



## **The Orford Ness Magazine (Munitions Storage) Building**

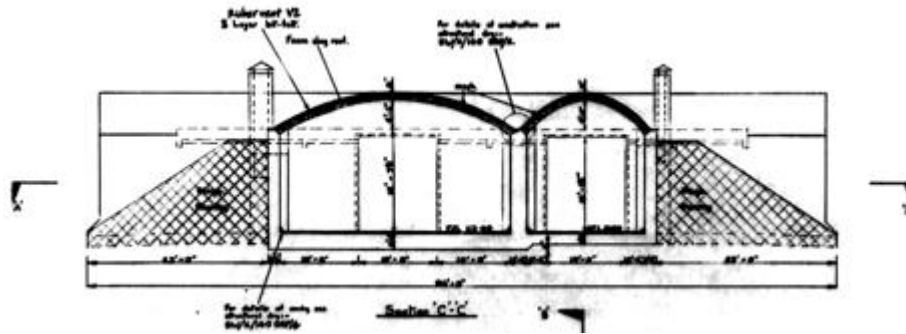
By Barry Searle

The Magazine was designed by C W Glover and Partners and was constructed in 1962 at a cost of £29.000 It formed part of the AWRE Phase 2 building programme. Its purpose was to provide secure storage of nuclear weapons and components that were undergoing test and evaluation at Orford Ness.



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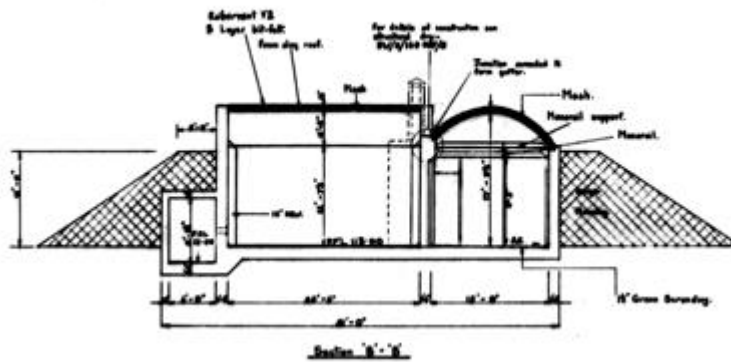
The weapons were assembled at Aldermaston or nearby Burghfield and transported to Orford Ness by road. An armed member of the site police team would escort the weapon during its journey to Orford Ness. The items being transported would predominantly have been test versions of the WE177 series nuclear weapons. Components for the Polaris missile programme would also have been present. It is possible that Red Beard, Red Snow and Yellow Sun weapons were also stored in the building.



Northern elevation

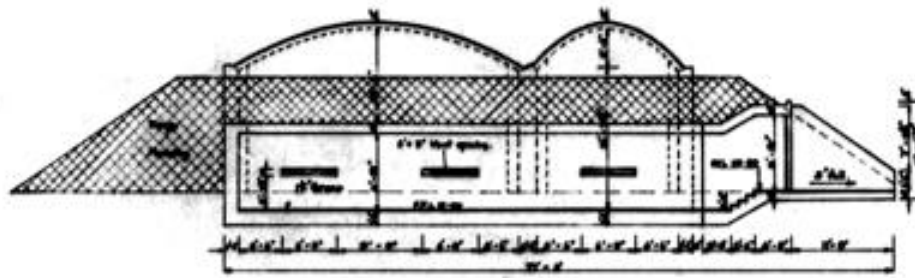
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The building is of reinforced concrete construction with barrel vaulted roofs. It has shingle revetments on all sides. There is a large drive through entrance passage with a smooth concrete floor. Large wooden double doors were fitted at both ends. Above the passage way there are a series of mounting plates that supported an overhead crane system. On the western side of the through passage there are two large self-contained storage chambers or magazines. They are separated from the main passage by large outwardly opening wooden doors. The northerly chamber is significantly wider than the southerly one, both having the same depth and roof clearance.



Eastern elevation

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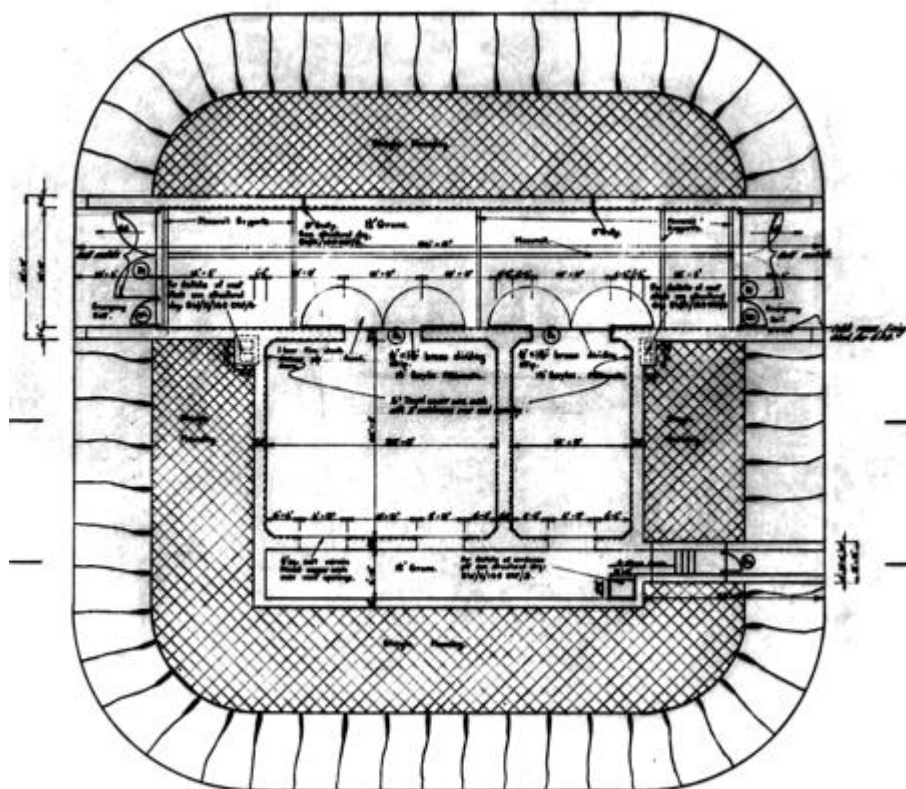


Section 'D-D'

Western elevation

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An equipment room was built behind the two main magazines for the whole length of the building. A single access door was provided through the southern revetment with steps leading down to a floor level that was below that of the magazines. Air - conditioning/ventilation equipment was installed in this space and there are two associated vertical stacks projecting from the roof.



Plan view

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The elevation of the magazine is such that it is further above sea level than the other buildings on the site.

During the 2013 winter Stoney Ditch overtopped resulting in the flooding of much of the site. The resident flock of sheep were hurriedly moved to the magazine where they safely remained above the floodwater.

The building is in good condition and was used as a setting for a music concert in 2018.

More recently, in 2021 the Magazine was used as one of the settings for the Artangel 'Afterness' art installation.

The location of the building is: 52°.08'05"N, 1°.55'20"E

Further information regarding nuclear weapons can be found on Brian Burnell's comprehensive website below.

<http://www.nuclear-weapons.info/vw.htm#WE.177>