

Interim Archaeological report,  
Community Archaeology Project for  
Golden Hill Country Park,  
Freshwater, Isle of Wight.

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Commissioned by Gift to Nature

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**Interim Archaeological Report,**  
**Community Heritage Project for Golden Hill Country Park,**  
**Freshwater, Isle of Wight**

**Introduction**

As part of the National Lottery Heritage funded Golden Hill Country Park project, Gift to Nature commissioned two community volunteer heritage reports from Dr Ruth Waller of Past Wight Heritage Consultancy. The results of the social history research for people associated with Golden Hill Fort and Country Park are described in a separate report.

This report details the results of the archaeological investigations by local volunteers who took part in the community heritage project to find and record surviving military structures within Golden Hill Country Park.

The volunteers work was severely constrained by the national lock-downs of the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021 and thus we were restricted to recording the seven structures which are reported on here. There are other surviving structures hidden by brambles, shrubs and trees within the park which we were unable to uncover and record.

The archaeological work and this report focus only on the land which now comprises the Golden Hill Country Park and does not discuss the archaeology of Golden Hill Fort itself which is now a private residential building.

**Aims of the project**

The two main aims of the Archaeology project carried out by the volunteers on this project were:

- to train local volunteers in archaeological techniques to allow them learn about and record some of the surviving military structures within Country Park;
- to clear and archaeologically record as many of the surviving structures as possible.

**Abbreviations:**

AA – Anti-aircraft

Batt - Battalion

DCLI – Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

GH – Golden Hill

GHCP – Golden Hill Country Park

GHF – Golden Hill Fort

IWCP – Isle of Wight County Press

RA – Royal Artillery

RASC – Royal Army Service Corps

RE – Royal Engineers

RGA – Royal Garrison Artillery

WTC – Water Training Company

**The Project Team:**

The archaeological work was carried out by local volunteers:

Katy Bell; Sheila Colenutt; Frances Cook; Jane Daubney; Caroline Dudley; Graham and Jackie Field; Susan Gisborne, Penny and David Green; Linda and Pete Harding; Josephine Hinson; Paul Johnson; Fiona and Pete Johnstone; Mike Maliphant, Richard Matthews; Paul Milnes, Felicity Morgan; Terry Noyce; Steve Parkes.

Special thanks to Brian, Alan, Ash and the members of the Vectis Diggers Metal Detecting Club; Carol Flux, Graham Biss, Nick Webb and Ed. Stiles and Vanessa Langley of Gift to Nature. Aerial photographs were provided by Mike Collins and Peter and Amanda Bassett.

## BACKGROUND

Golden Hill Country Park was opened in 1970 and the 20ha site lies around the Palmerston Fort building. The Fort is a local landmark which is in a very prominent position built to overlook and defend the access to Freshwater Isle over the River Yar. When the site was sold by the Military in the 1960's, the land around it was bought by the Isle of Wight Council. Freshwater and Totland Parish Council's and local community groups created the County Park for the enjoyment of the local community. The Park is now managed by Gift to Nature, an Island environmental charity which is operated by Natural Enterprise, on behalf of the Isle of Wight Council.

In 2019, Gift to Nature received a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a program of works to enhance the natural and historic environments of Golden Hill Park for the benefit of the local community and visitors. The Archaeological project was part of this wider program of works designed, in conjunction with the Social History Research project, to allow local community volunteers to be involved in the discovery, investigation and dissemination of information about the heritage of Golden Hill Fort and Country Park.

The location of the park is shown in Figure 1 below:

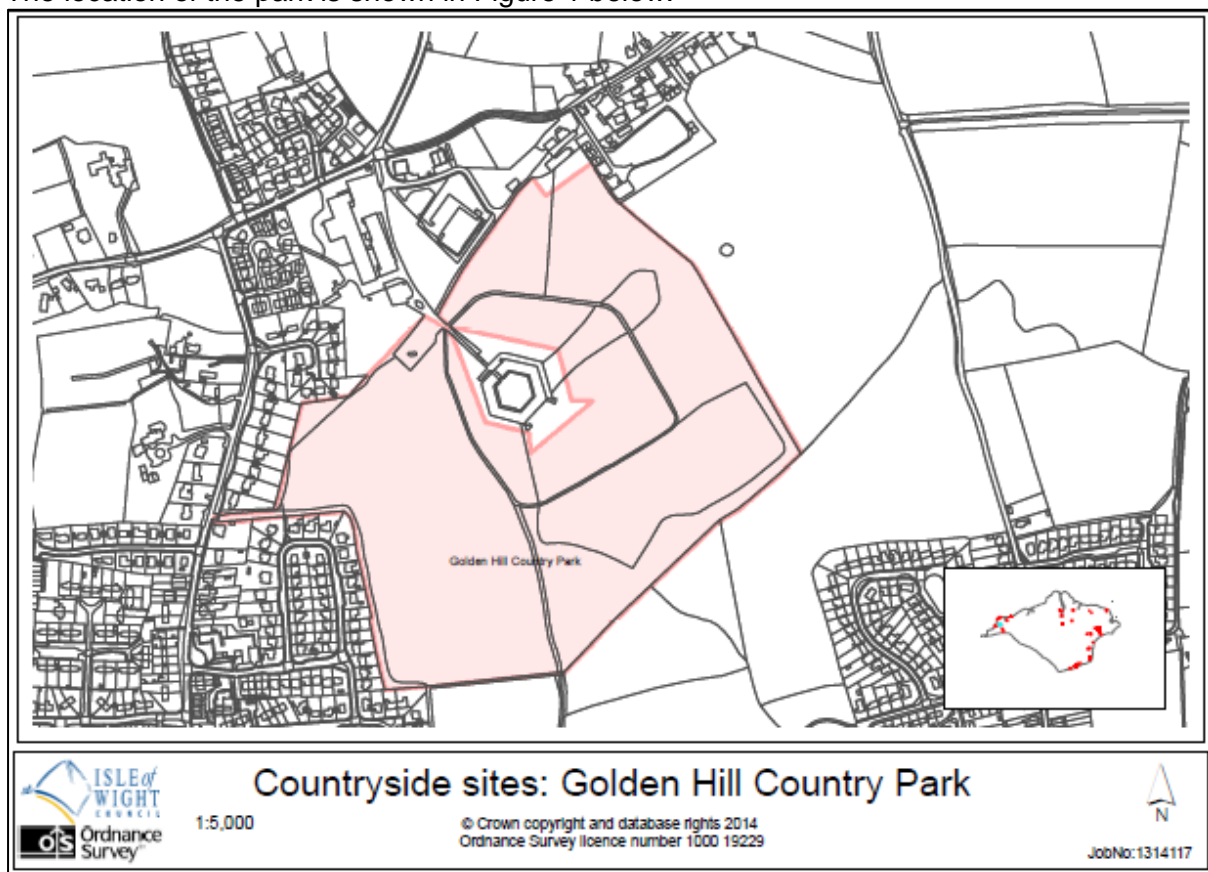


Figure 1: Location plan of the site

Freshwater Isle had played an important strategic role in the defence of the western entrance to the Solent since the Medieval period when a system of beacons was in place to warn of invasions.

The first fort built within Freshwater Parish was Worsley's Tower at Round Tower Point in 1525 and Shrapnode Blockhouse was built in 1547 at Sconce Point. Nearby stone forts were also built in Yarmouth and Hurst in the 1540's. These were intended to protect the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour which housed the Tudor fleet. Two large brick-built forts were constructed at Fort Victoria and Fort Albert in the 1850's along with Freshwater Redoubt which was built in 1855.

By 1859 the French had constructed an iron clad war ship and there was a French invasion scare that year which resulted in the Royal Commission on the Defences of Britain in 1860. The Commission considered that the defences in the West Wight were inadequate and there was a complete reorganisation of the coastal defences.

### **The history of Golden Hill Fort**

By Frances Cook

The Royal Commission on the Defence of the United Kingdom (1859), reporting in 1860, was given the task of looking at the 'state and efficiency of British land-based fortifications against naval attacks.' The areas of specific consideration included Portsmouth, Spithead and the Isle of Wight. The report recommended the building of a number of forts around the coast of the United Kingdom (Porter, 1977). Lord Palmerston, who was Prime Minister at the time was instrumental in setting up the Royal Commission and pushing through the recommendations. For this reason, they became known as 'Palmerston Forts'. The forts also acquired the name of 'Palmerston Follies', largely due to the fact that the first ones built in Portsmouth had their weapons trained inland to provide protection from a land-based attack. They were wrongly thought to have been built back to front as the main purpose was believed to be protection of The Solent, Southampton and Portsmouth from a seaborne French attack. (Victorian Forts and Artillery). Another theory suggests the name was given as the forts were 'costly ornamental buildings with no practical value' (Oxford Dictionary). Later the term came to refer to all Victorian forts, however not all the forts were Palmerston Forts and were not merely ornamental follies (Victorian Forts and Artillery). By 1890 the forts around the coastline of the United Kingdom had cost a total of £12,154,416 with another £5,484,810 to arm them. The proposed cost had been £11,000,000 which had risen to £17,000,000 by 1890 and the forts were yet to be completed. (Victorian Forts and Artillery).

Eight defence sites on the Western end of the Isle of Wight were built between 1852 and 1865, Fort Victoria (1852); Fort Albert (1854); Freshwater Redoubt (1855); The Needles Batteries (1861); Warden Point Battery (1862); Cliff End Battery (1862); Golden Hill Fort (1863) and Hatherwood Battery (1865). Concerns over the firing of such large guns causing the cliff at the Needles battery to crumble led to the building of the New Needles Battery in 1893. These and a further nine sites built on the Eastern end of the island and four forts built in the Solent formed part of the Portsmouth defences.

Golden Hill Fort was built on the high ground at Hill Farm in Freshwater between 1863 and 1868, its purpose was to defend the River Yar and provide accommodation for soldiers serving in the local batteries of the West Wight. The cost of building the fort was £38,000 (Cantwell 1985). Various theories have been put forward as to why it was called Golden Hill including one mentioned by Kokeritz, in the Royal Surveys it is recorded as "Gaulddoune" (1299), "Gauldone" (1440) and "Galdon common" and "Galdon meade" (1608) (Kokeritz, 1940).

Notices for tenders for War Department contracts for the preparation work for Golden Hill Fort were published in The Hampshire Telegraph. The work included erecting fencing along part of the boundary of War Department land at the fort (Issue dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 1863) and 'grubbing and clearing roots, stool moors etc. from land known as Golden Hill Plantation' the tender stated that 'the roots etc. grubbed up becoming the property of the contractor' (Issue dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 1863). Grubbing is digging up ground or soil to clear away roots, stumps

and vegetation (Collins English Dictionary). The tenders were to be sent to the Royal Engineers Office based at Hill Lodge, Freshwater under the direction of Colonel Bouchier.

The plans for the fort were signed off by William Francis Drummond Jervois. Jervois was born in Cowes, Isle of Wight in 1821, he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in March of 1839 and trained at the School of Military Engineering in Chatham, Kent, leaving in 1841. He saw action in South Africa and later was responsible for overseeing the building of fortifications in Alderney (Watson, 1977). After his request to be posted to the Crimea was refused, he became the Commanding Royal Engineer (Major) for the London district in 1855 (Crick, 2012). In 1856 he became Assistant Inspector-General of Fortifications. Jervois was appointed Secretary of the Royal Commission in 1859 (Porter, 1977) and following the publishing of the Commission's report, he supervised the design of the Palmerston Forts (Watson, 1954).

An article in The Hampshire Independent newspaper dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 1863 reported that work had started on the new redoubt to be built on the top of Golden Hill. The successful contractors were Messrs George Smith and Co, of Pimlico, London. Messrs George Smith and Co built the forts at the Needles Point and Warden Point and were described in the article as 'the eminent Government Contractors of Pimlico'. The Hampshire Advertiser County Newspaper reported in November 1863 that 'a great number of men' were 'employed in digging out the soil and levelling the ground'. The report added that the building of the fort would provide work and good wages for large numbers of men. It was also seen as benefiting the Parish of Freshwater generally, as work had already begun on the building of cottages in the area (Issue dated 28<sup>th</sup> November 1863). Messrs George Smith and Co were also awarded the contract for the building of a battery at Hatherwood. It was estimated that approximately five million bricks would be required for the construction of Golden Hill Fort and Hatherwood Battery. Eight kilns were situated on the common around Golden Hill Battery to produce the bricks needed (The Hampshire Advertiser County Newspaper issue dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 1865).

Reports appeared in The Hampshire Advertiser County Newspaper that work on the fort was coming to an end and that men were starting to be discharged on a weekly basis as the fort neared completion (Issue dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 1863). In September 1867 the Secretary of State for War, Sir John Pakington and Colonel Jervois RE (Royal Engineers), paid an official visit to carry out an inspection of the nearly completed fort (The Hampshire Advertiser County Newspaper issue dated 21<sup>st</sup> September 1867). In 1869 it was suggested that the majority of the earthworks surrounding the fort were to be removed as they were causing dampness in the quarters inside. The article also makes mention of the scarcity of work in Freshwater at the time and it was hoped that these works would go ahead to provide employment for local people (The Hampshire Telegraph issue dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1869). A grand ball was held on the opening of the fort with 'upwards of 150 invitations to the elite of the island' by the officers. A few days later 'the ball was renewed at the fort by non-commissioned officers and gunners of the different batteries in the division and their friends who thoroughly enjoyed themselves' (The Isle of Wight Observer issue dated 11<sup>th</sup> September 1869).

The original design of the fort was a polygonal shape to accommodate 400 men, however this was considered to be too big and was reduced to 250 men. By the time the fort came to be built in 1863 the design had been reduced further to a smaller hexagonal fort to house 8 officers and 128 men. A hospital (for 14, later 21) was built within the fort (Cantwell, 1985). The entrance to the fort was via a sunken way and tunnel through the glacis. A glacis is "an embankment sloping gradually up to a fortification, so as to expose attackers to defending gunfire" (Collins English Dictionary). On the ground floor were: Guardroom and Cells, Magazine, Tap Room, Canteen & Bar, Cook House, Barrack rooms, Hospital Kitchen, Sergeants rooms, Stores, Laundry, Married Soldiers Rooms, Officers' and Officers' servants rooms. On the upper floor: Barrack rooms, usually for 14 men, a reading room, a 21-bed hospital, Ablutions, Married Soldiers Rooms, Officers' mess, Field Officer's quarters and

Officers' rooms (Williams. D., 2020). A tender for the building of a Gun Shed at the fort was advertised in September 1870 (The Hampshire Telegraph issue dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 1870).

The fort was designed as a double storey brick casemated barracks surrounding an open courtyard. The roof was bomb-proofed by placing earth on it. The earth which slipped in 1868 additionally let in damp but was not removed until the 1950s, when the roof was painted white. Initially 18 light guns were planned to be positioned at each of the six salient angles with two-gun positions between each angle. The land on which the fort was built contains Blue Slipper Clay, which becomes unstable when wet. Spells of heavy rain caused some of the earthworks to fail, accounting in part for the high cost of building works (Cantwell, 1985). To compensate for this the roof gun positions had to be modified to just six positioned at the angles with a firing step between. The guns were 40-pounder breech-loaders, installed in the 1870s and removed around 1903 (Cantwell, 1985). Three musketry caponiers defended the 31-foot-deep dry ditch. (Williams, 2020), they also provided light to the barrack rooms. Access to the upper barrack rooms was provided by a glass roofed veranda supported on iron columns on three sides of the building (Cantwell, 1985).

In 1869 the Royal Artillery were posted to the fort, providing two companies of coast gunners. During the late 1870s a skittle alley, workshop and fire engine house were built in the ditch outside the fort. In 1888 the fort was used as the Western District Artillery School and resulted in the expansion of these out-buildings to the north of the fort to include assorted workshops, stores, barracks, a drill hall, a new hospital and married quarters block (Cantwell, 1985). In April 1908 HMS Gladiator collided with an American liner SS St Paul and sank near Yarmouth with the loss of 28 sailors (Cantwell, 1993). Survivors from Gladiator were cared for at the hospital. In 1912 the majority of the hospital buildings were converted into additional officers' quarters. Between 1920 and 1923 the Royal Irish Rifles were stationed at the fort due to the Irish rebellion against British rule, necessitating Irish regiments serve out of Ireland.

As well as continuing as the School of Gunnery, the First World War saw the fort being used for training infantry regiments, it is estimated that over 30,000 men of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry being trained between 1915 and 1918. The fort was continually in use during the inter-war years including by the Royal Artillery (Williams 2020). In 1926 the fort became a District Establishment, staff based at the fort maintained coastal batteries and Regular Army specialists trained the Territorial Army. From 1932 the headquarters of the Needles Fire Command were based at the fort. During the Second World War the fort became the headquarters of the 530 Coast Regiment Royal Artillery (formerly the Isle of Wight Rifles, until 1937). Training continues with the gunners of the Territorial Army of the Hampshire Heavy Regiment. In 1940 when the threat of German invasion was at its height, the 50th Holding Battalion and the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Hampshire Regiment were based at the fort. Initially men from the Royal Militia of Jersey, who had escaped from the Channel Islands prior to the German Occupation, formed the Royal Hampshire Regiment. It is believed that the fort was used for training Canadian soldiers when these units left. From 1945 to 1962 the fort was used as a barracks for the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) Water Transport Training Company and training their Junior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) (Cantwell, 1985).

In 1962 the RASC left the fort and in 1964 the Army sold the fort bringing its military connection to an end. From 1969 to 1984 a number of light industries were based there. Restoration of the interior of the fort began in 1984 and it opened as a tourist attraction, including a cafe and a museum, in 1985 (Cantwell, 1985). However, this was short lived, eventually folding and the fort was left derelict. During this time a number of illegal rave parties were held there. In 2002 the fort was put on the market for £800,000. It was purchased in 2005 by property developer Kevin Clarke and converted into 18 individual apartments, of which 4 are holiday lets, named 'Palmerston House', 'The Well House', 'The Sergeants Quarters' and 'The Tap Room'. The interior of the fort is a closed gated community. A few commercial businesses still remain in the buildings to the north of the fort. The glacis of the fort is a nature reserve (Williams, 2020).

The Social History of the Fort, Country Park and the people associated with both who we were able to identify between 1869 and 2021 can be read within 2 volumes of the Social History report.

#### The timeline of the History of Golden Hill Fort and Country Park

The Social History research carried out by the project volunteers has identified 10 different phases of the history of the Fort and Country Park:

1869 to 1887 – the arrival of the military and the construction of the Fort and Batteries

1888 to 1913 – the Royal Artillery Western District Artillery School

1914 to 1918 – First World War

1918 to 1925 – Departure of School of Gunnery and Heavy Battery training

1926 to 1938 – District Establishment and Anti-aircraft training

1939 to 1945 – Second World War

1945 to 1962 – the Royal Army Service Corps Water Transport Training Unit

1964 to 1984 – Light industry and Golden Hill Country Park

1984 to 2002 – Tourist attraction and raves

2005 to 2021 – Residential apartments at Golden Hill Fort

Furthermore, we were able to identify some of the Brigades and Batteries based at Golden Hill Fort throughout its military use. There are gaps when troop movements may not have been reported in the local newspapers, so it should not be assumed that a military unit recorded as arriving at the Fort stayed until the next recorded arrival:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Details</b>
September 1869	Arrived at GHF	21 <sup>st</sup> Brigade of Royal Artillery
May 1870	Left GHF	21 <sup>st</sup> Brigade of Royal Artillery
May 1870	Arrived at GHF	7 <sup>th</sup> Brigade RA
January 1874	Arrived at GHF	102 <sup>nd</sup> Regiment Royal Bombay Fusiliers
April 1880	Left GHF	No 2 Battery 7 <sup>th</sup> Brigade RA
April 1880	Arrived at GHF	42 <sup>nd</sup> Royal Highlanders (The Black Watch)
November 1886	Arrived at GHF	7 <sup>th</sup> Battery 1 <sup>st</sup> Brigade North Irish Division Royal Artillery
1888		GHF became the Western District Artillery School of the Royal Artillery
May 1889	Arrived at GHF	5 – 1 Lancashire Division of the Royal Artillery
May 1889	Arrived at GHF	8 – 1 North Irish Brigade, who “went in to camp on the slopes of the fort”.
May 1891	Arrived at GHF	Battery of 100 non-commissioned officers and men of 39 Southern Royal Artillery who formed the School of Instruction
June 1889	Arrived at GHF	10.1 Lancaster Division RA and of 6.1 Welsh Division RA
July 1889	Inspected GHF	Royal Engineer Department of Southern Command
May 1890	Arrived at GHF	No 19 Battery Royal Artillery
May 1890		IW Highways Commissioners grant permission to military to erect a line of telegraph posts from GHF to Warden Point
June 1890	Arrived in West Wight for mobilisation of Garrison Artillery for annual drills	4000 men and officers garrisoned at all forts and batteries in West Wight including Garrison Artillery of Southern District, 4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle Brigade, 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2nd Hants Artillery volunteers and the Isle of Wight, Artillery, East Surrey and Wicklow Artillery Militias
July 1890	Left GHF	Northern Irish Battery

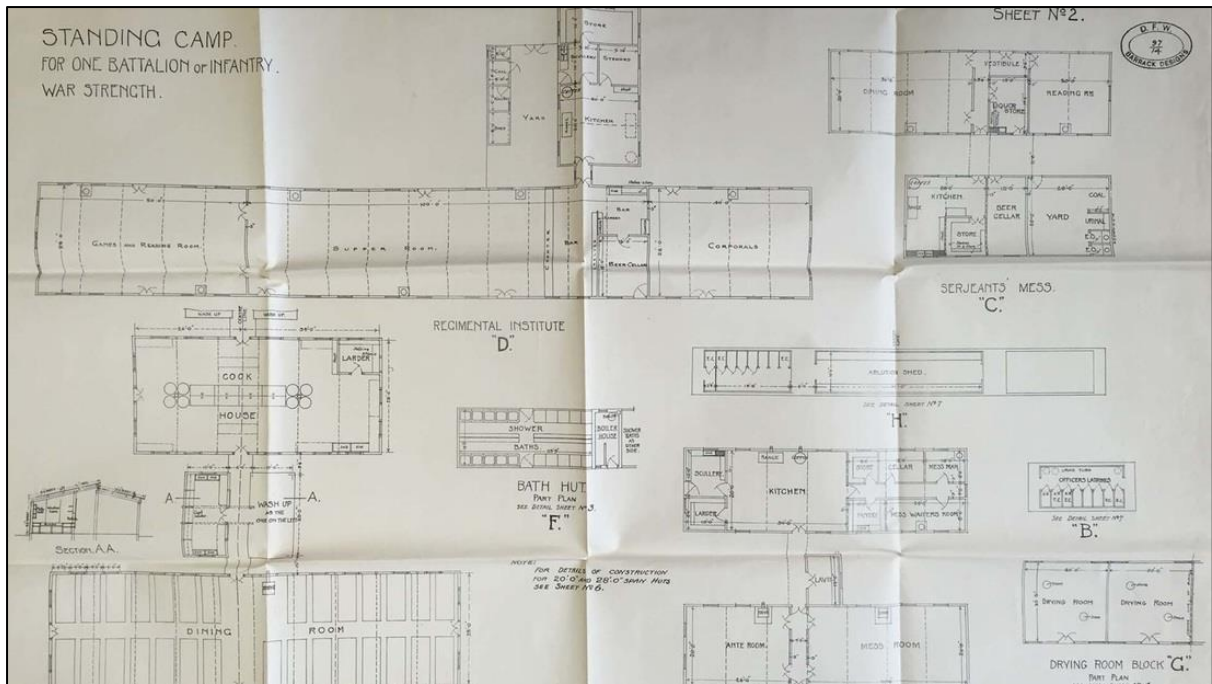


August 1890	Left GHF	Western Division Royal Artillery
August 1890	Arrived at GHF	No 41 Battery South Division Royal Artillery
May 1891	At GHF	39 <sup>th</sup> Battery Royal Artillery
May 1891	Left GHF	39 <sup>th</sup> Southern Division Royal Artillery
May 1891	Arrived at GHF	31 <sup>st</sup> and 34 <sup>th</sup> Divisions Royal Artillery
July 1891	Left GHF	31 <sup>st</sup> and 34 <sup>th</sup> Divisions Royal Artillery
July 1891	Arrived at GHF	No 2 Battery Southern Division and 42 Battery Divisions Royal Artillery
September 1891	Arrived at GHF	No 1 Company Southern Division Royal Artillery
June 1892	Rehearsal of mobilisation for invasion of Portsmouth	Southern District Royal Artillery in West Wight
May 1892	Arrived at GHF	14th Company Southern Division, Royal Artillery
April 1913	Camping at GHF	2 Companies of Royal Garrison Artillery
May 1913	6-inch gunnery shooting	Portsmouth Garrison Artillery Territorials
December 1913	At GHF	11 Company RGA
September 1914	At GHF	4 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwickshire
December 1914	Left GHF	Nos. 11, 32, 33, and 3* Companies of the R.G.A.
April 1916	At GHF	Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry
July 1919		School of Gunnery moved to Shoeburyness
October 1923	At GHF	Royal Ulster Rifles
April 1924	Left GHF	Royal Ulster Rifles
April 1924	Arrived at GHF	2 batteries of Heavy Artillery
May 1926	6-week gunnery course	Brigade of Royal Artillery
1926		GHF became District Establishment
April 1929	Annual gunnery practice	Devon Heavy Brigade RA (T)
1932	At GHF	headquarters of the Needles Fire Command
March 1935		Anti-aircraft Section of RA
July 1939		Leicestershire Regiments
1945 to 1962	At GHF	Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) Water Transport Training Company

**Figure 2: Troop movements at GHF identified from local newspapers 1869 to 1962**

Pertinent to the identification of the date of some of the structures within the Country Park are the reports in the local newspapers that show that in December 1914 the Inspecting Officer of camps moved the detachment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwickshire camped on the slopes of Golden Hill to billets in public halls because of the flooded camping ground. It notes that the construction of long line of huts on south side of the hill is proceeding rapidly for the men. In January 1915 it reports that "The men of Kitchener's Army billeted around Freshwater can now move into the huts around Golden Hill."

Paul Milne, one of our volunteers, found one page of a plan which was sent out by the War Department to local contractors for them to build standing camps in 1914. This page came from the archives of R G Hogg, a Suffolk builder, which was published in the 2018 PhD thesis of Karey Lee Draper entitled "Wartime Huts: The Development, Typology, and Identification of Temporary Military Buildings in Britain 1914-1945". The Hogg plan has helped us identify the date and function of some of the structures within Golden Hill Park and is shown below:

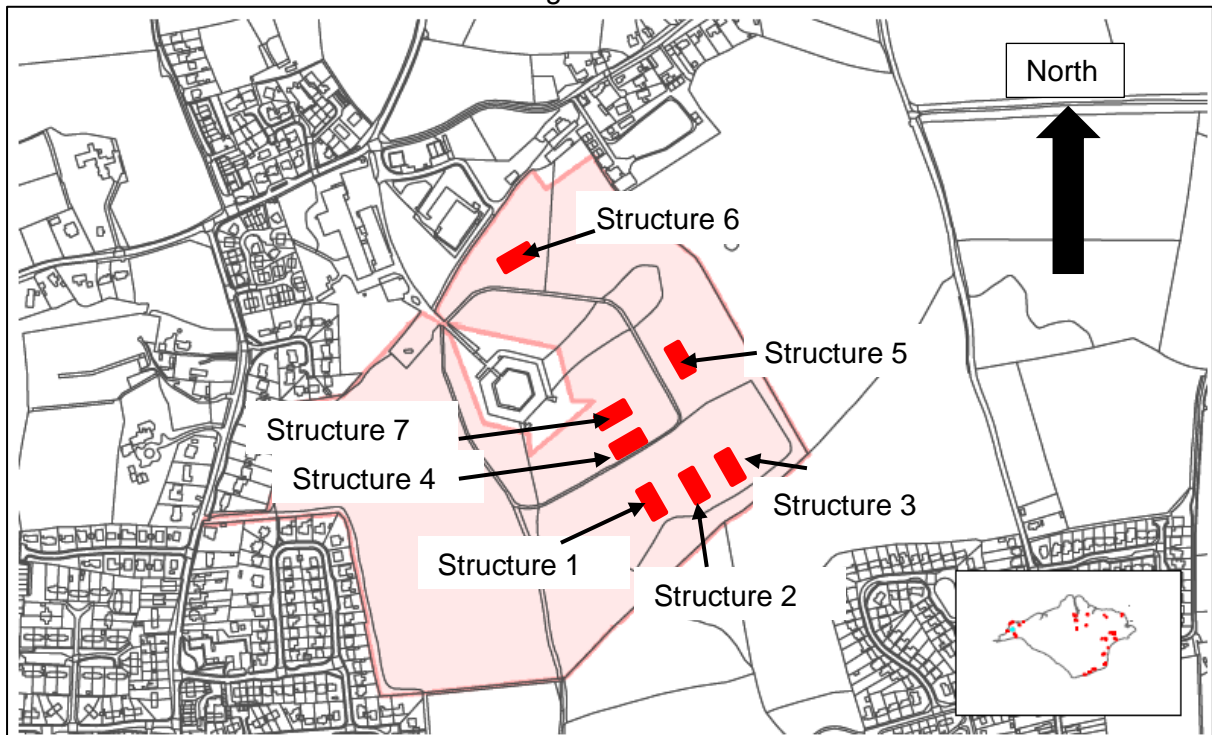


**Figure 3: the page of the Hogg plan from Draper's thesis 2018.**

**Archaeological results:**

A complete archaeological report detailing the dimensions and details of the results of our project will be produced in due course and will be deposited with the Isle of Wight County Archaeology Service for inclusion in the IW Historic Environment Record (HER) database.

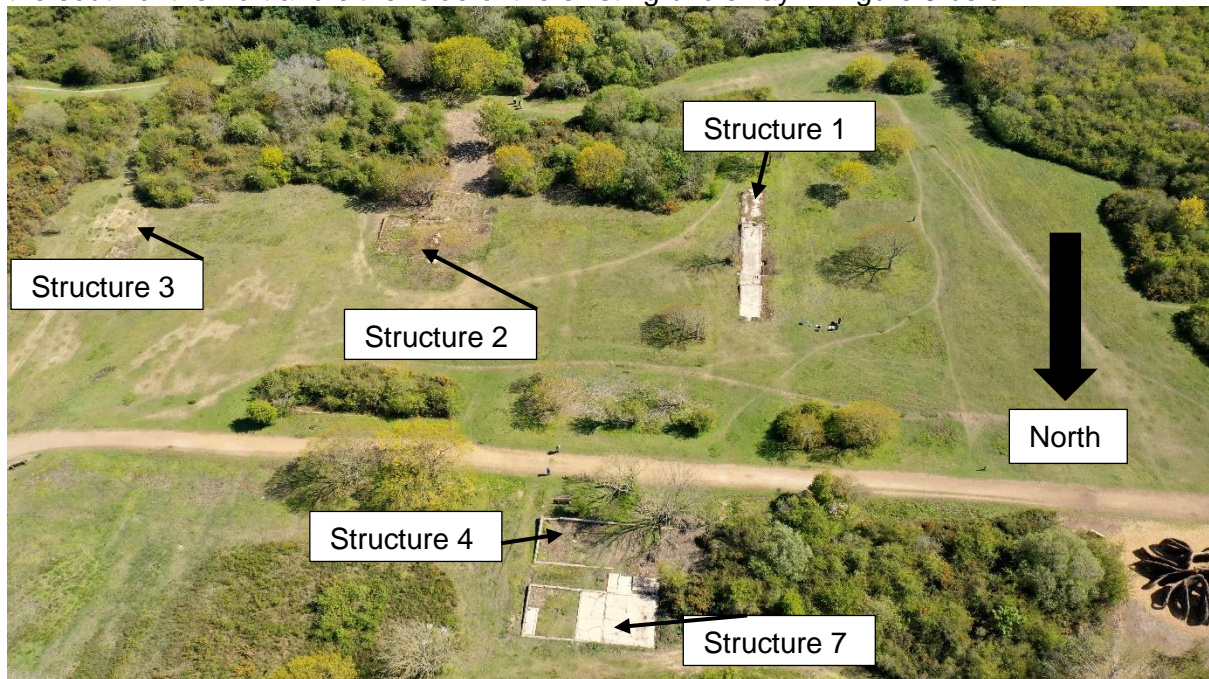
The bases of seven structures were located, cleared and recorded by our volunteers. The locations of the structures are shown in Figure 4 below:



**Figure 4: Location plan of structures identified as part of the project**



Structures 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 are shown within the area of the Country Park on the slopes to the south of the Fort and either side of the existing bridgeway in Figure 5 below:



**Figure 5: Structures 1, 2, 3, 4 + 7 on the slopes of Golden Hill to the south of the Fort**

**Structure 1:**

Structure 1 is made up of the concrete bases of a long thin building running north to south with three levels and steps leading down to each level.



**Figure 6: Structure 1 ©Peter Bassett [www.astronomyroadshow.com](http://www.astronomyroadshow.com)**

We have identified this structure from the dimensions and layout from the Hogg plan as being an Ablutions shed



**Figure 7: The Ablutions Shed shown on the 1916 Hogg plan**



The upper level contains eight circular holes for toilets and square holes to the east running down the centre of the floor which we have interpreted as the upright posts for the doors of the toilet cubicles. The external walls have short raised concrete blocks on which the wall framework would have sat to allow air to circulate between the gaps and can be seen in Figure 8 below:



**Figure 8: The upper level of Structure 1 the Ablutions Shed**

The Middle level of the Ablutions Shed has the same raised concrete fixtures on the outer walls to allow air to circulate and two channels along the east and west external walls which would have carried water out of the building to a substantial drain in the south-western corner.



**Figure 9: Middle level of the Ablutions Shed**



Evidence for the corrugated (probably iron) wall structure can be seen in the concrete of the steps leading down from the upper to the middle levels as shown in Figure 10 below:



**Figure 10: Evidence for corrugated wall construction in middle level of Ablutions Shed**

One of our volunteers found a photograph of a similar World War 1 Ablutions shed in use with the concrete channels in the floor which is seen in Figure 11 below. We are still working to try and find the source of this photograph:



**Figure 11: Similar Ablutions Shed (source still being researched)**

## **Structure 2**

Structure 2 lies to the west of Structure 1 and is also orientated north to south. It consists of three levels of concrete bases with concrete steps leading down to each level. Unfortunately, we were unable to clear the all of the levels due to covid-19 pandemic lockdowns.





**Figure 12: Structure 2 from above** ©Peter Bassett [www.astronomyroadshow.com](http://www.astronomyroadshow.com)

The central level consisted of ten poured concrete slabs with a thin layer of concrete screed over the top which showed considerable wear patterns around a large rectangular non-worn area. This could possibly indicate the wear of soldiers sitting around large tables and has led us to suggest that this may have been a soldier's mess area with the cook house on the lower level. None of the buildings on the Hogg plan have similar dimensions or plans as this structure, however we are continuing the research to try and identify its function.



**Figure 13: Wear patterns in central level of Structure 2**

### **Structure 3:**

Structure 3 lies to the east of Structure 2, however, very little of it survives above ground and has been disturbed by water distribution trunk main pipes running north to south immediately to the east. Structure 3 is orientated north to south and is shown in Figure 14 below:





**Figure 14: Structure 3 from above (photo by Mike Collins)**

We were unable to clear any of this structure due to covid-19 lockdowns, however it appears to be very similar in size and plan to the Ablutions shed (Structure 1) to the west.

### **Structures 4 and 7**

Structures 4 and 7 lie to the north of the bridle path and we discovered, after clearing the huge amount of scrub and greenery which were covering them, that they were used together. They are seen in Figure 15 below:



**Figure 15: Structures 4 and 7 from above (photo Mike Collins)**



Both structures are orientated east to west, with Structure 4 lying to the south of Structure 7. Only the walls of Structure 4 survive with no concrete floors in place, however iron fixing bars and holes for possible wooden upright posts to support the walls are in place around it.

Structure 7 consists of three separate areas, with the two most westerly areas floored with concrete and the eastern area having holes for upright posts.

Within the north-eastern corner of the eastern area is a concrete floor with surviving evidence for the settings of the bases of toilets and circular holes for the drains behind them as seen in Figure 16 below:



**Figure 16: Remains of settings for toilets in the north-eastern corner of Structure 7**

The remains of iron fixing bars onto which the wooden building frame would have been bolted survive around the external concrete walls as shown in Figure 17 below. Evidence of the wall construction survives in the corrugated shapes in the cement rendering which was applied to the surfaces of the walls.

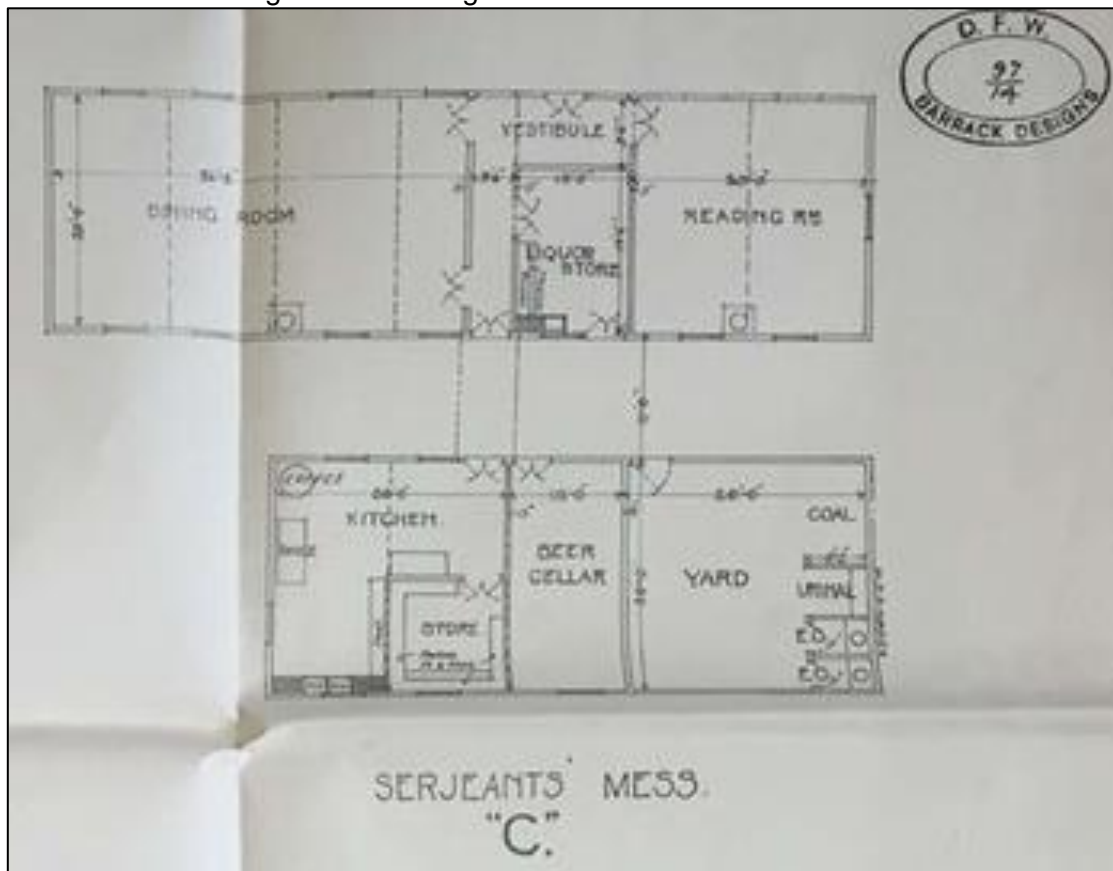


**Figure 17: Iron fixing bar set into top of external walls of Structure 7**

We were able to compare the dimensions and plan of structures 4 and 7 with those on the 1914 Hogg plan and we have identified that, with some slight alterations, these two buildings are likely to have been the Sergeants Mess.



Structure 4 has the same dimensions as the upper room on the Hogg plan shown in Figure 18 below/overleaf. With a large dining room area to the left, a vestibule and Liquor store in the centre and a reading room to the right of this.



**Figure 18: The Sergeants Mess shown in the 1914 Hogg plan**

Structure 7 is comparable to the lower building on the Hogg plan which shows a kitchen and store room to the left, a beer cellar in the middle and a yard with toilets and a coal store area to the right. Although the toilets in structure 7 are placed in the top right corner, everything else is comparable to the Sergeants Mess shown on the 1914 Hogg plan.

### **Structure 5**

Structure 5 is orientated north to south and lies to the north of the other structures on the southern slopes of Golden Hill and is easily recognisable as the Bath House on the 1914 Hogg plan.



**Figure 19: Structure 5 from above (photo Mike Collins)**



Although the northern half of the building has been severely damaged when it was demolished, the southern half survives very well including walls of the individual shower units in which the drain strainers still survive. Figure 20 below shows the southern half of the building which contains ten shower cubicles along each wall. Figure 21 below show one of the drain strainers within one of the shower cubicles.



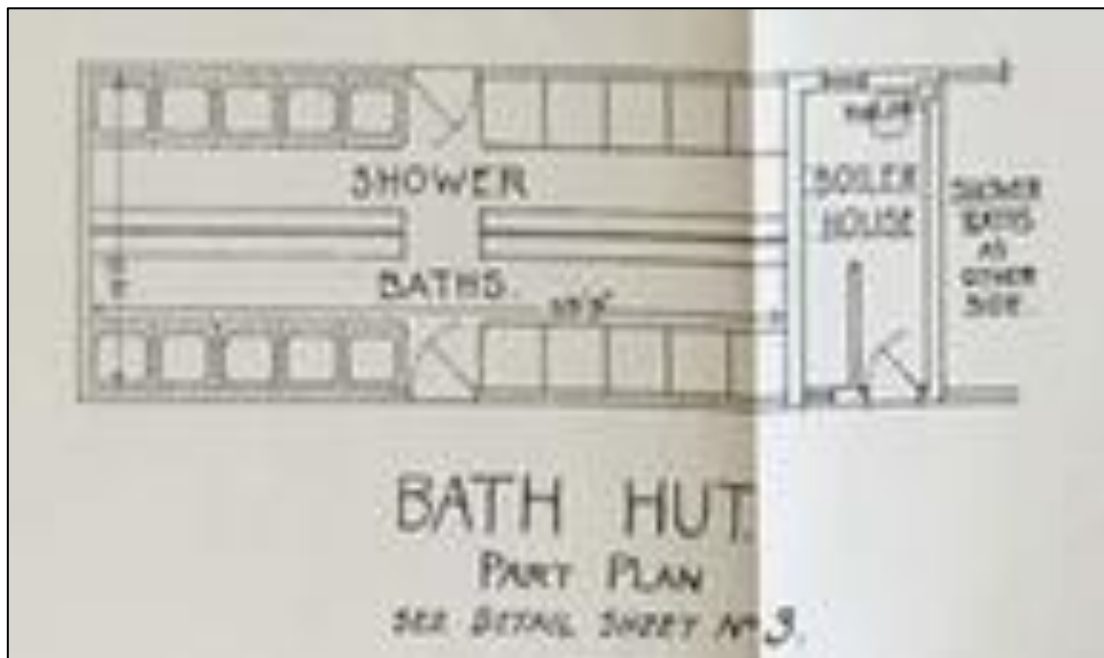
**Figure 20: The southern half of Structure 5 showing the shower cubicles**



**Figure 21: One of the drain strainers within one of the shower cubicles in Structure 5**

This structure is easily recognisable from the 1914 Hogg plan as the Bath Hut which is shown in Figure 22 overleaf. The Hogg plan shows only one side of the structure with ten clearly marked “shower bath” units along both sides of building with what appear to be benches in the middle. We were able to see the remains of iron fixtures which would have held the benches in place within the floor of the southerly half. Between the two halves of the

Bath Hut (each with 20 cubicles) was the boiler house which survives as a flat concrete surface with brick edging.



**Figure 22: Bath Hut shown on 1914 Hogg plan.**

The waste water from the shower cubicles flowed through metal drain pipes set into the concrete into a separate concrete channel which was set just outside the east and west walls as shown in Figure 23 below:



**Figure 23: The outside waste water channel from the shower cubicles in Structure 5**



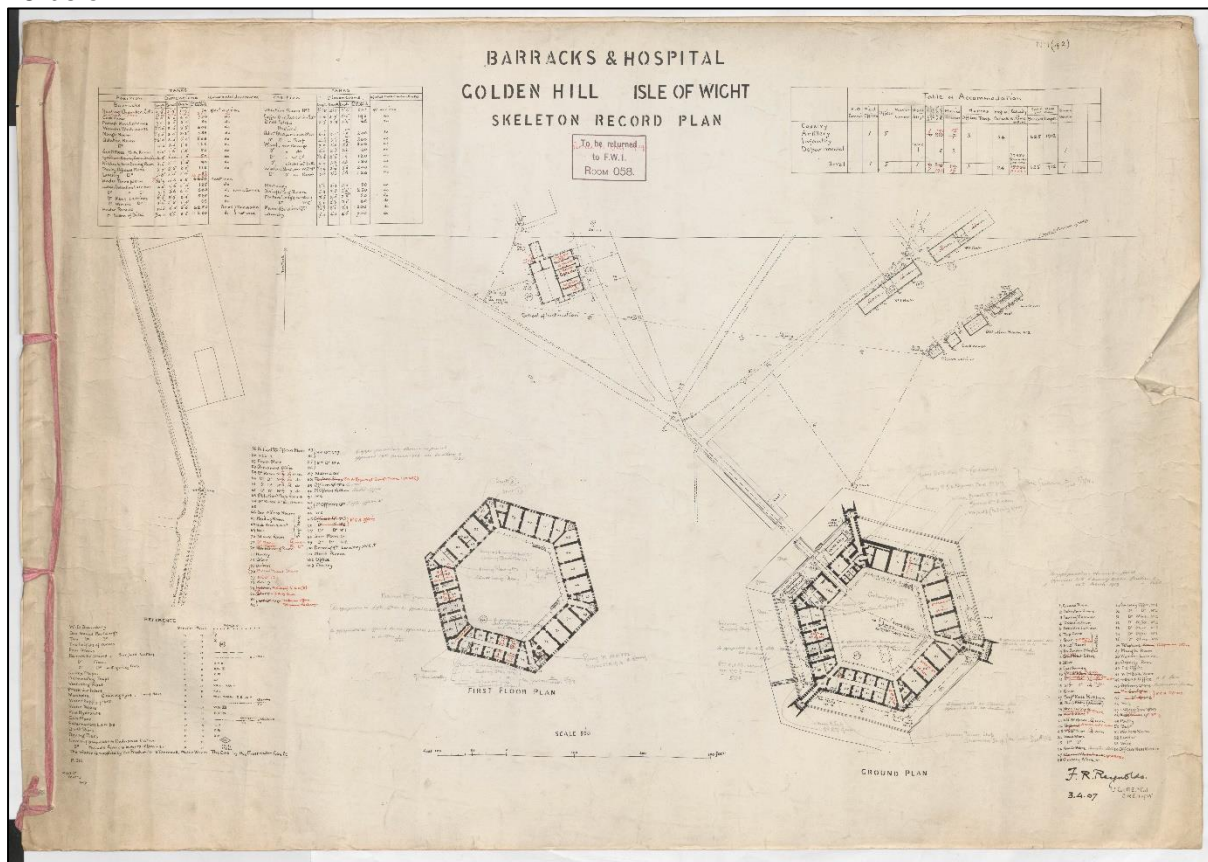
## Structure 6

Structure 6 was the only building north of the Fort which we were able to clear because of the Covid-19 Pandemic and lack of time meant that we could only partially clear the structure for recording. It is orientated north-east to south-west and lies within an area of buildings shown on some of the maps we were able to research.



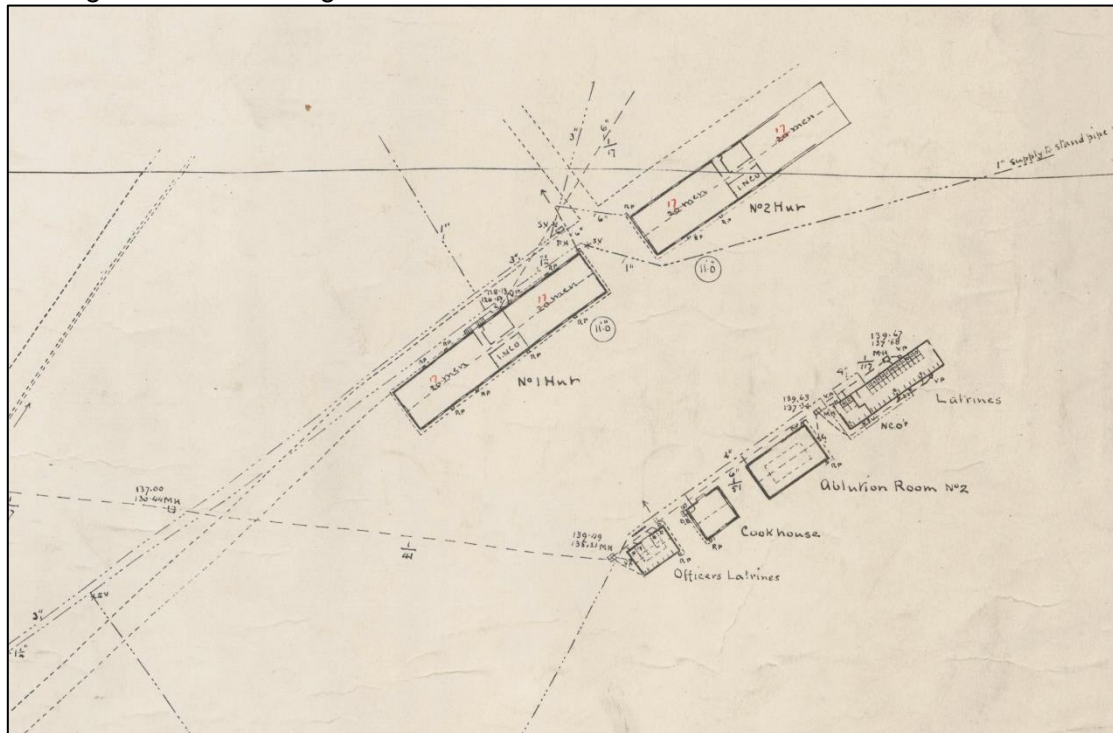
**Figure 24: Structure 6**

We were able to find a skeleton record plan dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1907 in the National Archives which shows the Fort and some of the structures to the north of it which is shown in Figure 25 below.



**Figure 25: Skeleton Record Plan of Golden Hill Fort and buildings 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1907 (National Archives WO 78/3740)**

Two rows of huts are shown to the north of the Fort building on this 1907 plan and are shown in greater detail in Figure 26:



**Figure 26: section of 1907 GHF Skeleton plan showing buildings to north of Fort**

The two buildings to the north, called No 1 Hut and No 2 Hut on the plan, are shown as barracks for 40 men either side of a room for an NCO.

The southern range consists of four buildings which are labelled "Officer's latrines", "Cook House", "Ablutions room no 2" and "NCO's latrines". Detective work by volunteer Paul Johnson has suggested that Structure 6 was the most northerly building in the southern row of four which was the NCO's latrines.

## **Conclusions**

The volunteers of the Golden Hill Heritage Research project have produced the first archaeological records of some of the surviving structures around Golden Hill Fort within the Country Park.

Although we were not able to identify and record as many structures as we had planned because of the covid-19 pandemic, we know that there are many other bases of military structures surviving with Golden Hill Park which require archaeological recording.

A further more comprehensive archaeological report and a full archaeological archive of the remains we have recorded will be produced in due course and some of the identifications in this interim report may change when further research is carried out.

We believe that we have identified surviving World War 1 structures which were previously unknown and undated, which is a superb achievement for the hard-working local volunteers who should be very proud of their work to bring the vital military role which Golden Hill played in World War 1 into the realm of public knowledge.

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