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Commonwealth of Australia

DEVELOPMENT OF NAVY
SUPPLY CENTRE AND ARMY
WORKSHOP FACILITY

Defence Establishment, Zetland, N.S.W.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Public Works

(First Report of 1976)

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(TWENTY-FOURTH COMMITTEE)

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EXTRACT FROM
THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
No. 32, DATED 26 MAY 1976

6. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENT, ZETLAND, N.S.W.: Mr McLeay (Minister for Construction), pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969–1974*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report: Development of a navy supply centre and army workshop facility at defence establishment, Zetland, N.S.W.

Mr McLeay presented plans in connection with the proposed work.

Question—put and passed.

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Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

DEVELOPMENT OF NAVY SUPPLY CENTRE AND ARMY WORKSHOP FACILITY AT DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENT, ZETLAND, N.S.W.

Report

By resolution on 26 May 1976 the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report to the Parliament, the proposal to develop a Navy supply centre and Army workshop facility at Defence establishment, Zetland, N.S.W. This reference had been referred previously, on 9 October 1975, but lapsed with the dissolution of the Twenty-ninth Parliament on 11 November 1975.

The Committee have the honour to report as follows:

THE REFERENCE

1. The proposal is for the redevelopment of the ex-Leyland car manufacturing plant at Zetland to provide a Navy supply centre and an Army workshop and servicing facility. The work comprises:

- conversion and rehabilitation of existing buildings;
- construction of one major new building;
- the installation of specialised stores handling and vehicle servicing facilities;
- a complete fire detection system for all buildings together with improved fire suppression installations;
- rationalisation and upgrading of engineering services;
- renewal of major sections of roofing of three buildings; and
- any necessary minor maintenance to buildings.

2. The estimated cost of the work at the time of reference to the Committee was \$14.2m.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

3. The Committee received written submissions and drawings from the Departments of Defence and Construction and took evidence from their representatives at a public hearing in Sydney on 15 June 1976. Representatives of the South Sydney Municipal Council also gave evidence.

4. The Committee inspected the site and existing ex-Leyland buildings. This was followed by an inspection of Navy stores depots at Randwick and Garden Island.

5. The Committee's proceedings will be published as Minutes of Evidence.

BACKGROUND

6. The Royal Australian Navy has been endeavouring for more than twenty years to consolidate its warehouse facilities and supply division office accommodation in one complex, close to its principle activities which are centred in the Sydney area. Garden Island Dockyard is the largest single customer for stores. In addition, Cockatoo Dockyard and four other major commissioned establishments are located in the Sydney Harbour area.

7. Planning was under way for the construction of a modern warehouse complex, initially at Woolloomooloo and since 1969, at Randwick. A two phase development program for Randwick estimated to cost \$40m (at 1973 prices) was planned to commence in 1976-77. However this was curtailed by the allocation of the Zetland site for this purpose.

8. The Committee were advised that the acquisition and allocation for defence purposes of the former Leyland Zetland site, only 5 km from Garden Island, has provided an almost ideal location for the Navy supply centre. The proximity of the Zetland site to the centre of Navy activity and to the repair and maintenance facilities of industry, its location in an industrial area and its ready accessibility to road transport are other factors favouring this site.

9. The Army's Sydney Workshop Company is presently located at Mascot in leased premises. The Company's service station is located at Leichhardt. Collocation of the Army Workshop Company and its service station at Zetland will result in more efficient Army operation as well as providing some servicing facilities for Navy supply centre vehicles. The siting of the Reserve units with the Workshop will give Reserve soldiers access to training facilities.

10. The new Navy supply centre and Army workshop facility will enable the progressive release of Navy sites at Randwick (28 hectares), Leichhardt (2.63 hectares) and Woolloomooloo

(0.5 hectare) and the Army site at Mascot (2.6 hectares) for other Australian Government or community use.

THE NEED

11. *Existing facilities* The Navy supply organization is presently fragmented in both warehousing facilities and management locations throughout the Sydney area. Supply management is exercised from five office locations, namely Potts Point, Goulburn Street (City), North Sydney, Randwick and Pyrmont. Hardware stock is held in six major warehouse complexes located at Garden Island, Woolloomooloo, Randwick, Pyrmont, Leichhardt and Rydalmere. Some of the warehouses pre-date the turn of the century, with low ceilings, numerous support pillars and inadequate stores lifting and access arrangements, while others are of the fibro cement sheet and shed type constructed during the Second World War. Under these conditions full application of modern cost saving and warehousing techniques has not been possible.

12. Sydney Workshop Company at Mascot provides repair and recovery facilities for vehicles and general equipment belonging to Army units in the Sydney metropolitan area. It repairs office machinery for Army units in New South Wales, provides repair support for Army survey operations in Australia and overseas and repairs medical and dental equipment for the three services in New South Wales. The service station, which is a section of the Sydney Workshop Company is presently located at Leichhardt. It services all Army vehicles located in the metropolitan area other than Randwick.

13. The existing Army facilities consist of old corrugated iron sheds at Leichhardt and a steel bow-framed asbestos-roofed facility at Mascot. Requests to upgrade the Mascot workshop have been denied over the years because of the uncertainty of its tenure, the type of structure and the general condition of the facility.

14. *Committee's conclusion.* There is a need for more spacious and centralised storage facilities for the Navy to enable the employment of modern cost saving and warehousing techniques. There is a need for enlarged, centralised premises for the Army Workshop and servicing Facility to enable it to develop its full capability.

THE PROPOSAL

15. The proposed works embrace the modification of existing buildings for use of offices, warehouses, workshops and warehouse support facilities; the construction of a gas, acid and flammable store; the rationalisation of existing services to meet planned requirements and the installation of necessary services and equipment.

16. *The Site and Existing Buildings.* The site is 893-931 South Dowling Street in the Municipality of South Sydney, 4 km from the Sydney G.P.O. It borders the Municipality of Randwick and is bounded by South Dowling Street on the east, O'Dea Avenue on the north, Joynton Avenue on the west and by a private property to the south. The area is 24.9 hectares. It is zoned for general industrial use. The buildings on the site are as follows:

- eight general purpose factory buildings, with a total floor area of 94 861 square metres. One of these buildings also incorporates office space which will accommodate about 90 personnel, a computer room and a telephone exchange;
- the main administration building which is a modern office building with a capacity to accommodate approximately 450 personnel;
- one amenities building of 4000 square metres incorporating a canteen and a locker and washroom;
- four small buildings being the boiler house, office air conditioner plant, emission control/dynamometer building and air compressor building
- twenty-four small buildings of a miscellaneous nature.

There are also two areas of hardstanding totalling 5667 square metres.

17. *Utilisation of Existing Buildings.* Of the eight factory buildings, six will be used for warehouse operations for the Navy supply centre. One will be used for on-site servicing the Navy supply centre materials handling equipment, while the remaining one, with surrounding area, will be used to house the Army's Sydney Workshop Company which includes the service station and Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Reserve Units.

18. The main administration building and the office space in one of the factory buildings will be used for office accommodation for the Navy supply centre. The computer room and telephone exchange will continue to be utilised for the services. One of the small miscellaneous buildings previously used as an office building could not be economically brought to a satisfactory standard for office accommodation and will be utilised as a baggage and archives store.

19. The canteen section of the amenities building will be retained and part of the locker and washroom section will be used for male and female personnel in adjacent warehouse buildings. The Department of Construction undertook to consult with relevant unions concerning these amenities prior to finalisation of documentation.

The remainder of the locker and washroom area which is in excess of requirements for these purposes will be used for supply support functions.

20. The capacity of the existing boiler house is unnecessarily large for Navy supply centre requirements and its operation will be phased out with the installation of a smaller heat generator for office heating. The space which will become available in the building will then be used for workshop and laboratories.

21. The emission control/dynamometer building will be retained and used by the Department of Transport for vehicle emission research in the short term. Subsequently the equipment will be used by the Army.

22. With three exceptions the various small buildings on the site will be retained to house new or existing services such as guard houses, transport and pedestrian control stations, salvage and scrap compound, accommodation for on site servicing and transport personnel and materials, fire station, fire main booster pump house, town gas, electricity, sewerage, oil traps and temporary shore storage needs of ships. The three exceptions comprise two old brick buildings and a galvanised ironclad building which are in an extreme state of disrepair and will be demolished.

23. The Navy supply centre will house virtually the full range of the Royal Australian Navy inventory except explosives and missiles, comprising more than 500 000 items for the support of ships, shore establishments and dockyards covering general hardware, food, clothing, textiles and support spares for aircraft, machinery, weapons and the electrical and electronic equipment used by the Navy.

24. High rise storage is planned to the greatest extent practicable in those buildings where roof heights make this appropriate. Compact racking will be used in other buildings to achieve effective use of available space. To simplify the transport of stores and to save time and labour, mechanical conveyor systems are proposed. Computer facilities will be provided for warehousing data.

25. *Committee's conclusion.* The proposed redevelopment of the Zetland complex will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Navy supply organisation and the Army's Sydney Workshop Company.

CONSTRUCTION

26. *Existing buildings.* Where existing buildings are to be rehabilitated, modified or altered the construction and materials used will be similar to that existing with the exception of roofing materials. All new roof cladding will be of a non-combustible type. Generally, work will be to a good 'industrial' standard. Amenities, locker

rooms, toilets and washrooms will be reduced from the present provision for a much larger staff, to a scale appropriate to the proposed staff. The reduced accommodation will conform with the New South Wales Department of Labour and Industry standards.

27. *New building.* The flammable, gas and acid store building will be single storey brick construction with concrete floor, steel frame roof structure and metal roof sheeting.

28. *Electrical services.* Electric power is reticulated throughout the site via a number of substations on the property. The capacity of these substations is far in excess of the loads required for light and general power in store areas and, due to the excessive no load losses, the capacity of the larger substations will be reduced and appropriate modifications to the switchboards will be made. Additional external lighting will be provided in areas not already covered, particularly the transport and Army vehicle parks, to ensure an adequate standard of security lighting over the whole site. Some modification of existing internal lighting will be carried out to suit the buildings' new usages.

29. A control cable throughout the site of 150 pairs with suitable pillar boxes will cater for fire detection, controls for fire booster pump security alarms and public address systems. Sufficient pairs will be provided for future expansion.

30. *Hydraulic services.* The existing water supply to the complex is obtained from a number of separate connections to the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board mains in Joynton Avenue. Separate reticulation is provided for fire fighting purposes and for domestic supplies. The domestic reticulation is adequate for future needs as a storehouse complex, as the population served will be approximately 1200 compared with the population of 5000 when the area was used for manufacturing.

31. To provide for water demand for fire protection, considerable improvement to this reticulation is required. This will comprise a new large connection to the Board's main, feeding automatic start electric booster pumps, with diesel engine standby in case of power failure. The size of the existing internal mains is generally insufficient for the flows required. A new ring main will be installed around the site with enlarged mains in some buildings. Existing mains are to be interconnected into the new reticulation, wherever possible, to reduce the extent of replacement required.

32. The present domestic sewerage reticulation is adequate for the reduced population mentioned above and is connected to the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board system. Industrial

liquid waste at present flows via the stormwater reticulation and is separated and collected in the south west corner of the site. However, in order to comply with present regulations covering waste discharge, additional facilities will be installed at each point of discharge of liquid waste from buildings. The existing waste collection installation will be retained in case of accidental spillage outside buildings.

33. *Mechanical services.* Some existing equipment which is suitable for reuse with modification or overhaul is being retained. Warehouse No. 1 contains two 10-ton and two 20-ton gantry cranes, all cabin operated. These will be converted to pendant control by a walking operator. Mechanical ventilation will be provided to the security storage vaults.

34. Air conditioning equipment which served the Leyland computer section in the office section of warehouse No. 3 will be retained for use with Navy computer equipment. The warehouse section will be provided with an in-floor conveyor system and compactus type storage. Food storage will be provided at deep freeze and normal refrigeration holding temperatures. Low and normal temperature air conditioned space will be provided for storage and receipt of perishable stock items.

35. The existing stacker crane in warehouse no. 4 has been over-hauled and renovated and its use will be extended to the full length of the building. The existing 10-ton overhead gantry will be converted to a stacker crane. Compactus type storage and an in-floor conveyor system will be provided in no. 5 warehouse.

36. The Army workshop and servicing facility will retain the existing 2-ton pendant operated gantry crane. Air conditioning will be provided for the environmental control of special workshops. Fume exhaust systems will be provided where required and full facilities for vehicle servicing and maintenance, including heavy duty vehicle hoists, lubrication equipment and spray painting booths will be supplied.

37. The supply centre service building will be supplied with a powered roller conveyor and accumulating conveyor system and automatic weighing, strapping and measuring equipment. It will also be provided with an in-floor conveyor system which will be linked to the system in no. 5 warehouse.

38. Two of the steam boilers and ancillary equipment situated in the boiler house are being removed from the site by Leyland. The third boiler and associated equipment is Navy property and will remain in service to provide heating for the main office block until alternative heating equipment is installed in the air conditioning plant room.

39. Mechanical ventilation and exhaust will be provided in the fire station and associated workshop. Halide fume detection will be supplied in the fire extinguisher charging area.

40. A weighbridge of 50-tonne capacity will be installed. At the public hearing, the Committee queried the need for the proposed weighbridge. Following consideration of subsequent information provided by the Department of Defence, the Committee are satisfied that this installation is justified.

41. *Fire protection provisions* Fire detection systems installed in accordance with Australian Standard 1670 will be provided to all main buildings. Light beam smoke detectors will be used in warehouses and smoke or thermal detectors, or a combination of these, will be used elsewhere, dependent upon the construction and use of the individual building or section.

42. Each building will be equipped with a fire indicator board and an area fire indicator console will be installed in the Naval Police post. All fire detection and automatic fire sprinkler systems together with manual (break glass) alarms will be connected thereto.

43. Manual call points will be installed at each exit from individual buildings.

44. An automatic fire suppression system, appropriate for the goods being stored, will be installed in the flammable store. Automatic fire sprinkler protection will be installed in warehouses nos 1, 2, and 4, the vehicle service centre, the supply centre service building and the Army workshop and servicing facility building. No sprinkler installations are proposed for warehouses Nos 3 and 5, which will house stores in compactus shelving, nor at this stage in the supply support store or for the southern two bays of warehouse No. 1, which area is proposed for storage of steel plate and other heavy items with low fire risk. All sprinkler systems will be designed in accordance with the requirements of Australian Standard CA 16 covering such installations.

45. To provide adequate water pressures and flows for the operation of sprinklers and hydrants, provision will be made for the fire booster pumps to be started automatically upon a drop in pressure in any of the fire sprinkler systems or upon the operation of a manual call station.

46. Additional hydrants will be provided where there are deficiencies in the present installation and small bore hose reels will be installed to give complete coverage of all buildings.

47. Smoke vents and smoke curtains are to be provided where required.

48. Fire protection provisions proposed have been discussed with the fire prevention section of the N.S.W. Fire Brigade, who consider them satisfactory.

49. *Civil services.* The existing road system, which provides access to all present buildings, is in reasonable condition and only minor repairs are proposed to bring it to a standard to accommodate stores vehicles.

50. The existing staff car park facilities are very poor and light flexible pavement reconstruction is proposed, to provide a minimum acceptable standard. On completion, parking will be available for approximately 450 employees' cars.

51. New access and loading areas will be provided for the new flammable, acid and gas store. A portion of the access road will be used as a test track for Army vehicles undergoing road tests.

52. A new vehicle park will be provided to the west of the Army workshop for Army vehicles awaiting repairs. A new heavy duty parking area adjacent to the traffic control office will provide space for parking and marshalling heavy stores vehicles.

53. *Fencing.* Existing fencing is to be replaced or restored where necessary, so that a minimum 2.4 m high manproof barrier exists around the site. New internal manproof fencing will be provided for Army vehicle repair parks. Staff car parks will be separated from the site by a 2.4 m high manproof fence, of which some already exists.

54. *Landscaping.* At present the site presents a poor appearance when viewed from surrounding streets. A limited landscaping scheme will provide a screen from surroundings, and will also help to create a more pleasant atmosphere on site and furnish shade and protection.

55. *Committee's conclusions.* The Committee recommend the work outlined in this reference.

56. *Environmental aspects.* The environmental aspects of the use of this site for defence purposes were considered during the Government review of possible alternative uses of the property and the proposal was exempted from further environmental review.

PROGRAM

57. The Department of Defence proposes to occupy various areas progressively and the work plan will be arranged accordingly. It is expected that the whole of the work could be completed in approximately four years.

ESTIMATE OF COST

58. The estimated cost of the work when referred to the Committee was \$14.2m made up as follows:

	\$
Building Work	3 500 000
Electrical services	500 000
Mechanical services	3 000 000
Civil Works	3 700 000
Fire protection	1 800 000
Roof replacement and main- tenance	1 700 000
	14 200 000

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

59. The summary of recommendations and conclusions of the Committee is set out below. Alongside each is shown the paragraph in the report to which it refers.

	<i>Paragraph</i>
1. There is a need for more spacious and centralised storage facilities for the navy to enable the employment of modern cost saving and warehousing techniques	14
2. There is a need for enlarged, centralised premises for the army workshop and servicing facility to enable it to develop its full capability	14
3. The proposed redevelopment of the Zetland complex will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the navy supply organisation and the army's Sydney workshop company	25
4. The committee recommend the work outlined in this reference	55
5. The estimated cost of the work when referred to the committee was \$14.2m	58

C. R. KELLY
Chairman

Parliamentary Standing Committee
on Public Works
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.
19 August 1976.

