

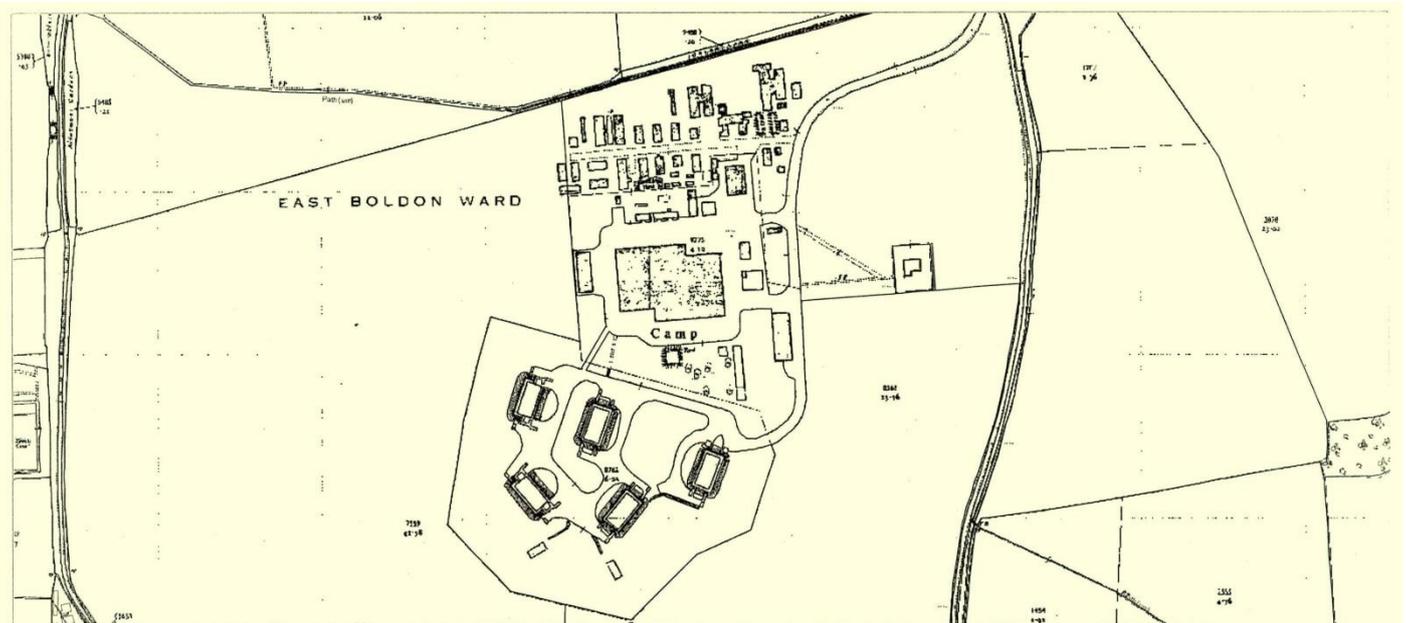


BOLDON CAMP HERITAGE GROUP

East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Supply Depot (HER1829)

Grid Reference: - NZ3687 6063

Please note that Boldon Camp is private property. Access is ONLY by permission of the owner.



Outline plan of the East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Supply Depot circa 1954

The Depot today.

East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Supply Depot (HER1829) is the last of its type in the North East of England. The sister site of this depot which provided ammunition etc. to the Anti-Aircraft Batteries located north of the River Tyne at Killingworth was demolished in 2014/15 with the land being used for housing.

Prior to the demolition of the Killingworth Depot, the local press reported that:-

“The site was built in 1938 in anticipation of war with Germany. Its function was to supply ammunition to anti-aircraft and other gun emplacements guarding the conurbation north of the Tyne. Its other role was to store and maintain vehicles serving the gun batteries. Ammunition stored at the depot included 0.303 rounds for Lewis and Bren Guns, shells for Polsten and Bofors Guns plus heavy shells for the anti-aircraft and coastal batteries. Because the buildings were planned and constructed before the war good quality materials were used.

A report from the Tyne & Wear archaeology officer at the time stated that “Tyne & Wear may be unique in having two such surviving sites.

English Heritage also stated at the time that, “The Killingworth Depot is one of two surviving former World War Two anti-aircraft supply depots in Tyne & Wear and while the site is not nationally designated, it is clearly of regional and local importance”

The above details were reported in the regional press in August 2014, and it would seem that since the Killingworth Depot was demolished and the land turned over to housing, the last remaining Depot at East Boldon must assume a more important role in being preserved for future generations.

At present the detailed history of the East Boldon site is still being researched, however for an overview of the only web based information about East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Depot, we would recommend the Boldon Wartime Memories website where the Camp section contains some limited information about the depot.

<http://www.boldonwm.uk/index.htm>)

The Boldon Camp Heritage Group believes that this depot like the Killingworth Depot played a major role in the supply of ammunition to all of the heavy and light Anti-Aircraft Batteries located south of the River Tyne in the South Tyneside and Sunderland areas during World War Two. The extent of the supply operation and the area covered by Boldon Camp is the subject of ongoing research which will be published on this website when completed.

The site is located to the east of East Boldon (Grid Reference:- NZ3687 6063) just as you leave the village on the A184. The track to the depot is on the right hand side of the road opposite the cricket ground. Within 100 metres of leaving the A184 you are travelling on the original wartime concrete laid roadway which swings up through the entrance gate between two large grassed areas and into the complex of derelict depot buildings and bunkers.

With regard to the 1954 plan above, all of the area to the North of the site where the hatted encampment was located was cleared of buildings decades ago and the land returned to rough grassland. However the main structures of the supply depot still exist today, but are in a poor condition.

All of the “still standing” buildings have been vandalised with steel framed windows removed, roof coverings taken down by the previous owner, some demolished brickwork, no existing original fittings, mounds of debris and extreme graffiti on just about every surface. There has been no grounds maintenance for many years with trees and shrubs growing over large swathes of what should be open areas between the buildings and bunkers.

Covering an area of 7.6 hectares of brownfield and rough grassland, this site has remained in existence for over 75 years and is now the last remaining major “above ground” World War Two site left in the North East of England. In its current state the buildings that still survive consist of the large main warehouse, workshop, administration buildings, a row of single storey offices, a post war metal Romney building, external brick storage area, small pump house, brick blockhouse assemblies and five concrete ammunition bunkers with blast walls and earth embankments.

The site is located within the South Tyneside Authority area in the greenbelt between South Tyneside and Sunderland. Currently privately owned, the 7.6 Hectare site has been subject to review as part of a Strategic Land Review initiated in 2016 by South Tyneside Council (initiated by Central Government) to determine if it and many other undeveloped locations throughout the Borough should be classified as potential housing land. The Strategic Land Review was completed in early 2019 and the results fed into the “Draft Local Plan” which determines future use of available land within the South Tyneside Council area. The “Draft Local

Plan” was issued in early August 2019 and identified that “East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Supply Depot” should remain as “Green Belt” land. The site is only locally listed and has no legal protection from development.

The Boldon Camp Heritage Group believes that this World War Two era site complete with derelict buildings and open grassland is of great local and regional historical importance and that every effort should be made to save and conserve the site for future generations to enjoy as a local “Living Military Museum”.

The Boldon Camp Heritage Group believes that this region has the expertise to rebuild and restore the depot buildings to as near to their original condition as possible providing a complex of buildings and bunkers as the foundation of a regional military museum.

East Boldon Anti-Aircraft Supply Depot should be saved to remind future generations of the struggle endured by previous generations in the cause of this country’s freedom. To this end, we invite you to help us save this unique site by making a donation to our cause, details of which can be found by selecting the donate button on our home page..