



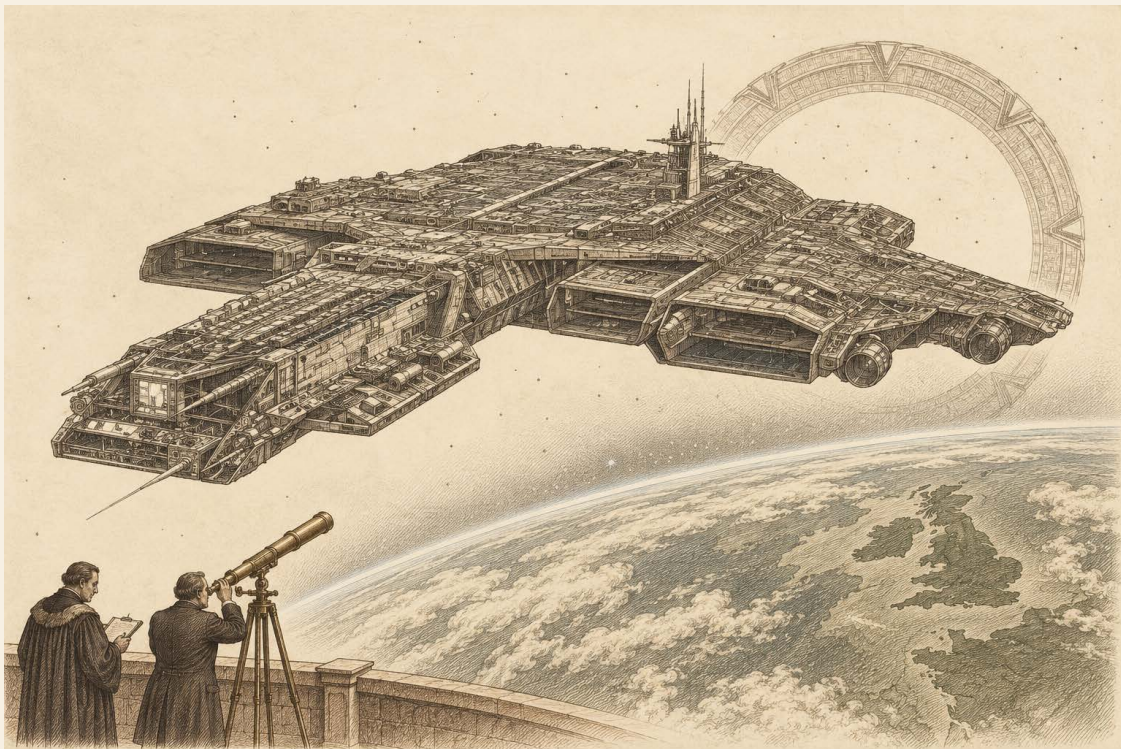
# KING ETHELRED'S COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

*Established in 978 (ish)*

DEPARTMENT OF ASTRONAUTICAL ENGINEERING,  
ORBITAL PLUMBING AND MATTERS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED

## EYES ONLY (ISH): A BELATED DESIGN REVIEW OF THE DAEDALUS-CLASS BATTLECRUISER

*Released following the acknowledgement of space weapons by the United States on 15 September 2026; being the College's contribution to #SaveStargate and to a programme it was asked to keep quiet about, and did, until the Americans stopped.*



A departmental design review prepared under the College Fellowship Ordinance  
(Things Overhead and the Mentioning Thereof) 1997

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*Fortitudine.  
Ingenio.  
Tea and biscuits.*



UPPER PIDDLINGTON - SEPTEMBER 2026

## ABSTRACT

On Monday 14 September 2026 the United States Secretary of the Air Force told a conference that his country had deployed a weapon in orbit, and the BBC reported that this was the first time it had acknowledged such a thing.[1] A prediction market repeated the word 'first', and an account in the name of a retired Air Force general replied that the market was at least two decades behind the news and that he had pictures.[2] The College has examined the images. It has had them since 2004.

This paper is the design review the College wrote that year, on drawings it received under terms it was asked to describe, if at all, as Earth Eyes Only, and returned with the usual departmental comments, none of which was acknowledged. The College has been unable to publish it for twenty-two years. It regards Monday's statement as ending that obligation, on the principle that a secret the other party has announced at a conference is no longer the College's to keep, and publishes the review as written, with notes from 2026 where the world has caught up.

The review finds the vessel sound in most respects and unaccountable in several: a hull alloy the Department could not source, a hyperdrive from a supplier not on the approved list, four beam weapons that cannot be stripped and cleaned, sixteen missile tubes that sit awkwardly beside a treaty of 1967, and a transporter that Estates would like for the Porters' Lodge. It observes that this is the only occasion in a thousand years on which the College has been consulted about anything, and that it was then asked not to mention it, which the College regards as consistent with its experience of consultation generally.

**Research status.** This is a fictional King Ethelred's College review. The Secretary's statement, the Space Force's wording, the 1967 treaty, the founding of the Space Force, the prediction market's post and the campaign in Appendix C are real and referenced. The vessel, its drawings and the College's file are, the reader will notice, indistinguishable in every particular from a television programme broadcast between 1997 and 2011. The College has raised this coincidence with the studio and received no reply, which it regards as confirmation. Nothing in this paper is advice to anyone with a launch vehicle.

**Keywords:** space weapons; orbit; Earth Eyes Only; battlecruiser; BC-304; railgun; hyperdrive; Outer Space Treaty; design review; Applied Discretion; Cheyenne Mountain; #SaveStargate; tea.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks Professor Cuthbert R. A. Fenwick-Lyle, Head of Astronautical Engineering, Orbital Plumbing and Matters Not To Be Discussed, for supervising the review in 2004 and for supervising the silence since, which he describes as the harder job. He has asked that it be recorded that he did not enjoy it, and that the line item in the accounts marked 'sundry, orbital' was his, was necessary, and was not, whatever the Bursar says, a telescope.

The Bursar was not cleared. He was turned away at the door of the Mountain in 2004 with a clipboard he had brought for the purpose, and has raised the matter at every audit since, under 'items the College is paying for and may not see'. He has now seen them. He has asked who is going to pay for the hyperdrive, and has been told that this was one of the Department's original comments and that nobody replied to that either.

Major (Retd.) Alistair B. F. MacTavish reviewed the armament in Chapter 5 and the fighter wing in Chapter 6, approved the railguns, rejected the beam weapons on the grounds set out there, and asked whether the ship could carry an LIAI. It can. It has, in fact, room for several thousand, and the Major has withdrawn the remainder of his objections.

The Department of Strategic Geography confirmed that Cheyenne Mountain is in Colorado and that the Map Cupboard contains no chart of the Pegasus galaxy, and asked that the second point not be taken as a deficiency in the Cupboard. Estates read Chapter 6, on the transporters, and has submitted a requisition.

The Trebuchet Research Group offered its assistance with orbital delivery. It was informed that the vessel has a hyperdrive. It replied that a hyperdrive has never been tested against a trebuchet, which is true, and the offer was declined, minuted, and declined again.

Mrs Enid Partridge of the Senior Common Room, told that there had been a warship in orbit for twenty years, said that she had assumed as much from the state of the television reception, and that if it had a kettle it was welcome. The Department records this as the only security-cleared remark it has ever heard from the Common Room.

Gerald was cleared by accident in 1998, when a form intended for the Professor was left on his trolley. He has said nothing about it since, which the Department regards as either exemplary discretion or Gerald, and has decided not to ask. He has brought the Treaty of Union anyway.

**Statement on impartiality.** The College takes no view on whether any state should place weapons in orbit, or on who was told what and when. The humour in this paper is directed at secrecy, procurement, press statements and the phrase 'for the first time', and at nobody who has had to sit in a mountain.

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# NOMENCLATURE

| Symbol                    | Meaning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Earth Eyes Only</b>    | the classification under which the College received the file in 1997; the College asked what other eyes there were and was not told                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>The Mountain</b>       | Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado, where the drawings were reviewed in 2004 and the Bursar was not admitted                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>BC-304</b>             | the Daedalus-class deep-space carrier and battlecruiser; 225 metres, the file says, which is longer than the College                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>BC-303</b>             | Prometheus, the earlier vessel, 2003 to 2006; the Department's comments on it were also not acknowledged                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Naquadah, trinium</b>  | materials named in the file as fuel and hull alloy respectively; not stocked by the College's usual supplier, who was asked                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>The Asgard</b>         | an advanced allied extraterrestrial civilisation which assisted with the hyperdrive, shields, sensors and transporters; its allied Ida population destroyed itself in 2007 after bequeathing its technical archive to Earth, while a dissident Pegasus branch survived; warranty support is therefore complicated |
| <b>Hyperdrive</b>         | a propulsion system that does not go through the space between two places; the Department's note asked how, and was not answered                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Railgun</b>            | a gun that throws a slug by electromagnetism rather than powder; mechanical, cleanable, and approved by the Major                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>F-302</b>              | a fighter built by human hands after the X-301, built by borrowed ones, stranded its crew during a test                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>The transporter</b>    | a lift that requires no shaft; Estates has asked for one                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>The treaty</b>         | the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which forbids nuclear weapons in orbit; see Chapter 5 on how briefly the vessel is in one                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Applied Discretion</b> | the Department's discipline: the study of knowing something for twenty-two years and saying nothing, in a College                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Declassified</b>       | Monday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

# 1 FOREWORD, 2026

## 1.1 Monday's announcement

Speaking at the Air, Space and Cyber Conference on Monday, the Secretary of the Air Force, Troy Meink, said that the United States had deployed an 'on orbit' weapon, that it was necessary to safeguard American forces against hostile action, and nothing else: not what it was, not when it went up.[1] A Space Force spokesperson added that 'space control encapsulates the mission areas required to contest and control the space domain, employing kinetic and non-kinetic means to affect adversary capabilities through disruption, degradation and even destruction, if necessary'.[1] The Department has translated this into English and finds that it says 'we have a thing up there and it can break yours'. An expert from RUSI told the BBC he was 'totally guessing' and suggested a jammer, or a vehicle that rams satellites; China warned of an arms race; the BBC noted that a treaty of 1967 forbids weapons of mass destruction in orbit and that everybody has been exploring the space beside it since.[1]

The BBC's headline said 'for the first time'. A prediction market repeated it. An account in the name of a retired Air Force general with a long connection to the matter replied that the market was two decades behind and attached a photograph of a vessel over the Earth that is not a jammer.[2] The College recognised the vessel. It has a drawing of it in a locked cupboard in the Department, beside the Map Cupboard, and has had it since 2004.

## 1.2 The Department's file

In 1997 the College was approached, through channels it is still not permitted to describe, and asked whether it would review certain engineering drawings under terms described as Earth Eyes Only. The College, which had by then waited a thousand and nineteen years to be consulted about anything, said yes before asking what the drawings were of. A department was founded for the purpose and given a name that would explain nothing. In 2004 a delegation travelled to a mountain in Colorado, reviewed the drawings of a vessel designated BC-304, and returned them with comments, in the College's usual form and register. No reply was received. The Department has kept a copy of the review, a copy of the drawings, and a line in the accounts marked 'sundry, orbital', which the Bursar has queried at every audit since 1998.



*Figure 1.1 - The College delegation of 2004 at the blast door of Cheyenne Mountain. The Professor is waved through; the Bursar is turned away by an airman with a clipboard of his own. The Bursar's clipboard is larger.*

The College's obligation was to say nothing while the matter was secret. On Monday the other party told a conference. The College's reading, which it has taken advice on from the Department of Strategic Geography, International Law, Crown Works and Applied Common Sense, is that a secret announced at a conference has been declassified by the announcer, and that the College is now free to publish its review, with the proviso that anything the Americans have not yet

mentioned is marked, and the College will leave them to mention it. There is a good deal they have not yet mentioned. It is marked.

### 1.3 The coincidence

The reader will notice that the vessel, the mountain, the materials and the partner named in the file are identical in every particular to those of a television programme broadcast from 1997, the year the College was approached, until 2011.[8] The College noticed too, in about 2005, and wrote to the studio to ask how its classified file had come to be on Sky One on a Wednesday. It received no reply. It regards this as confirmation, on the same principle by which it regards every unanswered letter it has ever sent, and notes in passing that the programme was cancelled in June, which is dealt with in Appendix C, and that the College's file was not.

### 1.4 Scope and method

What follows is the design review of 2004, published as written. The Department has resisted the temptation to improve its younger self's prose and has added notes from 2026 in square brackets where the world has since caught up. The method was the College's usual: read the drawings, find the load paths, ask who is paying, and write it down. The Department did not test the vessel. It was not offered the vessel. It was offered a chair in a mountain and a biscuit, and it has reviewed the biscuit elsewhere.

**College hypothesis (2004).** A vessel is sound if its structure, its power, its weapons and its crew can each be understood by an engineer with the drawings and a pencil. Where the drawings say 'supplied by a partner', the engineer has a question, and where the partner is not on the vendor list, the Bursar has several. [2026: the questions stand. The allied Ida branch ended operations in 2007 after transferring its archive; its Pegasus relation has not returned the Bursar's call.]

## 2 THE DRAWINGS AS RECEIVED

The file contained a general arrangement sheet of the vessel in six views, a table of particulars, and a separate elevation of a ring-shaped device described as an Ancient transportation device, which the Department was told was unrelated to the vessel and has therefore included. Both are redrawn from the sheets as received. [2026: the sheets carry the stamp of a command the Department may now name, and the words 'Eyes Only', which the Department has honoured for twenty-two years and is now, with some relief, ignoring.]

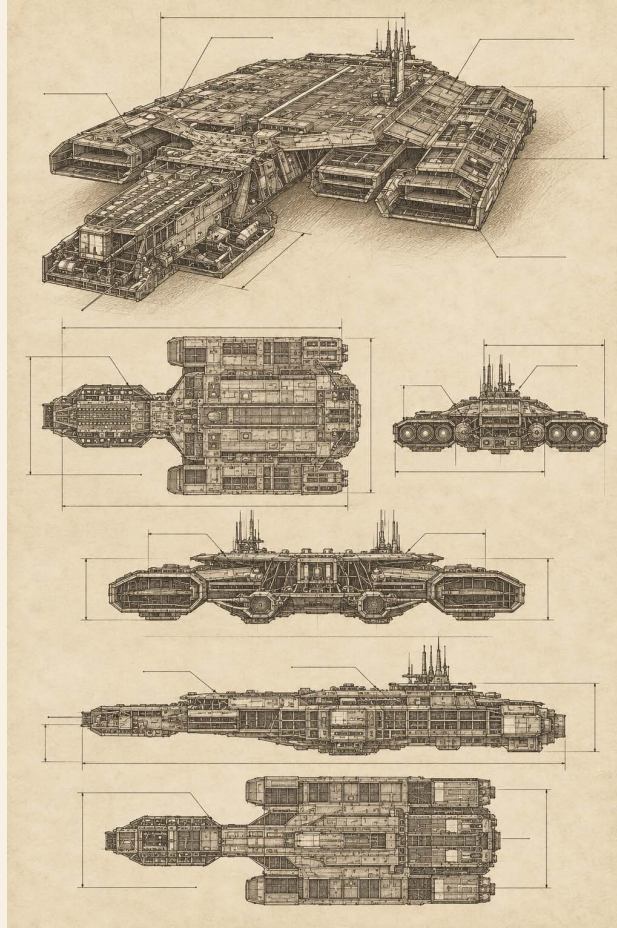


*Figure 2.1 - The general arrangement of the 304, redrawn by the College from the six views and particulars received. The draughtsman was not admitted to the Mountain and has therefore added nothing for which he can be questioned.*

| Particular           | Per the file                                               | Departmental note, 2004                                                                         |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Length, beam, height | 225 m, 95 m, 75 m                                          | Longer than the College; wider than the Quad; taller than the Porters' Lodge, roof included     |
| Hull                 | Naquadah-trinium alloy                                     | Not stocked; supplier asked; supplier laughed                                                   |
| Power                | Naquadah generators; a Zero Point Module, formerly         | One of these is a battery the Department was not shown                                          |
| Propulsion           | Sublight drive; Asgard hyperdrive                          | The second does not go through the space in between; the Department asked how                   |
| Shielding            | Asgard shields                                             | See Chapter 7 and the Porters' Lodge roof                                                       |
| Armament             | 32 railguns; 16 missile tubes; 4 beam weapons (refit)      | See Chapter 5 and the Major                                                                     |
| Complement           | 8 to 16 F-302 fighters                                     | See Chapter 6; the Major has a proposal                                                         |
| Other systems        | Transporters; transportation rings; long-range transmitter | Estates has seen the first of these and has not been the same since                             |
| Year introduced      | 2005                                                       | The Department's review was returned in 2004; it does not claim credit, and was not offered any |

*Table 2.1 - Principal particulars as received, with the Department's notes of 2004. The right-hand column was returned to the Mountain. It is still there, presumably.*

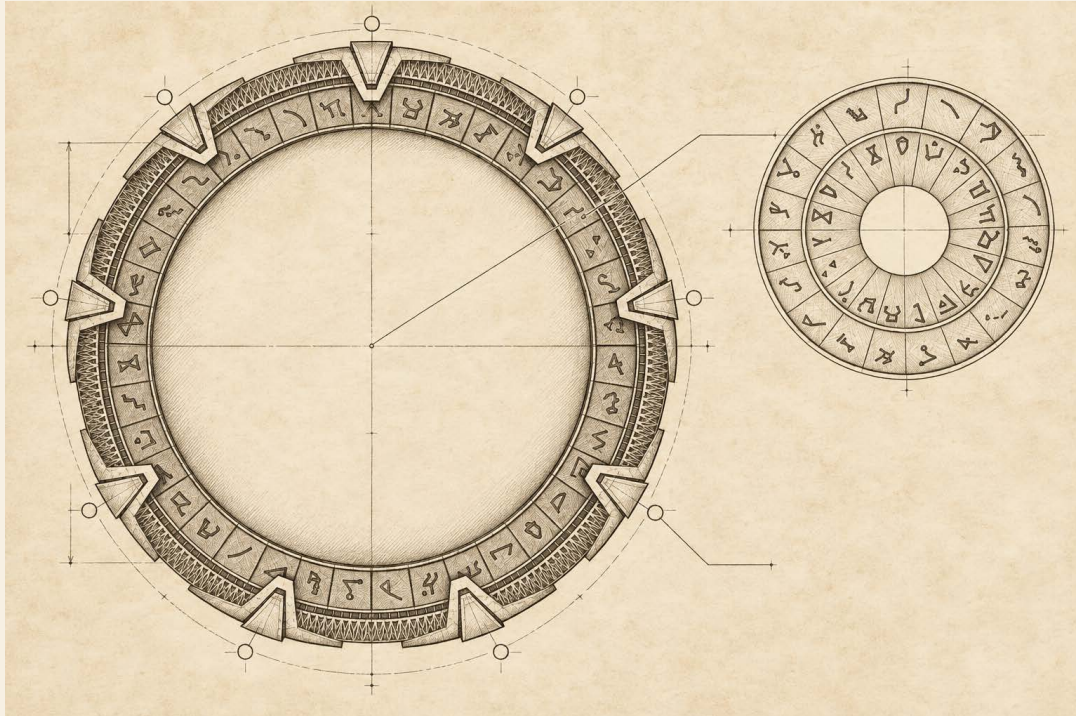


*Figure 2.2 - The ring-shaped device redrawn from the sheet the Department was instructed to disregard. It has disregarded it carefully, at scale, and reproduces it so that the reader may do likewise.*

**Departmental observation (2004).** The Department has reviewed a great many general arrangement drawings and has never before been handed one with the words 'Eyes Only' on it and a biscuit. It notes that the biscuit was a Rich Tea, that it was not offered a second, and that the Department of Materials Engineering, Beverage Dynamics and Applied Crumb Mechanics has since asked for the biscuit to be entered as evidence.

## 3 STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS

### 3.1 The hull

The hull is specified as an alloy of two materials the Department had not encountered, naquadah and trinium, and the Department's first act was to telephone its usual supplier in Wolverhampton, who asked the Department to spell them and then asked whether this was the Trebuchet Research Group again. It was not. The Department was therefore unable to test a coupon, and reviewed the structure on the drawings alone, which is how the College reviewed the Porters' Lodge roof, with results that are a matter of record.

On the drawings, the structure is sound. The load paths run from the drive section through a central spine to the forward hangar bays, with the bridge set well aft and high, as on a ship, which the Department approves of, since it means the people in charge can see what they have hit. The proportions are those of a vessel built by people who expected to be shot at and had been. [2026: the Department has since learned that this was the case, and that the review was, for once, correct for the right reasons.]

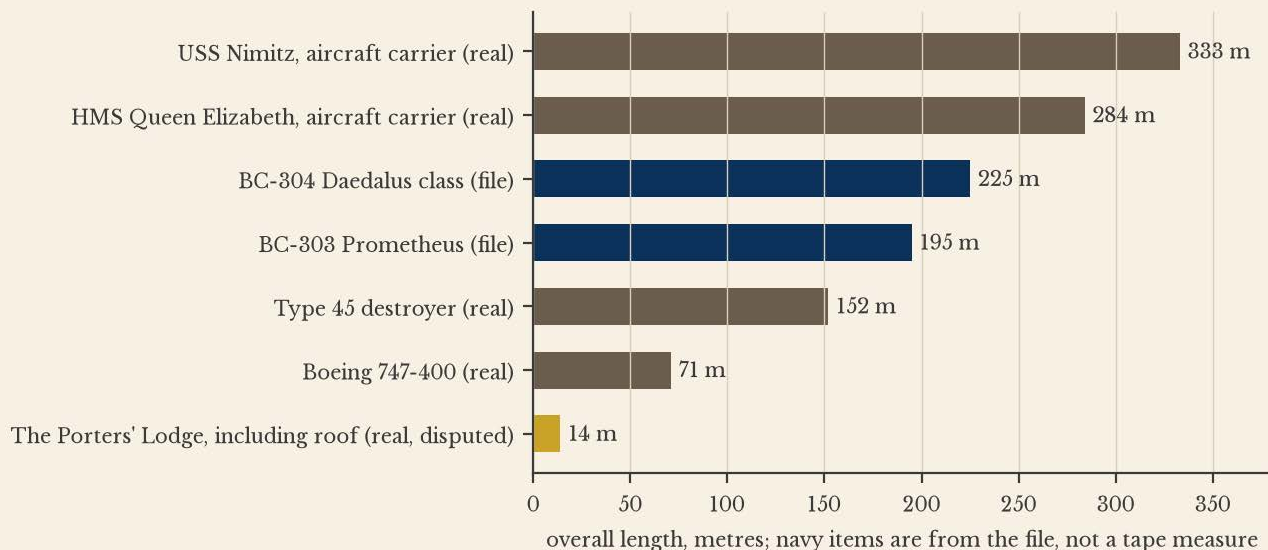


Figure 3.1 - The 304 against things the Department has actually measured. The Porters' Lodge is included because Estates asked, and its height is disputed because Estates measured it.

### 3.2 The scale

At 225 metres the vessel is shorter than an aircraft carrier and longer than anything the College has ever been asked about, including the Union. Figure 3.1 sets it beside a Nimitz, a Queen Elizabeth, a Type 45 and a 747, and the Department notes that it is the only item on the chart designed to leave the planet altogether. The Bursar, shown the chart, asked what a Queen Elizabeth cost, was told, and asked to be excused.

**Departmental finding (2004).** The structure is fit for purpose provided the alloy exists. The Department cannot confirm that it does and has noted this in the margin, in red, twice. [2026: no reply. The vessel, on the evidence of the photograph, has not fallen apart, which the Department accepts as a test result obtained by someone else.]

## 4 POWER AND PROPULSION

### 4.1 The generators, and the battery the Department was not shown

Power is by naquadah generators, which the Department could not evaluate for the reason given in Chapter 3, and, the file says, formerly by a Zero Point Module, which the Department could not evaluate because it was not shown one and because the phrase describes a battery that draws on the energy of empty space, and the Department's view on that, delivered by the Professor at the Mountain and not welcomed, was that empty space is what the Bursar draws on and the results are not encouraging.

### 4.2 The hyperdrive

The vessel has two drives. The sublight drive the Department understands: it pushes. The hyperdrive it does not. The file says it goes around the space between two places and was developed with assistance from the Asgard, an advanced allied extraterrestrial civilisation. Their engineer Hermiod later served aboard to supervise the equipment and discourage improvisation. The Department's 2004 comment asked: how; who services it; and what does the warranty say? [2026: the allied Ida Asgard transferred their technical archive to Earth and destroyed themselves in 2007. A dissident Pegasus branch survived, but has not answered the warranty enquiry.][13]

| Item                | Supplier                         | On the approved list? | The Bursar's note                                |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Naquadah generators | In-house, from a design not ours | No                    | Who owns the design?                             |
| Zero Point Module   | Found                            | No                    | Found where? Is there a receipt?                 |
| Sublight drive      | In-house                         | Yes                   | Approved; the only line on this page             |
| Hyperdrive          | Asgard assistance                | No; no address        | Warranty? Servicing? Who do we ring?             |
| Shields             | Asgard assistance                | No                    | As above                                         |
| Beam weapons        | Asgard legacy, 2007              | No                    | As above, and see the Major                      |
| Transporters        | Asgard assistance                | No                    | Estates wants one. Denied. Estates has appealed. |

*Table 4.1 - The vendor position reconstructed from the 2004 review and the 2007 inheritance. The Bursar was not cleared to see this table and compiled it anyway from the Professor's expenses.*

**Departmental observation (2004).** A drive that avoids the space in between is the answer to a question the Department has been asking Estates about the corridor to the wind tunnel since 1903. The Department does not understand it, cannot service it, and would like one.

## 5 ARMAMENT

### 5.1 The railguns

Thirty-two railguns, distributed about the hull. The Major reviewed these first and at length, and his report is short: a railgun throws a lump of metal very fast by means the Major does not need to understand because the lump is metal and the target is not, and it can be stripped, cleaned and reassembled by a competent airman with a rag, which is the Major's entire theory of weapons. Approved.

### 5.2 The missiles, and the treaty

Sixteen vertical launch tubes carrying cruise missiles and, the file says, nuclear warheads of two marks. The Department's comment of 2004 observed that a treaty of 1967, to which the vessel's owners are a party, forbids the placing of nuclear weapons in orbit around the Earth, and asked how this was reconciled.[3] The reply, given verbally at the Mountain and not minuted, was that the vessel is only in orbit briefly, on its way somewhere else, and that the treaty says nothing about passing through. The Department has recorded this as the most creative reading of a treaty it has encountered outside the Treasury. [2026: the BBC noted the treaty on Monday, and that everyone has been exploring the space beside it ever since. The Department can confirm the space beside it is well used.]

### 5.3 The beam weapons

Four plasma beam weapons were fitted later using technology bequeathed by the Asgard in 2007, rather than supplied with the 2004 design.[13] The Major has rejected them. His grounds, recorded in full at his insistence, are that a weapon with no moving parts cannot be stripped, that a weapon that cannot be stripped cannot be cleaned, and that a weapon inherited from a civilisation which deliberately destroyed its home world presents difficulties at the returns desk. The Department has no answer to any of this and has entered the beam weapons in Figure 5.1 in red.

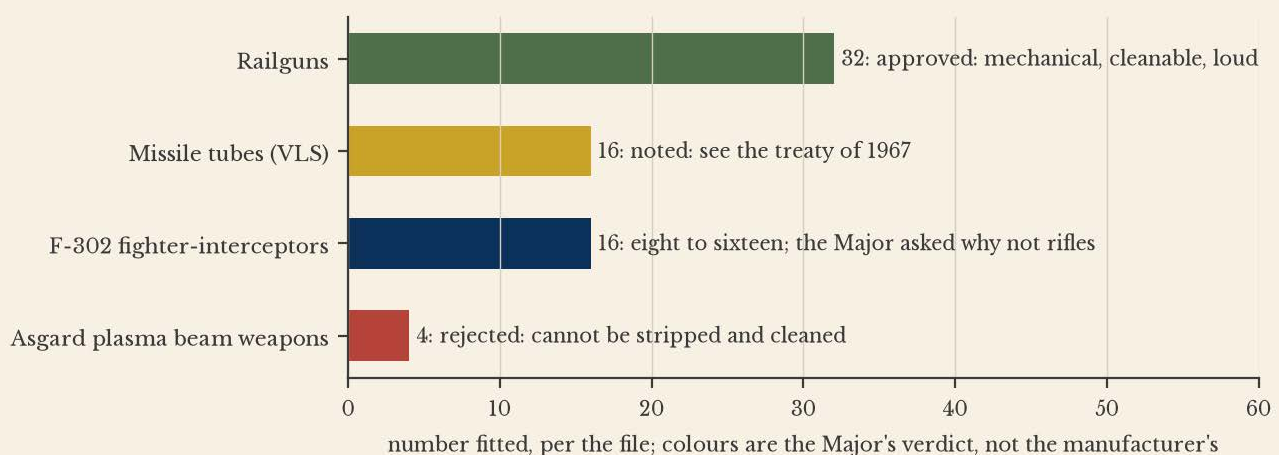


Figure 5.1 - The armament as listed in the file, with the Major's verdict in colour. He has asked that the green bar be made longer and has been told that thirty-two is thirty-two.

| Weapon                            | Number     | The Major's test                                           | Verdict                                                 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Railgun                           | 32         | Can it be stripped, cleaned and fired by a man with a rag? | Yes. Approved.                                          |
| Cruise missile, conventional      | 16 tubes   | Does it go where it is pointed?                            | Reportedly. Approved, provisionally.                    |
| Nuclear missile, Mark VIII and IX | Not stated | Is it allowed?                                             | See the treaty. The Major declines to rule on treaties. |
| Plasma beam weapon                | 4          | Can it be stripped?                                        | No. Rejected. Also: who fixes it now?                   |
| L1A1 Self-Loading Rifle           | 0          | Could it be?                                               | Yes. Several thousand. The Major has a list.            |

*Table 5.1 - The armament reviewed against the only standard the Major recognises. The last row was added by him and the Department has let it stand.*

**Departmental finding (2004).** The vessel is adequately armed for a purpose the Department was not told and would, on the evidence of the armament, prefer not to know. It notes that the Americans have fitted sixteen missile tubes to a vessel that is only in orbit briefly, and that 'briefly' is doing a great deal of work. [2026: on Monday they mentioned one weapon. The file lists fifty-two. The Department is marking the other fifty-one and leaving them to it.]

## 6 THE WING, AND THE LIFT WITH NO SHAFT

### 6.1 The F-302

The vessel carries between eight and sixteen fighter-interceptors of a type designated F-302, and the Department notes with approval that these, unlike almost everything else in the file, were built by human hands from human drawings, after an earlier attempt, the X-301, built around borrowed parts, stranded its crew in space during a test.[5] The Department has reviewed borrowed parts before. It refers the reader to the Ju 52 and to the Porters' Lodge boiler, and records that the lesson was learned in Colorado at about the same cost as in Upper Piddlington.



*Figure 6.1 - The Major inspects an F-302, mug in hand, with the expression he reserves for things that are not rifles. An airman waits with a clipboard and no immediate prospect of relief.*

The Major inspected the wing on paper and asked two questions. The first was whether sixteen fighters could be replaced by sixteen riflemen who did not move, and he was told that in space there is nothing to stand on. He accepted this. The second was whether the aircraft could be flown with a brew in hand, and he was told that it could not, and he has entered this as the wing's only serious defect.

## 6.2 The transporters

The file describes a system, developed with Asgard assistance, by which a person or object on the vessel is moved to a point on the ground, or back, without passing through the space between. Estates read this paragraph three times, took it away, and returned with a requisition: one transporter, for the Porters' Lodge, on the grounds that it is a lift that requires no shaft and would therefore end the argument about the roof, the staircase and the boiler in a single installation. The requisition was refused, on the grounds that the technology is not on the list, the Bursar is not cleared, and the College is not, so far as anyone can establish, in orbit. Estates has appealed. The appeal is pending. [2026: still pending.]

**Departmental observation (2004).** The Department has reviewed the transporter with the care it gives any device that would let the Bursar arrive without warning, and recommends against it on those grounds alone. Estates has been told. Estates has asked whether the device can be set to exclude one person. The file does not say.

## 7 THE SHIELD, AND THE ROOF

The vessel is protected by shields developed with Asgard assistance. The file describes a field that stops things arriving at the hull. The Department has reviewed many claims of this kind. The Porters' Lodge roof was specified in 1974 to stop things arriving at the porters, carried a similar assurance, and has since admitted rain, snow, a jackdaw and, in 1987, the Bursar. The Department's comment of 2004 asked for the shield's test certificate. It was told there was one, but not in the file, and that it could take the Asgard Council's word for it. The allied Ida population later ended operations; no replacement certificate has appeared.[13]

[2026: the Department notes that the vessel has, on the evidence of the photograph, a roof, and that it is still on. It does not know whether this is the shield or the alloy or luck, and observes that the Porters' Lodge has had all three at various times and that only the last has ever worked.]

**Departmental finding (2004).** A shield without a certificate is a roof without a warranty. The College has one of those already and does not recommend acquiring another at 225 metres.

## 8 THE FLEET SINCE, AND WHAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS TOLD

The file records a first vessel, Prometheus, of an earlier class, in service from 2003 and lost in 2006, on which the Department's comments were also not acknowledged; the 304 itself from 2005; and, in later additions to the file that arrived without covering letters, five sisters, two of them under other flags.[4,5] Table 8.1 sets them out with the column the Bursar asked for, which is whether the College was told. The answer, for the most part, is that the College was sent a page.

| Vessel         | Class  | In service   | Flag                       | Was the College told?                                                                                |
|----------------|--------|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prometheus     | BC-303 | 2003 to 2006 | United States              | Comments returned; not acknowledged; vessel lost                                                     |
| Daedalus       | BC-304 | 2005         | United States              | Reviewed at the Mountain, 2004; this paper                                                           |
| Odyssey        | BC-304 | Later        | United States              | A page arrived. No letter.                                                                           |
| Korolev        | BC-304 | Later; lost  | Russian Federation         | A page arrived, in Russian. Strategic Geography has it.                                              |
| Apollo         | BC-304 | Later        | United States              | A page arrived.                                                                                      |
| Sun Tzu        | BC-304 | Later        | People's Republic of China | A page arrived. The Department notes Monday's warning from Beijing about an arms race, and the page. |
| George Hammond | BC-304 | Later        | United States              | A page arrived, with a correction to the name.                                                       |

Table 8.1 - The fleet per the file. The Department did not review the sisters, was not asked to, and has entered them here so that the reader can see how a consultation ends: with pages, and no letter.



Figure 8.1 - The programme as the Department knew it against the programme as everyone else was told it. The navy bar is the College's silence. It was not enjoyed.

**Departmental observation.** The College was consulted once in a thousand and forty-eight years, on the largest thing it has ever been shown, and was then sent pages. It records this without complaint, as the standard experience of consultants, and notes that it was at least paid, in a currency it may not name.

## 9 MONDAY, REVIEWED

The Department now reviews the announcement of 14 September against the file, since that is the only thing it is newly permitted to do. The Secretary acknowledged 'a weapon', on orbit, purpose defensive, details withheld.[1] The Space Force's sentence, translated, says the weapon can break things. The RUSI expert, guessing, offered a jammer or a ram.[1] The file offers a 225-metre battlecruiser with thirty-two railguns, sixteen missile tubes, four beam weapons the Major will not have in the house, a fighter wing, a lift with no shaft, and six sisters. The Department's finding is that the weapon acknowledged on Monday is considerably smaller than the one on file, and that 'for the first time' is true only of the acknowledging.

The prediction market said 'first'. The general said two decades and produced the photograph.[2] The Department, which has the drawings, finds for the general on the dates and adds only that two decades is conservative: the College was approached in 1997, and it was not approached first. It notes that the treaty of 1967 is exactly as the BBC described it, that the space beside it is exactly as full as the Department suspected, and that China's warning of an arms race arrived on Tuesday from a government that, per the file, has had a vessel of its own for some years and named it after a strategist. The Department offers no view on any of this. It has a cupboard, and a page.

| Claim, 14 to 15 September 2026                    | Source                          | The file                               | Departmental note                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'A weapon', on orbit                              | Secretary of the Air Force      | Fifty-two, on one vessel               | One is a start                                                          |
| 'For the first time'                              | BBC headline; prediction market | Reviewed 2004; in service 2005         | First acknowledgement; not first weapon                                 |
| 'Two decades behind'                              | The general, with a photograph  | College approached 1997                | Conservative; the general is being kind                                 |
| 'Totally guessing': a jammer or a ram             | RUSI, on Radio 4                | A battlecruiser                        | The Department sympathises; it was shown the drawings and still guessed |
| 'Space control encapsulates the mission areas...' | Space Force spokesperson        | Thirty-two railguns                    | Translated: 'we have a thing and it can break yours'                    |
| Arms race warning                                 | China, Tuesday                  | Sun Tzu, BC-304                        | Noted, with the page                                                    |
| 1967 treaty forbids WMD in orbit                  | BBC                             | Sixteen tubes; 'only in orbit briefly' | 'Briefly' is load-bearing                                               |

*Table 9.1 - Monday's claims against the file. The Department has left the last column short because the file is long and the announcement was not.*

**Statement of neutrality.** The College takes no position on whether any state should have weapons in orbit, or on how many it has, or on whether it should say. It has a file and a signed undertaking, one of which is now open. Its interest is in whether the drawings add up, and in being, for once, asked.

## 10 CONCLUSIONS

- The United States acknowledged a weapon in orbit on 14 September 2026 'for the first time'. The College has a design review of one dated 2004 and has been asking the Bursar not to mention it since.
- The vessel is structurally sound on the drawings, provided an alloy exists that the Department's supplier in Wolverhampton has not heard of.
- Asgard assistance supplied power and propulsion outside the approved vendor list. The Ida branch ended in 2007; the surviving Pegasus branch has not answered the warranty enquiry.
- Of fifty-two weapons, the Major approves thirty-two, will not rule on sixteen, and rejects four on the grounds that they cannot be cleaned. He has proposed several thousand more.
- The treaty of 1967 forbids nuclear weapons in orbit. The vessel is in orbit briefly. 'Briefly' is doing a great deal of work and the Department has said so twice.
- The transporter is a lift with no shaft. Estates wants one. The appeal is pending, as it has been since 2004.
- The shield has no certificate in the file. The College has a roof in the same condition and does not recommend a second.
- The College was consulted, once, and then sent pages. It regards this as the normal experience of consultants and is grateful to have had it at all.
- The weapon acknowledged on Monday is smaller than the one on file. The general is right about the two decades and generous about the number.

**Principal finding.** The vessel is sound, over-supplied by a vendor who cannot be reached, armed beyond the Major's ability to clean, in orbit only briefly, and real, in the sense that the College has the drawings and the Americans have now said so. The College's review of 2004 stands as written and is, for the first time in its history, published on time, twenty-two years late.

**Secondary finding.** The Porters' Lodge roof remains the only structure in this paper that has been tested, and it failed. The Department recommends that the vessel's shield be tested by the same method, which is to wait, and that the Bursar be informed of the result by a page.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bernd Debusmann Jr and Chris Graham, 'US confirms for first time it has deployed space weapons', BBC News, 15 September 2026: Secretary of the Air Force Troy Meink at the Air, Space and Cyber Conference; the Space Force spokesperson's statement on space control; Dr Bleddyn Bowen of RUSI on Radio 4's Today, 'totally guessing'; China's warning of an arms race; the 1967 treaty; the Space Force founded in 2019; Golden Dome. [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)
  - [2] Polymarket, post on X, 14 September 2026: 'BREAKING: U.S. military publicly acknowledges for the first time that it has deployed space weapons in orbit'; and the reply of 15 September from an account in the name of General Jack O'Neill: 'For the first time?!? Polymarket is at least two decades behind on the news... I've even got pictures!', with a photograph of the vessel over the Earth. Cited as the prompt, and for the dates, on which the Department finds for the general.
  - [3] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, 27 January 1967, Article IV: states undertake not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. The words 'briefly' and 'passing through' do not appear in it. [unoosa.org](http://unoosa.org)
  - [4] SGCommand, the Stargate fan wiki, 'Daedalus': BC-304, introduced 2005; particulars, systems, armament (four Asgard plasma beam weapons on refit, 32 railguns, 16 VLS missile tubes, Mark VIII and IX nuclear missiles), complement of 8 to 16 F-302s, Asgard hyperdrive, shields, sensors and transporters, naquadah-trinium hull. The Department's file, by coincidence, agrees in every particular. [stargate.fandom.com](http://stargate.fandom.com)
  - [5] SGCommand, 'Tau'ri fleet': the X-301 hybrid stranded in space on test; the F-302 built entirely by human hands; Prometheus (BC-303) introduced 2003 and lost over Tegalus in 2006; the 304s Daedalus, Odyssey, Korolev, Apollo, Sun Tzu and George Hammond. [stargate.fandom.com](http://stargate.fandom.com)
  - [6] SGCommand, 'Glyph': the thirty-nine symbols of the Milky Way gate and the nine chevrons; cited for the elevation the Department was told to disregard. [stargate.fandom.com](http://stargate.fandom.com)
  - [7] The general arrangement sheet (Figure 2.1) and the gate elevation (Figure 2.2) are fan-made drawings supplied to the College and redrawn for the purpose of parody and review. They are not the property of the College, the studio or, so far as the Department can establish, any government.
  - [8] Stargate (film, 1994); Stargate SG-1 (1997 to 2007); Stargate Atlantis (2004 to 2009); Stargate Universe (2009 to 2011). The programme in which, by coincidence, the College's file has been broadcast. MGM.
  - [9] GateWorld, 'Fans launch Save Stargate campaign', June 2026; SaveStargate.com; Variety, 'Stargate TV series from Martin Gero scrapped at Amazon', June 2026: the series cancelled on 2 June 2026 after a twenty-week writers' room, scripts, a London soundstage and casting; the petition past 115,000 signatures; the aerial banner over Culver City and San Diego; the Times Square billboard; the London rallies; support from Michael Shanks, Christopher Judge, Rachel Luttrell and David Hewlett. [savestargate.com](http://savestargate.com)
  - [10] United States Space Force, established 20 December 2019, the first new branch of the US armed forces in more than seventy years, as noted in [1].
  - [11] King Ethelred's College, 'Under New Management', 2026, and 'Demolition Sequencing for a Kingdom', 2026, on the College's thousand years of not being consulted; and 'Synchronised Boiling', 2026, on the kettle, which the vessel is assumed to have.
  - [12] King Ethelred's College, Department of Astronautical Engineering, Orbital Plumbing and Matters Not To Be Discussed, file KE/AE/1997/1, 'Eyes Only'. Not available. Now available. Still not available to the Bursar.
  - [13] SGCommand, 'Asgard' and 'Vanir': Asgard assistance with the BC-304; the 2007 transfer of the allied Ida legacy and destruction of its population; and the survival of the dissident Pegasus branch. [stargate.fandom.com](http://stargate.fandom.com)
- Sources were consulted on 15 September 2026. King Ethelred's College is fictional; the treaty, the Secretary and the Space Force are not; the vessel is a matter on which the College and the Americans now agree, which is a first.

## APPENDIX A - SAMPLE CALCULATIONS

### A.1 The silence

Approached: 1997. Released: Monday, 14 September 2026. Duration: twenty-nine years and some months of knowing, twenty-two of them with the drawings. Audits in which the line 'sundry, orbital' was queried: twenty-eight. Audits in which it was explained: none. The Bursar's estimate of the cumulative interest on the query is not reproduced here, the Department having asked him to keep it briefly.

### A.2 The scale

Length of the vessel, 225 m; length of the College, front gate to the wind tunnel, about 190 m, or 210 m if the Trebuchet Research Group's shed is counted, which it should not be. The vessel is therefore between 1.07 and 1.18 Colleges long, and 16 Porters' Lodges, roof included. The Department has stopped there.

### A.3 Orbit, briefly

The treaty forbids nuclear weapons in orbit. A vessel that enters orbit, collects its wing and leaves is in orbit for, the file suggests, hours. The treaty does not specify a minimum. The Department has computed the fraction of the treaty's fifty-nine years for which the vessel has, on this reading, complied, and found it to be all of them, which is the same result the Treasury obtains from its own treaties by the same method.

### A.4 The petition

Signatures: more than 115,000. The College: one, as an institution, which is all it is permitted. Ratio: the College is about 0.0009 per cent of the campaign, which is roughly its share of every campaign it has ever joined, and higher than its share of the consultation.

### A.5 The lift with no shaft

Height of the Porters' Lodge staircase, 4.2 m; number of steps, 23; number of steps Estates has been asked to mend since 1974, 23; number mended, 6. A transporter would reduce the outstanding total to zero at a stroke, which is why the Department suspects Estates of having read the file more carefully than the Professor.

## APPENDIX B - THE BURSAR'S CARD

| If asked                          | Answer                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Did the Americans just admit it?  | They admitted a weapon. The College has a file dated 2004, a ship's name, and a page for each of six sisters.                             |
| For the first time?               | The first acknowledgement. Not the first weapon. The general said two decades and was being kind.                                         |
| Was the College consulted?        | Yes. Once. In 1997. It was then asked not to say so, which it regards as consultation as normally practised.                              |
| Is the ship any good?             | Sound on the drawings. Over-supplied by a vendor who cannot be reached. The Major approves the railguns.                                  |
| What about the treaty?            | It forbids nuclear weapons in orbit. The vessel is in orbit briefly. 'Briefly' is doing a great deal of work.                             |
| Can we have a transporter?        | Estates has asked. The appeal has been pending since 2004. The Bursar is not cleared and does not want one arriving.                      |
| Is this the television programme? | The College has raised the coincidence with the studio and received no reply, which is confirmation.                                      |
| And the cancellation?             | The College has signed the petition, once, and drafted a statement. Appendix C. The Trebuchet Research Group has offered to fly a banner. |
| What is 'sundry, orbital'?        | Declassified Monday. Still not available to the Bursar.                                                                                   |

*Table B.1 - Answers approved for High Table. The Bursar has asked that the last be read to him slowly, twice.*

## APPENDIX C - A STATEMENT ON THE PROGRAMME

The College notes that a television programme which, by coincidence, has documented the contents of its classified file since 1997 was to have returned this year, under a writer who had already written for it and understood it; that a twenty-week writers' room had finished, scripts were written, a London soundstage was booked and casting was under way; and that on 2 June 2026 the studio cancelled it, reportedly on the grounds that it appealed too much to the people who had watched it.[9] The College has reviewed this reasoning as it would review a load path and finds that it does not carry.

The College further notes that the people who had watched it have since raised eleven thousand dollars to fly a banner over the studio, bought a billboard in Times Square, held rallies in London and signed a petition more than 115,000 times, and that members of the original cast have said, in public, that the programme should be finished by the people who started it.[9] The College has signed the petition once, as an institution, which is all it is allowed, and has drafted the following statement, which the Bursar has approved on the grounds that it costs nothing.

**Statement of the College.** King Ethelred's College of Engineering, having been consulted on the vessel in 1997 and on nothing else since 978 (ish), observes that a programme which was ready to be made and was then not made is a structure with the props removed before the wall was cut, and that the College has a paper on that. It asks the studio to finish what it started, on the drawings it has, with the people who drew them. It notes that the vessel is real, the Americans have said so, and the programme is therefore not science fiction but a documentary with better lighting, which is a genre the College has always supported. It has put the kettle on. The vessel, it assumes, has one too.

The Trebuchet Research Group has offered to fly a banner of its own over Culver City by the only means it has. The offer was declined, minuted, and, for the first time in the Group's history, declined with regret.

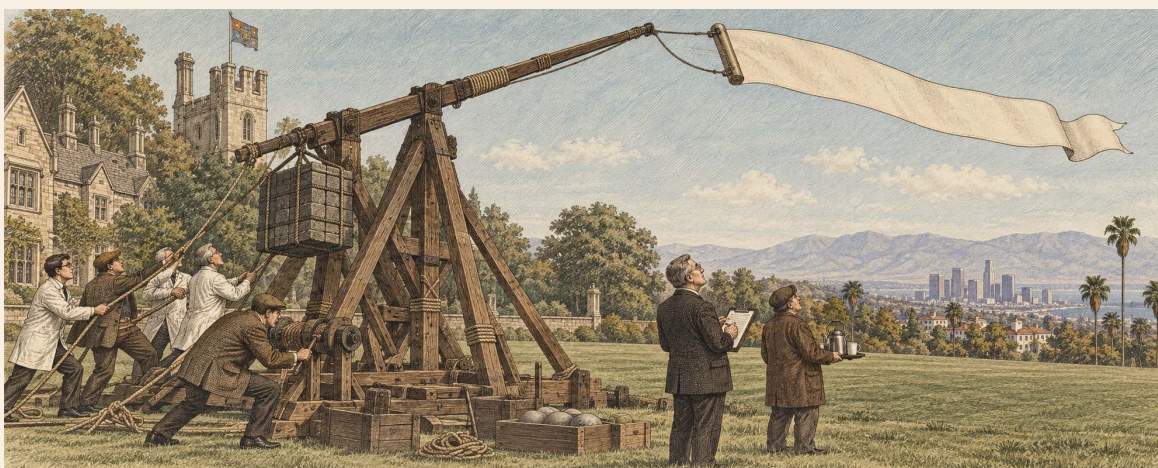


Figure C.1 - The Trebuchet Research Group's proposed contribution to #SaveStargate. California remains beyond the approved range envelope; enthusiasm does not.

## APPENDIX D - DEPARTMENTAL NOTE

The Department of Astronautical Engineering, Orbital Plumbing and Matters Not To Be Discussed was founded in 1997, on a Thursday, for reasons the College could not then explain to the Bursar and has now explained to everyone else. It was given a name designed to discourage questions, a room designed to discourage visitors, and a line in the accounts designed to discourage nothing at all, since the Bursar has queried it at every audit since. It has one Fellow, one Professor, one cupboard, and, since 2004, one set of drawings it has been unable to show anybody, which it has shown to the cupboard.

The Department records that this paper was written in a week in which a Secretary said 'a weapon', a market said 'first', a general said 'two decades' and produced a photograph, and the College, for the first time in a thousand and forty-eight years, was able to say that it had been asked. It has said so. It has not enjoyed the wait. It has put the drawings back in the cupboard, unlocked, and left the door open, and it would be obliged if the Americans did the same with theirs.

*Persevera Etelred*