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**Shelley Signs, Mill Lane,  
Eaton Upon Tern, Shropshire.  
June 2014**

aeon archaeology



Level 2 Historic Building Record  
Project Code: A0040.1  
Report no. 0041

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# **Shelley Signs, Mill Lane, Eaton Upon Tern, Shropshire. June 2014**

Report no. 0041 v1.0

Level 2 Historic Building Record  
Aeon Archaeology  
17 Cecil Street  
Chester  
CH3 5DP



Project Code: A0040.1

Date: 20/06/2014

Client: Shelley Signs

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was asked by Rob Shelley (Shelley Signs) to undertake a level 2 historic building record at Shelley Signs, Mill Lane, Eaton Upon Tern, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 2BX (centred on NGR **SJ 65311 23273**) in advance of demolition as part of a new housing development. The site forms part of the edge of the former World War II RAF Peplow camp (figure 1).

The archaeological mitigation is being completed as part of a condition of full planning permission (Planning Reference: **11/03440/FUL**).

The proposed development involves the demolition of the buildings on the site, which are currently used for light industrial purposes Shelly Signs Ltd and the erection of 13 residential dwelling houses with access, parking and landscaping.

The Shropshire planning service has not prepared a mitigation brief for this project, but has made a recommendation for a level 2 historic building record through the following condition:

*No development approved by this permission shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This written scheme shall be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.*

This design and all subsequent mitigation will conform to the guidelines specified in English Heritage ‘*Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*’ (2006) & *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (Institute for Archaeologists, 1996 (revised 2008)).

## 2.0 SPECIFICATION AND PROJECT DESIGN

The requirements were for an archaeological building record of the former RAF Peplow buildings present at the site prior to demolition work, however should observations or desk-based research suggest the potential for significant features to be encountered during the site clearance/ground work, the archaeological contractor should make arrangements to undertake any appropriate supplementary recording work during the development. The Shropshire planning service has requested that the building record be roughly commensurate with the English Heritage ‘*Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*’ (2006) **Level 2**.

Both the exterior and the interior of each building were viewed, described and photographed. The record presents conclusions regarding the building’s development and use, but does not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based.

The level 2 historic building record consists of English Heritage ‘*Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*’ (2006) elements:

written account: 1-3, 6

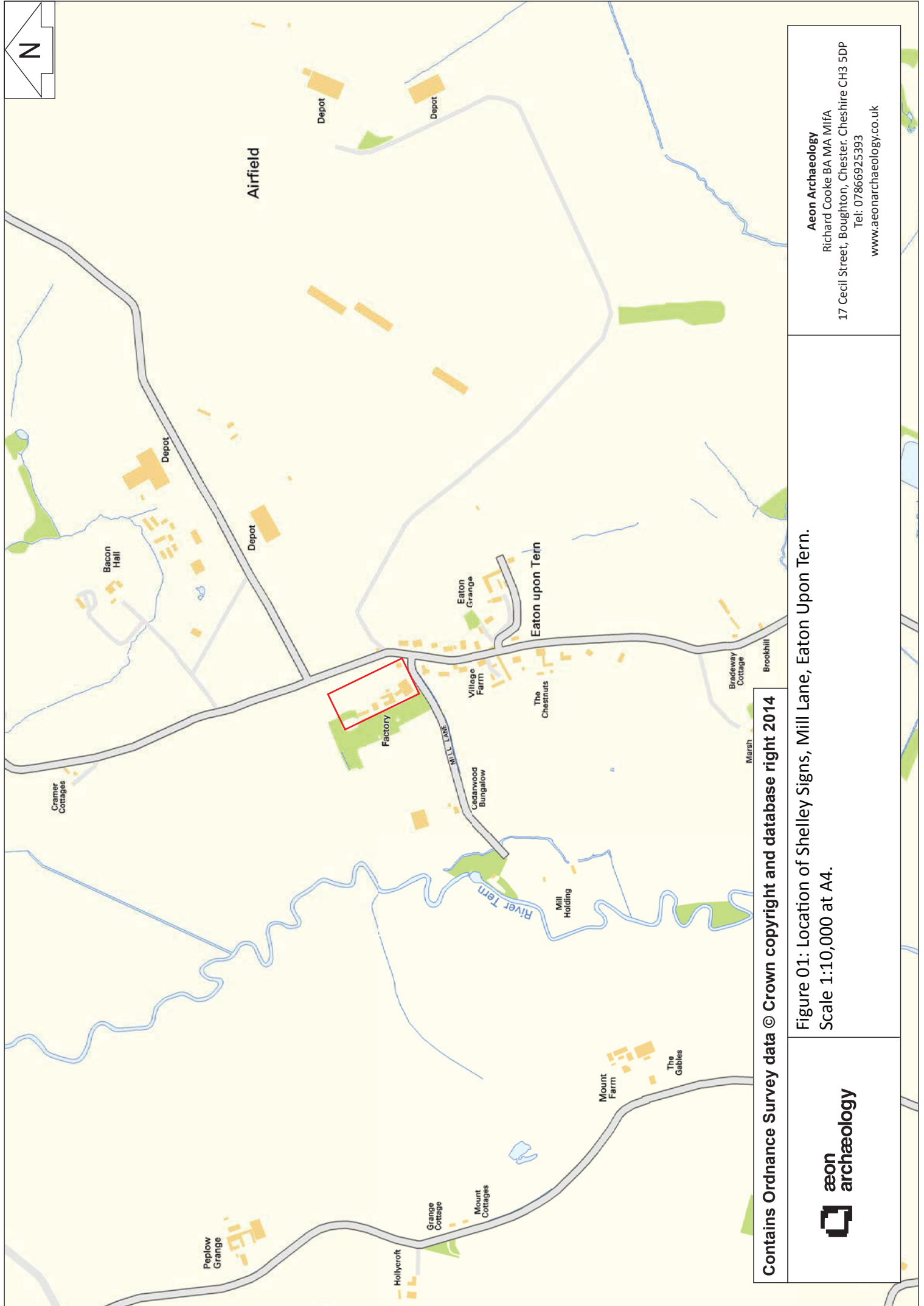
drawings: *sometimes 1, sometimes one or more of 2-7*

photographs: 1, 2, 4

### 2.1 Written Account

The written account includes:





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Figure 01: Location of Shelley Signs, Mill Lane, Eaton Upon Tern.  
Scale 1:10,000 at A4.



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- The building's precise location as a National Grid Reference and address form;
- A note of any statutory designation and non-statutory designation;
- The date of the record, name(s) of the recorder(s) and archive location;
- A summary of the building's form, function, date, and sequence of development.

## **2.2 Photographs**

The photographic record includes:

- A general view or views of the building;
- The building's external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building and give an impression of its size and shape;
- The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas.

A Digital SLR (Canon 550D) set to maximum resolution was used throughout.

## **2.3 Drawings**

The drawn record included:

- A site plan showing the location and orientation of photographs. This will label all room spaces and indicate any architectural features of note.

## **3.0 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

A photographic record was made using a Canon DSLR 550D camera set to maximum resolution. The location and direction of photographs are shown on figures 2-5.

Existing architects' plans were utilised for the purpose of locating and orientating photographs, and all features, details, room spaces, and elevations were photographed and described to illustrate the setting, appearance, and structure of the building. Photographic images were labeled with the subject, orientation and the date taken, and cross-referenced to a digital file.

## **4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RECORD**

The site formed the Western edge of RAF Peplow (formerly RAF Childs Ercall), a major bomber and pilot training base constructed in 1941. The air base stayed in action until 1947, having been passed under the control of the Fleet Air Arm (who subsequently renamed the overall air base complex RNAS Hinstock and then HMS Godwit).

There is a limited detail of RAF Peplow available – some accounts from numerous websites suggest the application site was principally workshops for site maintenance (such as landing strip lights etc). The site sits outside the principal runway perimeter road. According to the Applicant it is believed locally, that the site formed the staff quarters for the airfield.

Currently 7 no. buildings exist on site, 6 no. were constructed circa 1941. Each original building is single storey and of standard MOD wartime vernacular. However, a recently completed site survey indicates the existence of 2 no. underground bunkers (North and South of the site) and numerous foundation footings on the Western side of the site's roadway. Grainy archive pictures of the site suggest only half of the original buildings exist.

### 4.3 General description

Shelley Signs Ltd is located at NGR SJ 65311 23273 in the village of Eaton Upon Tern, Shropshire. The buildings are all set back from Mill Lane with four large buildings (1-4) and four smaller ancillary structures (A-D) belonging to the Second World War being identified on site and recorded.

#### 4.3.1 External description building 1

Building 1 lies towards the southeast end of the complex of buildings and consists of three distinctive and conjoined long rectangular structures all orientated northwest to southeast. For ease of recording these buildings have been labelled as 1A, 1B and 1C.

##### *Building 1A* (plates 1-3, figure 3)

Building 1A lies at the south-western end of three large conjoined rectangular structures that comprise building 1 and is centred on NGR SJ 65308 23260. The structure measures approximately 9.0m in width by 27.0m in length orientated northwest to southeast. The building is a single storey structure with a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet over walls constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render.

The northwest gable wall is separated into three distinct bays by two buttresses, with a double metal door located within the centre bay. Above this lies industrial equipment associated with the sign pre-fabrication process. To the immediate right of the doorway two modern flue pipes are attached to the wall and lead to a modern boiler-house constructed from breeze blocks and measuring approximately 1.0m by 2.0m and orientated northeast to southwest. A modern wooden door provides access through the northwest wall into this structure.

The southwest elevation has nine buttresses creating eight distinct bays, each with a 24 pane fixed window within black-painted wooden frames with red tile sills. The only exception is the north-westernmost bay which has a 12 pane fixed window, also with black-painted wooden frames and red tile sills. A large modern flue belonging to an extractor fan has been added through the south-easternmost window.

The southeast gable wall is separated into three distinct bays by two buttresses, with a single metal door within the centre bay. To the immediate left of the doorway the remains of an accompanying double doorway can be seen which has been blocked up.

The northeast external elevation is only partly visible due to a connecting through-passage into building 1B to the immediate northeast. The north-western part of the northeast facing elevation has three 24 pane fixed window within black-painted wooden frames with red tile sills.

##### *Building 1B* (plates 4 and 5, figure 3)

Building 1B lies at the centre of three large conjoined rectangular structures that comprise building 1 and is centred on NGR SJ 65312 23271. The structure measures approximately 9.0m in width by 25.0m in length orientated northwest to southeast. The building is a single storey structure with a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet over walls constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render.

A redundant water tower measuring 7.0m in height, 3.0m in length and 1.5m in width is located at the southeast end. It is also constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render and

has a blocked hatch and a three rung iron access ladder on its northwest face. This is connected to the southwest gable wall via a through passage with flat roof and constructed from red-brick clad in grey render. The passage completely covers the southeast gable wall.

The northwest gable wall is separated into three distinct bays by two buttresses, with a through passage extension with flat roof leading to an outbuilding, constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render with a monopitch roof of asbestos sheet.

The southwest elevation is only partially visible due to the flat roofed connecting through passage to building 1B but has six buttresses forming five distinct bays. In the north-westernmost bay are two 8 pane fixed windows within black-painted wooden frames with red tile sills. The four bays to the southeast each have a single 16 pane fixed window within black-painted wooden frames with red tile sills.

The northeast elevation is only visible at its north-western end due to a connecting through passage with flat roof connecting it to building 1C. The north-western end of the northeast elevation has four buttresses creating four bays each with a 16 pane fixed window within black-painted wooden frames with red tile sills.

#### *Building 1C* (plates 6-9; figure 3)

Building 1C lies at the northeast end of three large conjoined rectangular structures that comprise building 1 and is centred on NGR SJ 65325 23274. The structure measures approximately 9.0m in width by 22.0m in length orientated northwest to southeast. The building is a single storey structure with a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet over walls constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render.

The northwest gable wall is separated into three distinct bays by two buttresses. A double doorway had formerly been located within the centre bay but has since been blocked up and a single metal doorway added within the northeast bay.

The southwest elevation is only partially visible due to a through passage connecting with building 1B to the southwest and is otherwise featureless. The southeast gable wall is separated into three distinct bays by two buttresses with a double wooden doorway within the centre bay.

The northeast elevation has nine buttresses creating eight bays. The south-westernmost bay has a single metal doorway which is probably a later insertion, with a second single metal doorway within the third bay. Between this and within the second bay lies a 24 pane fixed window within a black-painted wooden frame with red tile sill. A second identical 24 pane window is located within the fourth bay but the fifth and sixth bays have larger 32 pane windows, also with black-painted wooden frames and red tile sills. To the immediate right of these and within the seventh bay is another 24 pane window and the final bay contains a smaller 12 pane window, also within a black-painted wooden frame above red tile sill.

### **4.3.2 Internal description building 1**

#### *Building 1A - workshop* (plate 2)

Building 1A was originally occupied by a single open-plan rectangular room orientated northwest to southeast but a partition has been added at the southeast end to create a room for spray painting. The majority of the building remains open plan as a pre-fabrication workshop and measures approximately 15.0m in length by 7.0m in width orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of modern white panels with ten evenly distributed fluorescent strip-

lights in two rows. All of the internal elevations are clad in white painted board and six 24 pane windows within black-painted frames are located within the northeast facing elevation.

The southeast facing gable wall has a double metal doorway providing access to the outside of the structure, and a sliding double wooden door provides access through the northwest facing partition wall into the spray paint room, which was not accessed due to health and safety precautions. Within the southwest facing elevation an opening with a single square pillar provides access via two sets of modern wooden fire doors into building 1B.

Immediately in front of the northeast facing elevation is a series of metal racks which hold metalwork and the room is filled with an array of work tables, materials and machines either side of an unofficial central aisle associated with the sign making business. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 1B – workshop (plate 5)*

The central part of building 1B is occupied by an open-plan workshop measuring approximately 10.0m by 7.0m and orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of modern white panels with twelve recessed fluorescent strip-lights divided into three rows. The northwest and southeast elevations are of red-brick painted white and the northeast and southwest elevations are clad in white painted board.

There are three 16 pane windows set within black-painted wooden frames within the northeast facing elevation and two 16 pane windows within black-painted wooden frames within the southwest facing elevation. Access into the workshop is via a modern wooden double fire door in the northeast facing wall permitting access into the building 1A workshop, and via an identical door in the southwest facing elevation permitting access into the building 1C workshop.

The southeast facing elevation has two green-painted single doors, the left of which provides access into store 1, the right providing access into an exit corridor. To the immediate right of the second doorway is a recess which houses sign making materials on metal racks. The floor is of poured concrete and the room is filled with an array of work tables, materials and machines either side of an unofficial central aisle associated with the sign making business.

#### *Building 1B – store 1*

Store 1 is a rectangular room measuring approximately 2.0m by 3.0m and orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling goes into the roof space which has been clad in white painted wooden boards and the walls are of red-brick painted white. A single 16 pane window in wooden frame is located within the centre of the southwest facing elevation; a green-painted single wooden doorway is within the northwest facing wall permitting access to the workshop to the immediate southeast; and a sliding wooden door in the southeast facing elevation provides access into store 2 to the immediate northwest. The room is illuminated by a single bulk-head light fixed on to the northwest facing wall and the floor is of poured concrete. The room is currently used as a store and houses boxes and materials.

#### *Building 1B – store 2*

Store 2 is a rectangular room measuring approximately 2.0m by 3.0m and orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling goes into the roof space which has been clad in white painted wooden boards with a single fluorescent strip-light in the centre; the walls are of red-brick painted white. A single 16 pane window in wooden frame is located within the centre of the southwest facing elevation; a green-painted single wooden door is located within the southwest facing elevation and permits access to the exit corridor located to the immediate



northeast; and a sliding wooden door in the northwest facing elevation provides access into store 1 to the immediate southeast. Metal racking has been fixed to the northwest and southeast facing elevations and hold lever-arch files associated with the sign making business. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 1B – exit corridor*

A corridor measuring 3.5m in length and 1.0m in width is orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling goes into the roof space which has been clad in white painted wooden boards and the walls are of red-brick painted white. A single fluorescent strip-light is located on the southwest facing elevation and green painted single wooden doors on the northwest facing and southeast facing elevations permit access into the workshop and out of the building respectively. A third green painted single wooden door is located within the northeast facing elevation and permits access into store 2 located to the immediate southwest. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 1B – spray room*

The southern part of building 1B is occupied by the spray-paint room however access was not permitted to this room due to health and safety reasons.

#### *Building 1C – workshop (plate 9)*

Building 1C had originally been entirely open-plan but has since been partitioned into three separate workshops. The central workshop measures approximately 15.0m in length by 7.0m in width orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of modern white panels with ten evenly distributed fluorescent strip-lights in two rows. All of the walls are clad in white painted board, and the inserted room partitions are also of white board. A double wooden modern fire door in the northeast facing elevation provides access into building 1B workshop and a single green-painted wooden door in the southeast facing elevation provides access to the northwest exterior of the building. The southwest facing elevation has two 24 pane windows, two 32 pane windows, and a single 12 pane window all set within wooden frames. Towards the southeast the southwest facing elevation has two single emergency wooden fire doors leading to the northeast out of the building. The floor is of poured concrete and the room is filled with an array of work tables, materials and machines

At the south-eastern end of the building an open double door space provides access into a secondary workshop which has a double wooden door in the northwest facing elevation providing access to the southeast exterior of the building.

In the western corner of the main workshop a second modern partition wall has been added providing a third smaller workshop room. This room measures approximately 5.0m square and is accessed via a single wooden doorway in the southwest facing elevation. The northeast facing elevation has a single 24 pane and a 12 pane window set within wooden frames.

### **4.3.3 External description building 2 (plates 10–26, figure 4)**

Building 2 is roughly L-shaped in plan and lies towards the southwest of the complex of buildings at the site and is centred on NGR SJ 65288 23296. The long axis of the building is orientated northwest to southeast and is rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 9.0m in width by 27.0m in length. The building is of a single-storey with a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet. Two modern flue pipes have been added to the southwest roof pitch, and the structure is of red-brick clad in grey render on all elevations.

The northwest gable wall has two buttresses separating the wall face into three bays. A projecting porch with flat roof extends out from the central bay and measures approximately 2.0m square. A single wooden door clad in metal security sheet is located within the northwest facing elevation of the porch and provides access into the building. A single security bulkhead light is situated above the doorway.

The southwest facing elevation has a grey PVC gutter secured by iron fixings beneath which are eleven buttresses creating ten equally sized bays. Within each bay is a 24 pane window with black-painted wooden frame above red tile sill with the exception of the south-easternmost bay which has a single metal security door with security bulkhead light above. This door permits access into a corridor at the south-eastern end of the building.

The south-eastern gable wall has two iron fixings for a telephone or electrical cable at roof space height and two buttresses creating three equally sized bays. Within each bay is a 12 pane window within black-painted frame above red tile sill.

The northeast facing elevation of the long axis of building 2 has a grey PVC gutter above two buttresses which creates two bays. The south-easternmost bay has an 8 pane window of frosted glass within black-painted wooden frames over red tile sill while the northwest bay has a 24 pane window with clear glass and black-painted frame above red-tile sill. At the north-western end of the northeast facing elevation there is a grey PVC gutter above three buttresses creating three bays. The northwest bay has a 12 pane window, the central bay has a 24 pane window, and the southeast bay has two 8 pane windows, the PVC gutter downpipe, and a double wooden door with wooden lintel. All of the windows are set within black-painted frames over red tile sills.

The shorter axis of the building is orientated northeast to southwest and also has a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet. At the northeast end a second redundant water tower is incorporated into the building and measures approximately 7.0m in height and 1.5m by 3.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The water tower has a flat roof with modern aerial and a hatch with wooden board door in the northeast face along with a three rung iron ladder permitting access. To the left of the tower the northeast gable wall has two 8 pane windows set within black-painted frames above red-tile sills.

The northwest facing elevation of the short axis of building 2 has three buttresses creating four bays. In the south-westernmost two bays there are a 16 pane windows, with a smaller 8 pane window within the third bay. A single black-painted wooden board door provides access through the fourth bay into the building.

The southeast facing elevation of the shorter axis of building 2 has five buttresses creating five bays. A 20 pane window is located within the south-westernmost bay, while two 16 pane windows are located within the central bays. The north-easternmost bay has two 8 pane windows either side of a boarded up single doorway. The right hand most window has metal security bars.

An attached outbuilding forms the current canteen in the cruck of the 'L' and measures approximately 3.0m square. It has a single black painted wooden board door and a 16 pane window in the northeast facing elevation. All of the building 2 windows are set within black-painted wooden frames over red tile sills.

#### **4.3.4 Internal description building 2**

##### *Building 2 – corridor (plate 16)*

The corridor measures 4.0m by 1.5m and is orientated northeast to southwest, located at the south-eastern end of the long axis of building 2. The roof space is open and clad in white painted wooden boards with a single pendulum light towards the centre. The walls are of red-brick painted white and wooden board single door painted green provides access through the southwest facing wall into the gent's toilet. A double wooden door in the southeast facing elevation provides access into the design room and a single metal security door provides access through the northeast facing wall to the exterior of the building.

Two 12 pane windows in black painted wooden frames are situated in the northwest facing elevation and the lower third of the internal walls have been clad in grey render. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 2 – Gents toilet*

The Gents toilet measures 2.5m by 1.5m orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is open to the roof space which has been clad in white painted wooden boards with a single pendulum light in the centre. The southwest facing elevation has an 8 pane window of frosted glass within black painted frames and all of the walls are of red-brick painted white. A second window of 12 panes is located within the northwest facing elevation. A white ceramic urinal and hand basin are positioned on the southeast facing wall and a cubicle with a green painted single wooden door is located at the northeast end. The cubicle has a white ceramic toilet with black metal seat and overhead white ceramic cistern. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 2 – Design room (plate 17)*

The design room measures 6.0m by 8.0m orientated northeast to southwest, and the ceiling is of suspended white panels with six recessed fluorescent strip-lights. All of the walls are of red-brick painted white and two 24 pane windows in wooden frames are located within the northeast facing elevation. A single 24 pane window is located within the southwest facing wall. A double wooden board door in the northwest facing wall provides access to the corridor and a single modern wooden door with inserted glass window is located in the southeast facing wall providing access to the UV print room. A design table is located within the centre of the room with material stored on either side. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 2 – Print room (plate 18)*

The print room measures approximately 7.5m by 9.0m orientated northeast to southwest and has suspended white ceiling panels with sixteen recessed fluorescent strip-lights with aluminium louvers. The northwest, southwest and southeast facing walls are of red-brick painted white and the northeast facing wall is clad in white painted wooden board. There are four 24 pane windows in wooden frames in the northeast facing wall and a single modern wooden door with inserted glass window situated in the northwest facing wall providing access to the design room. A single wooden board door painted green is located in the southwest facing wall as well as a single modern wooden door in the southeast facing wall providing access to the paint room.



An adjoining open-plan annexe to the northeast houses a computer and has a white painted wooden board door with inserted window in the southwest facing wall providing access to the office. The print room accommodates the large UV printer as well as design computers and work tables. The floor is covered in a blue carpet.

#### *Building 2 – paint room (plate 19)*

The paint room measures approximately 7.0m by 8.0 metres orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling has suspended white panels and six recessed fluorescent strip-lights. The walls are all of red-brick painted white. A double green painted wooden door is located in the southeast facing elevation and provides access to the porch and a single modern wood door is located in the northwest facing wall providing access to the print room. There are three 24 pane windows in the northeast facing wall and three 12 pane windows in the southwest facing wall, all of which are set within wooden frames. Two large workbenches are situated within the centre of the room and a trough for paint is attached to the northwest facing elevation. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 2 – Office (plate 20)*

The office measures approximately 4.5m square and has a suspended ceiling of white panels with one centralised fluorescent strip-light. All of the elevations are of red-brick painted cream with the lower half painted sky blue. The southeast facing elevation is of wooden plaster board and is a recent partition. There are two 16 pane windows in wooden frames in the northwest facing elevation and a white painted wooden board door with inserted window provides access through the northeast facing elevation into the print room. A second white painted door with inserted glass window is located in the southwest facing elevation and provides access to the corridor, with another modern wooden door in the southeast facing elevation providing access to the store 1. The floor is of red-orange ceramic tiles.

#### *Building 2 – Store 1 (plate 21)*

The first store measures approximately 4.5m by 2.0m orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of suspended white panels with one centralised fluorescent strip-light. All of the walls are of red-brick painted white with the exception of the northwest facing wall which is of white plasterboard and is an added partition. There are two 16 pane windows in wooden frames in the southeast facing elevation with modern blinds. A modern single wooden door is located in the northwest facing wall and provides access to the office. The floor is of red-orange tiles.

#### *Building 2 – Corridor (plate 22)*

A 3.5m by 1.5m corridor orientated northeast to southwest. It has suspended white ceiling panels and red-brick walls painted white. Two white painted wooden doors in the southeast facing elevation lead into the store and exit respectively, and a single white painted wooden door in the southwest facing elevation leads into the Ladies toilet. Two further modern wooden doors in the northwest facing elevation lead into the shredder room and dark room. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 2 – Dark Room (plate 23)*

The dark room measures 3.0m by 2.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The room has a suspended ceiling of white panels with two fluorescent strip-lights. The walls are of red-brick painted dark green and there is a blocked window in the northwest facing elevation with an extractor fan. A white painted wooden door provides access through the southeast facing

elevation into the corridor. The floor is of poured concrete and the room is filled with tables housing design plans.

#### *Building 2 – Shredder Room (plate 24)*

The shredder room measures 3.0m by 2.5m and is orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of suspended white panels with a centralised fluorescent strip-light. The walls are all clad in modern wooden boarding and an 8 pane window within a wooden frame and with iron security bars is situated in the northwest facing elevation. There is a modern single wooden door in the southeast facing elevation which provides access to the corridor and the floor is of brown carpet. The room is currently utilised as a shredding room as well as to store boxes.

#### *Building 2 – Store 2 (plate 25)*

The store room measures 3.5m by 1.5m and is orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of suspended white panels. The walls are all of red-brick painted white and an 8 pane window with wooden frame is situated in the southeast facing wall. A white painted wooden door is located in the northwest facing elevation and provides access to the corridor. The store has wooden shelving on the northeast facing wall and a white ceramic Belfast sink in the western corner. The floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 2 – Canteen (plate 26)*

The canteen measures 3.0m square and has suspended white ceiling tiles with a single fluorescent strip-light. The walls are all of red-brick painted white and the southwest facing elevation has a 16 pane window with wooden frame and a black-painted wooden board door. There are kitchen units on the northeast facing wall and a modern metal sink on the northwest wall. A table and chairs is located within the centre of the room and the floor is of beige linoleum.

### **4.3.5 External description building 3 (plates 27 and 28; figure 5)**

Building 3 is located towards the northeast of the complex of buildings and is centred on NGR SJ 65299 23309. It is a single storey structure, rectangular in shape and measuring approximately 14.0m long by 5.0m wide orientated northwest to southeast. The structure has a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet with an iron cockerel weather vane situated over the northwest gable. The walls are all constructed from red-brick clad in a grey render.

The northeast gable wall has two buttresses creating three bays, the central of which is slightly narrower. A modern PVC gutter downpipe is located on the northern corner.

The southwest elevation has a modern grey PVC gutter held in place with iron fixings with a PVC downspout at the southeast end. There are six buttresses creating five bays with a modern white PVC door in the north-westernmost bay providing access into office 4. The second bay has a 4 pane casement window in black-painted wooden frame; the third bay has a 3 pane casement window with white-painted wooden frame; the fourth bay has three 8 pane windows in black-painted wooden frames; and the final fifth bay has one 8 pane window in a black-painted wooden frame. The northwest half of the southwest facing elevation has been painted white, although this is now flaking.

The southeast facing gable wall has two buttresses creating three bays with a centralised doorway of black-painted wooden board providing access into the building 3 corridor.

The northeast facing elevation has six buttresses creating five bays. The north-westernmost bay has a modern 4 pane double glazed PVC window; the second bay has a 3 pane casement

window in black-painted wooden frame; the third bay has a 2 pane casement window in black-painted wooden frame; the fourth bay has a 3 pane casement window in black-painted wooden frame; and the final bay has a single pane window in black-painted wooden frame.

#### **4.3.6 Internal description building 3**

##### *Building 3 – Corridor (plate 29)*

The corridor measures approximately 4.0m by 1.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of suspended white panels and the walls are all of red-brick painted white. A single fluorescent strip-light is located on the southwest facing wall, and a white painted single wooden door in green painted frame permits access through the southwest facing wall into office 1. Two further identical doors are located in the northeast facing wall accessing the photocopier room and store respectively, and a fourth door is located at the northwest end of the corridor providing access to office 2. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 3 – Photocopier room (plate 30)*

The photocopier room measures 1.5m by 2.5m orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of suspended white panels and all of the walls are of red-brick painted white, with the exception of the northeast facing wall which is clad in white painted board. A black painted wooden door in the southeast facing elevation provides access to a toilet. There is a single fluorescent strip-light and the floor is of poured concrete. The northwest facing wall has a metal rack which holds lever-arch files and two large photocopier machines are located on the northeast and southwest walls respectively.

##### *Building 3 – Toilet*

A small toilet room measuring 1.5m by 0.75m and orientated northeast to southwest is located to the immediate northwest of the photocopier room. The ceiling is of suspended white panels and the walls are all of red-brick painted white. An 8 pane window in wooden frame is located in the northeast facing elevation and a white ceramic toilet is situated beneath it. A white ceramic sink is located on the southwest facing wall and a black painted wooden board door in the northwest facing wall allows access to the photocopier room. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 3 – Store*

The store measures 1.5m by 1.0m and is orientated from northeast to southwest. The roof space is open and painted white with a single pendulum light fitting in the centre. The walls are all of red-brick painted white with an 8 pane window in wooden frame in the northeast facing elevation. There is shelving against the northeast facing wall and a white painted wooden door in a green painted frame is located in the south-western wall and provides access to the corridor. The floor is of poured concrete and the room is currently used as a small storage room.

##### *Building 3 – Office 1 (plate 31)*

Office 1 measures approximately 2.5m by 3.5m and is orientated northwest to southeast. The ceiling is of suspended white panels with a single fluorescent strip-light in the centre. The walls are all of wooden board and have been painted light-blue. There is a single pane window and a 3 pane casement window in the southwest facing wall, both with wooden frames. A white painted wooden door is located in the northeast facing wall and allows access to the corridor. The room is utilised as an office and has a desk and computer at the southeast end and further desks against the southwest facing wall. The floor is of dappled red carpet.

#### *Building 3 – Office 2 (plate 32)*

Office 2 measures approximately 3.0m by 4.0m and is orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of suspended white panels with two fluorescent strip-lights. The walls are of wooden board and have been painted white, with the exception of the northwest facing wall which is of red-brick painted white. There is a 3 pane casement window in the northeast facing wall and a 2 pane casement window in the southwest facing wall, both with wooden frames. A white painted wooden door is located in the northwest facing wall and allows access to the corridor with a second brown wooden board door in the southeast facing elevation providing access to office 3. The room is utilised as an office and has a desk and computer at the northeast end and a further desk against the northwest facing wall. Two metal filing cabinets and some shelves holding lever-arch files are against the southeast facing wall. The floor is of brown carpet.

#### *Building 3 – Office 3 (plate 33)*

Office 3 measures approximately 2.5m by 4.0m and is orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of white painted plaster with a fluorescent strip-light and roof access hatch. The walls are all of white painted plaster. There is a 4 pane casement window in the northeast facing wall and a 3 pane casement window in the southwest facing wall, both with wooden frames. A brown wooden board door is located in the northwest facing wall and allows access to office 2 with a second white painted wooden door in the southeast facing elevation providing access to office 4. The room is utilised as an office and has a desk and computer at the northeast end and a further desk against the northeast facing wall. The floor is of brown carpet.

#### *Building 3 – Office 4 (plate 34)*

Office 4 measures approximately 2.5m by 4.0m and is orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of white painted plaster with two fluorescent strip-lights. The walls are all of white painted plaster. There is a modern white PVC door in the northeast facing wall and a 4 pane modern PVC double glazed window in the southwest facing wall. A white painted wooden door is located in the northwest facing wall and allows access to office 3. The room is utilised as an office and has a desk and computer at the northeast end and a further desk against the southeast facing wall. The floor is of grey and blue carpet.

### **4.3.7 External description building 4 (plates 35 - 38; figure 6)**

Building 4 is located towards the northwest of the complex of buildings and is centred on NGR SJ 65261 23357. The building is of one-storey and roughly rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 25.0m by 8.0m orientated northwest to southeast. There is a third redundant water tower at the northwest end and incorporated into the building structure, which measures approximately 7.0m in height and 1.5m by 3.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The tower is constructed from red-brick clad in grey render and has a filled in access hatch on the northeast facing elevation as well as a three rung iron ladder.

The north-western half of building 4 measures approximately 5.0m in width, with the south-eastern half widening to approximately 8.0m in width. Both halves of the building have a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet and walls constructed from red-brick clad in grey render. A modern grey PVC gutter runs the length of both the northeast and southwest elevations.

The northeast elevation of the north-westernmost half of the building has four equally spaced buttresses creating four bays, and within each is a 12 pane window within a black-painted

wooden frame and above red tile sills. The south-easternmost window has been blocked up with red-brick. A modern shed constructed from corrugated metal sheet has been added to the northern corner and is used for storage.

The southwest elevation of the north-westernmost half of the building has four buttresses creating five bays. In the north-westernmost bay is a single green painted wooden door leading to store 1; a second green painted single wooden door lies approximately 1.0m to the southeast in the second bay and leads to store 2; the third bay has a 12 pane window set within a black-painted wooden frame with a red-tile sill; the fourth bay has a single metal fire door; and the final fifth bay has another 12 pane window set within a black-painted wooden frame with a red-tile sill.

The southwest facing elevation of the south-easternmost part of the building has six buttresses creating four equal bays. There is a blocked up single doorway in the south-easternmost bay and all of the others have a 12 pane window set within a black-painted wooden frames with red-tile sills. To the immediate right of the blocked doorway is a security bulkhead electric light.

The southeast facing gable wall has a blocked window or possibly hatch in the roof space above a heavy double iron door, situated between two buttresses. A modern electrical security flood light is located above the doorway.

The northeast facing elevation of the south-easternmost part of the building has six buttresses creating four bays, each with a 12 pane window set within a black-painted wooden frames with red-tile sills, with the exception of the south-easternmost bay which has a 6 pane window. There are modern electric bulkhead lights situated at the northwest and southeast ends of the elevation.

#### **4.3.8 Internal description building 4**

##### *Building 4 - Store 1 (plate 39)*

Store 1 measures approximately 4.0m by 2.0m orientated northeast to southwest. The ceiling is of suspended unpainted wooden ply-board with a central hatch giving access to the roof space. The walls are all of red-brick and a 12 pane window with wooden frame is located within the southwest facing elevation. The northwest facing wall has a modern electric bulkhead light and an iron water pipe is attached to the southeast facing elevation. A single doorway at the north-eastern side of the northwest facing wall originally led into store 2 but has since been blocked with breezeblocks. A green painted single wooden door in the northeast facing elevation leads to the exterior of the building. The floor is of poured concrete.

##### *Building 4 - Store 2 (plate 40)*

Store 2 measures approximately 4.0m by 2.0m orientated northeast to southwest. The roof space is open and the asbestos sheet visible. The walls are all of red-brick and a 12 pane window with wooden frame is located within the southwest facing elevation beneath which is a vent opening secured with iron bars. The northwest and southeast facing walls have modern electric bulkhead lights and a series of iron water and gas pipes are attached to the southeast facing elevation. A single doorway at the north-eastern side of the northwest facing wall originally led into the workshop but has since been blocked with breezeblocks. A green painted single wooden door in the northeast facing elevation leads to the exterior of the building. The floor is of poured concrete.



#### *Building 4 – Carpentry room (plate 41)*

The carpentry room measures approximately 9.0m by 8.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The roof space is open but has been clad in white painted ply-boards with nine suspended electric fluorescent strip-lights in three rows. Three metal fan trusses are visible running northeast to southwest and equally spaced. All of the walls are clad in white painted wooden ply-board and a sliding wooden door in the southeast facing wall provides access to the workshop. There are four windows in the southwest facing elevation, three of which are 12 pane with a single 6 pane window at the southeast end, all within wooden frames. In the northeast facing elevation are three 12 pane windows in wooden frames and a blocked single doorway at the southeast end. There are modern machines and wood-working tables spread throughout and the floor is of poured concrete.

#### *Building 4 – Workshop (plate 42)*

The workshop measures approximately 4.0m by 6.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The roof space is open and is clad in modern ply-board painted white. There are two fluorescent strip-lights towards the centre. There are two metal fan trusses orientated northeast to southwest and equally spaced, and all of the walls are clad in white painted ply-board with the exception of the northwest facing elevation which is of red-brick. The southwest facing wall has three 12 pane windows set within wooden frames, and the northeast facing wall has two 12 pane windows, also in wooden frames. A modern single metal fire door is located in the centre of the northeast facing wall and a single door in the right hand side of the southeast facing elevation has been blocked up.

A sliding wooden door in the northwest facing elevation provides access into the carpentry room. There are racks holding materials and wood on all of the elevations as well as a work table towards the centre of the room.

#### **4.3.9 External description building A (plate 43; figure 2)**

Building A is a rectangular structure located at the southeast entrance into the site and centred on NGR SJ 65343 23269. The building is rectangular and measures approximately 5.0m by 4.0m orientated northwest to southeast. The structure is of single-storey construction with a double pitched roof of asbestos sheet above walls constructed from red-brick and clad in grey render. The northwest facing gable wall has three buttresses creating two bays, the left of which has a 4 pane window in black painted wooden frame above a red-tile sill. The right hand bay has a single doorway with a brown painted wooden board door.

The southwest facing elevation has two buttresses creating three bays in which the left and right hand bays each have an 8 pane window in black painted wooden frame above a red-tile sill. The southeast facing gable wall has three buttresses and two bays, the left of which has a 16 pane window in black painted wooden frame above a red-tile sill. The northeast facing elevation was inaccessible due to encroaching vegetation and the building was not accessed internally.

The original function of this building is unknown, but its small size and location near the entrance to the camp would suggest that it was a guard-house or reception office.

#### **4.3.10 Building B – Air raid shelter (plate 44 and 45; figure 2)**

Building B air raid shelter is located towards the southwest of the site, away from the complex of buildings and centred on NGR SJ 65297 23239. The shelter measures approximately 2.2m in height and 2.0m by 6.0m orientated northeast to southwest, buried approximately 1.0m beneath the ground surface. The shelter is accessed via a red-brick built

entrance porch situated at a right angle to the shelter and its north-eastern end. A second entrance is located at the southwest end of the shelter via an iron ladder from the surface.

The main structure of the shelter is a vaulted tunnel of corrugated metal riveted together and the floor is of compacted soil, although this may be due to silting up over time. The remains of twelve red-brick built pillars can be seen evenly spaced on either side of the shelter which would have supported wooden benches.

This shelter is currently redundant but would have provided refuge during air raids for the workers primarily in buildings 1 and A.

#### **4.3.11 Building C – Water tank (plate 46; figure 2)**

A water tank constructed from concrete and measuring approximately 6.0m square is located towards the southwest of the complex of buildings and centred on NGR SJ 65247 23283. The depth of the water tank is unknown as it currently holds water and is very overgrown but it appears to be more than 3.0m. The tank is currently surrounded by a wooden safety fence and is largely inaccessible.

The tank is currently redundant but would have been a supply of emergency water in case of fire caused by air raids.

#### **4.3.12 Building D – Air raid shelter (plate 47; figure 2)**

Building D air raid shelter is located towards the northeast of the site, away from the complex of buildings and centred on NGR SJ 65276 23356. The shelter measures approximately 2.2m in height and 2.0m by 6.0m orientated northwest to southeast, buried approximately 1.0m beneath the ground surface. The shelter is accessed via a red-brick built entrance porch situated at a right angle to the shelter and its south-eastern end. A second entrance is located in the northwest shelter wall and is accessed via an iron ladder.

The main structure of the shelter is a vaulted tunnel of corrugated metal riveted together and the floor is flooded. The remains of sixteen red-brick built pillars can be seen evenly spaced on either side of the shelter which would have supported wooden benches.

This shelter is currently redundant but would have provided refuge during air raids for the workers primarily in building 4.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

Shelley Signs Ltd occupies part of the former World War II RAF Peplow site but lies outside of the location of the main camp and runways. This separation is indicative of the function of the buildings at this part of the site as ancillary works not directly associated with the day to day service and flying of the military aircraft.

The remaining four large buildings from this era are of typical 1940s military vernacular, rectangular, single skin red-brick walls clad in grey render, frequent buttresses to add stability, and corrugated double pitch asbestos roofs. The internal room spaces of the buildings have altered very little in plan, with only a handful of later room partitions having been added. However, the rooms have been stripped of virtually all features of Second World War date and the function of many of the rooms is not known.

The layout of building 1 as three distinct rectangular open-plan buildings, all inter-accessible but at the same time separate, is indicative of workshop use for different components or possibly different stages of component construction of parts. The double doors at the north-

western end of each of the three buildings would have been conducive to the movement of fairly large trolleys of equipment and parts, but would certainly not have been large enough to house aircraft or any of the larger parts associated with their construction. Local knowledge suggests that the site was used for site maintenance, such as landing strip lights, and this appears to suit the layout of these buildings.

The layout of building 2 also appears to have changed very little in plan since its construction, and with its network of reasonably large rooms appears to have had a different role to building 1. Local knowledge suggests that the current design room had formerly been used as the sick bay and that the UV print room had been the infirmary. The presence of mostly single sized doors into and throughout building 2 supports the theory that it was utilised for people rather than machines and equipment. It is therefore very plausible that the building fulfilled the role as a medical bay as well as offices and stores.

The layout of building 3 has also altered very little. Its smaller size and the network of fairly small rooms suggest that it had been utilised as offices, as it is today. Building 4 also appears to have been originally utilised much as it is today, with stores at the northwest end, one of which housed a generator or boiler, and workshops to the southeast.

## **6.0 SOURCES**

### *Ordnance Survey maps*

Ordnance Survey map sheets 62 NE, 62 SE, 62 SW, and 62 NW.

### *Secondary Sources*

English Heritage, 2006. *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*.





	<p>Figure 02: Location of World War II buildings recorded within report and location/orientation of plates 43 - 47.</p>	<p><b>Aeon Archaeology</b>  Richard Cooke BA MA MIFA  17 Cecil Street, Boughton, Chester, Cheshire CH3 5DP  Tel: 07866925393  <a href="http://www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk">www.aeonarchaeology.co.uk</a></p>
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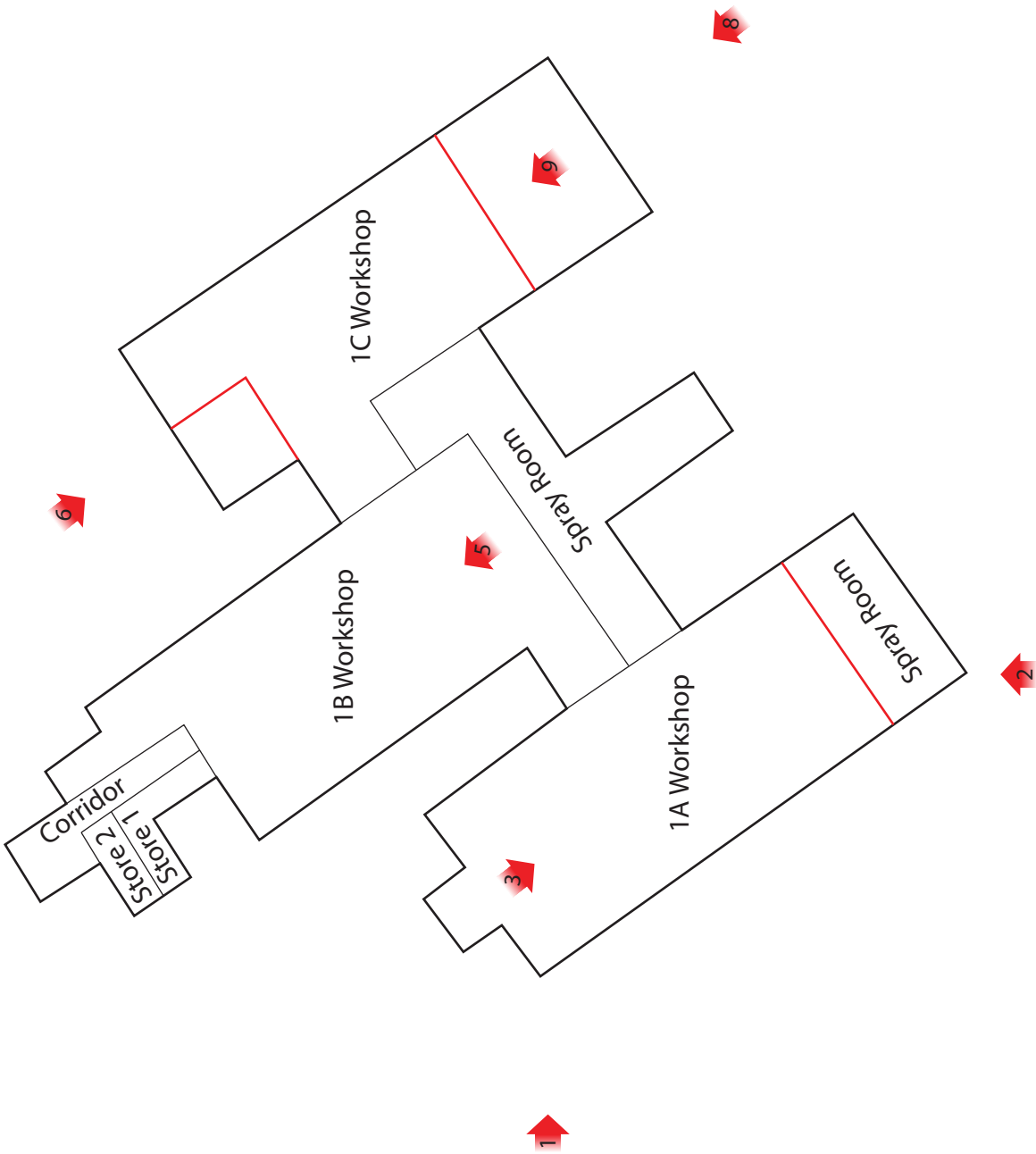


Figure 03: Location and orientation of photographs of building 1 (numbered arrows refer to plate numbers; red lines denote modern wall divisions). Not to scale.



Figure 04: Location and orientation of photographs of building 2 (numbered arrows refer to plate numbers; red lines denote modern wall divisions). Not to scale.

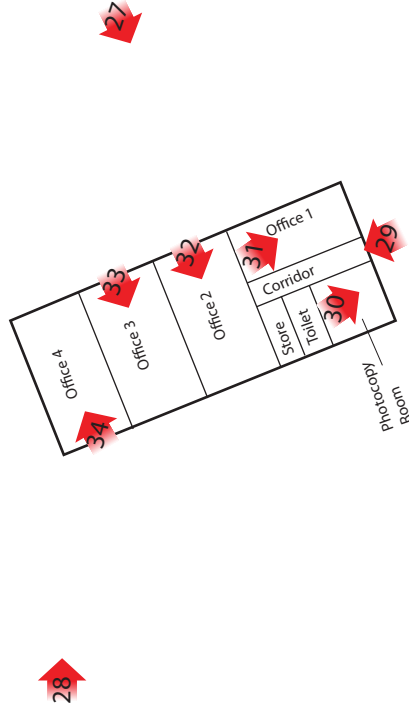


Figure 05: Location and orientation of photographs of building 3 (numbered arrows refer to plate numbers; red lines denote modern wall divisions). Not to scale.

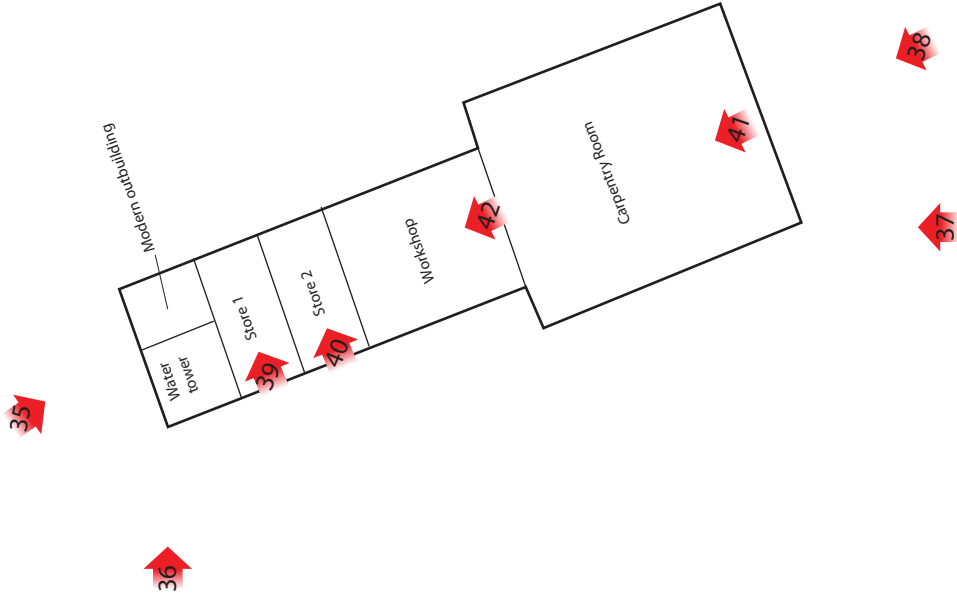


Figure 06: Location and orientation of photographs of building 4 (numbered arrows refer to plate numbers; red lines denote modern wall divisions). Not to scale.



Plate 01: Building 1A northwest facing external elevation, from the west. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 02:** Building 1A southeast and southwest facing external elevations, from the south. Scale 1.0m.

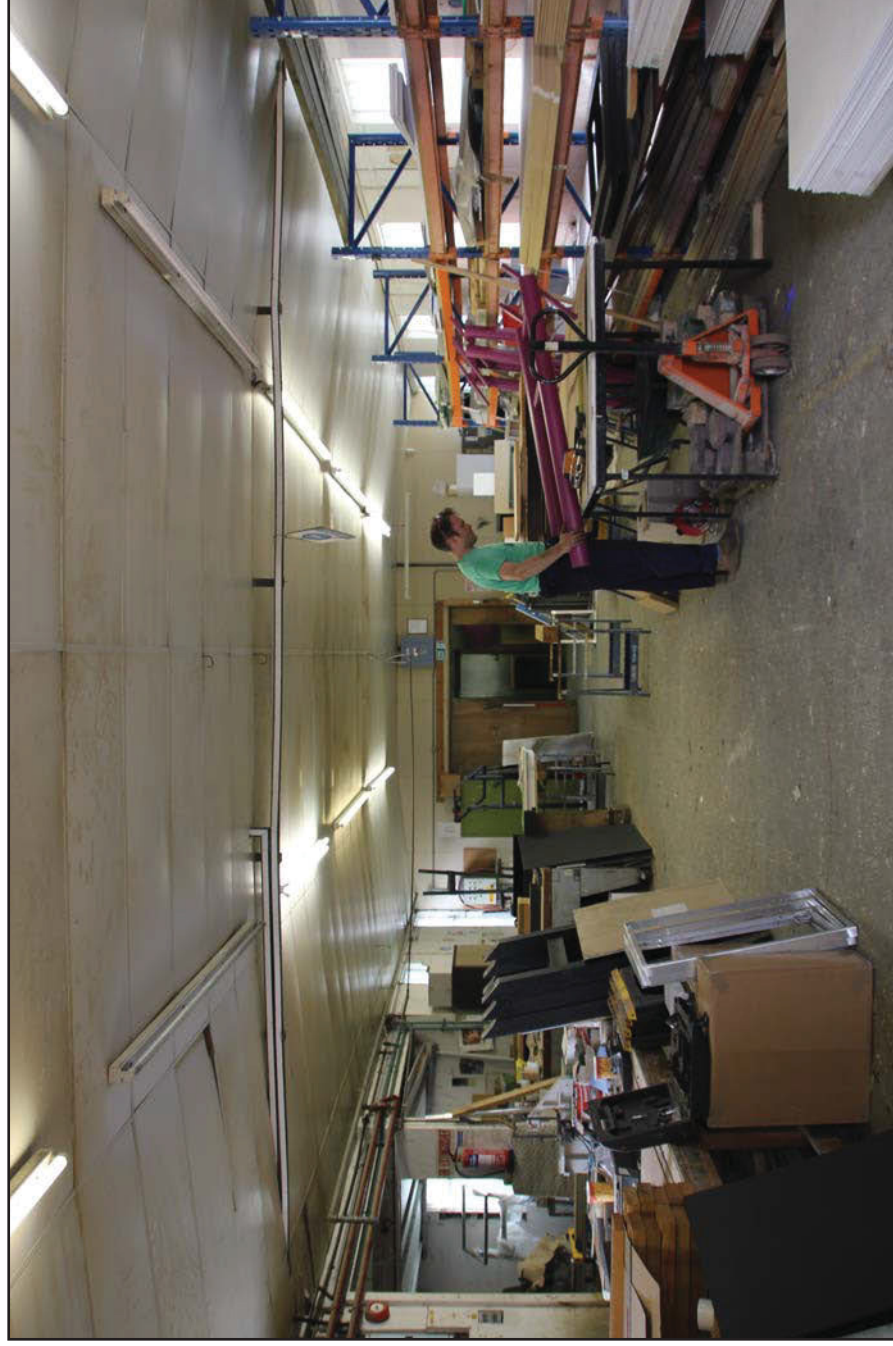


Plate 03: Building 1A workshop, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 04:** Building 1B northwest and northeast external elevations, from the north. Scale 1.0m.

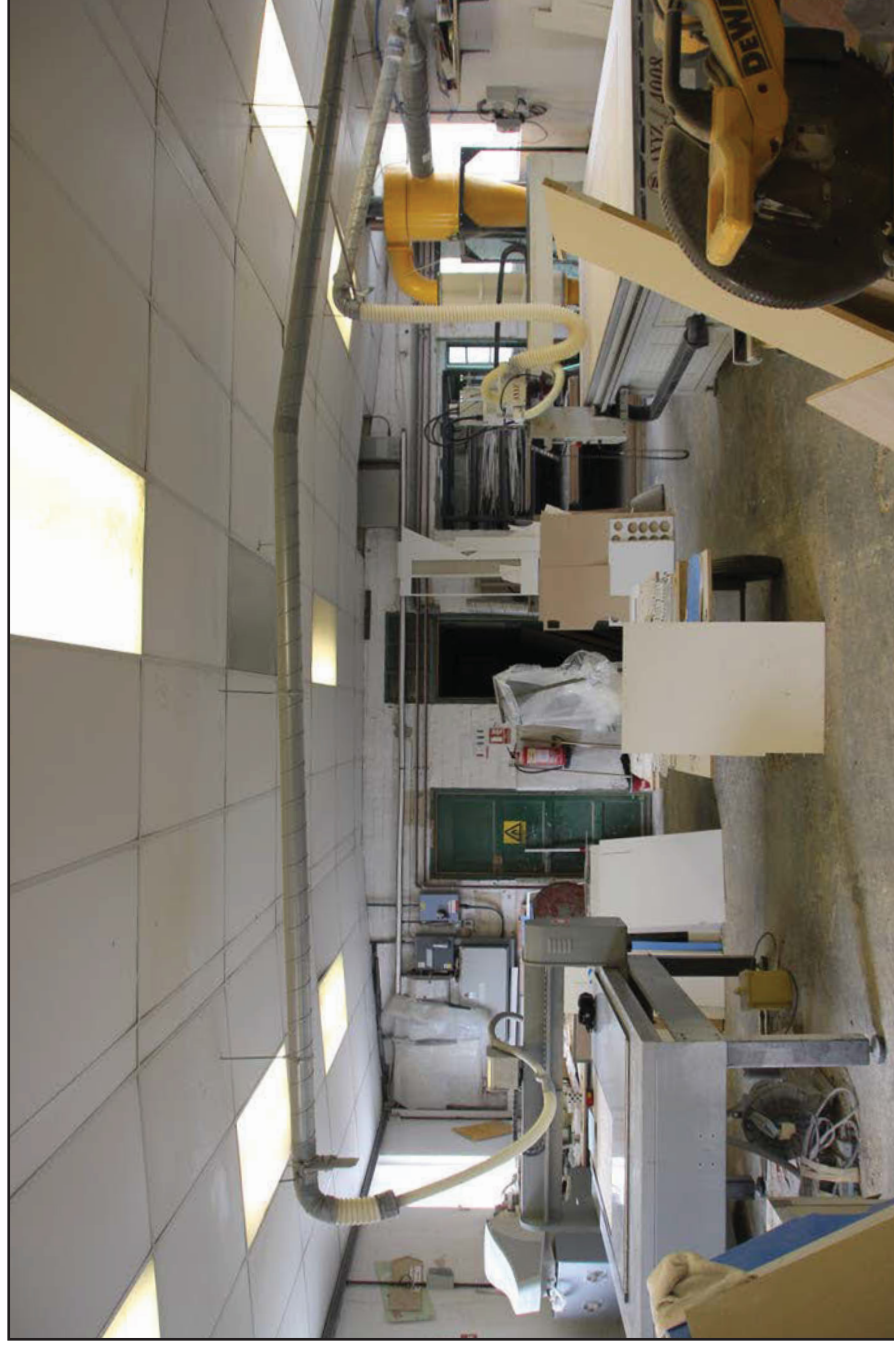


Plate 05: Building 1B workshop, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 06:** Building 1C northwest facing external elevation, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 07:** Building 1C northwest and northeast facing external elevations, from the north. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 08:** Building 1C southeast facing external elevation, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 09: Building 1C workshop, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



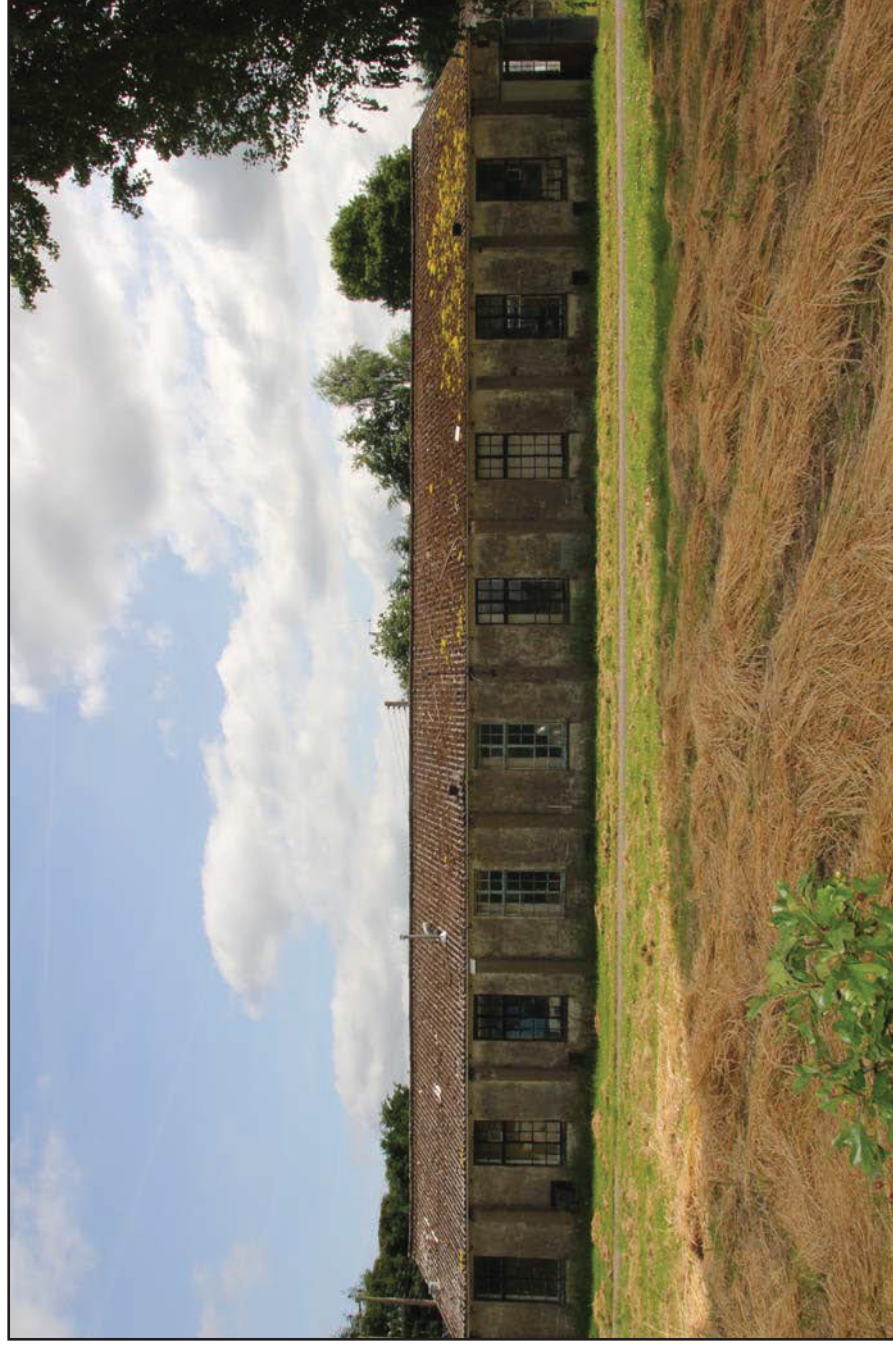


**Plate 10:** Building 2 northwest facing elevation, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 11:** Building 2 northwest and southwest facing elevation, from the west. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 12:** Building 2 southwest facing elevation, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 14:** Building 2 southeast and northeast facing elevation, from the east. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 15:** Building 2 northeast and northwest facing elevation showing water tower, from the north. Scale 1.0m.

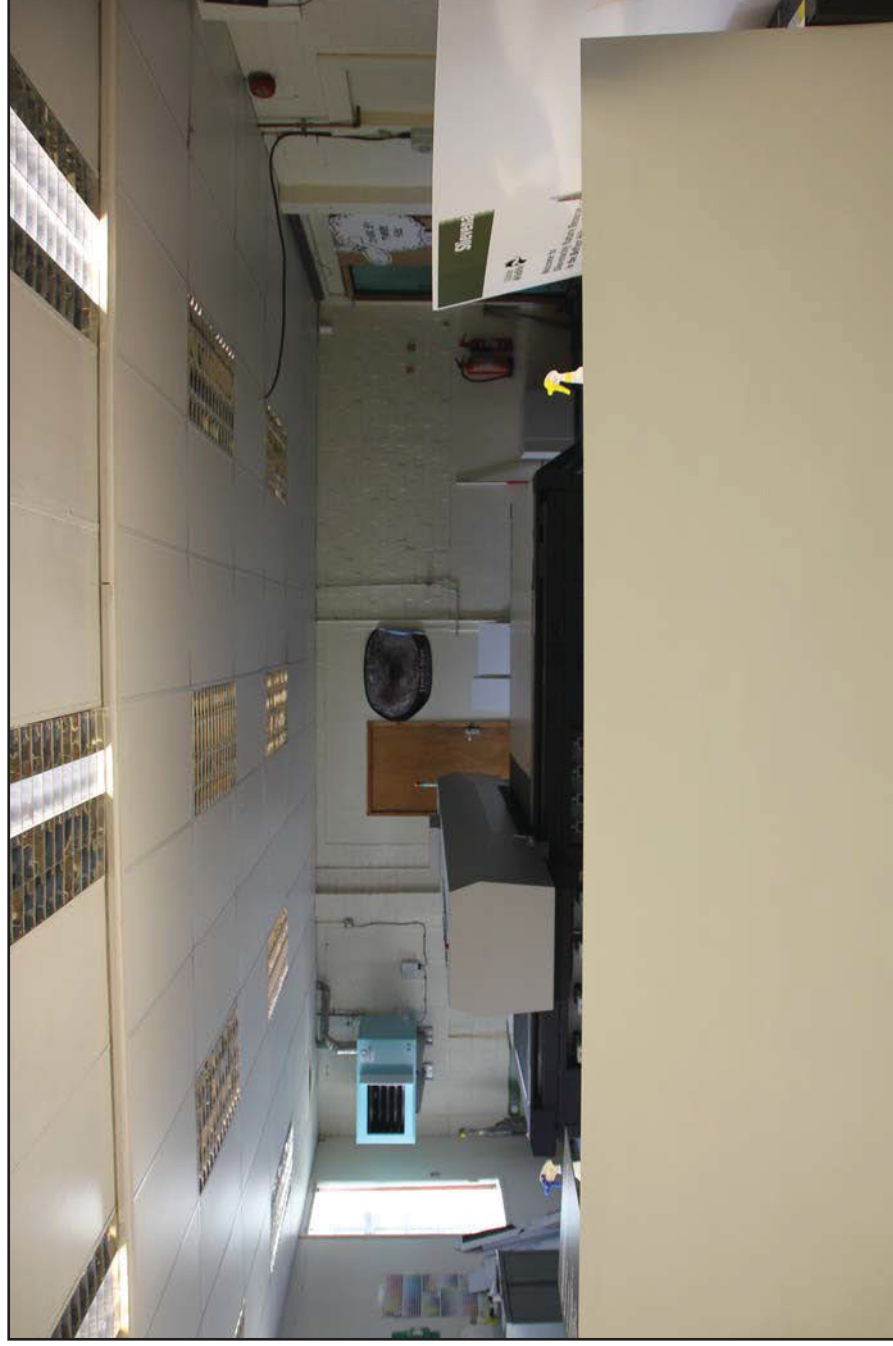


**Plate 16:** Building 2 corridor, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 17:** Building 2 design room, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 18:** Building 2 UV room, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 19:** Building 2 paint room, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 20:** Building 2 office, from the north. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 21:** Building 2 store 1, from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.

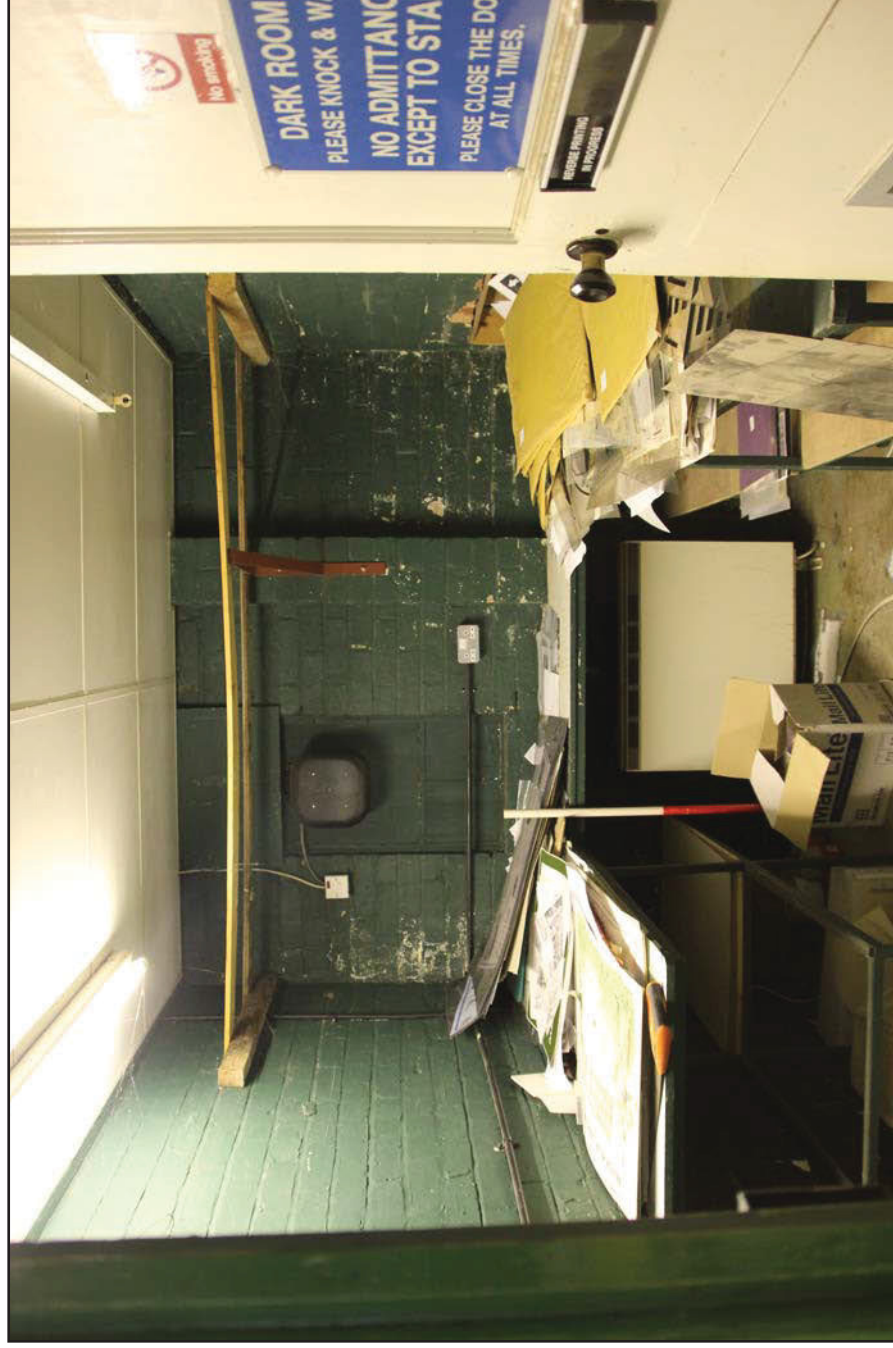


Plate 22: Building 2 dark room, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 23:** Building 2 shredder room, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



Plate 24: Building 2 corridor, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.





Plate 25: Building 2 store 2, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 26:** Building 2 canteen, from the east. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 27:** Building 3 northeast facing external elevation, from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 28:** Building 3 northwest and southwest facing external elevations, from the west. Scale 1.0m.

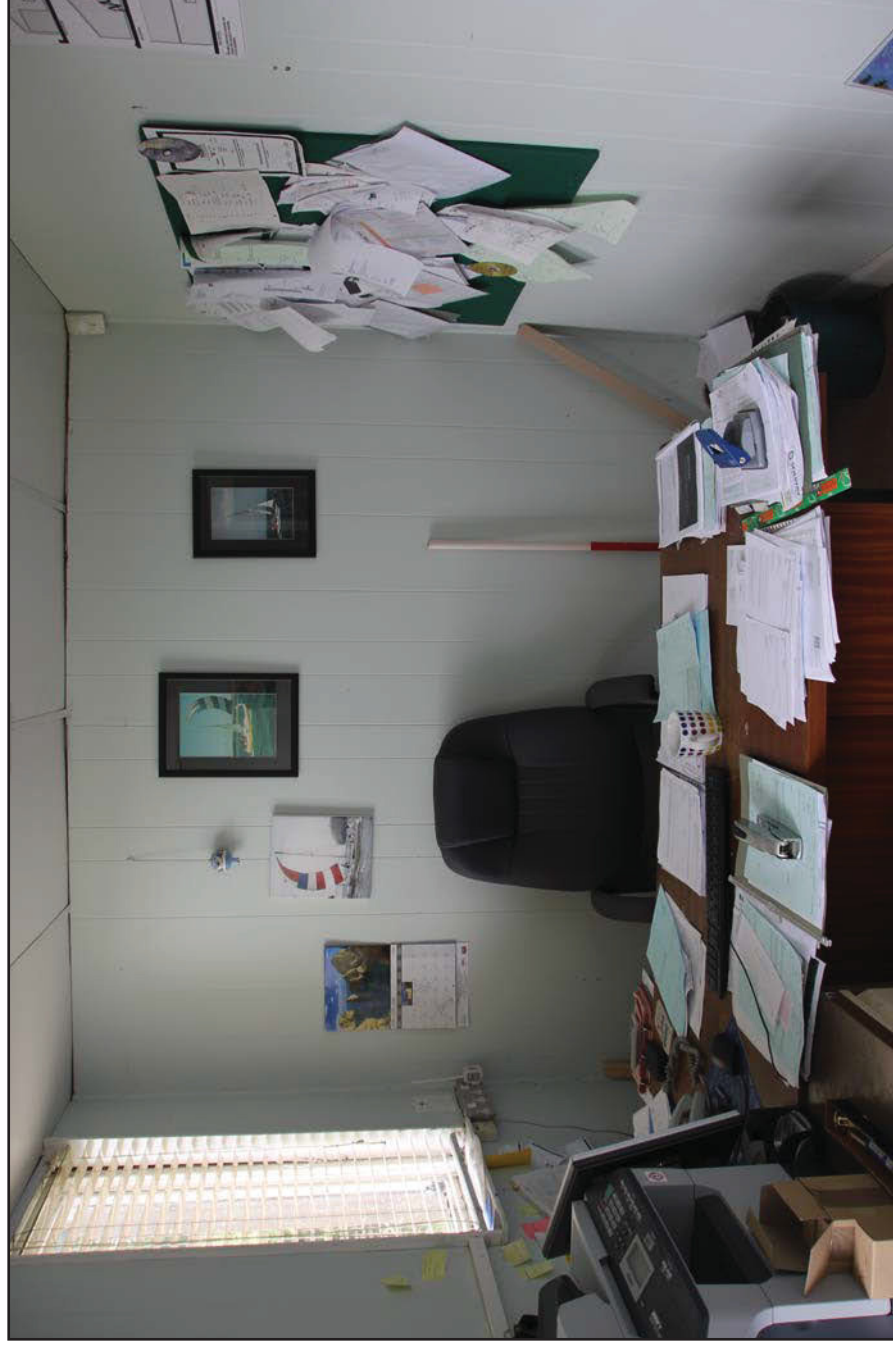




**Plate 29:** Building 3 corridor, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



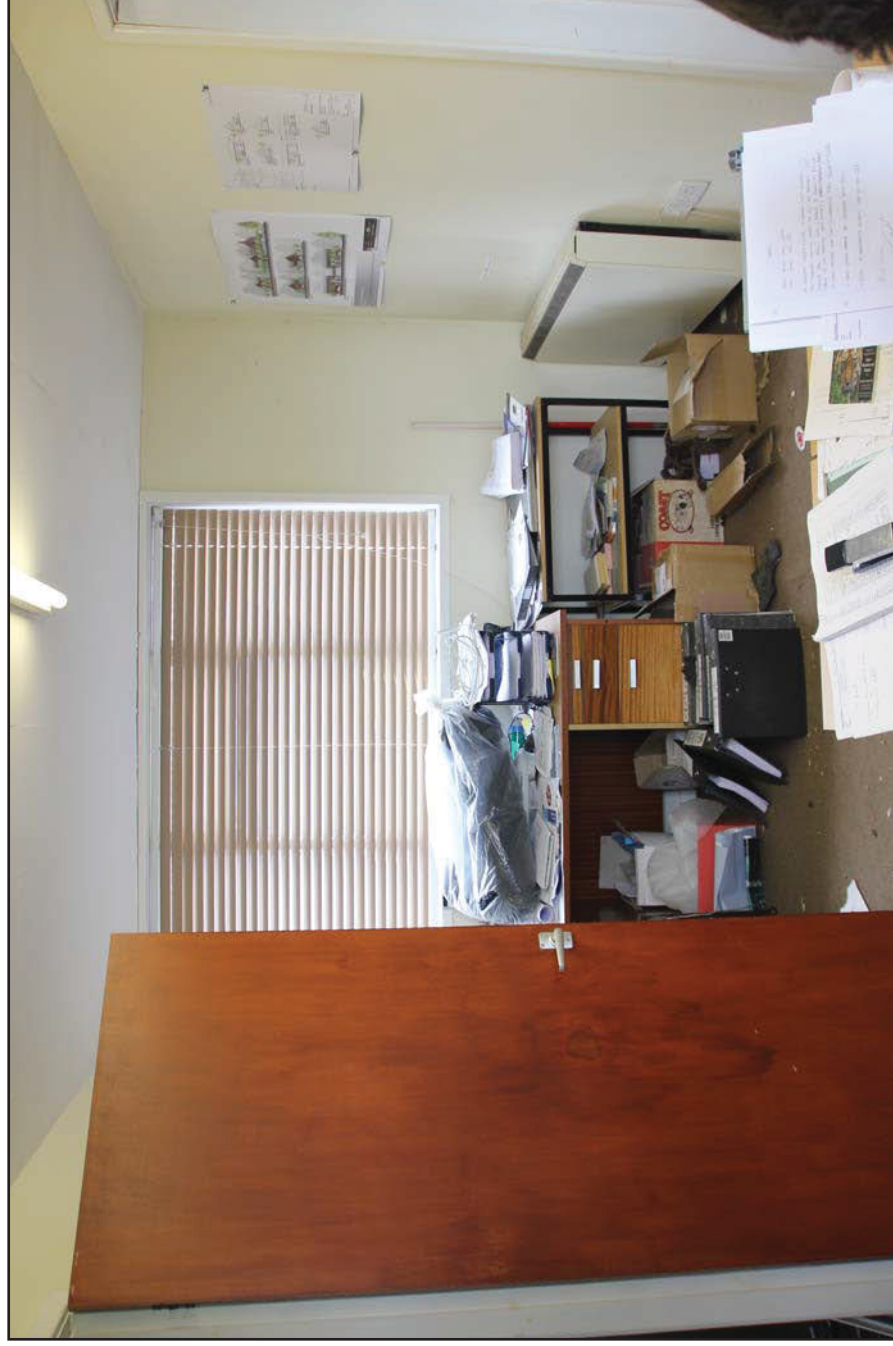
**Plate 30:** Building 3 photocopier room, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 31:** Building 3 office 1, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.

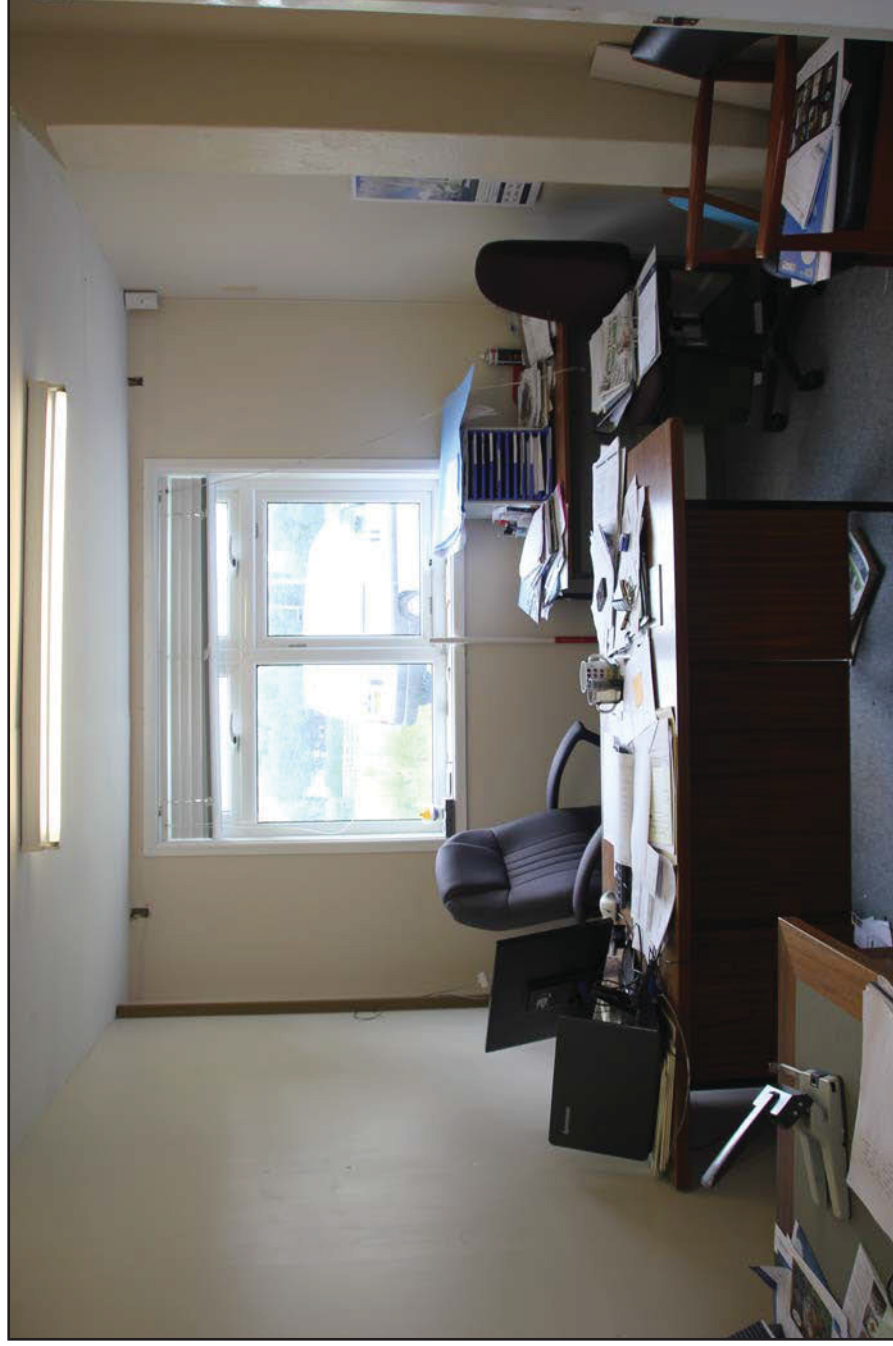


Plate 32: Building 3 office 2, from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 33:** Building 3 office 3, from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 34:** Building 3 office 4, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 35:** Building 4 northwest facing external elevation, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 36:** Building 4 northwest and southwest facing external elevations, from the west. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 37:** Building 4 southwest and southeast facing external elevations, from the south. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 38:** Building 4 southeast facing external elevation, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.

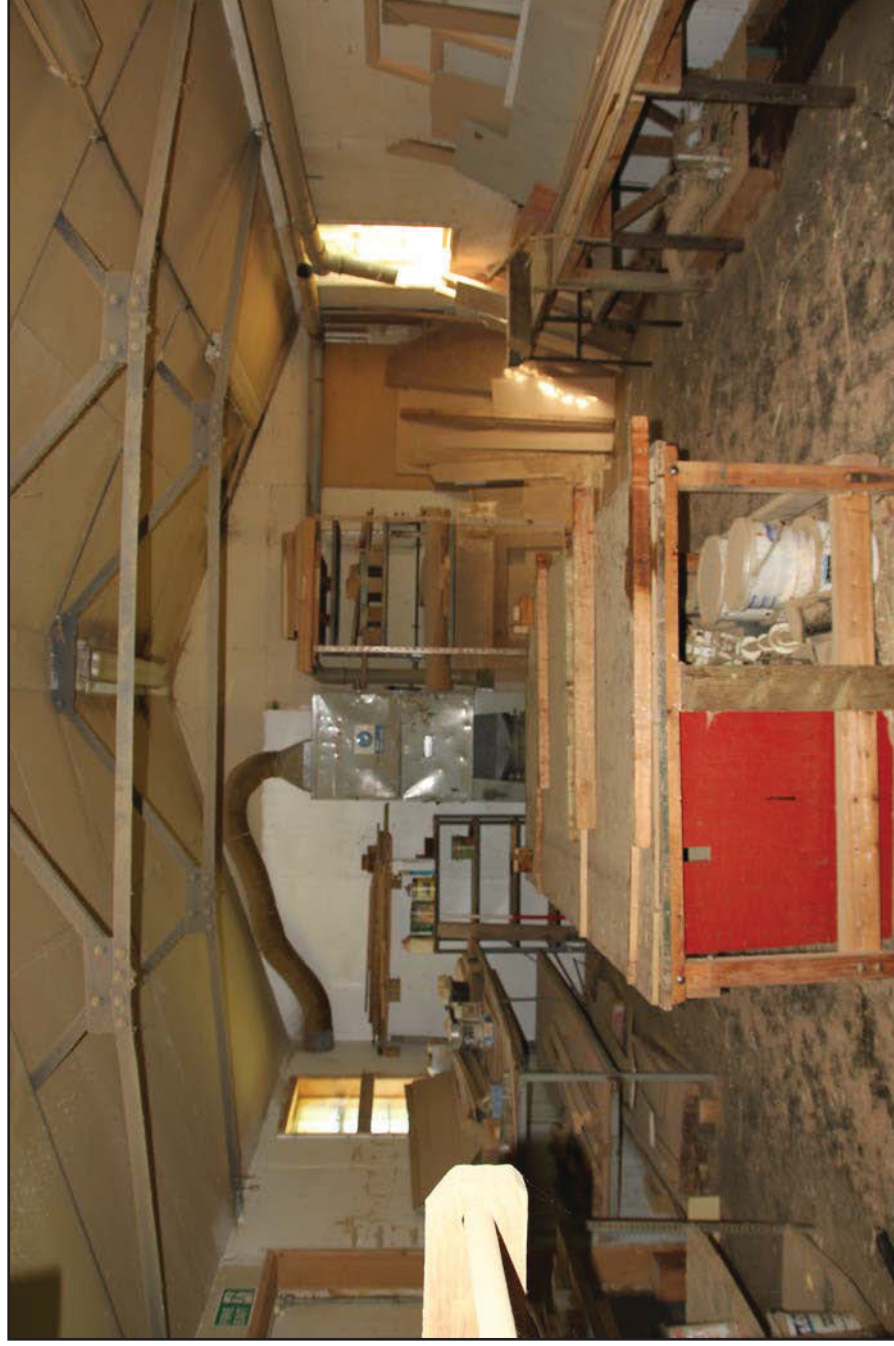




**Plate 39:** Building 4 store 1, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 40:** Building 4 store 2, from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 41:** Building 4 carpentry room, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 42:** Building 4 workshop, from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 43:** Building A northwest facing external elevation, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.





**Plate 44:** Building B air-raid shelter northwest facing external elevation, from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.



**Plate 45:** Building B air-raid shelter, from the northeast.





**Plate 46:** Building C water tank, from the southeast.





**Plate 47:** Building D air-raid shelter, from the southeast.

