

Folkestone & Hythe District Heritage Strategy

Appendix 1: Theme 5f Defence – Camps, Training Grounds and Ranges

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Appendix 1, Theme 5(f) Defence Heritage – Camps, Training Grounds and Ranges

1. Summary

At various points throughout their history, towns such as Folkestone, Hythe and Lydd have played an important military role and become major garrison towns. Large numbers of soldiers, officers and military families have been accommodated in various barrack accommodation within camps such as Shorncliffe and Sandling, or billeted across the local towns and villages. Training grounds and ranges have developed which have served important purposes in the training of troops and officers for the war effort and in the defence of this country. Together they are an important collection of assets relating to the defensive heritage of the District and in many cases, continue to illustrate the historical role that many towns played when the district was again physically and symbolically placed on the front-line during times of war and unrest.

2. Introduction

The District's proximity to continental Europe has inexorably linked its history with the defence of the coast and a continued military presence in a number of its towns going back as far as the Roman period. This legacy of coastal defence is represented by an outstanding collection of fortifications and other structures along the coastline as well as a number of training grounds, camps and ranges that have played important roles during wartime in the stationing and training of troops across the District. Troops have been housed in a range of structures; from purpose built barrack blocks to temporary billeted accommodation. This theme will concentrate on the military camps, training grounds and ranges that developed in the District from the eighteenth century onwards.

Places such as Lydd, Hythe and Folkestone have long history's as military towns and have continued to play an important role in the countries defence as well as the training and accommodation of troops and officers for the war effort. Lydd was known as a military town prior to the First World War where it housed an established Army training camp and military barracks. The Lydd ranges have been used by the military for over 150 years and continues to be active today. The ranges have been used for trials of techniques and munitions for many years, and most notably is the namesake for the explosive Lyddite.

The Hythe ranges are one of the oldest in the country and have been used for nearly 200 years. In 1853, they became one of the most important training centres in the country for the British Army and were home to the highly regarded Hythe School of Musketry. The ranges and School have played significant roles in major conflicts, primarily the First World War, and demonstrate the military importance that Hythe has played during its history.

The various camps and training grounds that were established at Folkestone and in the surrounding areas have also played significant roles in the military history of the District and continue to be important to the local historical character. Sites such as

Shorncliffe have made vital contributions to the development of the British Army, for example in 1803 Sir John Moore was appointed to command a brigade of infantry stationed at Shorncliffe to defend the coast. This marked the beginning of the celebrated camp for light infantry and resulted in significant changes to both the tactics and quality of the British Army. Shorncliffe went on to become one of the major staging posts for troops leaving for the Western Front during the First World War, as well as an important training ground for the new Canadian Expeditionary Force. Overall, the assets which will be explored in this theme form an important collection of sites that reflect the significant military role that the District has continued to play at various points throughout its history.

3. Description of the Heritage Assets

Shorncliffe Army Camp

In 1798 the deposition of Louis XVI of France and the beginning of the French Revolution sent shockwaves across the whole of Europe and would ultimately see war spread across Europe and the overseas colonies. Throughout the final decade of the eighteenth century and into the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain was engaged almost continuously in wars with France which ended with the defeat of Napoleon and the close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.

The Revolutionary Wars (1793-1802) and subsequent Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) prompted the construction of an extensive new system of defences that was built in stages across the District, and would also see southern communities eager to establish volunteer forces to resist the anticipated French invasion. This was the case in the district, and following the outbreak of the Revolutionary Wars in 1793 the British Government passed the Volunteer Act of 1794 which authorised the raising of a force “for the general defence of the kingdom during the present war”. Companies were raised to form cavalry troops (Yeomanry) to man coastal batteries and to serve as infantry in support of the existing militia. The towns of New Romney, Lydd, Hythe and Folkestone recruited men for a formation known as the Cinque Port Volunteers whilst other forces in Kent included the East and West Kent Yeomanry Cavalry. The Cinque Port Volunteers comprised both cavalry and infantry units together with artillery detachments which were based at locations including Saltwood, Sandgate Castle and Shorncliffe Battery.

Shorncliffe Battery was constructed in 1793 on land belonging to the Lord of the Manor of Cheriton. It was initially equipped with ten 24 pounder artillery pieces and was upgraded to twelve guns in 1801. The following year 229 acres of land adjacent to the battery were purchased “for the better securing His Majesty’s Batteries and other works”. The battery was garrisoned by a detachment of Sea Fencibles, a volunteer unit of the Royal Navy. In addition to the battery, the regular Army also had a camp at Shorncliffe during the 1790s which accommodated three regiments of the Militia; the West Lowland Fencibles and an artillery park.

In 1794, the Shorncliffe Redoubt was constructed as an anti-invasion defence against a possible landing on the beaches to the west of Folkestone. Designs for the redoubt were prepared by Lieutenant Colonel William Twiss who would also later oversee the construction of four bastions at Dover Castle, the defences on the

Western Heights and the Martello Tower system along the southern coast. It seems likely that the redoubt was primarily intended for the use of infantry deployed to defend the headland and roads leading up from the beach as well as in support of the Shorncliffe battery to the south-west. By the turn of the nineteenth century the camp at Shorncliffe now comprised the battery and a barracks, the latter being surrounded by the earthwork redoubt. Today substantial sections of the redoubt survive and are designated as a Scheduled Monument. It is uncertain whether anything survives of the Revolutionary Wars period battery, though the battery wall associated with the defence of the eastern end of the Royal Military Canal survives and is also a Scheduled Monument.

When in 1803 war with France resumed under the rule of Napoleon following the brief Treaty of Amiens and a French invasion was again an imminent danger, Sir John Moore was appointed to command a brigade of infantry stationed at Shorncliffe to defend this part of the coast. This marked the start of the celebrated camp for light infantry which resulted in significant changes to both the tactics and quality of the British Army. The units at Shorncliffe included the green-jacketed 95th Rifle Regiment, the first British infantry regiment to be wholly armed with the Baker rifle. This provided the basis for the elite Light Division which served with great distinction under Moore and Wellington during the Peninsula campaign. The camp at Shorncliffe consisted of temporary buildings and tents which were used during the summer training seasons on land to the north and east of the redoubt. A permanent training camp would not be set up until later in the 1850s. Training at Shorncliffe placed an emphasis on self-reliance, self-improvement and professionalism throughout the ranks and provided whole units of light infantry training as skirmishes able to combat the large French forces.

Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, as much as 150 acres of training ground at Shorncliffe were let to local farmers for grazing. The redoubt ceased to have a defensive role although it may have played a part in training exercises as many of the barrack huts were retained and rebuilt in brick for the use of the artillery. In 1838 material from the buildings of the redoubt were sold off at auction and by 1844 the site was empty.

The origins of the modern British Army camp can be traced to the Crimean War (1853-1856) during which time the Army supplied timber huts that could be assembled on site. Although these huts were found to be unsatisfactory in the field, several proved to be better suited for use in semi-permanent encampments that were established at home to accommodate an expanding regular army. The earliest of these new camps were established at Aldershot, Colchester and Shorncliffe.

The new camp was laid out at Shorncliffe between 1855 and 1856 to accommodate troops of the British German Legion, a formation that had been raised to make up for the shortfall in troop numbers exposed by the Crimean War. The camp was built to a standardised arrangement of huts for a half battalion with 192 huts in total, each accommodating 25 men. In addition to these, there were also five mess buildings, four expense magazines, a prison and a hospital which could cater for 300 men. A report that was compiled by the Barrack and Hospital Improvement Commission in 1858 found that the camp at Shorncliffe was largely satisfactory for its time but that it

lacked a sufficient water supply, contained no facilities for bathing and was lit by inadequate oil lighting.

In the early 1880s a number of experimental concrete brick barrack huts were constructed, though it was not until the 1890s that all wooden huts were finally replaced with more permanent structures. During the late 1880s the War Office had also concluded that long-term expenditure on capital assets such as barracks should be financed by loans as opposed to the annual Army Estimates voted by Parliament, and so subsequent capital raised was allocated to the reconstruction of 'great camps' such as Shorncliffe. All huts were now built of brick, and at Shorncliffe the Somerset Barracks were built followed by Moore, Ross and Napier Barracks over the course of the 1890s. Between 1903 and 1904 the Risborough Barracks were built north of Napier Barracks and was a large hutted camp containing brick service buildings, married quarters and huts built of timber. The new quarters became known as the "Tin Town" due to the corrugated iron roofs and cladding of the huts.

Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, the War Office purchased St Martin's Plain in order to provide further training facilities for the troops stationed at Shorncliffe as well as for the volunteer units that after 1908 became the Territorial Force. By 1902 the Great Field and the remaining portion of St Martin's Plain were owned by the Secretary of State for War. Historical photographs suggest that Territorial units such as the East Kent Mounted Rifles trained here during their annual training camps in the 1900s.

By the time Great Britain entered the First World War in 1914, the existing barracks at Shorncliffe could accommodate up to 174,800 NCOs and men. Capacity was further increased by reducing the available space per man from 600 to 400 cubic feet and by housing troops in the married quarters. This then allowed for the accommodation of up to 262,000 men. Following a huge rush of volunteers to enlist in Lord Kitchener's New Armies at the outbreak of war, the Army Council decided that units formed in the Eastern Command District were to be stationed at training centres at Colchester and Shorncliffe. However, it quickly became apparent that accommodation was insufficient to cater for units of the New Army, and so new plans were drawn up.

The British infantry battalion of 1914 consisted of approximately 35 Officers and 1000 men who were divided into four companies. Four battalions comprised one brigade, whilst three infantry brigades, four Royal Artillery brigades and Ancillary units including the Royal Engineers, the Army Service Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps made up a division of approximately 15,000 to 20,000 men. It was decided that divisional camps should be established given that each division represented a self-contained fighting unit that would greatly benefit from training together. New designs for battalion sized hutted camps were quickly issued and became known as "Armstrong huts" after their designer. The basic designs comprised a sleeping hut which was 60-foot-long by 20-foot-wide and with an average height of 10 feet. They were intended to accommodate 30 men and each hut was constructed on a timber frame with roofs of either corrugated iron or red fit scantling. Each battalion would also be provided with a large central cookhouse and dining halls as well as messes for Officers and NCOs and recreational huts.

Specifications were also issued for the layout of camps, though these did not necessarily consider the local topography.

By the end of September 1914 there were nearly 20,000 recruits of Kitchener's First New Army in training at Shorncliffe. Despite initial logistical failings upon arrival of the troops, the fine autumn weather made adjusting to the tented camps at Dibgate and St Martin's Plain far easier. The programme of hutted camp construction began during the autumn of 1914. Orders were placed through the War Office, who then awarded contracts to local civilian contractors; at Shorncliffe this was primarily with Sir John Jackson's Company. However, the construction faced severe delays largely due to poor weather conditions and a shortage of skilled construction workers who were off fighting in the war. The War Office resorted to recruiting unskilled labour which inevitably resulted in a decline in the quality of workmanship. There was also a shortage of materials which further hampered progress.

Despite the quality of many huts being unsatisfactory, the War Office decided to begin moving men into the accommodation at Shorncliffe and the surrounding camps regardless. This caused many problems, such as the men at Sandling camp having to put up tents inside their huts just to keep dry. The lack of permanent shelter and the continuing poor weather led to feelings of unrest, and strikes also broke out amongst the men in some cases. By the beginning of December 1914, it had been decided to billet New Army and Canadian troops in civilian homes instead. During the winter of 1914/15 as many as 800,000 troops were billeted with the civilian population. At Shorncliffe, men of the Eastern Division were turned out of their huts only a few days after moving in and billeted with civilian in nearby villages and towns.

In January 1915 the hutting programme was revisited with a renewed vigour. Troops were utilised as labourers and the War Office continued to work towards adequate hut accommodation and camp infrastructure. Despite initial delays to the programme, the majority of the New Army units were able to move out of their billets and into huts by the spring of 1915.

A plan of Shorncliffe Camp surveyed in 1922 gives an idea of the camps arrangement during the First World War. The plan shows as many as four separate hutted camps on the Plain, one comprising 32 barrack huts in the north-west corner, and the others of 38, 40 and 26 to the north-west of St Martin's Church. While the majority of the huts appear to have been the standard Armstrong barrack huts, the plan also shows the presence of other larger buildings which may include cookhouses, stables and regimental institute buildings. At least one of the buildings must have been the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) hut which was built with money raised by the Bank of England in early 1915.

In the first half of 1915, the second wave of Canadian troops began landing in Britain and were stationed in camps around Shorncliffe, Hythe and Folkestone. Documentary evidence suggests that the camp at West Sandling was "laid out in the form of a large square divided into four parts, one to each of the four battalions, the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st, each containing a large parade ground, quarters for officers, NCOs and men, together with offices, stables and stores". This was a typical arrangement for a New Army camp during the First World War.

Canadian troops arrived at Shorncliffe with minimal soldiering experience after only a few weeks of cursory training before crossing the Atlantic. Units of the 2nd Canadian Division spent their first few weeks in Kent conducting tactical training and musketry practice on the rifle ranges at Hythe. During the summer, the units undertook large-scale divisional exercises as well as digging trenches on Tolsford Hill. Training was also provided in using a rifle, bayonet and grenade as well as in methods of trench warfare. Special instruction in machine gunnery, signalling and bombing was also offered to every man.

A typical day for a soldier at Shorncliffe Army Camp was highly structured from around 5:30am until lights out at 10pm. Days incorporated physical drills, marches, parades and training punctuated with meal times. Visits by dignitaries such as Prime Minister Borden were a particular highlight and provided the troops with an opportunity to demonstrate their military skills and training. In September of 1915 King George V and Lord Kitchener visited the camp to inspect the troops and expressed a message of gratitude to the CEF; “the past weeks at Shorncliffe have been for you a period of severe and rigorous training.... History will never forget the loyalty and readiness with which you rallied to the aid of your Mother Country in the hour of danger”. By the end of 1915 there were reported to be as many as 40,000 Canadian troops living and training in the Folkestone and Hythe area.

Photographs and personal recordings shed light on the conditions that were experienced at Shorncliffe Camp by troops during the First World War. A number of photographs show the timber barrack huts as well as the standardised design of ancillary buildings including the canteens and cookhouses. Further research using national and local archives may reveal further information on the construction, layout and experiences had at the camp in the future.

In the years immediately following the end of the First World War, many training camps and grounds were sold off by the War Office. Areas of the camp at Shorncliffe were retained which included land at Dibgate and St Martin's Plain. In 1920 the Army School of Education (ASE) was established on the former New Army camps on St Martin's Plain as the importance of educating soldiers was recognised as being of great importance for both future employment prospects as well as for the conduct during future wars. In the future education would form an important part of the training of each soldier.

The corrugated huts on St Martin's Plain remained in use until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, by which time the Risborough and Moore Barracks had further been upgraded and expanded. A number of defences were then put in place around the camps at Shorncliffe including pillboxes, a number of which survive today. St Martin's Plain was also used as a base for anti-aircraft batteries. By the close of the war in 1945, Shorncliffe became the headquarters for the 1st Brigade of Guards during the Suez Crisis of 1956 before then being left vacant for a number of years. The new Moore Barracks were constructed in 1967, retaining only the four 1930s “Sandhurst” blocks from the old site. Shorncliffe was then used for training regular, territorial and cadet troops during the Northern Ireland crisis from 1969 onwards.

The Royal Engineers gradually vacated the site during the latter part of the twentieth century whilst the Light Infantry moved out in October 1986. Parts of the site began to be demolished, including the hospital and Ross Barracks whilst the greater part of the Somerset Barracks was sold off for redevelopment in 1973. The Moore Barracks was occupied by the 1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders during the withdrawal of troops from Germany between 1993 and 1995. In 2000, the Royal Gurkha Regiment moved into Shorncliffe whilst much of the remaining parts were sold off for further redevelopment in 2013. Today the Ministry of Defence still retains the Sir John Moore Plain and Barracks for use by the Brigade of Gurkhas as well as the nearby Shorncliffe Military Cemetery. There are also several surviving structures and buildings from the Shorncliffe Army Camp, some of which are designated, and all illustrate the rich defence heritage that this site represents:

- Pillboxes
- Martello Tower No. 9 (Scheduled Monument)
- Shorncliffe Redoubt (Scheduled Monument)
- Former Water Tank – Burgoyne Barracks
- Former Racquet Court - Burgoyne Barracks, principal building only (Grade II Listed Building)
- No. 1 Royal Engineer Barrack Blocks of 1880-81 – Burgoyne Barracks (Grade II Listed Building)
- Sir John Moore Memorial Library of c. 1915-16 west of Somerset House (Grade II Listed Building)
- Sir John Moore Memorial Statue, 1916 south of library (Grade II Listed Building)
- Salamanca Stone
- Gates to Risborough Ordnance Depot (Grade II Listed Building)
- Practice Trenches

East and West Sandling Camps

The original Sandling Camp was built by McAlpine and Sons of Glasgow in October of 1914 and consisted of wooden huts that were built to house eight battalions of the CEF as an extension to the nearby Shorncliffe Camp. The 21st Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) went straight to the West Sandling Camp upon arrival in England and made references to marches and training on Tolsford Hill in various letters and war diaries. Soldiers that were stationed at the West and East Sandling Camps during the First World War undertook training in trench construction and warfare known as 'entrenchment' at Tolsford Hill where there is still evidence of the

many practice trenches that were dug and subsequently used there. Soldiers would learn how to dig trenches and to 'go over the top' into what was known as 'no man's land' on the Western Front. There is also evidence for similar practice trenches at Shorncliffe and above Folkestone and Hythe. Route marching and entrenching formed an important part of the syllabus at the West and East Sandling Camps.

Some of the most enduring images of the First World War are the trenches on the Western Front. Trench warfare occurred when advances in firepower were not matched by similar advances in mobility resulting in a gruelling form of warfare which often sustained huge numbers of casualties. Both sides would construct elaborate systems of trenches and dugouts along opposing fronts with the protection of barbed wire, mines and other obstacles. The area between the opposing trench lines became known as 'no man's land' as it was fully exposed to artillery fire from both sides and many lost their lives 'going over the top' of their trenches.

Less well-known are the extensive practice trenches that were dug by troops as part of training before being sent to the Western Front. At the beginning of the war with the large influx of recruits for the army, the digging of practice trenches was an important way of imparting valuable military skills whilst also building up fitness and fostering team spirit. Practice trenches could also provide realistic training for what troops would encounter on the Front as well as being used in the practice of assault tactics. Many examples can be found across England and largely survive as archaeological earthworks. Within the district, examples of practice trenches can be found at Shorncliffe and Tolsford Hill near Folkestone.

For soldiers who were stationed at the East and West Sandling Camps in Saltwood, 'entrenchment' at Tolsford Hill is mentioned often on a daily basis in the syllabus of training and activities. The digging of these practice trenches would train the soldiers in the construction of trenches as well as preparing them for 'going over the top'. Entrenching as well as marching formed an important part of the syllabus which was taught by those who had actual fighting experience on the Front.

Little evidence of the camps survives today, with no physical buildings remaining. Documentary and photographic evidence sheds light on the experiences of the soldiers whilst stationed at these camps and provides important evidence for the camps whereabouts and layout. Recent fieldwalking and aerial photography has provided evidence for the practice trenches at Tolsford Hill which appear to be preserved in good condition though they are not designated.

Hythe School of Musketry and Hythe Ranges

The Hythe ranges were established in 1853 as the practice ranges for the newly founded Hythe School of Musketry. Mention of the newly established School was first made in the Army List of 1854, and in the years that followed it went on to become one of the most important training centres in the country for the British Army.

The Hythe ranges extend from the Dymchurch Redoubt and along the coast to Hythe where the School of Musketry reused the Napoleonic barracks that were built in 1807-1808. These were later demolished in 1973, though the former Commandants

House is extant and has now been converted into residential housing. In 1855 a Corps of Instructors was added to the School consisting of 100 First Class and 100 Second Class Instructors. Once these individuals were sufficiently experienced, they were distributed to Depot Battalions and Regiments as required minus three who would remain at Hythe. By 1914 the School had established itself as a centre of excellence in the training of officers and NCOs to effectively fire and utilise general issue firearms. During the years of the First World War (1914-1918), the Hythe School of Musketry would play a major role in the training of military personnel to face the German machineguns on the Western Front and to sufficiently repel enemy forces.

NCOs and officers were trained at the Hythe School of Musketry in marksmanship, drill and weapons handling which they could then cascade to other soldiers for effective use on the battlefield. Individuals who underwent training at Hythe were well-respected within the regiments as the School played such an important role in teaching methods to offset the early superior machinegun power of the German army. It was well-known that Germany had far more machineguns than the British, and so the Hythe School of Musketry developed a method for manipulating the rifle bolt so that soldiers were able to fire their arms 15-20 times within 60 seconds. This ability to fire accurately within such a short space of time became known as the 'mad minute', and some argue was significant in repelling the German forces during the Great War.

The School continued to play an important role in the training of NCOs and officers to fight on the Front throughout the First World War. The ranges were also used by the Royal Flying Corps and was home to the School of Aerial Gunnery. Due to the increased demand on the ranges, an airfield was established to the north of the Dymchurch Redoubt and west of Hythe in 1917. By 1919 its name had been changed to the Small Arms School with a badge that showed crossed rifles surmounted by a crown. In 1929 the original badge was changed to include crossed rifles and a Vickers machinegun surmounted by a crown and surrounded by a laurel wreath. The title Small Arms School Corps also came into being at this time and would continue until the Schools closure in 1968.

The Hythe ranges continued to change over the years, and were further utilised during the Second World War between 1939 and 1945. Most of the features identified at the range which are Second World War in origin appear to have been part of anti-invasion defences such as pillboxes, barbed wire obstructions and minefields. A new rifle range was also constructed around this time though it was later cleared in 1966. Today the Hythe ranges are located on the edge of the town off the A259 Hythe-Dymchurch-Hastings Road on an area of low-lying land adjoining the foreshore. The only building that survives relating to the School of Musketry is the Commandants House which is now used as a private residence. Upon the Schools closure in 1968, it was moved to Warminster in Wiltshire where its headquarters remain today.

The Hythe ranges are amongst the oldest in the country and have been used for live firing for nearly 200 years. They are still used today for live firing with a Danger Area that extends out to sea, and are managed by the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Defence Infrastructure Organisation. Red flags are flown during live firing sessions,

and access to the foreshore and seawall is prohibited. Whilst the only surviving evidence of the School of Musketry at Hythe is the Commandants House, the once vital role it played in the training and preparation of soldiers and officers for the Western Front continues to make an important contribution to the military and defence heritage of Hythe. Interpretation panels along the Royal Military Canal and a plaque marking the original entrance to the School continues to detail and highlight its once important presence in Hythe. It also survives in living memory for some of the towns residents and so continues to be highly valued as a communal asset.

St Mary's Bay – Jesson Lane Camp

The Tree Estate in St Mary's Bay which was built during the 1970s had been home to a number of camps since the First World War. With the outbreak of war in 1914, the War Department built a camp in what was then Jesson Lane (today's Jefferstone Lane) to house the Royal Flying Corps School of Gunnery amalgamated with No. 1 (Observers) School of Aerial Gunnery. The camp was intended to accommodate 1000 men, 300 NCOs, 400 Officers and 400 women. When the Royal Flying Corps Gunnery School was put up for sale in 1920, the Boy's Brigade purchased all the accommodation on the New Romney side of Jesson Lane, excluding a couple of homes. However, the camp was soon sold again and would later become the St Mary's Bay Holiday Camp before being demolished during the 1970s.

Lydd Training Camp and Ranges

Lydd has been known as a military town some years prior to the First World War where it housed an established Army Training Camp. The Royal Garrison Artillery was a military barracks and the School of Siege Artillery served as an important training facility. At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Lydd was expanded as a military garrison and the camp was extended by the addition of metal huts which were known by the locals as 'tin towns'. British soldiers who lived and trained at the Lydd Army Barracks were joined by servicemen from countries such as Canada and Australia, and went on to serve in theatres of war across Europe.

Over five miles of railway track passed within the camp and saw increasing traffic through the war as it was a direct route for supplies to the camp and for other training facilities within the area. In 1916 the No. 2 Royal Flying Corps Balloon School was established in partnership with the Siege Artillery Brigade, and balloons were thereafter used for artillery range spotting. Due to the flat terrain in the area, the balloon sheds and camp were visible by local people from the main town at Lydd. The Kent Cyclist Battalion would also have been visible on their patrols of the area. In 1918 Lydd became a base for the 21st Cyclist Battalion.

Lydd has also been used as a military firing range for over 150 years. The ranges are located on the Dungeness foreland and Romney Marsh, falling into part of the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Training in munitions and artillery techniques has been carried out at the Lydd Ranges as it has also been not far away at the Hythe Ranges throughout conflicts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The explosive Lyddite takes its name from the area where it was developed. Today the Lydd Ranges are still used for live firing with a danger area that extends out to sea, and are managed by the Ministry of

Defence's (MOD) Defence Infrastructure Organisation. Red flags are flown during periods of live firing and access along the foreshore and Galloway's Road is prohibited.

4. Statement of Significance

A number of the towns within the district have for many years been known as military towns and have played important roles during wartime in the stationing and training of soldiers and officers for the battlefield. Whilst many the heritage assets from this theme have since been lost, such as the Hythe School of Musketry and the West & East Sandling Camps, their presence is still strongly felt either in the living memory of the local communities or through surviving archaeological remains. For those assets that do survive, they serve as emotive reminders of our recent past and the need for the defence of the coast and country in times of war and unrest. They also demonstrate the important role that the District played during the wars of the eighteenth through to the twentieth centuries, and so are considered to be of **moderate to considerable** significance.

Evidential

There is considerable potential for sites such as Shorncliffe and Sandling to reveal further information regarding the development, layout and function of the various camps and training grounds that were located here. Whilst no buildings survive of the east and west Sandling camps, there may be buried archaeological remains that could shed further light on the location, layout and development of these camps. Recent aerial photography has also highlighted the extensive network of practice trenches on Tolsford Hill that soldiers stationed at these camps would have dug and trained in. Further investigation may reveal more information about these practice trenches and the training that was undertaken at Sandling whilst also providing evidence to support their future designation and protection.

There is a high potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains associated with the Shorncliffe Army Camp from its inception during the 1790s through to its decline following the end of the Second World War which could further provide information on the camps development and layout. These remains would be of significant value as Shorncliffe was one of the major staging posts for troops and officers during the First World War as well as being a vital training ground for the Canadian Expeditionary Forces. Remains relating to the earlier history of the camp would also be of high value due to the significance of the camp in the formation of the Light Infantry under Sir John Moore which would result in significant changes to both the tactics and quality of the British Army.

In addition to archaeological remains, there is also a high potential for new documentary evidence being found in archives held in the United Kingdom and Canada. It is possible that war diaries of troops and officers stationed at Shorncliffe could provide further insights into the construction of the camp as well as personal experiences of the living conditions and training undertaken. It is also possible that previously undocumented plans and maps of the camp may be held within these

archives and personal documents which could add to existing documentary evidence.

Historical

The historical value of the training grounds, camps and ranges highlighted in this theme is significant as they demonstrate the developments of the British military at a time when it was becoming a dominant military force on the world stage. The Hythe School of Musketry and Shorncliffe Army Camp for example are strongly associated with cases of military excellence and development during times of warfare. The training grounds and camps also illustrate the development in military accommodation and training facilities as areas grew to become major garrison towns. In particular, the military accommodation at Shorncliffe highlights the changes through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when there were changing attitudes towards the life and conditions of troops and officers.

The assets from this theme all have strong historical associations, and often reflect events at a national and international level. The camps and training grounds provide a clear illustration of the scale of conflict in our recent past and the huge numbers of individuals who passed through these sites. They also highlight the important role that the District has continued to play in the defence of the southern coast and country as it is continually placed physically and symbolically on the front-line.

Aesthetic

A number of the assets from this theme have left relatively few physical traces on the District's landscape, such as the Hythe School of Musketry and East & West Sandling camps, and so have limited aesthetic value. Other assets including the practice trenches at Tolsford Hill and surviving buildings at Shorncliffe Army Camp are again of limited aesthetic value due to their practical and functional designs, yet they do provide a poignant reminder of the role played during wartime and the huge numbers of people who would have been stationed and trained here.

Communal

The communal value of the assets from this theme is high as they clearly demonstrate the important role that the District played in the defence of the southern coast and country in times of war and unrest. When these relate to conflicts within our recent past, they are a particularly strong and emotive reminder of the enormous scale of these conflicts and the lasting impacts that they have had on a local, national and international scale. Some sites were also operational within living memory and so again are highly valued by their local communities for the contributions that were made to the international war effort.

5. Vulnerabilities

Some of the assets included within this theme have a current and long-term use, such as the Hythe and Lydd firing ranges. This along with the statutory protection of specific buildings and structures has minimised the vulnerability of these assets. However, sites that do not have a current use such as large parts of the Shorncliffe

Army Camp are significantly more vulnerable to deterioration and loss. Sites such as the Hythe School of Musketry and East & West Sandling Camps have already been completely lost due to falling out of use and so efforts should be made to retain those assets that still survive as they make important contributions to the local historic character.

Some assets that relate to the Shorncliffe Army Camp and form part of an important collection of national defence strategy fortifications are currently listed on Historic England's *Heritage at Risk* register (2017). Martello Tower No. 6, No. 7 and No. 9 are all identified as being in poor condition as well as the Dymchurch Redoubt; parts of which have been brought back into use as a military training facility. This illustrates the risks posed by dereliction and neglect to important historic buildings, and efforts should be made to avoid further deterioration of the surviving assets.

Those barrack buildings and related complexes that do not have a current or sustainable use are vulnerable to neglect, decay and vandalism. Without long-term maintenance and repair programmes this could lead to serious deterioration of the fabric of these assets. A lack of maintenance, uncontrolled vegetation growth, weathering and the effects of heritage crime have already had a negative impact on some assets such as at Shorncliffe. Changes to the setting of some sites will also have further negative impacts on the overall interpretation and context of some assets. For example, development of large parts of the Shorncliffe site may detract from the significance and interpretation of the sites original purpose as an important training ground and camp from the eighteenth century through to the twentieth century. Wherever possible, efforts should be made to incorporate surviving assets into the fabric of new development whilst other opportunities for the enhancement of the local military heritage such as heritage tours and new means of interpretation should be sought and utilised.

Those buildings from this theme which are currently vacant or neglected present a number of challenges in securing a long-term and viable future. These buildings were built for military purposes and so bring their own additional and specific challenges. Re-use of barrack buildings for example will require investment both in the fabric of the structures and in services to support any reuse. The longer these buildings remain unused the greater the risk of serious deterioration and as such seeking a sustainable solution for these sites should be a priority.

As has already been mentioned, much of the site at Shorncliffe is currently being redeveloped for housing. It is desirable however that any redevelopment at sites such as the Shorncliffe Army Camp refers to the historic character of the site. Development that does not reflect the historic character of a site is vulnerable to seeming artificial and placed.

The District's training grounds, camps and ranges form part of a wider defensive landscape and are often associated with or form part of defensive structures. These defensive sites have their own specific setting issues and can be better appreciated if efforts to maintain the context of the site as well as the structures themselves are made. Development adjacent to or within such sites has the potential to negatively impact upon the setting and character of these heritage assets. Development that

causes harm to the setting or diminishes the ability for visitors to the site to appreciate the significance of a monument or place should be avoided.

6. Opportunities

The district has an exceptional group of historic fortifications and a rich military history. The District's surviving training grounds, camps and ranges form an important part of this group of defence related heritage assets and can relay valuable stories relating to the significant role that many of these sites played between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. These assets as a collective in addition to others from this theme offer important opportunities for the enhancement and promotion of this type of heritage. Activities such as heritage tours, lectures and public events are important in raising awareness and understanding of the important role that the District has played in the defence of the coast and country during wartime. There are also valuable opportunities to co-ordinate the activities and goals of a number of local heritage initiatives and promote positive working partnerships relating to defence heritage.

Whilst large areas of the Shorncliffe Army Camp are now being developed for housing, this is an important opportunity to demonstrate positive heritage regeneration and incorporation. Developments should seek to be sited sensitively so as not to detract from the heritage assets and their setting as well as being of a high architectural quality. Wherever possible, new and sustainable uses should be found for the heritage assets to ensure their long-term viability. Incorporating the historic character into the development will be important in highlighting the significant heritage that survives here as well as preserving it for future generations. Mixed tourism and enterprise led reuse of heritage assets may also help to enhance their historic character as well as ensuring their survival.

7. Current Activities

- Shorncliffe Trust – several events which include Folkestone's Annual Canada Day Commemorations, re-enactments, lectures, Vimy 100, commemorations such as the Light in the Darkest Hour at the Shorncliffe Military Cemetery and guided tours. Hopes to establish a Heritage Park at Shorncliffe to enhance, highlight and promote the important role that the camp and training ground played in the development of the modern British Army.
- Shepway HEART Forum – working in partnership with the Shorncliffe Trust.
- Kent in WW1
- Step Short
- Local historical groups such as the Folkestone & District Local History Society, Hythe Local History Group and Dymchurch & District Heritage Group.

8. Sources Used & Additional Information

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