



THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM  
CROXALL ROAD  
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STAFFORDSHIRE  
DE13 7AR  
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## APPLICATION FORM FOR APPROVAL TO ERECT A MEMORIAL IN THE GROUNDS OF THE ARBORETUM

### Privacy Statement

At the National Memorial Arboretum we take your privacy seriously and we will only use the information you have provided on this form to administer your application and correspond with you thereafter regarding your memorial, tribute or artwork. We will use the contact details you have provided to telephone, email or write to you about your application, memorial, tribute or artwork. We will not share your data and promise to keep your personal information safe and secure.

We will hold your personal for in perpetuity. If you would like to update the contact details for your memorial, tribute or artwork, please contact Andy Ansell at the National Memorial Arboretum.

For further information about how the National Memorial Arboretum processes your personal information and about your rights under data protection law, please see our privacy policy on our website.

| 1.CONTACT DETAILS  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Name and address of Organisation to whom the memorial will be dedicated</b><br><br><b>To the 'Desert Rats'</b><br><br><b>The Desert Rats Association has three main POC:</b><br><br><b>Chairman:</b> [REDACTED]<br><b>See next box.</b><br><br><b>Secretary:</b> [REDACTED]<br><br>[REDACTED]<br><br><b>Treasurer and Historian:</b> [REDACTED]<br><br>[REDACTED] | <b>Name and address of contact person</b><br><br>[REDACTED] |

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANISATION TO BE COMMEMORATED

### **Brief outline of the objectives of the organisation or attach a brochure, pamphlet or information sheet**

Initially the Desert Rats Association was set up in the 1990s to build a memorial to the Desert Rats to commemorate their brief (6 months) stay in Thetford Forest in preparation for D-Day, 1944. The memorial, which consists of a Cromwell Tank on a brick plinth and two memorial stones, can be found at the entrance of what remains of the bases of the building and barracks (located on the A1065, two miles north of Mundford, Norfolk, England). There is also a special trail through the woods, along with information boards.

The memorial was initially inaugurated on the 23rd October 1998 by Field Marshal Lord Carver. The additional plaque commemorating the Desert Rats of the 4th & 7th Armoured Brigades from 1945 to 2003 was added to the plinth and inaugurated during the Open Day on the 27th June 2004 in the presence of Brigadier Adrian Bradshaw, commanding 7th Armoured Brigade, and other senior officers from both brigades. The Bishop of Lynn, Rt Rev'd Anthony Footitt inaugurated and dedicated the memorial.

Since then the Association has grown and developed into an organisation that holds a number of ceremonies and events each year to commemorate the original Desert Rats, and this now includes all soldiers and service men and women who have been on active duty in the desert. We supply support to members when required, and also attend funerals and commemoration services. The Association helps to keep the history of the Desert Rats alive by conducting talks and making visits to schools, military organisations and other associations.

Over time, and as the older original soldiers pass away, there has been a growing desire to build a fitting memorial to the Desert Rats. The aim is to include the current generation and to have wider appeal to all the soldiers, sailors and airmen who have served in the desert campaigns since 1939 to the present day.

Many people the Association help and support do not really understand the distinction between a soldier of the 7th Armoured Division and one from any other formation that fought in the North Africa campaign. Hence both the veterans and the Association believe the symbolic simple wording **Desert Rats** on the proposed memorial, although it may mean different things to different people, actually signifies a hardy breed of soldiers who fought and died for a worthy and just cause against a determined foe.

Association Website link - [Desert Rats Association](#)

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSALS

### **Brief outline of the design, materials of construction, interpretation required, symbolism used etc – detail to be provided on separate attachments**

The Desert Rats Association wish to build a new memorial to the men and women of the Desert Rats from 1939 to the present day, who have served in the desert for this country in war and peace.

The new memorial will acknowledge the history of these men and women using the insignia of the Desert Rat. A stylised sculpture, with a mechanised quality and speaking of the predominance of armour used, both light and heavy, whilst representing the Desert Rat's Jerboa.

The Jerboa will be; 1.64m high, 0.4m wide and 1.5m long, made of flame-cut laminated 30mm thick Corten steel, and left with a rust red finish. This will be placed on a Portland stone plinth, with the sides sloping at 45°, echoing angles used in some of the armour on tanks and vehicles. The Plinth will have the sides carved with a sand motif with the incised letters "DESERT RATS" in a *sans serif* Roman script fading in and out of the pattern, which

suggests movement through time, space and sand. We would like to keep the memorial as simple as possible to incorporate all desert serving men and women, but if required any further information can be added to a bronze plaque at the front.

There will be a French drain around the base of the plinth, covered with track from an armoured vehicle, and on the outside of that a strip of York stone paving to reduce the risk of wear and tear to the surrounding area.

We will use the Patina and Rust that will naturally occur, as the rust from the Desert Rat is likely to run and stain the plinth. We propose that this should be made into a feature by carving shallow channels in the plinth, which would create red tracks of rust signifying the blood spilt and given for victory.

The memorials will be positioned in an oval area with two crescent shaped mounds. The landscaping will echo the shape of dunes, steeper on one side than the other, and covered in turf. The original memorial will be placed on the higher of the two mounds with the 'Desert Rat' on its' plinth in the center between. The 'Desert Rat' will be orientated towards El Alamein, Egypt thus pointing in the direction of the origin of the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division.

The memorial from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst will be placed on the higher of the two mounds with the Rat on its plinth in the centre between. There will be a flat area running through the middle of the memorial ground. The Rat will be orientated towards El Alamein, Egypt, pointing towards the origin of the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division.

As a part of the project in creating this memorial we will be involving approximately 10 veterans to be taught how to carve the sand motif into the stone plinth. We also plan to involve another team of veterans/volunteers to help with the groundworks at the National Arboretum

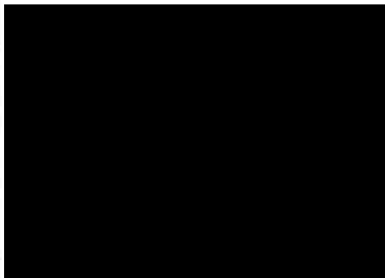
See attached for images of artist's impression and further explanation.

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF PLANTING (if applicable)**

Grassed mounds only.

#### **5. CONTACT DETAILS OF ARCHITECT or OTHER CONSULTANT THAT IS TO BE USED BY YOU (if applicable)**

Henry Gray – artist/designer, who will be working with veterans to carve the sand motif plinth. He will also project manage the assembly of the memorial.



**6. TIME SCALES**

Please see attached notes

Once approval for a memorial has been given then construction must have started within three years of the approval date. If work has not commenced a re-application will be required and the policies in force at that time will be applied.

Please advise approximate dates, (all to be confirmed by applicant in due course), of

- Submission of application to Arboretum - 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- Start of on site work - 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022
- End of on site work - 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022
- Anticipated date of first dedication - 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022

**7. MAINTENANCE**

The memorial will need to be maintained throughout its life and funds must be allocated to ensure that this commitment is met.

The Arboretum will undertake the maintenance for the perpetuity of the memorial for an agreed fee. Maintenance tasks will be agreed by both parties prior to submission for approval to the Arboretum Landscape and Memorials Committee.

A Maintenance schedule and any associated costs must be agreed and paid for before construction commences.

A copy of all drawings and construction specifications will be required for retention by the Arboretum to aid future maintenance and repair work.

Cost of maintenance work per annum £.....  
(inflation will be added annually)

**8. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Sandhurst Memorial: to include restoration, transportation £ 6,000.00  
Steel Desert Rat (design & manufacture): £18,000.00  
Plinth & sculpture (design & manufacture): £18,000.00  
Installation (transport, build, fixing and finishing): £ 5,100.00  
National Arboretum: £20,000.00  
Groundwork, Foundations and Landscaping TBC ivo 10K

GRAND TOTAL (Approximately) **£77,100.00**

d) Maintenance.....

e) Dedication Service £ 5,000.00

f) Other, state.....

TOTAL VALUE **£ 82,100.00**

Your Arboretum contact is The Head of Estates

**9. INSURANCE**

All memorials will be insured against loss.

To assist your deliberations we recommend you contact NAMM, which is the National Association of Monumental Masons 01788 542264 [enquiries@namm.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@namm.org.uk), they would be able to advise a good broker, independently.

You are asked to advise the Arboretum in writing what arrangements you are making.

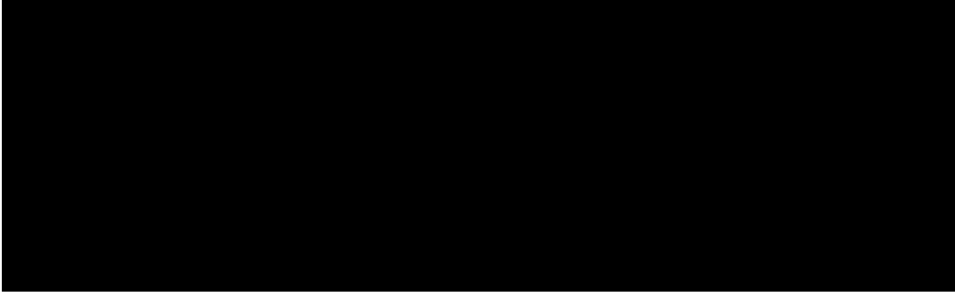
All Arboretum costs in the provision of this service will be recovered from the stakeholder.

## Application Fee

A £1,000 non returnable application fee should be included with the initial application before the new memorial will be considered by the Landscape and Memorials Committee.

## Re-Location of Memorial

The Arboretum reserves the right to relocate the Memorial within the grounds at any future date. Costs for any relocation will be borne by the Arboretum. The stakeholder will be informed at least three months in advance of any proposed re-location.



*Office notes*

*Application Fee Received*.....  
*Maintenance agreement signed on*.....  
*Date submitted to Memorials & Landscape Committee*.....  
*Passed/failed comments*.....  
*Notified Applicant on*.....  
*Passed/Agreed comments*.....  
*Notified applicant on*.....  
*ON SITE WORK DATE AGREED TO START ON*.....  
*(NOTE Applicant to advise the NMA of any changes to agreed start date)*





**DESERT RATS  
ASSOCIATION  
MEMORIAL**

**IRON - STONE - SAND - BLOOD**

# THE DESERT RATS

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The 7th Armoured Division was a division of the British Army that saw distinguished active service during World War II, where its exploits in the Western Desert Campaign gained it the 'Desert Rats' nickname. Since then, the desert rats insignia has been worn by generations of military units, celebrating the kinship and tenacity of those men and women fighting in the desert.

## THE CONCEPT

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The concept is to produce a sculpture of the Association's insignia, a jerboa, that would represent the history and spirit of the Desert Rats. The intention is to celebrate and commemorate the lives of those who have served, fought and died.

The proposed design will include the existing memorial, formerly sited at Sandhurst, which will be repaired and conserved where appropriate. It will be positioned in pride of place on higher ground.

The new memorial will complement the original and acknowledge the history of the Desert Rats using the Jerboa as a focus.



### Desert Rats Association



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
Pre - 1940



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
1940 - 1944



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
1944 - 1958



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Bde  
1942 - 1946



4 Armd Bde  
1943 to 1946



# THE DESIGN

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The proposed stylised sculpture, whilst representing the Desert Rats insignia, will also symbolise armour, both light and heavy. As you walk round the jerboa, from the side it's obviously a representation of the insignia, but as you get to the quarter and the end-on view, it looks much more like armour or kit.



The 'Rat' will be 1.65m high x 0.4m wide x 1.5m long, made of flame-cut laminated Corten steel and left with a rust finish. The rust from the Rat is likely to run and stain the plinth. We propose that this should be made into a feature by carving shallow channels in the plinth, which would create red tracks of rust signifying blood spilt, loss and history.

## Desert Rats Association



# THE DESIGN

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The sculpture will be placed on a stone plinth, with sloping sides to represent the angles used on some armour and tanks. The sides of the plinth will be carved with a sand motif and with the words "DESERT RATS" engraved, fading in and out of the pattern, which would suggest movement through time and sand. We would like to keep the memorial as simple as possible but, if required, any further information can be added to a bronze plaque in an appropriate place.

There will be a French drain around the base of the plinth, covered with track from an armoured vehicle, and on the outside of that a strip of York stone paving to reduce the risk of wear and tear to the surrounding area.



## Desert Rats Association



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
Pre - 1940



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
1940 - 1944



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Div  
1944 - 1958



7<sup>th</sup> Armd Bde.  
1942 - 1946

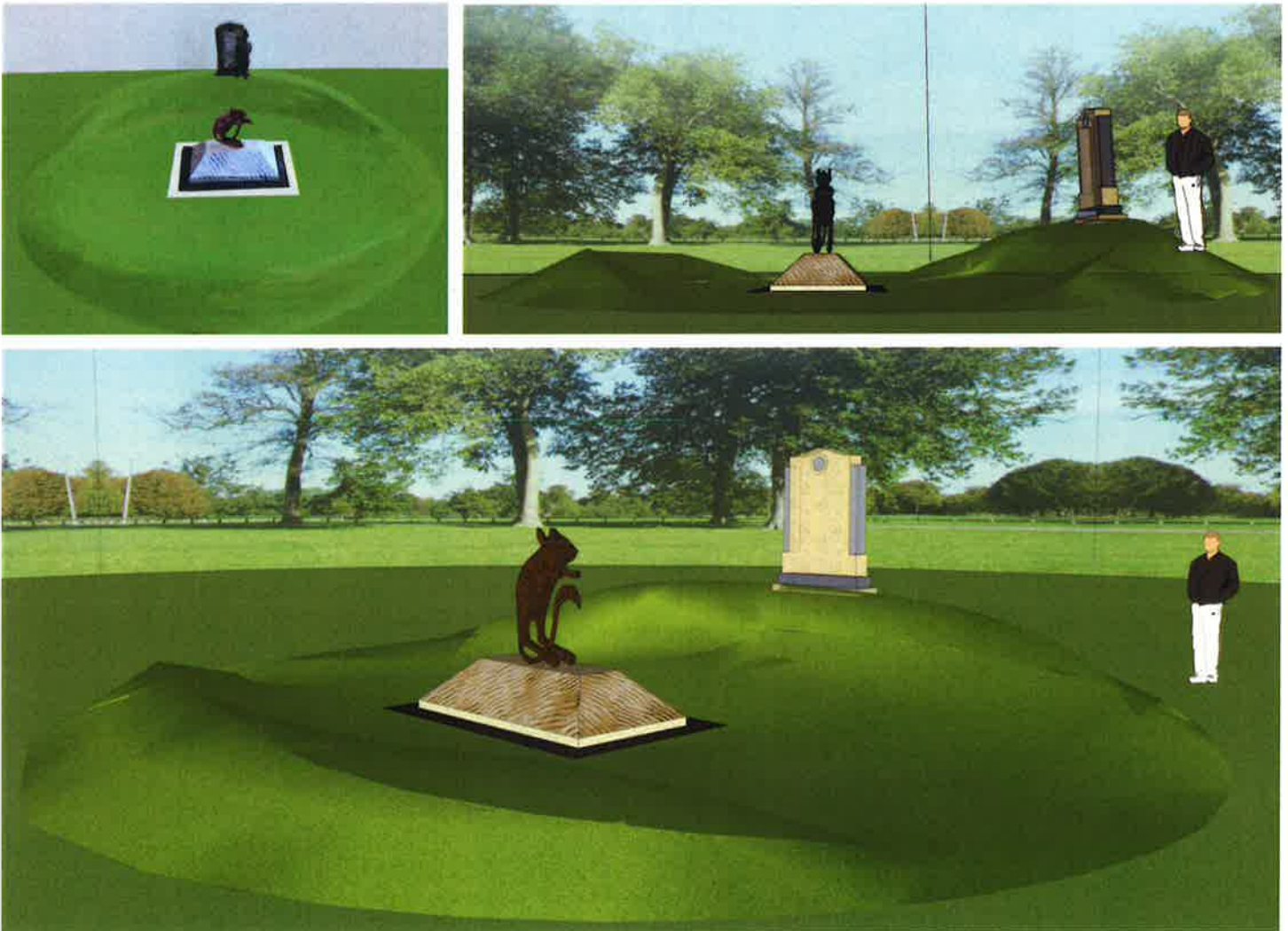


4 Armd Bde.  
1943 to 1946

# THE LANDSCAPING & ORIENTATION

The memorials will be positioned in an oval area with two crescent-shaped mounds. The landscaping will echo the shape of dunes, steeper on one side than the other and covered in turf.

The original memorial will be placed on the higher of the two mounds with the 'Desert Rat' on its plinth in the centre between. The 'Desert Rat' will be orientated towards El Alamein, Egypt, thus pointing in the direction of the origin of the 7<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division (see proposed location plan).



## Desert Rats Association



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
Pre - 1940



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1940 - 1944



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1944 - 1958



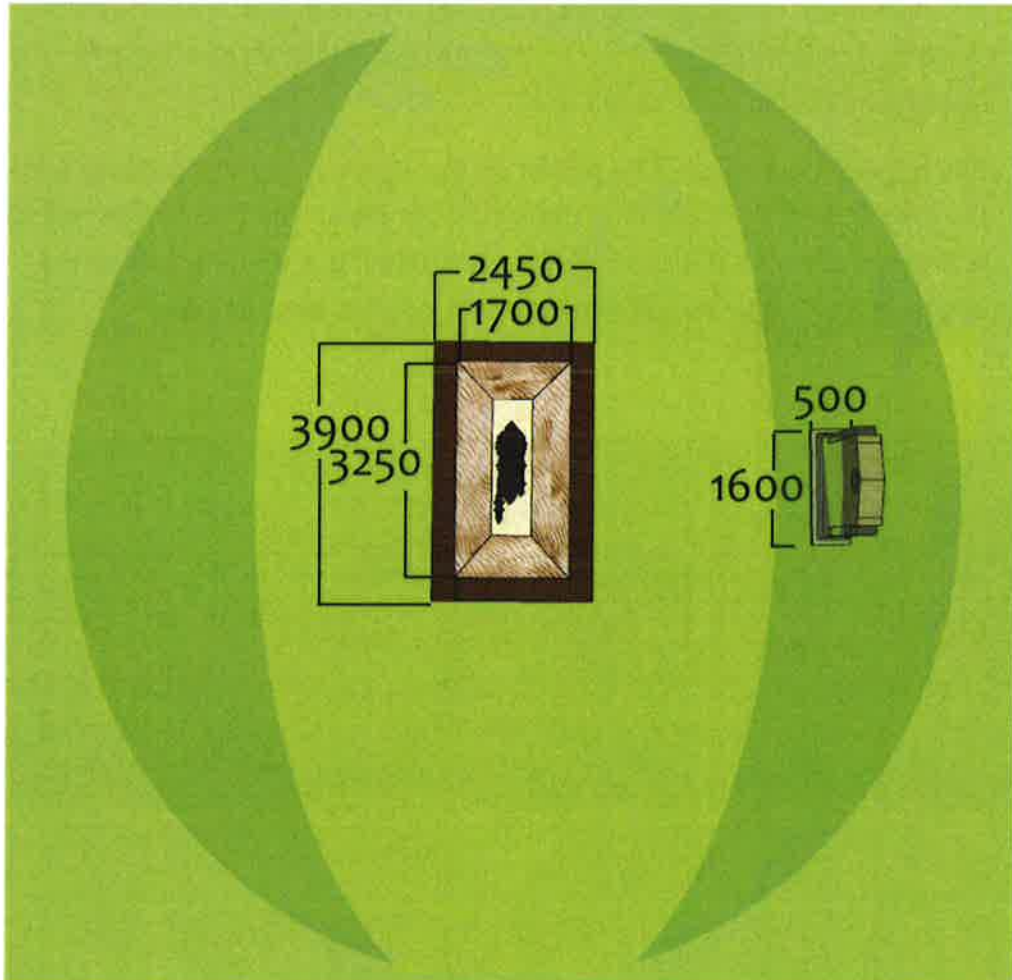
7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Bde  
1942 - 1946



4<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Bde  
1943 to 1946

# PLAN WITH DIMENSIONS

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Total height of original memorial from Sandhurst – 2200mm

Total height of Corten steel rat memorial and plinth – 2650mm

Dark green areas showing banks, dimensions adjustable to environment.

RHS bank – approx. max height 750mm, tapering to ground level at either end

LHS bank – approx. max height 450mm, tapering to ground level at either end.

## Desert Rats Association



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
Pre – 1940



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1940 – 1944



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1944 - 1958



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Bde  
1942 – 1946



4 Arm'd Bde  
1943 to 1946

# PROPOSED LOCATIONS

Having been to the National Memorial Arboretum and walked around with Andy Ansell – Head of Estates we were shown three potential sites, which we have marked below with red spots in order of preference.



## Desert Rats Association



**7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div**  
Pre - 1940



**7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div**  
1940 - 1944



**7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div**  
1944 - 1958



**7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Bde**  
1942 - 1946



**4 Arm'd Bde**  
1943 to 1946

# ARTISTS IMPRESSION

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Proposed Desert Rats' Memorial at map location I.



© Grays Stone Carving Studio 2020



## Desert Rats Association



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
Pre - 1940



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1940 - 1944



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Div  
1944 - 1958



7<sup>th</sup> Arm'd Bde  
1942 - 1946



4 Arm'd Bde  
1943 to 1946

# VETERAN INVOLVEMENT & COMMEMORATION

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It is our intention to involve approximately 8-10 veterans who will come to Gray's Stone Carving Studio, Wiltshire, to be taught how to carve the sand motif into the stone plinth.

Once the plinth is ready, we will ask for another team of veterans/volunteers to help with the groundworks at the National Arboretum, including the installation of the plinth.

On completion, The Desert Rats Association would like to hold a grand opening, to which all veterans and donors will be invited.

The landscaping lends itself to the laying of wreaths and for remembrance and memorial services, owing to the different levels and crescent shapes.

## SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED COSTINGS

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|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Sandhurst Memorial: to include restoration, transportation | £ 6,000.00        |
| Steel Desert Rat (design & manufacture):                   | £18,000.00        |
| Plinth & sculpture (design & manufacture):                 | £18,000.00        |
| Installation (transport, build, fixing and finishing):     | £ 5,100.00        |
| National Arboretum:  | £20,000.00        |
| Groundwork, Foundations and Landscaping                    | TBC ivo 10K       |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL (Approximately)</b>                         | <b>£77,100.00</b> |

<http://www.desertrats.org.uk/assoc/>



### Desert Rats Association



