

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

LIVERPOOL HOUSE, SUNDERLAND
 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

Quality Control

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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING OF LIVERPOOL HOUSE, 187-193 HIGH STREET WEST, SUNDERLAND, TYNE AND WEAR, SR1

SITE CODE: LHS05

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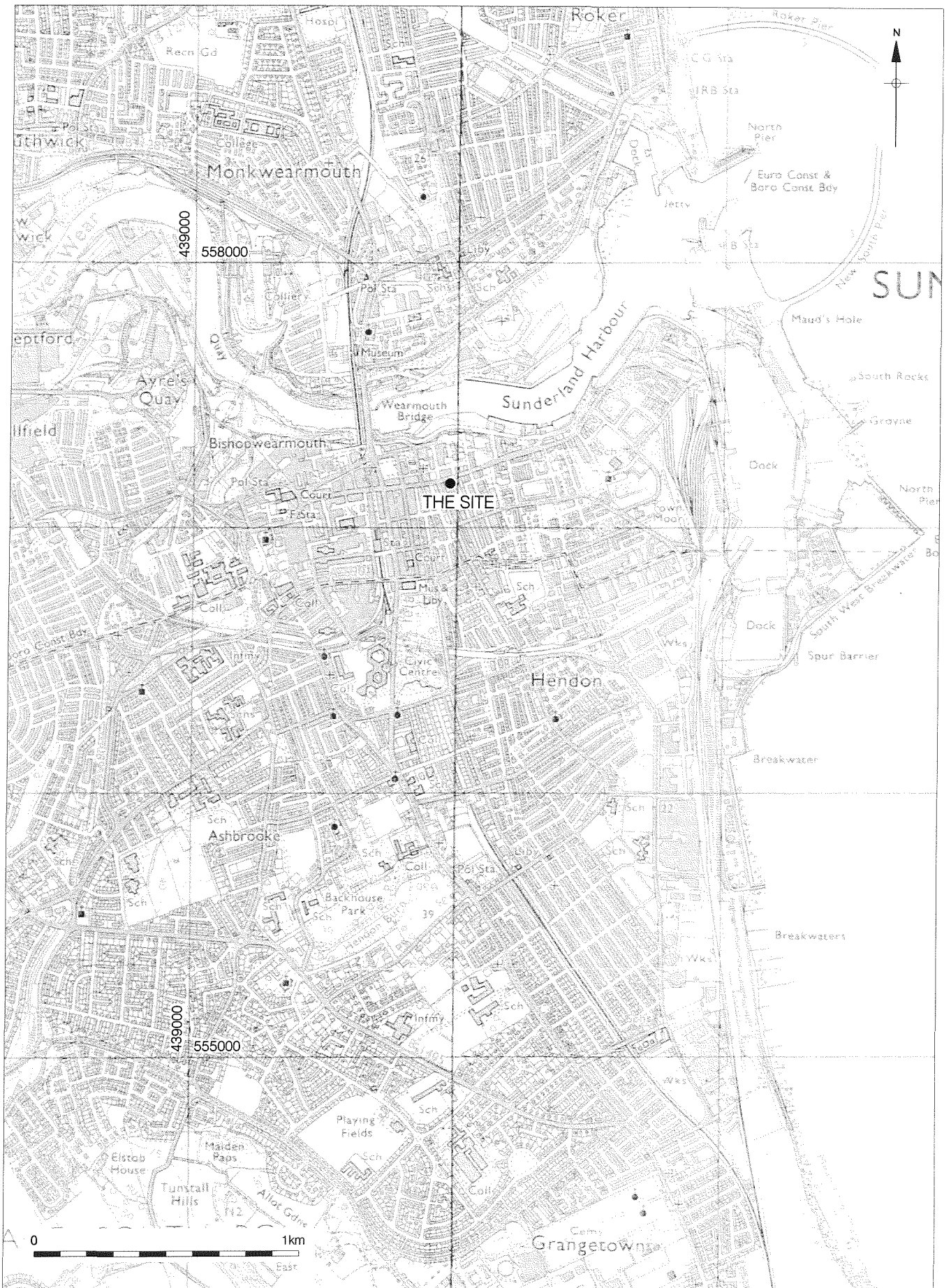
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1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 WeAre Homes are currently undertaking development work at Liverpool House, 187-193 High Street West, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR1 (Fig 1, 2, Plate 1).
- 1.2 The National Grid Reference for the site is NZ 399571
- 1.3 This report presents the results of a phase of archaeological recording of Liverpool House. This work followed the Specification for Archaeological Recording produced for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited by Jennifer Morrison, Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer.
- 1.4 The earliest elements of Liverpool House date from the early-nineteenth century and elements of a later urban industrial complex are retained within the structure of the building. Liverpool House is not listed, but is within the Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area, in the immediate setting of Central Conservation Area and covered by the Planning Framework of Sunnside Townscape Heritage Initiative.
- 1.5 A fabric analysis of the building was undertaken, with detail added to the plans of the building produced for WeAre Homes. The building, internally and externally, was comprehensively photographically recorded.
- 1.6 Recommendations for further recording have arisen from this phase of work. These are made in the conclusion to this report, alongside an appraisal as to the current condition of the building and its architectural and historic significance. It also discusses issues relating to the possibility of retaining elements of the building.



Plate 1 Liverpool House, North Elevation



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey 1:25,000.

Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000

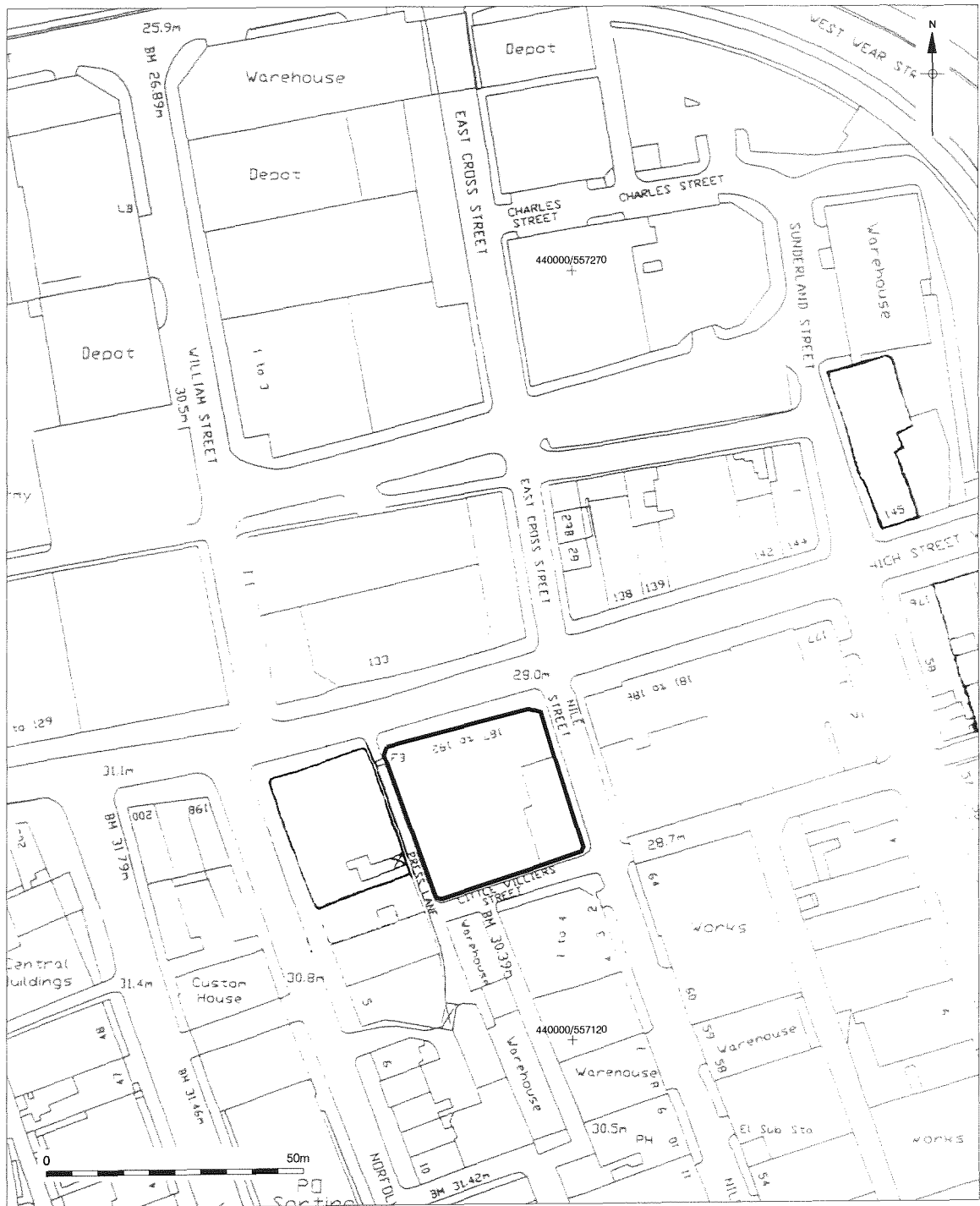


Figure 2
 Detailed Site Location
 1:1,250

2 INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

2.1 This work has been commissioned by David Richardson of WeAre Homes in advance of an application for Conservation Area Consent for development at Liverpool House, 187-193 High Street West, Sunderland.

2.2 The recording work was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited is a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* with the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

2.3 All work has been undertaken in accordance with current best practice. The work conforms to guidance from statutory and professional bodies including:

- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers: *Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and Control of Works to Historic Buildings* (1997)
- British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group: *Code of Practice* (1986)
- British Standards Institution: *Guide to the Principals of the Conservation of Historic Buildings (BS 7913)* (1998)
- English Heritage (Clark K): *Informed Conservation: Understanding Historic Buildings and their Landscapes for Conservation* (2001)
- English Heritage: *Guidance Paper 98; GLAAS: Guidance Paper 3 – Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London*; English Heritage (Clark K): *Informed Conservation* (2001)
- English Heritage: *The Presentation of Historic Building Survey in CAD* (2000)
- IFA: *Standards and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (1999)
- Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (now part of English Heritage): *Recording Historic Buildings: A Descriptive Specification* (1996)

2.4 Liverpool House stands on the south side of High Street West, Sunderland, bounded to the east by Nile Street and to the west by Press Lane (Fig 2).

2.5 The site lies within Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area (Fig 20, 22) and adjacent to, and therefore in the immediate setting of, Central Conservation Area (Fig 21, 22). At the time of the archaeological recording of Liverpool House, there were no completed Character Assessments available for these areas. The site is also within a larger area covered by the Sunnyside Townscape Heritage Initiative, this involving Sunderland City Council.

2.6 The key objectives of the Sunnyside Draft Planning Framework include to;

- Establish sound urban design principles for the area, including guidance on urban structure, urban grain, density and mix of uses, scale, building height and massing, façades and interface
- Develop and enhance Sunnyside's identity as a vibrant and exciting city quarter with a rich history that will engender civic pride
- Develop a public realm strategy for the design and management of the physical environment that will ensure a safe, clean, attractive and sustainable urban quarter
- Propose legibility and identity guidelines that will identify landmarks and gateways, and propose orientation measures such as public art, lighting and signage
(Sunnyside Draft Planning Framework, [sundraftpf.pdf](#), [www.sunderland.gov.uk](#))

2.7 Sunnyside Townscape Heritage Initiative is jointly funded by the City Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund and is aimed at the heritage-led regeneration of the historic core of the area. Its aim is to deliver financial assistance to owners of historic buildings to 'encourage their restoration and make more viable their return to full and beneficial use'.

3 **METHOD**

3.1 **General**

3.1.1 The archaeological recording of Liverpool House was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation produced by Pre-Construct Archaeology and a Specification for Archaeological Recording produced by Jennifer Morrison, Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer.

3.1.2 Recommendations for further recording work arose from this phase of work. These will be outlined in **7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**.

3.2 **Recording**

3.2.1 Archaeological recording took place in order to provide a permanent record of the structure as existing and to determine its historic significance. Background research was also undertaken, including a full map regression and an investigation of available census returns.

3.2.2 The Specification for Archaeological Recording advised that all measured survey took place based upon existing architect's drawings. Such drawings were not made available to Pre-Construct Archaeology in advance of recording, although an outline survey was made available later in the project.

3.2.3 The outline surveys of all plans and elevations were added to in order to note structural phasing, changes in building material and evidence of surviving fixtures and fittings and the location of historic features (see Appendix 1 and Figs 14-19).

3.2.4 The Specification for Archaeological Recording stated that one section of the building must be drawn, based upon architect's drawings. No adequate section upon which to work was supplied to Pre-Construct Archaeology.

3.2.5 Historic features and surviving historic structures were numbered in accordance with the Specification for Archaeological Recording. These appear in Appendix 1.

3.3 **Photography**

3.3.1 Photographs were taken throughout the building in black and white and on colour print film. Each photograph is clearly labelled with the room number and features of

interest within the photograph. The photographs can be cross-referenced with the table of features in Appendix 1 and with the plans and elevations produced in this report. Copies of photographs will be issued in accordance with the Specification for Archaeological Recording.

3.4 **Archive**

- 3.4.1 After the completion of all work, the site archive will be stored at the Tyne and Wear HER. The archive will consist of this report, a photographic record and any drawings produced during and after work on site, the latter in the format suggested in the Specification for Archaeological Recording.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The earliest map of the area is John Rain's Plan of Sunderland and Bishopswearmouth, 1790 (Fig 3). At this date, the area is on the outskirts of Bishopswearmouth. None of the current streets or buildings is in existence and the approximate area of Liverpool House is occupied by one of a series of walled gardens with axial walkways and a shed structure in its southwest corner.
- 4.2 A plan of Sunderland from 1826 (Fig 4) shows a much more substantial development of the area to have taken place, presumably in line with increased revenue moving through the harbour. A series of townhouses have developed on the Liverpool House site by this time as have the property boundaries that are evident throughout the remainder of the building's existence to the present day.
- 4.3 By the time of the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 in 1855 (Fig 5), the complex has been further developed and a series of alleyways between the buildings, a courtyard and outbuildings can also be seen.
- 4.4 The next major physical development of the building is seen in the late-nineteenth century (Figs 6-12), when the complex is consolidated into a single property, first as W C Thompson and Co., and then as Liverpool House department store in 1897. The original elevation and a later development can be seen in Fig 13.
- 4.5 Little further development of the site can be discerned until the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 Edition of 1988 (Fig 11) that shows the demolition of the southeast portion of the building to make way for a car park.
- 4.6 It is known that at some point in the 1950s, a Santa's Grotto was designed and installed in the basement of Liverpool House by Evan Oxenham. It was also the location of Easter shows with live animals, including chicks.
- 4.7 The Building Control Plans relevant to Liverpool House all concern the area of the site seen demolished on the 1988 Ordnance Survey.
- 4.8 Census details for the properties shown through the map regression are incomplete and a sequence of ownership could not be established. The buildings of the immediately local area are generally occupied by private tradesmen and ships captains.

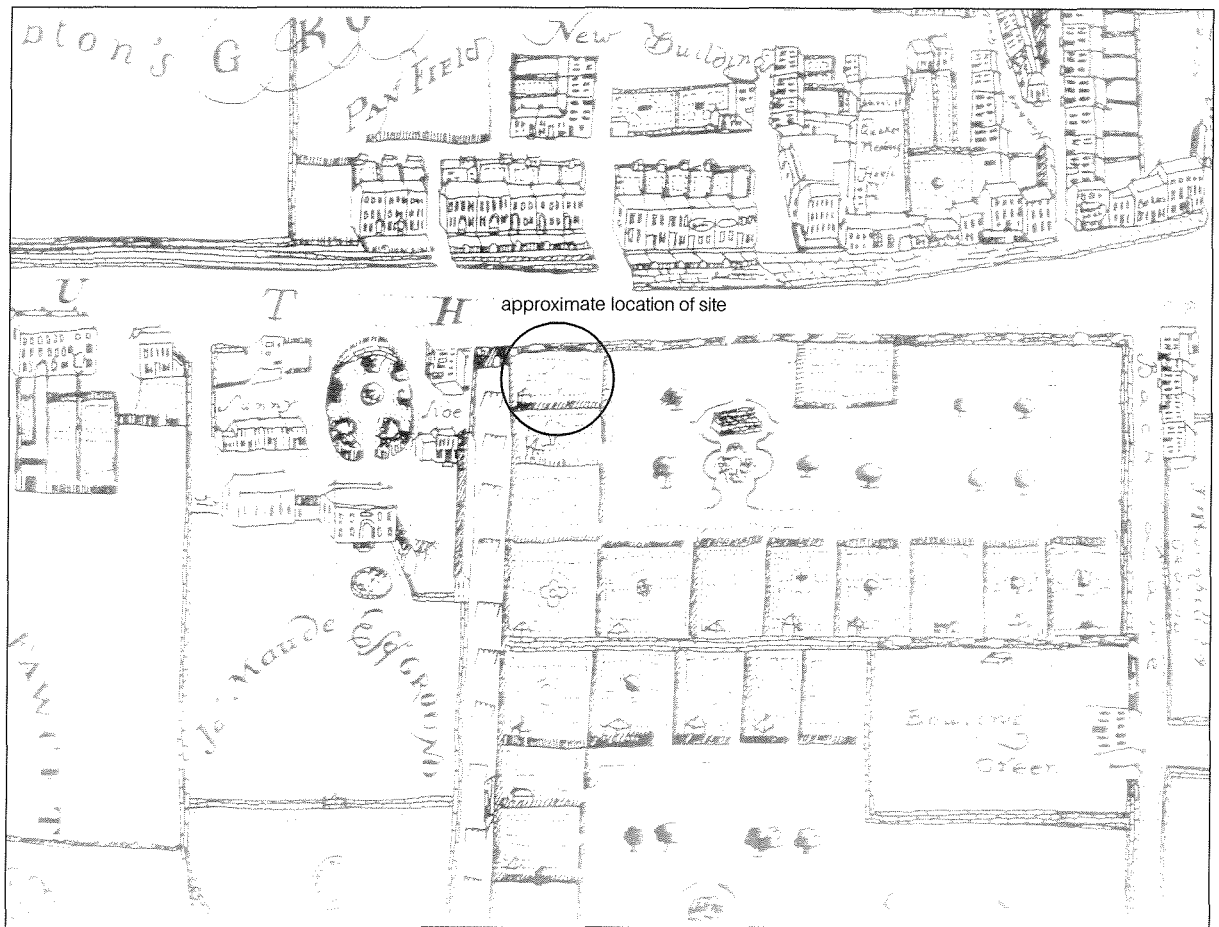


Figure 3
Plan of Sunderland, 1790
Not to scale

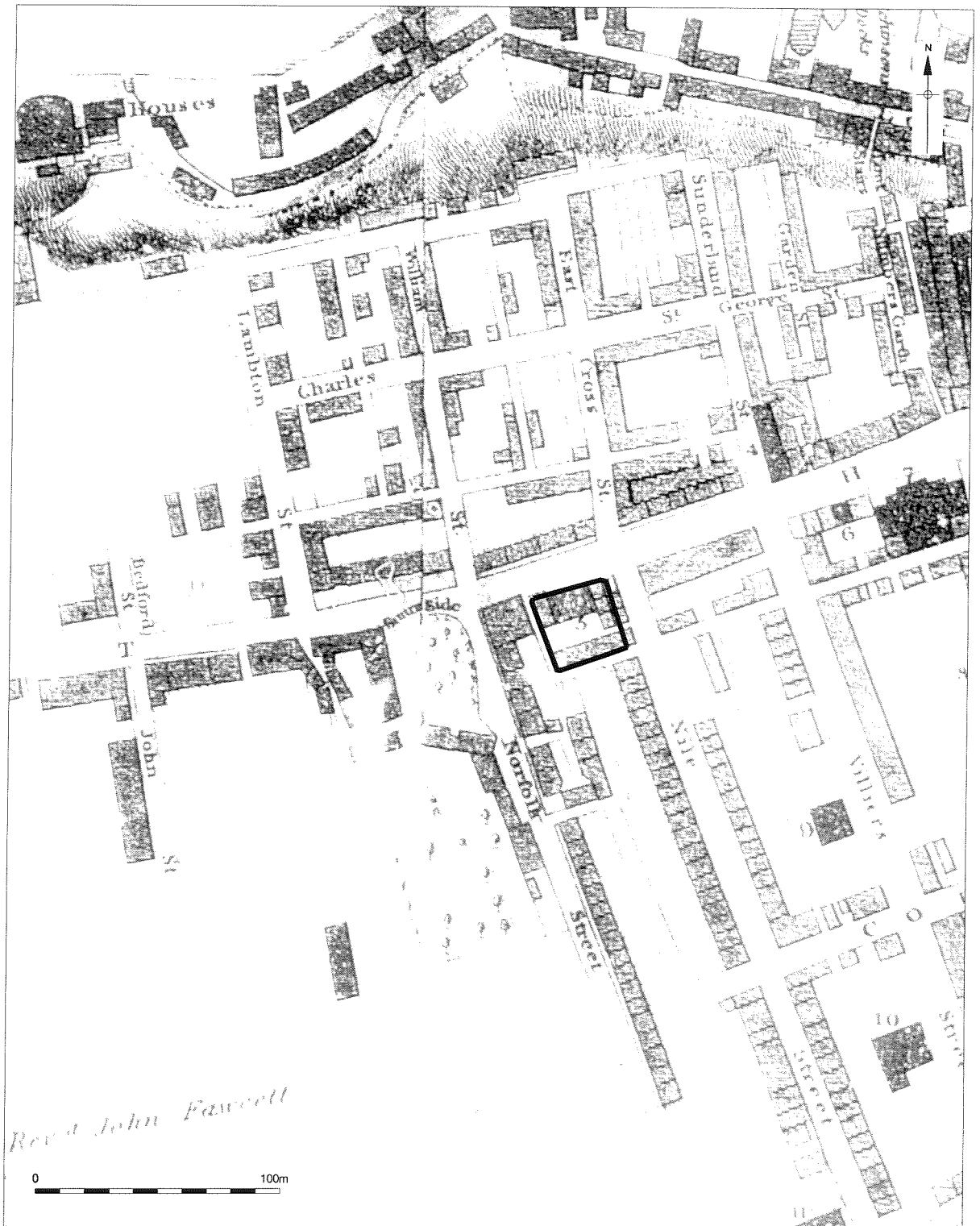


Figure 4
Plan of Sunderland, 1826
1:2,500



Figure 5
OS Map, 1855
1:25,000

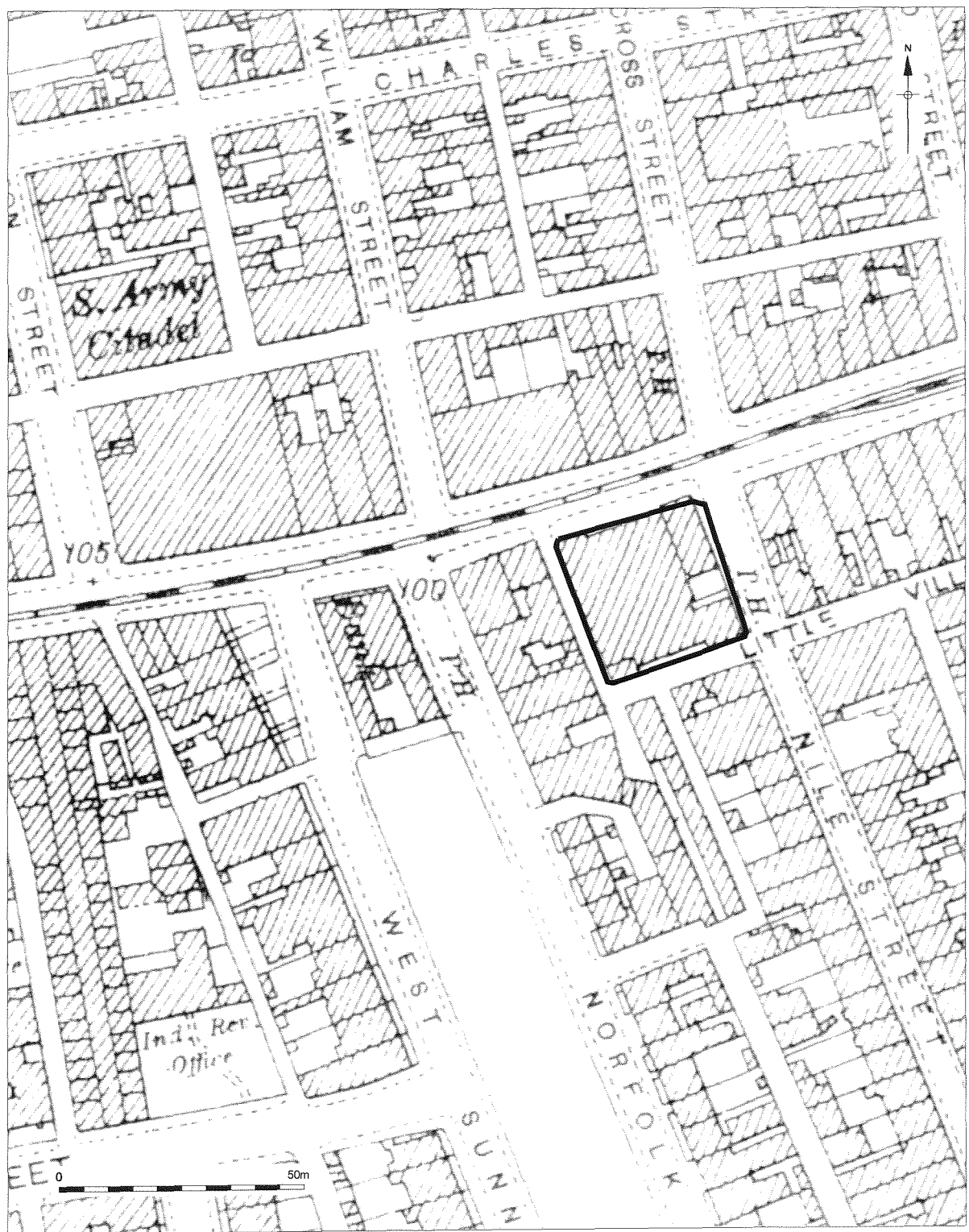


Figure 7
OS Map, 1897
1:1,250

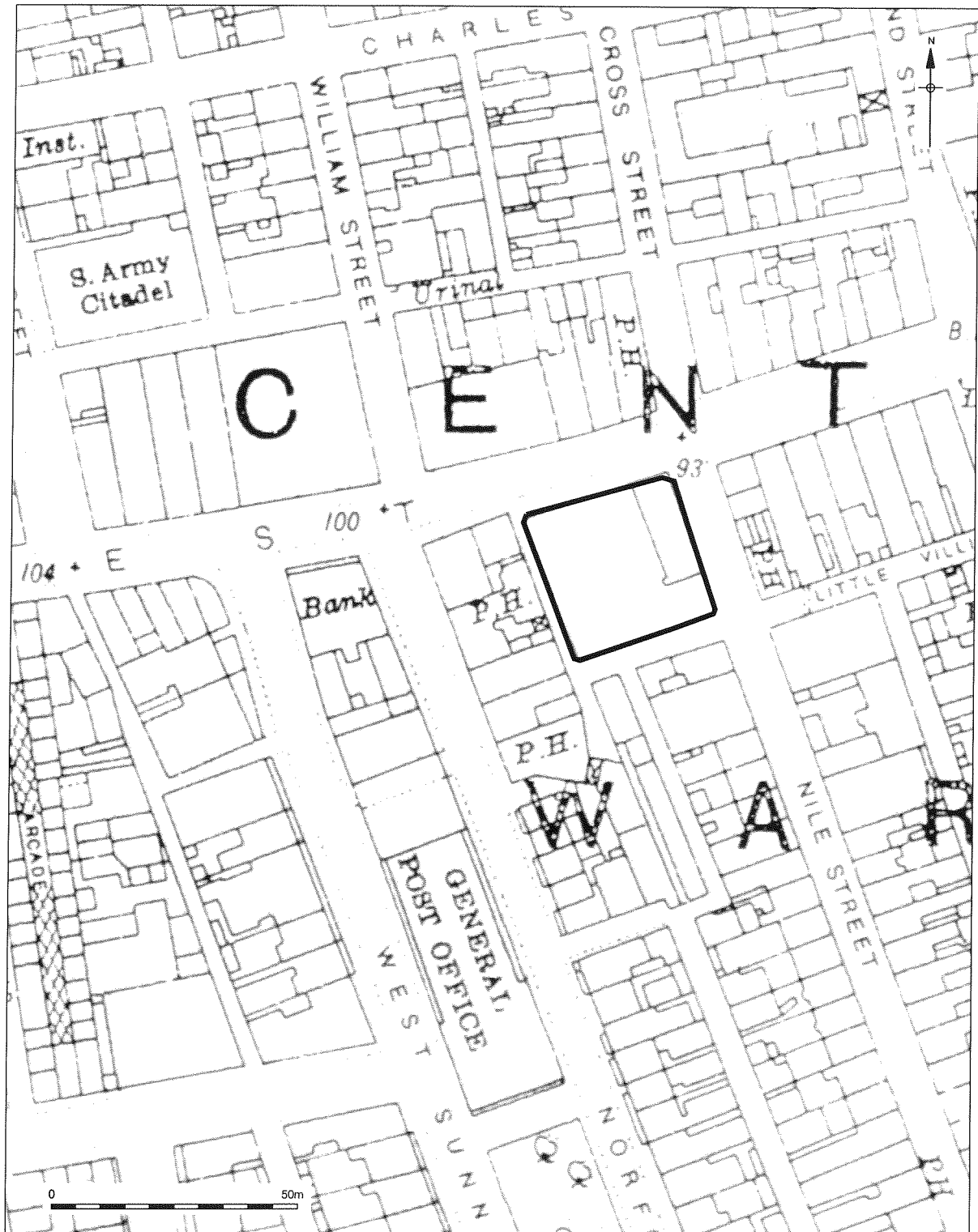


Figure 8
OS Map, 1919
1:1,250

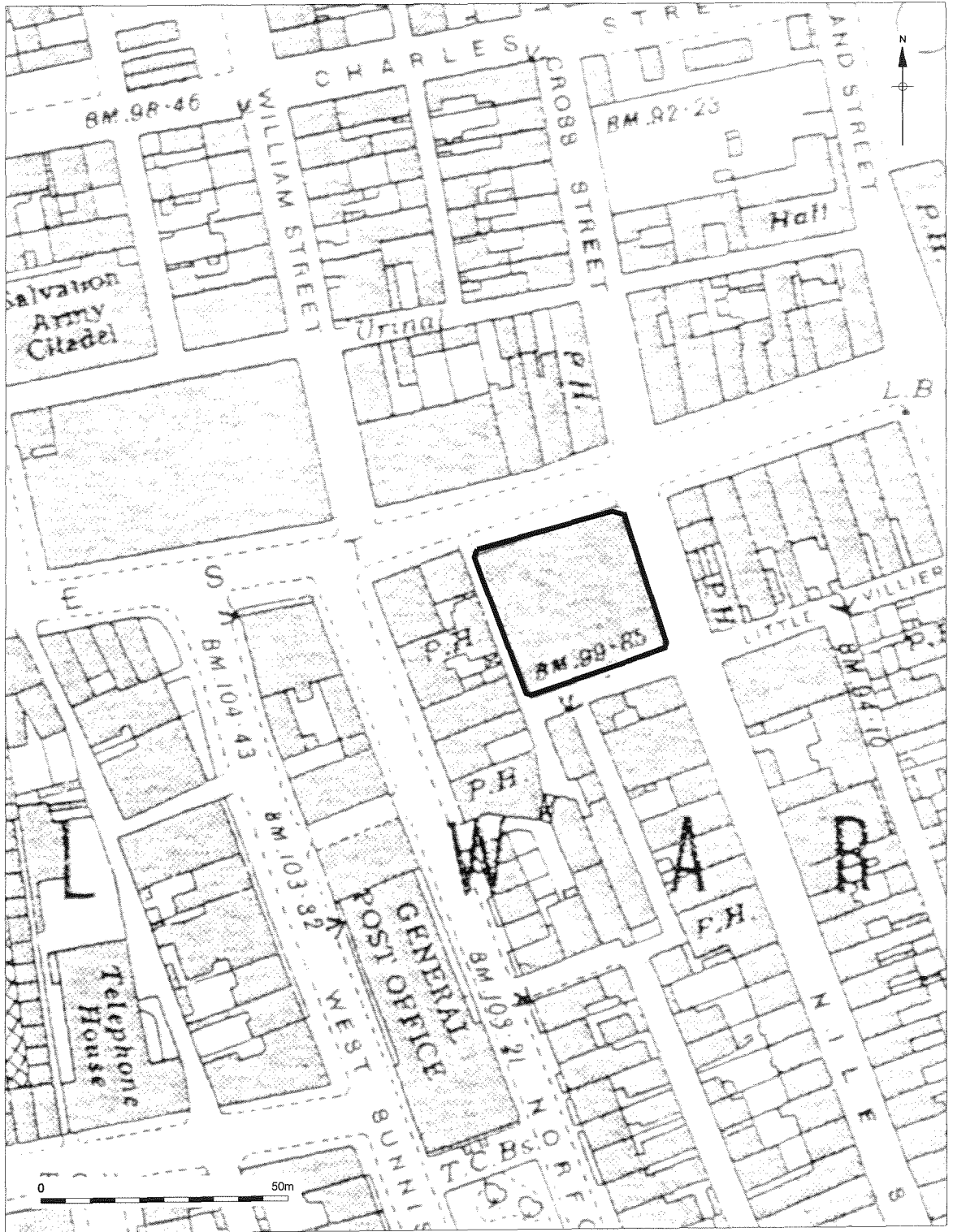


Figure 9
OS Map, 1941
1:1,250

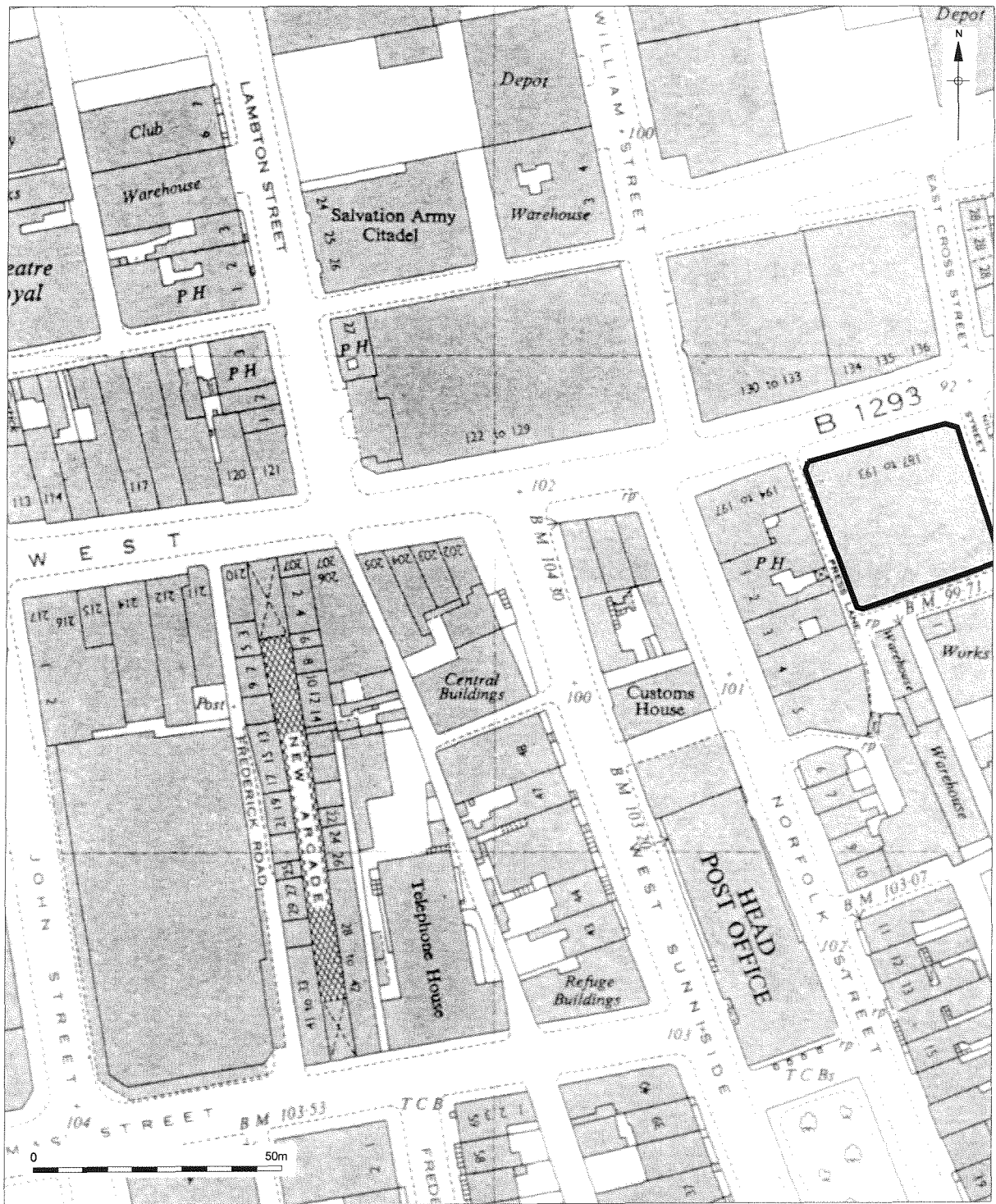


Figure 10
OS Map, 1970
1:1,250



Figure 11
 OS Map, 1988
 1:1,250

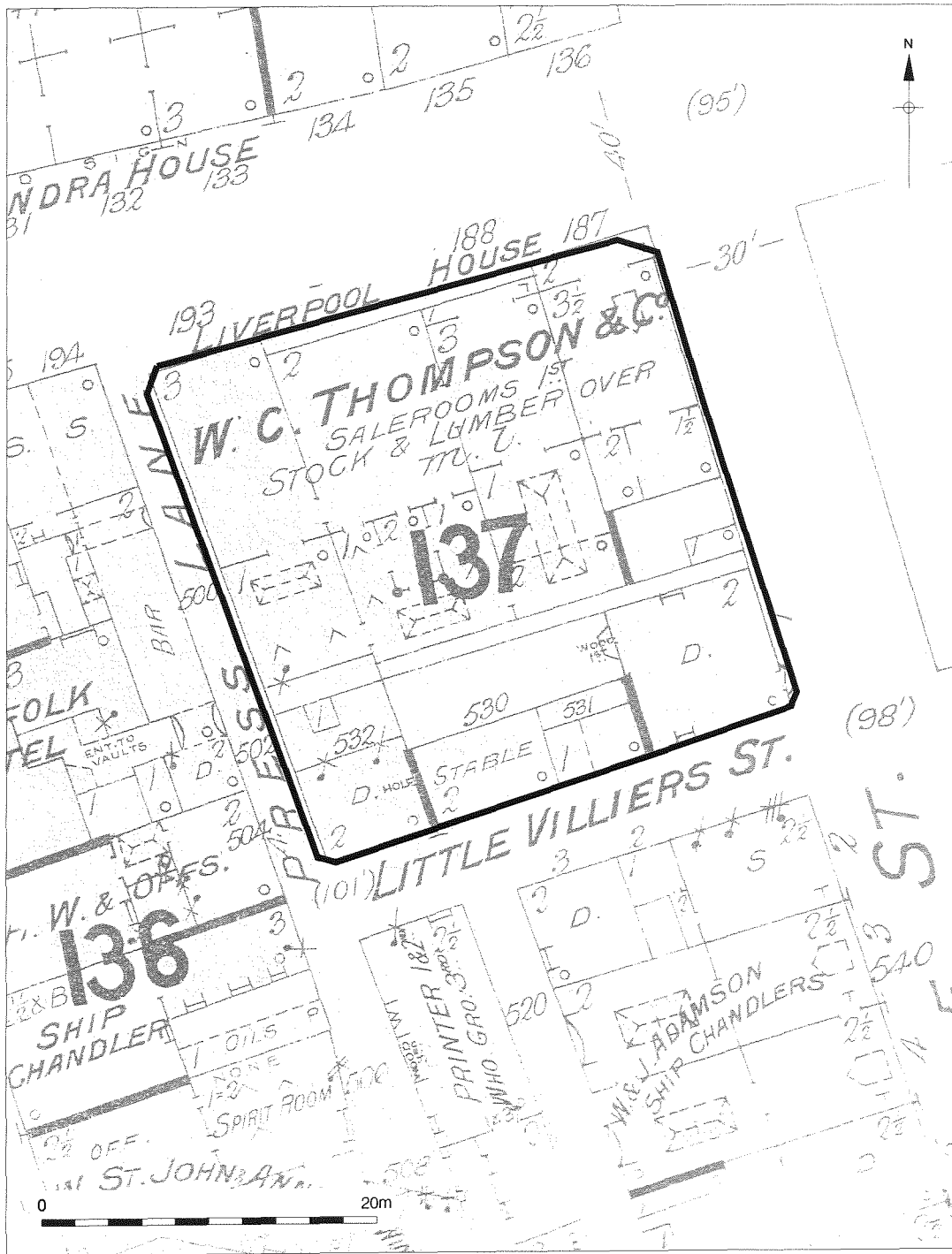
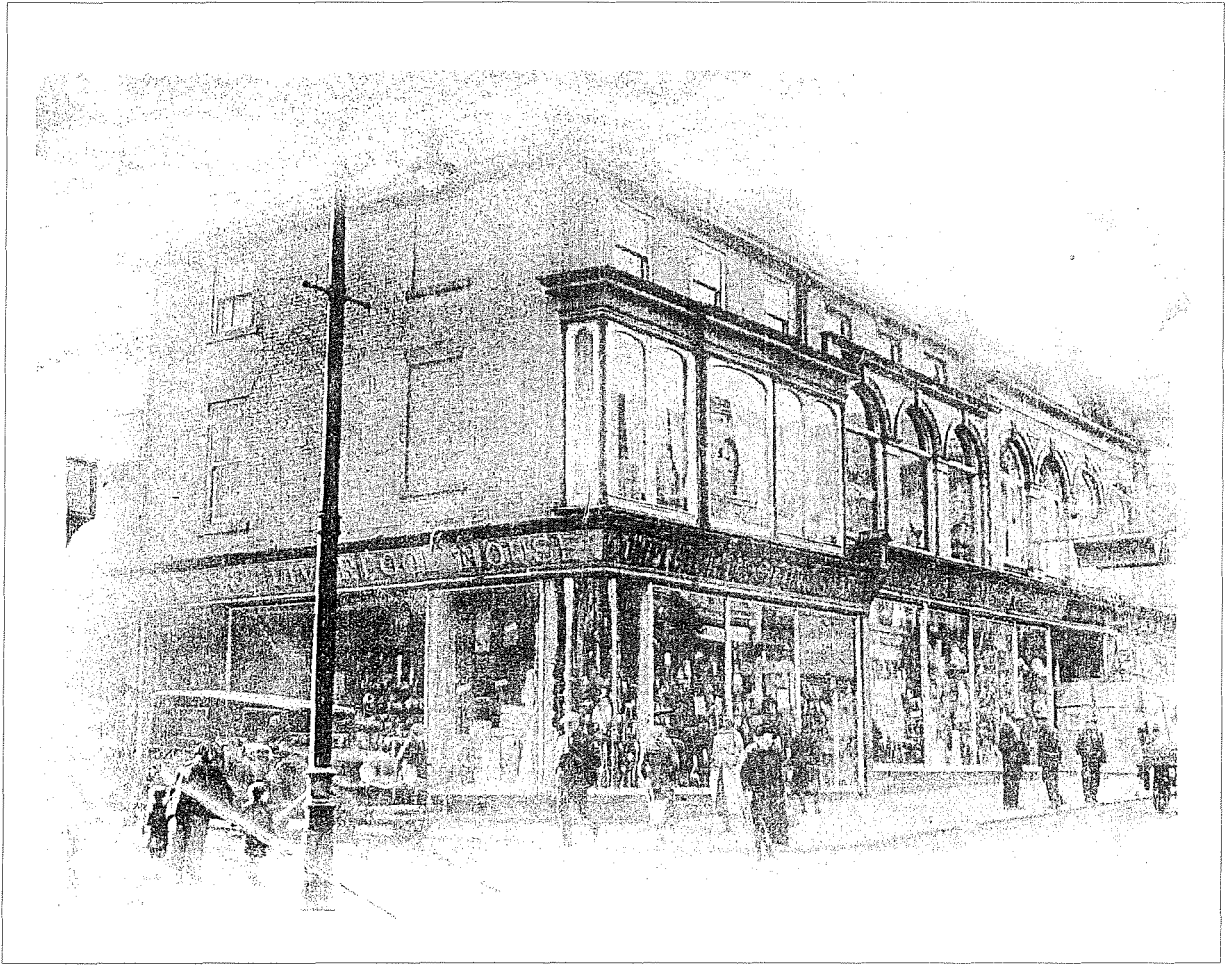


Figure 12
 Goad Fire Insurance Plan, 1894
 1:400



Early Twentieth Century photograph
supplied by We Are Homes



1898 North Elevation
Sunderland Illustrated 1898

5 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

5.1 Liverpool House is a four-storey building incorporating a number of different architectural styles, but outwardly mid- to late-twentieth century in appearance to its north and early-twentieth century to its east, west and south. When identified below, feature numbers (Appendix 1) appear in bold.

5.2 Basement

5.2.1 At the west end of the basement, room B01 (Plate 2) is largely built in stone (3) and its north wall is curved, echoing the floors above (Fig 14). The north stone wall shows evidence of a lightwell blocked with mixed bricks (7). The south wall of the room is built in modern Fletton brick and appears to block a passage leading south, a doorway here is covered with a plywood board sheet. The east wall is built in rendered brick (2) and has a doorway knocked through it leading to room B02. The ceiling timbers of B01 bear the remainders of early-twentieth century lath and plaster. The floor (6) is made up of stone flags although these do not show any wear to determine likely uses.



Plate 2 Stone Basement, Room B01

5.2.2 Room B02 is similarly blocked to the south with all of its walls built in rendered brick. It has a concrete floor and no ceiling covering, the timber beams and joists of the floor above being visible.

5.2.3 B03 is a much larger room containing possible evidence of an early industrial function of the building. The north wall is built in brick, painted black, and contains a number of blocked holes, likely to have been light-wells or chutes. To the south are a series of

'tunnels' extending away from a similarly painted brick wall. These tunnels were inaccessible at the time of recording, but appear to have stretched some metres to the south. The ceiling of B03 is of plywood board and the floor of concrete. In the northeast of the room, a stairway leads to the ground floor. The walls here are decorated with a light but thick render painted to imitate snecked rubble walling and appears intended to give the stairwell a Gothic feel (43). The rest of the walling in the northeast and east of the room is of orange/brown painted brick (2). On either side of B03 are brick-built trough/basins of unknown function, one of which has a tap attached, draining onto the central floor (5).

- 5.2.4 The easternmost room, room B04, is reached via two steps down from the east end of B03. Its floor is concrete and its tongue and groove planked ceiling is supported by makeshift wooden posts, these made of short planks nailed together (1). Just south of these is cast-iron column, becoming fluted as it nears the ceiling (8). Towards the north of the room are two encased iron columns. The west wall of B04 is built largely in breeze blocks, but to its north holds a tiled lightwell sloping up to the pavement of Nile Street (4). The west wall is probably built in brick, but is presently covered in tongue and groove boarding. The north wall has been reconstructed in modern brick.
- 5.2.5 The ground upon which Liverpool house is built slopes down towards the river to the east. The rooms in the basement follow suit, with the ceilings and floor level getting progressively lower from west to east.

5.3 Ground Floor

- 5.3.1 Historically, the ground floor (Fig 14) was the main shop floor of the building. Its succession of fronts (see below) were supported on a number of cast-iron and steel columns (eg. 9, 10, 11).
- 5.3.2 In the northeast corner, room GF01 has rendered walls to its west and separating it from GF02. It is carpeted and the roof is plastered. By the glazed front to the room's north are two steel support columns. The capitals and bases of these are not visible.
- 5.3.3 To the south, GF01 is separated from room GF03 by a modern, lightweight timber and plywood board dividing wall, creating GF03 as an office. To the south of GF03, rooms GF04 and GF05 are similarly divided off, GF04 having a rendered wall to the west and light timber wall to the east with a false ceiling, while GF05 has a rendered east wall and plastered ceiling. A door leads east from GF05 to room GF08.

- 5.3.4 The doorway at the north end of GF02 is the main entrance into Liverpool House and immediately in from the pavement is a large tiled slab bearing the inscription 'Liverpool House' (39) (Plate 3)



Plate 3 'Liverpool House' tiled slab

- 5.3.5 The north end of GF02 (Plate 4) has inserted display areas either side of lobby, these built in light timber and plywood board. The majority of the walls are either covered by plywood board or render. The floor is carpeted and the ceiling is plastered, containing two historic skylights, now infilled with corrugated tin. To the northeast of the room is a lift shaft, this now surrounded by plywood boarding. The room is divided to the south from GF08 by a light timber and plywood wall and there is access from the east of the room to GF09.



Plate 4 North end, Room GF02

- 5.3.6 GF09 is a similar room with plywood board covered walls and a false ceiling. To the north of the room is a disused staircase leading to the first floor. The shop front here is supported on plain iron columns, but neither the bases nor capitals of these are visible. A door in a timber and plywood wall to the south of the room leads to GF10 and there is a step down in the northeast of the room to GF11.
- 5.3.7 Room GF11 is similarly styled with a false ceiling and plywood coverings on all walls. At the north of the room, there is a low step up onto a display area. The iron column grid continues here with all of the columns fluted, including (9) which is a continuation of the column identified in room B04. Again, it was not possible to see the bases or capitals of any of the columns. The central northernmost column has an iron column around its middle with two ties running off and connecting with the iron framing of the room's glazed front.
- 5.3.8 Immediately south of GF09, GF11 contains an inserted 'shed' structure that appears to date from the early twentieth century (14). To the north of the room, the timber floorboards are visible and the east and west walls (15) are built in brick although it was painted and could not be analysed further. The ceiling here is low, being the upper floor of the shed reached via the timber stairs in the room's east. South of these stairs, the floor is covered in plywood boards and the room is open to the roof of the shed structure, this consisting of tongue and groove planking supported on plain 'A' frame trusses. The west wall at this point is of timber and plywood and contains a sliding door leading to GF08. The east and south walls are built in a mix of Fletton brick and breeze blocks and there is a brick blocked window in the south wall. The wall in the south west of the room is of brick, with tongue and groove planking over and finally covered in plywood boarding. The floor here is of wooden floorboards and contains a small area of red glazed tiles that appears to be an historic doorstep (14).
- 5.3.9 Room GF08 is very plain and appears to have been an outdoor area at some point in its use. The floor is concrete covered in plywood boards and the roof has two covered skylight holes the same as those in GF02. The west wall is rendered and the south wall (16) is of rendered brick.
- 5.3.10 In the extreme southwest of Liverpool House, rooms GF06 and GF07 make up a stable block and loft dating from the mid-nineteenth century (12) (Plate 5). GF07 is now a WC with concrete floor and rendered brick walls on all sides. There are stairs to a second floor, similarly constructed in concrete and brick and recently divided with timber and plywood floors. From GF07, GF06 is reached via a doorway in its west wall, the threshold of which is a well worn, deep wooden step. Inside GF06, the stone



Figure 14
 Ground Floor Plan
 showing areas of construction and important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:200

floor contains a number of grooves relating to an (unknown) industrial function. The brickwork of the structure is visible here, it being red brick measuring 229-230mm x 104-111mm x 53-60mm laid in stretcher bond. There is a large bricked up window in the south wall and a section of the wall has been reconstructed in Fletton brick. A wooden staircase leads to the loft of the structure (1F03). The floor 1F03 is of timber planks and there is a bricked up loading hatch with a wooden hinged door in the south wall.



Plate 5 Floor of Stable and Loft Structure, southeast

5.4 First Floor (Fig 15)

- 5.4.1 The first floor of Liverpool House is reached via the wooden stairs of the shed structure in room GF10. The first floor of this structure comprises rooms 1F05 and 1F06. 1F06 is built in orange brick and measuring 211-213mm x 105-111mm x 60-65mm (18). The floor is timber and the roof is of tongue and groove planking with its purlins supported on three 'A' frame type trusses, but with curved braces. The trusses (17) rest directly upon the brick wall.
- 5.4.2 Room 1F05 is divided off from the rest of the room with light timber and plywood walls. The room is small and shows no sign of function save for an inaccessible iron door (19) of unknown use.
- 5.4.3 At the north end of 1F06, a set of wooden steps lead up into 1F07. The floor of the room is covered in plywood boards and there is a modern false ceiling with tongue and groove planking visible behind in some areas. The room's central ceiling beam is supported by an upright steel 'I' section column (29). There are two sets of stairs in the room, one leading down to GF09 in the northwest of the room (25) and a set leading to 2F03 in the room's southeast. The room's north side is the inside of the north façade and it appears to retain most of its fenestration although large areas of

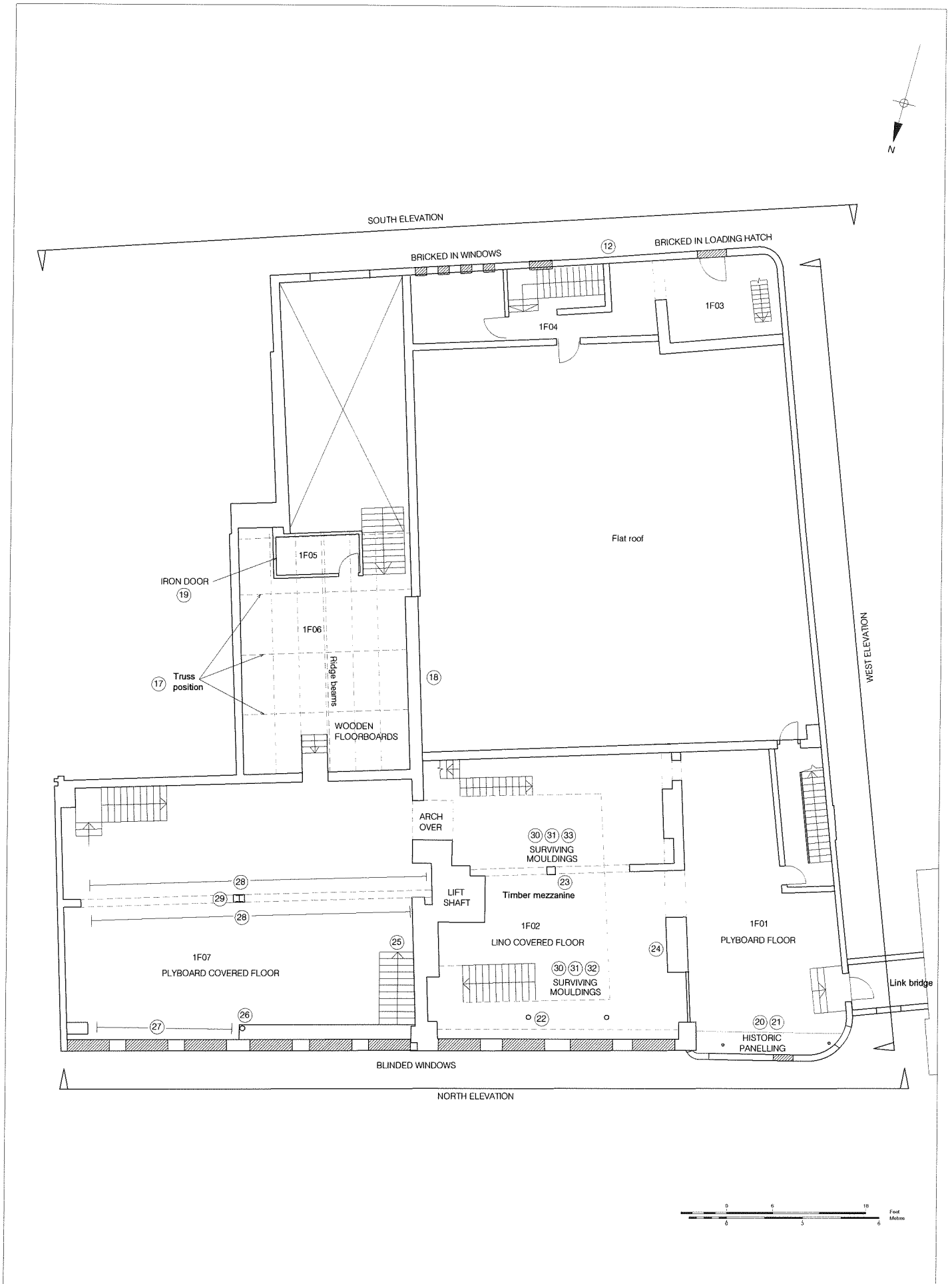


Figure 15
 First Floor Plan
 showing important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:200

this were covered and could not be assessed. The west side of this north front appears to be the original front of Liverpool House, being a wooden front supported in the centre of the room by a fluted cast-iron column with a moulded capital (26) (Plate 6). To the west of this, the continuing shop front has been removed (27). Both sides of the central ceiling beam have a cornice (28) running around the entirety of the room, broken only on the north side (27). There is an entrance to the lift shaft in the west wall.



Plate 6 Historic shop front, Room 1F07

5.4.4 Room 1F02 is open to double height with a plastered ceiling and a lino floor with floorboards visible beneath. All of the walls are built in brick, but either painted or rendered and not accessible for further analysis. Around the entirety of the room, a skirting board, picture rail and cornices survive (30, 31, 32, 33). As this is the only room in the building where such mouldings survive, it can be assumed that this was a principle room at some point in Liverpool House's existence. In the northwest of the room, there is a blocked up fireplace (24). The north wall of the room holds the fenestration, four large round arched windows (Plate 7), evident on the early illustrations and photographs of Liverpool House (Fig 13). At this wall, and in the centre of the room, the ceiling beams are supported on cast-iron columns (22, 23). Around the north, west and south walls of the room, a timber mezzanine level has been inserted.

5.4.5 Room 1F01 is immediately west of 1F02. The floor and walls of the room are covered by plywood boards and the ceiling is plastered. There are two windows in the north wall of the room, this echoing the rounded shape of room B04. The remainder of this front is covered in plywood board, but wood panelling and traces of lath and plaster were visible (20, 21). In the southwest of the room, a stairwell leads to room 2F01.



Plate 7 Historic windows, Room 1F02

5.5 Second floor (Fig 16)

5.5.1 Room 2F01 is of the same shape in plan as 1F01 and keeps the rounded shape of B01 in the north wall which holds three casement windows. The floor has a plywood board covering. Immediately north of stairwell (2F02) is a rounded scar in the floor of unknown origin (38).

5.5.2 To the east of the building, room 2F03 has a plywood boarded floor and ceiling. The walls are covered with tongue and groove plank boards. In the north wall, the original fenestration survives, this comprising six sash windows, illustrated in Figure 17. The central beam of the ceiling is supported on a cast iron column (34). In the northwest of the room is a steel 'I' section support brace, possibly related to supporting the mechanism at the top of the lift shaft, an entrance to which is in the west wall of the room. At the south of the room, a set of stairs leads down to 1F07 and up to a hatch allowing loft access (35).

5.6 Lofts

5.6.1 None of the loft spaces in Liverpool House were accessible during the time of recording.

5.7 North elevation (Fig 17, Plate 1)

5.7.1 The north elevation of Liverpool House fronts onto High Street West and appears to bear the traces of previous properties on the site. The lower level of the elevation is glazed, with plate glass held in an iron frame. In the centre of the building is the entrance to the building's lobby and, between the front door and the lobby, the large tiled slab bearing the title 'Liverpool House' (39). The windows of the level above this are blocked with wooden planking and the elevation itself is covered in render, scored to imitate ashlar blocks. At second floor level, there are six sash windows in the eastern part of the elevation and three windows at this level at the western end of the elevation.

5.7.2 Overall, the north elevation is demonstrative of a number of different historic properties on the site. Although the current façade appears largely 1960s in date, it still clearly contains the lines of historic property boundaries. The eastern, flat-roofed part of the building can be divided into two properties, roughly where between the third and fourth windows. The central part of the elevation, plainly classically styled with a central pediment lined in concrete slabs at roof level, appears demonstrative of one, larger historic property. At the far west of the elevation, at the junction with Press Lane, the shape of a three storey, nineteenth-century building is clearly visible, the whole projecting out from the line of the rest of the façade. It has a steeply pitched slate double roof that was not accessible for further analysis.

5.8 West Elevation (Fig 19)

5.8.1 This nineteenth-century building can be further seen on the west elevation where, at its north end, there is a single-storey's height of brown brick (42), holding a classically styled sandstone door and an early nineteenth century street sign (50) bearing most of the inscription 'Press Lane' (Plate 8), the start of each word truncated by the 1960s shop front as it 'wraps around' onto the west elevation from the north. Above this, the wall is constructed in modern red-brick although it was not possible to assess whether this was a replacement or a 'skin' reinforcing older brickwork. A link corridor stretches west away from this wall joining Liverpool House to the adjacent building. The roof at this point is double gabled.

5.8.2 Immediately south of this historic brickwork, is a low brick wall of unknown date, but built in Fletton brick and holding eight small windows.

5.8.3 At the southwest corner of the building is the west end of the stable block (12) discussed above. The corner of the structure (41) is protected by an iron turn-guard at



Plate 8 Early-nineteenth century street sign

floor level and the radiused corner above is decorated with a sandstone cornice immediately below roof level.

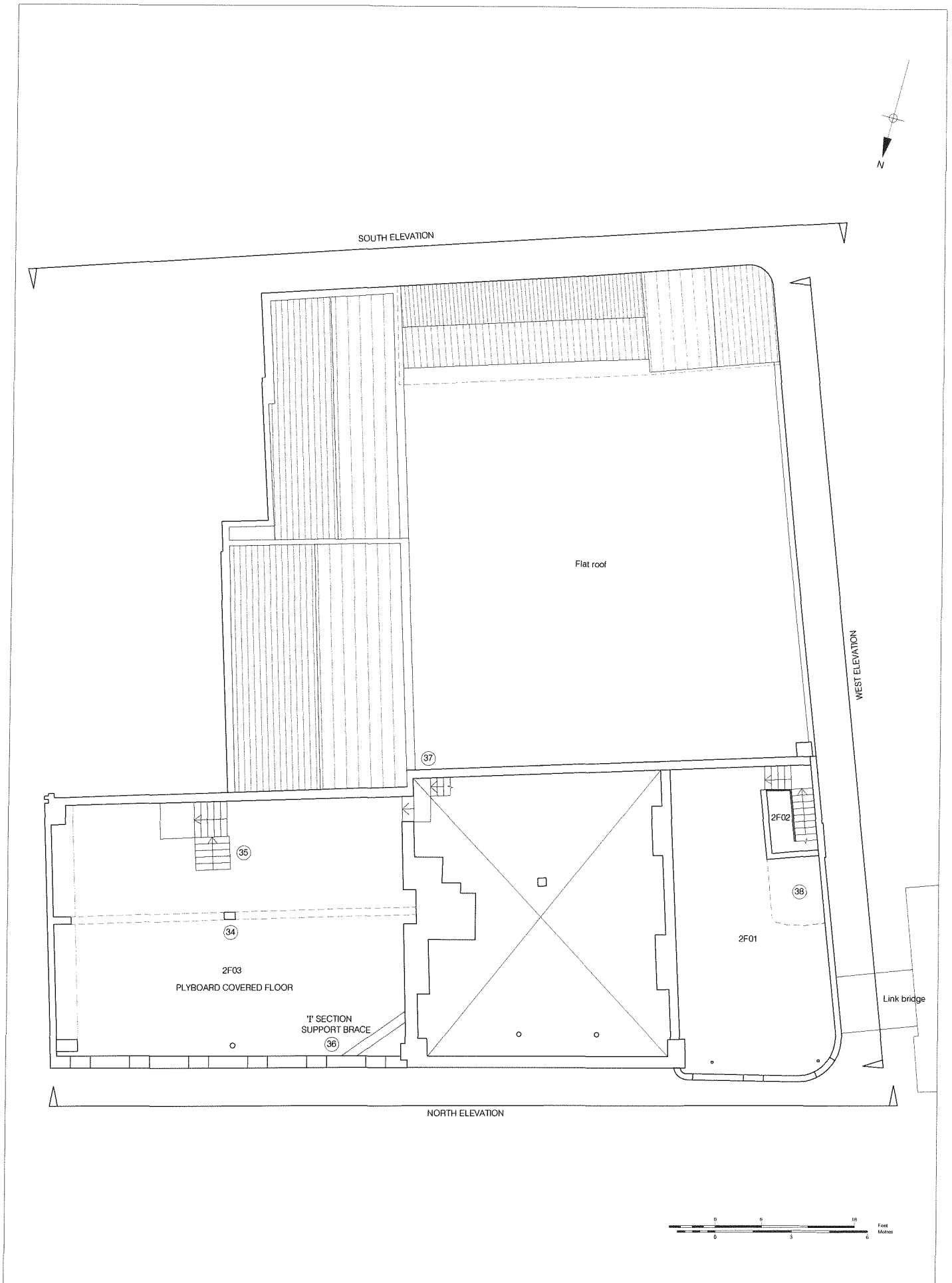


Figure 16
 Second Floor Plan
 showing important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:200



ELEVATION TO HIGH ST WEST

Figure 17
 North Elevation
 showing important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:125

5.9 **South Elevation** (Fig 18)

5.9.1 Structure (**12**) continues into the south elevation, facing onto Little Villiers Street. To the west, two large ground floor-level windows have been infilled in modern brick. Above these, there is a bricked up loading hatch with a sandstone lintel. In the centre of the structure is a fire escape above which is a further door, its external access removed. To the east of the elevation of structure (**12**), there are two rows of four original windows, these barred at ground floor level and bricked in at first floor level. East of this structure is the external wall of GF10 built in modern brick and breeze blocks, this containing a blocked window.

5.10 **East Elevation**

5.10.1 The east elevation of Liverpool House is covered almost entirely by a thick modern render. The northernmost end, above the glazed shop front is built up in brick and has two windows blocked up with brick.

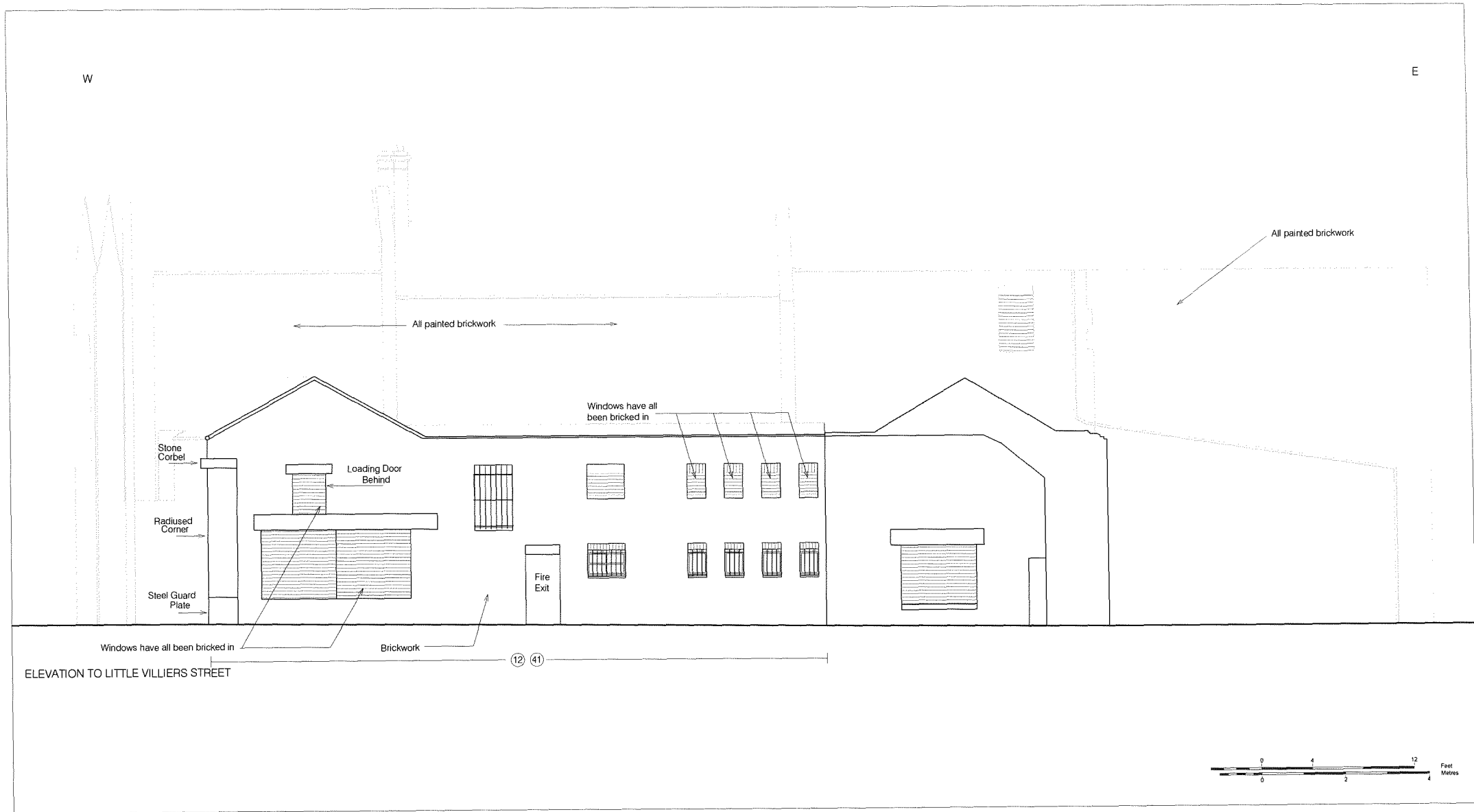


Figure 18
 South Elevation
 showing important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:125

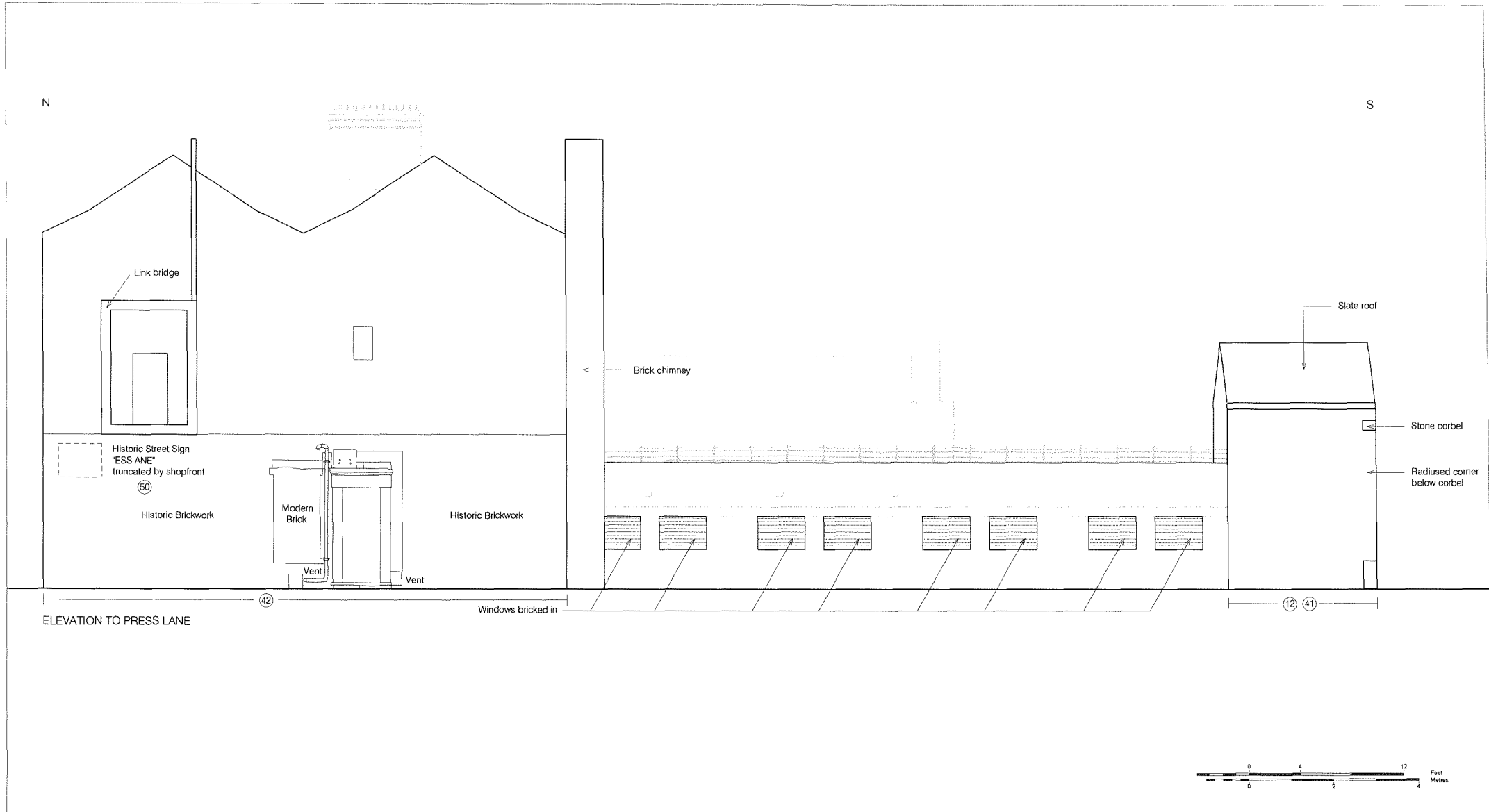


Figure 19
 West Elevation
 showing important features (ref. Appendix 1)
 1:125

6 THE HISTORIC SEQUENCE

- 6.1 The earliest structure surviving within the fabric of Liverpool House is in the northeast corner of the building where the remains of a building first appearing on the 1826 plan of Sunderland can be seen (Fig 4). This structure survives in the stone walling and flagstone floor of B01, in the early brickwork and street sign that can be seen on the west elevation and in interior elements to the north of 1F01. The shape of this early building is still retained in plan and on the north elevation. This constitutes Phase 1 of the building's development.
- 6.2 The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1855 (Fig 5) shows this building still in place and other buildings spreading to the east of it. The property boundaries and alleyways at this time are those that are echoed in the dimensions and internal divisions of Liverpool House. The southern limit of the High Street West fronting buildings is reflected in the current plan of Liverpool House. By this time, the stable block and loft in the southwest corner of the complex are also visible on the Ordnance Survey map. This phase, Phase 2, is characterised by the development of this series of outbuildings. They form part of a group of buildings on the other side of both Press Lane and Little Villiers Street as an urban industrial complex through an arch to the southwest of the building.
- 6.3 Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the building is converted into sales rooms, Phase Three of building. The first development (Fig 12), that of W C Thompson and Co. appears interconnect the extant row of buildings and remodel the frontage of the building to provide a protruding frontage to the east end of the north front of the building, matching that at the west. At this time, the area currently occupied by the car park contains buildings, including a galleried area shown in the Building Control Plans for the site. This building no longer exists. The second development is the conversion of the building to Liverpool House, following the designs visible in Figure 13. In particular, the historic property divisions are clear in the elevation from Sunderland Illustrated that clearly shows three tall early-nineteenth century buildings, two to the east and one (see 6.1) to the west. In the centre is the low, wide, classically styled building with four large arched windows still extant in room 1F02. The majority of interior elements and features date to this phase, including the trough/basins in B03 and the inserted shed structure making up GF10.
- 6.4 The final phase, Phase Four of the building's development, covers development of and repairs within Liverpool House since the early- to mid-nineteenth century. The most obvious developments in this period are the demolition of some rooms to the east of the building and the creation of the car park, the addition of the modern render

and timber board shop front that remains today and the 1950s insertion of a Santa's Grotto into the basement of the building as well as the plywood board covering of the majority of the buildings floors and walls. During this phase, Liverpool House was taken over by Style Furnishings, the most recent occupiers, and has been unused in recent years.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The Specification for Archaeological Recording provided by Jennifer Morrison, Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer required that this report appraise the current condition of the building, assess its architectural and historic significance and address the issue as to whether the building could be conserved and adapted to a new use. Included will be any recommendations for further work that will provide clarification of any queries raised.

7.2 For ease of discussion, the building has been divided into a number of significant areas. These will be discussed in turn, with reference to the above points. Each will also be discussed with reference to the relevant Conservation Areas, Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area which includes Liverpool House and Central Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs immediately adjacent to Liverpool House.

7.3 The areas to be discussed are;

- the early-nineteenth century building partially surviving in the fabric of the northwest of the building (Phase One)
- the stable block and loft at the southwest corner of the building (Phase Two)
- the late-nineteenth century façade of Liverpool House (Phase Three)
- twentieth century developments within Liverpool House and the legacy of Liverpool House within the local area (Phase Four)

7.4 Phase One

7.4.1 Evidence of an early-nineteenth century town house survives in the northwest corner of the building. The surviving elements comprise a stone basement with a blocked light-well and flagstone floor, a section of brick wall fronting onto Press Lane and bearing a street sign from the period and some sections of timber panelling on the second floor of the building in room 1F01. The shape of this building is retained throughout its height.

7.4.2 This structure appears to be structurally sound although it was not possible to fully assess the survival of the Phase One structure due to most of the interior walls being heavily rendered or obscured by plywood boards. The roof above this element was inaccessible for investigation, but showed few signs of water ingress.

7.4.3 The stone basement and its flagstone floor preserve evidence of this early phase in the building's development, is of moderate archaeological value and should be recorded in detail prior to removal and the materials reused elsewhere in the scheme if practicable. The brick wall, sandstone doorway and historic 'Press Lane' street sign on the west elevation of the structure. Visible from High Street West, this brickwork marks the western boundary of Old Riverside Conservation Area and is in the immediate setting of Central Conservation Area. The fact that it is considerably patched means that it is not practicable to incorporate all of the brickwork into proposed scheme. The historic street sign and the brickwork in its immediate vicinity is to be considered particularly important and worthy of retention or reuse in the new scheme.

7.5 **Phase Two**

7.5.1 Phase Two of the development of Liverpool House is best demonstrated by the stable and loft structure surviving in the southeast of the site. This is a brick structure retaining its original stone floor, and wooden second floor and stairs. The south east corner of this structure keeps its original sandstone radiused corbel and a later iron turnguard.

7.5.2 There are other similar structures in the vicinity and areas of the south elevation have been heavily repaired with modern brick. The structure is of low importance although there was no character assessment available for the Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area of which it is a part. It is not immediately visible from any of the major routeways through this Conservation Area.

7.5.3 The south elevation forms part of the setting of Central Conservation Area, as it is visible through an archway to the southeast, which is part of an urban industrial courtyard leading off Norfolk Street (Plate 9). The historic view through the nearby archway forms part of the character of Central Conservation Area. Any new walling visible through the arch should be of red/brown brick to harmonise with the brickwork that frames the view through the arch.

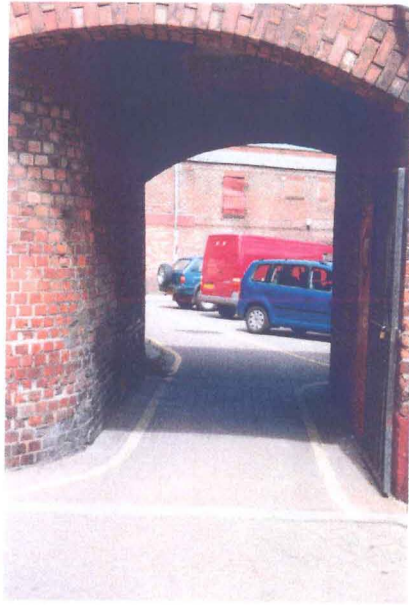


Plate 9 View of stable and loft structure through archway to southeast

- 7.5.4 The surviving structure is sound and could be incorporated into any new development although the small internal size of the structure may not make this cost-effective enterprise.

7.6 Phase Three

- 7.6.1 The most important surviving structures from the Liverpool House department store phase of the building's historic development survive to the north of the building and include the glazed shop front, iron column grid and shop fronts and windows that survive behind the current rendered and timber boarded shop front.
- 7.6.2 The column grid has been assessed as being structurally unsound due to subsidence downhill to the east and the columns tilt visibly. It is likely that the conservation of the column grid would be impracticable within any future development.
- 7.6.3 The late-nineteenth century frontage of Liverpool House partly survives behind the current frontage in the western half of 1F07 and in 1F02, where there are four arched windows of the former shop front. At the west end of the building the late 19th century frontage survives behind the current frontage, although it has had its cornice and string course removed. The 19th century window opening locations on the second floor at the east end of the building's frontage also survive. Liverpool House was as a well-known shop in Sunderland and its shopfront may be considered important to both Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area and the setting of Central Conservation Area where this is in line with their forthcoming character assessments.

7.6.4 The glazed elements of the shopfront are fragile and the fact that the late 19th century frontage survives in areas across the front elevation, rather than universally may render their incorporation into the proposed scheme impractical. If these elements are to be removed it would be desirable to produce an archaeological drawn record of them in mitigation.

7.6.5 The 'Liverpool House' tiled slab in the doorway of the building has suffered some cracking. If it can be reused or, if not reusable, replicated it could form a valuable reference in any new scheme to the former use of the building and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

7.7 Phase Four

7.7.1 Having been in use until relatively recently, Liverpool House is widely remembered among current Sunderland residents. Local residents spoken to by Pre-Construct Archaeology were unanimous in their remembrance of childhood visits to the Santa's Grotto in the basement of the building, designed and constructed by Evan Oxenham in the 1950s (Plate 10). Few structural elements of this remain and it may be judged that the historical value of this element of the building does not merit its physical retention.

7.7.2 That being so, the continuation of the important local legacy of Liverpool House exemplified by remembrance of the Santa's Grotto is highly desirable. This may be achieved by the conservation or, if not practical, the replication and reuse of the 'Liverpool House' tiled entrance slab in a prominent position within any future development.



Plate 10 Nativity scene in Santa's Grotto, Room B03, 1961,
supplied by Ms Maureen Oxenham

7.8 Sunnyside Townscape Heritage Initiative

- 7.8.1 The assessments and recommendations above are compliant with the aims of the Sunnyside Townscape Heritage Initiative.

7.9 Recommendations for further work

- 7.9.1 A number of important elements in the drawn record of the building were not included in the architect's survey as made available to Pre-Construct Archaeology. In particular, a plan of the basement should be produced as well as a section through the north of the building. The latter would complete a comprehensive drawn record of Liverpool House and demonstrate the survival of historic structures within the later building. The results of the fabric analysis of the building by Pre-Construct Archaeology should be added to this plan and section.
- 7.9.2 A small-scale, targeted removal of plywood boarding on the walls and floors of areas of the historic structure in the northwest of the building would be valuable in order to complete the definition of the areas of Phase One that currently survive. Any Phase One structural elements uncovered should be subject to a brief photographic survey. It is likewise necessary to assess the loft space in the northwest of the building to determine the survival of original roof trusses. Original trusses should be drawn and photographed, any later replacement trusses need only be photographed.
- 7.9.3 It is recommended that the late 19th century elements of the shop front that are to be removed should be recorded to produce a drawn record showing just the late 19th century elements at a scale of 1:100.
- 7.9.4 It is recommended that the archaeological report of the above works be produced as an appendix to the current survey and that it include a re-evaluation of the recommendations and structural appraisals where they are confirmed or refuted.
- 7.9.5 Large areas of walling are covered over and therefore, where these are not revealed by further opening up works as recommended above, demolition works should be subject to a watching brief to refine and complete the drawn record and phasing of the structure.

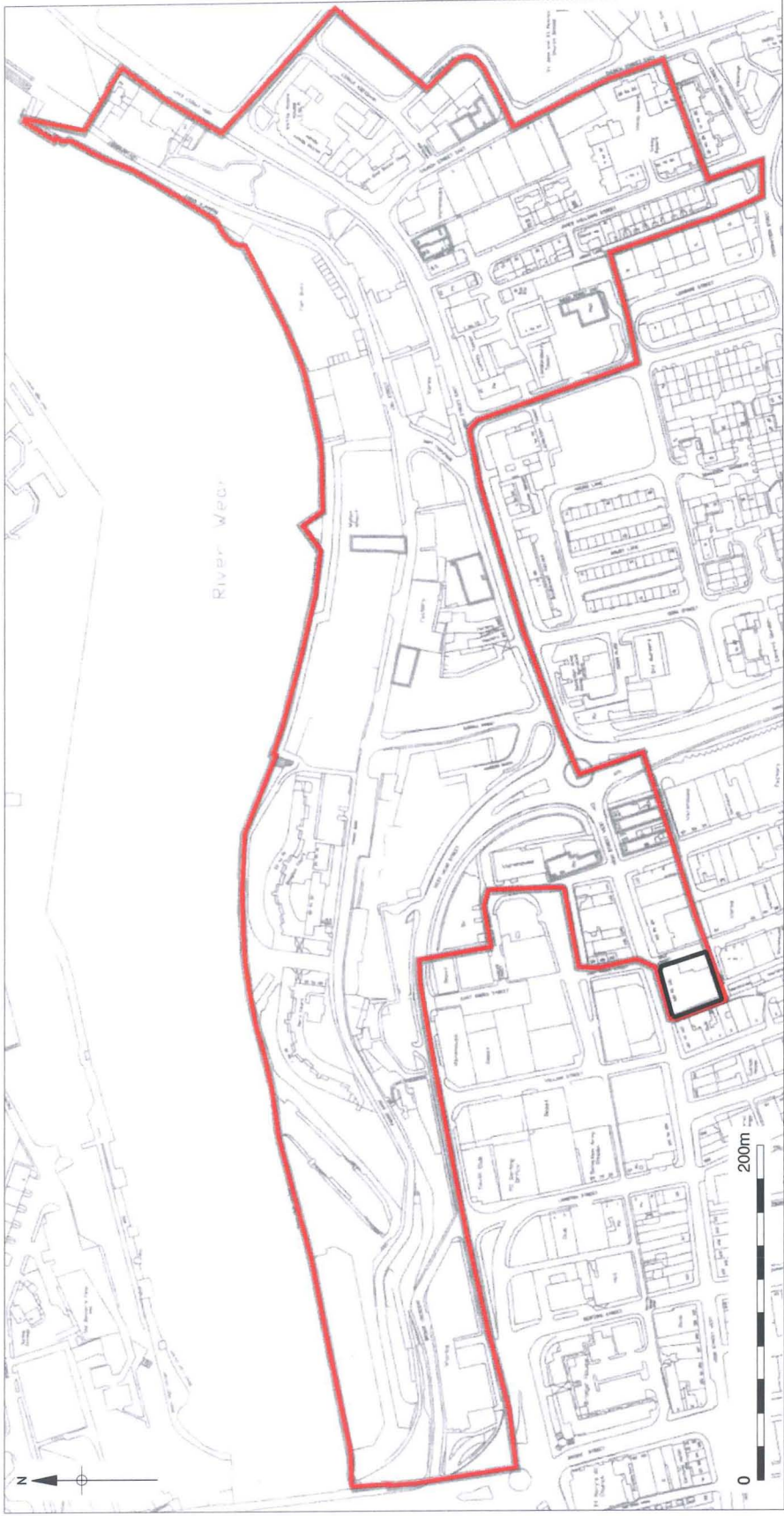


Figure 20
Old Sunderland Riverside Conservation Area
1:4000



Figure 21
Central Conservation Area
1:4000

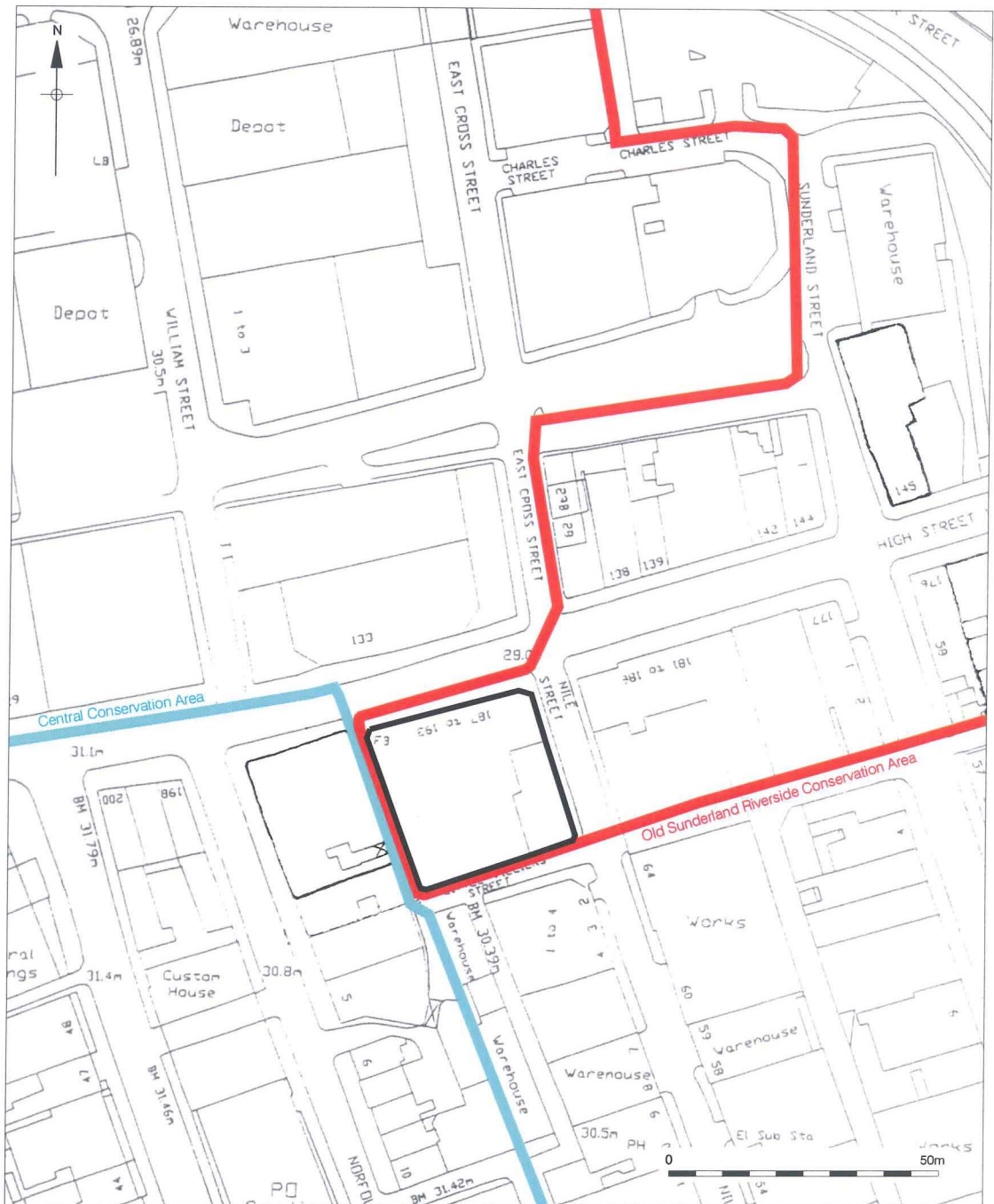


Figure 22
 Position of Liverpool House in relation to Old
 Sunderland Riverside and Central Conservation Areas
 1:1250

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 This report was produced for Pre-Construct Archaeology by James Dixon.
- 8.2 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank David Richardson of WeAre Homes for commissioning the work and for assistance on site. Thanks are also due to Loren Design for supplying the as existing drawings which formed the basis for the survey.
- 8.3 The author would like to thank Emma Allen for assistance on site, Cheryl Blundy for photography, Hayley Baxter for CAD illustration and Ken Sabel and Robin Taylor-Wilson for project management. Thanks also go to Ms Maureen Oxenham for providing information on the history of the building.

APPENDIX 1

1 Table of Historic features and locations.

Feature number	Location	Description
1	B04	Wooden beams
2	B01-B04	Historic brick walls
3	BO1-BO4	Stone walls
4	BO4	Tiled lightwell
5	BO3	Trough/basins
6	BO1	Flagstone floor
7	BO1	Blocked lightwell
8	BO4	Column A
9	GF11	Column A
10	GF02	Column B
11	GF02	Column C
12	GF06/GF07	Stable block
13	GF10	Tiled area
14	GF10/1F05/1F06	Inserted 'shed' structure
15	GF10	Historic brick walls
16	GFO8/GFO7	Historic brick walls
17	1F06	Roof trusses
18	1F06	Historic brick walls
19	1F05	Iron door
20	1F01	Wood panelling
21	1F01	Lath and plaster
22	1F02	Column D
23	1F02	Column E
24	1F02	Blocked fireplace
25	1F07	Removed staircase?
26	1F07	Column F (fluted)
27	1F07	Removed frontage
28	1F07	Cornice A
29	1F07	I' section supports
30	1F02	Surviving skirting
31	1F02	Picture rail molding
32	1F02	Cornice B
33	1F02	Cornice C
34	2F02	Column G
35	2F02	Loft access
36	2F02	Steel support beam
37	2F02	Stair brickwork
38	2F02	Stairwell feature
39	External, n	Doorstep
40	External, n	Frontage
41	External, se	Turnguard+elevation
42	External, e	Stone doorway
43	B03	Santa's Grotto

44	External, roof, s facing	Roof lines
45	External, roof, n facing	Roof lines
46	External, e	Elevation
47	External, s	Elevation
48	External, w	Elevation
49	External, sw	View through archway
50	External, nw	Historic street sign

2 Phased groupings of features

Phase 1 – Nineteenth century housing

3	BO1-BO4	Stone walls
6	BO1	Flagstone floor
7	BO1	Blocked lightwell
20	1F01	Wood panelling
21	1F01	Lath and plaster
42	External, e	Stone doorway
48	External, w	Elevation
50	External, nw	Historic street sign

Phase 2 – Later nineteenth century residential and urban industrial complex

2	B01-BO4	Historic brick walls
12	GF06/GF07	Stable block
13	GF10	Tiled area
14	GF10/1F05/1F06	Inserted 'shed' structure
15	GF10	Historic brick walls
16	GFO8/GFO7	Historic brick walls
17	1F06	Roof trusses
18	1F06	Historic brick walls
41	External, se	Turnguard+elevation
44	External, roof, s facing	Roof lines
45	External, roof, n facing	Roof lines
47	External, s	Elevation
49	External, sw	View through archway

Phase 3 – Liverpool House c.1897 - onwards

1	B04	Wooden beams
4	BO4	Tiled lightwell
8	BO4	Column A
9	GF11	Column A
10	GF02	Column B
11	GF02	Column C
19	1F05	Iron door

22	1F02	Column D
23	1F02	Column E
24	1F02	Blocked fireplace
25	1F07	Removed staircase?
26	1F07	Column F (fluted)
27	1F07	Removed frontage
28	1F07	Cornice A
30	1F02	Surviving skirting
31	1F02	Picture rail molding
32	1F02	Cornice B
33	1F02	Cornice C
34	2F02	Column G
35	2F02	Loft access
37	2F02	Stair brickwork
38	2F02	Stairwell feature
39	External, n	Doorstep
40	External, n	Frontage
43	B03	Santa's Grotto
46	External, e	Elevation

Phase 4 – Post-Liverpool House alterations

29	1F07	I' section supports	Low
36	2F02	Steel support beam	Low

APPENDIX TWO

PCA DRAWING NUMBER	DERIVED FROM	DESCRIPTION
PCA/LHSO5/001	Architect's survey	Phased ground floor plan
PCA/LHSO5/002	Architect's survey	First floor showing features
PCA/LHSO5/003	Architect's survey	Second floor showing features
PCA/LHSO5/004	Architect's survey	North elevation showing features
PCA/LHSO5/005	Architect's survey	South elevation showing features
PCA/LHSO5/006	Architect's survey	West elevation showing features

APPENDIX THREE

OASIS ID: preconst1-9540

Project details

Project name	Liverpool House Sunderland
Short description of the project	Liverpool House is a disused department store, its main phase of use beginning in the late-nineteenth century. It contains evidence of early- and mid-nineteenth century structures.
Project dates	Start: 11-07-2005 End: 13-07-2005
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	LHS05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	STRUCTURE Post Medieval
Monument type	STRUCTURE Modern
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
<h4>Project location</h4>	
Country	England
Site location	TYNE AND WEAR SUNDERLAND SUNDERLAND Liverpool House
Postcode	SR1
Study area	900.00 Square metres
National grid reference	NZ 399571 Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Tyne and Wear County Council

Project design originator Jennifer Morrison

Project director/manager Ken Sabel/Robin Taylor-Wilson

Project supervisor James Dixon

Sponsor or funding body WeAre Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Tyne and Wear Museums

Digital Contents 'other'

Digital Media available 'Survey'

Paper Archive recipient Tyne and Wear Museums

Paper Contents 'other'

Paper Media available 'Photograph', 'Report'

Project bibliography

1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Archaeological Recording of Liverpool House, 187-193 High Street West, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR1

Author(s)/Editor(s) Dixon, J

Date 2005

Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	London
Entered by	James Dixon (jdixon@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	5 August 2005