

# **Alliance Boots Campus, Beeston, Nottingham**

## **Historic Building Record of Former Factory Building D13**

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*West elevation of D13, viewed looking east*

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## **SUMMARY**

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Blackwell to undertake a Level 2 building record of disused factory D13 situated on Boots Alliance Campus, Beeston, Nottingham, centred at Ordnance Grid Reference SK 54545 36418 prior to the building's proposed demolition as part of a redevelopment scheme (Planning Application No. 14/00515/OUT).
- Boots UK, formerly Boots Pure Drug Co, was founded by John Boot in 1849. By 1900 his son, Jesse had overseen the expansion of the business which had begun to create their own patented drugs. In order to develop the company further Jesse Boot took the decision to construct a model factory in the 1920s to the south of Beeston. The purpose-built factory made direct reference to American corporate working models aimed at creating a modern industrial environment. Sir Evan Owen Williams, one of the most influential and innovative engineering architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was commissioned in the 1930s to design a number of the buildings comprising D10, the wet process factory, D6, the dry process factory, D34, the fire station and D13, the chemicals factory.
- Building D13 is of a single phase dating to 1938. It is a fine example of a reinforced concrete building in the Expressionism style. The principal alterations to the factory were probably undertaken during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the building was converted into a storage facility which necessitated considerable alteration to the original fabric of the building and the removal of all internal fixtures and fittings relating to the production of chemicals. During recent years the infrastructure and other buildings associated with D13 have been removed leaving the factory standing in relative isolation.

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November 2015

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The project was managed, and the fieldwork undertaken, by Matt Hurford. Thanks are extended to Blackwell for commissioning the work. The project was monitored by Michael Bruce the Senior Planning Officer at Broxtowe Borough Council.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Blackwell to undertake a Level 2 building record of disused factory D13, situated on Boots Alliance Campus located to the south-east of Beeston, Nottingham centred at Ordnance Grid Reference SK 54545 36418 (Figures 1-2). The work was undertaken prior to the buildings proposed demolition as part of a scheme to develop the former Alliance Boots Campus into a mixed-use site of residential, retail, storage, industrial and office units (Planning Application No. 14/00515/OUT).

1.1.2 Building D13 is not listed though is of architectural significance as it was designed by the celebrated civil engineer Sir Evan Owen Williams, the architect of the Grade I listed building D6 and building D10 and the Grade II listed building D24 which all formed an integral part of the Boots complex. D13 was designed as a fine chemicals factory and constructed in 1938.

1.1.3 The fieldwork recording was undertaken between 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 by Matt Hurford. The Level 2 survey comprised a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the former factory, assisted by original drawings of the building provided by the client.

### **1.2 Building Recording Methodology**

1.2.1 Broxtowe Borough Council requested a survey of D13 prior to the demolition of the former factory based on classifications as outlined in English Heritage's guide *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2006). In this instance a Level 2 survey of the building was required. The methodology employed also follows advice from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (2014) and adheres to the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Trent & Peak Archaeology (Hurford 2015) and approved by Michael Bruce, the Senior Planning Officer at Broxtowe Borough Council.

1.2.2 Where an existing building/structure is not protected by listing and permission is sought or granted for demolition or major alteration, the local authority may require that a full archival record be made first, in order to 'preserve by record'. Similarly, where a building is subject to national designation, such a survey will be required prior to the commencement of improvement works or development of the structure.

### **1.3 The Report**

1.3.1 The building recording has involved an examination of the former factory both externally and internally. This has allowed for a brief written description of the building and its background with 9 figures and 15 plates as illustrations. A second part of the report (Section 7: Archival Record) comprises a list of illustrations to support the archival record. The latter consists primarily of 97 digital images and black and white negatives and prints from all or part of 3 films, comprising 108 negatives with 108 prints held in archival quality sleeves. The report includes copies of the digital images together with plans showing their viewpoints. All 97 digital images are included in a separate CD affixed to the back of the report.

## **2. SITE BACKGROUND**

2.1.1 Blackwell propose to demolish former factory building D13 as part of a wider scheme to develop the former Alliance Boots Campus into a mixed-use site of residential, retail, storage, industrial and office units (Planning Application No. 14/00515/OUT).

**3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND** *(based upon information held by Historic England on the Boots Factory Site List Entry Numbers 1247927, 1247933, and 278028 and found in Pevsner 1979, 70-1)*

3.1.1 Boots UK, formerly Boots Pure Drug Co, was founded by John Boot in 1849. By 1900 his son, Jesse had overseen the expansion of the business which had begun to create their own patented drugs. In order to develop the company further Jesse Boot took the decision to construct a model factory in the 1920s and acquired 156 acres of land to the south of Beeston. The purpose-built factory made direct reference to American corporate working models aimed at creating a modern industrial environment comprising an agreeable environment for workers alongside the introduction of efficient, process-driven design. Sir Evan Owen Williams, one of the most influential and innovative engineering architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was commissioned to design a number of the Boots Pure Drug Co buildings comprising D10, the wet process factory (constructed 1930-32), D6, the dry process factory (constructed 1937-38), D34, the fire station (constructed 1938) and D13 (constructed 1938) that was built as a fine chemicals factory (Figures 3 and 4). The building is currently derelict though had until recently been used as a storage facility.

3.1.2 Development of the Boot's site began in 1928 with several buildings including D6, D10, D46 and the subject of this study present on the Ordnance Survey map of 1938 (Figure 5). Of note is a further building constructed in the same architectural style as D13 located immediately south of the former chemicals factory (Plate 1). The photograph also indicates that the sidings for Sixth Avenue that were connected with the south-east side of the LMSR Nottingham to Beeston railway line had been constructed by this time. The two buildings had been joined by the time that the 1955 edition Ordnance Survey map was published (Figure 6). D13 remained unchanged until the demolition after 1984 of the buildings erected to the west between 1967 and 1973, and the additions to the chemical factory to the south, leaving D13 standing in relative isolation (Figure 7).

**4. BUILDING DESCRIPTION**

4.1.1 The former fine chemicals factory D13 is orientated with its long axis extending from the north-west to the south-east though for ease of reference this report refers to the orientation of the long axis as north to south.

*4.2 Exterior (Figures 3-4 and 8. Plates 2-8)*

4.2.1 D13 is a two-storey 22 bay spinal building composed of reinforced concrete. The external pillars forming the bays carry the pitched roof structure. Cantilever beams support a deep projecting floor band that extends around the entire building at first floor level, access to which is via stairways located on the east and west elevations at both the north and south ends. The first floor window casements, and those above in Bay 16, have metal frames and appear original. All the windows of the ground floor and all the first floor windows of the south gable have been infilled with concrete block work. New doorways have been inserted in the north, west and east elevations and former doorways blocked. Two later single storey brick buildings, R and S abut the east elevation and four single storey buildings, B, O, P and Q abut the west elevation. These later brick buildings have the appearance of contemporary early additions with the exception of O and Q, the brickwork of which suggest a late 20<sup>th</sup> or early 21<sup>st</sup> century date. The north gable has been altered with the addition of a metal canopy presumably erected to protect goods from the elements whilst being moved from vehicles into D13 when the building became a storage facility.

*4.3 Interior (Figures 4 and 7. Plates 9-15)*

4.3.1 Internally the building is a single large room extending from floor to roof (Room A) with a range of two storey offices to the north-west. Room A original housed equipment for producing fine chemicals but this has all been removed and the room subsequently used as a warehouse. The offices originally extended to Bay 15 and above Room M, with a further room to the north of Room D, but they have subsequently been demolished. The remaining

offices are much altered and have been stripped almost all their original fixtures and fittings. Their layout has also undergone modification with Rooms H and I being made into large single storey rooms by the removal of a number of internal walls and the floor and the insertion of steel supports in the roof. Room D has had one of its internal dividing walls removed and a shower inserted. The ceiling of Rooms T and U have also been lowered. The windows that would have originally looked out onto Room A from the Rooms T and U have been infilled with blockwork. However, some potentially original features do remain including the raised concrete floor sections in Room C and the ceiling beams with diamond shaped mortices above, and the raised concrete flooring and central wall section in Room U. The internal windows dividing Room T and U are also original. The stairwell in room E leading to Room U above is also likely to date to 1938.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

5.1 Building D13 is of a single phase dating to 1938. It is a fine example of a building in the Expressionism style by the celebrated engineer Sir Evan Owen Williams, a pioneer in the use of reinforced concrete (Durant 1992, 200-202). The principal alterations to the factory were probably undertaken during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the building was converted into a storage facility which necessitated the infilling of the ground floor and gable windows, the insertion of new openings and the removal of all the internal fixtures and fittings relating to the production of chemicals. The offices also underwent significant change. During recent years the infrastructure and other buildings associated with D13 have been removed leaving the factory standing in relative isolation.

## **6. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). 2014 *Standard Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of standing buildings or structures*.

Durant, D. N., 1992 *British Architectural Styles*

English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings*

Historic England Building D6 at Boots Factory Site List Entry Number 1278028

Historic England Building D10 at Boots Factory Site List Entry Number 1247927

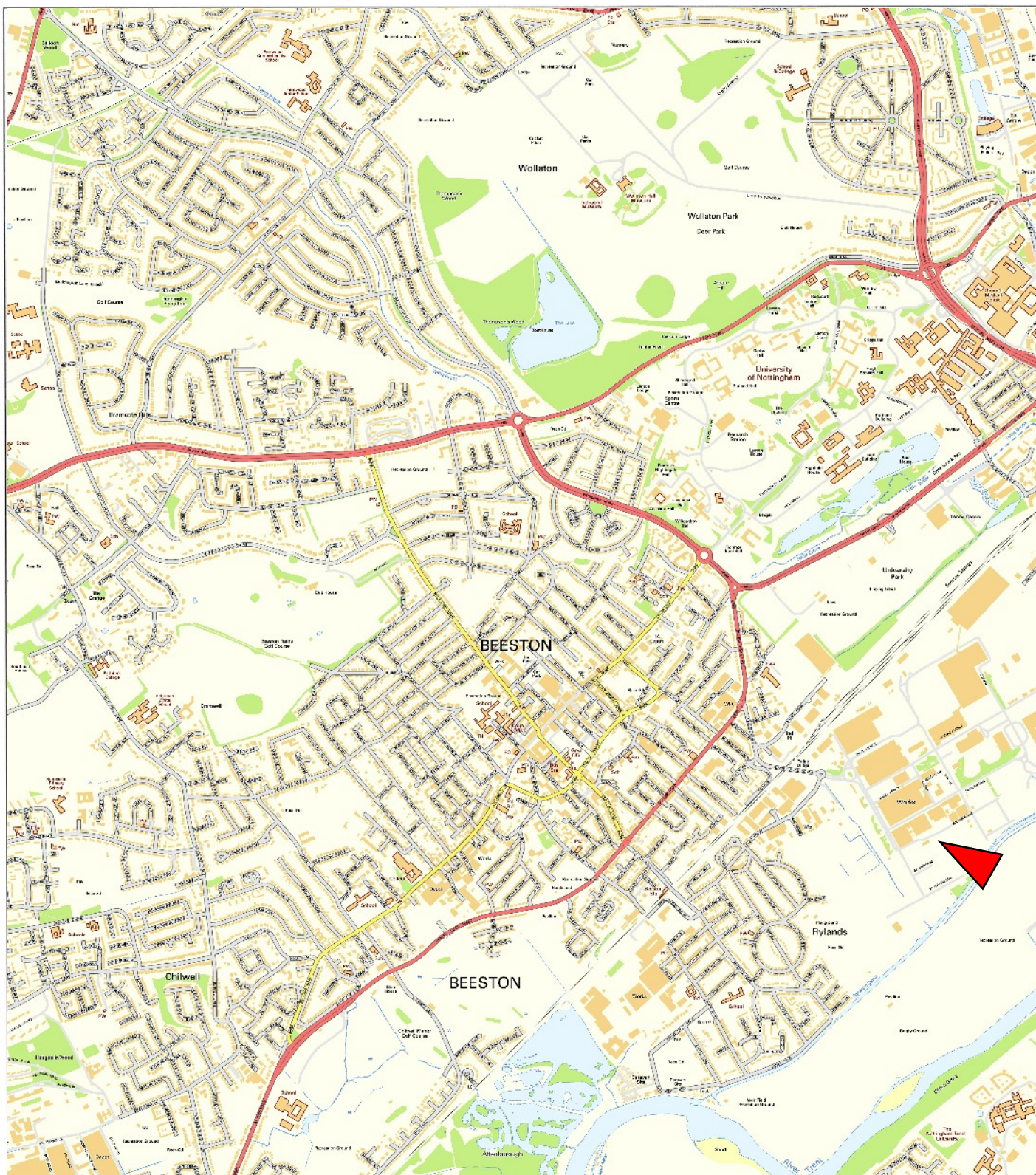
Historic England Building D34 at Boots Factory Site List Entry Number 1247933

Hurford, M., 2015 *Alliance Boots Campus, Beeston, Nottingham Former Factory D13. Historic Building Record Written Scheme of Investigation* Unpublished TPA Report 122/2015

Monkton, L. and Smith. P., 2009 Nottingham. The Creation of the City's Identity Characterisation Report, *EH Res Dep Rep Ser*, **22/2009**

Pevsner, N. and Williamson, E. 1979 *The Buildings of England Nottinghamshire*



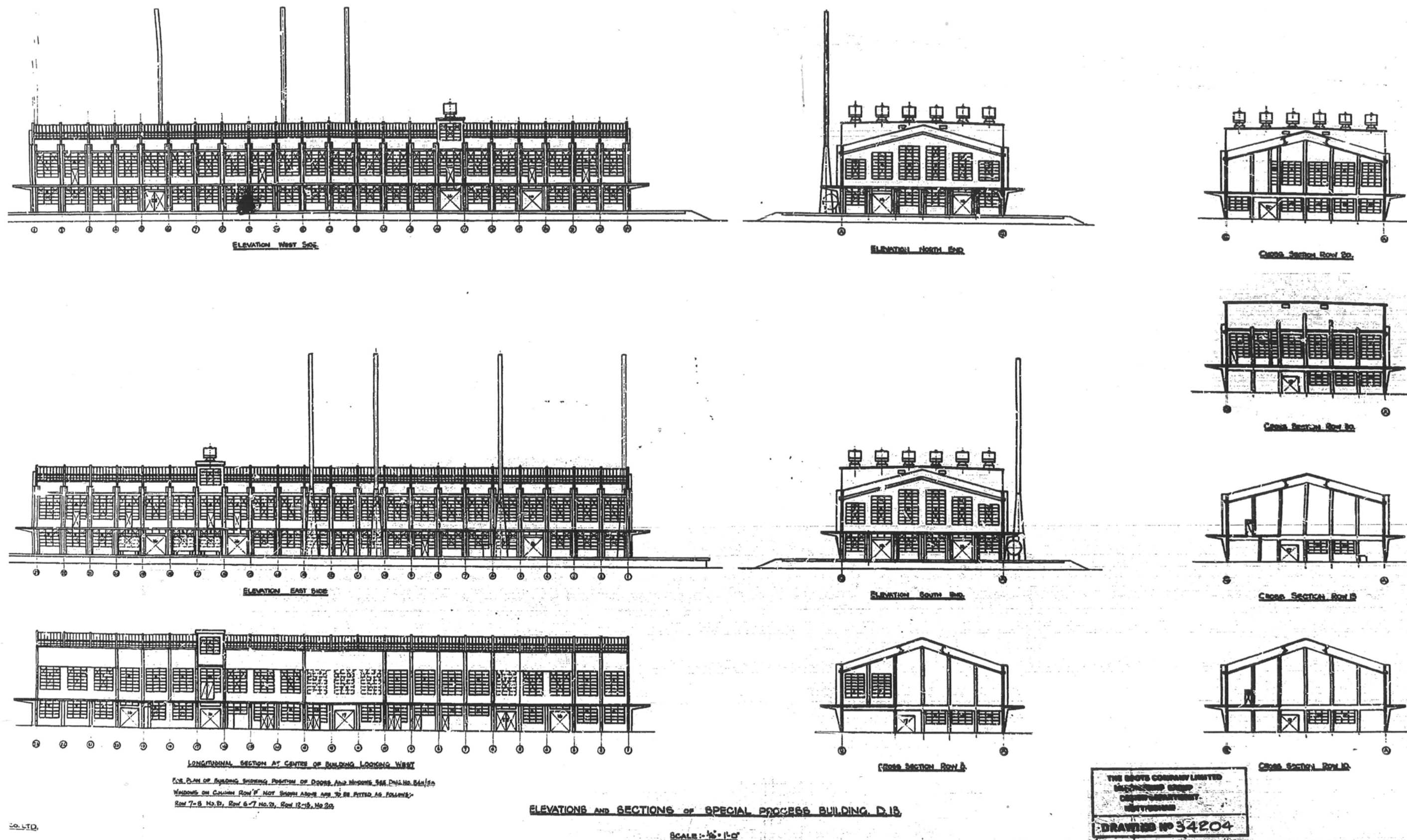




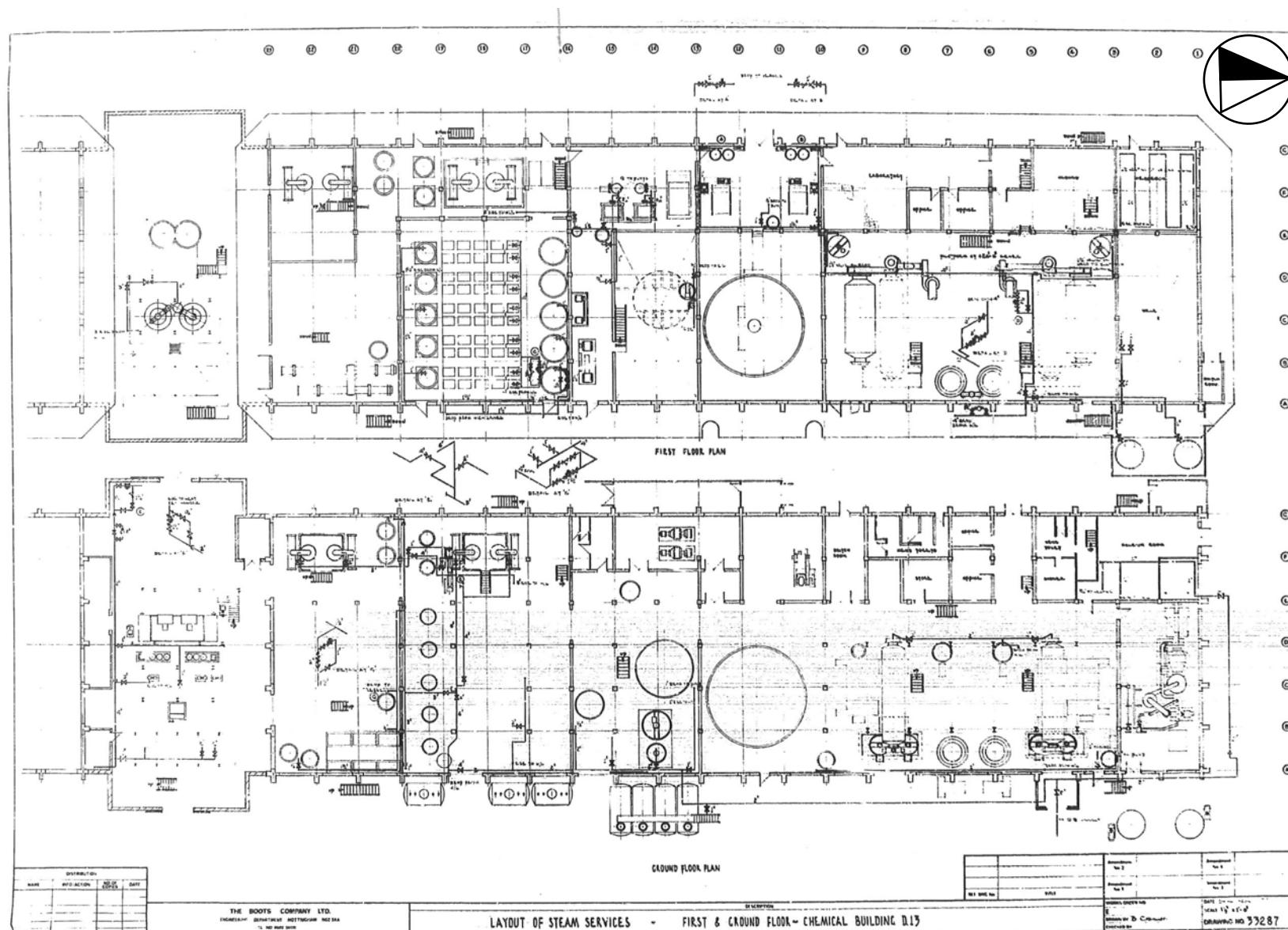


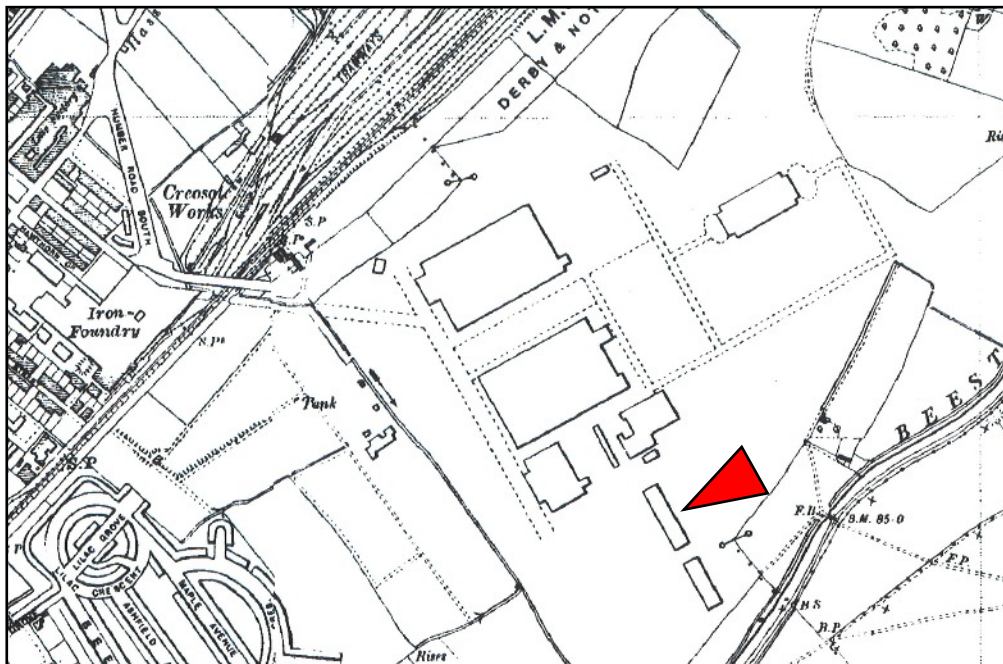
**Figure 2:** Site map of the Alliance Boots Campus with D13 indicated by the red arrow.  
Scale 1:25,00 at A4.  
Based on a map provided by the client.



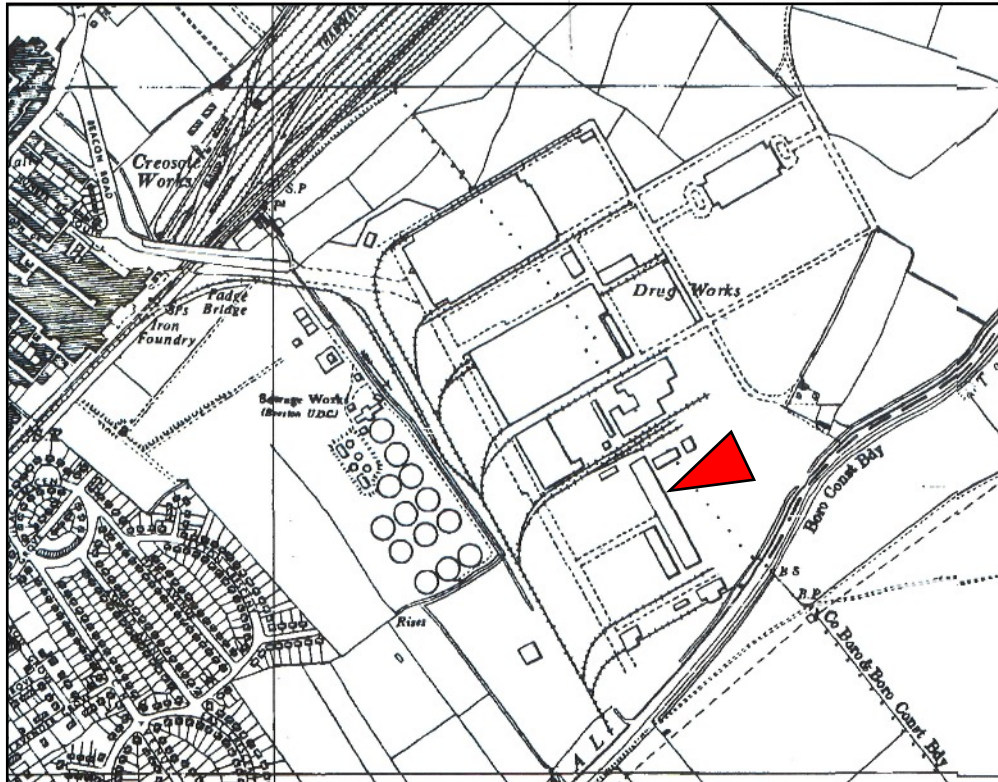






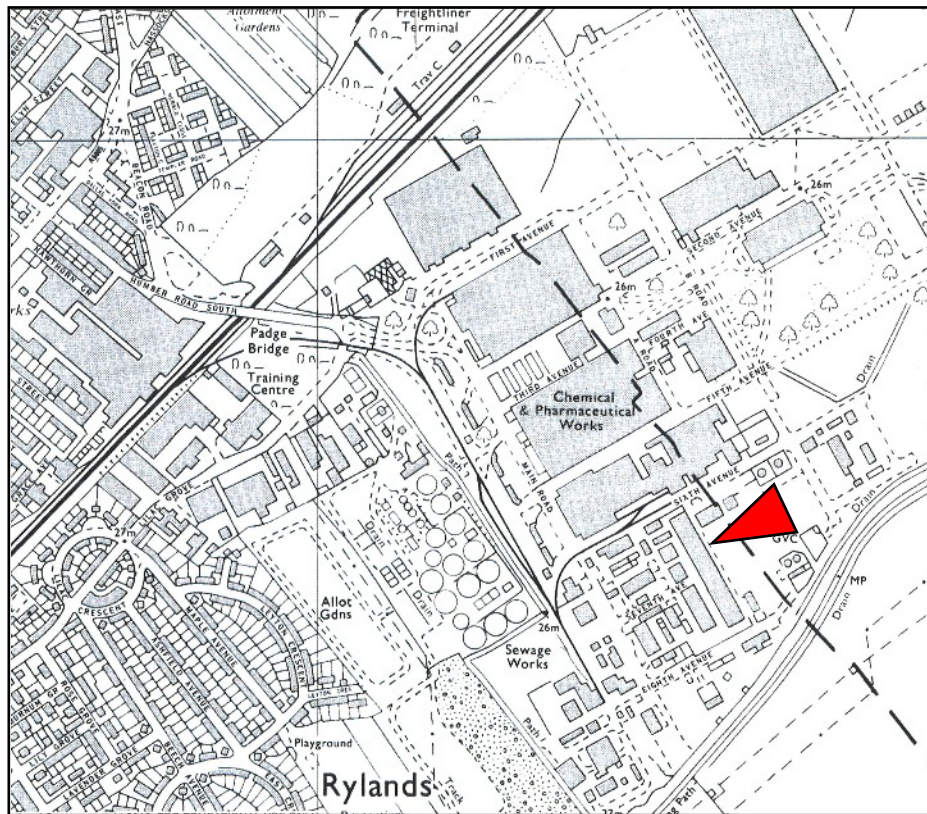


**Figure 5:** D13 depicted on the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1938.

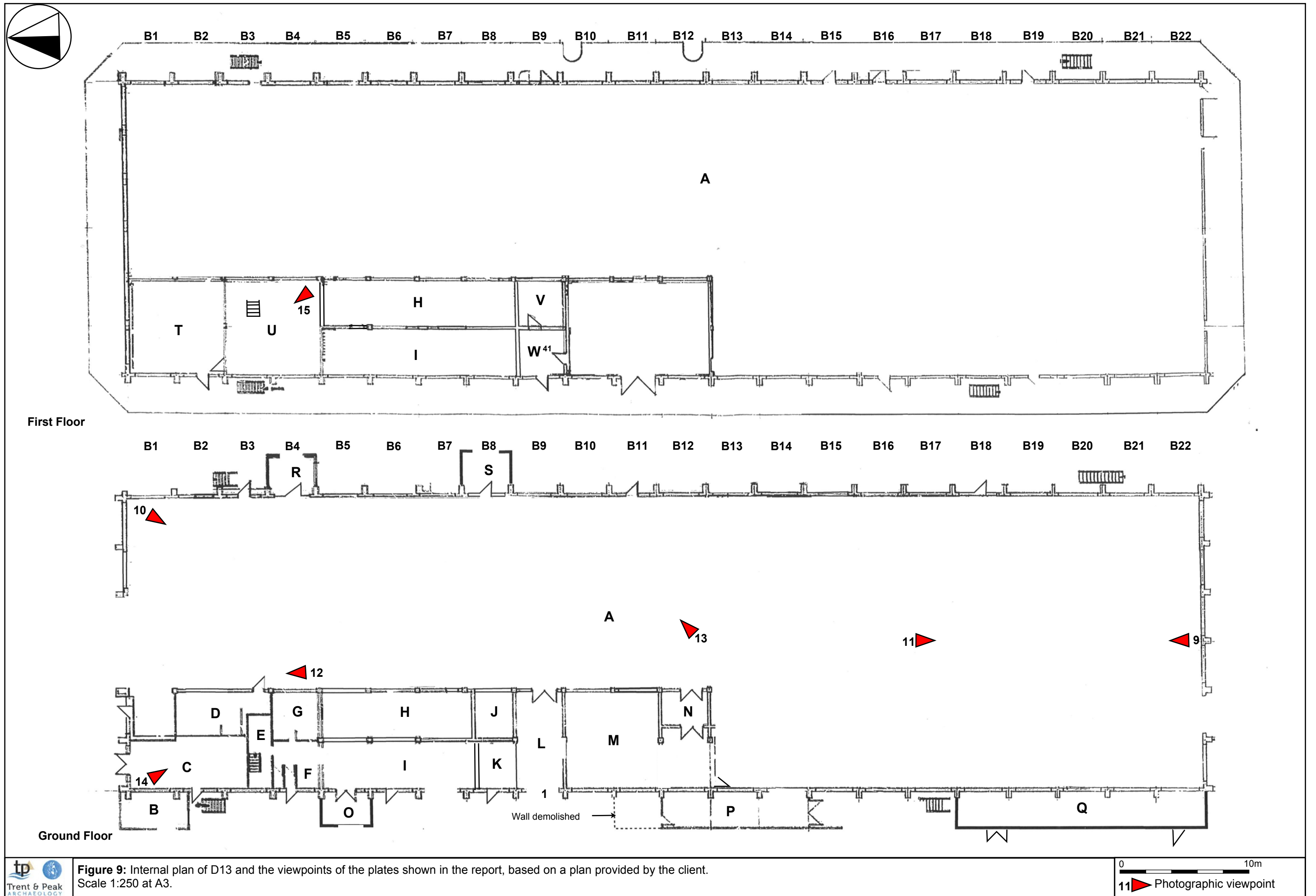


**Figure 6:** D13 depicted on the 25 inch scale Ordnance Survey map of 1955. Note that D13 has been joined to the building to the south.









**Figure 9:** Internal plan of D13 and the viewpoints of the plates shown in the report, based on a plan provided by the client.  
Scale 1:250 at A3.





**Plate 1:** D13 viewed looking south-east in 1938 (<https://www.architecture.com/RIBA25342.html>).



**Plate 2:** The west elevation and south gable, viewed looking north-east.





**Plate 3:** The east elevation, viewed looking north-west.



**Plate 4:** The north gable, viewed from the front of D20 looking south.





**Plate 5:** Detail of the cantilever beam support for the projecting floor band in Bay 20 on the east elevation, viewed looking north-west.



**Plate 6:** Detail of the stairs to the first floor band located in Bay 21 on the east elevation, viewed looking north-west.



**Plate 7:** Detail of Bays 15-16 on the west elevation, viewed looking west. Note the original windows above and the bricked in former windows below with later brick structure P to the north.



**Plate 8:** Brick structure B viewed from the north-east corner of D113 looking south-east.





**Plate 9:** General view of Room A from the centre of Bay 22, viewed looking north.



**Plate 10:** General view of Room A from north-east corner of Bay 1, viewed looking south-west.





**Plate 11:** General view of the south gable from the centre of Bay 17, viewed looking south.



**Plate 12:** General view of the north gable from the centre of Bay 4, viewed looking north.



**Plate 13:** Detail of the roof from Bay 14, viewed looking north-east.



**Plate 14:** General view of Room C, viewed looking east. Note the original concrete floor sections and ceiling beam.



**Plate 15:** General view of Room U, viewed looking north-west. Note the windows, raised concrete flooring, central wall section and stairwell which are all likely to date to 1938.

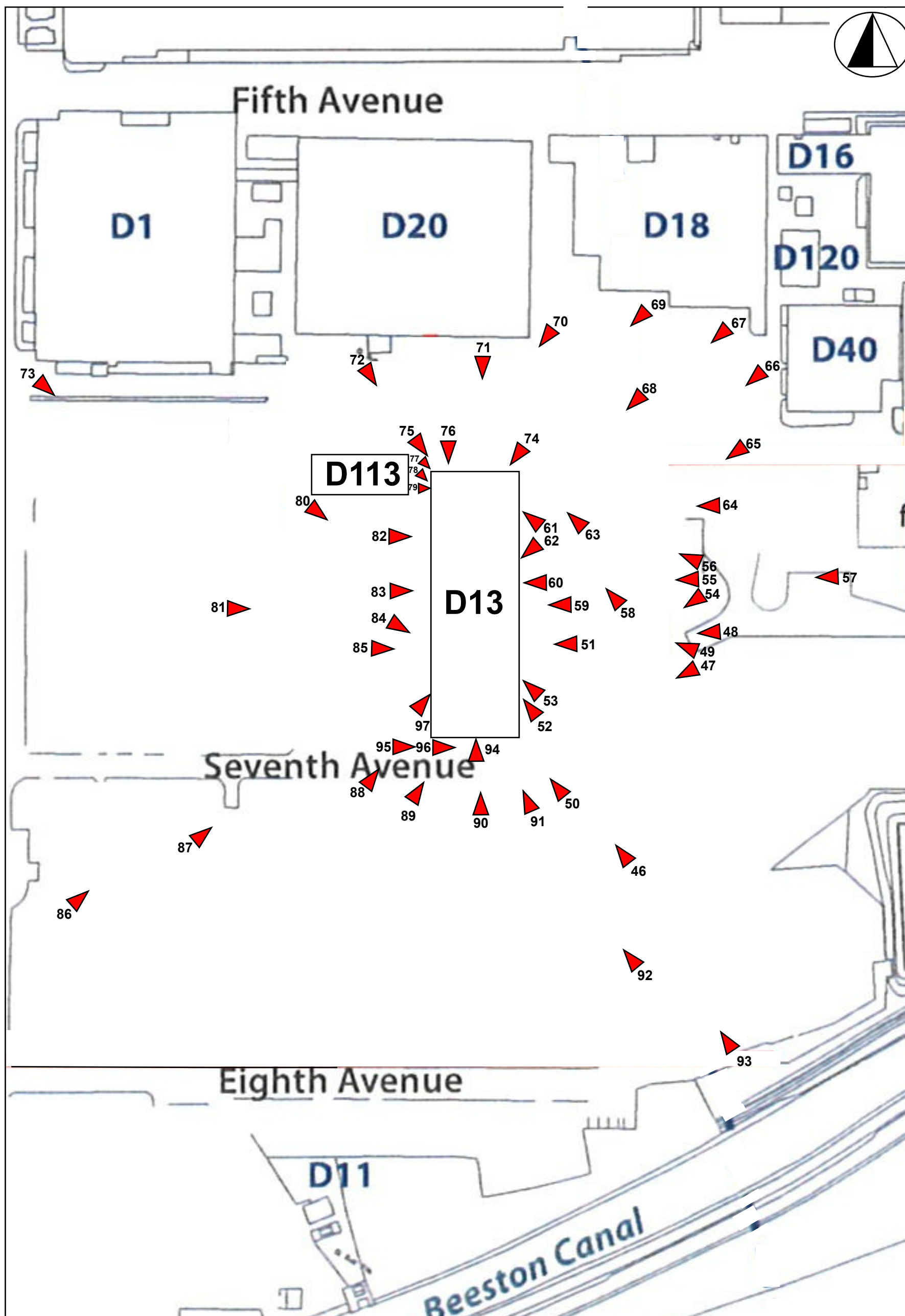


## 7. Archival Record

### Photo List

Photo No	Description	Viewed looking
<b>D13 Interior Ground Floor</b>		
1	Room L general view	East
2	Room A general view from south-west corner of Bay 22	North-east
3	Room A general view from centre of Bay 22	North
4	Room A general view from south-east corner of Bay 22	North-west
5	Room A doorway in east wall of Bay 18	East
6	Room A east wall detailed view	North-east
7	Room A west wall Bays 13-22 from Bay 17	West
8	Room A west wall Bay 16 from Bay 16	West
9	Room A south wall from Bay 17	South
10	Room A two storey section in north-west of factory from Bay 14	North
11	Room A roof detail from Bay 14	North-east
12	Room A south-east corner of two storey section in north-west of factory from Bay 14	North-west
13	Room M general view	North
14	Room A two storey section in north-west of factory Bays 7-12 from between Bay 10 and 11	West
15	Room A two storey section in north-west of factory Bays 1-9 from Bay 11	North-west
16	Room A two storey section in north-west of factory Bay 9 from Bay 9	West
17	Room A east wall Bays 1-11 from Bay 12	North-east
18	Room A east wall Bays 1-11 and north wall from Bay 12	North-east
19	Room A doorways in east wall in Bays 3 and 4 from Bay 3	East
20	Room A former openings into two storey section in the north-west of the factory Bays 1, 2, 3, and 4 from between bays 2 and 3	West
21	Room A north wall from Bay 4	North
22	Room A general view from north-east corner of Bay 1	South-west
23	Room A general view from centre of Bay 1	South
24	Room A general view from north-west corner of Bay 1	South-east
25	Room D general view	South
26	Room B general view	North-east
27	Room C general view	South-east
28	Room E general view	East
29	Room C general view	North-east
30	Room F general view	East
31	Room F general view	South-west
32	Room I general view	South
<b>D13 Interior First Floor</b>		
33	Room T general view	South-east
34	Room T general view	North-east
35	Room T west wall	West
36	Room T west wall window detail	West
37	Room U general view	South-east
38	Room U stairwell detail	West
39	Room U general view	South-west
40	Room U general view	North-west
41	Room W general view	North-east
42	Room W north wall	North
43	Room W exterior detail for Bay 10	North-east
44	General view through the building from first floor Bay 11	South-east
45	General view through the building from Room W	South

<b>D13 Exterior</b>		
46	South gable and east elevation	North-west
47	East elevation, southern half	South-west
48	East elevation	West
49	East elevation northern half	North-west
50	East elevation	North-west
51	East elevation Bay 16 detail	West
52	East elevation stairs Bay 21	North-west
53	East elevation Bay 20 balcony support detail	North-west
54	East elevation central and southern sections	South-west
55	East elevation central and northern sections	West
56	East elevation northern section	North-west
57	East elevation	West
58	East elevation Bays 1 to 10	North-west
59	East elevation Bays 9-16	West
60	East elevation first floor Bays 11-14	West
61	East elevation Bays 1-5 including brick structure Q	North-west
62	East elevation brick structure Q	South-west
63	East elevation bays 1-2 and steel work	North-west
64	East elevation north end Bays 1-12 and steel work	West
65	East elevation and steel work	South-west
66	East elevation with steel work in foreground from D40	South-west
67	East elevation with steel work in foreground from south-east corner of D18	South-west
68	East elevation with steel work in foreground from the front of D18 and D40	South-west
69	East elevation and north gable with steel work in foreground from the front of D18	South-west
70	North gable from between D18 and D20	South-west
71	North gable from the front of D20	South
72	North gable from the south-west corner of the shed abutting the front of front of D20	South-east
73	North gable and west elevation from the south-west corner of D1	South-east
74	North gable ground floor detail	South-west
75	North gable ground floor detail	South-east
76	North gable ground floor doorways	South
77	West elevation detail of brick structure B from north-east corner of D113	South-east
78	West elevation from north-east corner of D113	South-east
79	Brick structure B window detail	East
80	West elevation from south-west corner of D113	South-east
81	West elevation	East
82	West elevation Bays 4-8 inserted ground floor doors	East
83	West elevation Bays 8-12 inserted ground floor doors	South-east
84	West elevation brick structure P	East
85	West elevation Bays 15-17	East
86	West elevation and south gable	North-east
87	West elevation and south gable	North-east
88	West elevation from the south	North-east
89	South gable	North-east
90	South gable	North
91	South gable	North-west
92	South gable and east elevation	North-west
93	South gable and east elevation with Boots factory in the background	North-west
94	South gable door	North
95	South gable balcony supports and former steel supports for former building that extended to the south	East
96	South gable former steel supports for former building that extended to the south detail	East
97	West elevation from the south-west corner of the balcony	North-east



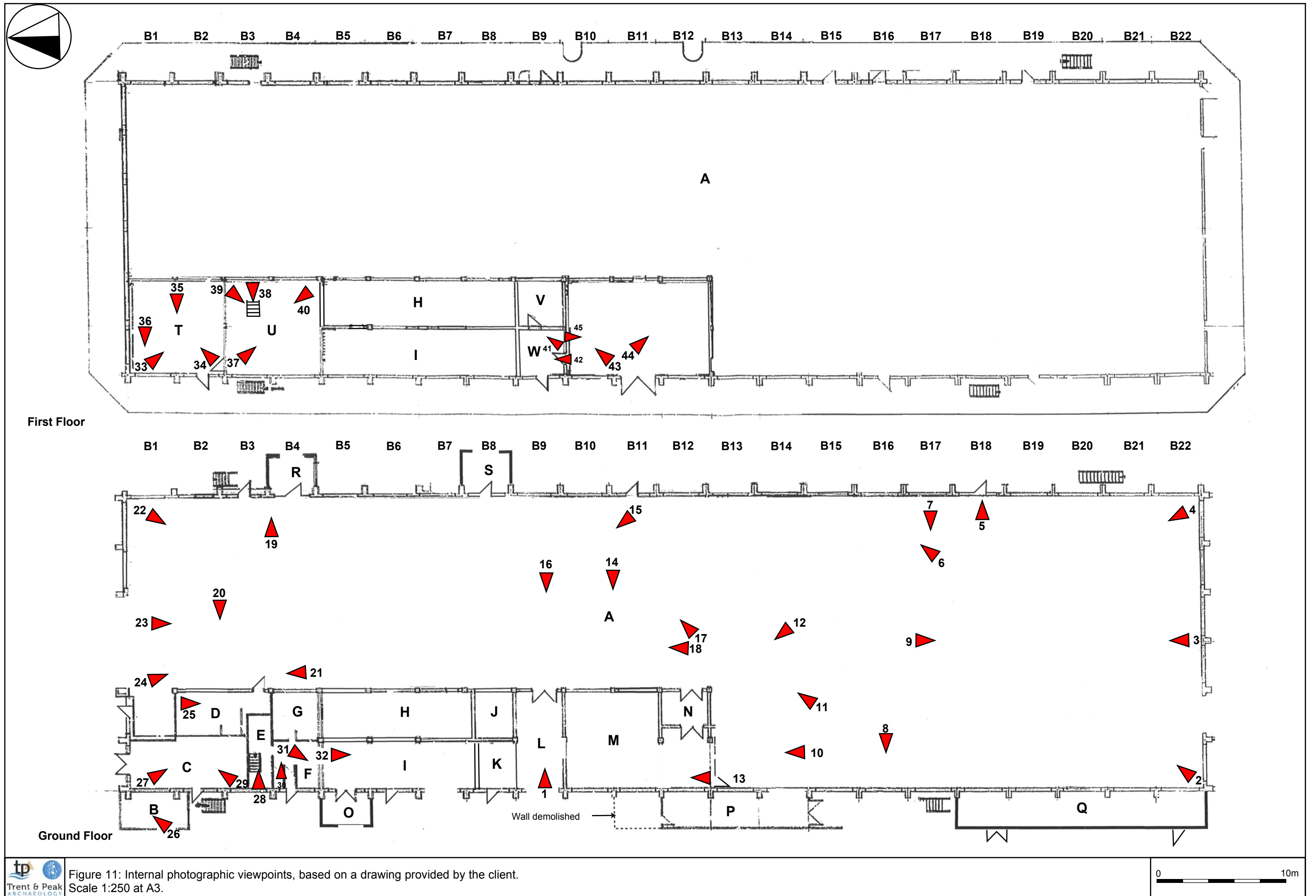


Figure 11: Internal photographic viewpoints, based on a drawing provided by the client.  
Scale 1:250 at A3.



