

2.0

ASSESSMENT

2.3 BUILDING CONTEXT

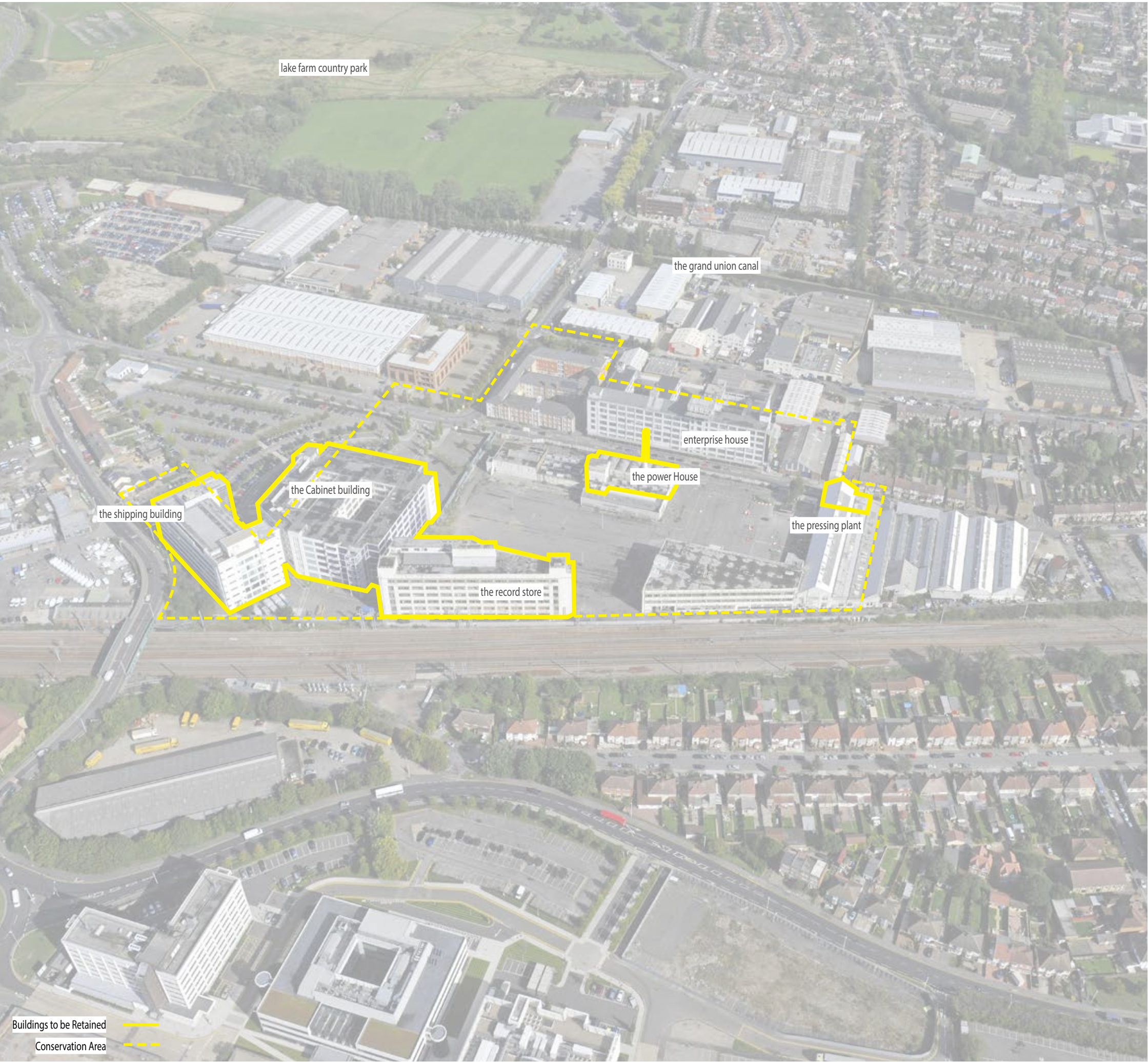
2.3.1 Conservation Area

The Powerhouse is located within the Botwell Thorn EMI Conservation Area.

2.3.2 Locally Listed Buildings

Part of The Powerhouse, the Shipping Building, The Record Store and the Pressing Plant are locally listed buildings and besides these, there are no statutory listed buildings on the site. However, their greatest significance lies on the value of the group as a whole, rather than their individual importance. Beyond the site, to the North, is Enterprise House, which is a Grade II listed building.

Please refer to the consented *Old Vinyl Factory Outline Planning Design and Access Statement* Section 2.4.2., for more information on the Powerhouse.



Right: Conservation Area
On the other page: Aerial View of The Powerhouse today.



2.0

ASSESSMENT

2.4 EXISTING BUILDING

2.4.1 History

To be read with reference to the consented *Old Vinyl Factory Outline Planning Design and Access Statement* Section 8.12.

2.4.2 Original Building

To be read with reference to the *Historic Building Record* Sections 2 and 3.2, produced by Purcell, submitted with the *Old Vinyl Factory Outline Planning Design and Access Statement*.

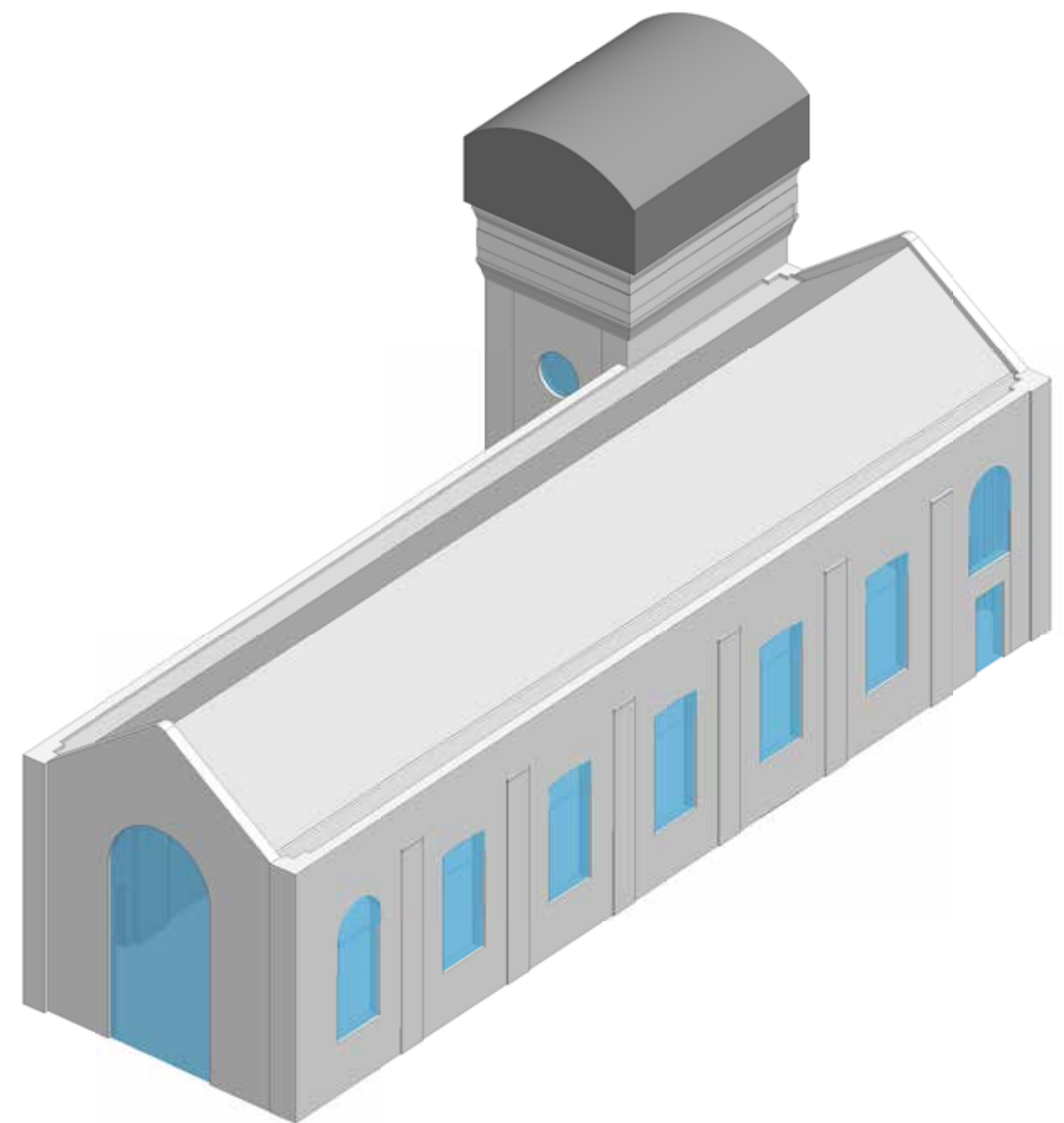
The Powerhouse, also referred to historically as Neptune, was built in 1907, as part of the new Gramophone Company's record factory, in Hayes.

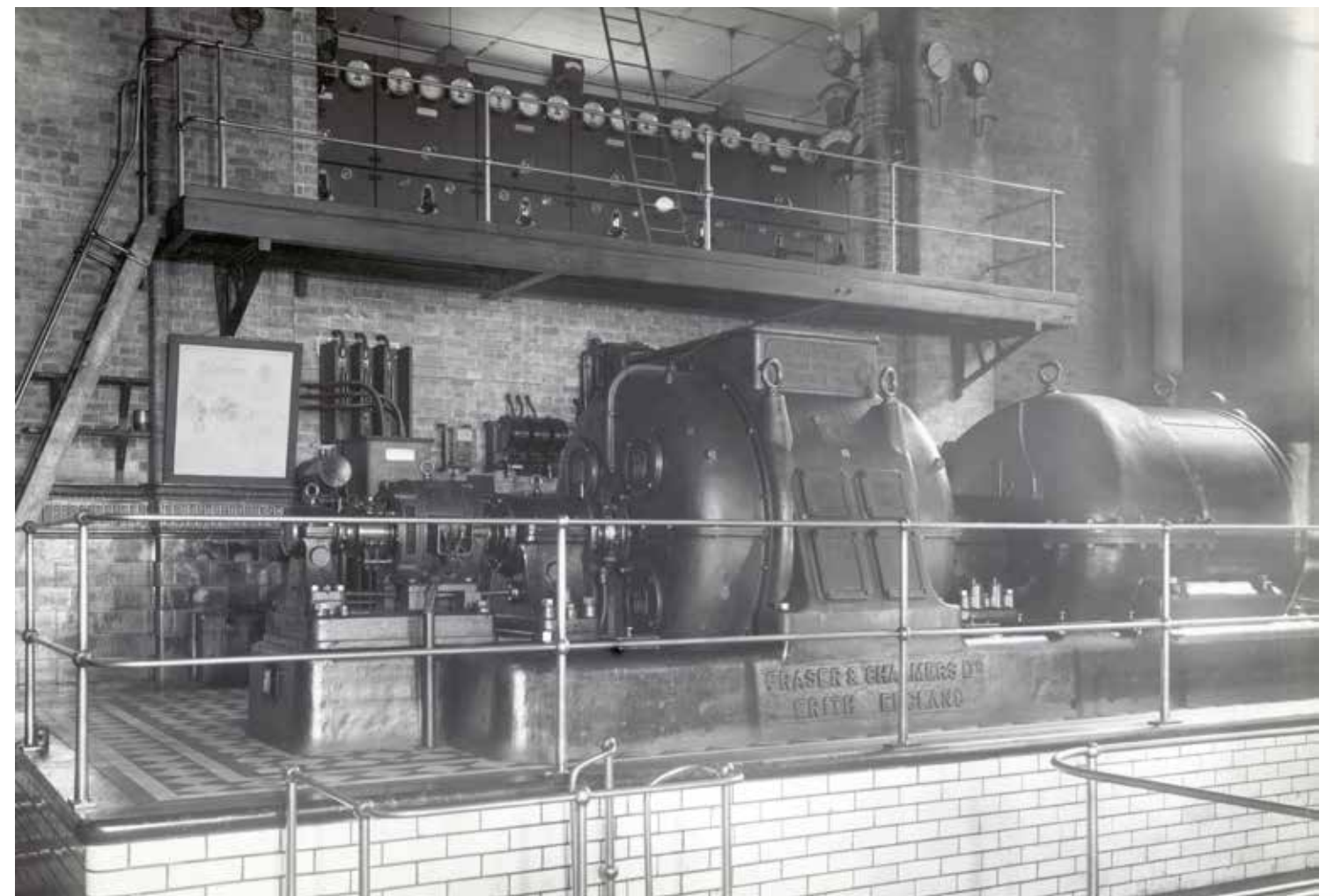
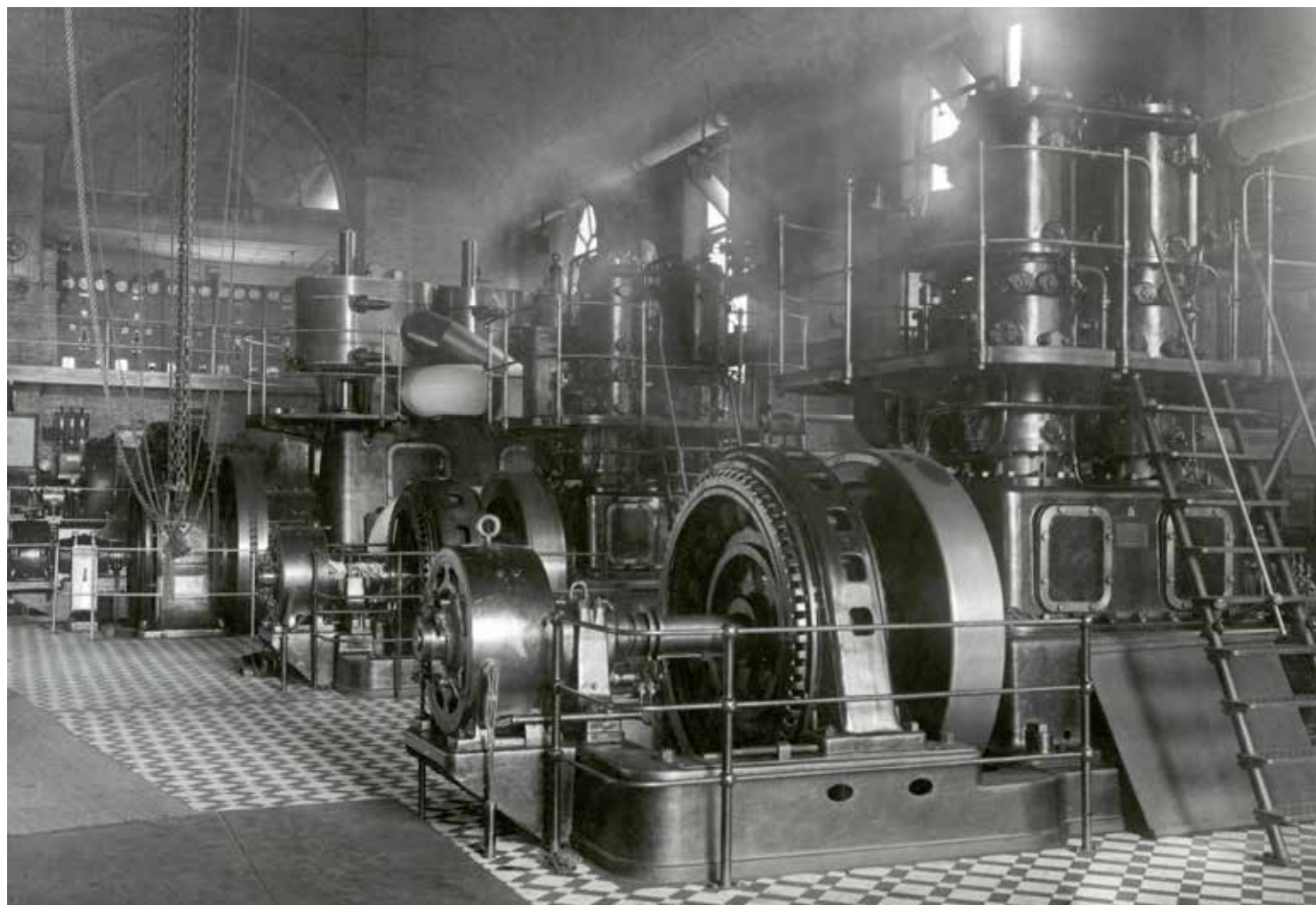
The form of the original building followed a well establish Victorian format: a large machine room housing a series of fossil fuel generators enclosed in a classical brick structure, with a large arched opening to allow access to the big machinery. High windows offered light but no views and a small high-level structure with an arched roof housed the water tank used for cooling the machinery.

The interior of the hall had delicate tiling and other ornamental details both on the floor and the walls.

Like the engine of a car, the Powerhouse would have been one of the technological prides of the day and its architectural envelope reflected that.

Right: 3D model showing the Powerhouse as it was built
On the other page: Top left - The Powerhouse under construction; Top right and Bottom - The Powerhouse in the first decades of the 20th century





2.0

ASSESSMENT

2.4.3 Historic Evolution

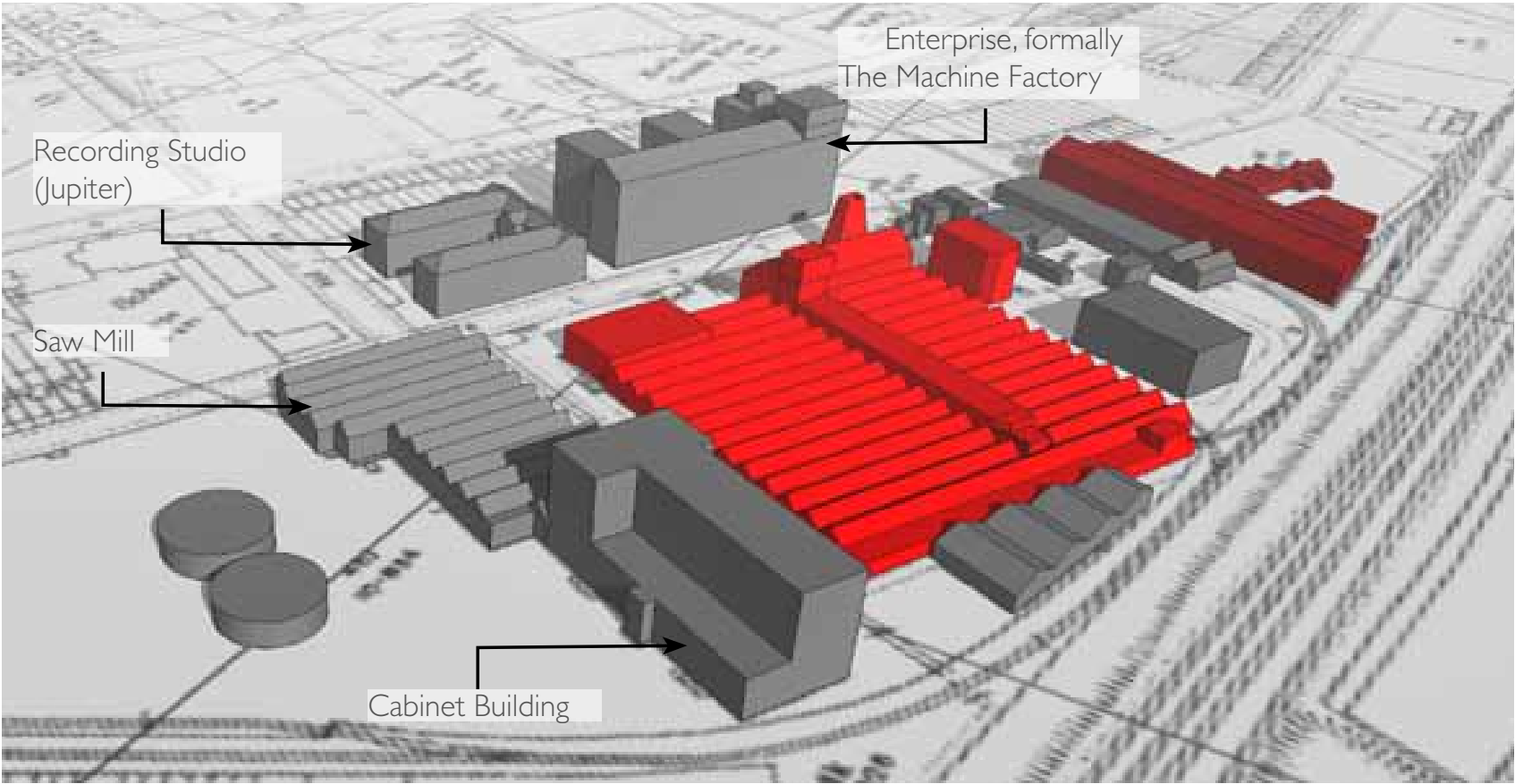
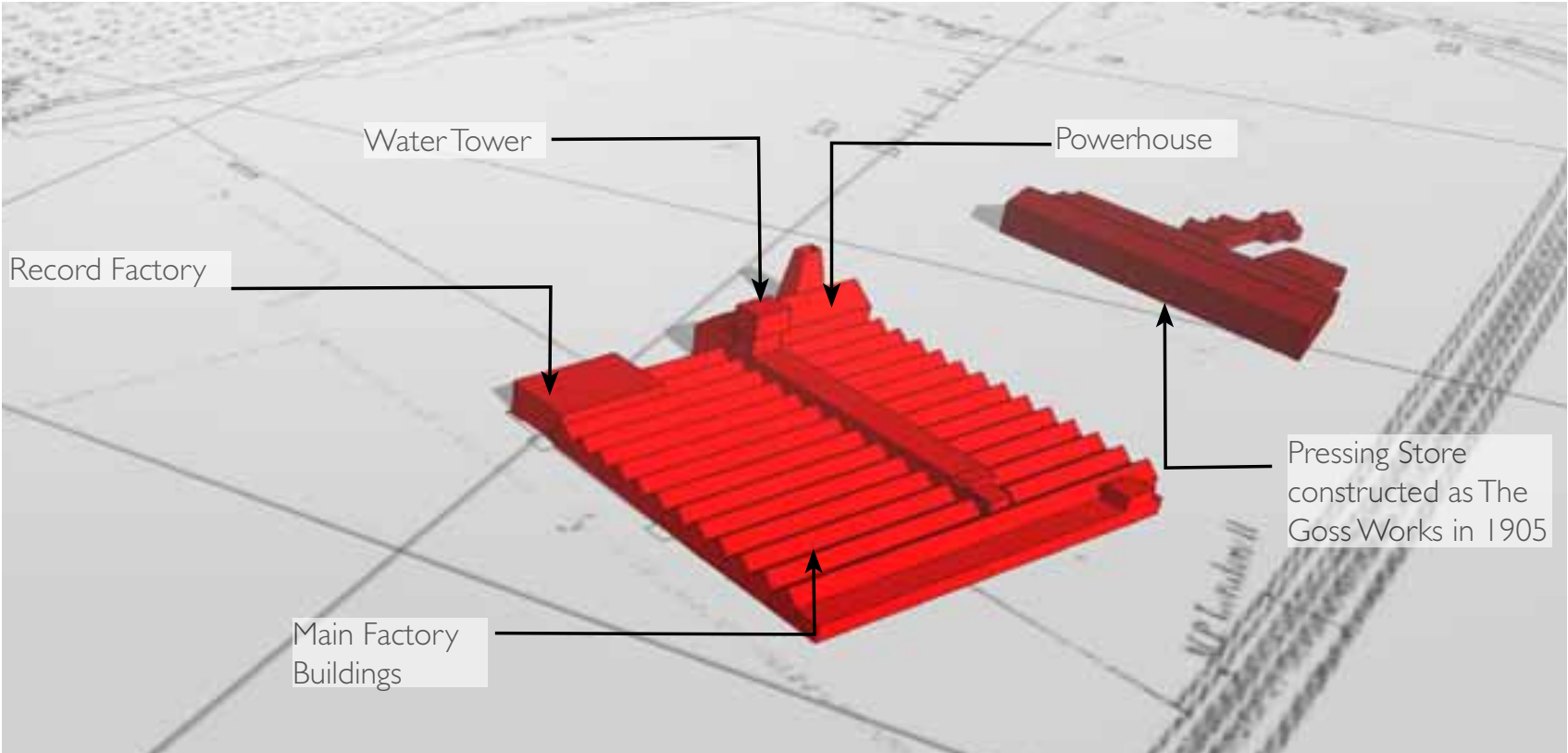
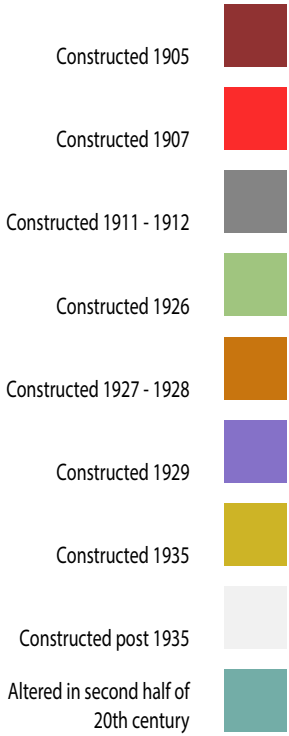
To be read with reference to the *Historic Building Record* Sections 2 and 3.2, produced by Purcell, submitted with the *Old Vinyl Factory Outline Planning Design and Access Statement*.

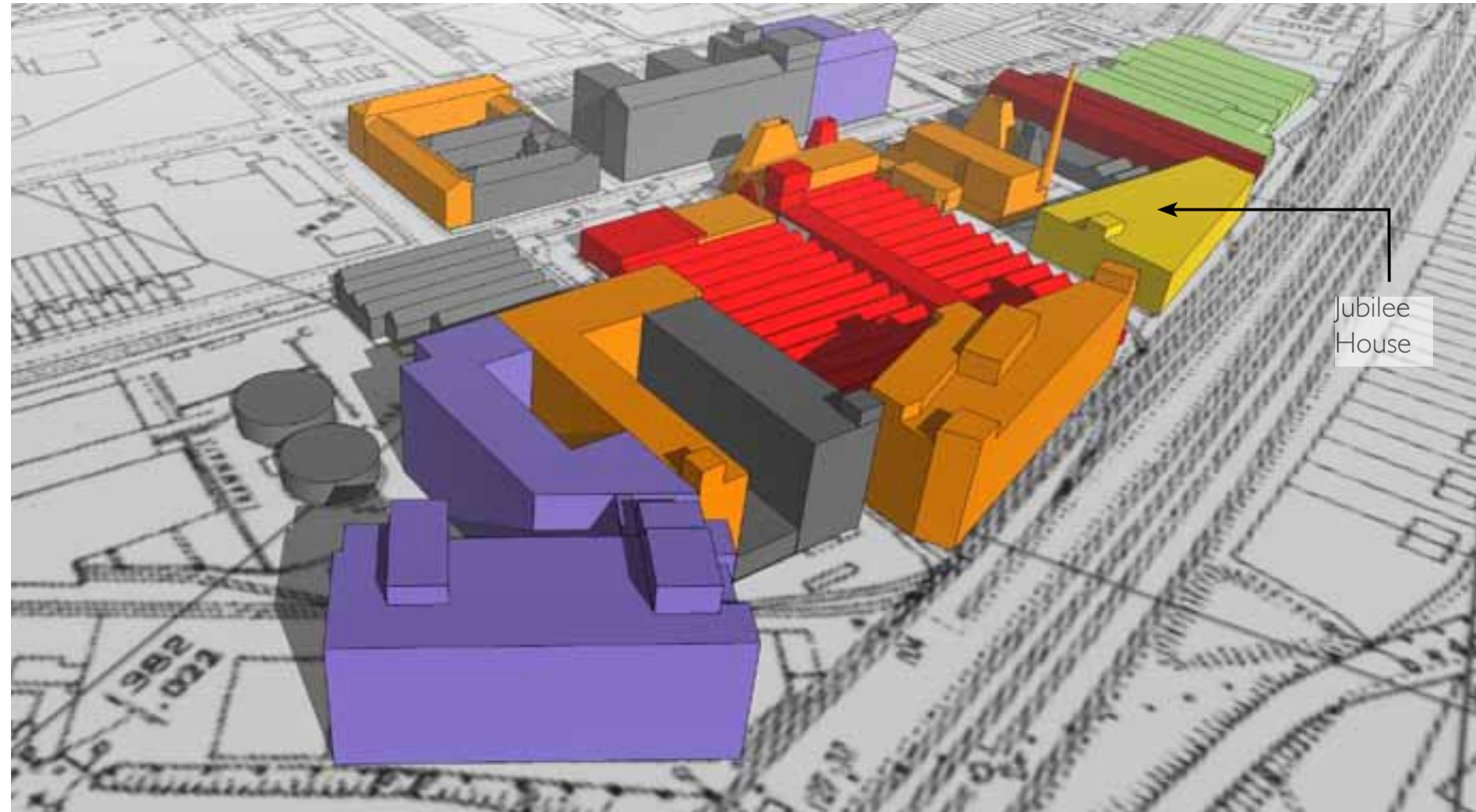
In 1911, when the factory complex was enlarged, the Powerhouse played a key role on this industrial site. The building and the machinery it housed powered the whole factory and all its production processes. The Hayes factory experienced several changes throughout the years, adapting to two World Wars and an ever changing market. In 1927 - 1928, for example, and just before Gramophone Company's profits reached a peak in 1929, a new Powerhouse was built, next to the original one. This building, however, no longer exists.

The Powerhouse building itself has been changed several times since it was first built. The barrel vaulted roof of the water tower was replaced with a corrugated pitched roof, and circa 1930 the building height was increased and the pitched roof was replaced with a concrete barrel vaulted roof. The Powerhouse building eventually became detached from the saw-tooth factory building it was once attached to. Two factory bays in a state of advanced disrepair remain attached to the southern elevation. Also, over the years the building's brick finish has been covered with a white render, along most of its visible surfaces.

However, one of the most significant changes was probably the introduction, in more recent years (probably second half of the 20th century), of a chimney in the middle of the main hall, that now dominates its skyline. This chimney became one of the most distinctive features of the building.

The Hayes factory eventually became redudant as EMI's operations (the most recent company on site) were moved elsewhere.





Left: Diagrams showing the evolution of the Old Vinyl Factory Masterplan site

2.0

ASSESSMENT

2.4.4 Current Status

To be read with reference to the *Historic Building Record* Sections 2 and 3.2, produced by Purcell, submitted with the *Old Vinyl Factory Outline Planning Design and Access Statement*.

Nowadays, the Powerhouse comprises one large open bay to be retained, a water tower at the south-west corner, also to be retained with the exception of the corrugated roof which will be replaced, and an annex bay attached to the south side, to be demolished.

Exterior

The two visible elevations, East and North (shown in the model on the right), constructed of brick laid in English Bond, are currently painted white, and a few sections of the walls have been rendered. On the North side it is still possible to see the ornate hoppers, resembling corbels, in line with each of the pillars. The Water Tower structure, originally built of red brick, was also painted white in recent years. In the upper part of the South elevation it is still possible to see sections of the old ‘Gramophone Company’ sign, painted on the masonry.

The main entrance, on the East side, and the large openings on the North side, have been changed over the years, and no longer show the original steel framed windows. The upper section of the windows has been covered (in-fill panels represented in red on the model on the right), but internally it is still possible to read the original opening outline.

Right: 3D model showing the Powerhouse current status
On the other page: Photos of the Powerhouse nowadays

Interior

The Powerhouse still preserves some of its original decorative features, like the green wall tiles, a few sections of black and white floor tiles, and some of the original moldings.

None of the original machinery was kept, besides the central chimney and a crane located above the cornice height (on the West site of the building).

