

# birmingham archaeology

An archaeological assessment of the  
Albion Mill and environs, Albion  
Street, Wolverhampton

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
**Project No. 817**  
August 2001

**An archaeological assessment of the Albion Mill  
and environs, Albion Street, Wolverhampton**

By

Stephen Litherland, Richard Morriss, and Kirsty Nichol

*For further information please contact:*  
Simon Buteux or Iain Ferris (Directors)  
Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
The University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT  
Tel: 0121 414 5513  
Fax: 0121 414 5516  
E-Mail: [BUFAU@bham.ac.uk](mailto:BUFAU@bham.ac.uk)  
Web Address: <http://www.bufau.bham.ac.uk>

# **An archaeological assessment of the Albion Mill and environs, Albion Street, Wolverhampton**

## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Background	2
3.0 Present character of the Study Area	3
4.0 General historical context	3
5.0 Detailed history of the Study Area	4
6.0 Assessment of the standing buildings	6
7.0 Conclusions and recommendations	16
8.0 Acknowledgements	18
9.0 References	18

## List of Figures

- Fig.1 Site location
- Fig.2 Proposed development area and BCSMR site locations
- Fig.3 Zones and buildings
- Fig.4 Tithe Map (1842)
- Fig.5 Health of Towns Plan (1852)
- Fig.6 Ordnance Survey First Edition (1:500 Series)
- Fig.7 1833 illustration of Buildings E and F (Bridgens Wolverhampton Directory)

## List of Plates

- Plate 1 The southern frontage of the Albion Mill
- Plate 2 Buildings A, B and C, western range of the Albion Mill
- Plate 3 Building D: eastern range of the Albion Mill
- Plate 4 Buildings E and G and steel-framed canopy, Zone III
- Plate 5 Former canal basin opening, west wall, Building E
- Plate 6 North wall, Building F
- Plate 7 Roof structure and south wall, Building F
- Plate 8 Detail of purlin tie, roof structure, Building F
- Plate 9 East wall, Building H
- Plate 10 Belfast-truss roof, Building J

## **An archaeological assessment of the Albion Mill and environs, Albion Street, Wolverhampton**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological assessment was carried out in July and August 2001 in advance of proposed development of a block of land between the Birmingham Canal and Albion Street, in Wolverhampton (centred on NGR SO 92100 68675). The work was undertaken by BUFAU and Richard Morriss on behalf of Redrow Homes. The area affected by the proposed development lies within the Union Mill Conservation Area and has been identified as part of a broader area of historic interest called the Canalside Quarter of Wolverhampton (Morriss and White 1998). The proposed development area included the Albion Mill, a Grade II listed building constructed in c.1830, and several other industrial buildings of varied date and function. These buildings were assessed in terms of their historical and architectural significance and a set of outline recommendations offered concerning the desirability of their preservation 'in situ' or 'by record'. In addition, an attempt was made to identify areas where below ground archaeological deposits may have survived so that a mitigation strategy regarding them could be formulated.*

*The assessment presented a valuable opportunity to chart the impact of the canal on this area of Wolverhampton from the later 18<sup>th</sup> century, as well as to examine the competitive interaction of the canal and railway networks from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Detailed documentary research has shown that development along the canal here was an early 19<sup>th</sup>, and not mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century phenomenon. The building survey identified a significant group of three structures associated with the expansion of the Albion Mill in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and a pair of canal warehouses to the east of the main mill that were built around 1830. The Shipton's, a prominent canal carrying family, owned these warehouses and had a close connection with the study area from c.1831 to 1922, when they finally sold the wharf to Fellows, Moreton and Clayton. The most significant below ground archaeological deposits that may survive within the proposed development area relate to the development of the Albion Mill and Wharf, and include in-filled canal basins and associated building foundations.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

This archaeological assessment was prepared by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit and Richard Morriss (Richard K Morriss & Associates) on behalf of Redrow Homes. The objective was to inform development proposals for a block of land centred on NGR SO 92100 68675, and hereafter referred to as the Study Area (Fig.1). It comprises a roughly rectangular block of land fronting the Birmingham Canal to the north, Albion Street to the south, Union Mill Street to the east and Corn Hill Street to the west (Fig. 2). A brief for the archaeological work, produced by Wolverhampton City Council (Appendix 2), proposed that this assessment would form the first stage of an archaeological response with regard to the proposed development, in accordance with guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 (DoE 1994) and 16 (DoE 1990). The assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999).



## **2.0 Background to the project**

The Study Area is situated within historically important Canalside Quarter of Wolverhampton and forms part of the Union Mill Conservation Area. In 1998 Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council (Morris and White 1998) commissioned an archaeological assessment of the Canalside Quarter. This initiative arose from a Town Centre Action Plan that included proposals for the enhancement of the canalside along the Birmingham/Wolverhampton Canal. It was recognised that 'the Canalside Quarter contains a number of important buildings and structures which relate to the economic, social and transport history of the town' and that 'sensitive development of this resource has potential to make an important contribution towards the regeneration of the area overall'. Situated about half a mile to the east of the historic town centre, a combination of topography and relative underdevelopment in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century made the Canalside Quarter the obvious place for a transport corridor. Subsequently, the urban sprawl of Wolverhampton expanded to link the two in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Study Area is centrally located within the Canalside Quarter, close to both canal, and later, railway links. Therefore, this project offers an opportunity to expand on the preliminary findings of the original survey, which, because the site was still occupied in 1998 could not be examined in as much detail as other areas.

### **2.1 Objectives**

The assessment was designed to enable appropriate mitigation strategies to be devised regarding the standing buildings within the Study Area, and to assess the potential for the survival of below ground archaeological remains across the site.

### **2.2 Method**

Published archaeological sources, primary and secondary records and maps held by Wolverhampton Archives and Local Studies Centre, Birmingham University Library, and the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record were consulted (all sources are listed in Appendix 1 below). An appraisal of the standing buildings on the site was also undertaken in order to understand the development and sequence of buildings on the site, and to identify further recording requirements. The appraisal involved a visual inspection of each structure with written analytical notes, and a photographic record of the interior, exterior, with details of original features being made.

### **2.3 Geology and topography**

The town of Wolverhampton lies on a north facing promontory belonging to the Birmingham plateau, lying between 150-159m AOD (Hooke and Slater 1986, 35), which gently slopes away to the east towards the Study Area. The underlying geology of the South Staffordshire region is generally complex, consisting of a mixture of marls, different coloured sandstone and some limestone outcrops. The drift geology within the Study Area is principally Boulder Clay and unbedded gravel and sand (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1959). The area around the Study Area remained boggy, with expanses of heath and moorland into the Industrial Period (Hooke and Slater 1986, 35).

### **3.0 Present character of the Study Area**

The Study Area was divided into three Zones, I-III, and for descriptive purposes each building was assigned a reference letter (Buildings A-K, Fig.3)

#### **Zone I**

This area is principally occupied by a large steel-framed structure covered with corrugated sheets. Several modern office buildings are associated with this structure, and to the west there lies a tract of wasteland that extends as far as Corn Hill. The buildings appear to be largely 20<sup>th</sup> century in date, and are derelict.

#### **Zone II**

The Albion Mill complex comprises the Mill building and several ancillary structures that are ranged around two sides of a courtyard. High boundary walls define the site to the south, and the rear elevations of structures located in Zone III and sections of freestanding boundary wall, define the eastern edge of this Zone.

#### **Zone III**

This area consists largely of derelict and abandoned industrial buildings with a wide date range. Once again, a high boundary wall that has two entrances from Albion Street defines the southern side of this Zone.

### **4.0 General historical context (Fig.2)**

It has been speculated (Hooke and Slater 1986, 29) that Wolverhampton may have taken on an urban character early in the evolution of the town, perhaps even by the time of the Domesday survey in 1066. However, it was not until the second half of the thirteenth century that Wolverhampton became a borough. Slater suggests that it is the situation of Wolverhampton at the meeting point of several ancient route ways that informs the topographical development as a town. Certainly, the development of Wolverhampton gained momentum in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, largely due to its central location within the coal fields of south Staffordshire, and its position within the developing layout of what became the Birmingham Canal Navigation system from the 1770s onwards (Brennan 1948, 19).

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the canals opened up new trade and were of paramount importance to the location of industry, and other associated business. The construction of the Horseley Fields Gasworks to the east of the Study Area in 1821 was one of the earliest large-scale initiatives in this area. It is noticeable that most early 19<sup>th</sup> century development was concentrated upon the western side of the canal, nearest the town centre. However, by 1854, with the construction of the High Level Railway and the opening of the Great Western Railway Low Level Station (BCSMR 2582) development concentrated on the eastern side of the canal. Nevertheless, the railway/canal interchange trade continued to provide business opportunities, and it was not until after the First World War that the canal system began to fall into terminal decline.

The archaeological assessment of the Wolverhampton Canalside Quarter identified a number of sites of the Industrial Period in the vicinity of the Study Area (Fig.2). In the north-west corner of Zone I of the Study Area lay numbers 12-13 Corn Hill (BCSMR 6908) now demolished, comprising a cluster of brick buildings of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century date ranged around three sides of a courtyard. Further to the east of this zone is the site of the former Albion Iron Works (BCSMR 10679), while Zone II includes the site of the Albion Mill itself, a Grade II listed building (BCSMR 1713) that was constructed c.1830. The Old Steam Mill, built c.1851, (BCSMR 2597) and its associated wharf area and annexe (BCSMR 11008) is situated immediately to the north of the study area. The basin (BCSMR 10934) may be a vestige of the original line of the canal (as seen on the Tithe Map, Fig.4) which was re-routed to accommodate the High Level railway. The (Old) Mill Street Bridge (BCSMR 6914) also dates to the period. Two other sites of importance lie directly to the east of the study area. The Cheese and Butter Factory is a good example of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century canal warehouse architecture (BCSMR 1652), while the Union Mill, built c.1813, was largely burnt down in 1989 (BCSMR 2598).

## **5.0 Detailed history of the Study Area**

The Study Area lies to the north east of Wolverhampton town centre and Taylor's Map, drawn in 1750, indicates that this area was open fields and relatively undeveloped at this time. However, with the construction of the Birmingham Canal, 1768-1772, this picture rapidly changed, and the earliest structures within the Study Area belonged to one of the most prominent families associated with water transportation of the time, the Shipton's, who had three headquarters in Birmingham, Gloucester, and Wolverhampton (Thorn 1996, 110).

It was James Shipton who rose to prominence in Wolverhampton, becoming Mayor in 1854. From 1821 he had a brief partnership with his cousin, James Maurice Shipton, when their timber business was situated in Can Lane. Maurice and James also leased a nearby wharf, the Albion Wharf, from one Henry Pratt (Thorn 1996, 116). Later, in December 1831, James purchased the wharf, making it the headquarters of a successful general carrying business. According to an advertisement in the *Wolverhampton Chronicle* of 24 April 1833, Pratt had already built a warehouse over the canal basin to the Albion Mill (Building E) and James added a further warehouse for grain over a smaller spur at right angles to the main basin (Building F). Both of these buildings are depicted in an advertisement in Bridgens *Wolverhampton Trade Directory* of 1833 which notes that Shipton's and Company fly boats provided a regular carriage service to over seventy towns in England as well as to wharves on the Thames for coastal shipping.

This documentary evidence does not entirely fit with the early map evidence for the Study Area. The earliest cartographic reference to the Albion Mill and Wharf found during this assessment was a map dating to 1836. On this map a spur off the main canal is depicted, together with a small cluster of buildings surrounding it. This spur, but no buildings, is also represented on an even earlier map dating to 1827, but can be more clearly seen on the Tithe Map of 1842 (Fig. 4), where it is shown as a long basin running almost parallel to the canal. The Apportionment for the Tithe Map records that James Shipton rented fields on the opposite side of the canal to his wharf; fields

613a and 613c from William Wenman, and 613b and 614a from the Duke of Cleveland. These were probably to accommodate the many horses needed to pull the fly and butty boats belonging to Shipton. The Tithe Award was drawn up to show the division and ownership of land, and, consequently, evidence for buildings on the site at this time is limited and non-representative. Any structures associated with the spur of the canal and the Albion Mill are also omitted from a Plan of the Township of Wolverhampton dating to c.1850. Therefore, it would appear that the early maps provide a misleading impression concerning the date from which the canalside began to be developed, and that this belongs to the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and not c.1850. Indeed, the Shipton carrying trade was changing in the late 1840s when first the North Staffordshire Railway Company, and then the Trustees of the Duke of Bridgewater, took control of the company. While the Shipton's continued to own the Albion Wharf they acted merely as agents for these larger companies in the canal carrying trade. James's interest in local politics and diversification into other investments like the gas industry and purchase of the Saw Mill may have been a response to these broader changes.

The Health of Towns Act Map (Fig. 5) drawn up in 1852 shows much more clearly the structures that occupied the site, and highlights their relationship with the canal and basin. There was a complex of buildings in the Study Area that fronted both Albion Street and Corn Hill. A series of structures at right angles to Albion Street divided Zone I into three separate courtyard areas, each with its own access from the road. In Zone II the canal basin is depicted as extending across the rear of the Albion Mill itself, and there appears to be a building the other side of the spur, between the canal and the basin. Building E has been built over the basin in Zone III, and Building F forms the eastern side of a courtyard. A smaller building, situated in the southwest corner of this courtyard appears to have had an elaborate frontage in the form of three protruding semicircular bays. The eastern part of Zone III is occupied by a collection of warehouses and workshops. The whole area surrounding the study area is shown as extensively built up by this period and the new line of the canal, which was re-routed c.1850, is also shown.

There appears to be little change to the layout of the principal buildings between 1852 and 1864 when a plan of Horsley Fields within a ¼ mile of Messrs. Wildsmith and Gaunts Works was surveyed (not reproduced here). The Albion Foundry is shown occupying the central courtyard in Zone I. The canal basin is visible as being open for almost its entirety stretching through Zone II and into Zone I, while a Washer Works served by another basin occupied the eastern part of Zone III.

On a map dating to 1871 (also not reproduced here) the eastern return of Albion Street has been renamed Shipton Street. The Albion Mill Foundry occupies Zone I, and the Albion Flour Mill Zone II. Buildings C and D are now shown straddling the canal basin to the rear of the mill, while Shipton's Wharf occupies the western part of Zone III.

The First Edition 1:500 Series Ordnance Survey map (Fig.6), surveyed in 1883, shows the Albion Ironworks and the Albion Coal Wharf in Zone I. The building between the basin and the canal proper to the rear of the Albion Mill is no longer depicted, but several other buildings have been erected in the frontage of the Mill. Shipton's Wharf (Zone III) has been renamed Albion Wharf, and Building G erected



between the warehouse at the rear of the plot and the structure with the elaborate frontage to the south. An extension has also been added on to the south side of the warehouse in the courtyard area. The Washer Works is now called a Saw Mill and Timber Yard, although Shipton had purchased it as early as 1857. The actual layout of the buildings is unchanged, but the later spur off the canal appears to have been re-cut, and is now Y-shaped.

On the First Edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey Map, produced in 1888 the western return of Albion Street is referred to as Bradshaw Street. Between 1888 and 1902 the elaborate building at the entrance to Shipton's Wharf was demolished, together with several buildings in the far west of Zone I. The Y-shaped canal basin associated with the Saw Mill in Zone III was filled in, surviving only as a small recess in the southern side of the canal. A large irregularly shaped building is shown just to the south of where the basin was once situated.

Although all major public buildings and key industries are marked on Alfred Hinde's map, dating to 1914, it does not show any buildings in the vicinity of the Study Area. The canal is reproduced, but the Albion Wharf basin is also omitted. However, the Third Edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map shows that the basin was still in existence in 1919. By this period the Albion Ironworks had moved to the western part of Zone I, and a 'Travelling Crane' occupied its previous site to the east. Several structures situated in the southwest corner of Zone I were demolished as part of a reorganisation of the Ironworks. The Albion Mill in Zone II is simply referred to as a warehouse, and a Smithy was located in one of the ancillary buildings in the western range of the mill complex.

The Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1938 was not available for consultation, but by 1956 the eastern part of Zone I was occupied by a large unit called the Albion Foundry (Iron) and the canal basin was in-filled. The Albion Mill is simply referred to as a warehouse, and further alterations appear to have been made to the structure, as well as ancillary buildings along the eastern part of the site being demolished. A house is shown in the south-western corner of Zone III that is still called the Albion Wharf. The Saw Mill has been radically redeveloped with additional factory units, including Buildings I and J being constructed.

The recent Ordnance Survey mapping (1988 and 2001) shows that Albion Street was extended eastwards to connect with Union Mill Street. Massive slum clearance in the surrounding area paved the way for further large factory units such as the works on the southern side of Albion Street, and the majority of Zone I was now a single foundry building. In Zone II Building A was extended, and a large structure erected in the courtyard space in front of the mill, but had been demolished by 2001.

## **6.0 Assessment of the standing buildings (Fig.3)**

### *6.1 The Albion Mill Complex (Zone II)*

The Albion Mill (Plate 1) will be retained as part of the proposed development and is not, therefore, included in this assessment. However, four other buildings were identified and assessed as being part of the Albion Mill complex, along with several

other minor structures. The buildings have been labeled alphabetically A to D in a roughly clockwise fashion on the site, starting with the Forecourt Range (Building A) and ending with the Eastern Range (Building D). It should be noted that these names are purely arbitrary and have no historical basis.

#### 6.1.1 Building A: the Forecourt Range

##### Description

The Forecourt Range flanks the western side of the forecourt of the mill (Plate 2). It is a two-storey brick range - its ground-floor level being at the first-floor level of the other buildings because of the changes of ground level on the site.

Although it has 19<sup>th</sup>-century origins it has clearly been radically rebuilt; the northernmost section is of a separate build than the rest, there being a straight vertical break between the two. The southern gable has been rebuilt in two phases in the recent past. In the rest of the building there is older handmade red brickwork in the ground floor portions of most of the walls, but the upper floor is of later machine-made brick. All the openings are haphazardly spaced and those on the ground floor have generally been inserted or blocked.

Some of the blocking is very recent, for it is evident that two existing window openings at ground-floor level had been retained when the top was rebuilt - and given new 'false' or 'Flemish' flat-arched heads. In between was a wide gateway opening under a timber lintel. Both windows have since been blocked in brick and the opening reduced to a simple doorway. The building has a simple hipped roof.

Internally the building has been gutted and rearranged on several occasions and retains little or nothing of historic value. The ground floor has been for storage and garaging, whilst the first floor had until recently been used as a two-bedroom flat.

##### Assessment

Apart from defining the western side of the forecourt and being of a suitable scale within the curtilage, it is a building of little or no historic or architectural significance having been radically altered and retaining little of its original character.

#### 6.1.2 Building B: the West Range

##### Description

The West Range is a narrow block running parallel to the main mill building and separated from it by a narrow yard (Plate 2). At the south end the range has a wider section, giving it an 'L-shaped' footprint, and that portion defines the south end of the yard. At its northern end it abuts the slightly earlier North-Western Extension (Building C).

It is a two-storey range built of handmade red brick laid in a mixture of both English and English Garden Wall bonds. The east wall and the northern side of the southern 'wing' of the block were both once whitewashed, to maximise the amount of light in the narrow courtyard. At the north end of the east wall on the ground-floor is a double doorway with a segmental brick head. To the south there are three windows, all with brick sills, segmental brick heads of two rings of headers, and cast-iron

glazing. Symmetrically aligned on the first floor above are three identical windows, with a fourth above the north doorway. There are single windows of the same type at ground and first-floor levels in the courtyard wall of the south 'wing'.

There are no other openings, apart from an inserted doorway into the building from the North-Western Extension, presumably cut into a window position in that building when the West Wing was built, and a double-doorway in the east wall of the south wing at first-floor level. That opening, providing access from the front of the mill and the forecourt, is of recent date. It partly cuts the blocking of a primary window opening with a segmental head.

The roof of this range is in two sections. The south wing is covered by a lean-to from the brick gable wall of the Forecourt Range (Building A), and this is screened from the main forecourt by a coped section of brickwork of unknown date that butts against the main mill. The rest of the roof is plain gabled and supported by four king-post trusses. It is boarded and covered with slate; at the north end it runs into the south wall of the North-Western Extension (Building C).

Internally, there are just two large open spaces on each level. On the ground floor there is a series of four single cast-iron pillars to support the substantial first-floor beams, and the floor is brick paved. The first floor was not examined in detail because of its condition, but there seem to be no traces of earlier partitions or any other significant features of note. At the north end of the courtyard a lean-to structure provided covered access between an inserted doorway in the side of the mill and the main ground-floor entrance to this wing.

#### Assessment

The wing is evidently later than the mill and the North-Western Extension, but still of mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century date. According to the map information assessed in Section 5.0 above, the building dates from 1864-1871. It is very similar in its detailing to the Eastern Range (Building D) that is also of that period. As well as being a relatively unaltered example of its date, it forms a visually uniform group of structures around the narrow courtyard between it and the main mill and thus has a degree of aesthetic as well as historic significance in the context of the site.

#### 6.1.3 Building C: North-Western Extension

##### Description

The mill's canal basin ran under the northern part of the main building and continued for an unknown distance to the west of it; this is indicated by the existence of the full width opening at ground-floor level in the mill's west wall, matching the one in its east wall.

The North-Western Extension was built over the open part of the basin immediately to the west of the mill, and its north and south walls butted against the west wall of the original mill building (Plate 2). This virtually square block appears to have predated the wing later attached to it that ran southwards and parallel to the main mill (The West Range, Building B).

It is of four storeys and built of handmade brick laid in English Garden Wall bond. There are no openings at ground-floor level - the level of the canal basin - although there is some hint of a blocked doorway on the south side. At first-floor level there were probably two windows in the south side, but these were blocked when the West Range was built. This area was deemed unsafe to inspect closely, but it does seem that the eastern window was adapted as a doorway between the ranges and the slightly odd angle of the north end of the later wing's east wall was associated with this.

At second-floor level there are two windows in the south elevation, with brick sills, segmental heads of a single ring of headers, and cast-iron glazing. There are two identical windows in the west elevation. The lower third floor also has two windows in the south elevation with similar detailing, while two others in the west elevation have been blocked.

The walls are topped by dentilled eaves cornices. The roof is hipped, though the eastern foot of the hip dies out in the brickwork of the main mill. It has a king-post truss and is covered with slates.

At ground-floor level there is one large space, which would have been taken up entirely by the canal basin. The building has no west or east walls at this level, so that the basin must have continued to the west of it. The present 'wall' at the west end is part of a separate structure. The last supporting beam for the first-floor at the west end is supported by cast-iron brackets. The first-floor space was inaccessible at the time of the survey and the other floors rather dangerous, so these were only examined very briefly. There seems to have been just a single room on each level, reached, apart from the third-floor, through inserted doorways in the west wall of the mill. The third-floor was reached by a timber stair. After the construction of the West Wing there was access between it and this range by an inserted doorway at first-floor level.

The detailing of the dentilled eaves and the single arch of headers in the window heads suggests that this range was built soon after the main mill, and before any of the other additional buildings within the curtilage. However, the map evidence suggests that it was built between 1864 and 1871. Its exact function is not known but it was clearly allied to the processes within the mill complex.

#### Assessment

It is, in the context of the site, a building of some historical significance, and, in the context of the area, a good and virtually unaltered example of 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrial architecture.

#### 6.1.4 Building D: the Eastern Range

##### Description

The lower eastern portion of the original mill building did not extend the full length of the building. A canal basin was built under the northern end of the main mill, and the northern end of the eastern portion stopped by its southern bank. The basin ran parallel to the main line of the canal immediately to the north, presumably with a junction to the east of the mill. At a later date, a three-storey structure was built over the open part of the basin, its western end slotted into the angle between the side of the main body of the mill and the northern end of the lower eastern portion (Plate 3).



The vertical construction breaks between the walls of the new build and the original mill walls are quite clear, as are blocked windows in what had been the northern end of the mill's lower eastern portion. Similarly, at the east end of the new range it is clear that it butted against the end wall of an existing structure, the brickwork of which continues southwards as part of the building that still fronts the yard to the south. When the new range was built, it was necessary to raise the northern part of what was presumably a sloping roof to accommodate the height of the new work. The new building's north wall also curves slightly at its eastern end to butt against the north-western corner of that earlier range. In effect, the new building consisted only of its long side walls, utilising existing walls for its end gables, and the westernmost section of its south wall.

The new range is built of handmade red brick laid mainly in English Garden Wall bond. Apart from an inserted double doorway in the north wall on the ground floor, there are no openings on that side. On the south elevation there is a low but broad window with a segmental brick head and cast-iron glazing (presently lying on the ground) at ground-floor level. At first-floor level there are three evenly spaced windows, also with segmental heads of two rings of brick headers, fitted with multipane cast-iron glazing. On the second floor, there are five virtually identical windows, though obviously more closely spaced. Evidently there was a sixth window, now blocked, at the west end of the elevation at this level.

There are no obvious openings in the east gable wall of the range, the wall that already existed when it was built. However, there is evidence that the ground-floor brickwork of this wall is much later than the rest, probably representing the infill of a full-width opening over the canal basin to the mill. This would account for the odd arrangement of a short corbel-supported girder at the north-eastern corner, the other end of which is visible on the other side of the wall; this takes the lintel of the opening and the end floor beam of the first-floor of the new range. Such a broad opening would also help to explain the wide brick relieving arch in the wall visible at first-floor level - a feature also visible in the side walls of the main mill immediately above the position of the canal basin openings. Allied to this, there is no end wall at the western end of this range at ground-floor level because of the position of the primary canal basin opening in the east side of the main mill.

At first and second floor levels doorways were inserted into the mill's east wall to provide access to the upper floors of the new range. The floor structures are of substantial timber beams on the first floor and paired beams on the second, and the floors are well boarded. At each level there are no indications of any former partitions that could have divided the large spaces into separate rooms.

The western end of the range is encapsulated within the raising and lengthening of the eastern portion of the mill building into the four full gables, so that this part required no separate roofing. The rest of the roof is hipped at the west end but gabled at the east - ending in the remodeled earlier brickwork. It is of three bays and simple king-post construction; the trusses have stirrup supports for the king-post feet and bolts to stiffened the joints between principals and tie-beams. They support a single tier of chocked purlins and a ridge-board. The roof is boarded and the top covering is of slates - which are rapidly disappearing.

## Assessment

Whilst clearly not primary to the main mill, the building does appear to be a relatively early addition to the site and probably dates to the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century. The map evidence indicates a date of construction between 1864 and 1871. The ground-floor portion was taken up with the canal basin to the mill, whilst there were long single rooms on each of the two upper floors, the top one being lit by six windows. The only access to the building was from the mill, indicating that its function was associated with the mill. In the context of the site this is, therefore, a building of some historical significance, and, in the context of the area, a good and virtually unaltered example of 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrial architecture.

### 6.1.5 Lesser Structures

#### The Gateway

There appears to have been a tall brick wall along Albion Street that probably completely separated the forecourt of the mill from the public highway. The eastern half of this has mostly been removed and replaced by large corrugated iron gates. The remaining section contains an earlier, and possibly primary, gateway to the site which is set back slightly from the wall. The gate piers have stone hinge blocks and are topped by simple 'pyramid' stone copers. The gates are of corrugated iron on steel frames and of no historic significance.

In the angles between the flanking stub walls of the gateway recess and the main boundary wall to either side are small structures with lean-to roofs. One, to the west, contains a WC and is probably of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century date. The other may also have served the same function, despite the lack of any vents, but appears to be slightly older. The dating of the wall and gateway is difficult but the bricks used are unlike those of any of the main mill buildings; it is likely that the wall is of late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup>-century date. It is thus historically unimportant, but in the context of the site does reflect the degree of enclosure that was once integral to it.

#### Missing Steel-Framed Range

The concrete floor and cut-down feet of RSJ stanchions to the south of the main mill in the central area of the forecourt indicate the position of a steel-framed structure that has since been removed. It was probably of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and of no historical consequence.

#### The Retaining Wall

The level of the forecourt to the south of the mill is mainly at the level of the street and of the mill's first floor. The one section that is not is that flanked by the eastern wall of the main mill and the south wall of the Eastern Range. The ground level in that area is roughly the same as the level of the Birmingham Canal to the north.

On the eastern side, this area is revetted by the brick end walls of building on the adjacent property. On the north side there is the Eastern Range and, for most of the west side, the main mill. The section south of the main mill had to be revetted by a separate revetment wall instead. This roughly continues the line of the mill's east wall. It is a substantial brick wall, at least two brick stretchers wide, and at one time it formed the eastern boundary of the platform of the missing steel-framed building (see

above). Dating is difficult, but the possibility that there was a side arm of the canal basin at one time, prior to the construction of the Eastern Range, cannot be ruled out without further investigation.

#### The Canal Retaining Wall

To the north of the complex are the Birmingham Canal and a much rebuilt and repaired canal retaining wall. Difficulty of access meant that it was impossible to assess how much of the original brickwork has survived.

#### The North Courtyard Shed

In the narrow courtyard between the buildings and the canal is a modern flat-roofed shed built onto the canal revetment wall. This structure is of no historical or architectural significance

### *6.2 The Albion Wharf (Zone III)*

The historic building stock within Zone III of the proposed development area was rapidly examined by Stephen Litherland and Kirsty Nichol of BUFAU on August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2001. For clarity a similar method and lettering system was adopted for this survey (Fig.3). Only buildings of historic interest were selected for examination. Therefore, steel-framed factory units, which were principally of post-war date, were ignored.

The buildings of historic interest within Zone III can be divided into three groups. Buildings E and F were both built around 1830 as canal warehouses. There is a demonstrable historical and structural connection between these buildings and the Albion Mill complex to their west. Buildings G and H were both industrial structures. While not enough of their original fabric remains to assign a precise function, they clearly represent later 19<sup>th</sup>-century development. The final structures (Buildings I and J) form a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century industrial unit, remarkable only for a well-preserved variant of a 'Belfast-truss' roof.

#### 6.2.1 Building E: Canal Warehouse

##### Description

This building is located adjacent and parallel to the main Birmingham Canal. The western gable of Building E is partially abutted by the east-end of Building D (Plate 4), the later eastern range of the main Albion Mill complex constructed between 1864 and 1871. In plan the building is the shape of a skewed parallelogram. This was caused by the fact that the northern half of the building was constructed over the pre-existing canal basin that served the Albion Mill. As a consequence of this the floor level inside the building is about 1m lower than that outside. It is a two-storey structure consisting of two large spaces on each floor. These are divided into a northern and a southern half by a series of brick piers supporting a massive oak beam at first floor level that is aligned east/west down the centre of the building. The building has been modified and strengthened a number of times during its life. Nevertheless enough of the early fabric has survived that, when comparison is made with the 1833 etching of the building (Fig.7), it is possible to propose a reasonable outline of its original form.

Built of handmade brick mainly laid as a two-brick thick wall in Flemish and English Garden Wall bonds, the eaves that are visible on the main south-facing elevation have a plain brick projection. The roof was probably hipped at both ends and finished in slate. However, the western end has been rebuilt into a plain gable and the roof is now tiled. Both the first floor and the roof, which is a Queen-post type, employ large timbers that are nailed together and often strengthened by cast-iron stays and stirrups.

The south wall overlooked the central yard of the wharf complex and is clearly depicted on the 1833 illustration. The eastern end of the wall is now masked inside a later factory unit and has been so altered that there is no indication of the stone-clad arch here. However, a set of three large arches survive to the west. The central arch is elliptical and sprung with rubbed-brick voussoirs set on stone pads. Any indication of a second lower arch has been lost through later alteration. Each flanking arch is semi-circular with plain brick voussoirs, although the 1833 drawing suggests that false cement heads masked the brick arches. Each of the flanking openings are recessed and blind, but internally there are wooden lintels that correspond with the position of the first-floor windows shown in 1833. These former windows have either been blocked in the case of the eastern opening or opened up into a door in the case of the western opening that is served by a wooden staircase in front of the building. There is also a small semi-circular ground floor window situated near the western end of this elevation.

The north wall facing the canal is plainer containing a series of four regularly spaced elliptically arched windows at ground and first floor levels. Within the northern half of the west gable wall at ground floor level are the remains of the large, and later blocked, opening over the canal arm (Plate 5). There are several phases of repair here, one of the latter consisting of a bolted steel I-beam, which is indicative of a very late 19<sup>th</sup>-century phase of repair. The eastern gable of the building has been entirely lost.

#### Assessment

Building E is clearly depicted on the 1833 etching of the Shipton's yard and is further referred to as a warehouse in an advert in the *Wolverhampton Chronicle* made in April 1833. There is a clear historical link with the Shipton's canal carrying business and the Albion Mill complex that is further confirmed by the structural evidence for the opening for the canal arm into the Albion Mill. Therefore, in the context of the site Building E is a building of some historical significance, and in the context of the area a good and relatively rare survival of earlier 19<sup>th</sup>-century canal-based architecture, albeit significantly altered in places.

#### 6.2.2 Building F: Canal Warehouse

##### Description

Building F is located at the eastern end of Building E and was built over a second canal basin dug at right angles to the main one serving the Albion Mill. The canal basin occupied the eastern half of the building. Both buildings share many design features including evidence for a load-bearing spine down the main axis of the building supported by brick piers. Constructed in handmade brick laid in English Garden Wall bond, the walls of this building are mainly one-and-a-half bricks thick. Building F is two storied and retains a slate roof that was originally hipped at both



ends, although the northern end now has a plain gable. Building F is both longer and narrower than Building E and has a more regular rectangular plan. This may indicate that it was a slightly later addition that did not have to fit into a pre-existing framework.

Much of the west wall of the building has been extensively rebuilt and no evidence of the openings depicted in 1833 was found during the preliminary inspection. A section of original brickwork survives in the northern end of this wall, including a circular feature in the north west corner of the building whose function remains unclear. The north gable wall of the building is splayed at its base where it faced the main canal basin, above this a semi-circular window with a stone frame survives in situ (Plate 6). To the east of this window the north wall curves round to provide access to the canal basin. This window design, which is depicted on the 1833 etching, is repeated in three equally spaced windows at first floor level, although the outer two have both been damaged. This pattern of three windows is repeated in the southern end of the building, although these were subsequently blocked (Plate 7). Beneath the windows a substantial first floor timber beam has been infilled with later brickwork, so this end of the building may have been open at ground floor level. The east wall is blind apart from a blocked opening in the original brickwork towards its northern end at first floor-level.

The roof is a Queen-post design consisting of eight principal trusses that support three purlins on either side. The purlins are tied to the principal rafters by iron stays (Plate 8). The roof has been extensively repaired and strengthened using steel I-beams and steel columns. These repairs appear to be contemporary with the replacement, strengthening and raising of the first floor and central spine of the building sometime in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Trap doors in this later floor provided access, the central one of which had a pulley hoist attached to a principal roof truss.

#### Assessment

Building F is clearly grouped with Building E in terms of function, style and ownership. It is depicted on the 1833 etching of the Shipton's yard and is referred to as a newly-built grain warehouse set at right angles to the main basin in the *Wolverhampton Chronicle* of 24 April 1833 (Thorn 1996, 116). Therefore, in the context of the site, Buildings E and F form a group of some historical significance, and in the context of the area are good and relatively rare survivals of earlier 19<sup>th</sup>-century canal-based architecture, notwithstanding the fact that Building F is the more extensively repaired and altered of the two structures.

#### 6.2.3 Building G: Small Warehouse/Cart Store

##### Description

Building G is a two bay structure open from its floor to a simple Queen-post roof sheeted with corrugated iron (Plate 4). Constructed in irregularly fired machine-cut brick laid in English Garden Wall bond, only the east gable overlooking a yard contains any openings. These comprise an inserted cart opening to the south and two semi-circular arched windows each containing a cast-iron frame with small glazing panels. One window is located to the north of the cart entrance and the other is centrally placed within the gable. The south and north walls have been strengthened with three brick columns on each side. The northern wall incorporates an earlier

length of walling made of handmade brick laid in Flemish Stretcher bond. In front of Building G a steel-framed canopy supporting an asbestos roof was erected in the last century to protect goods coming into Building E from the elements.

#### Assessment

Constructed between 1871 and 1883, while the building helps to define the western boundary of Zone III only in the broadest 'industrial' sense does the building stylistically form a group with Building E or Building F. Indeed, it partially obscures the south-facing elevation of Building E.

#### 6.2.4 Building H: Warehouse to East of Building F

##### Description

Building H is a simple rectangular building with gabled roof that abuts the south east corner of Building F. The building is divided into four bays by three principal King-post trusses supported upon brick columns and is now open from floor to roof, but originally was two-storeyed. Built of irregularly fired brick laid in Flemish Stretcher bond most of its openings have been blocked and the structure has been extensively altered. Original openings appear to have been segmental arches of two courses of headers, the lower set normally and the upper on edge. A centrally placed first-floor window opening survives in the eastern gable with two blocked windows and a doorway under (Plate 9). Both this wall and the other western gable are laid in English bond that is one-and-a-half bricks thick up to the level of the former first floor, which the wider wall supported at each end.

##### Assessment

This building is representative of the later industrial development of the area to the east of Shipton's yard in the mid-Victorian period. It may be represented on the 1852 Board of Health map (Fig.5) and by 1861 was part of a Washer Works that had been converted into a Saw Mill by 1883. However, the extent of later alterations to the building has severely compromised any intrinsic historical or architectural interest this building may once have possessed.

#### 6.2.5 Buildings I and J: Factory Units with Variant Belfast-Truss Roof

Buildings I and J form a rectangular structure of two parts situated on the eastern side of the proposed development area. Whilst sharing a similar roof, the southern part of the building has been added on to the main northern block and is higher, the roof being supported on concrete columns (Plate 10). The only remarkable feature of this building is the variant Belfast-truss roof built of timber and used to span an open space nearly 20m wide internally. The northern range contains seven trusses and the southern range five. Both ranges can be broadly dated to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### *6.3 The Albion Works (Zone 1)*

The former Albion Works recently closed down and the site is derelict. It occupied a huge area between the Albion Mill complex to the east, the canal to the north, Albion Street to the south, and waste land fronting Corn Hill to the west.

### 6.3.1 Building K

#### Description

The main section is of three gabled piles of steel-framed structure, with trussed stanchions, RSJ beams, and trussed steel trusses. The southern pile does not extend as far west as the other two, and the northern pile has, for most of its length, an aisled extension. The gable ends are sheathed in corrugated sheeting of two periods, or are mostly open, whilst the outer walls to Albion Street and the canal are of brickwork. The roofs are covered in corrugated sheeting and there are ridge cowl for ventilation.

#### Assessment

Despite its size the building is of little or no architectural merit or historical significance.

### 6.3.2 Lesser structures

At the south-western corner of the main building is a two-storey block of brick-built offices, and there is a separate set of service buildings further west. There are few surviving fixtures or fittings in the main 'shop', but some evidence of internal rails for moving machinery, changing rooms, and at least one deep pit infilled with rubble. The whole complex appears to have been the result of a major redevelopment in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, with additional later alterations. Given its 20<sup>th</sup>-century date, its lack of any aesthetic merit, and the standard nature of its construction, it is considered to have little historical or architectural significance.

## **7.0 Conclusions and recommendations**

In summary, it can be demonstrated that sufficient historic building stock has survived in Zones II and III, that when read in combination with the documentary evidence, a convincing model can be proposed for the development of the Study Area. It seems clear that significant industrial development began along the western bank of the Birmingham Canal here early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and not c.1850. The Albion Mill was part of this early phase of growth, dated c.1830, and was located here to process incoming supplies of corn and grain delivered by canal. Simultaneously, James Shipton and others were establishing independent canal carrying businesses in a period of expansion and competition. The Albion Mill and Buildings E and F of the Albion Wharf are representative of this phase of early growth within the Study Area, as were the Union Mill and gasworks to the east and the canal cottages (BCSMR 6908) to the west. There is a close relationship between the Albion Mill and the Albion Wharf, both sets of buildings were arranged around a shared canal basin and were interconnected in terms of the building stock and function. Other industries reliant upon bulk commodities, including ironworking and coal wharves were also located here and the area continued to develop after the arrival of the railways c.1850, because of the interchange trade between the two transport networks.

However, the organisation of industry began to change in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reflecting a tendency for family-sized firms to amalgamate into larger groupings. Several of the extensions to the Albion Mill (Buildings A – D) may be explicable in these terms, as may the continued development of the Saw Mill and

Albion Wharf in Zone III (Buildings G and H). This process of amalgamation continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the Albion Works (Building K) in Zone I and the growth of the light engineering works in Zone III (Buildings I and J). At the same time canal-based trade was in terminal decline until the growth of leisure boating in the later half of the century, and, more recently, urban regeneration schemes have prompted renewed interest in canalside areas as a visually attractive urban resource. It is also paradoxical that due to under-investment, the classic malaise of British industry, several older buildings in Zone III survived, being used by an engineering company that produced components for Rolls Royce aero-engines and Land Rover cars.

In terms of further work, the following provisional requirements may be tentatively proposed as applicable to the Study Area, although ultimate decisions regarding the scope of this work lie within the remit of the Black Country Archaeologist and the Conservation Department of Wolverhampton M.B.C.

In summary, it is proposed that limited trial trenching be carried out in Zone I to establish the likely extent of clearance in order to build the Albion Works. In Zone II, which is the best preserved historic landscape and is further covered by Grade II listed building status in the case of the Albion Mill, a combination of detailed building recording and trial trenching may be applicable, as outlined below. The response in Zone III may be split in terms of the historical entities of the Albion Wharf to the west and the former Saw Mill to the east. In the Albion Wharf a combination of detailed building recording and trial trenching is likely to be required. Whereas limited building recording and a small trial trench to locate the canal basin is likely to be required in the area of the former Saw Mill.

In terms of the standing buildings the assessment has sought to highlight those structures that are of historical importance. However, decisions concerning the desirability of their preservation *in situ* or alternatively 'by record' must also be made with reference to broader issues. These include the structural integrity of a building, the financial practicality of restoration and considerations of future use, as well as their overall contribution and group value with other buildings of this period within the Canalside Quarter.

Clearly within the Albion Mill (Zone II) Buildings B, C and D are demonstrably of historic importance because they relate to the later development of the complex in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, moreover they are relatively unaltered. Whereas, Building A has been radically altered and has lost most of its historic value. Therefore, a programme of detailed building recording is necessary in Buildings B, C and D either in mitigation of demolition, or to inform the conservation process. The same applies to the Albion Mill in terms of conservation.

Within the Albion Wharf (Zone III) the pair of canal warehouses, Buildings E and F are demonstrably of historic interest and are clearly linked to the development of the Albion Mill complex as a whole from the 1830s onwards. However, they have been more extensively altered than their counterparts in Zone II. Again a detailed programme of building recording would be required whether or not a decision to demolish or retain is made.



Buildings G, H, I and J, have some historic interest but are not in the same category as the buildings noted above. In their case further limited building recording may be appropriate prior to demolition.

No building recording is recommended for Building K in Zone I.

The most significant below-ground archaeological deposits are likely to be associated with the Industrial Period of expansion in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These will include in-filled canal basins and associated building footings and features. Knowledge about these structures may also be useful in informing the overall design scheme for the new development of their condition and stability and even potential for reinstatement. However, it may be argued that the value of these deposits lies most in their ability to shed further light on the proposed development sequence for the Albion Mill and Albion Wharf. This is where they compliment the evidence from the standing buildings and known documentation. For this reason it is provisionally recommended that trial trenching be targeted to answer questions in Zones II and III. This should include excavation to establish the line of the canal basin inside Buildings C, D, E, F and into Building K. Consideration may also be given to trying to establish the footprint and function of the more elaborately fronted building at the entrance to the Albion Wharf shown on maps up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The same case may also be made for the building located between the rear of Albion Mill and the canal depicted on the 1852 and 1864 maps. The archaeological response in Zone I is dependant upon the survival of buried remains of the various phases of ironworks. However, these remains are likely to be have been severely truncated and out of context with any standing structures.

## **8.0 Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Redrow Homes, and thanks are due to Malclom Caddy for his co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks are also due to Mr Gill for his help. Thanks also go to Mike Shaw, the Black Country Archaeologist, and Nick Hogden, the Conservation Officer for Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council, who monitored the project on behalf of Wolverhampton M.B.C. The documentary research was undertaken by Kirsty Nichol and the assessment of the standing buildings was undertaken by Stephen Litherland (BUFAU) and Richard Morriss (Richard K Morriss & Associates). Stephen Litherland also monitored the project for BUFAU and Iain Ferris edited this report. The illustrations were prepared by Mark Breedon and the plates were compiled by Kirsty Nichol.

## **9.0 References**

Brennan, T. 1948 *Midland City – Wolverhampton Social and Industrial Survey*

Department of the Environment (DoE) 1994 *Planning Policy and Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*

Department of the Environment (DoE) 1990 *Planning Policy and Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*

Hooke, D. and Slater, T. 1986 *Anglo Saxon Wolverhampton and its Monastery*

Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) 1999 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments*

Morriss, R. and White, H. 1998 *Wolverhampton Canalside Quarter Archaeological Assessment*

Thorn, P. 1996 'From Timber to Passengers with the Shipton Family, 1806-1865' *Journal of the Railway and Canal Historical Society*, Vol.32 part 2. No. 164, July 1996

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Original sources consulted**

#### **Primary Sources**

1833 Wolverhampton Trade Directory

1838 Bridgens Trade Directory

1857 *Wolverhampton Chronicle* (11<sup>th</sup> November)

#### **Maps**

1750 Taylor's Map of the Town of Wolverhampton

1827 Map of the Town of Wolverhampton

1836 Map of the Borough of Wolverhampton in the County of Staffordshire

1842 Wolverhampton Tithe Award

1850 A Plan of the Township of Wolverhampton

1852 Health of Towns Act: Wolverhampton

1864 Horseley Field, within a radius of ¼ of a mile of Messes Wildsmith and Gaunts Works

1883 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map (1:500 Series)

1888-9 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS Map

1901 Stephens and Mackintosh: Business Street Map of Wolverhampton

1902 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS Map

1914 Alfred Hinde's Map of Wolverhampton

1919 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Map

1938 OS Map (only partial coverage of the Study Area)

1956 OS map (1:2500 Series)

1988 OS map (1:1250 Series)

2001 OS map (1:1250 Series)

Geological Survey of Great Britain 1959 Wolverhampton, Sheet 153

Mills, M. 1993 *Mapping the Past – Wolverhampton 1577-1986*

## APPENDIX 2

### Brief for building and archaeological evaluation at Albion Mill, Albion Street, Wolverhampton

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Development proposals for a block of land around Albion Mill are currently under discussion.
- 1.2 The area was identified in a report to the council as an area of historic interest (Morris and White 1998) and lies within the Union Mill Conservation Area.

#### 2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The proposed development area is a rectangular block of land, around 1ha in extent, centring on SO 92100 68675. The block of land lies between Birmingham canal (north), Corn Hill (west), Albion Street (south) and 16 Union Mill Street (east).
- 2.2 The site includes Albion Mill, a listed building (Grade II), and other historic industrial buildings
- 2.3 The proposed development area lies in the canalside quarter, an industrial area which grew up after the opening of the Birmingham canal in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and was given greater impetus by the coming of the railway and the opening of the High and Low level stations in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 3. Requirements

- 3.1 The purpose of the work is to:
  - (1) assess the significance of the standing buildings
  - (2) assess the potential for the location of buried archaeological deposits

Desk-top study

- 3.2 A study of existing documentary records, especially the cartographic evidence, to gather information about past land use on the site, paying particular attention to existing and former buildings. Wolverhampton Archives and Local Studies Centre (tel: 01902 555480) should be visited and a printout of records for the area in the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (tel: 01902 555493) should be obtained. The recent report on the Canalside Quarter (Morris and White 1998) contains useful information and pointers for more detailed work.

Building Assessment

- 3.3 An assessment of the date, nature and significance of the standing buildings in order to establish buildings/features which should be retained during the development and buildings/features which should be recorded ahead of and/or during development

#### Archaeology

- 3.4 An assessment of the area covered by the development in order to establish whether archaeological deposits relating to the earlier history of the area are likely to be located in the area and their potential survival conditions (e.g. are there cellared buildings in the area which would have removed earlier deposits?).

- 3.5 If there is the potential for survival of earlier deposits there may be the need for the excavation of evaluation trenches in order to assess these deposits.

#### Analysis and Report

- 3.6 On completion of the desk top study and building and archaeological assessment an illustrated report detailing the results and making recommendations for action should be produced.
- 3.7 If archaeological evaluation trenches are determined to be necessary these should be carried out, and a separate report produced, in advance of determination of the planning application.

#### 4. General conditions

- 4.1 The work should be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeological staff, preferably under the supervision of a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The building recording should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist.
- 4.2 An appropriate recording strategy should be used and the method and justification for this stated in the reports.
- 4.3 The code of conduct, standards and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists should be adhered to. The building analysis should adhere to the guidance issued by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (*Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and Control of works to Historic Buildings*, ALGAO 1997) and the RCHME (*Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification*, RCHME 1990).
- 4.4 A specification for the work required should be prepared by the contractor and agreed with the sponsor and the local planning authority before the

work commences. It is advisable to submit a draft of the specification to the Black Country Archaeologist before the submission of a tender in order to ensure that the work proposed meets the requirement of the brief.

- 4.5 On completion of the work the site archive should be deposited with an appropriate museum/public archive. The site owner is encouraged to deposit any finds with the archive. In this case archives should be deposited with the Wolverhampton Archives Service (01902 721305).
- 4.6 Copies of all reports should be provided to the LPA, together with two copies for the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The report will normally become a publicly accessible part of the SMR within 6 months of completion.

4.7 Reports should contain the following information:

- Location, aims and methodology
- Results of documentary research
- A written summary of the findings together with appropriate illustrations, which should be related to the national grid. Levels should be related to the Ordnance Datum.
- An analytical summary of features and deposits
- List of sources consulted and their full titles/reference numbers
- A copy of the brief

- 4.8 On completion of the work a summary report should be sent for publication in West Midlands Archaeology and any other appropriate local or national archaeological journal.

4.9 Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with relevant Health and Safety regulations.

Site procedures should be in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers

4.10 Monitoring

The work will be monitored by the Black Country Archaeologist on behalf of the Planning Authority and provisions for monitoring should be agreed with him. At least five working days notice of commencement of any fieldwork should be given to the Black Country Archaeologist.

5. References

Morriss, Richard, and White, Hilary, 1998 *Wolverhampton Canalside Quarter: Archaeological Assessment*.

Mike Shaw, Black Country Archaeologist, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2001

**Contact details for Mike Shaw: tel 01902 555493; e-mail [mikeshaw.wmbc@dial.pipex.com](mailto:mikeshaw.wmbc@dial.pipex.com); fax 01902 555637; address Black Country Archaeologist, Wolverhampton City Council, Regeneration and Environment, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RP**



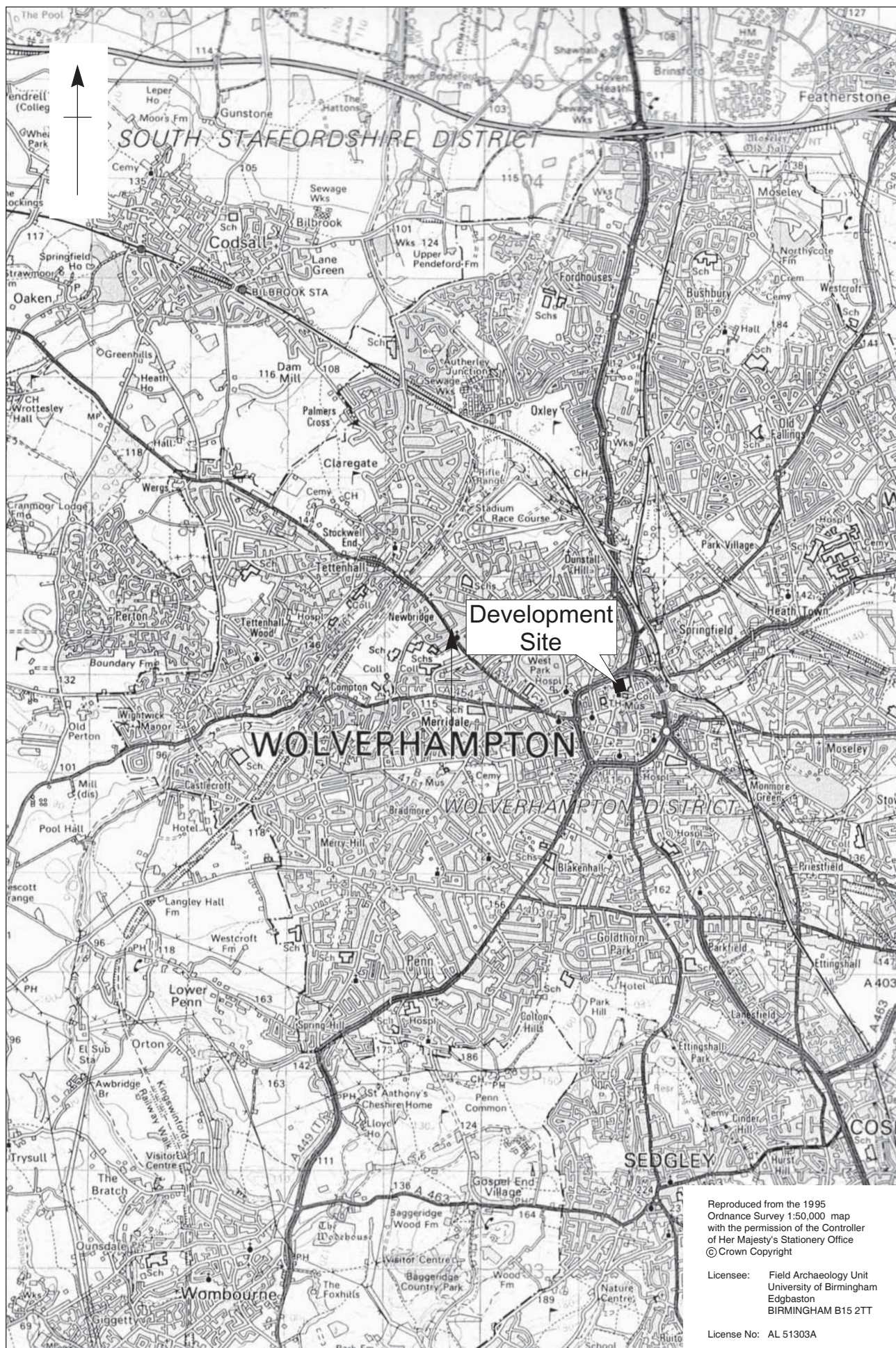


Fig.1



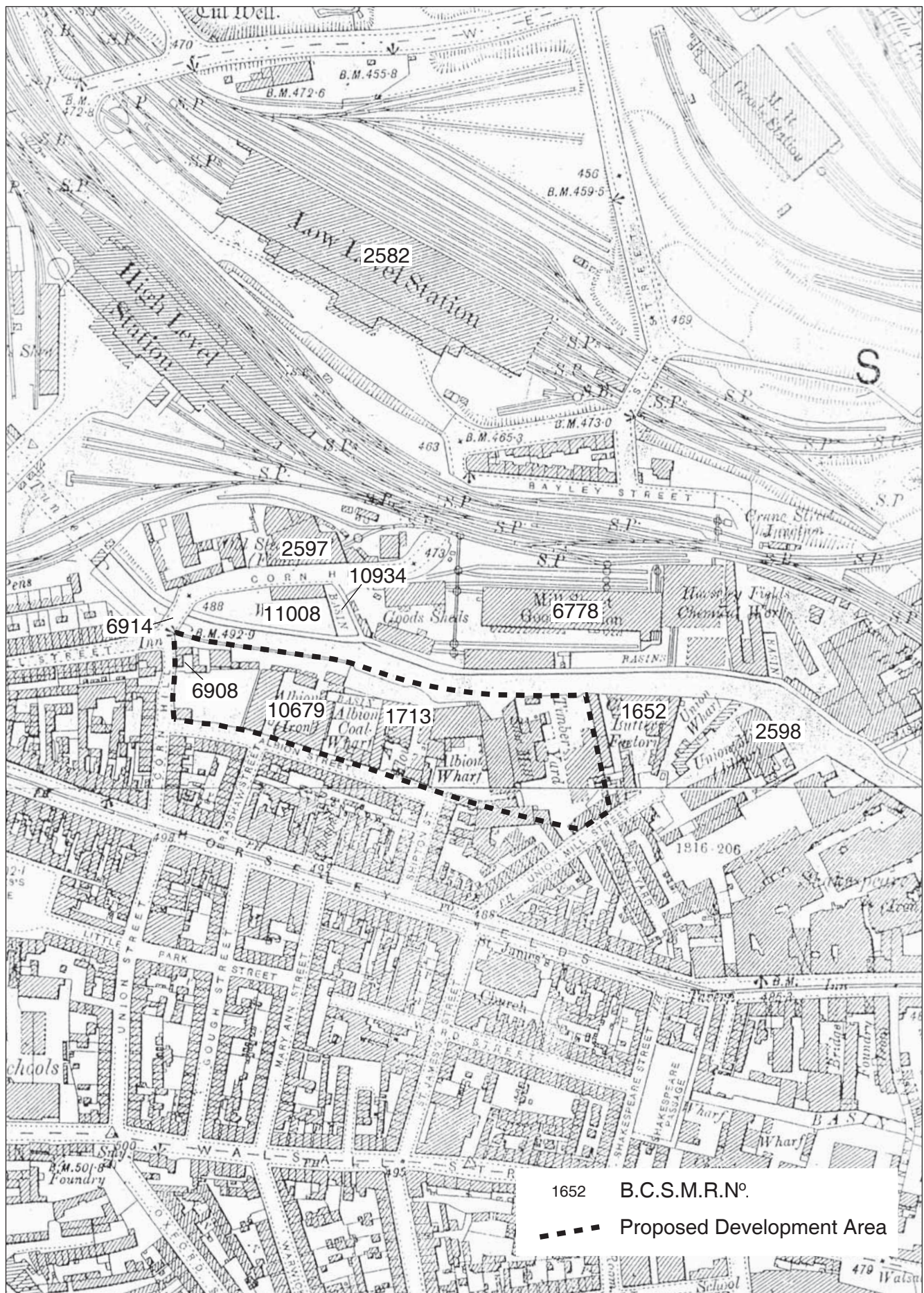


Fig.2



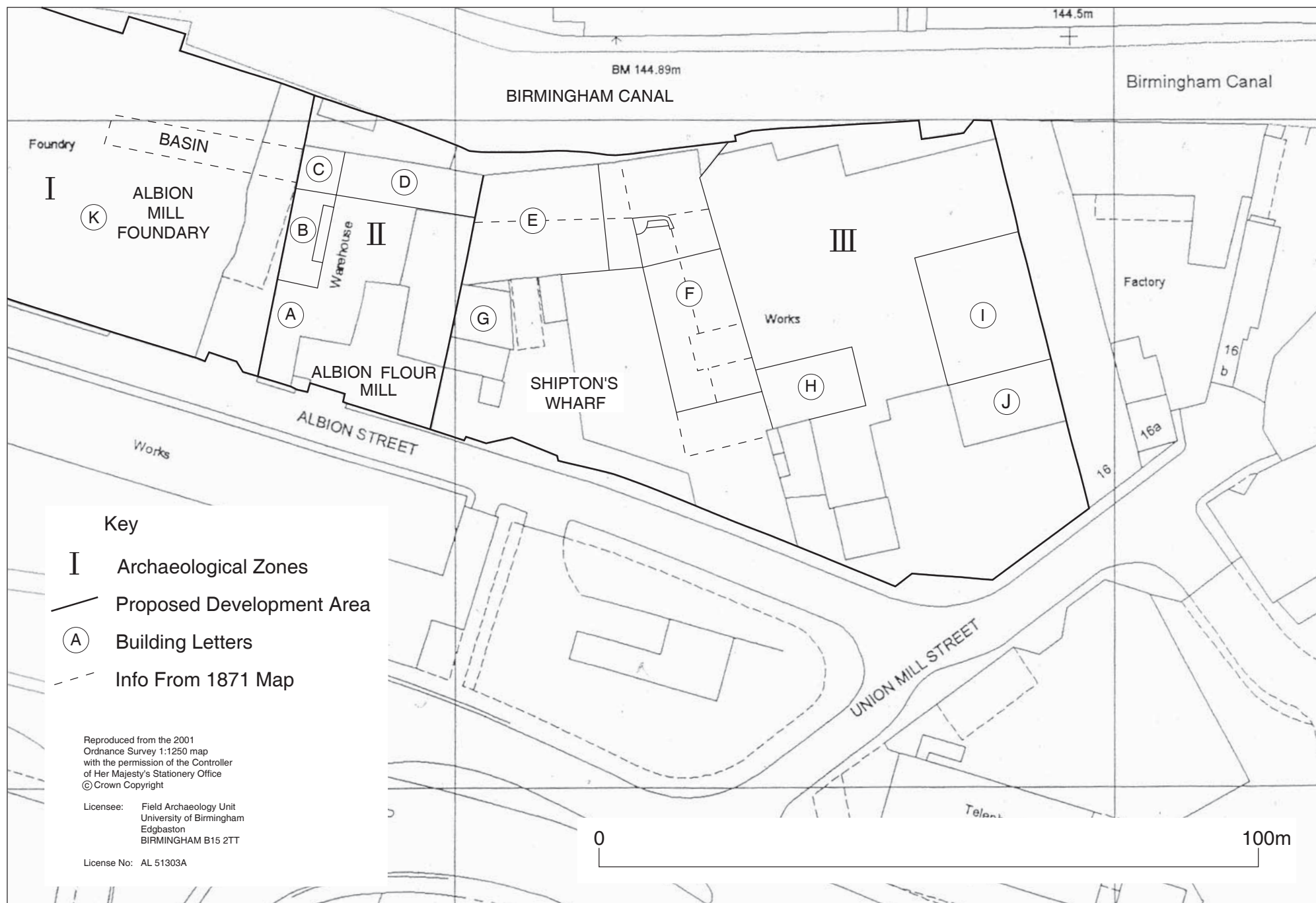


Fig.3

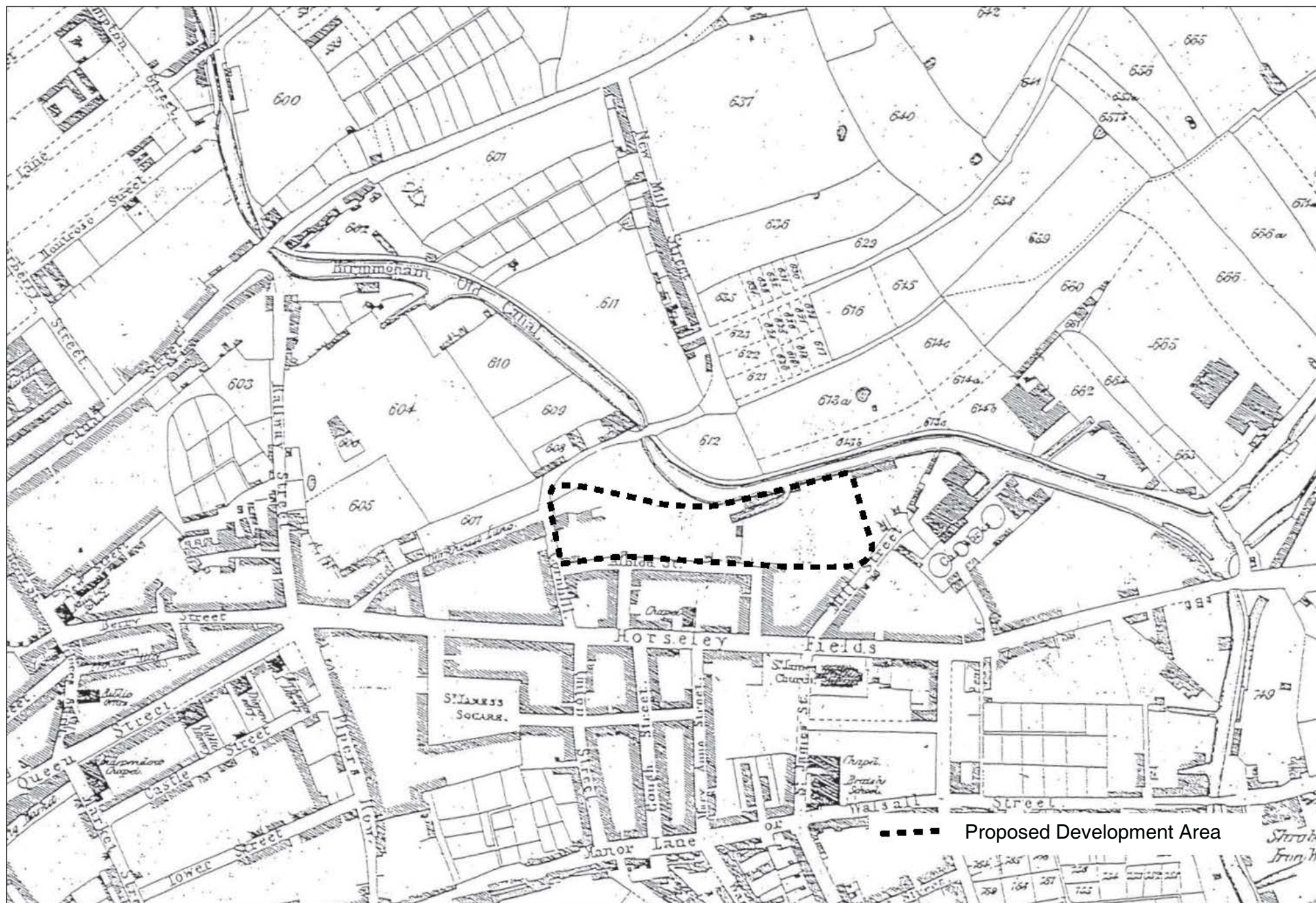


Fig.4



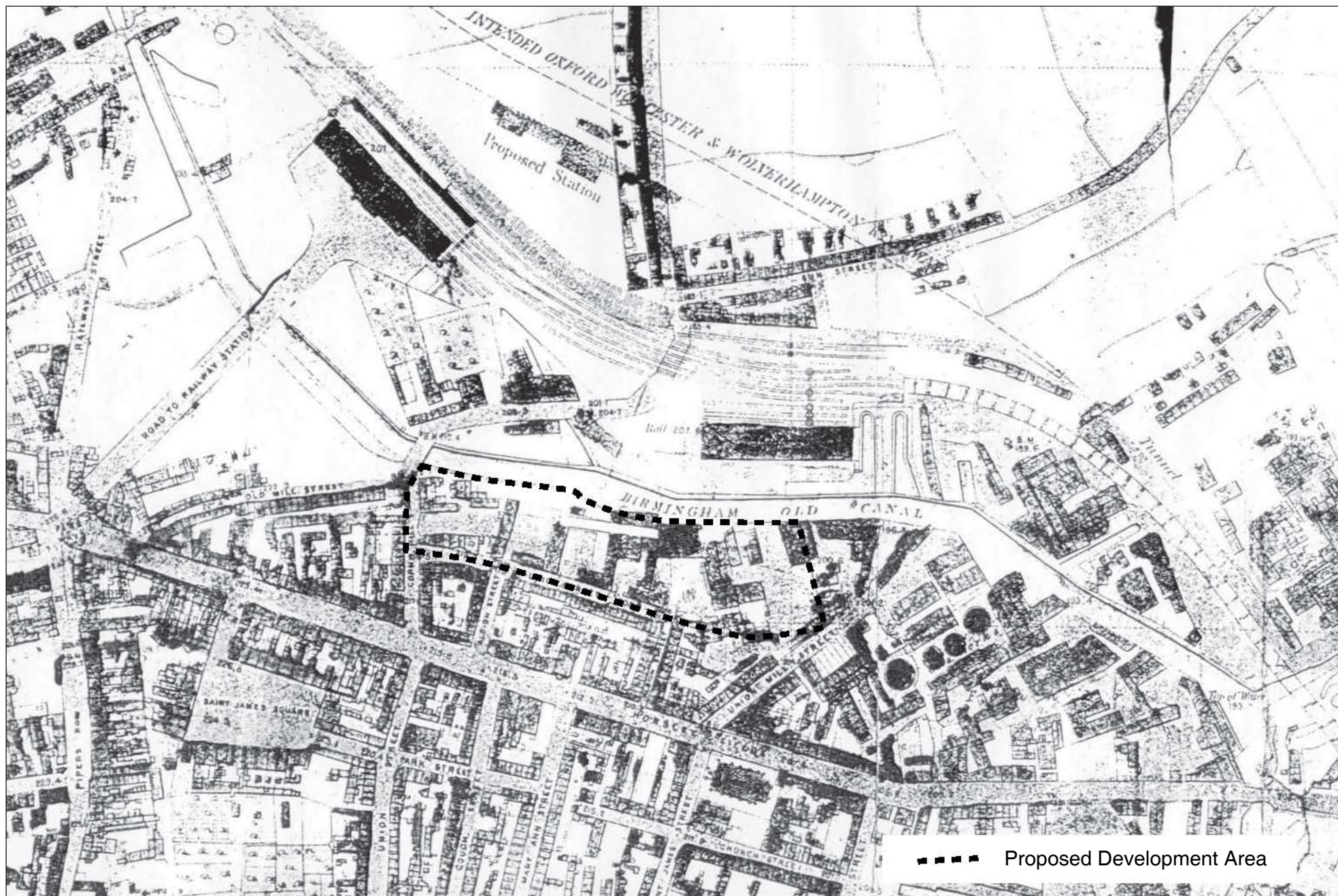


Fig.5



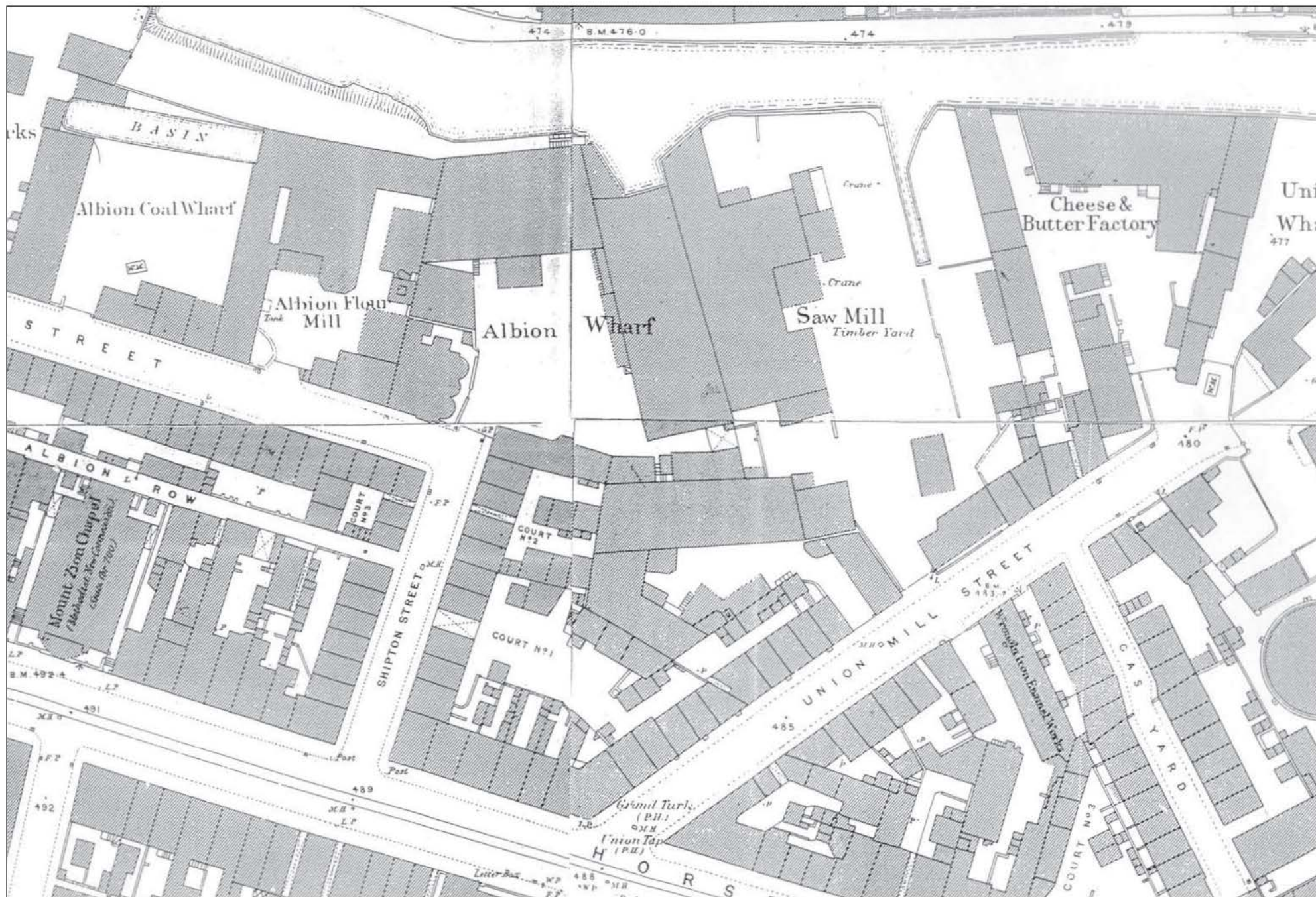


Fig.6



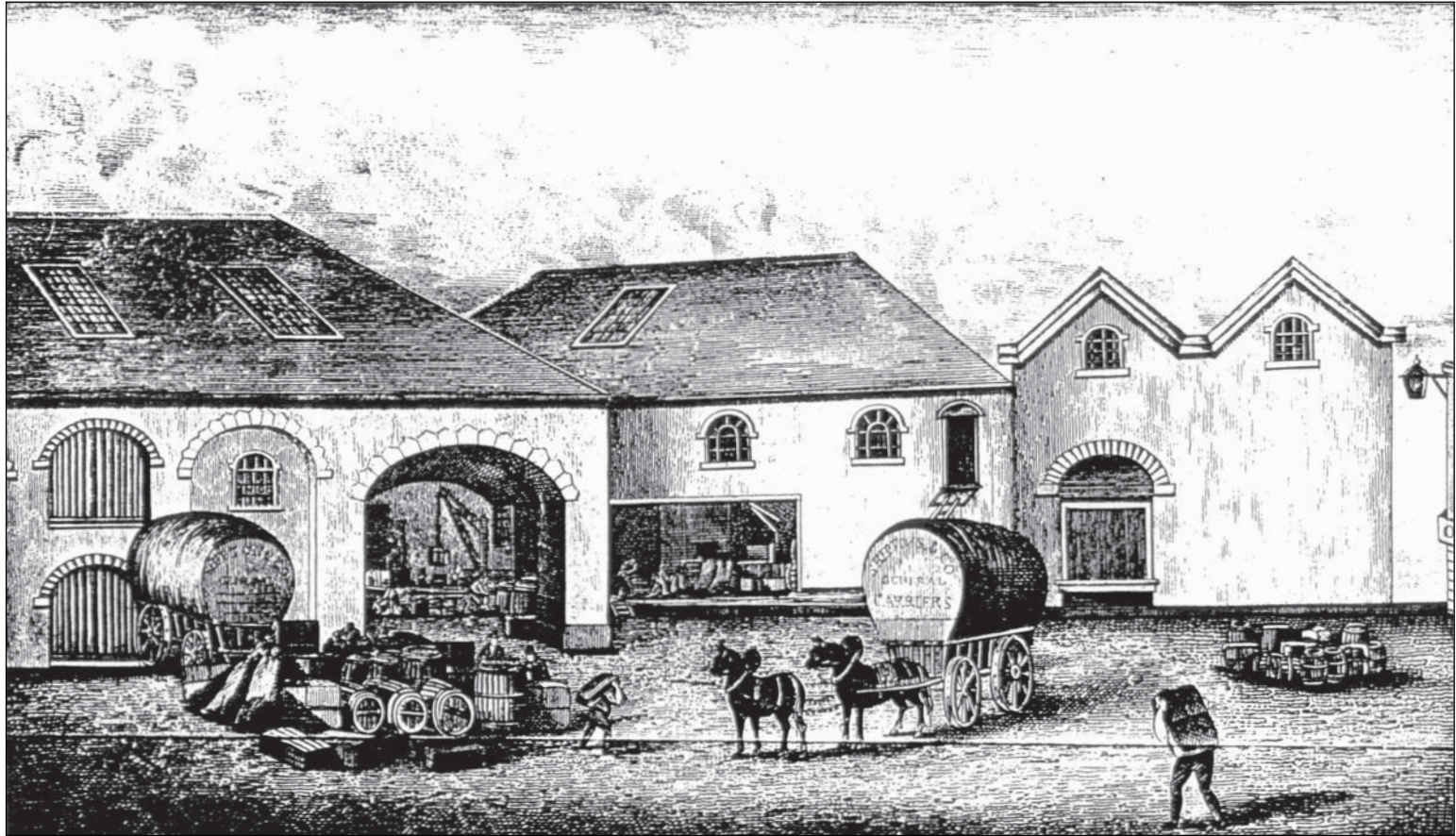


Fig.7



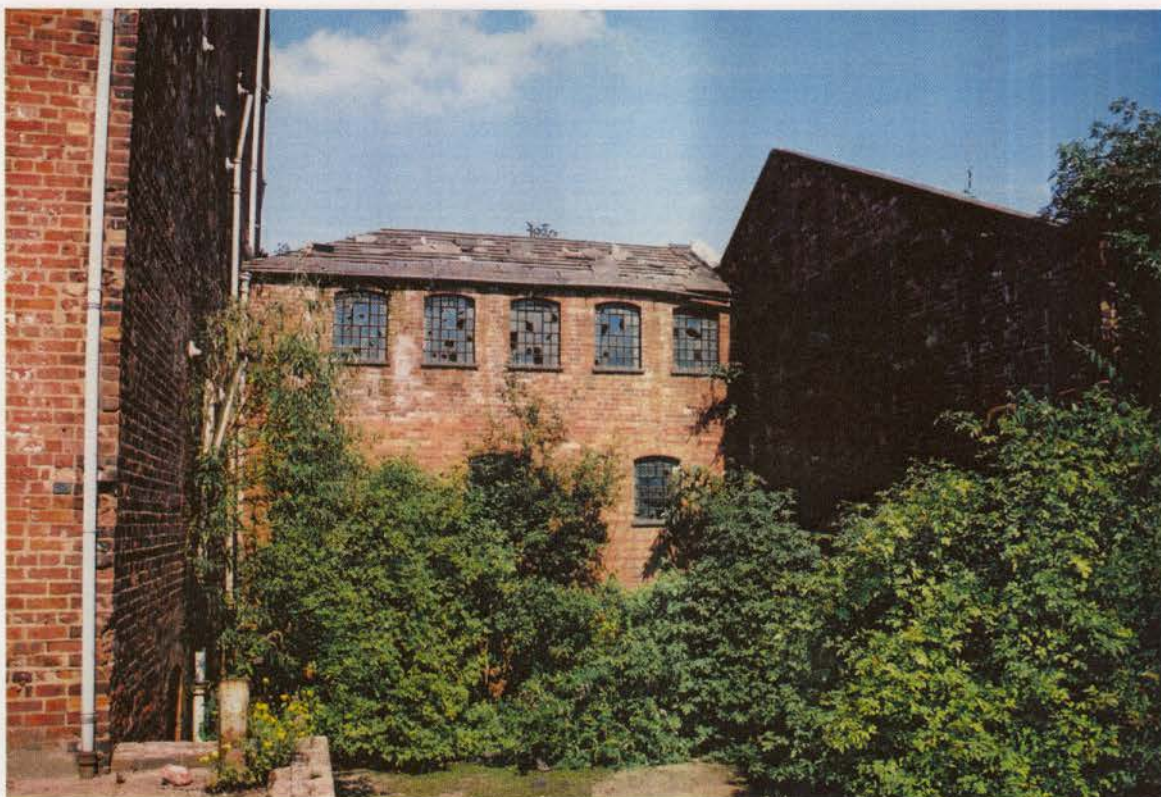


**Plate 1** The southern frontage of the Albion Mill



**Plate 2** Buildings A, B and C, western range of the Albion Mill





**Plate 3** Building D: eastern range of the Albion Mill



**Plate 4** Buildings E and G and steel-framed canopy, Zone III





**Plate 5** Former canal basin opening, west wall, Building E



**Plate 6** North wall, Building F



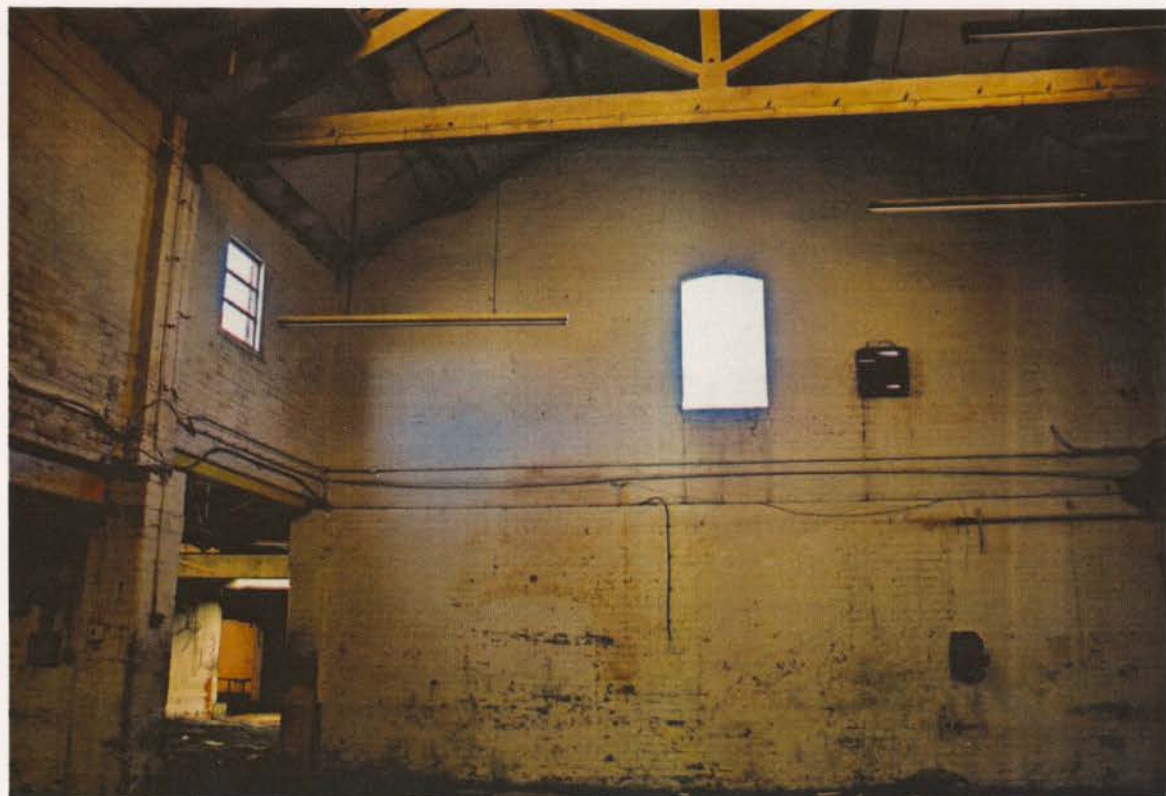


**Plate 7** Roof structure and south wall, Building F



**Plate 8** Detail of purlin tie, roof structure, Building F





**Plate 9** East wall, Building H



**Plate 10** Belfast-truss roof, Building J