

**HISTORIC BUILDING
RECORDING OF
NO. 13 WATTS GROVE,
LONDON BOROUGH OF
TOWER HAMLETS,
E3 3RH**

SITE CODE: WGR15

PCA REPORT NO. R12094

MAY 2015



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**Historic Building Recording of No. 13 Watts Grove, London Borough of Tower Hamlets,
E3 3RH**

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Site Code: WGR15

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Central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: TQ 37536 81932

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DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

NO. 13 WATTS GROVE,
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E3 3RH

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

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1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mulalley and Company Limited to undertake a programme of historic building recording of No.13 Watts Grove, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, E3 3RH, prior to its demolition. The work was carried out in response to planning condition (10) for archaeological survey work attached to the planning permission (Ref. No: PA/14/02585) and on the advice of John Gould, the Historic England Greater London Archaeological Advisor to Tower Hamlets Council.
- 1.1.2 The historic building survey of the No.13 Watts Grove has shown that this small early 20th century industrial/office building was constructed by the Sanitas Company Limited, a locally based company in the Poplar/Bow area specialising in a wide range of disinfectant and soap based products. Its use by the Sanitas Company is clearly seen by an inscription with the company name on the stone entablature above the first floor windows and its construction date, evidenced by a date plaque reading '1914', integral to the ground floor Serlio window. This is further supported by the buildings inaugural appearance on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1921.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Mulalley and Company Limited to undertake a programme of historic building recording of no.13 Watts Grove, a former office building, built in 1914 by the Sanitas Company Limited, within the Watts Grove Depot Site. The survey was carried out prior to the demolition of no.13 Watts Grove and in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Watts Grove Depot Site to provide 148 new homes (planning ref: PA/14/02585). The building is not listed nor does it lie within a Conservation Area, although it is located at a short distance to the north of the Limehouse Cut Conservation Area. The development site is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TQ 37536 81932.
- 2.1.2 The historic building recording was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Matthews 2015) agreed in advance of the work by John Gould, the Historic England Greater London Archaeological Advisor to Tower Hamlets Council. The survey works are in accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance, specifically National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and the Local Planning Authority's adopted policy towards built heritage and archaeology.

2.2 Site Location and Description

- 2.2.1 No. 13 Watts Grove is located to the north-east of Limehouse and to the south of Bow Common. It lies within the Watts Grove Depot site, which until recently was partly in use by Veolia Environmental Services and, in the area of no.13 Watts Grove, by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Building Control (drainage). Watts Grove Depot has a gated entrance from Watts Grove immediately to the north of no. 13 Watts Grove. Watts Grove Depot is bounded by Watts Grove to the west, Yeo Street to the south and Glaucus Street to the east. The building is located at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TQ 37536 81932 and lies within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (**Figures 1 and 2**).
- 2.2.2 No.13 Watts Grove was built in 1914. It lies along the western side of the depot site and fronts onto Watts Grove to the west. The surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of commercial, industrial and residential buildings. No.13 Watts Grove sits directly opposite a five storey complex of apartments (Bilberry and Bramble House) built as part of the provision of council housing by London County Council. No.13 Watts Grove is a detached brick industrial building constructed on two storeys with single storey sections to the rear, parts of which appear to have been added at a later date. The main building has a shallow hipped roof with a parapet and four chimneys located along the perimeter walls. At the time of the recording, the building was disused and many of the window openings had been boarded-up.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 National legislation and guidance relating to the protection of historic buildings and structures within planning regulations is defined by the provisions of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. In addition, local planning authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system and policies for the historic environment are included in relevant regional and local plans.

3.2 Legislation and Planning Guidance

- 3.2.1 Statutory protection for historically important buildings and structures is derived from the *Planning (Listed and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Guidance on the approach of the planning authorities to development and historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and other elements of the historic environment is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was adopted on 27 March 2012 and the 2010 PPS5 Planning Policy Statement 5: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide.
- 3.2.2 Historic buildings are protected through the statutory systems for listing historic buildings and designating conservation areas. Listing is undertaken by the Secretary of State; designation of conservation areas and locally listed buildings is the responsibility of local planning authorities. The historic environment is protected through the development control system and, in the case of historic buildings and conservation areas, through the complementary systems of listed building and conservation area control.
- 3.2.3 Development also falls under the remit of the Mayor of London's London Plan [July 2011] which addresses Heritage, Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites and Protected sites. The core intent of the Mayors strategy in the London Plan is expressed as follows:

POLICY 7.8 HERITAGE ASSETS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.

Planning decisions

Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.

- 3.2.4 Planning permission (Ref. No: PA/14/02585) has been granted by Tower Hamlets Council for the 'Complete redevelopment consisting of the demolition of all buildings and structures on the Watts Grove Depot Site and associated areas of hardstanding to provide 148 new homes (flats and houses) in buildings of varied heights ranging

from three storeys to seven storeys'. An archaeological building recording condition (10) is attached to the consented scheme. The wording of the condition is as follows:

Condition 10:

Prior to the commencement of works on the substructure, the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority.

a) The implementation of a programme of archaeological and historic building recording in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

No development or demolition shall take place other than that which has been approved in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation as above.

b) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation Written Scheme of Investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (as approved) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The development of this site is likely to damage heritage assets of archaeological interest that may survive in this area. These measures should be taken to ensure the preservation of any finds or remains, in situ or by record, and subsequent analyses and dissemination of the results. This is in accordance with the recommendations of the NPPF 2012, policy SP10 of the Adopted Core Strategy 2010, policy DM27 of the Managing Development 2013.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Aims and Objectives

- 4.1.1 The aim of the building recording as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation was to provide a record of no. 13 Watts Grove prior to its demolition. The purpose was to clarify the historic and structural development of the building. This record was to be made in accordance with a Level 3 survey as defined in English Heritage (2006). *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. The aim was to provide a better understanding of the building and to compile a lasting record, to analyse the results and to disseminate these results.

4.2 Documentary Research

- 4.2.1 A search of relevant primary sources was carried out at the Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives. The results of historical research are provided in Section 5 of this report.

4.3 On-Site Recording

- 4.3.1 The historic building recording was carried out on the 20th and 21st April 2015. Scaled plans of the building, compiled on site, have been used as a basis for the illustrations in this report (**Figures 11 and 12**).
- 4.3.2 A photographic survey comprising high quality digital images was completed to record, key features and interior spaces. The photographic survey also recorded the external elevations of the No. 13 and adjacent buildings to place the building in context with its immediate environs. A selection of photographs (**Plates 1 to 34**) has been included in this report and **Figures 11 and 12** show the location and direction of these photographs.

4.4 Project Archive

- 4.4.1 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited in Brockley, London, under the site code WGR15. It is anticipated that the archive (copies of the report, drawings and photographs) will be lodged with the LAARC (London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre). The report will be prepared as soon as possible after completion of the on-site work and will be submitted to the client, the GLHER (Greater London Historic Environment Record) and Tower Hamlets Council.

4.5 Guidance

- 4.5.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with standards set out in:
- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (1997) *Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and control of works to historic buildings*
 - British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group (1986) *Code of Practice*
 - British Standards Institution (1998) *Guide to the Principals of the Conservation of Historic Buildings (BS 7913)*
 - ClfA (2014) *Standards and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*
 - English Heritage (Clark, K.) (2001) *Informed Conservation: Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*,
 - English Heritage (2000) *The presentation of historic building survey in CAD*
 - English Heritage (2006) *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*

- Historic England 2015 Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London
Archaeological Advisory Service

5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1.1 The building is primarily dated by the date plaque of 1914 set in relief within the tympanum of the ground floor window to the facade (**Plates 1 to 4**). This date concurs with the cartographic evidence, as the building is first shown on the map extract of 1921 (**Figure 4**) and not on the previous Ordnance Survey map of 1893 (**Figure 3**).
- 5.1.2 The 1893 and 1921 extracts (sheet VIII.51) (**Figures 3 and 4**) show that the present Watts Grove was formerly named Weston Street (until around 1937). The 1893 map shows a Soap Works, Tallow and Bone Works, Oil Store and Paint and Colour Works at the south end of the Watts Grove Depot site. The Phoenix Printing Ink Works lie to the east of a terrace of seven houses (**Figure 3**).
- 5.1.3 No. 13 Watts Grove is shown for the first time on the 1921 map in its current location and with a similar building footprint (**Figure 4**). It is neither annotated by name or number on this extract, although it clearly lies within an area dominated by industrial activities, lying close to the wharfs and industry focused along the route of the Limehouse Cut to the south. The soap works shown on the 1893 map in the south-east corner of the site are labelled 'Cooling Towers' on the 1921 map. A large building was built between 1893 and 1921 to the east of no. 13 Watts Grove and this was presumably the soap works connected with no. 13 perhaps moved from the south-east corner of the site. The subject building abuts the short terrace of seven houses, probably industrial workers housing, to the south shown on the 1893 map. The Poplar (Borough) slipper baths and public washhouse and the Poplar (Borough) stone yard were added between 1893 and 1921. The Phoenix Printing Ink Works, Tallow and Bone Works, Oil Store are still extant in 1921.
- 5.1.4 Kellys Trade Directory of 1919 records the Sanitas Company Limited in Limehouse. The full description reads: 'Sanitas Company Ltd (The) C.T Kinsett F.I.C, F.C.S Chairman and Governing Director, & N.F. Kinsett, sec. Manufacturers of Sanitas Disinfecting Antiseptic, Deodorant & toilet fluids, powders and soaps. Offices and Works'. This directory also records a varnish manufacturer, Langston Jones and Samuel Smith, and The London Thorium Company (used to make Thorium Nitrate for gas mantles) along Weston Street. It also lists two large coal-fired electricity power stations: one adjacent to Hollidays Wharf on Limehouse Cut to the south and the other east of Glaucus Street. The impression is an area of chemical based industries and manufacturing. The next trade directory in 1920 also records George Broome and Fairbrother, Nitric acid works and Harry Michael Blewitt and Sons, rag merchants.
- 5.1.5 The Ordnance Survey map for 1937 (sheet VIII.51) (**Figure 5**) shows Weston Street as Watts Grove. This map labels the subject building '13a' with the terrace of houses to the south labelled '14', '15', '16', '17', '17a', '18' and '19'. Nos 1 to 12 on the west side of Weston Road (Watts Grove) and shown on the 1921 map (**Figure 4**) had been demolished by 1937 to make way for a London County Council housing estate. The Borough stone yard and a Borough 'Waste' Destructor depot lay to the east of 14 to 19 Watts Grove and were accessed from Glaucus Street. The slipper baths are still shown to the south on the 1937 map. By 1937, the former Britannia rubber works to the north of the site had passed into local authority ownership and the site was renamed Sumner House. Interestingly, by 1932, the Sanitas Company, still specialising in disinfectant manufacture, relocated its works and office from Limehouse to No. 51 Clapham Road (SW9). They expended their interests at the Clapham Road site, until the mid 1970s when the company relocated to Sanitas House in Stockwell Green (SW9) and expanded into Europe with facilities in Copenhagen. It seems likely (due to no contrary information) that No.13 Watts Grove passed into in local authority hands after Sanitas relocated in 1932.
- 5.1.6 The London ARP bomb census maps does not record any high explosive or incendiary bombing incidents either on or close to the site, with the closest

occurrences detailed approximately 100m to the south-west during the early 'Blitz' period. Numerous further incidents were recorded in the wider area, but at significant distances from the site (BACTEC, 2012).

- 5.1.7 The next Ordnance Survey map of 1962 (TQ3781NE) (**Figure 6**) shows little change to the general area around Watts Grove. The footprint of No.13 had changed slightly with the addition of a small rear extension projecting south. The stone yard, still under local authority control, is now referred to as the Corporation Yard whilst the slipper baths, unsurprisingly by this date, appear to be no longer in use. The Kellys Trade Directory of 1940 first records the Poplar (Borough) garage along the east side of Watts Grove and by 1943 the Poplar Electricity Works, later the London Electricity Board (LEB). The Poplar Metropolitan Borough Council operated under an Electric Lighting Order of 1893 and commenced supply in 1900, with generating stations set up at Glaucus Street and Watts Grove. By 1948 the industry was nationalised and the London Electricity Board, responsible for the supply of electricity to both industry and on a domestic level, brought together a large number of companies which had developed in a piecemeal fashion since the 1880s.
- 5.1.8 The map of 1974 (**Figure 7**) shows the loss of the Glaucus Street power station, demolished in 1961 and then large works at Watts Grove to the south. The site and adjacent buildings have changed little, the yard to the east still in use by the local authority (Tower Hamlets) as the corporation yard. The buildings immediately east of no. 13 Watts Grove form part of the local authority garage, accessed via the entrance from Watts Grove adjacent to no.13. The decline of large manufacturing industries in the area, exacerbated by the damage caused during World War Two and the decline of the entire London Dock system and nearby Tilbury Docks, is manifest in the character of the operations along Watts Grove by the 1970s, with Traffic Services and Plant and Transport businesses.
- 5.1.9 The next map extract of 1986 (**Figure 8**) shows the extensive demolition of the former local authority buildings within the former corporation yard and the slipper baths to the south. No. 13 Watts Grove remains isolated along the western side of the former yard, arguing for its continued usefulness as an office and accommodation. The latest map of 1996 (**Figure 9**) shows the present Veolia Buildings to the south and east, constructed or adapted after the mid 1980s and no. 13 Watts Grove. The building at no. 13 Watts Grove was latterly in use by the Tower Hamlets Environment Department.

6 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Matthews, 2015) required the analysis and detailed recording, equivalent to an English Heritage Level 3 survey, of no. 13 Watts Grove, prior to its demolition. This record was to comprise a detailed drawn, photographic and descriptive survey of the building.
- 6.1.2 The following descriptive text provides objective information on no.13 Watts Grove at the time of the survey (20th and 21st April 2015). Description and interpretation of the building, its original spatial and functional layout is based on information gathered during the fieldwork, analysis of the building fabric and from documentary information.
- 6.1.3 For ease of description, each significant internal space/room has been given an individual identifying number pre-fixed with either G or F representing Ground floor or First floor (**Figures 11 and 12**).

6.2 General External Descriptions

- 6.2.1 The building which forms the focus of the survey work was constructed in 1914 and was built in brick over two storeys with smaller, flat and hipped roofed, single storey ranges projecting to the rear (east). No. 13 Watts Grove survives as a free standing structure constructed with its principal west-facing elevation fronting onto Watts Grove. The main two-storey range is laid out to an L shaped plan, returning eastward at the southern end. This overshadows single storey, hipped and flat roofed parts of the building which project to the rear (east) and were built at the same time although some were later additions. The principal two storey range (apart from a later pent roofed first floor extension) was built with a brick parapet wall, concealing a low pitched and hipped, slate covered roof structure.
- 6.2.2 The principal (more visible) west facing elevation and its return elevation to the north are constructed using better quality red brickwork while most of the rear elevations are built using lesser quality yellow London stock bricks. The southern elevation is concealed by a covering of rough-cast cement render, added following the demolition between 1937 and 1962 of the former terrace to the south (**Figures 5 and 6; Plate 13**). Later additions are few but were built using either yellow stock bricks or Fletton brickwork.

Western Principal Elevation (Plates 1 to 5)

- 6.2.3 The western elevation is laid out over two storeys and a 3:2 window range on both floors (**Plates 1 and 2**). The elevation is relatively symmetrical, with larger window openings of three lights or paired window openings, set in line in both the vertical and horizontal axis. The only entrance from Watts Grove is positioned off-centre to the facade, probably as a consequence of the larger fenestration lighting the northern part.
- 6.2.4 The elevation is relatively plain and built using pointed red brickwork laid in Flemish bond. The bricks, measuring 225mm x 65mm x 105mm are fixed using a hard cement mortar and flush pointing. The lower 23 (visible) brick courses of the main elevation, including the brick mullions to the windows, were built using harder wearing, red glazed terracotta bricks, while the brick treatment above, up to the level of a concrete fascia or entablature, uses a much plainer smooth faced red brick, also laid in Flemish bond. The entablature, which extends the full width of the facade above the first floor windows is inscribed with THE SANITAS COMPANY LIMITED in plain capital lettering (**Plate 5**). The stone entablature, symbolically supported by the 'columns' of the brick mullions to the first floor windows, is bordered by an over-sailing band to the soffit and a more prominent over-sailing moulded cornice above and at the junction of the brick parapet. The latter is capped by a plain concrete coping course. This accentuation of the horizontal, is further repeated at first floor

level with the inclusion of a narrow, stone sill band, picking up the line of the stone sills of the first floor windows. This banding (which wraps around the northern elevation) is not repeated on the ground floor windows, which also comprise concrete sills. The window openings are mainly tall and rectangular with joinery set back from the wall plane. The first floor windows use concealed lintels (built behind the entablature) while the ground floor windows have depressed flat arches in gauged brickwork. The northern window at ground floor level is much more elaborate, adopting a Serlio architectural motif, with a taller central arched opening flanked by lower flat headed openings (**Plate 4**). A date plaque of 1914 is set in relief within a rough cast tympanum to the central arch.

- 6.2.5 The brickwork of contrasting glazed and red brick is also present within the adjoining gated entry and depot compound wall to the north (**Plate 3**). The latter includes a decorative stone coping to the southern post (northern coping missing) and a stylobate, to protect the north-western angle, at the base of the wall.

Northern Elevations (Plates 6 to 9)

- 6.2.6 The northern elevation of the front two storey range corresponds with the detailing described for the facade, with the lower courses of brickwork faced in glazed brick, a plain stone first floor band and a continuation of the entablature and cornice at the eaves line (**Plates 6 and 7**). It is built blind at first floor level but includes a window and door openings to ground floor. Both openings have flat arches with gauged brick voussoirs, the door opening also incorporating a rectangular stained glass light (latterly boarded). A single storey, red brick, hipped roofed range extends to the rear (east) of the two storey building (**Plate 8**). It was built at the same time as the front two storey building using corresponding brickwork, in Flemish bond and includes a pair of tall window openings, with gauged brick flat heads. Both have concrete sills and horned sash windows set back a half brick from the wall plane. A simple brick band is present at the eaves junction and queen closers are correctly used at angles and openings.
- 6.2.7 A flat roofed, single storey, yellow stock brick range adjoins the hipped roof part along its eastern wall (**Plate 9**) and was built at the same time as the front two storey building. This more utilitarian building includes a pair of window openings flanking a central door opening, all using flat gauged red brick heads, along its northern elevation. The yellow stock brick of the walls corresponds in size (225mm x 65mm x 105mm) to the red brick used elsewhere and is built using the same hard cement mortar in Flemish bond. A moulded (cyma-recta) edge or cornice to the concrete roof slab projects out over the wall line and above the voussoirs of the three openings. The latter all have later replacement joinery.

Eastern Rear Elevation (Plates 10 to 12)

- 6.2.8 The eastern rear elevations comprised a composite of single and two storey ranges with a mixture of flat, hipped and pent roofs (**Plate 10**). The rear elevations of the two-storey front range were built using lower quality yellow stock brick, but included contrasting red brick gauged heads for the window and door openings. Red brick was also used as a decorative feature in banding and over-sailing courses to the chimney stacks. The chimneys projected as in-wall stacks through the parapets of the south and east walls. The use of yellow brick extended to the rear (easternmost) flat roof range, the roof of which was latterly re-used as a garden or sun terrace (with safety balustrade) to the first floor accommodation. The openings within this flat roofed unit were, unlike those of the main building, later insertions, created using simple rough brick heads in matching yellow stock brick. The fenestration comprised simple metal framed windows with reinforced obscure glazing (Georgian wire twist) and top hung ventilators.
- 6.2.9 The moulded concrete edging or cornice to the roof slab extended around the entire circumference of the flat roof and continued, in the same form, along the rear south facing elevation (of room G10; **Figure 11; Plate 11**) of the now two-storey range. At this point the moulded band marked the full extent and height of the original rear

single storey part of the building, which were clearly later overbuilt with the addition of the first floor pent roofed extension (room F7; **Figure 12**). This later addition was clearly a variant to the original build, using less refined brickwork, with simpler red brick segmental voussoirs of on-edge brickwork to the openings. It also involved the partial adaptation and narrowing of an original rear bedroom window to light (room F5; **Plate 12**), the latter an internal reworking. It is interesting that the sash windows of this later extension and those of the original building are identical. Therefore either the new windows were sourced from the same/original supplier (as a standard sash window), suggesting this extension was added not too long after 1914 or that windows in the altered part of the original building were reused.

- 6.2.10 The most recent (post-war) addition was a shallow pent roofed single storey extension (store) added along the southern side of the rear flat roofed unit. It was built in Fletton brick laid in stretcher bond and was roofed using corrugated asbestos-cement sheeting. Access was from the yard only. It was lit by a single metal-framed window of eight panes.

6.2.11 Internal Descriptions

Ground Floor

- 6.2.12 The original main two-storey range comprises three principal ground floor rooms (G1 to G3) and staircase/hall G5 and four main first floor rooms (F1, F2, F3, F4/5) and staircase/landing F6 (**Figures 11 and 12**). Kitchen F7 is a slightly later addition built off the pre-existing walls of room G10, itself part of a flat roofed rear unit comprising (G6 to G8 and G11). Access into the main building is via two principal entrances, one off Watts Grove, giving sole access, through hall G5, to the apartment accommodation at first floor level, or via the door opening in the north elevation to the yard/works and from hall G12 into rooms G2 and G4.

Former Office G1 (Plates 14 and 15)

- 6.2.13 Former office G1 is located within the southern part of the building, to the south of the central entrance hall G5 and adjacent to the Watts Grove elevation. It is broadly L-shaped in plan, as it incorporates a former passage along its northern side (**Figure 11**). The route of this narrow passage, originally connecting the front door from Watts Grove with rooms G1 and G3 is apparent by the presence of a downstand (representing a removed wall) set parallel with the stairwell (**Plate 15**). It was blocked off at the western end by a return wall with a crudely formed chamfer to the corner.
- 6.2.14 The decorative treatment to room G1 is typical of the principal ground floor rooms, with a wide plaster cornice and moulded banding to ceiling, circumventing the room, but only to the downstand to the north. This shows that the original room was broadly square in plan, probably accessed via an opening within the removed wall. Other decorative features to the walls include a moulded softwood picture rail and a 7 inch high skirting board. The latter, which has a half rounded and beaded top, is seen throughout the building and clearly is an original feature.
- 6.2.15 A chimney breast lies central to and projects out from the southern wall (**Plate 14**). A paint scar shows that until recently, a cast-iron fireplace, probably identical to the example still extant in room G3 (**Plates 18 and 19**), was also present. Analysis of the opening to the fireplace suggests that this fireplace may have been a later introduction as the large opening had been rebuilt in brick to improve draught and to receive the cast-iron surround.
- 6.2.16 The two window openings in the west wall were not visible as they had been boarded over when the present shelving was installed. However the original moulded window architraves and sills remained. All manufactured in softwood, they echoed the general reserved theme of half-round and beaded motif.

Former Office G2 (Plate 16)

- 6.2.17 Room G2, latterly used by the Local Authority Drainage Department as a locker/mess room, occupied the opposite space to room G1 but to the north of entrance hall G5.

Whilst it is broadly of similar dimension, alterations to the access from Watts Grove, entailed the addition of a section of north-west canted wall along its southern side (**Figure 11**). This canted wall abuts the western flank wall and the southernmost mullion of the large Serlio window, central to the west wall. This wall cuts off room G2 from entrance hall G5 and provides light, via the southernmost light of the Serlio window into entrance hall G5.

- 6.2.18 The Serlio window, of which the wider central and narrower northern lights are visible in room G2 comprises a mixture of 6 over 6 or 4 over 4 top hung sash windows on cords. The central light comprises a pair of 4 over 4 sashes, each set either side of a timber mullion. The sashes have both internal and external horns, with simple cavetto to the inner and a more elaborate shaped horn to the exterior. The window panes measure 10 x 13¾ inch and held by glazing bars with an internal ovolo detail. The window architraves adopt the typical shallow half round mould also used on skirting boards and door architraves. The window sill is plain and continuous to both openings but incorporates a shallow moulded apron. The plaster cornice is identical to that in room G1, although appears to have been remoulded along the canted wall line (**Plate 16**). The ceiling, where visible, was lath and plaster.
- 6.2.19 The 9 inch skirting boards, though of similar design are taller in this room than those generally seen elsewhere. This together with the larger Serlio window may suggest room G2 was a higher status room. The chimney breast was located along the internal east wall. Whilst the fireplace/surround had been removed and blocked, the hearth, comprising small, black, 3 inch tiles survived.

Small lobby G12 (Plate 17)

- 6.2.20 A small lobby G12 adjacent to the side entrance was built at the same time as the rest of the building, as evidenced by the use of the same style of skirting boards, similar moulded decoration to the ceiling and typical door architraves. This area also included short lengths of moulded dado rail to the walls and an ornate Arts and Craft style stained glass panel to the door light (**Plate 17**).

Former Office G3 (Plates 18 and 19)

- 6.2.21 Former Office G3 lay on the east (rear) side of the building. It could be accessed from room G1 and from the rear part of the building via room G10. The treatment to the walls of this room was less ornate, with no evidence of a cornice, picture rail or dado, but it did incorporate a typical 7 inch skirting board. The floor was laid with a hard wearing oak herringbone parquet floor (suggesting non-domestic use), overlain by modern tiles.
- 6.2.22 The chimney breast and fireplace, as in room G1 were set against the southern flank wall (**Plate 18**). The recesses to each side of the chimney breast were either boxed in (east) or re-used for a tall built-in cupboard (west). The latter used plain panelled softwood doors and was internally shelved. The cast-iron surround to the fireplace in part survived (although detached from the wall). It was adorned with a simple relatively plain design of vertical fluted bands and a plain basket-weave panel (**Plate 19**).

Room G4 (Plates 20 and 21)

- 6.2.23 Room G4 lay outside the two storey range and within the single storey hipped roof unit to the east. It could be accessed directly via small lobby G12 (**Plate 20**) or indirectly from the rear utility range. The room decor was typical of that already described with a standard plaster cornice, skirting, picture rail and a dado rail. Sections of the picture rail and dado were missing, although neither survived along the eastern wall (to room G11). This is because the bulk of this wall had been removed and replaced with a much lighter half brick thick partition wall with a metal-framed fixed glazed window, providing borrowed light to room G11. This lighter wall is characteristically similar to those internal partition walls to rooms G6 to G8 suggesting that this more functional less ornate, insertion marks a change to a more utilitarian function for this area.

- 6.2.24 The chimney breast and fireplace in room G4 is set against the south wall (**Plates 20 and 21**). The original fireplace has been removed and a smaller brick built fireplace, with an Art Deco like stepped decoration to the opening, added. The corresponding cast-iron grate has gone but the ceramic fire back and stones remain. The mantel shelf is very plain. The room is lit by a pair of original 6 over 6 sashes of typical horned design, remaining within their original surround and architrave.

Entrance Hall G5 (Plates 22 and 23)

- 6.2.25 This area has clearly been spatially much altered in association with changes in internal use and access to the first floor rooms. At present internal access to the first floor is only available via this stairwell from the Watts Grove entrance. It appears, given the scar of a removed wall in the parquet floor in room G5 that originally no direct access between the main entrance and the stair was possible. This could only be achieved via room G2 before it was blocked off with the introduction of the canted wall.
- 6.2.26 Lit by the southernmost light of the Serlio, which comprised a typical 6 over 6 sash window, hall G5 was an awkward space that was rather constrained toward the foot of the stairs, where the lobby walls 'chamfered' southward to meet the staircase. Decorative plaster stops adorned this narrow opening to the staircase (**Plate 22**). The latter was a straight, closed riser stair with a quarter-winder to the landing. Built in softwood with prominent nosings to the treads, the stair also incorporated two storey height newel posts, one towards the base and one at the fulcrum of the quarter winder.
- 6.2.27 The ceilings to hall G5 employed the typical cornice treatment, although this appeared to have been reworked along the line of the canted wall (**Plate 23**). This was also the case with the 7 inch skirting boards, which were not totally consistent. The floor to the entrance hall comprised hard wearing oak parquet (as in room G3), interrupted along the line of a removed wall central to hall G5. The original door to the main entrance had latterly been replaced with a security door and the door light above, with plain clear security glass.

Utility Rooms G6 to G8 and G10 (Plates 24 and 25)

- 6.2.28 Rooms G6 to G8 were a series of three utility rooms within the flat roofed rear (east) section of the building (**Figure 11**). All had wall plastered walls (internal partition walls were half brick thick) with no decorative treatment and hard wearing diamond pattern quarry tiled floors. Room G6 included three openings, an original door and window opening to the north wall, the latter with an ornate architrave, and a much plainer inserted metal framed window to the east (**Plate 24**). The adjacent room G7 was used as a toilet, again lit by an inserted metal framed window, while room G8, probably a store or a former toilet, was lit by a small original casement in its south wall. The panelled door and architrave to room G8 were also original features.
- 6.2.29 The decorative treatment to the present kitchen area G10 was also very plain, with unadorned walls and simple plank-like skirting boards. The ceiling was rough cast 'artex' and the floor covered in modern linoleum. Whilst the sash window to the south wall had latterly been blocked the window architrave and door architraves to the yard and door to room G3 were all original (**Plate 25**). A modern 'flat pack' kitchen unit with sink was present along the eastern and southern walls.

First Floor

- 6.2.30 The only internal access to the first floor was via the central stair, accessed solely from the Watts Grove entrance (**Figures 11 and 12**). This limited/sole access argues that the first floor was segregated-off as a self-contained apartment/flat. It comprises three main rooms along the western flank wall: rooms F1 to F3, a smaller subdivided former bedroom F4/F5 and a later added kitchen extension F7 (**Figure 12**). All bedrooms could originally be accessed from the landing F6, although due the insertion of the bathroom F5, access to room F4 is only possibly via room F3.

Room F1 (Plate 26)

6.2.31 Room F1 was located within the northern part of the building and accessed directly from the landing F6. It is lit by a pair of 6 over 6 horned sash windows of typical design in the western front wall (**Plate 26**) and was heated by a fireplace in the opposite eastern wall. Whilst the breast remains the fireplace had been removed and blocked, replaced latterly with an electric storage heater. The ceiling was lath and plaster and exhibited no evidence of a cornice or ceiling decoration. The walls were also plain but did include a typical moulded 7 inch skirting board to the floor junction. The floors comprised softwood boards nailed to softwood deep section floor joists of 8 x 2½ inch scantling. The architraves to both the door opening and the two windows were original, the latter also incorporating a continuous sill below both windows. Examination of the internal walls between rooms F1, F2 and F3 showed that they were all lightweight stud walling.

6.2.32 A small linen cupboard was sited to the south and adjacent to room F1. It retained its panel door and architrave and was internally shelved, although a pair of hooks suggests an earlier use for coats. A small fixed light had also latterly been inserted in the rear (east) of the cupboard. It is not immediately obvious why this was carried out.

Room F2 (Plate 27)

6.2.33 Room F2 was the central one of the three western rooms. It was a small unheated room lit by a single 6 over 6 sash window set off centre and against the internal partition wall to room F1 (**Plate 27**). In common with room F1, the window and door architraves remained as did the standard 7 inch skirting. The door to room F2 was a modern fire door. No evidence of ceiling or wall decoration was observed.

Room F3 (Plates 28 and 29)

6.2.34 Room F3 was more similar in plan and size to room F1, lit by a typical pair of sash windows in the western front wall (**Plate 28**). A chimney breast lay central to the southern external wall, with a built-in cupboard occupying the recess to the west of the chimney breast. This was a simple construction with plain panel doors, the upper section shelved and the lower half latterly used to house an immersion tank. The original fireplace had been removed and replaced by a 1930s or 1950s style grey-tiled fire surround and hearth (**Plate 29**). The cast-iron fire basket also remained but little else due to its replacement with an electric storage heater. In common with the other rooms, the decor was plain and the door into the room, a replacement fire door.

Bedroom F4 (Plate 30)

6.2.35 Bedroom F4 was originally clearly of a size comparable to the other rooms, but had been subdivided on its northern side to create bathroom F5 (**Figure 12**). The chimney breast, lying central to the southern wall, no longer retains its fireplace and surround, both removed and blocked-in (**Plate 30**). The walls and ceiling are plain and the skirting typical of those seen elsewhere. The door architrave and the door were both original, the latter a moulded four panelled door with a Bakerlite handle. The window in the eastern wall was a horned sash of typical design.

Bathroom F5

6.2.36 As discussed, bathroom F5 was a later insertion, created by the addition of a half brick thick partition wall into the former bedroom F4/F5. It was probably added when the kitchen F7 was built and as part of improvements to the first floor accommodation. The treatment to the bathroom was functional with little evidence of decoration. It was lit by a narrow 4 over 4 sash window, inserted, partly reusing an existing window opening, after the creation of the bathroom.

Landing and Stair F6 (Plates 31 and 32)

6.2.37 The first floor landing F6 provided direct access to most of the original first floor rooms and to the later kitchen extension F7 (**Plate 31**). As with the other first floor rooms the decor was plain and understated. The balustrade to the stair was similarly simple with stick balusters and a plain moulded handrail. The turned newel posts were slightly more ornate incorporating a ball finial (**Plates 31 and 32**). Both the

balustrade and the staircase were mass produced items manufactured using softwood.

Kitchen F7 (Plate 33)

- 6.2.38 Kitchen F7 was a later addition built off the roof slab and walls of the original single storey rear part of the building (room G10). The door from landing F6 into kitchen F7 was also a later insertion, broken through the rear (east) wall to integrate the kitchen into first floor accommodation (**Plate 31**). This included a modern door flanked to the north by a smaller fixed glazed window. The window to the south wall was a 6 over 6 sash of the same design seen elsewhere (**Plate 33**). This raises the possibility that either the standard window was sourced from the same manufacturer or that the window was reused from perhaps the original east wall of landing G6 before the kitchen was added. Otherwise the kitchen, which included modern kitchen base units along its south wall, was unadorned. A door opening in the east wall led out via a short flight of steps onto the flat roof of the rear (north-east) projection, used as a terrace garden or sun terrace to the flat (**Plate 34**).

Roof Structure

- 6.2.39 Observation of the roof structure was limited to that seen through a loft inspection hatch over landing F6. This revealed that the hipped roof was constructed using machine cut, deep section softwood joists overlain by sarking boards.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 The historic building survey of the No.13 Watts Grove has shown that this small early 20th century industrial/office building appears to have been constructed by the Sanitas Company Limited, a locally based company in the Poplar/Bow area specialising in a wide range of disinfectant and soap based products. Its use by the Sanitas Company is clearly seen by an inscription with the company name on the stone entablature above the first floor windows and its construction date, evidenced by a date plaque reading '1914', integral to the ground floor Serlio window. This is further supported by the buildings inaugural appearance on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1921 (sheet VIII. 51).
- 7.1.2 The Sanitas Company established its premises within an industrial landscape of chemical based industries, electricity generating and manufacturing. This industrial area developed alongside the wharfs of the Limehouse cut, which passes just south of Watts Grove (formerly Weston Street), and exploited the wider London canal network and connections to the Thameside ports.
- 7.1.3 The trade directories show that by 1932, the Sanitas Company, still specialising in disinfectant manufacture, relocated its works and office from Limehouse to No. 51 Clapham Road (SW9) and later to Sanitas House in Stockwell Green (SW9). It seems likely, given the proximity of the Corporation yards and facilities along Watts Grove, that at this point no.13 Watts Grove passed into local authority hands, in which it remained. This may correspond with a number of internal spatial alterations made to the building to create both office facilities at ground floor and a self contained first floor flat. The latter included the creation of sole access to the first floor from Watts Grove and the addition of a new first floor kitchen (F7), bathroom facilities (F5) and creation of a garden or sun terrace on the rear (east) flat roof.
- 7.1.4 Despite these changes, the building had remained relatively unaltered built with better quality red bricks to the visible north and western elevations and in an eclectic style of simplified neo-Georgian and classical motifs. The original footprint of the building is still legible and much of the internal spatial layout, apart from the changes to the access and first floor facilities, remains intact. The decoration to the rooms, befitting a building of this type, was restrained with simple wall and ceiling treatments present only in the principal rooms. Much of this decor remained or was repaired once altered. The fenestration to the main rooms, where original, used a standard 'off the peg' horned sash window. Structurally the building was unremarkable and typical of the period, built with solid one and a half brick thick walls, used machine cut softwood for floor and roof joists and softwood for all other joinery (windows, doors, boards and architraves). The roofs were shallow pitched so as not to be visible and covered with imported Welsh slate.
- 7.1.5 Later alterations saw the renewing or blocking (apart from former offices G1 and G3) of the fireplaces on both floors carried out during the 1930s or 1950s, the reworking of the rear flat roofed part of the building (G6 to G8 and G11) to create a series of small rear utility rooms and the addition of a small extension (G9) used as a store with only external access.
- 7.1.6 Whilst no.13 Watts Grove was architecturally unremarkable with an undistinguished use, it was however an unusual survival from the early 20th century in an area of east London much blighted by the effects of bombing campaigns against the industry and the docks during the Second World War and by post-war clearance and redevelopment.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mulalley & Company Limited for commissioning the project. The help and assistance of Ian Stuttle of Mulalley is gratefully acknowledged.
- 8.1.2 The project was managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Charlotte Mathews. The building recording and report were completed by Adam Garwood. Hayley Baxter prepared the illustrations.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Squire Heritage, 2014 *No.13 Watts Grove, London E3 3RE, Heritage Assessment*

BACTEC, 2012 *Explosive Ordnance Threat Assessment in respect of Watts Grove*, London for Tower Hamlet Council.

Matthews, C. 2014 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording at No 13 Watts Grove, Tower Hamlets* Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Historic Cartographic Sources

Ordnance Survey Map of 1921 (Sheet VIII. 51)

Ordnance Survey Map of 1937 (Sheet VIII. 51)

Ordnance Survey 1: 1250 Map of 1962 (TQ3781NE)

Ordnance Survey 1: 1250 Map of 1974 (TQ3781NE)

Ordnance Survey 1: 1250 Map of 1989 (TQ3781NE)

Ordnance Survey 1: 1250 Map of 1996 (TQ3781NE)

APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-210131

Project details

Project name	Historic Building Recording of No. 13 Watts Grove, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Short description of the project	A programme of historic building recording focused upon no.13 Watts Grove, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, E3 3RH, was completed prior to its demolition. The work was carried out in response to planning condition (10) attached to the planning permission (Ref. No: PA/14/02585). The survey has shown that this small early 20th century industrial/office building was constructed by the Sanitas Company Limited, a locally based company in the Limehouse/Bow area specialising in a wide range of disinfectant and soap based products. Its use by the Sanitas Company is clearly seen by an inscription with the company name on the stone entablature above the first floor windows and its construction date, evidenced by a date plaque reading '1914', integral to the ground floor Serlio window
Project dates	Start: 20-04-2015 End: 21-04-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Unknown
Any associated project reference codes	WGR15 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	PA/14/02585 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	OFFICE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Measured Survey","Photographic Survey","Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON TOWER HAMLETS POPLAR No.13 Watts Grove
Postcode	E3 3RH
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 37536 81932 51.5190407758 -0.017470233974 51 31 08 N 000 01 02 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	John Gould

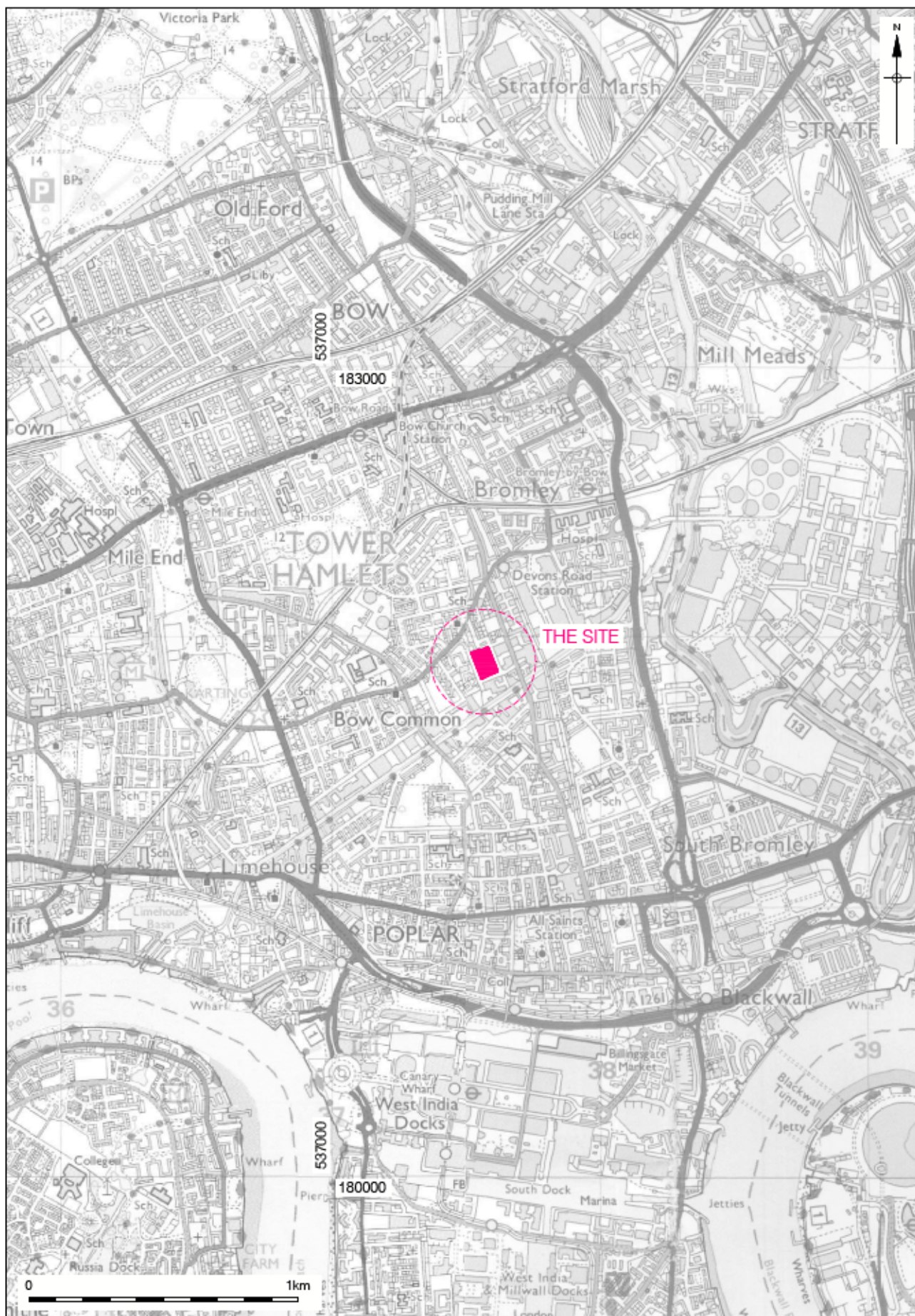
Project design originator	Charlotte Matthews
Project director/manager	Charlotte Matthews
Project supervisor	Adam Garwood
Type of sponsor/funding body	Borough Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mullaley and Company Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Microfilm"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Historic Building Recording of No. 13 Watts Grove, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, E3 3RH
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Garwood, A
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Place of issue or publication	Brockley, London
Description	A4 PDF report
Entered by	Charlotte Matthews (cmatthews@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	12 May 2015

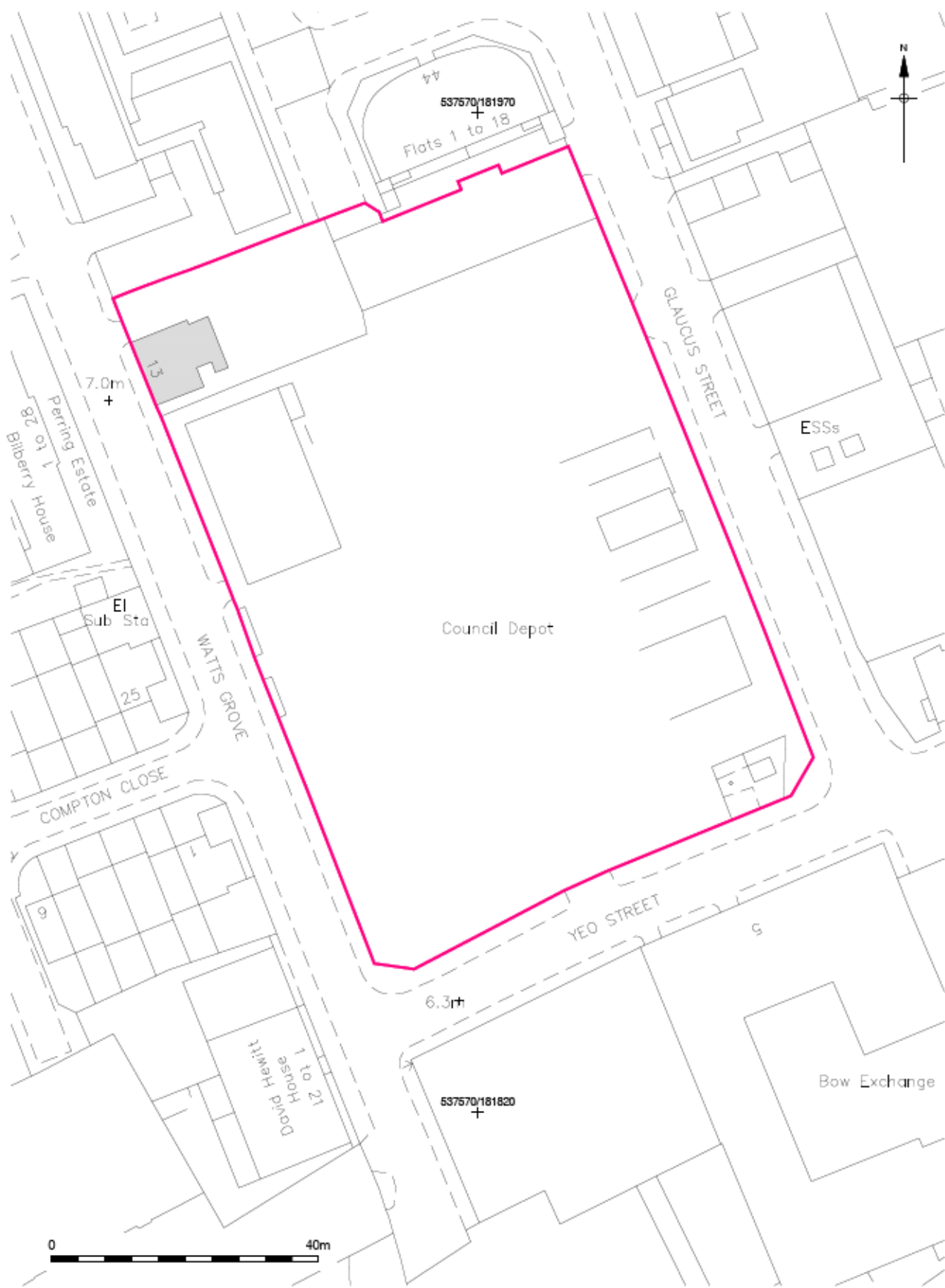


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Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4

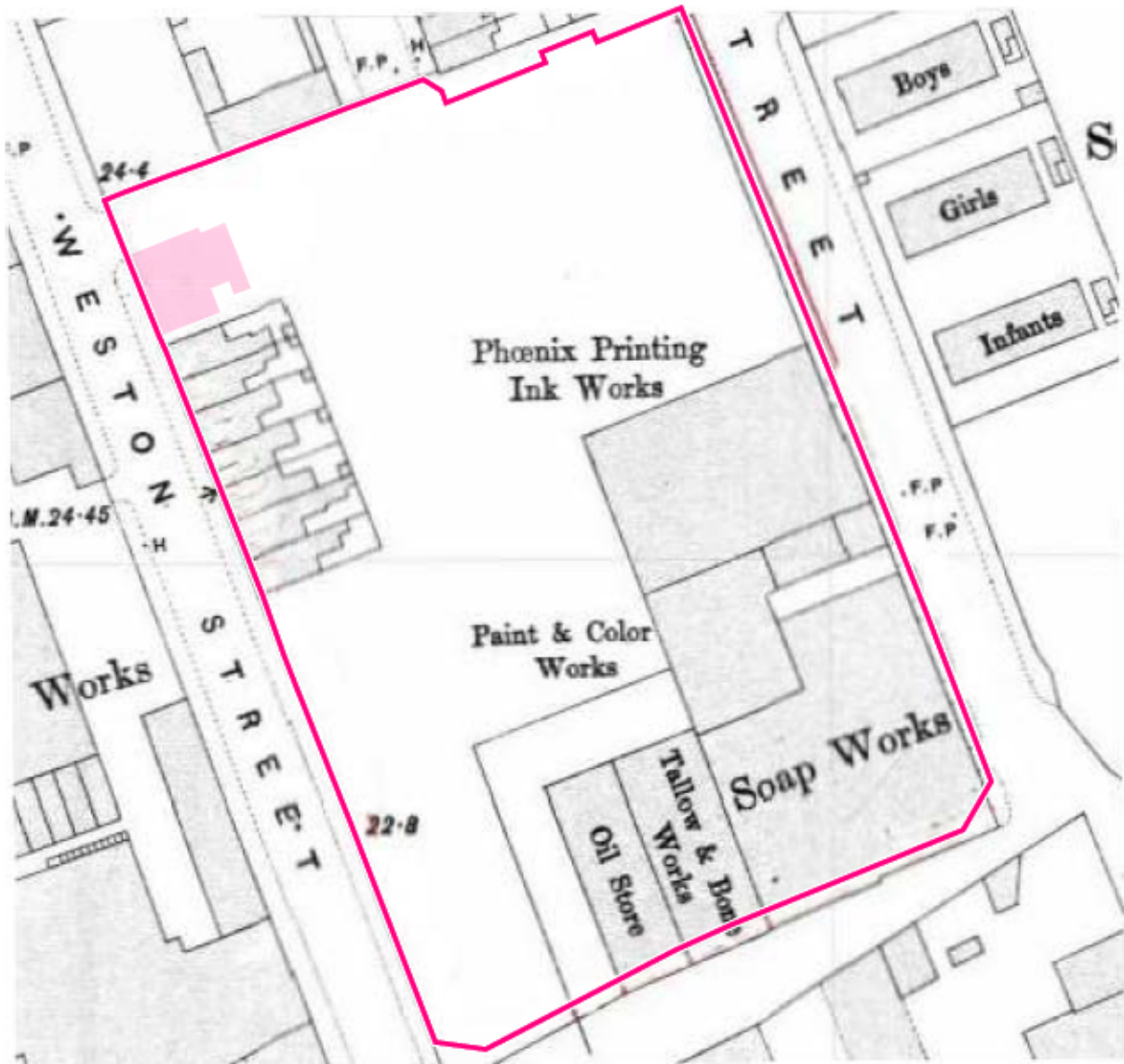


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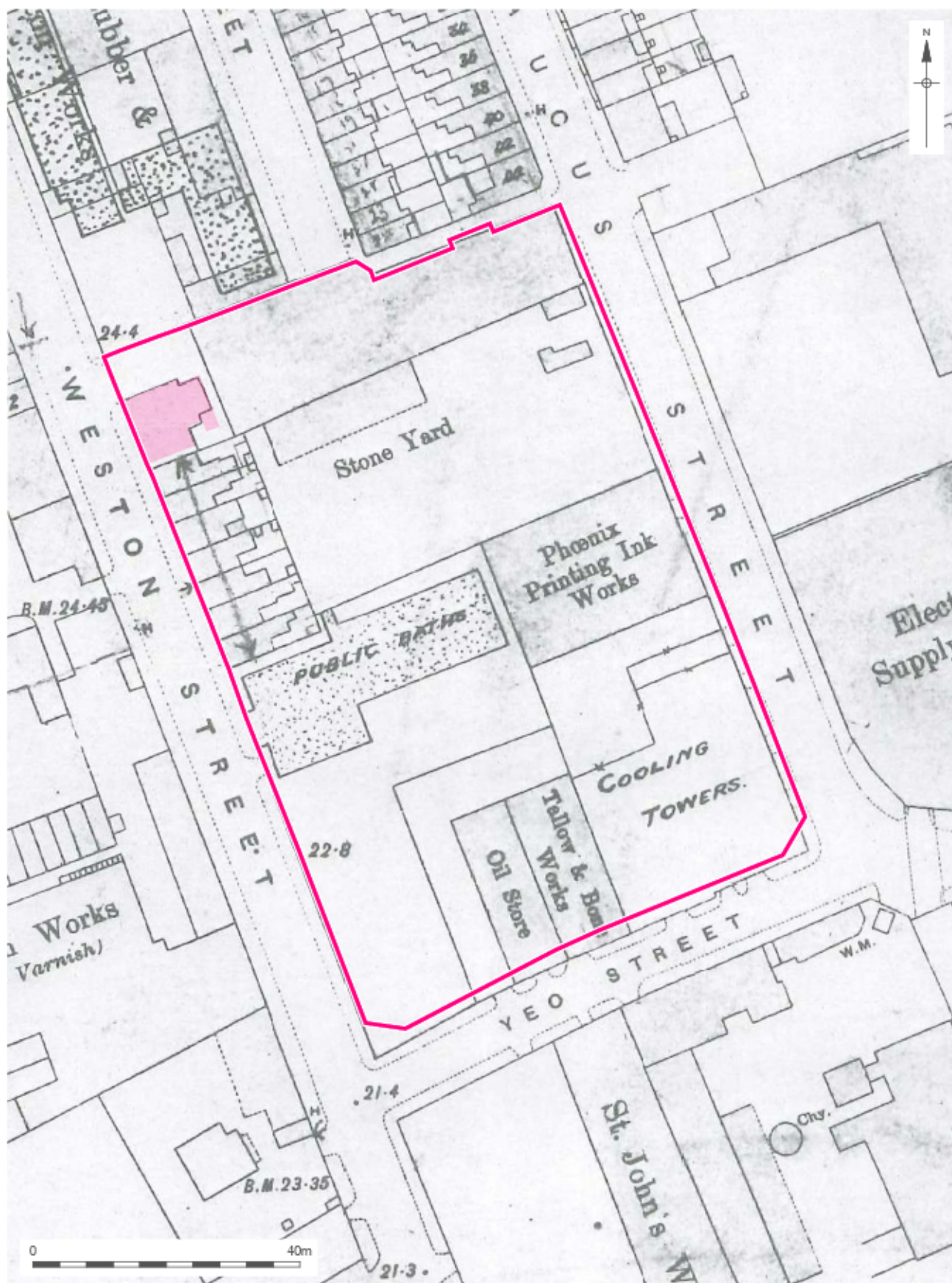
Figure 2
Detailed Site Location
1:800 at A4



0 40m

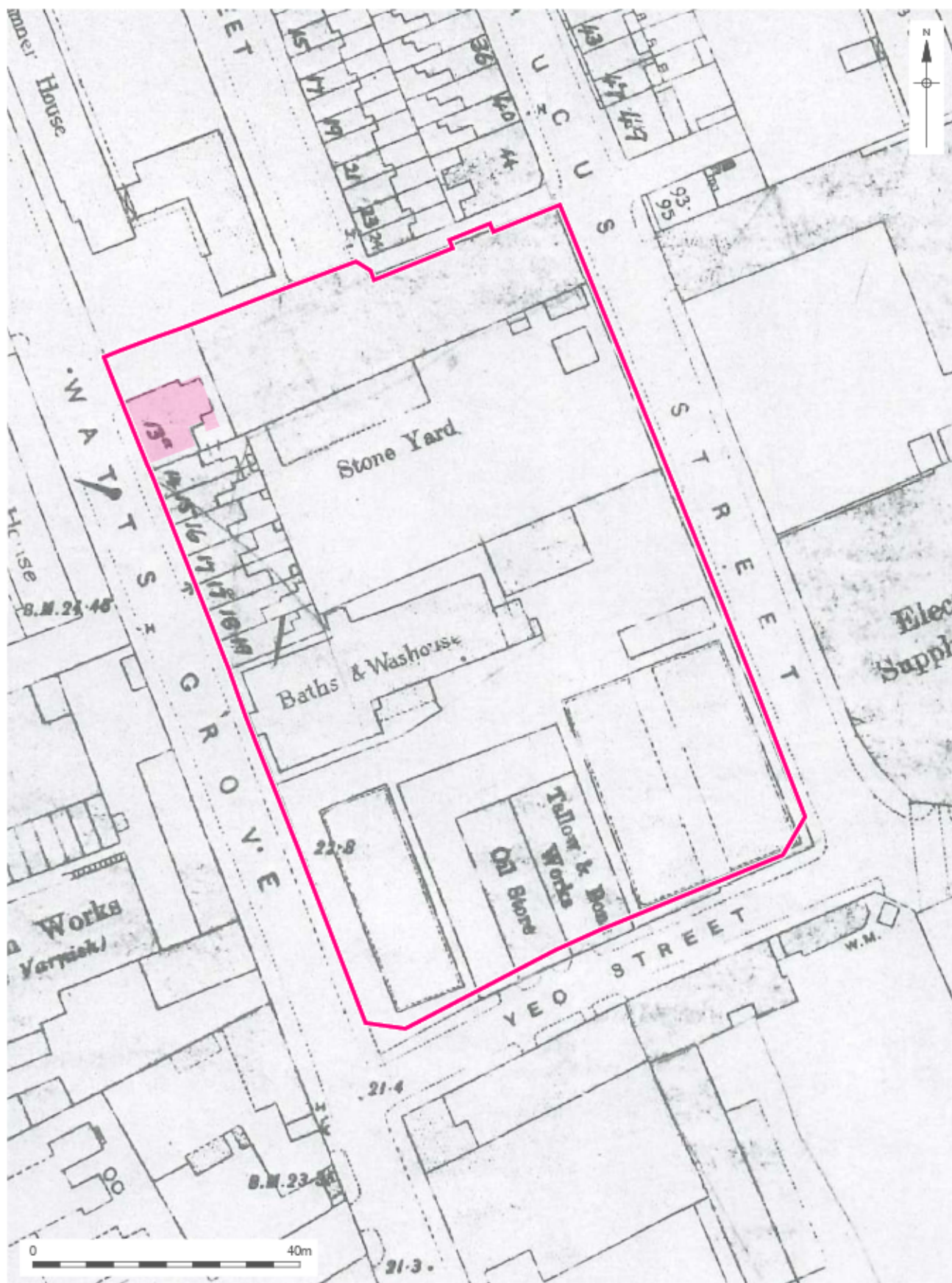
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Figure 3
Ordnance Survey, 1893
1:800 at A4



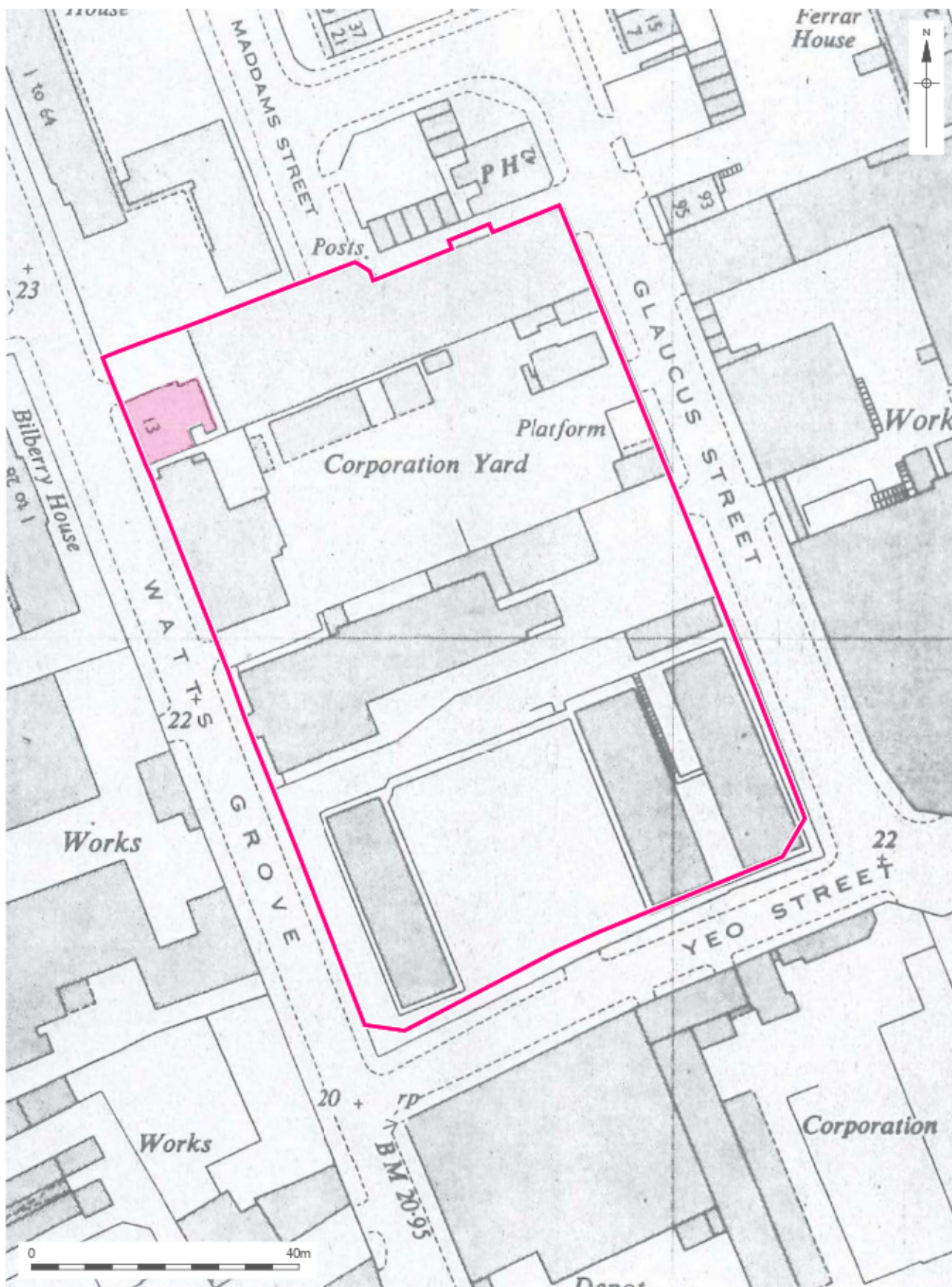
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Figure 4
Ordnance Survey, 1921
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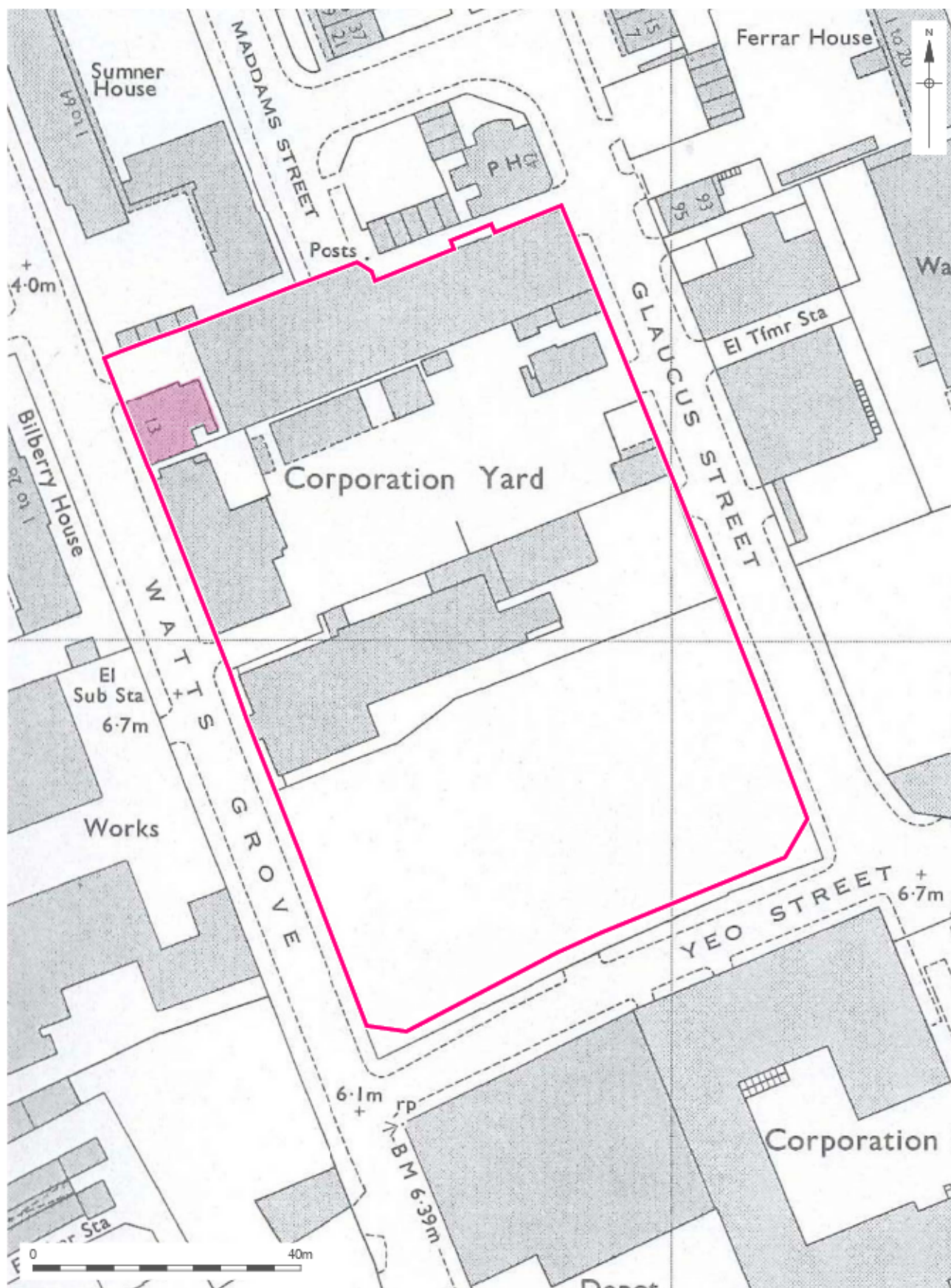
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Figure 5
Ordnance Survey, 1937
1:800 at A4



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Figure 6
Ordnance Survey, 1962
1:800 at A4

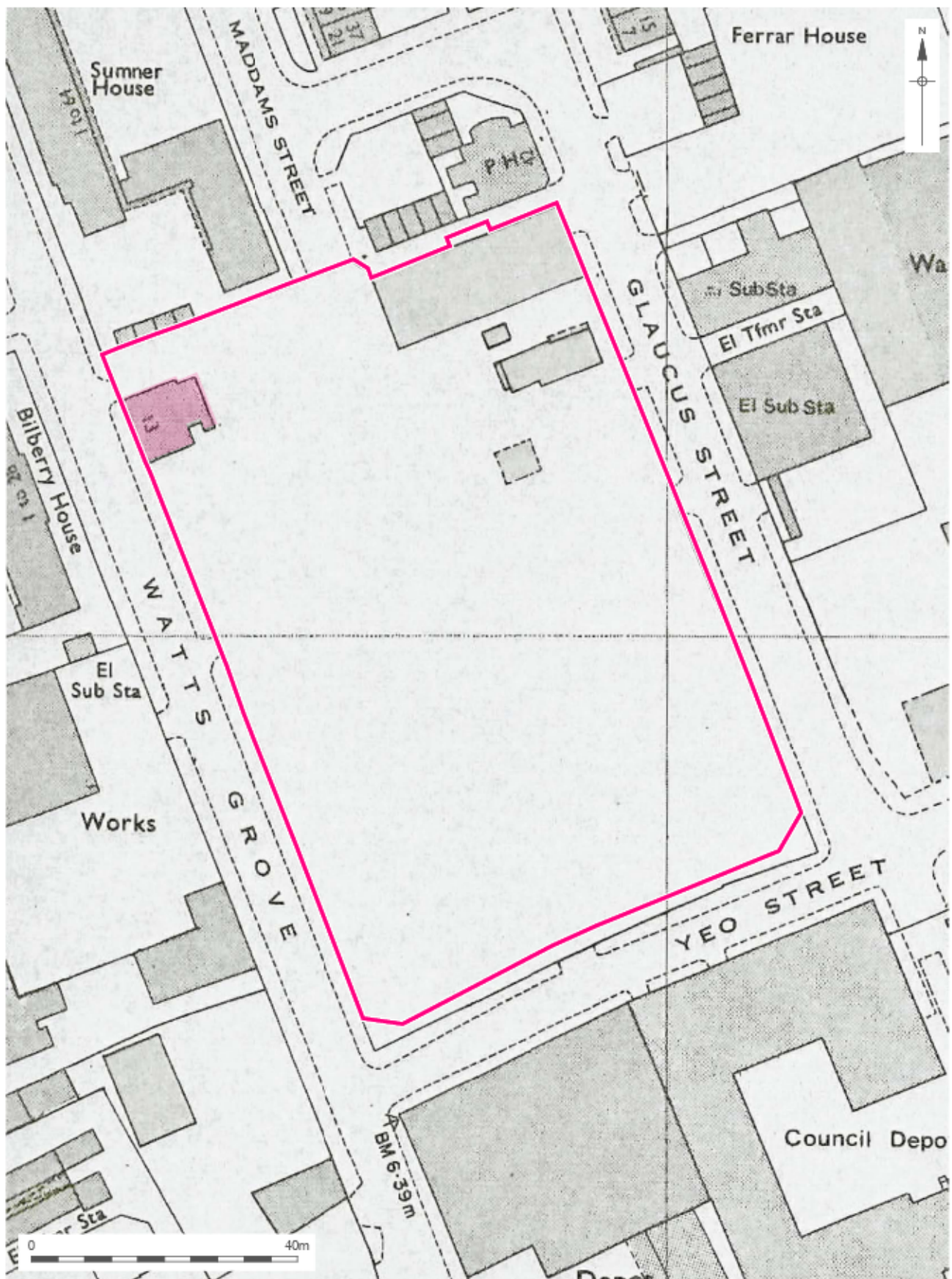


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Figure 7
Ordnance Survey, 1974
1:800 at A4

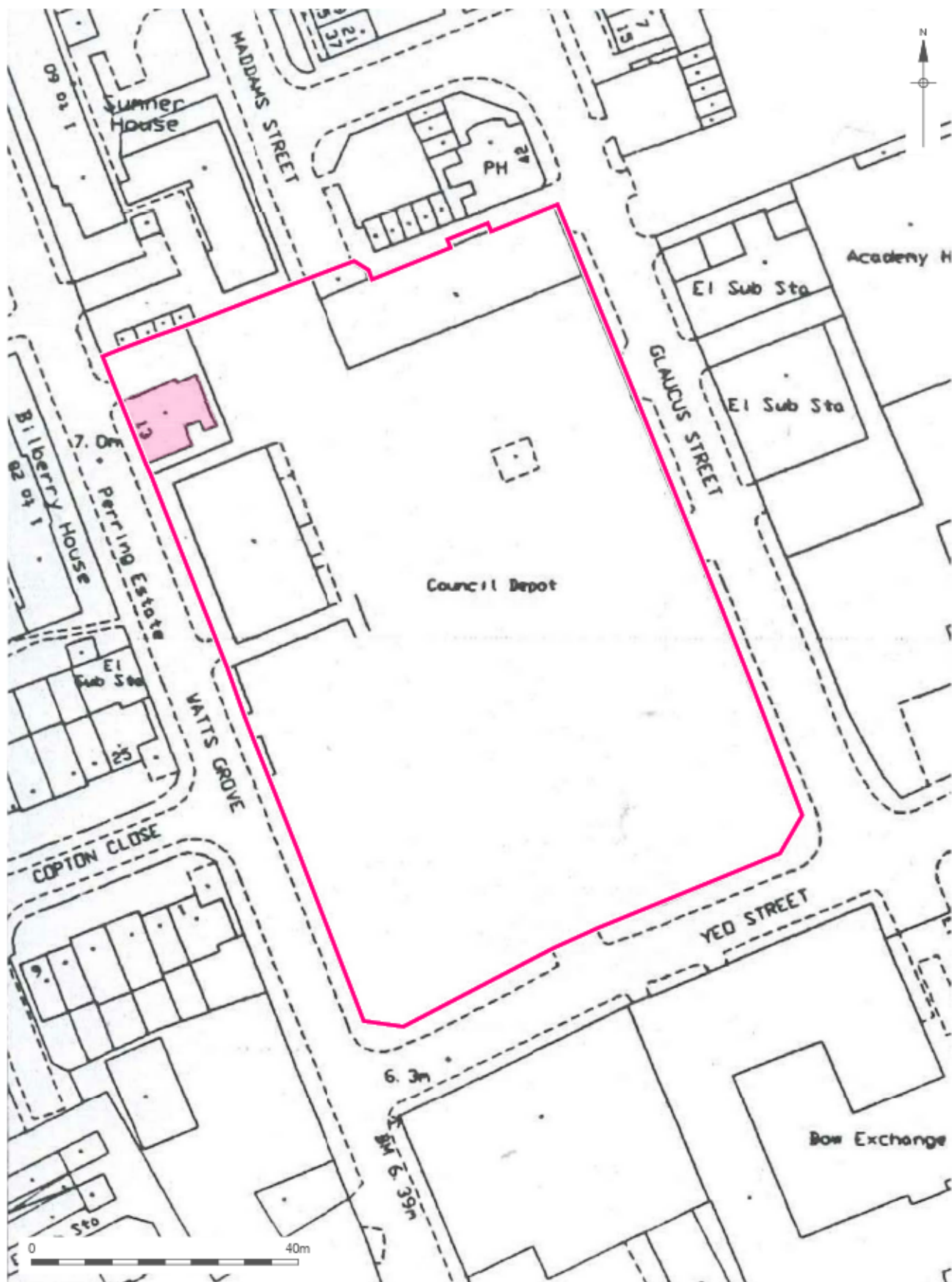


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Figure 8
Ordnance Survey, 1989
1:800 at A4



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Figure 9
Ordnance Survey, 1996
1:800 at A4



Figure 10
External Plate Locations
1:250 at A4



Figure 11
Existing Ground Floor Phase Plan & Plate Locations
1:50 at A3

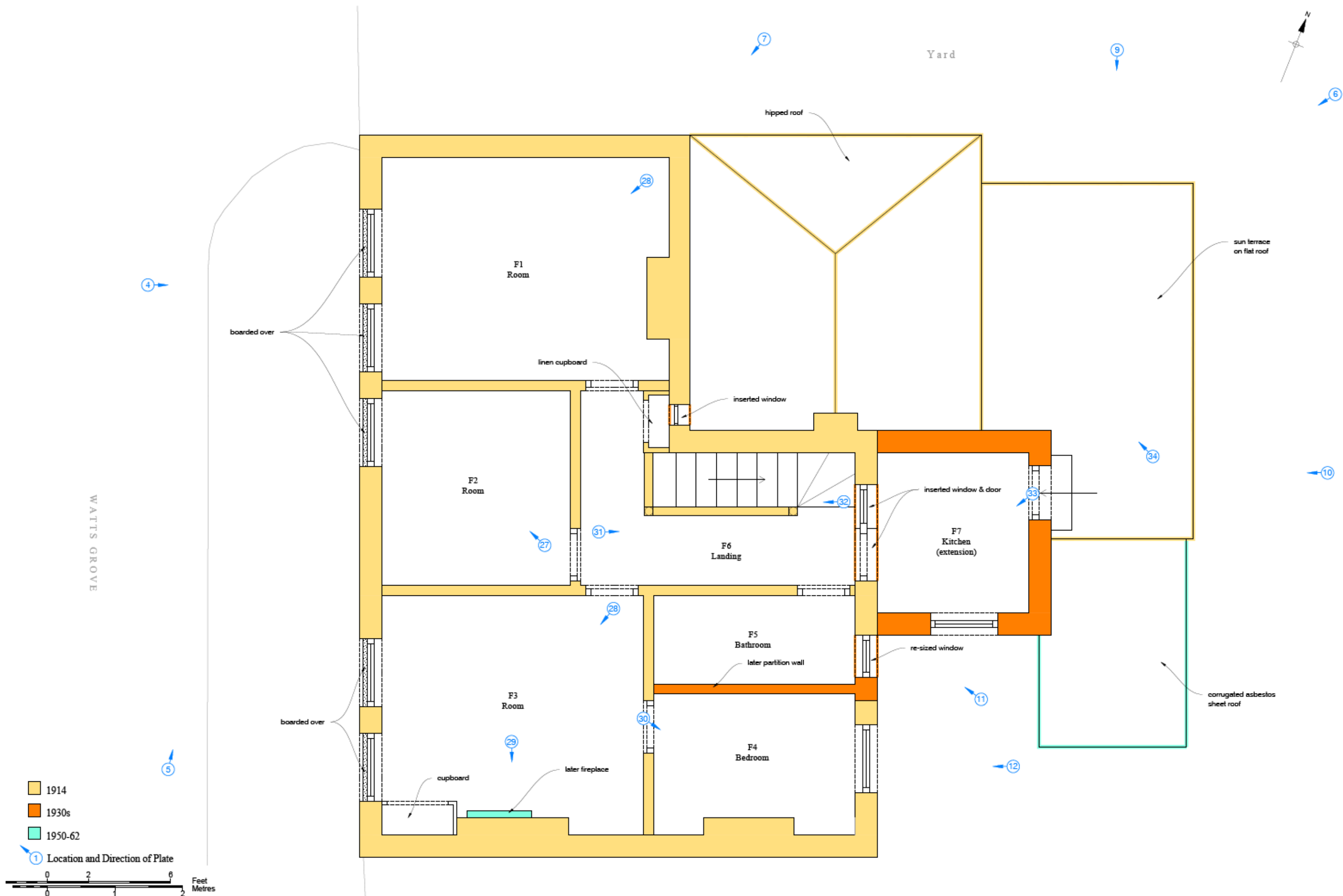




Plate 1 Western principal elevation, looking east



Plate 2 Western principal elevation, looking south-east



Plate 3 Gated entrance and compound wall, looking east



Plate 4 Serlio window and date plaque of '1914', looking east



Plate 5 Company name 'THE SANITAS COMPANY LIMITED' over first floor windows, looking east



Plate 6 Northern elevations, looking south-west



Plate 7 Northern elevation two storey range, looking south-east



Plate 8 Contemporary hipped roof rear range looking south



Plate 9 Flat roofed rear projection, looking south



Plate 10 Eastern rear elevations, looking west



Plate 11 South elevation of rooms G10 and F7 showing moulding of original single storey building, looking north-west



Plate 12 Partly blocked first floor window overbuilt by kitchen K7, looking north-east



Plate 13 Rendered southern elevation, looking north-east



Plate 14 Office G1, looking south west



Plate 15 Office G1 showing former passage, looking north-west



Plate 16 Office G2, looking south-east



Plate 17 Glass door light to small lobby G12, looking north



Plate 18 Office G3, looking south-west



Plate 19 Detail of fire surround in office G3



Plate 20 Office G4, looking south-west



Plate 21 Later Art Deco themed fireplace in office G4, looking south

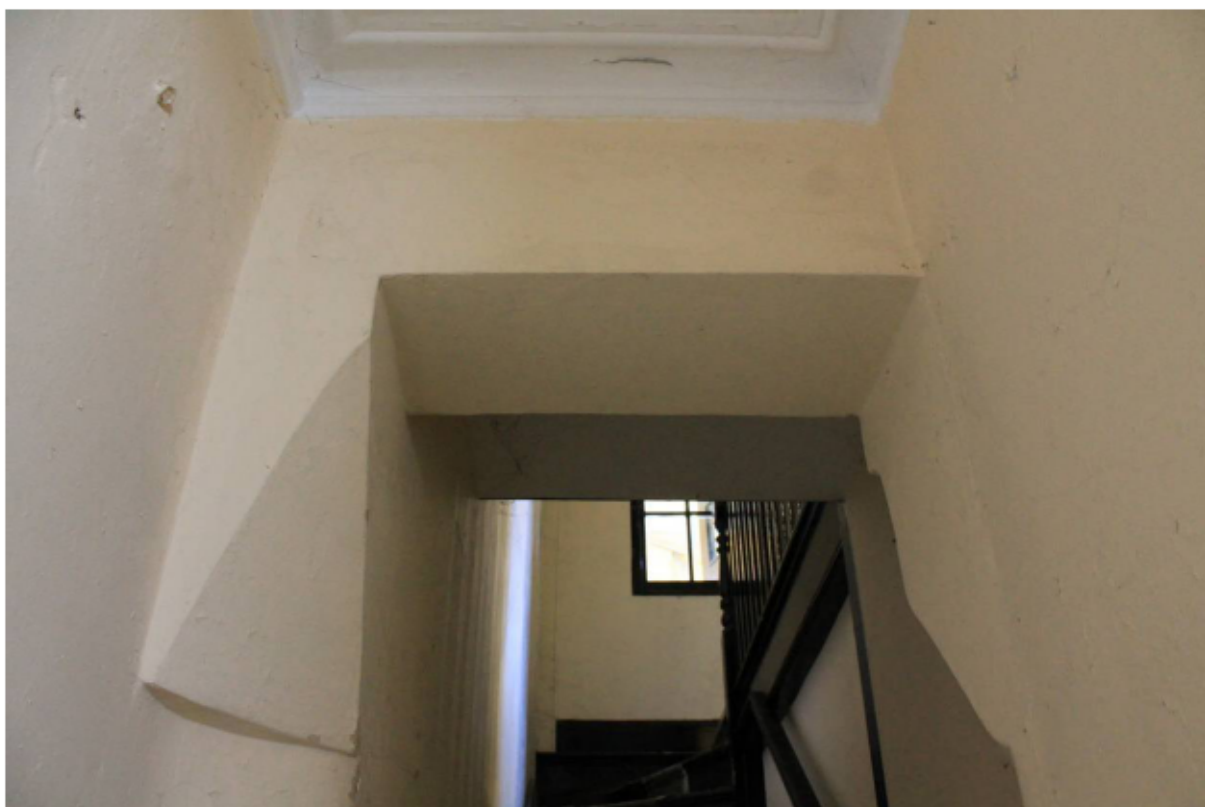


Plate 22 Constrained stopped and chamfered opening to stair G5, looking east



Plate 23 Canted wall taking in southernmost sash of Serlio window in hall G5, looking west



Plate 24 Utility room G6, looking north-east



Plate 25 Kitchen G10, looking south



Plate 26 Room F1, looking south-west



Plate 27 Room F2, looking west



Plate 28 Room F3 looking south-west

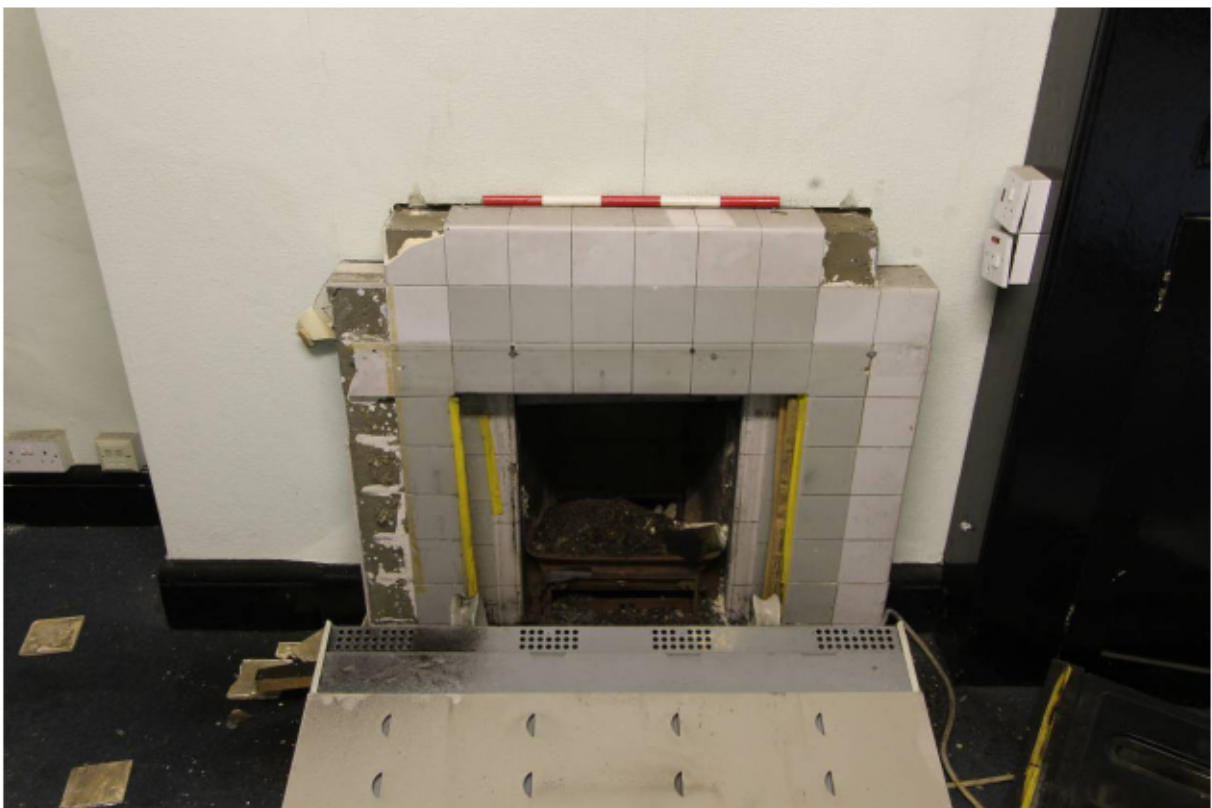


Plate 29 Detail of fire surround in room F3, looking south

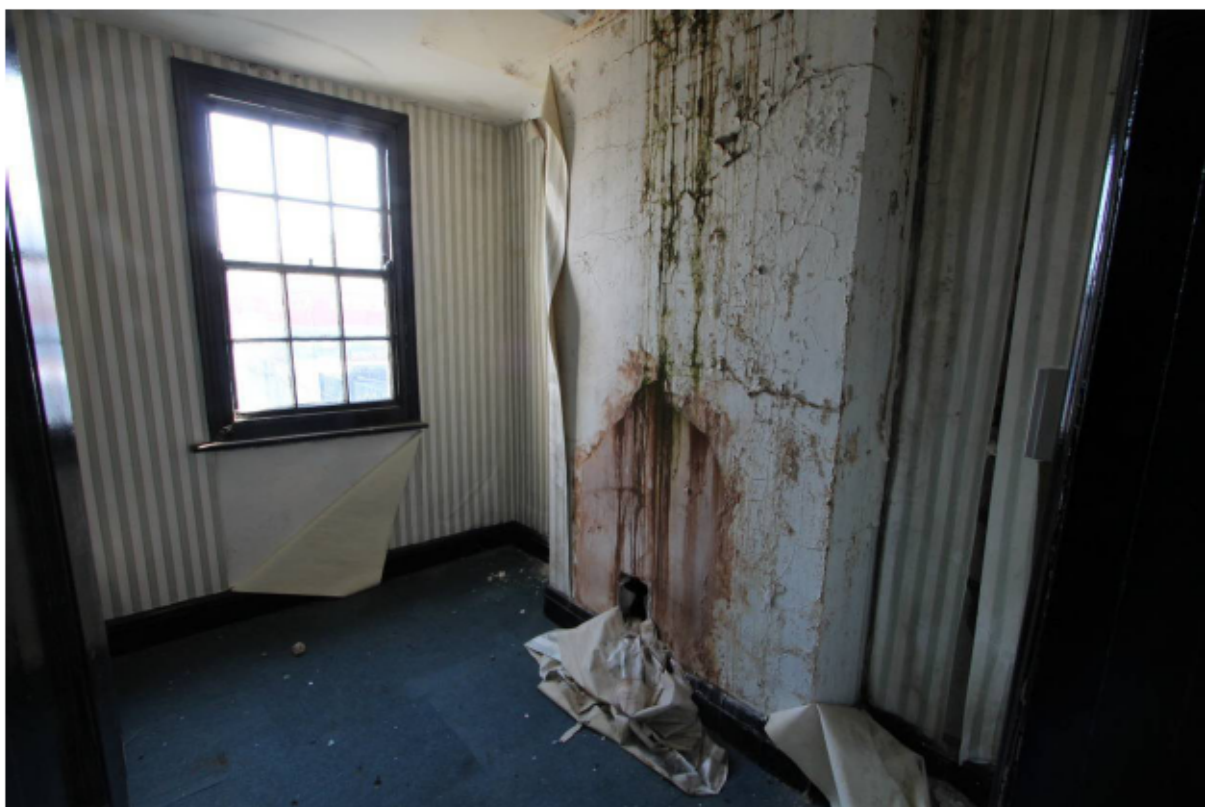


Plate 30 Bedroom F4, looking south-east

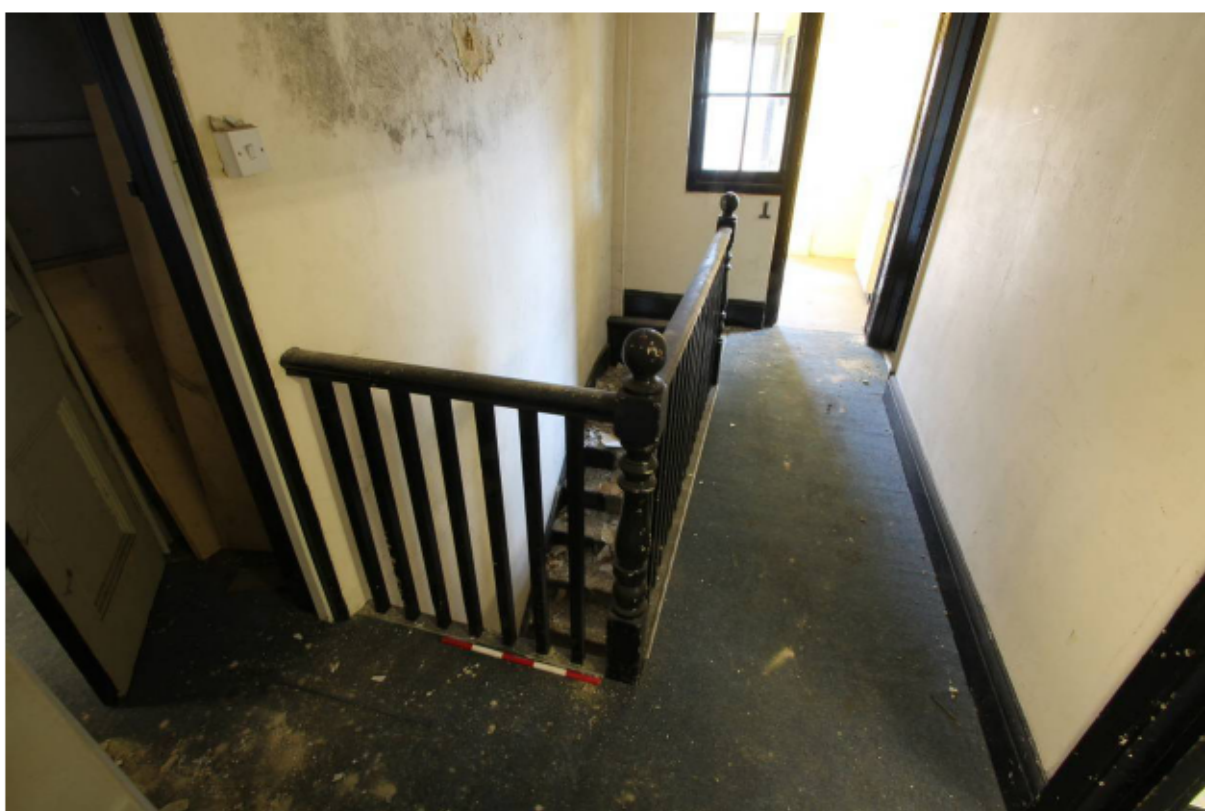


Plate 31 First floor landing F6, looking east

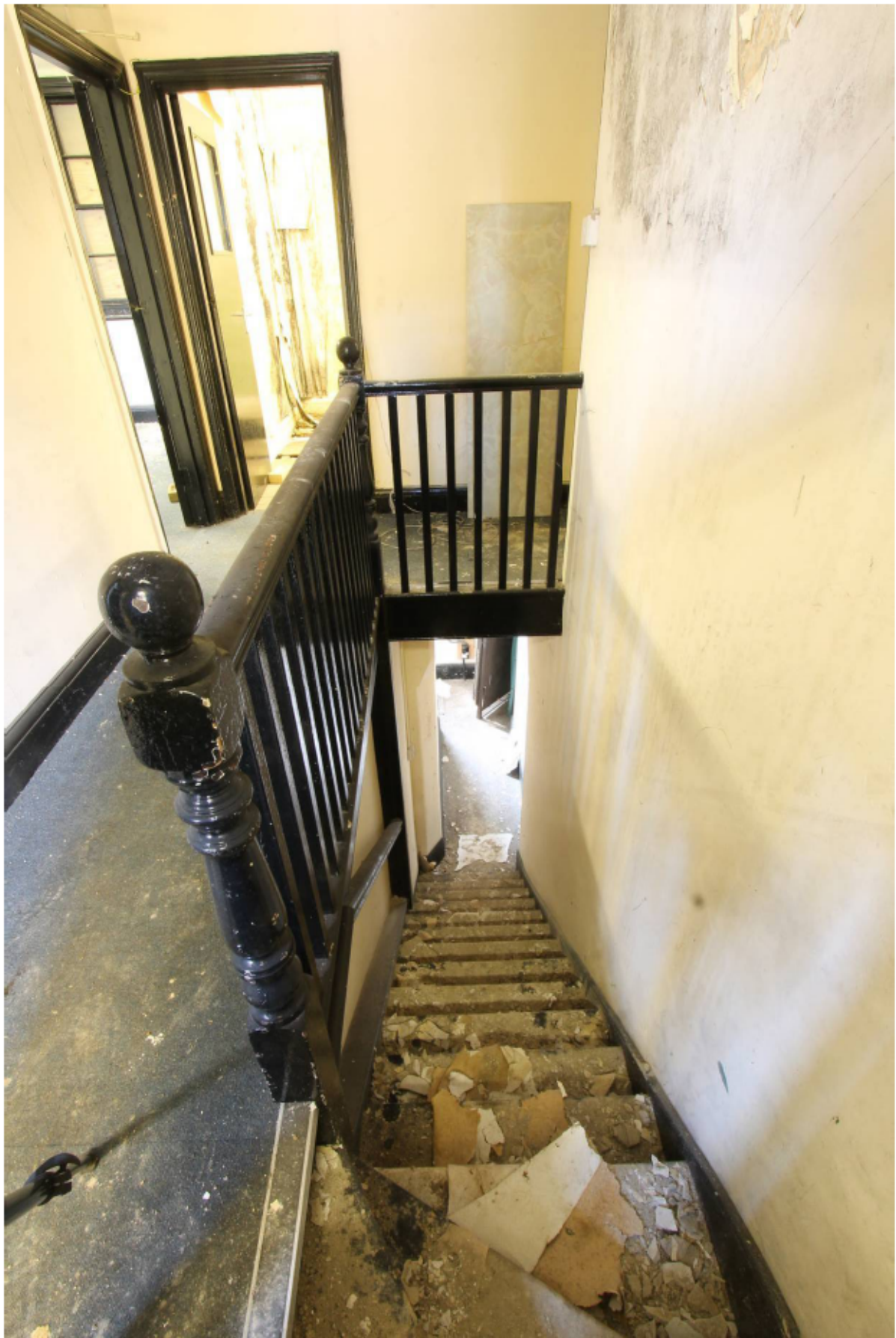


Plate 32 Stair and landing F6, looking west



Plate 33 Kitchen F7, looking west



Plate 34 Garden terrace looking north, showing hipped roof over room G4

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