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# Erskine Barracks, The Avenue Wilton, Wiltshire

Historic Building Record and  
Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Planning Ref: S/2011/0517/OL 14/01828/DEM 13/04870/OUT  
Ref: 103650.02  
July 2014



**Erskine Barracks, The Avenue  
Wilton, Wiltshire**

**Historic Building Record and  
Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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**July 2014**


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## Quality Assurance

<b>Project Code</b>	103650	<b>Accession Code</b>		<b>Client Ref.</b>	
<b>Planning Application Ref.</b>	S/2011/0517/OL 14/01828/DEM 13/04870/OUT	<b>Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)</b>	410453, 131659		

<b>Version</b>	<b>Status*</b>	<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Checked and Approved By</b>	<b>Approver's Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
v01	I	GLW/RAD	GSC		11/07/14
File:	X:\PROJECTS\103650\WSI\103650\				
File:					
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\* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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# Erskine Barracks, The Avenue Wilton, Wiltshire

## Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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# Erskine Barracks, The Avenue Wilton, Wiltshire

## Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Redrow Homes Ltd to create a historic building record (English Heritage Level 1), and to carry out an archaeological watching brief prior to, and during, the demolition of the former MoD Erskine Barracks, The Avenue, Wilton, Wiltshire. The work was required as part of a planning condition placed on the redevelopment by Wiltshire County Council. The redevelopment works include the demolition of all of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of housing. The investigations were undertaken over a period of 13 days, intermittently between 31st March and 4th June 2014.

Five buildings were selected from the wider group for their style and design that best represented the sites development, particularly Post World War Two and Cold War architectural design. These were the Sergeants Mess, the Boiler House, Gymnasium and Fitness Centre, Arnham Block and the main Headquarters building. Level 1 record was made of each building and this included external digital photography and each building located on the overall existing site plan. A brief description was also made of the building design and materials used in their construction. The group of buildings selected varied in scale and form and included steel framed and concrete modular examples of large scale offices to utilitarian structures such as the well-lit boiler house. Other structures were constructed in brick with varying styles part reflecting classical proportions, more modern post war modernism and simple single story functional buildings.

The archaeological watching brief monitored the demolition of most of these recorded buildings as well as the removal of foundations of buildings and associated structures across the Site. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the area of the buildings foundations, which were generally substantial, up to a maximum of approximately 5m below present ground level. Made ground or heavily disturbed ground was recorded once shallow foundations were removed. Where deeper foundations were removed it is unclear whether the exposed 'natural' was redeposited or *in situ* weathered periglacial chalk with involution fill in hollows. Deep excavations could not be closely inspected because of health and safety constraints.

The observations of deep footings and of terraces indicate that there has been substantial landscaping of the natural sloping topography, likely 'cut and fill' across extensive areas of the Site where buildings were constructed. Where the buildings are densely clustered on the Site, particularly to the north of the railway line, the watching brief has demonstrated that the impact of the modern buildings will have likely removed any archaeological remains.

However, the area close to the southern boundary of the Site was not built upon and whilst there may be some localised ground disturbance in the area of the tennis courts and planting that exists, there may be some archaeological potential in this particular area of the Site.



# **Erskine Barracks, The Avenue Wilton, Wiltshire**

## **Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

### **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Redrow Homes Ltd for commissioning the work, in particular Andrew Dicker and Kyle King. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Clare King, Assistant County Archaeologist of Wiltshire County Council for advice during the course of the works. Wessex Archaeology are also grateful to the team of contractors of Wooldridge Demolition for their understanding and assistance during the investigations.

The watching brief was undertaken by Mike Dinwiddy, Susan Clelland and Piotr Orczewski. This report was compiled by Gail Wakeham (watching brief) and Bob Davis (building recording) with illustrations by Rob Goller. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Caroline Budd and Gareth Chaffey.





# Erskine Barracks, The Avenue Wilton, Wiltshire

## Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Redrow Homes Ltd (the Client) to undertake building recording and an archaeological watching brief prior to, and during, the demolition of the former MoD Erskine Barracks, The Avenue, Wilton, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 500360 170250 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 Erskine Barracks is a former MoD complex which has been derelict since the UK Land Forces (UKLF) relocated to Andover in 2010. On the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2013 outline planning consent was granted for the demolition of the existing structures and the construction of new housing (SL/2011/517/OL). This was subject to a condition (31), which stated that:

*No development shall commence until a written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and the approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

*REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.*

1.1.1 A separate application for the demolition of the existing structures was made in February this year (14/01828/DEM) which concluded that prior approval had already been granted under the previous application and subject to the previous conditions. Subsequently outline and full application has been made (13/04870/OUT) for the redevelopment of the Site and construction of 292 new houses, 40 retirement homes and associated infrastructure, which has yet to be determined.

1.1.2 Wiltshire Council and the Assistant County Archaeologist Clare King indicated that due to the historic and archaeological potential of the Site that a number of the buildings would merit basic building recording prior to their demolition. It was also stated that a watching brief be carried out during the demolition of buildings and the removal of their foundations as well as the removal of hard standings, ground slabs and underground tanks.

1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the investigations (Wessex Archaeology 2014, ref 103650.01) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology and submitted to, and approved by, WCC, prior to the start of fieldwork.

1.1.4 This document presents the results of the building recording and the archaeological watching brief which took place over 13 days, intermittently between 31st March and 4th June 2014.





## **1.2 Site location and description**

- 1.2.1 Erskine Barracks are situated just to the north-east of the town of Wilton and some 4km to the north-west of the centre of Salisbury. The Site comprises two areas of land divided by the Salisbury – Yeovil Railway line. The northern area comprises 9.65 hectares of land bounded by The Avenue to the north-west, residential housing to the north-east, arable land to the south-east and the railway to the south-west. The southern area comprises approximately 3.83 hectares and is bounded to the north-west by The Avenue, to the north-east by the railway, to the south-east by the residential housing and to the south-west by the A36.
- 1.2.2 The Site is currently extensively developed, with the former UKLF buildings still standing. These included the Headquarters' Building and other ancillary and residential blocks as well as areas of car parking and sport's fields. The southern area is less extensively developed, with the area adjacent to the A36 undeveloped.
- 1.2.3 The Site is located on the south-west facing slope of the Wylde Valley, lying between 98m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north and 55m aOD in the south.
- 1.2.4 The geology is recorded as the Seaford Chalk Formation overlain by river terrace deposits in the northern and southern extents of the Site.
- 1.2.5 Geotechnical borehole data indicated that clay deposits were encountered in all the boreholes with the top of the chalk bedrock encountered between 0.6-3.5m below the current ground level (bgl). Head deposits were identified in the southern area and within the southern edge of the northern area and an area adjacent to The Avenue. These deposits in the wider landscape have been identified as potentially containing Palaeolithic archaeological remains of national and international importance.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment detailing the archaeological and historical background was prepared to accompany the original planning application (Entec 2011). A summary of the main findings and conclusions is provided here.

### **2.2 Designations**

- 2.2.1 The Site is situated within an Area of Special Archaeological Importance and the southern boundary lies along the edge of Wilton Conservation Area.
- 2.2.2 Within 1.5km of the Site are 150 Listed Buildings concentrated within the historic core of Wilton, Quidhampton and Wilton Park. None lie within, or immediately adjacent to, the Site.
- 2.2.3 Two Scheduled Monuments lie within the 1.5km radius: the ruined church of St Mary and St Nicholas (list entry 1005637) which lies within the centre of Wilton some 500m to the south-west of Site; and a barrow within Wilton Park (list entry 1003039), some 1km to the south.
- 2.2.4 Wilton Park, which is located on the opposite side of the A36, is a Grade I Registered Park and Garden (list entry 1000440) associated with the Grade I Listed Wilton House (list entry 1023762).



## 2.3 Archaeological background

- 2.3.1 No previous archaeological investigations are known within the Site and the nearest work undertaken was at the Park and Ride site, some 200m to the west of the Site, where only an undated ditch is recorded (HER ref. MWI11353).
- 2.3.2 No evidence for early prehistoric activity is recorded within the 1.5km Study Area considered for the Site, though a concentration of Palaeolithic finds were located in a quarry site at Bemerton c.2km to the east of the Site (HER ref. MWI11080) and there are some isolated Mesolithic findspots recorded in the wider area. Head deposits were identified in geotechnical borehole data within the Site, in the southern area and within the southern edge of the northern area and an area adjacent to The Avenue. These deposits in the wider landscape have been identified as potentially containing Palaeolithic archaeological remains of national and international importance.
- 2.3.3 Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork has been recovered from the Study Area and a possible Late Bronze Age settlement was located near Camp Hill (HER ref. MWI11111), some 1.9km to the north of the Site. A number of barrow sites also lie within the Study Area indicating Neolithic or Bronze Age funerary activity.
- 2.3.4 Iron Age and Romano-British settlement has been identified at Camp Hill Reservoir (HER ref. MWI11118 and MWI11137) while possible Iron Age settlement and human remains have been recorded 600m to the east of the Site close to Quidhampton quarry (HER ref. MWI11121). Some of the undated cropmarks with the Study Area may represent Iron Age field systems associated with nearby settlement.
- 2.3.5 Wilton is known to have been a significant settlement by the end of the 8th century and may have been a local royal administrative centre even before this date. A royal palace complex near Kingsbury Square is documented in the 9th century. A mint is known to have existed in Wilton from at least 960AD (HER ref. MWI6561), though this was later relocated to Old Sarum, as this settlement grew in importance. A 5th century hanging bowl located in 1860 (HER ref. MWI6463), may also suggest early Saxon funerary activity in the area.
- 2.3.6 The Site itself is likely to have fallen within the rural hinterland of Wilton in the Saxon and medieval period and although a medieval settlement is recorded at Fugglestone in 1236 the exact extent of this is unknown, though it may have included the southern area of the Site. The Church of St Peter (list entry 1365906), which lies opposite the southern boundary of the Site dates to the 13th century while St Giles Hospital, which lay some 350m further to the east was founded in the 12th century. However, the Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment notes that fieldnames used in the late 17th and 18th century may suggest that the Site was largely open fields in the medieval period.
- 2.3.7 Wilton Abbey was originally established in the 8th century as a priory, becoming an abbey in the late 9th century. After the Dissolution the abbey and surrounding land were given to William Herbert, later Earl of Pembroke, who demolished the abbey and built a new residence. The present Wilton House is largely 17th century, rebuilt after a fire in 1647.
- 2.3.8 Andrew's and Dury's map of 1773 does not depict any buildings on the Site, though a track is shown running from the south-west to north-east of the Site. The first building shown on the Site is on John Seagrim's *Plan of Foughtleton Farm* (1789; Wiltshire Record Office (WRO ref. 1553/93). Here a structure is shown on the northern side of Salisbury Road while the farmhouse Foughtleton House and associated buildings are seen to the south of the road and east of the church.



- 2.3.9 By 1840 the former farmhouse is gone and a new Fugglestone Farmhouse built on the southern area of the Site, this arrangement is seen on the 1840 tithe map (WRO D/1/25/T/A/Fugglestone St Peter's) and a map published in 1843 (WRO 2057/P1/27).
- 2.3.10 The Great Western Railway line between Salisbury and Westbury was opened in 1856 and three years later the London & South-Western Railway opened parallel to this route. The railway lines, which lie below the level of the Site, divide the northern and southern areas of Site that were arable fields at this time.
- 2.3.11 Some troops were stationed around Wilton during the Great War (WWI) including a small hutment on Fair Field on the western side of the Avenue. The use of Wilton increased during the Second World War (WWII), with Fair Field becoming an area for the storage of military vehicles. Fugglestone Farmhouse became the focus of an army camp in 1940 with the farmhouse becoming the headquarters of Southern Command by the end of the year. The operational centre was later transferred to Wilton House but reverted back in 1949.
- 2.3.12 An aerial photograph from 1944, produced in the DBA, shows the southern and much of the northern area of the Site occupied by Nissen huts. Later photographs show that the re-adoption of the farmhouse as the Southern Command Headquarters coincided with the construction of a number of more permanent structures, including a number of the east – west blocks to the east of the main spine road.
- 2.3.13 The farmhouse was demolished by 1968 and the current Headquarters' Building constructed. Due to the continuing use of the Site a number of changes and alterations can be seen until its abandonment in 2010. The walkover survey conducted in conjunction with the Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment concluded that all the current standing structures post-dated the 1950s and mentioned the Headquarters' Building, Warrant Officers and Sergeant' Mess, Boiler House, Fitness Centre and Arnhem block as particularly warranting building recording.

## **2.4 Previous impacts on the potential buried archaeological resource**

- 2.4.1 The Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment noted that much of the Site had been terraced, with areas of the Site noticeably lower than the adjacent fields. However, it is also likely that while some areas have been truncated some may have been built up and the borehole logs do not made ground deposits in a number of locations which could indicate such activity. A watching brief carried out during the demolition works should help identify areas of potential as well as areas where previous impacts mean that any archaeological deposits have been removed.
- 2.4.2 The southern area of the Site is less densely developed and the southern edge in particular is clear of buildings. The Assistant County Archaeologist has indicated that an archaeological evaluation of this area may be required prior to full determination, particularly in light of the potential for head deposits which may contain evidence of early prehistoric activity. This will be a separate phase of archaeological investigation, subject to a separate WSI which will relate directly to the detailed planning application.

## **3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Aims and objectives**

- 3.1.1 The WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2014 ref 103650.01) set out the agreed aims of the project and the methods by which these aims would be achieved, in line with current IfA guidelines.



3.1.2 The aims of the project were:

- *To enable the preservation by record of any archaeological features, buildings or deposits uncovered or extant, and to establish the extent (where possible), date, character, relationship, condition and significance of surviving archaeological features, artefacts and deposits exposed by the demolition works;*
- *To identify areas where disturbance and truncation will have removed any archaeological remains as well as identifying any areas where archaeological potential and survival is greater;*
- *To place any identified archaeological remains within their archaeological and historical context; and*
- *To produce a report that will present the results of the fieldwork.*

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Building recording**

4.1.1 The recording was commensurate with the scope of a Level 1 record, as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings; a guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006a).

4.1.2 As set out in the guide, a Level 1 record is essentially a visual record, supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the buildings location, age and type. Level 1 survey usually consists of exteriors only.

4.1.3 The buildings identified as 'special interest' were:

- *Building 7 Sergeants Mess*
- *Building 10 Boiler House*
- *Building 16 Headquarters*
- *Building 17 Gymnasium and Fitness Centre*
- *Building 27 Arnham Block*

4.1.4 The building recording was carried out using a high-quality digital camera. General views, as well as close-ups, of any buildings thought to have particular cultural significance, and those thought to provide good examples of the history and architecture of the Site were taken. Field notes on building design, condition and location prior to demolition were also made.

4.1.5 In addition, any available plans of the layout of the surveyed buildings from existing archives were consulted and as appropriate are used in this report, summarising the known history of the buildings and placing them within their historical context.

4.1.6 A selection of the photographic record is used to illustrate this report with annotated plans showing the location of photographic plates. The full photographic record, together with copies of the plans and the photo gazetteer will be included in the site archive.



## 4.2 Watching brief

- 4.2.1 The watching brief monitored the demolition of the existing buildings, in particular the removal of foundations, hard-standings and underground tanks. This was undertaken by at least one experienced archaeologist subject to the number of site operations being undertaken at any one time.
- 4.2.2 Where possible, mechanical excavation was undertaken using a toothless bucket and under archaeological monitoring. If potential archaeological features and/or deposits were uncovered they were investigated by hand, with any necessary recording and sampling undertaken.

## 4.3 Recording

- 4.3.1 Any encountered archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, with all features and deposits being assigned a unique context number. A full graphic record was maintained, with plans and sections produced at a scale of 1:20 and 1:10, where appropriate. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels will be calculated, with plans and sections annotated with OD heights. The location of features was accurately surveyed by GPS and tied into the OS National Grid.
- 4.3.2 A full photographic record was maintained using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. This illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features and the site as a whole. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

## 4.4 Health and Safety

- 4.4.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 4.4.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The building survey and archaeological watching brief was undertaken over a period of 13 days, intermittently between 31st March and 4th June 2014.

### 5.2 Building Survey

- 5.2.1 Buildings are numbered or named according to their prefix given to them by the MoD.

#### **Building 7 Sergeants Mess**

- 5.2.2 This building was located in the north-east part of the site (**Figure 1, plates 1-5**). Originally built to a symmetrical plan, with projecting central entrance portico and gabled tower, the building now forms an irregular plan orientated north-west to south-east. The original core of the building was two-storey with shallow pitched and hipped roof covered with concrete interlocking tiles. The original frontage, facing south-west, was articulated by regular two-storey side wings either side of the projecting central entrance tower. The fenestration consisted of paired casement windows with vented and glazed panels.



- 5.2.3 The building was constructed from red clay bricks laid in Flemish garden wall bond. The central tower was also constructed in brick, with two-storey concrete moulded framing projecting slightly from the plane of the tower. The ground floor main entrance consisted of recessed double doors and glazed side and over panels set in a plain metal door frame. At first floor level there was a cantilevered and curved balcony with double door entrance from the recessed interior. The balcony had a curved iron handrail consisting of plain square sectioned balusters fitted directly to the concrete balcony. Above the balcony a panelled clock face sat just below the tower gable, and above this, the eaves level was highlighted by darker, blue coloured bricks and red brick decorative vertical coursing.
- 5.2.4 The rear of the original core of the building was plainer as one would expect, the fenestration was simpler by comparison to the front with only single casements and top vented windows used. Some of the windows were 'frosted' indicating internal ablution areas. The rear of the tower was glazed over two-storeys; this was to provide natural light to what was the main central staircase. From this internal central hub, the two wings of the building could be accessed via a central corridor running the length of the two wings. The north-west end may have been extended at some point as it projected slightly from the main axis of the building.
- 5.2.5 The building had also been extended to the east and south-west with a mixture of single storey flat roof and two-storey shallow pitched roof structures.

#### **Building 10 Boiler house**

- 5.2.6 This building was located close to the north-east boundary and on the east side of Building 7 (**Figure 1, Plates 6-8**). A tall utilitarian structure consisting of red brick construction with the main part of the building on a rectangular plan. The south facing elevation consisted of a large white glazed panel with three rows of windows set in, what appeared to be, UPVC framing.
- 5.2.7 The plan form at the east end was punctuated by an elevated rectangular tower located centrally down the pitched roof. The pitched roof was covered with red concrete interlocking tiles. The north side of the building had a similar glazed panel to the south side but, also a low brick building with flat roof. Extending up through this low building were three insulated metal flues. The boilers within the building were fed with fuel oil stored in large tanks.

#### **Building 16 Headquarters**

- 5.2.8 This large building comprised several co-joined buildings built around three sides of a partly enclosed courtyard. The courtyard was open to the west and the buildings were constructed in such a way as to form a connected complex of offices which formed the main headquarters of the barracks. It was located on the east side of The Avenue and up against the west side of the barracks boundary (**Figure 1**). This group of buildings comprised several styles and types, each reflecting a different phase of extension and addition.
- 5.2.9 The original part of the building would appear to have been situated along the south-west facing and south-east facing sides (**Plates 9-11**). This consisted of two rectangular flat roofed wings, one parallel to the main entrance gate and one located at the east end and perpendicular to the first. Constructed from a ferro-concrete square frame with curtain walls of pre-fabricated glazed panels over four floors. An under-pass for vehicular access passed under the eastern wing and gave access into the west courtyard.





- 5.2.10 Due to the sloping ground, many of the buildings were constructed on terraces, in the case of the east wing of the headquarters building, this meant that its south end projected out of the ground and had cantilevered upper floors.
- 5.2.11 The later extensions consisted of three main parts, a north extension consisting of two structures (**Plate 12**), a centre, free standing building (**Plate 13**) and a south building located on the north side of the original south wing (**Plate 14**).
- 5.2.12 The north extension bounded the large courtyard and consisted of two-storey flat roofed offices. Ferro-concrete frames formed the structural core of the buildings and large non-weight bearing glazed panels and wooden cladding. This provided both room and light into the office interior. The west end of this extension appeared to be of a later phase of construction and had a modern profiled roof clad in metal sheeting. Of similar style to the other north extension, this building was also of steel frame construction and part clad in red brick.
- 5.2.13 The centre extension was built over the original courtyard and consisted of a two-storey pre-fabricated steel and concrete frame. The outer walls were clad in pre-fabricated concrete panels on top of a brick plinth with plain windows. The roof was shallow pitched roof covered in concrete interlocking tiles.
- 5.2.14 The south extension was possibly built first and consisted of a single storey building, rectangular in plan. It was constructed from steel and concrete frames and clad in decorative stone. Large glazed windows provided natural light to the interior. The shallow pitched roof was covered in profiled metal sheeting.

#### **Building 17 Fitness centre**

- 5.2.15 This building was located mid-way along the east boundary of the northern half of the barracks (**Figure 1**). A mixed building of several different styles and designs (**Plates 15-16**), largely consisting of single storey elements conjoined to form sports and fitness halls. Perhaps key among these elements is the southern side of the building (**Plate 16**). This purpose designed hall was founded on a brick built under-storey with a pre-fabricated steel and concrete cantilevered frame on top.
- 5.2.16 The large glazed panels set between the steel columns allowed the maximum amount of natural light to illuminate the interior. It has a flat roof which highlighted and articulated the square, robust proportions.
- 5.2.17 The other elements were less stimulating architecturally. Simple brick elevations with large glazed panels and additional window tiles above articulated with less impression (**Plate 17**).

#### **Building 27 Arnham block**

- 5.2.18 This building was located in the south-east corner of the north half of the site (**Figure 1**) and represented a large rectangular building with a flat roof. Constructed from red brick laid in stretcher bond. The south-west facing elevation had a series of casement windows providing light to the interior (**Plate 18**). At the time of the survey the building housed the Chapel.





### 5.3 Watching Brief

- 5.3.1 The watching brief monitored the demolition of most of the recorded standing buildings, with particular attention to monitoring the removal of building footings across the Site and other associated below-ground impacts.
- 5.3.2 No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the archaeological watching brief.
- 5.3.3 The depth of foundations varied from building to building but was generally deep, up to a maximum of approximately 5m deep, as indicated in the table below (the numbered location of the buildings is shown in **Figure 1**):

Building number	Approximate depth of foundations (metres below ground level)
7	1.75
16	5.0
19	1.5
52	1.75
53	1.0+ deeper basement
54	1.0
56	5.0

**Table 1: A selection of buildings showing approximate depth of foundations**

- 5.3.4 Where such deep foundations were exposed (**Plates 19 - 21**), it was not possible to closely inspect the excavations because access was not permitted due to health and safety considerations being paramount. The substantial nature of many of these foundations also meant that the demolition contractor used toothed buckets, therefore not leaving a clean sections or surfaces. Both of these factors were constraints on the watching brief.
- 5.3.5 It is therefore impossible to state whether the 'natural' deposits seen in the sides of the deep excavations where the footings had been removed was re-deposited natural from the creation of the terraces (see below) or *in situ* weathered periglacial chalk with involution fill in hollows (**Plate 21**). However, the important point is that no archaeological features or deposits were observed in these excavations. Beneath shallower foundations, the only deposits exposed were made ground or very heavily disturbed ground (**Plate 22**).
- 5.3.6 Terraces were observed in the north of the Site (**Plate 23**). The presence of these terraces indicate that there was substantial landscaping of the Site, with likely 'cut and fill' at the time of the barracks construction in the mid-20th century.
- 5.3.7 Following an on-site meeting with Claire King (Assistant County Archaeologist WCC) on 4th June 2014, it was decided that the northern area of the Site (north of the railway line) held no further archaeological potential because of the impact of the substantial foundations and that the watching brief should focus on the removal of concrete slabs and foundations in the southern part of the Site (south of the railway line).
- 5.3.8 The removal of several building footings in the southern part of the Site was also observed, including the western gate-house (**Plate 23**) and the large southernmost building on the Site (**Plate 24**). Again, no archaeological deposits or features were observed in the area of the buildings here.



## **6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE**

6.1.1 No artefacts were recovered during the investigations.

## **7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

7.1.1 No archaeological deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

## **8 DISCUSSION**

8.1.1 The selected building recording has met the aims of the project by ensuring preservation by record. The buildings that were recorded represented, arguably, the best examples of mid-20th century military architecture within the Site. As with many government establishments, Erskine Barracks was typical of Post War development and design. Far from being a mediocre group where functionality was paramount during the Cold War years, some of the buildings attempted to incorporate style and design to a greater or lesser degree.

8.1.2 The Sergeants Mess, for example, invoked 'homage' to classical styling with a symmetrical frontage incorporating central projection and pediment gable. Only later, when the building was extended was this classical style corrupted by the need to expand.

8.1.3 The Boiler House, a utilitarian structure, constructed with only practicality in mind, was also given styling and design that was not only practical, with large glazed windows, but also, a striking profiled roof line.

8.1.4 On more modest a scale, the single story Arnham Block was, arguably, the less challenging in its design. However, selected, as it was, for a typical example of the flexible nature of its build. This building was, and could be, turned to many uses, reflecting the MOD's approach and needs. At the time of the survey the building was used as a Chapel, proving the flexibility of the internal space.

8.1.5 The Fitness Centre, a rather eclectic group, perhaps contained the most striking of all of the Post War design. Reflecting a modernism in its wide glazed façade which seemed to 'float' above a recessed plinth. Proof, if needed, of the Post-War attempt at mixing practical internal space with external impression.

8.1.6 Perhaps, the most striking example of Cold War design was the Headquarters Building. An impressive example of brutal modernism. The original plan form was set into the slope of the ground, reflecting the need to fit the landscape to the building. With this in mind, the ground was heavily terraced, producing the effect of 'over-engineered' foundations recorded during the watching brief. In modern terms, development is seen to fit into the landscape, this was not so at that time. What was formed was an architectural imposition of function over sympathetic style.

8.1.7 However, what was formed provided an impressive display of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century modular built. The repetition of modules enabled the design to be extended to form functional internal space, and by default, the stark facades so typical of this style of building. This style was only compromised by the later extensions and additions to the building, which created a rather disparate collection of structures with little conformity and a variation of style driven by the need to accommodate more people.



- 8.1.8 The archaeological watching brief monitored the demolition of most of these recorded buildings and the removal of foundations of buildings and associated structures across the Site. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the area of the buildings foundations, which were generally substantial, up to a maximum of approximately 5m below present ground level. Made ground or heavily disturbed ground was recorded where shallow foundations were removed and where deeper foundations were removed it is unclear whether the exposed 'natural' was redeposited or in situ weathered periglacial chalk with involution fill in hollows, as the deep excavations could not be closely inspected because of health and safety constraints.
- 8.1.9 The observations of deep footings and of terraces indicate that there was substantial landscaping of the natural sloping topography, likely 'cut and fill' across the Site where buildings were constructed. And where the buildings are densely clustered on the Site, particularly to the north of the railway line, the watching brief has demonstrated that the impact of the modern buildings will have likely removed any archaeological remains.
- 8.1.10 However, the area close to the southern boundary of the Site was not built upon and whilst there may be some localised ground disturbance in the area of the tennis courts and planting that exists, there may be some archaeological potential in this particular area of the Site.

## **9 STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **9.1 Archive**

- 9.1.1 The complete archaeological archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; IfA 2009; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 9.1.2 All archive elements will be marked with the project site code, museum accession number (if known – see below); and a full index will be prepared. The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the project code **103650**.
- 9.1.3 It should be noted that the Wiltshire Museum Service is not currently accepting archives therefore alternative arrangements will be sought. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.
- 9.1.4 In the absence of a recipient museum, the archive will be retained at Wessex Archaeology Head Office, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6EB for a period of three months beyond the completion of all works associated with this project. Thereafter, the archive will be returned to the landowner for appropriate storage. If no such storage facility is available, Wessex Archaeology can continue to hold the archive for a nominal monthly storage fee (£2 per archive item per month), though it must be noted that Wessex Archaeology is not a certified and approved archive storage facility, and cannot provide a temperature/ humidity controlled storage environment.

### **9.2 OASIS project reporting**

- 9.2.1 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded pdf version of this report.



## 9.1 Discard policy

- 9.1.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. Any discard of artefacts will be fully documented in the project archive.
- 9.1.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002).

## 9.2 Security Copy

- 9.2.1 In line with current best practice (Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of a PDF/A file; PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

## 9.3 Copyright

- 9.3.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.
- 9.3.2 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

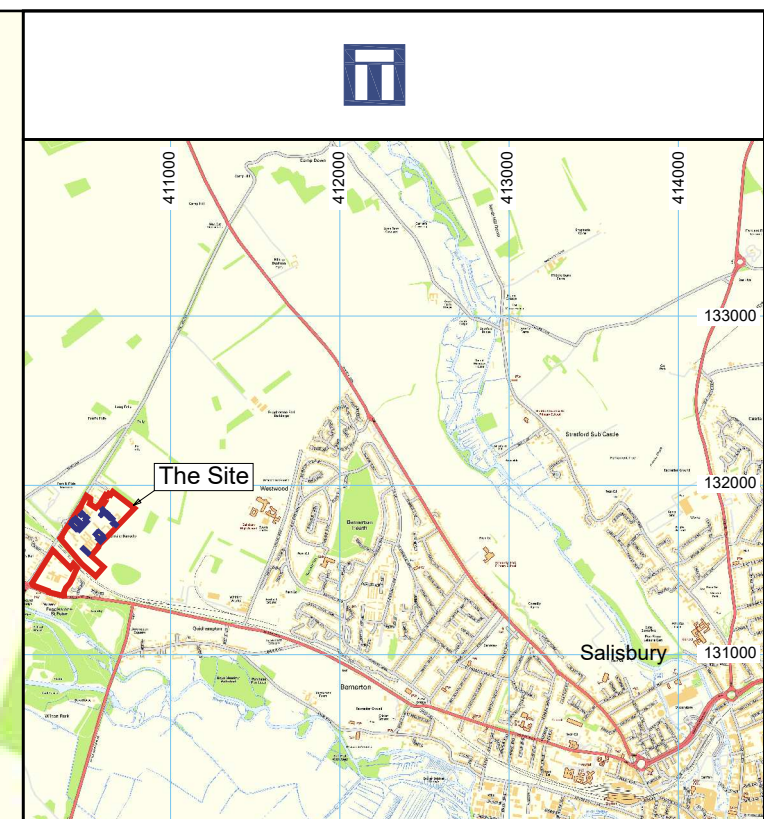
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- Site boundary
- Recorded building
- ← 4 Number and direction of Plate
- Areas of archaeological monitoring

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Site location plan

Figure 1





Plate 1: Building 7 Sergeants Mess viewed from south-east



Plate 2: Building 7 Sergeants Mess viewed form south-west


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Plate 3: Building 7 Sergeants Mess main entrance



Plate 4: Building 7 Sergeants Mess viewed from east


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Plate 5: Building 7 Sergeants Mess viewed from north-west



Plate 6: Building 10 Boiler house viewed from south


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Plate 7: Building 10 Boiler house viewed from east



Plate 8: Building 10 Boiler house viewed from west


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Plate 9: Building 16 Headquarters viewed from south-west



Plate 10: Building 16 Headquarters viewed from south


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Plate 11: Building 16 Headquarters viewed from east



Plate 12: Building 16 Headquarters north extensions viewed from south-west


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Plate 13: Building 16 Headquarters centre extension viewed from north



Plate 14: Building 16 Headquarters south extension viewed from east


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Plate 15: Building 17 Fitness centre west entrance viewed from south



Plate 16: Building 17 Fitness centre viewed from south-west


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Plate 17: Building 17 Fitness centre south elevation



Plate 18: Building 27 Arnham block

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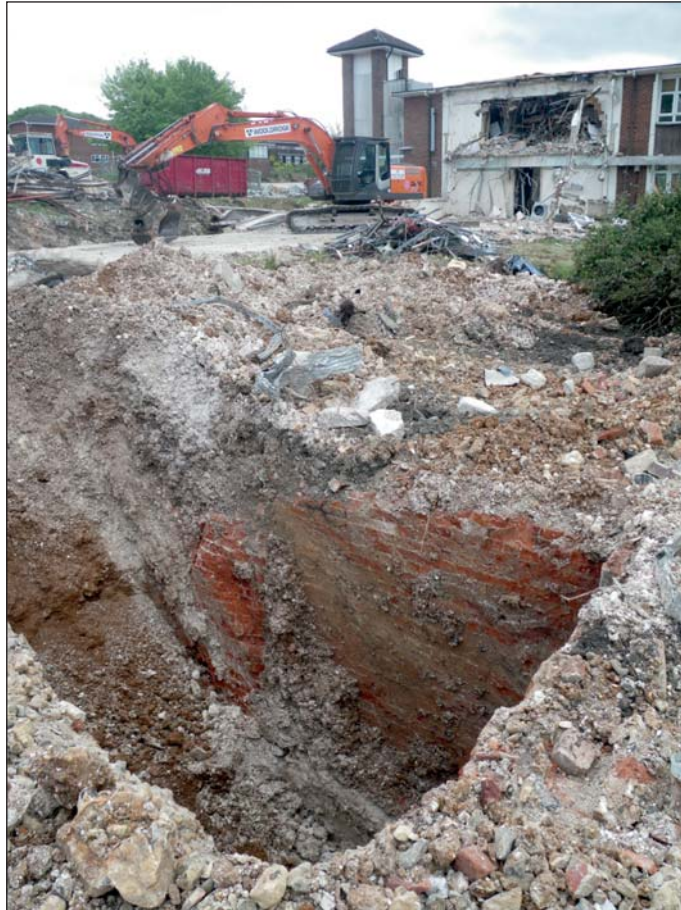


Plate 19: Basement/cellar wall beneath building 16



Plate 20: Deep excavation of substantial foundations of building 73


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Plate 21: Deep excavation following removal of substantial foundation of building 56



Plate 22: Removal of drainage in area of gatehouse building showing made ground


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Plate 23: View to south-east along terrace to the north of building 7/south of building 55



Plate 24: View to west showing demolition of southernmost building and associated surfaces

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