



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD

ON

BLOCK 6, LAMBOURN BUSINESS PARK,

LAMBOURN WOODLANDS, HUNGERFORD RG17 7RU

NGR SU 32134 76211

NOVEMBER 2020

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Block 6, Lambourn Business Park

Historic Building Record

SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out a historic building recording of Block 6, Lambourn Business Park, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford, Berkshire (SU 32134 76211).

The building originated as part of RAF Membury Airfield, a dispersed airfield camp with 12 sites, established in 1942 as a bomber operational training unit at Lambourn Woodlands. The main site was surrounded by 11 dispersed sites, including the communal site, instructional site and W.A.A.F site. The study building is situated at the airfield's former communal site and was the airfield's gymnasium and chapel.

The building comprises three units of different size, arranged longitudinally; The northern two buildings are brick built structures dating to WWII, while the southern building is a post-war addition, built of concrete block. The original WWII structures, here designated buildings A and B, were built as a combined gymnasium and chapel in 1942. The plan of both buildings has not been altered significantly, however of the original fittings and fixtures few survive. These are limited to the longitudinal RSJ, from which ropes could be hung, located in the gymnasium and a series of original metal windows, located in both buildings.

The later southern building is a post-war addition; however, the roof structure and several windows appear to have been re-used from a wartime structure.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origins of the Report

This report is a record Block 6, Lambourn Business Park, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford (SU 32134 76211). The report was requested by Indigo Planning on behalf of Junction 14 LLP.

An application has been submitted to West Berkshire Council for Demolition of existing building and erection of an identical facsimile replacement building, plus associated works of construction (**20/01420/COMIND**). A condition relating to the recording of the existing building is proposed:

No demolition/ site works/ development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved statement.

Reason: To ensure that an adequate record is made of these buildings of architectural, historical or archaeological interest.

Such an approach is in line with paragraph **199** of the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework. The level of recording necessary is in line with Historic England guidelines as set out in the Historic England document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (HE 2016). The requirements and methodology for recording were set out in Written Schemes of Investigation by John Moore Heritage Services (2020).

1.2 Location and Description

The site is located in the civil parish of Lambourn, in the West Berkshire district of Berkshire (centred NGR SU 32134 76211). Block 6 forms part of Lambourn Business Park, located at the former Communal site of RAF Membury Airfield, a temporary airfield established in 1942. The site is accessed off Ermin Street by a minor road and comprises a series of wartime buildings, now under mixed light industrial and office use. To the north and east, the site is bounded by woodland, while to the south and west are fields, currently in pasture.

1.3 Geology and Topography

The site is situated on a moderate southwest facing slope on the eastern side of a dry valley between 200 and 210m AOD. The underlying geology is Seaford Chalk Formation, a sedimentary Bedrock of the Cretaceous Period; this is overlain by superficial deposits of the Clay-with-flints Formation, clay, silt, sand and gravel formed in the Quaternary and Neogene Periods (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

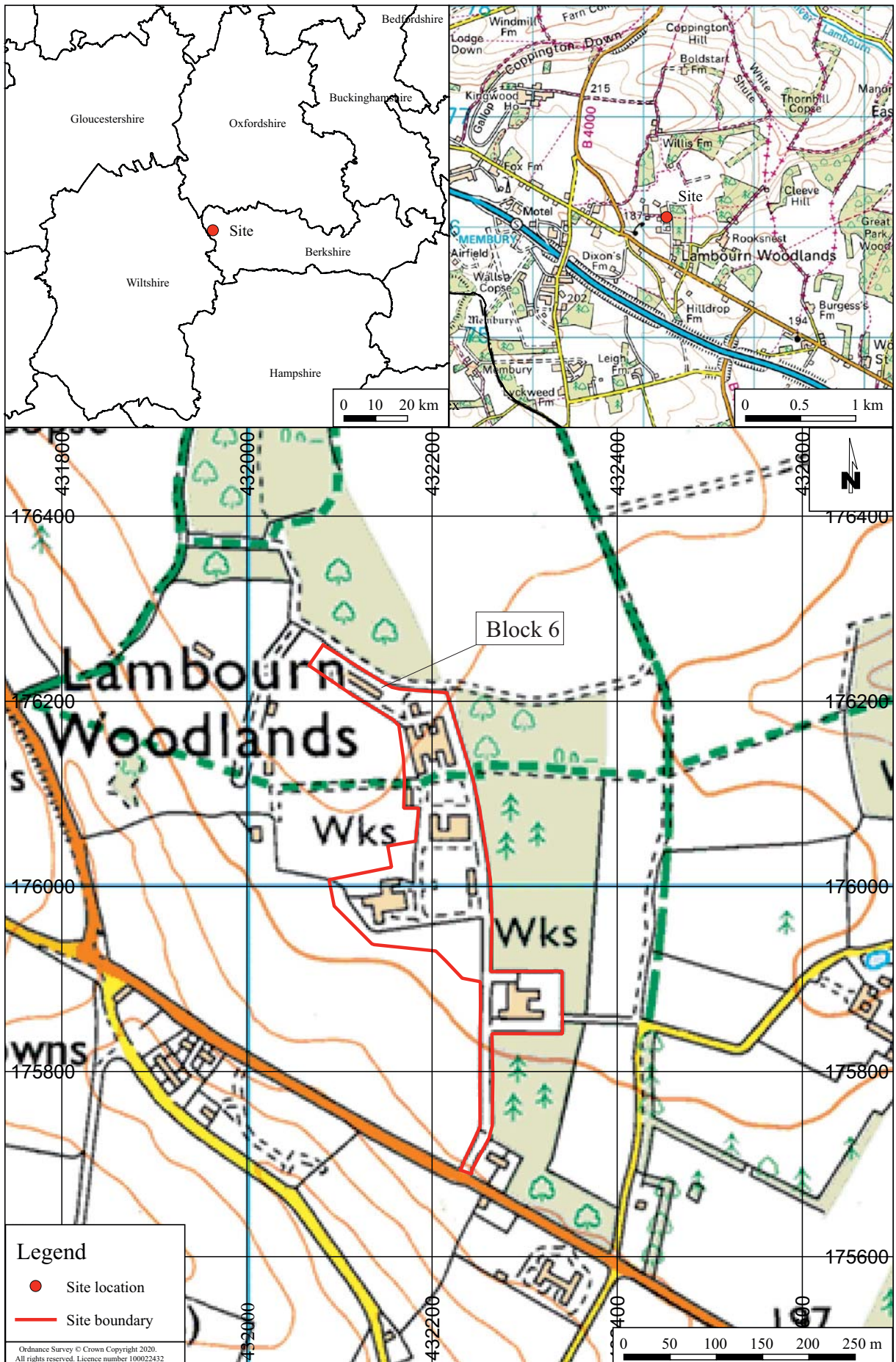


Figure 1: Site location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

- 2.1 To undertake a Level 3 (analytical) building survey (Historic England 2016) of the existing building so that the origin and any subsequent development of the building is recorded as part of the overall site's historic record.
- 2.2 Prepare plans and elevations of the existing, or annotate existing plans and elevations, and photographically identify and record any structural features or relationships.
- 2.3 To produce a written account of the building.

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS 2020) agreed with the Senior Planning Archaeologist of West Berkshire District. The format and contents of the report are an adaptation of the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidance paper for Heritage Impact Assessments, Historic Building Recording or Desk-based Assessments (CIfA 2020). The format of the report is adapted from a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard Guidance* paper (CIfA 2020).

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Heritage Background

RAF Membury Airfield, a dispersed airfield camp with 12 sites was established in 1942 as a bomber operational training unit at Lambourn Woodlands. The base was first used by the 3rd Photographic and the 67th Observation Groups, the reconnaissance unit of the USAAF Eighth Air Force Ground Air Support Command. The main site was surrounded by 11 dispersed sites, including the communal site, instructional site and W.A.A.F site. The base was transferred back to the RAF in 1945 and later sold to private owners. The main airfield, truncated by the M4 motorway in 1971, is now used for light industrial purposes primarily based around aircraft maintenance (<http://www.ramsburyatwar.com/memburyairfield.htm> and <https://lambourn.org/ww11-and-lambourn-area-membury-airfield/> accessed 20/22/2020). The study building is situated at the former site 2, the airfield's communal site. When in use, the communal site contained 34 buildings and structures including messes for officers and sergeants, dining rooms, a gymnasium, toilet facilities, shops for groceries, rations, barbers and a fuel compound. Of the original 34 buildings 10 are extant in some form at the present day, these are: the officer's mess, now known as Block 8, the sergeants' mess, now known as Block 9, the institute, now known as Block 2, the ration store, now known as Block 5, the dining room, now known as Block 1, the gymnasium and chapel, now known as Block 6 (the study building), the airmen's ablutions, the sergeants' and airmen's ablutions, the standby set-house and the grocery and provision store, now known as Block 3.

On the 1944 site plan the Gymnasium (building A below) and Chapel (building 170 on figure 2; building B below) comprised two interlinked buildings aligned north-west – south-east. The building is located at the northern end of the communal site, slightly apart from the other buildings. The Gymnasium and Chapel, as the name suggests, served a dual function. The gymnasium was used as an indoor sports hall and contained

features such as a central RSJ that ran the length of roof from which climbing ropes were suspended, three-section wall bars, fixing plates for horizontal bars, sockets for boxing-ring standards and rifle racks. Externally the southern side of the gymnasium was lined with rooms used as stores and changing rooms. The chapel extension comprised a chancel and Roman Catholic chapel; this allowed the gym hall to be converted into the nave of a church, with the extension acting as the chancel (Francis 1996, p.199-201).

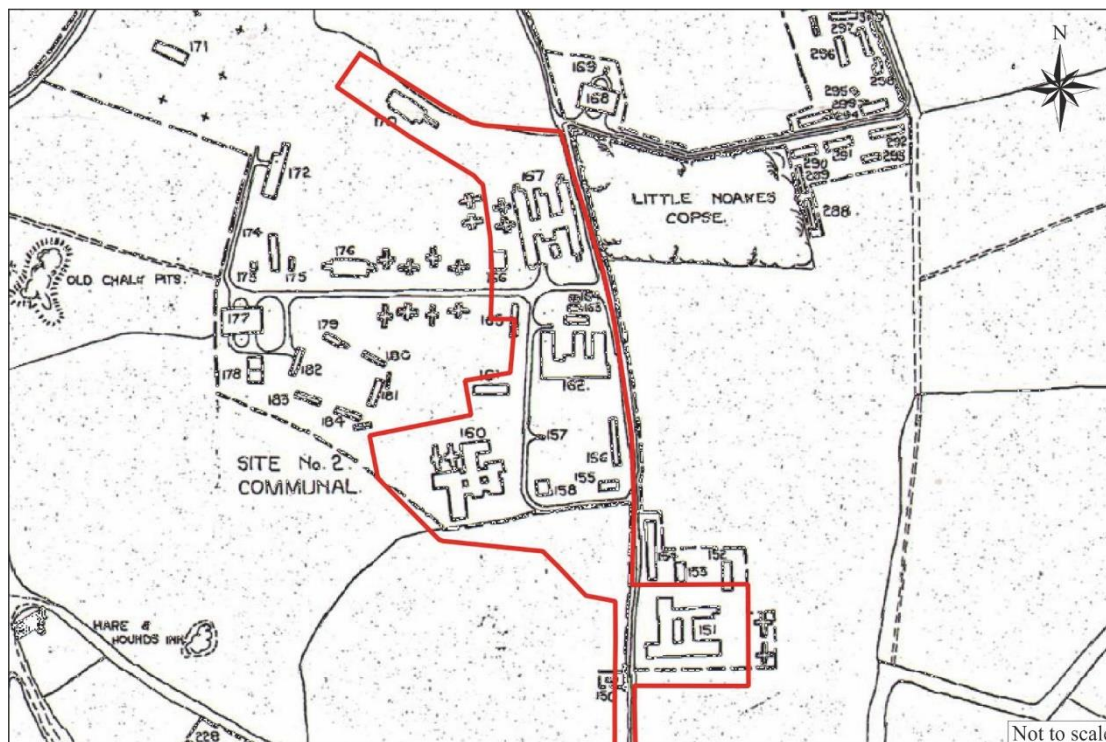


Figure 2: Plan of RAF Membury dispersed sites, 1944; block 6 (building 170) is located to the north-west (Air Ministry: Drawing 4495/44).

4 DESCRIPTION OF BLOCK 6

4.1 Introduction and General Description

The building comprises three units of different size, arranged longitudinally; these are described below as A, B and C. The northern two buildings (A and B) are of brick, while the southern building is of concrete block; all are clad in cement render. There are external brick buttresses located at regular intervals along each elevation of the two northern buildings (A and B). Each roof is gabled and clad in corrugated asbestos sheeting. Internally the roof structure throughout is formed from light steel, each truss comprising a tie beam and rafters with struts. These comprise lengths of flat steel bolted together.

4.2 External Elevations (Figure 3)

North east elevation

Building C makes up the eastern end of the north east elevation (Plate 1). A metal framed window is set into the elevation to the west of a metal double door that extends

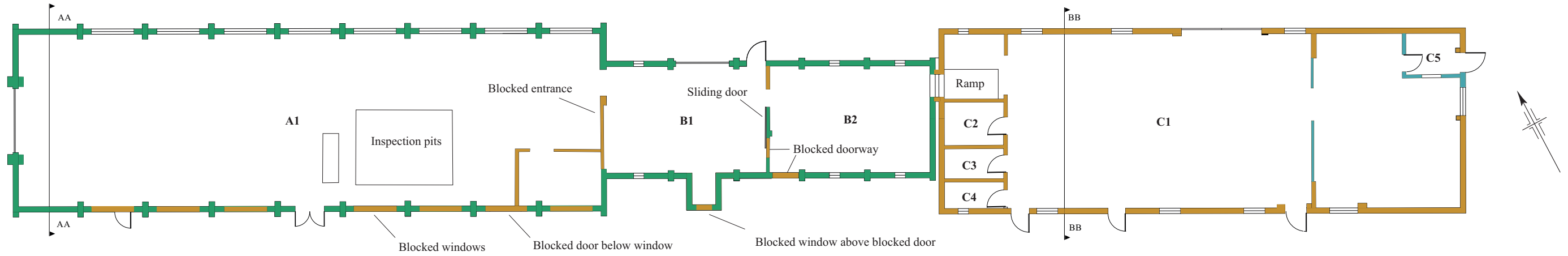
the full height of the wall. To the east are a further three metal windows. A slight gap is present between buildings C and B. The north eastern elevation of building B is divided into five panels by five brick buttresses (Plate 1, Plate 2). Located centrally in the first, second and fifth panels are metal windows; the third panel contains a metal door, positioned off centre, while the fourth panel contains a metal roller door. The north eastern elevation of building A is of similar construction (Plate 3); the elevation is divided into nine panels by ten brick buttresses. Between each panel, except the most westerly, is a metal window positioned just below the eaves.



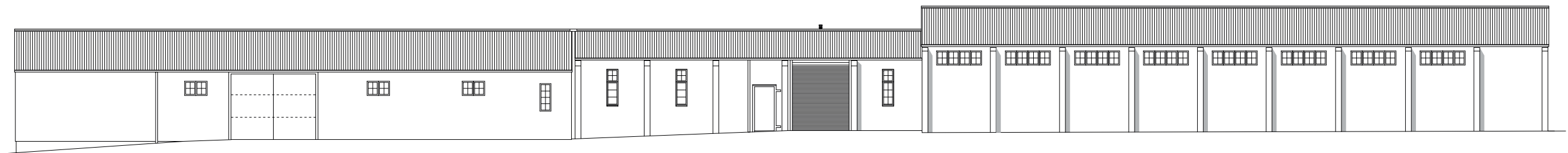
Plate 1: North east elevation, buildings B and C. Looking south.



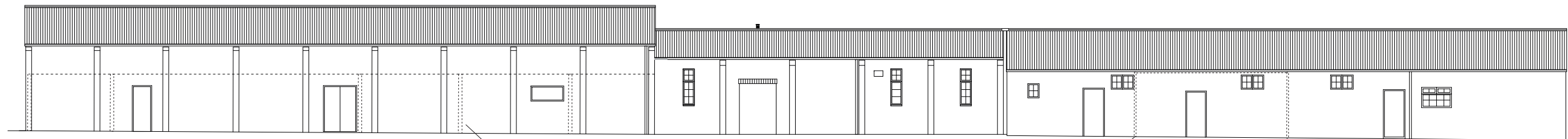
Plate 2: North east elevation, buildings A and B. Looking west.



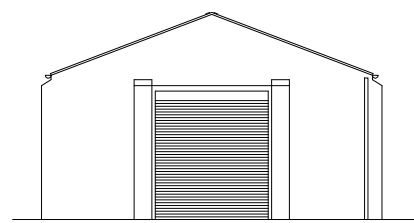
PLAN OF BLOCK 6



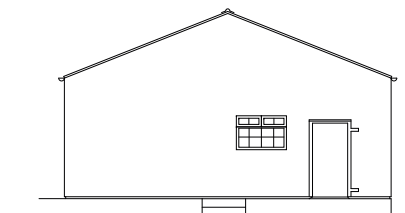
NORTH EAST ELEVATION



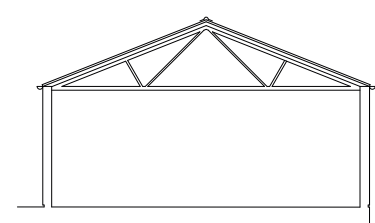
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



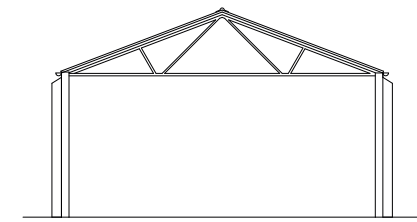
NORTH WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



SECTION AA



SECTION BB

Phase: ■ WWII ■ Post-WWII 1 ■ Post-WWII 2

0 *Plan and Elevations* 10 m
1:200

Figure 3: Block 6; external elevations and internal plans



Plate 3: North east elevation, building A. Looking south east.

South west elevation

Building A forms the northern end of the south west elevation (Plate 4). The elevation is similarly divided into nine panels by ten brick buttresses. A doorway is present in the second panel, located slightly off centre; a double doorway is located in the fifth panel, while a modern window has been inserted into the eighth panel. There is evidence that a lean-to structure was formerly located against the elevation: wall scars are present in five places along the elevation; each buttress is notched at the same height, consistent with the removal of a roof structure; above this point the wall is rendered in concrete while below it is painted brick.



Plate 4: South west elevation, building A. Looking north

Building B is also divided into five panels by five brick buttresses (Plate 5). Metal windows are located centrally within the first, fourth and fifth panels; a small brick built

porch with a corrugated asbestos sheet roof extends from the second panel. A small gap is present between buildings B and C (Plate 6); the south western elevation of building C contains four metal windows (Plate 7); three are arranged at a regular height and interval while the northern most is situated at a lower height. A modern window is present at the southern end of the elevation and three doorways, each containing a metal door, are located at semi-regular intervals along the elevation. Wall scars are also evident here, indicating that a lean-to structure formerly encompassed the central door and window.



Plate 5: South west elevation, building B. Looking east.



Plate 6: South west elevation, showing gap between buildings B and C. Looking north east



Plate 7: South west elevation, building C. Looking north.

North west elevation

The north west elevation is the northern gable end of building A (Plate 8). The elevation comprises a metal roller door flanked by two buttresses that extends to the level of the eaves.



Plate 8: North west elevation, building A. Looking south east

South east elevation

The south east elevation is the southern gable end of building C (Plate 9), and contains the main entrance. The elevation is accessed by way of a set of modern concrete and brick steps and contains a metal doorway and modern PVC window, positioned to the right of centre.



Plate 9: South east elevation, building C. Looking north.

4.3 Interior

Building A

Room A1 is accessed from the north-west through a modern metal roller door (Plate 10). The room is open to the roof and eight roof trusses are visible; the corrugated asbestos roof is supported on wooden purlins and a RSJ runs the length of the room just below the apex of the roof. Each truss rests upon a brick buttress and a series of tube lights are suspended from the purlins. The floor is concrete and contains two modern automotive inspection pits. With the exception of the most northerly panel, each panel of the north eastern wall contains an original metal window, located centrally just below the roof; these comprise two top hung casements of two panes over two positioned either side of two fixed light windows, also of two panes over two.



Plate 10: Building A, northern end. Looking north west.



Plate 11: Building A, southern end. Looking south east

The south western wall is brick (Plate 11); an entrance on the northern side leads to building B. This entrance has been partially blocked with concrete blocks. The south western wall contains eight blocked windows, mirroring the position of those on the north eastern wall (Plate 12). A blocked doorway is also present in the most southerly panel but one. Two doorways, each containing a modern wooden door, are present in the second and fifth wall panels consecutively. A modern concrete block partition is located in the south east corner of the room.



Plate 12: Building A, showing blocked windows and RSJ in roof structure. Looking west

Building B

Room B1 of Building B is accessed from the north-west through an open doorway, formed from concrete blocks that have been used to narrow an earlier entrance (Plate 13). The room is open to the roof and two steel trusses are visible; the roof is clad in plasterboard or asbestos sheeting, from which tube lighting is suspended. The floor is concrete. The concrete block partition forms the north western wall.



Plate 13: Room B1, north western wall. Looking north west.



Plate 14: Room B1, north eastern wall. Looking north.

The north eastern wall comprises two and a half panels, formed by two brick buttresses. A historic metal window is situated centrally in the northern panel (Plate 14). This comprises a top hung casement of two panes over two, situated over a fixed light of two panes over three. The central panel is occupied by a hand operated roller door, flanked by two concrete block buttresses. The southern half panel contains a modern metal door.



Plate 15: Room B1, south eastern wall. Looking south east.

The south eastern wall is an original brick partition between rooms B1 and room B2 (Plate 15). A later entrance, wooden partition and sliding door has been inserted into this wall. A blocked doorway is present on the southern side of the wall. The northern panel of the south west wall contains a historic metal framed window, mirroring that on the north eastern wall (Plate 16). The central panel contains a modern metal door that leads into a small former porch area, the exterior door of which is blocked with concrete blocks; a blocked window is located above the door to the porch.



Plate 16: Room B1, south western wall showing porch and blocked window. Looking west.

Room B2 is accessed from the north west through a modern sliding door. The room is open to the roof and two steel trusses are visible; the roof is clad in asbestos or plasterboard sheeting and a skylight is present. The floor is concrete. The north western wall, an original brick partition, contains a widened modern entrance way; this has

resulted in the truncation of a brick buttress, one of two positioned either side of the ridgeline (Plate 17).



Plate 17: Room B2, north western wall showing truncated buttress. Looking west.

A blocked doorway is present to the south of the extant buttress (Plate 17). The north eastern wall comprises two and a half panels, formed by two brick buttresses. Historic metal windows are located centrally within the southern two panels; both comprise two lights: a top hung casement of two panes over two, over a side hung casement of two panes over three (Plate 18). This is mirrored on the south eastern wall, though a blocked doorway is also located in the northern panel. The south eastern wall contains an entrance to room C1 of Building C, located off-centre on the northern side of the wall. A blocked window is located centrally, just below the eave height.



Plate 18: Room B2, north eastern and south western wall. Looking east.

Building C

Room C1 is accessed from the north west through a half-height opening in Room B2. Access is down a modern concrete ramp into a small ante-room created by an internal partition that also contains rooms C2 to C4. Room C1 is open to the roof and six steel trusses are visible; the roof is clad in asbestos or plasterboard sheeting and three skylights are present on the south western side (Plate 19). A series of tube lights are suspended from the ceiling.



Plate 19: Building C, room C1 showing roof structure and partition. Looking south east.



Plate 20: Building C, room C1 showing partitions C2 to C4. Looking north west.

A low partition is present at the south eastern end of the room, partially dividing the room. This appears to be of two phases, having been extended into the room using concrete blocks. The north western wall comprises a modern internal partition, within

which are rooms C2, C3 and C4; these are two toilets and a kitchen respectively (Plate 20).

Three metal windows are situated on the north eastern wall (Plate 21): the northern most is a fixed single light window of two panes over four; to the south east are two double light windows, both a side hung casement of two panes over two. A further double casement is located to the south east of a metal double door that is flanked by two concrete block buttresses. A partition that forms room C5 is located at the southern end of the wall.



Plate 21: Building C, north eastern wall. Looking north.



Plate 22: Building C, room C1 showing partition C5 and blocked entrance. Looking south east.



Plate 23: Building C, room C1 showing south western wall and internal partition.
Looking west.

Three metal doors are located at regular intervals along the south western wall of the room (Plate 23); interspersed between these are four windows, three of which are historic metal casements in the same configuration as those on the north eastern wall. The most southerly window is a modern PVC unit. The northern end of the south eastern wall, the gable end of the building, is the partition that forms room C5; to the south of this is a modern PVC window. A RSJ is located above the partition and window, supported by a concrete block buttress. This suggests that the window and partition are situated within a larger blocked entrance.

Room C5 is an internal partition and porch, accessed from room C1 through a wooden door or from the south east (outside) through a metal door. The south western wall contains an opening and wooden hatch to room C1.

5 ASSESSMENT

5.1 Phases

Phase 1: WWII

Buildings A and B were purpose built as a Gymnasium and Chapel during the construction of RAF Membury in 1942.

Phase 2: Post-WWII: 1

Post war, Building C was added to the south east of the chapel. The interior of buildings A and B were altered to be used as for vehicle servicing in the case of Building A.

Phase 2: Post-WWII: 2

The interior of Building C was altered slightly; the lean-tos on the south eastern side of Buildings A and C were demolished.

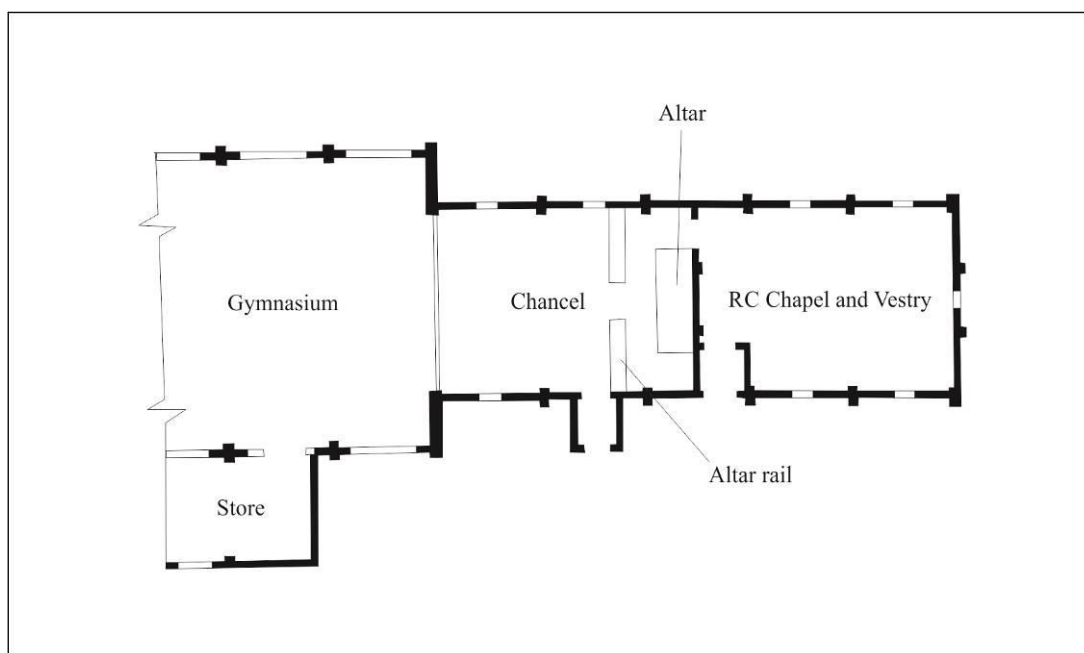


Figure 4: Gymnasium with church extension – adapted from Air Ministry drawings 16428/40 and 15424/41 (not to scale).

5.2 Historic and Architectural Assessment

Buildings A and B were built as a combined gymnasium and chapel in 1942. When built, interior features of the gymnasium (building A) would have included: a RSJ from which climbing ropes could be suspended, rope ladders, wall bars, fixing plates for horizontal bars and sockets for boxing ring standards (Francis 1996, p.201). Of the original fittings and fixtures the longitudinal RSJ, from which ropes could be hung, is the only surviving feature. A lean-to structure that ran the length of the south western wall of the gymnasium would have housed changing rooms, toilets and storage (Figure 4). Within the chapel (building B), room B1 served as the chancel and housed a wooden altar and altar rail. A wooden partition on sliding rails separated room B1 from the gymnasium. When a service was to take place, the partition could be rolled aside, allowing room B1 of the chapel to act as the chancel while the gymnasium served as the nave (Figure 4; Francis 1996, p.201). Room B2 served as a Roman Catholic chapel and vestry. No internal fittings and fixtures associated with these uses survive.

During the post war period, both buildings were subject to internal modification. This included: the infilling of the entrance between buildings A and B; the infilling of windows along the south western wall of building A, the insertion of additional entrances, including modern roller doors, and the construction of vehicle inspection pits in building A.

Building C appears to be a post-war addition, likely purpose built for use as a light industrial unit. The building is built of concrete block rather than brick and does not conform to the construction methods of the WWII temporary airfield buildings that were built of concrete. The building is not present on the plan of 1944 (Figure 2) and does not appear in aerial photographs of the site taken in 1947 (<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EAW007066> accessed 24/11/2020). However, the building does appear to contain historic elements, perhaps reused from

nearby WWII buildings after their demolition. These include the metal roof trusses, asbestos sheet roof and metal windows. Two phases of development are apparent, with some later internal partitioning taking place.

Within the last decade, based on satellite imagery, the external lean-to structures on buildings A and C have been demolished, leaving the buildings in their current iteration.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Following a planning application, a condition of historic building recording was proposed. John Moore Heritage Services carried out this historic building recording of Block 6, Lambourn Business Park, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford, Berkshire (SU 32134 76211).

The building originated as part of RAF Membury Airfield, a dispersed airfield camp with 12 sites, established in 1942 as a bomber operational training unit at Lambourn Woodlands. The main site was surrounded by 11 dispersed sites, including the communal site, instructional site and W.A.A.F site. The study building is situated at the airfield's former communal site and was the airfield's gymnasium and chapel.

The building comprises three units of different size, arranged longitudinally. The northern two buildings are brick built structures dating to WWII, while the southern building is a post-war addition, built of concrete block. The original WWII structures, here designated buildings A and B, were built as a combined gymnasium and chapel in 1942. The plan of both buildings has not been altered significantly; however of the original fittings and fixtures, few survive. These are limited to the longitudinal RSJ, from which ropes could be hung, located in the gymnasium and a series of original metal windows, located in both buildings.

The later southern building is a post-war addition; however, the roof structure and several windows appear to have been re-used from a wartime structure.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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HE 2015 *Historic England procedural document: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*

HE 2016 *Historic England procedural document: Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*

John Moore Heritage Services 2020, 20/01420/COMIND–Unit 6, Lambourn Business Park, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford RG17 7RU *Building Recording - Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished

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Project details

Project name	HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD ON BLOCK 6, LAMBOURN BUSINESS PARK, LAMBOURN WOODLANDS, BERKSHIRE
Short description of the project	John Moore Heritage Services carried out a historic building recording of Block 6, Lambourn Business Park, Lambourn Woodlands, Hungerford, Berkshire (SU 32134 76211). The building originated as part of RAF Membury Airfield, a dispersed airfield camp with 12 sites, established in 1942 as a bomber operational training unit at Lambourn Woodlands. The main site was surrounded by 11 dispersed sites, including the communal site, instructional site and W.A.A.F site. The study building is situated at the airfield's former communal site and was the airfield's gymnasium and chapel. The building comprises three units of different size, arranged longitudinally; The northern two buildings are brick built structures dating to WWII, while the southern building is a post-war addition, built of concrete block. The original WWII structures, here designated buildings A and B, were built as a combined gymnasium and chapel in 1942. The plan of both buildings has not been altered significantly, however of the original fittings and fixtures few survive. These are limited to the longitudinal RSJ, from which ropes could be hung, located in the gymnasium and a series of original metal windows, located in both buildings. The later southern building is a post-war addition; however, the roof structure and several windows appear to have been re-used from a wartime structure.
Project dates	Start: 03-11-2020 End: 03-11-2020
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	20/01420/COMIND - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	4365 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 3 - Despoiled land (contaminated derelict and ?brownfield? sites)
Monument type	AIRFIELD BUILDING Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Measured Survey", "Photographic Survey", "Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country England

Site location BERKSHIRE WEST BERKSHIRE LAMBOURN Block 6, Lambourn Business Park
Postcode RG17 7SJ
Study area 40 Square metres
Site coordinates SU 32134 76211 51.483453160966 -1.537181053195 51 29 00 N 001 32 13 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Moore Heritage Services
Project brief originator West Berkshire Council Archaeology Service
Project design originator JMHS
Project director/manager John Moore
Project supervisor Dr Sarah Doherty
Project supervisor Tom Rose-Jones
Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Project bibliography 1

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