



**Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Public Lavatories  
at Wellingborough Road,  
Abington Square,  
Northampton**

**Historic Building Record**

NORTHAMPTON HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD EVENT NO. ENN108611

PLANNING APPLICATION REF. N/2016/0254

SOUTERRAIN PROJECT SOU17-519

**Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd**

March 2017

*for*

**Design Board Architectural Services**

*on behalf of*

**Mr Anwarul Momen Esq.**

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## CONTENTS

	List of Figures	3
	Summary	4
	Preface	5
1.	THE HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD	6
2.	PLANNING BACKGROUND	6
3.	LOCATION	7
4.	HISTORIC CONTEXT OF THE ABINGTON SQUARE PUBLIC LAVATORIES	8
	A Plan for Change	8
	Abington Square: the Character of the Neighbourhood ( late 19 <sup>th</sup> century - late 1920s)	8
	The Desire for a Ladies' Convenience	10
	Disuse	13
5.	OBSERVATIONS	14
	Exterior	14
	Interior	15
	Women's Convenience	15
	Accessible Toilet	15
	Mens' Convenience	16
	Roof Construction	16
	Foundations	16
6.	COMMENT ON THE ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT	16
7.	ARCHIVE & REPORT	17
8.	COPYRIGHT	17
9.	REFERENCES	17
	Historic maps	18
	Historic Documents (Northamptonshire Archives)	18
	Newspaper Archives	19
10.	FIGURES	20
11.	PHOTOGRAPHS	29
	APPENDIX 1. PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX	45

(Illustrations are at the end of the report)

**List of Figures**

- Figure 1        Location of Site
  - Figure 2        Extract from Ordnance Survey 10' map of 1885
  - Figure 3        Extract from Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1889
  - Figure 4        Extract from Northampton Insurance Plan, 1889
  - Figure 5        Extract from Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1923-24
  - Figure 6        Extract from Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1938
  - Figure 7        Wellingborough Road façade (Northwest Elevation). Inset: view from W
  - Figure 8        Southwest Elevation (St Edmund's Terrace)
  - Figure 9        Plan of interior, showing phases
  - Figure 10       Direction of photographs at Section 11
- .

## **Summary**

*In February and March 2017 a historic building record was made of a disused early 20<sup>th</sup> century Public Lavatories building at Abington Square, Northampton, prior to its conversion to a residential unit.*

*The building stands on Wellingborough Road, on the south side of the square, one of the town's busiest public esplanades.*

*The report places the building into its historical context and identifies its broad phases of development.*

*A topic of planning discussions for several years, the Lavatories building was finally erected in 1929, when it was incorporated into an ambitious scheme of town re-development. As such the history of the building is integral to a transformation of Abington Square which took place between c.1928 and 1938.*

*Notably, its design and use of materials combined vernacular architecture with artisanal Art Deco modernity. It survives today as a unique form of architectural expression in the decade-long transition of Abington Square.*

*The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of the building based on 'as found' observations. It includes scaled elevation, plans and a photographic catalogue.*

## **Preface**

*All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of information or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of statements or opinions expressed in this document.*

*Survey and report:*

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## 1. THE HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD

- 1.1 This document presents an illustrated and descriptive 'as found' record of a historic twentieth century Public Conveniences building at Abington Square, Northampton, prior to its conversion to a residential dwelling.
- 1.2 The Historic Building Record has been prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) for Design Board Architectural Services (the planning agent) on behalf of Mr Anwarul Momen (the property owner), in accordance with a Condition attached to the Grant of Planning Permission.
- 1.3 The creation of the Historic Building Record is consistent with paragraph 141 of National Planning Policy<sup>1</sup> which requires the developer to record, and to advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets that are to be lost due to development.
- 1.4 The recording work observed the guidance of the Historic England (*Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2016)).
- 1.5 The Record comprises:
  - a photographic archive (digital images);
  - a descriptive account based on on-site observations;
  - measured floor plan and external elevations;
  - a historic account.
- 1.6 The report provides a comprehensive visual documentation of the former Public Conveniences building prior to the permitted conversion. Integral to the record, is a historical account, derived from locally available archive sources, the aim of which has been to gain an understanding of the building's historical context. The record falls within the overarching context of *East Midlands Heritage, Regional Research Objective 9A* (Knight, Vyner & Allen 2012)<sup>2</sup>, which is to *Assess urban building types of the early twentieth century*.
- 1.7 The historic account draws on primary and secondary source material from the following main repositories: Northamptonshire Archives; the Northampton Public Reference Library; the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record and the British Newspaper Archive. There are no known photographs or drawings of the building in any of these sources.
- 1.8 A purpose of the Record is to inform future conservation decisions and the subsequent management of the structure.
- 1.9 The report and archive is to be available as a public-accessible record.

## 2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Northampton Borough Council Planning Permission N/2016/0254 was granted on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2016 to Mr A Morgan of 78 Stanley Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 1EA, for the conversion of the disused Public Conveniences building at Abington Square, and the creation of a

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 27.03.2012

<sup>2</sup> Knight, D, Vyner, B. & Allen, C. 2012. *Research Agenda and Strategy For The Historic Environment of The East Midlands*, East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (Nottingham/York). Note: Objective 9A generally referring to historic buildings beyond Conservation Areas.

first floor to form two flats. The area of the proposed development is defined on the drawings (latest revisions) of Design Board Architectural Services submitted with the planning application: Drawing No. A203-1b: Existing and Proposed Plans and Elevations (Feb. 2014); and Drawing No. 203-4, Existing Plans and Elevations (Feb. 2014).

- 2.2 Condition 5 of the planning permission requires a historic building record to be compiled prior to alteration or demolition, and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This is in accordance with paragraph 141 of National Planning Policy<sup>3</sup> which requires developers to record and to advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets that are to be lost due to development.
- 2.3 The property has previously had planning approval for the extension and proposed change of use from a public lavatory to shop/offices with a new flat above (N/2013/1018). Subsequently, 'the change of use has taken place, as works has commenced and the use of the Public Lavatory has been removed'<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.4 A specific *design brief* was prepared for this project by Liz Mordue, Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council<sup>5</sup> and a *Scheme for a Historic Building Record*<sup>6</sup> was subsequently prepared by Souterrain on behalf of the planning agent.

### 3. LOCATION

- 3.1 The site is located on the eastern edge of the town centre of Northampton (Fig.1). It fronts the south side of the Wellingborough Road (A4500), a principal approach from the north east. It is centred at National Grid Reference 476105, 260806 and is at approximately 86.8 m AOD.
- 3.2 The property is located in the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area<sup>7</sup>, which is characterised largely by the high survival of factories associated with Northampton's 19<sup>th</sup> century boot and shoe production and rows of terraced dwellings built to house workers associated with the industry. The property faces Abington Square to the north, one of three Principal Open Spaces within the Conservation Area.
- 3.3 Northampton Borough Council's '*Character Area Assessment*' identifies Abington Square island as a key landmark within the 'Upper Mounts Character Area', defining it as area of urban green space which is valuable in visual, aesthetic and amenity terms<sup>8</sup>. The former Public Lavatories block is included in 'Key View 1', a vista of the square from Kettering Road.

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<sup>3</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 27.03.2012

<sup>4</sup> Design and Access Statement n.d. (2016) *Proposed 2 flats above former Public Lavatory. Public Lavatories, Wellingborough Road, Northampton, NN1 3DN*, Design Board Architectural Services A203-DAS

<sup>5</sup> Mordue, L, 2017. *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Building Recording at Public Conveniences, Abington Square, Wellingborough Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire*, Planning Northamptonshire County Council, V1 26th Jan 2017

<sup>6</sup> Souterrain Archaeological Services Limited 2016. *Scheme for a Historic Building Record: Public Lavatories, Wellingborough Road, Abington Square, Northampton (NGR 476105, 260806)* (App. Ref.: N/2016/0254), SOU17-519, 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2017

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200207/building-conservation-and-trees/1444/boot-and-shoe-quarter-conservation-area> [accessed 16 February 2017]

<sup>8</sup> Space 2010. *Character Area Assessment & Tall Buildings Strategy for Northampton's Central Area* Produced for Northampton Borough Council, Final Report June, Character Area 07, pp. 121 and 125.



## 4. HISTORIC CONTEXT OF THE ABINGTON SQUARE PUBLIC LAVATORIES

### ***A Plan for Change***

- 4.1 After the First World War economic recovery was slow throughout the 1920s, with unemployment high. The monthly minutes of the Borough's Public Health Committee between 1926 and 1932 paint a miserable picture of prevailing conditions throughout large parts of the town; regularly dominated by great numbers of notified cases of infectious diseases (tuberculosis, diphtheria, scarlet fever and erysipelas), the identification of dwellings unfit for human habitation (for demolition under the 1875 Public Health Act), and the destruction of rats. In 1925, the Borough of Northampton revealed to the public its proposals for the 'Future Development of Northampton'<sup>9</sup> an ambitious plan to remedy existing infrastructural defects by re-planning and reconstructing the townscape - both the central and outer areas of the town. All future growth would be regulated 'in the interests of industrial efficiency, convenience and amenity'. The scheme was the result of an in-depth study of the town carried out by the Borough. It is likely that the research took place over the course of several years, although there is no mention of such a plan being underway in the surviving minutes of the Town Council. The main reasons presented for the new town plan were: congestion, overcrowding, public health, the inheritance of haphazard building development, the lack of building lines, insanitary housing, dilapidated buildings and an overloaded public transport system.
- 4.2 Essentially, the main thoroughfares into the town centre from the east, the Wellingborough Road and the Kettering Road and their junction at Abington Square, were to be an integral part of the grand scheme of change. Buildings were to be removed to enable sufficient widening of the roads, in order to ease traffic congestion and to facilitate a more efficient mode of public transport. It is within this context of town planning that a new set of public conveniences were built at Abington Square.

### ***Abington Square: the Character of the Neighbourhood (late 19<sup>th</sup> century - late 1920s)***

- 4.3 Abington Square is located at a forked junction, where the Wellingborough Road and the Kettering Road meet on the eastern approach to the town centre (Fig. 1). Both highways date back to the medieval period. The area was formerly known as St. Edmund's End, the angle in the roads being the site of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Church of St. Edmund<sup>10</sup>, which stood there until the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>. A house and garden occupied the site in the 1870s<sup>12</sup>. The square derives its name from the former civil parish of Abington<sup>13</sup> which was situated to the west of the town, bisected by the road from Wellingborough.
- 4.4 Four detailed maps were made of Abington Square by Ordnance Survey between 1885 and 1938 (Figs. 2, 3, 5 and 6). When compared, they reveal the scale and extent of the alterations brought about by the new town planning scheme.
- 4.5 Ever since the eastern expansion of the footwear industry in Northampton in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the Wellingborough Road had increasingly become one of the town's busiest public esplanades and shopping areas, while Abington Square was an instinctive meeting place and a constant hive of activity. The square was a foremost fare stage on the town's tramway system<sup>14</sup>, the tramlines running along the middle of the Wellingborough Road and the Kettering Road (Figs. 3 and 5). Initially

<sup>9</sup> *Future Development of Northampton*, Borough of Northampton, 1925 (Northampton)

<sup>10</sup> HER 1160/18 - MNN8789

<sup>11</sup> *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire, Volume 5, Archaeology and Churches in Northampton*, RCHME 1985 (London), *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/northants/vol5> [accessed 16 February 2017].

<sup>12</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Saturday 30 September 1882

<sup>13</sup> Defunct in 1900, becoming part of the Municipal Borough of Northampton

<sup>14</sup> see for e.g. *Borough of Northampton Tramways Comm. Mins.*, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1923, 208

horse-drawn, the tramway was electrified in 1904, and was for many years the main form of public transport in the town. By 1921, however, Wellingborough omnibuses were running a service to Abington Square<sup>15</sup>, competing for space with trams, hackney cabs, cars, and other forms of transport along Wellingborough Road.

- 4.6 Abington Square, from at least the last quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was geographically located at a major social class interface. Beyond the various middle class commercial or institutional premises that fronted the main roads (Abington Street, Wellingborough Road and Kettering Road), the square was surrounded on three sides (north, east and south) by dense working class terraced housing. There are two institutions of the period at Abington Square whose histories stand out to provide us with a valuable, if somewhat biased, insight to the character of this neighbourhood, both of which owe their origins to groups of philanthropically principled members of Northampton's middle class.
- 4.7 The first of these institutions opened in October 1878 on the south side of Abington Square, on Wellingborough Road, and was to become one of the town's significant religious gathering places. The Mission Hall<sup>16</sup> (Figs. 3, 5 and 6) was a plain brick building, 9 m x 15 m 'with open timber roof, close boarded on the inside and tiled on the outside'. Built by private subscription and donations, at a cost of £500 it was proclaimed to 'one of the cheapest buildings [of its kind] ever erected'. The construction of the Mission had been a philanthropic initiative of the middle classes, whose anxieties about the character of the neighbourhood and its predominantly working class problems were plainly manifest at a 'tea meeting' held on the Monday after its opening; at which 500 persons were seated. Mr W Adkins Justice of the Peace presided: *"There was a great need for a mission of [this] kind, for, notwithstanding the many places of worship in our town, there were hundreds and thousands who never came within their walls, and who were wandering about on the Lord's day..."* Called upon to make a statement as to the objects and origin of the mission, the Secretary, Mr T Dyer, declared: *"There was at the present time a population of over 50,000 [i.e. in Northampton], but, including children and young people, not more than half that number are found on the Sabbath-day in the various churches and chapels...."* The founders of The Mission *"wished it to be understood that this place was not for those sheep who had folds, but for those who were out on the mountain of sin – that large class who were being led away by evil of one kind or another, and some of whom, possibly, were beginning to find, as they would do, that there is no peace for the wicked, and that the way of transgressions is hard"*. The building survives as a 'gentlemen's club'.
- 4.8 The second institution took hold at Abington Square three years later: The People's Café. This was a grand, imposing three-storey red brick building 'in the Elizabethan style', over 60ft (18 m) high which occupied the entire angle of the Wellingborough Road and the Kettering Road. The building's frontages were 45 ft (c. 13.5 m) on Abington Square<sup>17</sup>, 99 ft (c. 30 m) to Kettering Road, and 75 ft (c. 23 m) on Wellingborough Road; effectively all of the area today that is between the Bradlaugh Statue<sup>18</sup> and the Garden of Rest and War Memorial (c.f. Figs. 3, 4 & 5). Owned by the People's Café Company of Northampton, the establishment was the second venture of Northampton's Temperance Movement (the other café at Gold Street in the town centre), aimed at discouraging alcoholism amongst the working classes of Northampton, a habit which the middle class saw as the scourge of their town. The company's annual rota of directors was composed of local dignitaries, including the Justices of the Peace. The Café at Abington Square was set up to tackle the working classes who lived in the surrounding suburbs, the majority of whom toiled in the footwear industry and associated trades 80 hours a week.

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<sup>15</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 06 May 1921

<sup>16</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Saturday 09 November 1878

<sup>17</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Disastrous Fire in Northampton, Friday 04 July 1902,

<sup>18</sup> HER 1160/0/38; today a Listed Building

- 4.9 At the company's annual meeting in 1883, the chairman proudly declared that "they had built a house at Abington Square that would not only fulfil its purpose but would be an ornament to the town. They considered that the step was justified by the number of inhabitants and the character of the neighbourhood..." The middle class pre-occupation with the nature of working class activity in this area of the town is most telling in the lord mayor's speech celebrating the opening of the cafe, in which he claimed that '9 out of 10 cases brought before him on the Bench were the result of drunkenness in Northampton (ironically the mayor was not a teetotaler)<sup>19</sup>. In a sense the term 'café' is misleading, for in addition to its dining rooms and coffee house, the establishment included a nine-bedroom Commercial House (lodgings) on the Wellingborough Road, with adjoining manager's sitting room and living rooms and, on the Kettering Road, a two-storied warehouse, yard and stables. It was in fact a business, based on philanthropic principles, but with its shareholders expecting annual dividends of at least 7% of profits, free of income tax<sup>20</sup>. But, nonetheless, and most importantly at a basic level for members of the public, one of the advertised attractions of the People's Café was its free lavatories which accommodated the needs of both ladies and men.
- 4.10 Abington Square was chosen as the commemorative place for Northampton's most celebrated Victorian hero, Charles Bradlaugh M. P, who died in 1891. Bradlaugh, a free thinking Liberal, had been for eleven years a junior Member of Parliament. Ironically, in the context of a prevailing middle class ethos (marked by other institutions at Abington Square) he was also an affirmed atheist. The unveiling of a terracotta statue of the man in June 1894 was witnessed by 'one of the greatest concourses of people ever seen in Northampton'<sup>21</sup> after the boot and shoe factories closed early to mark the occasion.

#### ***The Desire for a Ladies' Convenience***

- 4.11 At some juncture, a block of underground public conveniences had been been constructed at Abington Square (by the council) - but they only accommodated men in the form of urinals; this is manifest from statements made by the Borough Engineer to the Public Health Committee in 1928<sup>22</sup>. The location of the urinals shown on the 1899 Insurance Plan of Northampton: as a narrow blue block between the 'Statue of Chas. Bradlaugh' and the 'Northampton Café Co. Ltd. Rest.' (Fig. 4)
- 4.12 The People's Cafe at Abington Square fought a losing battle. In spite of the prices and fare being made particularly attractive to the working class, and the introduction of a dance hall and a large billiard hall, the discourse of company's annual meetings and their financial difficulties suggest that other forms of social establishment were more popular in this part of the town<sup>23</sup>. The Café hung on until 1900 when the board of directors, unable to sell by auction<sup>24</sup>, resolved to let the premises<sup>25</sup>. Within two years, the Abington Square Café (as it was then called) somehow caught fire and burned from the basement up. All of the property and its contents (fortunately insured!) were destroyed, except for its viable lodging houses (known as Manfield Temperance Hall) fronting the Wellingborough Road<sup>26</sup>. An unfortunate outcome of the Café's destruction was the loss of a main facility for accommodating female sanitary needs at Abington Square. Another outcome of the Cafe's demise was to be the advent of a number of mobile coffee stalls established around the Bradlaugh Monument at Abington Square<sup>27</sup> (much to the annoyance of Mrs Bradlaugh-Bonner).

<sup>19</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Saturday 31 March 1883, Opening of Abington Square Cafe

<sup>20</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Saturday 1st October 1881

<sup>21</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 29 June 1894

<sup>22</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Mins*, 19th Feb. 1929 Item 5. Public Conveniences. No. 30 Wellingborough Road.

<sup>23</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 20 September 1901; see also e.g. *Northampton Mercury* - Saturday 01 October 1887

<sup>24</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 26 January 1900

<sup>25</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 20 September 1901

<sup>26</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 04 July 1902

<sup>27</sup> See *Borough of Northampton Highways Comm. Mins*. 1925 to 1934, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1926, 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. 1926, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1926, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1926

- 4.13 In 1924, the Borough's Public Health Committee expressed their desire for a new Ladies' Public Convenience to be constructed at Abington Square<sup>28</sup> (undoubtedly the loss of the café convenience had been lamented much earlier, yet no minutes of the committee survive before this date). In November of that year the Ministry of Health had given its sanction to the raising of a loan for £750, the cost of the proposed scheme. Two years later, July 1926, the Council obtained vacant possession of an end of terrace house and premises at No. 30 Wellingborough Road (Fig.2 and 3) to form the site of the public lavatories. But it was to be a further two years before the Town Council resolved to instruct the Public Health Committee to proceed forthwith with the erection of the Ladies' Conveniences on the site<sup>29</sup>. At a meeting of the Committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1928, the Borough Engineer stated that the original scheme (and cost) provided only for the erection of Ladies' Conveniences at the rear, leaving the front part of the premises, for men, to be dealt with at a later stage. And, in the meantime, the provision for men would be at the underground convenience near the old Café premises. Clearly unhappy with this scheme, the Committee decided to hold a Special Meeting to discuss the provision of a set of dual gender conveniences. The meeting subsequently took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 1929, whereupon the Borough Engineer furnished details and plans of alternative schemes<sup>30</sup>. The meeting closed with a resolution to recommend *"that the Council to adopt the scheme providing for accommodation for 6 W.C's and 6 wash basins for women, and 4 W.C's, 4 wash basins, and 5 urinal stalls for men at an estimated cost of £1,700, the Committee being satisfied as to the necessity for the provision of accommodation for both sexes. That the Borough Engineer be instructed to obtain tenders"*. It was duly proposed that since the Ministry of Health had previously sanctioned the raising of £750 for the construction of ladies' conveniences, the sum should be utilised towards the cost of the new scheme.
- 4.14 But on the 2nd of February 1929<sup>31</sup> the provision of Ladies' Convenience at Wellingborough was back on the Public Health Committee's agenda – having been stalled by the Finance Committee, with the suggestion that the existing underground conveniences at Abington Square could be enlarged to provide accommodation for women and improved facilities for men. This idea was however, swiftly quashed by the Borough Engineer, who stated that until the new road widening scheme was undertaken – an integral part of the plan for the 'Future Development of Northampton' (which also involved the remaining Café premises) no accommodation for women could be provided underground. The Engineer added that additional accommodation for men could now be provided (i.e. at the Wellingborough Road site) if desired, at an additional cost of £900. The Committee needed little convincing *"that it was most desirable to proceed with the accommodation for both sexes at No.30 Wellingborough Road"*. It was thus resolved to re-submit to the Council their previous recommendation and that the Borough Engineer should be instructed to obtain tenders forthwith.
- 4.15 Unfortunately, the Borough Engineer's plans of the Public Lavatories are no longer available to us. Neither are there surviving financial records that could inform us which builder won the contract. The new lavatories block was built adjoining an existing property, 'The Volunteer' public house, conforming to the building line of the existing street frontage. The entrance to each convenience was on St. Edmund's Terrace, an pedestrian alleyway on its west side. The building was evidently completed within 1929, for brief news note appeared in the *Northampton Mercury* on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December, which also stands testimony to the blatant sexual inequality that prevailed during the period: *"There are 106 applicants for the post of attendants at the Wellingborough-road lavatory, for which the wages offered are 24s.9d, for the woman and 48s. for the man"*<sup>32</sup>. There is no record of who was appointed, but the British Legion was pleased to announce that an unskilled ex-serviceman

<sup>28</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Mins.* 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 1928, 11. No. 30 Wellingborough Road. Ladies' Conveniences

<sup>29</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Mins.* 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 1928, 11. No. 30 Wellingborough Road. Ladies' Conveniences

<sup>30</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Mins.* 16<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1929, 16, 13 [sic]. 30 Wellingborough Road. Conveniences. The item contains a reference to the Report of Finance Committee, page 142, although no record appears to have survived

<sup>31</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Mins* 19th Feb. 1929 Item 5. Public Conveniences. No. 30 Wellingborough Road.

<sup>32</sup> *Northampton Mercury - Friday 13 December 1929* Page 8 "Town and District"

had been selected for the male attendant post, in harmony with the employment code of the day<sup>33</sup>. It is presumed that the use of a W.C was obtained for a fee, as was frequently the case, to help the conveniences pay for their upkeep, lighting and such. In addition, there was clearly an income to be had from a weighing machine in each of conveniences (supplied under contract by Mr W.P. Pedley) for the annual rental of each machine prior to 1933 was over £5<sup>34</sup>.

- 4.16 Adorned with gold-lettered signage in Art Deco style (**1** to **7**), the somewhat mundane lavatories block was given a fashionable appearance, becoming a part of the Borough's new vision for Abington Square. But the scheme of transformation of the square was to take more than nine years, possibly a lot longer than anticipated, for late in 1929 the effects of the US stock market crash reached Britain, marking the beginning of a great economic recession.
- 4.17 As earlier as 1927 the council made it known to the public that the Tramways Committee was considering scrapping the, now overloaded, electric trams within five years, gradually superseding them with motor omnibuses. Wellingborough Road would be the first section to have the tramlines pulled up<sup>35</sup>. The final substitution of omnibuses for trams was decided in October 1928<sup>36</sup>. In the same period the council began had acquired, via compulsory purchase, all of the buildings on the north side of Wellingborough Road to the west of Abington Square. This included the surviving premises of the former People's Café, which was now the Empire Billiard Hall. Its lease extensions were carefully regulated by the council, reserving the right to re-determine the lease at any time after the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1928 on six calendar month's notice<sup>37</sup>. The road widening scheme, put forward by the Improvements Committee, was decided on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1928<sup>38</sup>. The Town Council subsequently applied for an Order under the Public Health Act of 1875 to clear the dwellings from the north side of Wellingborough Road, from Abington Square to the Poor Law Institution (c. 400 m to the northwest; later known as St Edmund's Hospital) in order to obtain an additional road width of 60ft (18.3 m)<sup>39</sup>. As a Class I A road, it would be upgraded with Ministry of Transport grant<sup>40</sup>. In March 1929<sup>41</sup> Permission was given to the Northampton Electric Light and Power Co. Ltd. to extend electric lighting cables to Wellingborough Road, and the road programme was announced on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1930<sup>42</sup>.
- 4.18 It was finally decided in October 1934, that the old underground men's urinals in Abington Square (Figs. 3 to 5) had had its day; it was to be closed, demolished and filled in<sup>43</sup>. The square was by now much diminished in size, the west part with the Bradlaugh statue was to become isolated to ease congestion and form a traffic island. In the mid 1930s the Town Council began to contemplate having a Garden of Rest at Abington Square, which prompted Mr Ernest Poole of Abington Square to offer the council £500 towards a, long overdue, Roll of Honour for the men of Northampton killed in the Great War, on the condition that the council presented the British Legion with a portion of the square to enable the scheme to be put into effect<sup>44</sup>. The Garden of Rest (**44**) was eventually constructed in 1937<sup>45</sup>. The following year, the Mobbs Memorial (**42**), a monument honouring

<sup>33</sup> Wherever possible, unemployed unskilled men in Northampton were put to work on construction schemes. Ex-servicemen were given priority (75% of unskilled labour on grant-aided road schemes had to be ex-servicemen; see for e.g. *Highways Comm. Mins.* 23 September 1930

<sup>34</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. mins.* 12<sup>th</sup> April 1933 Wellingborough Road. Weighing machine contract

<sup>35</sup> *Northampton Mercury - Friday 04 November 1927* Scrapping the Trams.

<sup>36</sup> *Borough of Northampton Transport Comm., Omnibus Sub-comm. mins.* 25<sup>th</sup> October 1928

<sup>37</sup> *Borough of Northampton Improvements Comm. minutes*, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1925 and 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. 1927, 2

<sup>38</sup> *Northampton Borough Council Improvements Comm. mins* 1913-1927, p.23, 19<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1928

<sup>39</sup> *Borough of Northampton Highways Comm. minutes* 28<sup>th</sup> October 1928. Road widening

<sup>40</sup> *Borough of Northampton Highways Comm. Mins* 19<sup>th</sup> March September 1930

<sup>41</sup> *Borough of Northampton Highways Comm. Mins* 19<sup>th</sup> March September 1930

<sup>42</sup> *Borough of Northampton Highways Comm. Mins.*

<sup>43</sup> *Public Health Comm. Mins* 10<sup>th</sup> October 1934, 12 (b)

<sup>44</sup> *Northampton Mercury - Friday 28 February 1936*

<sup>45</sup> *Northampton Mercury - Friday 10 December 1937*

Northampton's popular sporting hero Edgar Mobbs who was killed at Ypres in 1917, was taken down from market square and moved to the Garden of Rest to occupy a central position<sup>46</sup>. Prior to the war, Lt. Col. Edgar R. Mobbs DSO, of the 7<sup>th</sup> Northampton battalion, was renowned for captaining both the Northampton and England rugby union teams. With this last addition, the transformation of Abington Square into a Garden of Rest was probably considered to be complete. The Garden (also known as the Garden of Remembrance) with its Roll of Honour remains a historic public landmark at Abington Square.

- 4.19 The Public Lavatories at Abington Square were among the first of a spate of new conveniences built for both ladies and men constructed in the course of the reconstruction of the townscape; on the recommendation of the Borough's Public Health Committee. In the process, existing nineteenth century conveniences, which seem to have been solely mens' urinals (examples being: a lavatory at Wood Hill<sup>47</sup> a urinal adjoining the Poor Law Institution, Wellingborough Road<sup>48</sup> and another at Burleigh) were demolished. By 1934 there was in existence at the Borough, a Public Conveniences Sub-Committee of the Public Health Committee<sup>49</sup>, although it is uncertain when the body originated since only one summary report appears to have survived. Conveniences at Regent Square were built at some juncture after April 1926, at a cost of £2,251; an original estimate of £1,800 having been sanctioned by the Ministry of Health (for the raising of a loan) in the previous November<sup>50</sup>. A building contract followed in October 1926 for the construction of underground conveniences in Abington Park (together with a Police box and tramways shelter at a total cost £974)<sup>51</sup>. In June 1934 the Public Health Committee recommended that existing men's urinals at St. James should "provide for accommodation for both sexes", at a cost of £180. They were demolished and an alternate plot of land belonging to the Sub-Police station was subsequently chosen in December 1934<sup>52</sup>. At Kingsthorpe, public conveniences for both ladies and men were erected at the junction of Cranford Road and Kingsland Avenue at some point after October 1934. In the same year, following the compulsory purchase of six houses for street improvement at Mayorhold, an area was set aside for the erection of conveniences for both sexes, at a cost of £350. At South Bridge a contract was issued in October 1934 for the provision of a W.C for males at an existing convenience (at a cost of £49. 15s.) but there is no mention of a ladies convenience<sup>53</sup>. Of the few buildings that survive (mostly abandoned, such as Abington Park and Kingsthorpe), none are comparable in outward design to the structure at Abington Square (see Section 6).
- 4.20 It is of interest, that local authorities of the period were not obliged to provide public toilets, and, as recently noted in parliamentary publications, even when Section 87 of the Public Health Act of 1936 gave local authorities power to provide 'public sanitary conveniences' (or 'lavatories'), it imposed no duty to do so<sup>54</sup>.

### **Disuse**

- 4.21 The Public Lavatories at Abington Square are understood to have continued in use for the remainder of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, having undergone complete refurbishment and re-modelling, including the creation of an Accessible Toilet for wheel chair users. The date of the refurbishment is elusive, but is

<sup>46</sup> *Northampton Mercury* - Friday 13 May 1938

<sup>47</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Minutes* 16<sup>th</sup> March 1927

<sup>48</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Committee Minutes* 8<sup>th</sup> May 1930, item 8 (b)

<sup>49</sup>, see *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Minutes*, Public Conveniences Sub-Comm., 21st June 1934, 12.

<sup>50</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Minutes* 27<sup>th</sup> April 1926

<sup>51</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm. Minutes* 26<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1926

<sup>52</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Conveniences Sub-Committee Public Health Comm.* 21<sup>st</sup> June 1934, 12.

<sup>53</sup> *Borough of Northampton Public Health Comm*, 10<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1934

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcomloc/636/636.pdf> *House of Commons Communities and Local Government The Provision of Public Toilets Twelfth Report of Session 2007-08* (2008)

presumed to have been at sometime between the late 1970s and 1990s. A newspaper article of December 1975<sup>55</sup> remarks on ‘peremptory closure’ of the toilets, which may either allude to their closure for refurbishment, or simply the hours of opening. An illuminated sign (**10**), with the international symbol of disability (post-1974) was affixed to the Wellingborough Road façade. Equally elusive is the date when the conveniences finally went out of use. Local informants understand this to have taken place between 10 and 15 years ago (2002 - 2007), which, if so, could coincide with the closure of several public conveniences by Northampton Borough Council between 2006 and 2007 as an austerity measure<sup>56</sup>. The Borough Council sold the abandoned property on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

## 5. OBSERVATIONS

5.1 In the description which follows, the numbers in bold refer to photograph numbers (Section 11; appendix 1). The photograph viewpoints are shown on Figure 10. The metric scales which appear in the photographs are normally 2 m in length with divisions of 0.2 m.

### *Exterior*

- 5.2 The building is a single-story oblong block built of red brick, with a flat roof (Figs. 7 and 8; **1-3, 15-16**). It has two public faces; its northwest elevation (c. 6.6 m wide) which fronts Abington Square on Wellingborough Road, and its southwest elevation (12.9 m long) which faces St Edmund’s Terrace, an alleyway/ pedestrian thoroughfare. The other sides of the building are hidden from view, the southeast elevation (c. 12.15 m long) sharing a party wall with a modern electrical sub-station, the north-east elevation sharing a party wall with ‘The Volunteer’ public house.
- 5.3 The façade of its northwest side, fronting Abington Square, is raised above the level of the southwest elevation and roof by c. 0.85 m, to incorporate a terracotta frieze (a signage panel) located between a corner pilaster (NW) and an end pilaster (NE) (Fig. 7; **1-3**). Each pilaster has a brick cornice capital with cyma recta mould. The signage panel is likewise corniced. Below the level of the signage panel runs a corbelled dentil string course (**4, 5**).
- 5.4 The main body of the northwest façade has two rectangular panels framed in a ogee moulded bricks (Fig. 7; **2, 6** and **7**). Each pilaster has a similarly framed panel above and below the corbelled string course. The brickwork style of each of the pilasters is English bond, while the main body of the wall is Flemish style. The base of the wall has a chamfered plinth which wraps around the base of each pilaster. The frieze is composed of rectangular moulded terracotta tiles with chip carved, mannered Art Deco lettering (‘PUBLIC LAVATORIES’) in gold paint (**4, 5**). Above and below the tiles is a single row of terracotta brick-shaped tiles. Surrounding the gold lettering, the frieze has been painted matt brick red.
- 5.5 The southwest façade (Fig. 8) is built in Flemish bond. The brick plinth continues on this elevation, as does the cornice with cyma recta moulding. There are three doorways, two of which are flanked by pilasters and have a terracotta frieze, signed ‘GENTLEMEN’, and ‘LADIES’, respectively, denoting the original (i.e. 1929) public entrances to each of the conveniences (**11, 13-14**). The frieze panels each have five rectangular moulded ceramic tiles which, like the northwest façade, have chip carved, mannered Art Deco lettering painted gold (**8, 9** and **12**). Similarly, above and below the tiles is a single row of terracotta (mathematical) brick tiles. The background to the gold lettering has also been painted with matt brick red. In harmony with the northwest façade, the door pilasters of each

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<sup>55</sup> *Northampton Chronicle & Echo*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1975, ‘Inconvenience on Abington Square’

<sup>56</sup> *c.f. Northampton Borough Council Disabled People’s Forum*, Tuesday, 10 July 2007, 4. Closure of Accessible Toilets in Northampton

public entrance have cyma recta-moulded cornice capitals and matching lower stringcourses. The frieze panels are equally corniced at the same level of each capital.

- 5.6 The third door, located towards the south west end of the façade (Fig. 8, **15-16**), has a plain surround and may have been an entrance to a service area or store.

### **Interior**

- 5.7 At the time of the survey, the entire internal floor space was obscured by building rubble, debris and excavated soils (Fig. 10). A number of non-load bearing internal walls, all of late 20<sup>th</sup> century date had been demolished, as had cubicles and other furnishings. Four geotechnical pits had been excavated inside the building (Fig. 9) and remained open. Since all of the internal partitions had been destroyed the interior layout and phase plan has been devised from wall scars and foundations partially visible foundations.
- 5.8 At some juncture in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the conveniences were completely refurbished and the internal layout re-modelled. A part of the women's convenience was partitioned to accommodate an accessible toilet for disabled persons (Fig. 9). Two additional areas in each convenience were partitioned-off to create areas for cistern maintenance, outflow servicing and storage (Fig. 9). The accessible toilet was centrally placed, entered from the original 'Ladies' entrance, while the original plain service doorway towards the south east end of the block, became the new entrance to the women's convenience.

### **Women's Convenience**

- 5.9 In the original layout (i.e. 1929) the women's convenience occupied the south-eastern half of the block (Fig. 9); its overall floor space measured c. 35 sq. m. Nothing survives of the 1929 interior, other than portions of metro-tiled wall which are only visible in the later designated maintenance and storage areas (**17 - 25**). The metro tiles (glazed bricks) each measure 225 mm x 80 mm. The tiles were applied in blocks of either light green tiles, or white tiles with two horizontal bands of black tiles (e.g. **23** and **25**). The differential block use of colour was most likely to denote particular areas or functions within each convenience. For example, in the women's convenience we know there was accommodation for six W.C's and six wash basins (*ante*. 4.13), but the location of each set of facilities can only now be guessed. A plinth band of buff square (150 mm x 150 mm) tiles ran along the base of each wall (**27**). The original floor covering was not visible at the time of the survey. Two 4-panelled wooden doors with metal coat hooks (**26**) stacked in the debris were probably from the 1929 toilet, although their original location is not known.

### **Accessible Toilet**

- 5.10 The accessible toilet cubicle measured 2 m by 1.85 m (Fig. 9). It was accessed via the original street entrance to the Ladies' convenience. Its rear and south east wall (**18**) were constructed of breeze blocks (c. 0.15 m wide) with a stud wall frame, 0.3 m wide, lining the inner side of the cubicle which conceals cistern fittings. The walls of were tiled (**18**). At the time of the survey, the interior of the cubicle was filled with rubble and debris. All of the metro tile-work is obscured by later tiling. Accesses to maintenance areas (for the mens' convenience) were incorporated into its rear and northwest walls (Fig. 9, **36**).



### **Mens' Convenience**

- 5.11 The overall floor space men's convenience was c. 36.7 sq. m (Fig.9). As with the women's convenience, the whole of its interior was gutted in the course of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century refurbishment, leaving only portions of original metro-tiling visible in the newly designated maintenance, storage and service areas (**31, 36** and **38**).

In one such area, in the northwest wall, is a notable rectangular block of white tile, bordered in black (**31, 36**), in an otherwise area of green tiling, which seems to denote a specifically allocated space; possibly for weighing machine (*ante.* 4.15).

### **Roof Construction**

- 5.12 The roof was neither accessible nor visible, though is understood to be flat. In each convenience there are two, centrally located, parallel joists encased inside rendered box-work, which extend from the end wall to the internal dividing wall (**17, 18, 29, 30, 32, 39**); the span distances being 5.75 m (women's) and 5.85 m (men's). The joists are set apart c. 0.75 m to allow for a c. 2 m long roof light in each convenience (**22, 32**). Since the joists are presently not visible due to their encasement, the technique and method of roof construction will only become known once the opening up for refurbishment has commenced. It is, however, presumed that some type of open web steel joists (e.g. Warren-type<sup>57</sup>) is present. Similarly, it could not be established whether the joists rest on steel columns or directly on brick walls.

### **Foundations**

- 5.13 The outer brick walls of the building are between c. 0.25 m and 0.3 m thick. A series of geotechnical test pits (Fig. 9) revealed that they are constructed on concrete-filled foundation trenches (of unknown depth), c. 0.6 m (8 brick courses) below the floor level (**27, 31** and **35**). The concrete foundation projects inwards about 0.3 m, while the remainder of the floor foundation consists of building rubble, c. 0.6 m thick, lain directly above dark brown earthen ground. In the northwest corner of the men's convenience, a ground investigation made through an area of reinforced concrete floor revealed a brick-walled basement (Fig. 9, **41**). The extent, depth and function of the basement are presently uncertain. It is considered unlikely, however, to be a cellar of the house which previously occupied much of the site, since the detailed Ordnance Survey 10' map shows this area to have been outside of the building footprint (Fig. 2).

## **6. COMMENT ON THE ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

- 6.1 The Public Lavatories at Abington Square were built in the age of Modernism. Yet the decorative brickwork (dentil corbelling, moulded cornices, pilasters and framed panels) looks back to a late Victorian and Edwardian style, not out of character with workers housing and factories of the neighbourhood<sup>58</sup>. Only the fashionable lively lettering on the terracotta frieze, the flat roof, and the the possible use of open web steel joists, betrays the new era to which it belongs. But in this sense, the use of different styles and materials encapsulate Art Deco's peculiar trait of eclecticism; styles which at times may even seem at odds. In this manner the building also presents an impression of a vernacular response to modernity. It is so far uncertain who designed the building, yet it is quite possible that the proposal drawings presented by the Borough Engineer to the Public Health Committee (*ante.* 4.13) were the work of an unsung Corporation draughtsperson. As shown, the building was erected to a clearly defined budget and it is quite likely that the bricks were locally and

<sup>57</sup> For example, Stuart D M, 2009. 'Antiquated Structural Systems Series, Part 9A, open Web Steel Joists', *Structure Magazine*,

<sup>58</sup> For example, the former Hornby and West shoe factory to the north of the square on corner of Overstone Rd. and St. Michael's Rd, built c.1875 (LB Id. 1390677)

economically sourced. Even so, yet there was sufficient allowance to include *à la mode* artisanal elements. The building survives as a unique form of architectural expression in the decade-long transition of Abington Square.

## 7. ARCHIVE & REPORT

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- 7.3 The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations: [www.oasis.ac.uk](http://www.oasis.ac.uk)) identification number for this project is souterra1-279297

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16<sup>th</sup> March 1927

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3<sup>rd</sup> October 1928, 11, 'No. 30 Wellingborough Road. Ladies' Conveniences'

19<sup>th</sup> February 1929, 5, 'Public Conveniences. No. 30 Wellingborough Road'

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23. *Borough of Northampton, Minutes of the Improvements Committee 1913-1927* (NRO 39e)

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10<sup>th</sup> October 1934

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23<sup>rd</sup> March 1926  
13<sup>th</sup> July 1926  
28<sup>th</sup> October 1928. Road widening  
19<sup>th</sup> March 1930  
23 September 1930

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25<sup>th</sup> October 1928

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Saturday 09 November 1878  
Saturday 1st October 1881  
Saturday 30 September 1882  
Saturday 31 March 1883  
Saturday 01 October 1887  
Friday 29 June 1894  
Friday 26 January 1900  
Friday 20 September 1901  
Friday 04 July 1902,  
Friday 06 May 1921  
Friday 04 November 1927  
Friday 13 December 1929  
Friday 28 February 1936  
Friday 10 December 1937  
Friday 13 May 1938

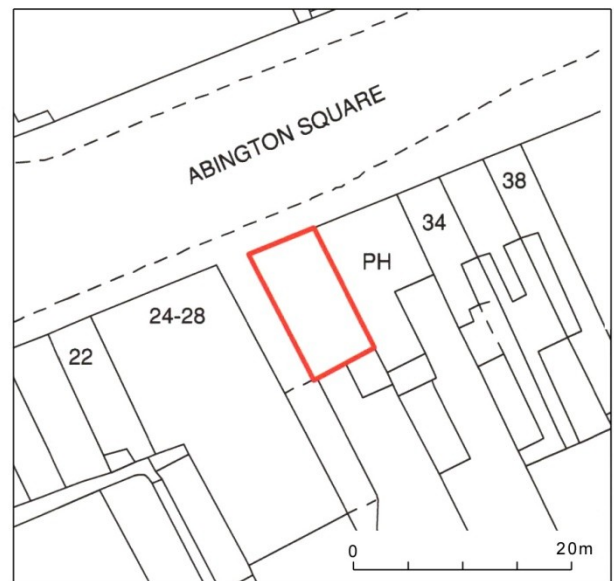
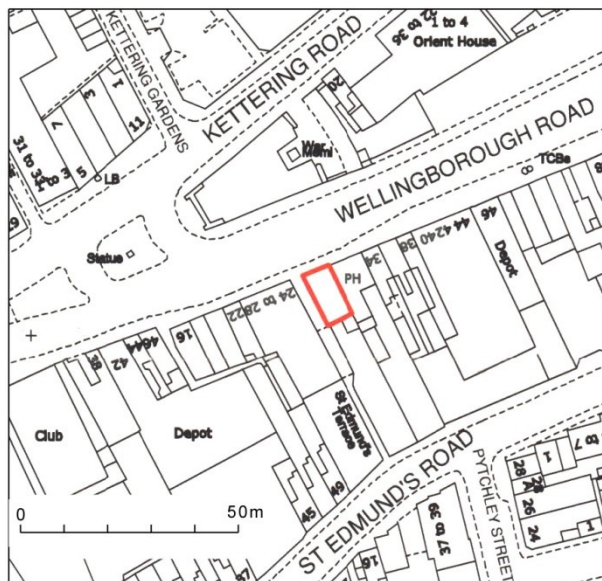
#### *Northampton Chronicle & Echo*

12<sup>th</sup> December 1975, 'Inconvenience on Abington Square'

### **Acknowledgements**

The staff of the Northampton Record Office and the Northampton Public Reference Library, are thanked for their assistance with access to archives.

## **10. Figures**

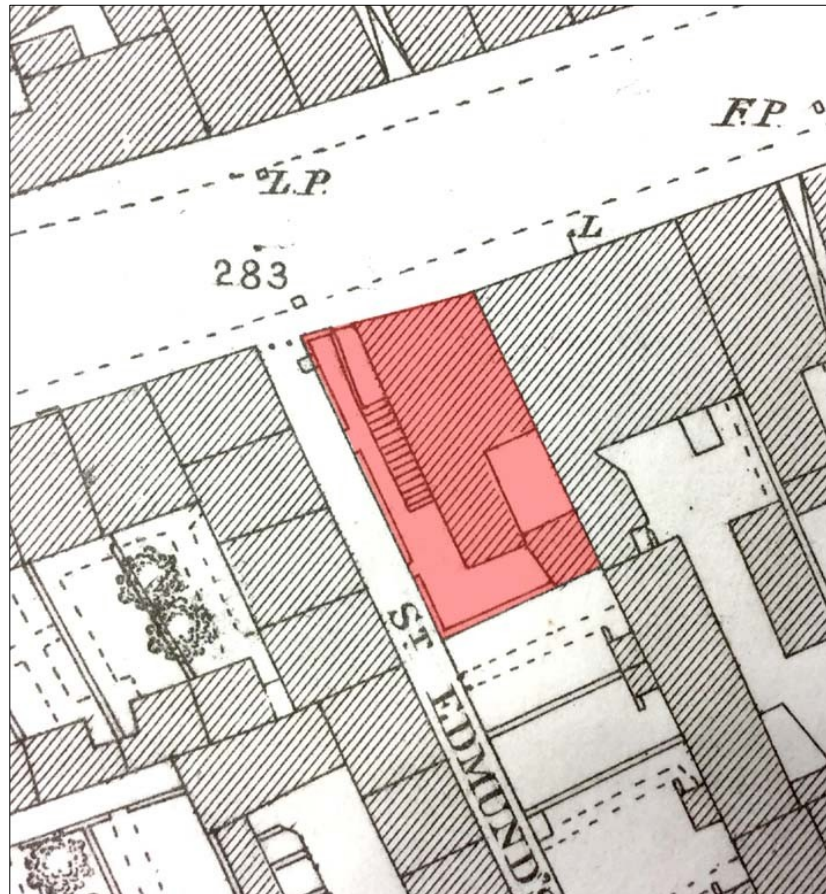


**Figure 1. Location of Site**

(based on Ordnance Survey Open Data mapping , © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

**Figure 2 (right).**  
Extract from  
Ordnance Survey  
10' map of 1885

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**Figure 3 (below).**  
Extract from  
Ordnance Survey  
25" map of 1889

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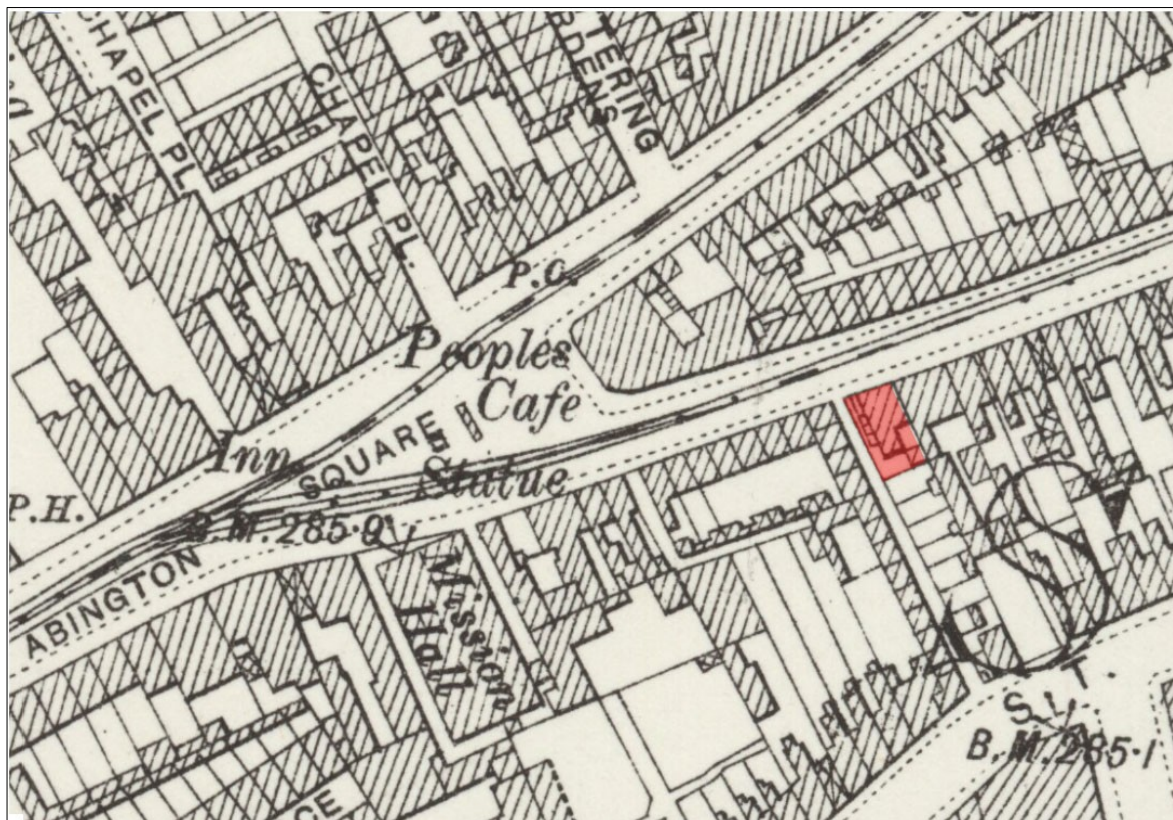




Figure 5. Extract from Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1923-24

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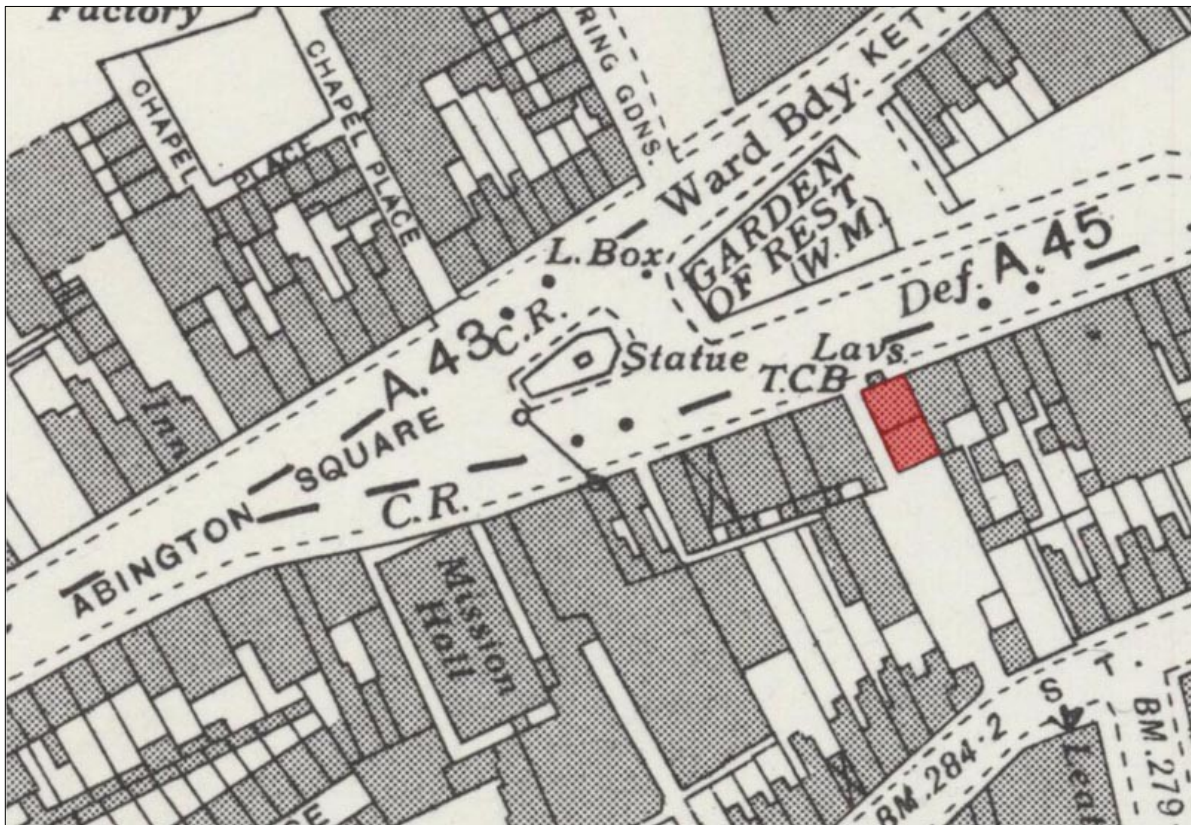


Figure 6. Extract from Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1938

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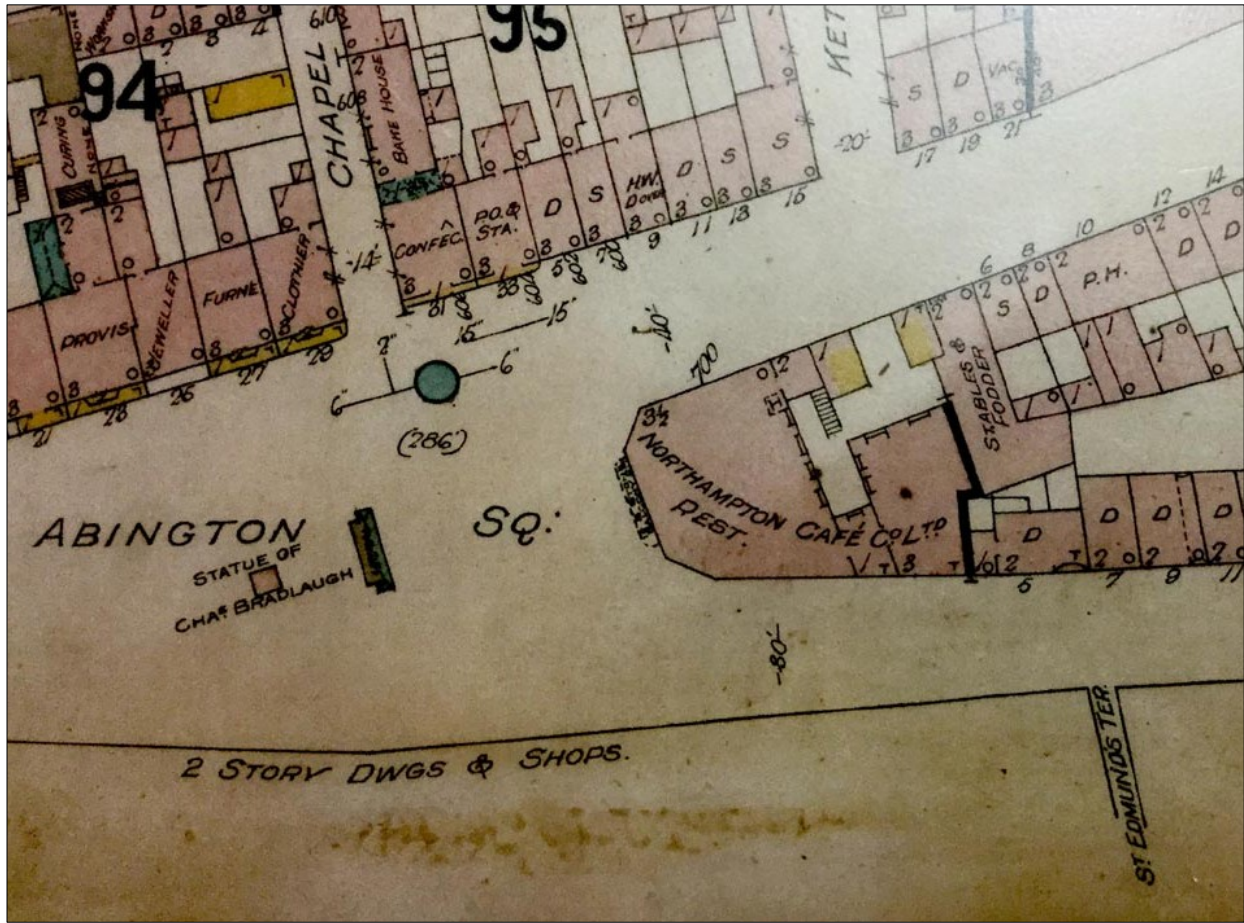


Figure 4. Extract from Northampton Insurance Plan, 1889. (Northampton Reference Library)



**Figure 7. Wellingborough Road façade (Northwest Elevation). Inset: view from W)**

(Elaboration of Design Board drawing)

**Figure 8.**  
**Southwest Elevation**  
**(St Edmund's Terrace)**

(Elaboration of Design  
Board drawing)



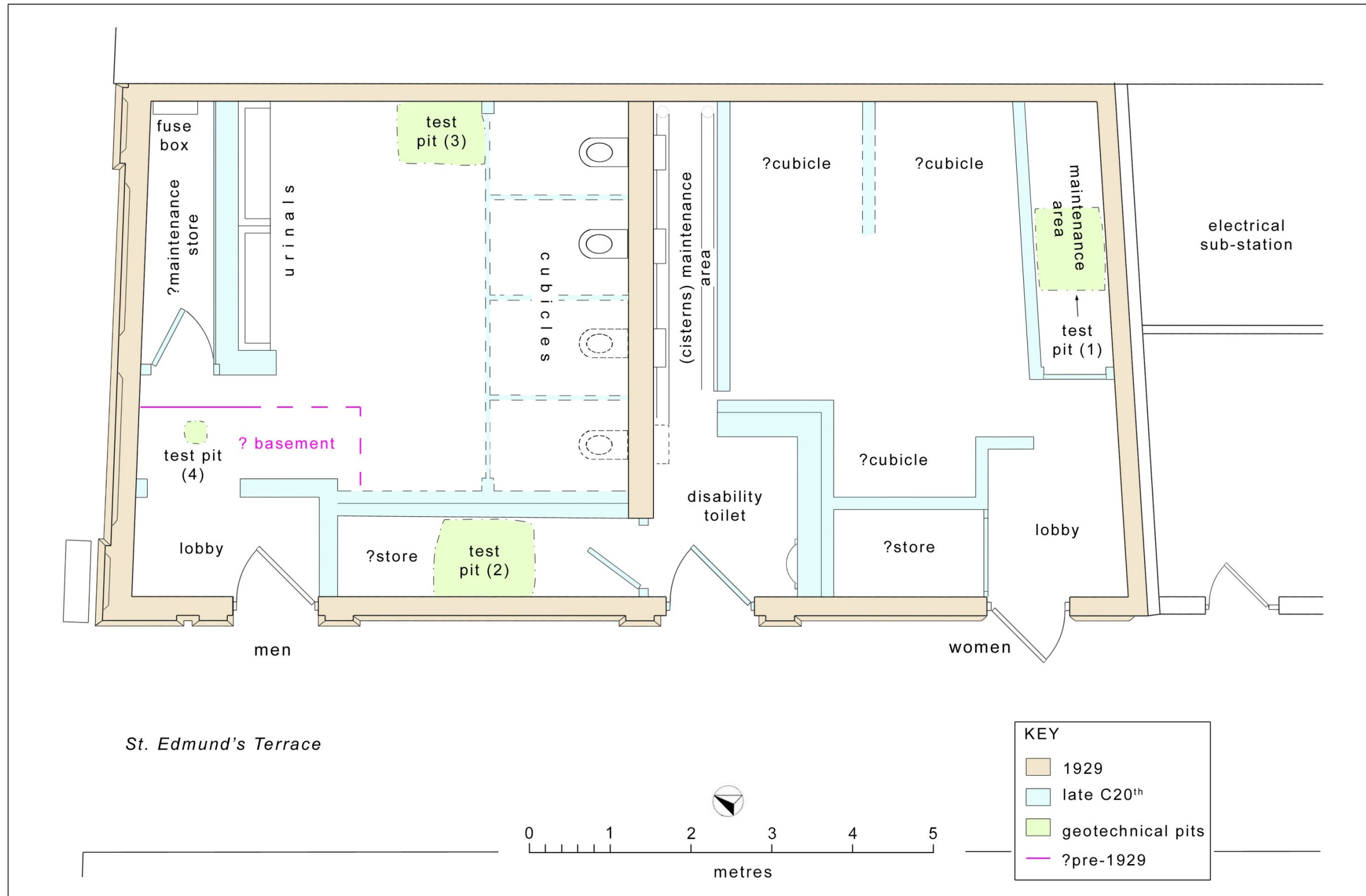


Figure 9. Plan of interior, showing phases

(External wall plan: Design Board; Interior plan: Souterrain)

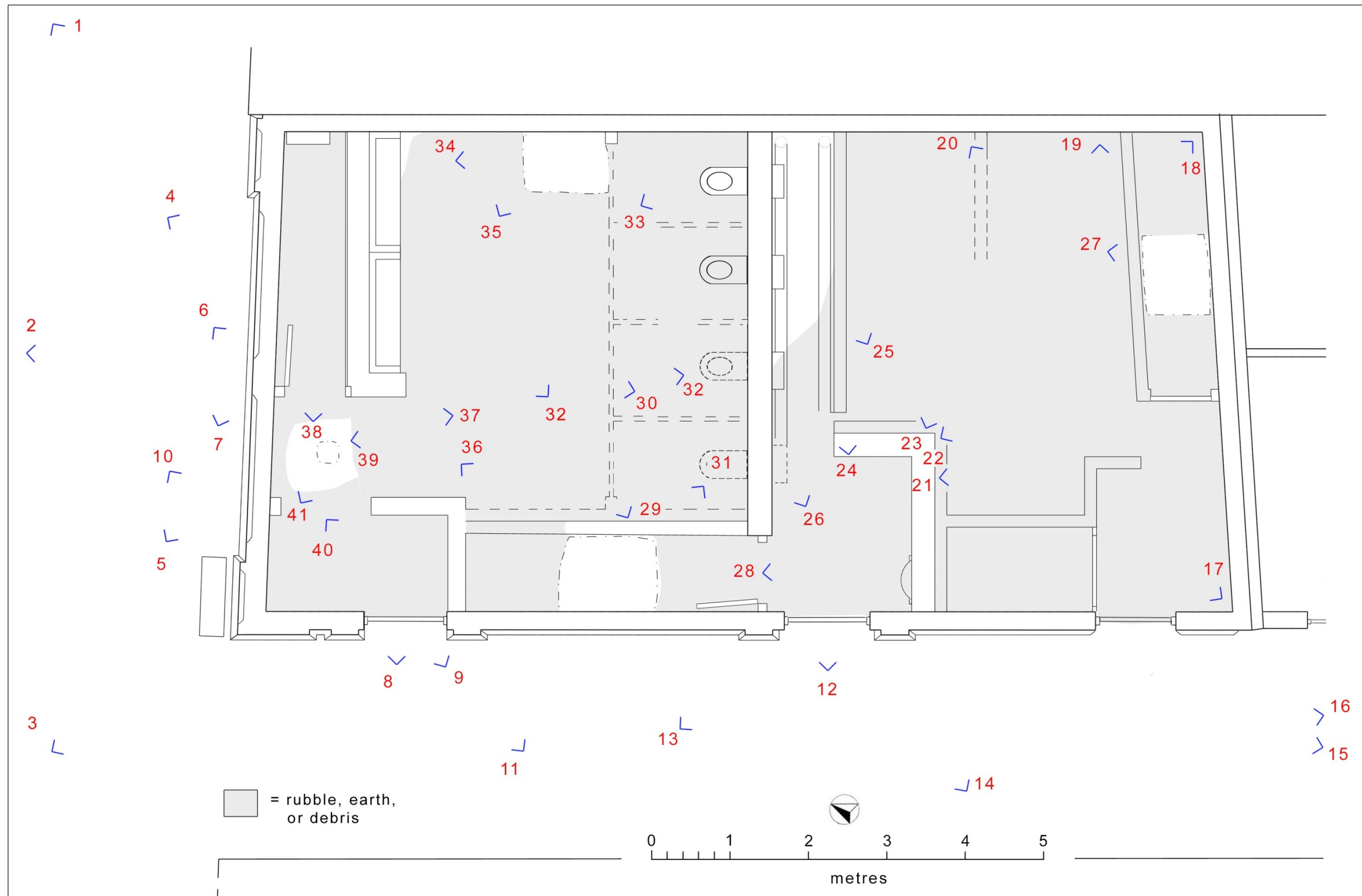


Figure 10. Direction of photographs in Section 11

(External wall plan: Design Board; Interior plan: Souterrain)

## **11. Photographs**



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**APPENDIX 1. PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX**

(REPORT &amp; ARCHIVE: CD)

<b>DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX</b>				
<b>PROJECT: Historic Building Record, Abington Square Public Lavatories HER ENN108611</b>				
<b>No. in report</b>	<b>Image No.</b>	<b>Direction (facing)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
			<b>Exterior</b>	01:03:2017
1	1-P1110746	SW	NW façade (Wellingborough Road)	01:03:2017
2	2-P1110786	SE	As above	01:03:2017
3	3-P1110755	SE	As above	01:03:2017
4	4-P1110796	S	NW façade, close up of frieze, moulded terracotta tiles with chip carved Art Deco lettering	06:03:2017
5	5-P1110793	E	NW façade, close up of frieze, moulded terracotta tiles with chip carved Art Deco lettering	06:03:2017
6	6-P1110819	SE	NW façade, detail of rectangular panel frame with ogee moulded bricks	06:03:2017
7	7-P1110807	E	NW façade, detail of rectangular panel frame with ogee moulded bricks	06:03:2017
8	8-P1110721	NE	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), Gentlemen's entrance, close up of frieze, moulded terracotta tiles with chip carved Art Deco lettering	01:03:2017
9	9-P1110728	NE	As above	01:03:2017
10	10-P1110788	SW	NW façade, late C20 <sup>th</sup> (post-1974) illuminated sign for wheel chair access	01:03:2017
11	11-P1110719	NE	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), Gentlemen's entrance	01:03:2017
12	12-P1110736	NE	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), close up of frieze, moulded terracotta tiles with chip carved Art Deco lettering	01:03:2017
13	13-P1110732	SE	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), Ladies' entrance,	01:03:2017
14	14-P1110738	NE	As above	01:03:2017
15	15-IMG_4726	NW	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), overview, later (late C20 <sup>th</sup> ) entrance to womens' convenience	28:02:2017
16	16-P1110739	NW	SW façade (St Edmund's Terrace), overview	01:03:2017
			<b>Interior</b>	
17	17-IMG_4638	N	Women's convenience, overview	28:02:2017
18	18-P1110510	NW	Women's convenience, overview, towards Accessible Toilet	28:02:2017
19	19-P1110459	SW	Women's convenience, overview, 1929 metro tiling and late C20 <sup>th</sup> over-tiling	28:02:2017
20	20-IMG_4627	SW	As above	28:02:2017
21	21-IMG_4616	SE	As above	28:02:2017
22	22-P1110457	SE	Women's convenience, rooflight	28:02:2017
23	23-IMG_4617	E	Women's convenience, overview, 1929 metro tiling and late C20 <sup>th</sup> over-tiling	28:02:2017
24	24-IMG_4614	NE	As above	28:02:2017
25	25-P1110519	NE	Women's convenience, 1929 metro tiling surviving in late C20 <sup>th</sup> cistern (mens') maintenance room	28:02:2017
26	26-IMG_4668	NE	Women's convenience, original (1929) solid wood panelled door with coat hook (in demolition debris)	28:02:2017

<b>DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX</b>				
<b>PROJECT: Historic Building Record, Abington Square Public Lavatories HER ENN108611</b>				
<b>No. in report</b>	<b>Image No.</b>	<b>Direction (facing)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
27	27-P1110489	SE	Women's convenience, wall foundations revealed in geotechnical test pit 1 (see report Fig. 10)	28:02:2017
28	28-P1110604	SE	Remains of late C20 <sup>th</sup> Accessible Toilet.	28:02:2017
29	29-IMG_4662	NE	Men's convenience, overview	28:02:2017
30	30-IMG_4690	NW	Men's convenience, late C20 <sup>th</sup> urinals	28:02:2017
31	31-IMG_4699	NW	Men's convenience, roof light	28:02:2017
32	32-IMG_4685	NE	Men's convenience, differential area of metro tiling, with foundations exposed below (geotechnical test pit 2, see report Fig. 10)	28:02:2017
33	33-IMG_4696	SE	Men's convenience, in situ toilet bowl (late C20 <sup>th</sup> )	28:02:2017
34	34-IMG_4673	SE	Men's convenience, remains of late C20 <sup>th</sup> cubicles	28:02:2017
35	35-IMG_4681	E	Men's convenience, wall foundations revealed in geotechnical test pit 3 (see report Fig. 10)	28:02:2017
36	36-P1110574	SW	Men's convenience, overview, towards maintenance access from Accessible Toilet. Differential area of metro tiling.	28:02:2017
37	37-IMG_4713	NW	Men's convenience, access from lobby	28:02:2017
38	38-IMG_1879	NE	Men's convenience, metro tiling in late C20 <sup>th</sup> maintenance room/store	28:02:2017
39	39-IMG_4706	SE	Men's convenience, over view from point of access	28:02:2017
40	40-IMG_1875	SW	Men's convenience, lobby, late C20 <sup>th</sup> grilled door	28:02:2017
41	41-IMG_1885	E	Men's convenience, access area, basement revealed in geotechnical test pit 4 (see report Fig. 10)	28:02:2017
42	42-P1110764	S	View from Wellingborough Road	01:03:2017
43	43-P1110761	SW	View from the Garden of Rest, Mobbs Memorial to left	01:03:2017
44	44-IMG_4816	SE	View from the Bradlaugh Statue (right), Garden of Rest and War Memorial to left.	28:02:2017

Height OD / Depth	Min: 86m Max: 86m
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd
Project manager	M D Wilson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr A Momen Esq.
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
<b>Project bibliography 1</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Early 20th Century Public Lavatories at Wellingborough Road, Abington Square, Northampton: Historic Building Record
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wilson M.D
Other bibliographic details	SOU17-519
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd
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Entered on	15 March 2017



**OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England**

**OASIS ID: souterra1-279297**

<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	Early 20th Century Public Lavatories at Abington Square, Northampton: Historic Building Record
Short description of the project	In February and March 2017 a historic building record was made of a disused early 20th century Public Lavatories building at Abington Square, Northampton, prior to its conversion to a residential unit. The building stands on Wellingborough Road, on the south side of the square, one of the town's busiest public esplanades. The report places the building into its historical context and identifies its broad phases of development. A topic of planning discussions for several years, the Lavatories building was finally erected in 1929, when it was incorporated into an ambitious scheme of town re-development. As such the history of the building is integral to a transformation of Abington Square which took place between c.1928 and 1938. Notably, its design and use of materials combined vernacular architecture with artisanal Art Deco modernity. It survives today as a unique form of architectural expression in the decade-long transition of Abington Square. The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of the building based on 'as found' observations. It includes scaled elevation, plans and a photographic catalogue.
Project dates	Start: 21-02-2017 End: 14-03-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Associated ref. codes	ENN108611 - HER event no.
Associated ref. codes	N/2016/0254 - Planning Application No.
Associated ref. codes	SOU17-519 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	PUBLIC CONVENIENCE Modern
Monument type	SIGN Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Photographic Survey","Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure","Measured Survey"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Prompt	Conservation Area Consent
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NORTHAMPTON NORTHAMPTON Early 20th Century Public Lavatories at Abington Square
Postcode	NN1 4DN
Study area	87 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 761 608 52.23972245766 -0.885399608169 52 14 23 N 000 53 07 W Point