
***SUNDERLAND CIVIC CENTRE
NUCLEAR BUNKER AND RAILWAY TUNNEL***

REPORT ON A HISTORIC BUILDINGS RECORDING



JANUARY 2022

***The Archaeological
Practice Ltd.***



HISTORIC BUILDINGS RECORDING

SUNDERLAND CIVIC CENTRE, NUCLEAR BUNKER AND RAILWAY TUNNEL



Frontispiece: Looking through the former railway tunnel beneath Sunderland Civic Centre, view looking east.

Grid reference:	<i>NZ 39724 56607 (Bunker, Centre); NZ 39626 56579 (Tunnel, West Entrance), NZ 39778 56574 (Tunnel, East Entrance)</i>
Date of fieldwork:	<i>December 2021</i>
TWAS reference:	<i>MON16512</i>
Client:	<i>Sunderland City Council</i>
Project code:	<i>AP 21/43</i>
Stage:	<i>Final</i>
Compiled by:	<i>Richard Carlton, Marc Johnstone & Adam Leigh</i>
Control:	<i>Alan Rushworth</i>
OASIS ID:	<i>thearcha2-504163</i>

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT
3. BUILDING DESCRIPTION
4. THE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
5. REFERENCES

APPENDIX 1:

Photographic Record of Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.

APPENDIX 2:

Photographic Record of Railway Tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.

APPENDIX 3:

MON16512. Specification for Archaeological Building Recording at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7DN. By Tyne and Wear Archaeology Service, October 2021.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: Inside the main room (Room 2) of the Nuclear Bunker, view looking west.

Frontispiece: Looking through the former railway tunnel beneath Sunderland Civic Centre, view looking east.

- Illus. 01: City view, showing the study area (circled in red) in Sunderland City Centre.*
- Illus. 02: Street view, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Sunderland Civic Centre.*
- Illus. 03: Site view, showing the study areas (highlighted in red) at Sunderland Civic Centre.*
- Illus. 04: Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Town Plan of Sunderland c.1858, showing the study area (highlighted in red).*
- Illus. 05: Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1897, showing the study area (highlighted in red).*
- Illus. 06: Extract from the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1919, showing the study area (highlighted in red).*
- Illus. 07: Extract from the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1939, showing the study area (highlighted in red).*
- Illus. 08: Extract from the 5th Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1955, showing the study area (highlighted in red).*
- Illus. 09: Extract from the 1968 (published date) OS Plan of Sunderland, scale 1:1250, showing the site before the Civic Centre.*
- Illus. 10: Illus. 10: Extract from the 1972 Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland, scale 1:1250, showing the Civic Centre.*

- Illus. 11: *Extract from a lithograph of a 'Birds-eye view of Sunderland', c.1857, artist unknown. Extract showing Sunderland Station and the Durham and Sunderland Railway. The approximate study area locations are highlighted in red.*
- Illus. 12: *Undated sketch of Fawcett Street Station, looking north.*
- Illus. 13: *Photograph of the Penshaw Branch Line in July 1964.*
- Illus. 15: *Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2001. Courtesy of Google Earth.*
- Illus. 16: *Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, April 2018. Courtesy of Google Earth.*
- Illus. 17: *Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, July 2021. Courtesy of Google Earth.*
- Illus. 18: *Location plan of the Nuclear Bunker and Railway Tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre.*
- Illus. 19: *Plan of Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre.*
- Illus. 20: *Key plan of Nuclear Bunker, showing locations of photographs taken during Historic Building Recording.*

APPENDIX 01: Photographic Record of Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.

- Photo 01. Position of bunker entrance (beyond the skip).*
- Photo 02. View of bunker entrance, looking south.*
- Photo 03. View of bunker entrance, looking south-west.*
- Photo 04. View of the entrance corridor, looking south-west.*
- Photo 05. View of the south-west end of the entrance corridor.*
- Photo 06. View of doorway surround at south-west end of entrance corridor.*
- Photo 07. Inside door of internal SE-NW corridor.*
- Photo 08. View of internal corridor, looking SE.*
- Photo 09. Door at NW end of internal corridor, view looking SW.*
- Photo 10. View of air vent grill.*
- Photo 11. View of Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking SW.*
- Photo 12. View of WC access corridor, looking SW.*
- Photo 13. Entrance to Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking NE.*
- Photo 14. View of door.*
- Photo 15. View of Room 1, looking east.*
- Photo 16. View of collapsed air filtration ducts against the north wall in Room 1.*
- Photo 17. View of the east wall in Room 1.*
- Photo 18. View of the south wall in Room 1.*
- Photo 19. View of the west wall in Room 1.*
- Photo 20. View of the north wall in Room 1.*
- Photo 21. View of bracket fittings.*
- Photo 22. View of WC cubicle in NE-SW corridor, view looking SE.*
- Photo 23. View of the entrance to Room 2 from NE-SW corridor, looking NE.*
- Photo 24. View of the north wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 25. View of the east wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 26. Alternative view of the east wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 27. View of the south wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 28. View of the west wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 29. View of the south end of the west wall in Room 2.*
- Photo 30. View of steps through the south wall of Room 2.*
- Photo 31. View of Room 2 entrance to exit corridor from steps.*
- Photo 32. View of NW-SE exit corridor, looking SE.*
- Photo 33. View of door at SE end of exit corridor.*
- Photo 34. View of service vent at SE end of exit corridor.*

Photo 35. View looking NE at doorway opposite the spiral stairway in short exit corridor return.

Photo 36. View of spiral stair in short NE-SW exit corridor return.

Photo 37. View of blocked spiral stair exit located at the SW corner of the bunker.

Photo 38. Looking upwards at blocked spiral stair exit.

Photo 39. Alternative view looking upwards at blocked spiral stair exit.

APPENDIX 02: Photographic Record of Railway Tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.

Photo 01. View of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.

Photo 02. Broad view of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.

Photo 03. View near the east end of the tunnel, looking south.

Photo 04. View looking east towards the east end of the tunnel.

Photo 05. View looking west from near the east end of the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 01 visible (foreground right).

Photo 06. View of Retreat Alcove 01, looking north.

Photo 07. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 1, looking north.

Photo 08. View looking west along the tunnel, from between Retreat Alcoves 01-02.

Photo 09. View of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.

Photo 10. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.

Photo 11. View of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.

Photo 12. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.

Photo 13. View of Retreat Alcove 04, looking south.

Photo 14. View looking west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcoves 05-06 visible in the foreground.

Photo 15. View looking north-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 05 in the foreground.

Photo 16. View of Retreat Alcove 05, looking north.

Photo 17. View looking south-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 06 visible in the foreground.

Photo 18. View of Retreat Alcove 06, looking south.

Photo 19. View of Retreat Alcove 07, looking north.

Photo 20. View looking west near the west end of the tunnel.

Photo 21. View looking east from near the west end of the tunnel.

Photo 22. Broad view of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.

Photo 23. View of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.

Photo 24. View looking west at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.

Photo 25. View looking north at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.

Photo 26. View looking south at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.

Photo 27. View looking east through the tunnel from the west end / entrance.

SUMMARY

A programme of building recording was carried out on two structures at ground level underlying the principal operational buildings of Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, namely a Cold War-period Nuclear Bunker and a Railway Tunnel, both long-abandoned and in a state of dereliction. The recording work responds to a Specification document provided by the planning archaeologist for Tyne & Wear (MON16512) setting out the requirement for recording in order to advance understanding of the structures prior to their proposed demolition, along with the rest of the Civic Centre complex, and redevelopment of the site for residential housing.

The Nuclear Bunker site, within the short north-east face of the northernmost hexagon of the early 1970s Civic Centre complex, measures some 32 by 7 m, set at right angles to the face through which it is entered. Its walls are of concrete shuttering, and its roof of close-set steel sheets shaped and riveted together into the form of a ceiling of beams of trapezoidal section. Its main structure, accessed from both ends by steel-plated doors, focuses on two rooms, Room 1 measuring 6.2 m long and 5.2 m wide with an integral WC block, the other, to the north, occupying the full width of the subterranean structure and measuring 11.5 by 6.7 m. Room 1 is dry-lined in part, otherwise of bare concrete, and contains a considerable amount of rectangular-section ventilation ducting, while Room 2 is largely empty. The end passage ends with a circular stairwell, largely infilled with loose concrete rubble, containing the remains of a cast-iron newel stair which can be traced beyond the ceiling level.

A mid-19th century railway line east from the south end of the present railway station (Sunderland Central) originally served the docks on the south side of the mouth of the Wear, but the short section adjacent to the station had closed by 1953, although the existence of the tunnel here described proved that there was some plan for its re-use. The present section of tunnel, the central north side of which lies some 10 m south of the circular stairwell entrance to the nuclear bunker, is c 187 m long, 7.9 m wide and c 5 m high, largely constructed of shuttered concrete, spanned by a series of pendant flat arches, with four pedestrian refuges provided on each side.

*Examination of these two, closely-adjacent and contemporary structures has shown them to survive well, albeit in a state of dereliction and having been subject to some damage by vandalism which, in addition to minor structural damage, has removed most of any fixtures and fittings which may have been present there until abandonment. Evidence for the former existence of demolished fixtures and equipment does not survive in the tunnel but does survive in the bunker, where quite elaborate provision was made for ventilation and air filtration, and presumably also for communication, although none of the fittings survive in a state which merits preservation or, indeed, allows for the full explanation of its *modus operandi*.*

The railway tunnel appears to offer no potential for further investigation with respect to its physical remains and little potential for its operational and social history to be revealed by documentary work. The bunker offers a little more potential in both regards, but may not be feasible given the current circumstances of its imminent demolition. Although the demolition process itself may reveal hitherto unknown structural detail, the prospect of further surveying during demolition may not be practicable on health and safety grounds given the subterranean nature of the structure. Additionally, the process would probably not offer any substantial improvement to the record already provided. Whilst further documentary research appears to offer little of promise, the recollections of former City Council employees may be of interest in comprehending how it was intended to be used, and in shedding light on the social and political context of its 'Cold War' history, although it is possible that such information may now lie beyond the reach of personal recollection.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Archaeological building recording of the Cold War Nuclear Bunker and Railway Tunnel at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road, has been specified by the planning archaeologist for Tyne & Wear (MON16512), in order to record and advance understanding of the structures prior to the proposed demolition of the Civic Centre and redevelopment of the site for residential housing.

The recording programme reported on here, follows a much larger archaeological recording of the entire Civic Centre complex (NAA 2020), but which was unable to gain appropriate permissions at the time to access the bunker and tunnel system.

Sunderland Civic Centre was opened in 1970, and is said to be a good example of post-war civic architecture in the Brutalist-Modernist style. The Civic Centre complex lies within the Ashbrooke Conservation Area, which was designated in 1969 in recognition of its architectural and historic interest. Whilst the ACA Appraisal identifies the Civic Centre as a 'landmark building', dominating the northern part of the designated area, with views over the city centre, it was assessed by Historic England in 2017 not be granted Listed status. Indeed, the building was subsequently given a Certificate of Immunity from Listing, which remains valid until May 2022.

The works specified are in accordance with paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework and comprise a Level 2 Historic Building Record.

The following elements of the Historic Building Recording were specified by the planning archaeologist for Tyne & Wear and included in the report:

1. Documentary research
2. Building investigation
3. Survey and drawings
4. Photography
5. A written account
6. Archiving and dissemination

1.2 Work Specified

The work requested by Sunderland City Council Planning Department, on the advice of the Tyne and Wear Planning Archaeologist, involved producing a record of the historic buildings in the form of a photographic survey of the structure, with accompanying documentary research, investigative description and survey drawings. The aim of the work is to provide a permanent archive record of the structures prior to demolition.

Permission to access the buildings were gained via Sunderland City Council from Nexus and Network Rail and all works were monitored under supervision of representatives from both of these organisations.

1.3 Methodology

The photographic recording of the bunker and tunnel was undertaken to accompany a written description in December 2021, using digital photography. Existing modern Ordnance Survey plans of the railway tunnel were utilised and elaborated for the survey record of the railway tunnel (Illus. 18), with the plans being adapted to provide a key plan identifying the location of recess alcoves labelled and used in the photograph captions. A separate measured building survey was produced for the report (Illus. 19) using a Leica Total Station EDM for the Nuclear Bunker, which had no pre-existing scaled plans available. This survey was later adapted to provide a key plan, showing the location of photographs taken comprising the photographic recording element of the report.

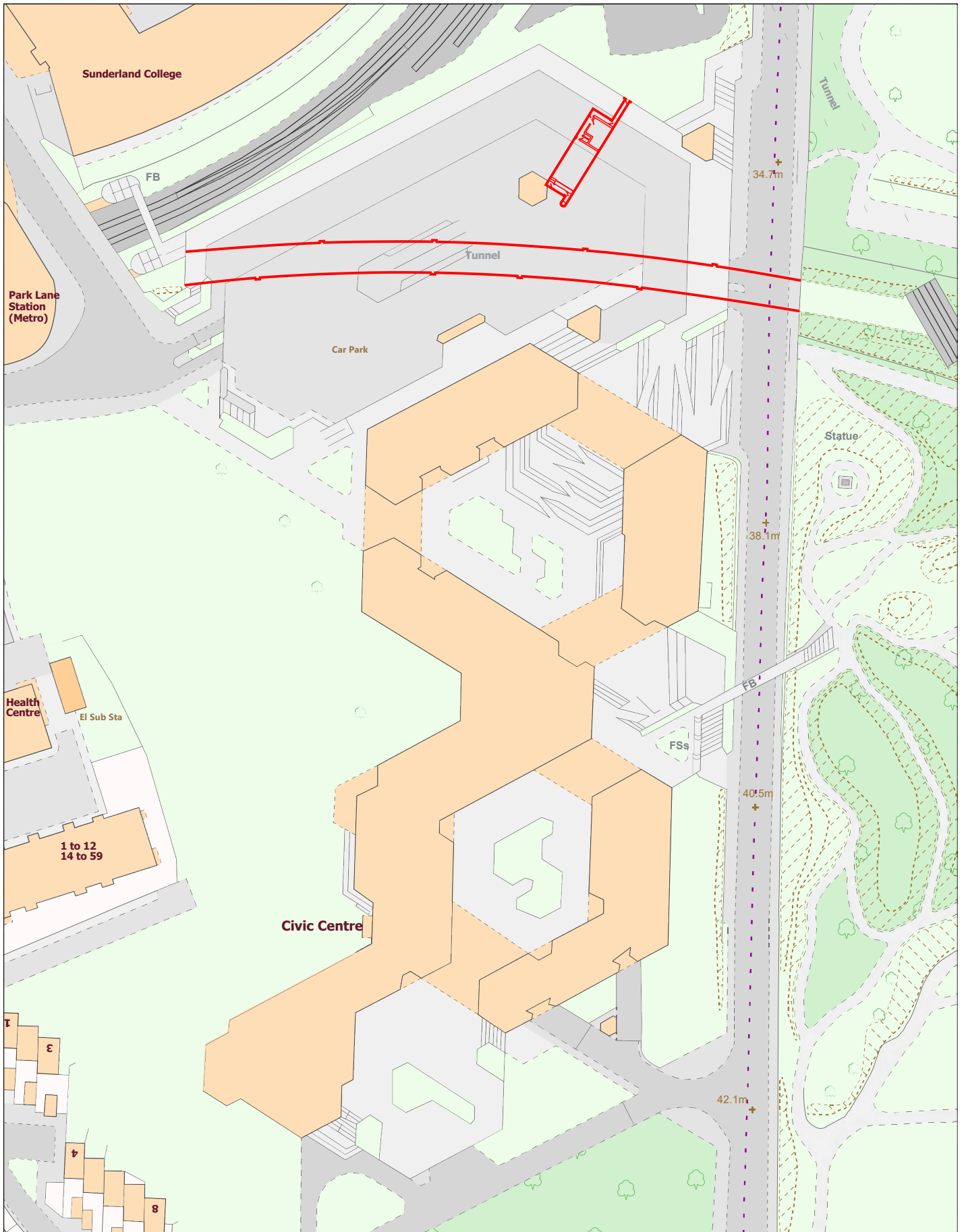
A search was made of historic building plans held by Tyne & Wear Archives (Discovery Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne), but no plans or elevation drawings could be located relating to the construction of the bunker and railway tunnel. An additional search was conducted relating to the railway tunnel, from the online catalogue in the National Railway Museum in York, but unfortunately no plans were found to exist.



Illus. 01: City view, showing the study area (circled in red) in Sunderland City Centre.



Illus. 02: Street view, showing the study area (highlighted in red) at Sunderland Civic Centre.



Scale 1:1250

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 m

Illus. 03: Site view, showing the study areas (highlighted in red) at Sunderland Civic Centre.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Sunderland Civic Centre and its Archaeological Potential.¹

After Sunderland became a Municipal Borough in 1835 civic leaders held their meetings in the Exchange Building on High Street East, until in 1890 a purpose-built Town Hall was erected on Fawcett Street, and designed by Brightwen Benyon of Ipswich. After World War II it was decided to build new premises on West Park, which had previously been a residential area, and the old Town Hall was finally pulled down in 1971. Construction of its successor began in January 1968, in a 'modern' or 'Brutalist' style and it was designed by Sir Basil Spencer, Bennington and Collins, with Jack Bonnington as the lead architect. It opened to the public in 1970. The buildings were accommodated in a series of large hollow hexagons on the west side of Burdon Road, with access to the city centre across a railway bridge to the north-west, and also to Mowbray Park to the east.

The influential design based on a triangular grid, with a honeycomb of triangles and hexagons repeated across the building's interior and exterior, is symbolic of the building's function as a 'hive' of local government activity at the centre of Sunderland's civic life. The Administrative Block, which is the main body of the complex, comprises two interlocking hexagons, with central courtyards. This houses the main office accommodation. To the south is the Civic Suite including the Council chamber which forms a third, smaller hexagon set slightly apart from the main complex. This is connected to the Administrative Block by a linear section that houses committee rooms and members' offices. The final element is the partially subterranean multi-storey North Car Park.

The civic centre dominates the northern part of the Ashbrooke Conservation Area, with views over the city centre to the north and Mowbray Park to the east (SCC 2005; Clement 2018). The design combines the use of both red brick and concrete to dramatic effect.

The Civic Centre is likely to have had a substantial impact upon any earlier remains on the site. Photographs taken during construction show that much of the site, well beyond the footprint of the new Civic Centre building, was stripped to bedrock during construction work and later reinstated. This means that the potential for the survival of any archaeological remains across the site is unlikely not only within the footprint of the building but also within its immediate vicinity.

Recently it was decided that the Civic Centre had been too large and expensive to retain, and that its site should be returned to residential use. Construction of a new and smaller City Hall commenced in 2019 on the Vaux Brewery Site. In January 2021 the Guardian had listed the 1960s building as 'one of Britain's Brutalist buildings most at risk from demolition and development'.

The present account deals with two specific elements within the 1960s complex, both in the basement of the northernmost and most elongate hexagon of the group. These comprise:

- [1] A Disused Nuclear bunker
- [2] A Disused Railway Tunnel

¹ For further background information on Sunderland Civic Centre see *Northern Archaeological Associates [NAA] Historic Building Record (2020a) and NAA Cultural Heritage Appraisal (2020b)*

2.2 Cold War Overview

To put the Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre in context, an overview of the Cold War period has been summarised from various sources, with the principal text being Cocroft & Thomas' book on the Cold War, produced for English Heritage in 2003.

For over 40 years the global split between the political ideologies of capitalism and Soviet bloc communism and the ensuing military stand-off, known as the Cold War, shaped the history of the late 20th century. The most obvious physical evidence of this era are the remains of defence sites. To most people these places were secret and closed worlds, but the end of the Cold War has made it possible to gain access to previously restricted sites.

Cold War monuments are generally not well known or understood, and they are poorly represented in the National Monuments Record. The architecture of the new buildings of the Cold War is severely functional. It is largely of concrete, steel and earth, and is an extreme example of the dictum that function dictates form. Most were designed through centralised planning and the deployment of standardised weapons systems resulted in nearly identical site and structure types across the country (Cocroft & Thomas 2003).

The Cold War was marked by the use of new technology and complex machines. Radar stations (from 1950 "Rotor" radar stations helped operate the Air Defence Scheme) and anti-aircraft batteries were re-equipped. The Civil Defence Corps and Home Guard were re-established. New early warning systems included the "golfballs" at Fylingdales on the North York moors. The Royal Observer Corps now had underground monitoring posts. New weapon developments included rockets and nuclear arms. By 1958 the jet bombers of the V-force were in operation, carrying the first British atomic bomb "Blue Danube". The first British guided weapons included the surface-to-air missile "Bloodhound" and the air-to-air missile "Firestreak". This was the era of Mutually Assured Destruction – the threat of a Soviet attack on the west was to be deterred by the threat of nuclear retaliation. By the 1970s new structures which could withstand nuclear, chemical or biological attack were required because Western policy now agreed that any Soviet threat would be met in kind (Whaley, Morrison and Heslop 2008).

While the confrontation did not intrinsically require mass participation, planning for nuclear war reached down to every home in the country. Over the period, a sizeable proportion of the population had been drawn into the conflict as service personnel, through civil defence, or as people working in the defence industry (Cocroft & Thomas 2003).

The Civil Defence Act of 1948 and later regulations, required local governments to make provision for an infrastructure capable of carrying out the functions of the wartime ARP units; at the time, any future war with the Soviet Union was expected to be very similar to the previous war with Germany, though the additional damage caused by atomic bombing was seen as a major new threat. At the same time, the Home Office was making plans for Regional War Rooms, the main function of which was to maintain communications between national and local government. By the time that most of the purpose-built structures were nearing completion in 1955-6, the advent of nuclear weapons had led to an enormous change in the perception of the threat posed by the Soviet Union, and the needs of Civil Defence. The threat now was of complete breakdown of central government, and so the Regional War Rooms were superseded by Regional Seats of Government, fully autonomous regional command centres, hardened against nuclear attack (Mabbitt 2003).

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the loosening of the Soviet Union's grip on eastern Europe, the west was able to reassess its defence needs, with a massive reduction in both

military spending and in the area of land occupied by the armed forces. By the mid-1990s the MOD had identified more than 100 major sites in England as surplus to its needs. At the same time, the Home Office was able to re-examine its infrastructure for emergency government. It disposed of its network of bunkers and food and equipment stores and disbanded the Royal Observer Corps. Local councils were relieved of their responsibilities for organising emergency government in the event of nuclear attack and the public utilities relinquished their 'hardened' standby control centres, which had been specially constructed or reinforced to withstand the effects of nuclear explosion (Cocroft & Thomas 2003).

2.3 Regional Headquarters and the Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre

The origins of the Cold War Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre remain hazy, with any official contemporary documentation largely absent from the historical record. Analysis of Civil Defence Committee minutes and Civic Centre Committee minutes covering the period, now lodged with Tyne and Wear Archives (CB.SU/3/4 and CB.SU/73), simply do not mention the Civic Centre bunker in any detail. This is not surprising given the secretive nature of Cold War defence installations, with any surviving documentation potentially deemed as classified.

Interestingly, the Civil Defence Committee minutes from a meeting at Sunderland Town Hall on 18th December 1963 (pre-dating the construction of the Civic Centre by some seven years), discuss a comparable bunker proposed and with itemised costs, to be built in the basement of Sunderland Town Hall. The document (Ref: CB.SU/3/4) elaborates in p4 item 5:

"The Civil Defence Officer reported that in accordance with the Civil Defence Circular No. 17/1963 which outlines certain changes in the Civil Defence Control System, war-time control in the Borough should be based at or near the place where normal peace-time administration... was carried out. The situation had been examined and it appeared... the best position for the centre would be the basement of the Town Hall and the Borough Architect had been asked to prepare an estimate of the cost of necessary alterations and purchase of equipment similar to that carried out at Burdon Hall which the Town Hall basement would replace as a control centre.

The Borough Architect reported that the estimated cost of the adaptation of the town hall basement and purchase of the necessary equipment amounted to £7,300 as detailed hereunder and would utilise one of the light walls to house a Generator House, the two rooms formerly used by the Borough Treasurer's Department as Wages Offices to provide a women's rest room and a kitchen, the partitioning of the space at the base of the main stairs into the basement for use as a male rest room and alterations to the existing male toilet to form male and female toilets."

An "automatic air-cooled diesel generator, complete with all ancillary e [sic] equipment" is itemised together with "Installation of pumps, cables, lighting, fans, radio and teleprinter equipment, cooking equipment and extract ventilation system" for a sum of £3,500 of the total £7,300. While the word 'bunker' is not explicitly used in the minutes, the description of the Town Hall 'Control Centre' certainly sounds like a comparable facility and perhaps a precursor to the later arrangement at the Civic Centre.

Further to this account are the minutes from 18th March 1964, which specify in p16, item 3:

"The Town Clerk submitted an extract from the minutes of the Finance Committee of 19th February, 1964, asking the Committee to report back to the Finance Committee on the proposal to provide a Control Centre in the Town Hall basement when the question of the availability of accommodation for such purpose had been further considered... The Borough Architect reported that having regard to the fact that the new Civic Centre was programmed

to be completed in October 1968, he had revised his estimate from £7,300 down to £4,250 for the adaptation of the Town Hall basement for the above purpose."

Subsequently, by 3rd June 1964, p27, item 7 states:

"The Civil Defence officer reported that the cost of the adaptation of the Town Hall Basement for use as the Civil Defence Control Centre in place of Burdon Hall had been reduced to an absolute minimum... and that most of the items would be transferable to the new Civic Centre."

Evidently there was a culture of recycling such equipment, as further items (e.g. comms equipment) were planned to be cannibalized from Burdon Hall for use at the Town Hall.

By 20th April 1966, p84, item 4 states:

"The Civil Defence Officer reported that the works having been completed on the installations of the generator [etc.]..., the electricity power was turned off and the generator started in order that a test may be made which was reported as satisfactory."

We might conclude that at this point, the Town Hall basement was near ready for potential wartime control centre use.

In February 1968, one of the last few meetings within the minutes book, it is commented that gross local authority Civil Defence spending was to be reduced eightfold to £1m. This effectively signalled the end of the committee and presumably put the town hall basement into maintenance mode:

Minutes, Wednesday 21st February 1968, p136, in item 3(e):

"Maintenance of existing control premises and the equipment in them should be continued for the time being to the extent necessary to prevent deterioration."

There is no further mention within the tome of the basement of the town hall. Regarding the use of the new Civic Centre for civil defence purposes:

Minutes, Tuesday 19th March 1968, p140, in item 2:

"The Chairman reported that by the 30th September, 1968, the civil Defence Department would have ceased to exist. He referred to the 5 rooms earmarked for Civil Defence Purposes in the Civic Centre and stated that these would not now be required but, subject to further guidance, one room could be required to house a part-time Civil Defence Officer."

There is no explicit mention of the Civic Centre 'bunker' beyond possible allusions above to the eventual transfer of equipment from the Town Hall to the Civic Centre.

Other accounts, external to Town (later City) council records, some contemporary - such as the magazine of the CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), along with modern websites produced by Cold War defence enthusiasts, are therefore the only sources available that specifically discuss the Sunderland bunker – and these cannot always be taken at face value. Considered analysis of such records along with comparable Cold War defence installations, such as the bunker at Kenton Bar, Newcastle, does however provide a basic structured narrative that we can reasonably apply to the history of the bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre.

The sources indicate that the Sunderland bunker was a replacement of the considerably larger Regional War Room based at Kenton Bar in Newcastle, which had probably been in operation since 1952, and remained in use until the stand down of Civil Defence in 1968. According to the Home Defence Review of 1971, Kenton Bunker was still officially performing this role and, in 1974 it was transferred to Tyne & Wear County council. The newly formed Council officially designated Kenton Bunker as their war HQ, but was apparently not used due to the political

stance of the Council, who had an extreme left-wing policy on Civil Defence and refused to pay rent to the Home Office. A scaled-back, modern alternative was adapted from the existing sub-basement of the newly constructed Sunderland Civic Centre, abandoning/repurposing the Kenton Bunker thereafter. How long the Sunderland Bunker remained in operation remains a mystery. However, later in 1982 the Sub Control in Heaton, Newcastle, was designated as the Main War HQ, continuing as such until the end of the Cold War in 1989.

A glimpse of social history can be read in the 1981 April/May edition of SANITY, the magazine of the CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), which mentions the Sunderland Bunker, reporting that in January of that year:

“The Week of Action began on the previous Friday night when, in the space of a few hours, 3000 posters appeared across the whole of Tyneside drawing attention to the devastation that a nuclear attack would cause. The following day hundreds of people marched through Sunderland to a rally outside the Civic Centre. Martin Spence said that the Tyne and Wear County controller’s bunker was situated beneath Sunderland Civic Centre, and that in a nuclear war this unelected controller will have the power of life and death over the survivors. Throughout the week 70,000 leaflets were distributed to households and shoppers throughout Tyneside.”

2.4 The Railway Tunnel beneath Sunderland Civic Centre

The tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre is located beneath the present north Car Park (see *Illus. 18*) and can be seen on the cross-section plans of the Civic Centre published in the Architectural Review of 1971 (see *Illus. 14*). Although the tunnel, which is constructed largely in concrete, was built during the main works for the Civic Centre, opening in 1970, the railway that it housed was an existing line of considerable age, originally dating to 1852. Approximately 20 metres north of this branch line was one of Sunderland’s earliest railway stations, at Fawcett Street, which survived until the construction of the Civic Centre.

An excellent summary of the Sunderland to Durham Railway and the Fawcett Street Station has been adapted here from the ‘Disused Stations’ website (http://disused-stations.org.uk/s/sunderland_fawcett_street).

Fawcett Street Station provided the eastern terminus of the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway’s route from Leamside and Penshaw. A year after it opened, in 1854 the line became part of the North Eastern Railway (NER) system. Although the NER decided not to spend lavishly on the building at the Fawcett Street terminus it was provided with a handsome classically-inspired single-storey brick building, with sandstone quoins and decorative detail.

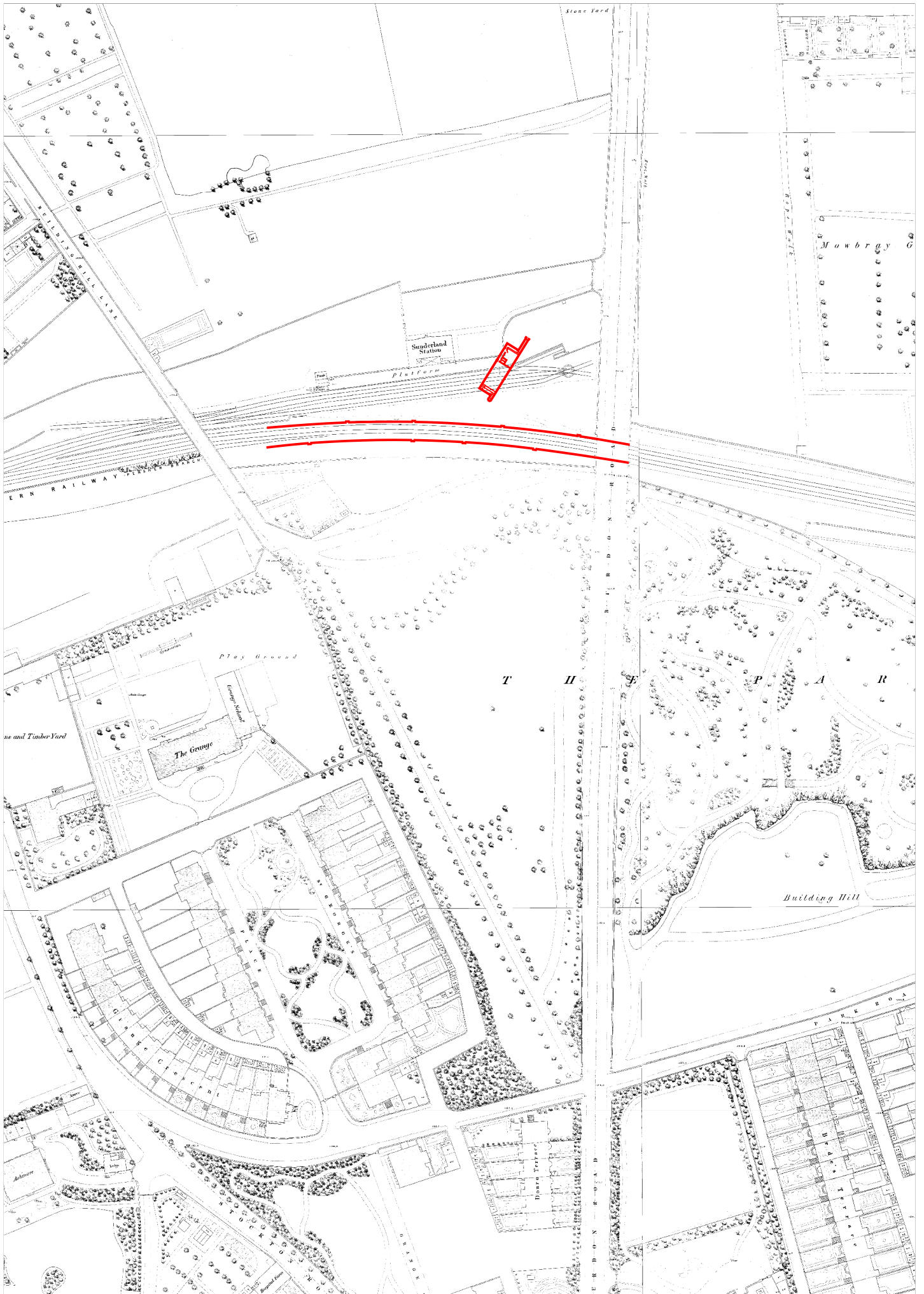
Eventually Sunderland was to be provided with a single principal station in the town centre, which included a new bridge over the River Wear and cut-and-cover tunnelling. The Fawcett Street terminus closed on 4 August 1879 when the through station, Sunderland Central replaced it, and its building was converted into housing. After about a century in this new role Fawcett Street station building was demolished to make way for the new Sunderland Civic Centre.

The line within the existing railway tunnel beneath Sunderland Civic Centre, ran 20 metres parallel to the south of Fawcett Street Station and was known as the ‘Painshaw Branch’, which was originally a cutting through the bedrock running ultimately to the South docks. The original line was authorised in an Act dating to 27th July 1846. From Sunderland to Penshaw the line followed the River Wear valley, but its route was generally some distance from the river to avoid a meander near Hylton and to serve the communities which were growing south

of the river. The line opened on 20th February 1852 for goods traffic and 1st June 1853 for passengers. As with most lines in northern County Durham, the Sunderland – Durham route carried large quantities of goods and mineral traffic, notably coal. Several collieries were directly linked to the line, and there were branches into shipyards and Deptford staiths on the Wear as well as to the Hudson, Henson and South docks on the coast.

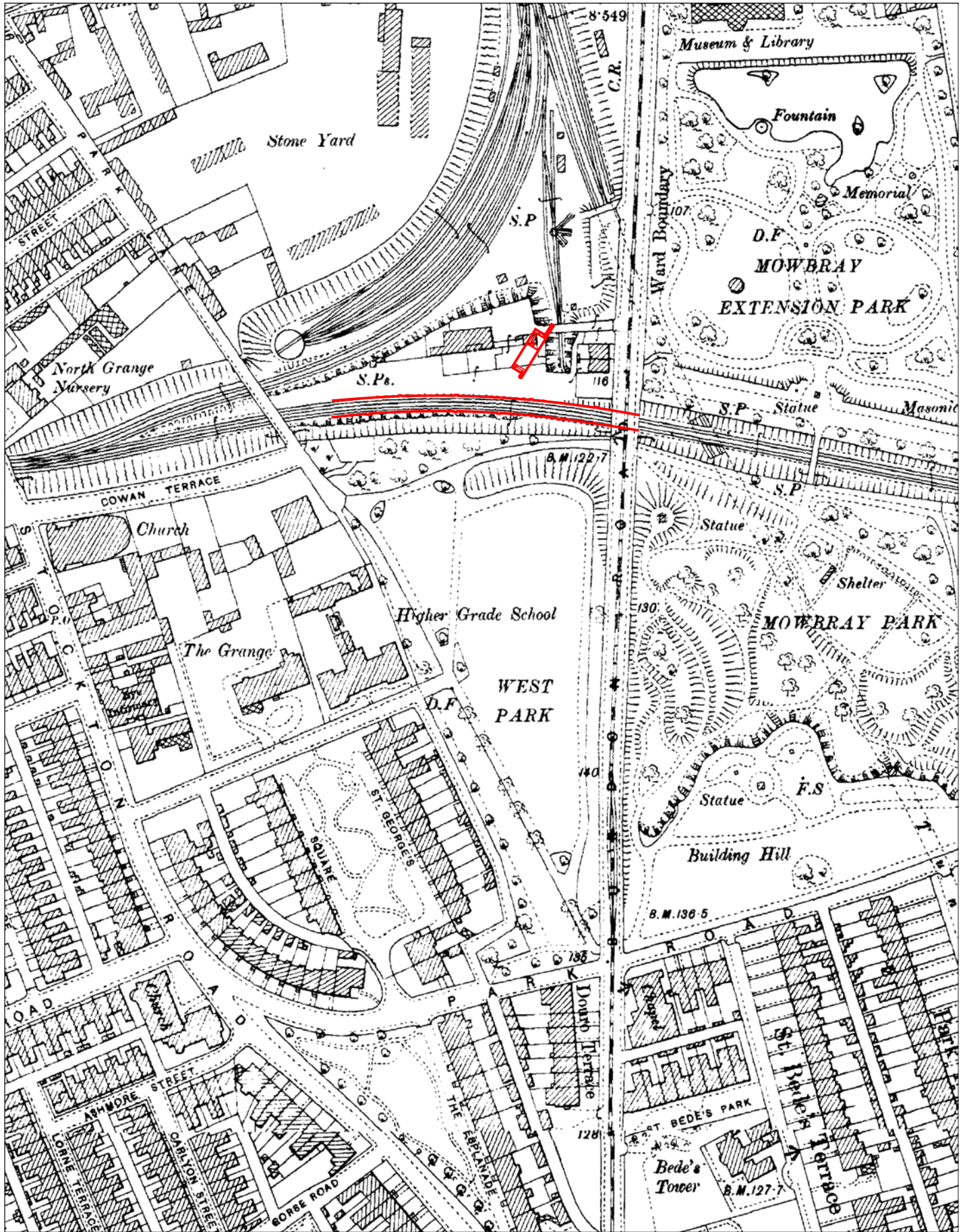
The tracks into the former Fawcett Street terminus, which had continued as a goods facility reached from the Durham line, were severed on 3 October 1965. Goods services were retained between Penshaw and Sunderland until 21 August 1967 when they were discontinued west of Hylton Quarry sidings. In January 1971 traffic ceased between Hylton Quarry and Pallion, and the line was officially taken out of use on 20 November 1976. The remainder of the line to Hendon, including the route through the Civic Centre Tunnel, closed to goods on 27 November 1984.

The station, along with the cutting for the Penshaw Branch, can be clearly identified in a period lithograph showing a bird's eye view of Sunderland in 1857 (*see Illus. 11*) along with historic Ordnance Survey mapping from 1858 onwards (*see Illus. 04-10*). Additionally, the station and branch line are shown in a historic sketch of unknown date (*Illus. 12*) and in an excellent photograph of 1964 (*Illus. 13*), which shows a coal train running along the branch line in the exact location from which the later tunnel was to be built.



Scale 1:2000
0 20 40 60 80 100 m

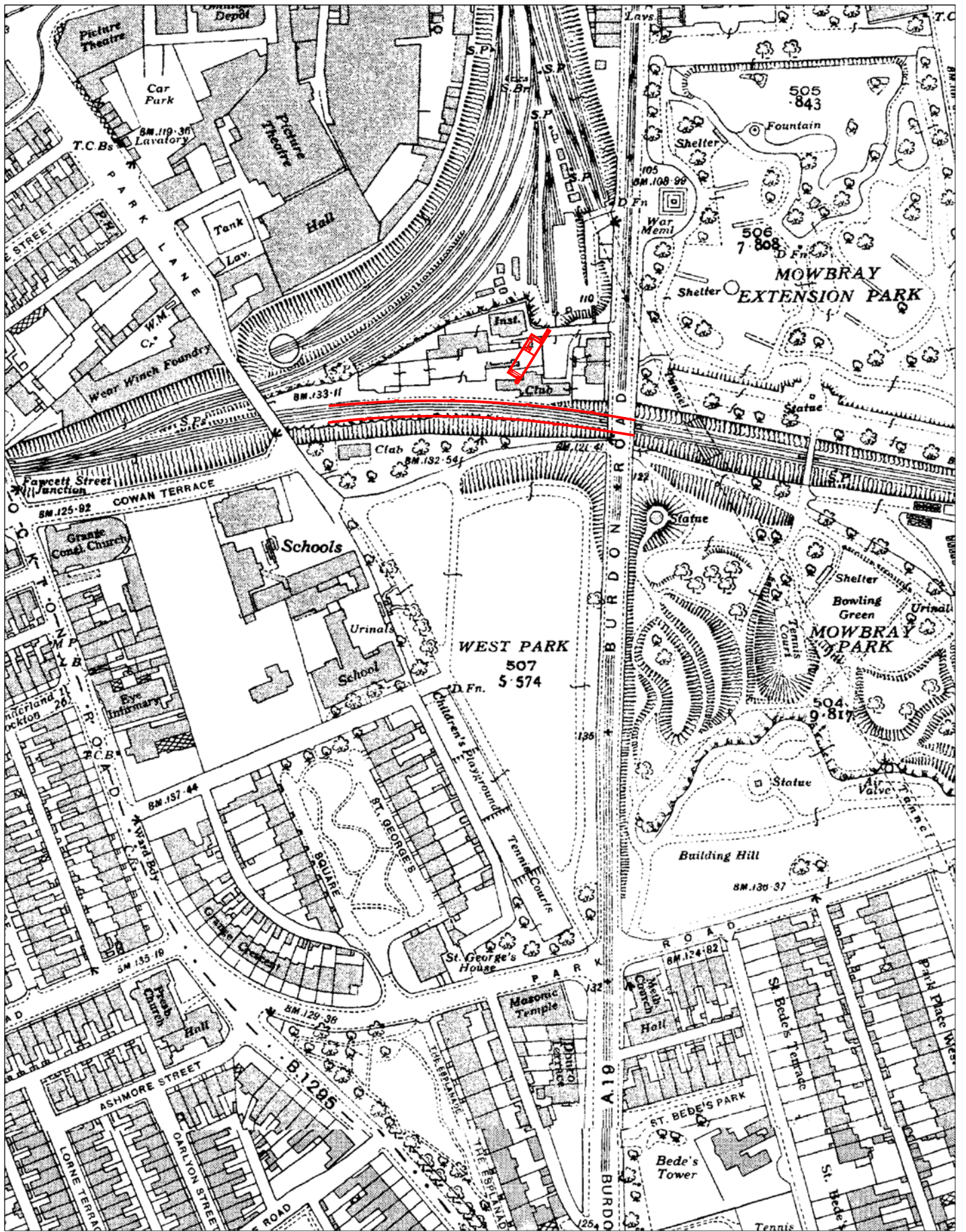
Illus. 04: Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Town Plan of Sunderland c.1858, showing the study area (highlighted in red).



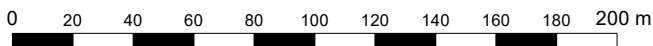
Scale 1:2500

0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 m

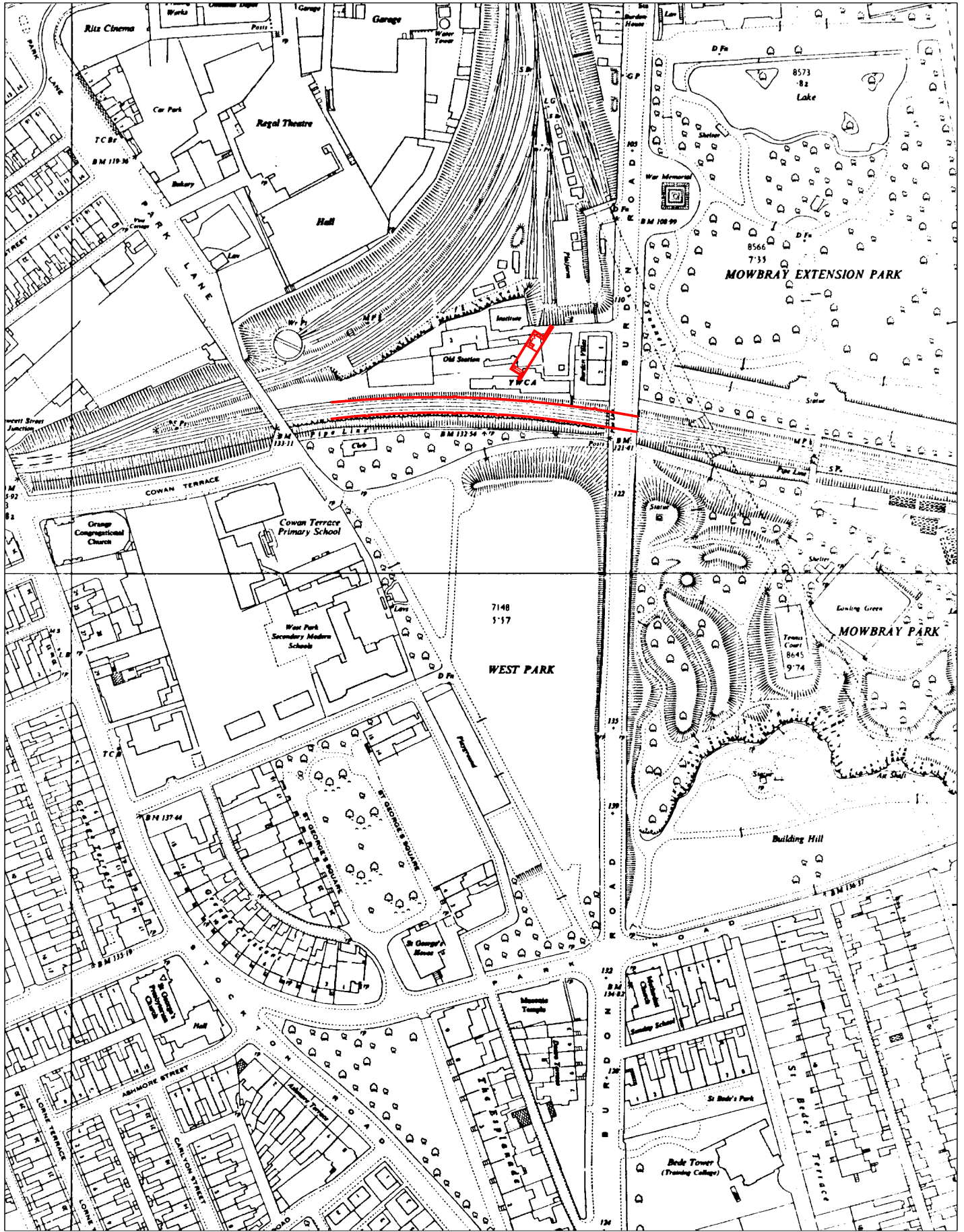
Illus. 05: Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1897, showing the study area (highlighted in red).



Scale 1:2500



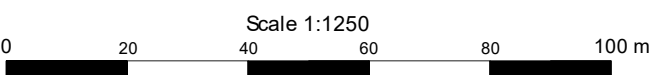
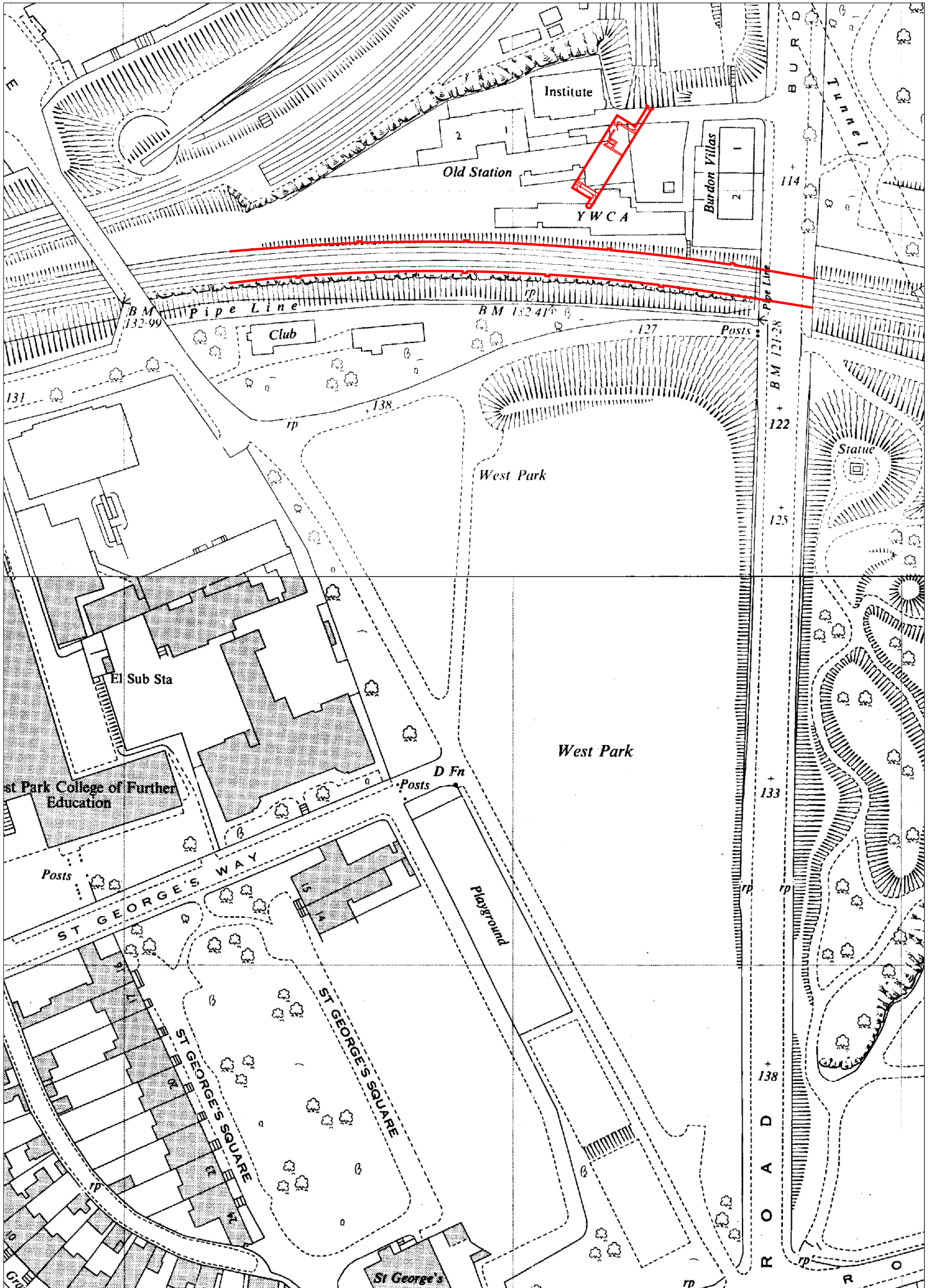
Illus. 07: Extract from the 4th Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1939, showing the study area (highlighted in red).



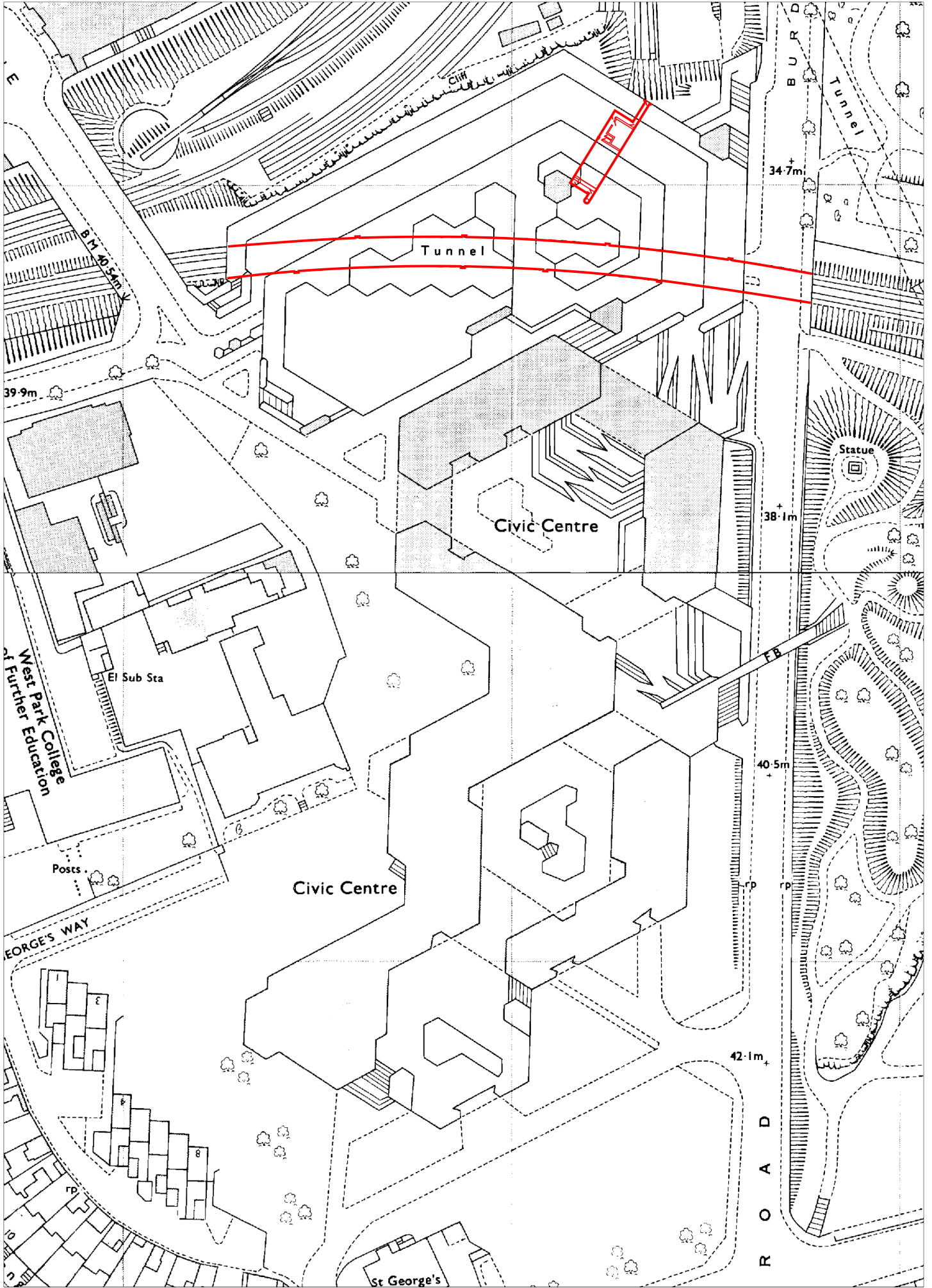
Scale 1:2500



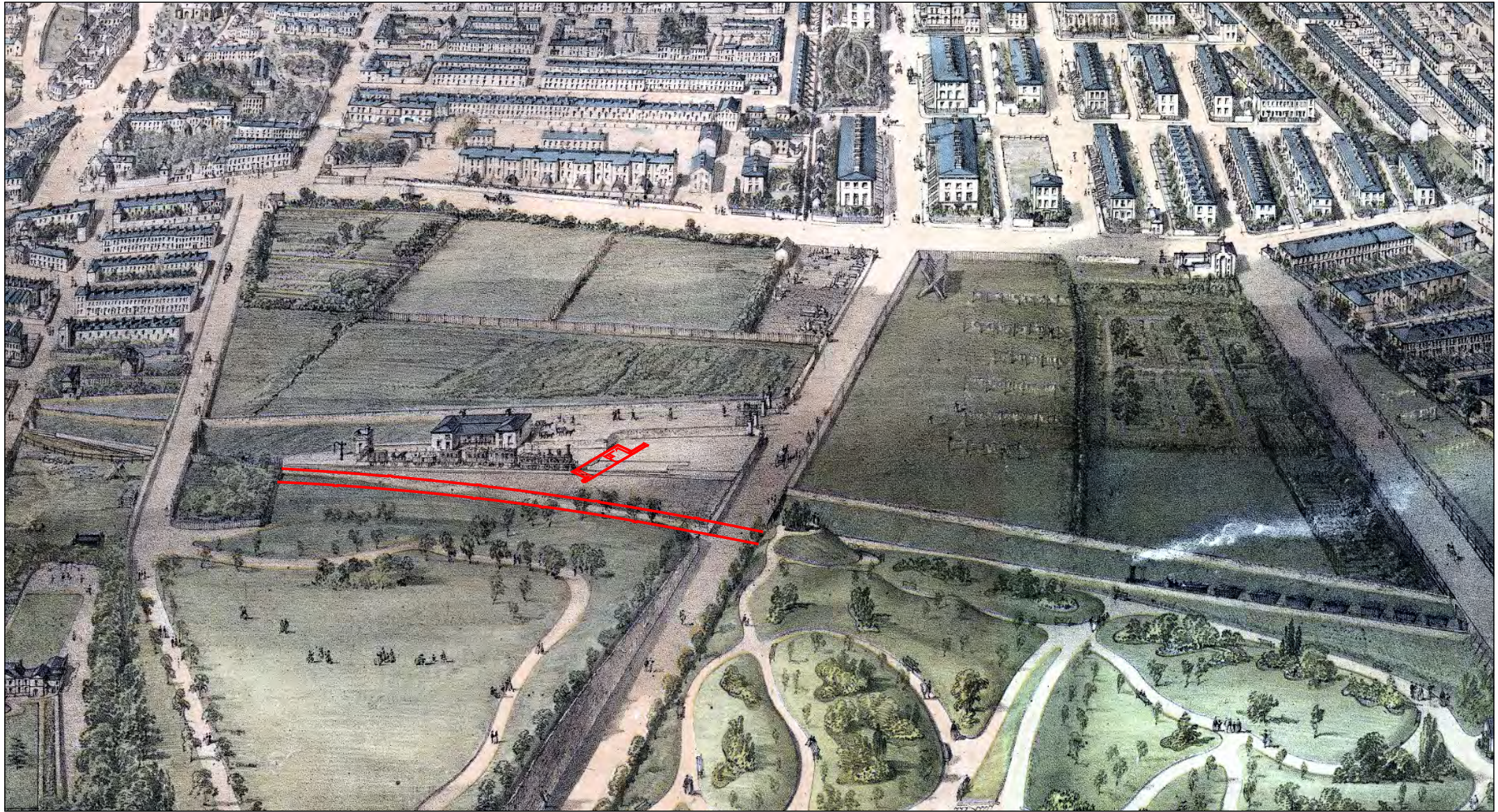
Illus. 08: Extract from the 5th Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland c.1955, showing the study area (highlighted in red).



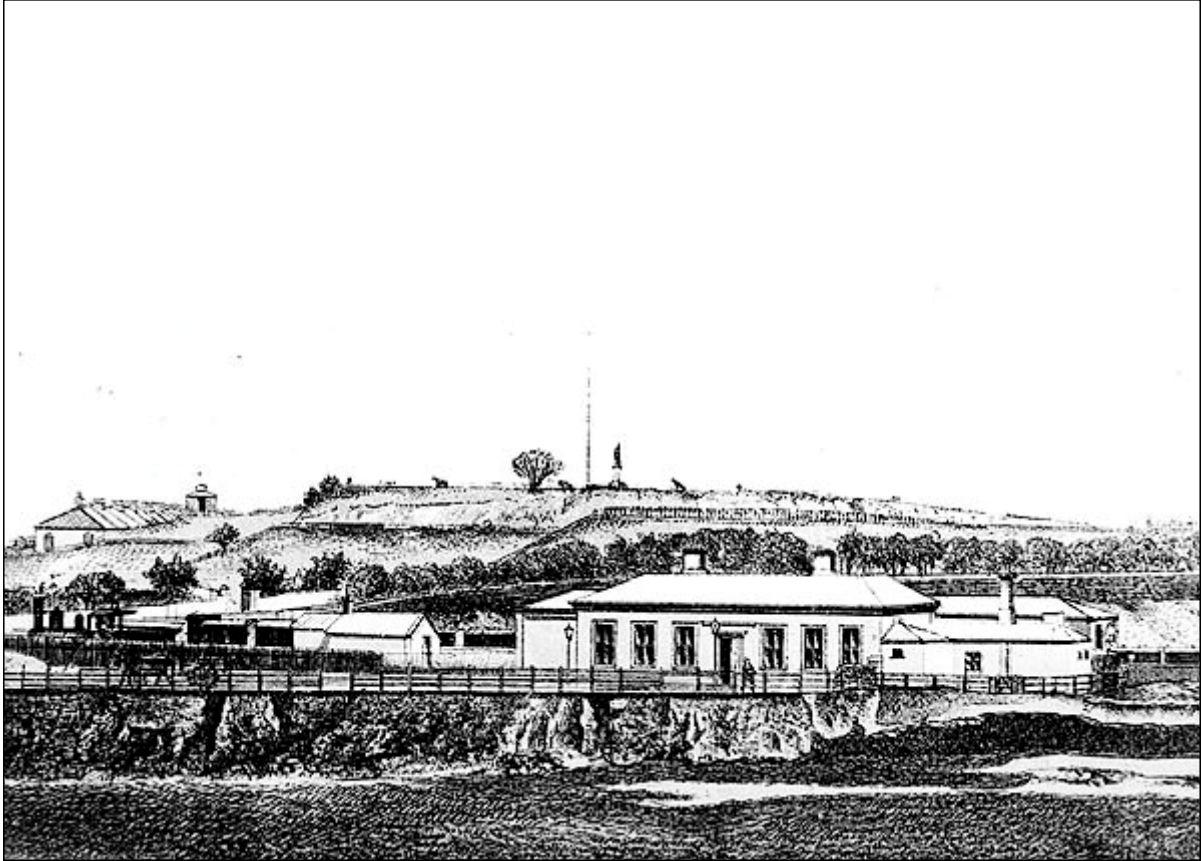
Illus. 09: Extract from the 1968 (published date) OS Plan of Sunderland, scale 1:1250, showing the site before the Civic Centre.



Illus. 10: Extract from the 1972 Ordnance Survey Plan of Sunderland, scale 1:1250, showing the Civic Centre.



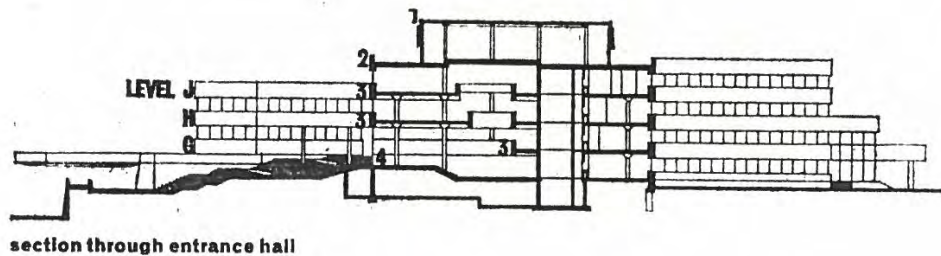
Illus. 11: Extract from a lithograph of a 'Birds-eye view of Sunderland', c.1857, artist unknown. Extract showing Sunderland Station and the Durham and Sunderland Railway. The approximate study area locations are highlighted in red.



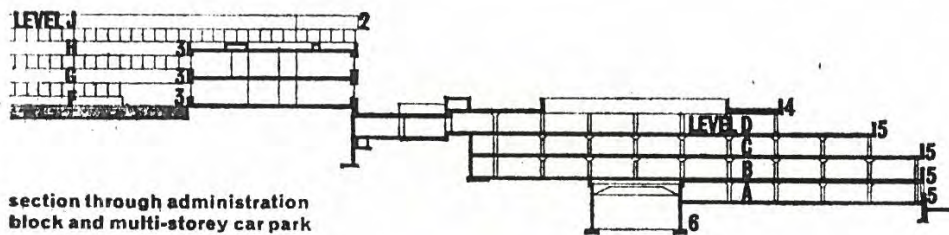
Illus. 12: Undated sketch of Fawcett Street Station, looking north.
(http://disused-stations.org.uk/s/sunderland_fawcett_street)



Illus. 13: Photograph of the Penshaw Branch Line in July 1964. Looking east from Park Lane bridge as NCB 0-6-T no. 5 runs through to South Dock with a coal train. The former Fawcett Street station can be seen on the extreme left. (http://disused-stations.org.uk/s/sunderland_fawcett_street)



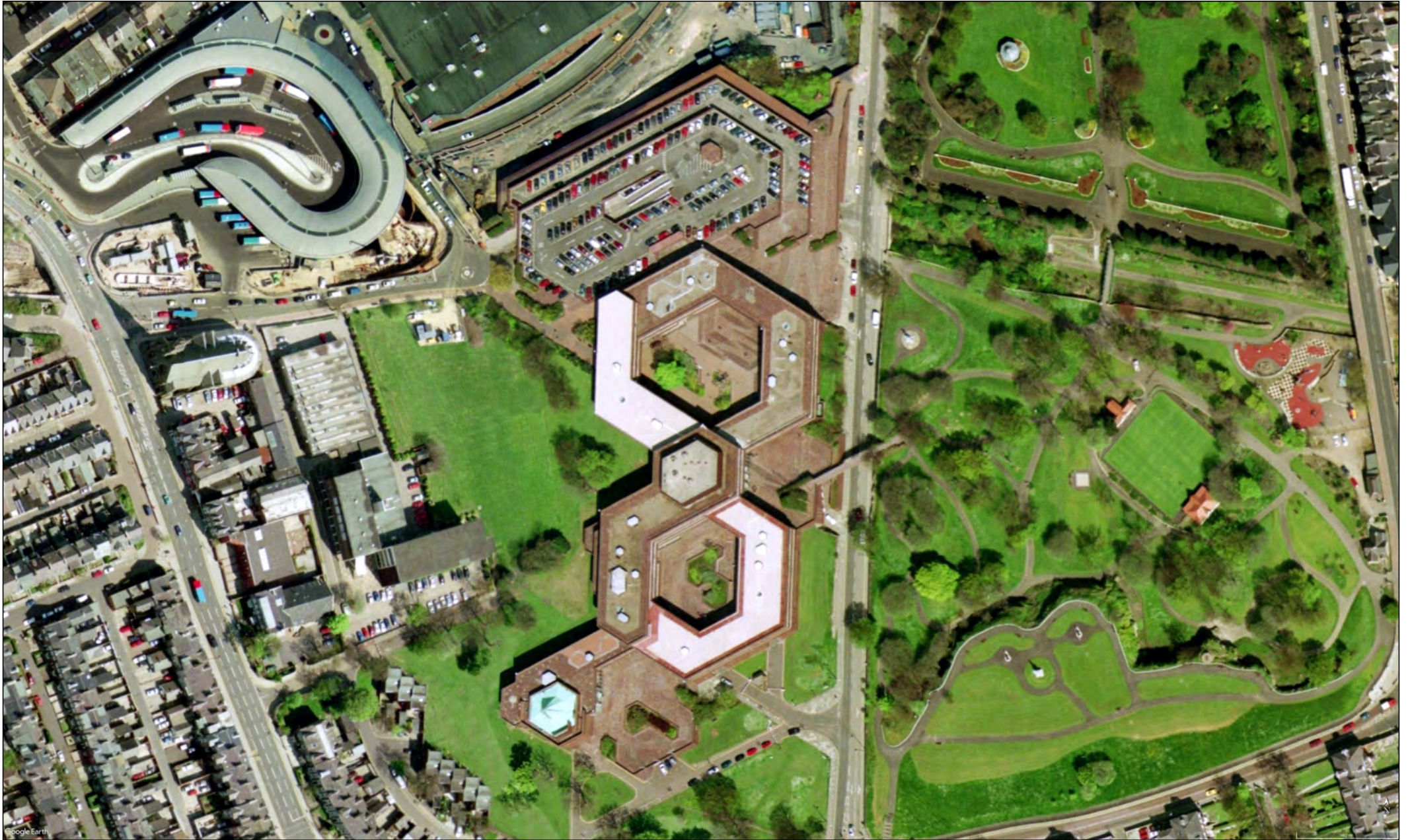
section through entrance hall



section through administration block and multi-storey car park

- key to sections
- 1, plant
 - 2, roof
 - 3, offices
 - 4, entrance hall terrace
 - 5, car park
 - 6, railway

*Illus. 14: Cross-section of Sunderland Civic Centre, showing the location of the Railway Tunnel (6).
Extracted from Architectural Review, 1971.*



Illus. 15: Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2001. Courtesy of Google Earth.



Illus. 16: Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, April 2018. Courtesy of Google Earth.



Illus. 17: Aerial view of Sunderland Civic Centre, July 2021. Courtesy of Google Earth.

3. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

3.1 The Nuclear Bunker

This is sited within the short north-east face of the northernmost hexagon of the early 1970s Civic Centre complex, where its small outer entrance (at NGR NZ 39736 56636) is closed by a barred metal gate, on the edge of what is now car park. Overall, it is a subterranean structure 32 m by 7 m, set at right angles to the face through which it is entered. Its walls are of concrete shuttering, and its roof of close-set steel sheets shaped and riveted together into the form of a ceiling of beams of trapezoidal section.

The entrance passage [Passage 1 - **P1**], 5.5 m long and 1.23 m wide, is initially 1.4 m high close to the rubble-strewn entrance, then slopes down to 2 m to end in a blank wall with a second iron-framed doorway on the right. There is a small circular vent close to roof level next to the external east jamb of the door, presumably related to ventilation, and a recess on its internal (north) wall close to its right jamb, just below ceiling level, contains heavily rusted equipment relating to either a communications or ventilation system.

This second, chamfered concrete doorway, with a small central grilled spy-hole or vent at head-level in the steel plate door, now opens into a further passage [**P2**] set at right angles to the entrance passage, 5.5 m long and 1.23 m wide - within which are fittings for a strip light on the left (south) side - ending with a third rebated iron doorway on the left. A similar combination of circular vent and square recess containing rusted fittings exists either side of the east jamb of this door (see *Illus. 19*), with the vent on the external north side and the recess on the internal south side. The door leads into a 7 m long passage [**P3**], partitioned off from the first of two rooms which is entered by a wooden door in the partition wall. This enclosed room measures 6.2 m long and 5.2 m wide, excepting for a WC block containing a pair of WCs extruded into its western corner, and entered from Passage 3 [**P3**] just before a fourth door at its south end. The internal walls of the room (Room 1) are in part dry-lined, otherwise of bare concrete, and, as well as a bracket towards the east end of the north wall, it contains a considerable amount of rectangular-section ventilation ducting, mostly cut or fallen down. Some of it is still in place, however, attached to an opening over the door in the west wall, while an opening at the same level opposite, in the north end of the east wall, suggests that it was connected there, too.

In Passage 3 [**P3**] a bracket also exists at low level, below another strip light fitting, on the east wall beyond the entrance to Room 1, just north of the toilet block doors. Beyond the door at the south end, just south of the toilet block entrances in the east wall of Passage 3 [**P3**] is the second, larger room, occupying the full width of the subterranean structure and measuring 11.5 by 6.7 m. It is largely empty except for some portable racks against its north and east walls and discarded debris of no obvious consequence. Strip light fixings exist above head height in the centre of the east wall and close to both entrances on the west wall (see *Illus. 19*). At the south-west end of its south-east wall are three steps up to a short passage [**P4**] which soon returns north-east to a fifth doorway, with another small central grilled spy-hole or vent at head-level in the steel plate door, leading into a longer, 5.5 m long and 1.23 m wide passage [**P5**], with a fourth, shallow step (at right angles) beneath the doorway sill. **P5** ends in a sixth rebated doorway, with a steel-plated door lacking spyhole, and a right-hand bend in a final passage [**P6**]. Above the doorway is the same combination seen earlier of circular vent and square recess containing rusted fittings either side of the south jamb (see *Illus. 19*), with the vent on the external east side and the recess on the internal west side just below ceiling level. Passage 6 [**P6**] ends with a circular stairwell, largely infilled with

loose concrete rubble, containing the remains of a cast-iron newel stair which can be traced at least one level up from the ceiling level of the main bunker.

The bunker has clearly been abandoned for some time, and little can be said of its internal arrangements other than that quite elaborate provision was made for ventilation and air filtration, and presumably also for communication. It may remain questionable whether it would have allowed a significant unit within the council to have confidently survived a nuclear holocaust, and it was probably better never put to this test.

3.2 The Railway Tunnel

A mid-19th century railway line east from the south end of the present railway station (Sunderland Central) originally served the docks on the south side of the mouth of the Wear, but the short section adjacent to the station had closed by 1953, although the existence of the tunnel here described proved that there was some plan for its re-use.

The present section of tunnel is c 187 m long, 7.9 m wide and c 5 m high, largely constructed of shuttered concrete, spanned by a series of pendant flat arches, with four pedestrian refuges provided on each side - those on the north side being fairly regularly spaced, those on the south more irregularly spaced (see *Illus. 18*) - each with a chamfered surround. The western portal to the tunnel is at the south end of the present railway station, at NGR NZ 39629 56581, and the eastern at NZ 39783 57570. The westernmost section of the north wall is of massive coursed limestone masonry, with a metre or so of concrete above, and immediately outside the eastern portal (the Burdon Street Bridge) is exposed natural Magnesian Limestone in Mowbray Park, which has its origins in earlier-19th century quarrying. When re-opened after restoration in 2000 the Park became the most-visited tourist attraction outside London.

3.3 Discussion

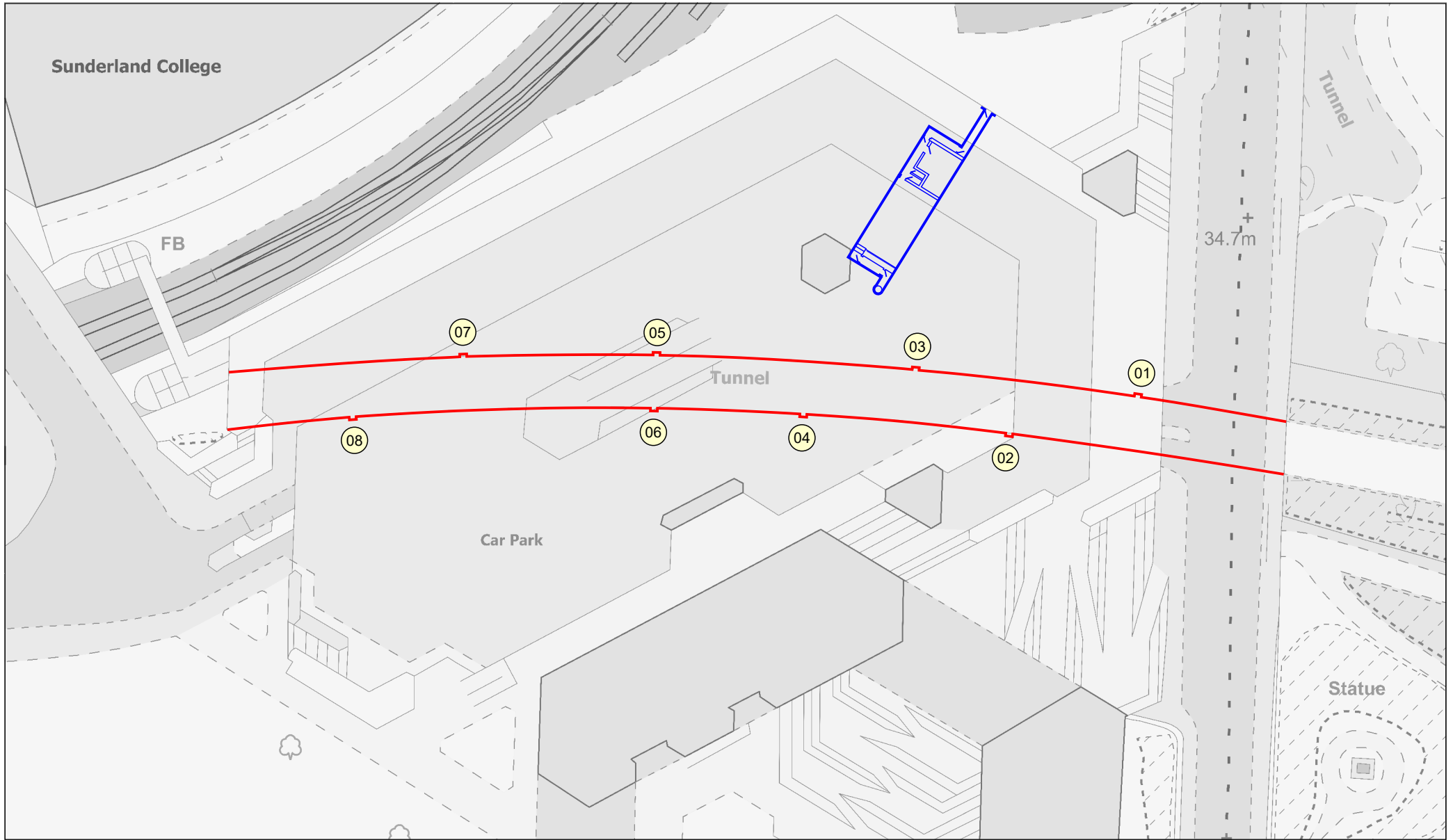
Examination of these two, closely-adjacent structures set beneath the now-abandoned Sunderland Civic Centre complex has shown them to survive well, albeit in a state of dereliction and having been subject to some damage by vandalism which, in addition to minor structural damage, has removed most of any fixtures and fittings which may have been present there until abandonment, which in both cases appears to have been relatively soon after construction in the 1970s. Evidence for the former existence of demolished fixtures and equipment does not survive in the tunnel but does survive in the bunker, principally in the form of ventilation and communication equipment, notably ventilation/air filtration equipment in the enclosed Room 1, as well as in the form of light fittings. None of this equipment, some of which remains in situ while most lies on the floor of the room, survives in a state which merits preservation, however, or allows simple explanation of its *modus operandi*.

The railway tunnel appears to offer no potential for further investigation with respect to its physical remains and little potential regarding its operational and social history revealed by documentary work. Although the recollections of local people and railway employees who used it in the past during the course of their work or as an unofficial routeway would shed light on the way it was used, there would be minimal value in such a record.

The bunker offers a little more potential in both regards, but may not be feasible given the current circumstances of its imminent demolition.

Although the demolition process itself may reveal hitherto unknown structural detail, such as the upper entrance into the Civic Centre and the wall thicknesses of the main bunker outer walls, the prospect of further surveying during demolition would probably not be practicable on health and safety grounds given the subterranean nature of the structure. Additionally, the process would probably not offer any substantial improvement to the record already provided. The recollections of former City Council employees may be of more interest in comprehending how the bunker was intended to be used, and in shedding light on the social and political context of the 'Cold War' times in which it was intended to be used. It would be interesting to understand the role it was expected to play in the event of a nuclear event, the numbers of individuals to be accommodated, and provision for their subsistence and welfare, for example, although it is quite possible that such information may now lie beyond the reach of personal recollection.

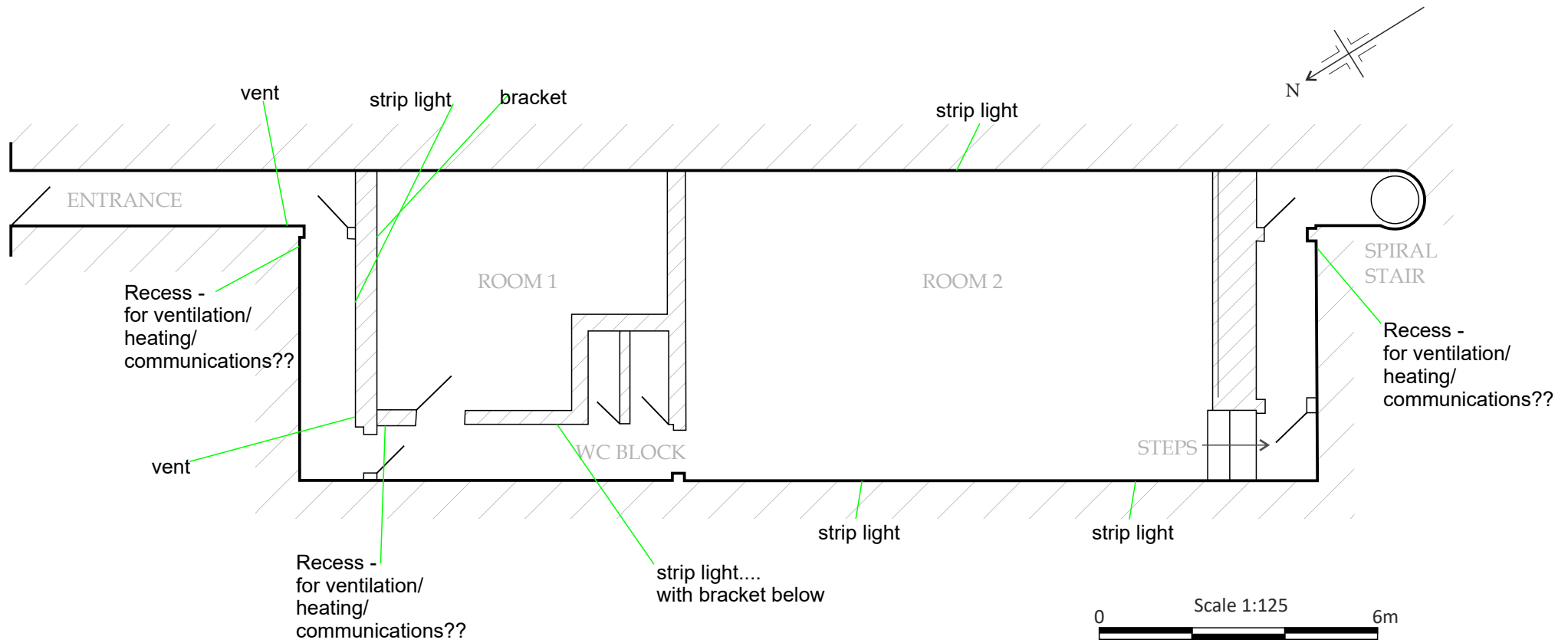
Ultimately, any further investigation of the site will be at the discretion of the County Council Archaeologist for Tyne and Wear.



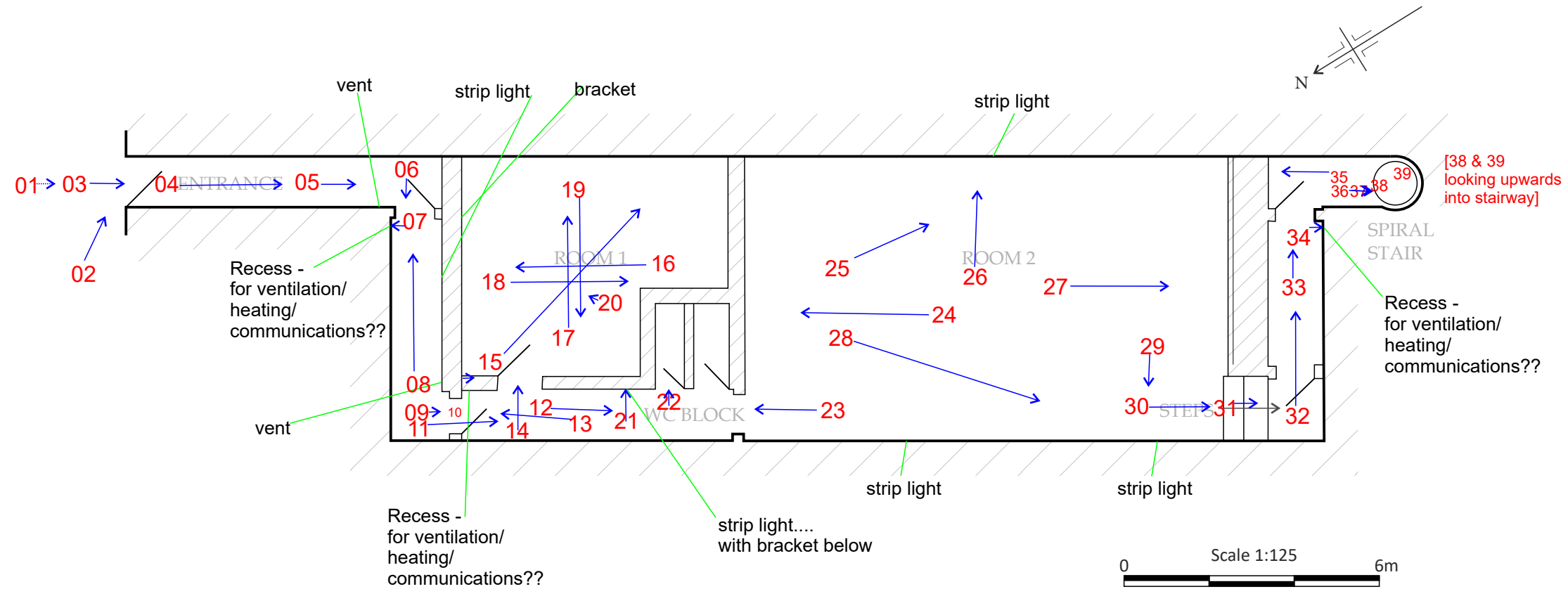
Scale 1:750
 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 m

— = Bunker — = Edge of tunnel
 (00) = Retreat number

Illus. 18: Location plan of the Nuclear Bunker and Railway Tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre.



Illus. 19: Plan of Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre.



Illus. 20: Key plan of Nuclear Bunker, showing locations of photographs taken during Historic Building Recording.

4. THE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Record photographs supplied as Appendix 1 and 2 and digitally are keyed to the Measured Survey Plan (*Illus. 20*).

Photographic Record of the Nuclear Bunker, Sunderland Civic Centre (Appendix 1)

<i>Photo number</i>	<i>Description</i>
01	<i>Position of bunker entrance (beyond the skip).</i>
02	<i>View of bunker entrance, looking south.</i>
03	<i>View of bunker entrance, looking south-west.</i>
04	<i>View of the entrance corridor, looking south-west.</i>
05	<i>View of the south-west end of the entrance corridor.</i>
06	<i>View of doorway surround at south-west end of entrance corridor.</i>
07	<i>Inside door of internal SE-NW corridor.</i>
08	<i>View of internal corridor, looking SE.</i>
09	<i>Door at NW end of internal corridor, view looking SW.</i>
10	<i>View of air vent grill.</i>
11	<i>View of Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking SW.</i>
12	<i>View of WC access corridor, looking SW.</i>
13	<i>Entrance to Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking NE.</i>
14	<i>View of door.</i>
15	<i>View of Room 1, looking east.</i>
16	<i>View of collapsed air filtration ducts against the north wall in Room 1.</i>
17	<i>View of the east wall in Room 1.</i>
18	<i>View of the south wall in Room 1.</i>
19	<i>View of the west wall in Room 1.</i>
20	<i>View of the north wall in Room 1.</i>
21	<i>View of bracket fittings.</i>
22	<i>View of WC cubicle in NE-SW corridor, view looking SE.</i>
23	<i>View of the entrance to Room 2 from NE-SW corridor, looking NE.</i>
24	<i>View of the north wall in Room 2.</i>
25	<i>View of the east wall in Room 2.</i>
26	<i>Alternative view of the east wall in Room 2.</i>
27	<i>View of the south wall in Room 2.</i>
28	<i>View of the west wall in Room 2.</i>
29	<i>View of the south end of the west wall in Room 2.</i>
30	<i>View of steps through the south wall of Room 2.</i>
31	<i>View of Room 2 entrance to exit corridor from steps.</i>
32	<i>View of NW-SE exit corridor, looking SE.</i>
33	<i>View of door at SE end of exit corridor.</i>
34	<i>View of service vent at SE end of exit corridor.</i>
35	<i>View looking NE at doorway opposite the spiral stairway in short exit corridor return.</i>
36	<i>View of spiral stair in short NE-SW exit corridor return.</i>
37	<i>View of blocked spiral stair exit located at the SW corner of the bunker.</i>
38	<i>Looking upwards at blocked spiral stair exit.</i>
39	<i>View from the rear of the stairwell at ceiling level looking upwards into the blocked stairwell towards its entrance from the Civic Centre above.</i>

Photographic Record of the Railway Tunnel, Sunderland Civic Centre (Appendix 2)

<i>Photo number</i>	<i>Description</i>
01	<i>View of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.</i>
02	<i>Broad view of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.</i>
03	<i>View near the east end of the tunnel, looking south.</i>
04	<i>View looking east towards the east end of the tunnel.</i>
05	<i>View looking west from near the east end of the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 01 visible (foreground right).</i>
06	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 01, looking north.</i>
07	<i>Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 1, looking north.</i>
08	<i>View looking west along the tunnel, from between Retreat Alcoves 01-02.</i>
09	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.</i>
10	<i>Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.</i>
11	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.</i>
12	<i>Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.</i>
13	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 04, looking south.</i>
14	<i>View looking west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcoves 05-06 visible in the foreground.</i>
15	<i>View looking north-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 05 in the foreground.</i>
16	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 05, looking north.</i>
17	<i>View looking south-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 06 visible in the foreground.</i>
18	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 06, looking south.</i>
19	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 07, looking north.</i>
20	<i>View looking west near the west end of the tunnel.</i>
21	<i>View looking east from near the west end of the tunnel.</i>
22	<i>Broad view of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.</i>
23	<i>View of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.</i>
24	<i>View looking west at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.</i>
25	<i>View looking north at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.</i>
26	<i>View looking south at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.</i>
27	<i>View looking east through the tunnel from the west end / entrance.</i>

5. REFERENCES

Sources for the Bunker:

Internet Sources:

- <https://www.28dayslater.co.uk/threads/sunderland-underground-bunker-october-2010.55144/> A selection of photographs taken within the bunker, October 2010.
- <https://sunderlandglobalmedia.org/sunderlands-secret-and-lost-places-have-you-been-to-any/> Photograph and brief discussion of the bunker, July 2021.
- https://www.bunker13.co.uk/html/cold_war_use.html Regional info on Cold War, with mention of Sunderland towards end.

Written Sources:

- Archaeological Practice Ltd. 2009. *Former Northumberland Record Office, Melton Park, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne. Archaeological Assessment and Building Recording.* Grey literature archaeological report AP09/53.
- SANITY, the magazine of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament). April/May 1981/2.
- CB.SU/3/4 Civil Defence Committee minutes 18 December 1963 - 17 April 1968 (1 volume)
- CB.SU/73 Civic Centre Committee minutes, 1968 - 1974 (1 volume)
- Cocroft, Wayne D. and Thomas, Roger J. C., Barnwell P.S. (ed.). 2003. *Cold War – Building for*
- *Nuclear Confrontation 1946-1989.* Historic England, Swindon.
- Mabbitt, J.C., Tyne and Wear Museums, 2003, *Former 13 Group Fighter Command Headquarters, Kenton Bar, Newcastle upon Tyne – Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*
- Mabbitt, J.C., Tyne and Wear Museums, 2004, *Former 13 Group Fighter Command Headquarters, Kenton Bar – Inventory of Portable Objects*
- MON16512. *Specification for Archaeological Building Recording at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7DN*
- NAA (2020) *Desk-based Archaeological Appraisal: The Civic Centre, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear.* Unpublished NAA no. 20/14.
- NAA (2020) *Historic Building Recording: Sunderland Civic Centre, Tyne and Wear.* Unpublished NAA no. 20/62.
- Sunderland City Council (SCC) (1970) *Sunderland Town Hall and Civic Centre. Commemorative Brochure.*
- Sunderland Town Hall and Civic Centre, in *The Architectural Review*, 1971.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance, City of Sunderland, Development and Regeneration Directorate. 2005. *Ashbrooke Conservation Area Character Study.*
- Tyne & Wear Specialist Conservation Team (Whaley, R., Morrison, J. and Heslop, D.). 2008. *Archaeology of the Twentieth Century Defence Sites of Tyne and Wear, An Illustrated Guide.* Newcastle City Council.

Sunderland City Council Photographic Archive:

- Photographic archive of the bunker taken in 2015.

- Photograph showing NE portion of Sunderland Civic Centre, with approximate plan of Nuclear Bunker transposed.

Sources for the Railway Tunnel:

Internet Sources:

- <https://www.28dayslater.co.uk/threads/burdon-road-tunnel-sunderland-june-2013.81282/> Photographs and useful information with dates etc. June, 2013.
- http://disused-stations.org.uk/s/sunderland_fawcett_street/ Excellent historical summary of the relevant portion of railway, together with selected images.

Written Sources:

- Biddle, Gordon Victorian stations (David & Charles 1973)
- Biddle, Gordon Britain's historic railway buildings (Oxford University Press 2003)
- Bragg, S and Scarlett, E North Eastern lines and stations (NERA 1999)
- Clinker, C R Register of closed passenger stations and goods depots (Avon Anglia 1978)
- Cook, R A and Hoole, K North Eastern Railway historical maps (RCHS 2nd edition 1991)
- Fawcett, Bill A history of North Eastern Railway architecture (Three volumes) (NERA 2001-05)
- Fawcett, Bill George Townsend Andrews of York (NERA 2011)
- Guy, Andy Steam and speed: railways of Tyne and Wear from the earliest days (Tyne Bridge Publishing 2003)
- Hoole, Ken A regional history of the railways of Great Britain: vol 4 The North East (David & Charles 2nd edition 1974)
- Hoole, Ken Railway stations of the North East (David & Charles 1985)
- Hurst, Geoffrey Register of closed railways 1948-1991 (Milepost Publications 1992)
- Quick, Michael Railway passenger stations in Great Britain: a chronology (RCHS 2009)
- Sinclair, Neil T Railways of Sunderland (Tyne & Wear County Council Museums 1985)
- Teasdale, John G (Ed) A history of British Railways' North Eastern Region (NERA 2009)
- Young, Alan Lost stations of Northumberland & Durham (Silver Link 2011)
- Hansard Various (HMSO)
- North Eastern Express North Eastern Railway Society (various)

APPENDIX 1:

Photographic Record of Nuclear Bunker at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.



Photo 01. Position of bunker entrance (beyond the skip).



Photo 02. View of bunker entrance, looking south.



Photo 03. View of bunker entrance, looking south-west.



Photo 04. View of the entrance corridor, looking south-west.



Photo 05. View of the south-west end of the entrance corridor.



Photo 06. View of doorway surround at south-west end of entrance corridor.



Photo 07. Inside door of internal SE-NW corridor.



Photo 08. View of internal corridor, looking SE.

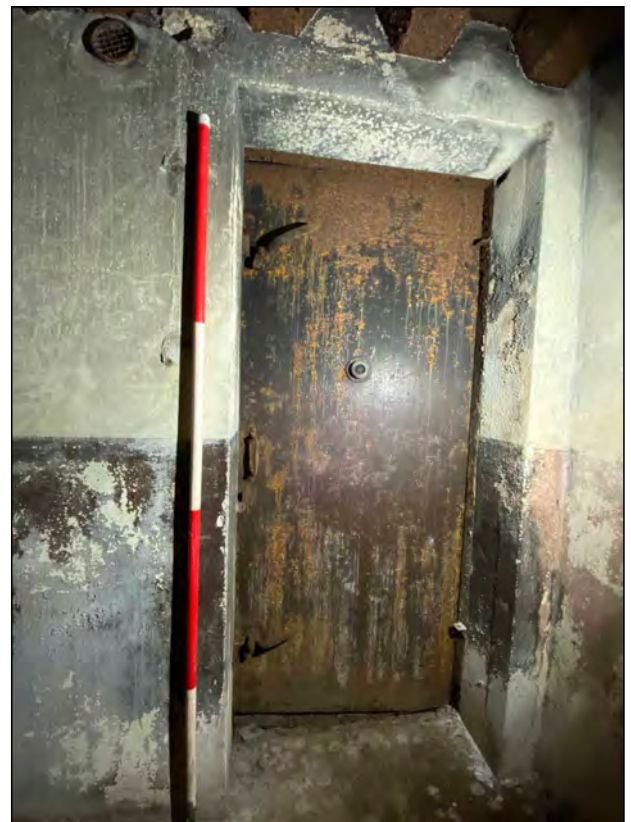


Photo 09. Door at NW end of internal corridor, view looking SW.



Photo 10. View of air vent grill.



Photo 11. View of Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking SW.



Photo 12. View of WC access corridor, looking SW.



Photo 13. Entrance to Room 1 and WC access corridor, looking NE.



Photo 14. View of door.



Photo 15. View of Room 1, looking east.



Photo 16. View of collapsed air filtration ducts against the north wall in Room 1.



Photo 17. View of the east wall in Room 1.



Photo 18. View of the south wall in Room 1.



Photo 19. View of the west wall in Room 1.



Photo 20. View of the north wall in Room 1.

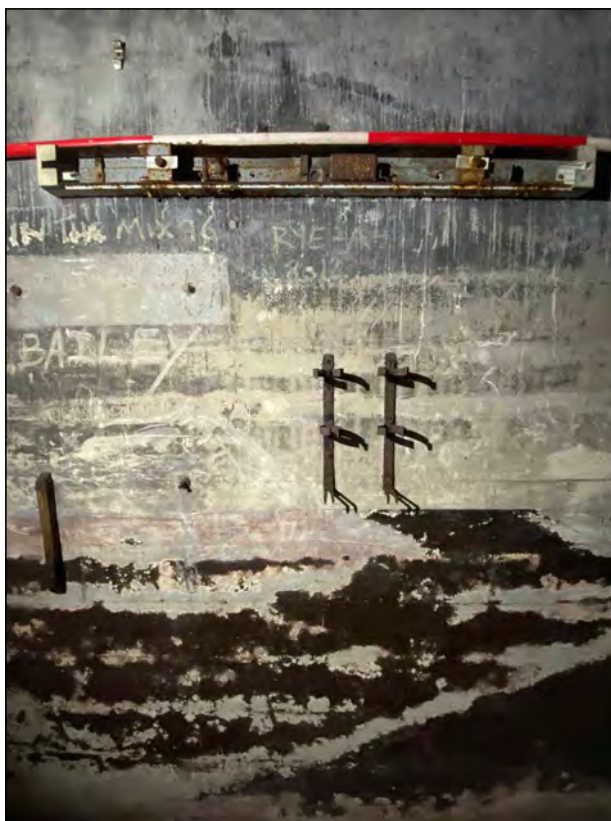


Photo 21. View of bracket fittings.



Photo 22. View of WC cubicle in NE-SW corridor, view looking SE.



Photo 23. View of the entrance to Room 2 from NE-SW corridor, looking NE.



Photo 24. View of the north wall in Room 2.



Photo 25. View of the east wall in Room 2.



Photo 26. Alternative view of the east wall in Room 2.



Photo 27. View of the south wall in Room 2.



Photo 28. View of the west wall in Room 2.



Photo 29. View of the south end of the west wall in Room 2.



Photo 30. View of steps through the south wall of Room 2.



Photo 31. View of Room 2 entrance to exit corridor from steps.



Photo 32. View of NW-SE exit corridor, looking SE.



Photo 33. View of door at SE end of exit corridor.



Photo 34. View of service vent at SE end of exit corridor.



Photo 35. View looking NE at doorway opposite the spiral stairway in short exit corridor return.



Photo 36. View of spiral stair in short NE-SW exit corridor return.



Photo 37. View of blocked spiral stair exit located at the SW corner of the bunker.



Photo 38. Looking upwards at blocked spiral stair exit.



Photo 39. Alternative view looking upwards at blocked spiral stair exit.

APPENDIX 2:

Photographic Record of Railway Tunnel at Sunderland Civic Centre, December 2021.



Photo 01. View of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.



Photo 02. Broad view of the east end of / entrance to the railway tunnel, looking south.



Photo 03. View near the east end of the tunnel, looking south.



Photo 04. View looking east towards the east end of the tunnel.



Photo 05. View looking west from near the east end of the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 01 visible (foreground right).



Photo 06. View of Retreat Alcove 01, looking north.



Photo 07. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 1, looking north.



Photo 08. View looking west along the tunnel, from between Retreat Alcoves 01-02.



Photo 09. View of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.



Photo 10. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 02, looking south.



Photo 11. View of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.



Photo 12. Detailed view of Retreat Alcove 03, looking north.



Photo 13. View of Retreat Alcove 04, looking south.



Photo 14. View looking west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcoves 05-06 visible in the foreground.



Photo 15. View looking north-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 05 in the foreground.



Photo 16. View of Retreat Alcove 05, looking north.



Photo 17. View looking south-west along the tunnel, with Retreat Alcove 06 visible in the foreground.



Photo 18. View of Retreat Alcove 06, looking south.

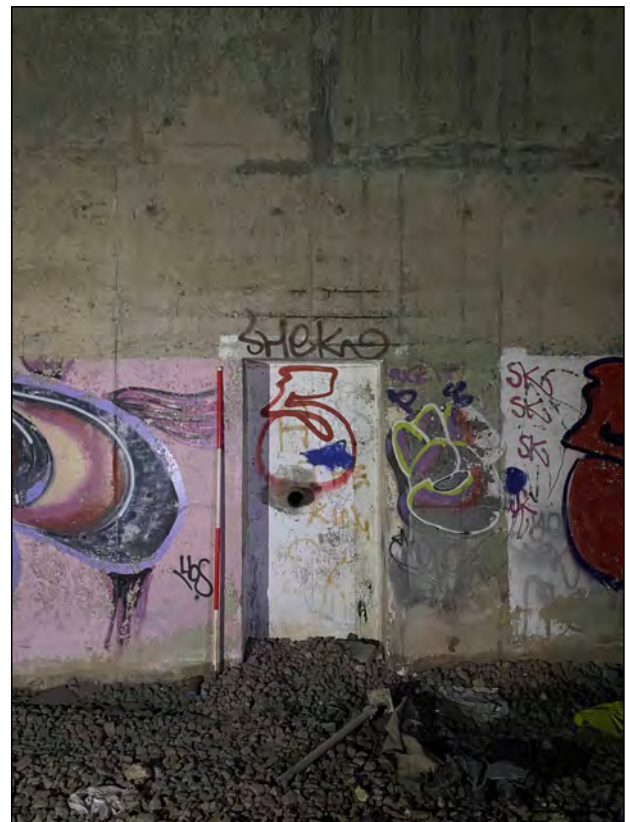


Photo 19. View of Retreat Alcove 07, looking north.



Photo 20. View looking west near the west end of the tunnel.



Photo 21. View looking east from near the west end of the tunnel.



Photo 22. Broad view of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.



Photo 23. View of Retreat Alcove 08, looking south.

Photo 24. View looking west at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.



Photo 25. View looking north at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.



Photo 26. View looking south at the west end / entrance of the tunnel.



Photo 27. View looking east through the tunnel from the west end / entrance.

APPENDIX 3:

MON16512. Specification for Archaeological Building Recording at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7DN. By Tyne and Wear Archaeology Service, October 2021.

Tyne and Wear Archaeology Service

Specification for Archaeological Building Recording at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7DN

Planning reference: pre-application

TWAS reference: MON16512

Date of issue: 8th October 2021

Author: Sophie Laidler

Email: Sophie.Laidler@newcastle.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 277 7102

Address: Newcastle City Council, Planning, 9th Floor, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/planning-building-and-development/tyne-and-wear-archaeology>

To receive this document in a different format please contact the officer named above.

This specification is for the archaeological building recording of the nuclear bunker and tunnel at Sunderland City Council Civic Centre, Burdon Road. Sunderland City Council is planning on vacating the present civic centre for a new building. It is proposed that the present civic centre will be demolished, and the site redeveloped for residential housing.

NZ 39705 56497



The HER entry for Sunderland Civic Centre is as follows:

HER 9689 Sunderland Civic Centre

Town Hall and civic centre. Designed 1965 by Sir Basil Spence, Bonnington and Collins. Built 1967-70.

Reinforced concrete frame comprised of a grid of 20ft (6.1m) equilateral triangles, subdivided into 5ft (1.52m) equilateral triangles. The office wings have concrete floor slabs and external cladding of brown brindled engineering brick with matching tiles for walls, paving and plinth. The windows are slightly tinted in aluminium surrounds. There is a copper roof to the council chamber and Cor-ten louvres to the plant room on top of the administrative block. Inside, the same brown brick pavements and brown tiles are used for hall floors and walls, many now carpeted. Light grey melamine-faced panelling lines the principal corridors.

The building occupies a steeply sloping and elevated site that makes for complex changes of levels. It consists of a series of hexagons. At the centre there are administrative offices in a pair of interlocking hexagons forming a figure of eight. Openings through central courtyards and a bridge link across Burdon Road to Mowbray Park. At the south end there is a civic suite with a road underneath providing access for services and the councillors car park.

Sunderland Civic Centre was assessed by Historic England in 2017. The Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport decided not to list the building and a Certificate of Immunity from Listing was issued on 8 May 2017.

The building lies within Ashbrooke Conservation Area.

Northern Archaeological Associates undertook a comprehensive historic building survey of Sunderland Civic Centre in 2019/2020. At the time that the building recording was undertaken health and safety restrictions meant that there was no access to the nuclear bunker which is situated next to the railway.

The appointed archaeologist **must** read Northern Archaeological Associate's building recording report prior to undertaking the additional historic building recording.

The aim of the project is to provide additional Level 2 Historic Building Record to advance understanding of the significance of the bunker and tunnel in advance of their demolition (if the proposed works are approved).

The permanent archive should consist of both a written and photographic record of the structures. This work is required in accordance with paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The project should be carried out with reference to the relevant research agendas of the [North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment \(NERFF\)](#) (2006). The NERFF is [currently being revised](#).

The fieldwork should be carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' [Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures](#) (2019) and the Yorkshire, Humber and the North East Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process (available on request). It should follow the guidance set out in Historic England's

[Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#) (2016). The methodology below follows the structure of this guidance and should be read alongside it.

The historic building recording must be undertaken by a professional archaeologist or building historian with proven experience of undertaking similar projects, and with appropriate skills and experience to undertake work to the highest professional standards.

The appointed contractor must produce a risk assessment in line with legislative requirements and industry best practice. If any elements of the fieldwork cannot be completed due to health and safety issues, this should be clearly stated in the report.

The record should consist of the following elements:

1. Documentary research

Historic map regression using Ordnance Survey and any other available historic maps should be carried out for the structures. A search for published material and original documents such as plans and photographs relating to the structures should be carried out at relevant local and national repositories. The following resources are suggested:

Northumberland Archives https://www.northumberlandarchives.com/
Tyne and Wear Archives https://twarchives.org.uk/ Amongst other items they hold Building Control Plans for Tyne and Wear which pre-date 1947 which provide useful information on the location of cellars or basements or other features which may have destroyed or truncated archaeological deposits. Building Control Plans that post-date 1946 are held by the Local Planning Authority.
Durham Record Office http://www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/ Mostly holds records for Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside but does hold some records relating to those districts north of the River Tyne and has a lot of mining records.
Durham University Special Collections https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/ Holds amongst other items the tithe maps for County Durham http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150_s1gf06g2666.xml#DDR-EA-TTH-1-t and church records. The separate local history section in the library has a good collection of books, journals and leaflets.
Newcastle City Library local studies section https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/libraries-culture/history-and-heritage/local-studies-and-family-history Along with historic photographs, newspaper articles and more the library holds Charles Goad Fire Insurance Plans for the City Centre which provide useful information on destructive cellars but also the function and layout of historic buildings. The library also holds the City Engineer's photographic archive from 1965-2000. This includes photos of Newcastle street views and historic buildings which have since been renovated or demolished.
West End Library, the West Newcastle Picture History Collection https://newcastlephotoarchive.org.uk/ There are around 17,000 images and maps of the West End, mainly of Benwell, Elswick and Scotswood. The collection includes a large selection of images by Jimmy Forsyth but also covers other west end wards in detail.

Gateshead Archive	https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/9671/Gateshead-Archive
Discover North Tyneside	https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1017/local-studies-and-information
Sunderland Local Studies Centre	https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/12841/Materials-and-facilities
Local and Family History section at The Word South Shields	https://theworduk.org/explore/archives/ The Word library houses a wide range of books, maps, pamphlets and other ephemera, some items dating back to the 18 th century, which record the social, political, maritime and industrial history of South Tyneside and the North East. The South Shields Gazette is available on microfilm from its first edition up to present day. Many of the early years of the Gazette, up until 1916, are also available on the British Newspaper Archive website which is free to use at The Word. They also have a large photographic collection of more than 18,000 images which give a view of South Tyneside's past: www.southtynesidehistory.co.uk/
Tyne and Wear HER	http://www.twsitelines.info/
Goad fire insurance plans for Newcastle, Sunderland and River Tyne Docks	https://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/firemaps/england/fireinsurancemapsengland.html
Beamish Museum People's Collection	http://collections.beamish.org.uk/ Building and street photographic collection
Newcastle Libraries flickr	http://www.flickr.com/photos/newcastlelibraries Tyneside Life and Times
The Historic England Archive	https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive
England's Places	https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/englands-places/

2. Building investigation

The project should aim to establish by observation the origins, form, function, date and development of the structures. Particular attention should be paid to evidence of phasing, architectural styles, plan elements, and where applicable decorative schemes and fixtures and fittings. The potential for scientific dating or analysis such as dendrochronology should be considered.

3. Survey and drawings

If there are existing architect's drawings for the structures these may be used as a base for annotation, however they must be checked for accuracy. The following drawings should be produced:

1. Site location plan.
2. Measured plans (to scale or fully dimensioned) as existing. Plans should show the form and location of any structural features of historic significance, such as blocked doorways, windows and fireplaces, masonry joints, ceiling beams and other changes in floor and ceiling levels, and any evidence for fixtures of significance.

3. A site plan relating the building to other structures and to any related topographical and landscape features.
4. A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs.
5. Copies of earlier drawings throwing light on the building's history.

Survey may be carried out by hand or using digital survey techniques, for which further guidance is available from [Historic England](#). Hand drawings should be made at a scale appropriate to the building, typically 1:100 or 1:50 for plans, and 1:50 or 1:20 for sections. Graphic conventions are set out in section 7 of Historic England's [Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#) (2016).

4. Photography

Digital photographs should be taken using a high-resolution DSLR camera with sensors exceeding 10 Mega Pixels, producing either TIFF files or RAW files which must be converted to TIFF before archive deposition. The photographs should be recorded in an index recording the image number, subject, any scales used, direction facing, date the picture was taken and who took it.

All photographs should be in focus, with an appropriate use of depth of field; they should be adequately exposed in good natural light, or where necessary well-lit by artificial means (not by camera-triggered electronic flash). The use of a tripod is recommended, particularly for interiors.

The following photographs should be produced:

1. A general view or views of the structures in their wider setting or landscape (if and where possible).
2. The structure's external appearance. A series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the structure, and give an overall impression of its size and shape. Individual elevations should be photographed at right-angles to the plane of the elevation, with metric scales where appropriate.
3. The overall appearance of the rooms and circulation areas.
4. Any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use, with scale where appropriate.
5. Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence.
6. Any dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers' plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building. A transcription should be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret.
7. Any building contents which have a significant bearing on the building's history.

5. The written account

A report must be produced detailing the results of the recording. It should be illustrated with an appropriate selection of the record photographs, reproduced at no smaller than one quarter of a full A4 page. References to cardinal directions should use the [standard 16 point system](#) with no further subdivision. The report must contain the following:

1. The precise location of the structures as an address and in the form of a National Grid reference.
2. A note of any statutory and non-statutory designations.
3. The date when the record was made, the name(s) of the recorder(s) and the location of any archive material.
4. A contents list; a list of illustrations or figures.
5. A summary statement. This account should summarise the building's form, function, date and sequence of development. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given if known.
6. An introduction briefly setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, and any constraints. This specification should be referenced and appended.
7. Acknowledgements.
8. A discussion of the published sources relating to the building and its setting, an account of its history as given in published sources, an analysis of historic map evidence (map regression) and a critical evaluation of previous records of the building, where they exist.
9. An account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout) and of its successive phases of development, together with the evidence supporting this analysis.
10. Any evidence for the former existence of demolished structures or removed plant associated with the building.
11. An assessment of the potential for further investigative or documentary work, and of the potential survival of below-ground evidence for the history of the building and its site.
12. Copies of historic maps, drawings, views or photographs illustrating the development of the building or its site (the permission of owners or copyright holders may be required).
13. Full bibliographic and other references, and a list of the sources consulted.

6. Archiving and dissemination

The report must be submitted digitally as a pdf and as a bound paper report to the Tyne and Wear HER. Any hard copy records such as drawings on film should be submitted with a second copy of the bound paper report for deposition with Tyne and Wear Archives.

The digital archive including all photographs, CAD files etc. must be submitted to the Tyne and Wear HER on an archive quality CD, and archived with the [Archaeology Data Service \(ADS\)](#). The likely cost of archiving with the ADS and their requirements for archived material should be established before tendering for the project. Proof of archiving with the ADS will be required by the Tyne and Wear HER.

Digital photographs should be named using their index number and the site name, and have metadata attached to each file including the index number, site name, address, a brief

description of the subject and any copyright restrictions. Guidance on preparing digital material for archive is available in chapter 6 of Historic England's [Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice](#) (2016).

The project must be registered with [OASIS](#) in order to signpost the project nationally, and the reference number included in the report.

If you have any queries about this specification, require full website links or notice any broken links, please contact the officer named above.

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.



Westmorland House, Elswick East Terrace,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7LJ
Tel: 0191 273 0777; Fax: 0191 273 1777
Email: info@archaeologicalpractice.co.uk
Web: www.archaeologicalpractice.co.uk