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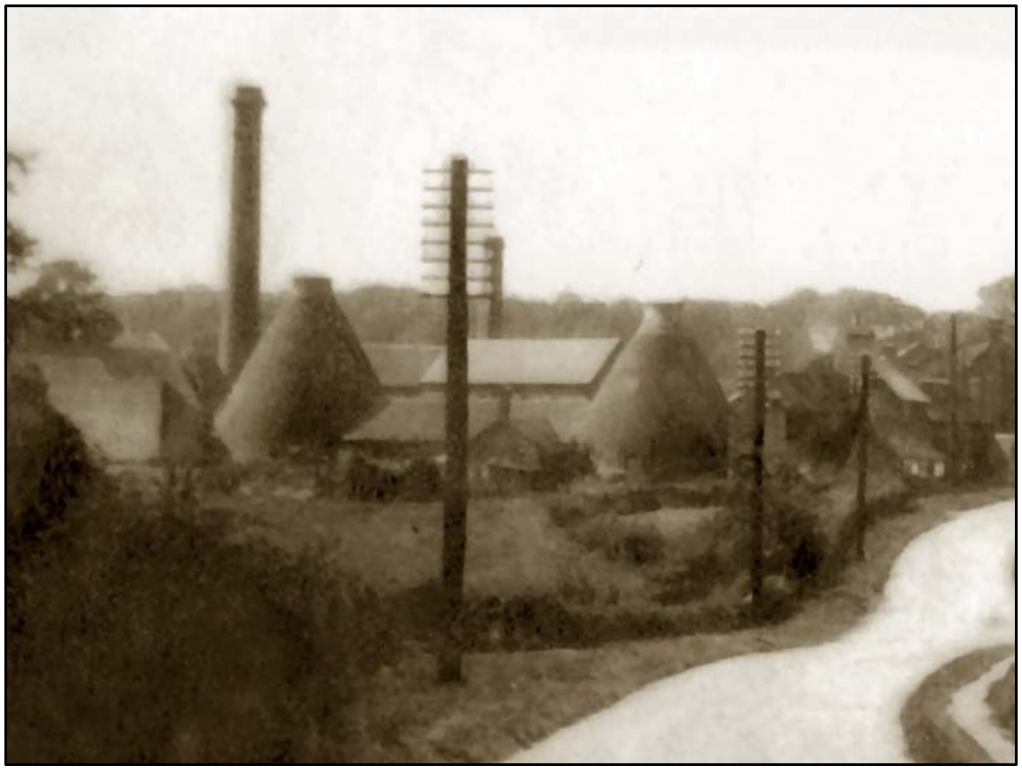
Archaeological Services

An Additional Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Former Lisk Controls Site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire (NGR SK 387 193)

Gerwyn Richards and Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No 2012-025

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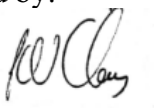
For: Bellway Homes

Approved by:

Signed: 

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Figures

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Bellway Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building survey (to English Heritage Level 2) of the former Lisk Controls site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire. Planning permission is being sought to re-develop the site for residential use. The proposed re-development requires the demolition of the existing buildings on the site of the former Coleorton Pottery.

The Pottery at Coleorton was in operation from about 1840 to 1932. This additional building survey indicates that only limited structural remains of the earliest pottery building survives within the proposed development area and is currently used as offices. The survey recorded elements of this building, most notably re-used oak king post trusses.

The remainder of the buildings date mainly from the early years of the 20th century and contain a number of interesting features including iron columns and rase marks on the timber trusses. Evidence of the later use of the buildings was also recorded.

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museums, under the museums accession number X.A94.2011.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Bellway Homes Ltd to undertake further archaeological standing building recording of the former Lisk Controls site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire (SK 386 192). Planning permission is being sought to demolish the buildings in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use. The buildings are multi-period and relate to the original Coleorton Pottery which occupied the proposed development area during the 19th and early 20th centuries and as a result, the Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to North-west Leicestershire District Council has recommended that an archaeological standing building survey to English Heritage Level 2 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006) be carried out prior to any proposed works being carried out. The survey builds upon the previous historic building assessment (Richards 2011).

An archaeological desk-based has been carried out for the proposed development area as a whole (Hunt 2010) as well as an archaeological evaluation of the Nottingham Road

frontage (Higgins 2011). An historic building assessment of the proposed development area has been carried out (Richards 2011). This assessment identified a number of the buildings as being of historical significance and as a result the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council as advisor to the planning authority requested an additional phase of building recording. This additional work concentrated on buildings 1, 3 and 4. The site visits were undertaken by Gerwyn Richards on December 5th and 6th 2011. Further site visits were made by Andrew Hyam on the 16th and 23rd of February 2012 after the soft strip and during the final demolition of Building 1.

Figure 1. Site location

The project was completed in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures (2008)*. In addition,

Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (1997)* was followed.

2. Aims and Methodology

The specific objectives of the standing building survey were as follows:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of the buildings prior to their demolition.
- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.
- The site-based element of the Historic Building Recording programme involved the production of measured survey drawings and the compilation of photographic and written records.
- Desk-based research included the analysis of readily available documentary and cartographic sources.

3. Historical background

The early history of Coleorton Pottery is vague. The first definitive information regarding the pottery is the 1841 census which lists Thomas Wilson, John Wilson and George Proudman as pot makers. Suggesting that the pottery was already a going concern by 1841, by 1842 the pottery is listed as the Wilson & Proudman Pottery. In the 1881 census William Wilson probably an heir of either Thomas or John Wilson is listed as an earthenware master, employing '17 men, 11 young women and 3 boys at the Potworks, Cole Orton'.

The census returns suggests that the pottery was at its peak between 1851 and 1881, with the largest workforce. The census returns for that period also list brickmakers and pipemakers as well as pot makers indicating diversity and overlapping trades within the pottery. At the moment it is not possible to confirm the exact period during which decorative wares were produced at the pottery, and indeed it is not clear what decorative wares were produced, although one sources describes the production of yellow glazed wares. A recent auction, however lists a two brown vases as Coleorton Ware. It is possible that more than one type of decorative ware was produced.

The pottery closed down in 1932 and during World War II the site was used for the storage of tinned foods. During the post-war years the buildings went through periods of occupation and of being empty. The longest occupation was by Lisk Industrial Controls who remained at the site until 2007, producing engineering and electrical components. After a period of dereliction, the site was taken over by Bradnor Investments, who renovated and occupied the northernmost buildings as office space and maintained the remainder the buildings as plant workshops and storage.

Figure 2
Coleorton Pottery from the north-east (unknown date, probably late 19th/early 20th century).

4. Description of the Buildings

Orientation: The recorded buildings occupy the northern and central part of the proposed development area and consist of a large single multi-phase block of buildings, fronting Nottingham Road. The long axis of the buildings is orientated approximately north to south, with the principal elevations being north-facing. Where the terms 'left', 'right', 'front' and 'back' etc. are used in the report, this is in relation to these principal elevations, as viewed from the north. Initially there are four principal buildings of interest and a fifth building included for group value included within the historic building assessment and for the purpose of that report number identification had been allocated to identify the buildings and a letter prefix added for significant partitions (Richards 2011). These numbers have been retained for the purpose of this additional work.

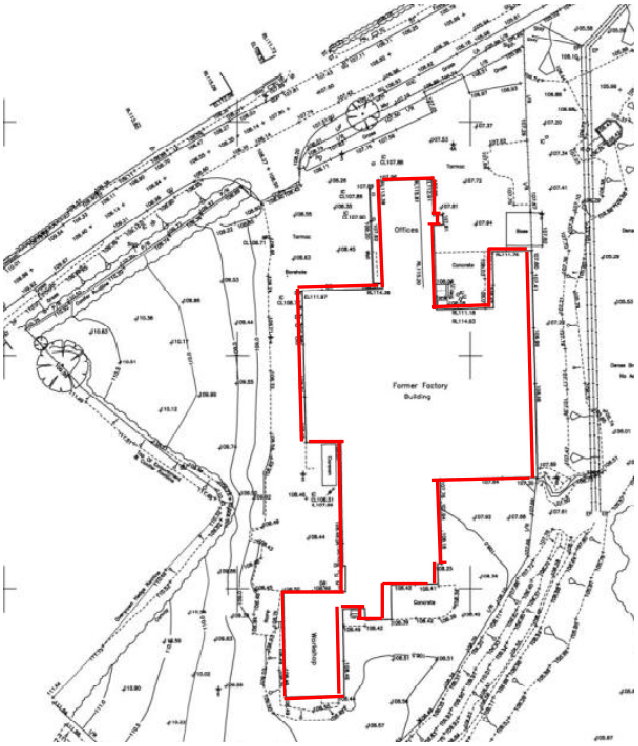

Figure 3 Outline plan of former Coleorton pottery (in red).
(Drawing supplied by Bellway Homes Ltd Grid 100m. North to the top).

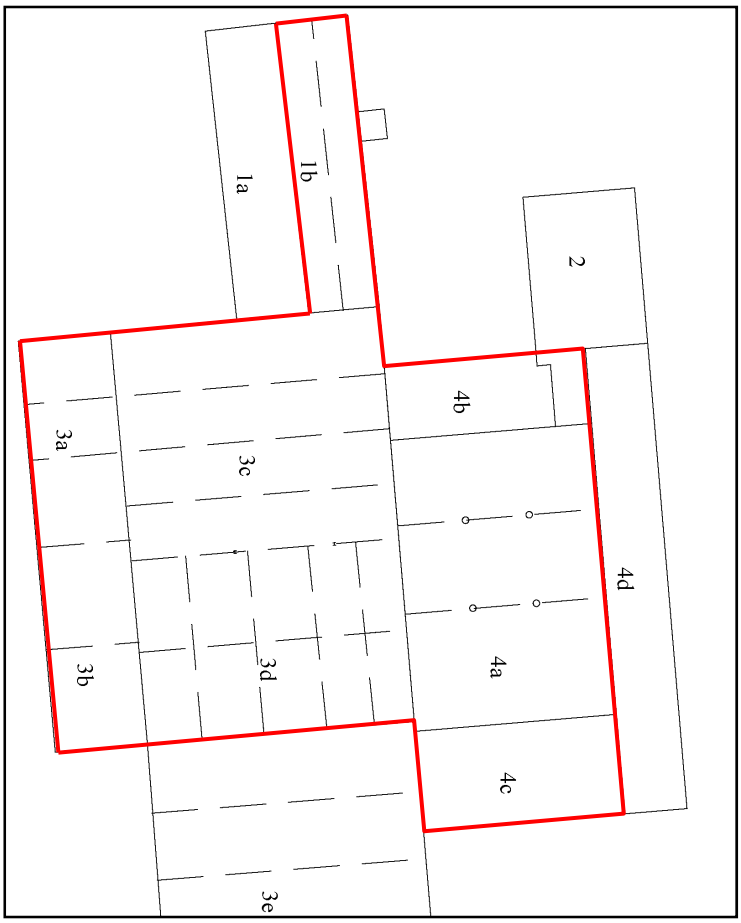

Figure 4 Buildings recorded during this phase of survey (in red).

4.1 Building 1

Building 1 is the northernmost building, adjacent to Nottingham Road. It is two storied and aligned north-south, with the gable fronting Nottingham Road. The building is stucco rendered with a pitched roof on the eastern side and a flat roof on the western side (Building 1a to the west, 1b to the east), indicating two separate phases, as well as a change in roof heights which may also suggest a third phase. The step in roof height can be seen midway along building 1b (*Figures 9 and 11*). The windows on the eastern elevation are modern uPVC while on the western elevation they are a mix of modern uPVC and older Crittal style steel-framed windows; the roof is modern ceramic roof tiles.

A limited view of the un-rendered south-facing gable confirms the east and west buildings do indeed consist of two separate phases. Building 1a is built of 20th century incised Fletton bricks and does not appear on the Ordnance Survey map until 1984. The southern gable of building 1b is built of earlier looking possibly hand-made red bricks.

Internally, there is very little of historical or architectural interest remaining within either building. Both had been extensively renovated by the new owners. The only exceptions are the partially exposed timbers, the tie beams of the roof trusses, on the first floor of building 1b (*Figures 12 & 13*). A more detailed examination of these beams indicates a clear division between the northernmost and southernmost beams. After the soft strip and before final demolition, a blocked staircase could be seen in the floor of the southern room in the north part of the building (*Figure 17*). This was presumably superseded and replaced when the western Building 1a was added.

The exposed timbers within the southern part of the building are of greater significance and are clearly earlier in date. Again the four beams are the tie beams of concealed roof trusses; visible dimensions range between 240mm and 356mm (8-14 inches), and they appear to be hand-finished hardwood. Access to the attic space within this part of the building was possible which confirmed that the trusses were King Post trusses (*Figure 15*). The birds mouth openings visible on the both the rafters and the king post itself indicate that the timbers are re-used and were originally wall plates. The southernmost truss appeared to contain a trench for a wind brace on the inside face, suggesting that it too was not in its original position and is likely to be re-used. After demolition and removal from the building it could be seen that the large tie beams contained sockets for floor joists *(Figure 14).* The rafters were socketed and bolted into the tie beams.

The northern beams are deal, with a single visible dimension of 76mm (3 inches), all of the visible beams had this same size and finish, such regularity suggesting a more recent construction date. The attic space above the northern end of the building was inaccessible during the initial building survey due to a brick gable end separating the two halves of the building. This could not be studied until the demolition of the entire building. At this stage, although it was not possible to enter the building, it could be seen that the roof structure consisted of a single King Post truss and rafters towards the northern end of the roof *(Figures 15-16).* Unlike the southern half of the building the timbers did not appear to have been reused from elsewhere. A number of additional insubstantial timbers were also present within the southern part of the northern building

roof structure forming a crude Queen Post and tie beam structure. However, it is difficult to see how well, or how necessary, this would be given the size of the King Posts.

The ground floor has been extensively renovated, although there is a single timber upright post within the southern end of Building 1b. The exact purpose of this post is unclear; however, it may be carrying some structural element, possibly a bridging beam which is concealed by the recent renovations. Following the soft-strip there was still no clear evidence about why this post should be present as it clearly did not act as a structural element. It is also apparent in this part of the building that the exterior walls are wider, approximately 500mm (19 ¾ inches) wide, as opposed to the standard 230mm (9 inch) walls seen within the northern part of the building. Further indication that this southern end is earlier pre-dates the remainder of building 1b.

Cartographic evidence (*Figures 26-29*) indicates that building 1b is the earliest remaining within the proposed development area and is likely to be part of the original Coleorton Pottery works and the roof of which can be seen in Figure 2. The photograph also confirms the division between the northern and southernmost parts of the building, showing both a change in roof level and roofing materials. The 1903 Ordnance Survey map appears to show the southern portion of Building 1b but the northern part is only depicted after the 1923 edition.

4.2 Building 3

Building 3 is the largest of the buildings within the proposed development area and consists of at least four historic phases and a modern block-built extension to the southernmost elevation (*Figures 7 & 9*). This phase of survey was limited to bays a, b and d (*Figures 4 & 7*). On the whole building 3 is a red brick building with a north-light roof, the southernmost bay (building 3d) having a pitched roof carried on fan trusses of angled steel (*Figure 20*). There are a number of roofing materials including Welsh Slate and corrugated asbestos cement. Both site inspection and cartographic sources confirm the four separate phases, with 3b being the earliest, dating to the later part of the 19th century (*Figures 26-29*). The westernmost bay consists of two clear phases with a clear change in both the external brickwork and internal roof structure. The northernmost bay (building 3a) has the same roof design as that within bay 3c (angle steel north-light trusses with longitudinal pratt trusses supporting the apex of both bays and date from the 1950s or 1960s) and is likely, therefore to be contemporary and mid 20th century in date.

The southernmost part (building 3b) has a much simpler roof design where the north-light roof is carried on only two purlins, as a result of which significant bowing has occurred (*Figure 19*). The lack of any significant architectural or historical features means the precise dating of Building 3b is uncertain; the brickwork is red brick (dimensions 8 x 2 ½ x 4 inches) laid in a Flemish Garden Wall bond (three stretchers and one header in each course) with what appears to be a lime mortar containing ash or clinker, which has the appearance of a late 19th or very early 20th century build. Cartographic sources appear to support this with a building recorded on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1903 (*Figure 29*).

The next significant phase within building 3 is 3d, the southernmost bay. This consists of a single storied building with a pitched roof carried on fan trusses of angled steel (*Figure 5*). Once again there is little of architectural or historical interest to securely date this bay. The only significant features are the roof structure and the steel work carrying the northern part of the bay. A single piece of angle steel is embossed with the makers name Frodingham Iron & Steel C^{o} Ltd. This company was established in the 1860s and remained in production until Nationalisation in 1967. Cartographic evidence for building 3d is also limited, with the only clear evidence of the building appearing on the 1960 Ordnance Survey map (*Figure 26*), while there is no evidence of the building on the 1923 Ordnance Survey map (*Figure 25*).

Because the pottery was closed in 1932 it is unlikely that 3d was built prior to World War II, and photographic evidence shows the Coleorton Pottery staff posing in front of two kilns and the western elevation of building 4 (*Figure 5*). Cartographic sources indicate that these three kilns are at least partially within the footprint of Building 3d, and although undated the clothing worn by the staff suggests a late 1920s or early 1930s date. It is almost certain, therefore, that building 3d dates from the 1950s, or very early 1960s, with the earlier date being the most likely.

Figure 5
Coleorton Pottery staff, with limited view of building 4 (approximately within the future footprint of building 3d).

3.4 Building 4

Building 4 is located to the east of building 3; there are at least two identifiable phases as well as another two sub-divisions which appear to be original partitions. The earliest phase is the large central bay; the long narrow bay on the east side of the building is a mid to late 20th century addition and is not covered by this phase of work. The building as a whole is red brick (dimension 9 inch x 3 inch 4¼ inch) laid in an English Cross Bond (alternating courses of headers and stretchers) with a north light roof. The southern roofs appear to be Welsh Slate but recent bitumen coating prevents closer identification.

The building consists of three bays, 4a (in the centre) being the largest. It has a timber-built north light roof with four cast iron columns carrying the central gutter beams. The columns are 6 inch (145 mm) in diameter with a collar and although there are no identifying marks on the columns, they are likely to have been locally produced. The trusses are bolted deal (*Figure 22*) with clear circular saw marks visible on the tie beams and iron straps on the ridge. There appear to be two separate sets of marks incised in a number of the tie beams. One set is limited to the southern ends of the tie beams at the joint with the joist and are possibly carpenters marks. There are also a number of incised marks, almost certainly rase marks visible also (*Figure 23*). Such marks were incised into Baltic pine before being shipped to the United Kingdom. It is known that the port of Gdansk used the letters K (first quality), B (second quality) and BB (third quality); subsequently other marks were added by buyers (Atkinson 2007). Unfortunately with the exception of an inverted RM (*Figure 21*) none are clearly identifiable and match these known examples, but are however similar in form to examples identified at the warehouse at the Liverpool Road Station, the Manchester terminus of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, which dates from 1830 and are likely to represent identification and denote the quality (Greene 1995).

Although slightly out of line with the trusses in the two southern bays, the those within 4b (to the north) are identical, suggesting, despite the brick-built partition, that all three bays are contemporary and represent a single phase of building. Also within 4b there is a blocked flat arched carriage entrance on the western wall, providing further confirmation that building 3c is later infilling. On the eastern wall there are a number of blocked flat arched windows, again confirming that the easternmost bay is a later addition. These windows are almost certainly those which can be seen to the left of Figure 6.

Figure 6
Coleorton Pottery staff inside building 4a (the left hand wall is the easternmost wall of 4a).

The only evidence of the buildings previous use lies within 4c, where there is an overhead hoist on a semi-circular runner which circles the work space carried on Rolled Steel Joist (RSJ) columns (*Figure 25*), the exact purpose of which is unclear. Under the ownership of Lisk Controls this workspace is recorded as being the Phosphating Shop. Phosphating is used on steel for corrosion resistance and foundation for top coats or painting. A dilute solution of phosphoric acid and phosphate salts is applied by spraying or immersion which chemically reacts with the surface of the steel to form a layer of insoluble, crystalline phosphates, thereby inhibiting corrosion. It is likely that this overhead hoist, therefore, relates to this process rather than Coleorton Pottery. It is likely that the open sumps in the south-west corner of 4c also relate to this Phosphating process. There is also a second piece of overhead machinery, the exact identity and purpose of which is unknown.

Along the southern most wall there are six flat arched windows in pairs, two of which have been blocked (*Figure 21*). There is a single original steel-framed window surviving, while externally there are deep blue splay brick sills, an undoubted Victorian flourish.

Despite initial doubt of the date of this building this additional work and a closer examination of the cartographic sources confirm that building 4 dates to the late 19th century and is recorded on the 1903 Ordnance Survey (*Figure 27*) and has remained largely un-altered since.

5. Conclusion

Despite initial assessments, the former Coleorton Pottery is a much more straightforward building than previously thought. There are elements of the early pottery buildings still standing, most notably the southernmost part of the Nottingham Road offices (building 1a) which appears to contain significant historical fabric within the roof space most notably re-used oak timber roof trusses. At the time of the initial survey it was thought possible that other historically significant features might remain within this part of the building, concealed by modern decoration. The demolition of the building did prove that the southern end of the building was the earliest phase of this group of three structures and that the roof timbers of the southern and earliest phase had indeed been re-used from elsewhere. The northern part of building 1b also revealed the internal stairs which lead to the first floor. This might suggest that the northern and southern ends of the building were not connected when first built.

The remainder of the factory buildings are of limited architectural or historical interest, but do, however have merit in so much as they represent the remains of a medium scale pottery enterprise on the fringes of the traditional heartland of the East Midlands potteries. It is likely that the factory buildings were built piecemeal as and when expansion was necessary, which is supported by cartographic sources. These sources also indicate that demolition also occurred during the pottery's lifetime, suggesting that some of the buildings were of such poor quality as to be not worth retaining. Some of the buildings, however, were retained, most notably buildings 3 and 4. Both of these date to the late 19th or early 20th century and their construction suggests that the pottery was thriving and foresaw a bright future, which unfortunately only lasted some 30 years.

6. Bibliography & Sources

Atkinson, D. 2007 *Shipbuilding & Timber Management in the Royal Dockyards 1750-1850: An Archaeological Investigation of Timber Marks*. University of St Andrews.

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Higgins, T., 2011 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Former Lisk Controls site Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire NGR SK 3860 1920* ULAS Report 2011-113.

Hunt, L. 2011 *An archaeological desk-based assessment for land at former Lisk Controls site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire (SK 386 192).* ULAS Report 2011-034.

PPS 5 2010 *Planning and the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2010).

Richards, G., 2011 *An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Former Lisk Controls Site, formerly Coleorton Pottery, Lount, Leicestershire, (NGR SK 386 192).* ULAS Report 2011-112.

Sources

HER Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland (Leicestershire County Council: Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record, County Hall)

ROLLR Records Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland maps and records.
OS MAPS: 25 inch maps: Leicestershire Series sheet XVI.6, 1st Edition (1882); 2nd Edition (1903); 1923 Edition.
1: 2500, SK3819, 1960 Edition.
1: 1250, SK3819, 1984 Edition.

Magic Attic, Swadlincote Figures 5 and 6.

John McDonald, Coleorton Heritage warden

7. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

4 A2 permagraph sheet containing sketch plans & site notes
DVD containing 133 digital images from initial survey plus a second DVD containing 45 digital images from demolition survey
4 A4 contact sheets from initial survey plus one from demolition survey
133 Black & White negatives and contact prints
4 A4 photo record sheets
Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2012-025)
Unbound copy of An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of the Former Lisk Controls Site, formerly Coleorton Pottery, Lount, Leicestershire, (NGR SK 386 192). ULAS Report No 2011-112.

The archive will be held at Leicestershire County Council Museums under the Accession Number X.A94.2011.

A version of the summary (above) will be submitted to the editor of the local journal *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* for inclusion in the next edition.

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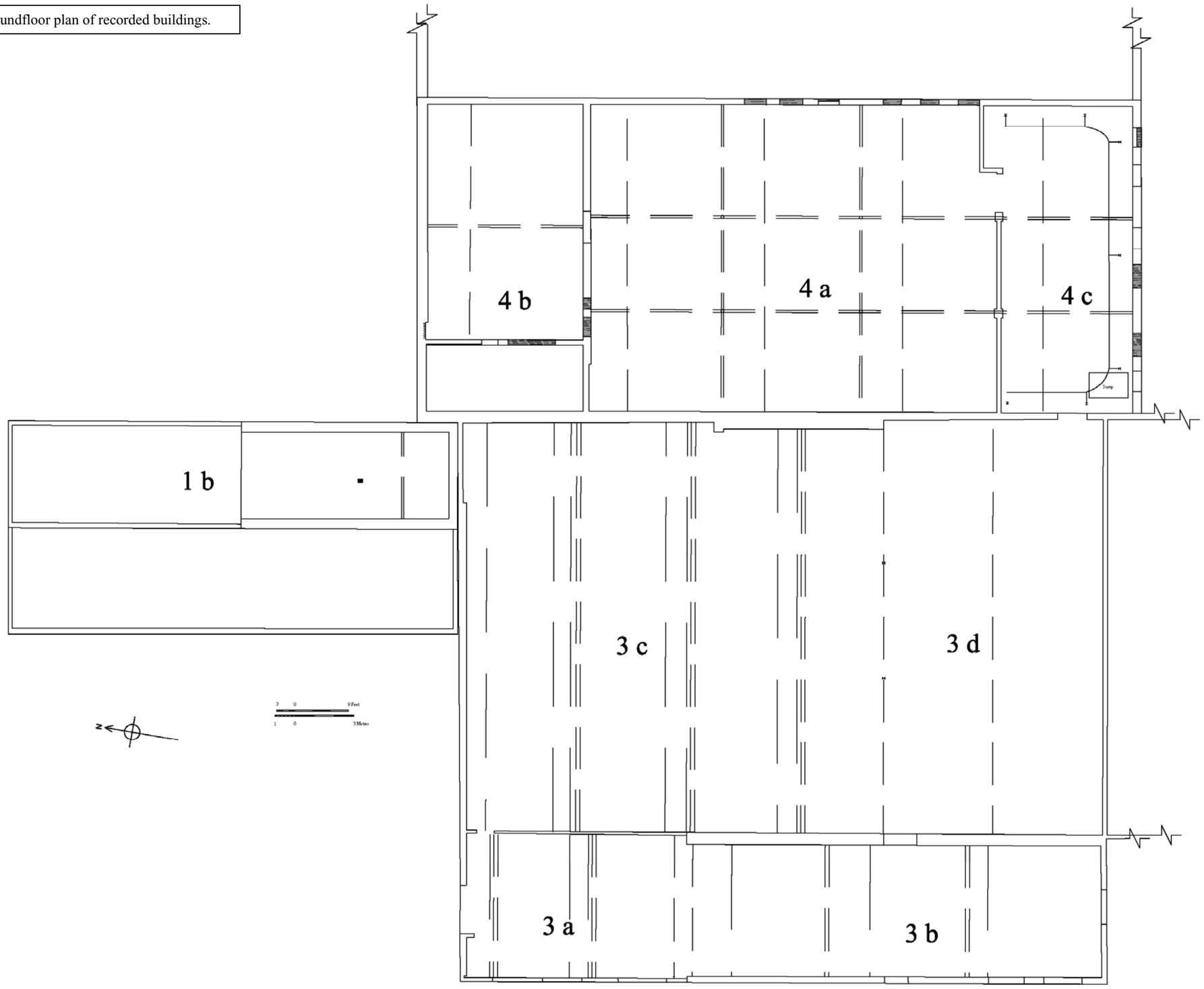
Figure 7 Groundfloor plan of recorded buildings.



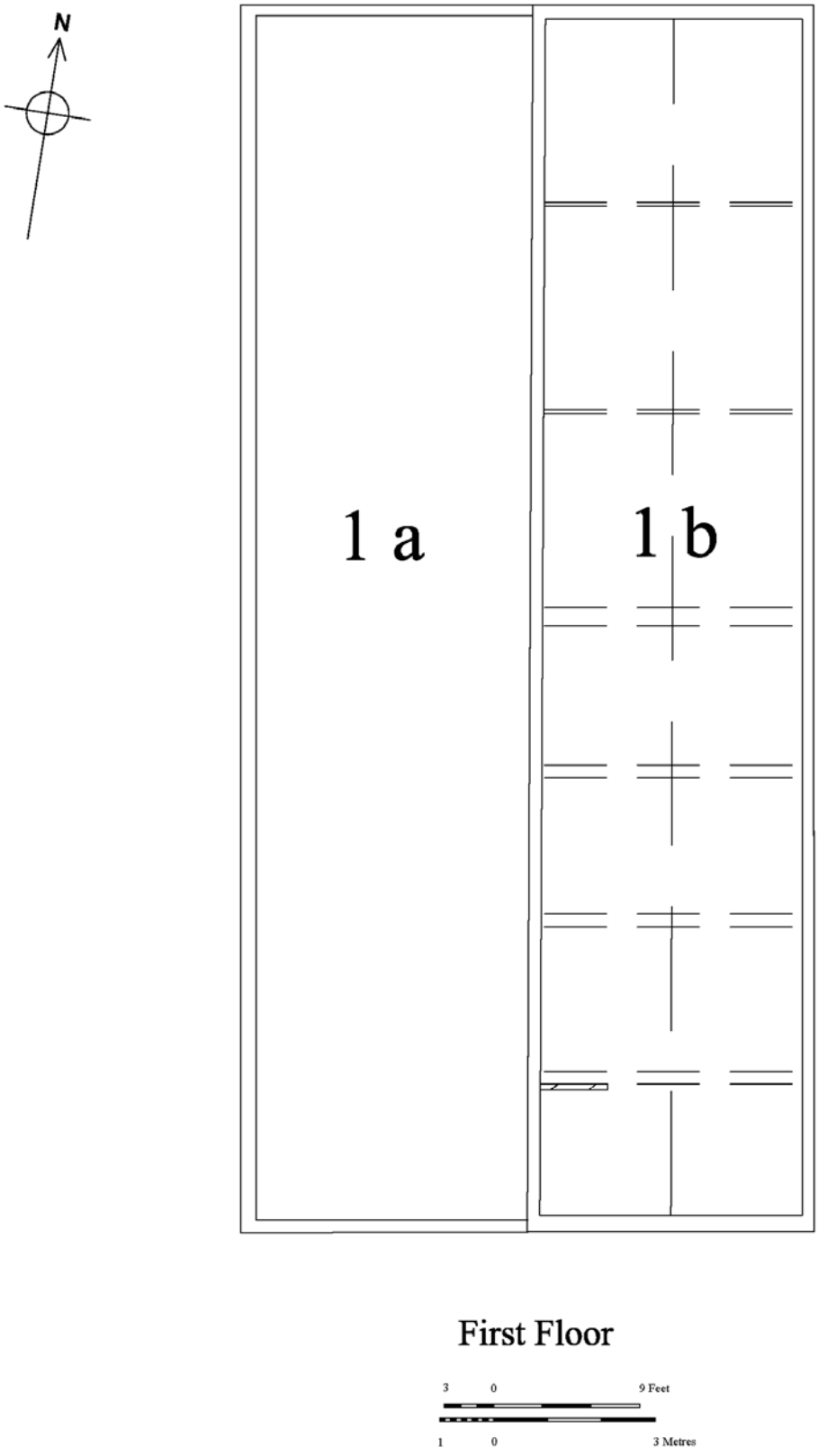


Figure 8 First floor plan of building 1.

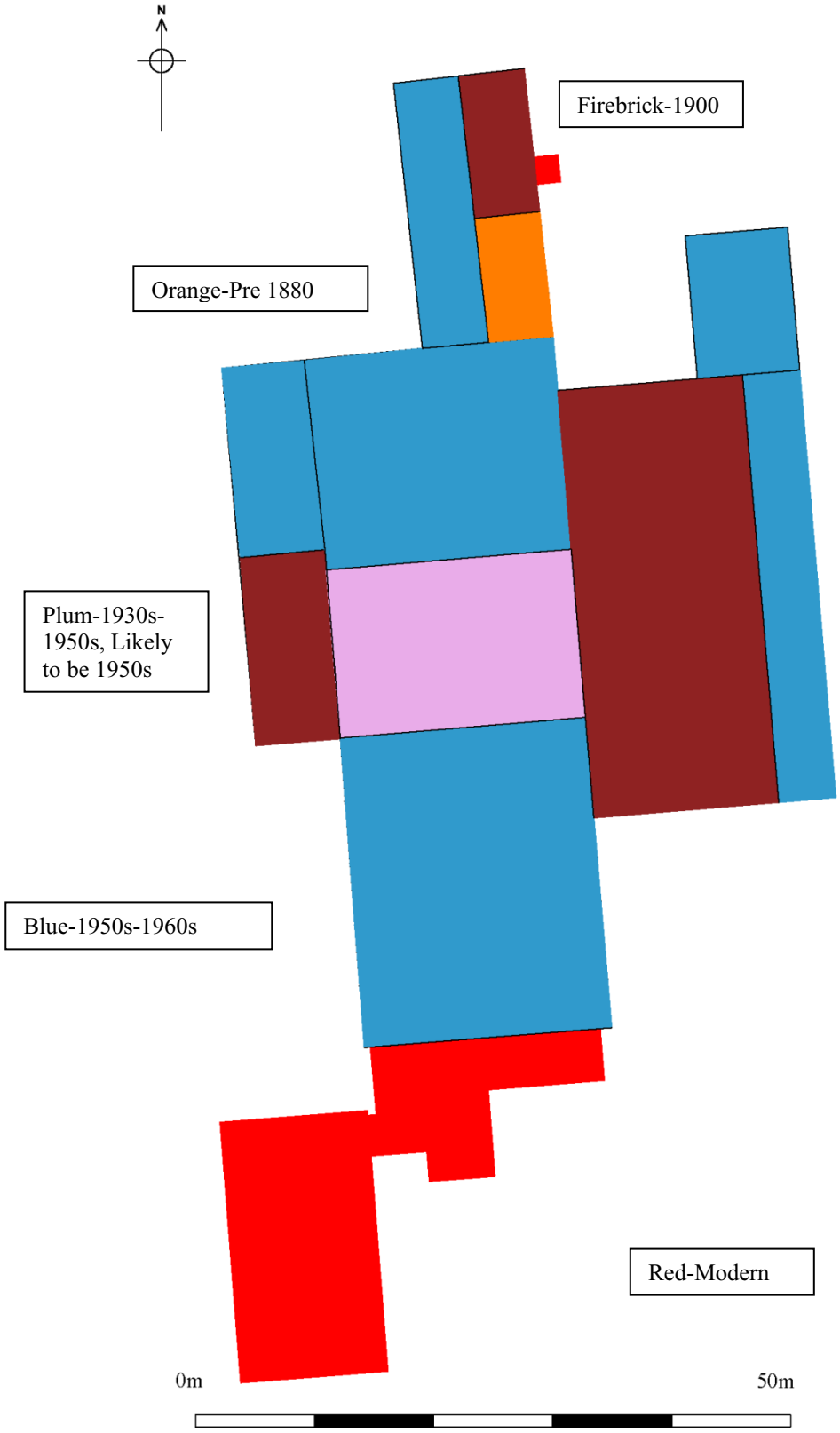


Figure 9 Block plan showing revised phasing.

8. Colour Plates

Figure 10 North-facing elevation of building 1.

Figure 11 East facing elevation of building 1b, showing change in roof line.

Figure 12 Tie beams visible within building 1b.

Figure 13 Tie beams visible within building 1b.

Figure 14 Tie beams from Building 1b after removal

Figure 15 Roof truss within building 1b.

Figure 16 Building 1b, northern end during demolition

Figure 17 Removed staircase Building 1b, south room northern end

Figure 18 Building 3b, west facing elevation.

Figure 19 Roof construction within building 3b.

Figure 20 Roof construction within building 3d.

Figure 21 South facing elevation of building 4.

Figure 22 Roof truss within building 4.

Figure 23 Rase marks on tie beam, building 4.

Figure 24 Inverted RM on tie beam, building 4.

Figure 25 Hoist & tracking mechanism, building 4.

9. Cartographic Sources

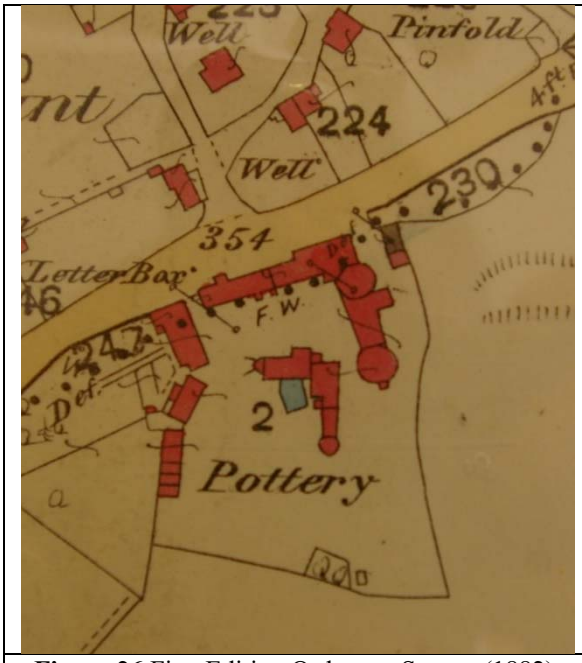


Figure 26 First Edition Ordnance Survey (1882)

Figure 27 Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1903)

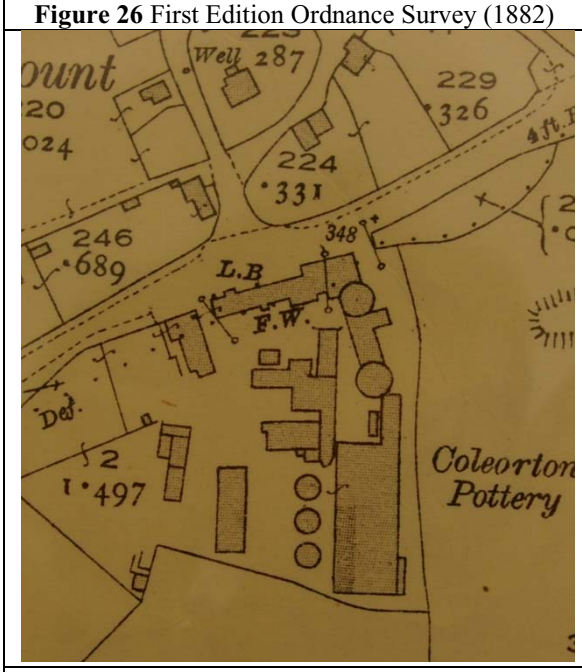


Figure 28 1923 Edition Ordnance Survey

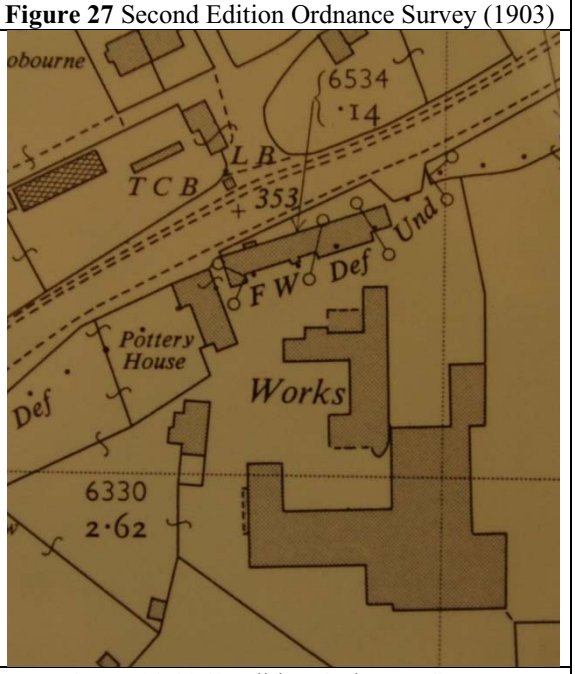


Figure 29 1960 Edition Ordnance Survey

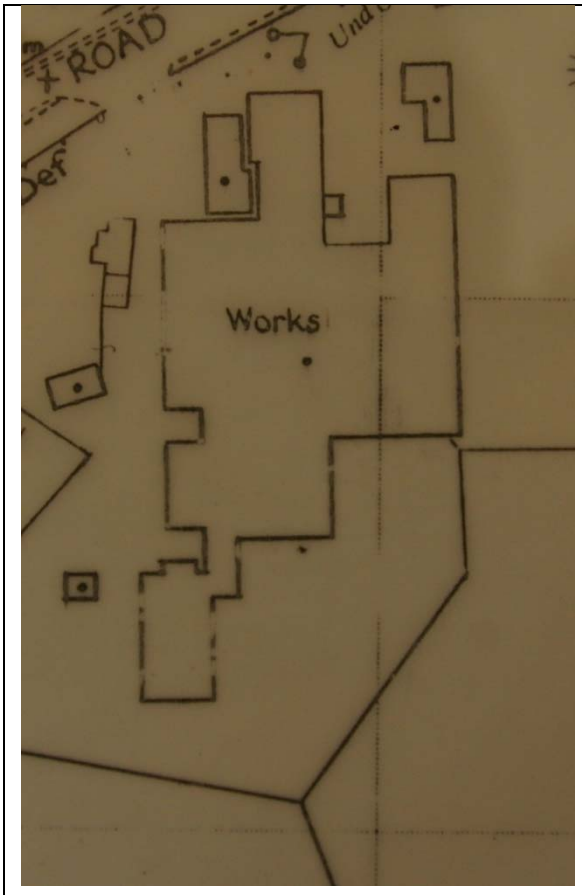


Figure 30 1984 Edition Ordnance Survey

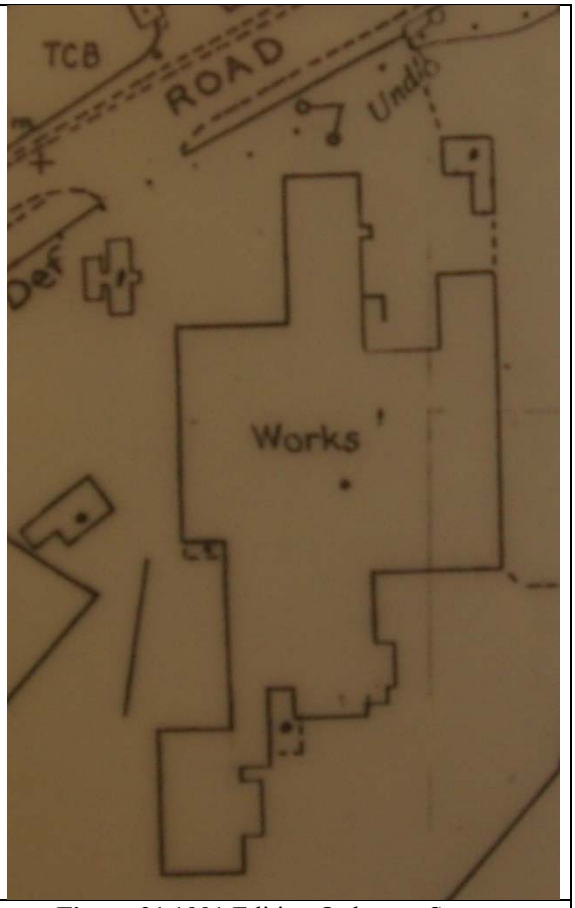


Figure 31 1991 Edition Ordnance Survey

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