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Rochdale Road,
Manchester

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Lewis Stitt

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Contents

Summary.....	1
1. Introduction	2
1.1 Planning Background	2
2. The Setting.....	4
2.1 Location	4
2.2 Topography.....	4
2.3 Geology	4
3. Historical Background	5
3.1 Development of Swan House.....	5
4. Historic Building Investigation.....	12
4.1 Introduction	12
4.2 External Description	12
4.3 Internal Description	21
5. Discussion.....	67
5.1 Introduction	67
5.2 Swan House.....	67
5.3 Synthesis	69
5.4 Conclusion	70
6. Archive	71
6.1 Archive.....	71
Sources.....	72
Maps.....	72
Secondary Sources	72
Acknowledgements	74
Appendix 1: Illustrations	75

Summary

RGCM Ltd, on behalf of Savills, are undertaking the redevelopment of the site Swan House within the Manchester city centre, bounded by Swan Street to the south-west, Rochdale Road to the north-west, Cable Street to the north-east and Mason Street to the south-east (centred at NGR 384510 398850). The proposals allow for the erection of a part 31, part 13, part 5 storey building to form 373 residential apartments (Use Class C3a) and 12 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) together with a ground floor commercial unit (408sqm) (Use Class A1, A2 or A3) with associated car parking, public realm and other associated works following demolition of existing buildings (Planning Ref: 121380/FO/2018). The site currently comprises three, two-storey buildings each with a basement; these can be categorised as commercial buildings of early to mid-20th century construction.

In order to secure the archaeological interests and offset the harm of any impact on internal and external features of the building during its demolition, Manchester City Council attached a condition to planning consent that required a scheme of archaeological investigation to be undertaken as part of the development. Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, it was recommended that an appropriate scheme of archaeological works would comprise Level 2-type historic building investigation of the building, coupled with archaeological monitoring during any ground-breaking works to ensure an appropriate record was compiled of any buried archaeological remains of interest. After a full examination of the upstanding remains had been completed, it was deemed likely that the deep and extensive basements below Swan House had resulted in the complete loss of any earlier structural remains. It was therefore decided in consultation with GMAAS that the proposed monitoring of ground-breaking works would no longer be necessary.

In January 2021, Salford Archaeology was commissioned by RGCM Ltd to undertake the recommended investigation and fulfil the archaeological planning obligations. This concluded that Swan House was built between 1932 and 1948 as a warehouse, replacing the former Cable Street Mill and adjacent properties. The historical mapping shows that the warehouse was a single large block with an attached office/warehouse block to the south-eastern end. The current building has retained this layout, although a second office block had been constructed shortly after its north-western end. This extension also appears to have been completed before 1948.

The archaeological investigation of Swan House has provided a valuable opportunity to record an early- to mid-twentieth century warehouse and office block, mitigating any loss of historic fabric resulting from the site's redevelopment. It has also enabled a review of the available documentary material; used in combination with the physical evidence, this has produced a detailed narrative of the building's development. In light of the current redevelopment in central Manchester, and rarity of this building type, the record created by this work plays a crucial role in creating a holistic picture of the city's history and architectural development.

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning Background

RGCM Ltd, on behalf of Savills, are undertaking the redevelopment of the site Swan House within the Manchester city centre, bounded by Swan Street to the south-west, Rochdale Road to the north-west, Cable Street to the north-east and Mason Street to the south-east (centred at NGR 384510 398850). The proposals allow for the erection of a part 31, part 13, part 5 storey building to form 373 residential apartments (Use Class C3a) and 12 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) together with a ground floor commercial unit (408sqm) (Use Class A1, A2 or A3) with associated car parking, public realm and other associated works following demolition of existing buildings (Planning Ref: 121380/FO/2018). The site is currently occupied by three, two-storey buildings each with a basement; these can be categorised as industrial buildings of early to mid-20th century date.

Swan House was built in c 1932 - 48 as a warehouse after the demolition of earlier Cable Street Mill that had previously occupied the site. The historical mapping shows that the warehouse was a single large block with an attached office/warehouse block to the south-eastern end. The main building has been constructed on this footprint, although a second office block was constructed later at the north-western end.

In order to secure archaeological interests and offset the harm of any impact on internal and external features of the building during its demolition, Manchester City Council attached a condition to planning consent that required an appropriate scheme of archaeological investigation to be undertaken as part of the development.

Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), in their capacity of archaeological advisors to Manchester City Council, it was agreed that an appropriate scheme of archaeological works would comprise an historic building survey, coupled with a targeted archaeological evaluation to determine the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest. It was recommended that the survey should be consistent with an Historic England Level 2-type building investigation to provide a detailed record of Swan House prior to any alterations or removal of historic fabric.

In the light of this recommendation, Manchester City Council attached a condition to planning consent (Condition 4) that states:

'No soft-strip, demolition or development groundworks 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 are to be undertaken in accordance with Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by Manchester City Council, as Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any development at the site. The WSIs shall cover the following:

- a. A phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording to include:
 - archaeological building recording (HE Level 2);

Following demolition of the existing building(s) to slab level

- targeted archaeological evaluation through machine assisted trial trenching
 - (where justified by the evaluation results) open area excavation
 - archaeological open area excavation.
- b. A programme for post investigation assessment to include:
- analysis of the site investigation records and finds;
 - production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological and historical interest represented.
- c. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record
- d. Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance;
- 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 investigate the archaeological interest of the site record and preserve any remains of archaeological interest, pursuant to saved policy DC20.1 of the Unitary Development Plan of the City of Manchester and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.'

In January 2021, Salford Archaeology was commissioned by RGCM Ltd to undertake the recommended investigation and fulfil the archaeological planning obligations. This report presents a summary of the historic building investigation that has been completed to date to enable the development to be progressed. It is anticipated, however, that no further information will come to light during the demolition programme that will enhance the archaeological record.

2. The Setting

2.1 Location

Swan House is located in Manchester City Centre, and is bounded by Swan Street to the south, Mason Street to the east, Rochdale Road to the west, and Cable Street to the north (centred at NGR 384510 398850). The site was comprised two early to mid-twentieth century buildings and a single, mid-century addition, currently split into multiple commercial premises (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Recent aerial view of Swan House

2.2 Topography

Topographically, the Manchester conurbation as a region lies within an undulating lowland basin, which is bounded by the Pennine uplands to the east and to the north. The region as a whole comprises the Mersey river valley, whilst the rivers Irwell, Medlock, and Irk represent the principal watercourses in Manchester (Countryside Commission 1998, 125). The site lies closest to the River Tib – a lesser tributary of the Medlock – which now lies culverted and buried below ground.

2.3 Geology

The site is located on sandstone bedrock, part of the Chester Formation. The superficial geology consists of Devensian till (British Geological Survey, 2018).

3. Historical Background

3.1 Development of Swan House

The development of Swan House may be traced reasonably well from the sequence of available historic mapping. The earliest detailed maps of the study area were produced by William Green in 1787-94 and Charles Laurent in 1793, which capture the area on the cusp of intensive, industrial development. Green's map shows the Swan Street area was developed relatively late on. At the time of the survey, the site was occupied by just two buildings fronting Rochdale Road (Plate 2). Nearby was a pinfold for locking up stray animals / livestock. Most of the site at this time was made up of vacant plots or gardens. To the south-east of the site were two ponds known as the 'Shude Hill Pitts' (Plate 2), open bodies of water that were fed by the River Tib. Subsequent maps produced in the early 19th century, such as those produced by Aston in 1804 and Roper in 1807 provide a glimpse of the early stages of development. These capture increased activity across the site with several of the earlier plots having been taken up by residential buildings. By the time of Dean and Pigot's map of 1809, terraced housing had been built along the southern side of Cable Street and the northern side of Swan Street. The area witnessed further industrial development leading up to 1831, as evidenced by a map by Banks and Co (Plate 3), which shows the south-east of the site occupied by the Phoenix Iron Foundry. This map depicts all the properties in the north-west of the site as back-to-back or blind-back houses, with the exception of Swan Street lock-up (Plate 3).

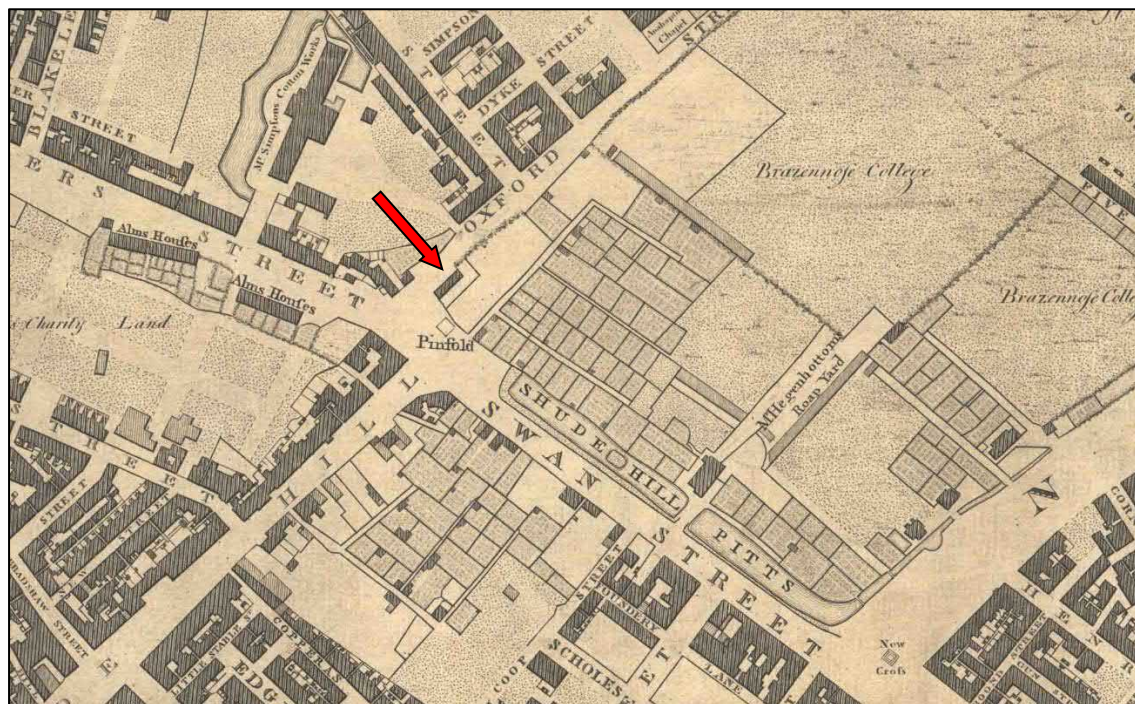
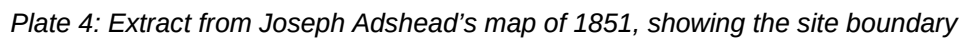


Plate 2: Green's 1787-94 Map of Manchester, with arrow marking the study area



Plate 3: Extract from Bancks and Co.1831

The site is shown in greater detail on Joseph Adshead's map of 1851. The lock up was taken over by the borough police in 1838 and is shown on Adshead's map as a Police Station. It was surrounded by a block of dwellings accessed by a small alley labelled 'Dean's Co' [court] and the Rising Sun Tavern. The properties still appear as back-to-backs although the frontages along Rochdale road were primarily commercial. Approximately 12 of the properties within the site were still designated as residential. Immediately south of the site, the terraced properties fronting Swan Street are shown to have been shops with small yards to the rear; directly behind, stood Makin and Walker's Silk Mill (Plate 4). The mill occupies the site of the former foundry. This was otherwise known as Cable Street Mill. Depicted on the 6"-1-mile plan of 1850, we can see it was accessed via a covered entranceway situated on Cable Street (Plate 5). The mill appears in Pigot and Slater's Trade Directory of 1850 under the ownership of Makin and Walker (Slater 1850, 236).



The map shows Cable Street running diagonally from the top left to the bottom right. The Cable Street Mill is a large building in the center. To its left is 'The Royal Mint'. To its right is 'Mason Street Saw Mill'. Further right is 'ADD STREET'. At the bottom left is 'Corn Mill' and 'Wharfedale Street'. At the bottom right is 'STREET'. A red outline highlights a building complex between Cable Street and the Cable Street Mill, which is the location of the Cable Street Mosque.

Plate 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey Town Plan published 1850, showing the site boundary

Perhaps the most significant changes are evidenced by changes to the former textile mill. It is no longer labelled as such on the 1891 edition and appears to have been subdivided. Turning again to Goad's plan of 1888, further details of the former mill are revealed. The north-western end of the mill (No. 43 Cable Street) was a five-storey building. It had been given over to the works of Samuel Mosley Strong and Co. Ltd. – engravers, lithographic printers, and wholesale stationers. This business appears under multiple headings in Slater's 1895 directory for Manchester, producing and supplying all manner of products. Next door (No. 35) was Brassington and Cooke, makers of Perambulators. The south-eastern end of the complex – four storeys high – comprised warehouses and stores for consumables: fruit, potatoes, corn, and beer. A subsequent revision of the map in 1928 reveals additional warehousing and stables to the rear of The Rising Sun public house. This alteration can be back-dated to at least 1895, when Matthew Ollier was listed in Slater's directory as a 'hay and straw dealer' (No. 47 – 53 Cable Street). It is also noteworthy that the former back-to-back properties making up Dean's Court were reconditioned, although on the other side of cable street there remained several blocks of unaltered dwellings.

By the time of the 1922 Ordnance Survey map, Swan Street had been widened and the tramlines along Swan Street and Rochdale Road laid. The former police station, shops and houses forming Dean's Court, in the north-west of the site, had since been demolished, although the mill building, terrace and banks were still present, albeit in a modified form.



Plate 6: Extract from the 1:500 Ordnance Town Plan, 1891, showing the site boundary



Plate 7: The Ordnance Survey 25":1-mile revised 1931-2, published 1934, showing the site boundary

The Ordnance Survey 6"-1-mile 1915 revision (published in 1922) and 25"-1-mile plan, revised in 1931-2 (published in 1934) (Plate 7) provide much the same information as the late nineteenth century maps. Both present a broadly similar configuration for the buildings within the site.

A plan was produced by Manchester City Council between 1940 and '41 showing the extent of bomb damage as a result of aerial bombing at the beginning of the Second World War (Plate 8). Cable Street had been hit particularly hard, although the none of the buildings within the site appear to have suffered damage.

The next available map is the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 National Grid map published in 1948. This clearly shows the completed warehouse in exactly same form as it is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1955 indicates that the former buildings occupying the site were cleared and replaced by a single unit (Plate 9). Although little can be deduced from the mapping, it is noteworthy that six zones of dropped curbing – corresponding to entrances into the warehouse – are visible along Cable Street, and do not appear to correlate with pre-existing site access; this reinforces the notion that none of the former mill building was retained, a notion that is reinforced by an examination of the fabric of the extant buildings. The improve site access and open plan of the buildings imply the extant structure was purpose-built as a warehouse.

Another notable change in the intervening period between 1934 and 1955, was the demolition of the Rising Sun public house and a detached building to the south-west (Plates 7 and 9). These were replaced by an extension to the warehouse with a curved western wall (Plate 9). From the map sequence, it is possible to infer a post-war construction date for the warehouse and the northern extension, built sometime between

1934 and 1955 (Plates 7- 9). In the following decades, nearby bomb sites were cleared, and new warehousing built.

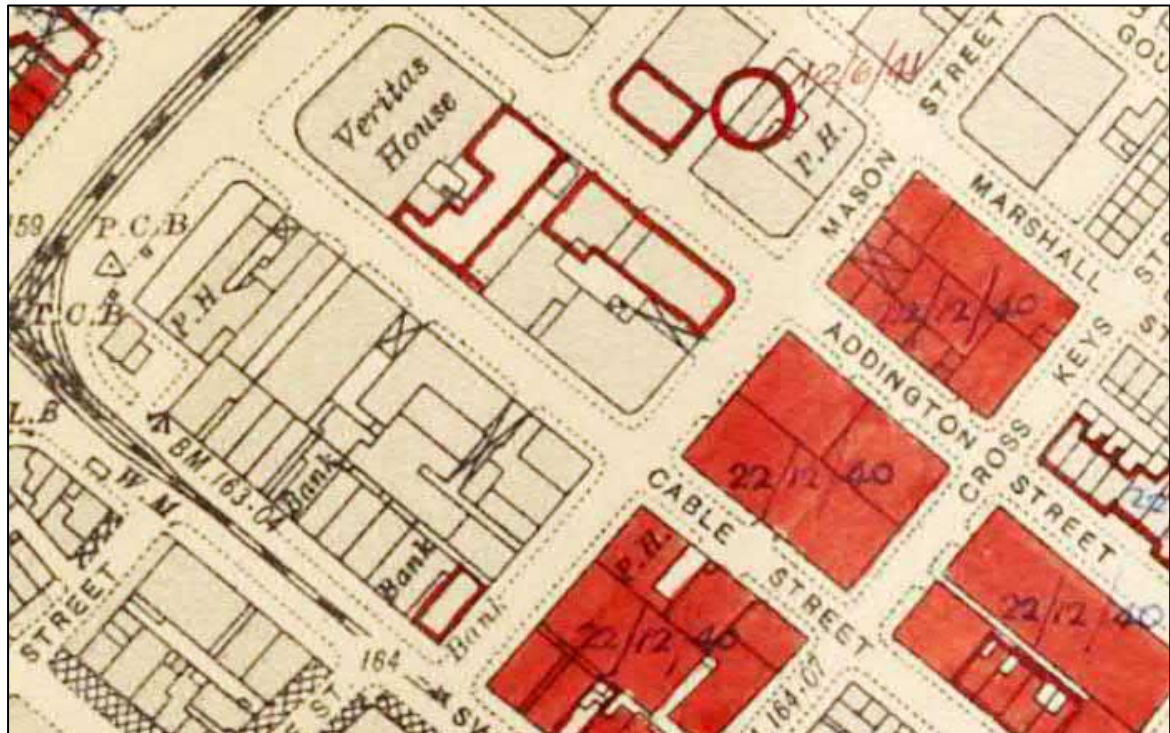


Plate 8: Extract from a plan showing bomb-damaged properties, 1940 – 41
(GB127.MISC/1192/1)

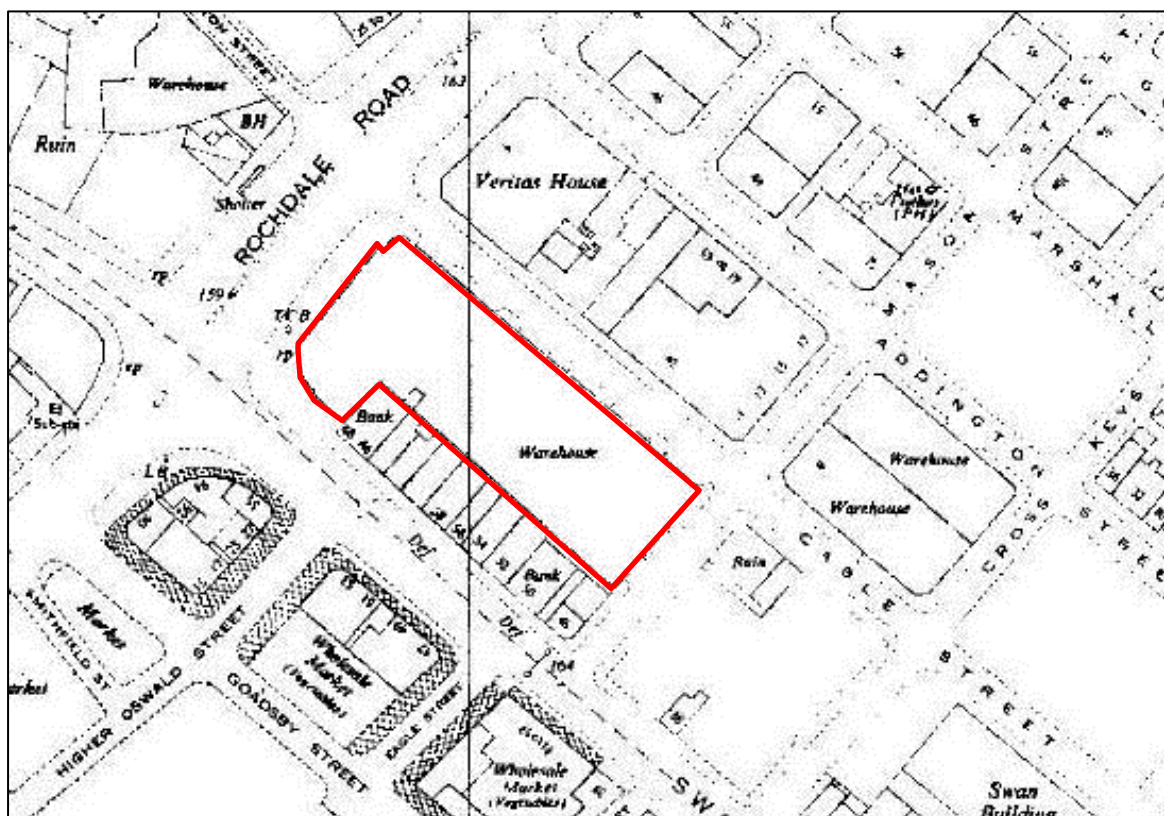


Plate 9: The Ordnance Map 1955, showing the location of the site boundary

Despite cosmetic alterations, the shell of the building has remained largely unaltered until the present day. The warehouse had been in use in the late twentieth century as fish processing factory but was subsequently been split into several units used for textile manufacturing, storage, double glazing sales and a furniture shop.

4. Historic Building Investigation

4.1 Introduction

The programme of historic building investigation undertaken at Swan House on Rochdale Road was carried out to Historic England Level 2 standards. The site comprises three buildings of two-storeys and a basement. The north-western building was of a mid-twentieth century construction and had been constructed as an office block while two earlier buildings to the south-east were perhaps in existence as early as 1932, built as a warehouse and office block.

4.2 External Description

The north-western elevation: this elevation, which fronted onto Rochdale Road, is built in a Monk bond and was the north-western elevation of the mid-20th century office block (Plate 10). The ground-floor comprises seven window apertures with a door at the north-eastern end and set within the stair tower. The window apertures comprised a single continuous protruding concrete lintel and flush concrete sills that were recessed between brick square reveals. The openings housed a nine-light uPVC casement window with clear glazing (Plate 10). The first-floor apertures consisted of protruding chamfered concrete sills and lintels and housed a vertical uPVC three-light casement window (Plate 10). The basement was lit by seven window apertures within this elevation. Each consisted of painted flush concrete sills and lintels and housed a small six-light steel framed window glazed in obscure glass panes (Plate 11).



Plate 10: General view of the north-western elevation



Plate 11: Detail of the basement windows on the north-eastern elevation

The single doorway at the north-eastern end had a protruding lintel overhanging an entrance sign; the motor and gearing for a modern roller shutter door was attached to the underside of the lintel (Plate 12). Behind this shutter was the original doorway which consisted of a timber doorframe housing two flush timber doors with side lights and a three-light fixed transom window. The doors had a blocked glass panel above the lock rail (Plate 13).



Plate 12: The roller shutter door at the north-eastern end of the elevation



Plate 13: Detail of the timber doors behind the roller shutter

The north-eastern elevation: the north-eastern elevation fronted Cable Street and was constructed in a Monk bond with three protruding brick string courses at ceiling height of the ground-floor. A small parapet wall was constructed above the lintels of the first-floor windows which obscured the double pitched roof. The south-western end of the building had contained the early-20th century office block which had a flat roof below a small parapet wall.

The ground-floor had five large loading-bay doorways and two smaller pedestrian doorways. Each of the openings had grey engineering brick lintels and reveals. The loading-bays had sandstone bumpers. The loading-bays housed a large modern roller shutter door (Plate 14). Two of the bays had the doors removed and the openings blocked up using modern perforated brick, into which three uPVC casement windows had been inserted to let in additional light to the ground-floor (Plate 15).

The first-floor contained a continuous row of horizontal uPVC casement windows with four loading-bay doors. Each of the doorways contained two timber doors set within an opening of brick reveals, lintels, and sills (Plate 14).

The office/warehouse block had been set back from the warehouse and had been constructed in the same design. The large loading bay-doorway is a recent insertion into an earlier doorway that also had sandstone bumpers. The original opening had been partially blocked using modern aeriated brick with steel framed rolled shutter door situated at the centre (Plate 16).



Plate 14: The north-western end of the north-eastern elevation



Plate 15: The central doorway within the north-eastern elevation



Plate 16: The south-eastern end of the north-eastern elevation

The south-eastern elevation: this elevation fronted Mason Street and formed the south-eastern elevation of the early-20th century office/warehouse block. It was constructed in a Monk bond with three protruding brick string courses at ceiling height of the ground-floor. A small parapet wall was constructed above the lintels of the first-floor windows which obscured the flat roof (Plate 17).



Plate 17: General view of the south-eastern elevation

The ground-floor consisted of three large loading-bay doorways with central opening having a modern roller shutter door while the other two have been blocked up. As with the loading bays on the north-eastern elevation the openings had been constructed with engineering brick reveals with sandstone bumpers (Plate 17). At the centre of each pier between the doorways was a narrow window comprising engineering brick reveals, sills, and lintels. A three-light steel framed window with steel mesh was housed within the openings (Plate 18).

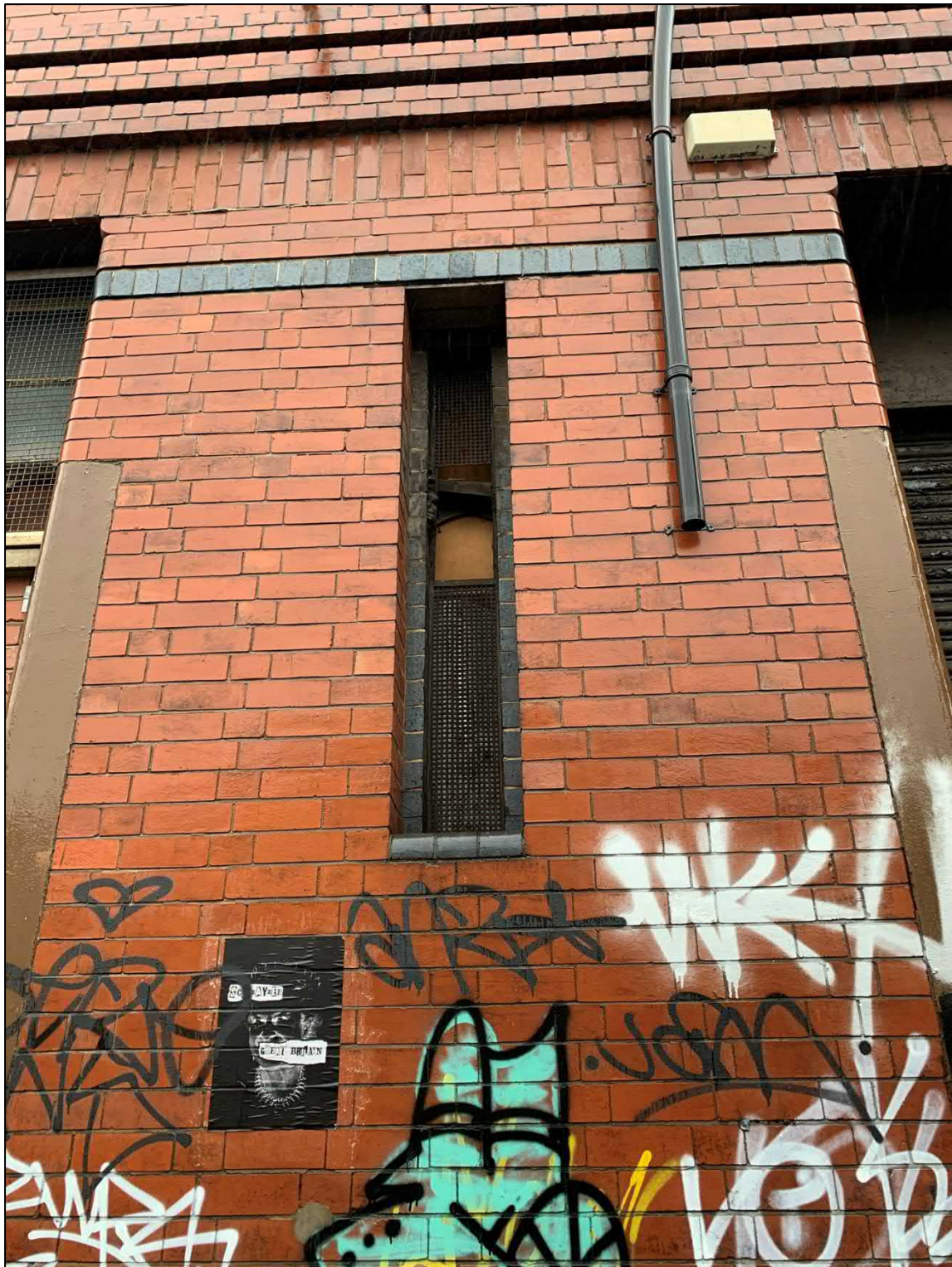


Plate 18: The lancet window within the central pier of the south-eastern elevation

The first-floor was of similar design the north-eastern elevation and had a row of horizontal uPVC casement windows. These were set within an opening that had chamfered protruding concrete sill and lintel (Plate 19). Two small windows with a more decorative stepped sill were situated at either end.



Plate 19: Detail of the first-floor windows on the south-eastern elevation

The south-western elevation: the south-western elevation fronted Swan Street and was constructed in a Monk bond with three protruding brick string courses at ceiling height of the ground-floor (Plate 20). The north-western corner had been curved corner which follows the junction of Swan Street and Rochdale Road. This was the south-west elevation of the mid-20th century office block.

The ground-floor comprised seven window apertures with an inserted door at the south-eastern. The window apertures comprised a single continuous protruding concrete lintel and flush concrete sills that recessed between brick square reveals. The openings housed a nine-light uPVC casement window with clear glazing (Plate 20). The first-floor apertures consisted of protruding chamfered concrete sills and lintels and housed a vertical uPVC three-light casement window (Plate 20). The basement had been light by seven window apertures within this elevation. Each consisted of painted flush concrete sills and lintels and housed a small three-light steel framed window glazed in obscure glass panes (Plate 20).

The doorway had been recently inserted and was accessed by a set of mild-steel steps. A flush timber door with modern door furniture had been housed within the opening along with an off-centre uPVC transom light (Plate 20).



Plate 20: General view of the south-western elevation

4.3 Internal Description

The ground-floor: internally, the ground floor of the later office block had recently been divided into multiple compartments with the insertion of timber-framed partition walls (Fig 2). Access into the north-western end of the building was gained through the large loading bay doors at the north-western end of the north-eastern wall. This was a large modern electrical motorised roller shutter with a steel frame bolted to the brick jambs (Plate 21). The doorway led into a loading bay area with a brick and concrete ramp at the centre (Plate 22). The north-eastern and north-western walls of the room were built using brick, while the south-eastern and south-western walls were of a concrete block construction. Each of these had been painted white.

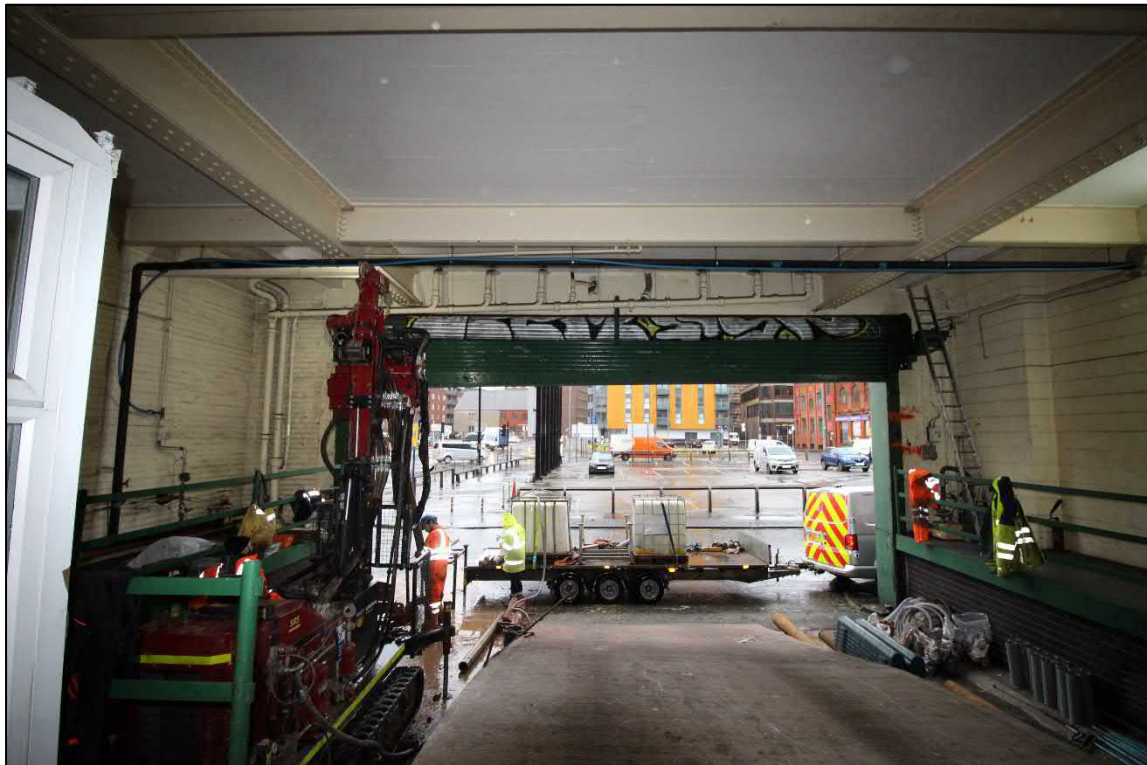


Plate 21: The doorway within the north-eastern wall



Plate 22: The concrete ramp at the centre of the north-western loading-bay

The main central room of this building had been heavily modernised with painted concrete block walls and a laminate timber floor. The room was open plan with two rows of concrete rendered steel columns. These had supported the concrete rendered steel ceiling beams (Plate 23). The render had been removed on one of the beams exposing a rolling stamp: 'Appleby-Frodingham England'. The windows on the north-western and western walls had squared reveals with flush concrete lintels and flat concrete rendered sills. Modern uPVC casement windows had been housed within the openings (Plate 24).



Plate 23: The central room of the ground-floor



Plate 24: The windows within the western wall of the ground-floor

At the south-western end of the room were three modern offices. Each room comprised timber-framed partition walls, suspended ceilings and carpeted concrete floors. The windows, as with those in the main room, had squared reveals with flush concrete lintels

and flat concrete rendered sills. Modern uPVC casement windows had been housed within the openings (Plate 25).



Plate 25: The windows within the south-western office on the ground floor

A kitchen had been situated within the south-eastern corner of this later extension (Fig 2). This comprised white tiled walls, brown floor tiles and a painted concrete ceiling (Plate 26). The south-eastern wall had been dominated by a large 12-light steel framed window with clear glass panes with the upper north-eastern pane having been removed for the installation of the modern galvanized ducting (Plate 26).



Plate 26: The kitchen at the south-easter corner of the ground-floor

Access into the south-western end of the basement was gained from a set of quarter turn concrete stairs to the south of the kitchen (Plate 27; Fig 2). These stairs gave access into a room that contained four toilet cubicles (Plate 28). The room had consisted of white tiled walls, brown floor tiles and a painted concrete ceiling; each of the stalls had timber doors and partition walls and contained modern sanitaryware (Plate 28).

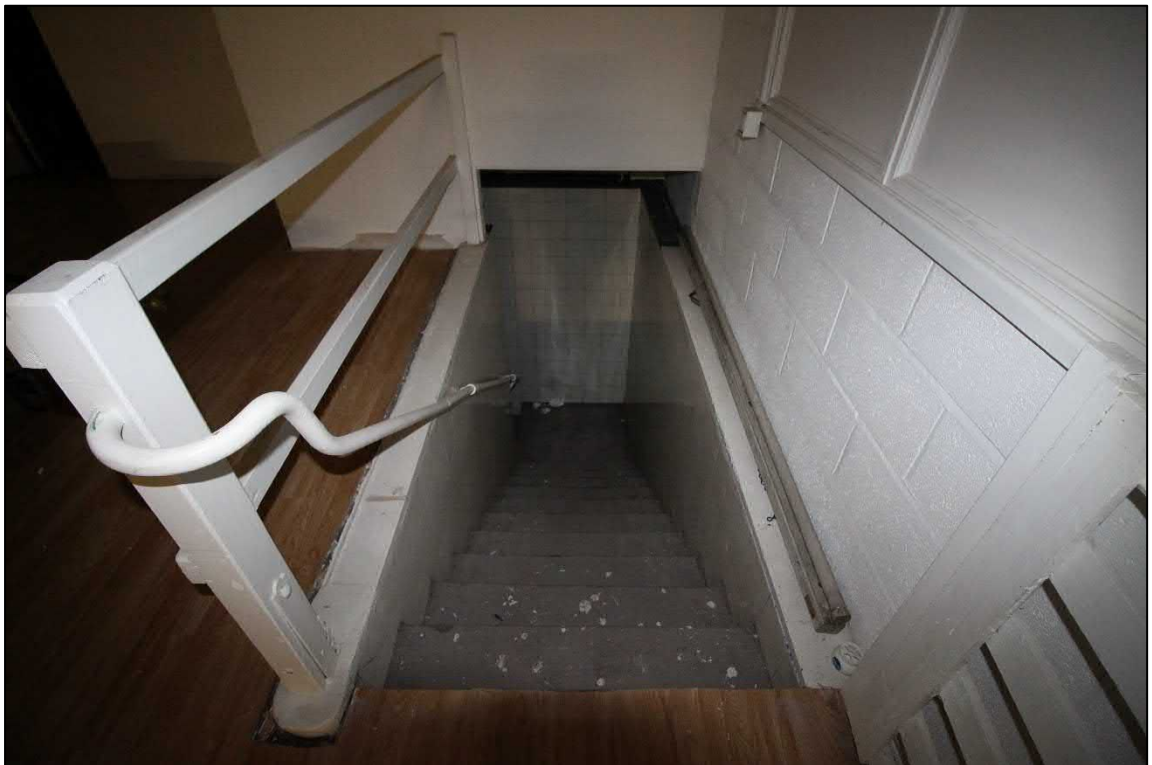


Plate 27: The concrete stairs leading to the toilets within the basement of the later office block



Plate 28: Detail of the timber toilet stalls within the basement of the office block

Internal access into the warehouse compartments to the south-eastern end was gained through a modern flush timber door that was inserted into a concrete, block constructed partition wall. A small narrow L-shaped corridor at the north-western end of the large warehouse gave lateral access into the warehouse area (Plate 29).



Plate 29: The narrow corridor giving internal access between the later office block and the earlier warehouse

The warehouse had been divided into eight large compartments (Fig 2), with each room consisting of concrete floors, painted brick walls and an open ceiling that exposed the underside of the concrete floor of the first-floor. The steel I-section beams had been supported by H-section columns that were bolted to the concrete floor and to each beam using L-section angle-iron cleats (Plate 30). All the exposed steel beams and columns within this section of the building along with the earlier office/warehouse block had 'Dorman Long & Co Ltd Middlesbrough England' roll stamped; the roll stamps were visible on the webs (Plate 31).



Plate 30: General view of the north-western end of the warehouse



Plate 31: The rolling stamp of Dorman Long on the steel beams and columns used in the construction of the warehouse and attached office/warehouse block

The four compartments on the north-eastern end of the building had all been used as loading-bay docks. Each had a concrete dock pit floor with brick and steel dock walls (Plate 32). The bays had been separated from the room to the south-west by a modern concrete block wall which had been partially been demolished at the north-western end (Plate 33).



Plate 32: The loading-bay at the north-western end of the warehouse



Plate 33: The partition wall between the loading-bay and the storage area to the south-west

The three rooms to the south-west of the warehouse were open plan with concrete floors, painted brick walls, and exposed I-section steel beams. Each of the beams had been supported by a row of H-section columns that were bolted to the concrete floor and to each beam using L-section angle-iron cleats (Plate 30 and 34).



Plate 34: General view of the central compartment within the warehouse

Each of these rooms had been further extended to the south-west with the addition of a single-storey extension (Fig 2). The rear wall of the original building had been partially demolished, with a steel H-section beam supporting the first-floor above. A pitched steel framed roof had been fitted with clear paned, glass sky-lights (Plate 35).

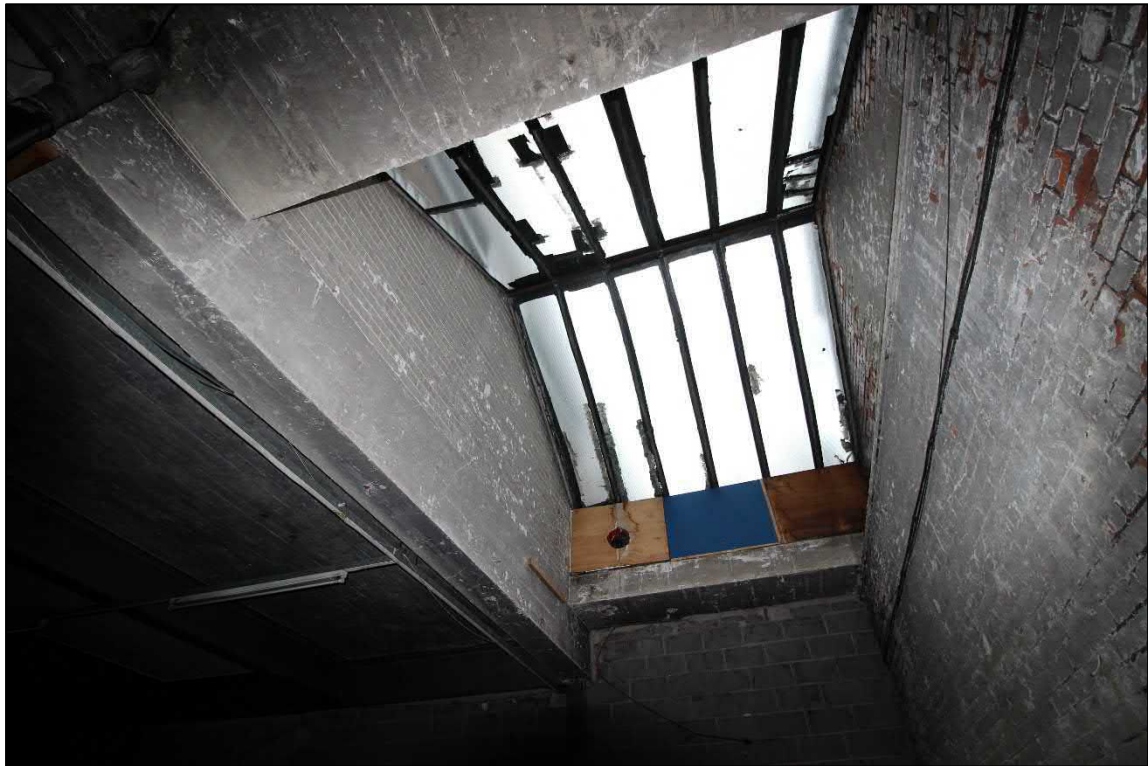


Plate 35: Detail of the skylights at the south-western end of the warehouse

The south-eastern compartment was a large open plan room, with no partition wall between the loading bay and the and the storage area to the south-west (Plate 36; Fig 2). The area comprised a concrete floor, painted brick walls and an open ceiling that exposed the rivetted steel ceiling beams (Plate 36). This section was the ground-floor of the office/warehouse block, and does seem to have originally been intended as storage space with offices on the first-floor.



Plate 36: General view of the south-east compartment within the warehouse

The south-eastern wall contained two large doorways comprising squared reveals, steel lintels and concrete thresholds. The south-western opening had a modern roller shutter door while the north-eastern opening had been blocked using plywood (Plate 37). At the centre of each of the piers between the doorways was a narrow window comprising recessed brick reveals, sills, and lintels. The openings had been blocked internally using plywood (Plate 37).

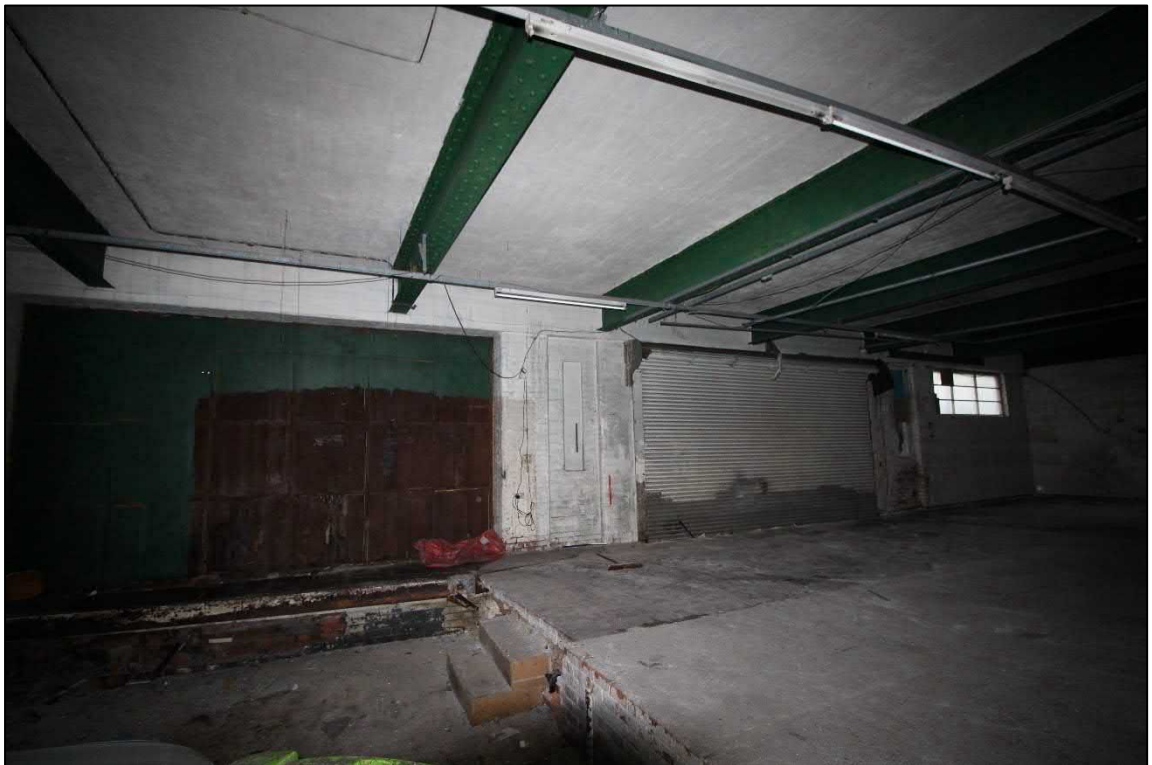


Plate 37: The south-western wall, detailing the two blocked doorways

A narrow L-shaped corridor had been constructed with concrete block walls had been situated at the south-western end of the room (Plate 38; Fig 2). The southern stairwell was situated at the southern end of the corridor and provided access to the basement and the first floor.

This stairwell was one of three stairwells that gave access to the first-floor and basement (Fig 2). The walls consisted of painted brick with concrete landings to each of the floors. The steel closed stringer staircase had mesh steel treads with open risers and a hollow steel tube handrail that was supported by steel balusters (Plate 39). The stairwell had a single round skylight and a single window aperture within the north-western wall, providing the only means of light into the stairwell. The skylight and the window had been glazed in clear glass panes (Plate 40).

The central staircase had been inserted during the later 20th-century after the concrete floor of the first-floor had been cut. This was a simple steel closed stringer staircase had steel plate treads with open risers. The rectangular shaped steel handrail was supported by hollow square box section balusters (Plate 41).

The third stairwell was situated to the northern end of the warehouse building (Fig 2). The concrete risers and treads had been built into the walls of the stairwell with a simple half-round steel handrail and round steel balusters (Plate 42). The walls to stairwell had a double cream tiled dado with the lower fill having cream coloured square tiles while the upper fill was of plaster (Plate 42). Orange coloured square tiles with black tile borders had been laid on each of the landings (Plate 42).

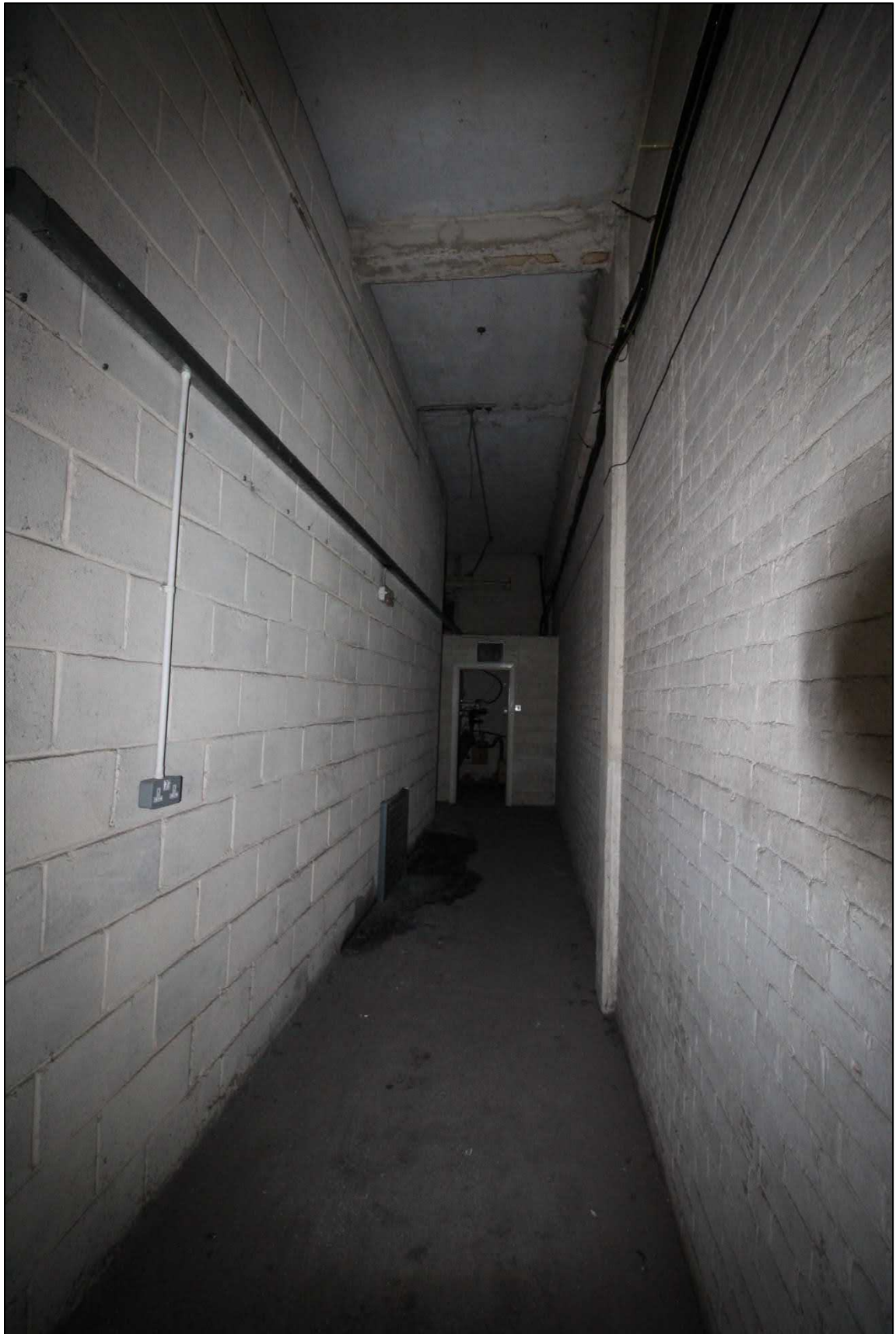


Plate 38: The narrow corridor at the south-western end of the ground-floor



Plate 39: The southern staircase



Plate 40: Detail of the round skylight and the single window within the southern stairwell



Plate 41: The central steel staircase

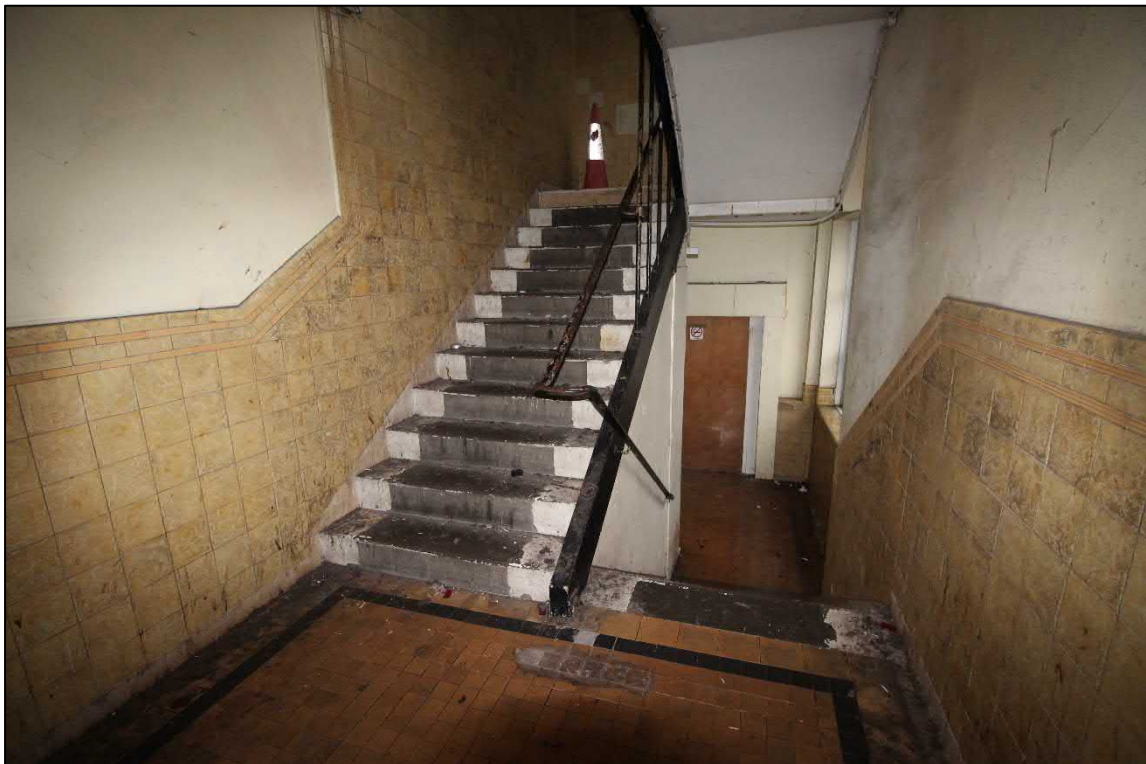


Plate 42: The northern staircase

The first-floor:

The first floor had also been heavily altered and divided into multiple compartments (Fig 3). The general plan of this floor mirrored the ground-floor below, with a long brick-built warehouse to the south-east with a later building constructed to the north.

The earlier office/warehouse block had been divided into five compartments, with four having been created during the late-20th century. At the northern end were two modern toilets that had been built using concrete block walls, a painted concrete floor and a false suspended ceiling. All sanitaryware was late-20th century in date.

The southern room was a large L-shaped open planned room the with a painted concrete floor, painted brick walls and an open ceiling with exposed concrete rendered steel beams. A row of concrete rendered steel columns supported the beams at the north-western end of the room (Plate 43). The L-section angle-iron fan roof trusses of the warehouse had been seen at the northern end of the room (Plate 44).



Plate 43: The first-floor of the office/warehouse block



Plate 44: The northern end of the office showing the exposed fan trusses of the warehouse

The warehouse had been divided into eight compartments, with six having been constructed during the late-20th century. Four compartments comprised timber framed panelled walls with false suspended ceilings and carpeted floors and had been used as offices (Plate 45).



Plate 45: One of the modern offices created at the south-eastern end of the warehouse

The landing of the southern staircase gave access to a narrow corridor running between the warehouse and office block (Fig 3). This corridor had modern concrete block walls, a concrete floor with a high open ceiling (Plate 46). At the northern end was the original lift tower. This had squared reveals with a concrete lintel and a modern galvanised concertina door occupied the opening (Plate 47).



Plate 46: The corridor within southern staircase first-floor landing



Plate 47: The lift tower at the northern end of the southern corridor

The southern compartment of the warehouse consisted of a painted concrete floor, exposed brick walls and an open ceiling (Plate 48). This exposed the L-section angle-iron fan roof trusses with each truss having been supported by large steel I-section steel beams. Two rows of H-section columns had been bolted to the beams and the floor using L-section angle-iron cleats (Plate 48).



Plate 48: General view of the southern compartment on the first-floor of the warehouse

At the centre of the north-eastern wall was a loading-bay door that had been flanked by a bank of horizontal window apertures. The doorway had bullnose brick reveals with a flush concrete lintel. Two replacement plywood doors with modern door furniture had been hung within the opening (Plate 49). Two fixed light timber framed transom windows had been fitted directly above the top rail of the doorframe (Plate 49).

The windows that flanked the loading-bay had flush concrete lintels, flat brick sills with bullnose reveals. These housed modern uPVC casement windows that had been glazed in clear glass panes (Plate 49).



Plate 49: The north-eastern wall of the warehouse

The northern room was of a similar layout to that of the central compartment. This consisted of a largely open plan rooms of three-bays wide, with a painted concrete floor, painted brick walls and an open ceiling (Plate 50). This exposed the L-section angle-iron fan roof trusses with each truss having been supported by large steel I-section steel beams. Two rows of H-section columns had been bolted to the beams and the floor using L-section angle-iron cleats (Plate 50). The dividing wall between the two large compartments was of modern concrete blocks.



Plate 50: General view of the northern compartment on the first-floor of the warehouse

The north-eastern wall contained a loading-bay door to the north-western end that had been flanked by a bank of horizontal window apertures. The doorway had bullnose brick reveals with a flush concrete lintel. Two replaced plywood doors with modern door furniture had been situated within the opening (Plate 51). The transom light above the doorway was blocked using plywood (Plate 51). The windows that flanked the loading-bay had flush concrete lintels, flat brick sills with bullnose reveals. These housed modern uPVC casement windows that had been glazed in clear glass panes (Plate 51).



Plate 51: The north-eastern wall of the warehouse

The north-western wall contained three doorways leading to leading to a set of toilets at the south-western end, a lobby area for the central lift and a set of modern constructed offices at the north-eastern end (Fig 3). The doorway leading into the toilets and the offices had simple rectangular architraves with brick lintels, while the central doorway had been inserted into a modern timber partition wall (Plate 52 and 53).



Plate 52: The doorway leading into the toilets within the north-western wall



Plate 53: The doorway and partition wall of the northern lift lobby

The toilets comprised painted concrete floors, plaster rendered walls and a suspended ceiling that contained a timber framed skylight. Two cubicles with modern sanitaryware had been situated to the south-western end of the room and had been divided by a timber framed partition wall.

The lobby had been formed using plywood and timber framing, but originally had been unrestricted. The lift shaft was constructed in brick with the doorway situated at the centre of the south-eastern wall. This consisted of bullnose brick reveals with a concrete lintel and had retained the original timber door (Plate 54). No access was gained into the lift. A small doorway was situated at ceiling height within the south-western end of the shaft. This gave access into a small room that had contained the lift winding gear. The doorway had bullnose brick reveals, a flush concrete lintel and threshold. A timber ledge and braced door was housed within the opening (Plate 55).



Plate 54: The lift doorway on the south-eastern wall of the lift shaft



Plate 55: The doorway leading to the small room containing the lift winding gear

The modern constructed offices at the north-eastern end consisted of timber framed partition walls, a concrete floor that had been covered in modern timber laminate flooring and a false suspended ceiling (Plate 56). The north-eastern wall of the north-eastern office had contained a bank of four-horizontal uPVC casement windows. These had been housed in aperture that consisted of a concrete lintel and brick sill that had been obscured by tongue and groove timber boards that had recently been attached to the brick wall (Plate 57).



Plate 56: The central office at the north-western end of the warehouse



Plate 57: The north-eastern wall of the warehouse, detailing the altered windows

The north-western wall to each office gave access into a small narrow corridor that had been built after the front office block had been constructed (Fig 3). This had a timber panelled suspended ceiling, plywood clad walls and a painted concrete floor. The north-western wall of was the original gable of the warehouse which had been obscured by the cladding on the wall (Plate 58).



Plate 58: The northern corridor at the north-western end of the warehouse

Internal access into the later office block on the first floor was gained by narrow corridor at the north-eastern end of the building (Fig 3). This comprised a painted concrete floor, painted brick walls and a concrete suspended ceiling (Plate 59). The bank of horizontal windows had continued from the warehouse on the north-eastern wall. These had also comprised bullnose brick reveals with flush concrete sills and lintels.

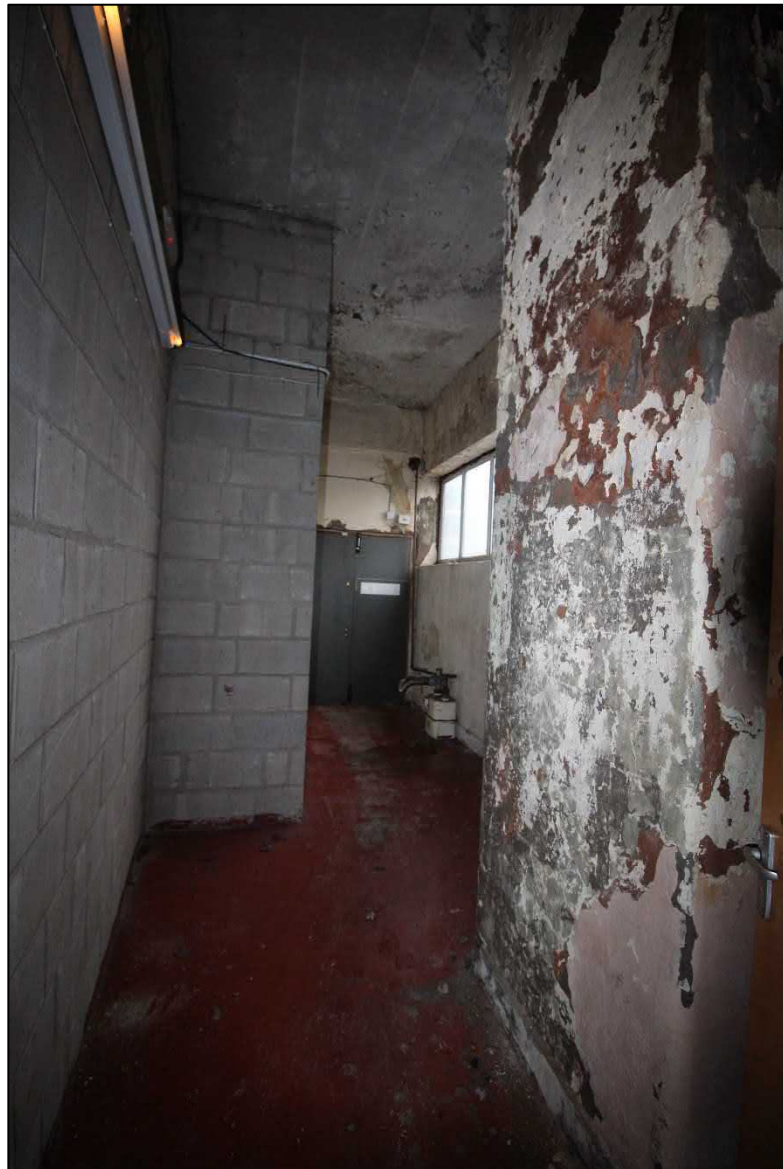


Plate 59: The north-eastern corridor giving access into the later office block

At the northern end of the corridor was a circular stairwell which gave access into a small attic space. The stairwell had concrete rendered walls with white tiles on the external face (Plate 60). Internally, a small cast-iron spiral staircase with mesh treads and open risers had been situated at the centre of the stairwell (Plate 61). At the top of the stairs were two rooms containing the lift winding gear (Plate 62). Each room had painted brick walls, concrete floors and suspended concrete ceilings (Plate 62).



Plate 60: The round stair tower at the northern end of the corridor



Plate 61: The spiral staircase leading to the roof space of the later office block



Plate 62: The lift winding gear room

The office block had been divided into nine compartments with six of the rooms having been built using timber framed and concrete block walls. The main central room of this level was open plan, consisting of a painted concrete floor, painted brick walls and a suspended ceiling. The ceiling had been supported by concrete rendered beams and a single row concrete rendered columns (Plate 63). The tall vertical windows on the north-western and western walls had bullnose reveals with a three-light uPVC window housed within the openings (Plate 64).

The main room had been accessed vertically by two stairwells situated to at the southern end of the level. Each had mesh steel treads with open riser stairs that had been built into the stairwell walls (Plate 65). The first-floor landing of the central of the two had also contained a blocked doorway that had originally given access into the northern end of the warehouse. This had bullnose brick reveals, a flush chamfered-edge concrete lintel and had been blocked using modern concrete blocks (Plate 66).



Plate 63: General view of the central room of the later office block



Plate 64: The north-western wall of the later office block



Plate 65: The southern stairwell of the later office block



Plate 66: The doorway within the central stairwell originally giving access into the first-floor of the warehouse

The basement:

Basements had been constructed under each of the buildings and were contemporary with the two phases of early and mid-century construction. The warehouse and first office/warehouse block basement utilised Dorman Long steel while the later office block used Appleby-Frodingham Steel. The basement of the warehouse was accessed via a concrete ramp at the south-eastern end of the ground floor (Fig 3). The large doorway at the bottom of the slope had a modern galvanised steel roller shutter door (Plate 67). This section of the basement had been divided into eight compartments with two large rooms to the north-western end and five rooms to the south-eastern end (Fig 4).



Plate 67: The doorway leading into the warehouse basement

Each of the small rooms had recently been used as offices, comprised of timber-framed partition walls, concrete floors, and suspended ceilings, with the northern room having a false suspended ceiling (Plate 68). The original ceiling had been supported by steel beams and columns that had recently been boxed in using plasterboard (Plate 68). The north-eastern wall was built using concrete blocks and had served as the dividing wall between the room and a narrow corridor, which provided access into the large north-western room of the basement.



Plate 68: One of the northern offices within the basement of the office/warehouse block

The large south-eastern room was open plan, comprising four-bays north-east/south-west by three-bays north-west/south-east. It had a concrete floor, painted brick walls and an open ceiling, revealing the underside of the ground-floor floor. This steel I-section beams and columns had been boxed in using plasterboard (Plate 69).



Plate 69: General view of the south-eastern room



Plate 70: The doorways of the kitchen and toilets

At the north-western end of the room were two rooms that had latterly been in use as a kitchen and a set of toilets. Entry into each room was gained through doorways that consisted of simple rectangular architraves with flush timber doors within the openings (Plate 70). The toilets had timber framed partition walls with false suspended ceilings and contained modern sanitaryware. The kitchen consisted of a suspended plasterboard ceiling, painted brick walls and a painted concrete floor. The room had retained some of the modern kitchen units and sink at the eastern corner (Plate 71).



Plate 71: The kitchen at the north-west end of the south-eastern compartment of the basement

The concrete floor and open ceiling continued into a long narrow corridor to the north-eastern end of the room. At the north-western end of the corridor was a bullnose brick reveal doorway that gave entry into a small room, which had been used as the electrical room (Plate 72). A second doorway had been inserted into the concrete block wall which gave access into the north-western room (Fig 4).

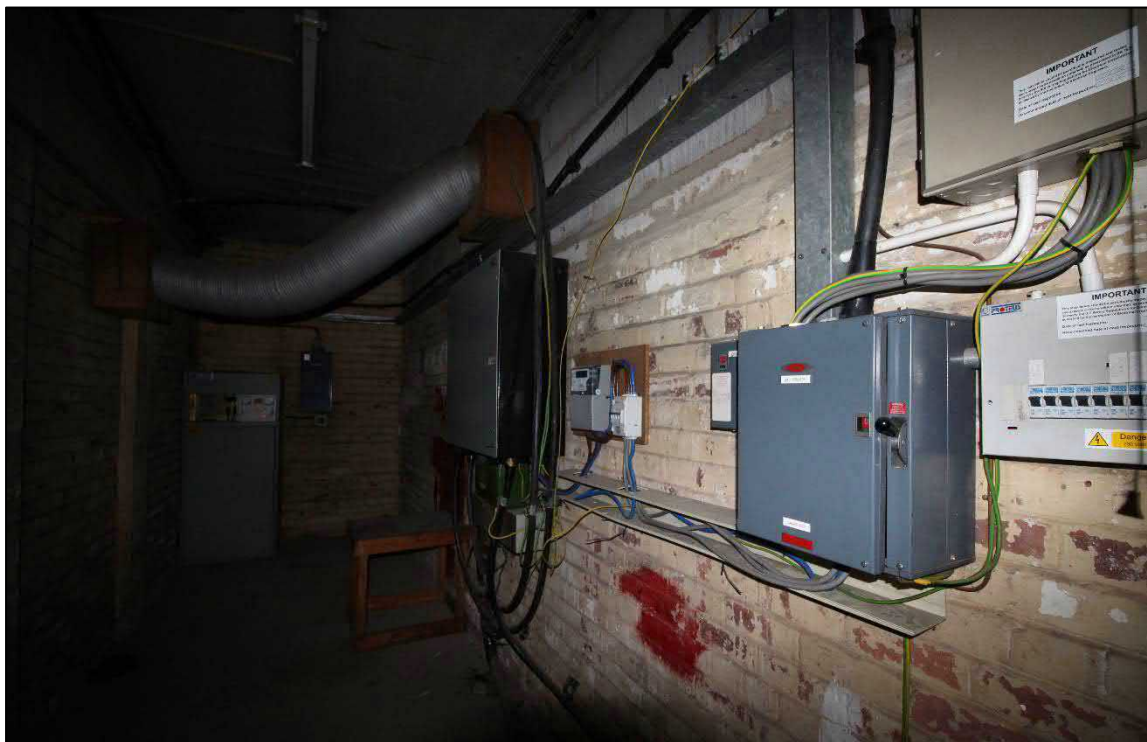


Plate 72: The electrical room at the north-east end of the corridor

This room had until recently been open plan. A modern (MDF) timber-walled division had been built at the western corner of the room. Excepting this modern addition, the room was of three-bays north-east/south-west by three-bays north-west/south-east. It had a concrete floor, painted brick walls and an open ceiling, exposing the underside of the ground-floor floor. The steel I-section beams and columns were boxed in with plasterboard (Plate 73).



Plate 73: General view of the north-western room

The north-western wall of the room contained a single doorway that gave entry into a small corridor providing internal access between the warehouse and office block basements (Fig 4; Plate 74). This corridor had a single room situated to the south-west, which had been converted into a modern privy. The room had painted plasterboard walls, a false suspended ceiling, and a tile floor (Plate 75). Three small windows had been inserted into the south-western wall with the central window containing a galvanised steel air duct (Plate 75).



Plate 74: The doorway leading to the linking corridor between the buildings



Plate 75: The modern privy constructed within the room located south-west of the corridor

Entry into the stairwell at the north-eastern end of the corridor was gained doorway with bullnose brick reveals and a flush concrete lintel. The opening had recently been blocked. The closed stringer staircase (with mesh steel treads and open risers) was however visible through an aperture in the blocking. As described above, a hollow steel tube handrail that was supported but steel balusters had been bolted to the stringers (Plate 76).



Plate 76: The blocked entrance into the north-eastern staircase

The basement of the office block had been constructed using Appleby-Frodingham Steel, which is consistent with the upper-floors. During the late-20th century some of the ceiling beams had been replaced with Skinningrove Steel (Plate 78).

The building had been divided into 15 compartments, with eight compartments having been created recently using timber framed partition walls (Fig 4). Each of the rooms consisted of concrete floors, painted brick walls and open ceilings. The steel ceiling beams, and columns had been boxed in using plasterboard (Plate 77). The windows within the south-west and western walls comprised bullnose brick reveals, and sills with flush concrete lintels. These housed a small six-light, steel-framed window, glazed with 'obscure' – offering reduced visibility – glass panes (Plate 79).



Plate 77: General view of the central room of the office block basement



Plate 78: The rolling stamp of Skinningrove on the steel beams used in the later office block



Plate 79: The windows within the south-west wall

At the northern end of the basement was a small kitchen with a detached toilet to the north. The kitchen consisted of white tiled walls, a concrete floor, and a suspended ceiling. The kitchen units and sink are of late-20th century (Plate 80). A single window with bullnose brick reveals, and sill and a flush concrete lintel had been situated within the western wall. A six-light steel framed window glazed in obscure glass panes had been housed within the opening (Plate 80).

The toilet had painted brick walls, a concrete floor and an open ceiling that exposed the boxed in steel beams. Two cubicles with modern sanitaryware had been built at the northern end of the room (Plate 81).



Plate 80: The kitchen at the northern end of the basement



Plate 81: The toilet at the northern end of the basement

At the north-eastern end of the basement was a narrow corridor which gave access into two further toilets and the basement landing of the northern staircase (Fig 4). The corridor had a concrete floor, an open ceiling and plaster rendered walls (Plate 82). Two central doorways with squared reveals and flush lintels had been situated within the corridor. The doors on the southern doorway had been removed, whilst northern doorway contained two timber doors; each leaf was fitted with modern door furniture (Plate 82 and 83).



Plate 80: The north-east corridor of the basement



Plate 83: The north-west doorway of the corridor

The toilets to the south of the corridor had painted ceilings, tiled walls and tiled floors, and were fitted with modern sanitaryware. A single window with bullnose brick reveals, and sill and a flush concrete lintel had been situated within the western walls. A six-light steel framed window glazed in obscure glass panes had been housed within the opening.

The walls of the basement landing within the northern stairwell had a double, cream-coloured tiled dado; the lower fill contained cream-coloured square tiles, whilst the upper fill was of plaster (Plate 84). As with the landings on the upper floors, this landing had orange-coloured square tiles with a border of black tiles. The concrete risers and treads of the stairs had been built into the walls of the stairwell with a simple half-round steel handrail and round steel balusters.



Plate 84: The basement landing of the northern stairwell

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The archaeological investigation of Swan House has provided a worthwhile opportunity to record an early- to mid-twentieth century warehouse with an attached office/warehouse block mid-century office extension. This has served to mitigate any loss of historic fabric sustained during the redevelopment of the site. It has also enabled a review of the available documentary material. Where possible this has been used alongside the physical evidence to reconstruct a detailed narrative of the building's development.

5.2 Swan House

The evidence available suggests that the building was erected in early- to mid-20th century as a purpose-built warehouse and office block after the demolition of the converted mill buildings and adjoining properties. The site had a long history of use. A number of warehouses are known to have preceded Swan House. These were used for the storage for fruit and potatoes amongst other consumables. Other commercial properties to the rear of the Rising Sun public house had also served as stores for hay and straw, a reminder that horses continued to play an important role in the city as a means of traction and transport well into the twentieth century.



Plate 85: Recent aerial photograph of the site showing the three components of the building, looking north

Three elements to the warehouse complex were discernible during the survey (Plate 85). The main building had been constructed between 1932 and 1948 and had two parts, mainly containing open plan warehouse space. It was of red brick construction, utilising steelwork from Dorman Long & Co Ltd. Where the steelwork had been exposed, the roll stamp 'Dorman Long & Co Ltd Middlesbrough England' was visible on the web (Plate 86). Dorman Long was founded in 1875 in Middlesbrough and had a long and prestigious history. Expansion of the company throughout the 1920s saw it produce steelwork for several iconic landmarks, not least of all Sydney Harbour Bridge, which was completed in 1932. It operated under the name 'Dorman Long & Co Ltd' until 1951, when it was nationalised under the Iron and Steel Act, becoming part of the Iron and Steel Corporation of Great Britain. As such the beams could have been produced up to 1951, which neatly coincides with the first suspected phase of the construction c. 1932 – 1948.



Plate 86: Detail of the roll stamp 'Dorman Long & Co Ltd Middlesbrough England'

A later extension to the north-west (Plate 85) was built as an office block and was extant before 1948. It was largely built in red brick with concrete floors and used Appleby-Frodingham steel. The beams had 'Appelby-Frodingham Iron & Steel Co. Ltd, England' rolling stamps on the web. The Appleby-Frodingham Steel Co came into existence in 1912 with the takeover of Appelby Iron Co by the Frodingham Iron Co. This joint venture lasted six years until in 1918 the company was amalgamated with the United Steel Companies. As a branch company, however, it continued to produce steelwork under its own name. By 1961, the Appleby-Frodingham Steel Co was one of nine listed companies that made up the United Steel Companies Group. By 1967 this group had been nationalised as part of British Steel. It is therefore only possible to assign a broad date range for the production beams used in the northern extension, 1912-1967, although it seems likely they were installed in either the 1930s or '40s.



Plate 87: Detail of the roll stamp 'Appelby-Frodingham Iron & Steel Co. Ltd, England'

Several ceiling beams within the basement of this later building had been replaced using Skinninggrove Steel, which had a 'British Steel' rolling stamp. The Skinninggrove Iron Co was nationalised in 1951. This reinforces the notion that the building was established some time before 1948, as the structure underwent this alteration or repair. Based on the understanding that Skinninggrove ceased to be an independent company in 1951, the steel was probably produced before nationalisation and whilst it may be anticipated that existing stock bearing the stamp will have been in circulation post-1951, this nevertheless suggests that the extension was completed beforehand.

Combining the Level-2 survey of the buildings' fabric with a documentary research has resulted in a comprehensive picture of the internal and external layout and construction of the building. As is evident from the external phase breaks and mapping, the building was built in several phases between 1932 and 1948. The finished build utilised certain materials (steel) that can only have been sourced before or after the Second World War, owing to the importance of steel and iron for the war effort. This narrows down probable dates for construction to 1932-5 and/or 1945-8.

5.3 *Synthesis*

Widespread construction of warehouses and offices in the New Cross and Ancoats area first occurred during the early nineteenth century in tandem with the rise of the textile industry. As Manchester's textile industry boomed so too did its demands for storing raw materials and finished products, not least of all cotton. By the late nineteenth century Manchester was at the forefront of the textile industry. During this time, its population also grew.

The commercial and industrial needs of the city and its citizens was met by a large number of warehouses. These were mainly concentrated in areas adjacent to its transport hubs and were used for storing all manner of goods. Many were given over to the storage of food products and consumables – feeding the burgeoning population. However, by the late nineteenth century the area around New Cross and Ancoats also boasted a large number of offices, stores and warehouses. The decline in certain industries – such as silk production – saw such premises converted for other uses. This was the case with Cable Street Mill, which was used into the twentieth century as warehousing and factory space.

Gradual redevelopment in the interwar and post-war eras saw further investment in the warehousing capacity along Cable Street, as evidenced by Swan House and several other large purpose-built warehouses to the south-east. By the end of the twentieth century however the premises were in decline. Swan House was eventually subdivided into multiple commercial units. During this time, it witnessed several haphazard and unsightly internal modifications. The overall deterioration of the building coupled with the increased price of land in central Manchester means its redevelopment is inevitable. As such, however, it represents a loss to the overarching history of the area, as fewer and fewer low-storey warehouses of its type or age now survive.

5.4 Conclusion

The programme of historical building recording undertaken has been undertaken to mitigate the loss incurred through redevelopment of the premises of Swan House. Early- to mid-century buildings particularly warehouses and office blocks are a diminishing resource in the city; neither their form nor proportions lend to the sympathetic conversion seen by their earlier counterparts. The growing rarity of this building type underscores the importance of this work, which in the broader context of twentieth century office development bridges the gap between the impressive late Victorian / Edwardian warehouses in the city centre, and the late office blocks in outlying areas.

Last of all, the work has demonstrated that deep basements exist throughout. The construction of the basements is likely to have eradicated any evidence of earlier buildings on the site. With this in mind, it is anticipated no further archaeological mitigation will be required in advance of the forthcoming work.

6. Archive

6.1 Archive

The results of the archaeological investigation form the basis of a full archive that has been prepared to professional standards, in accordance with current Historic England guidelines, the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and current ClfA standards and guidance for the creation, compilation, transportation and deposition of archaeological archive. The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the ClfA in that organisation's code of conduct.

The documentary and digital archive generated from the historic building investigation is currently in the possession of Salford Archaeology. A copy of this report will be submitted to the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record in digital and hard copy formats. A digital copy of the report will be publicly available on the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) website.

Sources

Maps

Map of Manchester and Salford, drawn from a survey by William Green, begun in 1787 and completed in 1794

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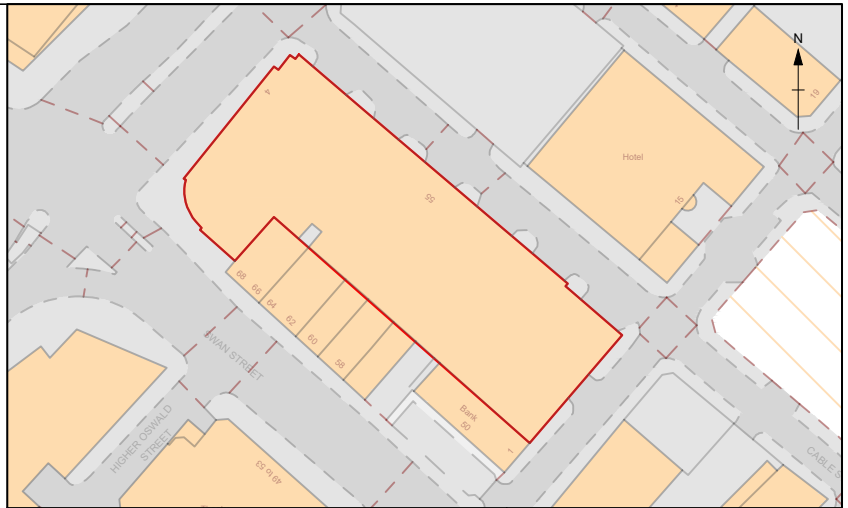
Appendix 1: Illustrations

Figure 1: Site location plan

Figure 2: Ground-floor plan

Figure 3: First-floor plan

Figure 4: Basement plan

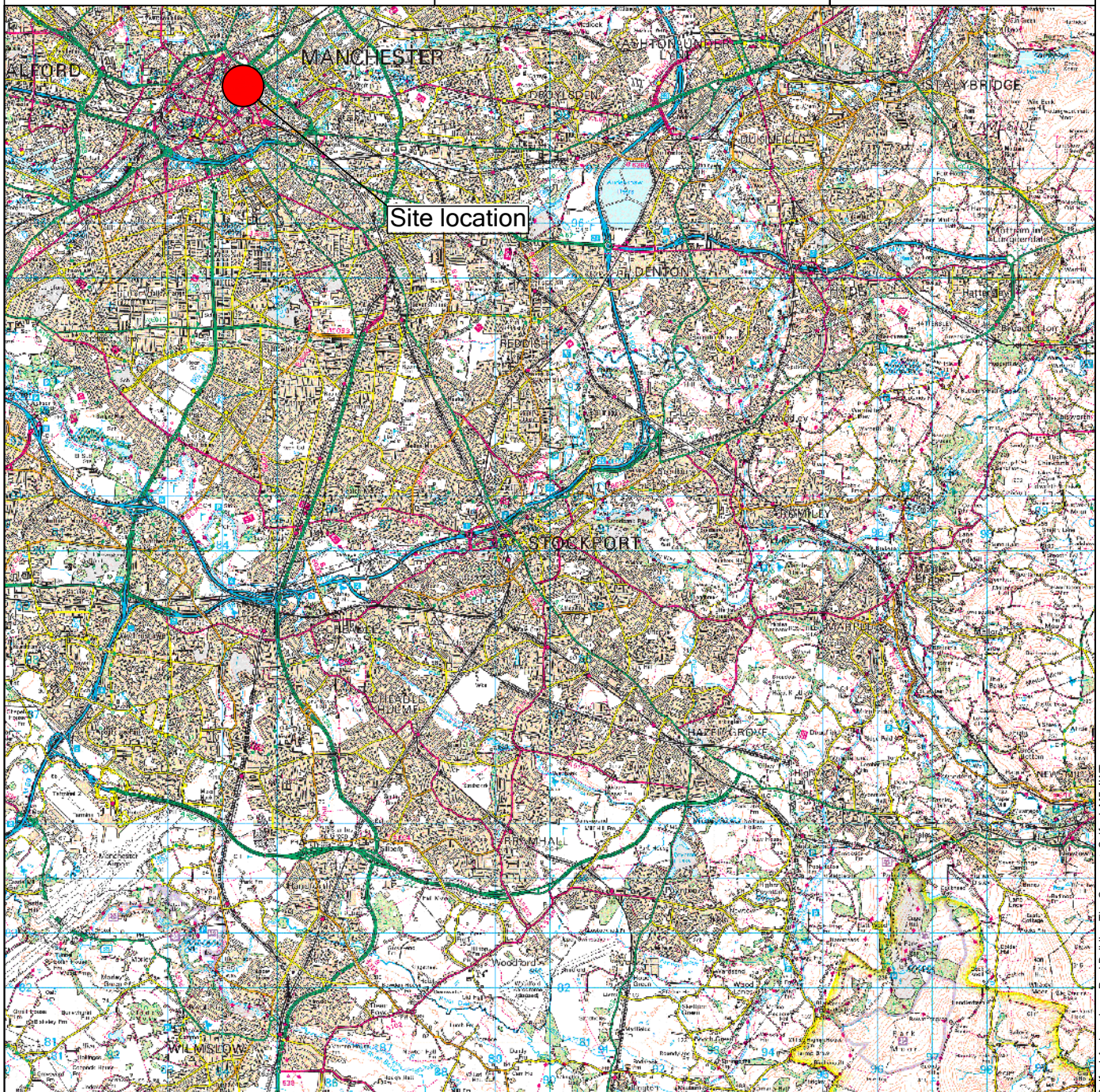


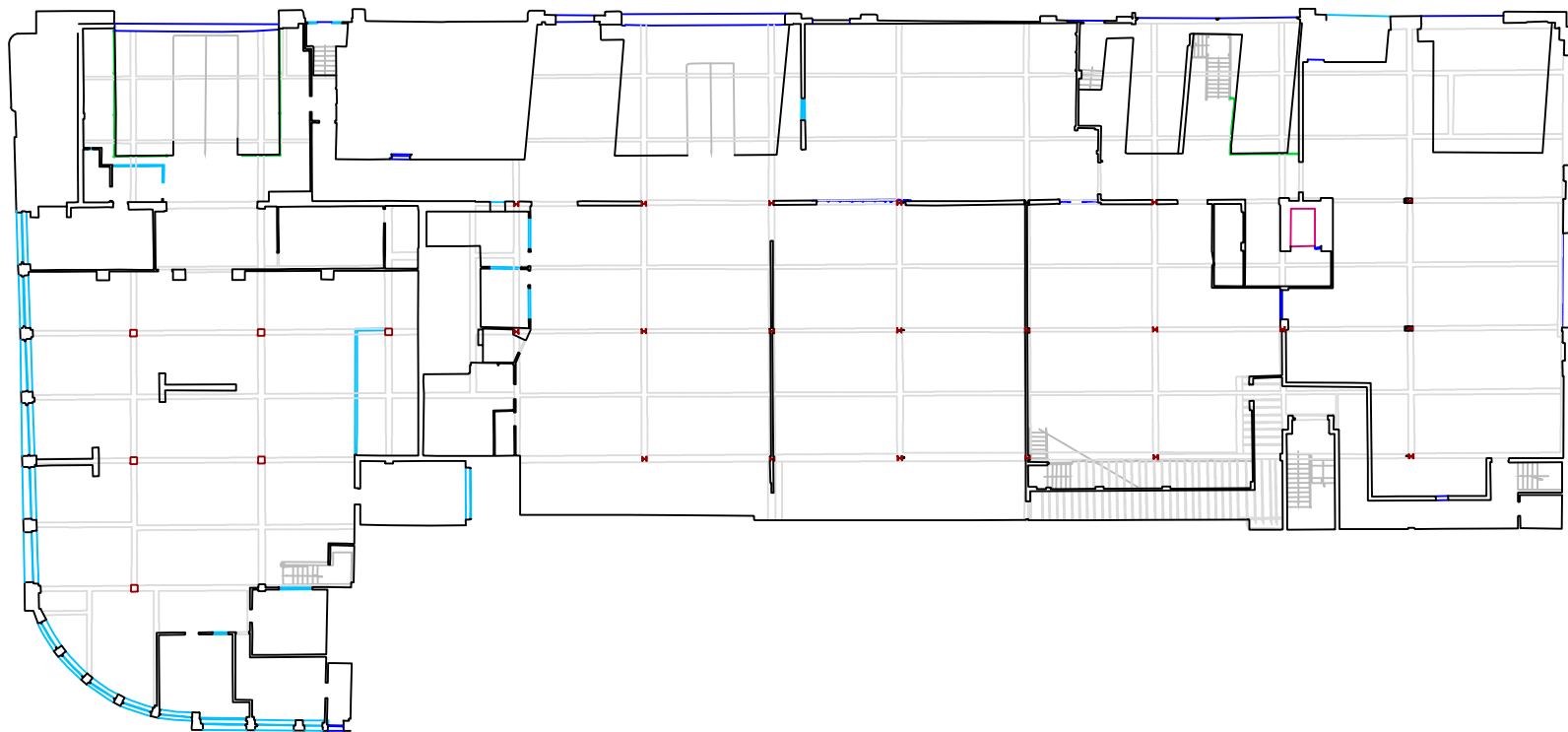
Former Swan House, Rochdale Road, Manchester

Figure 1: Site Location



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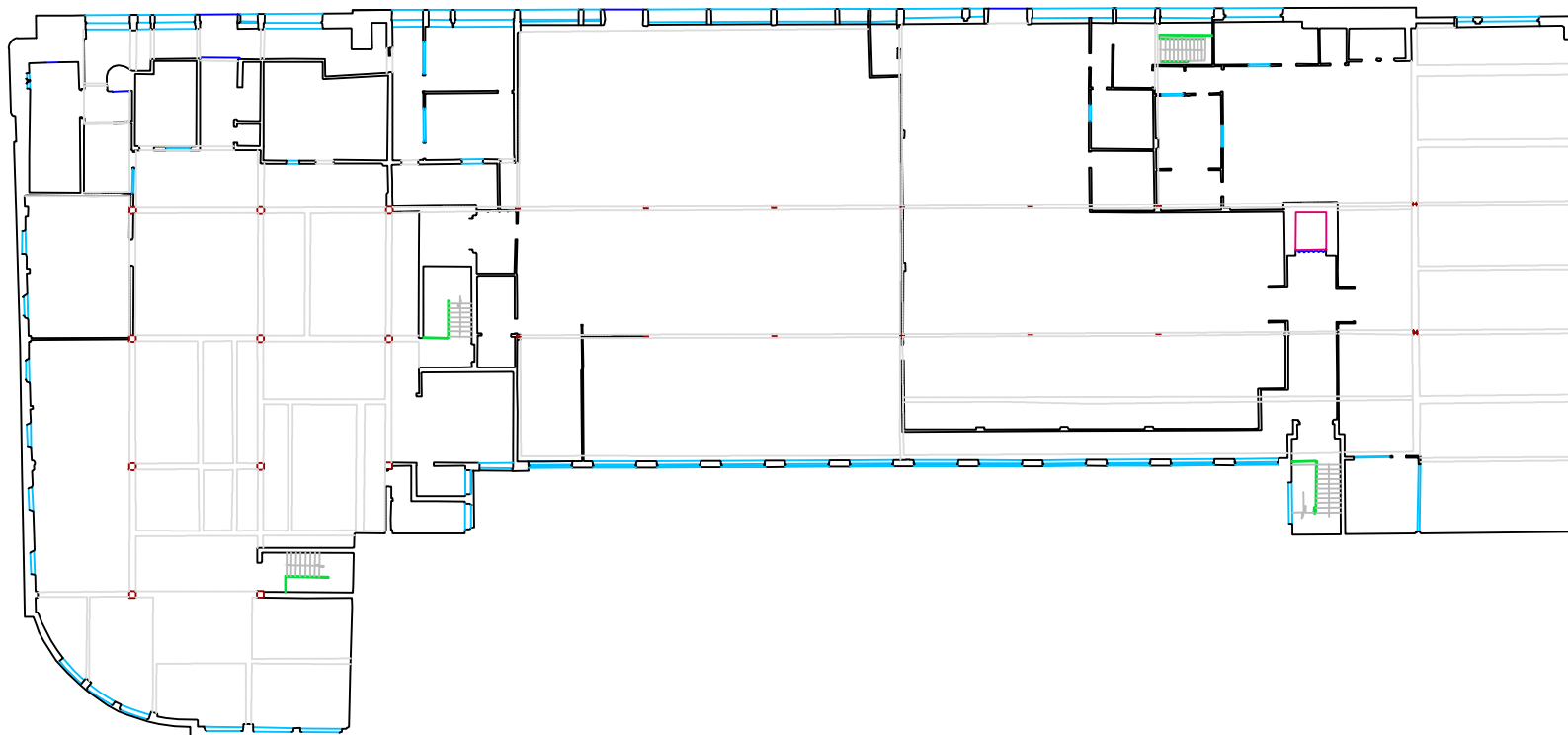
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Swan House, Manchester
Ground floor plan



Key:

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| □ External door / Blocked door | □ Lift |
| □ Column | |



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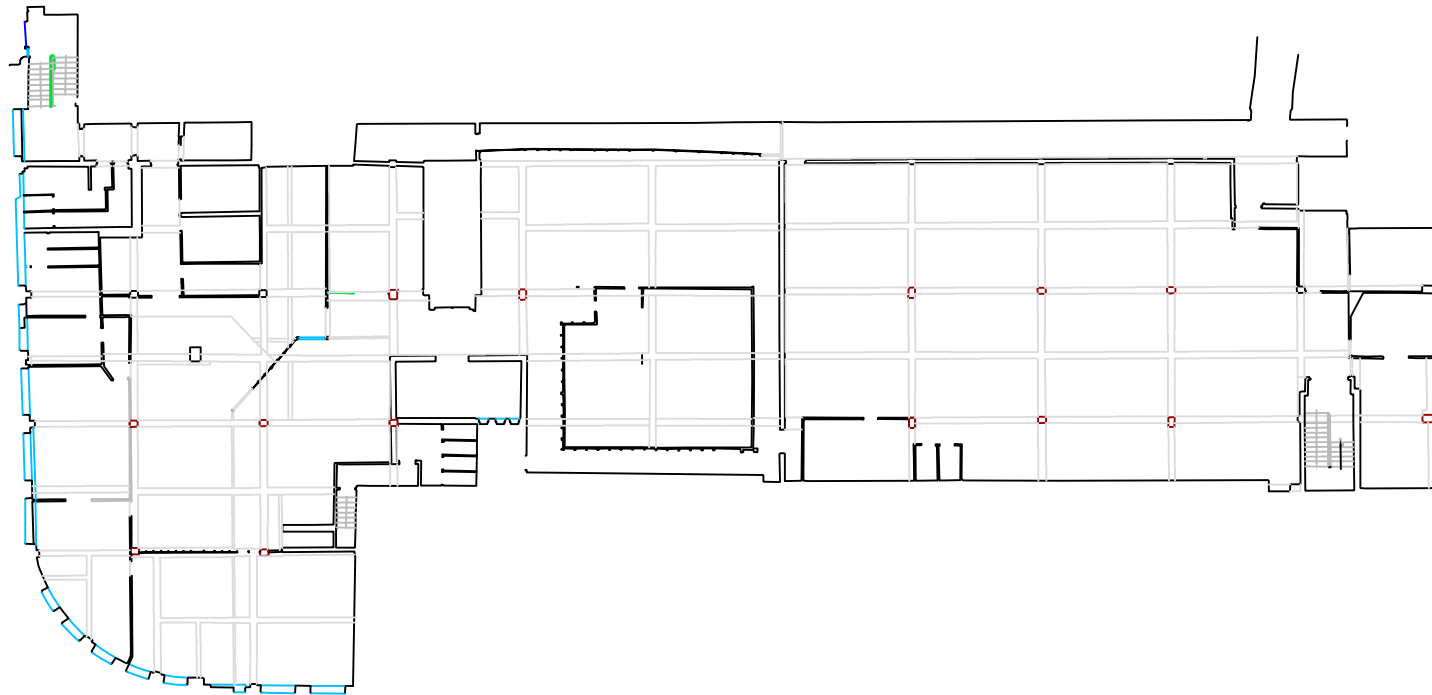
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Swan House, Manchester
First floor plan



Key:

- | | |
|--|--|
| □ Window / Sil | □ Beam |
| □ External door / Blocked door | □ Lift |
| ● Column | |



SALFORD
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0 20 m
Scale at A4 1:400

Swan House, Manchester
Basement floor plan



Key:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Window / Sil | Beam |
| External door / Blocked door | Lift |
| Column | |