

**TRANSFORMING A SUPER GARRISON – BRAND NEW ACCOMMODATION  
FOR SOLDIER'S RETURNING FROM GERMANY**

The transformation of military accommodation hit another milestone today as hundreds of soldiers returned from Germany to brand new barracks at Catterick Garrison in Yorkshire.

The successful return of troops from Germany is the Army's largest relocation for more than 20 years. The 6,000-strong 4th Mechanized Brigade, or the "Black Rats", have been based in Osnabruck, Germany for the past 27 years. 1,800 of the returning soldiers will now have their own en-suite rooms, which have been built under a £330m programme to develop the Supergarrison.

The homecoming and new accommodation was celebrated at a formal opening ceremony by the new Defence Minister responsible for military accommodation, Kevan Jones MP.

Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Kevan Jones said:

"There has been a legacy of under-funding in Armed Forces housing, so today's opening ceremony at Catterick is indicative of future standards. There is no quick fix, but the evidence of progress that we are now starting to see, speaks for itself.

"It was a real privilege to be able to visit Catterick and speak to the soldiers living in the new barracks to hear their thoughts. These new facilities are one way of expressing gratitude to the brigade for almost three decades of service in Germany and, recently, an exemplary six-month tour in Iraq. Our troops dedicate themselves to serving our country, and in return for that they deserve nothing short of first-class accommodation and facilities.

"I was very impressed by the scale of what has been achieved under the transformation project so far."

Since 2002 some 2,800 new bedrooms have been completed as part of the £330m programme to develop the Supergarrison. The MOD is also building a physiotherapy centre, dining facilities, a sport and leisure centre and swimming pools as well as redeveloping Catterick town centre under a major PFI contract.

The homecoming has included the Royal Dragoon Guards – returning to their home territory of Yorkshire – who have now taken occupancy of their new accommodation, completing the brigade's three-month-long move. Most of the personnel have recently completed a six-month tour in Iraq.

Brigadier Julian Free, commander of 4th Mechanized Brigade, said:

“For a large part of the brigade, returning to Yorkshire has been a return to our spiritual home. Our single soldiers have been thrilled to arrive back to newly completed en-suite bedrooms, which along with the other new facilities we are all very grateful to see.”

SLAM has run since 2002, delivered new accommodation blocks at some 33 sites around the UK, and won 13 trade awards.

Since 2003, the MoD has now delivered a total of 26,000 new or upgraded bedspaces through a combination of Project SLAM, and other parallel projects such as Project Neptune, Project Allenby-Connaught and the Colchester PFI contract.

### **Notes to Editors**

1. Work on the new single living accommodation at the Garrison began in 2004. The intention to expand Catterick as a core site and possible “super garrison” was made at the end of 2005, and plans for the new sport and leisure centre, dining facilities and technical accommodation followed thereafter. However, work is very much ongoing, with the redevelopment of Catterick town centre phase 1 scheduled for completion in 2011
2. Catterick Garrison is the UK's largest Army base and accommodates 7,500 regular soldiers, 1,900 recruits, and 1,550 civilian and contract staff.
3. In all around £330m is being invested in the development of Catterick. Of this around £220m is being invested in new accommodation.
4. A major phased regeneration of Catterick town centre is scheduled to begin 2010, including retail, leisure and health facilities, a hotel, new offices and residential. A new sports and leisure centre is under construction, that will be shared by the military and local communities. There is also new technical

accommodation, and dining facilities. A new junior ranks mess will be completed in 2009, and substantial improvements are being made to transport and utilities infrastructure.

5. Catterick has been demarcated as a core Defence site, and has the potential to expand in the future. It is being developed as a “super garrison”, in which resident units will be permanently based, bringing greater stability to personnel in their military careers, and enabling families to put down roots in a community. The development of new facilities and the regeneration of the town centre is intended to improve quality of life for the military community and forge closer links with the civilian community.
6. In terms of sustainability, the various developments include a ground and air source heat pump for the water supply and space heating, solar thermal water-heating systems, occupancy and daylight linked lighting control, and insulation thickness that is double that specified by current building regulations.
7. Some 11km of cycle path has been created, and green areas and “corridors” (representing 30% of the site) have been enhanced to encourage the movement of wildlife through the Garrison.
8. On some facilities, rainwater harvesting will save between 60-70% of water demand. Projects are assessed for Sustainability using the Defence Related Environmental Assessment Methodology (DREAM) which assesses the sustainability for each major project.
9. Catterick also has a large stock of Service Families Accommodation. Although much of the housing stock (around 1,500 homes) was built between 1930 and 1960, 59% is at the top standard for condition and 37% is at standard 2. Some properties still have their original kitchens, and this is reflected in the charge. 300 houses have been identified for kitchen and wiring upgrades. Recent maintenance work has included 290 new roofs, 146 new boilers and the redecoration of 915 properties in time for the return of 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Brigade.
10. For further information, please contact Rebecca Young at the MoD press office on 020 7218 5903 or visit [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)