

**Stewart, Duncan MR 1**

**From:** Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 March 2010 8:30  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** FW: Underground Building Condell Park [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Categories:** UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

s47F

I should have added that if you require any further information the appropriate point of contact is Mr Andrew Smith, Assistant Secretary, Property Branch, Department of Finance and Deregulation, Canberra.

Regards

Duncan

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**From:** Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 March 2010 08:27  
**To:** s47F  
**Subject:** RE: Underground Building Condell Park [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

s47F

We are in receipt of of correspondence signed by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation that advises that "the Commonwealth does not own or have any proprietary interest in the land or bunker at Condell Park".

Regards

Duncan Stewart

Acting Assistant Director Property Disposals  
Property Disposals, Sydney, Defence Support Group

Ph: (02) 9393 3660 Fax: 9393 3785

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**From:** s47F [mailto:s47F]  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 March 2010 15:36  
**To:** Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Subject:** Underground Building Condell Park

Hi Duncan,

As per our conversation this afternoon, I am enquiring into the ownership of the underground building on

8/03/2010

253

land located on the corner of Edgar and Marion Street Condell Park, Local Government Area Bankstown. The underground structure is the former Air Defence Headquarters Sydney (commonly referred to as No. 1 Fighter Sector Headquarters).

Regards,

s47F [redacted]  
Listings Officer  
NSW Heritage Branch  
ph: 9873-8537

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This message is intended for the addressee named and may contain confidential/p:  
Views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, and are not  
You should scan any attached files for viruses.  
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252



**THE HON LINDSAY TANNER MP**  
Minister for Finance and Deregulation  
Member for Melbourne

REF: B10/109

The Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



*Mike*  
Dear Dr Kelly

Thank you again for your letter of 28 October 2009, concerning representations from the Member for Blaxland, the Hon Jason Clare MP to the Minister for Defence on behalf of Mr Luke Nicholls, General Manager of Bankstown City Council, regarding the former World War II bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown NSW.

As mentioned in my earlier reply of 21 December 2009, further investigation was required to clarify legal ownership of, and interest in, the bunker site. My Department has now completed its investigation and has concluded that the Commonwealth does not own or have any proprietary interest in the land or bunker at Condell Park.

If officers from the Department of Defence require any further information, they are welcome to contact Mr Andrew Smith, Assistant Secretary, Property Branch, Department of Finance and Deregulation on (02) 6215 2682.

Thank you again for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

*Lindsay Tanner*  
Lindsay Tanner

08 FEB 2010

248

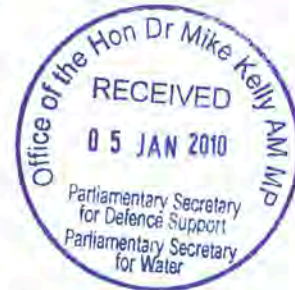




# THE HON LINDSAY TANNER MP

Minister for Finance and Deregulation  
Member for Melbourne

The Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



*Mike*  
Dear Dr Kelly

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2009 concerning representations from the Member for Blaxland, Mr Jason Clare MP to the Minister for Defence on behalf of Mr Luke Nicholls, General Manager of Bankstown Council regarding the former World War II bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown NSW.

I understand from Mr Nicholls' letter, that he is seeking assistance to resolve several issues for the possible reuse of the bunker site. Further investigation is required to clarify legal ownership of the bunker site; this has been difficult due to its location underground.

I would hope to provide you with a more detailed reply, once the legal research has been completed.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

*Lindsay Tanner*  
Lindsay Tanner

21 DEC 2009

242



File pls. s22  
s22  
6/11

**The Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP**  
**Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support**

Mr Jason Clare MP  
Member for Blaxland  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

28 OCT 2009

Dear Mr Clare *Jason*

Thank you for your representation of 17 September 2009 to the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon John Faulkner, on behalf of Mr Luke Nicholls, General Manager of Bankstown City Council, concerning the Council's interest in a World War II bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown. As this matter falls within my portfolio responsibilities, your correspondence has been passed to me for response.

I am advised investigations by Defence indicate that the WWII bunker at Condell Park was disposed of in 1977. The predecessor agencies to the Department of Finance and Deregulation were responsible for the disposal of the site and any conditions that were associated with the sale are now managed by that Department. I have referred this matter to the Minister for Finance and Deregulation.

I hope this information will be of assistance to you and Mr Nicholls.

Yours sincerely

**MIKE KELLY**

(241)



**The Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP**  
**Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support**

The Hon Lindsay Tanner MP  
Minister for Finance and Deregulation  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

28 OCT 2009

Dear Minister *Lindsay*

I write concerning the attached representation of 17 September 2009 from the Member for Blaxland, Mr Jason Clare MP to the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon John Faulkner, on behalf of Mr Luke Nicholls, General Manager of Bankstown City Council, regarding a World War II bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown.

I understand this property was disposed of in 1977, during which period Defence was not responsible for the disposal of land. I understand that the predecessor agencies to your Department dealt with property disposal in 1977 and I request that your Department clarify the issues raised by Mr Clare MP. I have referred this matter to you for your Department's action.

Yours sincerely

**MIKE KELLY**  
Encl

240





Jason Clare MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BLAXLAND

17 September 2009

REFERRED

23 SEP 2009

To the Office of the Parliamentary  
Secretary for Defence Support

Senator the Hon John Faulkner  
Minister for Defence  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Minister

I have been approached by Mr Luke Nicholls, General Manager of Bankstown City Council regarding the Second World War (WW2) Bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown.

The bunker was constructed during the later part of the War (1943-45). The two storey underground concrete facility was used by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) as their No 1 fighter Sector Head Quarters (1FSHQ) base and the Allied Forces' command post for the south-west Pacific.

In 2006 Bankstown Council investigated the possibility of restoring the bunker for suitable reuse if the following issues could be resolved:

- Determining the legal ownership of the Bunker site;
- Determining access rights to the Bunker site from public roads; and
- Obtaining commitment from other stakeholders to be involved in restoration.

Please find enclosed correspondence from Bankstown Council outlining the difficulties they have encountered in trying to establish the ownership of the property where the bunker is situated.

Any assistance that you may be able to provide in establishing the ownership of the land and any support for restoration of this historical and significant landmark would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Jason Clare MP  
MEMBER FOR BLAXLAND

iw

Office: Suite 7, Level 1, 400 Chapel Road, Bankstown  
Mail: PO Box 153, Bankstown NSW 1885

Phone: (02) 9790 2466 ■ Fax: (02) 9790 0770 ■ Email: [jason.clare.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:jason.clare.mp@aph.gov.au)





09 SEP 2009

9 September 2009

The Hon. Jason Clare MP  
Member for Blaxland  
Parliamentary Secretary for Employment  
P.O. Box 153  
BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Dear Mr. Clare

**Second World War (WW 2) Bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown**

As you may be aware Council has been exploring the possibility of restoring the Second World War (WW2) bunker located at Condell Park, Bankstown.

By the way of background, the bunker, located at the corner of Marion Street and Edgar Street, Condell Park, was constructed circa 1943. During the later part of the War (1943-45), the two storey underground concrete facility was used by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) as their No 1 Fighter Sector Head Quarters (1FSHQ) base and the Allied Forces' Command post for the south-west Pacific.

Attached is copy of a recent report to Council, including information on the bunker, its post War history and potential options for restoration.

In April 1971, the then Commonwealth Minister for Housing announced that the Commonwealth would offer the underground facility to Bankstown Council for community use and that War Service homes would be built on the remainder of the 9 acre site. It now appears that the handing over of the bunker site to Council did not eventuate. The historic bunker is now buried beneath an open space, surrounded by clusters of War Service homes built during 1974-75.

Council's 2006 investigation on the possibility of restoring the WW2 Bunker for suitable reuse revealed that this is likely to be feasible only if the following issues could be resolved:

1. Determining the legal ownership of the Bunker site.
2. Determining access rights to the Bunker site from public roads
3. Obtaining commitment from other stakeholders to be involved in the restoration.

Council also observed that the time and resources necessary to refit the facility to its Wartime condition would itself be significant and unaffordable for Council alone, unless a multi-stakeholder initiative can be ensured. The possibility of



Commonwealth, the ADF, the State Government and philanthropic involvement needs to be explored. Accordingly, at its Ordinary Meeting of 21 November 2006, Council resolved to:

*Liaise with Commonwealth and State and try to ascertain their interest in heritage listing of the bunker and a proposal for a major restoration of the bunker as a public facility.*

During 2007, Council wrote to the RAAF Head Quarters, Office of Air Force History, the Secretary Department of Defence, the Australian Heritage Council, the Royal Australian Historical Society, NSW Heritage Council and other relevant Commonwealth, State agencies and peak bodies to ascertain their interest in a project to restore the historical bunker.

The Secretary, Department of Defence referred the matter to the RAAF HQs for consideration by the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee (RHAC) to ascertain whether RAAF or the ADF has an interest in the project.

In November 2008, the NSW Department of Lands advised Council that during the War the site was acquired for purposes of the Commonwealth, as notified in the Government Gazette of 9 August 1945. Since this time the site has not reverted to the Crown as Crown Land within the meaning of the Crown Lands Act, 1989 and as such the NSW Department of Lands has no further records relating to this parcel of land.

Accordingly, Council advised the RAAF HQs of this reply from the NSW Department of Lands regarding the ownership of the land where the bunker is buried.

In July 2009, Council received a reply from the Air Force HQs, which advised that the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee (RHAC) had given due consideration to Council's request and decided that Defence support for restoration of the bunker should be conditional upon Bankstown Council determining the legal ownership of the land and developing a viable restoration project.

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The RHAC also advised that should a bunker restoration project proceed, support from the Department of Defence would be limited to the provision of historical research assistance from the Office of Air Force History.

Although the ownership of the open space above the underground bunker appears to be still with the Commonwealth, with the adjacent strata plans having the right of way/easement over the actual bunker site, there seems to be some uncertainty about this among Commonwealth agencies.

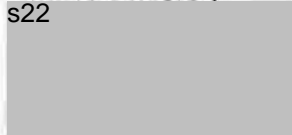
At its meeting of 25 August 2009, Council resolved to seek your assistance "to clarify the ownership of this property [the bunker site] with the relevant Commonwealth Departments."

(237)

Council would appreciate your assistance in resolving this matter with the relevant Commonwealth Departments and in getting Commonwealth actively involved in the restoration of this WW2 historical site, particularly with a view to financial support, given that Council could not proceed with the project within its own resources.

Yours sincerely

s22



**General Manager**

Attached: Copy of 25 August 2009 Council Report on the WW2 Bunker

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(236)

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## Report of the General Manager - 25th August, 2009

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ITEM 5.5            Second World War (WW2) Bunker at Condell Park  
FILE                BCC/000399/PT2  
AUTHOR            Governance and Financial Services

### ISSUE

To advise Council of our review of the possibility of restoring the Second World War (WW2) Bunker located at Condell Park.

### BACKGROUND

#### WW2 Bunker at Condell Park

The Second World War (WW 2) bunker, located at the corner of Marion Street and Edgar Street, Condell Park, was constructed circa 1943. During the later part of the War (1943-45), the two storey underground concrete facility was used by the Royal Australian Airforce (RAAF) as their No 1 Fighter Sector Head Quarters (1FSHQ) base and the Allied Forces' Command post for the south-west Pacific. Attached (Attachment A) is a Fact Sheet on the bunker compiled by Council officers, which includes information on the site, its structure, post War history and potential options for restoration.

The Bunker could arguably be described as of some historic significance for Australia and an icon of Bankstown's War time history. Consequently, there has been some interest in restoring the facility for a suitable reuse, for example as a museum or a similar public facility.

In 1971, the Department of Defence handed over the 9 acre site to the Commonwealth Department of Housing for developing War Service homes. It was about this time the underground facility, kept secured since the end of the War, was rediscovered in an intact condition. Unfortunately, soon afterwards the historic facility was burned out. It was either an act of vandalism or a fire lit by homeless people who were known to squat there at the time.

In April 1971, the then Commonwealth Minister for Housing announced that the Commonwealth would offer the underground facility to Bankstown Council for community use and that War Service homes would be built on the remainder of the 9 acre site. It now appears that the handing over of the bunker site to Council did not eventuate. Therefore the ownership appears to be still with the Commonwealth, with the adjacent strata plans having the right of way/easement over the actual bunker site. The historic bunker is now buried beneath an open space, surrounded by clusters of War Service homes built during 1974-75.

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Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25th August, 2009



Later in the year, in November 2007, Council wrote to the Secretary, Department of Defence and as a result the matter was referred back to the RAAF HQs for consideration by the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee to ascertain whether RAAF or the ADF has an interest in the project.

As the Commonwealth Department of Defence and the RAAF was uncertain about the ownership of the bunker site, in December 2007 and again in October 2008, Council wrote to the Director General, NSW Department of Lands to ascertain the ownership of the open space at the site under which the bunker is believed to be situated.

In November 2008, Council received a reply from the NSW Department of Lands (Attachment B) advising that during the War the site was acquired for purposes of the Commonwealth, as notified in the Government Gazette of 9 August 1945. Since this time the site has not reverted to the Crown as Crown Land within the meaning of the Crown Lands Act, 1989 and as such the NSW Department of Lands has no further records relating to this parcel of land.

In December 2008, Council advised the RAAF HQs of this reply from the NSW Department of Land regarding the ownership of the land where the bunker is buried.

In July 2009, Council received a reply from the Department of Defence (copy in Attachment C). The Department advised that the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee (RHAC) has given due consideration to Council's request and decided that Defence support for restoration of the bunker should be conditional upon Bankstown Council determining the legal ownership of the land and developing a viable restoration project.

The RHAC also advised that should a bunker restoration project proceed, support from the Department of Defence would be limited to the provision of historical research assistance from the Office of Air Force History.

#### **No option available for potential restoration of the WW2 Bunker**

The replies received from the NSW Department of Lands and the RAAF HQs hardly leave Council with any viable option to proceed with the restoration of the WW2 Bunker at Condell Park.

Although the open space above the underground bunker still appears to be Commonwealth land, the surrounding strata plans have right of way/easement over this, thus making any future arrangement for entry/egress to and from the bunker hard to resolve, in a way suitable for a public facility.

1. Council note the outcome of the review of the possibility of restoring the Second World War (WW2) Bunker located at Condell Park.
2. The matter be referred to the Heritage Committee for further consideration.
3. Council write to the Federal Member, Mr Jason Clare, MP seeking his assistance to clarify the ownership of this property with the relevant Commonwealth Departments.

- CARRIED.



## ATTACHMENT A

### World War 2 Bunker and RAAF Sector HQ at Condell Park, Bankstown, South-western Sydney.

#### Location of the Bunker

The World War 2 bunker, constructed circa 1943, is located at the corner of Marion Street and Edgar Street, Bankstown and is buried beneath an open space, surrounded by clusters of War Services homes (*Photos in Attachment -A*). In the past, the site used to be known as the bushland of Black Charlie's Hill. The site was originally owned by the Bankstown Hospital Trust and was later on acquired by the Commonwealth. The site was selected for the underground RAAF and Allied Command Post because of its proximity to the Bankstown Airport and the relay stations around the area.

#### Description of the Bunker

During the war, this bunker was used by the No. 1 Fighter Sector HQ, RAAF as the Allied Command Post for the entire South Pacific operation. There was a code room, radio transmitter room, kitchen, buffet (dining) area, male and female bathrooms, bedrooms and the main operation hall had a huge wall map of the Southwest Pacific Area.

From the available drawings (floor plans and sections) and photographs of the interior, it appears that the bunker itself is a two-storey facility - a basement and a ground floor each 9 feet (2.75m) high - measuring 117 feet 8.75 inches by 53 feet 9.5 inches (approx 35.9m x 16.4m) [*Attachment-B*]. The walls were constructed from brickwork approximately two feet (60cm) thick, with floors and ceilings of reinforced concrete. The roof of the bunker was constructed of three feet (91cm) thick concrete to make it bombproof. There were two exhaust air stacks and an air intake stack protruding above ground.

The underground facility housed an extensive communication system, which was reportedly linked to a control tower at Bass Hill. The bunker had an emergency power plant, air conditioning and 50 telephones installed.

#### A Brief Post-war History: Rediscovered and Burned Out in 1970s

After the war, the facility was closed and was assigned a caretaker for three years. At the end of this period, the facility was secured. Thereafter, the bunker complex had remained forgotten for nearly 30 years, except that in 1965 the facility was briefly occupied by the Navy in connection with the naval exercises in the Pacific. In 1971, the nine-acre site was handed over to the Commonwealth Department of Housing for developing War Services homes.

It was about this time that the existence of the underground headquarters was rediscovered in 1971 and the whole facility including all equipment, telephones and furniture were found to be intact [*Photo in Attachment C*].

On Wednesday the 21 April 1971, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Daily Telegraph and The Torch (local newspaper) simultaneously published news items disclosing the existence of the underground RAAF HQs and Allied Command Post.



## **Access to the Facility**

Currently, the entrance and air vents are buried beneath the ground and are not identifiable. Reportedly, the main entrance to the bunker is now buried below the backyard of one of the villas. s47F [REDACTED], mentioned above, even had named the owner of this home in his 1994 article. It may be possible to explore and identify the location of the entrance from the copies of plans (construction drawings) available and information from people who reportedly entered the bunker in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

As already mentioned, without further research, it cannot be immediately confirmed whether the actual bunker site (the vacant land) forms part of the adjoining strata plans or is still Commonwealth/public land. The legal ownership of the open space and access rights from public roads are primary issues that need to be investigated and sorted out first, before any option for restoration and reuse can be effectively considered.

## **Potential and Options for Restoration**

From the copies of plans and other construction drawings available, the underground Command Post bunker appears to be a professionally designed and robustly constructed facility. Although furniture, soundproof wall claddings, ceilings, and artifacts were burned out, its concrete and brick shell is expected to still retain its structural integrity and soundness. So, it is likely to be feasible to restore the facility for suitable reuse, for example, as a museum or a similar public facility, subject to the ability to provide legal and safe access and egress.

When it was rediscovered in 1971, its interior was completely intact and a series of photographs taken at that time is still available, and restoration of the interior to its wartime look is considered still technically feasible. But this may be an affordable option only if the Commonwealth, State and other stakeholders are convinced of its historic significance and are willing to commit themselves to a restoration project.

A less expensive option will be to get the structural integrity and safety of the burned out shell confirmed by experts and then use it as-it-is as a historical facility or a compatible tourism or community related purpose, including a WW2 memorabilia museum or a light and sound WW2 history show. For example, in Mallacoota near Melbourne, local RSL and Historical Society converted a WW2 RAAF bunker at Mallacoota's airstrip into a military museum. Sappers from the Australian Army carried out the restoration work.

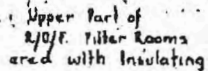
In Darwin, the East Point bunker where the army planned top end defence strategy during WW2 has been converted into a military museum. In Coffs Harbour, the City Council and the local Rotary Club joined hands and restored a derelict WW2 bunker to house the Australia's largest original cartoon collection, known as Bunker Cartoon Gallery. Only minor alterations were made to ensure the historical integrity of the structure was preserved.

## **The Way Forward**

Definitely, the first step will be to research and gather more information about the ownership of the actual bunker site and feasibility of public access to it, if needed by acquiring use of the site from the Commonwealth and/or entering into an arrangement with the adjoining property owners, if that is feasible.

Another basic step is to go for a preliminary engineering, heritage and conservation assessment of the site. This may be followed by an initiative to get the site heritage listed. This status will facilitate involvement of Commonwealth and other stakeholders - including, for example, Australian Defence Forces, RSL, philanthropic organisations and the media - in the provision of funding, expertise and community support to help the project take off. For example, in 2006, the President of the Bankstown Sports Club had expressed interest in taking a proposal to his board to contribute to the restoration of the bunker.

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SEC 0.15.

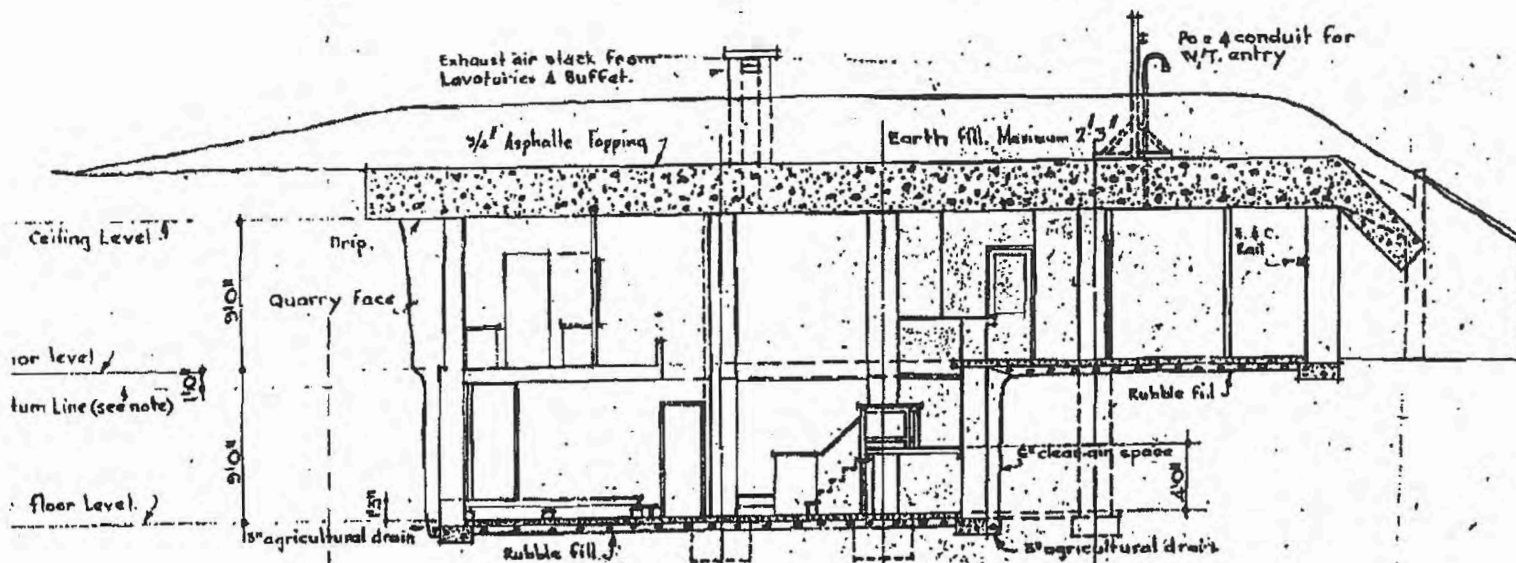
STRUCTUR. DETAILS.

ADMIN. & R. T. 1. SITE PLAN.

42/4

BASEMENT PLAN.





SECTION E-F

220



EXC07/953

Department of Lands

BANKSTOWN CITY COUNCIL	
27 NOV 2008	
REFERENCE NO.	SAG/68
EXC07/953	

Land Administration & Management  
Property & Spatial Information

Mr G Brown  
Group Manager  
Strategy and Governance  
Bankstown City Council  
PO Box 8  
BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Dear Mr Brown,

I refer to your representations to Mr Warwick Watkins, Director General, Department of Lands concerning the status of land at Bankstown under which a World War 2 bunker is situated. The Director General has asked me to investigate your request and respond on his behalf. I apologise for the delay in replying.

The land on which the bunker is situated originally formed part of a 50 acre grant for an estate in fee simple to Ouseley Conde. The site was subsequently acquired for purposes of the Commonwealth notified in the Government Gazette of 9 August, 1945.

Subsequent to its alienation the land has not reverted to the Crown as Crown land within the meaning of the Crown Lands Act, 1989 and as such this Office has no further records relating to this parcel of land.

Yours faithfully

S22

John Filocamo  
Program Manager  
Land Administration  
Sydney Region



103400

Ref: ASPS/OUT/2009/202  
Requested

UNCLASSIFIED



Australian Government  
Department of Defence



## MINISTERIAL REPRESENTATION

To: Dr Kelly

Timing: Routine

Required by:

Reason:

05 NOV 2009

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, DepSec DS, FASMSPA, HI, HDSO, RD DS-NNSW, SCA-DSG.

### Ownership and Access Rights to a WWII bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown NSW.

#### Recommendation:

That you:

- i. sign the attached letter to Mr Jason Clare MP, Member for Blaxland advising that the matter has been referred to the Hon Lindsay Tanner MP, Minister for Finance and Deregulation.

SIGNED / ~~NOT SIGNED~~

- ii. sign the attached letter to the Hon Lindsay Tanner MP, Minister for Finance and Deregulation.

SIGNED / ~~NOT SIGNED~~

#### Key Points:

1. Bankstown City Council has previously raised this issue with Defence. Investigations by Defence indicate that the WWII bunker at Condell Park was sold by the Defence Service Homes Corporation, NSW in 1977.
2. The sale and redevelopment of Bankstown Airport was managed by the Department of Finance and Deregulation (and its predecessors). In December 2007 this matter was referred to the Department of Finance and Deregulation. A copy of correspondence (ASPS OUT 2007 227) at Attachment A refers.
3. As this land is not owned by Defence any queries concerning the current ownership of the site will need to be directed to the Department of Finance and Deregulation.

#### Sensitivity:

4. Nil.

#### Resources:

5. Nil.

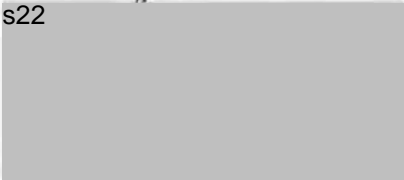
226


**Consultation:**

6. Nil.

**Attachments:**

- A. Copy of correspondence from Assistant Secretary Property Services to Bankstown City Council dated 11 December 2007 – ASPS OUT 2007 227.
- B. Draft letter to the Mr Jason Clare MP, Member for Blaxland.
- C. Draft letter to the Hon Lindsay Tanner MP, Minister for Finance and Deregulation.

Approved By: <b>Michael Healy</b> Assistant Secretary Property Services Defence Support Group Infrastructure Division 19 October 2009	s22 
Contact Officer: Michael Healy	Phone: (02) 6266 8650

s22  <b>MIKE KELLY</b> 29/10/09
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(225)





**Australian Government**

**Department of Defence**  
**Defence Support Group**

Michael Healy  
Assistant Secretary  
Property Services  
BP3-2-A001  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Michael.Healy@defence.gov.au  
Tel: 02 6266 8490  
Fax: 02 6266 8276

ASPS/OUT/2007/227

Mr Greg Brown  
Group Manager  
Strategy and Governance  
Bankstown City Council  
PO Box 8  
BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Dear Mr Brown

**WW 2 Bunker in Bankstown: RAAF's No.1 Fighter Sector HQ (1943-'45)**

Thank you for your letter of 12 November 2007 to Mr Nick Warner, Secretary Department of Defence. This matter has been referred to the Department of Finance and Deregulation who will contact you to resolve the issue.

The contact person in the Department of Finance and Deregulation is Dr Guy Verney, who can be contacted on 02 6215 2222.

I trust this matter can be expediently resolved to the satisfaction of both Bankstown City Council and the Commonwealth.

Yours sincerely

s22

Assistant Secretary  
Property Services

// December 2007

224

Defence FOI 090/20/21  
Item 4\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\* TX REPORT \*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

TRANSMISSION OK

TX/RX NO	3974	
CONNECTION TEL		062668294
SUBADDRESS		
CONNECTION ID		
ST. TIME	28/01 12:07	
USAGE T	04'24	
PGS. SENT	16	
RESULT	OK	



Australian Government

Department of Defence

Defence Support Group

**Facsimile**

Duncan Stewart  
Acting Assistant Director  
Property Disposals  
Level 19, 270 Pitt Street  
Defence Plaza  
Department of Defence  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
[duncan.stewart1@defence.gov.au](mailto:duncan.stewart1@defence.gov.au)

Tel: 02 9377 3660  
Fax: 02 9377 3005

To	DAVID CARMAN
Facsimile	6266 8294
Telephone	
email	

From	Duncan STEWART
Facsimile	(02) 9377 3005
Telephone	(02) 9377 3660
email	<a href="mailto:duncan.stewart1@defence.gov.au">duncan.stewart1@defence.gov.au</a>

Subject			BANKSTOWN - WWII BUNKER		
Reference	YOUR EMAIL OF 27/1/08	Date	28 JAN 2008	Pages	(including cover): 16

Instructions or comments:

David

As discussed, following pages show the link to AIRCDRE Green, & response to Bankstown City Council dated 11 December 2007.

If there are any gaps, please let me know & I'll see what I can do

**Peaker, Nicola MS**

**From:** French, David MR 1  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 15 July 2008 8:21  
**To:** Peaker, Nicola MS  
**Cc:** Firkins, Isabel MS  
**Subject:** FW: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** Letter to Mr Greg Brown - 11 Dec 2008 - WW2 Bunker Bankstown.pdf  
**fldAfterOnSend:** UNCLASSIFIED ROUTINE  
**fldClassification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**fldComposed:** sent  
**fldPmNs:** gov.au  
**fldPmVer:** 2005.6  
**fldPrecedence:** ROUTINE  
**fldPrevClassification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**fldVersion:** V1.0.9

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Nicola,

This is the other project I wanted you to look into. Isabel might be able to provide some assistance in my absence. We are waiting for any response to the email below - but I suggest we will be asked to carry the matter.

Can you speak with Isabel and 'investigate' where the file might be hiding - we think it has been misplaced.

Thanks

**Dave French**  
 Director  
 Property Disposals

Tel. (02) 6266 8017

---

**From:** French, David MR 1  
**Sent:** Friday, 11 July 2008 10:20  
**To:** Green, Dennis AIRCDRE 1  
**Cc:** Clifton, Alison MS; Lacey, Graham MR; Holcroft, Lorraine MS; Weston, Terry MR  
**Subject:** RE: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

AIRCDRE Green,

In late 2007 this matter was referred to the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DoFD) for action as the last "owner" of the site appeared to have been the then Commonwealth Department of Housing. Any disposal/transfer action of Commonwealth property around that time would have been handled by an agency now subsumed by DoFD - the former Dept of Administrative Services or the Australian Property Group.

ASPS wrote to Council advising them of the DoFD point of contact (copy attached). To date I have been unable to locate either a response from Council or DoFD on this issue.

15/07/2008



It would appear to me that the issue of ownership remains unresolved, therefore so do the respective heritage obligations for preserving the site under either Commonwealth or State legislation.

Might I suggest that the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee make contact with Council to determine what, if any, action has taken place. If nothing has happened it would be useful if Council could provide the Lot and Section number for the property and a copy of the registered title from their Lands Titles Office. The title should establish legal ownership. If no title is able to be located the Commonwealth will need to seek legal opinion as to the way forward. This matter would need to be discussed further between Defence and DoFD to determine who should carry the action.

Hope this assists.

**Dave French**  
A/ASPS

Tel. (02) 6266 8017

---

**From:** Lacey, Graham MR  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 July 2008 17:21  
**To:** French, David MR 1  
**Cc:** Clifton, Alison MS  
**Subject:** WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Hi Dave

On 12 Nov 07 Bankstown City Council wrote to the Secretary seeking to ascertain Defence's interest in joining with Council and State agencies in preserving a WWII bunker which is located at Condell Park. The matter was referred by DepSec DS to HI, who subsequently passed it to ASPS for action.

I understand from speaking to Mike that you handled the issue and it was referred to DoFD (Guy Verney) as the land was not Defence. Mike's recollection is that DoFD refused to accept responsibility for the issue and passed it back to Defence, but he can't recall what happened with it from there.

ASEP has now been approached by AFHQ (AIRCDRE Dennis Green) for help on this matter. This approach is probably the result of him being contacted by Council because it hasn't heard anything back from Defence. Given PS Br past involvement in the matter could you contact AIRCDRE Green and discuss the matter with him

I have some paperwork on the matter if you need it

Thanks

**Graham Lacey**  
Director Estate Strategic Planning  
Estate Planning Branch  
BP3-1-A029  
Tel: (02)6266 8092  
Mob: s22 ( )  
Fax: (02)6266 8287  
Email: graham.lacey@defence.gov.au

206

15/07/2008



**Australian Government**

**Department of Defence**  
Defence Support Group

Michael Healy  
Assistant Secretary  
Property Services  
BP3-2-A001  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Michael.Healy@defence.gov.au  
Tel. 02 6266 8490  
Fax. 02 6266 8276

ASPS/OUT/2007/227

Mr Greg Brown  
Group Manager  
Strategy and Governance  
Bankstown City Council  
PO Box 8  
BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Dear Mr Brown

**WW 2 Bunker in Bankstown: RAAF's No.1 Fighter Sector HQ (1943-'45)**


Thank you for your letter of 12 November 2007 to Mr Nick Warner, Secretary Department of Defence. This matter has been referred to the Department of Finance and Deregulation who will contact you to resolve the issue.

The contact person in the Department of Finance and Deregulation is Dr Guy Verney, who can be contacted on 02 6215 2222.

I trust this matter can be expediently resolved to the satisfaction of both Bankstown City Council and the Commonwealth.

Yours sincerely

s22

  
**Michael Healy**  
Assistant Secretary  
Property Services

// December 2007

(205)



**AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS**  
Directorate of Coordination - Air Force

<b>To:</b> <b>ATTN: Alison Clifton</b> <b>ASEP</b>	<b>From:</b> <b>AIRCDRE Green</b> <b>AFHQ</b> <b>Department of Defence</b> <b>CANBERRA ACT 2600</b>	
<b>Fax:</b> 68287	<b>Fax:</b> (02) 626 57260	
<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> (02) 626 56239	
<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b>		
<b>Reference:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 1 Jul 08	<b>Pages (including cover):</b> 3

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**Instructions or comments:**

254





# AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS

# COPY

FOLIO
51
REFERS to FOLIO

R1-6-C002 Department of Defence, CANBERRA ACT 2600, AUSTRALIA

 OCAF/OUT/2007/2017  
 AFHQ 2007/

Mr Sayed Chowdhury  
 Political Analyst  
 Strategy and Policy Unit  
 Bankstown City Council  
 PO Box 8  
 BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

Dear Mr Chowdhury

Thank you for providing a comprehensive outline of the history of the WWII Bunker located at Bankstown. I am writing to advise you that the matter of the WWII bunker and Command Post in Bankstown is being considered by the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee to ascertain whether RAAF or the ADF has an interest in the project.

Once the committee has discussed the matter we will advise you of our decision.

s22

D.G. GREEN, AM  
 Air Commodore  
 Acting Deputy Chief of Air Force

Tel: (02) 6265 5478

8 November 2007

- 275M
- NofA Telecons 1230-1315.
1. 500000 advises Mac has not been a meeting of RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee
  2. ACPMPT Richardson not aware of issue
  3. ACPMPT Innes not aware of issue
  4. Macdonald Maher passed matter to OSC for action.
  5. Macdonald Terry Morris (facilities area) not aware
  6. Alison Clifton AS Estate Planning x 68002, 0404367100
  7. Terry Weston ASPE 68051 - on leave. PA recalls matter will attempt to track info.
  8. Sharon Mitchell @ to Alison Clifton x 68005.
  9. Alison Clifton - trying to track what has happened requested fax of available info to ext 68257.
- 303M
- 1 Jul 9.

263

Covering UNCLASSIFIED

 **COPY**

FOLIO

51

REFERENCE FOLIO

**OCAF INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE****CDR Reference**

Book: .....

Serial: .....

Folio: .....

Document ID:

OCAF/IN/2007/4992

Object ID:

eR358756

Date Registered:

5 November 2007

Registered by:

Rudnicki, Danielle (Miss)(AFHQ DCOORD-AF)

Document Title: World War II Bunker at Condell Park, Bankstown, South Western Sydney

Addressee: A/DCAF Through DCOORD - AF

Originator: DDCRM

External ID:

Filed On:

File Name: OCAF 11. Nov 07

Distribution

Name / Appointment	Code	Comments
<del>A/DCAF</del>	E	
① Duplant Mahon	A	Sec pasant
② B/f to DINT 14 Dec	.	① Review OSC/DCPANT Mahon progress ② RANT Marking Cancel.

A - Action I - Information C - Comments D - Draft Reply G - Discuss E - For Signature F - File

Please return this slip to ..... when you have completed action on this document

Document ID: OCAF/IN/2007/4992

Object ID: eR358756

Filed On: .....

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**CDR Reference**

Book: .....

Serial: .....

Folio: .....

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OCAF/IN/2007/4992

**DECISION BRIEF FOR A/DCAF****WORLD WAR II BUNKER AT CONDELL PARK, BANKSTOWN, SOUTH WESTERN SYDNEY****Background**

Mr Sayed Chowdhury, Political Analyst, strategy and Policy Unit from Bankstown City Council, has approached Air Force with some information about a WWII bunker. At its Ordinary Meetings of 24 October and 21 November 2006, Bankstown City Council resolved to explore the potential for preserving the site and to liaise with Commonwealth and State agencies to try to ascertain their interest in the project. An approach was made to the Office of Air Force History to ascertain the OAFH interest in the site. It was considered unwise for OAFH to give any expression of interest, as requested by Bankstown Council, in advance of consideration by the Defence Heritage Management section in CSIG and RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee.

Bankstown City Council is grappling with issues regarding long-term preservation and use of the site, and have identified Commonwealth/Defence interest as a critical element in resolving these questions. Specifically, when it comes to options for restoration, willingness to commit funding is a major consideration. Mr Chowdhury has sought advice from RAAF as to what support, if any, could be expected.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this brief is to provide A/DCAF with this information in order to determine a way ahead in relation to the responsibility for the restoration and funding for the WWII bunker.

**Discussion**

The World War II bunker is located at the corner of Marion Street and Edgar Street, Bankstown and is buried beneath the open space and surrounded by clusters of War Services homes (Photos at flag A). In the past, the site used to be known as the bushland of Black Charlie's Hill. The site was originally owned by the Bankstown Hospital Trust and was later on acquired by the Commonwealth. The site was selected for the underground RAAF and Allied Command Post because of its proximity to the airport and the relay stations around the area. The bunker was constructed circa 1943.

**Description of the Bunker**

It appears from the available drawings (floor plans and sections at flag B) and photographs of the interior that the bunker itself is a two-storey facility - a basement and a ground floor each 9 feet (2.75m) high - and measuring 117 feet 8.75 inches by 53 feet 9.5 inches (approx 35.9m x 16.4m). The walls were constructed from brickwork approximately two feet (60cm) thick, with floors and ceilings of reinforced concrete. The roof of the bunker was constructed of three feet (91cm) thick concrete to make it bombproof. There were two exhaust air stacks and an air intake stack protruding above ground.

The underground facility housed an extensive communication system, which was reportedly linked to a control tower at Bass Hill. The bunker had an emergency power plant, air conditioning and 50 telephones installed. During the war, this bunker was used by the No. 1 Fighter Sector HQ, RAAF as the Allied Command Post for the entire South Pacific operation. There was a code room, radio transmitter room, kitchen, buffet (dining) area, male and female bathrooms, bedrooms and the main operation hall had a huge wall map of the Southwest Pacific Area.

(201)



### A Brief Post-war History: Rediscovered and Burned Out in 1970s

After the war, the facility was closed and was assigned a caretaker for three years, at the end of this period the facility was secured. Thereafter, the bunker complex had remained forgotten for nearly 30 years, except that in 1965 the facility was briefly occupied by the Navy in connection with the naval exercises in the Pacific. In 1971, the nine-acre site was handed over to the Commonwealth Department of Housing for developing War Services homes.

It was about this time that the existence of the underground headquarters was rediscovered in 1971 and the whole facility including all equipment, telephones and furniture were found to be intact (flag C). On Wednesday the 21 April 1971, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Daily Telegraph and The Torch simultaneously published news items disclosing the existence of the underground headquarters.

According to a front-page report (*Underground RAAF HQ Offered to Council*) in The Torch dated the 28 April 1971, the then Commonwealth Minister for Housing had announced that the Commonwealth would offer the headquarters building to Bankstown Council for community use and War Services homes are to be built on the remainder of the property. A condition of the arrangement would be that the underground facility would not be touched and the underground structure area would be set aside as an open space. It now appears that negotiations for handing over the bunker site to Council did not eventuate.

The War Services homes were built at the site during 1974 -1975. It is not clear whether the remainder of the land directly above the bunker was definitely excluded from the surrounding development for eventual handing over to Council as promised. Further research is also needed to find out whether the vacant land on top of the bunker forms part of adjoining strata plans or is still Commonwealth owned.

A year or two after its rediscovery in 1971, the underground historic facility was burned out. It was either an act of vandalism or a fire lit by homeless people who were squatting there.

s47F [redacted], an adventurer, claimed in an article by him published in the Jan-Mar 1994 issue of The Corroboree (*Backyard adventure uncovers a wartime secret*) that in 1987 he was able to identify the entrance to the bunker buried in the backyard of one of the adjoining homes and, with the help of the owner, eventually had managed to dig up a hole in the ground and crawl inside the bunker through a 50cm diameter vent pipe.

He described the burned out facility as, "at least two storeys high and just a blackened shell with lots of rooms and passages running off at various levels...."

An Internet search shows that as late as January 1996 the bunker was entered and photographed by a group known as "Bunker Boyz". Photos on their website show their members inside the burnt-out but structurally intact facility. The entrance to the bunker was reportedly resealed following an incident around Christmas 1996 when the Police Rescue Squad was called in after some youths were seen leaving the tunnel.

### Historic Significance of the WW 2 Bunker

The WW 2 Bunker, which was the RAAF's No. 1 Fighter Sector HQ (1FSHQ) and Allied Command post for Southwest Pacific, is a large underground facility and could reasonably be described as being of historic significance to Australia and may be considered as an icon of Bankstown's war time history. According to the Australian Post (June 24, 1971):

200



*"...General Macarthur paid several visits to the base to study aircraft movements....when he was Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in the Pacific... It was the heart of our defence network where, in cooperation with the highest officers of Navy and Army, our bombers and fighters were controlled and manoeuvred in defence and attack against the enemy..."*

The 1FSHQ had first relocated from Sydney CBD to a picture theatre in Bankstown. Once the underground facility was constructed, they eventually relocated to the Condell Park bunker during the last years of the War (circa 1943). Although mentioned in the newspaper report above, there is no confirmation that General Macarthur came to Bankstown.

### **Access to the Facility**

Currently, the entrance and air vents are buried beneath the ground and are not identifiable. Reportedly, the main entrance to the bunker is now buried below the backyard of one of the villas. s47F mentioned above, even had named the owner of this home in his 1994 article. It may be possible to explore and identify the location of the entrance from the copies of plans (construction drawings) available and information from people who reportedly entered the bunker in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

As already mentioned, without further research, it cannot be immediately confirmed whether the actual bunker site (the vacant land) forms part of the adjoining strata plans or is still Commonwealth/public land. The legal ownership of the open space and access rights from public roads are primary issues that need to be investigated and sorted out first, before any option for restoration and reuse can be effectively considered.

### **Potential and Options for Restoration**

From the copies of plans and other construction drawings, the underground Command Post bunker appears to be a professionally designed and robustly constructed facility. Although furniture, soundproof wall claddings, ceilings, and artefacts were burned out, its concrete and brick shell is expected to still retain its structural integrity and soundness. It may be possible to restore the facility for suitable reuse, as a museum or a similar public facility, subject to the ability to provide legal and safe access and egress.

When it was rediscovered in the 1970s, its interior was completely intact and a series of photographs taken at that time is still available, and restoration of the interior to its war time look is considered still technically feasible. This would be an expensive option and as a significant historic project it would be likely to involve several key stakeholders.

Another option would be to get the structural integrity and safety of the burned out shell confirmed by experts and then use it as-it-is as a historical facility or a compatible tourism or community related purpose, including a WWII memorabilia museum or a light and sound WWII history show. For example, in Mallacoota near Melbourne, local RSL and Historical Society converted a WWII RAAF bunker at Mallacoota's airstrip into a military museum. Sappers from the Australian Army carried out the restoration work.

In Darwin, the East Point bunker where the army planned top end defence strategy during WW2 has been converted into a military museum. In Coffs Harbour, the City Council and the local Rotary Club joined hands and restored a derelict WWII bunker to house the Australia's largest original cartoon collection, known as Bunker Cartoon Gallery. Only minor alterations were made to ensure the historical integrity of the structure was preserved.

(199)



## Factors for Consideration

- It is essential that the legal ownership of the bunker site is determined. Once this has been identified the responsibility for the feasibility of public access to it and any restoration can be progressed.
- It is possible that negotiations for handing over the bunker site to Council did not eventuate.
- Further research is also needed to find out whether the vacant land on top of the bunker forms part of adjoining strata plans or is still Commonwealth owned.
- The legal ownership of the open space and access rights from public roads are primary issues that need to be investigated and sorted out first, before any option for restoration and reuse can be effectively considered.
- A preliminary engineering, heritage and conservation assessment of the site should be done and if appropriate apply to have the site heritage listed. This status will facilitate involvement of Commonwealth and other stakeholders which may include the ADF, RSL, philanthropic organisations and the media - in the provision of funding, expertise and community support to help the project take off. For example, the President of the Bankstown Sports Club has already expressed interest in taking a proposal to his Board to help finance the restoration of the bunker.

## Summary

It would be appropriate to refer the matter to the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee to determine the way ahead and formally identify the legal ownership of the bunker. Once ownership has been identified other issues such as funding and restoration can be investigated. The first step for Air Force is to determine whether it has any legal ownership or responsibility for heritage matters relating to the bunker so that the Bankstown City Council can be informed.

## Recommendation:

It is recommended that you:

1. Agree to present the case to the Heritage Advisory Committee for consideration.
2. Sign the attached letter to Mr Sayed Chowdhury advising him that the matter is being considered.

GP/INT Maher

Please review this minute and discuss with DSC. Provide advice to DCAF on possible options from DSC perspective s22  
g new

Prepared by: WGCdr Jo Elkington, DDCRM.

Consultation: Dr Chris Clark OAFH.

## AUTHORISED BY:

s22

A. BORZYCKI  
GPCAPT  
DCOORD-AF

2 Nov 07

## 1. AGREE / NOT AGREE

s22

D.G. GREEN  
AIRCdre  
A/DCAF

6 Nov 07

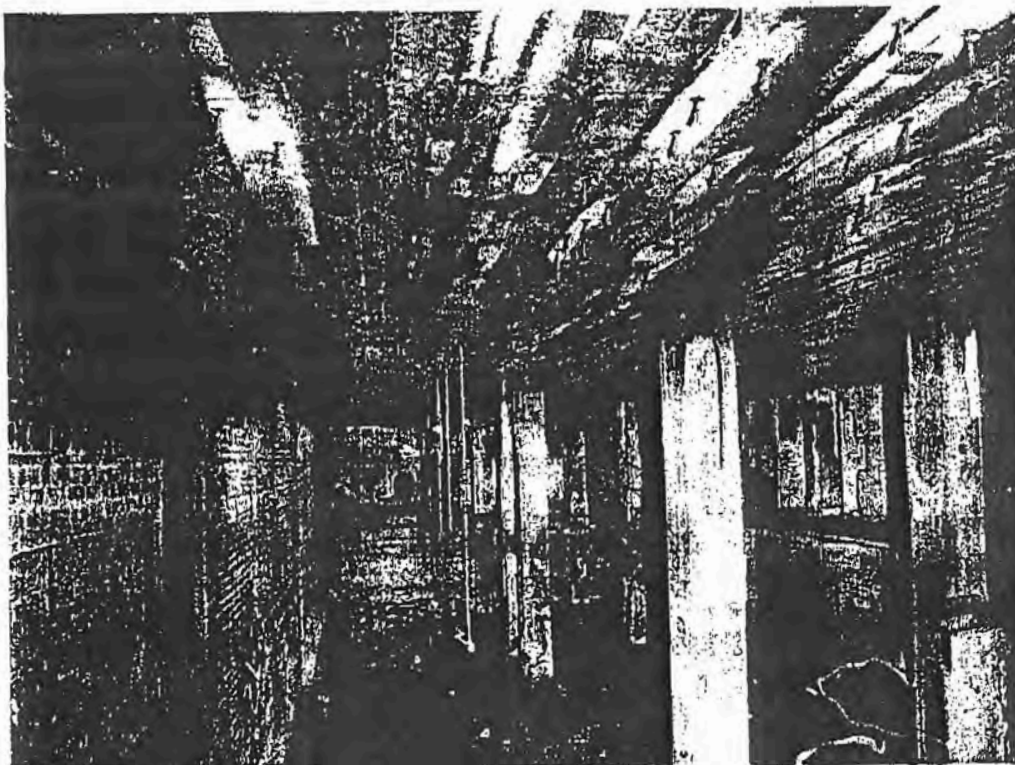
198



Flag - A



**The Bankstown Bunker is located below this area of land under Marlon Reserve, corner of Marlon and Edgar Streets, Condell Park.**



**Burned-out shell of the Bunker.**

(197)

५/८८

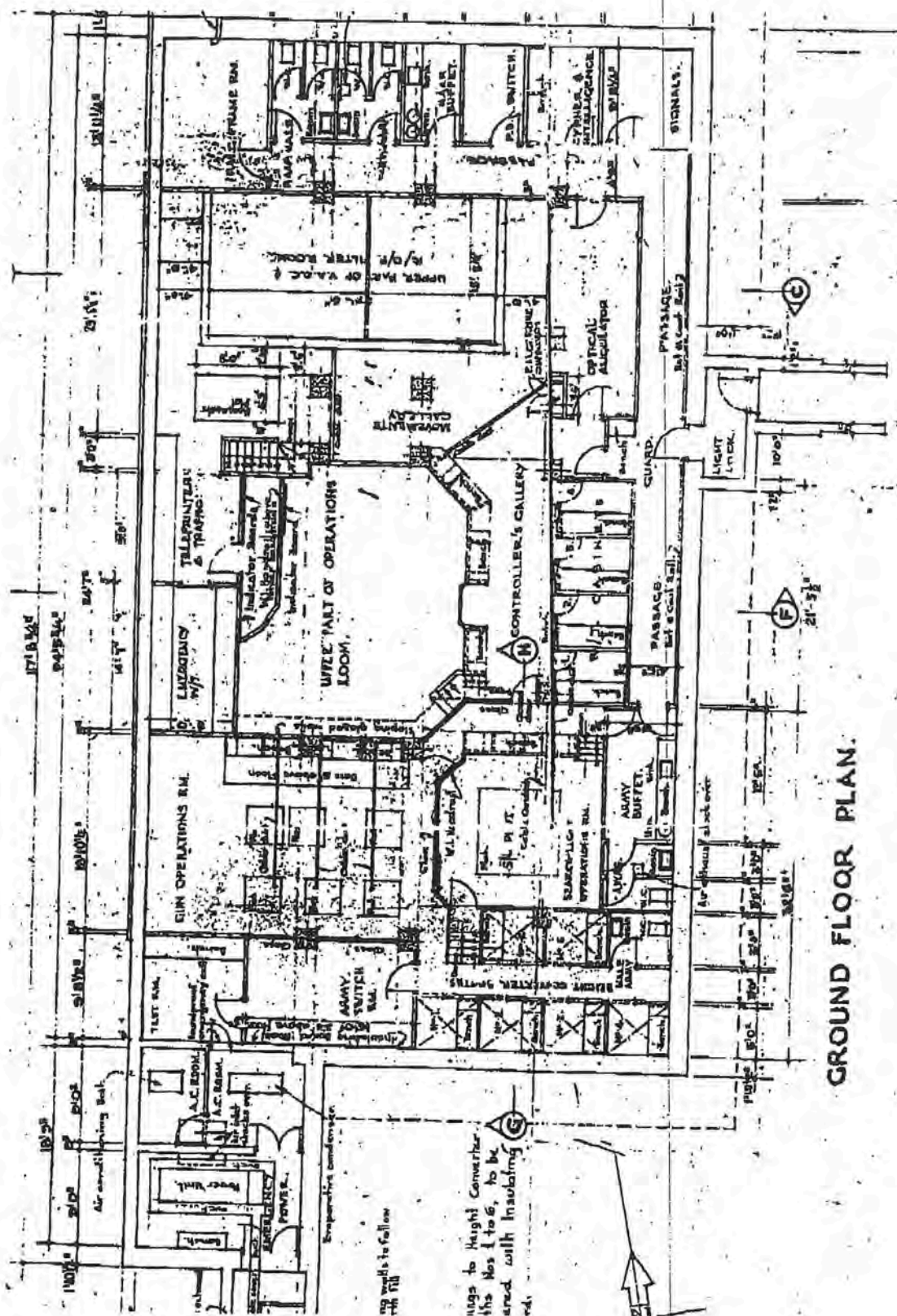
**BASMENT PLAN.**

[illegible]

Upper part of  
Rd. 1. Filter Rooms  
and with insulating

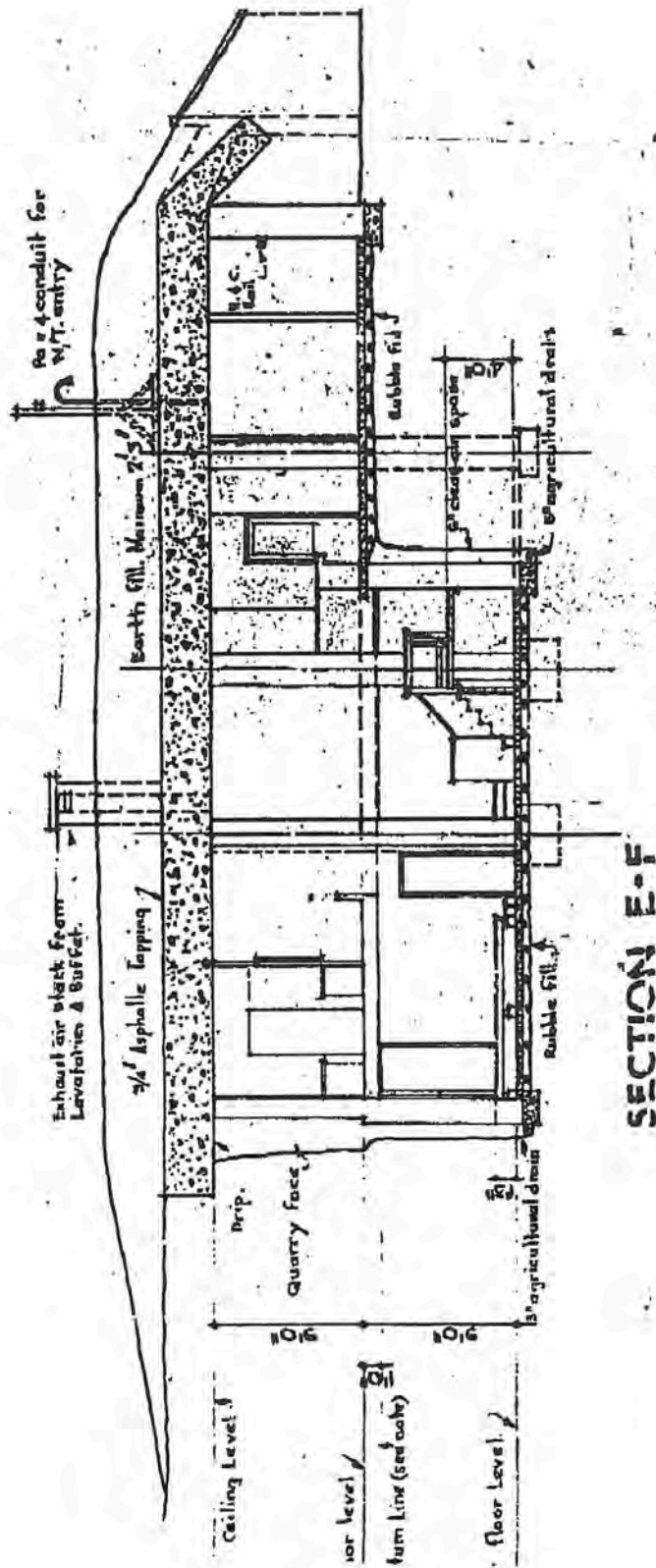
for the purpose of





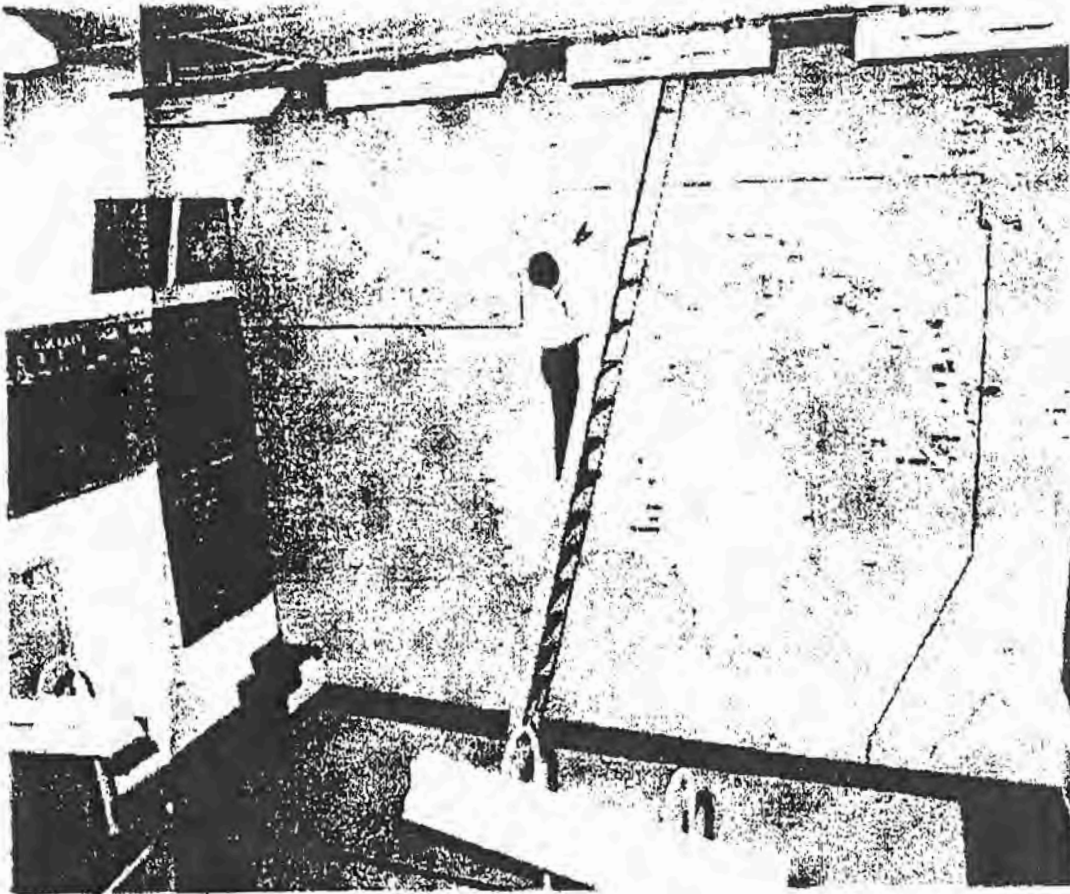
(195)





194

Flag - C



193

**Stewart, Duncan MR 1**

**From:** Carman, David MR  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 27 January 2009 11:49  
**To:** Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Subject:** WW2 BUNKER AT BANKSTOWN [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Categories:** UNCLASSIFIED

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Hi Duncan

Thank you for the info provided in your email dated 22 Jan 09.

Dave French is currently on leave so I have not been able to get any further background details from him or his staff regarding the preparation of responses relating to this matter.

Bankstown City Council wrote to the Secretary on 12 November 2007 and have written again on 24 Dec 08 and our office has been requested to review and prepare a response to the latter letter. I have not checked with the Secretary's Office, but suspect there was no response to the Bankstown City Council's first letter of 12 Nov 07.

Would you mind casting your eye over your file with a view to ascertaining what the linkage was with Air Force (AIRCDRE Green minute) and to confirm if the request from David F also related to the Bankstown City Council's letter of 12 Nov 2007. Subject to how successful you are, could you send me copies of related doc's please.

Thank you

David Carman  
EO Master Planning - NSW/ACT/SA/VIC/NT-K  
Land Planning and Spatial Information Section  
Estate Planning Branch  
Brindabella Business Park (BP3-1-A007)  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Ph: (02) 6266 8189  
Fax: (02) 6266 8294  
Mob: s22

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192

28/01/2009



**Stewart, Duncan MR 1**

---

**From:** Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 January 2009 9:54  
**To:** Carman, David MR  
**Subject:** WWII Bunker at Bankstown [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Categories:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Attachments:** Property Disposals DPD letter to AIRCDRE Green re Banksotwn Bunker August 2008.doc;  
Attachments for DPD letter to AIRCDRE Green.doc

**UNCLASSIFIED**

David

As discussed, please find attached copy of minute together with attachments that were sent to AIRCDRE Green on 1 Sept 2008. We've heard nothing since.

Let me know if we can be of further help

Regards

Duncan Stewart

Acting Assistant Director Property Disposals  
Property Disposals, Sydney, Defence Support Group

Ph: (02) 9377 3660 Email: duncan.stewart1@defence.gov.au

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(191)



**Australian Government**

**Department of Defence**  
Defence Support Group

David French  
Director  
Property Disposals  
BP2-2-A034  
Department of Defence  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
[david.french1@defence.gov.au](mailto:david.french1@defence.gov.au)

Tel: 02 6266 8017  
Fax: 02 6266 8276

PDS/OUT/2008/65

AIRCDRE Green  
Director General Air Force Special Projects  
Via email: [dennis.green1@defence.gov.au](mailto:dennis.green1@defence.gov.au)

Dear AIRCDRE Green

**WWII BUNKER AT BANKSTOWN, NSW**

Reference is made to my email dated 12 June 2008 regarding ownership of the WWII bunker at Bankstown, NSW.

Further investigations by Property Disposals have found that the area in question, then identified as Lot 18 in DP253720, was sold by the Defence Service Homes Corporation, NSW in 1977 for subdivision and development into strata lots. A surveyor's plan detailing a portion of the subdivision is attached for your information (refer Attachment A).

The location of the bunker is at the corner of Marion and Edgar Streets, Condell Park, not at Marion Reserve as previously suggested in documents provided by Bankstown City Council. The two locations appear to be entirely separate with only the former being of relevance to the bunker. The bunker seems to be located under a number of strata title town houses, however the location of the original entrance to the bunker facility is unknown to Property Disposals. Internet research suggests that an informal entrance is located within the back garden of one of the townhouses and that the bunker may still be frequented by amateur explorers.

Further inquiries also unearthed a photograph taken in 1943 which shows the construction of the bunker within a nine (9) acre plot (refer Attachment B). It seems from the photographs that the bunker may have been constructed to just above ground level.

It would appear that the Commonwealth does not own the land above the site of the bunker. However, it may be advisable to obtain legal opinion as to the current ownership of the bunker itself, as the transfer of land title may not have identified or included the underground facility. There also remain some questions as to potential liability for the structural integrity of the bunker and for injuries of any persons who may access the bunker.

I trust this information is of some assistance to your staff and their enquiries in this matter..

Yours sincerely

s22

David French  
DPD

25 August 2008

190

Plan Drawing only to number in this space	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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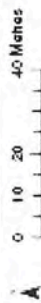




Red boundary indicates the original 9 acre site containing the Bunker



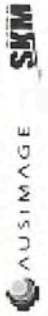
AUSIMAGE SKM



Cnr Marion and Edgar Streets, Condell Park

187





0 5 10 20 Metres

nr Marion and Edgar Streets, Condell Park

86



**Peaker, Nicola MS**

---

**From:** French, David MR 1  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 August 2008 16:22  
**To:** Peaker, Nicola MS  
**Subject:** RE: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**fldAfterOnSend:** UNCLASSIFIED ROUTINE  
**fldClassification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**fldComposed:** sent  
**fldPmNs:** gov.au  
**fldPmVer:** 2005.6  
**fldPrecedence:** ROUTINE  
**fldPrevClassification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**fldVersion:** V1.0.9

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Nicola,

I did not ever receive a response.

*Dave French*  
*Director*  
*Property Disposals*

*Tel. (02) 6266 8017*

---

**From:** Peaker, Nicola MS  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 August 2008 16:13  
**To:** French, David MR 1  
**Subject:** RE: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Hi David,

I am in the process of drafting a letter for AIRCDRE Green from yourself to pass on what information we have uncovered re: the bunker.

Did the AIRCDRE ever send a response to your email below?

Thanks,

Nicola.

---

**From:** French, David MR 1  
**Sent:** Friday, 11 July 2008 10:20  
**To:** Green, Dennis AIRCDRE 1

185

18/08/2008



**Cc:** Clifton, Alison MS; Lacey, Graham MR; Holcroft, Lorraine MS; Weston, Terry MR  
**Subject:** RE: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

## UNCLASSIFIED

AIRCDRE Green,

In late 2007 this matter was referred to the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DoFD) for action as the last "owner" of the site appeared to have been the then Commonwealth Department of Housing. Any disposal/transfer action of Commonwealth property around that time would have been handled by an agency now subsumed by DoFD - the former Dept of Administrative Services or the Australian Property Group.

ASPS wrote to Council advising them of the DoFD point of contact (copy attached). To date I have been unable to locate either a response from Council or DoFD on this issue.

It would appear to me that the issue of ownership remains unresolved, therefore so do the respective heritage obligations for preserving the site under either Commonwealth or State legislation.

Might I suggest that the RAAF Heritage Advisory Committee make contact with Council to determine what, if any, action has taken place. If nothing has happened it would be useful if Council could provide the Lot and Section number for the property and a copy of the registered title from their Lands Titles Office. The title should establish legal ownership. If no title is able to be located the Commonwealth will need to seek legal opinion as to the way forward. This matter would need to be discussed further between Defence and DoFD to determine who should carry the action.

Hope this assists.

*Dave French*  
 A/ASPS

Tel: (02) 6266 8017

---

**From:** Lacey, Graham MR  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 July 2008 17:21  
**To:** French, David MR 1  
**Cc:** Clifton, Alison MS  
**Subject:** WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

## UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Dave

On 12 Nov 07 Bankstown City Council wrote to the Secretary seeking to ascertain Defence's interest in joining with Council and State agencies in preserving a WWII bunker which is located at Condell Park. The matter was referred by DepSec DS to HI, who subsequently passed it to ASPS for action.

I understand from speaking to Mike that you handled the issue and it was referred to DoFD (Guy Verney) as the land was not Defence. Mike's recollection is that DoFD refused to accept responsibility for the issue and passed it back to Defence, but he can't recall what happened with it from there.

ASEP has now been approached by AFHQ (AIRCDRE Dennis Green) for help on this matter. This approach is probably the result of him being contacted by Council because it hasn't heard anything back from Defence. Given PS Br past involvement in the matter could you contact AIRCDRE Green and discuss the matter with him

I have some paperwork on the matter if you need it

Thanks

184

18/08/2008

*Graham Lacey*

Director Estate Strategic Planning  
Estate Planning Branch  
BP3-1-A029  
Tel: (02)6266 8092  
Mob: s22  
Fax: (02)6266 8287  
Email: graham.lacey@defence.gov.au

(83)



**Peaker, Nicola MS**

**From:** s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 July 2008 16:37  
**To:** Peaker, Nicola MS  
**Subject:** Re: Bankstown WWII bunker [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** 20080730162935.pdf  
**fIdClassification:** UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Nicola

We acknowledge receipt of your email and further to our voice message earlier today, please find attached for your consideration and information the title details of -

- each lot with in SP 12199 including CP/SP12199 and a plan of the strata plan
- CP/SP11442
- CP/SP60820
- CP/SP11595
- CP/SP12200
- CP/SP12092

We have reviewed the land where the bunker in question was built together with the adjoining strata plans to confirm if Defence holds an interest in this property. It would appear from the fore-mentioned titles that the ownership of the bunker or an easement for the bunker has not been created.

s42

In addition, for your information the cost of the title searches as been included for your reference. UGL will provide a tax invoice to you accordingly for Defence's payment; in due course.

Should you have any queries, please contact me directly on 02 9224 8035.

Regards

s47F

**National Technical Manager Revenue Leasing**

Tel. 02 9224 8035

Fax. 02 9224 8055

Mobile s22

Email. s47F

 **UnitedGroup**  
Services

"Peaker, Nicola MS"  
<Nicola.Peaker@defence.gov.au>

To: s47F  
cc  
Subject Bankstown WWII bunker [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

180

18/08/2008

30/07/2008 12:00 PM

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Hi s47F

I have been provided with the attached photos of the bunker in question being built in 1943.

You can clearly see from the overlay which plots of land it utilised.

Thought it may assist in the search.

It also appears that it may have been built above ground and then covered.

Regards,

Nicola.

*Nicola Peaker*

Nicola Peaker  
Department of Defence  
Property Disposals  
Ph. 02 9377 2029  
Fx. 02 9377 2036  
[nicola.peaker@defence.gov.au](mailto:nicola.peaker@defence.gov.au)

---

**From:** s47F (SKM) s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 July 2008 09:34  
**To:** Peaker, Nicola MS; Stewart, Duncan MR 1  
**Subject:** FW: Condell Park

Dear Nicola and Duncan

Attached are two files with the 1943 photo of the site. The yellow lines are the current cadastre (property boundaries) overlayed on the photo. Please note that the cadastre overlay is pretty close but not 100% accurate.

The good news is I believe that the bunker is actually shown in these photos. It looks like it straddles four Strata Plans. You can also see the two piles of soil to the west of it.

Very interesting.

Regards

s47F

Senior Property Consultant  
100 Christie Street St Leonards NSW 2065

18/08/2008

179



Tel: +61 2 9928 2395

Fax: +61 9928 2520

Mobile: +61 s22

Email: s47F

Sinclair Knight Merz

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[attachment

"Condell\_Park\_Larger\_Area.pdf" deleted by s47F KFPW] [attachment

"Condell\_Park.pdf" deleted by s47F KFPW]

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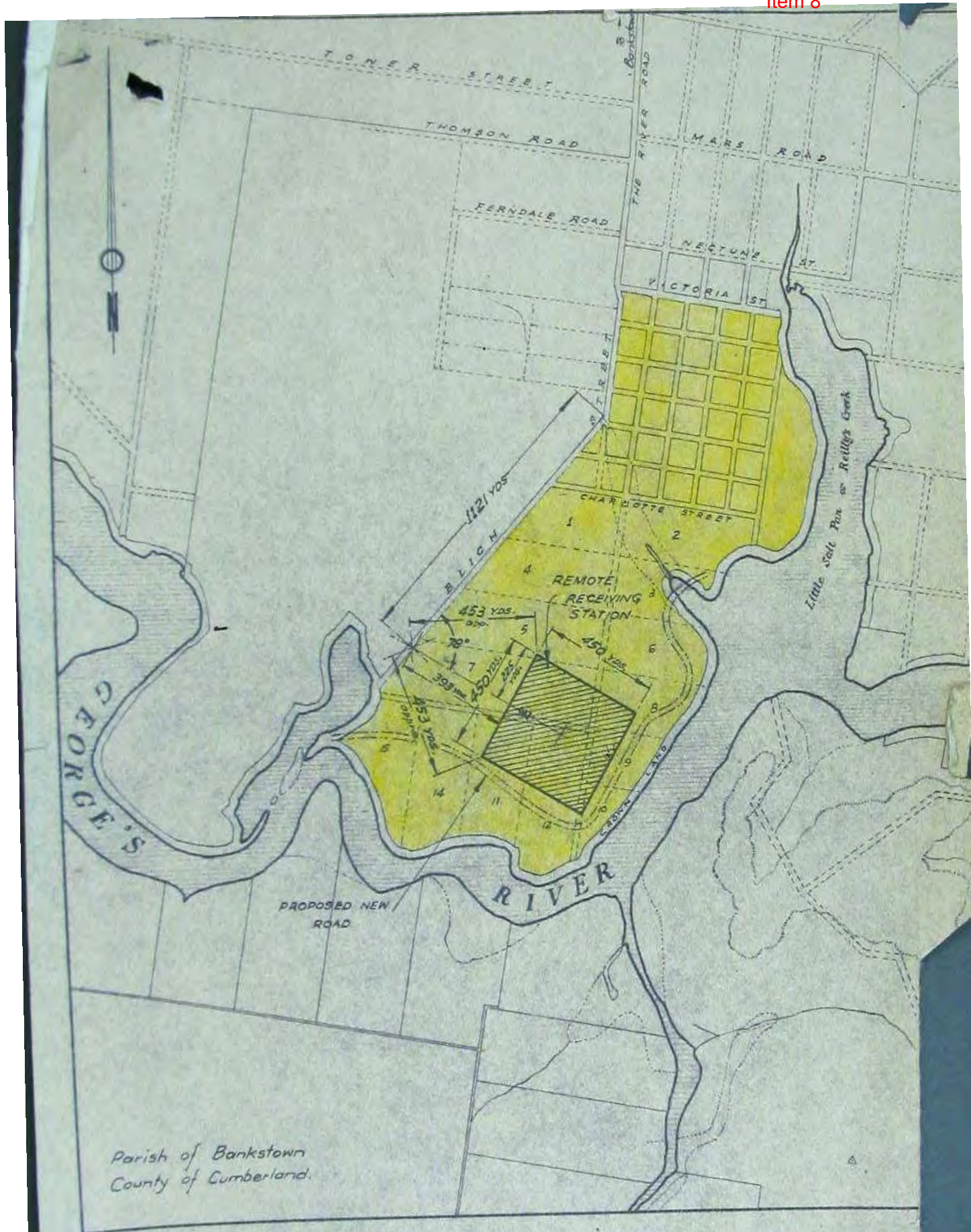
178

**User ID: kfpw-defence (United KFPW Pty Ltd) from 29/07/2008 to 30/07/2008****NSW Property****User ID: kfpw-defence**

Prod ID	Product	Date	Price (exc GST)	Price (inc GST)	GST	Trans ID	Reference	Matter
LPIEP	Plan	29/07/2008 15:32:49	\$17.60	\$19.36	\$1.76	8873339	12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:42:28	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873432	1/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:43:08	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873438	2/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:43:52	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873447	3/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:44:11	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873450	4/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:44:35	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873452	5/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:44:56	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873455	6/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:46:01	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873468	7/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:46:15	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873470	8/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:46:28	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873473	9/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:46:40	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873479	10/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:47:00	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873484	11/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:47:14	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873487	12/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	29/07/2008 15:47:41	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8873492	CP/SP12199	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	30/07/2008 16:12:47	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8881187	CP/SP11442	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	30/07/2008 16:13:35	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8881197	CP/SP60820	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	30/07/2008 16:14:10	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8881202	CP/SP11595	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	30/07/2008 16:14:48	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8881205	CP/SP12200	N Peaker
RT	Title Search	30/07/2008 16:15:20	\$17.40	\$19.14	\$1.74	8881209	CP/SP12092	N Peaker
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19 Transactions</b>		<b>\$330.80</b>	<b>\$363.88</b>	<b>\$33.08</b>			
<b>Totals for kfpw-defence</b>	<b>19 Transactions</b>		<b>\$330.80</b>	<b>\$363.88</b>	<b>\$33.08</b>			

177





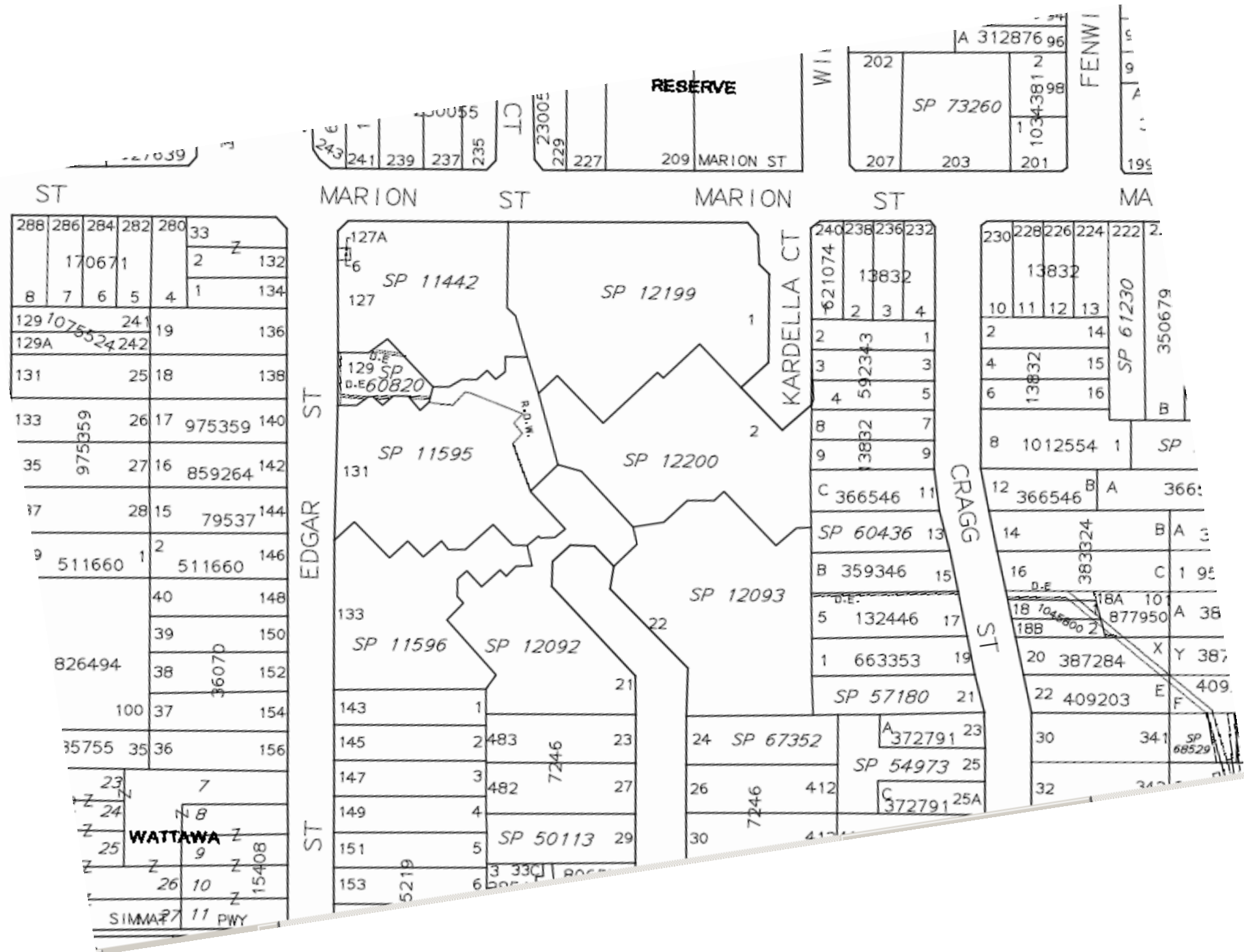
Note: A restrictive area extends for a radius of two miles from the centre of the site.  
Lewis Gordon Estate shown in yellow.

BANKSTOWN, N.S.W.  
SITE-REMOTE RECEIVING STATION.

Drawn	Date	Checked	Date	Scale	Refere
s22	17/2/42			1" = 20 chns.	

DIRECTORATE OF SIGNALS - R.A.A.F. HEADQUARTERS







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From: French, David MR 1  
Sent: Friday, 11 July 2008 10:20  
To: Green, Dennis AIRCDRE 1  
Cc: Clifton, Alison MS; Lacey, Graham MR; Holcroft, Lorraine MS; Weston, Terry MR  
Subject: RE: WWII BUNKER @ BANKSTOWN, NSW [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

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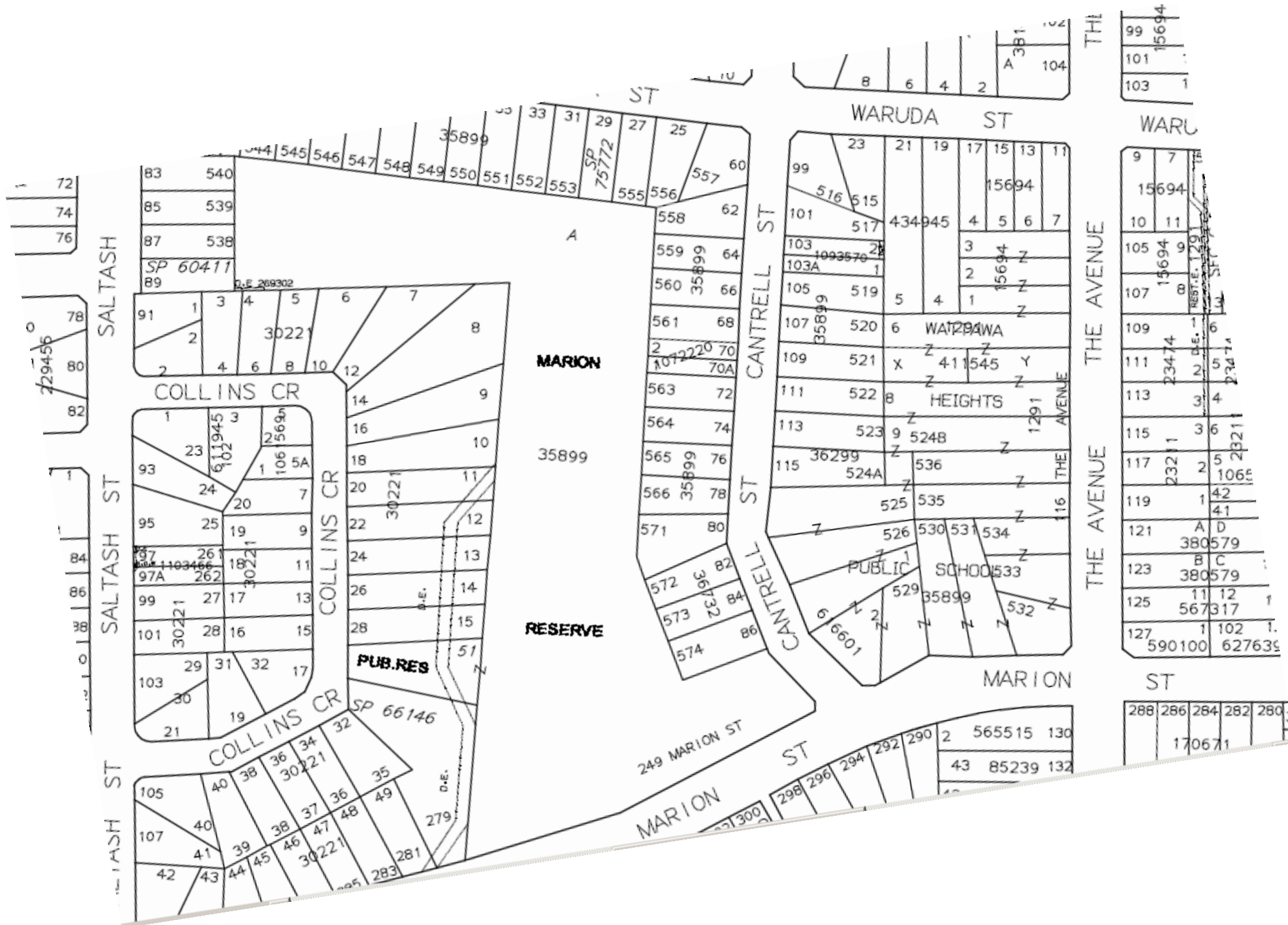
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Hope this assists.

***Dave French***

A/ASPS





**From:** s47F (SKM) s47F  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 July 2008 11:43 AM  
**To:** Peaker, Nicola MS  
**Subject:** RE: Condell Park [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Exactly how it would have been built. Happy for you to forward to UGS.

s47F  
Senior Property Consultant

100 Christie Street St Leonards NSW 2065  
Tel: +61 2 9928 2395  
Fax: +61 9928 2520  
Mobile: +61 (s22  
Email: s47F

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---

From: Peaker, Nicola MS [<mailto:Nicola.Peaker@defence.gov.au>]  
Sent: Wednesday, 30 July 2008 11:41 AM  
To: s47F (SKM)  
Subject: RE: Condell Park [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Thanks s47

Great piccies.... looks almost like they built it above ground and then buried it. Changes the legal perspective for ownership.

Do you mind if I forward the piccies to UGS for their title search project??

Thanks,

Nicola.

*Nicola Peaker*

Nicola Peaker  
Department of Defence  
Property Disposals  
Ph. 02 9377 2029  
Fx. 02 9377 2036  
[nicola.peaker@defence.gov.au](mailto:nicola.peaker@defence.gov.au)

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