



1969

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

## REPORT

relating to the proposed construction  
and extension of

## STORES BUILDINGS

at

St. Mary's, Botany and Waterloo  
New South Wales  
(Tenth Report of 1969)

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

STORES BUILDINGS FOR DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY  
AT ST. MARY'S, BOTANY AND WATERLOO, N.S.W.

R E P O R T

On 17 July 1969, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report to the House of Representatives, proposals for the construction and extension of stores buildings at St. Mary's, Botany and Waterloo, New South Wales for the Department of Supply.

The Committee have the honour to report as follows:

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

1. The Committee received written submissions and drawings from the Departments of Supply and Works and took evidence from their representatives and from the Chief Property Officer, Department of the Interior at a public hearing in Sydney. We inspected the existing storage and other facilities of the Department of Supply in the Sydney area at Hale Street, Botany, at Hansard Street, Waterloo and at Bunnerong. At St. Mary's we examined the sites for the proposed new buildings and the two storehouses to be renovated.

THE REFERENCE

2. The proposals referred to the Committee involve
- at St. Mary's - erection of two storehouses, an office and amenities building and provision of roads, drainage and other services;
  - renovation of two large stores buildings;

- at Botany - erection of a new store; and
- at Waterloo - extension of storage accommodation and facilities to establish the depot as a staging area.

3. The estimated cost of the work when referred to the Committee was \$3,550,000.

DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY STORES, SYDNEY

4. The Department of Supply through its Stores and Transport Branch holds materials, intermediate products and final products appropriate to its role in the provision and manufacture of aircraft and munitions for the armed services. In its additional role as the central storage authority for the Commonwealth, it is responsible for holding stores on deposit for other Commonwealth departments and authorities and for the operation of disposal depots, in which to auction goods no longer required by the Commonwealth.

5. To perform these functions in the Sydney area, the Department has stores at Hale Street, Botany and at Bunnerong. It also maintains transport depots in Sydney, including the Heavy Transport Depot at Hansard Street, Waterloo.

6. Stores Depot, Hale Street, Botany This depot is located on five acres of Commonwealth owned land and its main function is as an auction sale depot for the disposal of plant, motor vehicles and other stores declared surplus by the Services, the Department of Supply and other Commonwealth departments.

7. Bunnerong Stores Stockholdings at the central storage depot at Bunnerong occupy 720,000 sq. ft. Items held include strategic stocks, production reserve, munitions reserve, distributory and lead time stocks and stocks held on deposit for the Department of Supply and other departments.

8. Heavy Transport Depot, Hansard Street, Waterloo This depot is located on eight acres of Commonwealth owned land and its main function is as the base for the department's heavy transport operations in New South Wales.

COMMONWEALTH OCCUPATION OF STATE LAND  
AT BUNNERONG

9. During World War II, the Commonwealth took over some 100 acres of New South Wales State Government land at Bunnerong, under National Security legislation, for the erection of stores buildings. Except for 46 acres which were returned to the State in 1957, the land has been occupied continuously by the Commonwealth since then. The formal agreement for the Commonwealth to occupy the land terminated in December 1968 and although occupancy until December 1969 is permitted, the State is adamant that the Commonwealth should vacate the area and rehabilitate it immediately.

10. The departments occupying the 29 buildings on the area are -

Department of Supply	-	(17 $\frac{1}{2}$ buildings)
Department of Immigration	-	( 8 buildings)
Department of the Army	-	( 2 buildings)
Prime Minister's Department (Commonwealth Archives Office)	-	(12 $\frac{1}{2}$ buildings)

11. The present reference is concerned with the provision elsewhere of accommodation to replace the Department of Supply's stores at Bunnerong.

12. We noted that when the new migrant hostel at Randwick is completed in early 1970, the eight buildings occupied by the Department of Immigration will be vacated and demolished. Plans are being developed to relocate the Army stores, also at Randwick.

13. The Committee were told that, as yet, firm proposals have not been developed for the relocation of the Commonwealth Archives Office, although a site has been set aside at Villawood for the erection of alternative accommodation. Subject to the completion of the facilities in this reference, the relocation of the Archives storage is the only impediment to achieving the Commonwealth's target for vacating the Bunnerong area by the end of 1971 so that the entire area can be returned to the State.

14. Not only is it desirable for the land to be returned to the State at the first opportunity and, in any event, no later than the end of 1971, but the Government should apply itself quickly to the task of relocating storage for the Commonwealth Archives Office.

#### THE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

15. The Committee were told that before deciding to proceed on the basis of the proposals in this reference, two other possibilities for the relocation of the stockholdings of the Department of Supply now at Bunnerong were examined.

16. The Newington Proposal This proposal was to establish a complete depot providing gross storage space of 673,000 sq.ft. on land to be made available by the Department of the Navy at its Armament Supply Depot at Newington. The proposal initially involved expenditure estimated in 1967 at \$6.95 million of which \$0.8 million was for the provision of new buildings for the Navy to replace those which would need to be demolished at Newington, and \$6.15 million on the construction of the central storage depot. It included also an estimated \$350,000 for heavy transport facilities. It was proposed eventually to develop a heavy transport depot at Newington to replace the facilities at Waterloo. Under the proposed phasing of the work, the Bunnerong stores could have been vacated progressively between 1974/75 and 1978/79.

17. However, because of the high cost of the proposal and the expected unfavourable attitude of the State Government to the timing of the return of the land at Bunnerong, other alternatives were examined.

18. Wool Stores Several large privately owned wool stores located at Pymont which might have provided alternative accommodation for the central storage depot were investigated. They were, however, unsuitable because of poor and obsolete construction, inadequate fire protection for departmental purposes, and poor location in relation to road traffic congestion and rail access. Conversion would have been expensive and would only have resulted in a depot less than satisfactory.

#### THE PRESENT PROPOSAL

19. The present proposal is basically the re-establishment of the Bunnerong facility at St. Mary's but because of the relative isolation of St. Mary's from the Sydney metropolitan area, it also involves extensions of the depots at Hale Street, Botany and Hansard Street, Waterloo.

20. Stores at St. Mary's During World War II, a munitions filling complex was established at St. Mary's about 35 miles west of Sydney. After the war, the complex was made available to industry as a new industrial estate. By the early 1950s over 3,000 persons were employed on the estate. In 1957, a new munitions filling factory operated by the Department of Supply was opened in the area. A guided weapons repair facility was completed as an annexe to the filling factory in 1967.

21. Between 1947 and 1964, part of the industrial estate was leased to A.E. Goodwin Pty. Ltd. The site previously occupied by the company contains two large storehouses, an administration block, canteen building, garage, weighbridge and guardhouse and covers about 49 acres.



22. The current proposal is to establish a new central stores depot, based on the former Goodwin site and involving the extensive rehabilitation of the two storehouses which cover a total of 250,000 sq. ft, the construction of two new storehouses providing a further 255,000 sq. ft and an office building. The other existing buildings are to be removed because they are either unsatisfactory or do not fit into the overall plan for the redevelopment of the area. It is also proposed to earmark an area of nine acres of Commonwealth property adjoining the former Goodwin site for use in the future by the Department of Supply.

23. The renovation of the existing buildings at St. Mary's will enable a reduction in both the overall cost of the proposal and the construction time, compared with building a complete facility elsewhere. Furthermore, it will be possible to shift some of the stockholdings from Bunnerong in advance of the completion of the new stores.

24. Facilities Required in the Sydney Area Although the transfer of the central storage depot to St. Mary's is considered to be the most satisfactory method of storing most of the items now at Bunnerong, it does raise problems in respect of some of the stockholdings which need to be retained closer to Sydney.

25. It is therefore proposed

- to erect a storehouse at Hale Street, Botany for those stores which must for economy and convenience be located in the Sydney area, e.g. furniture and office equipment, stocks of printed matter pending packing and despatch and Commonwealth property declared for disposal;

- to provide storage space at the Heavy Transport Depot at Mansard Street, Waterloo for use as staging accommodation for stores which are being transhipped through Sydney.

26. Size of Proposed Replacement Stores The Committee were told that the Department of Supply has reviewed its stockholdings in the Sydney area and plans a contraction in some stockholdings, especially of strategic stocks. We noted that taking account of this contraction and the projected needs of the future, it is thought that the proposed facilities at St. Mary's and Botany totalling 536,000 sq. ft gross of storage space will be adequate replacement for the 720,000 sq. ft gross now available at Bunnerong.

27. We were also given evidence that the use of modern, efficient storage facilities and techniques will assist in reducing the overall requirement. These techniques are being steadily introduced into Department of Supply stores and already have had a marked effect on the area in use at Bunnerong.

28. The new stores proposed for St. Mary's and Botany will be designed so that the location of columns and roof heights will permit the maximum use of floor space and facilitate the use of modern storage methods. Good road systems with adequate hardstanding areas are planned and ramps suitable for the passage of forklift trucks and other vehicles are to be provided. By comparison, storage at Bunnerong is limited by the height of the buildings, spacing of columns and other construction factors.

29. "Narrow aisle" forklift trucks will be used for most stock movements at St. Mary's, enabling a reduction in aisle spacings and in the existing stores there will be an increase in stowage height through the removal of most of the overhead cranes. Modern techniques such as the use of pallets, pallet racking, container pallets and containers are planned.

30. Committee's Conclusions The Committee found that there is a need to relocate the Department of Supply stores now at Bunnerong. We believe that the proposal to relocate the central storage depot for the Sydney area at St. Mary's is appropriate and that there is a need for additional storage at the Botany and Waterloo depots.

#### ST. MARY'S BUILDING PROPOSALS

31. Site The site fronts Windsor Road and is close to the St. Mary's railway station. It is served by existing railway spurs and is crossed by easements for transmission lines, railways and P.M.G. cables. The site is thus accessible by road and rail and being fairly flat is suitable for the economical construction of buildings and roads.

32. Existing Stores These buildings are steel-framed saw-tooth roof structures with brick dado walls and corrugated iron wall sheeting above, and roofs of the latter material. Floors are of concrete. It is proposed to replace the roof covering, which is reaching the end of its useful life, and to repaint and repair the building throughout.

33. In the first store, there are four railway spurs, 3 ft 6 in. below floor level. Only one of these will be retained, the floor being made good over the others. In the second store, the rails, which are flush with the floor, are to be removed and the floor made good.

34. The existing annexes to the stores are to be removed and a small new office built inside each. Each building will have external toilets for both males and females.

35. New Stores The larger of the two new stores is to be of four bays measuring in all 706 ft by 289 ft and providing 204,000 sq. ft of storage. The other, of one bay only, will be some 175 ft by 289 ft providing 50,000 sq. ft of storage space.

36. Both buildings are to be of steel frame construction, the roof being supported by columns and fire walls. The external walls will have a brick dado 5 ft high and vertical colour coated galvanised steel sheeting supported on the steel framing. Roofing will be galvanised metal deck with two bands of translucent sheeting to give natural light internally.

37. The design objective will be to provide maximum unobstructed floor space for storage, the dimensions being based on pallet storage. Fire doors where necessary will be large enough to allow forklift trucks to pass through when loaded.

38. Office and Amenities Building This building, measuring externally 87 ft by 29 ft, will accommodate an office from which control will be exercised over the main entrance gate. It will also contain a lunch room, lockers and showers and toilets for male and female staff. A small weighbridge and weighbridge house will be erected nearby.

39. The main building will be of brick construction with a concrete floor and concrete roof tiles. Floors will generally have vinyl coverings with ceramic tiles in toilets. Ceilings will be in fibrous plaster and windows will have aluminium frames. Curtain walling to the verandah, gate control and to the small weighbridge house will be aluminium frames with glass and  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. coated asbestos cement panels. The weighbridge house will have a flat metal deck roof.

40. Engineering Services The normal water requirements of the area will be small but in the event of fire the quantity required for sprinklers and hoses could be considerable. As mains pressure is at times inadequate, it is proposed to provide a 10,000 gallon elevated storage tank and two 100,000 gallon ground level storage reservoirs with twin fire booster pumping units.

41. Sewerage will be connected to the local mains, using existing site reticulation as far as possible. The existing stormwater drainage will be renovated and extended.

42. Electricity will be supplied at high voltage to three substations in the area from which the buildings, booster pumps and external lighting will be supplied. The two existing stores will be provided with a new electrical installation including fluorescent lighting, power outlets and direct wiring to travelling cranes and other fixed appliances. The new buildings will be wired for fluorescent lighting and power. Security lighting will be installed around the perimeter of the site and on the outside of the stores buildings.

43. A new 6-ton capacity overhead travelling crane will be installed in each of the existing stores. The large, most frequently operated sliding doors on all stores will be motorised.

44. The vehicular entrance will be from Windsor Road, past the guardhouse and boom gate giving access to a 22 ft wide paved road system, with kerbs and gutters. Concrete aprons to external doors will be provided for forklift truck operations.

45. Disturbed areas will be topsoiled and unpaved areas will be grassed and planted with suitable trees.

46. Fire Protection Sprinklers, fire hydrants and manual fire alarms will be provided in each building. A new alarm indicator board to which sprinklers and manual alarms will be connected will be located in the office building.

NEW STORES BUILDING, BOTANY

47. The new stores building to be built at the Hale Street, Botany depot will measure 135 ft by 239 ft providing 32,000 sq. ft of storage space. It will be similar in construction to those being built at St. Mary's except that as it is smaller, fire walls will not be required. As the subsoil on the site makes normal foundations unsuitable, the building will be constructed on a concrete raft which will also form the floor.

48. The site is now partly occupied by three old timber framed buildings which have reached the end of their useful life and which are to be demolished.

49. Engineering Services The existing water supply will be extended to the new building for domestic and fire purposes. In the event of fire, the mains pressure can be increased by pumping.

50. The existing overhead electrical reticulation will be modified as necessary and a new substation provided by the supply authority. Fluorescent lighting, power outlets and direct wiring to fixed appliances will be provided. The existing security lighting will be extended as required.

51. The existing bituminous pavement will be extended, with korb and guttering to provide access to both entrances of the new store. Disturbed areas will be loamed and grassed.

52. Fire Protection Sprinklers, fire hydrants and manual fire alarms will be provided. A 5,000 gallon elevated tank and booster pump are part of the current reference and will serve the new store.

BUILDING PROPOSALS, WATERLOO

53. At the Heavy Transport Depot at Hansard Street, Waterloo, heavy vehicles are at present parked under cover in a large building. It is proposed in the future to park them in the open on an area south of the building, which will then be used for the storage of material awaiting transshipment through Sydney. A new administration building of similar construction to the one at St. Mary's as well as a new main entrance, guardhouse, weighbridge, fuel and oil point, lubrication point, steam cleaning pit, foreman's office, an enlarged gear and tackle store and a relocated oil store are also included.

54. The administration building measuring 142 ft by 37 ft, besides providing a locker room with adjoining showers, toilets and lunch room, will contain the office space required for the operation of the depot.

55. Engineering Services New water, sewerage and stormwater lines will be connected to existing services.

56. Electricity for the new structure will be taken from the existing reticulation. Illumination will be by fluorescent fittings. Power outlets and wiring will be provided and existing security lighting extended and modified.

57. A 12 ft roadway will be constructed from the entrance of the larger of the existing workshops to the steam cleaning ramp. Existing roadways will be widened and a road from the new main entrance will be constructed. A car park south of the new administration building and a paved area adjacent to

the new unloading ramp are included. Kerbs and gutters will be provided and disturbed areas will be loamed and grassed.

58. Fire Protection Thermal fire alarms will be installed in the new buildings and connected to the alarm panel in the guardhouse.

59. Committee's Recommendation The Committee recommend the construction of the work in this reference.

#### PROGRAMME

60. The Committee were told that because of the urgency of the work, most of the final designs and tender documentation have been completed, ready for the calling of tenders.

61. We noted that the calling of tenders for and the construction of the work involved in rehabilitating the existing stores at St. Mary's are expected to take 7 months after an approval to proceed is given. It is thought that the new buildings at St. Mary's will be available 15 months after the invitation of tenders.

62. The corresponding time for completion of the work at Botany and Waterloo is 12 months.

#### ESTIMATE OF COST

63. The estimated cost of the work when referred to the Committee was \$3.55 million. At the public hearing we were told that this figure has since been revised and is now \$3.50 million as follows:

	\$
Building work	2,230,000
Hydraulic engineering	515,000
Electrical engineering	220,000
Mechanical engineering	250,000
Civil engineering	<u>285,000</u>
	<u>3,500,000</u>



RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

64. 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.

Paragraph

- |    |                                                                                                                                                                      |    |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. | IT IS DESIRABLE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OCCUPIED LAND AT BUNNORONG TO BE RETURNED TO THE STATE AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY AND IN ANY EVENT NO LATER THAN THE END OF 1971. | 14 |
| 2. | THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD APPLY ITSELF QUICKLY TO THE TASK OF RELOCATING STORAGE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH ARCHIVES OFFICE.                                                   | 14 |
| 3. | THERE IS A NEED TO RELOCATE THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY STORES NOW AT BUNNORONG.                                                                                        | 30 |
| 4. | THE PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE THE CENTRAL STORAGE DEPOT FOR THE SYDNEY AREA AT ST. MARY'S IS APPROPRIATE.                                                                 | 30 |
| 5. | THERE IS A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL STORAGE AT THE BOMAY AND WATERLOO DEPOTS.                                                                                             | 30 |
| 6. | THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WORK IN THIS REFERENCE.                                                                                              | 59 |
| 7. | THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE WORK WHEN REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE WAS \$3.55 MILLION. THIS FIGURE HAS SINCE BEEN REVISED AND IS NOW \$3.50 MILLION.                      | 63 |

Parliamentary Standing Committee on  
Public Works,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

*F. C. Chaney*  
(F.C. CHANEY)  
Chairman

9 September, 1969.