

# Stanley L Hunt Printers

Midland Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire

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Midland Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 9UJ

## Historic building recording

SP 95460 67068

OASIS ID: 110archa1-316717

Site code: rush18

HER activity ref: ENN109191

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one ten archaeology

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*Frontispiece; view from south-east*

## *SUMMARY*

Historic Building Recording was carried out in March 2018 prior to both the refurbishment of the front building and redevelopment of the old workshop and site for housing. The recent interior furnishings and décor which appears to date to the 1970s, associated with the building's most recent use as the premises of Stanley L Hunt Printers, was cleared away to reveal structural and architectural details of the original factory associated with boot and shoe manufacturing. These illustrate not only the importance of the industry to the town but also the quality, craftsmanship and architectural aspirations in a wealthy country at the height of empire.



Fig. 1; site location

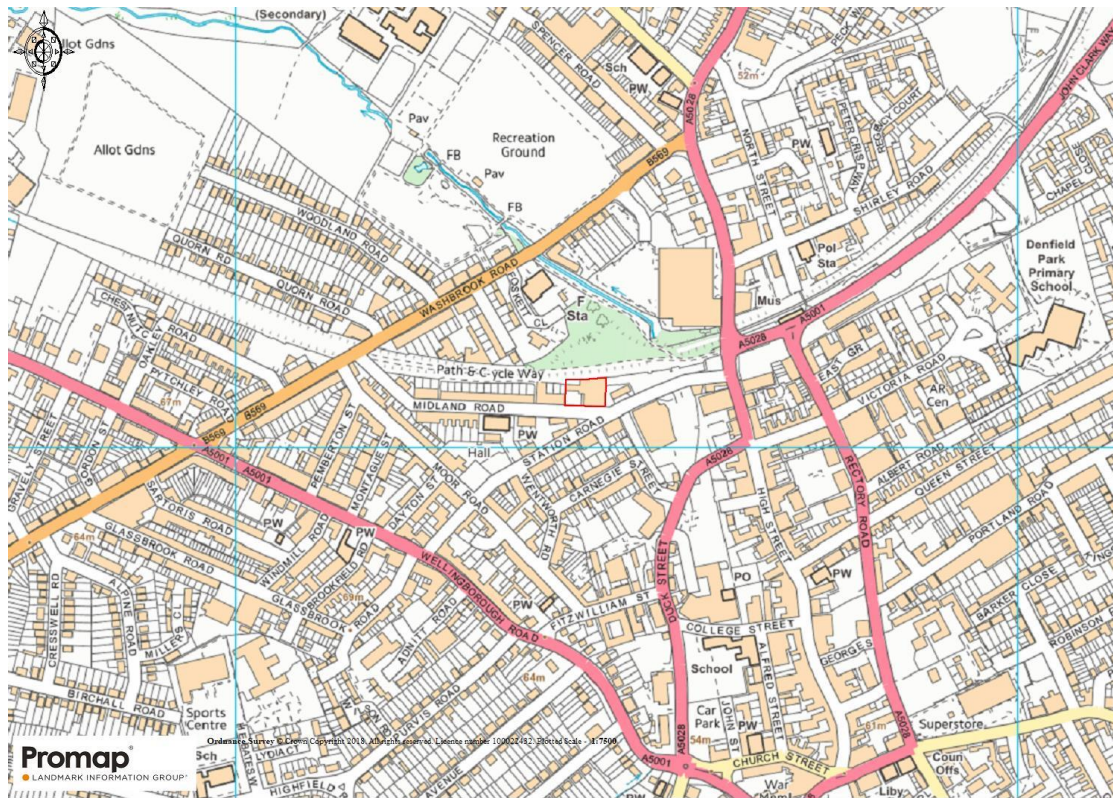


Fig. 2; area of study

## INTRODUCTION

### *Location and scope of work (Figs. 1 & 2)*

This document details the results of historic building recording carried out during 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at the former Printing Works, Midland Road, Rushden Northamptonshire, NN10 9UJ at the request of at the request of Danelaw Partners LLP. Planning permission had been granted by Northampton Borough Council (planning ref: 17/02674/FUL) for the conversion to residential of a former printworks at Midland Road, Rushden and the demolition of the associated warehouse to the rear. Permission was conditional on a programme of approved archaeological work in accordance with a brief (Mordue, 2018) issued by the Archaeology Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council requiring the implementation of a programme of historic building recording prior to the conversion of the existing building at the front and demolition of the warehouses to the rear. The building is recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) as monument no. MNN100083, identified as Industrial Building/Workshop, Midland Road and a built heritage asset. Consequently, work the was undertaken to record the factory which would potentially be affected by the development.

### *Rushden; Geology & Topography*

Rushden is a town and civil parish located in the county of Northamptonshire. The parish of Rushden covers an area of some 36km<sup>2</sup> and is part of the district of East Northamptonshire. The population of Rushden was approx. 30,000 in 2011 making it the fifth largest town in the county. The site which comprises approx. 1,770m<sup>2</sup> is situated in the central area of the town at a height of about 60m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), the underlying consists of undivided Mudstone with subordinate limestone and sandstone (BGS, 2007).

### *Archaeological and Historic Background*

Apart from the Nene valley, the area is well-timbered with numerous small woods and copses on the heavier clays and on the glacial deposits. In the N.W. larger tracts of woodland are survivals of the extensive Rockingham Forest. Except for the N. limestone plateau, rivers, streams and springs provide ample water

supplies. Building stone of high quality is quarried from various limestone strata, and ironstone from the Northampton Sands; sands and clays are available for pottery manufacture. Present-day settlement is, for the most part, restricted to the main valleys, the higher Boulder Clay areas being uninhabited except for hamlets and isolated farmsteads. The principal urban area lies in the extreme S. where Rushden, Irthlingborough, and Higham Ferrers now form an almost continuous industrial zone. However, the growth of these urban centres is of quite recent date, and before the C19 only Higham Ferrers had reached borough status. Further N., Thrapston and Oundle remain small market towns (VCH, 1937).

The parish of Rushden, currently about 9,000 acres (36.42 km<sup>2</sup>) and part of the district of East Northamptonshire, lies to the south of Higham Ferrers with which the town is now continuous. In 1893 a short branch line railway opened linking Rushden and Higham Ferrers with the Midland Main Line, closed in 1959 and dismantled.

The town, which in 1881 was no more than a large village with 3,657 inhabitants, grew very rapidly during the last decade of the C19, the increase in the population between 1891 and 1901 being over 5,000. Rushden's growth has resulted from numerous industries, including lacemaking and farming, and especially shoemaking and associated trades; by the mid C20 there were over 100 boot and shoe factories in the town. The factory is associated with this expansion westward which provided in addition to employment, terraced housing, churches and a school.

The census returns of 1931 showed that the number of inhabitants had then risen to over 14,200, this growth being due principally to the establishment of the boot-making industry. The population at the 2011 Census was 29,272, making it the fifth largest town in the county but there are now only four shoemaking companies; one of the most renowned is Sanders and Sanders, which still makes boots for the British Army and other defence departments throughout the world. Some of the redundant factories have been reordered for residential use. Industry in the town is varied, and mostly situated in an out-of-town industrial estate and many shops remain although town-centre shopping has changed considerably but Rushden still has the oldest toy shop in the county. The oldest domestic building in the town, lying in 32 acres (13ha) of land is Rushden Hall, once owned by members of the Sartoris and Pemberton families.

The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted with a 500m radial search centred on the site. A total of 11 event and 200 monument records were identified within the search area, the majority of the

monument records relate to Rushden's industrial history, although possible earlier Roman activity is recorded by the recovery of unstratified Roman coins at 18 Quorn Road (MNN27656) and 44 Woodland Road (MNN34932).

The building was surveyed (ENN103909) as part of the Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe Survey (English Heritage, 2000) and is catalogued as Rushden site 11.

### *The Factory (Figs. 3-5)*

The factory, built around 1910, is first mentioned as the premises of the British United Shoe Machinery Co in a document of 1911 and it has some stylistic similarities with the BUSMC's depot in School Lane, Kettering (EH 2000). The factory is labelled as a boot and shoe factory on the 1:2500 OS 1923, but this may possibly be due to confusion with the numerous boot and shoe factories in the vicinity.

The front elevation is a striking feature at a forked junction of roads and was perhaps complimented by another shoe factory opposite, now lost, which had taken architectural advantage of its position in the acute part of the junction.

The front range consists of a five-bay two-storey office block and a wide single-storey goods-entrance to the west. The office block end bays, defined by regular stone quoins, project slightly and reduce in width at first floor level, scrolls accentuating this change, the projections are surmounted by boldly articulated pediments above the entablature which extends across the entire front, the brickwork within the pediments is English-bond. The red-brick stretcher-bond of the first floor is pierced by five four-pane sash-windows, set-back. At ground-floor level the eastern bay has a large three-light wooden framed casement, with transom, within a finely wrought masonry opening; the head has a flat-arch with projecting keystone under an entablature. The two windows to the west, both of four-lights are similarly detailed with intervening red-brick English-bond, below the cills the walling is also in English-bond but in 'blue' brick. This dark 'plinth' is pierced in the central bay by three short segmental-headed windows which formerly lit the now filled-in boiler-room, the plain chimney above survives. The next bay westward accommodates the handsome classically detailed front-door; the door-head is semi-circular with keystone under an entablature, like those over the windows but with scrolled-panels to enhance its importance. The western bay was formerly pierced by a wide opening, its head detailed like the windows but most of the lower parts of the jambs formed in quarter-round 'blue' bricks, the upper few feet formed of moulded masonry, with



elaborate stops. When this opening was infilled, for a door and two small windows in the 1970s, the original western jamb was carefully dismantled and moved westward, and the lowest block of masonry neatly reworked as a corbel after removing the stop. For the time this seems to show a surprising respect for the architecture of the façade. This entrance would be consistent with a staff entrance to the premises, originally and later. The goods-entrance to the west is, like the office-block, well-proportioned but plain and clearly utilitarian.

The workshop behind the front buildings is covered in four-ranges of roofs in seven bays, appearing to have been originally divided into three parts, and the 'wall'-plates of the shallow-pitched king-post roofs are supported on plain iron columns. The gable ends of these ranges are pierced by small ventilation openings the doors of which were originally raised by a system of chords and pulleys, the roof-lights in the northern slopes of the workshop roofs were opened with similar mechanisms. The east end of the office-block is constructed of lighter coloured bricks, orange and cream, in English-bond of a pronounced striped character, there is a straight joint between this and the matching workshop wall.

Additional ranges were added to the north, before, and north-west, after 1974 and new openings created within. The old workshop is devoid of any significant original furnishings, which were swept away in the reordering for the new printing works with its ubiquitous and cheery turquoise décor.

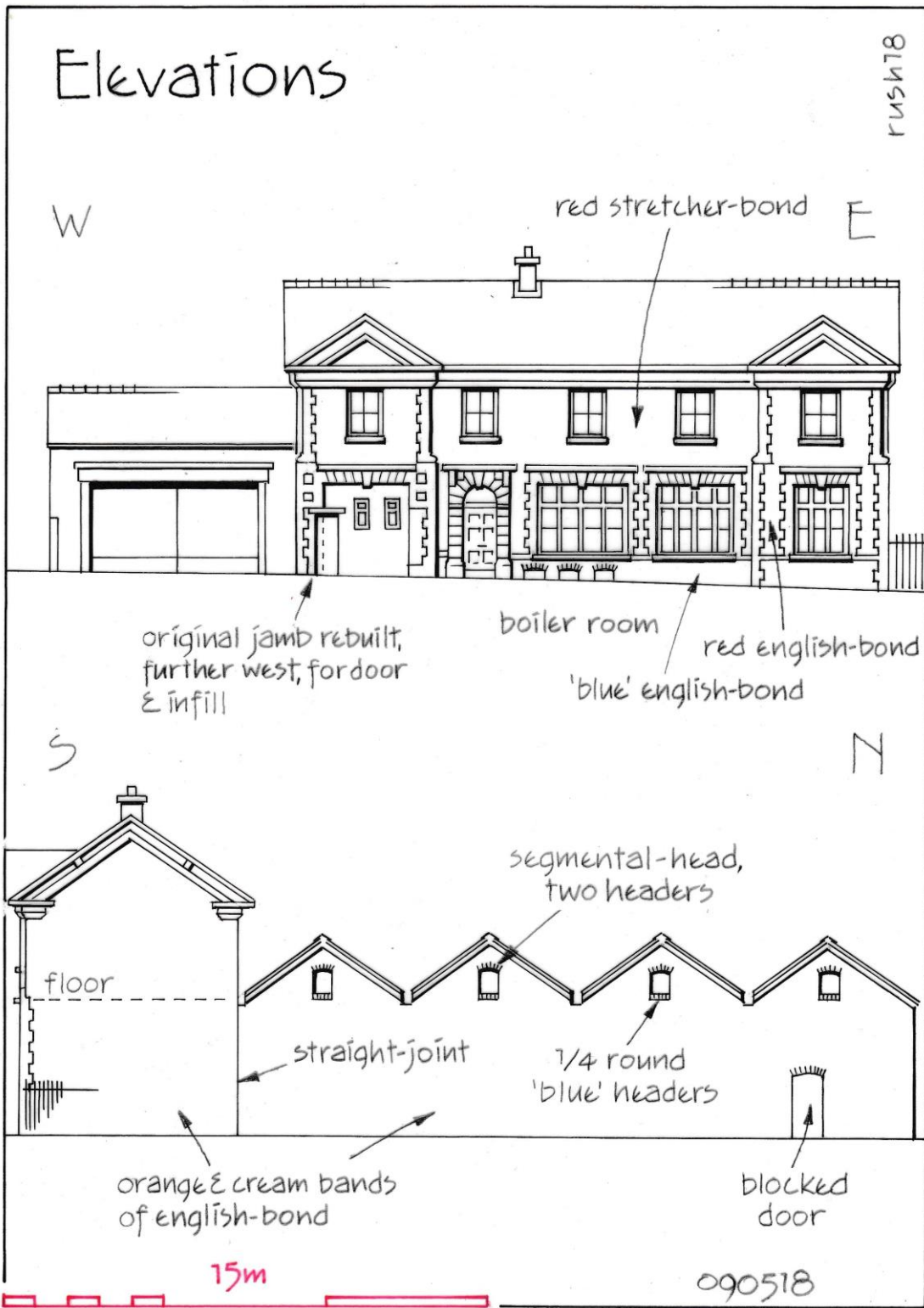


Fig. 3: Elevations

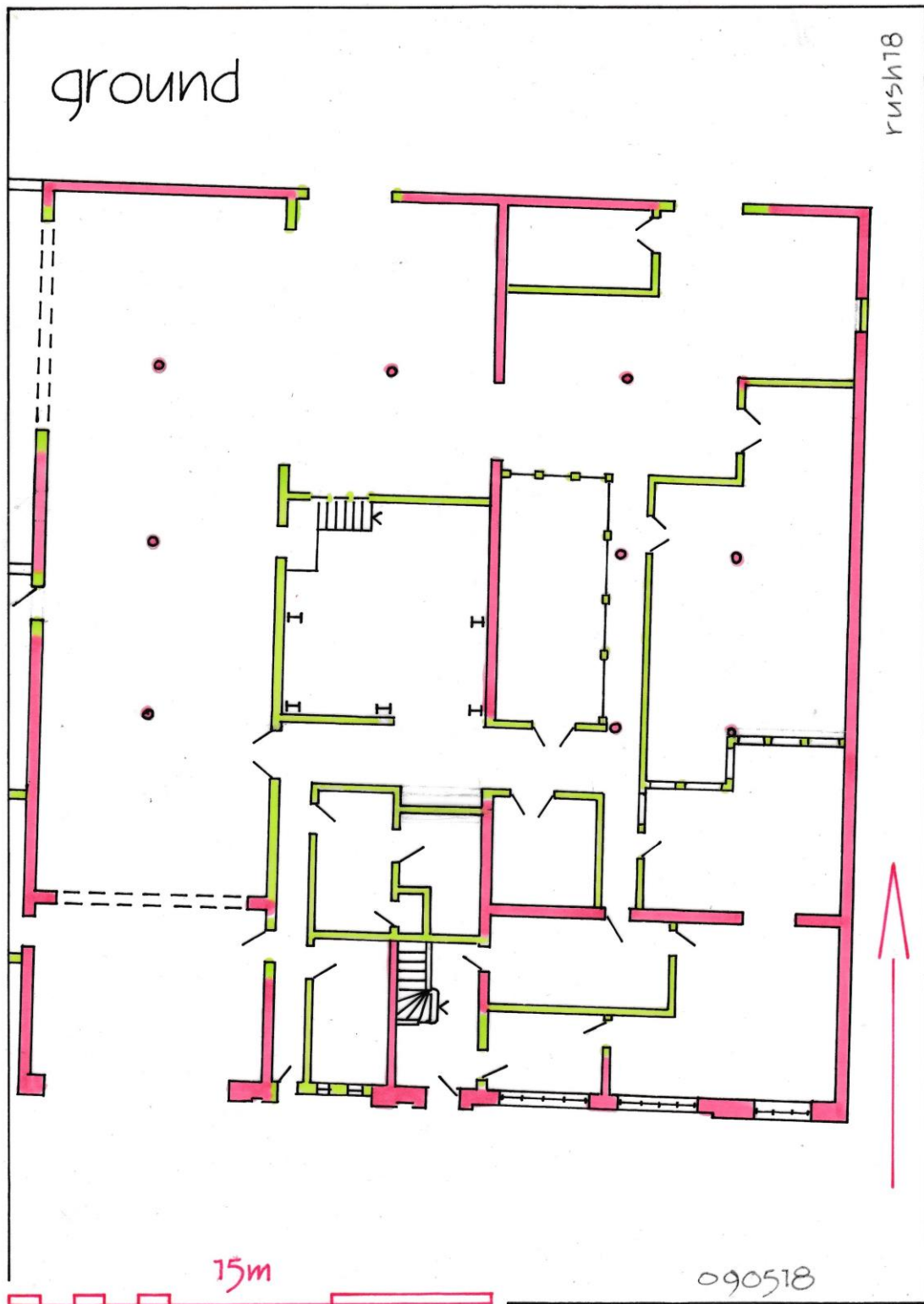


Fig. 4; Factory ground-plan, original fabric shown in pink and 1970s reordering shown in green

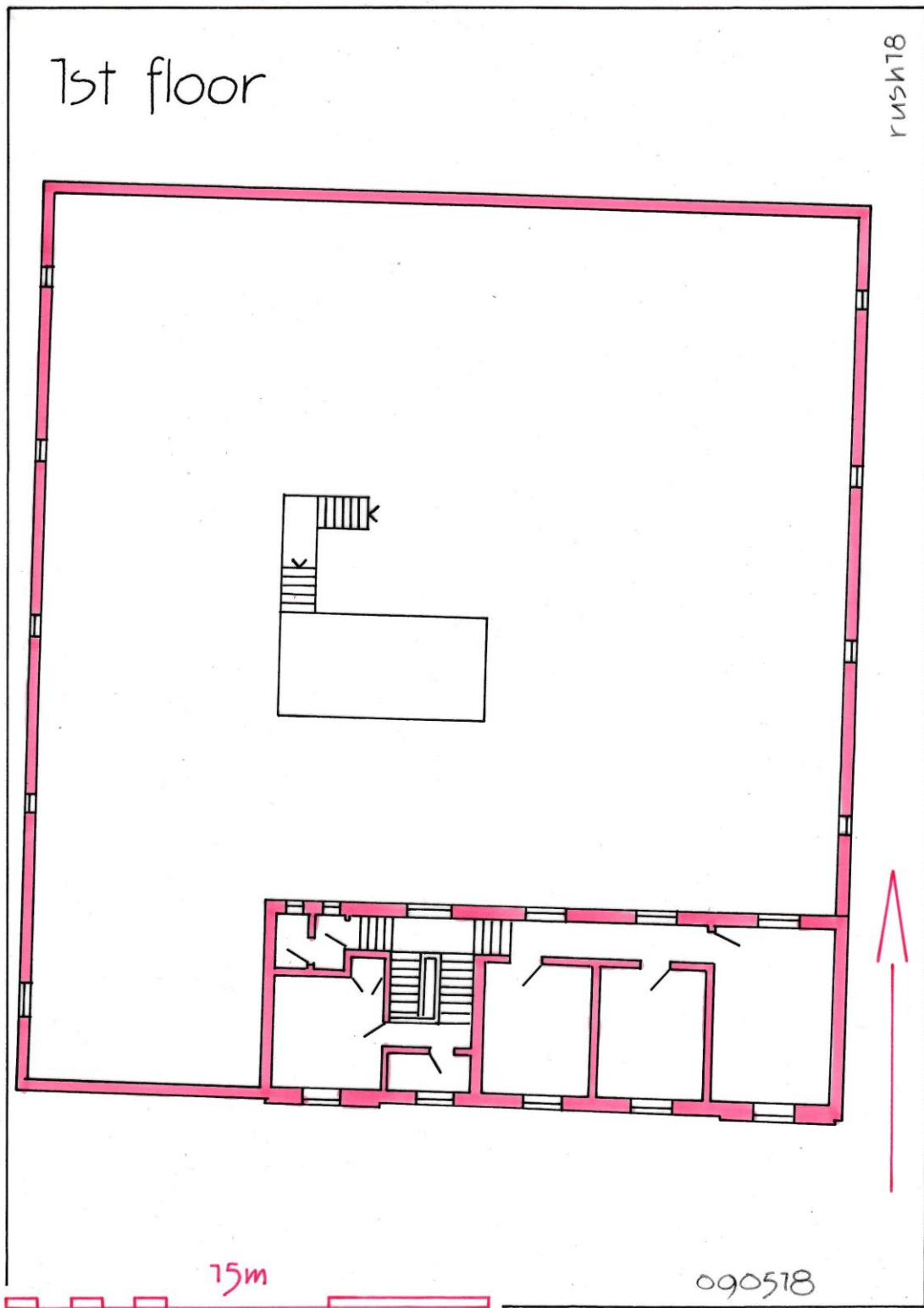


Fig. 5; Factory 1st floor plan, original fabric shown in pink

DISCUSSION (Figs. 6 & 7)

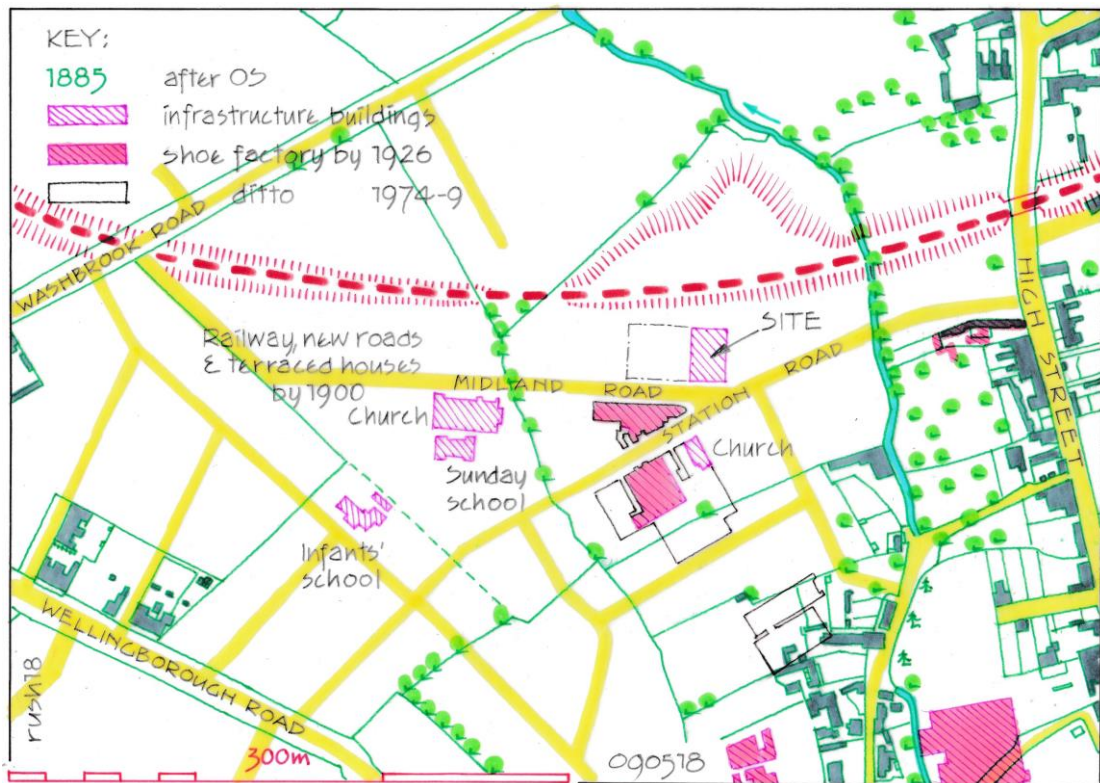


Fig 6; historic environment; 1885 shown in green, streets of terraced-housing and infrastructure buildings by 1900 shown in yellow and pink hatch, the grey outlines show the size of the shoe-factories, labelled as such on the OS, by the 1970s

By 1885 the rural landscape to the west of Rushden had only just begun to be developed, but by 1901 the railway had been built, the roads had been laid and terraces of houses were being erected. An important part of the social infrastructure are the churches and infants school shown on the 1926 OS, and employment was provided by the numerous boot and shoe manufactories which continued in use until the 1970s, apparent on the OS. The factory, on the north side of Midland Road, was built in 1910 at a time when its importance and the wealth of the nation is clearly displayed by skilled craftsmanship in the fabric of this historically and architecturally significant building.

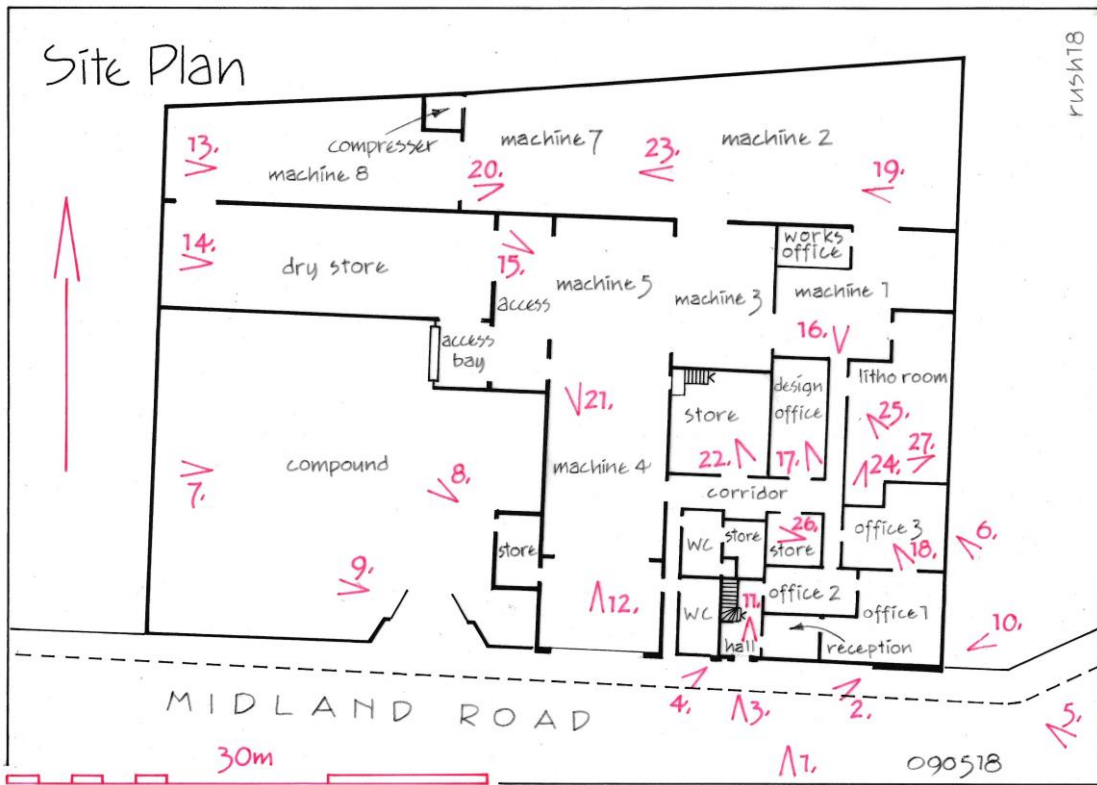


Fig. 7; Factory Site Plan 2018, also showing photo locations



Plate 1; Front elevation



Plate 2; detail of east end of front



Plate 3; detail of front door





Plate 4; detail of blocked waggon-entry



Plate 5; view from south-east showing roofing over rear workshop



Plate 6; detail of workshop ventilation



Plate 7; view from west



Plate 8; view from north-west of west end



Plate 9; west elevation



Plate 10; detail of pediment

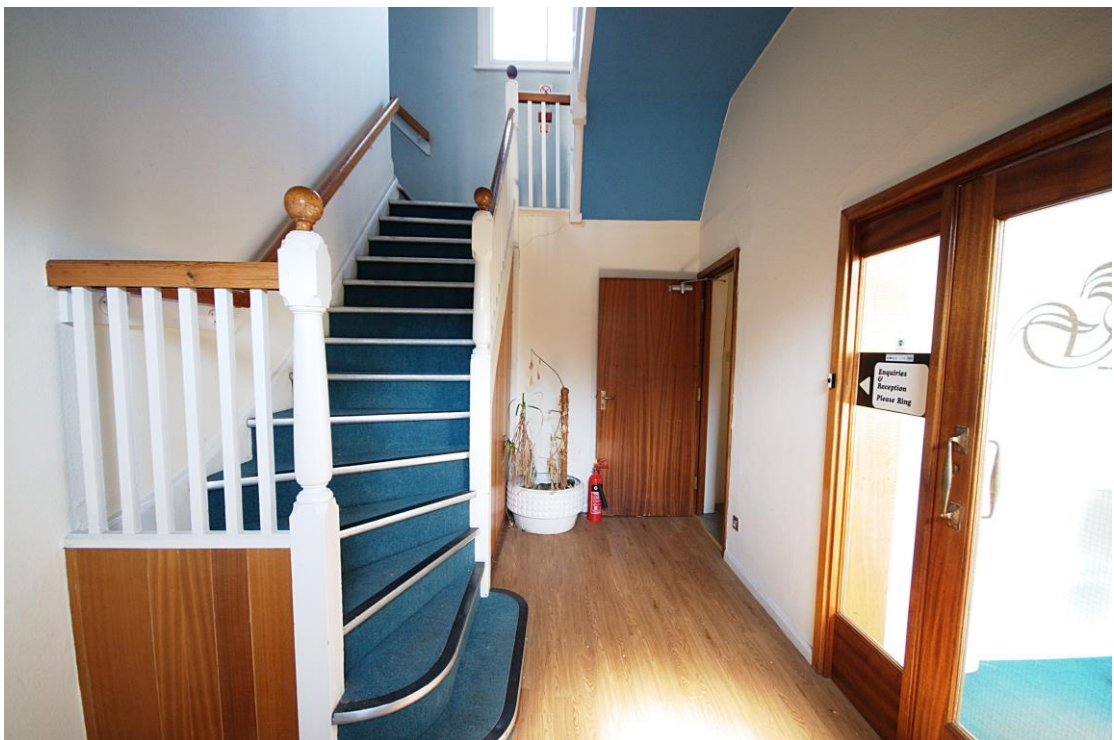


Plate 11; entrance hall



Plate 12; machine-shop 4, and 5 beyond, to north



Plate 13; machine-shop 8 and beyond to east



Plate 14; dry-store to east



Plate 15; machine-shop 5 to east



Plate 16; corridor between litho-shop and design-office to south

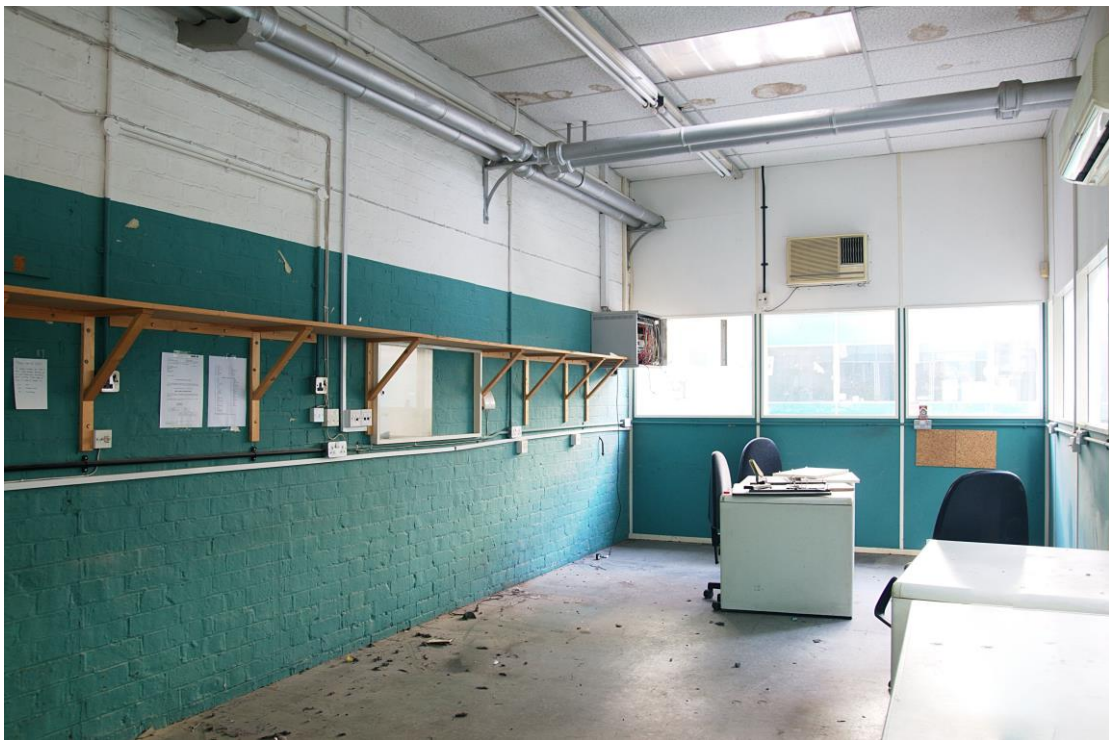


Plate 17; design-office to north





Plate 18; office 3 to north



Plate 19; machine-shop 2 to west



Plate 20; machine-shop 7, and 2 beyond, to east



Plate 21; machine-shop 4 and beyond, to south



Plate 22; store and stair to mezzanine-store



Plate 23; view to west showing machine-shop 7 and machine-shop 8 beyond



Plate 24; litho-shop to north-east



Plate 25; view showing the original open workshop, to north-west



Plate 26; king-post frames over the original workshop



Plate 27; ventilation-hatch in gable

## *METHODOLOGY*

### *Aims and objectives*

The objective of the historic building recording was to obtain a detailed analysis and description of the history, character, and date, techniques of construction, phasing and significance of the structure. Primary and secondary sources relating to the building were consulted and relevant information included in this report.

### *Documentary search, fieldwork & recording*

The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted with a search carried out over a 500m radius centred on the site. Significant aspects of the data within the HER that is relevant to the site, including an analysis of historical mapping was used in this report.

The site survey comprised a systematic internal and external perambulation of the property, observing, discussing and noting features including structural, functional and chronological aspects, which was accompanied by the creation of a photographic and drawn record. This was followed by subsequent visits to answer questions and resolve anomalies identified following the initial investigation.

### *Archive Location*

The archaeological documentary archive arising from the work will be appropriately conserved and deposited with the Northamptonshire County Museum. The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

#### *Digital archive:*

Pdf report

X22 digital images

## *BIBLIOGRAPHY*

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English Heritage, 2000. *Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe Survey; Rushden site 11*



## Appendix 1: OASIS

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### Project details

Project name	rushden factory
Short description	Historic Building Recording was carried out in March 2018 prior to both the refurbishment of the front building and redevelopment of the old workshop and site for housing. The recent interior furnishings and décor which appears to date to the 1970s, associated with the building's most recent use as the premises of Stanley L Hunt Printers, was cleared away to reveal structural and architectural details of the original factory associated with boot and shoe manufacturing. These illustrate not only the importance of the industry to the town but also the quality, craftsmanship and architectural aspirations in a wealthy country at the height of empire.
Project dates	Start: 19-03-2018
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	rush18 – Site code
Type of project	Building Recording
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	FACTORY Modern

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### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RUSHDEN Stanley L Hunt Printers
Postcode	NN10 9UJ
Study area	1875 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 95460 67068 52.293043256901 -0.600151551023 52 17 34 N 000 36 00 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 55m Max: 57m

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
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Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	jill atherton
Project supervisor	jill atherton
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Danelaw Partners LLP

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*Project archives*

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive Exists?	No

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*Project bibliography*

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Stanley L Hunt Printers, Midland Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 9UJ, Historic Building Recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Atherton. J
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Place of issue or publication	Warwickshire
URL	<a href="http://www.oasis.ac.uk">http://www.oasis.ac.uk</a>

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