

**Building recording at Area K1,
the former Cavalry Barracks, Butt Road,
Colchester, Essex
May 2011**



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**on behalf of
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1 Summary

A programme of building recording was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust on six buildings at the decommissioned Cavalry Barracks, Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex. The work was commissioned by the RPS Group on behalf of the landowner Taylor Wimpey. The buildings date from the early 1860s to the latter half of the 20th century. None of the buildings are listed but they include some of the last examples of post-Crimean War innovative barracks design first developed at Aldershot. The majority of the original internal fixtures and fittings have been removed or altered, and three of the buildings have been partially demolished. These alterations have had a significant impact upon the functionality of the buildings as originally designed. The value of these buildings is in their design and in their links and associations with military and historical events over the past 150 years.

2 Introduction (Figs 1-2)

This report provides a written and photographic record of six former Army buildings located in Garrison Alienated Land Area K1, in the southern part of the Cavalry Barracks, at Colchester Garrison (EHER no 46846). The buildings are a mix of original structures and later additions, none of which are listed and all of which are scheduled for demolition. This report is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission submitted to Colchester Borough Council. The written report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record of digital images (Appendix 2). The buildings were surveyed during May 2011 when the accompanying photographs were taken. The report includes eleven printed photographs from the photographic record.

3 Historical background (Fig 11)

The background information here is based on *Garrison: ten military towns* (Dietz 1986) and *British barracks 1600-1914* (Douet 1998).

Prior to the Crimean War (1853-56), the Army presence in Colchester was always temporary, with soldiers billeted locally or housed in tents. Although some wooden barracks were constructed in 1794, these were disposed of after the Napoleonic Wars. The presence of troops in Colchester was predominantly in response to military crises, such as the Napoleonic Wars, with the town serving as a transit camp for troops on their way to the Continent via the port of Harwich. However, after the end of the Crimean War, it was decided that Colchester Camp was to be put on a permanent footing. This was in addition to the temporary wooden huts constructed in 1855-56 on Ordnance Field (land between Military Road and Mersea Road which later became the site of Meeanee Barracks and Hyderabad Barracks) intended as barracks for 5,000 infantrymen. The permanent barracks would not be a huddled encampment. Due to the campaigning actions of reformers such as Florence Nightingale and public awareness of the vast number of soldiers who had died of disease during the Crimean War (16,323 compared to 4,774 killed in action or died of wounds), Prime Minister Lord Palmerston was forced to appoint a Royal Commission in 1857 to examine the problems of sanitation, sickness and mortality in barracks around the country. In response to this, a Commission for Improving Barracks and Hospitals was set up. A direct result of the Commission was the inclusion of improved heating, ventilation and sanitary arrangements for new barracks. Plans including these new arrangements, for a simply-named 'Cavalry Barracks' at Colchester, were signed off by General Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector General of Fortifications, in 1861 (see ground-plan in CAT Report 97, fig 20). By 1864, Colchester Camp

had doubled in size with the completion of the new brick-built cavalry barracks.

The Cavalry Barracks was the first purpose-built barracks in Colchester. It was sited on open land to the south-west of the built-up town, adjacent to Layer Road (now Butt Road) and facing east over the open expanse of the Abbey Field. In a departure from the traditional enclosed, parade-centred layout, the plan of the Cavalry Barracks was more open-plan. The barracks comprised over 40 structures: these included four two-storey blocks of Soldiers' Quarters housing 16 NCOs and 288 men, four Troop Stables for 224 horses, and four two-storey Troop Stables for another 224 horses with Soldiers' Quarters Above. A Staff Sergeants' Quarters and the Sergeants' Mess, Library and Reading Room flanked the parade ground itself. Officers were well catered for in a three-storey building accommodating Quarters, Mess and Billiard Room for two commanding Field Officers, two Field Officers and 32 other officers. Their horses were stabled separately in two blocks of Officers' Stables, with their own yard, and each block holding stalls for 88 mounts. Two Infirmary Stables were included, one being of loose boxes for eight horses, and the other being of stalls for 16 horses. The Infirmary Stables had its own exercise ground, two Infirmary Forges and a Shoeing Shed. A Riding School with an outdoor *manège* (riding arena), based on a model prepared by the Inspector General's office in 1862, was included for exercising the horses and practising manoeuvres.

The barracks also had its own water supply, provided via a circular Water Tower on brick piers. Separating the barracks from Layer Road (now Butt Road) was a brick boundary wall approximately 10 feet high topped with semi-circular bricks, with a main gate of four brick piers forming a central wide opening flanked by two outer, narrower openings. The main opening was double gated while the outer openings each contained a single gate. The piers were capped with York stone. The remainder of the barracks' ancillary buildings were ranged along this boundary wall. They varied greatly in function and included offices for the Barrack Sergeant and Barrack Master, the Utensil Store, the Bedding Store, the Straw Store, the Coal House, the Ablution House, the Soldiers' Latrines, the Pay Master's Office, the Orderly Room, the Cells and Lock-up, the Guard House, the Shoemaker's, Saddler's and Tailor's Shops, the Quartermaster's Office and Store, the Armoury, the Forge and Shoeing Shed, a Granary on staddle stones, the Hay Store, the Bread and Meat Stores, the Tap Room, the Canteen, the Sergeants' Room and the NCOs' Room. The Magazine Store, located at a distance to the accommodation, was also along the boundary wall. (See locations of these buildings on the plan of 1897, Fig 12.)

4 Cartographic and documentary survey (Illustrations 1-8)

The Victorian development of the Army barracks in Colchester is well documented through the sequence of the O.S. maps of the period, and the Cavalry Barracks appears on all of these.

The group of buildings has been numbered Buildings 1-8 (see Fig 2); Buildings 1 and 3 were not surveyed, but Buildings 2 and 4-8 were surveyed as they are scheduled for demolition. (The Garrison Riding School was built as part of the Cavalry Barracks in the early 1860s. It is a Grade II listed building and is not included in this survey, but it is shown on Figs 1 and 12. It was surveyed by CAT in February 2011 (CAT Report 585) ahead of conversion.)

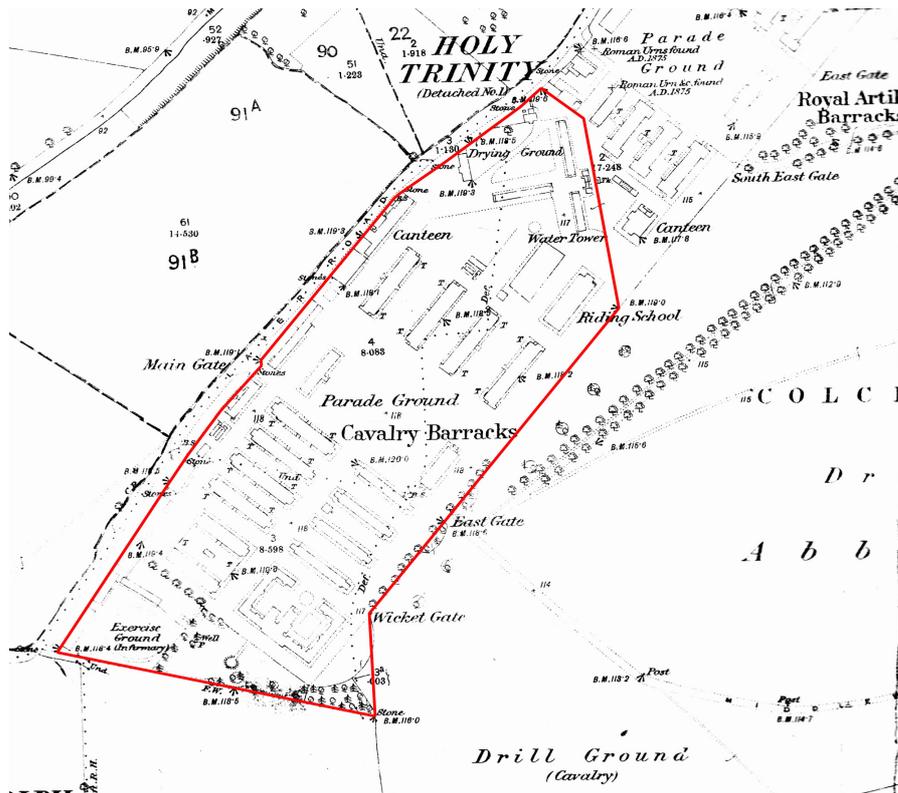


Illustration 1: O.S. 1st edition map of 1876 (scale 1:2,500), with the boundary of the Cavalry Barracks marked in red and the later Royal Artillery Barracks shown to the north-east.

The O.S. 1st edition map of 1876 shows the Cavalry Barracks a little over a decade after construction (Illustration 1, above). The buildings noted in section 3 (above) can be seen, with some, notably the Canteen, Water Tower and Riding School, being labelled. A sense of the new open-plan nature of the barracks recommended by the Royal Commission can also be gained from this map. This is clearly shown by contemporary postcards which give an impression of the barracks being airy, light and spacious, compared to those barracks described by the Commission as 'old, gloomy and bad' (Douet 1998). Illustration 2 (below) shows a view confirming the map evidence that there was a large area of open ground to the south of the Officers' Quarters and Illustration 3 (below) shows open space between the Soldiers' Quarters in this postcard. Building 5 of the survey, one of the Troop Stables, can be seen on the right of the three-storey Officers' Quarters.



Illustration 2: south-west elevation of the Officers' Quarters showing the open ground in front (Rock's Royal Cabinet Album Colchester).



Illustration 3: the Cavalry Barracks in 1875, with Building 5 in the far distance (The Queen's Album).

The *manège* to the north-west of the Riding School can also be seen on the extract from the O.S. map of 1876. This arena for exercising horses and riders is also depicted on an early 20th-century postcard (Illustration 4, below) which shows men from the 16th Lancers (stationed at Colchester in 1902) exercising their horses, with several of the Troop Stables with Soldiers' Quarters Above shown in the background.



Illustration 4: men of the 16th Lancers exercising their horses c 1902 (postcard).

By the time of the O.S. map of 1897 (below), very little appears to have changed.

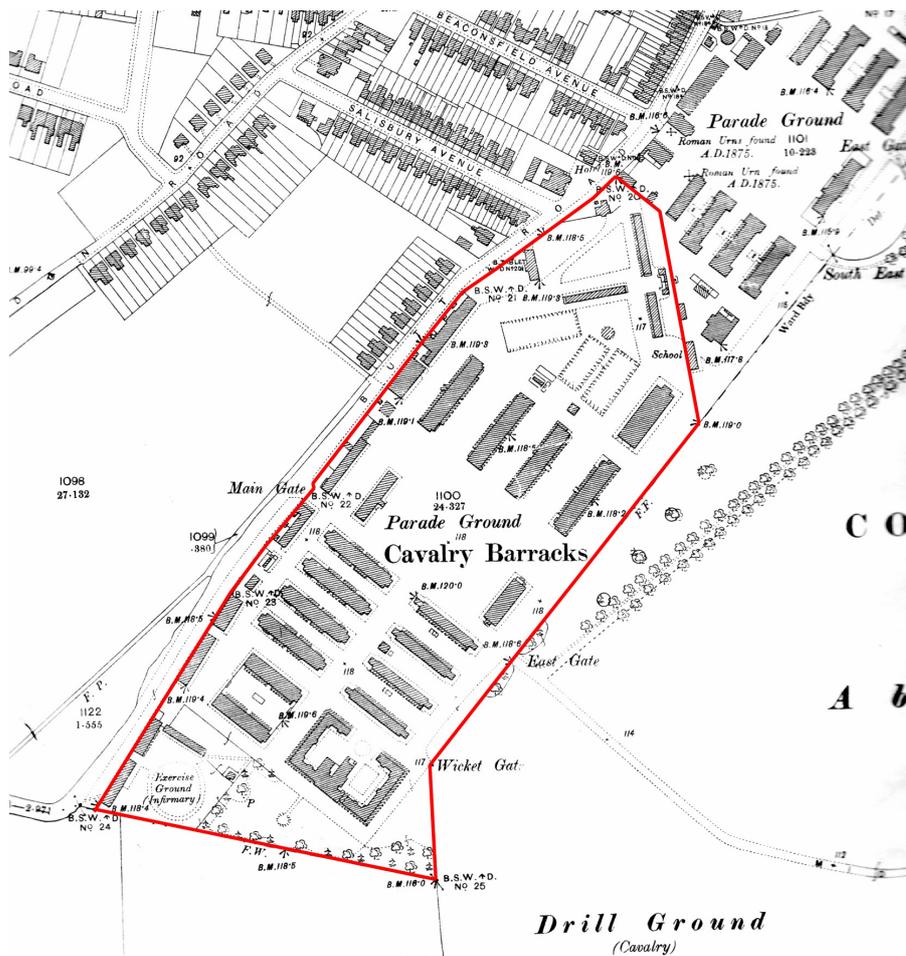


Illustration 5: O.S. 2nd edition map of 1897 (scale 1:2,500), with the boundary of the Cavalry Barracks marked in red.

All of the buildings appear as they do on the O.S. map of 1876, and the only apparent changes are two additional *manèges* located to the north-west of the original and an extension linking the Ablution House to the boundary wall. The *manèges* were probably added in response to the South African wars of the late 19th century. Outside the boundary wall, Colchester's suburbs can be seen to be encroaching southwards with the building of houses along Maldon Road and the recently renamed Butt Road and as well as the new developments of Beaconsfield Avenue and Salisbury Avenue. It may have been these new neighbours which prompted the 16th Lancers to post such formidable-looking sentries at the gate as are shown in a postcard from 1902 (Plate 1). This postcard shows the large central wooden gates tipped with iron spikes and one of the smaller outer gates. The brick piers with their York stone caps can also be seen.

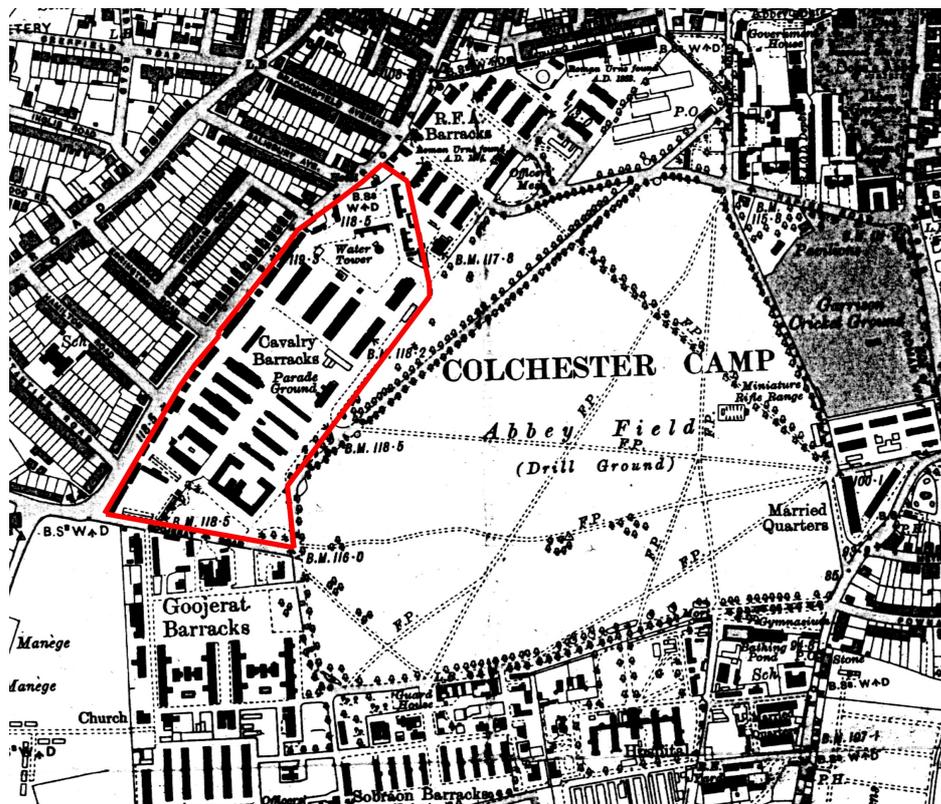


Illustration 6: O.S. map of 1921 (scale 1:10,560) with the boundary of the Cavalry Barracks marked in red.

The O.S. map of 1921 shows very little change to the Cavalry Barracks. A structure is outlined at the north-eastern corner of the parade ground but it is not blacked in like the other buildings on this map. This is probably indicative of a building which was planned but not built at the time of the 1921 survey. A similar outline can be seen to the north-east of the Officers' Mess in Le Cateau Barracks (shown on the map with its pre-1914 name, the 'R.F.A. Barracks' (Royal Field Artillery)). These planned buildings became the Dining Hall and Cook House for the Cavalry Barracks and, probably, the Regimental Institute for Le Cateau Barracks (this later became the Army Education Centre). Inscriptions on both buildings place the actual date of construction as 1937. The main point of interest to note from the O.S. map of 1921 is the expansion of the suburbs to the west of the Cavalry Barracks and the presence of the newer Goojerat Barracks

and Sobraon Barracks to the south. The creation of Goojerat Road and Circular Road South to access these barracks created the layout which still exists today.

A map of Colchester Garrison prepared by the Royal Engineers in 1949 (Illustration 7, below) shows the aforementioned Dining Hall and Cook House and also a Regimental Institute which was added to the Sergeants' Mess and Reading Room (also known as the Adult School) in 1935. However, this map notes four amendments (1953, 1955, 1956, 1962), but does not indicate what they were. Several original buildings, most notably the Officers' Stables (Building 4 of the survey), have been omitted when they were clearly still standing at the time and, as the purpose of this map is unknown, this casts doubt on the accuracy of this source. Significant changes include the complete removal of the Infirmary Stables and Exercise Ground, replaced by an office block, and the infilling of the open land to the south of the Officers' Quarters with what appear to be garages and outbuildings. The southernmost of the two Officers' Stables and the yard between them was replaced with a large warehouse, while the Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store was joined to the Commissariat Reserve Stores to create one long building. The Ablution House is shown to have an extension joining it to the boundary wall. The area of the *manèges* was replaced with a group of air-raid shelters, probably in 1939. The map also shows that the boundary wall separating the Cavalry Barracks from Le Cateau Barracks was breached.

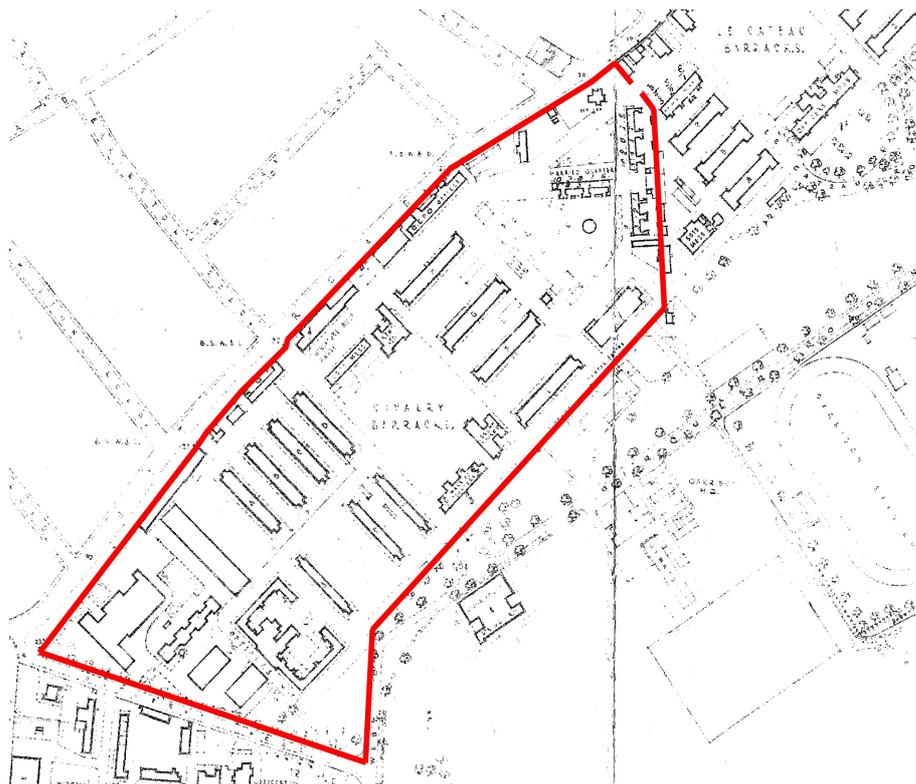


Illustration 7: Royal Engineers' map of 1949 with the boundary of the Cavalry Barracks marked in red.

By far the greatest change to affect the Cavalry Barracks came in the late 1970s. The modern O.S. map (Illustration 8, below) clearly shows that the Cavalry Barracks ceased to function as an independent component of Colchester Garrison and was, instead, incorporated into the later barracks surrounding it.

The most visible sign of this is Circular Road West, the construction of which cut the Cavalry Barracks in two, linking the Abbey Field ring-road to the western suburbs. The insertion of this road destroyed two of the Soldiers' Quarters and one of the Troop Stables, as well as one of the Latrines and the Wicket Gate. It was probably at this time that the eastern boundary wall was removed and replaced with a chain-link fence closer to the buildings. The brick piers of the East Gate have been removed during the 21st-century redevelopment of the garrison, but they were, for a long time, visible standing among the trees alongside Circular Road North. Another significant change is the appearance of the Royal Military Police Station to the south-east of the Officers' Quarters. A small structure was constructed to the north-west of the remaining Officers' Stables. North of the new Circular Road West, the modern mapping shows the removal of many of the original buildings. The Staff Sergeants' Quarters to the east of the parade ground were removed, along with the Troop Stables with Soldier's Quarters Above to the north-east. Many of the buildings along the boundary wall have been demolished, leaving only the Shoeing Shed and Smithy and the Hay Store. The only original building to survive north of the remaining Troop Stables with Soldier's Quarters Above is the Riding School.



Illustration 8: modern O.S. map, with the boundary of the former Cavalry Barracks marked in red.

5 Descriptive record

The scope of the building recording was confined to six structures scheduled for demolition, all of which are located in the portion of the Cavalry Barracks to the south of Circular Road West (Fig 2). Two additional structures are to be retained and converted and so were not surveyed (Buildings 1 and 3). For the purposes of the building recording, these have been included in the numbering of the block plan. The group of buildings surveyed includes original structures and later additions. The building recording was hampered by the previous partial demolition of the eastern ends of three of the structures and the dumping of waste building materials in-between the standing structures. Parts of the structures were also heavily overgrown by vegetation. As a result of this, the accompanying elevations and plans are partly speculative because the buildings were incomplete at the time of the survey and the quality of the external photography is less than satisfactory at times.

Building 1 (the Commissariat Reserve Stores) (Figs 2, 12)

This is being retained for conversion. As such it will only briefly be covered here. It is a long building incorporating the boundary wall in its north-west elevation, originally separate from Building 3 but now joined to it by Building 2. Building 1 is a rectangular single-storey structure of red brick in Flemish bond with a pitched roof of asbestos slates. It was originally divided into five rooms with a centrally-located entrance in its north-east elevation. Four other entrances were located in the south-east elevation. Two of these remain while the other two have been bricked in. The window heads with their alternating red and yellow brick voussoirs above these blocked entrances can still be observed. The seven windows of the south-east elevation have all been altered and new, smaller Crittall windows inserted, although the sills are original. The façade built into the boundary wall had eleven windows looking out onto Butt Road. These have since been bricked in.

Building 2 (unknown) (Figs 2-3)

This small building joins Building 1, the Commissariat Reserve Stores, to Building 3, the Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store, being a much later addition to both of these original structures (Plate 2). It is a single-storey structure with a shallow, single-pitched roof of tarred felt. The south-east elevation is of red brick laid in Flemish bond with its other walls formed by the boundary wall to the rear and Buildings 1 and 3 to the south and north. Two Crittall windows with window heads of soldiers are symmetrically aligned in the south-east elevation. This is mirrored in the boundary wall although the windows in this elevation have been bricked in. The interior of this building is divided around a centrally-aligned corridor with one large room on the boundary wall side and two smaller rooms on the other side. The most southerly of the latter was used as a kitchen; it is not possible to say what purpose the other two rooms had.

Building 3 (Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store) (Figs 2, 12)

This is being retained for conversion. As such it will only briefly be covered here. It is a rectangular single-storey structure originally tied into the boundary wall but later joined to Building 1 via Building 2. It is constructed of red brick in Flemish bond with a pitched roof of asbestos slates. The south-east elevation has eight full-height brick buttresses along its length. The building originally had two rooms, the larger to the north-east for the Army Service Corps Wagon Shed, with the other being occupied by the Commissariat Reserve Store. The Wagon Shed had no openings along the south-east elevation but had a wide entrance to the north-eastern end which also had two brick buttresses identical to those on the south-east elevation. The short end of the Wagon Shed displays significant alteration; a large window with a gauged brick window head was inserted and, at a

later date, the gable was rebuilt, the entrance bricked in and a modern fire door inserted. Three windows have been inserted into the south-east elevation, probably at the same time as the other alterations were carried out. The large entrance at the gable end of the Reserve Store has been filled in, probably at the same time that Building 2 was built. Three windows were originally located in the south-east elevation of the Reserve Store but these have been removed and replaced with Crittall windows with window heads of soldiers. A window head of alternating red and yellow brick voussoirs of one of the original windows can still be seen, but the others have been completely replaced by later brick fill.

Building 4 (Officers' Stables) (Figs 2, 4-5, 12-13)

This is the surviving example of the two Officers' Stables which, with walls to the west and east, formed an enclosed stable yard with drinking troughs and a central dung-pit (Plate 3). It is a single-storey long rectangular structure of red brick laid in Flemish bond, with a small storage shed built onto the north-western end. The south-eastern end has been demolished, but map evidence suggests that a storage shed was attached to this end of the building also. The roof is pitched and covered with asbestos slates, and is fitted with a range of roof lights. Original features include a low red brick plinth, window and door heads of arched alternating red and yellow bricks, the use of York stone for sills and kerbs, and a drainage channel of Staffordshire blue bricks around the footprint of the building.

The surviving north-east elevation contains a brick porch at the north-western end leading to an enclosed space with an original door at either end (Plate 4). Beyond the far door is a brick porch projecting from the south-western façade of the main building. The entrance to this porch has been bricked in. To the left of the porch entrance, at the northern corner of the main range, is a bricked-in doorway. An identical doorway is located at the western corner. The north-western wall has a range of three windows, each of ten lights with glazing bars. These open inwards on side-mounted pivots and are operated by a means of a long metal chain (Plate 5). Four identical windows and one which has been bricked in can be found on the north-east elevation, which also contains two large entrances. Both have large double wooden plank doors, the ones furthest north opening outwards with a concrete lintel above. This is a later insertion to the façade and has completely removed a window. The entrance closer to what would have been the centre of the building has doors opening inwards with the characteristic brick arch above. This second entrance is original and opens into a corridor dividing the building. Doorways at each corner of this corridor (now bricked in) originally provided access to the interior of the stable in the same configuration as those at the north-western end of the building. In effect, the building comprises two separate stable blocks. The building has been demolished up to the wall forming this corridor, but map evidence suggests that this was the centre point for a line of symmetry and the main building has been reconstructed accordingly (Figs 4, 5). Map evidence suggests that the storage shed at the south-eastern end had a south-west projecting porch added sometime after 1921, and a photograph from the Ingram historic building assessment (Ingram 2000) shows the entrances at the corners of the building to have been reduced in height and width (Plate 6). The same photograph also shows that the area in front of these entrances was originally paved with granite setts.

The south-west elevation is identical to the north-east elevation in layout, but this has two bricked-in windows and the later entrance is also blocked. The central entrance on this elevation has been reduced in width and height.

The interior of the Officers' Stable is a large empty space with a concrete and tile floor. Five wooden trusses held by iron bolts and banding support two large purlins on either side of the ridgeline. Originally the four doors at the ends of the block each had a sliding top section and a swing hung

lower section and would have provided access to a walkway paved with Staffordshire blue blocks around the perimeter of the stable (Fig 13). Off this walkway were individual horse stalls (eleven to a side) separated by metal bars hanging from chains fastened to a central masonry spine and iron posts. Although no trace remains of this, a litter shed was attached to the south-west elevation facing the enclosed stable yard.

Building 5 (Troop Stables) (Figs 2, 6-7, 12-13)

This is one of the two examples of the Troop Stables recorded during the survey. It is a single-storey long rectangular structure of red brick laid in Flemish bond, with a small storage shed built onto the north-western end (Plate 7). The south-eastern end has been demolished, but map evidence suggests that a storage shed was also attached to this end of the building. The roof is pitched and covered with asbestos slates, and is fitted with a range of roof lights. Original features include a low red brick plinth, window and door heads of arched alternating red and yellow bricks, the use of York stone for sills and kerbs, and a drainage channel of Staffordshire blue bricks around the footprint of the building.

The storage shed on the north-western end is centrally located and does not extend the full width of the stable block. It is flanked by original entrances, both of which have been reduced in height and width. The storage shed has an entrance with the original wooden door in its north-eastern side and an original window high on the wall opposite. An entrance has been inserted from this shed into the main stable, but this is clearly later in origin. The north-east elevation of the main stable block has an alternating pattern of three windows followed by a large entrance of outward-opening double wooden doors with a concrete lintel above. This pattern is repeated and the length of the building, as shown on the O.S. map of 1875, suggests that the facade would have comprised three entrances and four sets of windows prior to the demolition of the south-eastern end. The concrete lintels indicate that these wide entrances are not original. Ranged along the wall beneath the most north-westerly of the windows are five unevenly spaced iron tethering rings (Plate 8).

The south-east elevation follows the same pattern of windows and entrances but here the entrances are narrower. Door heads of the characteristic alternating red and yellow voussoirs indicate that these entrances are original. They have, however, been reduced in width and height with the original stable doors being replaced with modern fire doors. It is logical to assume that this is what the north-east elevation would have resembled before the insertion of the larger entrances. Only one tethering ring is found on this elevation but there is an iron tie for a hay bag protruding from the storage shed. It is possible that more of these original fittings have been lost over time, but the surviving locations of fittings confirm what is shown most clearly on the O.S. map of 1897. The two large rectangles projecting from the long sides of the building are litter sheds flanking the central entrances, and the smaller rectangle probably represents a water trough. Taking this into account, it is possible that the rings surveyed (and the equivalent ones lost at the demolished end) represent the total number of tethering rings that were originally attached to the building.

The interior of Building 5 is a large empty space subdivided roughly into thirds by a stud wall to the north-western end and a concrete block wall to the south-eastern end. Both of these are full height to the ridgeline and the building has been demolished to the line of the concrete block wall. The floor is of concrete. No evidence remains of original fixtures or fittings but it is possible to see the original brick archways which housed the sliding/swinging stable doors (Plates 9-10). The roof is of the same construction as Building 4, with wooden trusses held in place with iron bolts and strapping. The internal arrangement of Building 5 would have been the same as that of the Officers' Stables, only on a larger scale. This building

would have had 56 stalls, 28 on either side of a central spine with a walkway around the outer walls.

Building 6 (Troop Stables) (Figs 2, 8-9, 12-13)

Building 6 was essentially identical to Building 5 at the time of construction. The only differences occur in the later alterations. Here the entrances on both of the long elevations have been widened to accommodate double wooden doors, with those on the north-eastern side subsequently bricked in, presumably when Circular Road West was constructed. The entrances to the main stable block on the north-west elevation have also been altered, again with one being subsequently bricked in. The storage shed on this elevation retains the original door and window but has had a later Crittall metal-framed window inserted into its long side (Plate 11). The north-west and north-east elevations have also been painted off-white. There are surviving tethering rings in the same locations as in Building 5, and a hay-bag tie can be observed on the south-west elevation near to the storage shed.

The interior of Building 6 is a large empty space subdivided into three unequal parts. Two of these divisions are formed by wooden stud walls, the third by a concrete block wall with a door located off-centre. Building 6 has been demolished up to this wall. The floor is of concrete, and wooden trusses held in place with iron bolts and strapping support the roof. The original internal plan would have been the same as Building 5 and there would have been identical litter sheds and water troughs attached to the long sides.

Building 7 (Ablution House) (Figs 2, 10, 12)

This building is a single-storey rectangular structure of red brick laid in Flemish bond and a pitched asbestos slate roof, with a flat, felted roofed extension to the rear joining it to the boundary wall (Plate 12). This extension is a later addition as is shown by the 1875 and 1897 O.S. maps which depict the structure as freestanding. The building originally functioned as the Ablution House in conjunction with the Soldiers' Latrine located to the north-east which was destroyed when Circular Road West was constructed in the late 1970s. The south-east elevation has a range of five windows, three of which are original, displaying the characteristic window heads of alternating red and yellow brick voussoirs. A later Crittall metal-framed window has been inserted into one of the original openings and is slightly wider than the arch of the window head. The remaining window of this elevation is a large dormer with an unhorned sash window of eight over eight lights. This has replaced the original entrance to the building. The ridgeline of this dormer has a crest of upright geometric tiles.

The north-west elevation, the rear of the building, has four original windows in line with those on the front elevation. A probable fifth window, in line with the original entrance, has been removed by the construction of the extension. However, a window looking out onto Butt Road does exist where this extension is tied into the boundary wall. This has been bricked in at a later date.

The south-west elevation shows a centrally-located entrance inserted into the short end of the original structure. This has two small lights above it and is surmounted by a deep cast concrete lintel. Directly above this lintel is an original small, square-shaped louvred window with a York stone sill and the characteristic window head. Immediately to the rear of the main structure is the later extension. The south-west elevation has a narrow Crittall window of three lights and two single door entrances surmounted by a wide concrete lintel, opening into two separate rooms. These flat-roofed rooms are of differing height, with the one tied into the boundary wall being built higher than the wall itself. It is probable that this increased height housed a water tank to provide pressure, although there is no direct

evidence of this. The lower of the two flat roofs has a later brick alteration raising the overall height but keeping it below the level of the other roof.

The north-west elevation displays the same inserted entrance and original louvred window as the opposite end on the main block, while the facade of the extension has a window near to the eaves of the lower-roofed room. This window is of the same dimensions as the original ones in the main block but has a sill and lintel of cast concrete.

The interior of the former Ablution House has three distinct areas of increasing size. Off the south-western entrance are urinals and two WCs, on either side of a central passage. A door in a brick cross wall provides access to a larger room used as a kitchen, while a further door in a second cross wall provides access to a large square room, latterly used as an office. Both entrances in the cross walls show evidence of originally having been wider and of having a brick arch above. All three rooms have what appears to be the original boarded ceiling and have tiled floors, although the largest of the three rooms has carpeting concealing this (Plate 13). The rear wall of the central room is not original and has been moved further into the main block to accommodate the extension to the rear. The extension comprises a room with a WC and sink, closest to the main block, and a square room, which is empty except for shelving. As has been noted above, the height of the extension suggests the former presence of a water tank and these two rooms probably originally held the boiler room and equipment necessary to heat the water for the Ablution House. The tiled floor of the main block is original and reflects the function of the building. With the proximity of the Latrine to the north-east, it is unlikely that the smallest of the three rooms was ever originally designed as a lavatory. The presence of the louvred windows at either end of the building suggest that these rooms were designed to have a damp atmosphere and that the smallest of the rooms held sinks, whilst the largest was for baths, with the middle room doubling as both entrance and a place to heat water.

Building 8 (unknown) (Figs 2, 11)

This building is a single-storey rectangular structure with a pitched felt roof and vertically-boarded cladding to the walls (Plate 14). Access is via off-centre doorways in either short end and there are six large windows on both of the long sides. The south-western end of this building is taken up with a WC and urinals on each side of the entrance and a large open-plan office. To the north-east of this are two square offices and a rectangular office on either side of a corridor leading from the entrance at this end of the building. This structure does not appear on the 1875, 1897 or 1921 O.S. maps and is only present on the modern O.S. map; as such it is likely to date to the latter half of the 20th century.

6 Discussion

The overall theme associated with this survey has to be change. The establishment of the Cavalry Barracks represents a break with the transitory past of the early Colchester Garrison and the start of the permanent association of the military with the town. That association has now entered a new chapter with the coalescing of the scattered 19th- and early 20th-century barracks into the newly-built Merville Barracks.

This process of change is shown in the very fabric of the buildings surveyed. There were at least two distinct phases of change. The first (phase 2, as shown on Figs 3-10) consisted of the initial alterations that included widening/narrowing of entrances and modernisation of some windows, the construction of Building 2 and the extension to the Ablution House. It was probably at this time that the original roof slates were replaced with asbestos slates. These changes probably occurred either during the inter-war period (but after 1921) or after the Second World War

and prior to 1949. A second phase (phase 3) involved the bricking in of windows and doorways.

The purpose of these changes was to meet the new requirements of the modern Army and reflect the transition from horse cavalry to mechanised cavalry. The Army no longer required stables, but these buildings (with the internal fixtures and fittings removed) were easily converted to warehousing. Some of these second-phase changes, particularly the bricking-up of the non-original entrances in the north-east elevation of Building 6 and the infilling of the windows along the boundary wall, may also reflect heightened security issues in the 1970s.

The buildings are also a tangible link with the men who served their country and were stationed at Colchester. Their graffiti provides a record, a snapshot in time of those individuals and, in some cases, perhaps a glimpse of their attitudes to their time in the Army and a desire to record their presence (Plate 15).

The importance of the Cavalry Barracks is in the significance of the surviving buildings, with their historical links and associations with military events over the past 150 years and in their innovative design, construction and grouping, which reflect post-Crimean War thinking (Ingram 2000). The clearance of the 19th-century barracks at Aldershot also makes the Cavalry Barracks and Le Cateau Barracks in Colchester the only surviving complex of its kind in England, an important cultural, social and military resource that deserves recognition.

7 Acknowledgements

The Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Taylor Wimpey for commissioning and funding the work.

The survey work was carried out by C Lister and N Rayner. The project was monitored by the RPS Group.

8 References

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--|
| Dietz, P | 1986 | <i>Garrison: ten military towns</i> |
| Douet, J | 1998 | <i>British barracks 1600-1914</i> , English Heritage |
| Ingram | 2000 | <i>Colchester Garrison Historic Building Assessment</i> (Ingram Consultancy) |
| Rock Brothers | | <i>Rock's Royal Cabinet Album: Colchester</i> |
| Rock Brothers and Payne | | <i>The Queen's Album</i> |

9 Abbreviations and glossary

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| CAT | Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| CBC | Colchester Borough Council |
| EHER | Essex Historic Environment Record |
| <i>manège</i> | an arena for exercising horses |
| NGR | National Grid Reference |
| O.S. | Ordnance Survey |

10 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but it will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code COLEM 2011.41.

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date: 16.08.11

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11 Appendices

Appendix 1: selected photographs

Note: Plates 2-14 are referred to on Figures 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 with arrows labelled P2, etc, to indicate the point at and direction of which the photograph was taken.



Plate 1: 16th Lancers guarding the main gate (postcard of 1902).



Plate 2: Building 2 with the Wagon Shed to the right.



Plate 3: Building 4 (Officers' Stable) with Officers' Quarters in the background.



Plate 4: Building 4; original door.



Plate 5: Building 4; stable window.



Plate 6: Building 4 prior to partial demolition. The granite setts can be seen in the foreground by the storage shed (Ingram 2000).



Plate 7: Building 5, showing north-western storage shed and altered stable door.

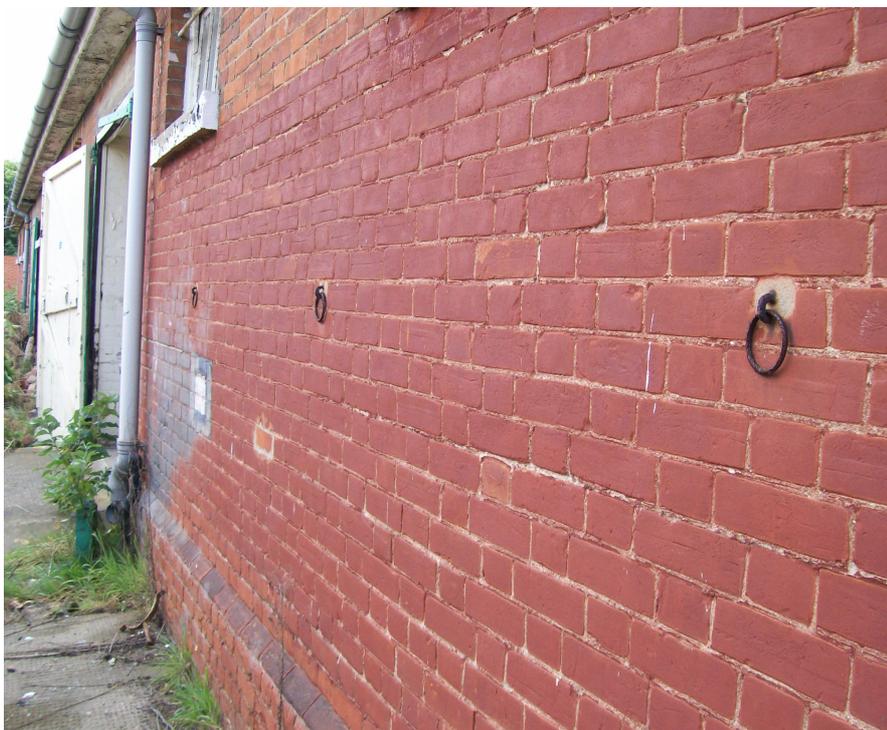


Plate 8: tethering rings on exterior of Building 5.

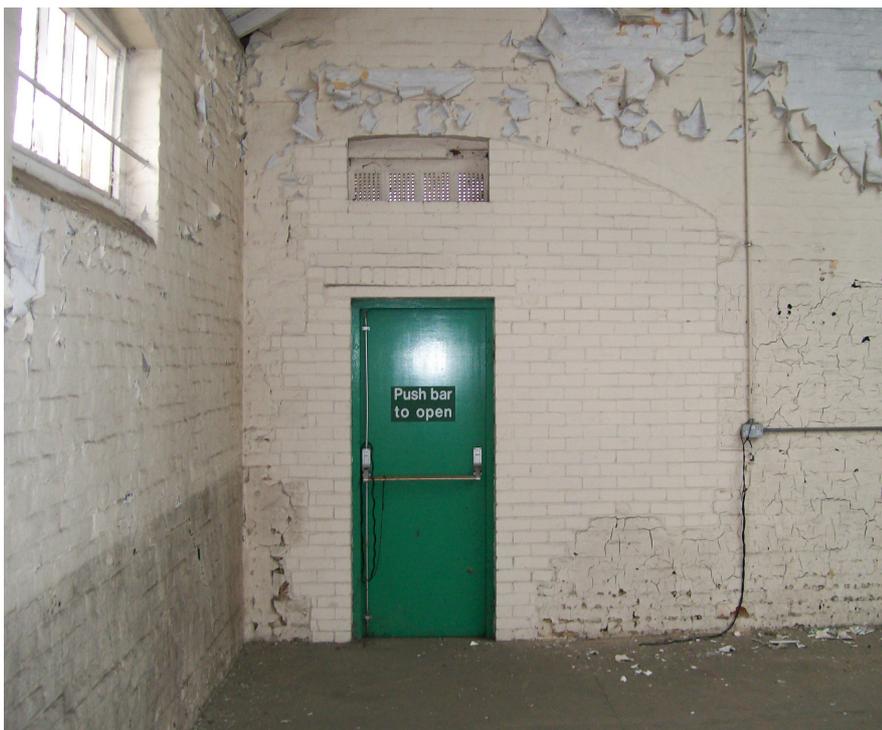


Plate 9: Building 5; the bricked-in archway of the original entrance with modern fire door where the opening would have been.



Plate 10: original stable door, Le Cateau Barracks (Ingram 2000).



Plate 11: Building 6.



Plate 12: Building 7; the Ablution House with replacement dormer window and inserted entrance on short elevation. The later extension can be seen to the rear.



Plate 13: Building 7; the Ablution House, showing the original tiled floor and roof and the altered doorway.



Plate 14: Building 8.



Plate 15: graffiti from two centuries.

Appendix 2: list of the photographic record

This is the full list of the photographic record which is included on the accompanying CD.

001.JPG	Building 4, view north.
002.JPG	Building 4, view north-east.
003.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
004.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
005.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
006.JPG	Building 4, view north-east.
007.JPG	Building 4, view north-east.
008.JPG	Building 4, view north-east.
009.JPG	Building 4, view east.
010.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
011.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
012.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
013.JPG	Building 4, view south-west.
014.JPG	Building 4: interior, view south-east.
015.JPG	Building 4: interior, view north-east.
016.JPG	Building 4: filled arch, view south-west.
017.JPG	Building 4: filled window, view south-east.
018.JPG	Building 4: roof truss, view north-west.
019.JPG	Building 4: example of window.
020.JPG	Building 4: east end, inside of a doorway, view south.
021.JPG	Building 4: doorway, filled arch, view north.
022.JPG	Building 4: doorway and interior, view north-east.
023.JPG	Building 4: interior, view south-west.
024.JPG	Building 4: north-west side of doorway, view south-west.
025.JPG	Building 4: filled interior door, view south.
026.JPG	Building 4: interior door, view south-west.
027.JPG	Building 4: door, view west.
028.JPG	Building 4: filled doorway, view south-west.
029.JPG	Building 4: window example, view north-east.
030.JPG	Building 4: door fitting.
031.JPG	Building 4: interior door.
032.JPG	Building 4: door fitting.
033.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view west.
034.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view south.
035.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view south-west.
036.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view north-east.
037.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view north.
038.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view south-east.
039.JPG	Building 8: exterior, view south-east.
040.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view east.
041.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view north-east.
042.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view north-east.
043.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view north-east.
044.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view north-east.
045.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view north.
046.JPG	Building 6: window example, view north-east.
047.JPG	Building 6: doorway, view north-east.
048.JPG	Building 6: exterior, view south-east.
049.JPG	Building 6: interior, view south-east.
050.JPG	Building 6: interior, view west.
051.JPG	Building 6: window example interior, view south-west .
052.JPG	Building 6: filled doorway interior, view north-east.
053.JPG	Building 6: filled doorway interior, view north-west.
054.JPG	Building 6: filled doorway interior, view north-west.
055.JPG	Building 6: modified doorway from arched door, view south-west.
056.JPG	Building 6: doorway, view north-east.
057.JPG	Building 6: hay tie and tethering ring, view east.
058.JPG	Building 6: tethering rings, view south-west.
059.JPG	Building 6: close-up of tethering ring, view south-west.
060.JPG	Building 7: exterior, view north.
061.JPG	Building 7: exterior, view north-east.

062.JPG Building 7: exterior, view north-east.
063.JPG Building 7: exterior, view north-east.
064.JPG Building 7: exterior, view north-east.
065.JPG Building 7: exterior, view north-west.
066.JPG Building 7: exterior, view south-west.
067.JPG Building 7: exterior, view south-west.
068.JPG Building 7: exterior, view south-east.
069.JPG Building 7: exterior, view north-west.
070.JPG Building 7: window example exterior, view north-west.
071.JPG Building 7: window example exterior, view north-west.
072.JPG Building 7: ridge tiles, view north-west.
073.JPG Building 7: loft air vent, view south-west.
074.JPG Building 7: interior, view north-east.
075.JPG Building 7: interior, view north-east.
076.JPG Building 7: interior, view south-east.
077.JPG Building 7: interior, view north-east.
078.JPG Building 7: interior, view east.
079.JPG Building 7: interior, view west.
080.JPG Building 7: original glazed W/C, view north.
081.JPG Building 7: interior, view north.
082.JPG Building 2: exterior, view north-west.
083.JPG Building 2: exterior, view south-west.
084.JPG Building 2: exterior, view north.
085.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-west.
086.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
087.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
088.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
089.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
090.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
091.JPG Building 5: exterior, view north-east.
092.JPG Building 5: exterior, view east.
093.JPG Building 5: exterior, view south.
094.JPG Building 5: exterior, view south-west.
095.JPG Building 5: exterior, view south-west.
096.JPG Building 5: exterior, view south-west.
097.JPG Building 5: window example, view south-west.
098.JPG Building 5: door example, view south-west.
099.JPG Building 5: original door, view south-west.
100.JPG Building 5: original air brick, view north-east.
101.JPG Building 5: modified doorway, view north-east.
102.JPG Building 5: hay tie, view east.
103.JPG Building 5: hay tie, view east.
104.JPG Building 5: tethering rings, view south.
105.JPG Building 5: interior wall painting, view south-east.
106.JPG Building 5: interior, view north-west.
107.JPG Building 5: window example interior, view north-east.
108.JPG Building 5: window example interior, view south-east.
109.JPG Building 5: modified doorway, view north-west.
110.JPG Building 5: doorway, view south-west.
111.JPG Building 5: interior original door, view north-east.
112.JPG Building 5: interior, view south-west.
113.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
114.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
115.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view north-east.
116.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view north-east.
117.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
118.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
119.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
120.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view south-east.
121.JPG Building 5: graffiti, view north-east.
122.JPG Building 1: graffiti, view north-east.
123.JPG Building 1: graffiti, view south-east.
124.JPG Building 1: graffiti, view south-east.
125.JPG Building 2: exterior, view north-east.
126.JPG Building 2: exterior, view south-east.
127.JPG Building 1: exterior, view south-east.

Appendix 3: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Introduction

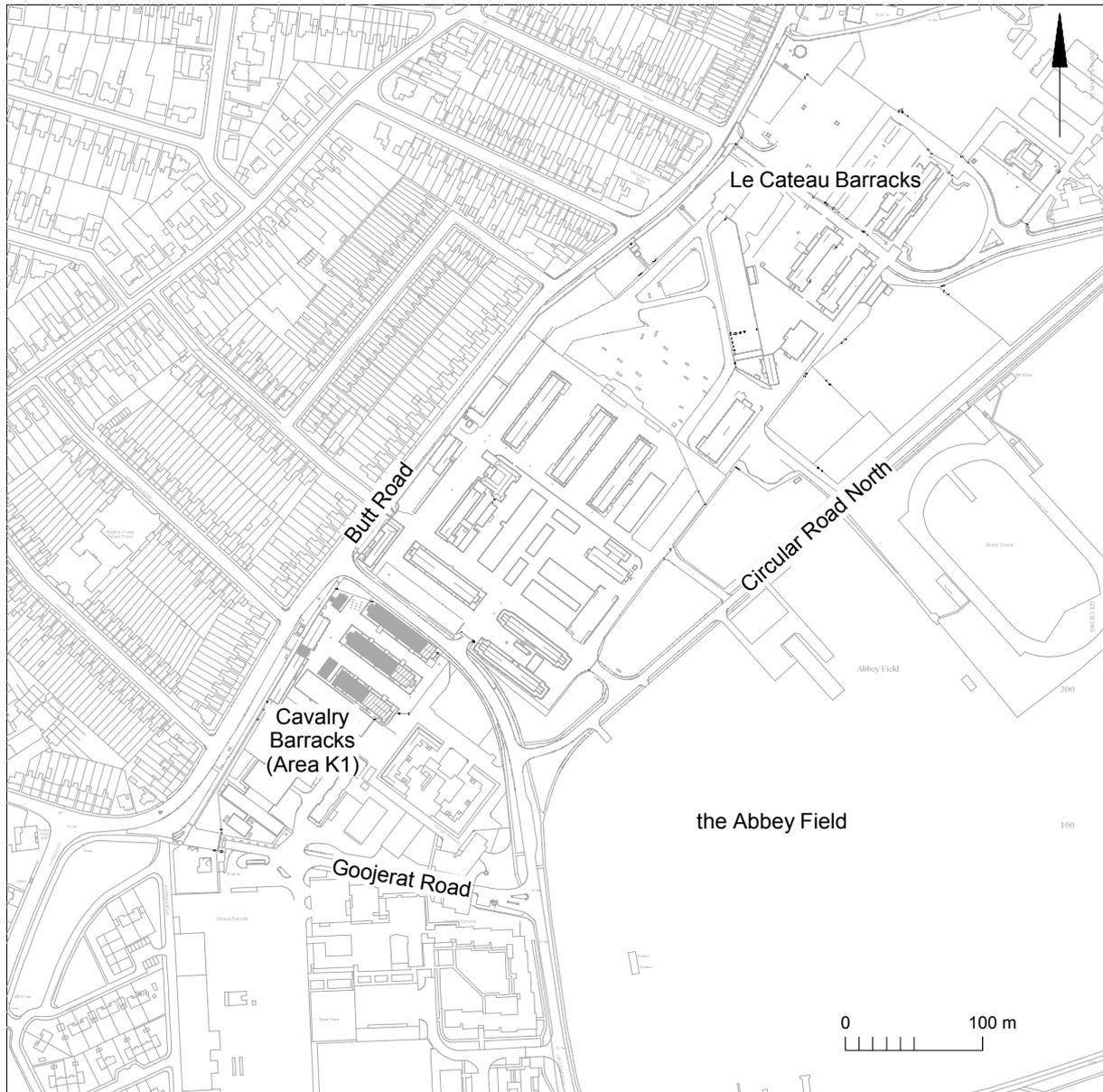
- 1.1 Copy of the demolition appraisal
- 1.2 Risk assessment
- 1.3 A3 site plans provided by the developer

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Digital photo. record
- 2.2 Digital photo. contact sheet
- 2.3 Attendance register
- 2.4 Site photographic record on CD

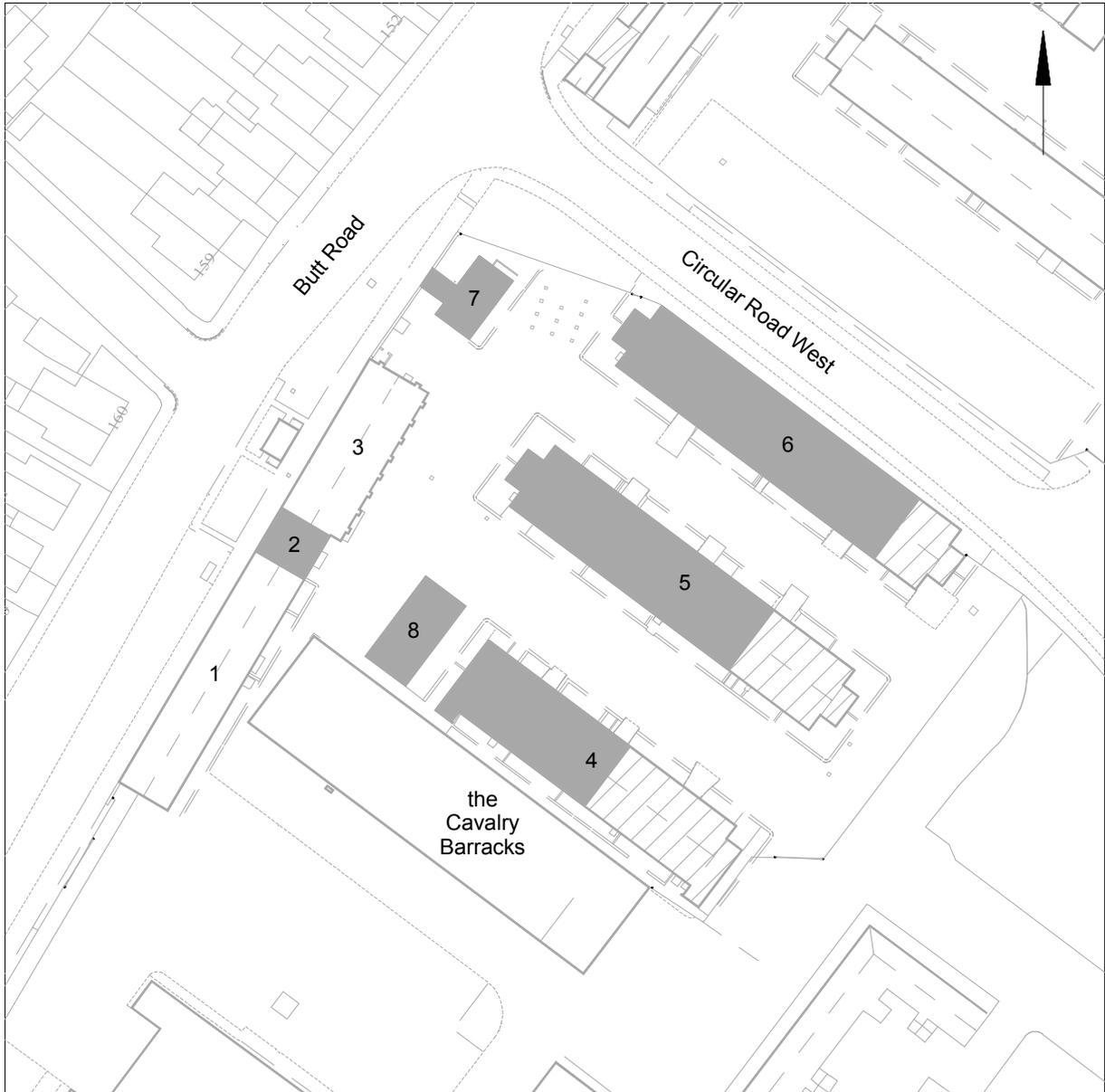
3 Research archive

- 3.1 Copy of the report



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Fig 1 Site location plan (surveyed buildings toned grey).



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Fig 2 Block plan of Buildings 1-8.

- scheduled for demolition
- ▨ demolished by MOD
- ▭ buildings to be preserved

- 1 Commissariat Reserve Stores
- 2 (unknown)
- 3 Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store
- 4 Officers' Stables
- 5 Troop Stables
- 6 Troop Stables
- 7 Ablution House
- 8 (unknown)

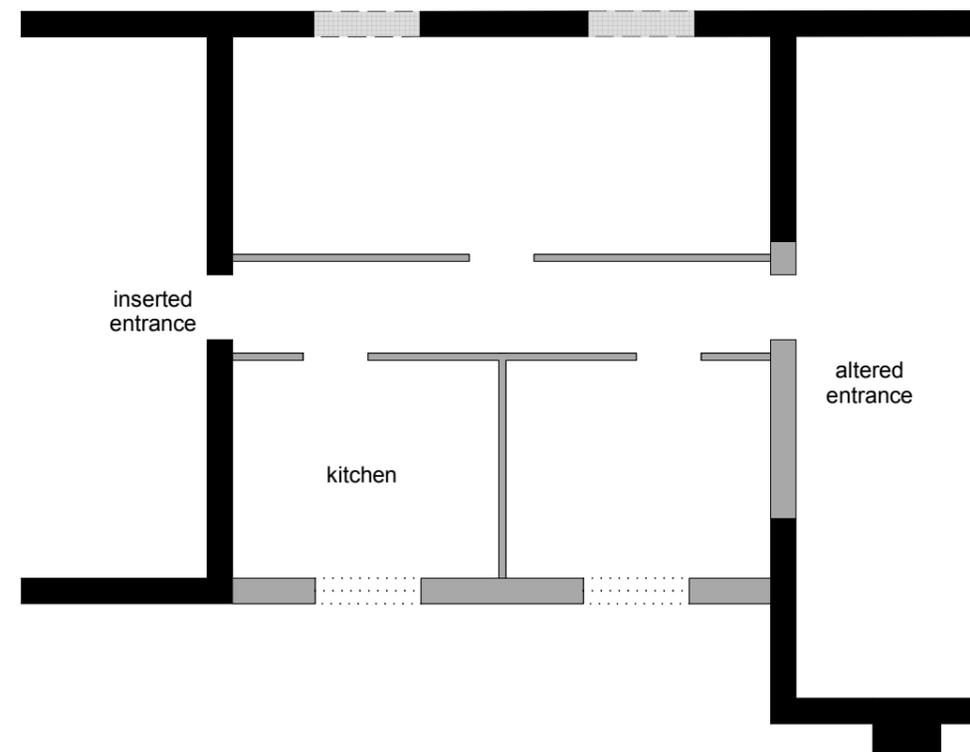
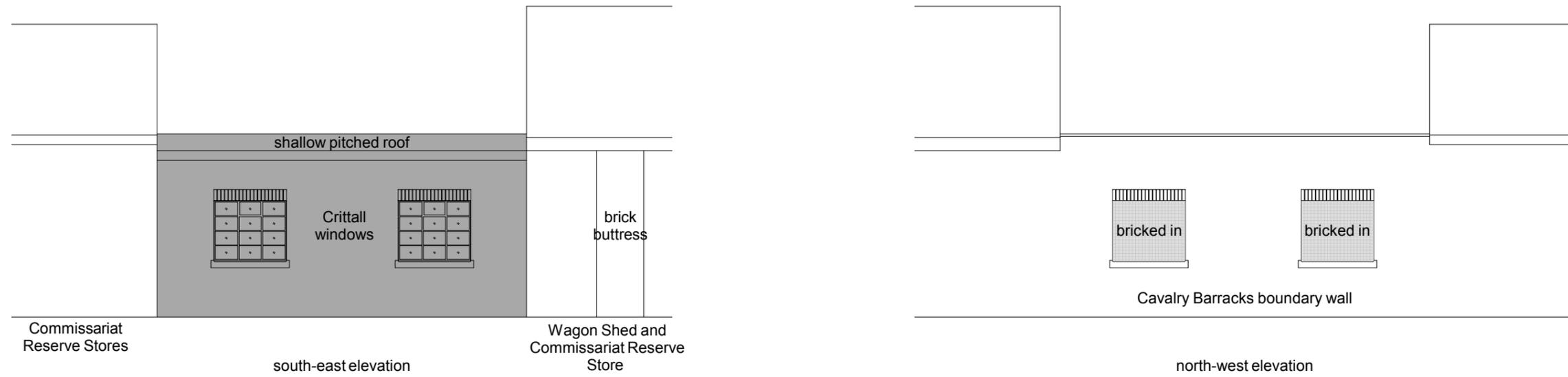
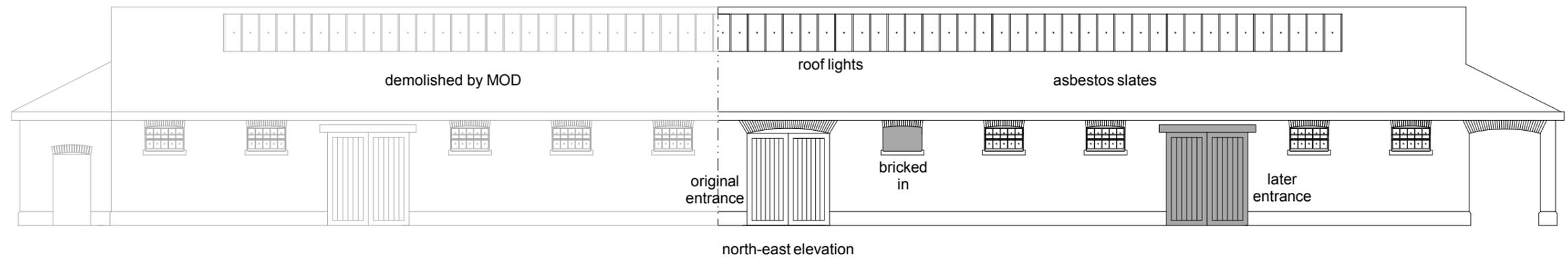


Fig 3 Building 2 (Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store): plan and elevations.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3

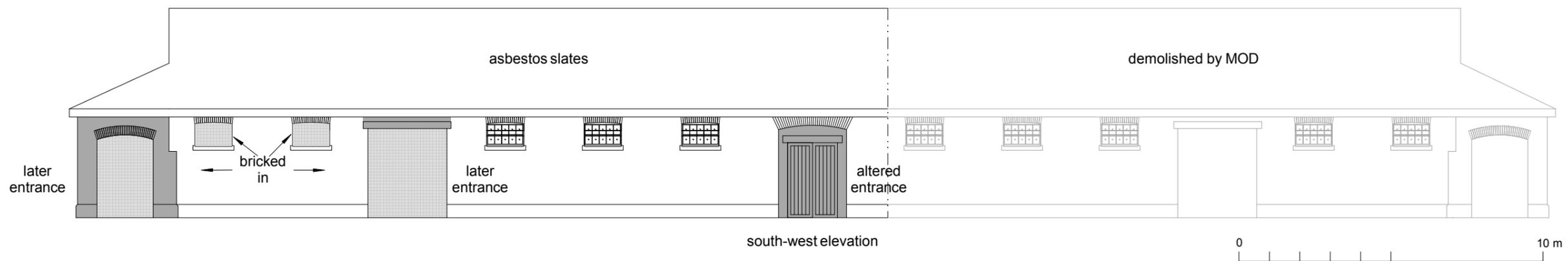
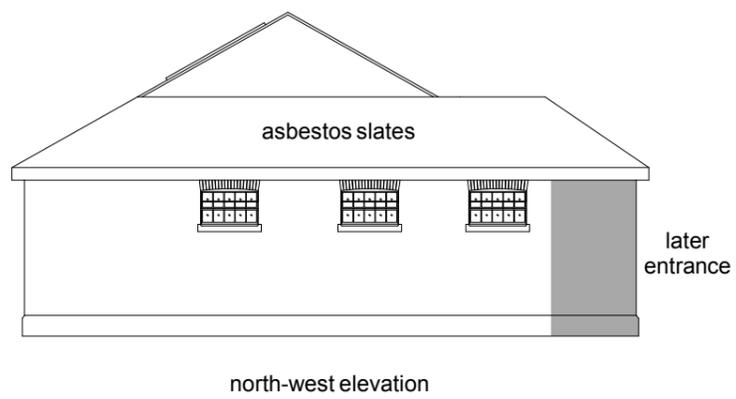
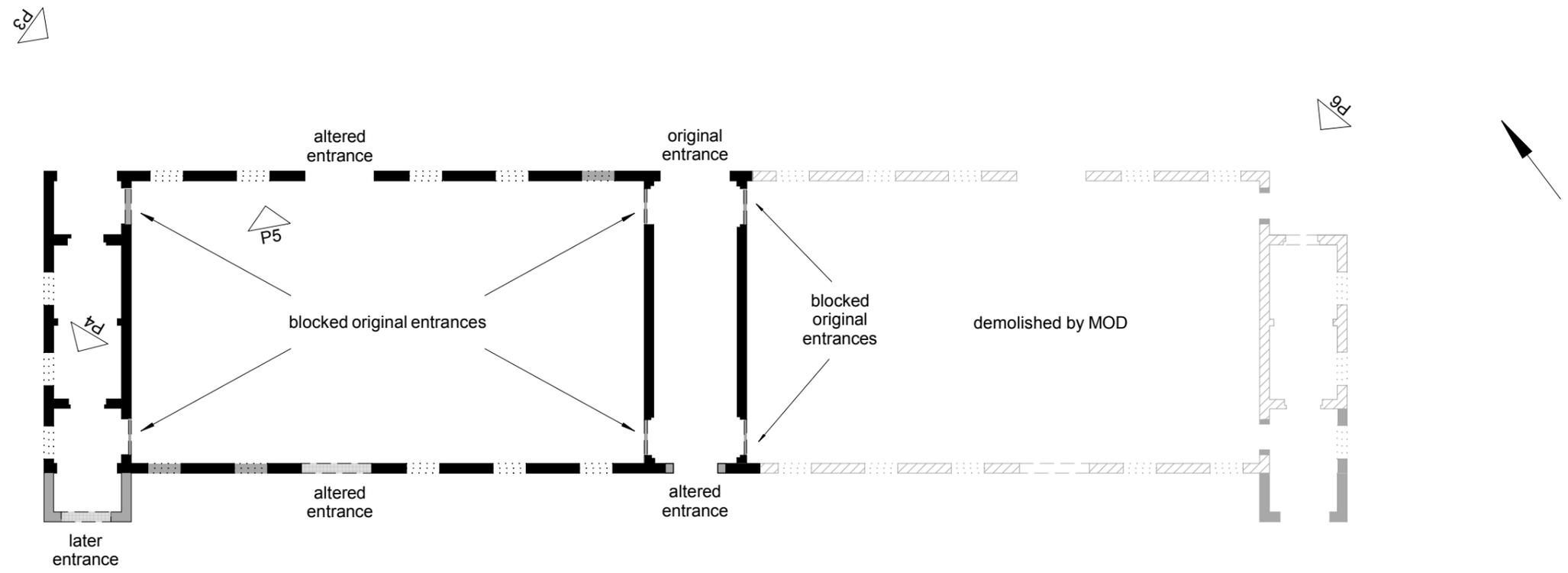


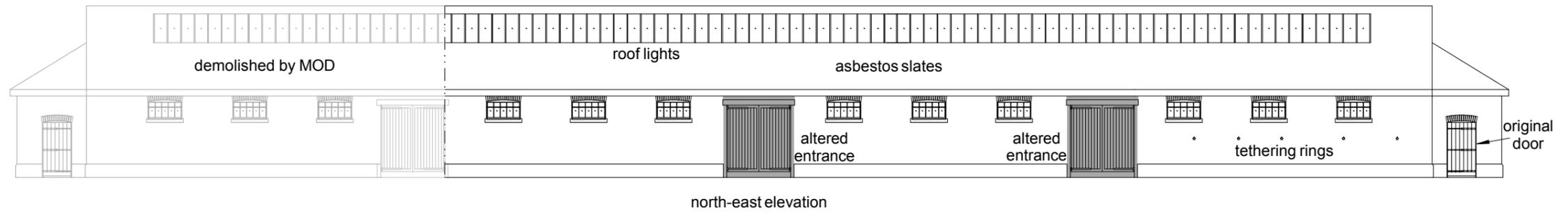
Fig 4 Building 4 (Officers' Stables): elevations.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3
- ▨ demolished



Fig 5 Building 4 (Officers' Stables): plan.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3

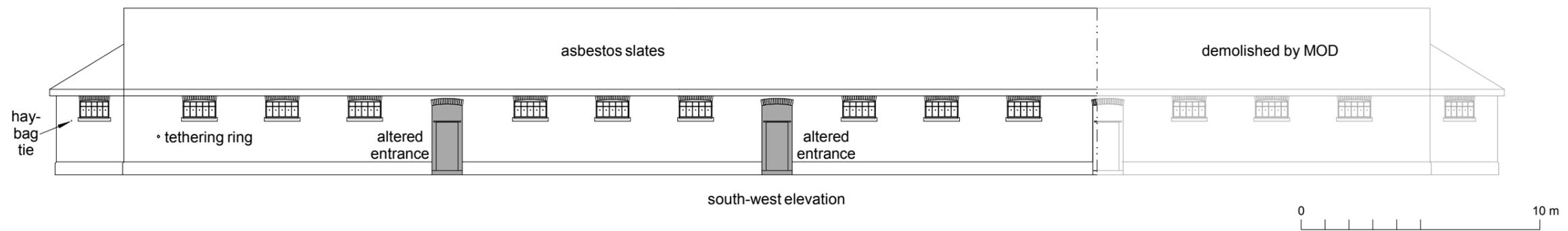
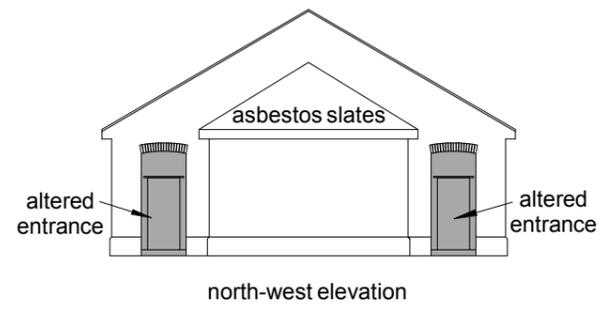
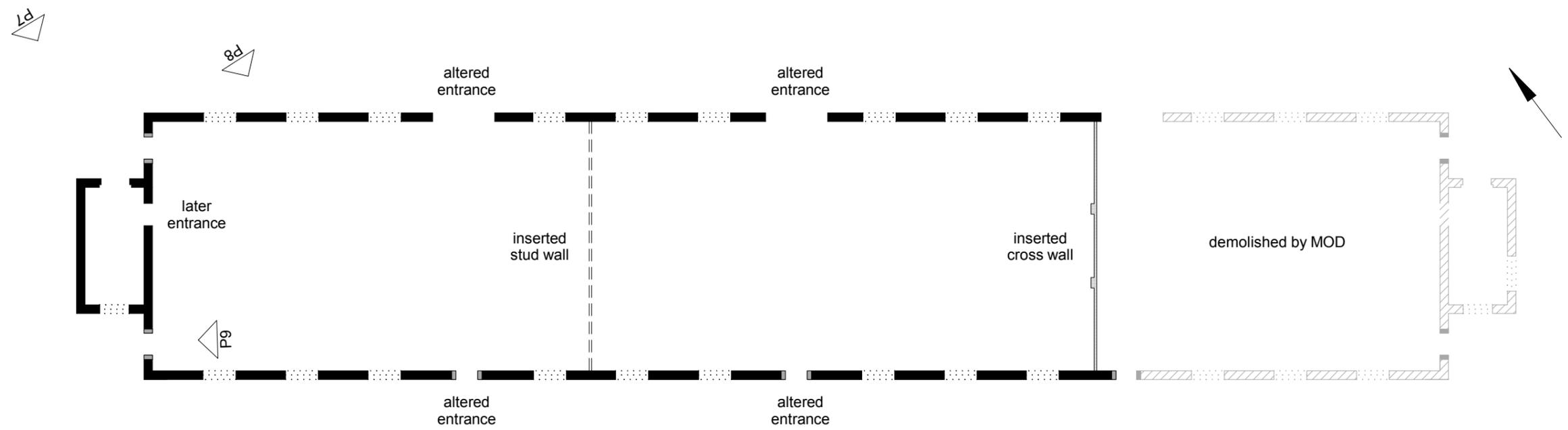


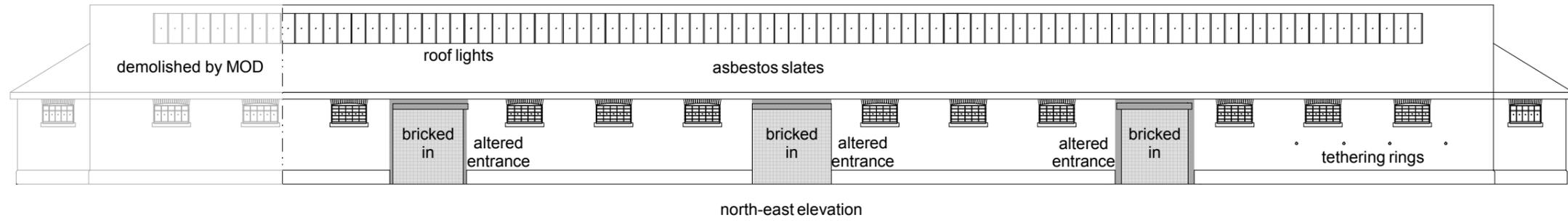
Fig 6 Building 5 (Troop Stables): elevations.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3
- demolished



Fig 7 Building 5 (Troop Stables): plan.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3

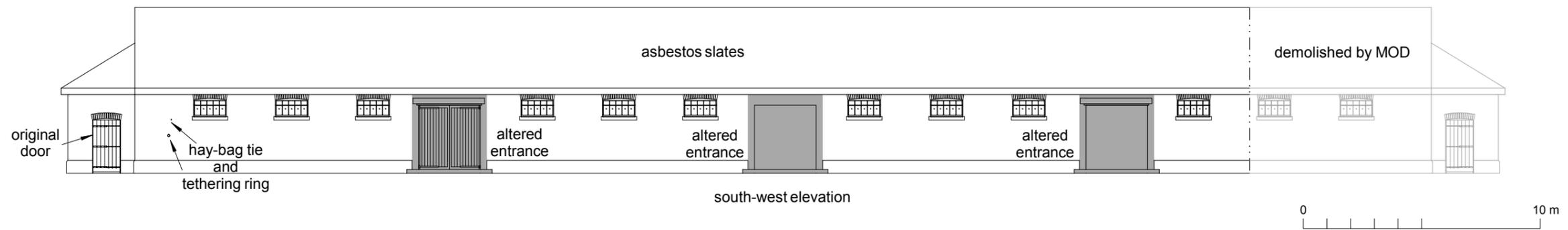
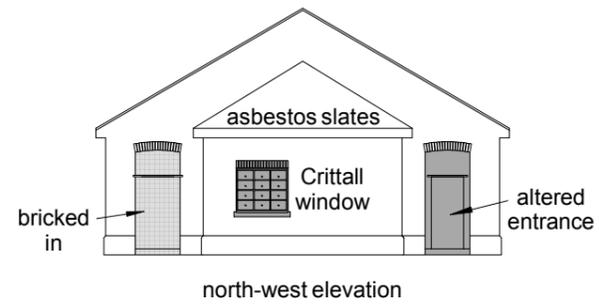


Fig 8 Building 6 (Troop Stables): elevations.

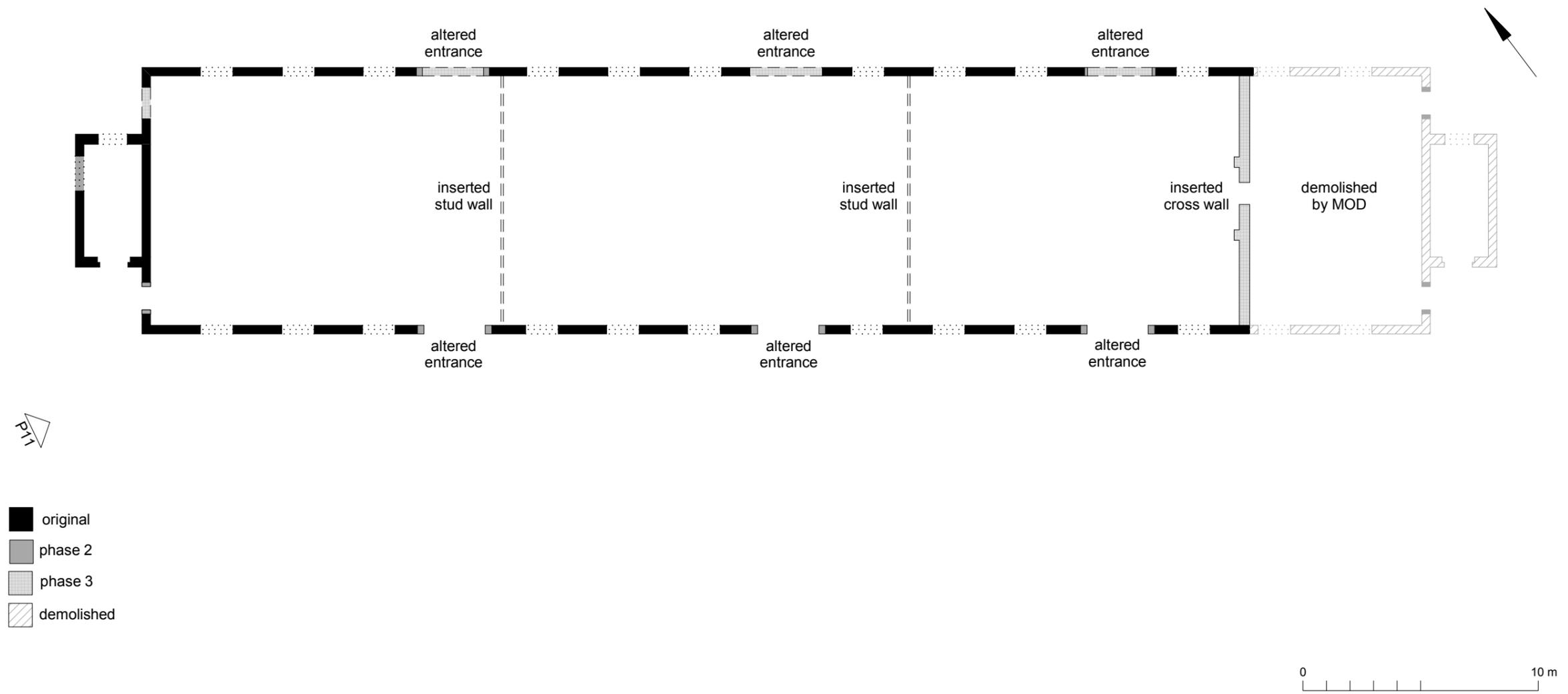
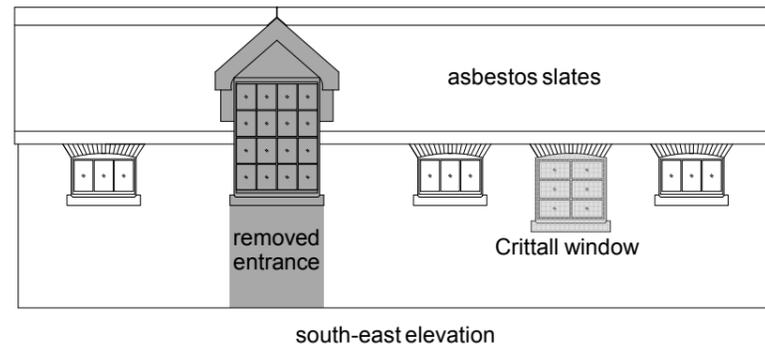
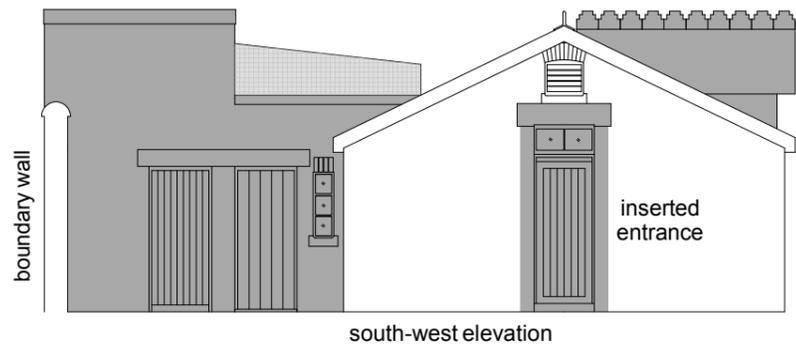
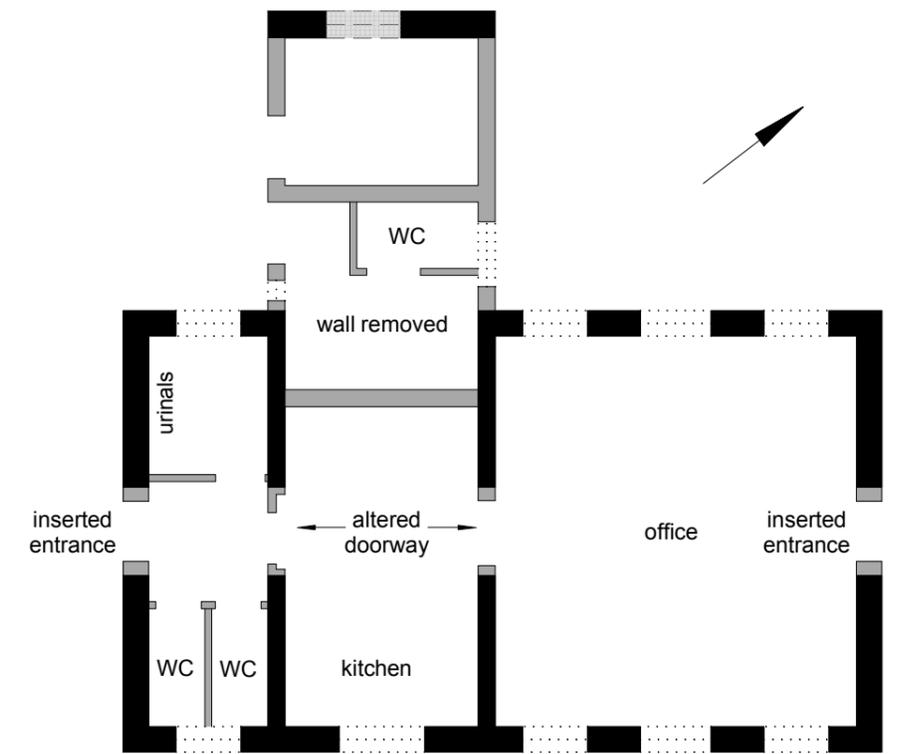
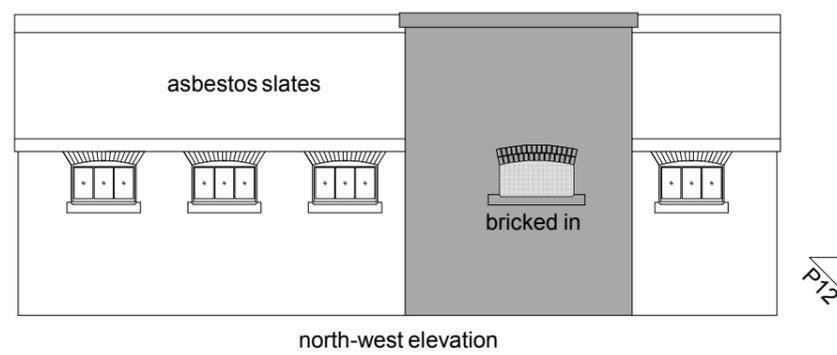
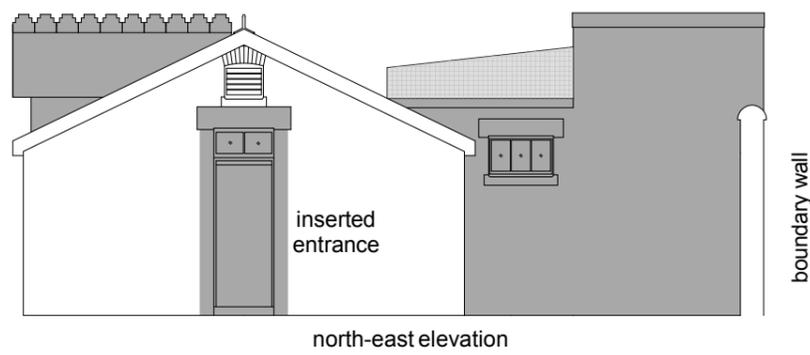


Fig 9 Building 6 (Troop Stables): plan.



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3



- original
- phase 2
- phase 3



Fig 10 Building 7 (Ablution House): elevations and plan.



P1A

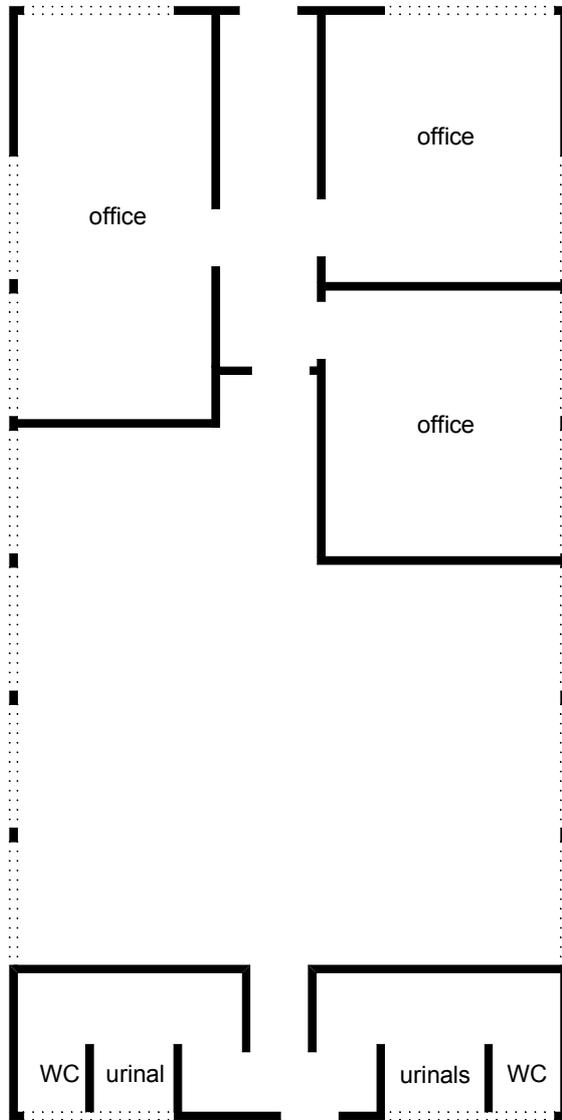
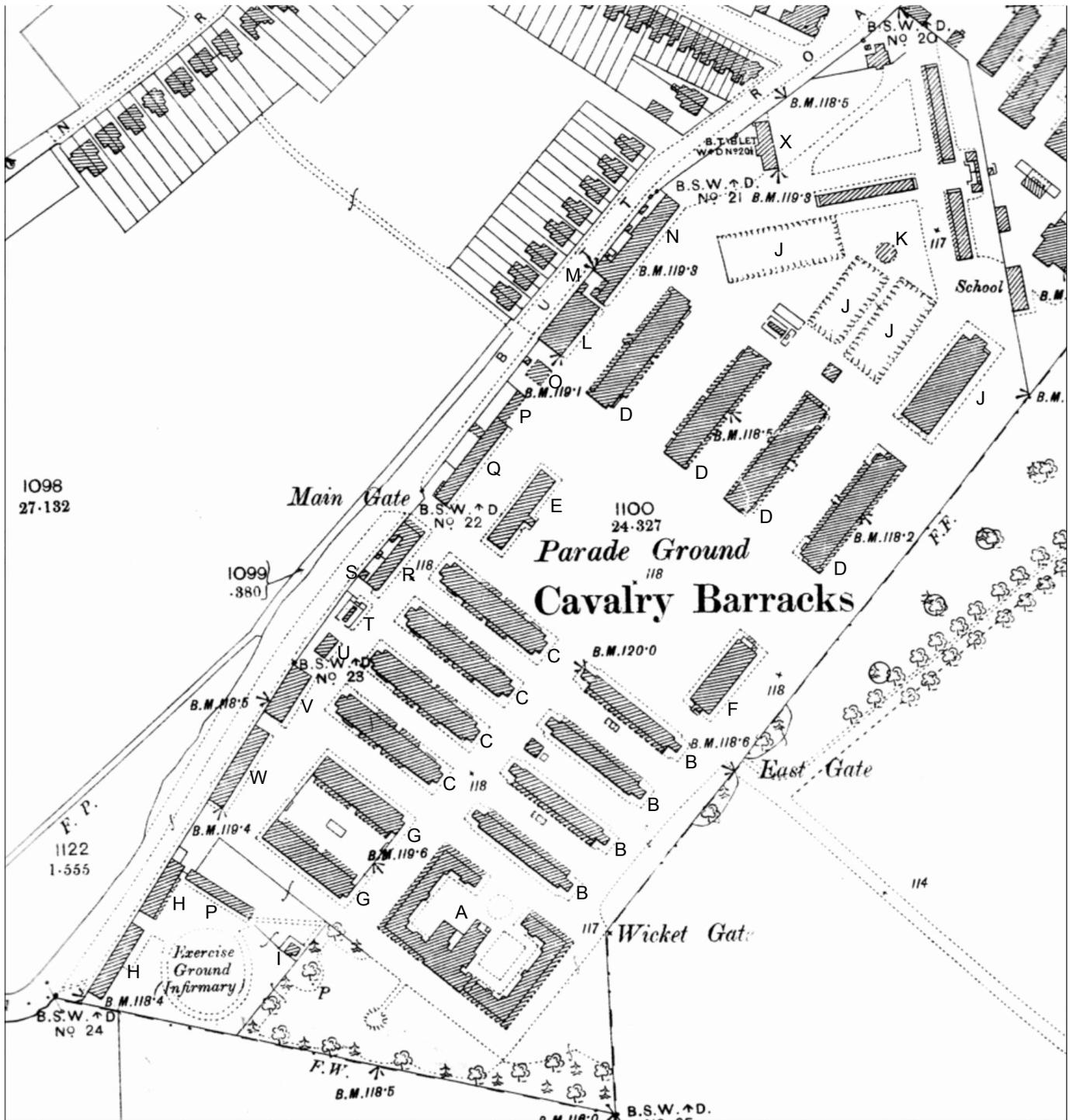


Fig 11 Building 8: plan.



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>A Officers' Quarters
 B Soldiers' Quarters
 C Troop Stables
 D Troop Stables with Soldiers' Quarters above
 E Sergeants' Mess and Reading Room
 F ?Staff Sergeants' Quarters
 G Officers' Stables
 H ?Infirmary Stables
 I ?Infirmary Forge
 J Riding School and <i>manège</i></p> | <p>K Water Tower
 L Hay Store
 M Bedding Store
 N Bread and Meat Store; Skittle Alley and Canteen; Tap Room and NCOs' Room
 O Granary
 P Shoeing Shed
 Q North to south: Smithy; Armourer's Shop; Quartermaster's Store and Office; Saddletree and Saddlemaker's Shop; Shoemaker's Shop</p> | <p>R Guard House and Prisoner's Room and cells
 S Fire Engine House
 T Latrine
 U Ablution House
 V Wagon Shed and Commissariat Reserve Store
 W Commissariat Reserve Stores
 X ?Magazine Store</p> |
|---|---|---|

Fig 12 Plan of the Cavalry Barracks in 1897, illustrating function of buildings.

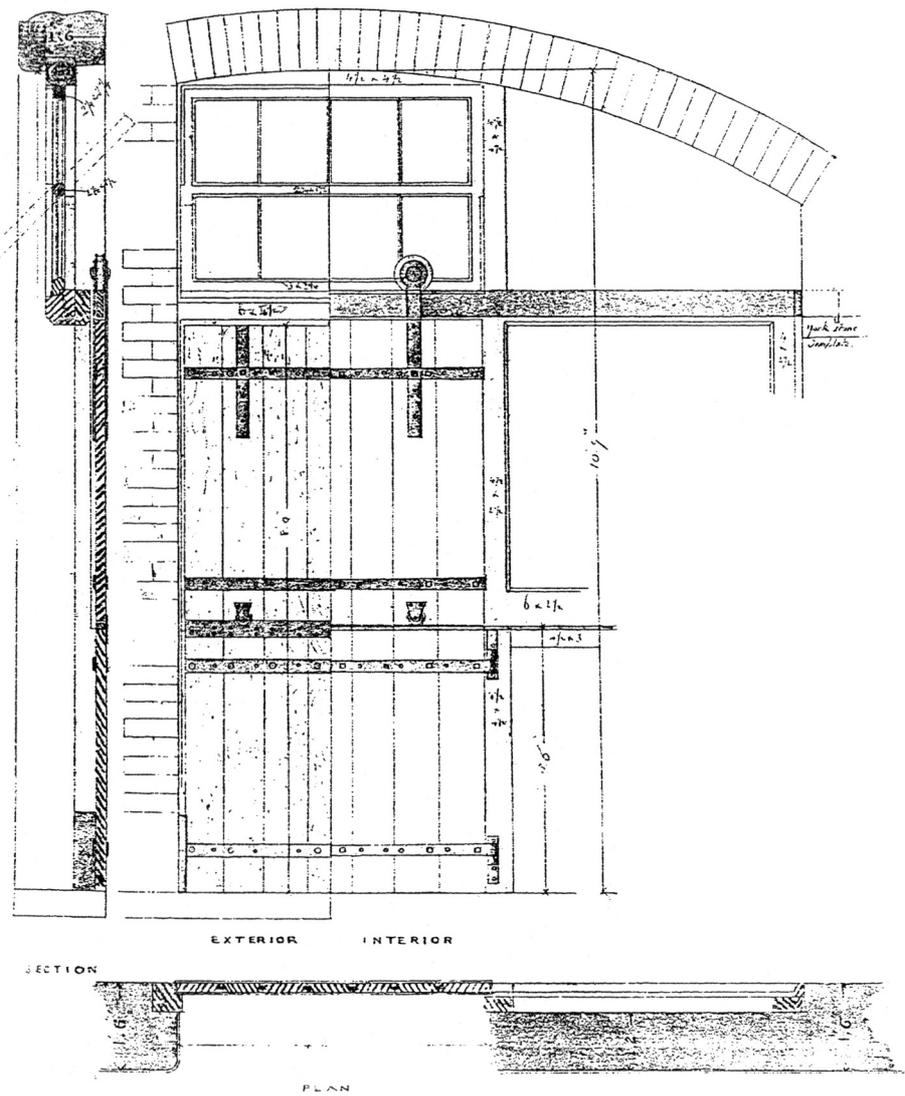


Fig 13 Original schematic for sliding/swing hung stable door.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: Area K1, the former Cavalry Barracks, Butt Road, Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Colchester	District:
NGR: TL 9896 2422 (c)	Site codes: CAT - 11/5g Museum accession - COLEM 2011.41
Type of work: Building recording	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: May 2011	Size of area investigated: approximately 6 ha
Location of finds/curating cuseum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos: 46846
Final report: CAT Report 606 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: 19th- to 20th-century military structures	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>A programme of building recording was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust on six buildings at the decommissioned Cavalry Barracks, Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex. The work was commissioned by the RPS Group on behalf of the landowner Taylor Wimpey. The buildings date from the early 1860s to the latter half of the 20th century. None of the buildings are listed but they include some of the last examples of post-Crimean War innovative barracks design first developed at Aldershot. The majority of the original internal fixtures and fittings have been removed or altered, and three of the buildings have been partially demolished. These alterations have had a significant impact upon the functionality of the buildings as originally designed. The value of these buildings is in their design and in their links and associations with military and historical events over the past 150 years.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Author of summary: Chris Lister	Date of summary: 16th August 2011