

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING (LEVEL 3)

**BELLE VUE STADIUM
GORTON, MANCHESTER**

**PREPARED BY LANPRO SERVICES
ON BEHALF OF
COUNTRYSIDE PROPERTIES AND
SCP INVESTMENTS**

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Contents

Contents	i
List of Figures	ii
List of Plates.....	ii
Non-Technical Summary	v
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 SITE LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION	1
3 PLANNING BACKGROUND	2
4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	3
5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	6
6 STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE.....	6
7 METHODOLOGY.....	7
8 DESCRIPTION.....	9
9 DISCUSSION	22
10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS	24
11 REFERENCES.....	25

Figures

Plates

Appendix 1: OASIS Form

List of Figures

Figure 1. Site Location

Figure 2. Layout of Belle Vue Stadium

Figure 3. Extract from Yate's map of Lancashire of 1786

Figure 4. Extract from the Gorton tithe map of 1846

Figure 5. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1935

Figure 6. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of 1951

Figure 7. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of 1973

Figure 8. Ground floor plan of Structure B

Figure 9. First floor plan of Structure B

Figure 10. Second floor plan of Structure B

Figure 11. Cross-section of Structure B

Figure 12. Photographic location plan of stadium

List of Plates

Plate 1. Layout of Belle Vue from the 1931 guidebook (after Inglis 2004, 45)

Plate 2. The main entrance (Structure A), south-west elevation showing the two brick booths and concrete canopy (facing north-east)

Plate 3. Structure A, west booth, south-west elevation (facing north-east)

Plate 4. Structure A, interior of the west booth (facing east)

Plate 5: Structure A, north-east elevation of the west booth (facing south)

Plate 6. Structure A, south-east elevation of the west booth (facing north-west)

Plate 7. Structure A, south-west elevation of the east booth (facing north-east)

Plate 8. Structure A, west room in the east booth (facing east)

Plate 9. Structure A, east room of the east booth (facing east)

Plate 10. Structure A, north-east elevation of the east booth (facing south)

Plate 11. Structure A, canopy at the north side of the entrance (facing north-west)

Plate 12. Structure A, main entrance and west kiosk (facing north-east)

Plate 13. Structure A, location of original Belle Vue sign to the left of modern advertisement (facing south-west)

Plate 14. Structure B, north elevation (facing south)

Plate 15. Later Phase main staircase and single-storey ticket hall (on the right of the frame), (facing south)

Plate 16. Structure B, south elevation (facing north)

Plate 17. Structure B, east elevation (facing west)

Plate 18. Structure B, west elevation (facing east)

Plate 19. Structure B west end, ground floor kitchen area (facing east)

Plate 20. Structure B west end ground floor kitchen area (facing west)

- Plate 21. Structure B west end staff room at the west end of the Phase II section (facing south-east)
- Plate 22. Structure B west end, Phase IV stores to the north of the Phase II section (facing east)
- Plate 23. Structure B west end Phase IV stores to the north of the Phase II section (facing west)
- Plate 24. Structure B west end Phase IV WC facilities (facing west)
- Plate 25. Structure B central, large open area (facing west)
- Plate 28. Structure B central, Tote (facing south)
- Plate 29. Structure B central, coffee bar (facing south)
- Plate 30. Structure B central, alcohol bar (facing east)
- Plate 31. Structure B central, steps (facing north)
- Plate 32. Structure B central, stair access to the track (facing south)
- Plate 33. Structure B central, steps down to lower ground floor (facing north)
- Plate 34. Structure B central, turnstiles (facing west)
- Plate 35. Structure B central, inner foyer and disabled lift (facing north)
- Plate 36. Structure B central, Phase IV staircase (facing north)
- Plate 37. Structure B east end, the kennels (facing east)
- Plate 38. Structure B east end, Phase II offices to the right, Phase IV offices to the left (facing west)
- Plate 39. Structure B east end, General Manager's office (facing north-east)
- Plate 40. Structure B east end, Operations Manager's office (facing north-west)
- Plate 41. Structure B east end, Cash Room
- Plate 42. Structure B east end, Chubb safes in cash room
- Plate 43. Structure B, first floor Training room, (facing north)
- Plate 44. Structure B, second floor landing (facing south)
- Plate 45. Structure B second floor corridor leading to control and commentary rooms (facing south)
- Plate 46. Structure B second floor, access to control and commentators' room (facing north)
- Plate 47. Structure B second floor, hare control room (facing south-east)
- Plate 48. Structure B second floor, Commentator's room (facing south-west)
- Plate 49. Structure B, phase plan
- Plate 50. Structure B, main truss detail
- Plate 51. Structure B, ground floor steel frame
- Plate 52. Structure B, ground floor steel frame construction details
- Plate 53. Structure B, the underlying cast in situ terraces of the Phase I stand exposed at the interface with Phase II.
- Plate 54. Structure B, Bison Beam and block floor in the main kitchen area
- Plate 55. Structure B, Bison Beam and block floor in the void next to the kitchen
- Plate 56. Structure B, detail of main beam and brace supporting the Bison beams.
- Plate 57. Structure B, south elevation showing Tote, main access and bar (facing north-east)
- Plate 58. Structure B roof, Phase I roof trusses (facing west)
- Plate 59. Structure B roof, Phase II roof trusses (facing east)
- Plate 60. Structure B roof, Phase II roof trusses (facing east)

- Plate 61. Structure C, south elevation (facing north)
- Plate 62. Structure C, north elevation (facing south)
- Plate 63. Structure C, Mayor turnstile (facing north)
- Plate 64. Structure D, south-west elevation (facing north-east)
- Plate 65. Structure D, north-west elevation (facing north-east)
- Plate 66. Structure D, north-east elevation (facing south-west)
- Plate 67. Structure D, interior aspect (facing south-west)
- Plate 68. Structure D, example of trusses (facing north-east)
- Plate 69. Structure E, north-west elevation (facing south-east)
- Plate 70. Structure F, west elevation (facing south-east)
- Plate 71. Structure F interior view (facing south)
- Plate 72. Structure G, The East Stand from the north (facing south)
- Plate 73. Structure G, The East Stand from the end of the south finger
- Plate 74. Structure G, view from The East Stand (facing west)
- Plate 75. Structure H, north elevation (Facing south)
- Plate 76. Structure H, west elevation (facing south-west)
- Plate 77. Structure H, east elevation, showing roof construction (facing west)
- Plate 78. Structure I, inner face of the trackside fence exhibiting a semi-trowelled finish (facing south)
- Plate 79. Structure I, outer face of the trackside fence (facing north)
- Plate 80. Structure I, elevation and cross-sections
- Plate 81. 1950s Perimeter fencing
- Plate 82. 1950s Perimeter fencing, detail
- Plate 83. Structure J, east elevation, (facing west)
- Plate 84. Structure J, west elevation, (facing east)
- Plate 85. Structure J, north elevation (facing south)
- Plate 86. Structure J, south elevation (facing north)
- Plate 87. Structure J, interior (facing south)
- Plate 88. Structure J, internal frame (facing south-west)
- Plate 89. Structure L, motorcycle business temporary buildings (facing south)
- Plate 90. Structure L, possible speedway building, south elevation (facing north)
- Plate 91. Structure L, possible speedway building, east elevation (facing west)
- Plate 92. Structure L, possible speedway building, west elevation (facing east)
- Plate 93. Structure L, possible speedway building, interior view (facing west)
- Plate 94. Structure L, building of unknown use, south elevation (facing north)
- Plate 95. Structure L, building of unknown use, west elevation (facing east)
- Plate 96. Structure L, interior view of WCs (facing north-east)

Non-Technical Summary

This historic building record of Belle Vue Stadium, Gorton, Manchester has been prepared by Lanpro Services Limited on behalf of Countryside Properties and SCP Investments Ltd in advance of proposed demolition of the stadium as part of residential development of the wider site.

This report provides a photographic, drawn and descriptive record of the stadium in line with the standards of an Historic England Level 3 building survey and was carried out in line with Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) agreed with Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS).

The historic building recording has been undertaken to fulfil the requirements of Condition 29 of planning permission (ref. 122160/FO/2018), granted on 2nd November 2020 for the proposed demolition and redevelopment of the stadium site including the construction of 243 dwellings and 80 apartments, including affordable as well as associated infrastructure.

The complex at Belle Vue extends to some 5ha and is currently occupied by the Belle Vue greyhound racing stadium. It is bound to the north by Kirkmanshulme Lane, to the east by Mount Road, to the south by mid-20th century housing developments, and to the west by sports fields. There are 12 non-designated structures within the complex, Structures A-L. All were recorded as part of the historic building recording.

The study site was purchased by the Greyhound Racing Association in the mid-1920s, and a custom-built greyhound stadium was constructed on the site, the opening meeting being held on 24th July 1926. The stadium was capable of holding a crowd of 25000 including 2000 in the covered stand, which survives, although much altered.

Survival of the structures within the site is fragmentary. The main entrance (Structure A) and the outer concrete fence of the track (Structure I) are the only two features that are essentially complete within the entire site.

Despite limited visibility of the underlying structural skeleton of the main building (Structure B), it has been possible to identify the four principal phases of construction. Phases I-III are clearly defined in time based on Ordnance Survey mapping and site observations. Phase IV is likely to be a simplification of numerous small-scale adaptations in addition to the known major refurbishment undertaken during the 1980s.

The historic building recording has revealed that the stadium and its buildings have been adapted and changed since construction. The overall basic layout remains but the main stands have been expanded and other structures such as a scoreboard have been added whilst others including the west stand have been removed to suit changes in attendance and visitors' requirements.

Substantial redevelopment in the 1980s has changed the appearance of most of the structures and it is unlikely that further investigation will yield additional information regarding the history and phasing of the structures at Belle Vue. In fulfilment of Condition 29d, a summary of the results of the historic building survey will be included in the 2021 roundup of Post-Medieval Fieldwork in

Britain and Northern Ireland (PMFBNI) published in the journal *Post-Medieval Archaeology* of The Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This historic building record at Belle Vue Stadium, Gorton, Manchester, Greater Manchester, has been prepared by Lanpro Services Limited on behalf of Countryside Properties and SCP Investments Ltd.
- 1.2 The work was carried out to fulfil Condition 29 of planning permission granted by Manchester City Council on 2nd November 2020 for the proposed demolition and redevelopment of the stadium site including the construction of 243 dwellings and 80 apartments, including affordable as well as associated infrastructure (ref. 122160/FO/2018).
- 1.3 Condition 29 also requires that evaluation trenching and targeted open area excavation be undertaken over the sites of two farmsteads recorded from the middle of the 18th century, which formerly occupied parts of the site (the subject of separate reports (Archaeological Research Services 2021 and Oxford Archaeology North 2022).
- 1.4 The historic building recording works were carried out in line with Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) agreed with GMAAS (Lanpro 2019).
- 1.5 All work was undertaken to the standards of a Historic England Level 3 survey as defined in *Understanding Historical Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016) and in line with the current guidelines set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (CIfA 2020), in order to address the requirements of Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2 SITE LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The complex at Belle Vue extends to some 5ha and is currently occupied by the Belle Vue greyhound racing stadium, situated in Gorton, Manchester (centred at SJ 8788 9606). It is bound to the north by Kirkmanshulme Lane, to the east by Mount Road, to the south by mid-20th century housing developments, and to the west by sports fields.
- 2.2 There are 12 non-designated structures within the complex, Structures A-L (Figure 2). All were recorded as part of the historic building recording.
- 2.3 A car park occupies the northern side of the site, with a former turnstile building (Structure A) at the site's north-east corner, which is now obscured from the road by advertising hoardings. To the south is the main stand (Structure B), which comprises largely internal viewing and seating areas, as well as bars and offices, and is fronted by large glass windows overlooking low terraces and the racing track.
- 2.4 There are low banks of terracing around the western side of the track, to the rear of which is a scoreboard (Structure J) and a number of small ancillary buildings (Structures K & L). The

area to the south of the track is open ground, metalled with stone, but was previously occupied by stands.

- 2.5 Further terracing is situated along the site's south-eastern side, which rises up to a stand of higher terracing at the track's eastern end (Structure G). A small storage building (Structure F), and a separate turnstile are situated above the terraces on the site's north-eastern corner (Structure C).
- 2.6 The ground level within the site is generally level, situated at a height of around an average of 61m above Ordnance Datum.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Condition 29 of planning permission requires a programme of archaeological works be carried out prior to groundworks, soft strip or demolition, reproduced below (ref. 122160/FO/2018);

'No development groundworks, soft-strip or demolition shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The works should be undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Lanpro Services and approved on behalf of Manchester Local Planning Authority by Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service. The WSI covers the following:

a) A phased programme and methodology of site investigation and recording to include:

- background documentary research into Belle Vue Greyhound Stadium*
- archaeological buildings survey (HE level 3)*
- targeted archaeological evaluation trenching*
- targeted archaeological open area excavation*

b) A programme for post investigation assessment to include:

- production of a final report on the results of the investigations and their significance*

c) Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record

d) Dissemination of the results of the archaeological investigations commensurate with their significance including, for example, information boards and commemoration of the stadium's history, or a volume in the Greater Manchester's Past Revealed series

e) Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation

f) Nomination of a competent person or persons/ organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved WSI.

Reason- To record and advance understanding of heritage assets impacted on by the development and to make information about the archaeological heritage interest publicly accessible pursuant to policy EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and saved policy DC20 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) and in accordance with NPPF Section 12, Paragraph 141.

- 3.2 In 2018, a desk-based assessment to inform the planning application was produced by Lanpro (Lanpro 2018). The following historical background, along with further research, is a precis of the information contained within the desk-based assessment of relevance to the historic building recording.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric (c. 9500 BC – c.43 AD) and Roman (c.43 AD – c. AD410)

- 4.1 There is no recorded evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the site or surrounding area.
- 4.2 The extensive disturbance to the study site caused by the original construction of the stadium in the 1920s, together with phases of rebuilding and demolition of stands and other structures since that time, combined with the lack of evidence for prehistoric activity in the surrounding area, suggest that there is negligible potential for the survival of prehistoric and /or Roman remains in the study site.

Medieval Period (c. AD 410– c. 1540)

- 4.3 There is no recorded evidence for medieval activity within the site or surrounding area.
- 4.4 The name Gorton derives from Anglo-Saxon meaning, ‘dirty farmstead’ and was first recorded in a document of 1282 (Mills 2011, 210) although the form of the name suggests early medieval occupation in the area. Following the Norman Conquest, Gorton formed part of the manor of Manchester, and a survey of 1320 record five tenants and a mill in the area (Farrer and Brownbill 1911, 276).
- 4.5 Later cartographic evidence suggests that the study site was situated about 750m to the west of the nearest focus of medieval settlement at Gorton, and it is likely that the site remained in agricultural use throughout this period. Any related archaeological remains would likely relate to ploughing or field boundaries of negligible significance, and the disturbance to the site caused by phases of construction and demolition relating to the Belle Vue Stadium are likely to have destroyed or severely impacted any such features.

Post-medieval and Modern Periods (c.1540 – Present)

- 4.6 There is no recorded evidence for post-medieval activity within the site. Post-medieval and modern sites within the surrounding area relate to former or extant buildings.

- 4.7 The earliest map covering the study site was produced by William Yates in 1786 which, despite its small scale, shows two farms within the site (Figure 3), named on later Ordnance Survey mapping as Higher Catsknowl, to the north, and Lower Catsknowl, to the south.
- 4.8 The Gorton tithe map of 1846 (Figure 4) shows Higher Catsknowl consisting of an L-shaped building range with a small ancillary building to its south, to the immediate south of Kirkmanshulme Lane. This was surrounded by fields which were under cultivation or in use as orchards, according to the records of the tithe apportionment, although the field to the farms east, which now forms the north-eastern corner of the study site is named 'Pit Meadows', perhaps suggesting (sandstone) extraction in this area. Lower Catsknowl, which occupied the south-eastern corner of the study site, is depicted as a single building range siting within an irregular plot, with a pond at its western end, while the land between the farm buildings and Higher Catsknowl was occupied by a single irregularly shaped field.
- 4.9 There are no major changes to the area within the study site on subsequent mapping right up until the early 20th century when the 'Belle Vue Greyhound Racecourse' and associated structures is first illustrated on the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1935 (Figure 5). The map shows the stadium consisting of the main stand on its northern side, with further smaller stands around the track, as well as open terraces surrounding the track perimeter. To the north-east of the stadium were turnstile buildings and what appears to be a parading circle, while kennels were situated outside the site's western edge.
- 4.10 There was little substantial change to the stadium through into the 1950s, although by 1951 two of the stands on the south-west side of the track had been removed, and 'Higher' Catsknowl, located on the site's south-eastern edge, had by this time been demolished and the site was in use as a Corporation Yard (Figure 6). In the 1960s,
- 4.11 The layout of the stadium remained largely in this form through the 1970s (Figure 7) and into the late 1980s, with the original Higher Catsknowl buildings surviving on its northern side.
- 4.12 The stadium was substantially redeveloped during the late 1980s creating its present layout and appearance, most significantly including the rebuilding of the main stand. The Higher Catsknowl buildings were demolished at this time and the north-eastern side of the site cleared of structures, while the former kennels that lay outside the site's western boundary were also removed.

Belle Vue

- 4.13 Belle Vue was more than a greyhound racing stadium; it was a whole cluster of venues that reached its apogee in the 1930s (Plate 1) and the post war boom years (Inglis 2004). Why Belle Vue was chosen as a location for the greyhound stadium is linked to the history and development of the complex, both before and after its development. At the time of writing, the greyhound stadium is the only remaining structure at Belle Vue.

- 4.14 The core of the complex was the 'Belle View Zoological Gardens', which was founded by a John Jennison after he relocated to Belle Vue from Stockport in 1836 and took on the lease in 1837 (Inglis 2004). The complex developed and expanded and ultimately housed the zoo, the famous 'Bobs' rollercoaster and an amusement park, a speedway venue and a boating lake amongst others. Before all of this though, the sport of hare coursing was a longstanding popular pursuit and the piece of land that later became Belle Vue Gardens was used as a hare coursing field (Manchester History 2021). The sport was banned by the Police in 1842, not for any animal welfare reasons but because the 'sport' was so popular, it tended to attract unruly crowds. At the time, Manchester was experiencing social unease and petty crime and the authorities took no chances (Inglis 2004).
- 4.15 By the 1920s, the attractions at Belle Vue were beginning to look tired and after a failing to secure Belle Vue as a possible new home for Manchester City football club, a John Henry Iles was brought in to inject new life into the venue (Inglis 2004). Iles was an amusement park man famously experienced in running similar venues all over the world (Manchester History 2021) and had just managed the 1924 Empire Exhibition at Wembley (Inglis 2004). In 1925, Iles formed a management company and took over Belle Vue from the Jennisons (Inglis 2004) and it was he who was approached by Brigadier-General Alfred Critchley and Sir William Gentle who had recently formed Greyhound Racing Association, to build the first stadium in the country.
- 4.16 Coursing had always attracted large crowds, especially the Waterloo Cup at Great Altcar, which was said to have attracted up to 75,000 people (Inglis 2004). One problem with hare coursing was that it was hard for the large crowds to follow the action and various methods, including linear tracks with mechanical hares, were tried but it was an American, Owen P Smith who realised that an oval track would allow a better view of the action (Inglis 2004).
- 4.17 So, given the tradition of coursing at Belle Vue and Iles fame for successfully running public attractions, the study site was purchased by the Greyhound Racing Association in the mid-1920s, and a custom-built greyhound stadium was constructed on the site, the opening meeting being held on 24th July 1926 (Manchester History 2021). The stadium was capable of holding a crowd of 25000 including 2000 in the covered stand, which survives, although much altered. A crowd of 1700 turned up for that first meet, the winner of which was a greyhound named Mistley (Inglis 2004, Genders 1981). The main stand was named after Mistley 50 years later (Inglis 2004).
- 4.18 Country Life Magazine described the layout of 'Belle Vue's £20,000 new track as being based on the racecourse, including a parade paddock, weighing in areas and stables, the 'hare' being capable of travelling at 55 miles per hour (Inglis 2004).
- 4.19 The stadium was attracting up to 70,000 visitors a week by 1927 triggering a 'mass build' of greyhound stadiums all over the country (Genders 1981), including stadiums at White City in Old Trafford (built 1927, first meet 28th May 1928) (Tarter 1930). By the 1940s there

were 77 licenced tracks and over 200 independent tracks in the United Kingdom with upwards of 50 million punters (The Guardian 2008).

- 4.20 In common with many greyhound stadiums, White City included, Belle Vue was also used for both speedway and latterly, stock car and banger racing. After White City in Old Trafford gained a speedway licence in 1928, John Iles wasted no time in trialling speedway on the grass infield at Belle Vue and by July 1928 had laid a proper cinder track (Inglis 2004). That same year, the well-known speedway club, the Belle Vue Aces was founded. However, not content with 'doubling up' at the greyhound stadium like White City, he had a brand new stadium (claiming to be the first in the country) built on the site of the athletics ground at Belle Vue (Inglis 2004) (Plate 1), which opened on 23rd March 1929 (Inglis 2004). Perhaps inevitably and following years of decline after the boom times of the 1940s, the speedway was closed in 1987, following several changes in ownership and the site was redeveloped. Speedway and the Belle Vue Aces moved back to the greyhound stadium with a shale track on the inside of the sand dog track (Inglis 2004). Racing continued until 2015 when it transferred to a brand new purpose built stadium, The National Speedway Stadium, less than 500m along Kirkmanshulme Lane (Belle Vue Speedway 2022).
- 4.21 Greyhound racing continued at the greyhound stadium until closure in 2020, the last race, the 14:49 on 6th June 2020, being won by Rockmount Buster (Greyhound Board of Great Britain 2022).

5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The primary aim of the historic building survey was to record surviving evidence for the original use and subsequent historical form, function and development of the buildings through the production of a record consisting of measured plans and a detailed photographic record, in line with Historic England Level 3 historic building survey standards (Historic England 2016).

6 STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

- 6.1 All historic building recording and subsequent reporting was undertaken to fully meet the following standard and guidance;
- *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice (Historic England 2015a)*
 - *Metric Survey Specifications for Cultural Heritage (Historic England 2015b);*
 - *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (Historic England 2016);* and

- *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (ClfA 2020);

7 METHODOLOGY

Plans and drawings

- 7.1 Floor plans were based on as-existing copies of plans and were compiled to meet Historic England drawing standards and conventions and supplemented with additional detail and information as required.
- 7.2 Floor plans of all accessible spaces and levels within the buildings and associated structures are presented where appropriate. The plans show the form and location of structural features of historic significance, such as blocked doorways, windows etc., and any evidence for fixtures of significance.

Photography

- 7.3 Where access was available, an external photographic record was made of all elevations of the structures from as nearly parallel to the elevations as possible. A more general external photographic record was also be made including a number of oblique general views of the buildings from all sides, showing their setting and to give an overall impression of size and shape.
- 7.4 An interior photographic record was made of each room or internal space, to record the form, general appearance and manner of construction of each area.
- 7.5 External or internal detail, structural or decorative, where relevant to the design, development and use of the buildings was photographed, with a scale where appropriate.
- 7.6 Photographs were taken with a high-resolution digital SLR camera (DSLR) and photographs included an appropriate scale, where possible.
- 7.7 Images were captured in the manufacturers proprietary raw format and converted to 8-bit TIFF (version 6) files for archival purposes. A selection of JPEG files were retained for illustration in the report. Most compositions used manual white balance settings and spot metering.
- 7.8 A register of the location, direction and subject of each shot accompanies the photographic record, and the position and direction of each image is recorded on copies of the building and site plans.
- 7.9 Curation of digital images was carried out post-fieldwork where necessary and file numbers updated accordingly.

Written account

- 7.10 The written description was undertaken on pro-forma record sheets where appropriate supplemented with manuscript notes.

Archive

- 7.11 The archive comprises all the digital data collected during the historic building recording, including all digital versions of plans and photographs, digital versions of pro-forma records and the text of the final report on the work. The archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).
- 7.12 An OASIS form has been completed for the work (Appendix 1) and an electronic copy of the final report will be deposited with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER).

Limitations

- 7.13 Both the written and photographic record made use of an existing site topographic survey and as-existing plans of the main building (Structure B). There were no as-existing plans of ancillary structures but these were mostly very simple structures however, block plans were drawn to aid the recording of photography locations in line with Historic England Level 3 guidance, to gain historical understanding.
- 7.14 The recording was undertaken in two stages. Firstly, an as-existing survey of the site was undertaken to show the final arrangement of the stadium.
- 7.15 Secondly, a more limited record focussed on recording construction detail exposed following licenced asbestos removal. The strip was very limited in extent (being specifically limited to asbestos removal)but revealed information to confirm the central section of the main building was a modern alteration to an earlier building. The strip was insufficient to establish a full chronological analysis of the changes that had occurred.
- 7.16 Unfettered access to the majority of the site was available but the interior of the scoreboard could not be entered until remediation of licenced asbestos material was completed. This did not affect the recording of the structure however, the interior was stripped of all fixtures.
- 7.17 The main building consisted of two to four principal phases: the earliest was the central part of the building broadly equating to the inside stands and considered likely to date to the earliest phase of the stadium and constructed c.1923. This central area had been extended to the east and west, but there was insufficient differentiation within the fabric to determine if these additions were a single event or two distinct phases. Finally, the building was externally clad and extended to the north.

- 7.18 Similarly, there were numerous small-scale alterations that again were constructed from fabric that has been in continuous use from the 1950s to present day, rendering definitive sequencing of all alterations impossible.
- 7.19 The north elevation of the main entrance building (Structure A) was screened behind billboards and thus no single centred photograph of the whole elevation was possible, though this is not considered a significant constraint since there is an archive photograph from 1958 that shows the original arrangement of this feature in greater detail than would be possible in its modern altered condition (m07832, Manchester City Council 2022).

8 DESCRIPTION

Introduction

- 8.1 The following section is a summary descriptive account of the buildings and structures at Belle Vue and is followed by a discussion of the results which will outline the development and phasing of the buildings.
- 8.2 Each building has been assigned a number: Structures A – K (Figure 2). Any attached structures or other additions will be included in that building's description.
- 8.3 The buildings lie on an east/west axis and for the purposes of this report all cardinal point descriptors will be in main directions, for example, north, south, north-west etc.
- 8.4 The descriptive account will deal with each element of the buildings in turn, commencing with a general description of the whole plot followed by each building. Each building element will then be described in a logical manner from exterior to interior. The fabric will be described first followed by any architectural and historic detail. External descriptions will work through each elevation and internal descriptions will be room by room (where appropriate) from the main point of access (or that accessible at the time of the survey).

General site overview

- 8.5 Belle Vue Stadium site is a rectangular area on an east-west alignment. The former main entrance turnstiles (disused prior to closing of the stadium) (Structure A) are located in the north-east corner providing access to a large tarmac parking area south of Kirkmanshulme Lane and north of the main building (Structure B).
- 8.6 Structure B housed covered stands, offices, Tote, turnstiles and catering was a long east-west aligned building covered in blue box-section cladding with yellow highlights and an asbestos cement roof. It was comprised of three main elements all with covered stands to their south elevations.

- 8.7 To the west, the ground floor housed a large commercial kitchen with associated stores, wash facilities and plant room. Above, the first floor housed a large carvery and stair.
- 8.8 The central section ground floor housed bar areas and a Tote whilst the first floor provided a wide inside terrace with bars, WC facilities and easy access to the covered stands. A small split third floor provided cramped conditions for media and operations.
- 8.9 The east 'wing' was largely administrative offices including the cash room and general manager's office on the ground floor with further hospitality, WC facilities and access to the stands at first floor level.
- 8.10 The covered south stands overlooked the greyhound track that was defined by several fences of differing ages. The earliest was of cast sectional concrete with later repairs and more modern tubular steel sections.
- 8.11 At the east end of the track there was an external stand largely constructed in concrete against a bank (Structure G). To the east, was a large maintenance building with further buildings of uncertain function.
- 8.12 A brick wall defined the south-east and south site boundary and had remnants of wall returns indicative of structures along the south boundary at its east end. These were largely destroyed other than relict brick stubs and concrete bases. Those that did survive had most recently been used as storage bins (Structure H) but may originally have been garage or workshop type structures.
- 8.13 At the west end of the track, the most dominant feature was the scoreboard (Structure J). To its rear was some covered areas that had functioned as dog pens (Structure K).
- 8.14 To the north, there was a small collection of modern temporary buildings (Structure L) of mixed vintage. One was apparently used as a first aid station but the remainder were used as motor workshops presumably associated with the return of speedway and/or stock car racing in 1987 following the closure of the adjacent speedway stadium.
- 8.15 Boundary treatment varied between remains of concrete walling added in the 1950s to modern concrete post with chain link or infill panels.

Structure A – Main entrance

- 8.16 The main entrance was located in the sites north-east corner providing easy access from the junction of Kirkmanshulme Lane and Mount Road (Fig 2). The surviving structure is a replacement of two former timber and corrugated steel ticket booths with central timber gates over which was a sign 'BELLE VUE GREYHOUND RACECOURSE'. These are illustrated on a photograph dating to 1958 (GB127.M27470, Manchester City Council 2022). The former layout and subsequent replacement are also shown on several undated archive plans (GB127.M723/84/6/4358). These show a slight change in orientation of the replacement turnstiles. A photograph dating to 1963 (GB127.M07832, Greater

Manchester City Council 2022) illustrates the replacement arrangement. No trace of the former structure survives.

Description

- 8.17 The surviving building was defined by two ticket booths constructed in red brick and a cast-concrete semi-cantilever canopy forming an imposing and instantly recognisable gateway to the facility (Plate 1). Inglis describes the structure as ‘Belle Vue’s only architectural feature of any note’ (Inglis 2004, 51 and 69).
- 8.18 The booths were constructed with flat cast-concrete roofs and good quality brickwork utilising facing bricks laid in Flemish bond to the northern gauge of 13”. The corners were correctly detailed with closers and the bricks measured 8¾” by 4” by 2¾”.
- 8.19 The booths’ interior ceiling height was only 2.07m. Both structures had a three-course high parapet. The east booth had been altered internally and a door inserted in the southwest elevation and both had bricked-in or boarded openings to their northeast elevations fronting Kirkmanshulme Lane.
- 8.20 The south-west elevation windows of the west booth were original two-light, top-hung Crittal-type iron window frames. The door is a modern replacement. The horizontal blue painted band is the cast concrete roof that presumably leaked because a later felted roof was constructed over the low parapet. The wall face was painted red (Plate 3). The door gave access to a single room (right) of uncertain function (Plate 4). The right (east) room was boarded up and could not be accessed.
- 8.21 The north-east elevation of the west booth contained former doors had been reduced to horizontal slit windows (Plate 5). The bricking-in was expertly done despite the bricks being a poor colour match, the size of brick was chosen to align with the existing structure and was executed in Flemish bond with regular perpends to match the original.
- 8.22 The south-east elevation of the west booth had been painted red and the original concrete roof highlighted in blue to match the southwest elevation. The white structure to the right of it is one of the piers supporting the cast concrete canopy (Plate 6). The north-west elevation of the west booth mirrored the southeast except it was unpainted. The respective elevations on the east booth were identical in appearance.
- 8.23 The south-west elevation of the east booth largely mirrored the west booth except the interior had been re-ordered and a new doorway inserted that truncated one of the windows. Again, the iron window frames survived but the second-fix joinery was modern (Plate 7). Only the west room was accessible (Plate 8) but the larger room to the east could be observed through a broken window (Plate 9).
- 8.24 The north-east elevation had boarded openings (Plate 10). There was no evidence to indicate why these openings were boarded up rather than bricked-in as was the case in the west booth.

- 8.25 The canopy of Structure A was a poured concrete construction forming a portal into the stadium. Although there was no outwardly visible evidence, the concrete was probably reinforced. Essentially, it was designed with two large piers and a massive lintel supporting a roof with a slender pier in the middle. It is not clear if this was a structural requirement or a means of subdividing the large opening between the large piers in to two. These lower structural elements supported the canopy roof that in plan resembled a slightly sweptback wing 'flying' into the stadium (Plate 2). As with the roof, there was no evidence for the structural makeup of the elements but it is highly likely they were reinforced with steel. The canopy roof was slightly cantilevered, the outer slender part being supported by integral braces from a central east-west spine (Plates 11, 12 and 13). Several details survive such as electric down lights (Plate 13) and fixings for the original signage.

Structure B – Main building

- 8.26 Structure B forms the main concourse building and lies immediately to the north of the north straight of the track (Fig 2).
- 8.27 Owing to the paucity of evidence for the development of Structure B, an additional site assessment following the removal of licenced asbestos was carried out since this would provide evidence of the core of the building. Although the soft strip associated with the asbestos removal did not extend to the whole of the building, there was sufficient evidence to reveal that the building was constructed in four main phases (Phases I to IV), which will be outlined in the phasing sections following the descriptions.

Description

- 8.28 The north elevation had stretcher bond brickwork to the ground floor with box-section cladding to the upper elevations along with a large steel framed glazed stair tower (Plates 14 and 15). Visible sections of the roof were a mix of box section and corrugated asbestos cement sheeting. The doors and windows were powder-coated aluminium. All visible construction materials were modern and associated with later extensions except corrugated asbestos sheeting covering the roof at the west end.
- 8.29 All visible materials in the south elevation were modern coherent and there was no visible evidence for any of the previous phases (Plate 16). The outward appearance of this elevation is considered most likely to be Phase III at ground floor level and Phase IV for the blue box section cladding to the second-floor commentating box (formerly the 'Stewards Box) and grey box section cladding of the 'cornice'.
- 8.30 The east elevation has stepped brickwork with glazing above defining the first-floor stands. Blue box section cladding to the right of this is the east elevation of the Phase IV extension (Plate 17). The gable was clad in asbestos cement sheeting that was not banned until 1999. The grey box section 'cornice' is likely to be Phase IV.

- 8.31 The west elevation gable was clad in corrugated asbestos cement sheeting with brickwork to the ground floor. The Phase IV north extension can clearly be seen (Plate 18). Unlike the glazing that characterised the first floor stands of the east elevation, the first floor had been clad in the familiar blue box-section sheeting presumably during the Phase IV redevelopment. At ground floor level, there was rare evidence for adaptation in the form of a blocked doorway.
- 8.32 Internally, the as-existing character of the buildings was almost entirely modern and associated with the mid 1980s refurbishment of the stadium. There was very little evidence within the majority of the building to reflect its incremental development.
- 8.33 Following this section, a summary of the structural evidence primarily gathered during recording maintained following licensed asbestos removal will provide the principal evidence to support the phasing evidence derived from historic mapping and archive records.

Ground floor – West end

- 8.34 This part of the building was a large commercial kitchen with associated storerooms and also coincided with the Phase II extension built 1963-1968. There was clear evidence for the phasing and the demolition and replacement of a building shown on the 1935 Ordnance Survey rather than its adaptation.
- 8.35 Within the kitchen area, to the rear of the south wall was a void providing insight to the underlying steel frame of the building (Plate 56), which comprised an upright I-beam and brace supporting the Bison beam. Off the main kitchen area, there was a small staff room at its west end (Plate 21), with stores (Plates 22 and 23) and WC facilities (Plate 24) along the north side of the kitchen within the Phase IV extension.

Ground floor – Central

- 8.36 The central section of the building consisted of the Phase I element that was largely characterised by a large open area housing a Tote, bar with stairs down to the stadium and up to the covered stands at first floor level. The Phase IV extension to the north provided a large main stair to the first and second floors (Plate 15 and 36), with the main entrance, offices and WC facilities to the ground floor. There had been multiple wall removals resulting in the original floor plan of the main Phase I element being completely lost resulting in a main open space located with columns supporting the first floor stands. This area was the principal public area after punters had gained access through the main entrance, the area contained a Tote in addition to the external one noted above; a coffee bar and an alcohol bar (Plates 25 – 30).
- 8.37 Multiple staircases provided access from the main public area to internal and external viewing areas (Plates 31 and 32). A short flight of steps led to a lower-ground floor area with WC facilities (Plates 31 and 33). The main staircase within the Phase I area provided

access to the first floor covered stands (Plate 33). This was the principal staircase prior to the construction of the Phase IV staircase and main entrance (Plates 34 - 36). It is considered likely that this was also original to the Phase I construction due to its scale, similar to the proportions of the original main stand. Observations on the ground floor following asbestos removal suggest that the original stand was altered by addition rather than subtraction preserving the staircase in situ. Additionally, there were several smaller staircases providing access between the ground floor and first floor stands but owing to the ubiquitous over-boarding with plasterboard during the 1980s refurbishment and limited extents of the soft strip (limited to asbestos removal) it was not possible to identify if any or all of these were contemporary with the original Phase I build or later insertions.

- 8.38 Forming part of the Phase IV additions, there are turnstiles, an inner foyer, emergency exit, a lift for disabled access to the stands (Plates 34 – 35) and the fabricated main staircase. This not only gave access to the first floor stands but also to offices and the commentary facilities at second floor level (Plate 36).

Ground floor – East end

- 8.39 The differentiation between phases III and IV was much clearer in this section. The Phase III element includes an area of kennels (Plate 37) accessed via a door in the east elevation and a row of offices (Plate 38), including the General Manager's office (Plate 39) and the Operations Manager's office (Plate 40), and cash room complete with Chubb safes (Plates 41 and 42). The primary contribution of the Phase IV north extension to the ground floor was a corridor and additional offices at both ground and first floor (Plate 38). This probably included remodelling of the Phase III floor plan but there was no visible evidence to confirm this.

First floor – Training and staff rooms

- 8.40 A small suite of rooms within the Phase IV north extension were accessed from the ground floor by a former open well staircase that had been enclosed presumably for fire-stopping. There was no evidence for specific functions other than human resources support and welfare provision and a security room all of which were plain and of modern appearance. The main training room had been subdivided with an office at the rear and a kitchenette (Plate 43).

Second floor

- 8.41 The second floor was accessed via the Phase IV main stair. A top landing (Plate 44) gave access to north-south aligned narrow corridor (Plate 45) that was essentially a long 'dormer window'. The narrow corridor lead from the main stair across the Phase I element to the control and commentary rooms (former 'Stewards Box') At the south end of the corridor, there were two short flights of steps (Plate 46). One led down to a small, cramped

hare control room (for the electronic hare that the greyhounds chased) (Plate 47), the other up to a similarly cramped commentary room (Plate 48).

Structure B - Phasing

Phase I

- 8.42 The earliest part of the building was the central section (Plate 49). This was characterised by triangulated roof trusses constructed from flat and angled steel sections (Plate 50) and cast concrete stalls supported on a steel frame the same as that shown on plans and sections of the existing building for the proposed 'Stewards Box' dated 1950 (GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29985). This is considered a surviving element of the original stands as first shown on the 1935 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 5) and its construction is consistent with the first period of development in the 1920s. A (undated) photograph in the 50th Anniversary Official Race Card (Greyhound Racing Association (Manchester) Ltd. 1976, p18) shows the stand being completely open to the front, the same publication showing an interior view with glazing installed, presumably dating to the 1970s (Greyhound Racing Association (Manchester) Ltd.).
- 8.43 Archive photographs dating to 1958 clearly show a steel frame clad with corrugated sheets and roof with an internal suspended ceiling (Manchester City Council 2022, m07829, m07931, m07830). The central section is also illustrated on an undated plan (GB127.M723/84/6/4358) as well as an overview plan for the reconstruction of 'The Pioneer Club' dated to 1964 (GB127.M900/1/1/2/22A/34562) along with overview plans for the proposed 'Stewards Box' and 'Greyhound Food Preparation House' (GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29985).
- 8.44 The blue 'Stewards Box' was added to the top floor of the south elevation around 1950, archive plans and sections (GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29985) clearly illustrating the form of both it and the surrounding main structure steelwork and trusses. The section shows Structure B measuring 53' 3" wide, the trusses being 12' 10" tall from foot to apex (11' 6" from the tie beam to apex) identical to those observed (Plate 58). The outer (original) steel frame is labelled '9x75 STAN', the new is labelled '8x63' STAN. The steelwork of the 'Stewards Box' is clearly depicted with all dimensions clearly labelled.
- 8.45 Two additional flanking structures, the footprints of which are within the current structure and not attached to the main building, were constructed separately sometime prior to 1935 (a structure of unknown use to the west) and 1973, (a stand to the east).
- 8.46 Most recently, this central section was used for hospitality and betting at ground floor level with indoor stands at first floor level.
- 8.47 Following the removal of the suspended ceiling, the underlying steel frame of the Phase I element is clearly evident (Plates 51 and 52). The use of narrow flange rolled steel joists is appropriate for the first period of construction and the same as those on plans dating to

1950 (GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29985). Wide flange rolled steel joists were not manufactured in the United Kingdom until the late 1950s. At the time of the construction of the stadium in the 1920s, their use would have been expensive, arguably too expensive for a structure such as this. The shuttered construction of the concrete first floor is visible where the grain of the wooden formwork has transferred to the concrete. The fixings are a mix of riveted and bolted interfaces, the riveted sections probably being prefabricated to which bolted members were affixed during on site erection (Plate 52).

Phase II

- 8.48 The building was extended to the west between 1963-1968 based on Ordnance Survey mapping and was characterised by triangulated roof trusses constructed from rolled steel joists (RSJs) and a 'Bison beam and block' first floor (a type of precast concrete T-beam and block floor). Bison Precast was founded as Concrete Ltd in 1919 by two Royal Engineers who had created fortifications in the Great War (Forterra Building Products 2022). The beams used in the Phase II element are typical of 1950s precast flooring. (Plates 54, 55 and 56). Hollow core concrete flooring was developed as early as 1935 with the invention of the 'pneumatic core' and further developed after 1945 with the introduction of pre-stressing and in the early 1950s the 'Bison Preferred Dimension frame was introduced (Forterra Building Products 2022).
- 8.49 Prior to extension, this area was partially occupied by a building of unknown function, which was illustrated on the Ordnance Survey 1935 map and archive plans as already discussed, but this building must have been completely demolished for the Phase II extension to be created as there is no trace on any earlier phase internally.
- 8.50 Most recently this area was used for catering and enclosed stands at first floor level with a commercial kitchen and associated stores on the ground floor.

Phase III

- 8.51 The building was extended to the east at some point before 1990 and it is first illustrated on the 1990 Ordnance Survey map. In similar fashion to the Phase II extension, this replaced an existing detached structure. This phase was characterised by brick, corrugated asbestos cement roofing sheets and welded triangulated steel trusses. The ground floor was primarily office accommodation and kennels with covered stands and secondary catering on the first floor.

Phase IV

- 8.52 The building was extended to the north with brick and concrete block cavity walls. It created modern turnstiles, a large main stair providing access to the first floor and office accommodation.
- 8.53 Two further modern extensions with flat roofs were built off the south elevation to provide a bar for external spectators and a Tote (Plate 57). Additionally, the interior of the building

has had at least one major refurbishment in the 1980s. This may have been concurrent with the Phase IV extension.

The roof

- 8.54 The Phase I-III roofs were constructed with triangulated roof trusses. The steel frame of the Phase IV north extension was secured to the earlier phases with steel flat-bar bracing. The trusses for Phase II & III were of the same design and only differed in the type of fixing and material specification (Plate 50). Examination of the roof enabled the sequence of construction of Structure B to be identified given the paucity of evidence on the lower floors owing to the 1980s refurbishment.

Phase I

- 8.55 This phase was characterised by triangulated steel trusses manufactured from flat bar and angle-section bolted together with fitch plates at high stress or complex joints (Plate 58).

Phase II

- 8.56 This phase was characterised by triangulated steel trusses but with Rolled Steel Joists (RSJs), T-section and flat bar with bolted joints with fitch plates (Plate 60).

Phase III

- 8.57 This phase was characterised by triangulated roof trusses constructed with welded T-section, angle section, flat bar and plate steel. (Plate 60).

Structure C - Turnstile

- 8.58 This structure is located at the north-east corner of the site, to the north-west of the main entrance, Structure A (Fig 2)

Description

- 8.59 The turnstile was a modern building constructed in metric common bricks but on the location of an earlier building shown on the 1935 Ordnance Survey map.
- 8.60 The south elevation (Plate 61) fronted directly on the north finger of the east stand (Structure G). In addition to a turnstile, this elevation had three further bays but only one was accessible. This appeared to be a general store and housed electricity switchgear.
- 8.61 The north elevation was largely obscured by a modern portable building (Plate 62) but did have doors associated with the turnstile and store, but windows or doors for the two central bays could not be identified. This is not considered a significant loss of information, given that the building was constructed relatively recently.
- 8.62 The turnstile mechanism was of standard form (Plate 63) manufactured in welded steel and constructed by R & BM Mayor company as evidenced by a name plate. This company (Mayor Turnstiles Limited) was incorporated in May 1991 and is apparently now

dissolved, the last accounts being filed in 2006 (DueDil 2021). They provided turnstiles for several football clubs including Goole FC (Miles 2020).

Structure D – Maintenance

- 8.63 The maintenance building was located immediately adjacent and behind the east stand (Structure G). It is possible that this building incorporates parts of the 'Pioneer Bar' that was rebuilt in the 1950s (GB127.M900/1/1/2/22A/34562), although later changes appear to have significantly altered the footprint.

Description

- 8.64 The general arrangement of the building consisted of five distinct areas used largely as storage. A space of approximately 20% of the gross floor area was used as a mechanical repair workshop, although this was used for storing beer kegs at the time of the survey. A building, or more likely, two attached buildings are shown on the 1932 Ordnance Survey map and continue to be depicted unchanged until the 1952 edition. By 1963, the building outline is markedly changed, with the smaller unit on the north-east side having been reduced in volume. This work was undertaken competently by toothing-in the new brickwork.
- 8.65 The building was constructed in common imperial bricks ($8\frac{3}{4}"$ by $4\frac{3}{8}"$ by $2\frac{7}{8}"$) laid to a gauge of 13". The roof was covered with modern box-section cladding supported on original triangulated trusses constructed from bolted steel angle section and fitch plates. Within the larger internal room, the span was intermittently supported off narrow-flanged RSJs, likely to date earlier than the late 1950s. All doors were either modern or plywood-clad and all windows were boarded over
- 8.66 The southwest elevation apparently unchanged since constructed and fronted directly on to the east stand (Plate 64) The windows to either side of the banner are boarded.
- 8.67 The north-west elevation clearly shows the recovered asymmetrical roofline usually associated with north-lit windows in industrial buildings (Plate 65). Roof lights are considered unlikely to have been provided in the original roof since there would have been strong sunlight streaming in from mid mornings onwards. The door is modern but the doorway appeared to be original. The opposing south-east elevation is identical to this elevation.
- 8.68 The north-east elevation has been significantly changed (Plate 66). It was not possible to establish exactly when this occurred but, in all likelihood, it was after 1952. The changes comprised narrowing the lean-to section and reducing its length. The entire northeast elevation of the lean-to is thus post 1952. The large double door opening to the right was original, but the doors were modern plywood replacements of what would almost certainly have been framed and braced boarded doors.
- 8.69 The interior consists of a single open space (with outshuts) and was used as a store for beer kegs at the time of the survey, the area was littered with a myriad of electrical and

mechanical spare parts. A built-in work bench ran below the rear wall in this frame. A concrete block wall differentiated the repair area from an equipment store.

- 8.70 Triangulated roof trusses typical of 1930s light industrial/commercial buildings were visible internally. These are effectively TRADA roof trusses executed in steel rather than wood (Plates 67 and 68). The narrow flanged I-Beam RSJs used for vertical support are also typical of the period since the only wide-flanged beams then available had to be imported. It took until 1957 for wide-flanged beams to be manufactured in the United Kingdom.
- 8.71 The lean-to on the north-east aspect of the building was longer and wider in 1952. The rear and left wall have therefore been rebuilt. The only evidence within the fabric of this event is subtle changes in the brickwork where the rebuilt sections are a little less consistent. If it wasn't for the map evidence being known, this would have been missed onsite since the brickwork was painted white that masks changes unless closely inspected. Double-hung double doors were rudimentary examples made in plywood.
- 8.72 The original function of the lean-to both before and after its reduction was not evident. Originally, it was accessed as a separate building but a doorway through to the main building has been inserted recently. Two windows in the north-east elevation have also been blocked-up and the door to the outside clad in plywood.
- 8.73 The inserted doorway from the lean-to leads to a rectangular two-bay section of the main building used for storage and housing electrical switchgear. A further door provides access into the mechanical repair shop.

Structure E – Electricity Sub-station

- 8.74 This building was located to the southeast of Structure D (Maintenance Building) (Figure 2). It could not be entered and dense undergrowth and mature sycamore trees only allowed the north-west and west elevations to be photographed (Plates 69 and 70). The building was constructed sometime prior to 1953 and it appears upon an aerial photograph of that date (Manchester History 2022)
- 8.75 It was constructed in red stock bricks (9" by 4½" by 3") laid to a gauge of 13" in English garden wall bond. The doorway to the store/office on the south side of the building had been reduced and a new door fitted. The plant room on the north side was fitted with modern steel doors.

Structure F – Derelict cold store

- 8.76 This structure was situated immediately to the south of Structure E, the Electricity Sub-station (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.77 This building was broadly aligned north-south with a slightly canted roof and was derelict condition. The north elevation had two door openings, both had cast concrete door

lintels and were primary features. However, the building was only one room as recorded, the two doors perhaps indicating that the building was previously partitioned with studwork partitions.

- 8.78 The west elevation was blind but provided the clearest view of its construction. The building was constructed in the same bricks as Structure E and also laid in English garden wall bond (Plate 71).
- 8.79 Internally, remains of the roof were still present. It was constructed with 4" RSJs as rafters supporting 4" box section used as purlins supporting modern box section sheeting. The south elevation had a louvered window with internal shutters, perhaps indicating a building linked to refrigeration (Plate 71)

Structure G – East stand

- 8.80 The east stand was situated at the east end of the track and to the south of Structures C, D, E and F (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.81 The east stand was constructed with poured concrete, cast concrete edgings and tarmac on a terraced artificial bank (Plates 72 - 74). The East Stand was originally two separate stands (described as the north and south fingers for the purposes of this survey) and until relatively recently, it was contained to an essentially square section since the two north and south fingers that extended out from the central area were historically part of covered stands.
- 8.82 Cartographic evidence suggests the covered stands survived until the 1980s but it is not known if this is an actuality or reflects a lack of revision in Ordnance Survey mapping of the stadium.

Structure H – Bin storage

- 8.83 The bins are located in the extreme south-east corner of the site, to the south of Structure G (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.84 This area was occupied by Higher Catsknowl Farm, (Figure 5) up until around the 1951 map where it is called 'Corporation Yard' (Figure 6). The bins are shown on this map and remain extant along with a boundary wall to the south.
- 8.85 The remaining brick building is contiguous with the east end of the south boundary wall. It is unclear what the original function of this building was, but at the time of the survey it had been most recently used as waste/storage bins (Plates 75 - 77).
- 8.86 The bins were constructed in common red bricks measuring 9" by 4¼" x 2¾" laid to a gauge of 13" in English garden wall bond (five to one), indicative of a secondary or ancillary function building. It had a poured concrete floor, level with the external

metaled surface and similar concrete slabs were visible to the west. The ceiling height was 2.3m and comprised the underside of a concrete beam and block floor with concrete screed above. This form of construction is normally used for load-bearing floors but there was no evidence that this building previously had an additional floor(s).

Structure I – Track and perimeter fencing

- 8.87 The fence completely surrounded the outside of the track and defined its outer boundary (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.88 The fence appears to be an original feature and probably dates to the construction of the stadium in the 1920s. It is constructed from reinforced concrete which has survived relatively well and appears not to have suffered from oxidation of the internal reinforcing members, which expands and shatters the concrete. The fence was sectional with integral posts location tabs and recesses (Plates 78 - 80).
- 8.89 Other fencing, including surviving sections of decorative pre-cast concrete perimeter fencing (Plates 81 - 82) date to around 1954, the construction of which is detailed on archive plans and sections of that date (GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29934). The fencing comprises concrete uprights with rounded tops and horizontal panels, the top panels having an overlapping semi-circular motif.

Structure J – Scoreboard

- 8.90 The scoreboard is situated at the west end of the track, directly opposite the east stand (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.91 When constructed in the early 1920s, the west side of the track was characterised by terraces and a stand. These were lost during the 1980s upgrading of the site to be replaced in part by a large scoreboard (Plate 83 - 84).
- 8.92 The scoreboard was constructed primarily with asbestos cement corrugated sheeting over a galvanised steel frame constructed off a metric brick plinth, laid in stretcher bond. Primarily constructed of planed timber, this was effectively a wall of light. The signage was constructed from coloured engineering plastic and would flash. The clear 'lenses' would convey information relevant to each individual race.
- 8.93 The north and south elevations were similar to the west, other than they had short flights of steps leading to access doors (Plates 85 - 86).
- 8.94 The interior was recorded following licenced asbestos and the interior was an empty shell with all the electronics stripped out (Plates 87 and 88)

Structure K – dog pens

- 8.95 These were located beyond the scoreboard at the west end of the stadium (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.96 To the south and west of Structure J (scoreboard) there were two rows of crude cover constructed of scaffold pipe and box section cladding. They were empty or being used for materials storage at time of the survey with no evidence for any dog pens.

Structure L – temporary structures

- 8.97 This was a group of a number of temporary structures located at the west end of the track (Figure 2).

Description

- 8.98 Situated to the north of a fence separating the track from the car park, there was a row of modern site accommodation type buildings used by a motorcycle business. These were not recorded in detail (Plate 89).
- 8.99 On the south side of the fence, two timber buildings of mixed vintages appeared to have been associated with the speedway and/or stock car and banger use of the track. These were all of conventional construction consisting of sheeted framed panels. One, a workshop, had king post roof trusses indicating that it was almost certainly of pre-war construction whilst the other had a thin Tyrolean finish typical of temporary buildings and residential caravans of the late 1970s to 1990s (Plates 90 - 92). This building close to the west boundary was divided into two functional spaces. To the west was a welfare facility and to the east a workshop.
- 8.100 Internally, the king post roof truss is clearly seen (Plate 93). Though modern as evidenced by its centre-point carpentry construction. The right-hand side of the room was defined by a long work bench with vices, grease guns and miscellaneous abandoned tools indicative of its use as a mechanics workshop.
- 8.101 To the east of the workshop, another non-permanent building (Plate 94 - 95) was of unclear function as only one room (WC) could be accessed (Plate 96). The WC was located at the east end of the building. Clearly a 'Gents' it may be that the bay to the west was a 'Ladies', but there was no indication of the use made of the west end bay.

9 DISCUSSION

- 9.1 Despite the limited visibility of the underlying structural skeleton of the main building (Structure B), it has been possible to identify the four principal phases of construction. Phases I-III are clearly defined in time based on Ordnance Survey mapping and site observations. Phase IV is likely to a simplification of numerous small-scale adaptations in addition to the known major refurbishment undertaken during the 1980s. The main phases are:

Phase I

- 9.2 The earliest part of Structure B was the central section. This was built with triangulated roof trusses constructed from bolted flat and angled steel sections above lower floors constructed with a lightweight steel frame based on narrow-flange beams with riveted connectors and bolted joints supporting cast concrete stalls that were cast in situ. This construction detail is consistent with a date of construction in the 1920s. The earliest map evidence for this phase is the 1:2, 500 1935 Ordnance Survey map.

Phase II

- 9.3 The building was extended to the west. This phase was characterised by triangulated roof trusses constructed from rolled steel joists and a Bison beam first floor. It was constructed between 1963-1968 based on Ordnance Survey 1:1250 and 1:10,560 edition maps. Its floor area was partially occupied by a building of unknown function on the 1935 map, but this building must have been completely demolished for the Phase II extension to be created and no traces were observed post licensed asbestos removal.

Phase III

- 9.4 The building was extended to the east between publications of the 1987-1990 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 edition maps. This phase was characterised by brick, corrugated asbestos cement roofing sheets and welded triangulated steel trusses. It is assumed that the lower levels were steel framed but the underlying structure was not exposed during licensed asbestos removal.
- 9.5 The construction of the main building followed common practice for large-scale building operations during the 1920s, 1960s and 1980s, there were no surprises and the construction form of the building is unremarkable. The layout of the stadium was modelled along horse racing lines, using accepted construction techniques like those already employed at other courses. Archive plans suggest that, presumably in order to save costs, designs, construction techniques and methodologies were somewhat standardised (at the Greyhound Racing Association courses at any rate). It is probable that much of the construction was pre-fabricated off site apart from the shuttered concrete flooring.
- 9.6 The remainder of the surviving structures is fragmentary. The main entrance (Structure A) and the outer concrete fence of the track (Structure I) are the only two features that are essentially complete within the entire site, although the fragmentary boundary concrete fence provides a context for the main entrance.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The historic building recording at Belle Vue Stadium has revealed that the stadium and its buildings have been substantially adapted and changed since construction. The overall basic layout remains but the main stands (Structure B) have been expanded and other structures such as the scoreboard have been added whilst others including the west stand have been removed to suit changes in use, attendance and visitors' requirements.
- 10.2 In accordance with the definition of significance (for heritage policy) in NPPF, Annex 2 (2021), the surviving structures at Belle Vue are considered to have historic interest as the first purpose-built greyhound racing track in Great Britain.
- 10.3 Substantial redevelopment in the 1980s changed the appearance of most of the structures and it is unlikely that further investigation will yield additional information regarding the history and phasing of the structures at Belle Vue. A summary of the results of the historic building survey will be included in the 2021 roundup of Post-Medieval Fieldwork in Britain and Northern Ireland (PMFBNI) published in the journal *Post-Medieval Archaeology* of The Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology.

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GB127.M723/84/6/4358. A/4538/1, A/4538/2, A3/4358/3, A3/4538/4 Belle Vue Greyhound Racing Course Plans.

GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29934. Plan of Boundary Wall to Greyhound Race Track Kirkmanshulme Lane Mount Road Gorton

GB127.M900/1/1/2/19/29985. Plan of: (1) Stewards Box to Greyhound Racecourse, Belle Vue, Kirkmanshulme Lane and Mount Street, Gorton (2) Rebuilding of Food Preparation House for Greyhounds

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Historical Mapping

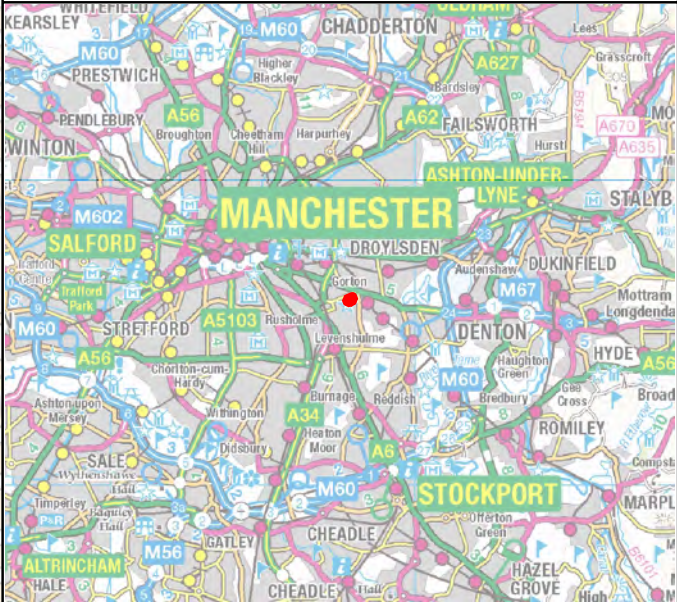
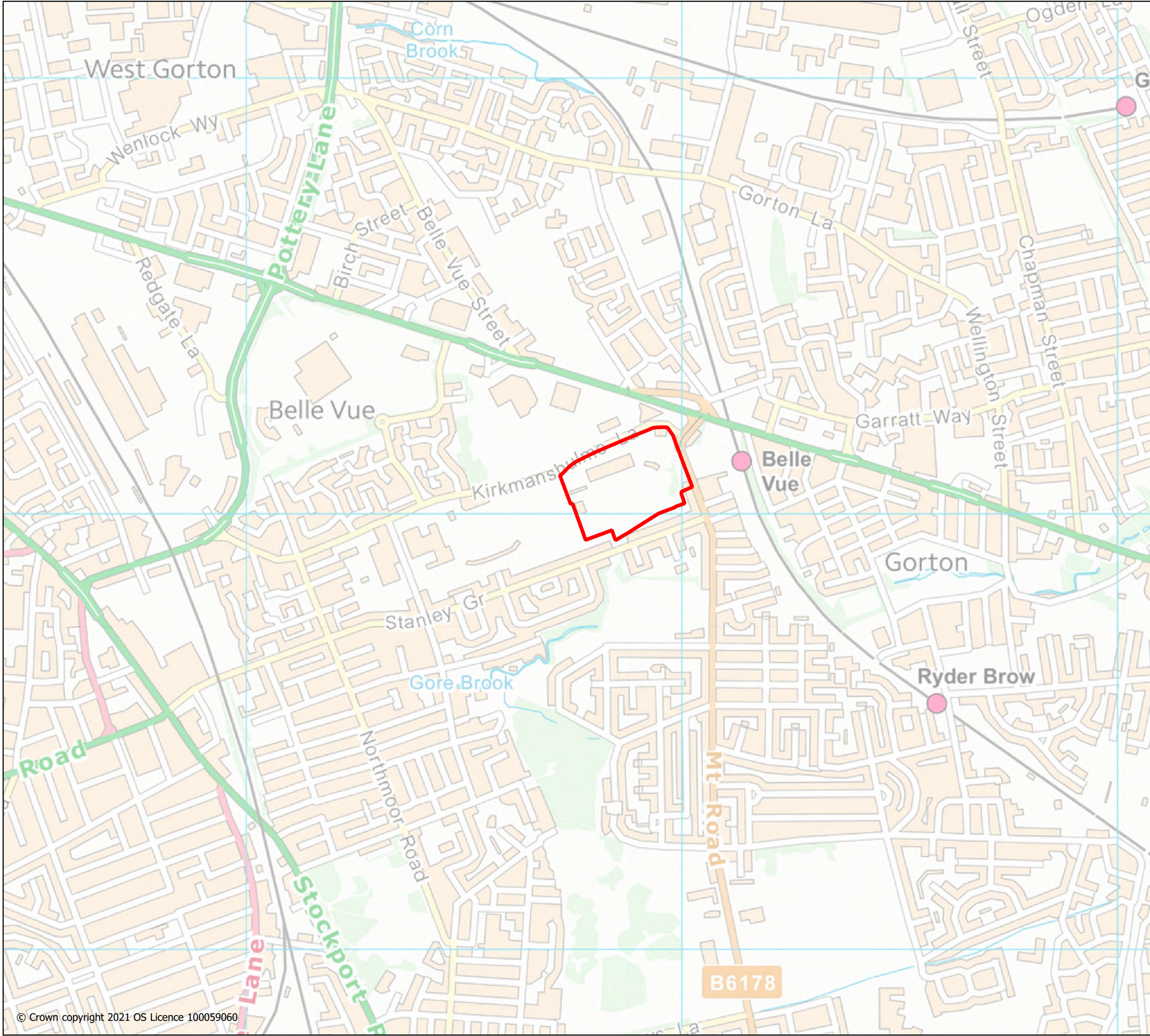
1846 Gorton Tithe Map

1935 Ordnance Survey Map

1951 Ordnance Survey Map

1973 Ordnance Survey Map

Figures



— Proposed development site

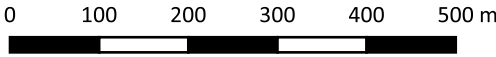


Figure 1. Site location

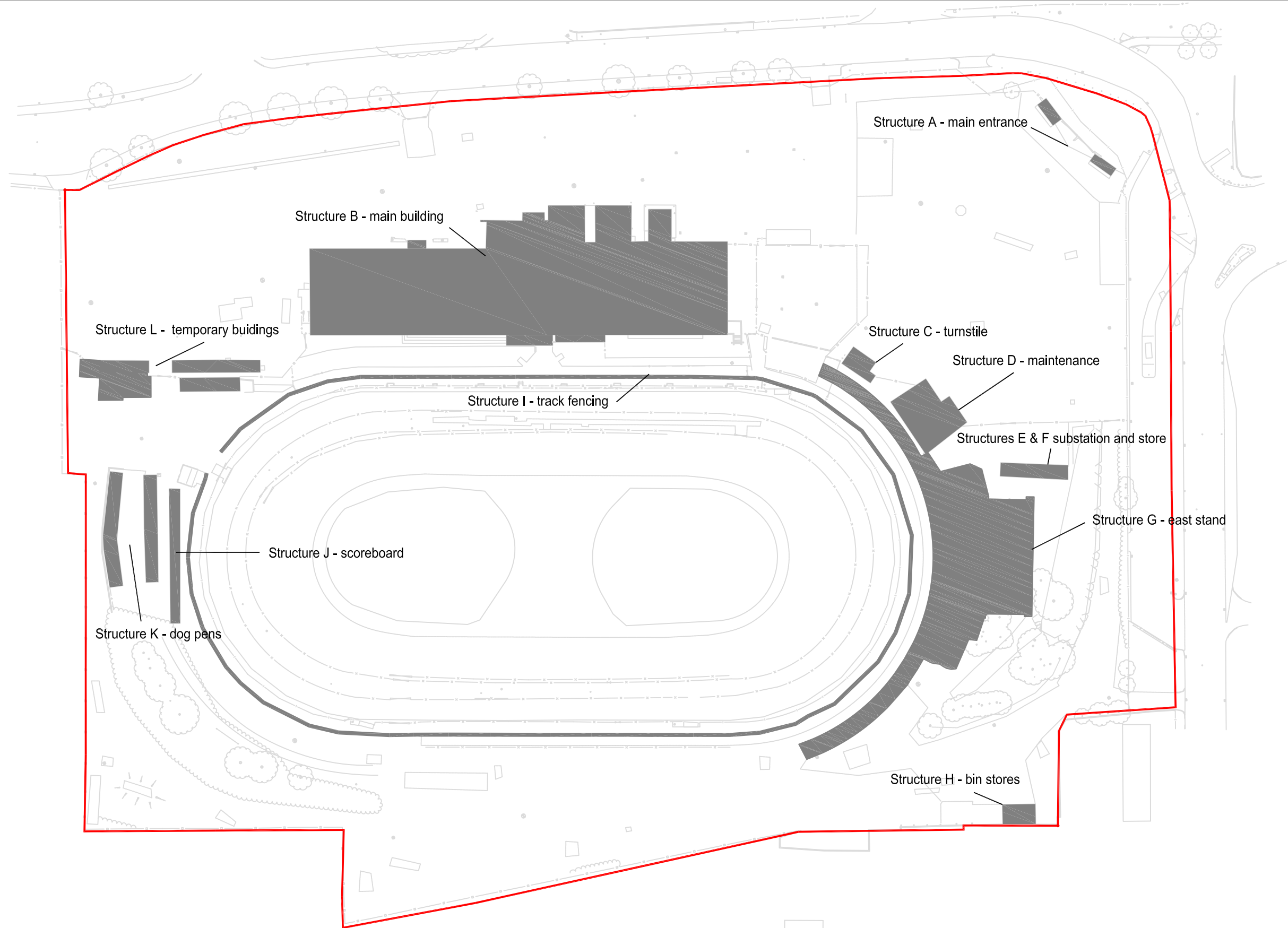


Figure 2. Layout of Belle Vue Stadium



0 20 m



Figure 3. Extract from Yates' map of Lancashire of 1786



 Study Site

0 500m



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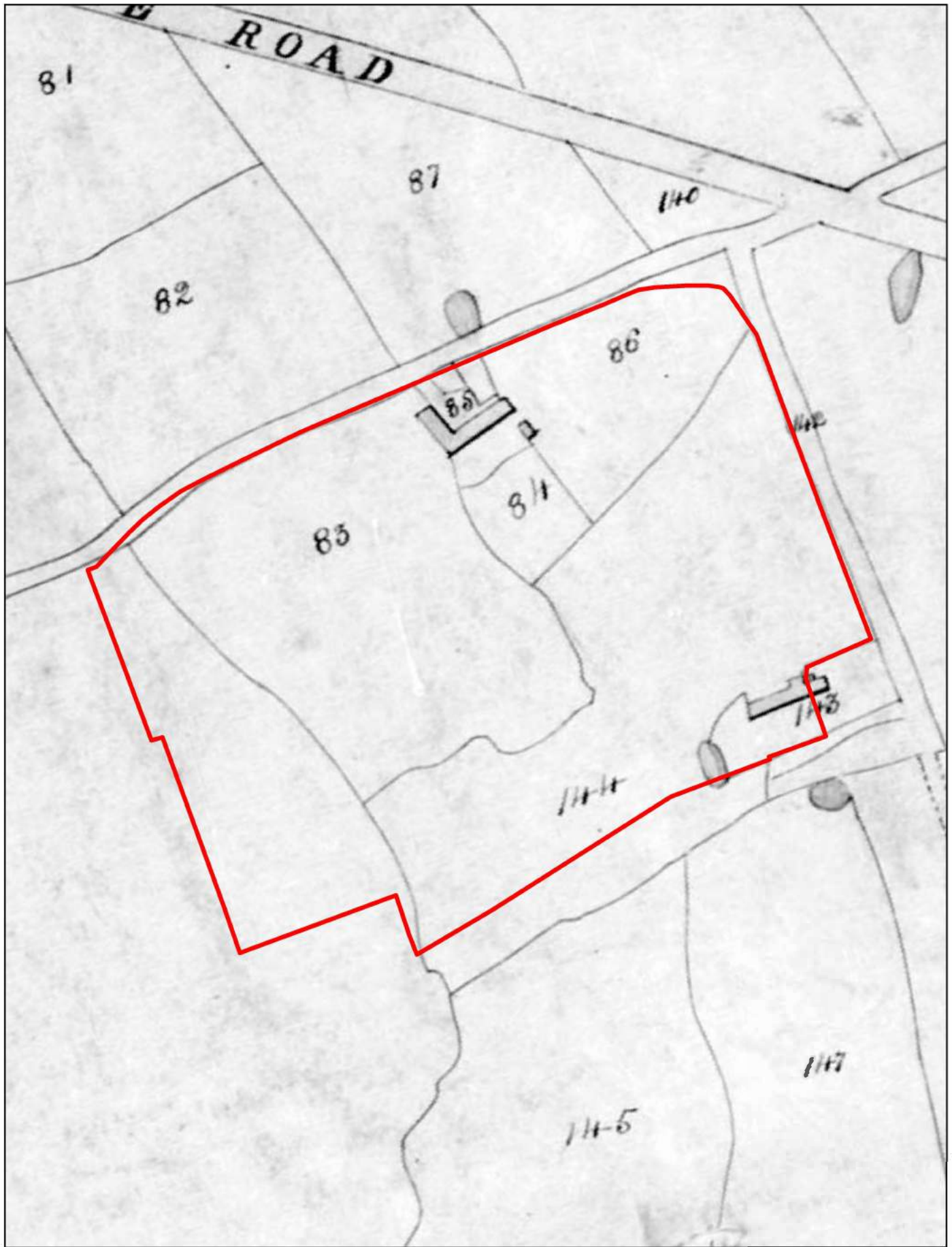


Figure 4. Extract from the Gorton tithe map of 1846

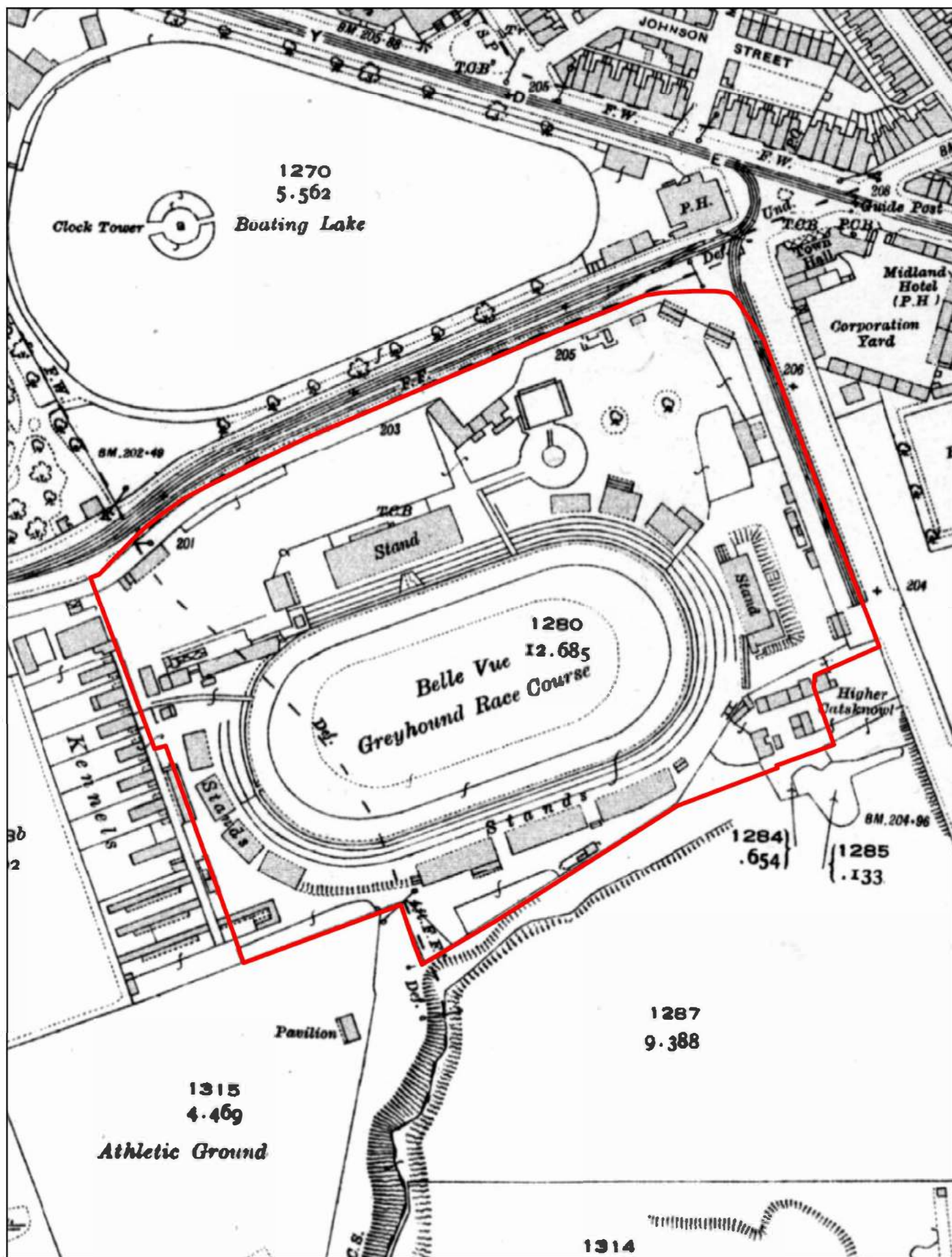


 Study Site

0 50m

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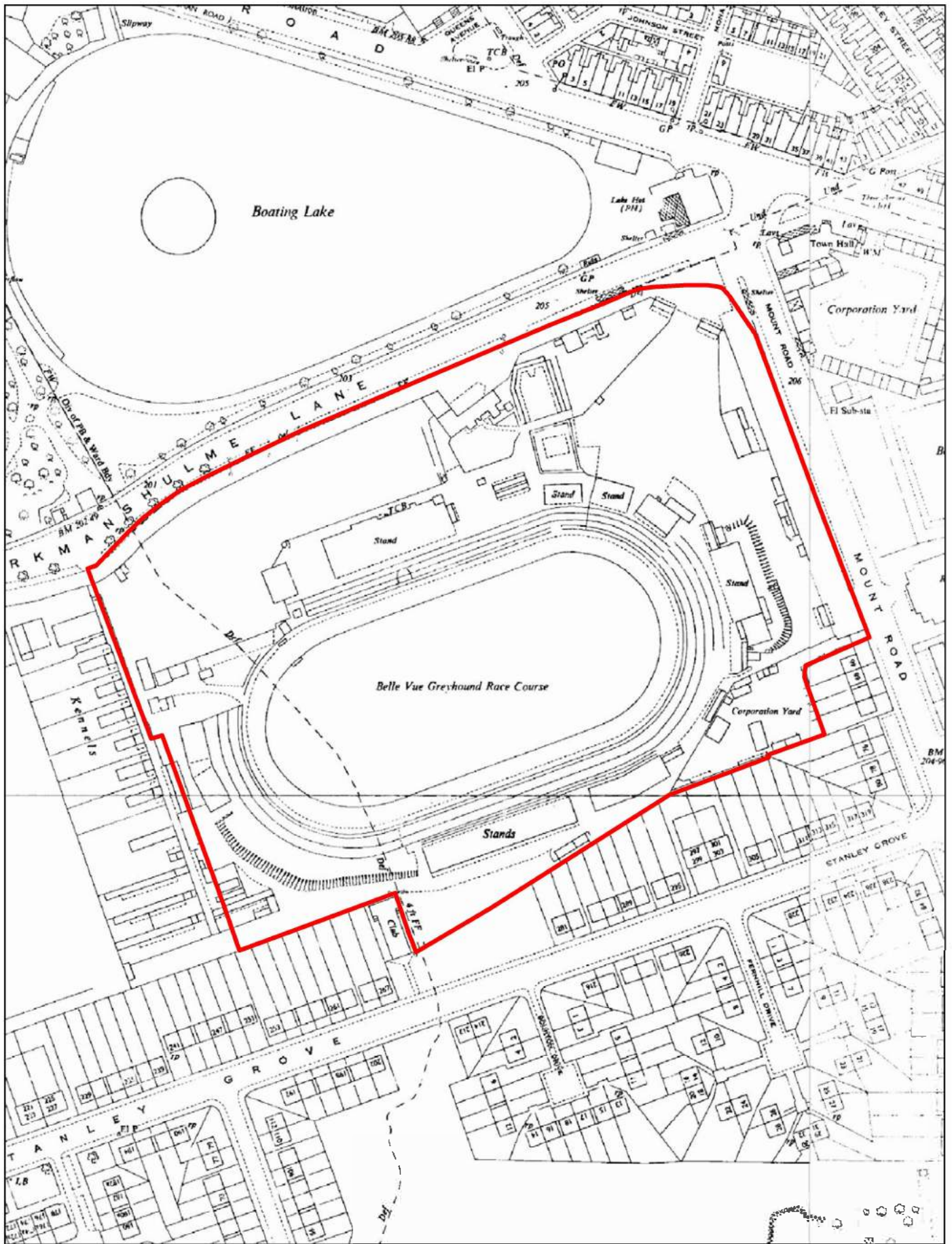


Figure 6. Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of 1951

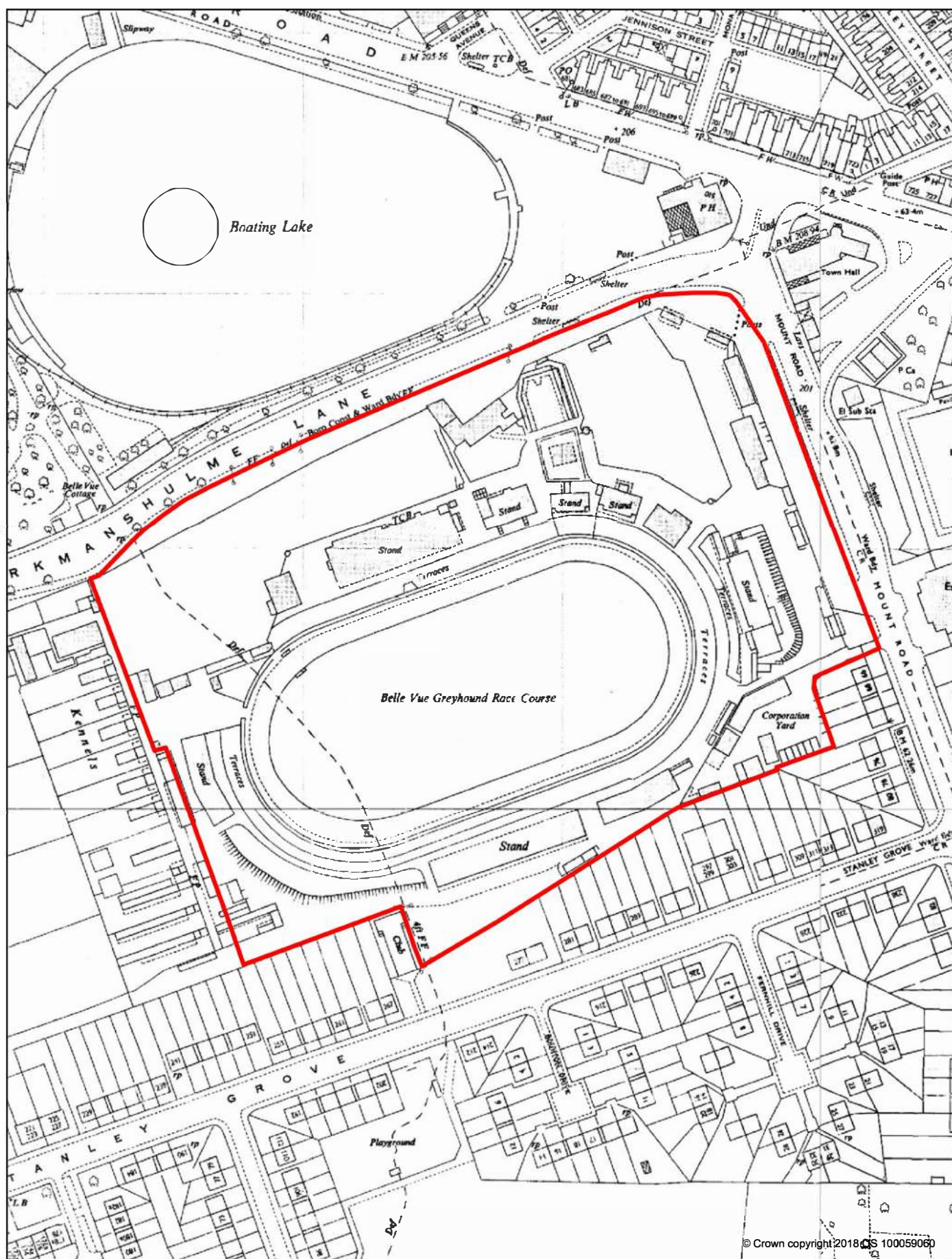


Study Site

0 50m

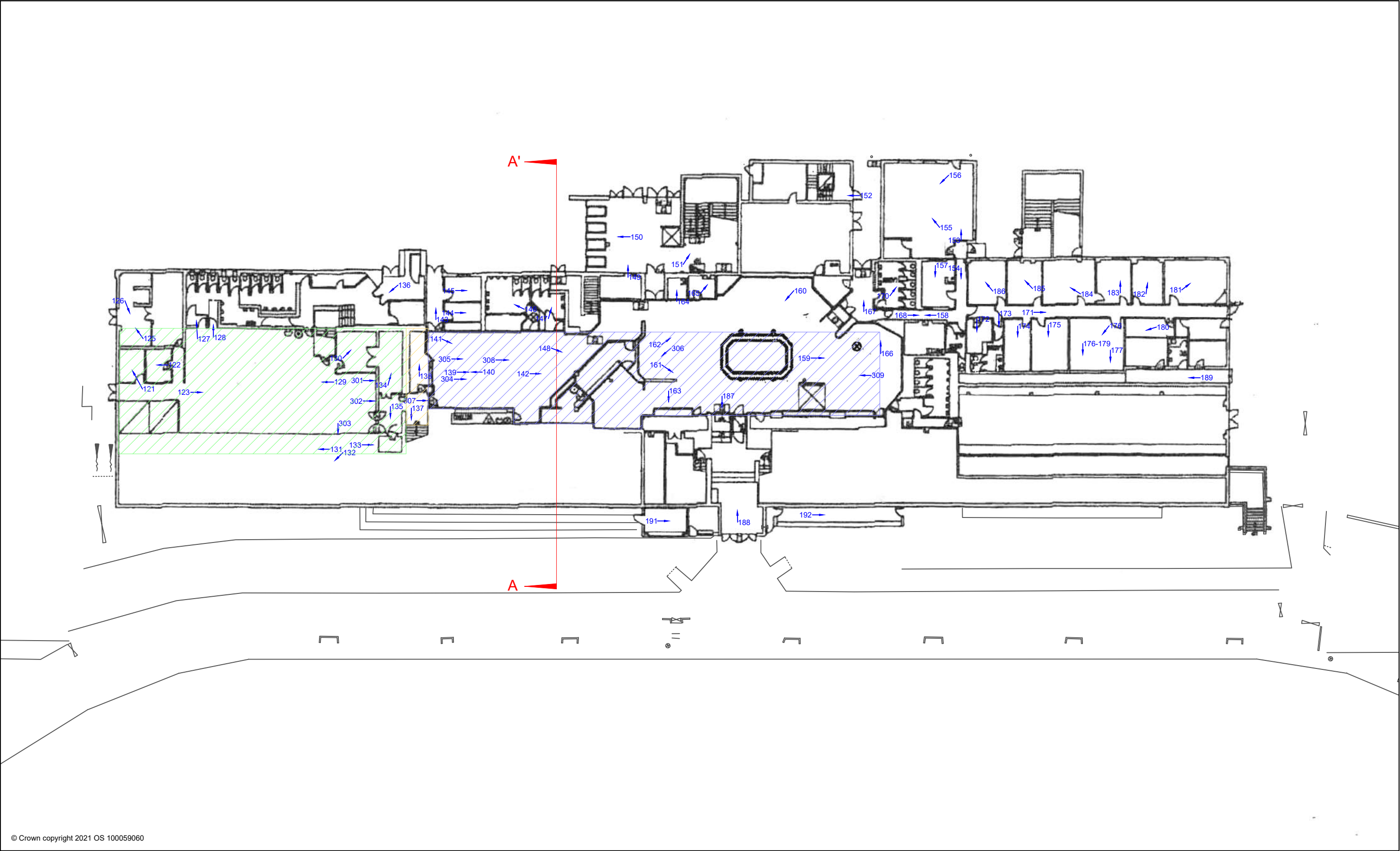
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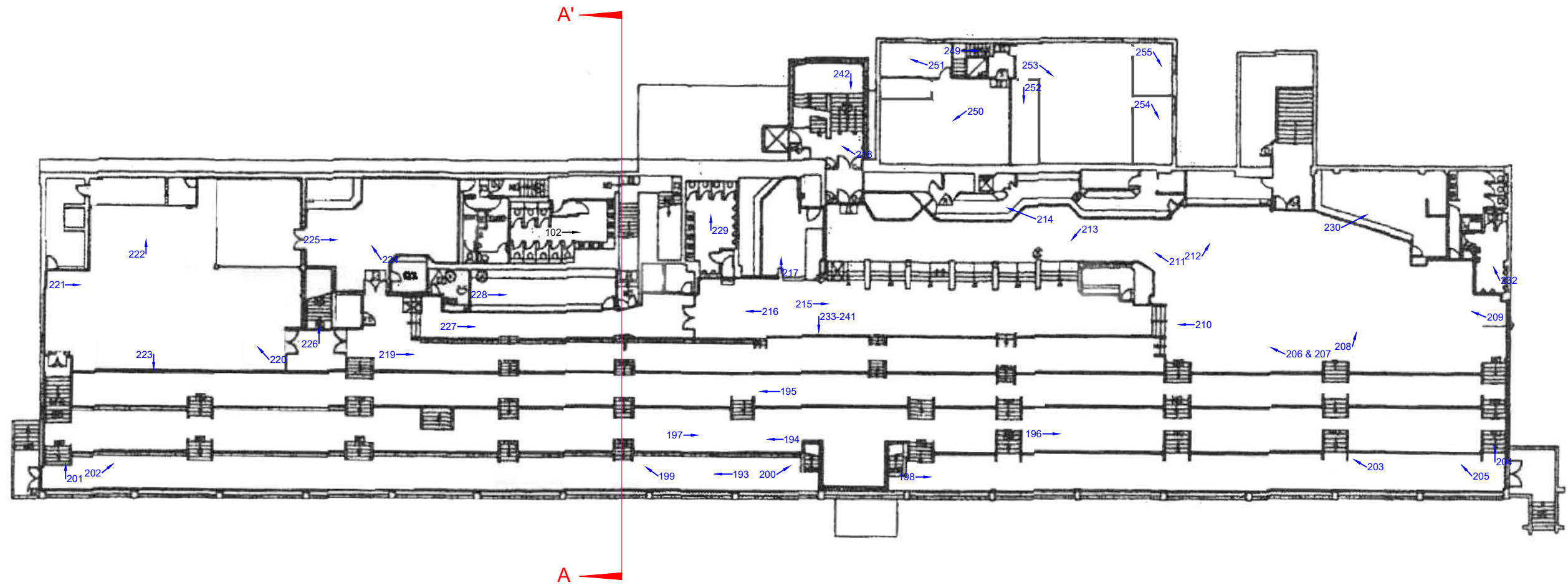
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Figure 8. Ground floor plan of Structure B



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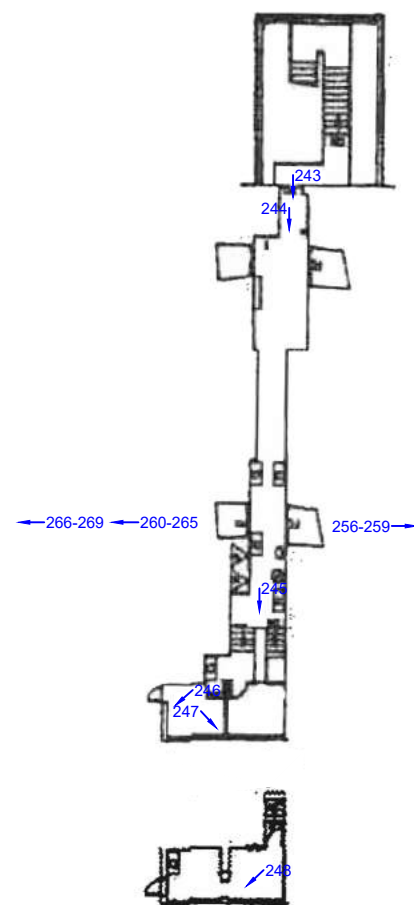
Figure 9. First floor plan of Structure B



001 → Photograph number and direction A-A' Cross-section

0 10m

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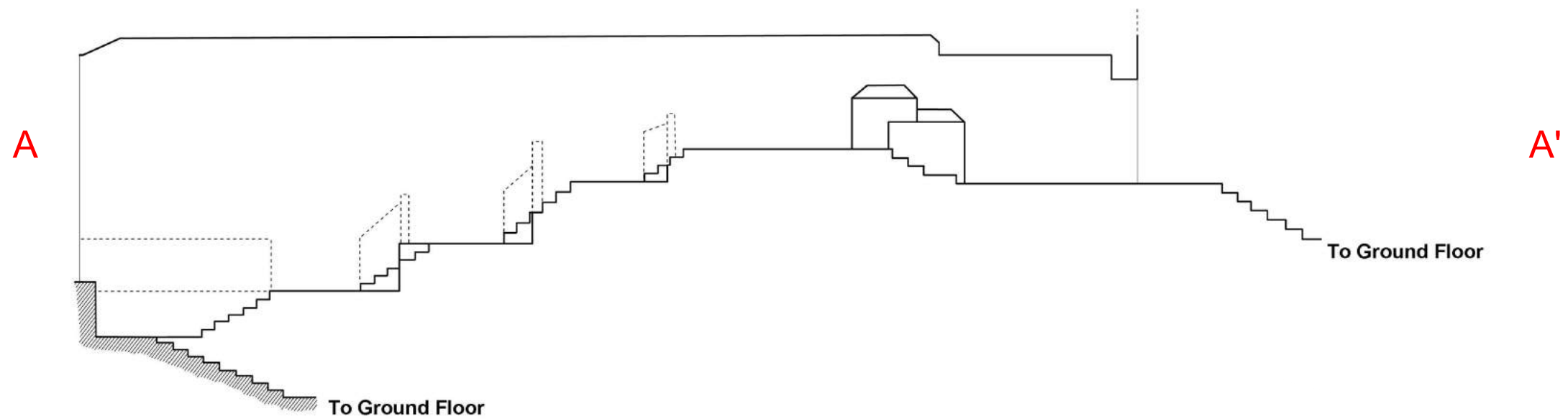
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Figure 10. Second floor floor plan of Structure B



001 → Photograph number and direction

0 10m



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Figure 11. Cross-section of Structure B

0 2 m

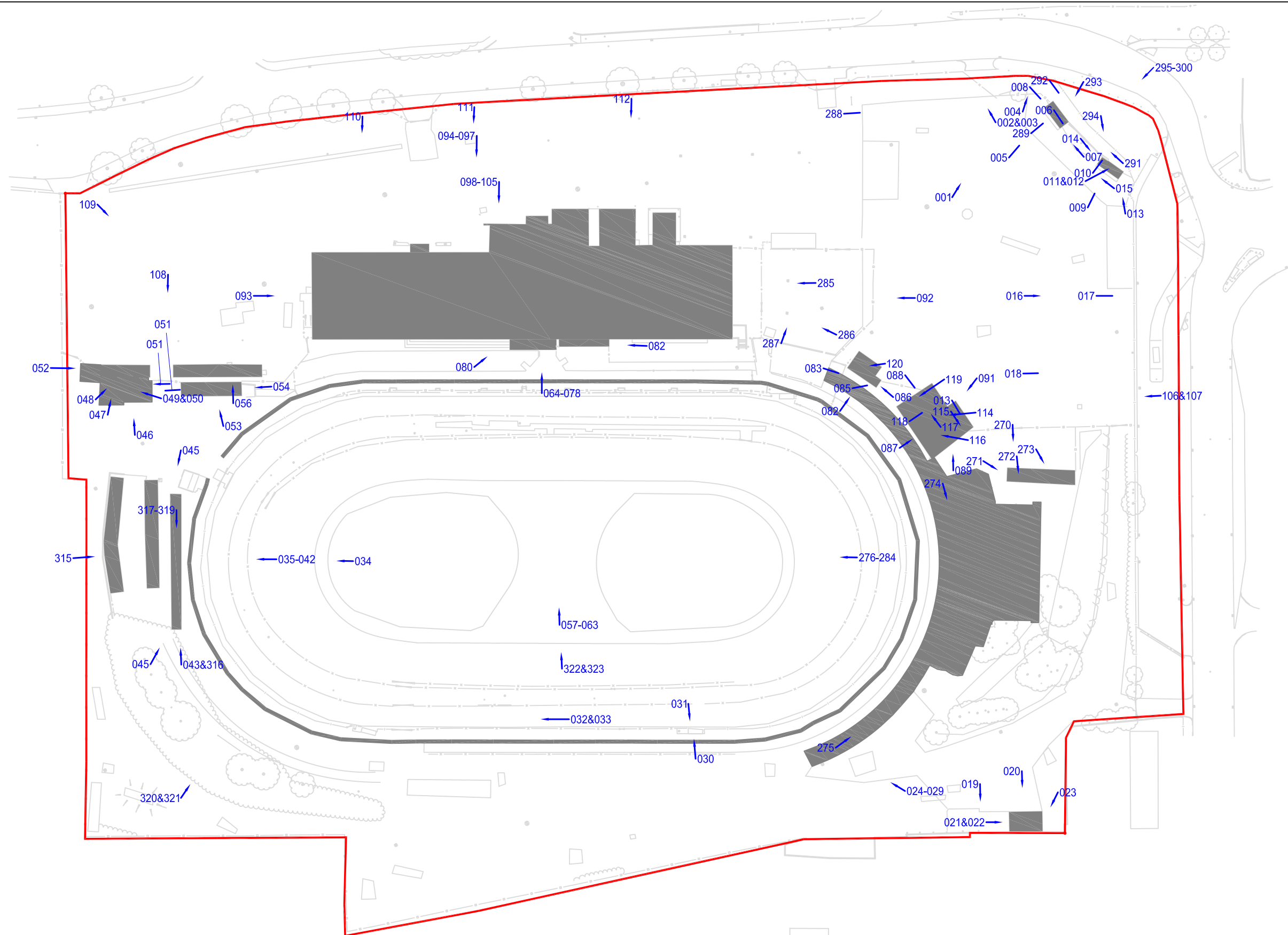


Figure 12. Photographic location plan of stadium



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0 20 m

Plates

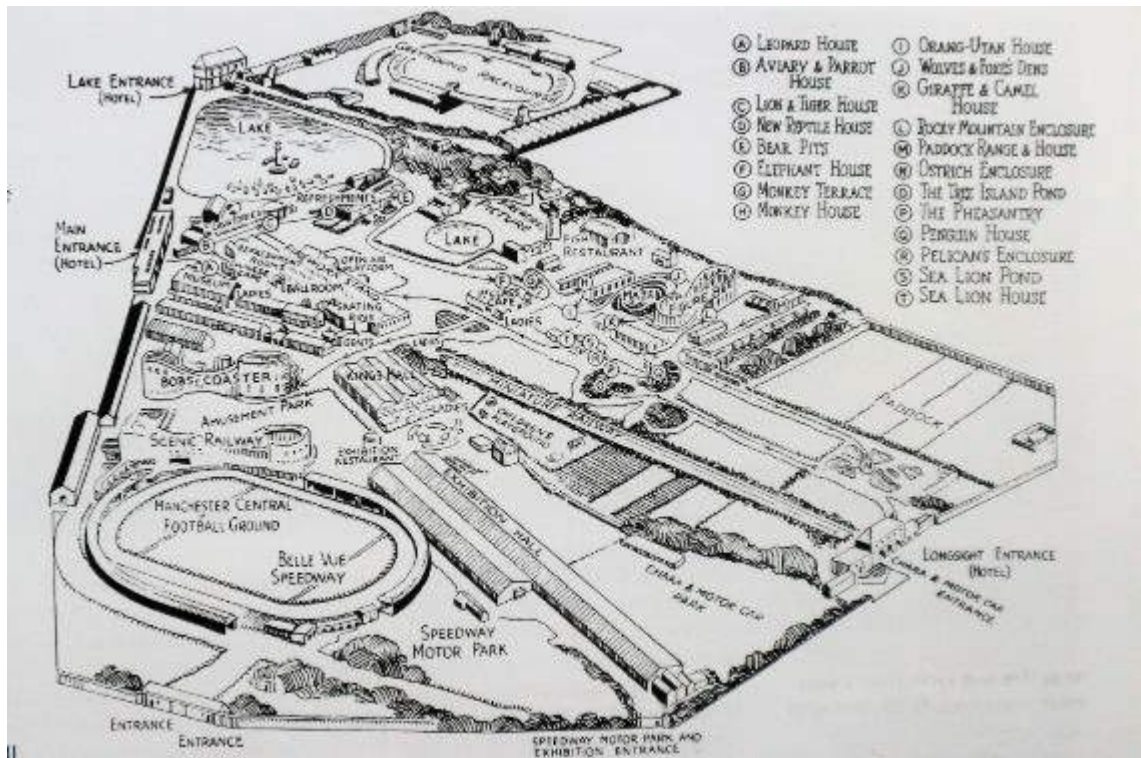


Plate 1. Layout of Belle Vue from the 1931 guidebook (after Inglis 2004, 45)



Plate 2. The main entrance (Structure A), south-west elevation showing the two brick booths and concrete canopy (facing north-east)



Plate 3. Structure A, west booth, south-west elevation (facing north-east)



Plate 4. Structure A, interior of the west booth (facing east)



Plate 5: Structure A, north-east elevation of the west booth (facing south)



Plate 6. Structure A, south-east elevation of the west booth (facing north-west)



Plate 7. Structure A, south-west elevation of the east booth (facing north-east)



Plate 8. Structure A, west room in the east booth (facing east)



Plate 9. Structure A, east room of the east booth (Facing east)



Plate 10. Structure A, north-east elevation of the east booth (Facing south)



Plate 11. Structure A, canopy at the north side of the entrance (facing north-west)



Plate 12. Structure A, main entrance and west kiosk (facing north-east)



Plate 13. Structure A, location of original Belle Vue sign to the left of modern advertisement (facing south-west)



Plate 14. Structure B, north elevation (facing south)



Plate 15. Later Phase main staircase and single-storey ticket hall (on the right of the frame), (facing south)



Plate 16. Structure B, south elevation (facing north)



Plate 17. Structure B, east elevation (facing west)



Plate 18. Structure B, west elevation (facing east)



Plate 19. Structure B west end, ground floor kitchen area (facing east)



Plate 20. Structure B west end ground floor kitchen area (facing west)



Plate 21. Structure B west end staff room at the west end of the Phase II section (facing south-east)



Plate 22. Structure B west end, Phase IV stores to the north of the Phase II section (facing east)



Plate 23. Structure B west end Phase IV stores to the north of the Phase II section (facing west)



Plate 24. Structure B west end Phase IV WC facilities (facing west)



Plate 25. Structure B central, large open area (facing west)



Plate 28. Structure B central, Tote (facing south)



Plate 29. Structure B central, coffee bar (facing south)



Plate 30. Structure B central, alcohol bar (facing east)

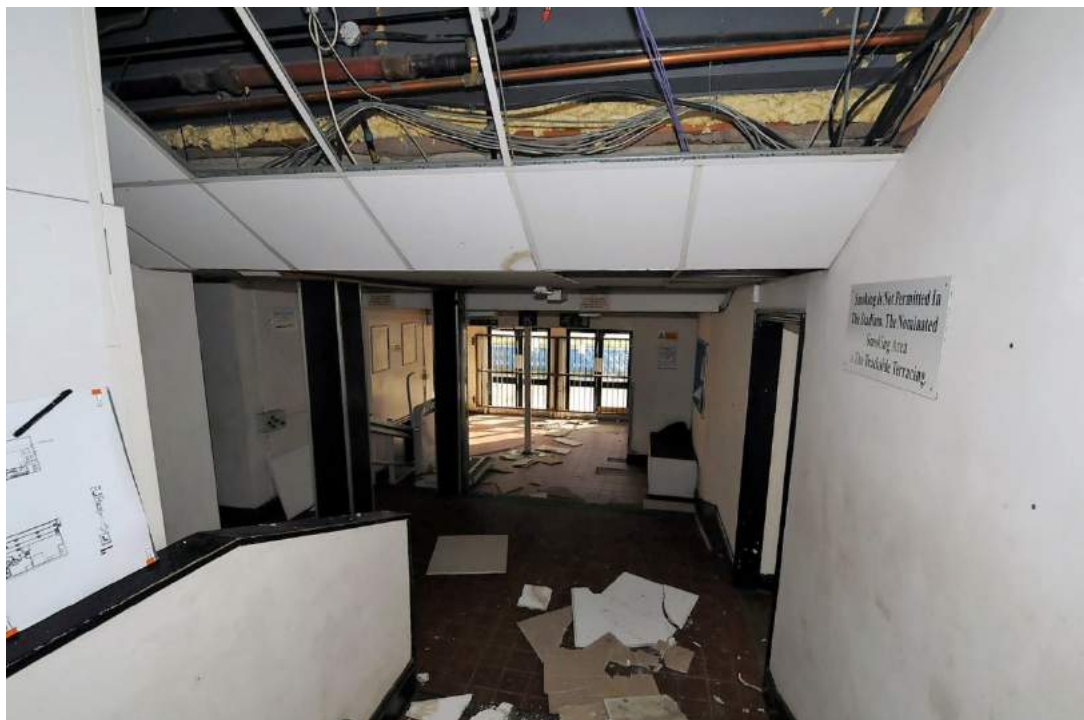


Plate 31. Structure B central, steps (facing north)



Plate 32. Structure B central, stair access to the track (facing south)



Plate 33. Structure B central, steps down to lower ground floor (facing north)



Plate 34. Structure B central, turnstiles (facing west)



Plate 35. Structure B central, inner foyer and disabled lift (facing north)



Plate 36. Structure B central, Phase IV staircase (facing north)



Plate 37. Structure B east end, the kennels (facing east)



Plate 38. Structure B east end, Phase II offices to the right, Phase IV offices to the left (facing west)



Plate 39. Structure B east end, General Manager's office (facing north-east)



Plate 40. Structure B east end, Operations Manager's office (facing north-west)



Plate 41. Structure B east end, Cash Room



Plate 42. Structure B east end, Chubb safes in cash room



Plate 43. Structure B, first floor Training room, (facing north)



Plate 44. Structure B, second floor landing (facing south)



Plate 45. Structure B second floor corridor leading to control and commentary rooms (facing south)



Plate 46. Structure B second floor, access to control and commentators' room (facing north)



Plate 47. Structure B second floor, hare control room (facing south-east)



Plate 48. Structure B second floor, Commentator's room (facing south-west)



Plate 49. Structure B, phase plan

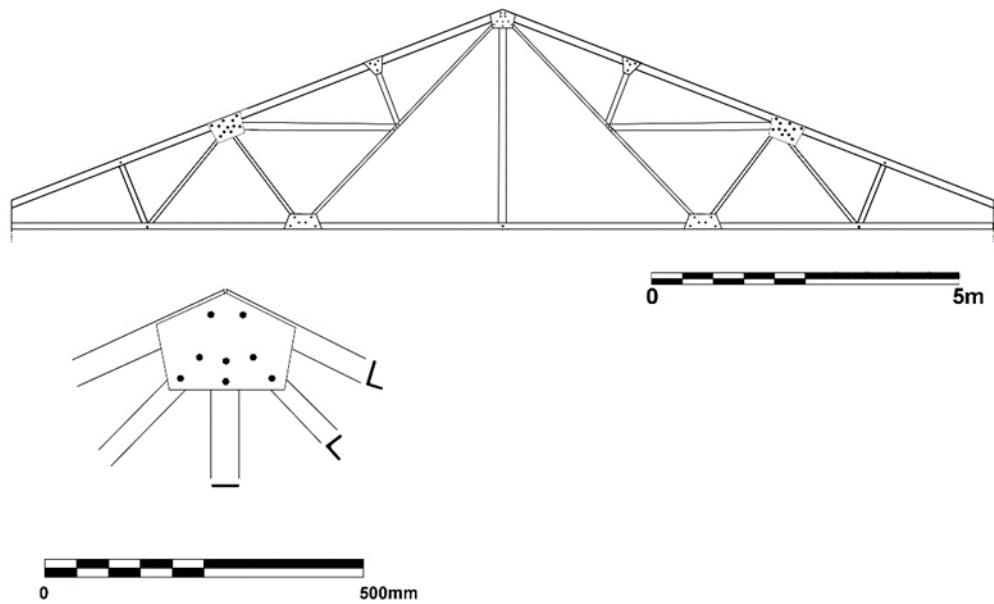


Plate 50. Structure B, main truss detail



Plate 51. Structure B, ground floor steel frame



Plate 52. Structure B, ground floor steel frame construction details



Plate 53. Structure B, the underlying cast in situ terraces of the Phase I stand exposed at the interface with Phase II.

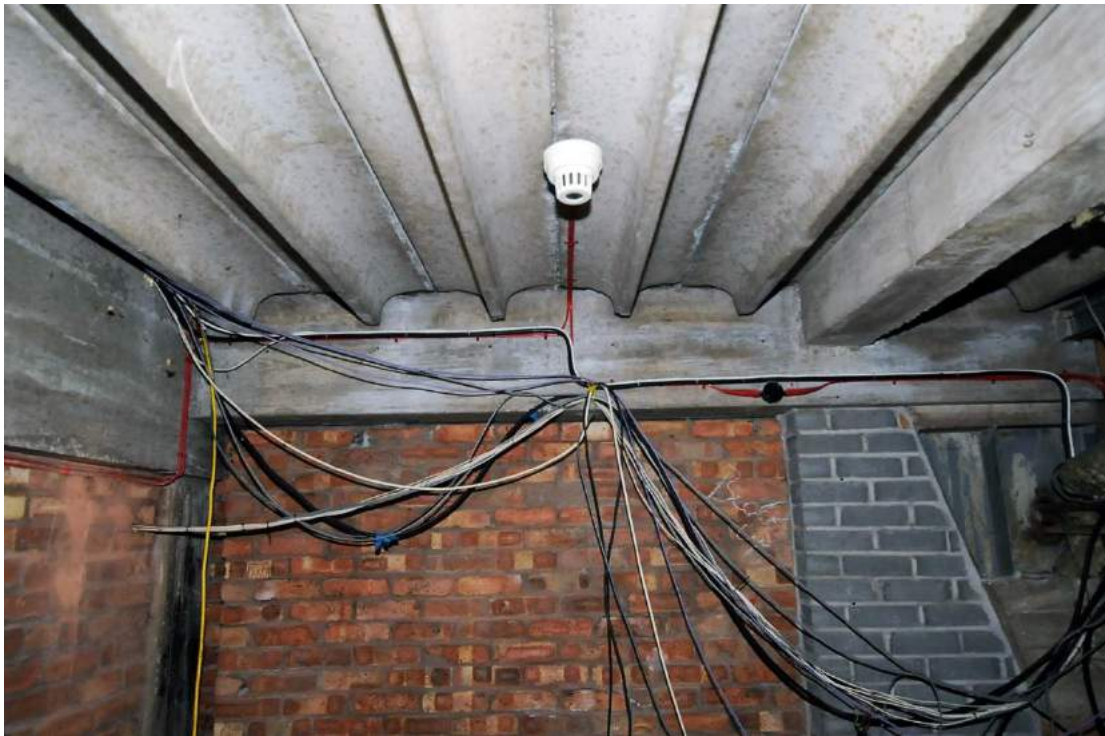


Plate 54. Structure B, Bison beam and block floor in the main kitchen area



Plate 55. Structure B, Bison Beam and block floor in the void next to the kitchen



Plate 56. Structure B, detail of main beam and brace supporting the Bison beams.



Plate 57. Structure B, south elevation showing Tote, main access and bar (facing north-east)



Plate 58. Structure B roof, Phase I roof trusses (facing west)



Plate 59. Structure B roof, Phase II roof trusses (facing east)



Plate 60. Structure B roof, Phase II roof trusses (facing east)



Plate 61. Structure C, south elevation (facing north)



Plate 62. Structure C, north elevation (facing south)



Plate 63. Structure C, Mayor turnstile (facing north)

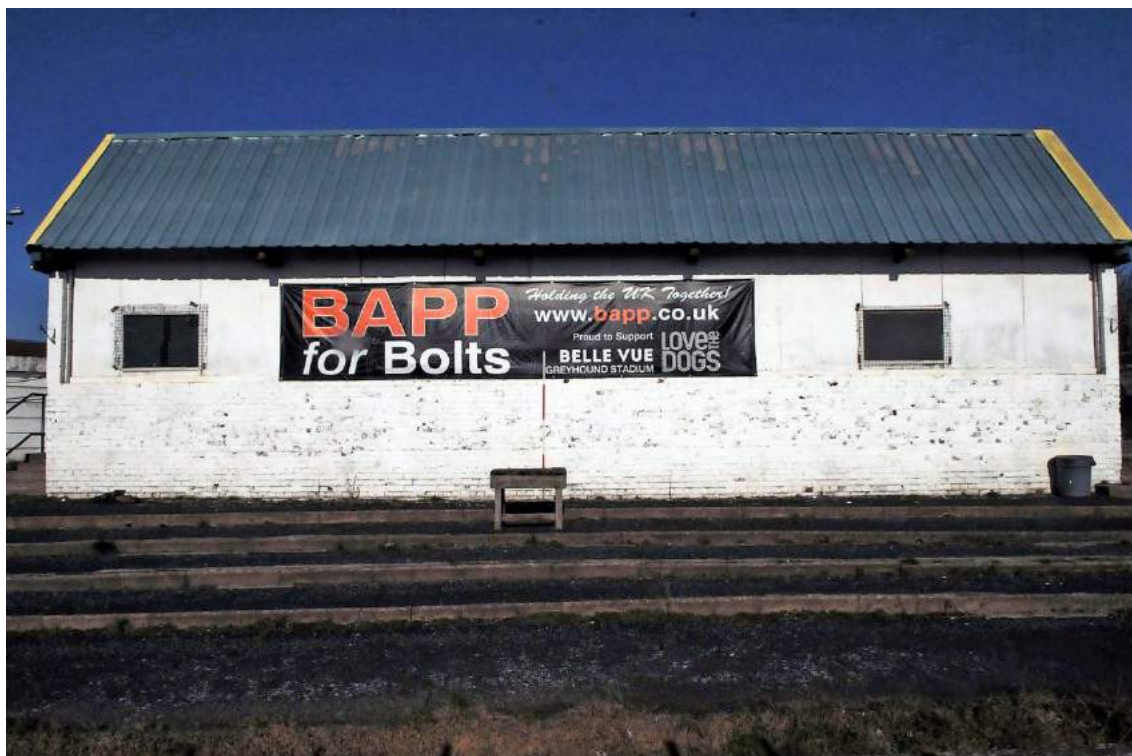


Plate 64. Structure D, south-west elevation (facing north-east)



Plate 65. Structure D, north-west elevation (facing north-east)



Plate 66. Structure D, north-east elevation (facing south-west)



Plate 67. Structure D, interior aspect (facing south-west)



Plate 68. Structure D, example of trusses (facing north-east)



Plate 69. Structure E, north-west elevation (facing south-east)



Plate 70. Structure F, west elevation (facing south-east)



Plate 71. Structure F interior view (facing south)



Plate 72. Structure G, The East Stand from the north (facing south)



Plate 73. Structure G, The East Stand from the end of the south finger



Plate 74. Structure G, view from The East Stand (facing west)



Plate 75. Structure H, north elevation (Facing south)



Plate 76. Structure H, west elevation (facing south-west)



Plate 77. Structure H, east elevation, showing roof construction (facing west)



Plate 78. Structure I, inner face of the trackside fence exhibiting a semi-trowelled finish (facing south)



Plate 79. Structure I, outer face of the trackside fence (facing north)

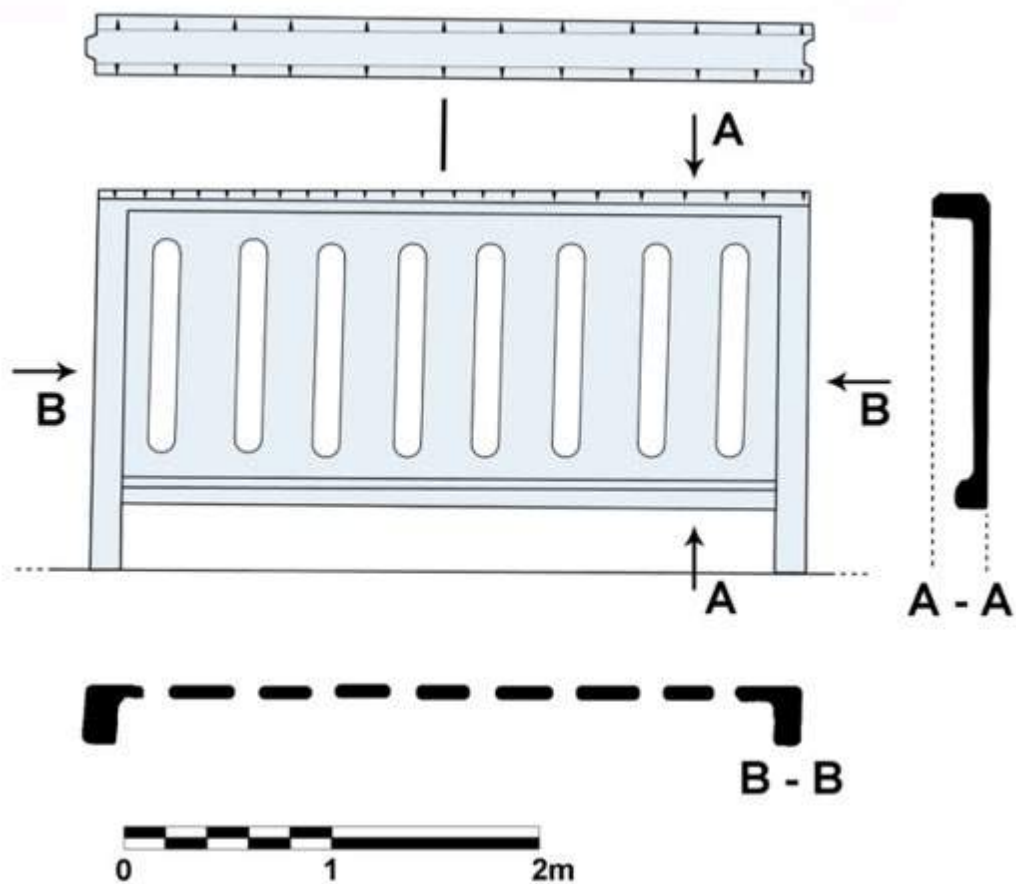


Plate 80. Structure I, elevation and cross-sections

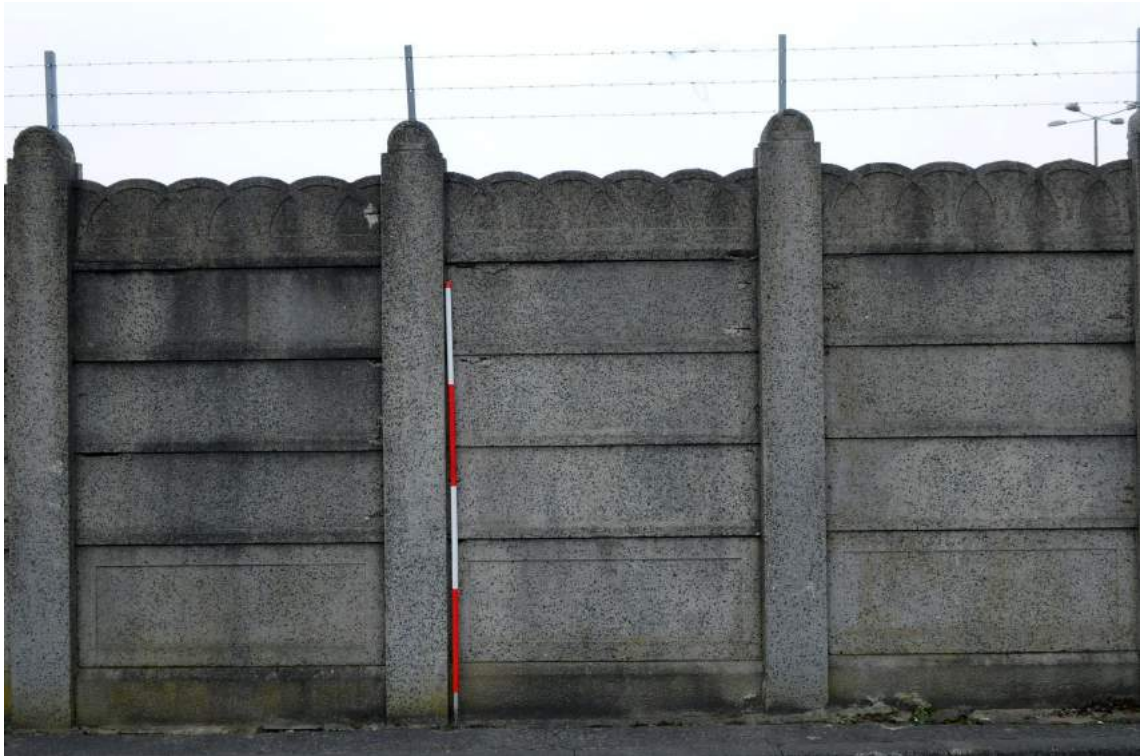


Plate 81. 1950s Perimeter fencing



Plate 82. 1950s Perimeter fencing, detail



Plate 83. Structure J, east elevation (facing west),



Plate 84. Structure J, west elevation, (facing east)



Plate 85. Structure J, north elevation (facing south)



Plate 86. Structure J, south elevation (facing north)



Plate 87. Structure J, interior (facing south)



Plate 88. Structure J, internal frame (facing south-west)



Plate 89. Structure L, motorcycle business temporary buildings (facing south)



Plate 90. Structure L, possible speedway building, south elevation (facing north)



Plate 91. Structure L, possible speedway building, east elevation (facing west)



Plate 92. Structure L, possible speedway building, west elevation (facing east)



Plate 93. Structure L, possible speedway building, interior view (facing west)



Plate 94. Structure L, building of unknown use, south elevation (facing north)



Plate 95. Structure L, building of unknown use, west elevation (facing east)



Plate 96. Structure L, interior view of WCs (facing north-east)

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OASIS ID: lanproar1-429572

Project details

Project name	Belle Vue Stadium, Gorton, Manchester
Project dates	Start: 01-03-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	122160/F0/2018 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Building Recording
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Methods & techniques	""Annotated Sketch"", ""Photographic Survey"", ""Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER MANCHESTER MANCHESTER MANCHESTER Belle Vue Stadium
Postcode	M18 7BD
Study area	5 Hectares
Site coordinates	SJ 8788 9606 53.460893901689 -2.182565586467 53 27 39 N 002 10 57 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Lanpro Archaeology+Heritage
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Lanpro Archaeology+Heritage
Project director/manager	Mitchell Pollington
Project supervisor	Simon Johnson
Project supervisor	Karl Taylor
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Countryside Properties and SCP Developments

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	ADS, Greater Manchester HER
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive Exists?	No

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Historic Building Recording (Level 3) Belle Vue Stadium, Gorton, Manchester
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Author(s)/Editor(s)	Johnson, S
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Pollington, M
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