

Land South of The Mease, Hilton, Derby

Historic Building Recording



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Name: Land south of The Mease, Hilton

Address: Hilton Business Park, Hilton, Derby, DE65 5FJ

National Grid Reference: SK 25305 29826

Local Planning Authority: Derby City Council

Planning Application Number: 9/2013/1044

County: Derbyshire

Statutory Listing: N/A

Conservation Area: N/A

Scheduled Monument: N/A

Date of Properties: Mid-Late 20th Century

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Humble Heritage is a professional built heritage and archaeological consultancy operating in the specialised area of the historic environment. The practice has extensive experience of historical and archaeological research and recording, assessing significance and heritage impact and preparing heritage statements, archaeological desk-based assessments, statements of significance, conservation management plans and so forth. Humble Heritage provides heritage and archaeological advice on behalf of a wide variety of clients across much of England, Wales and Scotland.

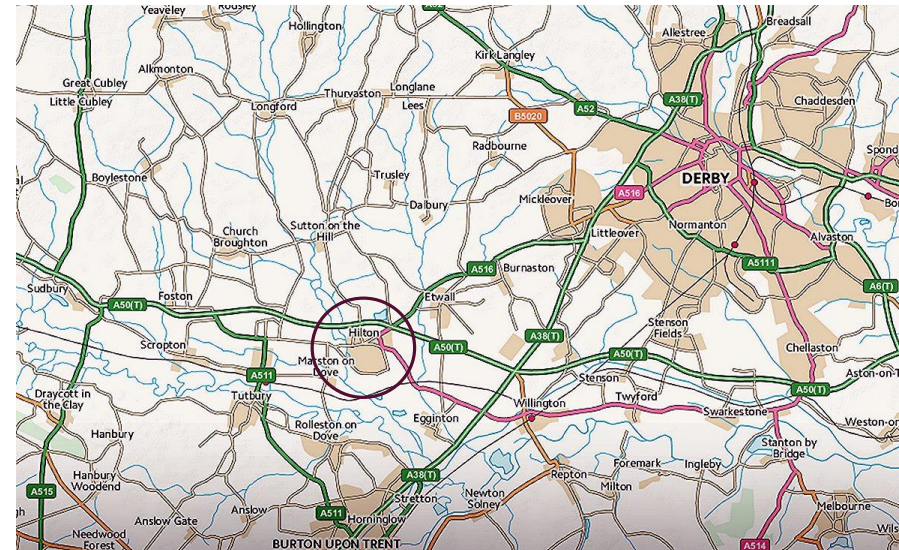
This report provides a building record that identifies and documents any items of archaeological and architectural interest prior to the redevelopment of the land south of The Mease, Hilton near Derby for a mixed-use development. This report has been prepared by Humble Heritage during April – May 2015 on behalf of St Modwen Developments Ltd and their heritage advisors Woodhall Planning and Conservation Ltd. The full photographic archive produced during the survey has been deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This historic building survey has been prepared by Liz Humble (MA Cantab., MA Dist., MCIfA, IHBC), Principal, Humble Heritage, on behalf of St Modwen Developments Ltd and their heritage advisors Woodhall Planning and Conservation Ltd during April-May 2015.
- 1.02 A copy of this report has been supplied to St Modwen Developments, Woodhall Planning and Conservation, Derby and Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist and Derbyshire Historic Environment Record. The Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) online form has been completed and the digital archive (a PDF of this report and JPEG and TIFF formats of the full photographic record) have been deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

SITE LOCATION

- 2.01 The site comprises 37.16 hectares of predominantly brownfield land, situated to the south of The Mease, at the village of Hilton, South Derbyshire. It forms part of Hilton Business Park, strategically located less than 1 mile from the A50 (M1-M6 link road), approximately 3 miles west of its junction with the A38 at Burnaston. Burton upon Trent is approximately 6.5 miles to the south, and Derby 8.5 miles to the northeast.



Location map



Aerial view

PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.01 The owners, through their agents Planning Prospects (4 Mill Pool, Nash Lane, Belbroughton, DY9 9AF) have obtained planning consent (Planning Application No.9/2013/1044) for a mixed-use development. Humble Heritage, as specialist historic buildings and archaeological advisors, have prepared this report following a written scheme of investigation as part of meeting the terms of an archaeological condition that has been placed on the consent.

3.02 Condition 28 of the planning consent states that:

'No development shall take place until a Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing, until all on-site elements of the approved scheme have been completed to the written satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, and until the provision to be made for analysis, reporting, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured. The Written Scheme of Investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions and:

- 1 The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.*
- 2 The programme and provision for post-investigation analysis and reporting.*
- 3 Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*
- 4 Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*

5 Nomination of a competent person or persons / organization to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

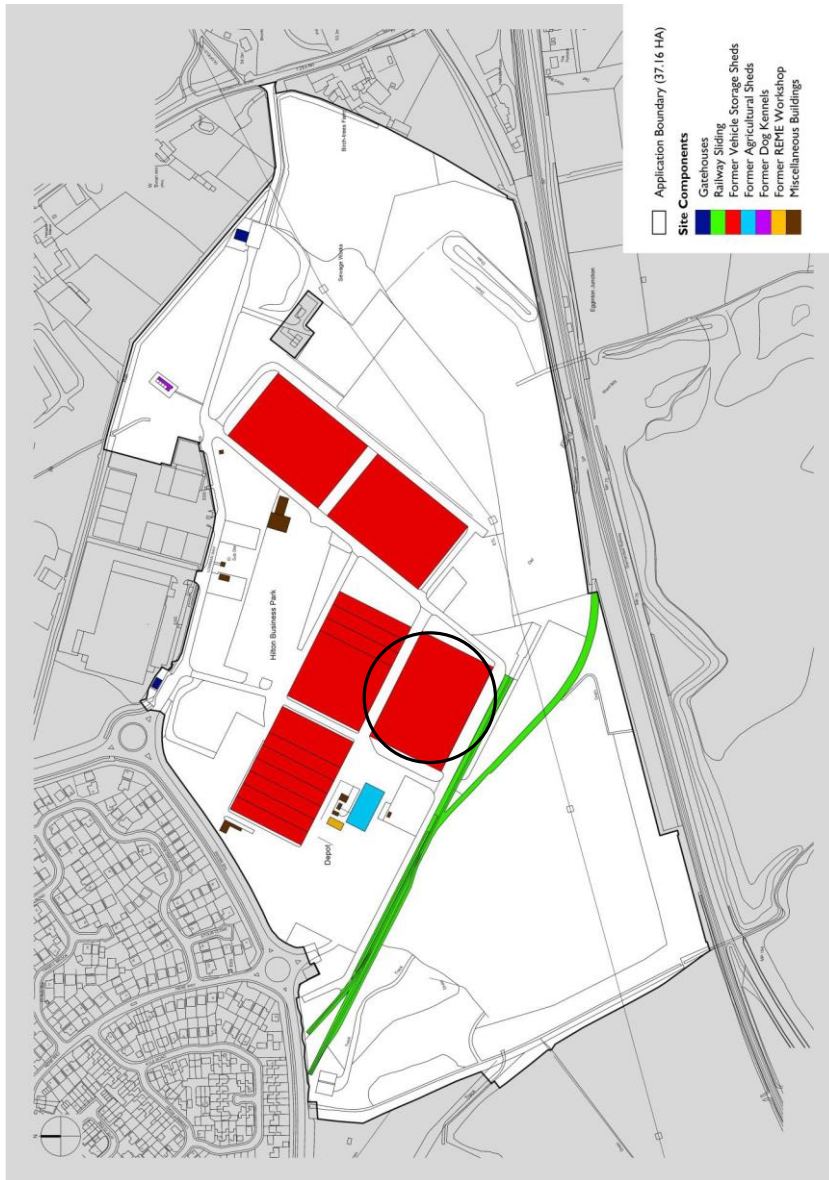
Reason: To ensure that the historic interests within the site are suitably recorded.'

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.01 The first aim of this report is to identify and objectively record by means of photographs any significant evidence for the original and subsequent historical form and functions of the complex and then to place this record in the public domain by depositing it with the Archaeology Data Service and local Historic Environment Record.
- 4.02 The second aim is to analyse and interpret the former vehicle depot buildings and railway siding as an integrated system intended to perform a specialised function. The roles of the structures, their historical plan form, technical layout and circulation / process flow are all considered in this process of interpretation.

METHODOLOGY

- 5.01 Following approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation by the Derby and Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist, the recording methodology that has been employed comprises a Level 2 survey/record in accordance with the English Heritage document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2006). A Level 2 record is a descriptive record.
- 5.02 The photographic record was compiled using a digital Nikon D90 DSLR camera (a 12mp camera) with an 18mm-105mm lens. The photographic archive consists of JPEG and TIFF format images produced to a high resolution and is accompanied by a photographic register. The drawn record is the topographic survey showing the site plan, annotated with the location and direction of the photographs illustrated within this report.
- 5.03 Site photography comprises:
- General views of the site, with a focus on the earliest infrastructure.
 - All exterior elevations of the former vehicle depot sheds.
 - Interior shots of Building No.20 located adjacent to the railway lines. This recognises that the sheds follow the same design and constructional details and therefore further photography would be unnecessarily repetitive. Shed No.20 was selected based upon its state of preservation as several historic features survive.
 - A 2m ranging rod was included in a selection of shots, sufficient to independently establish the scale of the building / feature.
- 5.04 The Heritage Statement (Woodhall Planning and Conservation 2014) included documentary research and cartographic analysis and has been lodged with the local planning authority. The contents of the Heritage Statement have informed the archaeological recording by providing background information with regard to function and phasing and are summarised within the written record below. In accordance with English Heritage guidelines (*Understanding Historic Buildings* 12-13, 2006), the record presents conclusions regarding the sites development and use, but does not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based. It comprises the following elements:
- The site location as a national grid reference and in address form.
 - A location map.
 - A note of any statutory or non-statutory heritage designations.
 - The date of the record, the name of the recorder and the location of the archive.
 - A summary of the type and purpose of the historic buildings and infrastructure, their materials and possible date(s), in so far as these are apparent from a superficial inspection.
- 5.05 This report has been produced as a digital copy and supplied to the client, with identical copies supplied to the Derby and Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist, to Derbyshire Historic Environment Record and to the Oasis project. Following agreement with the Development Control Archaeologist, the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) online form has been completed and the digital archive (report and digital photographs) deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).



Site plan indicating shed No.20 within the black circle

- 5.06 License is granted to the local planning authority, the Archaeological Data Service and to Derbyshire Historic Environment Record to use the material gathered during the project. The report could also be freely copied for planning, development control and research purposes without recourse to the copyright owner. The archaeological contractor retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as specified in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (chapter IV, section 79).

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.01 The written record in this section is informed by the Heritage Statement (Woodhall Planning and Conservation 2014) that included documentary research and cartographic analysis.
- 6.02 The site is on land south of The Mease, Hilton, near Derby at the postal address: Hilton Business Park, Hilton, Derby, DE65 5FJ. The national grid reference is SK 25305 29826.
- 6.03 The site does not fall within a conservation area and it does not include any buildings included on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The former vehicle depot storage sheds and a railway siding that partially survive are, however, considered to have some heritage interest (Heritage Statement, Woodhall Planning and Conservation, 2014).
- 6.04 Most of the site is occupied by mid-late 20th century industrial units and associated service yards and car parks. There are areas of woodlands situated along the southern and western boundaries and scrubland at the eastern and north-western corners of the site. The site is located beyond the village development

boundary, in an area designated as employment land in the adopted Local Plan.

- 6.05 The site developed from agricultural fields into a base for United States Army engineers in the 1940s during World War II and continued in use as a United Kingdom Central Army Vehicle Depot in the post-war period. An aerial photograph from 1945 reproduced in the Heritage Statement (2014, 8) reveals that none of the extant buildings were present in 1945. Instead, the current sheds (Buildings 18-22) were built in the late 1940s or 1950s, probably when the site was converted into the vehicle depot when they were used to store a wide range of vehicles including scooters, cars, taxis, fire engines, ambulances, lorries, Land Rovers and tank transporters. The depot covered all non-specialised (i.e. 'B' vehicles) belonging to the armed forces and handled vehicles for the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. These origins and early development of the site are supported by architectural evidence and the Historic Environment Record entry.
- 6.06 The most visible historical buildings on the site are the five hanger type sheds with a standardized rectangular floor plan, concrete bases with concrete block footings and concrete sheet walls, roof cladding and water goods (which all also contain traces of asbestos) (see for example plates 21-30). Some of the hangers retain c.1950s external concrete lamps under the saw-tooth roof structures (plates 23, 24 and 64). Slightly later features, from the 1960s and 1970s MOD use, include a number of internal and external signs, red painted fire doors and partial conversion of corrugated sheeting to blockwork walls with windows providing light to inserted office spaces and WCs (for instance see plates 15, 16, 20, 28, 64, 65, 71 and 72). These sheds are the only part of the site to hold any architectural significance; albeit this architectural significance is considered to be low.
- 6.07 Part of the railway sidings that previously connected to the main site also survive. Partially dismantled, the remains include railway

line buffers (plate 33), a switch lever to change tracks (plate 37) and a mixture of timber and concrete sleepers and associated rails (plates 34 and 36). These sidings previously connected The Mease to the Stoke-Derby Railway line and are likely to be associated with either the army camp during World War II or the early development of the Central Vehicle Depot. The site is considered to be of medium historical interest for its use as a base for Black American servicemen (US Army Engineers) and for its later conversion, firstly for storage of anti-aircraft guns, search-lights etc and then in the 1950s into an Army Central Vehicle Depot and its use as such during the Cold War and Falklands conflict. In addition to the railway sidings, the following elements at the site are likely to date from this period:

- Concrete drains and platform bases (possibly the bases for spot lit gantries or other security measures) on the woods at the edge of the site today (plates 54-56).
- A mining telephone stand with a fireproof iron cover designed for outdoor use by the Beeston, Nottinghamshire Ericsson factory (type B2374 code N2974A1 – plates 31-32).
- A couple of concrete bollards (plates 44, 46 and 52).
- A concrete structure near the railway sidings (plates 38-39).

6.08 Features from the growth of the site during the 1960s onwards are of low historic interest for demonstrating the later developments. They include:

- The current brick gatehouse and former gatehouse with entrance brick piers (plates 1, 44 and 45).
- Former agricultural sheds built by Aston Agriculture Limited with steel framing and corrugated concrete asbestos sheet walls and roofs (plate 74).
- A brick building built c.1970s formerly housing dog kennels (plate 42).
- A structure likely to have formed the base of a vehicular crane (plate 68).

- The two-storey brick REME workshop erected in the c.1980s as workshops for vehicle repair and maintenance (plate 67).
- WC and shower blocks erected in the c.1960s (plate 66).
- A late 20th century electricity sub-station (plate 40).
- Modern temporary cabins and industrial units (for example plate 40).
- Car parks (for example plate 2).

6.09 Due to military security, the 1970 Ordnance Survey map is the first to accurately record the site. It depicts the agricultural shed and the WC/shower blocks but not the adjacent former Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) building, which is a later addition, where vehicles were repaired. Nor does this map survey the dog kennels, which were presumably added later in the 1970s. Following a gradual reduction in staff numbers and activities, the Hilton Central Vehicle Depot was closed in about 1993 and the site sold to St Modwen PLC. The area of the former depot has been partially developed with a housing estate and a new business park.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD



The site was photographically recorded by Liz Humble on the 24 April 2015. The photographs below capture the main elements of the site and viewpoints are shown on this plan (arrows indicate directions, circles indicate photos looking upwards or downwards and the numbers correspond to the plates below)



1. Modern brick security office / gatehouse at the site entrance



2. General view across service yards towards the former vehicle storage sheds



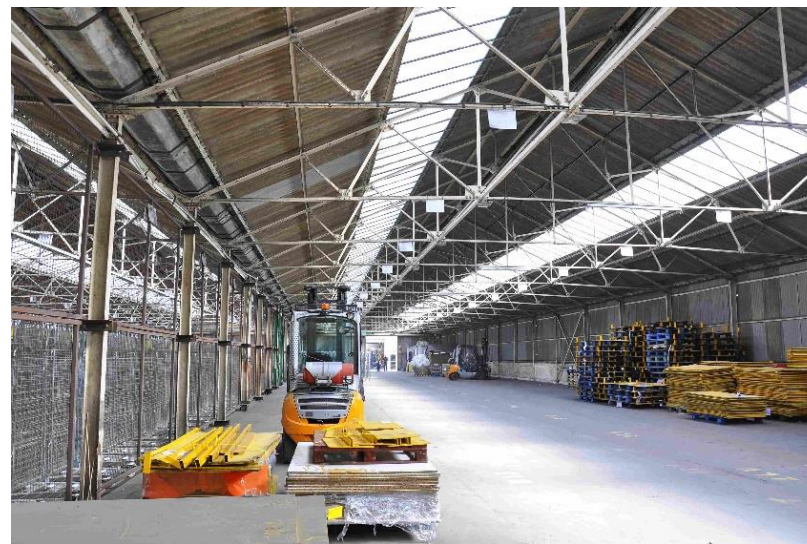
3. Former vehicle storage shed 20, interior (2m scale)



4. Former vehicle storage shed 20, interior with modern office cabin



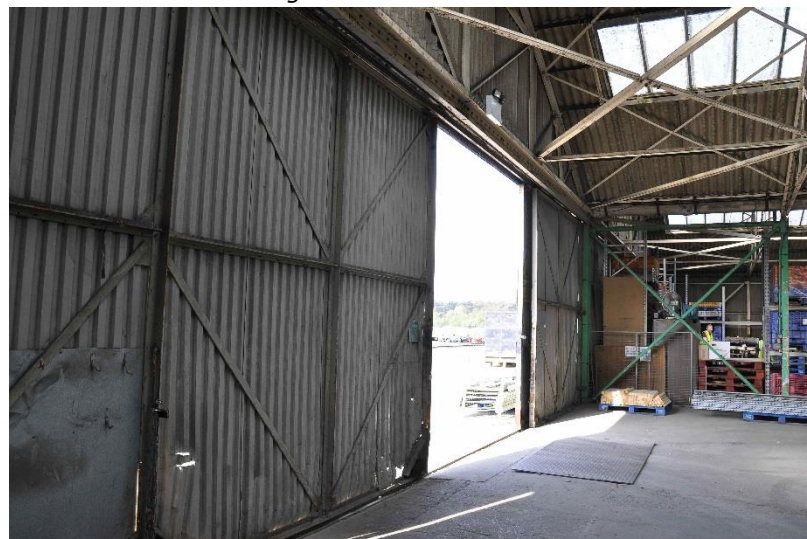
5. Former vehicle storage shed 20, with hanger-type metal trusses



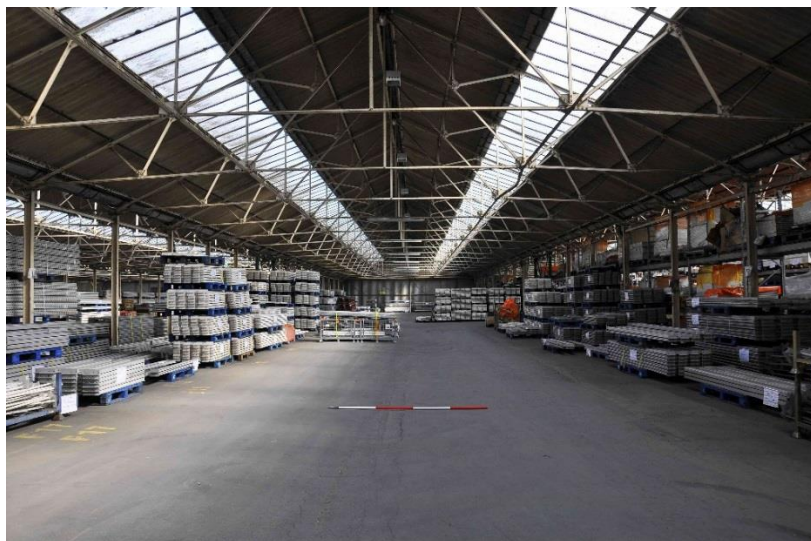
6. Former vehicle storage shed 20 with north-lit saw tooth roof



7. Former vehicle storage shed 20, interior, view towards south entrance



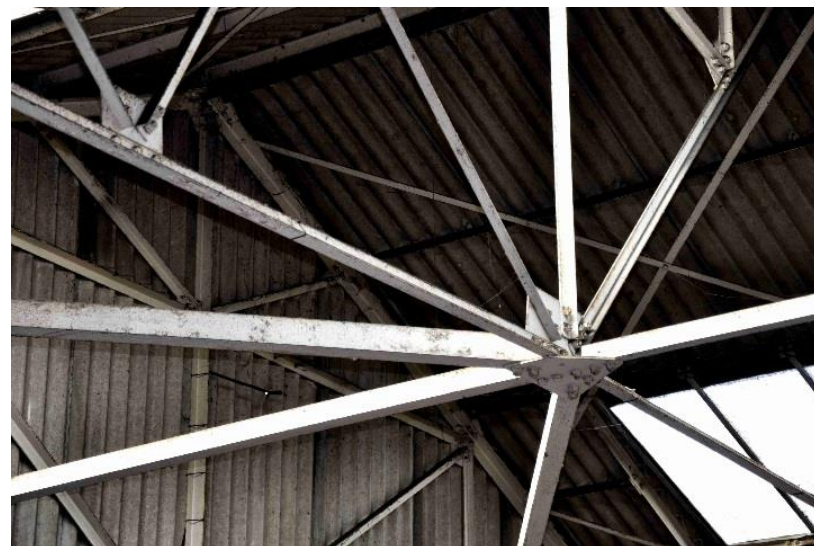
8. Former vehicle storage shed 20, view towards south entrance



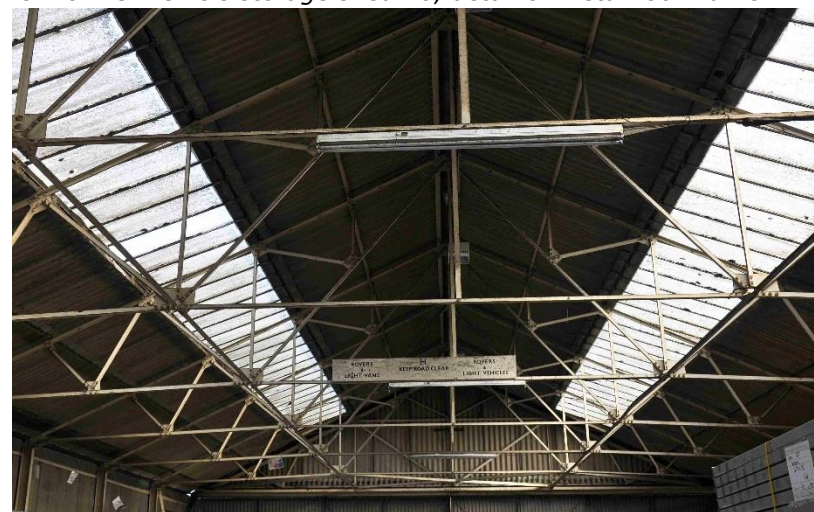
9. Former vehicle storage shed 20, interior (2m scale)



11. Former vehicle storage shed 20, external view of southern entrance



10. Former vehicle storage shed 20, detail of metal roof frame



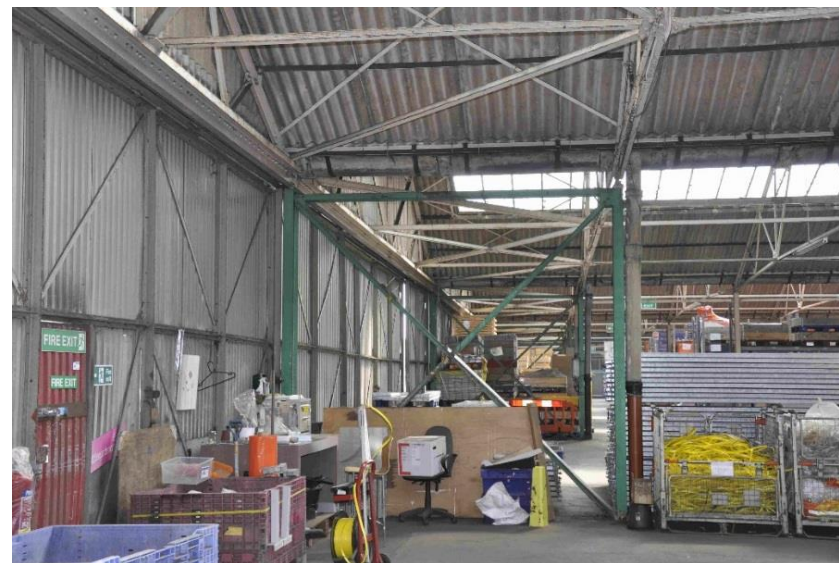
12. Former vehicle storage shed 20, MOD notice fixed to roof truss



13. Former vehicle storage shed 20, northwest corner (2m scale). Note modern bay lettering on concrete floor



15. Former vehicle storage shed 20, MOD notice fixed to truss, c.1960s



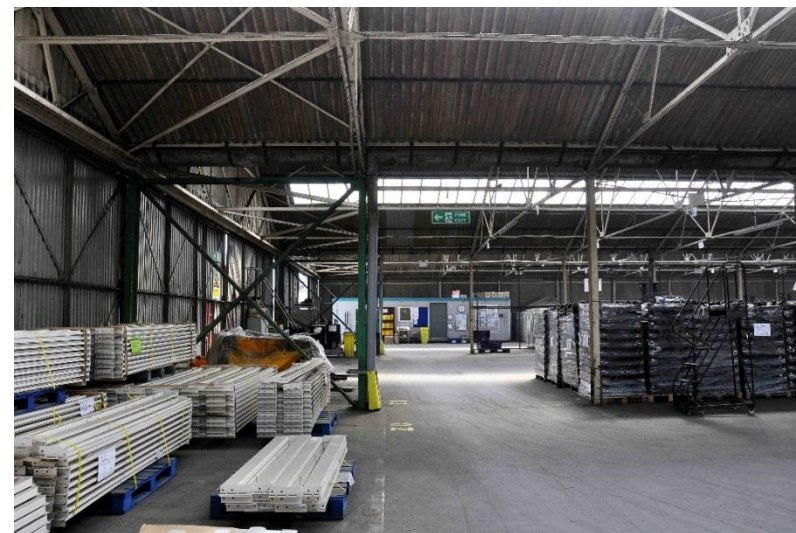
14. Former vehicle storage shed 20, example of cross framing employed along the northern wall



16. Shed 20, red and white MOD fire exit sign c.1960s



17. Former vehicle storage shed 20, interior view of a bay



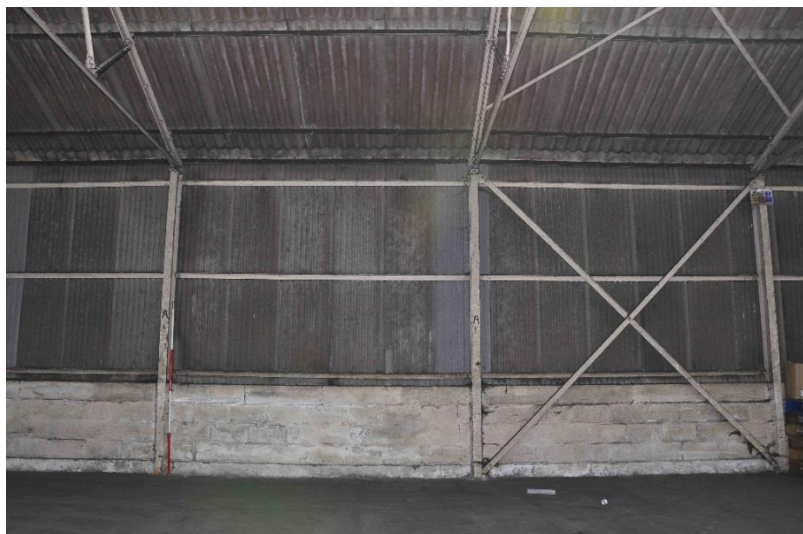
18. Former vehicle storage shed 20, example of cross framing employed along the northern wall



19. Former vehicle storage shed 20, detail of a bay column



20. Former vehicle storage shed 20, typical red painted MOD fire exit door



21. Former vehicle storage shed 20, concrete blockwork foundations and plinth with corrugated sheeting above (2m scale)



22. View west along the passage between sheds 19 and 20



23. Former vehicle storage shed 20, north elevation



24. Former vehicle storage shed 20, detail of c.1950s MOD lamp



25. Former vehicle storage shed 20, west elevation (2m scale)



26. Former vehicle storage shed 20, west elevation (2m scale)



27. Shed 20, detail of gutter and drain pipe (2m scale)



28. Former vehicle storage shed 20, MOD fire exit south elevation (2m scale)



29. Former vehicle storage shed 20, south elevation



30. Former vehicle storage shed 20, east elevation



31. Iron cased flameproof telephone case designed for outdoor use



32. Detail of the telephone casing, manufactured by Ericsson and used by MOD



33. Buffers at the termination of the surviving railway siding (2m scale)



34. Railway siding with concrete sleepers, 1940s or 1950s (2m scale)



35. Convergence of two 1940s or 1950s railway sidings (2m scale)



36. Detail of timber rail sleepers



37. Railway siding switch mechanism



38. Concrete structure of unknown function, possibly associated with the railway siding or use of the site during World War II



39. Rear of concrete structure (see plate 38) with ironwork where something has been removed



40. Miscellaneous modern structures including a sub-station



41. Former vehicle storage shed 21, west elevation



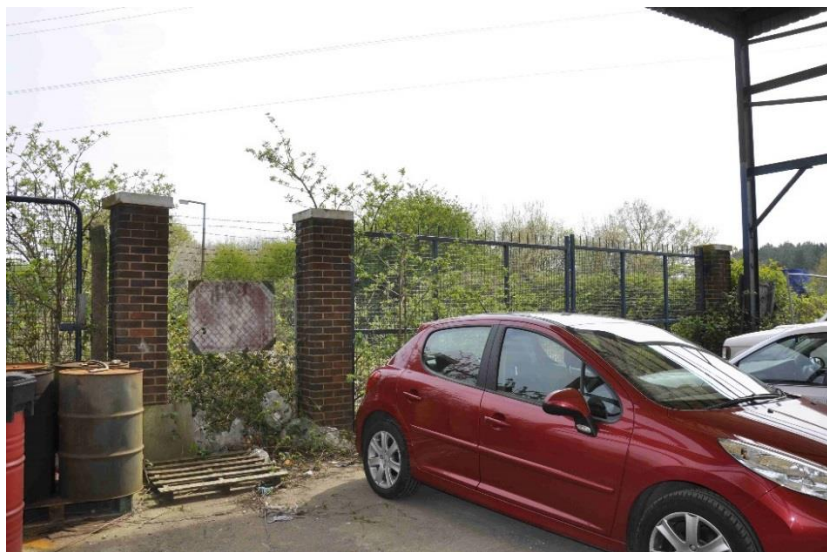
42. Former dog kennels, built 1970s



43. Former vehicle storage shed 21, north elevation



44. Former gatehouse with disused entrance and later structures



45. Brick gate piers, previously a vehicular and pedestrian access point



46. Concrete bollard, mid-20th century



47. Long distance views towards former vehicle storage shed 21



48. Former vehicle storage shed 21, north and east elevations



49. North elevation of shed 22 and south elevation of shed 21



50. Former vehicle storage shed 22, east elevation



51. MOD sign on former vehicle storage shed 22



52. Concrete post near former vehicle storage shed 22



53. Former vehicle storage shed 22, south elevation



55. Entrance to underground drain



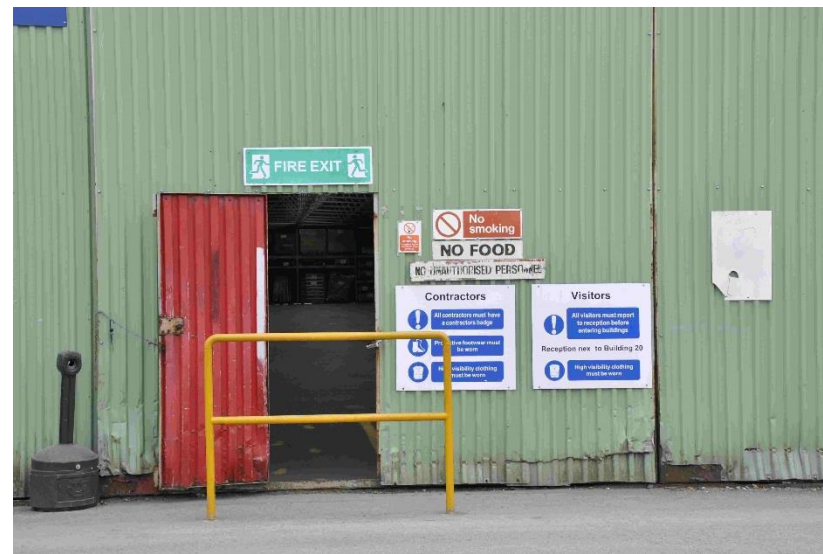
54. Concrete bases, possibly remains of a gantry for searchlights



56. Underground drain



57. Former vehicle storage shed 22, west elevation



58. Former vehicle storage shed 22, MOD fire exit on west elevation



59. Former vehicle storage shed 21, west elevation



60. Former vehicle storage shed 19, east elevation



61. Former vehicle storage shed 19, north elevation



62. Former vehicle storage shed 19, west elevation



63. Former vehicle storage shed 18, southeast corner



64. Former vehicle storage shed 18, detail of offices conversion, south elevation



65. Former vehicle storage shed 18, south elevation



66. Miscellaneous 1960s onwards buildings, formerly shower and WC blocks



67. Former REME workshop, built in the c.1980s, west elevation



68. Possible base for a former vehicular crane associated with MOD activities



69. Former vehicle storage shed 18, west elevation



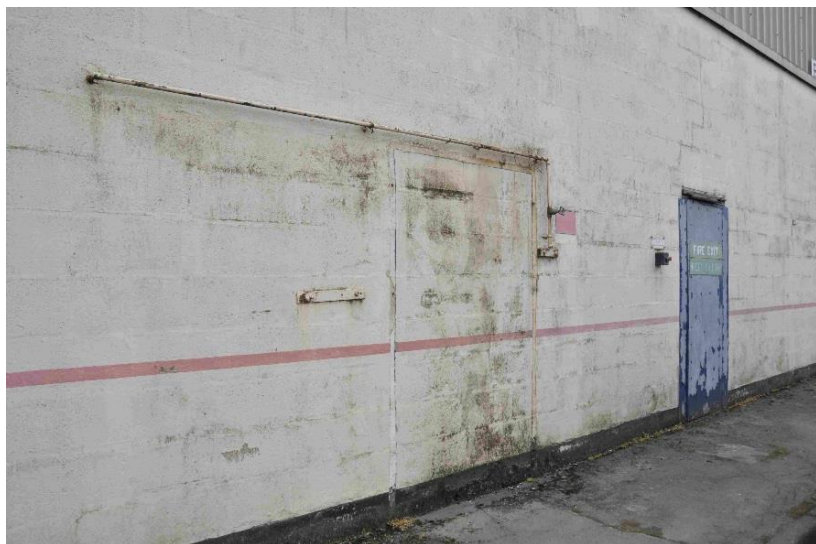
70. Former vehicle storage shed 18, north elevation



71. Former vehicle storage shed 18, north elevation, MOD gear



72. Former vehicle storage shed 18, north elevation, MOD water pipe and sign



73. Former vehicle storage shed 18, north elevation, blocked opening



74. Former agricultural sheds built by Aston Agriculture Limited



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