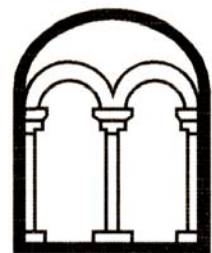


**BUILDING ON McCONNELL DRIVE
WOLVERTON
MILTON KEYNES**

**ARCHITECTURAL
BUILDING RECORDING**

Albion
archaeology



**BUILDING ON McCONNELL DRIVE
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**ARCHITECTURAL
BUILDING RECORDING**

Document: 2013/47 ver.1.1

Project no: MD1448
HER event number: 1340
OASIS ref: albionar1-146124

Issue date: 25th March 2013

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Produced for:
Kaby Developments Ltd
Milton Keynes



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All photographs by Albion Archaeology



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a report as possible, within the terms of the specification. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact 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 facts or opinions expressed in this document.

This report has been prepared by Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer) and approved by Hester Cooper-Reade (Business Manager). The photographic survey was undertaken by Nigel Macbeth (freelance photographer).

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Kaby Developments Ltd. and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Nick Crank, Senior Archaeological Officer of Milton Keynes Council. The map data and licence was supplied by the Milton Keynes HER.

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Version History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>19/03/2013</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>1.1</i>	<i>25/03/2013</i>	<i>Added OASIS reference number</i>

Structure of this report

This report presents the results of an architectural recording survey of a building in a former goods yard on McConnell Drive, Wolverton. After an introductory section and sufficient historical background to place the building in context, the results of the survey are described. A selection of photographs and plans are included to illustrate the text. A synthesis of the results and the conclusions of the survey are presented in Section 3. Section 4 represents the bibliography and list of sources consulted, and Section 5 contains the appendices with a detailed list of all photographs taken as part of the Level 2 survey.



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (08/00479/FUL) was granted in 2008 for the conversion of the existing building at the former scrap yard on McConnell Drive, Wolverton, into two one-bedroom flats and the erection of a new building containing 12 one-bedroom flats. On the advice of the Milton Keynes Council Senior Archaeological Officer (SAO) a condition was attached to the planning permission in 2008, requiring the implementation of a programme of architectural recording works of the extant structure on the site prior to its conversion.

The archaeological condition has been updated to reflect the changes in planning legislation over the last 5 years and is currently in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, which was published on 27 March 2012.

The building survey took place on 14th February 2013 and this report describes the results and presents a selection of the photographs taken. The full archive will be submitted to Milton Keynes Museum.

Wolverton lies in the north-western part of Milton Keynes c. 2.5m east of the A5. Wolverton Works was built by the London and Birmingham Railway which became part of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1846. Wolverton is the world's first planned railway works town and was designated a Conservation Area in 2001.

The building that stands in the north-western corner of the Development Area originally was part of a goods yard within the Wolverton railway works. Map evidence shows that the goods yard consisted of a large rectangular goods shed in which trains were directed via turntables off the main line. A small office was attached to the western side of the goods shed. The site of the current building was occupied by a stable block with a number of small outhouses to the north.

Goods most likely arrived at the shed and were transferred to horse-drawn carts in order to be re-distributed to areas beyond the works and the town. Around 1900 the goods yard was connected to the Wolverton and Stony Stratford Light Railway and the stable block demolished.

Between 1900 and 1925 the building currently on site was built, most likely as a larger and purpose built administrative building. No original fixtures and fittings survive apart from a wooden partition inside the building that would have formed a separate office space, most likely for the head clerk or manager.

The building and goods yard on McConnell Drive were a small but nevertheless important component of the Wolverton Works and the wider transport industry associated with the town. The project has highlighted the role of the goods yard and associated infrastructure in taking goods that arrived by rail on the main north-south transport route and then re-distributing them to locations away from the main rail line. The physical remains on the site as well cartographic and map evidence has shown how this changed from transport by horse and cart to light railway and tram and eventually to lorries.





1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning permission (08/00479/FUL) was granted in 2008 for the conversion of the existing building at the former scrap yard on McConnell Drive, Wolverton, into two one-bedroom flats and the erection of a new building containing 12 one-bedroom flats. In 2010 the applicant applied for extension of the time limit for this planning application (10/02515/FUL).

On the advice of the Milton Keynes Council Senior Archaeological Officer (SAO) a condition was attached to the planning permission in 2008, requiring the implementation of a programme of architectural recording works of the extant structure on the site prior to its conversion.

The archaeological condition has been updated to reflect the changes in planning legislation over the last 5 years and is currently in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the *National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, which was published on 27 March 2012.

Albion Archaeology was been commissioned to carry out the programme of architectural recording works in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Wolverton lies in the north-western part of Milton Keynes c. 2.5m east of the A5. The Development Area (DA) lies on the western side of McConnell Drive to the south of its junction with Church Street (Figure 1). The existing building lies in the north-western corner of the DA and is in a derelict state. The surface of the DA consists of overgrown concrete and its boundaries are planted with mature trees and shrubs. To the west and south the site is bordered by the residential development along St. George's Way.

The DA lies at the base of the shallow rise in ground towards the west at a level of c. 75m OD. It is centred on national grid reference SP8195 4104.

The geology of the area is boulder clay and morainic drift overlying solid Great Oolite and Cornbrash beds. The River Great Ouse is located c. 750m to the north-east of the site, and this has deposits of alluvium along either side of its course.



2. ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 *Wolverton Railway Works*

The building that stands in the north-western corner of the Development Area originally was part of a goods yard within the Wolverton railway works.

Robert Stephenson chose the site of the present Wolverton as a convenient half-way point on the newly built railway line between London and Birmingham for the servicing and refuelling of locomotives in 1838. He also built a station and refreshment rooms to the north of the canal, on a high embankment of made up ground (see below). The site was originally known as 'Wolverton Station' before it rapidly grew with the expansion of the works into the 'new' Wolverton village.

Wolverton Works was built by the London and Birmingham Railway which became part of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1846. From 1851 to 1862 the famous Class 31 locomotives, nicknamed 'Bloomers', were constructed at the locomotive erecting shops in the Triangular Building for the London and North Western Railway. When locomotive building moved to Crewe in 1863, Wolverton became the main carriage works for the company and it remained so until 1992 when it was ceased to be used by the railway.

Several comprehensive accounts of the foundation, development and appearance of Wolverton Works have been written. These often include detailed descriptions and photographs of the components of the works, including the Royal Train Shed, Triangular Building and Reading Room. The publications range from contemporary descriptions of the Works and Railway Station shortly after their foundation (Whishaw 1842, Head 1849, Dickens 1854) to later appraisals of the Works at the beginning of this century (Townshend 1907, Gairns 1914).

The story of Wolverton Works has also been told in an informative book that collates much of the historic documentary and photographic evidence and which has been invaluable in the compiling of this report (West 1982). West also published further volumes on Wolverton, including many historic photographs taking in all aspects of Wolverton, its works and workforce (West 1987, 1988, 1993). More recently the works and their history have been described in detail in a volume published by The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society (Jack 2001).

The Royal Train Shed and Triangular Building, which are one of the few remaining upstanding buildings of the works to the north-east of the DA, were part of a programme of archaeological and architectural recording work prior to their conversion into residential use in 2006-2008 (Albion Archaeology 2008).

2.2 *The Goods Yard and Building on McConnell Drive*

Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record (HER) holds a series of detailed hand drawn maps that show the development of the works from their beginning in 1840 to the early 20th century.



The goods yard and associated building is first shown on a map from 1860 (Figure 2). The yard lies sandwiched between the main north-south railway line to the east and several rows of tightly packed railway workers cottages along Young Street, Glyn Square, Ledsam Street and Creed Street to the west.

The yard consists of an east-west aligned shed with an internal siding and an external siding along its southern side, both of which are connected to the main line via turntables. The railway shed has a small square extension on its north-western side. A larger, detached square building lies to the north-west of the shed. The yard is enclosed by a boundary wall.

The railway tracks leading into and along the building are also enclosed by a black line on the map, suggesting that they may have been within their own cutting. The ground of the goods yard lies at a considerably higher elevation than the main north-south line (and the current McConnell Drive) but the shunting and access of wagons on the sidings into the yard would have needed level ground.

Subsequent maps of the Wolverton Works and the first edition OS map show the layout of the site unchanged but the maps give increasingly detailed information. On a Works map of 1882 the railway shed is marked “Goods” (Figure 3). The latter map also shows a clear access gate within the northern side of the boundary of the yard. This leads the open area to the east of Young Street and the residential part of Wolverton beyond.

On an 1886 map of the works the small square building on the site of the current building is marked “stables”, the shed “Goods shed” and the approach to the goods yard “Approach to coal yard” (Figure 4). It is possible that a large number of the goods arriving at the yard consisted of coal, that was then transported by horse and cart (stabled on site) to the residential area of the works through the gate in the northern wall of the yard.

On a map of 1897 the clearly marked “Goods Warehouse” has a narrow extension on its north-western side and the stables building has acquired three small buildings immediately to its north, between the building and the boundary wall (Figure 5). Their function is unclear.

Detailed information on the development of the goods yards is given on an undated map of the Works. The HER describes it as “post-1887” but the map regression and comparison with the OS map of 1900 suggests that it most likely dates from between 1897-1900 (Figures 6 and 7). The Wolverton Works map shows that the square stable building has disappeared, most likely it was demolished. The three little buildings near the northern boundary wall still survive and are now marked “stables”. The main goods shed is marked “Goods Warehouse” and its small north-western extension, which had been there since 1860, is marked “office”.

The most interesting development is the track that now runs from the goods shed through the gate in the northern goods yard wall, via Glyn Square and Ledsam Street, to join the *Wolverton and Stoney Stratford District Light Railway*



(STRAM) line that ran along the Stratford Road. It seems likely that transportation of goods by horse-and-cart was now replaced by a transport by light railway and a large stable block was no longer required.

The second edition OS map of 1900 mirrors this development in that it only shows the goods shed and the small structures near the northern boundary wall (Figure 6). The square building on the site of the current building is not shown.

This map regression shows that the building currently on the site was not built until the beginning of the 20th century. The third edition OS map of 1925 shows the footprint of the building as it is in its current form, including its south-western extension (Figure 8). The external form and fabric of the building suggests that it was built in one phase - later alterations most likely only affected the interior of the building (see Section 3.4).

The goods shed and building stood on the site until at least the late 20th century. An aerial photograph of the works in 1949-59 prior to the construction of McConnell Drive (Figure 9) shows the goods shed and building in the foreground, still being part of the Works.

In a photograph of 1959-1970 the 19th century terraced houses to the west of the yard are being replaced with the modern blocks of flats still adjacent to the development area. The building and goods shed are just visible at the edge of the photograph. On the 1969-1970 OS map the goods shed and sidings are gone and just the building remains on the site.

The more recent history of the Development Area was as a scrap yard. The plot is currently empty, save for the extant building.



3. HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

3.1 Aims and Objectives

The objectives of the historic building recording were to record a class of building associated with the pioneering planned Wolverton Railway Works.

In order to do this the project provides a comprehensive visual record of the structures prior to the conversion of the buildings. The survey was to English Heritage Level 2 standard. It also undertook a review of the local and regional historical context, with reference to the appropriate regional research agendas. This is adequately detailed to place the findings of the recording in context.

The project aimed to produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to 'preserve by record' the buildings in their current form prior to demolition. The photographic archive and report will be deposited with Milton Keynes Museum. A copy of the report will also be submitted to the Historic Environment Record (HER). Plans and a selections of photographs are given in the figures at the end of this report.

3.2 Methodology

The methodology for the project is set out in detail in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion 2013). Throughout the project the following standards were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd ed, 2001).
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> (2009) • <i>Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good practice</i> (2006)
• IfA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct;</i> • <i>Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i> (2008); • <i>Standards and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i> (2012).
• Milton Keynes Council SAO	<i>Brief for Architectural Recording at McConnell Drive, Wolverton. Nick Crank, Archaeological Officer, Date: 17th October 2008.</i>

The building was in very bad repair with a partially collapsed main roof, loose brickwork and overgrown southern and western external walls. Rubbish was dumped within and around the building. Therefore not all parts of the building could be accessed fully.



3.3 General Description of Site and Buildings

The Development Area encompasses the whole area of the former goods yard which consists of a rectangular plot of land at the junction of McConnell Drive and Church Street. Access is from Church Street through a mesh fire fence and gate.

The yard is bounded in the south and west by a substantial wall made out of large granite blocks (Figure 10). This serves as a retaining wall for the rise in topography to the west and south. It is likely that when the yard was part of the Works its surface was considerably lower in order to provide level access from the railway line to the east. The current ground level may have been raised with arisings from the construction of McConnell Drive and there is now a considerable embankment down to McConnell Drive.

The plot is now empty, save for the extant industrial building in the north-western corner of the yard (Figure 10). The building is rectangular in plan and on a NNW-SSE alignment. It consists of a main rectangular cell with an extension at its western and southern side.

The building is built of red brick in English bond. The main façade faces eastwards towards the yard. It has a single narrow door near the northern side of the building and four equally spaced rectangular high. The northern side of the building has two equally spaced windows and there is also a window in the southern and wall of the building. The latter are close the eastern and southern corner of the building respectively, in order to accommodate the extension curving around the south-western side of the building. All windows have moulded stone sills, flat brick arches and the remains of wooden frames (Figures 11 and 12).

A simple decorative brick frieze runs around the top of the building and consists of three courses of bricks in header bond, with the middle course having alternate protruding and recessed bricks.

Currently the building has a low hipped roof partially covered in wooden slats. This would originally have been covered in tiles. A wooden ventilation chimney sits centrally on the roof. The remains of a tin oven pipe still hang from the chimney into the interior of the building. A conically shaped ventilation cover had fallen from the roof to the ground (Figure 13).

The main brick-built chimney of the building lies centrally within its eastern wall. This initially served a small open fireplace. This was later blocked and replaced with rectangular and circular openings in order to provide ventilation attachments for an internal oven or heater (Figure 12).

The interior of the building was completely stripped and filled with rubbish and partial demolition debris fallen from the roof. The floor was wooden and had partially decayed to reveal the floor bearing timbers. The remains of plaster survives on some of the walls with the lower part of each wall painted white (Figures 14-16). No original fixtures and fittings survived.



A wooden partition partially survived within the north-western corner of the room (Figure 15). This extended the full height of the room and probably formed a special office area in the corner of the building. It was painted a light blue colour with a darker blue in its lower section. Some of the wooden panels had decayed so it is impossible to say whether the screen contained windows or glass panels or whether it formed a solid wooden partition.

The south-western extension is lower than the main building and currently has no roof. It extends around the south-western corner of the building and originally the hipped roof extended all the way from the main gable over the extension. There are two parts of this extension: the western part is accessible for the interior of the main room, the southern part is only accessible from the outside of the building.

Within the western extension are four small rooms, accessible through two adjacent doors from the main room of the building (Figure 16). The two northernmost rooms had simple, utilitarian white tiles halfway up their walls and were used as toilets and washrooms. The central rooms were plastered with a lower c. 2 foot high painted border, while the southernmost rooms consisted of whitewashed brickwork. All rooms had simple, small and rectangular windows with wooden frames. One four-panelled wooden door survives. A further three-panelled door lies propped against the wall within the main room, suggesting that some of the doors had upper glass panes to let in light.

The southern part of the extension has a curved outer wall that forms an opening without a door between the end of the wall and the main building. This leads to an open cell, half of which is partitioned off with a brick wall, less than head height. A smaller closed room lies beyond.

The yard around the building is overgrown and partially covered in tarmac. In a few places there are remains of a cobble stone plaster made up of rectangular

3.4 Development and Phasing

The map regression has shown that the building was built in one phase sometime between 1900 and 1925, after the demolition of the earlier, square stable building on the site shown on earlier maps. The south-western extension was built at the same time as the main room. Small internal alterations may have taken place throughout the 20th century, like the adaptation of some of the rooms within the extension into washrooms and toilets and the blocking and conversion of the small open fireplace to accommodate a closed heating system.

3.5 Function and Design

The building was located within an area of the Wolverton Works that always functioned as a goods yard and it is likely that it was built to house extended office and administrative facilities related to the arrival and departure of goods. Its form is purely functional with sparse decorative highlights restricted to a change in brick pattern along the top of the walls below the roof line. The more decorative Flemish Bond, which was used at a time when English bond had become the norm, also makes a concession to a more decorative appearance of the building



and its use as an administrative building used by employees. It is also in-keeping with the main façades of other, earlier buildings of the Wolverton Works.

Originally the office of the goods yard was very small and attached to the western end of the goods shed (Figures 2-7, labelled as “office” in Figure 7). The site of the current building was originally occupied by a stable block, but with the changeover of goods carriage from horse and cart to the tramway and later lorries (see Section 2.2), the stable block was no longer required and the space could be re-used for a larger administrative building.

No fixtures and fittings survive within the building that could give a further indication as to its function. The wooden partition within its north-western corner suggests that this part of the building was subdivided into a separate office space. The remainder of the main room would have been an open space, heated by the centrally placed oven and a further heater near the eastern main chimney. The only access was by the fairly narrow door in the eastern wall, so no goods would have been housed within the building.

The layout of the southern part of the extension is consistent with male toilet facilities comprising a walled off open urinal at the front and a closed cubicle behind. It could only be accessed from the outside and could have been used by goods yard workers and office staff alike. It is possible that when the building was adapted to modern use, with the inclusion of women within the staff, the toilets were later re-located inside. However, the external structure was inaccessible due to blockage by rubbish and vegetation and this interpretation is speculation.

3.6 Conclusion

The project recorded the remains of a building that was part of the Wolverton Railway Works. Wolverton is the world’s first planned railway works town and was designated a Conservation Area in 2001. The development site represents a small surviving element of the Wolverton Works within an area that has been substantially re-developed and remodelled in the latter half of the 20th century, and this is reflected in its inclusion within the Conservation Area.

The research framework for the eastern counties highlights the importance of post-1840s building stock and recommends that building recoding as part of the planning system should become the norm (Medlycott 2011, 78). The impact of primary communication routes on the region’s development and character is also a research topic on the agenda both in the eastern region (Medlycott 2011) and the East Midlands (Vyner *et al* 2012).

The building and goods yard on McConnell Drive were a small but nevertheless important component of the Wolverton Works and the wider transport industry. The project has highlighted the role of the goods yard and associated infrastructure in taking goods that arrived by rail on the main north-south transport route and then re-distributing them to locations away from the main rail line. The physical remains on the site as well cartographic and map evidence has shown how this changed from transport by horse and cart to light railway and tram and eventually to lorries.



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5. APPENDICES

5.1 List of Digital Photographs

Image no.	Description
01	East-facing side of building
02	East-facing side of building oblique
03	South-eastern corner of building
04	South facing side of building
05	East facing boundary wall of goods yard
06	Boundary wall, modern development and building, looking NNW
07	North-facing boundary wall of goods yard
08	North-facing boundary wall of goods yard
09	North-facing side of building
010	North-western corner of building
011	West-facing side of building
012	North-western corner of building
013	North-western corner of building
014	Internal, main room, eastern side of building, looking SSE
015	Internal, main room, eastern side of building, looking SSE
016	Internal, main room, looking south
017	Internal, main room, looking SW
018	Internal, main room, eastern side of building, looking south
019	Internal, main room, looking south and into roof space
020	Internal, main room, looking SE
021	Internal, main room, wooden partition, northern part of building, looking NE
022	Internal main room, roof
023	Internal, main room, roof, looking north
024	Internal, main room, within wooden partition, looking east
025	Internal, main room, within wooden partition, looking west
026	Internal, main room, within wooden partition, looking east out of window
027	Internal, main room, within wooden partition, looking north, NW window
028	Internal, main room, looking east, two northern windows
029	Internal, main room, looking east, two southern windows
030	Internal, main room, looking north-east
031	Internal, main room, looking north and into roof
032	Internal, main room, looking east
033	Internal, main room, looking south, SE window
034	Internal, main room, SW end, looking west towards doors to western extension
035	Internal, main room, looking west
036	Western extension, central room, looking WNW



Image no.	Description
037	Western extension, looking north from central room
038	Western extension, looking south from central room
039	Western extension, looking west
040	Western extension, looking south-west
041	Western extension, southern room , looking south-west
042	Western extension, looking north from southern room
043	Internal main room, looking north
044	Internal main room, looking north
045	Internal main room, wooden screen, side facing main entrance in east
046	External, eastern side, window sill detail
047	External eastern side, railway plaque
048	External eastern side, window flat arch and roof detail
049	Oven pipe hood chimney fallen from roof
050	Oven pipe hood chimney fallen from roof
051	Oven pipe hood chimney fallen from roof
052	External eastern side, two northern windows
053	External eastern side, two southern windows
054	Goods yard boundary wall, looking SSE
055	Goods yard boundary wall, looking south
056	Goods yard boundary wall, looking SW
057	Goods yard boundary wall, looking W
058	Goods yard and building looking NW
059	Goods yard, building and access from Church Street, looking N
060	Cobble surface below concrete in yard

5.2 List of Black and White Photographs

Negative no.	Description
1	Building external view
2	Building external view
3	Building external view
4	Building external view



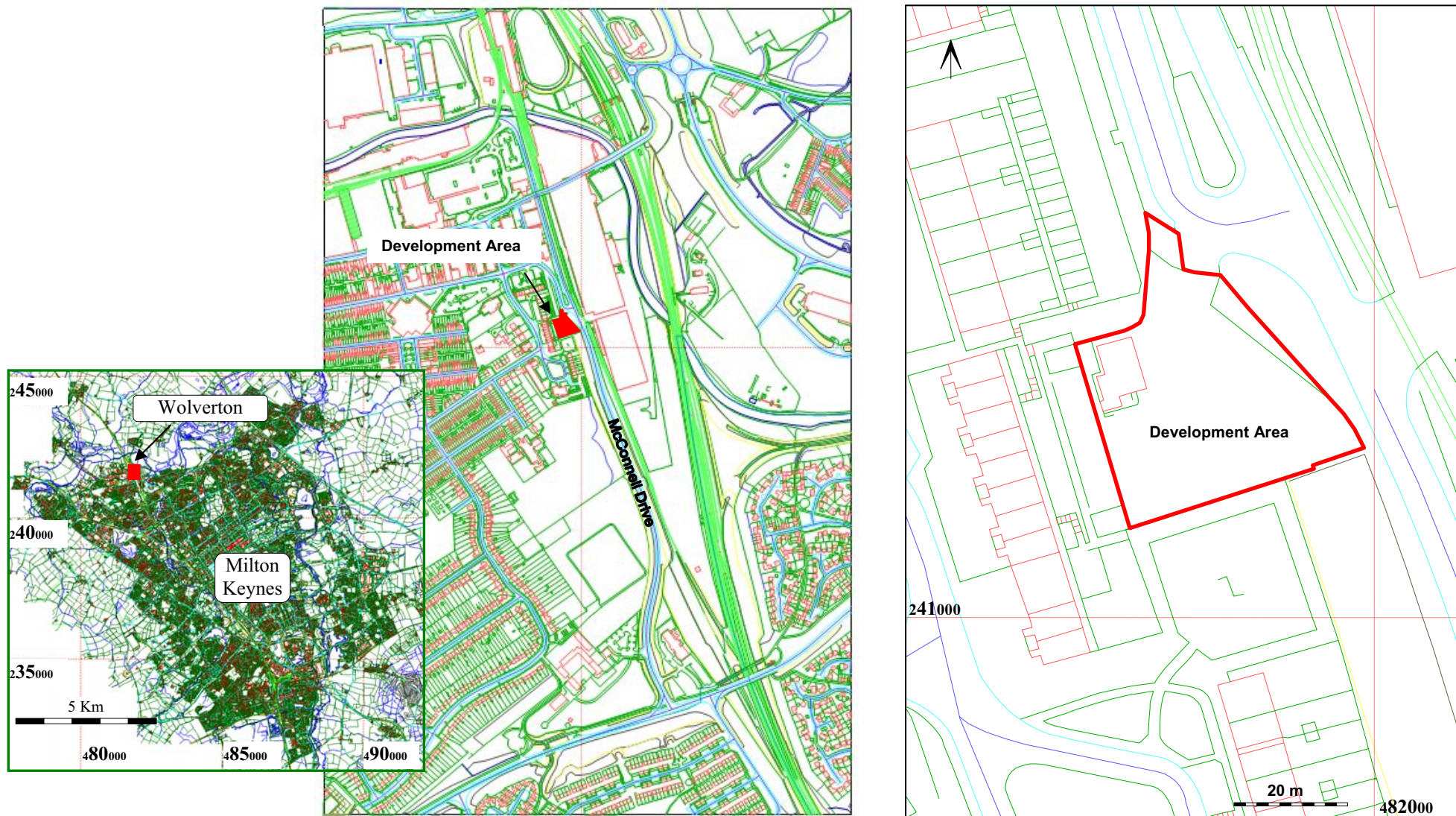


Figure 1: Site location

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*Building on McConnell Drive, Wolverton, Milton Keynes:
Architectural Building Recording*

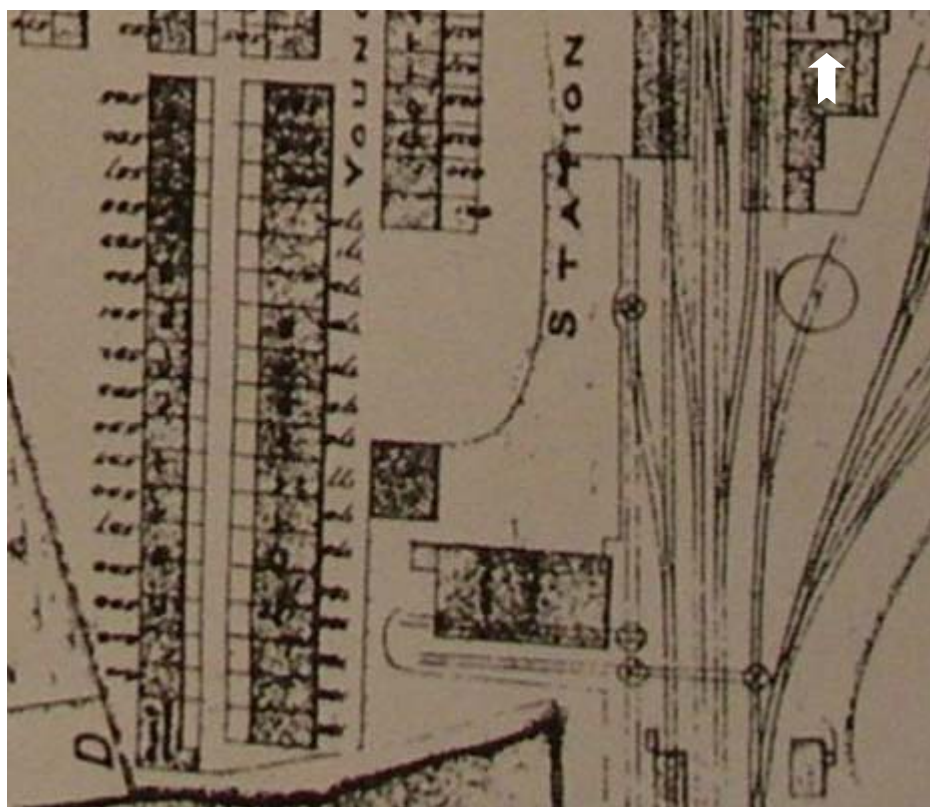


Figure 2: Wolverton Works map 1860

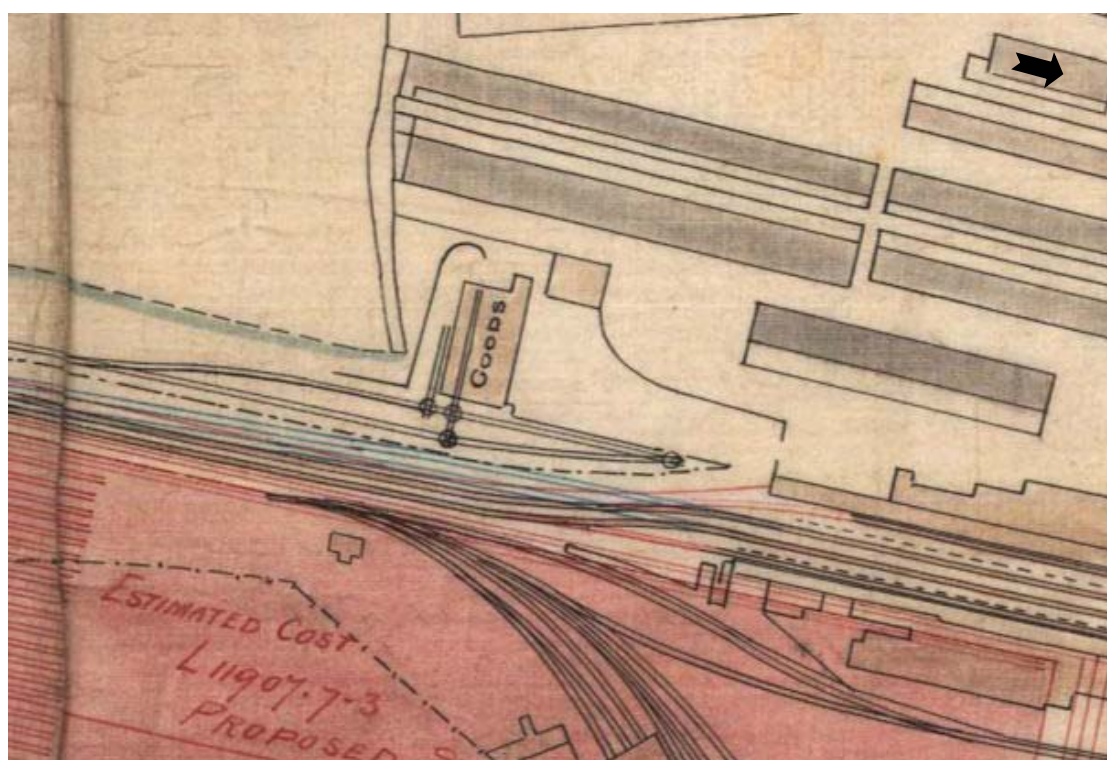


Figure 3: Wolverton Works map 1882

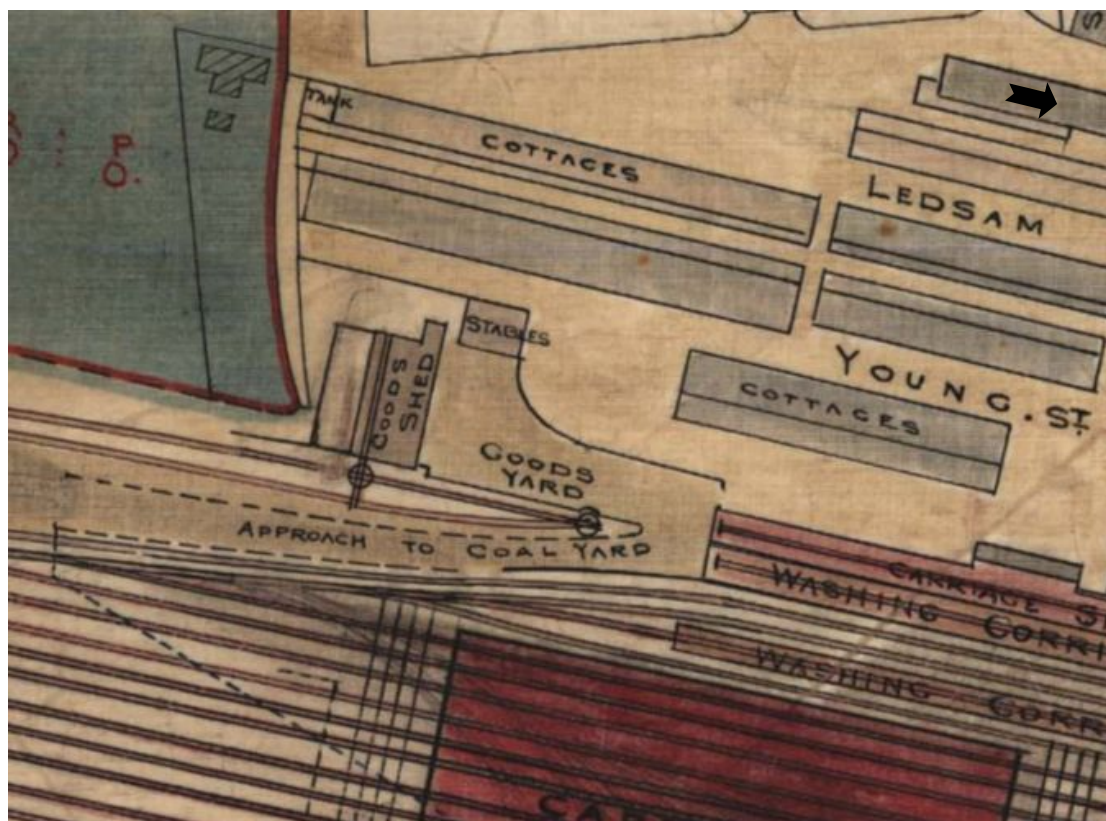


Figure 4: Wolverton Works map 1886

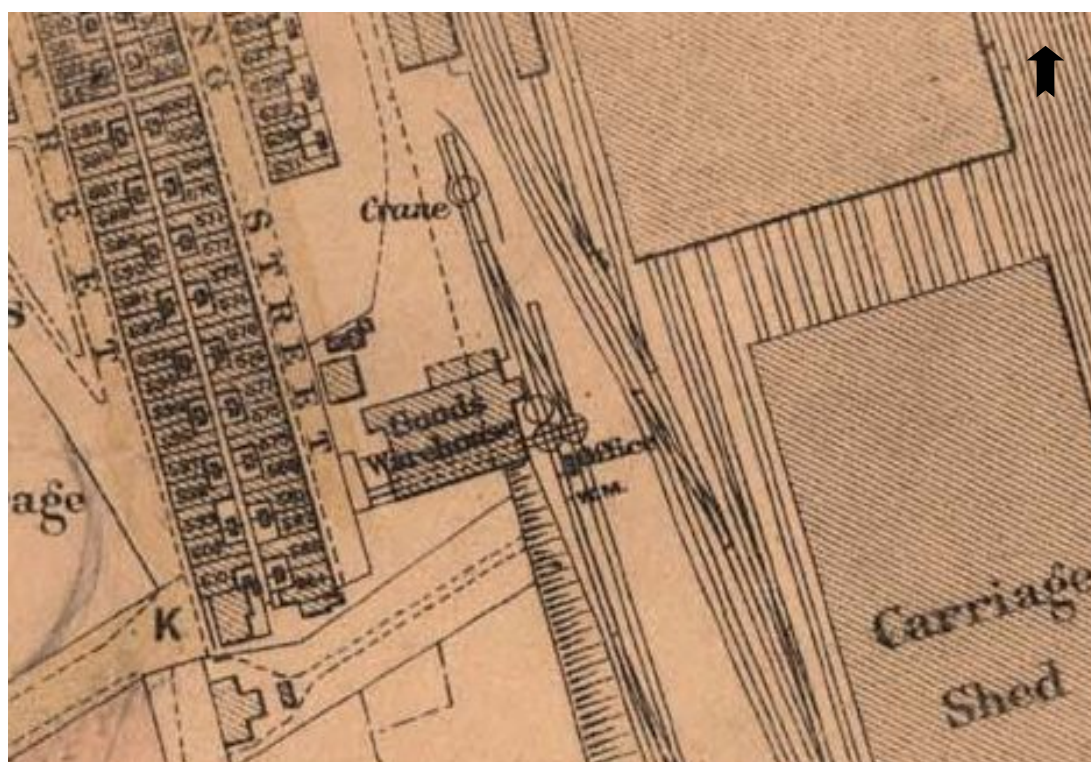


Figure 5: Wolverton Works map 1897

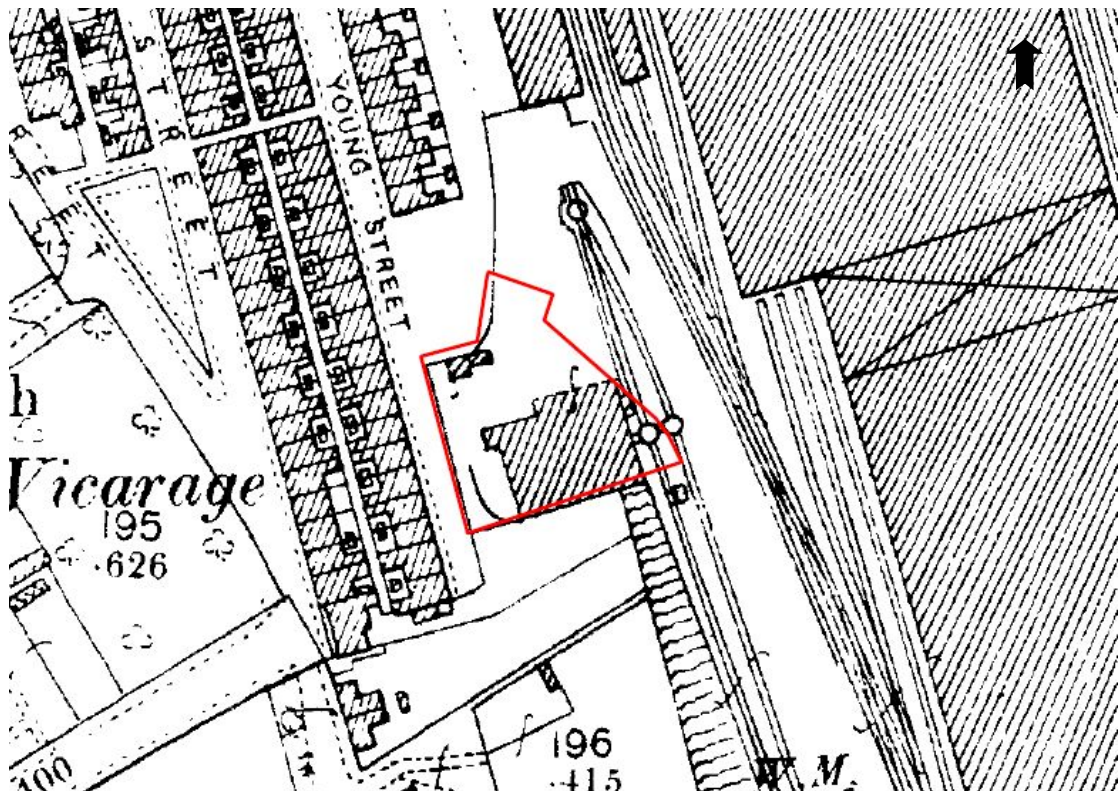


Figure 6: Second edition 25 inch OS map 1900

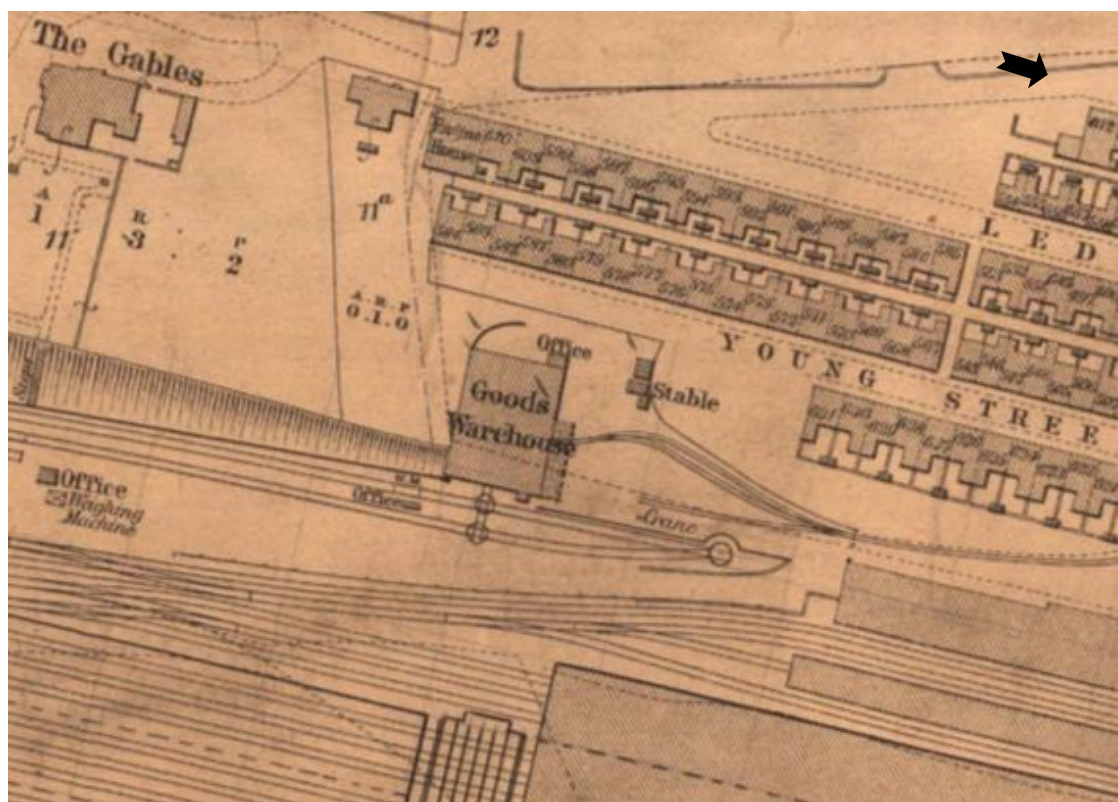


Figure 7: Wolverton Works map, most likely post 1900

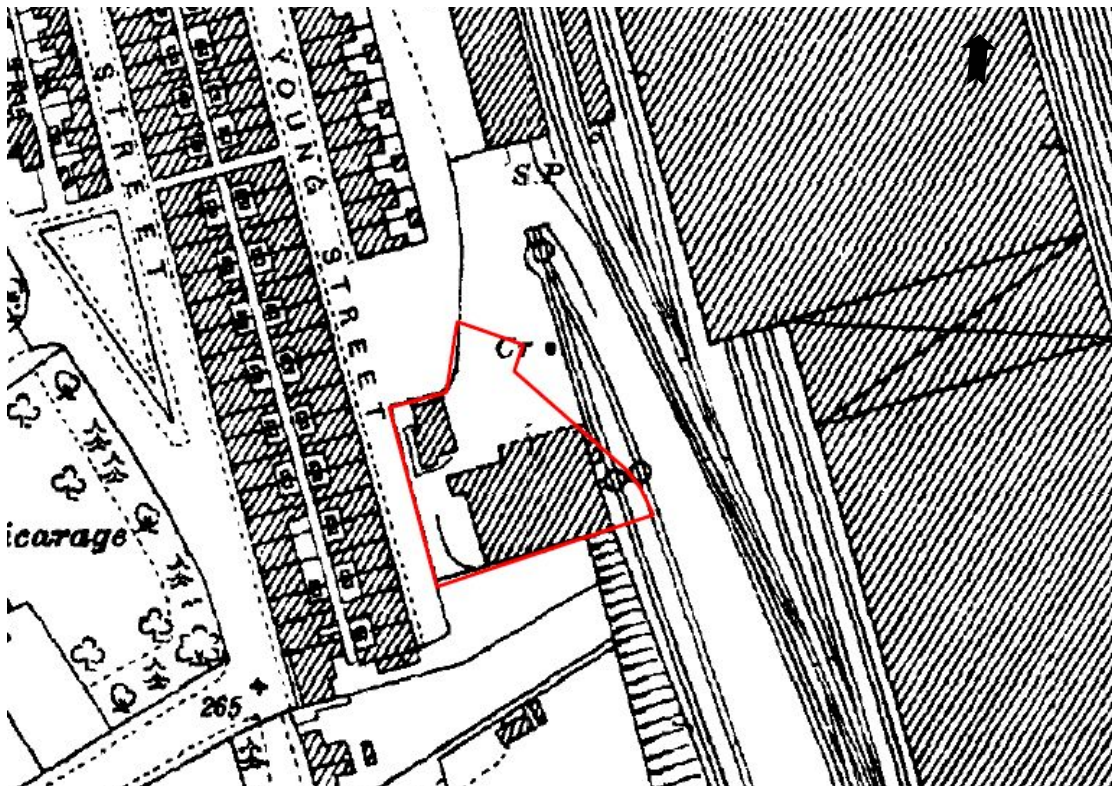


Figure 8: Third edition 25 inch OS map 1925



Figure 9: Aerial view of carriage works 1949 – 1959

(Image ref: phWolverton131 © Buckinghamshire County Council, licence applied for)



Figure 10: Goods yard today, looking north-west.
Revetment wall in left of image (2m scale), building in right of image.



Figure 11: East facing main façade of building. Internal wooden screen visible through main entrance door.



Figure 12: North and west facing sides of building showing extension and main chimney



Figure 13: Fallen-down capping of oven pipe chimney



Figure 14: Interior of building, main room looking south



Figure 15: Interior of building, main room looking north-east. Note remains of oven pipe within roof



Figure 16: Interior of building, main room looking west



Figure 17: Western extension, interior, looking north from southernmost room



Figure 8: Railway signage underneath window on western façade

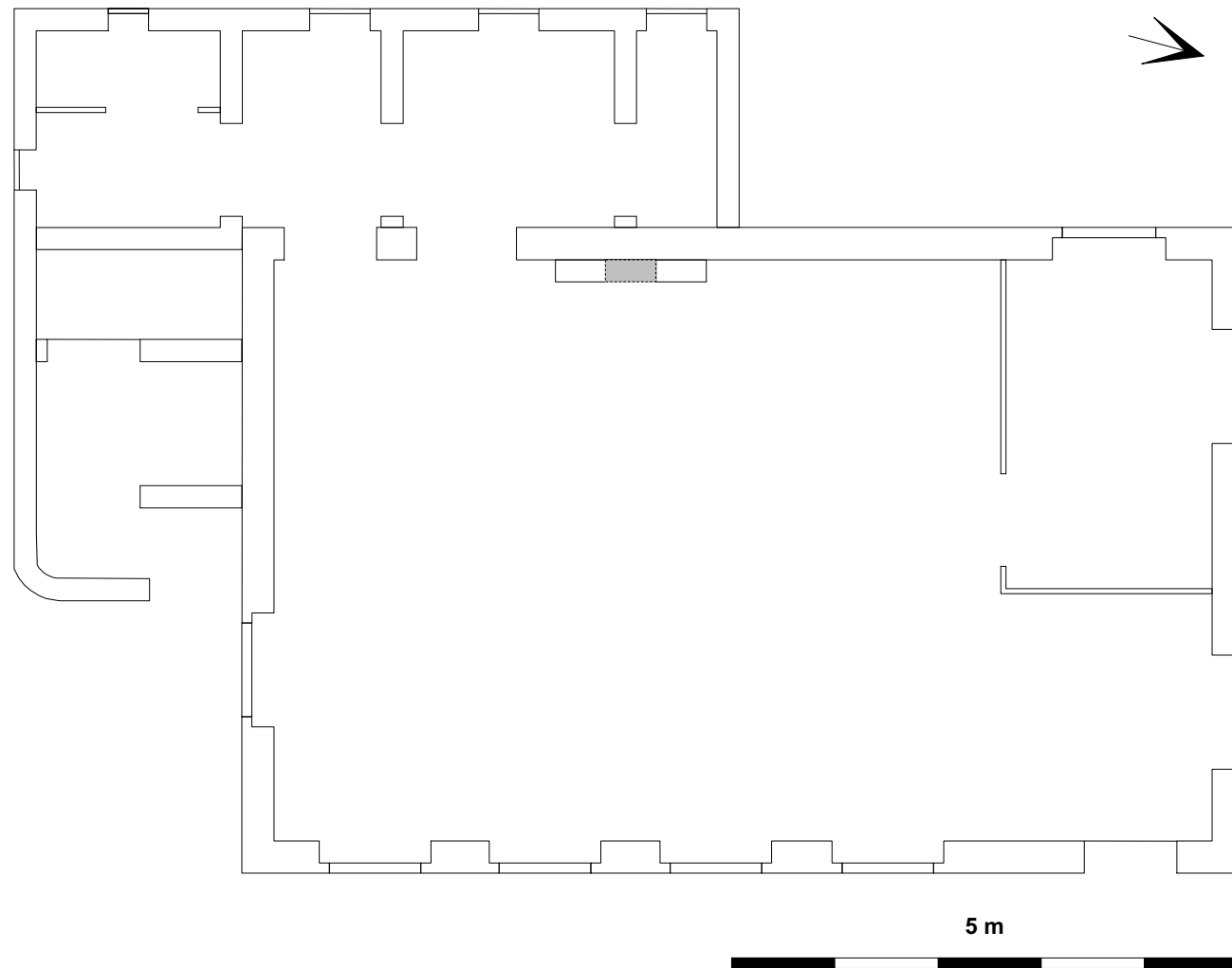


Figure 18: Ground plan of extant building on McConnell Drive.
(not all measurements to scale as some parts of building were inaccessible)

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