

Appendix 5 Level 3 Building Recording of  
**The Food Laboratory**

Blue Bird Park  
Bromsgrove Road  
Hunnington  
Worcestershire  
B62 0JW

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Dr Peter Wardle & Colin Lacey

**Building Recording of: The Food Laboratory Blue Bird Park  
Dr Peter Wardle & Colin Lacey**

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## Version Control

Version No	Draft	Content Added/Omitted	Date
0.5	Client Draft		24/4/23
0.7	LPA Draft	Client Comments	
1	Issued Report	Oasis Ref	9/6/23
2	Issued Report	LPA Comments, HER ref	20/6/23
3	Issued Report	Historic Photos	4/8/23

Heritage Statement: The Food Laboratory Blue Bird Park  
Dr Peter Wardle & Colin Lacey

## 1. Summary

The building is vacant, and was formerly used as an industrial laboratory. It is likely that the building was constructed as a warehouse.

Current Function	Vacant
Original Function	Warehouse Food laboratory
Period	Modern
Century	20 <sup>th</sup>
Precise Date	1925-27
Architectural Style	Industrial
Architect	This building was constructed after the first phase of building and although the architect may be SN Cooke, this cannot be proven.
Materials	Brick, concrete
Designation	Not Listed
Conservation Area	None

It is dated to 1925-27 by map evidence and historic records.

The following phases of construction are present:

Phase	Period	Date	Description	How Dated
1	Original	1925-27	Original part of building	Cartographic evidence, historic photographs
2	Recent	Post 1927	Internal stud partitions	Layout, materials

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 The Building

The building is a former laboratory building –purpose-built for the Blue Bird toffee factory.

### 2.2 The Client

This report was commissioned by J Richards of Seven Capital (Halesowen) Ltd and subsequently Malvern Estates Ltd.

### 2.3 Copyright

The copyright of this report belongs to the Historic Environment Consultancy. No liability to third parties is accepted for advice and statements made in this report.

### 2.4 Location

Site Address:	Laboratory Blue Bird Park Bromsgrove Road Hunnington Worcestershire
Post Code:	B62 0JW
Grid Reference:	SO 96592 81465
Latitude and Longitude	52.431156 , -2.0515574

The general location is shown in Figure 1 and the detailed location in Figure 2.

### 2.5 Date of Recording

The building was initially visited by Dr Peter Wardle in July & October 2019. Subsequent visits were made by Dr Wardle and Colin Lacey between this point and September 2022.

### 2.6 Circumstances of The Project

The recording of the building was required as a condition of a grant of planning permission and listed building consent reference Bromsgrove Borough Council 19/00592/FUL for:

*“Part demolition and site clearance of the former Blue Bird factory site for its redevelopment to provide 116 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), consisting of both new dwellings and conversion of the Welfare and Administration buildings, along with associated landscaping; drainage; engineering; highways and access works”.*

The wording of the planning condition is as follows:

*No development shall commence until a programme of research and building recording including a Written Scheme of Investigation(s), has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:*

- a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording which will include:*
- 1. A Level 3 historic building recording (as defined by Historic England) on all pre 1980s buildings. This will include documentary research.*
  - 2. A Level 1 historic building recording (as defined by Historic England) on warehouses, dating to the 1980s.*

3. *Investigative works prior to and during construction works to recover structural information.*

b) *The programme for post investigation assessment.*

c) *Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.*

d) *Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*

e) *Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*

f) *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.*

*REASON: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

## **2.7 Location of The Archive**

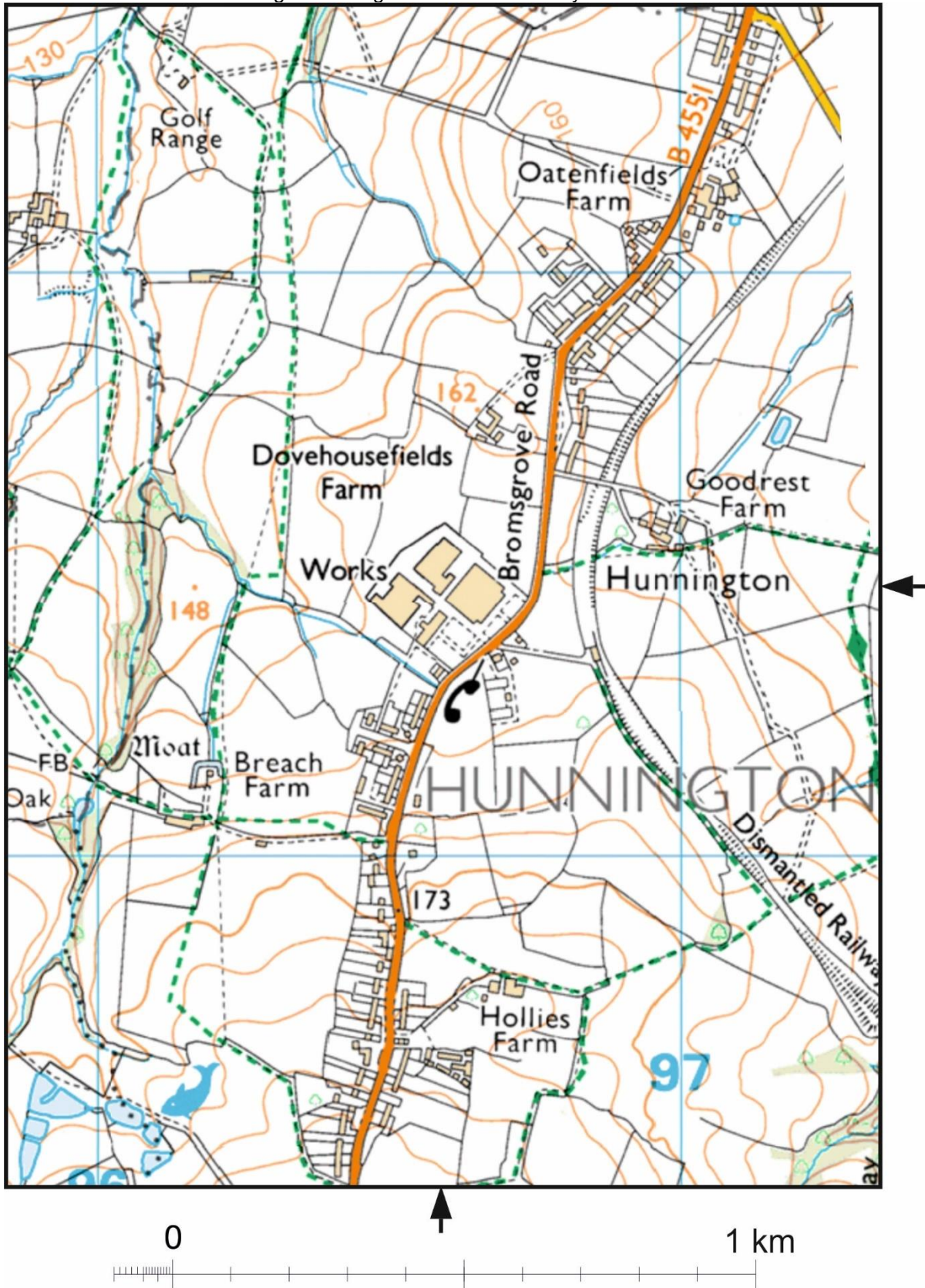
The archive of this project consists solely in the form of digital records. This report contains 667 high resolution photographs and 40 plans and elevations. The drawings are appended to the report as layered vector files. Copies of this report in pdf format therefore represents the archive.

Copies of this archive are therefore given to the Archaeology Data Service and Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Record.

## **2.8 Methodology**

The building was recorded according to the requirements set out in the English Heritage 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Recording Practice* and the method statement.

There were no difficulties experienced in the recording process.



Metres 1:10,000 @ A4

Figure 1: General Location Plan. Scale 1:10,000

Building Recording The Food Laboratory Blue Bird Park



Figure 2: Detailed Location Plan. Scale 1:2500



### 3. Historic Background

#### 3.1 Documentary Evidence

An article was published in The Midlander in February 1927. The article details the background behind the Blue Bird factory and the village of Hunnington describing the history of the Messrs Harry Vincent Ltd and Harry Vincent, himself. The article does not specifically mention this building.

A newspaper article from the Birmingham Gazette, published on the 13th May 1930, concerning the factory. The article does not specifically mention this building.

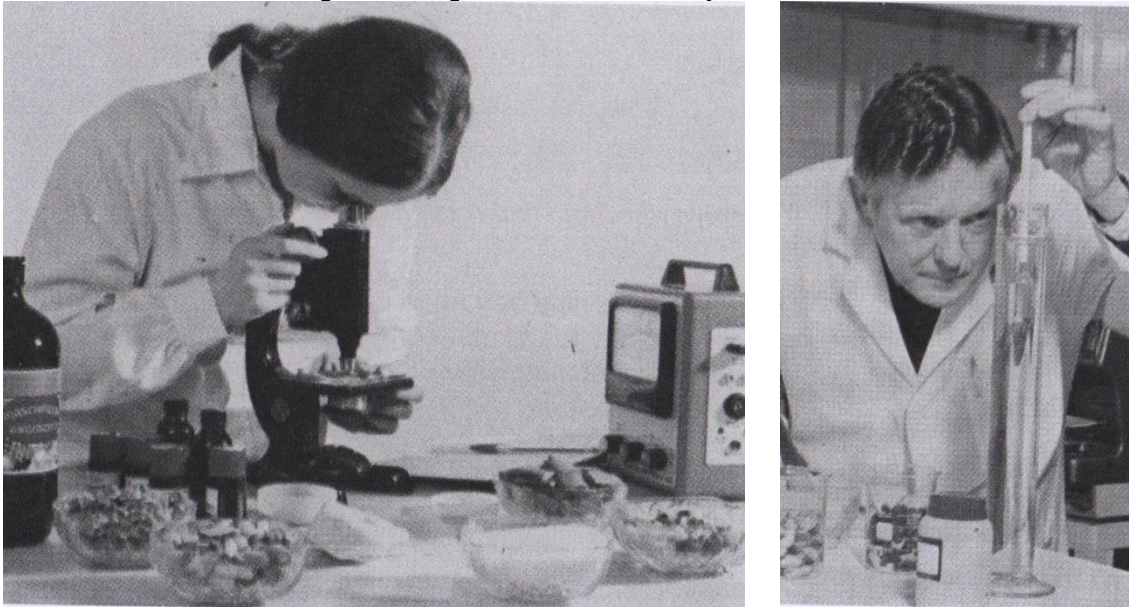
#### 3.2 Historic Photographs



**Plate 1: 1936 Air Photograph (Britain From Above)**



**Plate 2: 1948 Air Photograph (Britain From Above)**



**Plate 3: The laboratory in use in the 1930s (Cowling & Hastiloe 2022:102)**



**Plate 4: Southern aspect, 1930s photograph (Blue Bird Album, Romsley & Hunnington History Society)**

### The Building

Laboratory at former confectionery manufactory of Harry Vincent Ltd, makers of Blue Bird Toffee. It is considered likely the building was originally constructed as a warehouse, but later adapted to be used as a laboratory. Following the closure of the factory, the building was again used as a warehouse.

Current Function	Disused Industrial Laboratory .
Period	Modern
Century	20th
Precise Date	1925-1938
Architectural Style	Utilitarian
Architect	This building was constructed after the first phase of building and although the architect may be SN Cooke, this cannot be proven.
Materials	Brick, concrete
Designation	Listed Grade: Not Listed
Conservation Area	Not located within a conservation area

### 3.3 The Importance of the Building Listing Criteria

Date		For modern buildings one of the other criteria has to be clearly met.
Rarity		Industrial Buildings are a common type of historic building.
Architectural Interest		
	Architect	This building was constructed after the first phase of building and although the architect may be SN Cooke, this cannot be proven.
	Type	There is little particular interest in the building type.
	Innovation	This building does not use innovative building techniques or materials.
	Virtuosity	The building does not demonstrate a particularly high standard of craftsmanship.
	Plan Form	The plan form is not significant.
Historic Interest		This building does not illustrate important aspects of the nation's history. It is not associated with a Nationally Important person.
Group Value		There is group value with the other historic buildings.
Contribution of Setting		The building is surrounded by buildings of different dates and therefore there is no added importance from the setting.

### 3.4 Importance of The Building Understanding Heritage – Values Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

Evidential		The building dates from a period when the physical evidence of the building adds little novel information.
Historical		
	Illustrative	Low

Building Recording The Food Laboratory Blue Bird Park

		The building does not illustrate an unusual historic connection.
	Association	Low The building is not associated with a notable person, family, event, movement or cultural heritage.
Aesthetic		
	Design	The building is a utilitarian building and design is not a factor.
	Detailing & Craftsmanship	The building does not demonstrate a very high standard of craftsmanship.
	Architect	This building was constructed after the first phase of building and although the architect may be SN Cooke, this cannot be proven.
	Innovation	This building does not use innovative building techniques or materials.
Communal		Low – The building is visible from the public realm so it does have a communal value albeit a very low one.

### 3.5 Designations

The building is not listed:



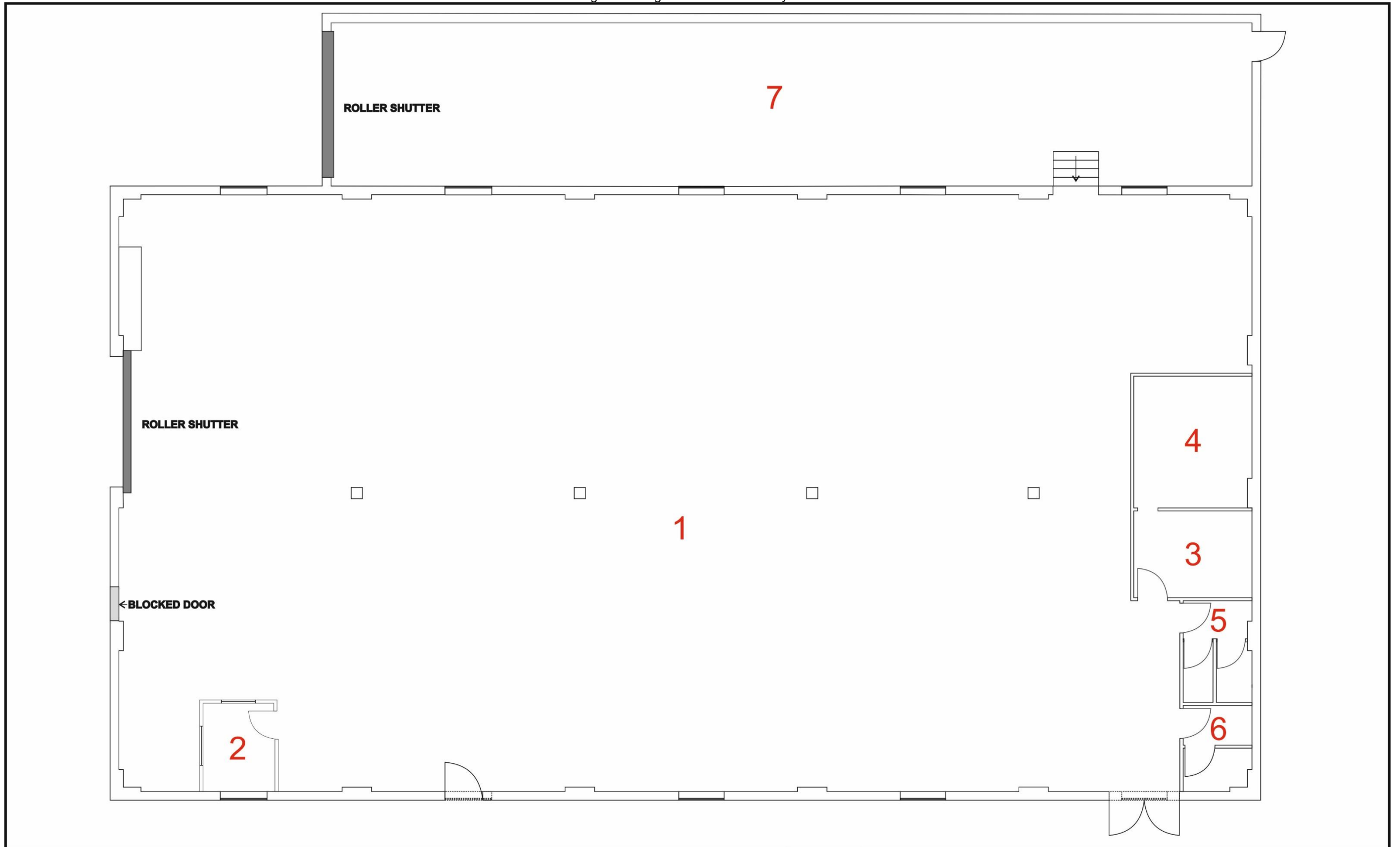
**Plate 5: The Building**



**Plate 6: The Building**

### **3.6 The Layout of The Building**

The layout of the building is shown in the following plans:



**Blue Bird Park**  
Former Laboratory Building

Figure 3: Floor plan, 1:100 @ A3



N

Scale @A3 1:100



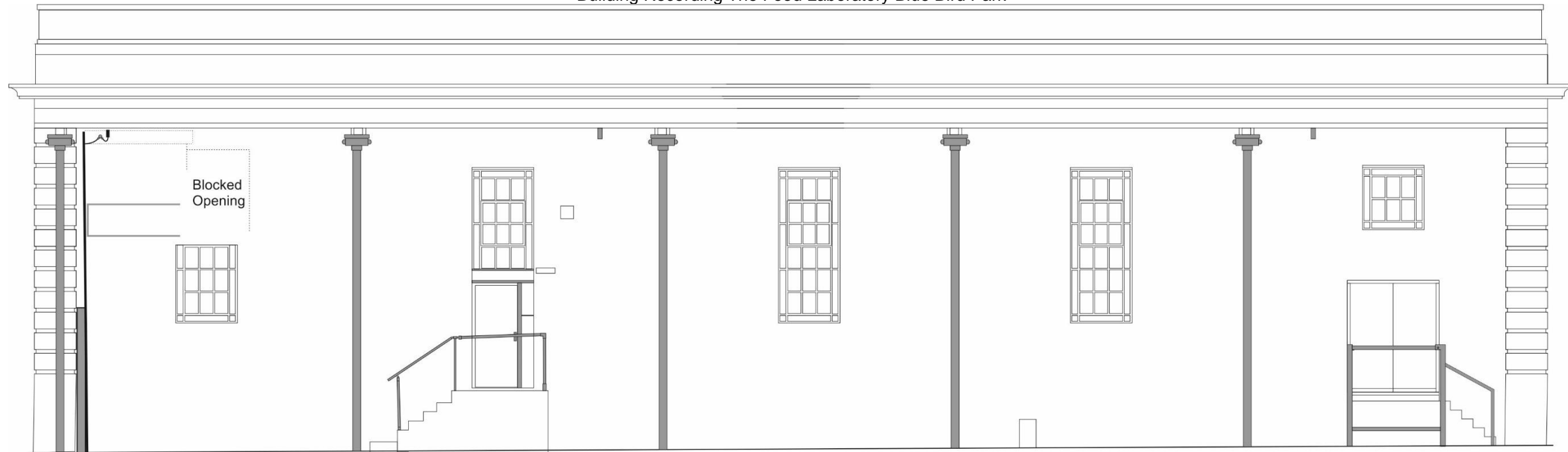
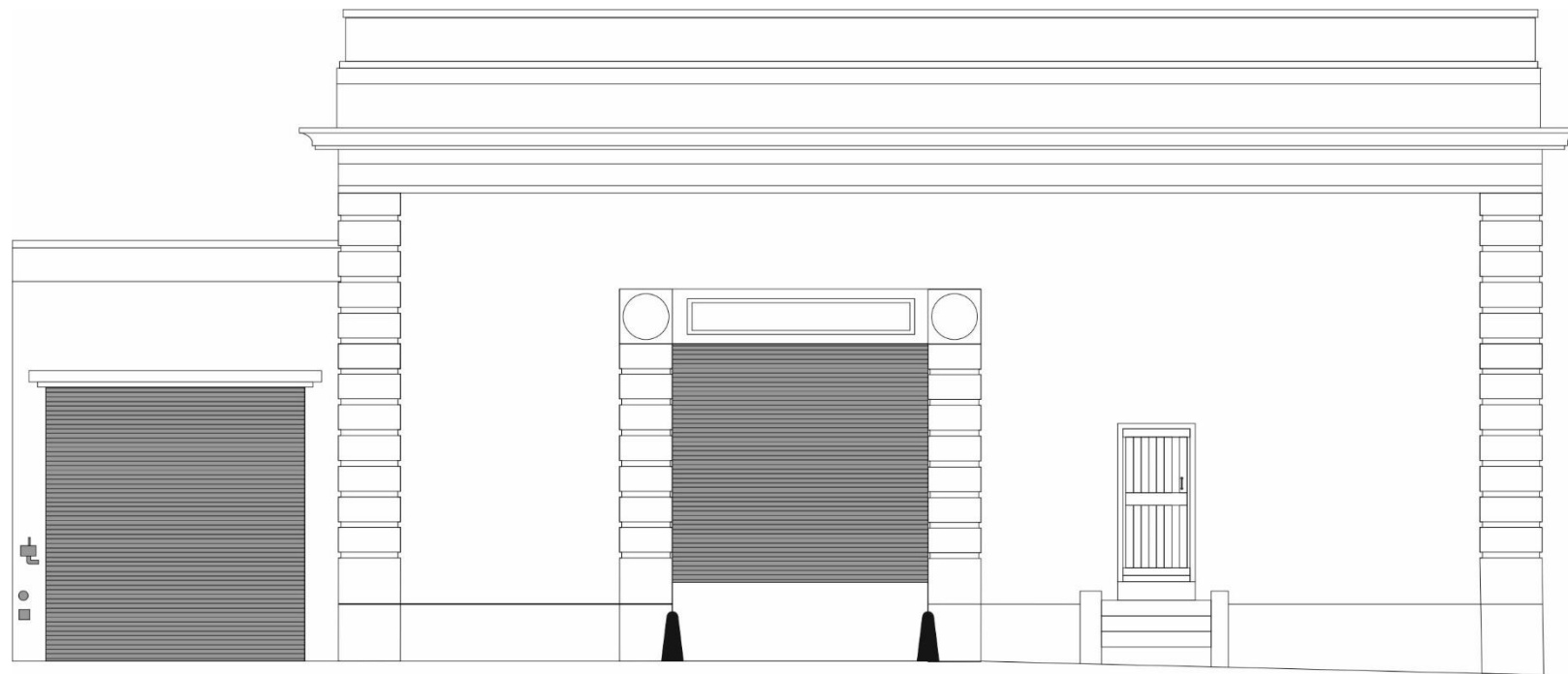
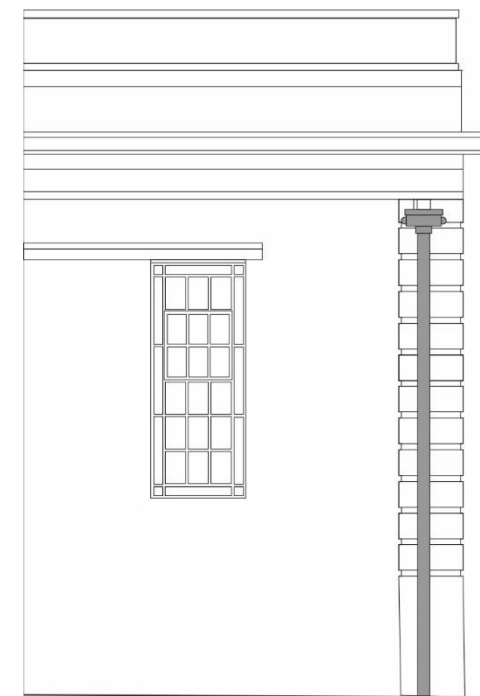


Figure 4: Southeast elevation, 1:100 @ A3



SOUTHWEST



NORTHWEST

Figure 5: Southwest and northwest elevations, 1:100 @ A3

### 3.7 The Date of the Building

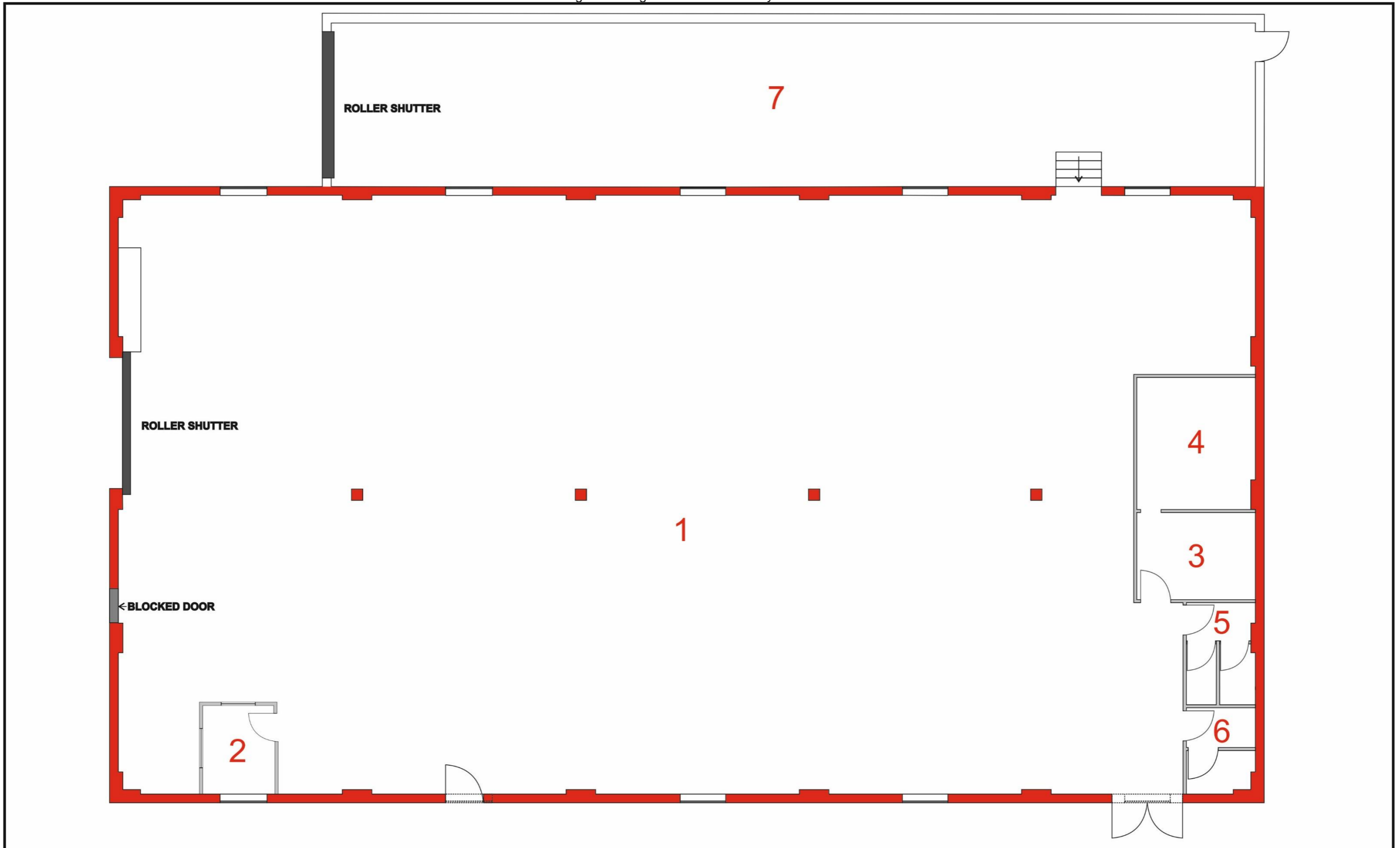
The building dates to the first phase of development, c. 1925 – 1927.

### 3.8 The Construction Sequence

The following Phases of construction are present:

Phase	Period	Date	Description	How Dated
1	Original	1925-27	Original part of building	Cartographic evidence, historic photographs
2	Recent	Post 1927	Internal stud partitions	Layout, fabric





**Blue Bird Park**  
Former Laboratory Building

Figure 6: Phase Plan Scale 1:100



Scale @A3 1:100



### 3.9 Description: Exterior

The building is constructed from machine-made red brick in a bond based on stretcher, Flemish and English Garden Wall bonds, as is found on other early buildings on the Blue Bird site. The building is somewhat more decorated than the manufactory or the transport buildings.

The walls feature a stepped pediment concealing the roof structure, with a wide projecting stucco cornice. At their foot, a brick plinth is present. Brick quoins are present at the corners of the building.

The southwest elevation features a large roller shutter door with a small timber personnel door to the right. Both are painted green. The shutter is bordered by quoined brick pilasters and has a substantial lintel with geometric relief mouldings. The personnel door is planked and accessed via a flight of four steps. The floor level of the building is notably higher than the surrounding ground level. This is thought to enable level loading onto lorries from the roller shutter door.



**Plate 7: Southwest elevation**



**Plate 8: Detail of roller shutter**



**Plate 9: Southwest elevation, northwest extension**

The building is joined to the adjacent warehouse via a small extension which features a roller shutter at its southwest end.



**Plate 10: Southeast elevation**

The southeast elevation features steel-framed multi-pane windows and two doorways, again reached via flights of steps to account for the raised floor level of the building. Rain hoppers and downpipes indicate the location of the gulleys of the sawtooth roof behind the parapet. Similar windows are present on the northwest side of the building, visible internally.



**Plate 11: Southeast elevation**



**Plate 12: Detail of cornice**

The northeast elevation is located in close proximity to the Powerhouse, with a narrow alley running between the two buildings. Owing to the proximity of this building, there are no windows in this wall. A galvanised conduit runs along the length of the wall, considered to relate to power distribution from the adjacent power house.



**Plate 13: Northeast elevation**



**Plate 14: View along northeast wall**



**Plate 15: Northwest part, northeast wall**

The northwest end of this wall is formed by the extension joining the building to the adjacent warehouse. Changes in brickwork indicate this was constructed in a later phase to the construction of the main part of the building however the precise date cannot be defined.



**Plate 16: Detail of roof from 2022 survey**

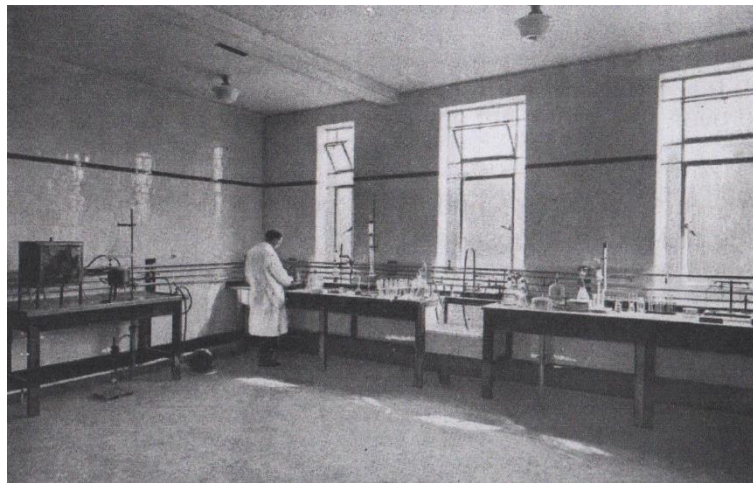
### 3.10 Description: Interior

The building houses a single warehouse space. The sawtooth roof is glazed to the northeast and solid to the northwest. Steel posts support the roof in the centre of its span.

The floor is tiled and the walls are of painted brick. A small partition to the northeast contains ladies' and gents' lavatories. Services are present around the walls of the space, with electrical distribution equipment on the northwest and southeast walls. The presence of lavatories and large-scale distribution of services suggests that whilst the building may have initially been constructed as a warehouse, this was not its ultimate function.

A timber partition is present in the southern corner of the building, the purpose of which is unknown.

The northeast door in the southwest wall has internal roller shutters.



**Plate 17: The laboratory in use in the 1930s (Cowling & Hastiloe 2022:103)**

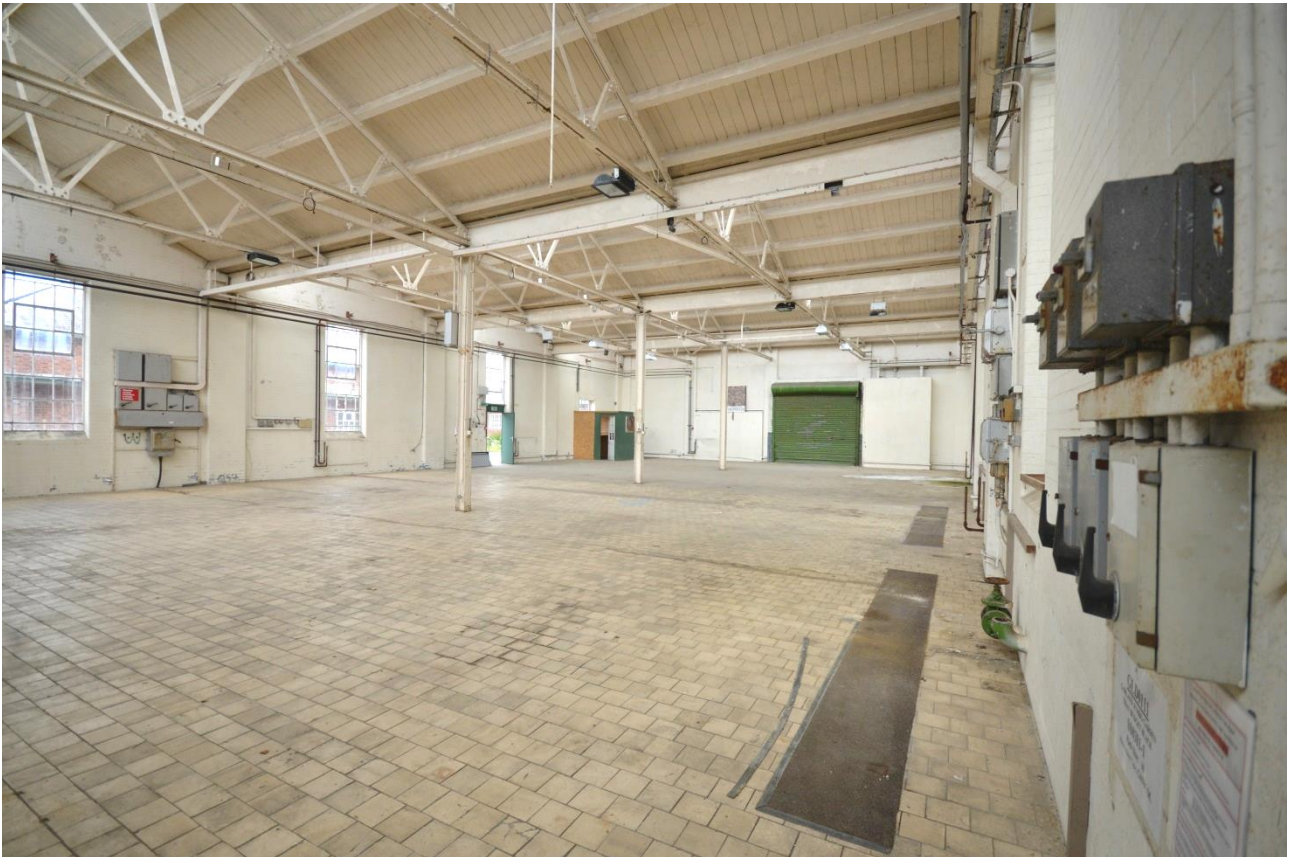




**Plate 18: Northeast aspect, interior**



**Plate 19: Southeast aspect, interior**



**Plate 20: Southwest aspect, interior**



**Plate 21: Northwest aspect, interior**



**Plate 22: View into partitioned rooms, northwest end of building**



**Plate 23: View into lavatory partition**



**Plate 24: Southern partition**



**Plate 25: Southwest aspect, extension**



**Plate 26: Northeast end of extension**

At the northeast end of the north wall, a blocked opening once led to the adjacent building.



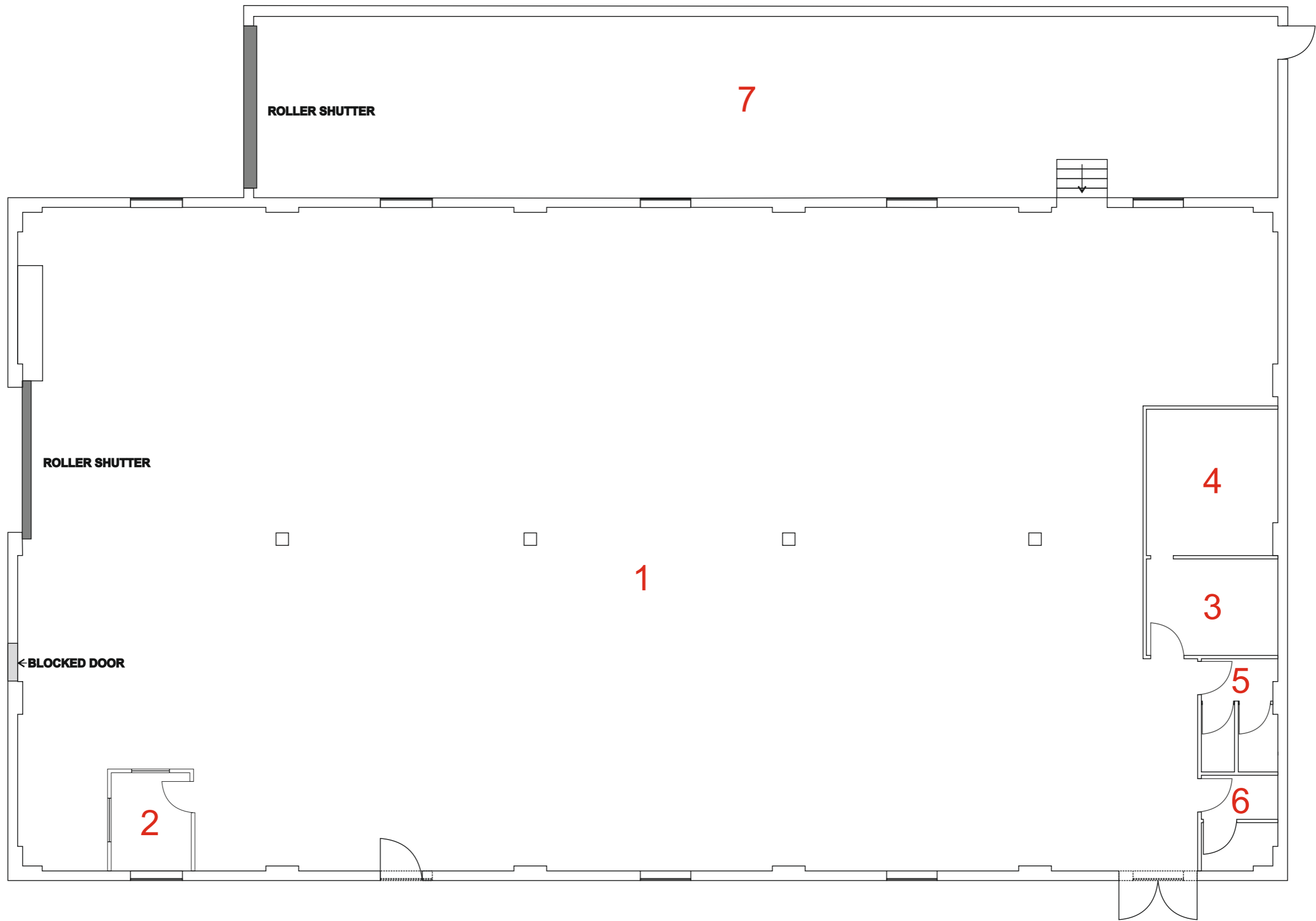
**Plate 27: Area of northeast partition rooms following removal of recent stud walls**



**Plate 28: Area of lavatories following removal of stud walls**



**Plate 29: Southwest aspect following removal of southern partition stud walls**

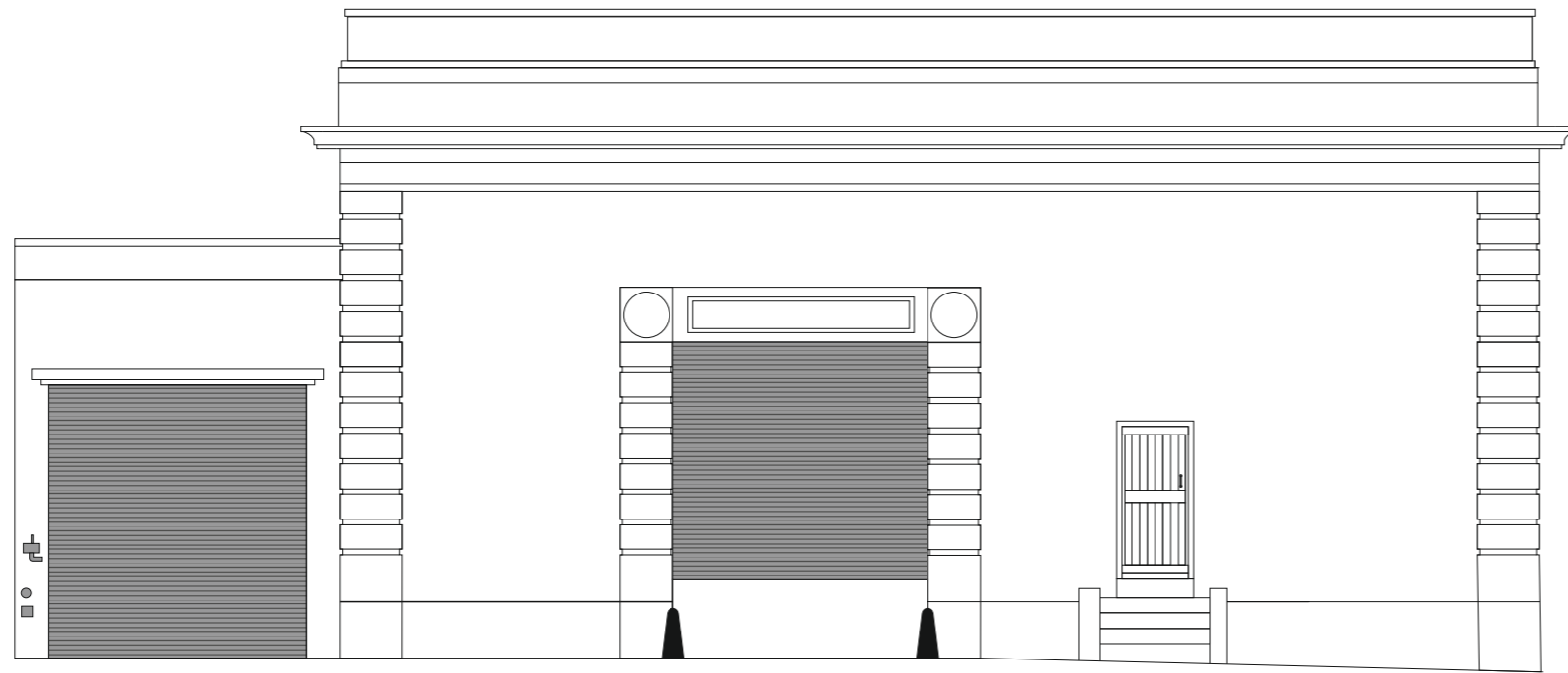


**Blue Bird Park**  
Former Laboratory Building

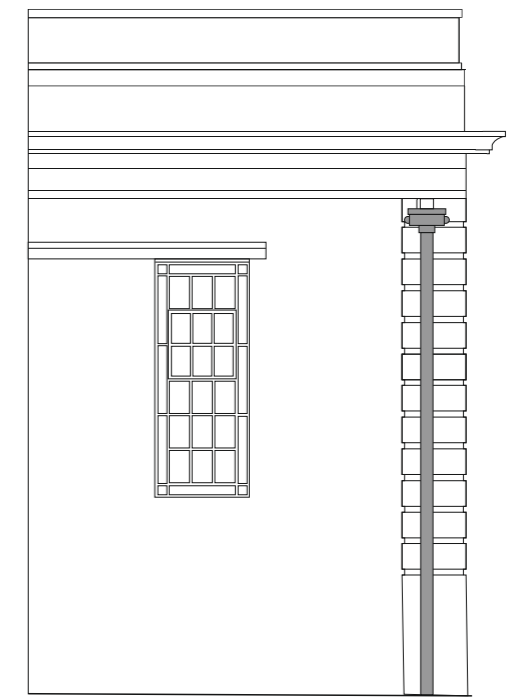


Scale @A3 1:100

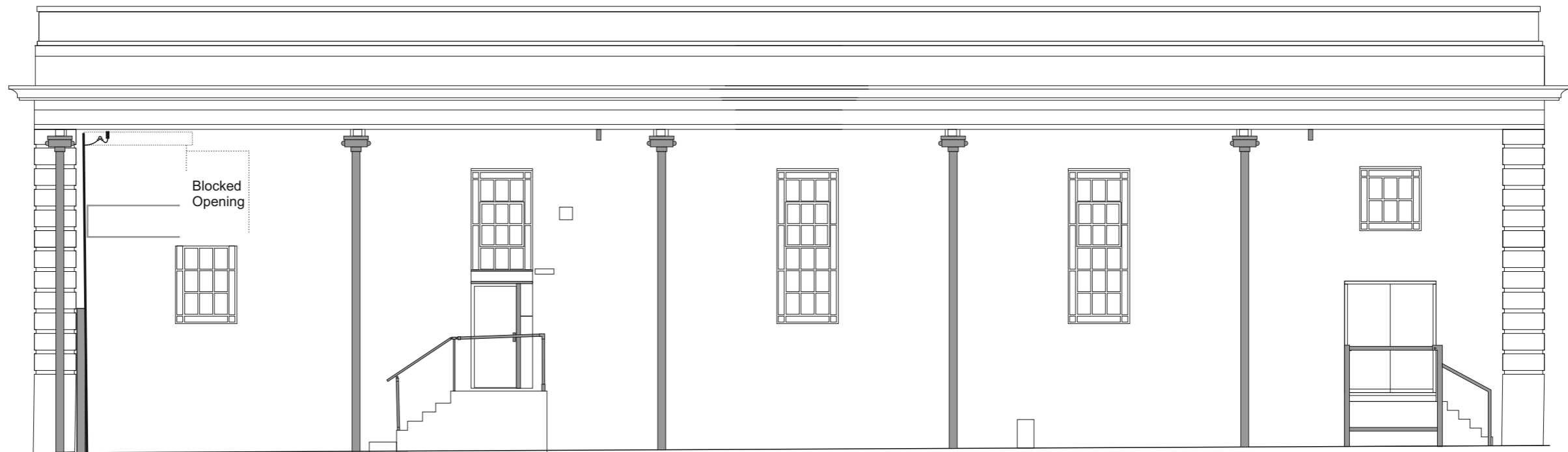




Southwest



Northwest



Southeast

**Blue Bird Park**  
Former Laboratory Building



Scale @A3 1:100

