



WWII Pill Box at Whaddon by Bob and Anne Powell

## World War Two Defences

Surviving defence works indicate that Whaddon was part of a large defence area during World War Two in spite of the fact that there is no documentary evidence to support the idea. In the 1940's Whaddon comprised a village with a church but is now two farms and a small number of houses.

Whaddon and Semington were two defence areas close together. Whaddon and Semington were connected to by the Semington Brook, the Kennet and Avon canal and the now defunct Trowbridge to Devizes railway line. The junction between two defence GHQ Lines was at Whaddon. GHQ Blue Line began there and followed the line of the canal. It was a "stop line" and as such was well fortified with pill boxes, anti-tank gun emplacements and road blocks. An anti-tank ditch protected Whaddon and it is likely that surrounding countryside was mined.

The best example of a remaining hexagonal infantry pillbox is at the railway embankment north of Whaddon and the anti-tank defences of concrete cylinders can be seen at the bridge over the Semington Brook at Whaddon Grove Farm. At Whaddon Farm are some huge anti-tank cubes that formed part of a roadblock.

The landscape at Whaddon is virtually unchanged with the buildings and fields being much the same as they were in 1940. It is an exceptional site where it is possible to understand the defence strategy that brought the two GHQ Lines together here.

Pill boxes were marked on the Home Guard map to the east of Whaddon Grove Farm but it is uncertain whether they were ever built, let alone survive.

Information taken from [Archaeology Data Service](#) More information and a [full description can be found here](#).



Below are photos of anti-tank defences at Whaddon. All are in the vicinity of Whaddon Farm. Photos taken February 2015.

