

The New Bilton Drill Hall.

Edward Street, Rugby.

GR SP497755 or 52° 22' 34"N 1° 16' 16"W



1. The Old Drill Hall from Edward Street.

JB 2016.

From 1902 the Territorial Association (TA) leased a small piece of land in New Bilton from the Willans & Robinson Company. In subsequent years they steadily increased their holding by leasing additional adjacent land from the same company (3). On land acquired in 1913 they built a Drill Hall – that hall is now an Indian Community Centre off Edward Street, Rugby. In subsequent years the TA Centre was much enlarged and included several other buildings all now apparently lost. At some time, apparently after 1950, the estate was rationalised with a range of modern buildings being erected to the south east of the old Drill Hall. In 2016 the new buildings are home to a reserve unit of 4 Para.

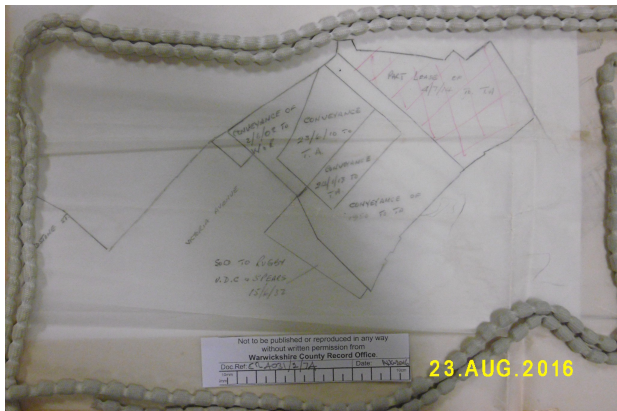


2. The Old Drill Hall from Edward Street.

JB 2016.

It is not known when the Drill Hall was built but it seems very likely that this was soon after the land was acquired in 1913. The Drill Hall is first seen on the very edge of an aerial photograph taken in 1921 (4) and can be more clearly seen in another aerial photograph from 1930 (5). Its first known appearance on an OS Map has a publication date of 1925 - an old survey but one that was revised up to 1923.

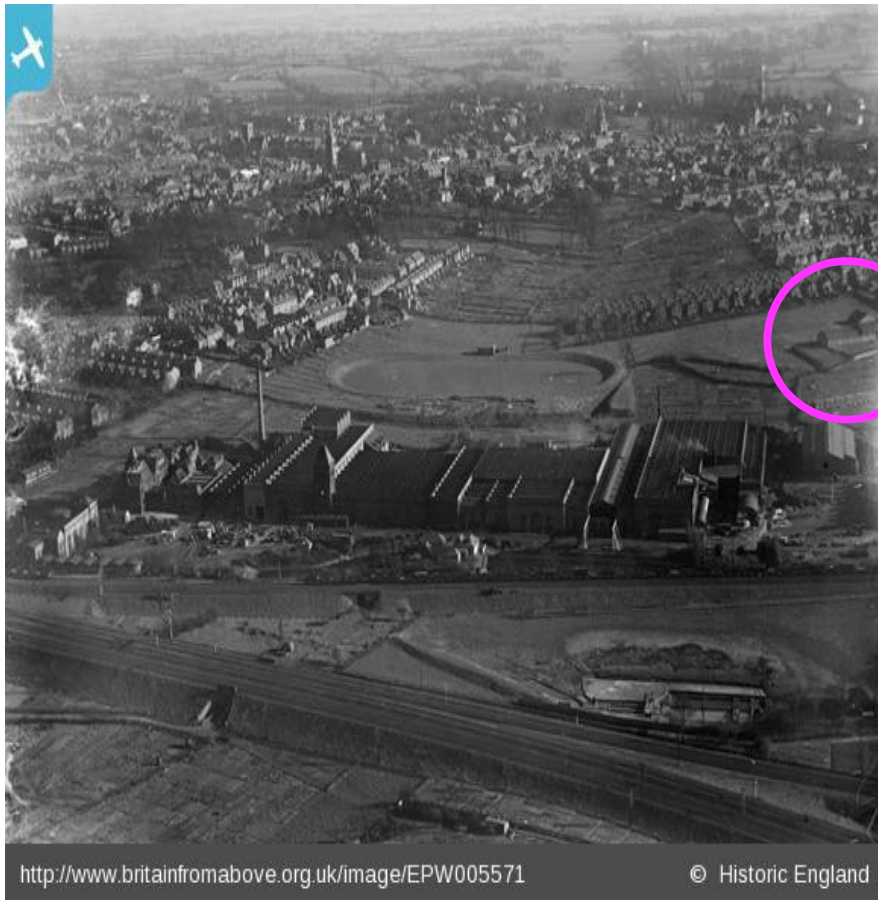
Clearly the Old Drill Hall has a new roof and it seems unlikely that the Pebble Dash is original. However, excluding the small annexes on the street side, the building form today is that first seen in the aerial photographs of 1921 and 1930.



3. Plan of the TA Holdings at New Bilton that can not be earlier than 1950. From the Willians Robertson Archive at Warwick County Record Office ref CR4031/2/74.

Note. When the territorial Association first acquired land in New Bilton, Edward Street did not exist – in the Willans & Robinson papers the site is referred to as Rowland Street.

John Brace
August 2016.



4. Archive photograph from March 1921. Historic England 2016.



5. Archive photograph from July 1930. Historic England 2016.