Drive.	03c
054	054	Original Belt Drive.	03c
055	055	Left Wall Interior Elevation.	03d
056	056	Left Wall Interior Elevation.	03d
057	057	Roof Truss.	03d
058	058	Roof Truss.	03d
059	059	Replaced Roof Truss Caused By Possible Bomb Damage.	03d
060	060	Replaced Roof Truss Caused By Possible Bomb Damage.	03d
061	061	Change in Roof Construction.	03d
062	062	Change in Roof Construction.	03d
063	063	Very Back of Building Looking Forward.	03d
064	064	Very Back of Building Looking Forward.	03d
065	065	Detail of Roof Construction.	03d
066	066	Detail of Roof Construction.	03d
067	067	General View.	04
068	068	General View.	04
069	069	Detail of Roof Truss.	04
070	070	Detail of Roof Truss.	04
071	071	Front Elevation Exterior.	04
072	072	Front Elevation Exterior.	04
073	073	Yard Buildings.	
074	074	Yard Buildings.	
075	075	Detail of Roof Truss.	01
076	076	Detail of Roof Truss.	01
077	077	Makers Name on RSJ Dorman Long & Co Ltd Middlesbrough.	01
078	078	Makers Name on RSJ Dorman Long & Co Ltd Middlesbrough.	01
079	079	Makers Name on RSJ Port Talbot Steel Co Ltd.	01
080	080	Makers Name on RSJ Port Talbot Steel Co Ltd.	01
081	081	Detail of Three Way Join.	01
082	082	Detail of Three Way Join.	01
083	083	Timber Roof Trusses.	02a
084	084	Timber Roof Trusses.	02a
085	085	Cast Iron Radiator.	02a
086	086	Cast Iron Radiator.	02a
087	087	Original Steel Windows.	02a
088	088	Original Steel Windows.	02a
089	089	High Elevation Exterior.	01

090	090	High Elevation Exterior.	01
091	091	General View of Cycle Shed Roofs.	01/03
092	092	General View of Cycle Shed Roofs.	01/03
093	093	Exterior Elevation Floors 1 & 2.	02
094	094	Exterior Elevation Floors 1 & 2.	02
095	095	Right Facing Gable Elevation, Floors 1 & 2 Exterior.	01a
096	096	Right Facing Gable Elevation, Floors 1 & 2 Exterior.	01a
097	097	Detail of Exterior Moulding.	01a
098	098	Detail of Exterior Moulding.	01a
099	099	Moulding Detail.	01a
100	100	Moulding Detail.	01a
101	101	Showroom Front Elevation.	01a
102	102	Showroom Front Elevation.	01a
103	103	Showroom Side Elevation.	01a
104	104	Showroom Side Elevation.	01a
105	105	Right Elevation, Exterior.	01
106	106	Right Elevation, Exterior.	01
107	107	Right Gable Exterior.	01a
108	108	Right Gable Exterior.	01a
109	109	Right Exterior Elevation.	03
110	110	Right Exterior Elevation.	03
111	111	Detail of Decorative Ironwork.	03
112	112	Detail of Decorative Ironwork.	03
113	113	Detail of Showroom/Cycle Shed Interface.	01/01a
114	114	Detail of Showroom/Cycle Shed Interface.	01/01a
115	115	Far Gosford Street Frontage.	01a
116	116	Far Gosford Street Frontage.	01a
117	117	Left Gable, Exterior.	01a
118	118	Left Gable, Exterior.	01a
119	119	Vecqueray Street Yard & Buildings.	
120	120	Vecqueray Street Yard & Buildings.	
121	121	Vecqueray Street Yard & Buildings.	
122	122	Vecqueray Street Yard & Buildings.	
123	123	Gulson Road Frontage.	03
124	124	Gulson Road Frontage.	03
125	125	Gulson Road Frontage, Sandstone Insert.	03
126	126	Gulson Road Frontage, Sandstone Insert.	03
127	127	Showroom Interior, Right to Left.	01a
128	128	Showroom Interior, Right to Left.	01a
129	129	Showroom Interior, Left to Right.	01a
130	130	Showroom Interior, Left to Right.	01a
131	131	Original Decorative Plasterwork.	01a
132	132	Original Decorative Plasterwork.	01a
133	133	Same View as 1921 Photo.	01
134	134	Same View as 1921 Photo	01
	135	Same View as 1921 Photo.	01
136	136	Detail of Lean-to Roof Construction.	

137	137	Detail of Lean-to Roof Construction.	
138	138	Original Window & Brickwork.	02d
139	139	Original Window & Brickwork.	02d
140	140	Original Blue Brick Floor.	02e
141	141	Original Blue Brick Floor.	02e
142	142	Wall Plate.	02e/01a
143	143	Wall Plate.	02e/01a
144	144	Original Rear Window and Decorative Sill.	01a
145	145	Original Rear Window and Decorative Sill.	01a
146	146	General View.	04
147	147	General View.	04
148	148	Shut Lane, Looking North.	
149	149	Shut Lane, Looking North.	
150	150	Detail of Roof Cradle.	03
151	151	Detail of Roof Cradle.	03
152	152	Possible Graffiti On Gulson Road Frontage	
153	153	Possible Graffiti On Gulson Road Frontage	
154	154	Roughly Bricked Up Doorway	03b/03d
155	155	Roughly Bricked Up Doorway	03b/03d
156		Gulson Road Frontage.	
157		Gulson Road Frontage.	

6. Digital Photograph Index

Digital Image	Description	Building No
001	Wooden & Glass Screen/ Lower Half.	01b
002	Wooden & Glass Screen/ Upper Half.	01b
003	Itched Glass.	01b
004	Staircase, From Ground Floor.	01b
005	Itched Glass, Exterior Window.	01b
006	Original Glazed Door Surround.	01b
007	Detail of Stained Glass.	01b
008	Detail of Cornice and Picture Rail.	01b
009	Detail of Dado Rail and Skirting Board	01b
010	Original Door.	01b
011	Mosaic Floor.	01b
012	Wooden & Glass Screen, From Corridor.	01b
013	Detail of Cornice.	01b
014	Detail of Door Moulding.	01b
015	Detail of Cornice on Chimneybreast	01b
016	General View.	01b
017	Original Radiator.	01b
018	Parquet Flooring and Ceramic Hearth Tiles.	01b
019	Cornice and Door Frame.	01b
020	Staircase, From First Floor.	01b
021	Itched Glass.	01b
022	Frosted Glass.	01b

023	Picture Rail & Window Moulding.	01b
024	Window Moulding.	01b
025	Itched Glass.	01b
026	General View of 1st Floor Landing.	01b
027	Ceiling Beam.	01b
028	Original Double Doors.	01b
029	Blocked Chimneybreast.	01b
030	Original Half Glazed 4 Panelled Door.	01b
031	Modern Ducting Cutting Picture Rail.	01b
032	Picture Rail & Ceiling Beam.	01b
033	Modern Fire Escape Door.	01b
034	Slate Fireplace.	01b
035	First Floor Windows.	01b
036	Slate Fireplace.	01b
037	Modern Step.	01b
038	Original Partially Glazed 5 Panelled Door.	01b
039	Picture Rail & Window.	01b
040	Modern Door & Frame.	01b
041	Marble Fireplace.	01b
042	Picture Rail.	01b
043	Original Horizontal Sash Window.	01b
044	Modern Door & Frame.	01b
045	Picture Rail & Ceiling Beam.	01b
046	General View.	01b
047	Original Steel Framed Window.	02e
048	First Floor Doorway.	02e
049	General View of 1st Floor Landing.	02e
050	Modern Cupboards	02e
051	Original Brickwork.	02a
052	Detail of Roof Construction.	02a
053	General View First Floor.	02a
054	Repair Work.	02a
055	Original Steel Framed Window.	02a
056	Detail of Roof Construction.	02a
057	General View of 1st Floor.	02a
058	First Floor External Doorway.	02a
059	Blocked Chimneybreast.	02a
060	General View of Roof Construction.	02a
061	Original Cast Iron Radiator.	02a
062	Original Floor Boards.	02a
063	Blocked Chimneybreast.	02a
064	General View of First Floor Landing	02a
065	Original Brickwork Behind Over boarding.	02a
066	Modern Staircase.	02b
067	Modern Staircase.	02b
068	Modern Polystyrene Suspended Ceiling Tiles.	02b
069	Original Stained Glass.	01b

070	Original Window, Second Floor.	01b
071	Modern Polystyrene Suspended Ceiling Tiles.	01b
072	Original Window, Second Floor.	01b
073	Modern Polystyrene Suspended Ceiling Tiles.	01b
074	Fire Exit Door, Second Floor.	01b
075	Original Stained Glass.	01b
076	Original Window, Second Floor.	01b
077	Modern Window Latch.	01b
078	Modern Polystyrene Suspended Ceiling Tiles.	01b
079	Original Window, Ground Floor.	02f
080	Steel RSJ.	02f
081	Original Windows, Ground Floor.	02f
082	Modern Vehicle Access.	01b
083	Original Wood Panelling.	01b
084	Detail of Roof Construction.	02f
085	Original Window, Ground Floor.	02f
086	General Exterior View.	02a
087	General Exterior View.	02a
088	Detail of Elevation.	02a
089	Detail of Elevation.	02a
090	Detail of Elevation.	02a
091	Detail of Elevation.	02a
092	Detail of Elevation.	02a
093	Detail of Elevation.	02a
094	Original Window, Ground Floor.	02d
095	General Interior View.	02d
096	General Interior View.	02d
097	General Interior View.	02d
098	Detail of Brickwork.	02d
099	Detail of Brickwork.	02d
100	Modern Partition & Doorway.	02d
101	General Interior View.	02d
102	Detail of Brickwork.	02d
103	Modern Partition & Doorway.	02d
104	General Interior View.	02d
105	General Interior View.	02d
106	Parquet Flooring.	02d
107	Double Doors.	02d
108	Original Brickwork Arch.	02d
109	First Floor Doorway.	02a
110	Rear Elevation, Second Floor.	01b
111	Second Floor Window, Exterior.	01b
112	Rear Elevation, General View.	01b
113	Rear Elevation & Gable.	01b
114	Rear Elevation & Gable.	01b
115	Rear Elevation & Gable.	02d
116	Rear Elevation, Second Floor.	01b

117	Rear Elevation, Second Floor.	01b
118	Original Brickwork.	02d
119	Original Brickwork,	02d
120	Original Brickwork.	02d
121	Original Brickwork.	02d
122	Original Brickwork & RSJ.	02d
123	Blue Brick Floor.	02d
124	Original Brickwork & Window.	02d
125	Original Brickwork & RSJ.	02d
126	General View, Interior.	02d
127	General View, Interior.	02d
128	Modern Vehicle Access.	01b
129	Modern Vehicle Access.	01b
130	Original Steel Framed Window.	02d/e
131	Original Ground Floor Window.	02f
132	General View, Interior.	02e/f
133	Staircase, First Floor.	01b
134	Front Elevation, Left Side.	01b
135	Front Elevation, Left Side, 1st & 2nd Floors.	01b
136	Front Elevation, Centre, 1st & 2nd Floors.	01b
137	Front Elevation, Centre, Ground Floor.	01b
138	Front Elevation, Dutch Gable.	01b
139	Front Elevation, Right Side.	01b
140	Front Elevation, Right Side.	01b
141	Ground Floor Window.	01b
142	Detail of Decoration.	01b
143	Detail of Decoration.	01b
144	Detail of Decoration.	01b
145	Front Elevation of 01b & 01a	01a/01b
146	Detail of Gable.	01b

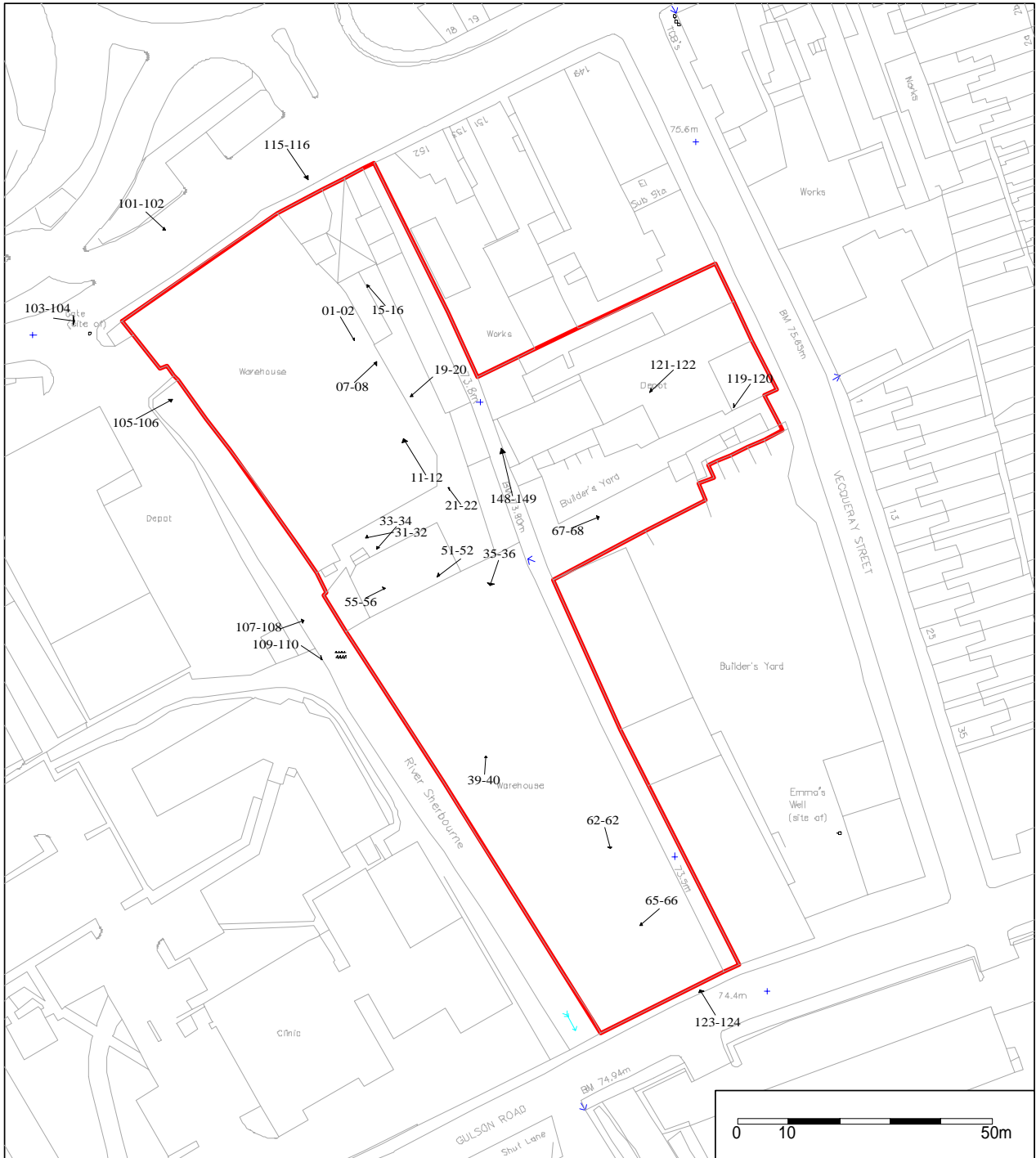


Figure 6: Location of photographs

7. Archive and Publication

The site archive comprises:

- 157 colour slides
- 157 monochrome negative and contact prints
- 146 digital images and contact prints
- 3 A2 Permatrace Drawings
- 2 A3 Permatrace Drawings
- photographic index
- field notes
- a copy of this report

This will be deposited with Coventry Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

7.

8. Bibliography and Sources

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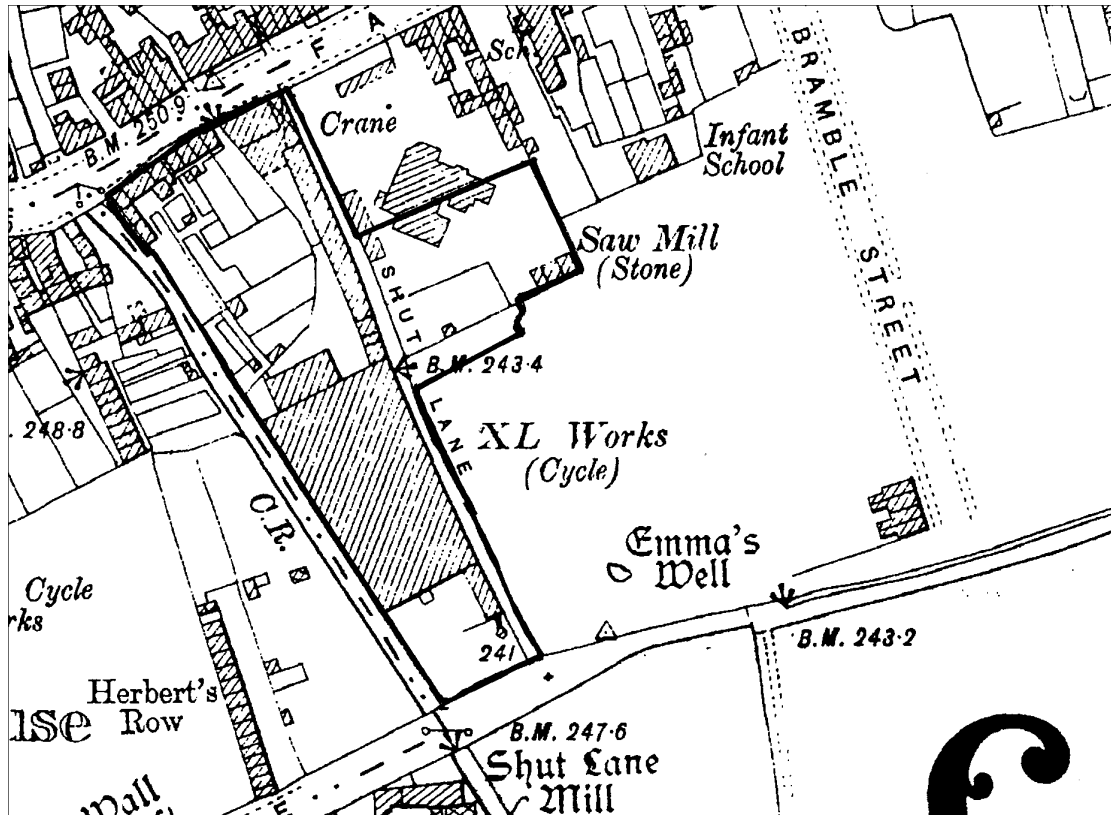


Figure 7: Ordnance Survey Map of 1903. Showing Original XL Works.
(Original scale 1:2500)

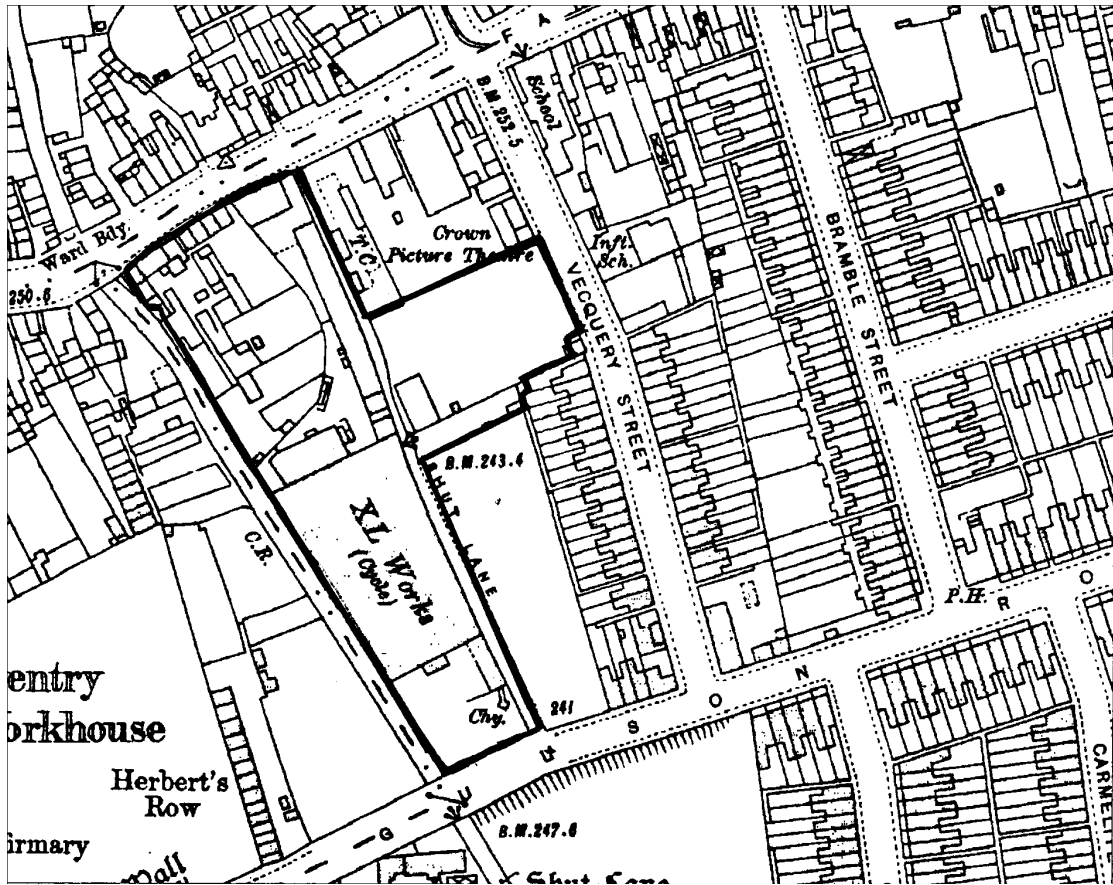


Figure 8: Ordnance Survey Map of 1914.
Showing No Major Additions To the Works.

(Original scale 1:2500)

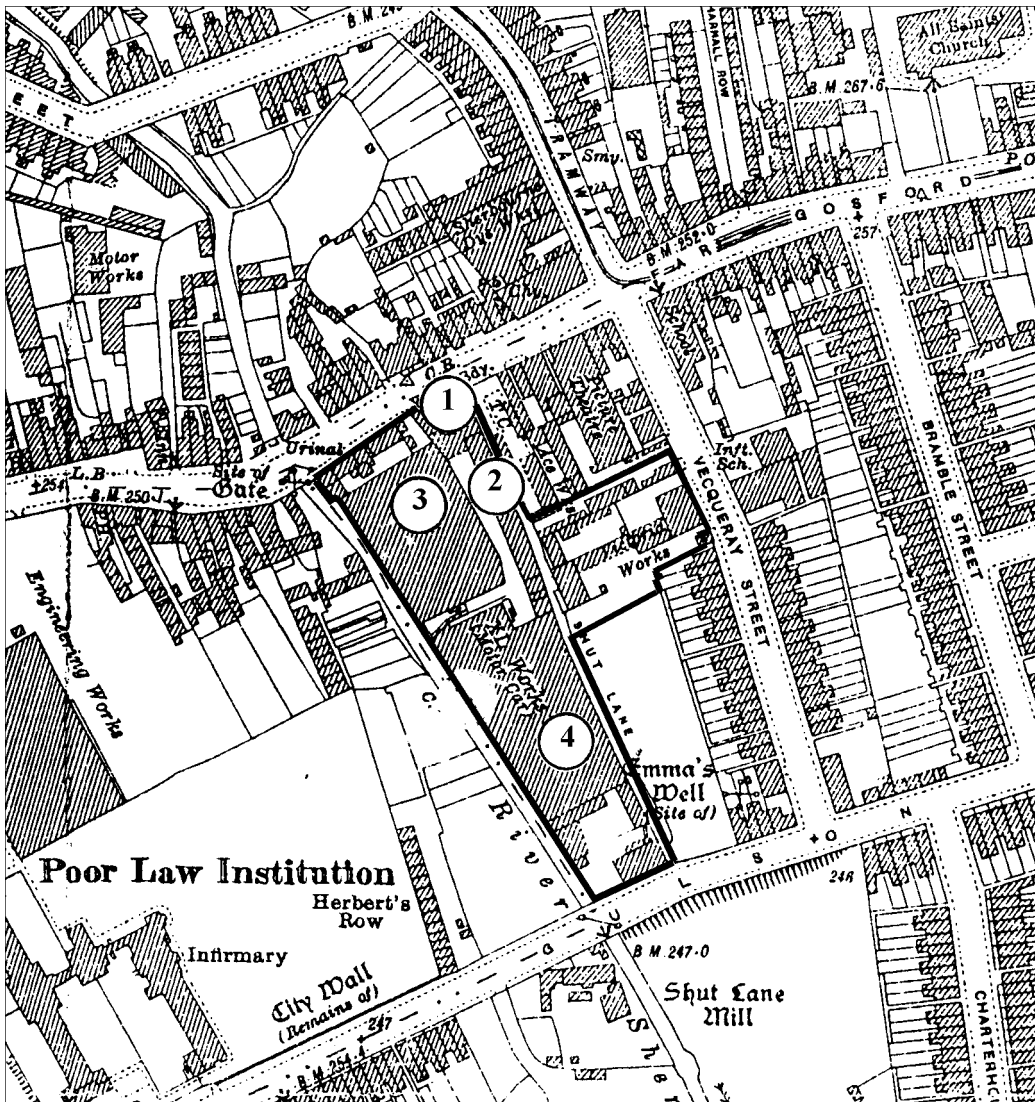


Figure 9: Ordnance Survey Map of 1925. Showing the 1916 Extension.
(Scale 1:2500)

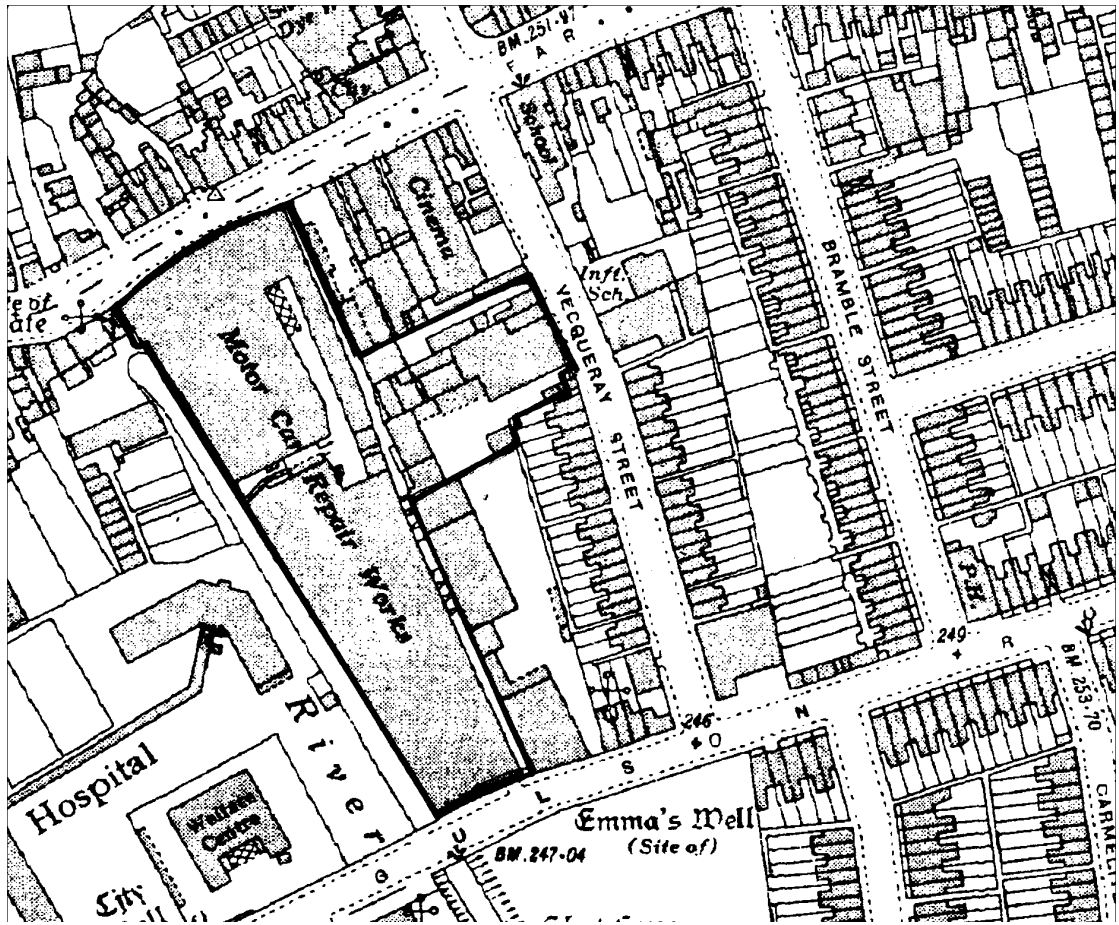


Figure 10: Ordnance Survey Map of 1936. Showing Current Extent of the Works,
With Some Minor Differences Along the Eastern Boundary.
(Original scale 1:2500)

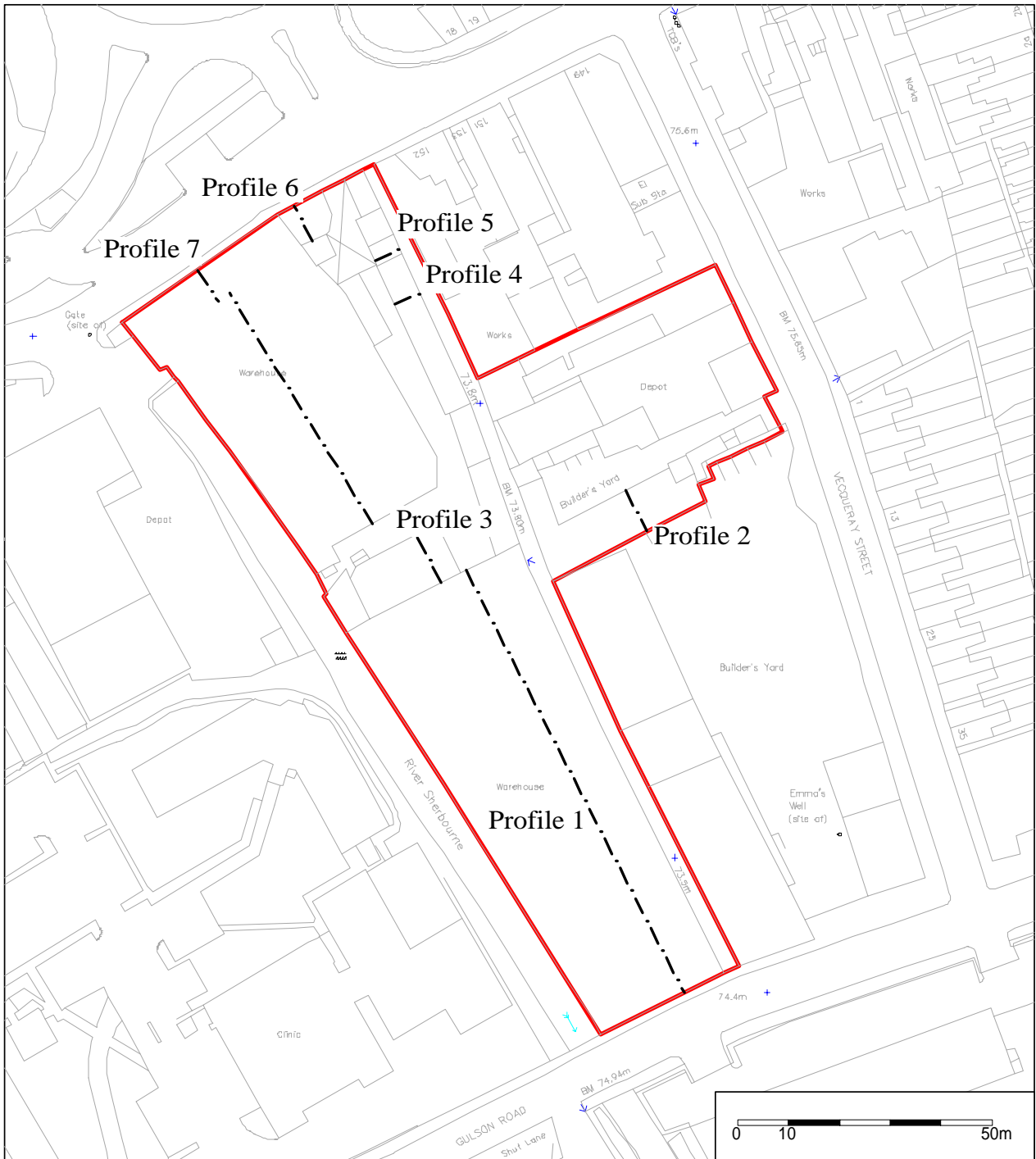


Figure 11: Location Of Building Profiles. Scale 1:1250.

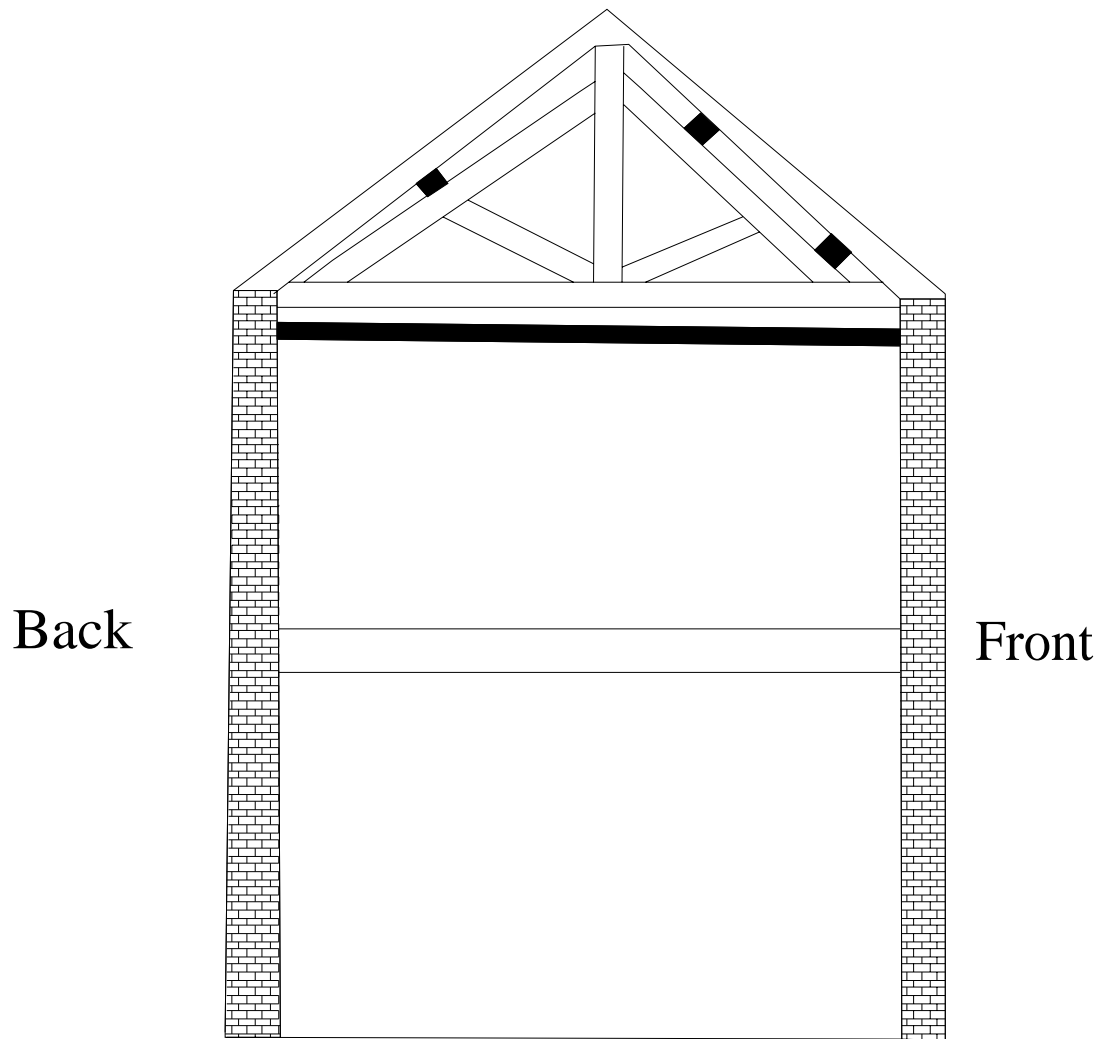


Figure 12: Profile 4 Building 2a
Scale 1:50

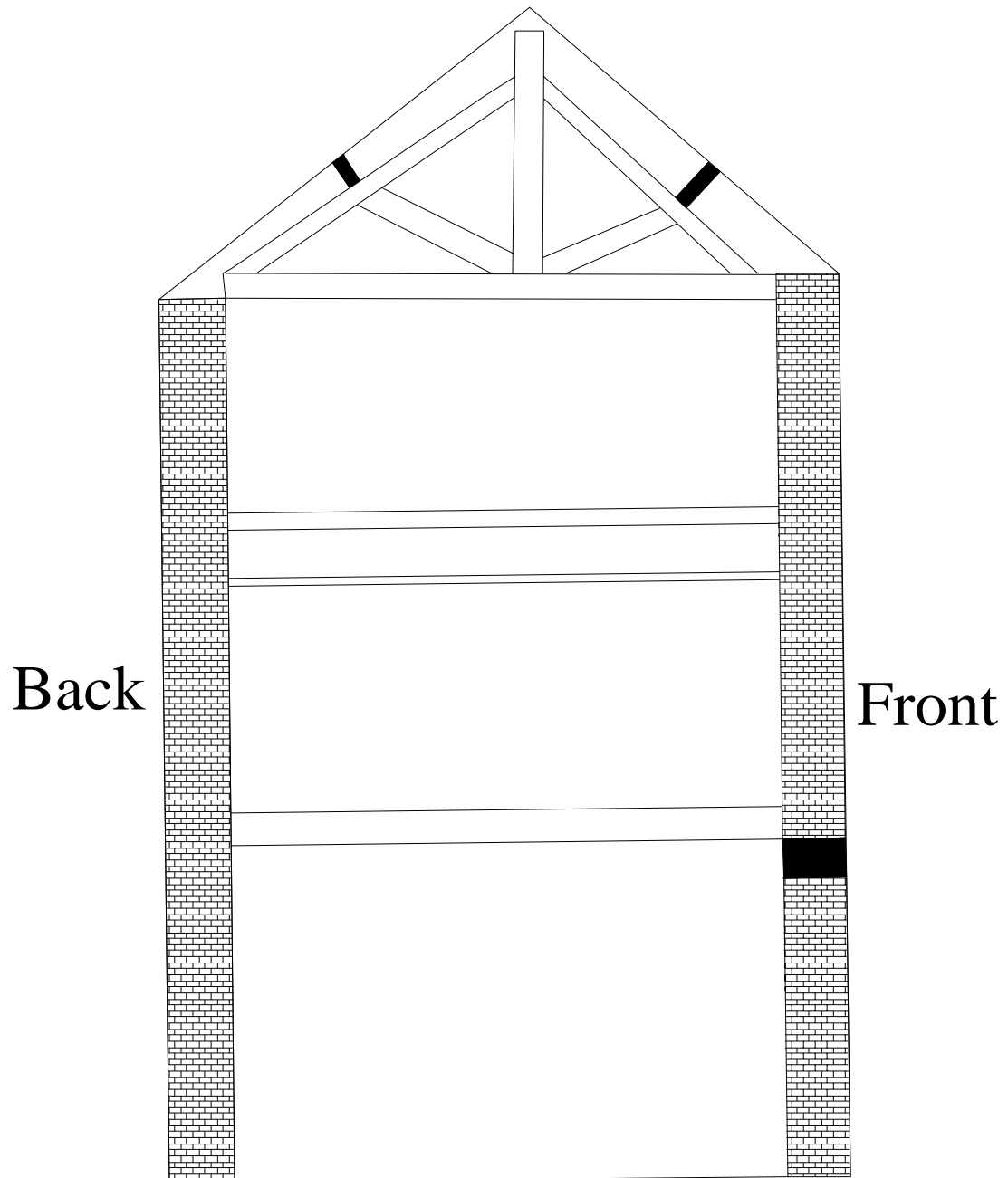


Figure 12: Profile 4 Building 2d
Scale 1:50

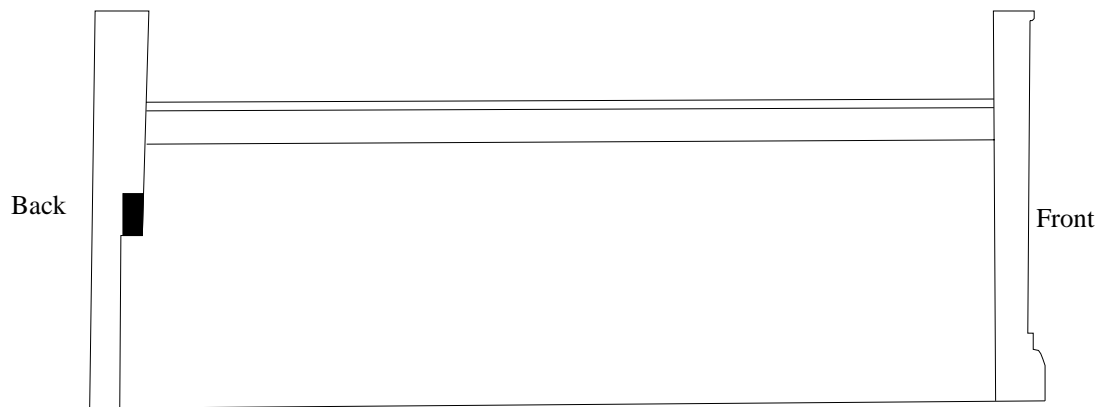


Figure 13: Profile 7. Building **1a**
Scale 1:50

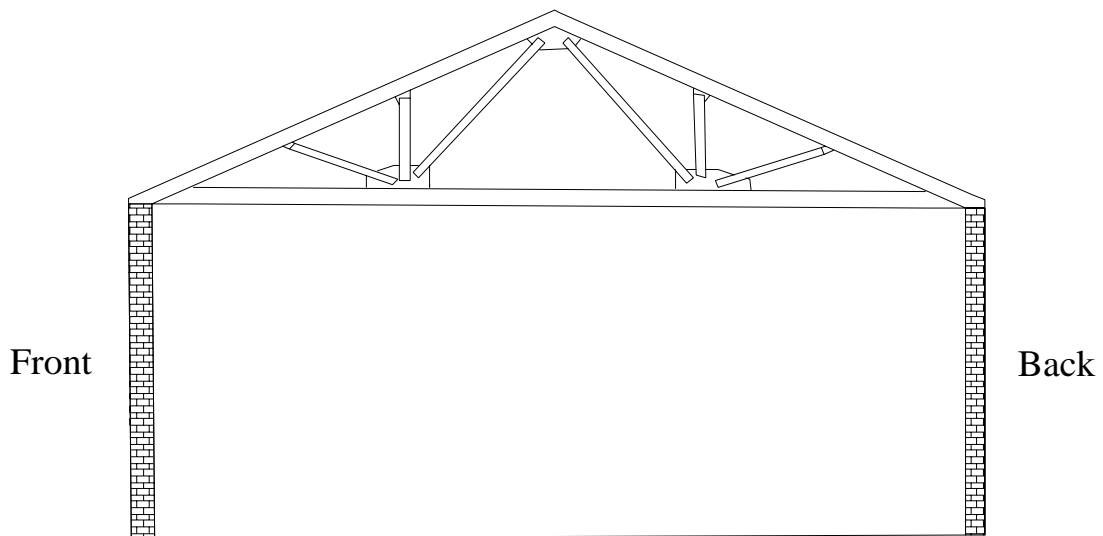


Figure 14: Profile 2. Building **4**
Scale 1:50

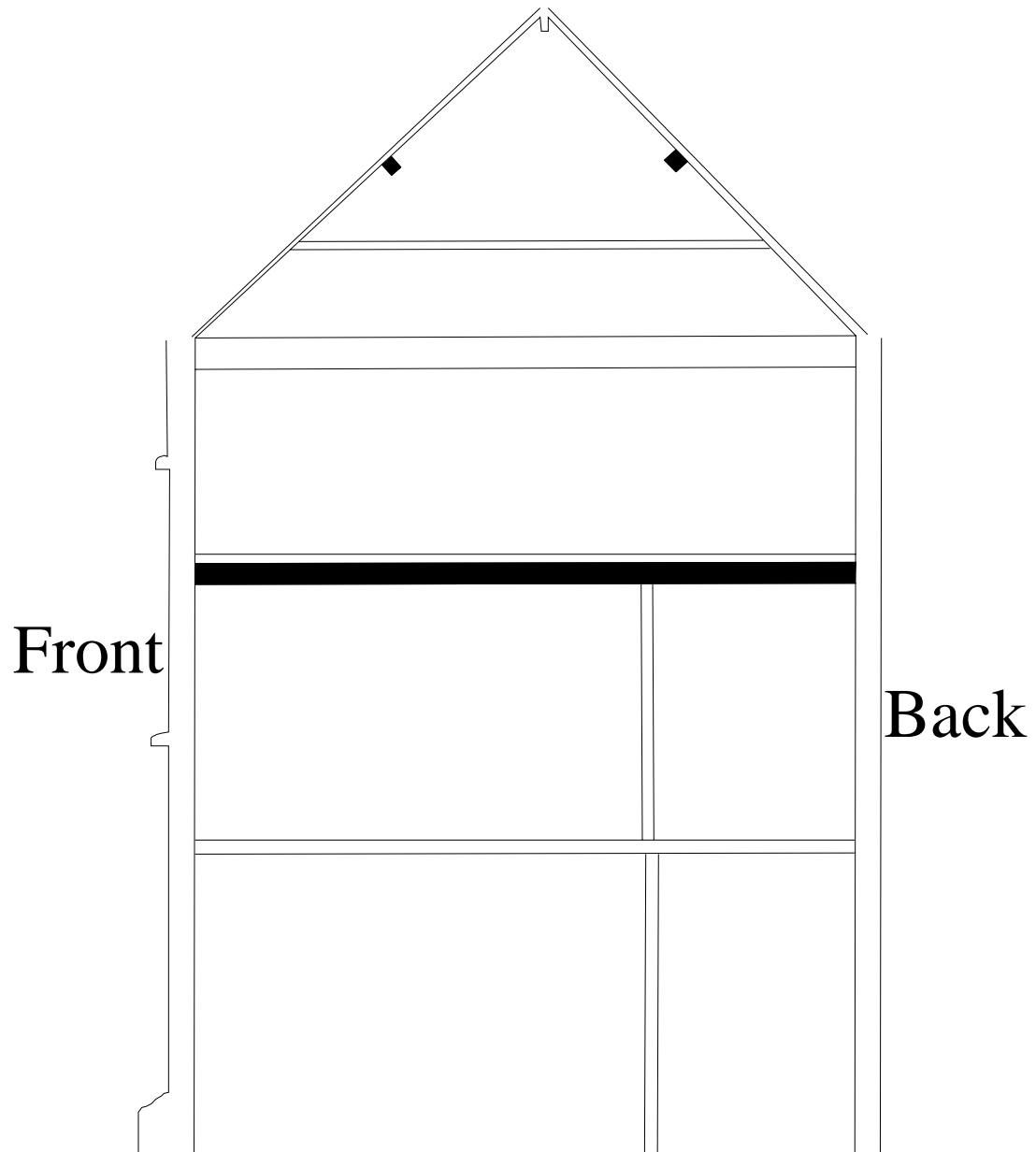


Figure 15: Profile 6. Building **1b**
Scale 1:50

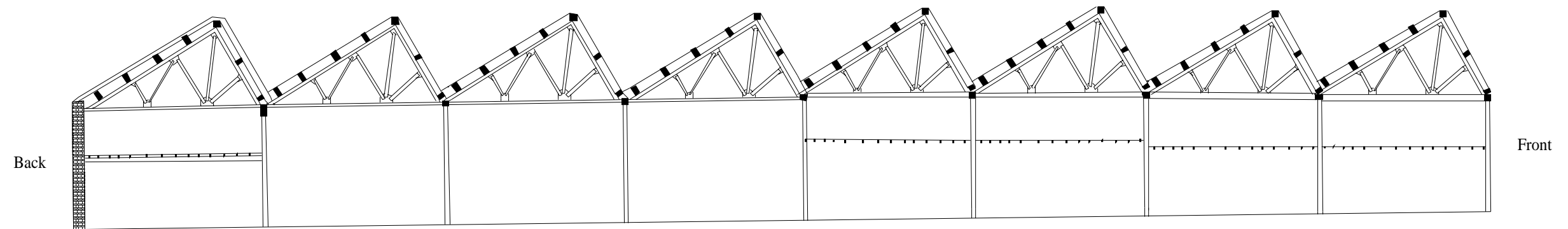


Figure 16: Profile 3. Building 1c
Scale 1:150

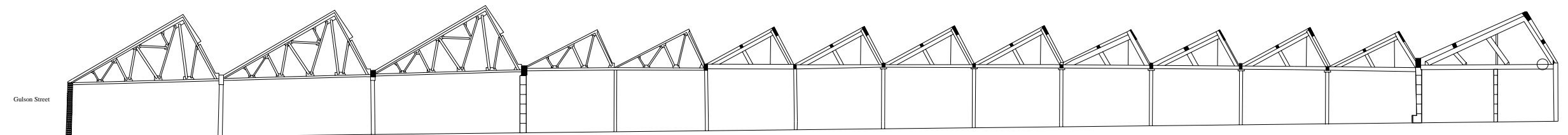


Figure 17: Profile 1. Building 3 (Scale 1:200)