

WASC 2318

Correspondence  
on Black Ditch  
Road sign



# Black Ditch Road sign

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## Summary

Evidence for the attribution to the ERDE Ministry of Defence establishment of the 'Black Ditch Road' sign exhibited on the stair well of Epping Forest District Museum at 39 – 41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL has been found in Royal Gunpowder Mills Waltham Abbey archive. Searches of other sources such as local library maps and Google maps did not find any further evidence.

## Report

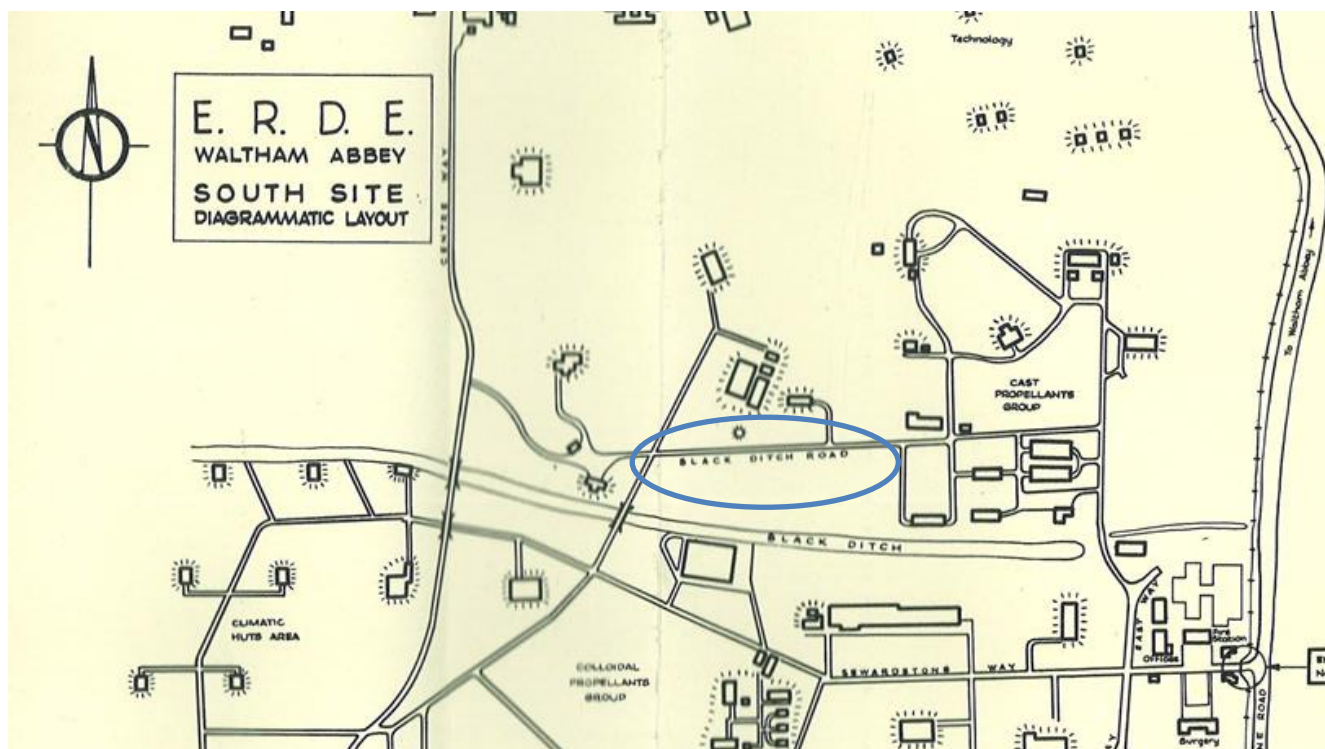
The road sign located on the stair well of Epping Forest District Museum at 39 – 41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL is of 'Black Ditch Road' and an image of this sign is below. The author of this report is familiar with the existing Black Ditch (now called Black Ditch or Rush Brook) and queried if this sign may be associated with this and be a part of the Ministry of Defence site that once surrounded Waltham Abbey.



Enquiries at the Museum did not provide any further information as to the origins of this sign. Investigations of the materials (old maps and local history books) held by the Waltham Abbey Library did not provide any further information. A Google maps search did not indicate the existence of any such road.

The archives of the Royal Gunpowder Mills were contacted for further information.

The archives located a booklet given to delegates to the Chief Scientists Conference 1957 entitled "*ERDE, A brief account of the Establishment*" that included a map of the sites with road names identified. Of particular interest is a road on the South Site map that is identified as 'Black Ditch Road'. The illustration below is an expanded portion of the complete map (reproduced at the end of this report) and Black Ditch Road is ringed in a blue oval on both.

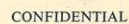


Thanks to Royal Gunpowder Mills Waltham Abbey Archive (Les Tucker and Ian Macfarlane) for identifying the map and to staff of Epping Forest District Museum Service (Alastair Prince and Ms J Holmen) for dealing with my initial enquiry and suggestions of contacts for further information.

Prof Graham Martin BSc, MSc, FRSC, CChem

16 September 2013

E. R. D. E.  
WALTHAM ABBEY  
NORTH SITE  
DIAGRAMMATIC LAYOUT



E. R. D. E.  
WALTHAM ABBEY  
SOUTH SITE  
DIAGRAMMATIC LAYOUT

