



HOLSWORTHY PROGRAM

**SPECIAL OPERATIONS WORKING
ACCOMMODATION
AND
BASE REDEVELOPMENT
STAGE 1**

HOLSWORTHY BARRACKS NSW

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE
TO THE
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
CANBERRA, ACT
May 2005**

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INTRODUCTION

1. Australia's Special Forces have for many years been considered amongst the most capable in the world, and in recent years Government initiatives in respect of these forces have further enhanced Australia's domestic and offshore security capabilities. These initiatives have developed a significant Special Operations capability in Sydney, including the ability to react to domestic terrorist activities. The capabilities include the raising of the Special Operations Command, the 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), the Incident Response Regiment and the Special Operations Combat Services Support Company.

OBJECTIVE

2. The objective of this submission is to seek Parliamentary clearance for Defence to undertake the Holsworthy Program of Works- Special Operations Working Accommodation and Base Redevelopment Stage 1. The program consists of the following five interrelated works projects, planned to be undertaken within the Holsworthy Barracks:

- a) The establishment of Army's Full Time Commando Capability, based upon the 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando);
- b) The establishment of the Tactical Assault Group (East), to become an organic element of the 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando);
- c) The establishment of the Incident Response Regiment;
- d) The establishment of Special Operations Command, including the Master Planning of the Special Operations Combat Services Support Company; and
- e) The first stage of the redevelopment of the Holsworthy Barracks.

BACKGROUND

Location

3. The proposed works will be constructed within Tobruk Lines, a sub-area of the Holsworthy Barracks precinct, located within the Liverpool Military Area. Attachments 1 and 2 illustrate the location of Holsworthy Barracks and the various sub areas within the barracks precinct and highlight the areas for the proposed works.

Recent Events

4. In October 2001, following terrorist attacks in the USA, the Government directed the establishment of additional counter terrorist capabilities. These were initially to be interim measures and included the establishment of a second Tactical Assault Group to be based in the Sydney region and the establishment of a capability to respond to chemical, biological or radiological incidents or threats. The first Tactical Assault Group is an element of the Special Air Service Regiment, based in Western Australia.

5. In December 2001, the Government approved a permanent counter terrorist capability, to be raised as a Tactical Assault Group and incorporated within 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) as its C Company. At the same time the Government approved the raising of an Incident Response Regiment.

6. On 19 December 2002, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of Special Operations Command to streamline command arrangements and enhance inter-departmental and international liaison on counter-terrorism matters. Amongst the Special Operations Command initiatives announced were an additional commando company, to become D Company 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), and a Special Operations Combat Services Support Company.

7. The Special Operations Command initiative also included the establishment of Special Operations Headquarters (Sydney) to be located at Garden Island as an interim measure until facilities become available in Bungendore within the Headquarters Joint Operations Command, when this headquarters is constructed. To accommodate urgent elements of these capabilities, with Public Works Committee concurrence, a number of interim works were undertaken at Holsworthy Barracks and at other Sydney locations.

8. A discrete (but associated) element of the Government's counter terrorist strategy, that of specialist training facilities for the Tactical Assault Group (East), was granted exemption from Public Works Committee examination by the Governor General in May 2004.

Strategic Planning

9. Army's draft Infrastructure Strategic Planning Guidance indicates that the Liverpool Military Area will remain a critical base in the Army's long term plan until at least the year 2025. This is consistent with Defence strategic planning and has been confirmed by the Government's commitment to Holsworthy as an ongoing base for significant Special Operations capabilities. This project satisfies the objectives of the Defence White Paper *Defence 2000- Our Future Defence Force* with regard to the Army's permanent commando capability and it meets Defence's long term objectives in terms of increased efficiencies and unit effectiveness.

Holsworthy Barracks

10. Holsworthy Barracks is a discrete precinct within the Liverpool Military Area, which has been used for military training since 1906. World War I saw Holsworthy Camp become the principal training camp for troops in NSW, and during World War II, the training area was enlarged and facilities were constructed for the School of Military Engineering and for a Base Ordnance Depot at Casula. See Attachments 1 and 2.

11. After World War II, Holsworthy expanded to become the principal live firing training area for the Sydney region and ultimately the base for the full time 1st Brigade. In 1992 the 1st Brigade commenced a phased relocation from Holsworthy Barracks to Darwin and was replaced progressively by the General Reserve 5th Brigade.

12. A number of Regular Army units are also accommodated within the Holsworthy precinct, including the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, 1st Health Services Battalion, A Field Battery and 17th Construction Squadron.

Works in Melbourne

13. The project includes works in Melbourne to provide office accommodation and laboratory facilities for the Incident Response Regiment to be provided at the Defence Science and Technology Organisation's establishment at Fishermans Bend in Victoria. The laboratories are to be used both for the formulation of scientific advice in support of deployed elements, and research and development tasks in support of the Incident Response Regiment developing protocols and techniques.

Other Works Projects

14. In the course of developing the Program the requirement for further redevelopment at Holsworthy was identified, to address the accommodation of other units located within the barracks, the rationalisation of messing, area support facilities, the augmentation and upgrade of engineering services and infrastructure, and occupational health and safety. This further redevelopment requires definitional studies and will be the subject of future submissions to the Public Works Committee.

15. Living in accommodation for single or unaccompanied personnel has been the subject of a tri-service national study. The Holsworthy requirement, which encompasses existing personnel and those moving to Holsworthy as a result of the Special Operations capability, will be considered within the Single Living-in Environment Accommodation Precinct project, which will be the subject of a separate submission to the Public Works Committee.

16. A further project, not an element of the current proposal, flows from the Prime Minister's announcement in September 2004 of the Government's decision to purchase additional trooplift helicopters and its intention to base a squadron of trooplift helicopters in the Sydney region to support the Special Operations Command. The location and facilities required to accommodate this unit (171 Aviation Squadron) are still subject to Government decision and will be the subject of a separate submission to the Public Works Committee expected to be brought forward in late 2005 or early 2006.

17. Two earlier works associated with Holsworthy Barracks and subject to consideration were:

- a) The relocation of the 1st Brigade from Holsworthy Barracks, NSW and Puckapunyal, Victoria to Darwin, Northern Territory (The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works Ninth Report of 1995 refers).
- b) The development of 1st Field Hospital at Holsworthy, NSW (The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works Twenty-Second Report of 1995 refers).

GOVERNING CONSIDERATIONS

18. In announcing the increase in special operations capabilities, the Government was specific that the new capabilities would be located in the Sydney region.
19. Holsworthy is the only Defence owned property in the Sydney region capable of accommodating the special operations capabilities approved by Government; other properties being either too remote to permit the rapid and efficient deployment of special forces, at or near maximum capacity, too small, or constrained by urban encroachment.
20. The accommodation of these forces at Holsworthy Barracks will require the construction of new facilities and the adaptive reuse of a number of existing facilities.
21. Holsworthy is an old area. The existing services and facilities are of varied quality and suitability for purpose. Many of the facilities constructed in the 1960s (or earlier) no longer meet either functional requirements or current standards, while significant occupational health and safety problems exist within many of the older buildings. Components of the engineering services and area infrastructure are inadequate for current loads and would not support the new developments that are proposed.
22. 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) and the Incident Response Regiment are currently accommodated in old facilities designed for other units, while the Tactical Assault Group (East) is housed in temporary demountable and some prefabricated buildings on Luscombe Airfield. Luscombe Airfield is one of a number of sites being considered to accommodate the relocation of 171 Aviation Squadron from Townsville. These facilities are inadequate and impact on each unit's operational and administrative efficiency.

THE REQUIREMENTS

Work Elements

23. The project includes the following works:
 - a) New and refurbished facilities for 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), including command and administrative facilities for the Tactical Assault Group (East) and the commando company to be raised as an element of the Special Operations Command initiative;
 - b) New working and logistic accommodation for the Incident Response Regiment;
 - c) Laboratories for the Incident Response Regiment at the Defence Science and Technical Organisation's Fishermans Bend establishment;
 - d) Base Redevelopment Stage 1 comprising:
 - The essential upgrade or replacement of engineering services and area infrastructure, and
 - Environmental and site remediation works.

Options Considered

24. Holsworthy is the only Sydney Defence property which is capable of development to achieve the Government's special operations requirements. It is not practical or economic, particularly when time frames are considered, to attempt to acquire additional new property on the eastern seaboard. As a site, Holsworthy meets all the Government and Departmental strategic, operational and administrative requirements.

25. Senior Defence Committee considerations of the proposal agreed that given the Government's directions and the nature of the capability to be delivered, non-facility options and "do nothing" options were not appropriate. Private funding initiatives, Public Private Partnerships and outsourcing options likewise were not considered appropriate.

26. Various traditional facilities options were considered in the development processes undertaken for each of the discrete project elements. A summary of the Options development and consideration process follows:

Special Operations Working Accommodation.

27. A comprehensive Facilities Options Study was undertaken by a consultant group resulting in the development of two options capable of providing the necessary facilities:

- a) Redevelopment of Tobruk Lines; and
- b) Redevelopment of Jordan Lines.

28. The redevelopment of Tobruk Lines was the preferred option as it represented the best value for money based upon a whole of life assessment.

Holsworthy Base Redevelopment Stage 1 (Infrastructure and Support Facilities)

29. A 'Do Nothing' option was considered to be unacceptable. There are a number of serious environmental and occupational health and safety shortcomings that must be addressed, while the existing infrastructure within the Holsworthy Barracks precinct is inadequate to meet current needs. It will not support the major developments that are proposed. Key infrastructure inadequacies include:

- a) Water Mains: The existing site wide combined domestic and fire hydrant ring main, which does not meet current Australian Standards, has been identified as being unsuitable for the long-term supply of fire hydrant and sprinkler systems across the site.
- b) Environmental Remediation: Significant improvements to soil and water management practices are necessary at Holsworthy Barracks.
- c) Roadway and Pathway Lighting: A large majority of existing roadway and pathway lighting does not meet Australian Code requirements and poses a significant health and safety risk.

The Preferred Option

30. Detailed studies of a number of siting options and facility adaptive reuse strategies have determined the most cost effective solution was to locate the capability at Holsworthy as follows:

- a) **4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando).** The preferred option is to redevelop the Tobruk Lines facilities for the battalion including the Tactical Assault Group (East). Specialist range and training facilities, granted exemption from Public Works Committee examination, are being constructed within the Holsworthy Range, approximately five kilometers from the proposed working accommodation site.
- b) **Incident Response Regiment.** The preferred option for the permanent facilities is to develop a site adjacent to 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), with laboratories at Fishermans Bend;
- c) **Holsworthy Base Area Redevelopment Works.** The proposed works include the upgrading of communications links, the upgrading of street and pedestrian lighting, the upgrading of the water supply system to dual supply for domestic and fire usage, and minor improvements to stormwater drainage; and
- d) **Environmental.** Works associated with environmental remediation are also to be undertaken. Proposals include the construction of detention basins and wetlands in addition to dredging, cleaning, stabilisation and remediation works.

TECHNICAL AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Site Selection, Zoning, Master Planning and Approvals

31. The sites selected are Commonwealth owned and Defence controlled, zoned for Defence Purposes. No State or local government approvals are necessary, however Defence will comply with the intent of both State and local government law and regulation. Development will comply with the requirements of the draft Liverpool Military Area Master Plan, which provides a framework for rational future development of the Area, guidance on future infrastructure requirements and the general siting of proposed facilities. Attachment 3 is the Special Operations Working Accommodation Master Plan for the precinct. Attachment 4 shows an indicative elevation of the Regimental Headquarters 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando).

Land Acquisition

32. There is no requirement for the acquisition of any additional land.

Project Scope

33. The outline Scope of Works are:

4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando)

- a) New and refurbished facilities for 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), including working and logistic accommodation, vehicle hardstands and security infrastructure.
- b) Working and logistic facilities for the Tactical Assault Group (East), are incorporated within the 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) works.

Incident Response Regiment

- a) New working accommodation for the Incident Response Regiment, including working and logistic accommodation, vehicle hardstands and security infrastructure.
- b) Laboratories for the Incident Response Regiment at the Defence Science and Technology Organisation's Fishermans Bend establishment.

Holsworthy Base Redevelopment Project

- a) Upgrading of electrical communications links.
- b) Upgrading of street and pedestrian lighting, Attachment 5 refers.
- c) Upgrading of the water supply system to dual supply for domestic and fire usage, Attachment 5 refers.
- d) Environmental and storm water remediation works. See Attachment 6.

Codes and Standards

34. Where appropriate, the design of new facilities will conform to the relevant sections of:

- a) Building Code of Australia;
- b) Relevant Australian Standards and Codes;
- c) Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering;
- d) Defence Security Manual;
- e) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;
- f) Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991; and
- g) Workplace Health and Safety Act and Regulations.

Planning and Design Concepts

35. The general philosophy to be adopted in the design of new facilities will incorporate the following considerations:

- a) the provision of cost effective, robust and utilitarian facilities of energy efficient design suitable for the climatic conditions, and of a style similar to other facilities at Holsworthy Barracks;
- b) achieving Ecologically Sustainable Development performance targets;
- c) the adoption of conventional construction techniques and materials; and
- d) the consideration of through life costs during design and in the selection of finishes, plant and materials.

36. The design, structure, servicing and siting of new buildings and services will ensure that future expansion is possible. This is of particular importance in sizing and terminating in-ground services.

37. Where appropriate, maximum flexibility is required in internal office design and partitioning. Except where the need for security or noise reduction dictates, minimum use is to be made of structural internal walls or columns.

38. In general terms, internal walls in office areas are to be of demountable partition or workstation type to facilitate economical rearrangement. Building services are to be compatible with this requirement.

39. This project will require:

- a) The maximum use of existing infrastructure to minimise capital facilities costs;
- b) The adoption of conventional construction techniques and materials, commonly used by the construction industry in south eastern Australia;
- c) The utilisation of readily available and durable materials that combine long life with minimum maintenance;
- d) Sympathy of design and construction features with the existing buildings and precinct; and
- e) Landscaping and the preservation of the visual environment.

40. The building works and services will be fully fitted out, with all communications, light fittings, partitions, floor treatments, furniture and specialist fittings.

41. If air cooled air-conditioning systems are proposed, no specific precautions against the Legionella bacillus are considered necessary. If, however, other forms of air-conditioning plant are envisaged, design shall take cognisance of the risk of Legionella bacillus.

Acoustics

42. Sound attenuation is especially important and specific levels, as specified within Australian Standards, will be met.

43. Vibration isolation of mechanical plant and equipment is an associated and essential design consideration and the designers and construction contractors will be required to limit vibration levels to comply with the recommended vibration levels as set out in Australian Standards.

Energy Management and Lighting

44. A key design focus enunciated within Defence policy is improved energy management to ensure ecologically sustainable development and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The design of all power supply, electrical and mechanical equipment will include an assessment of energy use applying life cycle costing techniques and power demand analysis, energy efficiency being a key objective in Defence facility projects.

45. Concept designs include an analysis of energy delivery and consumption systems, incorporating an estimate of any additional energy consumption and costs that are expected to result from the implementation of the concepts. Facilities will incorporate building management systems, metering and other provisions to measure energy use and to allow regular energy audits and management.

46. To reduce energy consumption and consequential greenhouse gas emissions, lighting is to be controlled, where possible, by photoelectric switches in conjunction with time switch schedules. This is to include provision of personal sensor controlled lighting to intermittently occupied areas. Lamps are to be high efficiency fluorescent, compact fluorescent or discharge types. External lighting is to take cognisance of night flying activities and is to be designed to minimise glare and colour distortion.

47. Where appropriate, time switches are to be installed at air conditioner controls to reduce running costs when premises are unoccupied.

48. Mechanical air handling equipment has been minimised and natural ventilation has been incorporated in most elements of the design.

Ecologically Sustainable Development

49. The Commonwealth Government is committed to Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Defence reports

annually to Parliament on its energy management performance and on its progress in meeting the energy efficiency targets established by the Government as part of its commitment to improving ESD. This project addresses this policy by adopting cost effective ESD as a key objective in the design, development, and delivery of new and refurbished facilities.

50. Preliminary design development has included an analysis of energy consumption that could be anticipated from the implementation of the proposal. The energy efficiency of new and refurbished buildings will be audited within twelve months of occupancy.

51. The preliminary design of the facilities has adopted the requirements of the Green Building Council of Australia to achieve a 4 Star rating.

Provision for People with Disabilities

52. Facilities for the disabled will be provided for most buildings in accordance with current codes and policies. However for those workshops and external training structures that are predominantly occupied by Australian Defence Force personnel whose activities would preclude people with disabilities and dispensation for non-compliance with Building Code of Australia disabled access requirements will be sought.

Fire Protection System

53. The following philosophy has been adopted in respect of the design of the fire protection systems:

- a) all construction and fire protection requirements will, as a minimum, be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code of Australia, the Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering and other applicable Codes and Standards;
- b) Defence requires certification from a suitably qualified Certifier that the design and construction meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia and the Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering, relevant Codes and Standards and any additional State and Defence requirements;
- c) Any recommended departures from the above requirements will be technically assessed by Defence specialist fire protection staff; and
- d) The successful contractors will be required to produce a Quality Assurance Plan to clearly show how the Building Code of Australia, Australian Standards and any additional Defence requirements in relation to fire protection/fire safety will be met and maintained.

Occupational Health and Safety Measures

54. The facilities to be provided will comply with the Department of Defence Occupational Health and Safety policy, the Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991, Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) (National Standards) Regulations and the Defence Occupational Health and Safety Manual. State Codes of Practice will be complied with.

Landscaping

55. Landscaping guidelines are included within the draft Liverpool Military Area Master Plan. Landscaping will be water and maintenance efficient, with a minimum of high maintenance areas. It will conform with the existing landscaping, in that mainly native species are proposed with some introduced species that reinforce the use, identity and sense of place within specific areas of the precinct.

56. Defence will implement a Green Offset Strategy, which will address the removal of isolated parcels of environmentally sensitive vegetation by rehabilitation and, by extending boundaries, thereby increasing areas of the same ecological communities in nearby parcels of land within the Liverpool military district. This is seen as more appropriate than simply planting a small selection of species.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

Cost of Works

57. The overall outturned estimate of cost for the Holsworthy Special Operations Working Accommodation and Base Redevelopment Stage 1 is \$207.7 m.

Construction Workforce

58. Over a construction period of some three years, it is estimated that an average of about 250 people will be directly employed on construction activities. In addition, it is anticipated that construction will generate further job opportunities off-site from design, supply, manufacture and distribution of components and materials.

Schedule

59. Subject to Parliamentary approval of the project, early works are planned to commence in March 2006. The project will be completed progressively by late 2009.

Hours of Work

60. It is planned that all works will be undertaken during normal site working hours. Generally this means site activity can be expected between 7am and 5pm Monday through Friday, and 8am and 5pm Saturdays. It is not expected that any site activity will take place on Sundays. Some military activities may impact on hours of work, but this can generally be forecast and managed through a process of notification and liaison.

Child Care Provisions

61. A 40 place child care facility, "The Little Diggers Centre" has been operating in the Holsworthy area for a number of years. It is intended that this centre will be replaced under a separate project with a 90 place child care/day care centre within the next two years.

Consultation

62. The following authorities and organisations will be consulted during the development of the project:

- a) Federal and State Government Representatives for the area,
- b) Australian Greenhouse Office,
- c) Australian Heritage Commission,
- d) Environment Australia,
- e) NSW Premier's Department,
- f) NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation,
- g) NSW Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources,
- h) Planning NSW,
- i) Integral Energy,

- j) Liverpool City Council, and
- k) Defence Housing Authority.

Revenue

63. There is no revenue to be derived from this proposal.

Environmental Impact Assessment

64. The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires that actions proposed by the Commonwealth that have or will have a significant impact on the environment, or on a place listed on the Register National Estate, be referred to the Department of the Environment and Heritage.

65. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been completed which identifies the key environmental risks likely to affect the Project. This was referred to the Department of the Environment and Heritage, following an on-site visit with staff from the Defence Environment Stewardship Section. The Department of Environment and Heritage have advised that the project is not a Controlled Action. An Environmental Management Plan will be implemented to address the environmental concerns identified by Defence.

66. Defence will implement a Green Offset Strategy, which will address the removal of isolated parcels of environmentally sensitive vegetation by rehabilitation and, by extending boundaries, thereby increasing areas of the same ecological communities in nearby parcels of land within the Liverpool Military District. This is seen as more appropriate than simply planting a small selection of species.

67. The project will deliver revegetation works and environmental remediation across wider Holsworthy Army Barracks and Range Area. The Cumberland Plains woodland in the area is of main concern. This work will include scientific development and support from NSW environmental agencies.

68. An Environmental Management Plan for the program of works has been prepared. This Plan establishes the environmental controls to be used in the three phases of the project: design, construction and operation, and provides a systematic means for addressing guidelines, requirement and obligations. This document will become an integral element of the Liverpool Military Area (Base) Environmental Management System.

69. Defence is committed to applying the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development into the design of all new facilities and redevelopment, and is supportive of the new rating tool that has been developed by the Green Building Council of Australia. The rating tool will assist in addressing a range of issues to improve the environmental and social performance of the development, in a whole of life context, at the design stage.

Heritage Considerations

70. There are no heritage issues in relation to the proposal. This has been accepted by the Department of Environment and Heritage.

Indigenous Considerations

71. There are no Native Title claims over the proposed work sites. It is all on Commonwealth owned land, which has been used for Defence purposes for many years and is largely built-up already or used for intensive close training. No known indigenous sites are affected by the project.

PROJECT DELIVERY AND PROGRAMS

Project Delivery

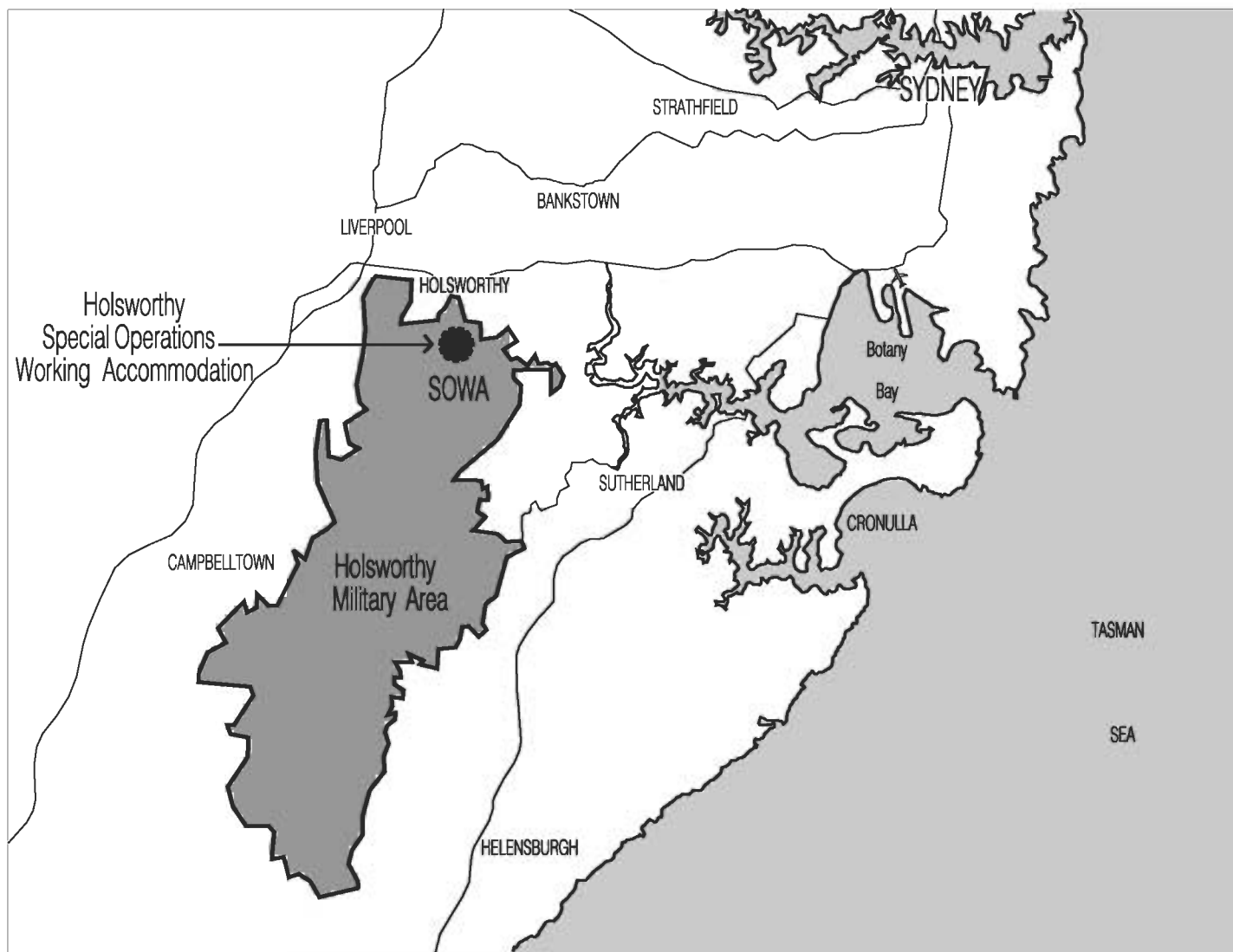
72. The project will be delivered using a proven project management approach. Construction works will progressively occur to ensure the quickest possible completion, while minimising disruption to the affected Army units. All major elements are therefore to be delivered through a traditional process of detailed design and documentation by a number of Design Consultants, and construction by a number of Head Contracts. Project management will be by a suitably qualified project manager/contracts management consultant.

Schedule

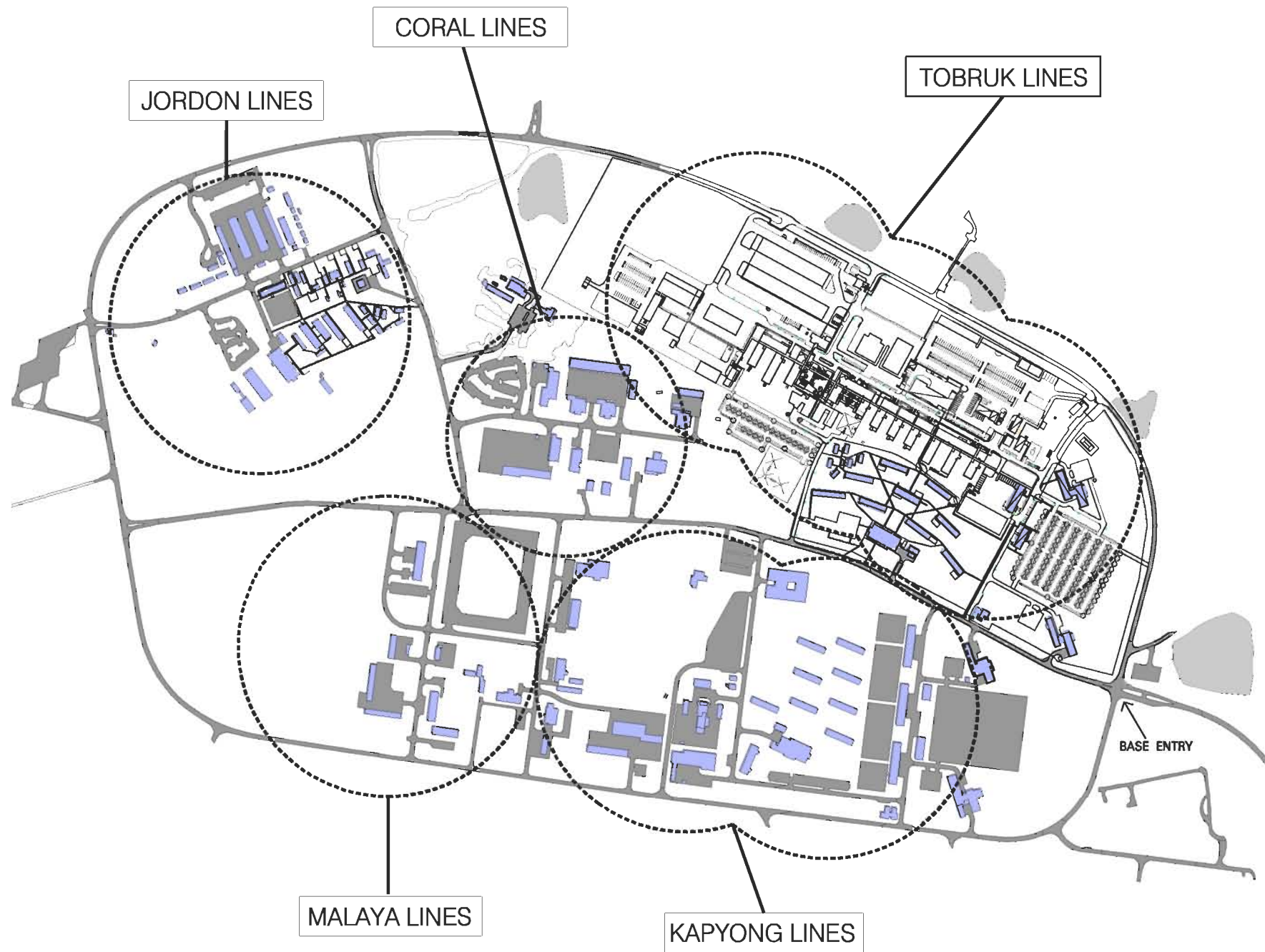
Government approval at National Security Committee	19 April 2005
Public Works Committee hearing	Late June 2005
Parliament approval (Expediency Motion)	August 2005
Release Request for Tender for Head Contractor	September 2005
Tenders Close for Head Contractor	December 2005
Award Contract	February 2006
Construction commence	March 2006
Construction complete	September 2009

ATTACHMENTS

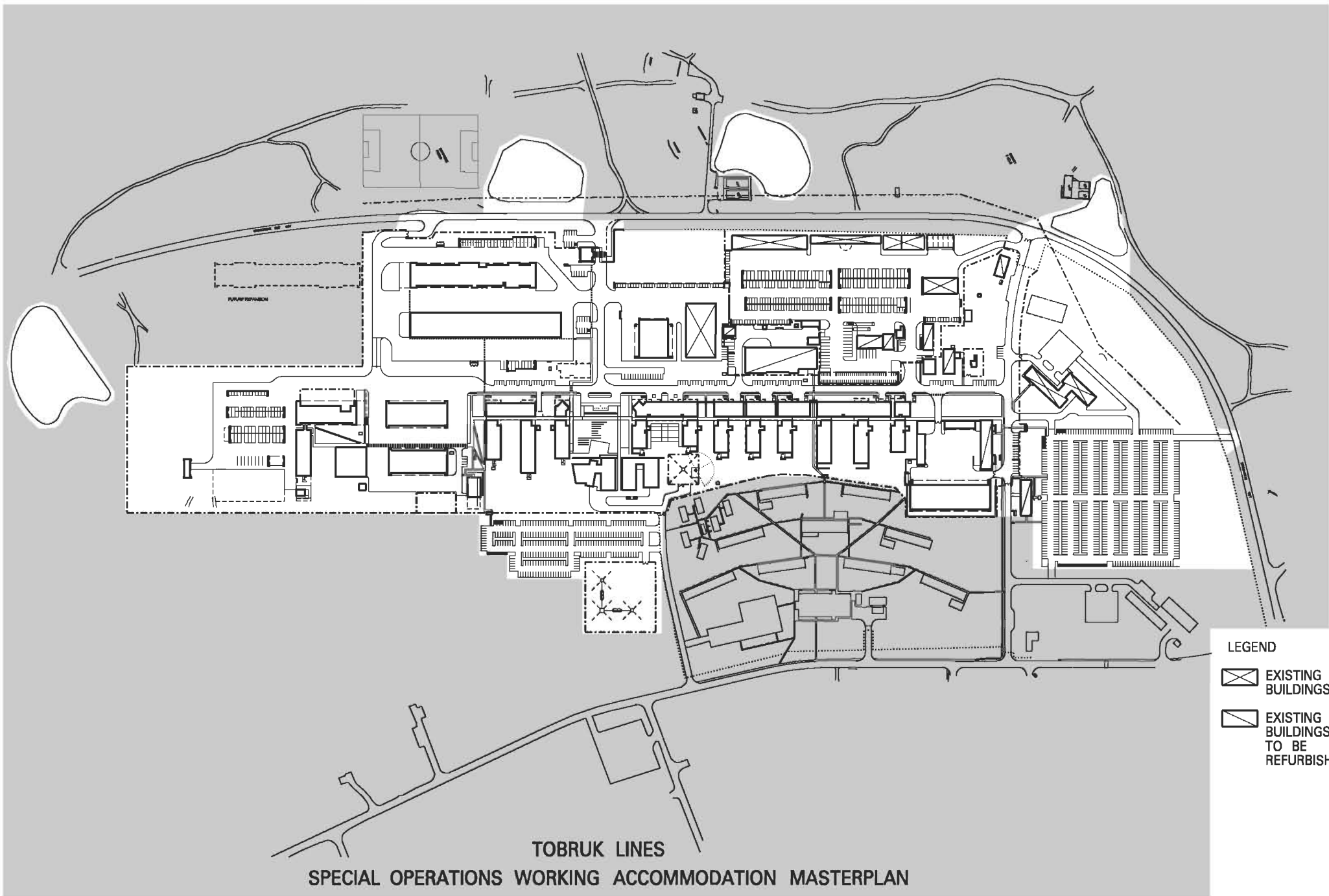
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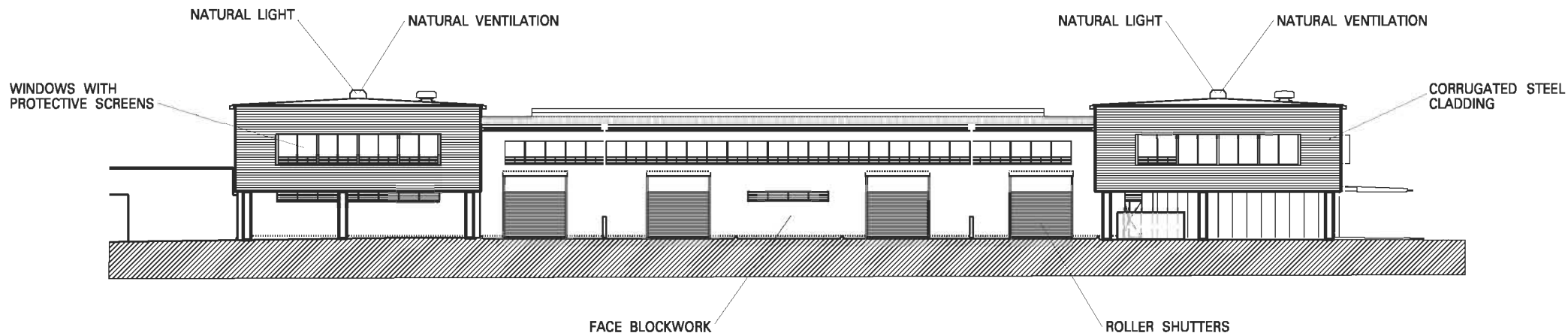


Base Location Plan

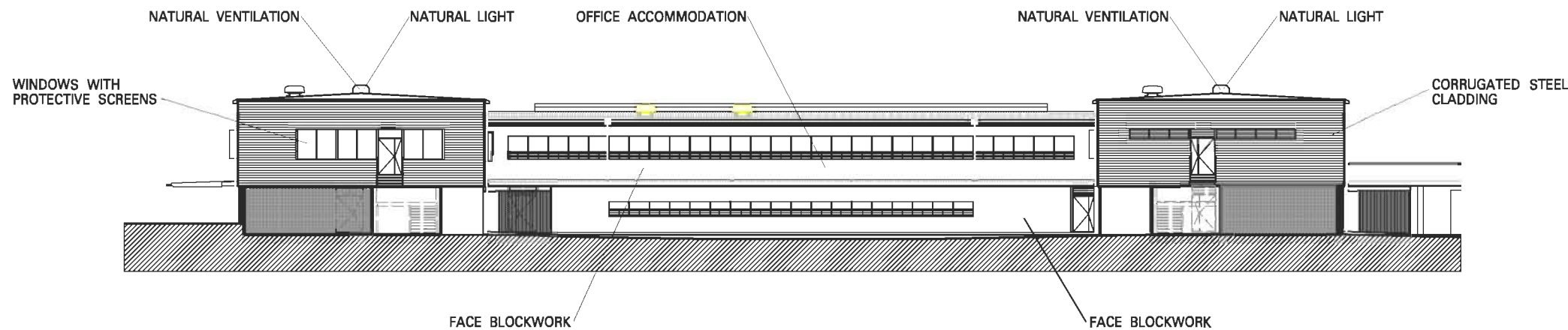


HOLSWORTHY PRECINCT PLAN





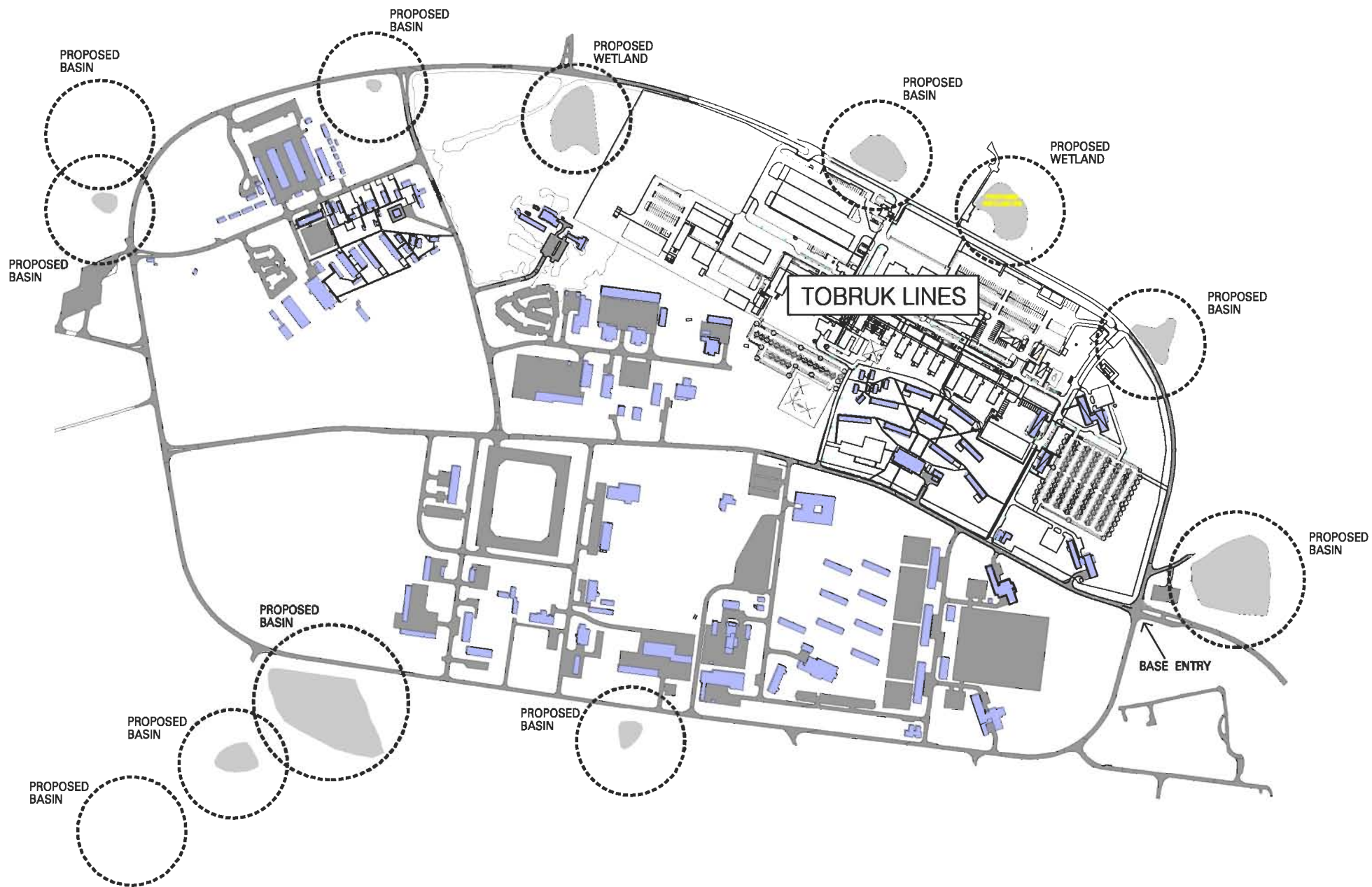
HOLSWORTHY SPECIAL OPERATIONS
WORKING ACCOMMODATION
TYPICAL ELEVATION



HOLSWORTHY SPECIAL OPERATIONS
WORKING ACCOMMODATION
TYPICAL ELEVATION



HOLSWORTHY PROPOSED ELECTRICAL REMEDIATION PLAN



HOLSWORTHY PROPOSED WATER RETENTION PLAN