

Information Data Sheet

Category Pillboxes

Description Pillboxes were concrete dug-in guard posts, designed to protect against small-arms fire and grenades and were raised to improve the field of fire. They were common along Stop Lines, perimeters of airfields, potential land invasion sites and around important civil sites.

Pillboxes frequently formed part of a trench system or line of defence and were used to guard strategic structures such as bridges or jetties.

Several different designs existed including Seagull Trenches (semi-buried structures) and Alan Williams and Tett Turrets (small prefabricated pillboxes). Fortified sites, buildings and loop-holed walls also functioned as pillboxes. Approximately 28,000 pillboxes or other hardened field fortifications were built in England in 1940 and around 6,500 of them still remain.

Pillboxes, when concentrated in large numbers as part of an extensive defence system, were targeted by low-flying enemy aircraft.



Hazard Pillboxes had associated ammunition caches although the vast majority of these had been removed by the end of WWII.

When positioned in large concentrations, for instance as part of airfield perimeter defence or defensive stop lines, pillboxes were attacked by enemy aircraft. In such instances, there is the potential for a UXB hazard to be present in the surrounding area.

