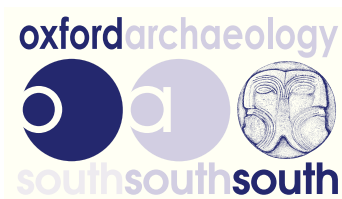


# Wapley Common Inland Sorting Depot Yate South Gloucestershire



## Historic Building Recording



October 2009

**Client: George Wimpey**

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# Wapley Common Inland Sorting Depot, Yate

*Historic Building Recording*

*Written by Jonathan Gill*

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## Wapley Common Inland Sorting Depot, Yate, South Gloucestershire

### Summary

*On the eastern side of Yate in South Gloucestershire is a large depot constructed during the Second World War which was historically known as Wapley Common, after the railway junction where its branch adjoins the main line. This depot is now being redeveloped but due to the historical interest of Wapley Common a programme of building recording has been undertaken prior to the clearance of the buildings on the site.*

*Due to the dramatic expansion of Yate in the 2nd half of the 20th century the site is now surrounded by housing developments but when it was first constructed in 1942 the site was in open fields between Yate and Chipping Sodbury. The site was constructed as part of a programme approved at the very end of 1940 to build a series of Inland Sorting Depots to relieve overcrowded port facilities and to rapidly move goods (particularly flammable materials and food) away from the main docks which had been targeted by the Luftwaffe bombers in 1940 and 1941. Wapley Common was intended to receive goods from Bristol (Avonmouth) Docks while similar Inland Sorting Depots were constructed close to Cardiff, Liverpool and Glasgow.*

*By the time that Wapley Common was completed (probably in the second half of 1942) the circumstances of the war had altered significantly and this led to a slightly different use for the depot. By this date the bombing threat to dock facilities had receded somewhat and the Americans had entered the War.*

*Rather than forming an inland sorting depot for foodstuffs and other conventional supplies Wapley Common's principal use (and possibly for a period its sole use) was as part of Operation Bolero: the colossal logistical build up of US Army personnel and equipment in Britain prior to and following D-Day. As part of Operation Bolero Wapley Common (and several of the other Inland Sorting Depots) were each used by the Americans to store equipment with Wapley Common used by the US Army 9th Air Force to store aircraft parts. After the War the site was used as a naval depot for many years before more recently being transferred to the Highways Agency.*

*Aerial photographs have provided a good impression of the changes to the site and its surroundings since Wapley Common's original construction. One such photograph shows the site under construction in June 1942 while another from 1946 shows the site fully developed with four warehouses, each with camouflage painted roofs, a dense network of railway tracks and a large area of railway sidings. By 1963 the expansion of Yate had reached the western edge of the depot and by 1971 the rail line to the main line had been lost. By 1989 the two western warehouses had been demolished and by 1994 the roof of the northern sheds had been re-covered. Apart from the two main warehouses the other main features which survive are an administration building, two entrance lodges and a set of earth banks which show how cuttings were made for rail tracks to allow the engines to pass slightly beyond the store building and position the wagons alongside the store buildings.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned by George Wimpey Bristol (Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd) to undertake a small programme of building recording on a set of structures at the former Highways Agency Depot in Yate, near Bristol, South Gloucestershire. The site is known locally as the Sea Stores. The main structures which survived at the site were two vast store buildings which were constructed during the Second World War as a military depot. The site is proposed for redevelopment and permission was granted for the clearance of the buildings on the site with a condition that the existing buildings be recorded prior to the demolition. The main subject of the project were the two large store ranges but the recording also covered a number of other small buildings and structures at the site.
- 1.1.2 David Evans (Historic Environment Record Officer from South Gloucestershire Council) confirmed that the recording should be largely photographic with additional analytical description.
- 1.1.3 The recording followed a previous assessment of the historical significance of the site undertaken by OA in October 2006. Much of the historical information gathered during the assessment has been incorporated into the current report.
- 1.1.4 Due to the expansion of Yate in the second half of the 20th century the depot site is now surrounded by residential development and it is no longer viable for the site to remain in its original use (ie as a store/depot). The site was earmarked for housing in a draft local plan dated 1992 but this was removed prior to the adoption of the plan. There is currently no use allocated for the site in the current local plan.

### 1.2 Aims and objectives

- 1.2.1 The principal aim of the work has been to create for posterity an archive record of the buildings on the site. This has concentrated on their structure, construction, history, architecture and function.

### 1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 South Gloucestershire Council confirmed that the recording was to be largely of a photographic nature with additional descriptive notes related to an existing site plan.
- 1.3.2 The site work was undertaken in July 2008. The photographic record included black and white prints (internal and external) as well as digital images.
- 1.3.3 Historical research undertaken as part of the previous assessment has also been incorporated into the report. This research included:
- a study of air photographs held at English Heritage's National Monuments Record in Swindon
  - Consultation with various relevant individuals or bodies including: Wayne Cocroft, Roger Thomas and Dr John Schofield from English Heritage, Mike Christensen and Tony Cane from the World War Two Railway Study Group, members of the Bristol Industrial Archaeology Society, Andy King from the Bristol Industrial Museum
  - Further research at Bristol Record Office, Yate Heritage Centre, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Bristol Central Library, the National Archives (PRO), Swindon and Wiltshire Record Office and various web sites on the internet.





- 1.3.1 Further information has also been kindly provided by the US Air Force Historical Research Agency which was not seen in the previous assessment.
- 1.3.2 An ordered and labelled project archive comprising photographs, negatives, this report and further notes will be deposited with Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery (site code: YATE08, accession number - 2008:56).

## 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The buildings covered by the current recording form the surviving parts of the Wapley Common Depot which was constructed during the Second World War and formed part of two distinct war-time phases or themes: 1) the construction of the inland sorting depots 2) Operation Bolero.

### 2.2 Inland Sorting Depots

- 2.2.1 The Wapley Common depot was originally built as part of a programme to construct a series of 'Inland Sorting Depots' relatively close to the principal docks along the west coast of the country. These would be connected to the national rail network and they would act like satellites of the main ports allowing goods and equipment (particularly food and flammable materials) to be rapidly moved away from the overcrowded ports. The goods would then be sorted at the Inland Depots and organised for despatch. The depots were intended to have two principal purposes: firstly to make the operations of the main ports more efficient by freeing up space in the dockside warehouses and secondly to protect the goods being imported by moving them away from the high risk dock areas. Dock areas were targeted by the Luftwaffe in the summer of 1940 and this increased dramatically in the first half of 1941.
- 2.2.2 The principle of inland depots such as these had been considered before the war but rejected partly because there were strong opinions against the scheme. When the idea was resurrected towards the end of 1940 the Ministry of Food declared itself against the scheme and the railways also had doubts arguing that it would be better to greatly improve the existing system with greater movement and supply of railway wagons. The new depots would take a year to build and the materials and efforts required to build the elaborate new facilities would be better used to build new lines and wagons. It was estimated that each depot would require 3000 tons of steel, 350 standards of timber and eight miles of railway track.
- 2.2.3 However the Admiralty and the Ministry of Shipping were strongly in favour and the Ministry of Transport Port and Transit Division also appear to have been cautiously in favour. The Ministry of Transport decided in favour of the scheme and On 20 December 1940 it was decided to build six Inland Sorting Depots for the main ports: two in the vicinity of the Clyde near Glasgow, a double depot near Liverpool (Kirkby), Wapley Common for Avonmouth Docks and St Mellons, (Longcross Farm, Rumney) near Cardiff. The Kirkby depot was to take goods from Liverpool, Manchester and Garston Ports, the two Glasgow depots were to take goods from Glasgow Port, Wapley Common was to take goods from Avonmouth (Bristol) port and St Mellons was to take goods from Swansea, Port Talbot, Barry, Cardiff and Newport ports.
- 2.2.4 After further delays the Prime Minister intervened in favour of the scheme and construction started in the spring of 1941 with the railways providing advice on their construction.



- 2.2.5 The first depots opened in the spring of 1942 and The Control of Traffic (Removal from Ports) Order was signed in May 1942 which gave the ports the authority to use the new depots. However by this time one of the principal reasons for their construction, to protect cargoes by moving them away from the areas under threat of bombing raids, had receded. It is not known how long (if at all) the depots served their originally intended function because relatively soon they were passed to the Americans and formed a part of Operation Bolero (detailed further below). This rapid change of use was a common feature of the war when circumstances had frequently altered by the time a site or complex was completed to that which had necessitated the original construction.
- 2.2.6 Mike Christensen of the World War II Railway Study group has also provided the following information: Work on the railway connections into Wapley Common began with some siding connections becoming available (for construction work?) 1/8/41. The two new signal boxes on the main line were brought into use on 1/7/42, so the depot was possibly available for full use around then. Its sidings were more extensive than at St Mellons, and its construction appears to have had a higher priority.
- 2.2.7 Useful information on the facilities and use of the Wapley Common Sorting depot are provided in an account of a visit to the site made on 29 June 1945 by the Institute of Transport (Western Section). This document (see Appendix B) which includes an outline plan of the site, shows that each of the four sheds were 500 ft by 100 ft and that the site cost c.£300,000 to construct. It also confirms that there were two distinct sets of sidings at the site, neither of which survive today. There was a large set to the west of the sheds which were the arrival sidings where trucks containing goods from the port would be temporarily stored before being shunted to the respective shed. The other set of sidings were some distance to the south of the sheds and these were the outward sidings where trucks loaded with goods for despatch from the sheds were marshalled into trains. The account provides much other useful information relating to the use of the site and it refers to the office and the 20 ton road weighbridge, both of which survive. It also states that the railway tracks are flush with the road surface so that both road vehicles and railway wagons could pull up to the sheds for loading or unloading.
- 2.2.8 St Mellons is believed to be the best surviving Inland Sorting Depot so some comparison with this site would be of use. The four sheds (which are all believed to survive) were the same size as those at Wapley Common each providing a floor space of 50,000 square feet (Bell, 1946). It was also constructed in an open area, c.3.75 miles east of Cardiff city centre and it appears to have had a similar sidings capacity (1275 wagons) as Wapley Common as well as a large park for road vehicles. The layout of the site was different to that of Wapley Common, presumably reflecting restrictions or other differences in each site, with the sheds being spaced further apart. The site was managed by the Great Western Railway (as the Port Authority). A plan of the site is included as Figure 5 (taken from a short article on St Mellons by Mike Christensen). The BBC's WWII Peoples War' web site contains an oral history account from a man who was involved in transporting goods between various depots in south Wales including St Mellons. The account confirms that:

*The usual procedure was when this traffic had arrived at the docks it would be immediately unloaded into wagons and converted from Cardiff Docks to what was known as the Inland Sorting Depot at St Mellons, just outside Cardiff, far enough away from the docks to be comparatively free from air raids; At that depot the wagons would be discharged and the commodities sorted out and reloaded into wagons for the various depots in and around South Wales... all imported food; It came from America. The convoy would come in and split up and go to various ports in South Wales and the Merseyside ports, what were known as the western*



*approaches. Of course, obviously to minimise any loss of foodstuff as a result of enemy action these depots were very very useful. (Article A4319822 by Reg Jeans and Tommy Dunscombe from the Gloscat Home Front. Peoples War website)*

## **2.3 Operation Bolero**

- 2.3.1 As stated above by the time that the Inland Sorting Depots were completed in the spring of 1942 the threat posed by German bombing of the ports had receded and this had lessened one of the principal reasons for their construction. It is not known for certain how long the Wapley Common depot was used for its original purpose and it rapidly became part of Operation Bolero, the vast logistical build up of American troops, aircraft, military equipment, spare parts and huge numbers of other items during the two years prior to Operation Overlord (D-Day) in June 1944.
- 2.3.2 The Americans entered the War in December 1941 and the following month the first few units of the American Army arrived in Britain. 'Operation Bolero' was initially the code name given to the build-up of troops related to Operation Roundup, an invasion of France that was planned in 1942 for the Spring of 1943. There were shipments of aircraft, equipment and elements of the US Army Air Forces (USAAF) during 1942 but it gradually became apparent that Roundup was impractical and the invasion was delayed, partly to allow a larger scale build-up in the UK. The number of US troops increased substantially in later 1943 and early 1944 as Operation Bolero evolved into preparations for Operation Overlord. By mid January 1944 there were 750,000 American military personnel in Britain and by D-Day this number had more than doubled to over 1.5 million.
- 2.3.3 All equipment and supplies arrived at various ports on the west coast of Britain, frequently manned by the Americans, and their camps also tended to be largely based in the western half of the country. There was a large number of Americans stationed in Gloucestershire and the West Country generally and at least initially these tended to be the Army Ground Forces as opposed to the USAAF which was initially based in East Anglia (the US 8th Airforce). This changed however when the 9th Airforce arrived in the country and this was stationed in the West Country.
- 2.3.4 Although Bolero was essentially an American operation utilising the British Isles as a base from which to attack Germany the construction of the infrastructure facilities for Bolero was largely undertaken by the British. This arrangement formed part of the Reciprocal Aid Pact although military call ups and the increasingly limited man power available, particularly in late 1943 and early 1944, led to the construction of the Bolero facilities being relatively slow. Thousands of unskilled and untrained American workers are reported to have been transferred to the UK to work in the new depots ('Big Week' article contained in *Air Force Journal of Logistics* Vol XXIV) and construction was also assisted by American aviation engineers (Anderson, 1985).

## **2.4 In-transit depots**

- 2.4.1 Operation Bolero was clearly a colossal logistical exercise and a US army organisation was set up, initially called Services of Supply, to receive, store and distribute the vast amount of supplies arriving in England. A great many depots were set up all over the country, arranged in regional groups, and in Bristol there were 200 separate buildings used for this purpose, the majority of which were probably existing storehouses. One of these was the depot at Wapley Common which, as detailed above, had been constructed in 1941-2 (initially before the Americans entered the War) as an Inland Sorting Depot. As part of Bolero Wapley Common was used to store aircraft spares and other related



supplies of the US Army's 9th Air Force and its official reference number in the list of all the American Air Force bases in Britain was AAF 515. While it was used by the Americans Wapley Common was known as a Port Intransit Depot (Port Intransit Depot No.3) and presumably its operations would not have altered greatly from when it was an Inland Sorting Depot. Avonmouth was the main receiving port for the 9th Air Force and supplies were taken from here to Wapley Common by rail, presumably for temporary storage before being transferred on to where they were required.

- 2.4.2 Ken Wakefield in his book on Operation Bolero (1994) states that Wapley Common was the American Air Force Station No 515 and that it was the Army Post Office 149. Post for the American forces throughout the country was taken to the main depot in Sutton Coldfield (West Midlands) where it was sorted and distributed to the many regional post offices such as Wapley Common. Wakefield also reports that it was the: HQ and HQ Detachment of the 8th Air Force In-transit Depot Group, and Detachments C, D, E, I of the 8th Air Force Intransit Depot Group. A genealogy website listing all the American bases in the War contains the same basic information but it also provides the dates of 18 February 1944 - c.July 1944. The site does not make clear precisely what these dates relate to but presumably that is when the base was used by the Americans.
- 2.4.3 Further useful documentation relating to the US use of Wapley Common has been kindly provided by Lt Col Cathy Cox from the US Air Force Historical Research Agency. Lt Col Cox has provided abstracts from four sources held by the US Air Force Historical Research Agency which provide dates showings when the US military was using the depot as well as a scan of one of the full documents. The four sources appear to have been collections of official data collated at the end of the war to provide historical accounts of the Detachments which were stationed for a period at Wapley Common. The detachments were only stationed at Wapley Common for a short period and were each moved to France soon after D-Day so much of the documentation is not directly relevant to Wapley Common but an extract from one of the documents has been included here at Appendix B.
- 2.4.4 The documents appear to broadly confirm the information provided by the genealogy website that the US military used Wapley Common from February 1944. The Air Force Intransit Depot Group (AFIDG), which had been activated on 1 November 1943 and which had been assigned various facilities in later 1943 and early 1944 was allocated Wapley Common on 23 February 1944. The AFIDG had initially been established to serve the 8th AF Service Command but it was transferred to the 9th Air Force at the very end of 1943. Detachment I was activated on 16 April 1944 at Wapley Common and then redesignated Detachment I1 (I-one). Detachment I1 appears to have been transferred to AAF Station 519 (Grove, Oxfordshire) on 15 June 1944 and at the same time Detachment I-2 was formed at Wapley Common. On 27 June 1944 it was transferred to France to join Det I-1. Detachment D of the 8th AFIDG was activated on 16 April 1944, primarily to act as a replacement pool, and it served this function until 15 May 1944 when it was designated as a Port Detachment. The total enlisted US strength of Det D was 105 men and on 27 June 1944 the entire detachment departed from Wapley Common for transfer to France. Detachment C was activated on 20 January 1944 at Southampton but then moved to Wapley Common. It was reorganised as a Port Unit after 29 April 1944 and then conducted operations to Utah Beach from 6 June until 6 July 1944. Then moved to France on 17 July 1944.
- 2.4.5 St Mellons, the Inland Sorting Depot near Cardiff was the USAAF Port Intransit Depot No. 4 (AAF 516) while the depot at Kirkby was Port Intransit Depot No. 2 (AAF 514). The two depots close to Glasgow appear not to have been used by the Americans but a



further depot (Kirby House, Silcock's Warehouse, Liverpool) which had not been constructed as an Inland Sorting Depot was the USAAF Port Intransit Depot No. 1. Silcock's Warehouse was a converted grain warehouse and was converted to an aircraft spares facility. The Kirkby depot is believed to now be an industrial estate and the administration building which is reported to survive at the entrance served as an officer's mess during the war. In December 1943 it was reported that intransit depots could deliver bulk supplies from the port to a depot or base within 72 hours.

- 2.4.6 Much of the above information on the other Intransit Depots is taken from Captain Barry Anderson's *Army Air Forces Stations* and the list of the American bases in the UK shows that these were the only four Port Intransit Depots in the Country. However it also shows that a number of Intransit Depots were established in France after D-Day presumably reusing existing buildings but whose purpose and operations would have been similar to the depots in Britain.
- 2.4.7 The account of the visit to Wapley Common made by the Institute of Transport in June 1945 provides evidence of the use of the site by the Americans (Appendix C). In particular the schedule of charges for the use of the site makes numerous references to the American use of the depot and the charges fixed for this service. It confirms that mail for the US Forces were sorted at Wapley Common for subsequent redistribution, that US personnel undertook labourage, that the Port Authority also loaned men for labour and that they were at least sometimes under US supervision. It also states that *'so far very little use has been made of gear, and no charge is being made. If used in future to any great extent a scale of charges can be fixed'*. This suggests that although the US detachments had vacated Wapley Common well before this date it was clear that considerable American supplies continued to come through Wapley Common and that they would continue to do so for some time to come.
- 2.4.8 It is not clear from all the historical documentation that we have whether Wapley Common remained throughout the war under the control of the Port of Bristol Authority and that its use as a US in-transit depot was within its continued role as a Inland Sorting Depot, or whether it was for a period fully handed over to the US military for their sole use. The document from June 1945 strongly suggests that at least by that date Wapley Common had a dual use by the Americans and British and there is nothing to suggest that there was ever any fundamental change in its use during the war. No doubt during the early months of 1944 American supplies made up the vast majority of the traffic travelling through Wapley Common but this was probably within its continued original use.
- 2.4.9 The four in-transit depots in Britain were clearly just one of a great many types of depots and other military installation used by the Americans as part of Operation Bolero but there does not appear to have been any comprehensive studies of what survives in a national context of these structures. Clearly such a study is well beyond the scope of this report but one Bolero site which has been investigated to some extent is the First Base Post Office in Sutton Coldfield. As referred to above this was the principal postal depot where mail for the American services was sorted. It was based at an existing rail-side depot which was expanded with new facilities and it has been reported in an article contained in the journal *After The Battle* No. 81. Another site which is understood to have been investigated and published is a US hospital near Bewdley (Wayne Cocroft pers comm). The largest single US supply and storage installation of the war was located at Burtonwood in Warrington which was the principal Base Air Depot Area headquarters.



## 2.5 Air photographs

- 2.5.1 A study of the air photos held at the National Monuments Record in Swindon has provided further important evidence of the construction of the depot buildings. The earliest photographs were taken on 6th June 1942 and although the quality of the photographs is not as good as that of some of those of a later date they do clearly show the form of the complex at this time. The photographs show four very large store buildings at the site each one apparently the same as the two which survive on the site today. The site is linked to the main railway line, which passes to the south of Yate and Chipping Sodbury, by a short branch which connects to the main line at Wapley Common. Although the site has today been surrounded by the modern expansion of Yate the photographs show that when the buildings were first constructed they were located within a large area of fields between Yate and Chipping Sodbury. The buildings and railway tracks dramatically cut through the rural landscape destroying the complex field pattern, and this perhaps reflects the desperate measures deemed acceptable (or indeed essential) during the war when the usual peace-time planning controls or regulations were suspended and land was compulsorily requisitioned.
- 2.5.2 Although the photograph shows that the four store buildings had been constructed by June 1942 it also suggests that the infrastructure surrounding the stores was not yet all in place and the site was not yet fully operational. The roofs of the four stores had not yet had their camouflage paint added and the layout of roads and tracks immediately surrounding the buildings were not yet complete. The land surrounding the site is shown to have been dramatically scarred in June 1942 from the construction works and quite unlike photographs from four years later when grass had re-covered the surrounding land.
- 2.5.3 Hangars and very large buildings of this type with standardised types and construction were erected very quickly during the war and almost certainly these buildings would have been constructed during the first half of 1942. Presumably the site would have been completed in the months following June. One significant point to note is that the administration block which survives today towards the north-west corner of the site, is shown on the photograph and is therefore definitely a primary feature of the site.
- 2.5.4 The next set of air photographs were taken on 14 April 1946, after the end of the war, and the roofs of all four store buildings have camouflage paint. The complex is now clearly fully developed with roads all around the buildings and a dense network of rail tracks. Immediately to the west of the four store buildings is a large set of rail sidings with c.14 sets of tracks adjacent to each other presumably for wagons or freight cars not in use. These had not been constructed by the 1942 photographs. A substantial turntable is shown to the south-west of the store buildings, in an area which is now beneath housing.
- 2.5.5 The next group of photographs date to the early 1950s: July 1951 and 1952 and each of these show the complex similar to that in 1946 but apparently much quieter. The 1952 photographs show a small number of vehicles at the site but in the 1951 view the site looks deserted.
- 2.5.6 A photograph taken in July 1963 again shows little significant change to the complex, although by this date the expansion of Yate had led to new housing developments extending as far as the sidings immediately to the west of the store buildings.
- 2.5.7 A photograph of June 1971 shows that by this date the site was no longer connected to the main railway line. The sidings had been dug up and the branch rail connection to the south had been truncated by a road being constructed through it. By June 1989 the two western sheds had been demolished the two surviving sheds were by now surrounded by



housing developments. In 1989 both surviving sheds retained their camouflage painted roofs but by October 1994 the roof of the northern shed had been recovered.

## **2.6 Post-war history of the site**

- 2.6.1 The history and use of the building in the post-war period is less clear. It is known that the site was used by the Royal Navy as a sea stores depot but it is not certain when this use for the site began. Bob Jordon, a local resident who visited the site many times in the decades after the war to undertake work there, remembers the buildings full of naval equipment such as anchors, ropes, beds and other items but this was probably largely in the 1960s. A plan which is held at the Swindon and Wiltshire Record Office shows that in 1947 it was proposed to build a wagon repairing depot over some of the sidings to the west of the main sheds (Fig 6). This proposal was presumably not carried out because the building is not shown on the aerial photos from the 1950s. The plan shows that the site was still called the Wapley Common Inland Sorting Depot and that it was still operated by the Great Western Railway (GWR). There is no evidence from the plan that the site was used by the Navy at this time.
- 2.6.2 Mr Jordon also states that the site was for a long time known as Costains. Since the 1980s it has been owned and operated by the Highways Agency as a storage depot and testing centre for motorway equipment.

## **3 DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1 The site has been much altered since its original construction in the 1940s with the removal (or covering over) of the railway tracks, the large sidings and various other features such as the turntable shown on the aerial photograph as well as the demolition of two of the four main sheds. However two of the sheds survive, although again one of these is significantly altered, as well as a primary administration block and these provide some indication of the original form of the complex. The entrance into the complex is from the west and this retains its primary layout. The track from the entrance into the complex would originally have passed alongside the northern end of the north-western shed but this has now been demolished.

### **3.2 Southern shed**

- 3.2.1 The two surviving sheds would originally have had very similar (or identical) construction but the northern shed has been significantly altered. The southern shed is therefore of the greatest interest and the current recording has concentrated heavily on this building.
- 3.2.2 The southern shed is a vast, steel-framed, single storey structure (c.167 m x c.37 m) with a double gable (M-profile) roof. The steel frame is of a simple, prefabricated form using a very small number of different types of structural member to ease and accelerate construction. The original corrugated metal roof cladding survives and this retains traces of the war-time camouflage paint designed to mask the buildings from enemy bombers.
- 3.2.3 The ground floor concrete slab is raised c.1.25 m above the height of the surrounding ground to allow goods and equipment to be easily transferred to and from the wagons of freight trains pulled alongside the building. The raised floor slab is supported by large concrete piers set beneath the building and hidden behind vertical boarding. The two main sides of the building incorporate deep overhanging eaves with tall green-painted



awnings which extend c.4 m beyond the walls to cover full length loading areas at the same raised height as the main ground floor. These loading platforms extend 1.8 m beyond the main side walls.

- 3.2.4 The main structure of the building is a steel frame and this allows light-weight curtain-wall panels, to each main side with corrugated metal cladding set on top-hung rollers. The panels are each slightly staggered or off-set from one another so that each one could be slid in front of the adjacent one to allow great flexibility in the arrangement of openings. Thus at times of rapid loading or unloading, when a long train of wagons had pulled up alongside the full length of the building the doors could all be opened and the equipment or goods could be transferred. Each 'door' panel is 3.89 m wide by c.4.9 m tall and there are 40 such panels to each side. The only fixed panels are those at each corner so there are 38 sliding doors to each main face.
- 3.2.5 Each sliding panel is almost entirely formed with L-section steel members (5 cm x 5 cm) and they have three main horizontal elements: one along the upper edge, one along the lower edge (base rail) and one jut below mid height. The upper section comprises a cross brace with rectangular connecting plate and the lower section is braced by two raking struts which meet at the mid point of the base rail. At the point where the two lower raking struts meet is a spring-loaded drop-latch which would drop into a hole in the concrete and fix the panels. At the two lower corners are iron boxes which house the runners on which the panels sit. These run along shallow sunken iron-lined trenches along the length of the building's outer walls. Each panel is clad in corrugated metal (zinc?).
- 3.2.6 The structural frame of the building has a standardised, prefabricated nature typical for the Second World War period and designed for rapid, easy erection. The building divides into 40 bays and each of these is divided by a pair of aligned trusses. The inner ends of each truss is supported by a series of posts along the spine of the building formed by coupled C-section steel members stamped 'Earl of Dudley'. The outer ends of each truss cantilever over the 4 m deep covered platforms and are supported by posts within the main external walls of the building.
- 3.2.7 The trusses are all constructed using bolted L-section members with a tie-beam, principal rafters, a central post, two main raking struts (which meet at the apex) and a series of smaller bracing struts above the main raking struts. The members are each fixed with bolted connecting plates of various forms. The principal rafters and tie-beam are each formed from two L-section steels but the other truss members are each formed from a single member. There are five purlins to each slope, again formed from L-section steel members, and there are 3 main longitudinal members along the length of the building which bracing each truss. These are located at the central point of each truss, at the valley between the pairs of trusses and at the outer walls. The roof is clad with corrugated sheeting.
- 3.2.8 The interior of the southern shed is now a single open space and appears to be little used. It is lit by a number of hood lights and by many roof lights on both slopes. The floor of the shed is a vast concrete slab with various bays painted on the ground. There are downpipes adjacent to every column to carry rain water from the central valley of the roof.
- 3.2.9 At each end of the building there are large (7.2 m deep) covered external areas supported by three I-section posts along the outer edge. These areas each cover a north to south concrete ramp to allow small trucks to transfer between the ground level and the raised slab of the shed. The ramp at the north end is immediately to the east of the central post





and directly above it there is a section cut out of the awning presumably to allow for tall trucks to enter the building. The covered north end appears to have been an entirely open space but the south end formerly had a separate room constructed within it. At this end the ramp for vehicular access is located well to the east of the central point (beneath the apex of the eastern gable) and whereas the smaller covered area to the east of the ramp is open the larger area to the west has been enclosed by a series of metal framed walls with metal (Crittall type) windows. Less than half the walls in this area survive but they appear to be of primary Second World War construction. The framing largely comprises simple L-section and flat-section steel members and the windows incorporate horizontally hung pivot windows. The windows are all in the south elevation and there are three with 30 lights and one with 15 lights. The interior of this enclosed area appears to have been a single space, rather than subdivided into rooms, and it may have been a small workshop. There are two partially surviving iron stoves with tall, iron flues and a desk. There is no ceiling and the roof structure is visible above the same as at the north end.

- 3.2.10 Photographs provided by George Wimpey as part of the current project show that until relatively recently this structure was covered in corrugated cladding and that there were five windows in the south elevation (four with 30 lights and one with 15). There were also two flues from the stoves/boilers which projected from the wall and carried smoke vertically above roof height.
- 3.2.11 Each end also incorporates two small concrete sets of steps (6 risers) to provide pedestrian access to the raised side platforms and to a doorway into the building.

### **3.3 Northern shed**

- 3.3.1 The northernmost of the two sheds would originally have been identical to the southern one but it has been altered in recent years to allow its use by the Highways Agency to store electrical equipment and other items. These alterations include re-cladding the roof, re-hanging the side doors so that they abut one another and can therefore be fixed shut, installing insulation (wall and roof) in the main central section of the building. One other feature of some interest is that towards the northern end of the building there is a small cellar (c.6 m x 4 m) with heavy concrete lined walls. The most likely purpose of this cellar is probably a small air raid shelter. At the southern end of the building is a separate area (possibly workshop) similar to that in the southern building.

### **3.4 Other Buildings**

- 3.4.1 Together with the two main sheds there are four other primary, Second World War buildings at the site which are shown on the 1946 aerial photograph as well as two other later structures. The largest and most significant of these buildings is an administration block which is located to the west of the northern end of the northern shed and which is shown on the aerial photograph taken in June 1942.
- 3.4.2 The administration block is a single-storey, brick building (English bond) with a recovered flat roof and is typical of the great many similar war-time structures built on airfields, depots, camps and other military bases. It has Crittall-type windows, a rectangular plan (c.50 m long) which steps in towards its northern end and a tall chimney towards its southern end. There are 11 windows to the east elevation each with 15 lights, and two doorways. The north elevation has a further two similar windows and a central door. The south elevation is rendered and has a single doorway but no primary windows. There is a concrete band around the building which forms the flat slab roof and acts as



the lintel for each window. The interior comprises a series of offices with plastered walls, carpets and fluorescent lights.

- 3.4.3 A short distance to the north of the administration block are two small single storey brick buildings with flat roofs either side of a small weighbridge for trucks on the main route into the complex (weighbridge cast by E&A Ashworth Ltd of Dewsbury and London). The northern building was an electrical substation and has a number 21 painted on it. It is unfenestrated but it has a door in the south face and a series of short vertical ventilation slits.
- 3.4.4 The southern building has a door to the south, two small windows to the east with concrete lintels and a large crittal-type window to the north facing the road. There is a petrol pump immediately to the east and presumably this building was a small lodge for a guard or attendant to weigh trucks, check equipment in and out and fill vehicles up with petrol.
- 3.4.5 Early aerial photographs confirm that these were primary Second World War buildings and that they were either side of the southern branch of a turning circle at the northern end of the depot.
- 3.4.6 To the south of the administration block are another two small buildings although only one of these (that to the north) is shown on the Second World War aerial photographs. This building is c.10 m long and is constructed with a pre-cast concrete frame comprising posts with shallow grooves to their side into which slot prefabricated panels and shallow-pitch concrete beams. The mid point of each beam is supported by a post and the interior now has severely peeling paint to walls and crumbling lino tiles to the floor. The external walls are painted green.
- 3.4.7 The other building is immediately to the south and it is also painted light green externally although it is a later addition (albeit still mid 20<sup>th</sup> century) and is constructed with concrete block. This building has a corrugated panel roof and no windows.

### **3.5 Earth banks and rail tracks**

- 3.5.1 To the eastern side of the site the ground level rises significantly and the ground in this area is cut and levelled to allow for the southern shed. At the northern end of the southern shed two further cuttings have been created in this bank to form flattened areas for train sidings. These cuttings align with either side of the southern shed so that trains could either pass beyond the shed or shunt wagons beyond. Due to the slope of the ground the cutting for the eastern siding is more substantial than the western one and the eastern bank of the east siding rises to c.2.5 m high. Evidence of the former tracks survive within the cuttings (sleepers, brackets, etc) but there is no evidence of loading/unloading facilities adjacent to the banks.
- 3.5.2 Although the rail connection between Wapley Common and the main line was truncated by 1971, and the use of railways to supply the depot probably ceased many years before then, it is still possible to see many railway tracks across the site. The site has been resurfaced with tarmac immediately above the rail tracks but their line immediately below (or sometimes just above) the surface is clearly visible in many areas across the site.

## **4 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1.1 Wapley Common Depot is clearly a site of historical interest the significance of which rests entirely on its construction and use as part of the logistical background to the



Second World War. In conventional terms it is of no particular aesthetic, architectural or structural engineering value and if it had been constructed five years later, in the immediate post war period, it would be of no historical interest. However from investigating the war-time role of Wapley Common and the network of other depots within which it fits we can gain a much wider understanding of the Second World War and life in Britain during it, than simply by studying battles or celebrated military engagements.

- 4.1.2 Appreciation of the significance of buildings and structures which survive from the 2nd World War has increased greatly in recent years and Wapley Common relates to two distinct themes of the war. The first theme, that of the Inland Sorting Depot for which it was originally constructed, was clearly one of a huge number of individually minor logistical facilities or operations that enhance our overall understanding of how the country was run during the war. The second theme, that of the vast logistical build up of Americans based in Britain from 1942 to 1944 (Operation Bolero) was clearly of fundamental importance in ensuring the defeat of Nazi Germany.
- 4.1.3 The two elements of the project to assess and record the structures at Wapley Common have been of value in documenting the type of redundant structure which cannot practically be reused and is not of listable quality. The Inland Sorting Depots are one of many classes of wartime structure which are not well documented or understood and the current investigation has increased our understanding of these sites. The best preserved of these sites is at St Mellons near Cardiff which retains all four of its sheds. Due to standardised wartime construction these sheds are each believed to be very similar to the former sheds at Yate.
- 4.1.4 The current study has not exhausted all avenues of research and it may be that there are people who worked at the depot during the war who would be willing to share their memories. This could provide a suitable oral history student project. There are also known to be documents held by the US Air Force Historical Research Agency which have not been seen and which may provide further information.

Jonathan Gill

October 2009



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*Ordnance survey Map 1:10,000 (1955)*

*Ordnance survey Map 1:10,000 (1966)*

*Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500 (1954)*

*Ordnance Survey Map 1:2500 Sheet 7181 (1966)*



## APPENDIX A. DETACHMENT D 8<sup>TH</sup> AIR FORCE INTRANSIT DEPOT GROUP

The following transcript is taken from a document provided by Lt Col Cathy Cox from the US Air Force Historical Research Agency. It appears to have been one of a number of similar documents related to various detachments prepared at the end of the war. The USAFHRA has provided scanned transcripts (some of very poor quality) of other documents but they appear to largely relate to the detachments after they had left Wapley Common.

Secret Detachment D  
Eighth Air Force Intransit Depot Group  
Historic Data

APO 149 US Army  
24 August 1944

On 16 April 1944, by authority of Paragraph 1 General Order 10 9th AFSADA Detachment D of the Eighth Air Force Intransit Depot Group (8th AFIDG) was activated in Wapley Commons, Gloucestershire, England on 18 April 1944. It began functioning as an organisation and submitted its first Morning Report. Captain Charles D Pearce Jr was appointed Commanding Officer and 1st Lt. Pat Hudson and WO (jg) William F Sommer were appointed his assistants. The organisation was primarily used as a Replacement Pool for the 8th AF Intransit Depot Group and functioned as such until 15 May 1944 at which time it was designated as a Port Detachment. Captain Pearce was relieved of command and Captain George B Collins assumed command of the Organisation. Mr Sommer was appointed Adjutant in place of Lt Hudson who has been transferred on 5 May 1944. The total strength of Enlisted men was 105 with James W Hicks as First Sergeant. On 19 May 1944 1st Lt John P Lillywhite, joined the organisation to be followed on 20th May 1944 by 2nd Lt James S Ellison. The Detachment was alerted for overseas shipment 18 May 1944. On 27 June 1944 the entire Detachment departed from Wapley Common in route to France. Arrived on Utah Beach, France 30 June 1944 and proceeded to march to St Mere Eglise where the Unit bivouaced with Detachment A. 8th AF Intransit Depot Group. On 3 July 1944, the entire Detachment departed from St Mere Eglise at 12.00 hours for La Bosquet, Manche, (Cherbourg), by track. Arrived at La Bosquet, at 1500 hours distance travelled 26 miles. weather good, morale of troops excellent. The geographic coördinance or grid reference of new location with title of map referred to is Cherbourg May 14.1; 18,96 scale of map 1:25,000. Twenty-four (24) enlisted men of detachment X-2 attached for rations, quarters and administration were relieved. Six officers and 25 enlisted men, advanced headquarters, 8th AF IDG, were attached for rations only. 8 July 1944 twenty five enlisted men. Advanced headquarters 8th AF IDG were relieved from attached for rations. Captain George B Collins Commanding Officer of the Detachment was admitted to the 12 Field Hospital on 11 July 1944 Captain Collins returned to duty and assumed command. On 17 July 1944 Captain Collins was assisted by 1st Lt Holmes Campbell who joined the organisation from Detachment A 8th AF IDG and was appointed adjutant. On 18 July 1944 2nd Lt James S Ellison was transferred to advanced Headquarters 8th AFIDG 1st Lt William M Langley assigned from Det B 8th AFIDG Operation of AF Dump began with .. and supplied of 42nd AF Depot on 19th July 1944. An office building was constructed and signs directing trucks have been posted as far as the center of Cherbourg. Supplies have started arriving regularly and the Dump is operating smoothly and efficiently. 1st Lt John P Lillywhite, transferred to advanced headquarters 8th AFIDG. On 9th August 1944 personnel of Detachment E, 8th AF IDG was consolidated with Detachment D 8th AFIDG by authority of Par 6 SQ 47 Adv HQ 8th AF IDG was disbanded 24 August 1944 by authority of Par 8 SQ 116 HQ First intransit DJG dated 24 August 1944 at which time personnel and equipment were transferred to third Port Intransit Depot Squadron, First IDG.

Approved      George B Collins, Capt Air Corps Commanding  
John B Adams, 1st Lt Air Corps, Historian Officer



APPENDIX B. ACCOUNT OF A VISIT BY THE INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORT (WESTERN SECTION)  
TO WAPLEY COMMON SORTING DEPOT 29 JUNE 1945. FROM DOCUMENT HELD AT  
BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE (PBA/F/STAT/7)

PORT OF BRISTOL AUTHORITY.

Visit of Institute of Transport (Western Section)  
to Wapley Common Sorting Depot,  
Friday, 29th June, 1945.

In 1940 the Ministry of Transport decided to construct Inland Sorting Depots to serve the major ports of the country and one of these Depots was to be adjacent to the Port of Bristol.

The object of these Depots may be summarised briefly as follows:-

- (1) To increase the intake capacity of the ports by expediting the clearance of goods which require sorting.
- (2) To clear away goods from dock areas subject to enemy attack with the utmost speed.
- (3) To despatch goods to a variety of destinations, after sorting, by routes where congestion is less acute than in the dock areas.

The Depot designed to serve the Port of Bristol was, after much discussion, located at Wapley near Yate and the cost was approximately £300,000. The Depot is operated on behalf of the Ministry of War Transport by the Port of Bristol Authority who are responsible for staffing and policing. Labour is provided by the National Dock Labour Corporation.

The Depot consists of four sheds each 500 ft. x 100 ft. It was designed to receive mixed consignments from the discharge of eight vessels simultaneously, a matter of 250 trucks 4-5 tons each, or five trains inwards each day, and a similar tonnage outwards. Road access to the Depot is by way of Yate, and the rail connection is made to the main Great Western line in the Westerleigh area. A plan of the Depot is given overleaf. The reception sidings outside the Depot fence have a capacity for five trains. The arrival sidings (marked "A" on the plan) have standage for approximately 750 trucks. The outwards sidings (marked "B" on the plan) have standage room for approximately 500 trucks. Loaded trucks are brought into the reception sidings by the train engine and the Depot engine brings them into the inwards sidings, sorts the trucks for the respective sheds and places them into position for unloading. The loaded trucks are taken from the sheds to the outwards sidings and marshalled into trains, according to their destinations, by the Depot engine. A railway weighbridge, weighing up to 40 tons, and a turntable for locomotives are provided. Covered platforms at truck level are provided on two sides of each shed. Two railway lines laid flush with the road run full length of each side of each shed and thus railway wagons and road vehicles may be unloaded and loaded on each side. A road weighbridge is provided weighing up to 20 tons. Cargo handling appliances include hand trucks, electric trucks with elevating platforms and 4 mobile cranes of 1-ton capacity, and each shed has office accommodation. Large stacking-out areas in the open are available with two 2-ton and two 10-ton mobile cranes.

Other facilities include an office block, canteen, incinerator, battery charging houses, gear store, engineering stores and shop, and a fire fighting system (the latter designed after experience of enemy raids, which is worthy of particular study).

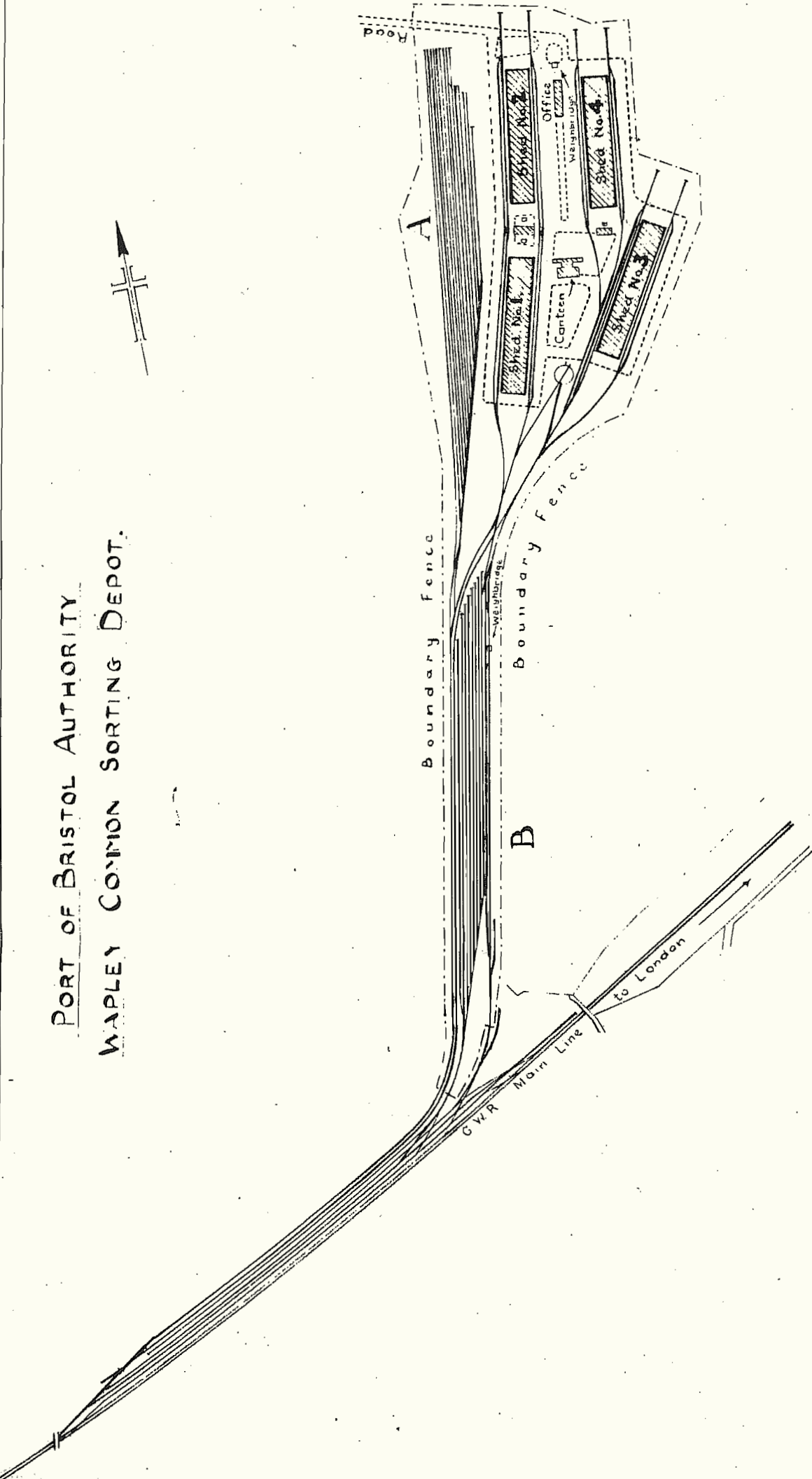
Goods requiring sorting are sent to Wapley on the direction of the Port Emergency Committee after consideration has been given to the prevailing traffic conditions at the port.

The Depot, which is a protected area controlled by the Approved Authority, is policed by the Port Authority's staff. It should be pointed out that the Depot is an integral part of the Port of Bristol and the Group railway rates for the Port have been extended to the Depot.





PORT OF BRISTOL AUTHORITY  
WAPLEY COMMON SORTING DEPOT.



SCALE - 500 FEET TO 1 INCH



WAPLEY COMMON SORTING DEPOT.

Schedule of Charges in pursuance of the Control of  
Traffic (Removal from Ports) Consolidation Order, 1943,  
dated 21st June, 1943.

No.	Service	Rate per ton	Notes
1.	Carriage from Avonmouth or City Docks -  (a) Railway  (b) Road	8/6  Sum paid out.	Accounts for carriage from Avonmouth and Portishead Docks to be certified by both the Docks Superintendent and Depot Manager before payment. Carriage from City Docks to be certified by Depot Manager.  Accounts to be certified by Depot Manager.
	The Depot Manager will show on all accounts for carriage the Government Department or Merchant to whom the carriage has been or will be recharged.		
2.	Labourage - Such of the following services as are performed:-  (i) Unloading railway wagons. (ii) Receiving (iii) Sorting to leading Bill of Lading Mark (iv) Trucking to and from pile (v) Stowing (vi) Unstowing (vii) Delivery	15/6	
3.	Sorting beyond leading Bill of Lading mark (item 2(ii)) and other additional services	-	Rate to be fixed in each case. Depot Manager will advise General Manager where abnorm- al services are required and at the same time notify the merchants. The account should specify the extra services.
4.	Goods of exceptional weight or bulk in relation to weight	-	Rate to be fixed for each class of goods after investigation.
5.	Overtime	-	See separate schedule.
6.	Rent: per ton per week.  (a) Stored in shed  (b) Stored in the open	6d  To be fixed as re- quired.	Rent is chargeable if Delivery Orders are not received by the time goods are ready for despatch and from that date. Same rule as at Avonmouth Docks will apply as to half week.

On any goods received for storage, rent will be charged from  
date of receipt.



No.	Service	Rate per ton	Notes
7.	Watching	-	Not usually required. Rate per hour to be fixed later.
8.	Weighing on Scales:- (a) On delivery (b) Weighing over	1/8 3/4	
9.	Weighing in railway trucks or road vehicles:-	6d 9d	100 ton lots Less than 100 ton lots.
10.	Crannage:- (a) Packages or pieces not exceeding 30 cwt. each  (b) Cranes on hire (i) Packages or pieces not exceeding 30 cwt. each  (ii) Packages over 30 cwt. each		The rate of 15/6 and any other rates for receiving, sorting and re-delivery normally include any crannage which may be required.  Port Authority's crannage schedule. Base rate of 6/- per hour plus 28 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> per cent.  Port Authority's crannage schedule in addition to special labourage rates.
	Packages of machinery etc. under 30 cwt. worked with lifts over 30 cwt. to be charged as follows:-  3 under 15 cwt. } 2 " 20 cwt. }	As one lift.	
11.	Shunting:-  When a separate charge is made	-  1/0 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	The rate of 15/6 and any other rates for receiving, sorting and re-delivery include shunting.  Minimum charge 1/-
12.	Sampling:- (a) Where labour is not specially employed  (b) Where labour is specially employed	-  -	Lump sum to cover expenses.  Wages and travelling time plus 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub> per cent.



No.	Service	Rate per ton	Notes
13.	Repairing and coopering packages	-	Wages and travelling time plus 33½ per cent.
14.	Weighing slack bags and collecting loose goods	-	
15.	Other exceptional services not covered by rates	-	
16.	Carriage by passenger train	-	Sum paid out.
17.	Materials	-	Cost of materials used and carriage, if any.
18.	Labelling of small consignments for despatch:-	<u>Per package</u>	
	(a) Affixing labels supplied by merchants	¼d	Minimum charge 3d.
	(b) Supplying and fixing labels	½d	" " 3d.
19.	Minimum Charges:-	<u>Per Consignment</u>	
	(a) Receiving, sorting and delivering	5/-	
	(b) Other services	1/6	Each service except shunting and labelling.
20.	Demurrage on railway trucks:-		
	(a) If incurred by neglect (or default of the merchant	-	Sum paid out.
	(b) Otherwise	-	To be borne as a depot working expense.
21. (Rate form No. 466)	<u>Hides, dry salted, loose folded, marks inside :-</u> Unloading, sorting to marks (by unfolding and refolding where necessary) each hide, weighing and re-delivery :- Not exceeding 10 lbs. each " " 20 lbs. " " " 30 lbs. "	30/- } 35/- } 40/- }	These rates will apply even if the shipment contains some portion of the hides with marks outside.  Per 100 hides.
	<u>Hides, dry salted, loose folded, marked outside:-</u> Unloading, sorting to marks, weighing and re-delivery:- Over 40 lbs. but not exceeding 50 lbs. " " 60 " exceeding 60 "	40/- } 47/6 } 52/6 }	Per 100 hides.





No.	Service	Rate per bag	Notes															
22.	<u>Mails - U. S. Forces.</u> Unloading, sorting in shed and re-delivery  <u>Civilian.</u> Unloading, sorting concurrently with unloading and re-delivery	8d 6d   5d	Up to 31st December, 1944. From 1st January to 30th June, 1945.   To 30th June, 1945.															
23.	<p>Traffic for U. S. Forces sent to the depot other than in pursuance of the Control of Traffic (Removal from Ports) Consolidation Order, 1943 dated 21st June, 1943.</p> <p>Railway carriage is settled direct between the U. S. Authorities and Railway Companies, vide Ministry's letter dated 28th August, 1942.</p> <p>Labourage</p> <p>(a) When undertaken by U.S. personnel</p> <p>(b) When Port Authority loan men and they are employed under U.S. supervision</p> <p>Use of sheds and land for storage</p> <p>Cranage</p> <p>Shunting</p> <p>Overheads to cover rates, policing, lighting, general maintenance, etc.</p> <p>Hire of gear:-</p> <p>(a) Where U.S. personnel employed</p> <p>(b) When Port Authority's men are employed</p> <p>Hire of electric trucks including driver:-</p> <p>Not exceeding 2 hours</p> <p>2 hrs. but not exceeding 4 hrs.</p> <p>4 " " " " 6 "</p> <p>6 " " " " 8 "</p> <p>Telephone Trunk Calls</p>	<p>No charge.</p> <p>Wages, travelling time, bus fares, N.D.L.C. plus 10 per cent.</p> <p>No charge.</p> <p>Port Authority's cranage schedule.</p> <p>1/0½d per ton</p> <p>1/6 per ton</p> <p>So far very little use has been made of gear, and no charge is being made. If used in future to any great extent a scale of charges can be fixed.</p> <p>Covered by the 10 per cent. addition to labourage charge.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Daywork</u></th> <th><u>Sunday</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Not exceeding 2 hours</td> <td>10/-</td> <td>15/-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 hrs. but not exceeding 4 hrs.</td> <td>20/-</td> <td>30/-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 " " " " 6 "</td> <td>30/-</td> <td>45/-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 " " " " 8 "</td> <td>40/-</td> <td>60/-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>No charge</p>		<u>Daywork</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	Not exceeding 2 hours	10/-	15/-	2 hrs. but not exceeding 4 hrs.	20/-	30/-	4 " " " " 6 "	30/-	45/-	6 " " " " 8 "	40/-	60/-
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4 " " " " 6 "	30/-	45/-																
6 " " " " 8 "	40/-	60/-																



No.	Service	Rate
24.	<u>Boxed Vehicles stored in the open - Heavy Lifts for War Office.</u>  Charges laid down in Ministry of War Transport's letter dated 13th May, 1943 (U296/27)  Labourage including 1/6 per ton for overhead expenses  Cranage  Rent - Storage in the open	10/- per ton.  Port Authority's cranage schedule (See No. 10(b))  1d per ton per week.
25.	<u>Ministry of War Transport Gear</u>  Rent	3d per square yard per week.

No accounts are to be rendered to the U.S. Forces, War Office or Ministry of War Transport, but statements are to be prepared periodically and sent to the Ministry of War Transport after certification by the local officers.

Quarterly

U.S. Forces - Sub Port Commander and Movement Control.

War Office - Movement Control.

(Vide Ministry's letters dated 29th April 1943 and 13th May, 1943, and Port Authority's to Ministry dated 31st August, 1944 - U296/27(2)).

Monthly

Ministry of War - Sea Transport Officer.  
Transport

(See letter from Ministry dated 23rd February, 1945 U7/66/12).



PORT OF BRISTOL AUTHORITY.

USUALLY COMMON SORTING DEFECT.

OVERTIME CHARGES.

- (a) Mondays to Fridays 5 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.  
 Saturdays 12 noon to 8.30 p.m.

Gang, including Checker

Cost per gang per hour

No. of Men in gang	<u>7 Men</u>	<u>6 Men</u>	<u>5 Men</u>	<u>4 Men</u>
1 Gang	8/-	7/-	6/-	5/-
Estab'ment	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>
	13/-	12/-	11/-	10/-
2 Gangs	10/6	9/6	8/6	7/6
3 "	10/-	9/-	8/-	7/-
4 or more Gangs	9/-	8/-	7/-	6/-

If cranes are used add 2/- per crane per hour  
 If electric trucks are used add 1/3 " truck " "

Engine overtime is not usually incurred.

- (b) Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Hourly rate per gang

Daily rate per gang

	<u>7 Men</u>	<u>6 Men</u>	<u>5 Men</u>	<u>4 Men</u>	<u>7 Men</u>	<u>6 Men</u>	<u>5 Men</u>	<u>4 Men</u>
Wages	20/-	17/-	14/-	11/6	160/-	136/-	112/-	92/-
Estab'ment	20/-	17/-	14/-	11/6	160/-	136/-	112/-	92/-
Engine	<u>10/-</u>	<u>10/-</u>	<u>10/-</u>	<u>10/-</u>	<u>80/-</u>	<u>80/-</u>	<u>80/-</u>	<u>80/-</u>
1 Gang	50/-	44/-	38/-	33/-	400/-	352/-	304/-	264/-
2 Gangs	35/-	30/-	26/-	22/-	280/-	240/-	208/-	176/-
3 "	30/-	26/-	22/-	18/6	240/-	208/-	176/-	148/-
4 "	27/6	24/-	20/-	17/-	220/-	192/-	160/-	136/-
5 "	26/-	23/-	19/-	16/-	208/-	184/-	152/-	128/-
6 "	25/-	22/-	18/-	15/-	200/-	176/-	144/-	120/-
7 "	24/-	21/-	17/6	14/6	192/-	168/-	140/-	116/-
8 or more Gangs	23/6	20/6	17/-	14/6	188/-	164/-	136/-	116/-

If engine is not used the appropriate reduction should be made from the rate.

If cranes are used add Per hour 1/- per crane or Per day £1.12. 0 per crane  
 If electric trucks are used add 2/6 per truck " £1. 0. 0 " truck



OVERTIME CHARGES (Contd.)

(c) Bank Holidays, other than Good Friday and  
Christmas Day 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Gang including Checker

Cost per gang per hour.

No. of Men in gang	<u>7 Men</u>	<u>6 Men</u>	<u>5 Men</u>	<u>4 Men</u>
Wages	10/-	8/6	7/-	5/9
Estab'ment	10/-	8/6	7/-	5/9
Engine	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>	<u>5/-</u>
1 Gang	25/-	22/-	19/-	16/6
2 Gangs	17/6	15/-	13/-	12/-
3 "	15/-	13/-	11/-	9/-
4 "	13/6	12/-	10/-	8/6
5 "	13/-	11/6	9/6	8/-
6 "	12/6	11/-	9/-	7/6
7 "	12/-	10/6	8/6	7/-
8 or more Gangs	12/-	10/6	8/6	7/-

If cranes are used add 2/- per crane per hour  
If electric trucks are used add 1/3 " truck " "

Daily rate per gang.

	<u>7 Men</u>	<u>6 Men</u>	<u>5 Men</u>	<u>4 Men</u>
1 Gang	200/-	176/-	152/-	132/-
2 Gangs	140/-	120/-	104/-	88/-
3 "	120/-	104/-	88/-	72/-
4 "	108/-	96/-	80/-	68/-
5 "	104/-	92/-	76/-	64/-
6 "	100/-	88/-	72/-	60/-
7 "	96/-	84/-	68/-	56/-
8 "	96/-	84/-	68/-	56/-

If cranes are used add 16/- per crane per day  
If electric trucks are used add 10/- " truck " "

Approved.

General Manager.

Bristol Dock Office,  
Queen Square.

18th April, 1945.





PORT OF BRISTOL AUTHORITY.

WAPLEY COMMON INLAND SORTING DEPOT.

SCALE OF OVERTIME CHARGES.

		Mondays to Fridays		Sundays.		Bank Holidays.	
		5 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.		8 a.m. to 5 p.m.		8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	
		per hour.	per hour.	per hour.	per hour.	per hour.	per hour.
		s. d.	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1. <u>Gangs.</u>							
	6 men and checker	8. 0	20. 0	8. 0. 0	10. 0	4. 0. 0	
	5 " "	7. 0	17. 0	6. 16. 0	8. 6	3. 8. 0	
	4 " "	6. 0	14. 0	5. 12. 0	7. 0	2. 16. 0	
	3 " "	5. 0	11. 6	4. 12. 0	5. 9	2. 6. 0	
2. <u>Cranes.</u>	per crane	2. 0	4. 0	1. 12. 0	2. 0	16. 0	
3. <u>Electric Trucks.</u>	per truck	1. 3	2. 6	1. 0. 0	1. 3	10. 0	
4. <u>Shunting.</u>							
			10. 0	4. 0. 0	5. 0	2. 0. 0	

Note:- Chargemen, usually one for 4 gangs are provided for in charge per gang, as is also the overtime for Engineer's staff.

To be apportioned over the number of gangs employed in connection with railborne traffic.

If engine is detained after usual time, a charge is to be made at full hourly rate as charged by Railway Co.

5. Overall Charges. To be apportioned over the number of gangs employed.

Foreman	1. 4	3. 3
Timekeeper	1. 2	2. 10
Office	-	7. 6
2 clerks	-	
Telephone Operator	-	
Establishment 100%	2. 6	13. 7
	2. 6	6. 5
Contingencies, Canteen, etc.	5. 0	20. 0
		8. 0. 0
		10. 0
		4. 0. 0

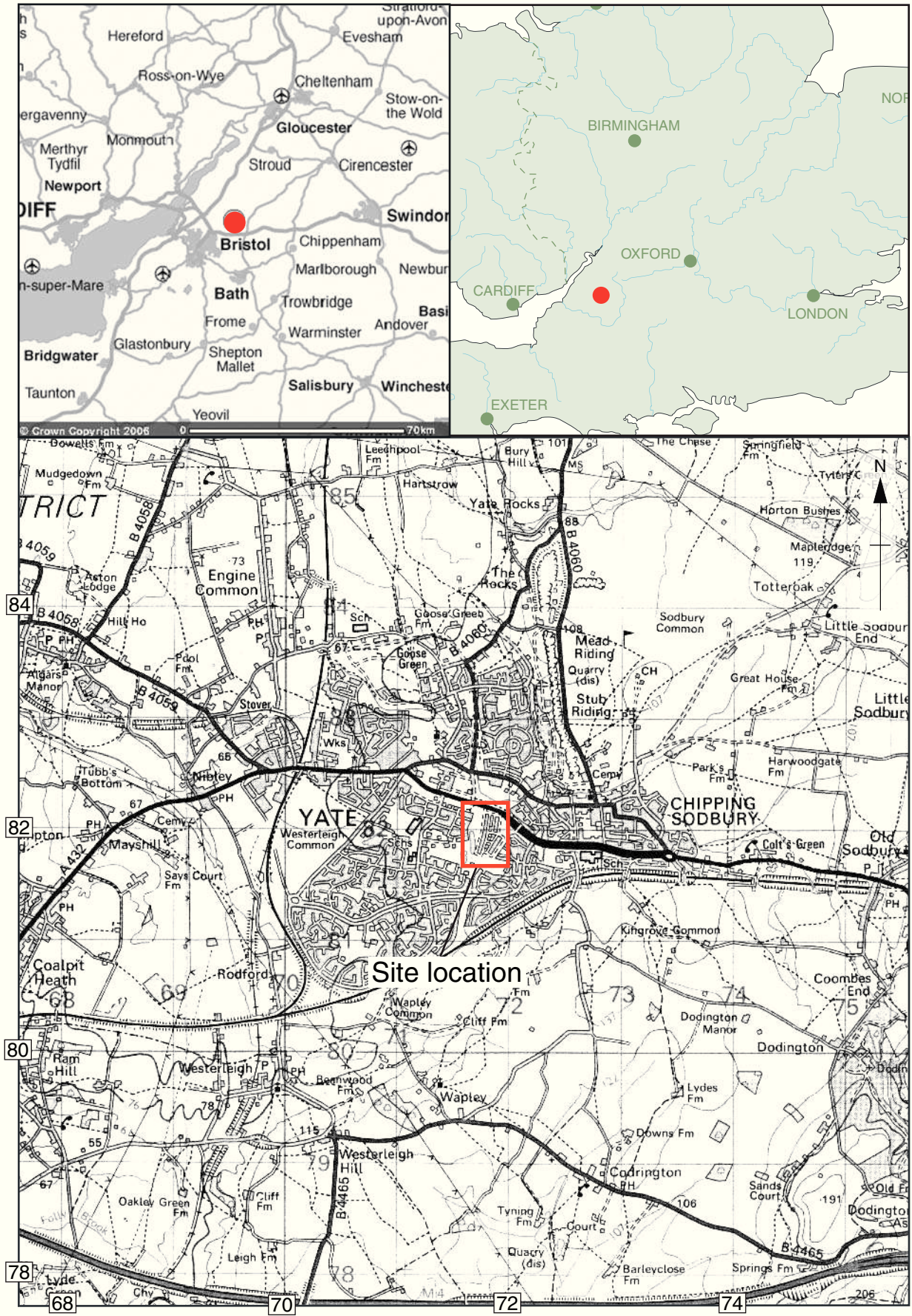
Overtime work, if any, by N.D.L.C. labour is usually limited to Sundays. The extra costs are somewhat lower than for the weekly permanent staff, but not enough for a distinction to be made in the overtime charges which are based on the employment of Wapley staff. The charges for evening overtime are to be calculated on the time men are actually paid. On Sundays and Bank Holidays a minimum charge as for 8 hours is to be made. The scale for Sunday overtime also applies to Good Friday and Christmas Day. Any extra expenses not provided for in this scale are to be charged in addition.

*Handwritten signature*

Approved.

General Manager.



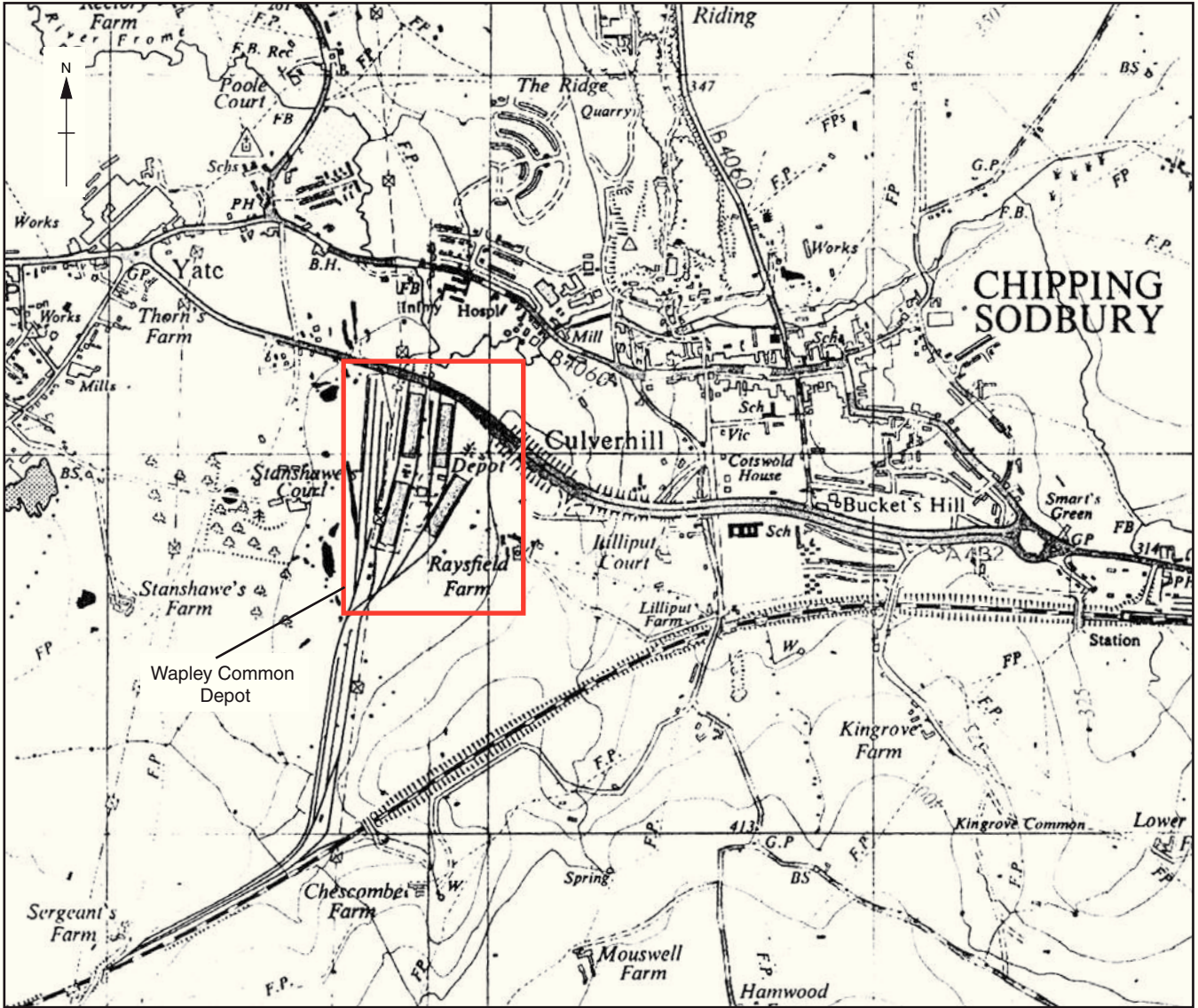


Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location






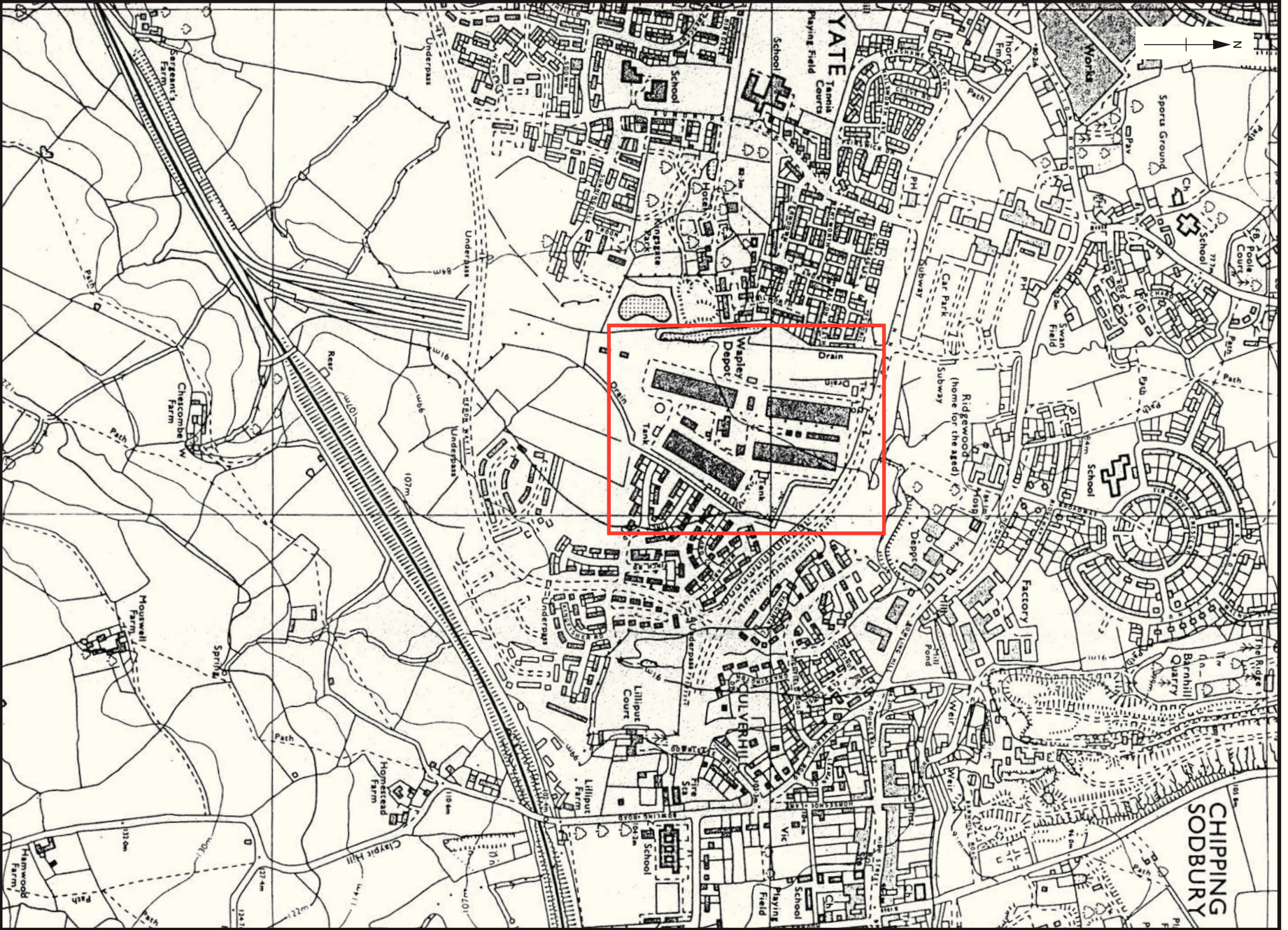
 Site location

Figure 2: 1955 Ordnance Survey map





Site location

Figure 3: 1966 Ordnance Survey map





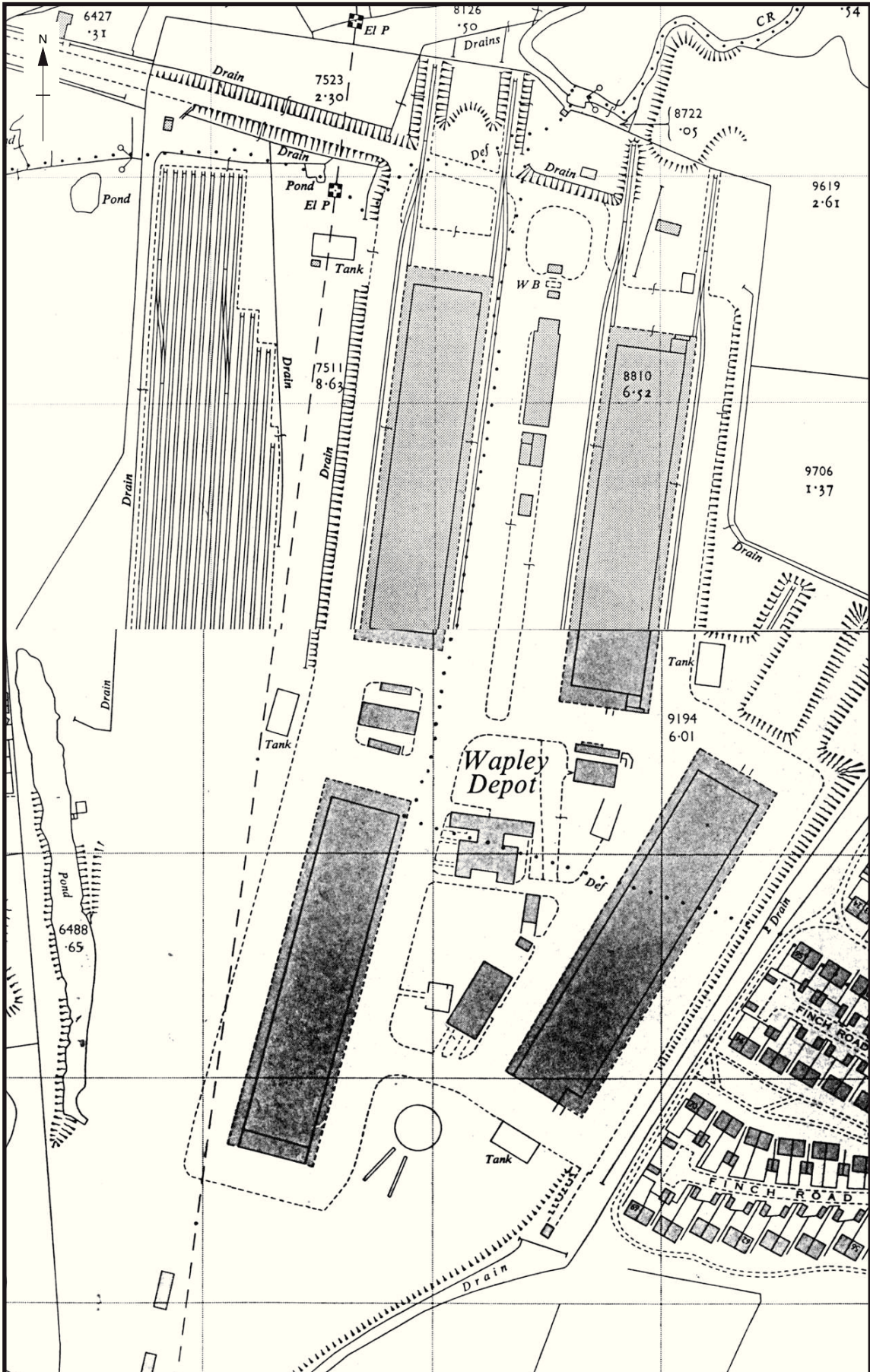


Figure 4: 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map. Top half from 1954, bottom half from 1964



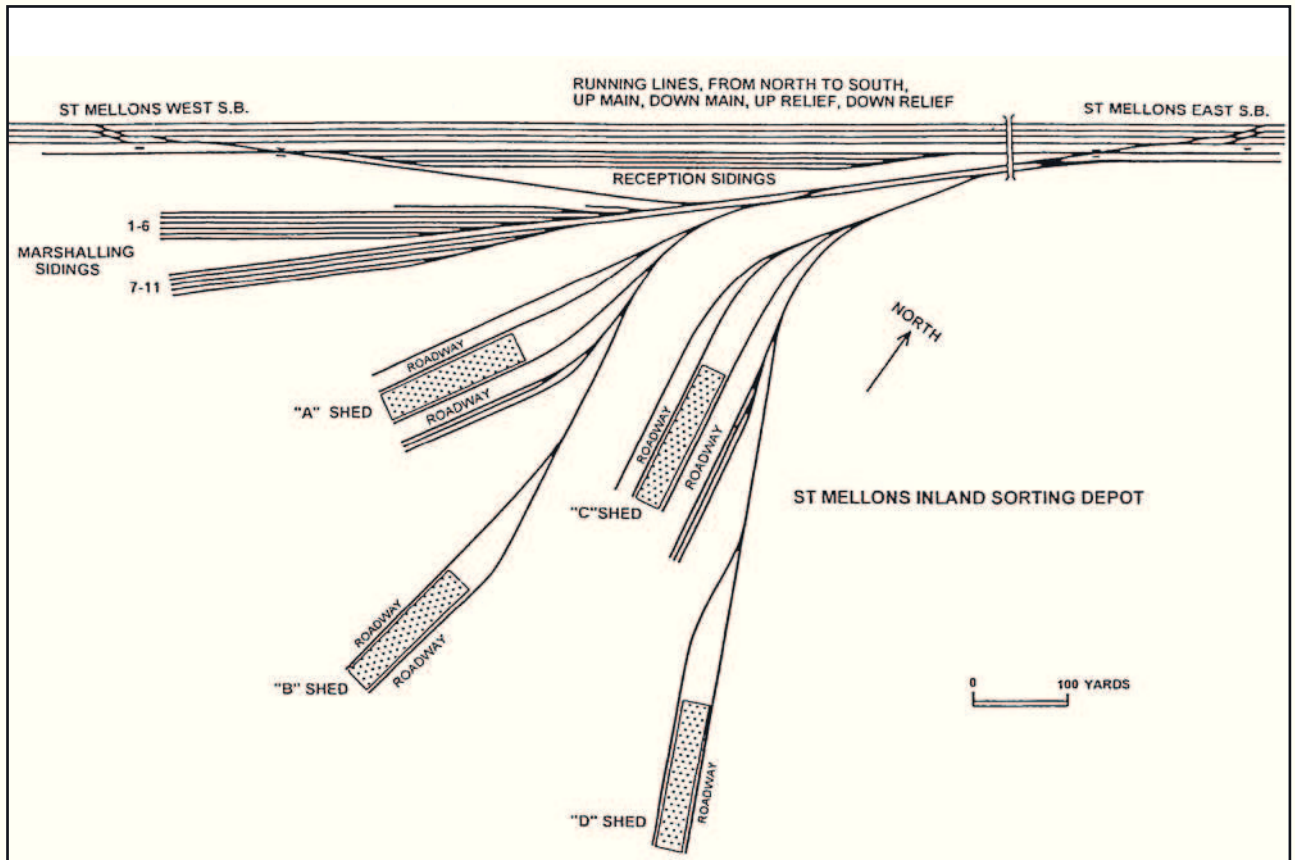


Figure 5: Plan of St. Mellons Inland Sorting Depot in Cardiff (from article on St. Mellons by Mike Christensen)



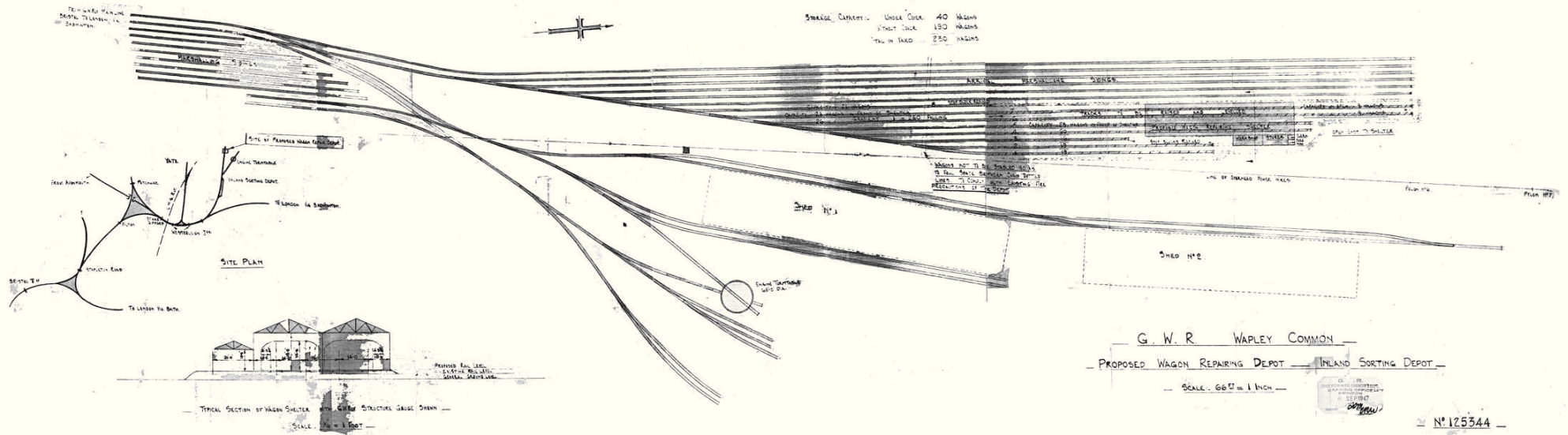


Figure 6: 1947 plan showing proposal for wagon repair depot at site





Plate 1: North end of north shed



Plate 2: General view of south shed



Plate 3: South end of south shed



Plate 4: General view of west side of north shed



Plate 5: South end of north shed



Plate 6: Covered platform on west side of north shed



Plate 7: Wall frame in south shed



Plate 8: North end of south shed





Plate 9: Internal view at south end of south shed



Plate 10: South shed interior looking north



Plate 11: Roof trusses in south shed



Plate 12: South end of south shed



Plate 13: Detail of wall in south shed



Plate 14: Detail of wall in south shed



Plate 15: Fragments of walling at south end of south shed



Plate 16: Detail of truss in south shed



Plate 17: Windows at south end of south shed

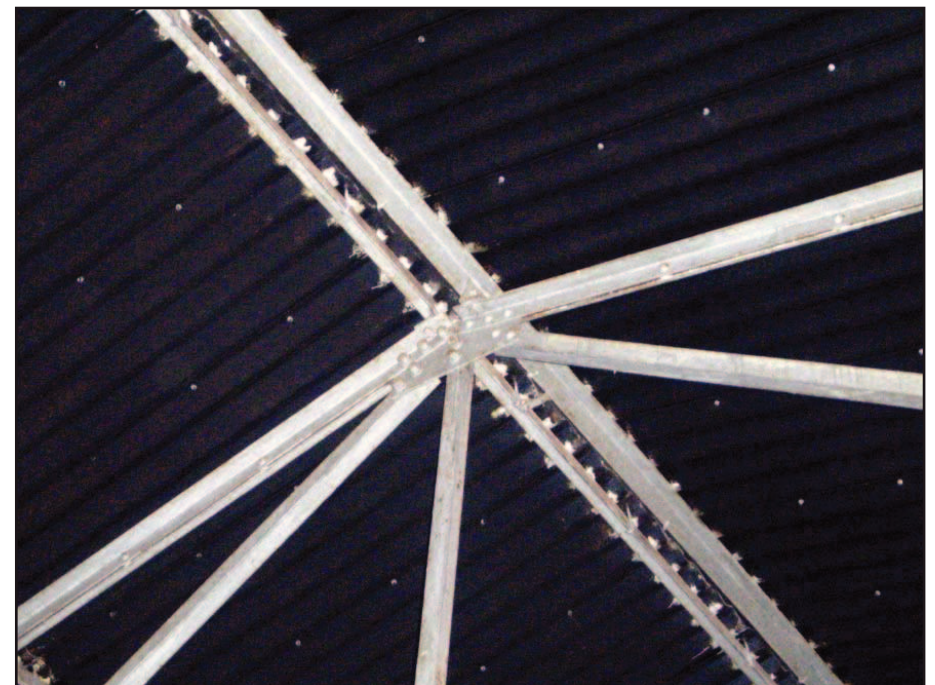


Plate 18: Truss apex detail in south shed



Plate 19: Truss detail at valley



Plate 20: Administration building



Plate 21: Surviving buildings at west side of complex



Plate 22: Interior of surviving ancillary building



Plate 23: Electrical substation and lodge at entrance



Plate 24: Electrical substation and lodge at entrance



Plate 25: Banks to north of south shed



Plate 26: Banks to north of south shed

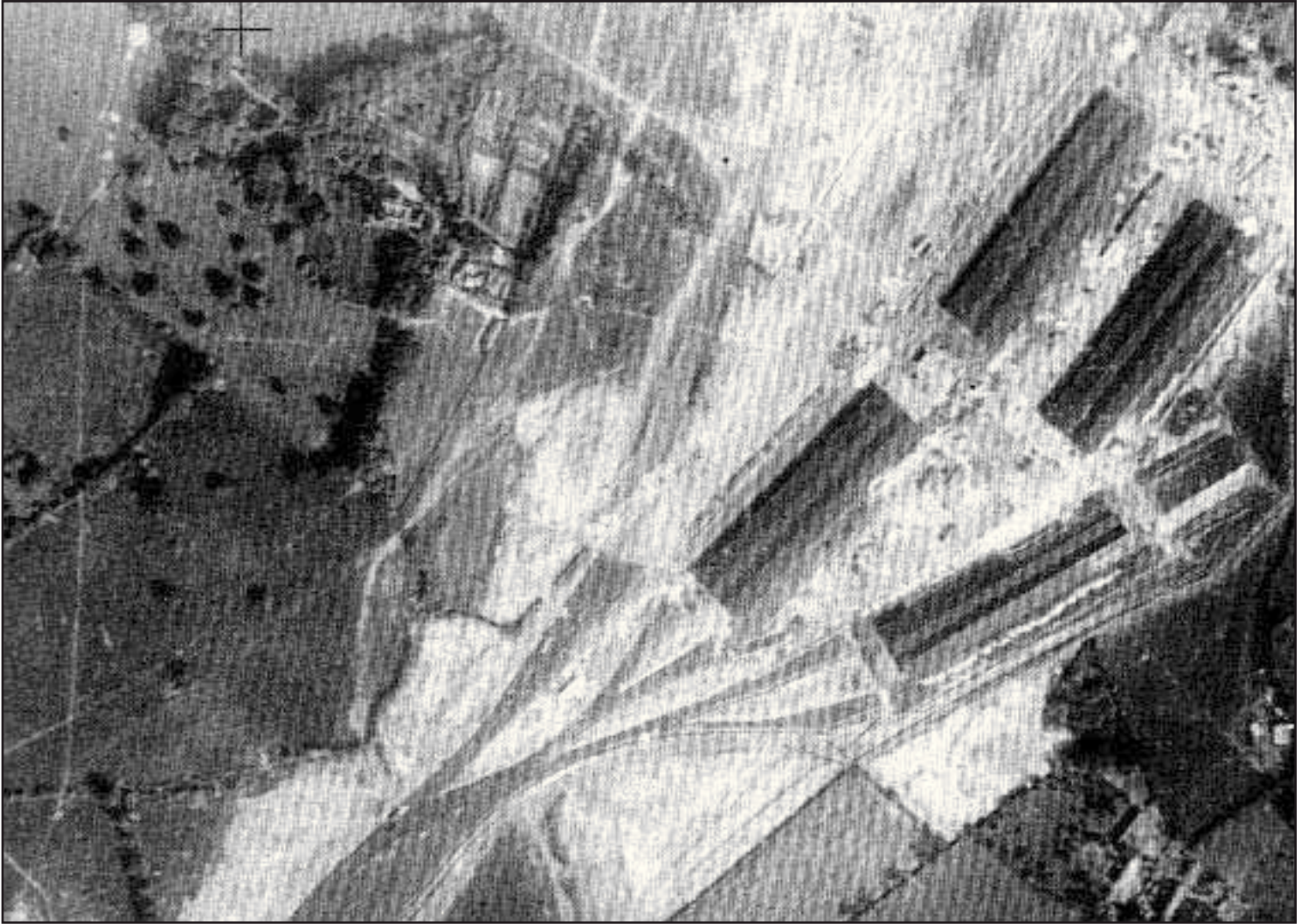


Plate 27: Aerial photo taken 6 June 1942

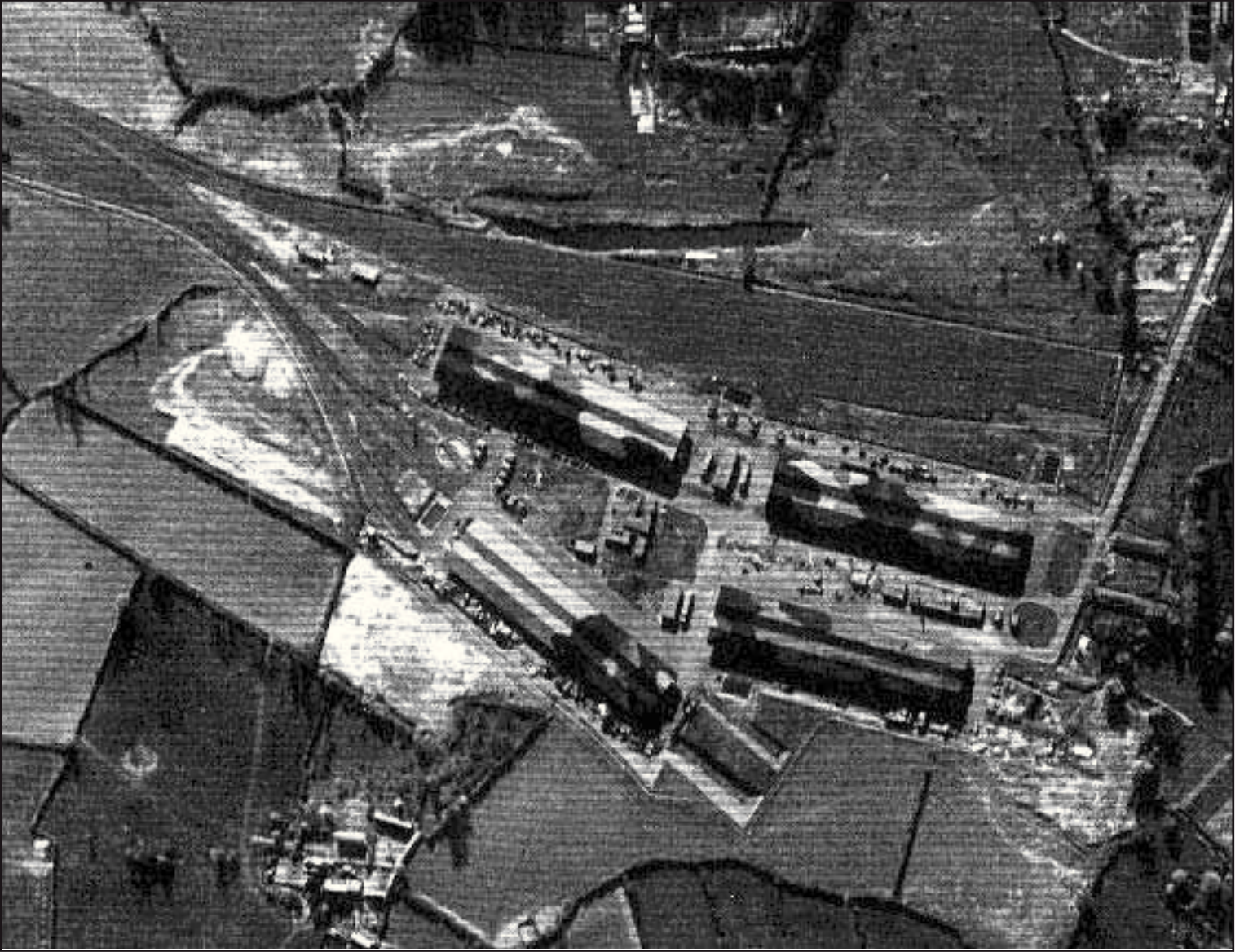


Plate 28: Aerial photo taken 14 April 1946









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