



**PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR
MARIBYRNONG IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRE
ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION AND RELATED
WORKS
MARIBYRNONG, VICTORIA**

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

**DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND
MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS
CANBERRA ACT
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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) proposes the construction of additional accommodation at the Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre (MIDC) in Melbourne.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE NEED

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The expansion of the MIDC is to achieve additional accommodation that provides improved amenity and demonstrates a clear regard for the personal needs and dignity of the residents.

The design is to provide detention infrastructure that is humane, non punitive and sensitive to the needs of people held under administrative detention.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Background

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the integrity of Australia's borders and to the effective control and management of the movement of people to and from Australia.

However, each year people seek to enter and stay in Australia by circumventing immigration laws. The Migration Act 1958 stipulates that unlawful non-citizens are to be kept in detention until granted a visa or until they are deported or removed from Australia.

The detention of unlawful non-citizens recognises and provides for the security of the individual while their claims are assessed or until they can be removed from Australia. This policy aims to maintain the integrity of Australia's migration and humanitarian programs.

The Department has a duty of care to all people in detention. These obligations include making decisions on how best to manage each resident, particularly taking into account factors such as risk and harm to others or themselves.

The centre in Maribyrnong was purpose built and first occupied in 1983, although previous buildings on the site had been used for detention purposes since the mid 1960s. Subsequent alterations have been completed over the years. In 1990, the North zone was added to accommodate families and in 2002 the perimeter security fencing was enhanced.

Residents generally comprise the following groups:

- Over-stayers or those whose visas are cancelled because they have failed to comply with their visa conditions;
- People refused entry to Australia at international airports and seaports;
- Former criminals awaiting deportation from Australia; and
- Unauthorized boat arrivals.

Over-stayers comprise those in breach of their visa conditions, who are not expected to be detained for more than a short period pending their removal from Australia. Only a small percentage remain in detention for an extended period of time due to such factors as non-cooperation with the removal process or outstanding applications for merits and/or judicial review. A significant percentage have community and family ties.

People refused entry to Australia at international airports and seaports generally stay for very short periods whilst onward passage is organised with airlines at Melbourne International Airport.

Former criminals awaiting deportation from Australia enter MIDC after serving a prison sentence in Victorian institutions. They are detained whilst deportation is arranged. This includes completing any outstanding applications, obtaining travel documents and airline bookings. A significant percentage have close family connections (spouse and/or children) living in Melbourne.

Unauthorized boat arrivals are on occasion accommodated in MIDC for reasons such as health care.

About 50% of MIDC residents stay for less than two weeks. Another 20% stay for less than four weeks.

This project is anticipated to provide an interim arrangement. A larger purpose built facility is envisaged for Broadmeadows, Victoria, in 2010-11.

THE NEED FOR THE WORK

Capacity

The current facility has the capacity to accommodate up to 76 residents.

Separation

The current physical layout of the facility generally only allows for the separate management of single adult males from females and families.

The background of residents has been changing. A growing number have criminal backgrounds and/or have used illicit drugs. In order to protect the welfare of residents and staff, immediate expansion of the facility is highly desirable.

The expansion will provide additional capacity, internal separation zones and amenity not available in the current confines of the building.

The proposed new accommodation provides additional privacy, larger choice of outdoor recreation areas and some self catering options.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Scope of Works

The project outcomes will be improvements to:

- separate discrete groups;
- accommodate more residents (approximately 50 persons);
- amenity for residents, particularly women and children;
- resident recreation and access to outdoor areas;
- reception and visitors facilities;
- disabled facilities for residents and visitors;
- privacy in new works;
- security cameras;
- OH&S conditions for staff; and
- some self-catering options.

Support facilities associated with the expanded facility includes:

- enlarged kitchen, dining facilities and storage;
- modified ablutions and some ensuite bathrooms; and
- extended and upgraded engineering services.

Due to urgency of the need for additional accommodation and to minimise disruption to MIDC operations, it is proposed that the project will maximise the use of transportable modular elements. Some refurbishment works and improved engineering services will also be required to support the expanded facilities.

Associated Projects

A separate, previously commenced minor project will be completed during the course of this project. These works provide for a new reception building at the front gate and some security modifications. This building will provide improved visitor access, covered waiting areas, toilets, lockers, and quick flow security checking similar to airports. The budget is \$675,000 and was tendered during November 2004.

Separate expenditure on other minor works are also under consideration/in progress.

OPTIONS

No alternate site options were explored due to the nature of the existing facility and the investment in the infrastructure that exists on the current site. The available options were therefore limited to options within the existing site.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The project is not a controlled action under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and is assessed to have no significant environmental impact. The project will not be the subject of an environmental impact assessment.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan which complies with the requirements of the relevant authorities will be implemented for the project and appropriate environmental controls will be put in place prior to the commencement of works.

HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

There is a heritage overlay to the surrounding area including this site but it will not impact on the expansion project.

CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Senator Vanstone has written to The Hon Steve Bracks MLA, Premier of Victoria and Cr Mohamad Abbouche, Mayor of Hume City Council, after the Budget announcement in May 2004.

The DIMIA Project Office has initiated consultation with the Australian Greenhouse Office regarding cost effective energy saving initiatives that can potentially be incorporated into the project.

The project arrangements has and will continue to involve correspondence and dialogue with the Maribyrnong City Council, supply and emergency services authorities and neighbours.

The site is generally not visible from the street.

REVENUE DUE TO THE PROJECT

The project will not generate any revenue for the Commonwealth.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located within the existing boundaries Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre located at 53 Hampstead Road, Maidstone, Victoria.

PROJECT SCOPE

The basic project requirement is to increase the occupancy of the centre by 50 residents. To cater for this increase in occupancy, upgrading of a range of facilities will be required, including:

- administration;
- processing;
- visiting;
- food preparation;
- dining; and
- general storage.

The new building elements are generally designed for construction from transportable modular elements to minimise on-site construction time and hence effects on daily MIDC operations.

Administration Building

A new administration building is proposed to house all DIMIA and most GSL (detention service provider at MIDC) administration functions. This building will be a standalone building adjacent to the existing administration wing and connected by an enclosed walkway to the existing staff entry. The building will be generally open plan with a meeting room, a staff room, locker rooms, ablutions and four enclosed offices for DIMIA and GSL management. The main control room is also relocated to the new administration building.

Accommodation Building

A new accommodation building is proposed which contains three zones. One zone for men, one zone for women/families and one zone for single residents that may be used for men or women as required (zones A, B & C). This building will be located partly on the existing men's courtyard (basketball court) and partly on the existing lawn exercise area. Each of the three accommodation zones are self-contained with their own courtyard, day room, kitchenette and laundry facilities and isolated from the other zones for management flexibility. All accommodation rooms contain ensuite facilities with typically two bunk or three single beds. All day rooms contain kitchenette, dining and lounge facilities adjacent to an external courtyard that allows resident access to "open-air" if desired. Two new staff point (SP) rooms are provided in the new accommodation area to allow secure staff surveillance of all residents. The new accommodation area will have an equivalent or better security system to that currently installed including security cameras and staff point

rooms electronically linked to the main control room for monitoring and staff safety. All new accommodation zones are linked to the existing dining and visitor areas by a single corridor that allows management flexibility to keep different resident groups separate whilst maintaining access to the external lawn exercise area and dining area at all times. The new men's area also includes a covered games area and gym facilities within the new courtyard.

All new and existing courtyards have a significant landscaping design component to improve the amenity for all residents including, garden beds, picnic tables, trees and shrubs, recreation facilities and brightly coloured painted concrete surfaces.

Reception and Processing Area

A new resident reception and processing area will be created adjacent to the existing vehicle sally port from the existing training room and office. A new pair of adjoining medical rooms will be created from the existing observation rooms.

Refurbishment Works

The main refurbishment works are planned to enlarge the existing visitor area, enlarge the kitchen, create a second dining room from the existing GSL office, and create a new resident reception area from the meeting room adjacent to the vehicle sally port.

An enlarged visitor area will be created from the former visitor area, visitor reception and visitor courtyard. A new roof will be installed over the existing visitor courtyard and new glazed access doors installed in the former courtyard wall facing the new reception building to be constructed near the main access gates (separate project).

The kitchen storerooms and the dining room will be expanded and adjoining areas remodelled.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The existing Immigration Detention Centre is located in a predominantly light industrial area. The site is surrounded to the north and west by Victoria University, to the east by a factory, and to the south by land earmarked for future residential development. The site is fully serviced.

INFORMATION ON ZONING AND APPROVALS

The existing Immigration Detention Centre is zoned Special Use Zone 1 by Maribyrnong Council which is appropriate for the site and will not be impacted by the expansion project.

LAND ACQUISITION

No land will be acquired for this proposal.

APPLICABLE CODES AND STANDARDS

The design of new facilities would conform to the relevant sections of:

- Building Code of Australia;
- Relevant current Australian Standards and Codes;
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Commonwealth);
- Environmental Protection Act and Regulations;
- Workplace Health and Safety Act and Regulations; and
- Immigration Detention Standards.

PLANNING AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Design Philosophy

The general philosophy to be adopted with the design of the proposed facilities shall incorporate the following considerations:

- Resistance to damage, tampering and self-harm were identified as worthy of important consideration along with the principle of relocatable building elements. With this in mind the design has progressed along the lines of a primarily relocatable structure with infill sections constructed traditionally in-situ.
- Consideration to the requirements of the new administration building and each of the accommodation zones as different management areas.
- The acoustic design of the MIDC Expansion and Refurbishment Project will encourage a humane environment and seek to provide a quieter environment to alleviate stress on residents.
- The design will provide flexibility to allow certain areas to be shut down providing benefits in both management and energy efficiency.
- The design will provide flexibility to allow for re-use of preconstructed elements at an alternative facility if required in the future.

Design

The proposed facilities will involve single storey buildings with steel columns supporting a structure which encloses relocatable units used for offices and bedrooms and provides additional indoor recreation spaces. The external structure consists of a façade of full height windows and compressed cement, sheet prefabricated metal walls and a metal deck roof. Landscaping will be used to complement the facility.

Design Options

Several draft concept options were developed. Following consultation with the Stakeholders the decision was made to proceed with a design based the following key criteria:

- Sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased requirement as per the initial brief;
- Sufficient flexibility to enable DIMIA to accommodate a wide cross section of people;
- Capacity to close down or isolate particular sections of the facility, during low occupancy, resulting in reduced running costs; and
- Ability to operate effectively throughout its design life.

Certification

The project manager is to ensure that the facility complies fully with operational requirements, and with the applicable codes and standards.

Philosophy Adopted for the Design of the Security System

The current security management approach will be maintained, but will be controlled from a new location within the newly constructed administration building. This will entail the relocation and cutover of all systems currently located (or connected to) the existing control room, to the new location.

These systems enable control room staff to communicate with detention officers and control all activity throughout the site using access controls, door release, duress alarms, mobile radio and intercoms. Visual monitoring of all sensitive areas is also provided using closed circuit television (CCTV) surveillance cameras.

The security principles to be reinforced in the project include:

- The ability to separate residents from other residents as necessary;
- The ability to separate visitors from residents; and
- No parking within the site.

Philosophy Adopted for the Design of the Fire Protection System

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

- All construction and fire protection requirements will be in accordance with the Building Code of Australia.
- Certification will be provided that the design and construction meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia, relevant Codes and Standards and additional State requirements.

Philosophy Adopted for Energy Management

Energy management is to incorporate passive measures that are practical and within the project budget. These measures will include orienting the extensions to the north and the use of façade elements with good insulation properties.

More detail will be examined during the detailed design phase. However, measures that will be investigated include:

- Reduced energy consumption and consequential greenhouse gas emissions through photoelectric lighting controls switches in conjunction with time switch schedules;
- Use of high efficiency fluorescent, compact fluorescent or discharge type lamps; and
- Where appropriate, time switches are to be installed at air-conditioner controls to reduce energy consumption and gas emissions when premises are unoccupied.

The design of the power supply and lighting systems will comply with all appropriate Codes and Standards.

Philosophy Adopted for Precautions against Legionella

Air-cooled air conditioning systems are proposed in the accommodation units and evaporative cooling systems are proposed for the day rooms. Appropriate legionella prevention strategy will be applied to the evaporative cooling systems.

CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT AUTHORITIES

Active consultation has been maintained with Maribyrnong City Council.

PROJECT COSTS

The 2004-05 Budget provides \$7 million for the interim expansion of the MIDC.

Timing

A design development, documentation and construction phase will continue at the completion of PWC scrutiny. The program shows design development to practical completion taking 8-10 months if a construction management approach is adopted.

Construction Workforce

Over the construction period it is anticipated that approximately 30 workers will be required on average. Additional effort will be associated with off-site prefabrication and material preparation activity to support the project.

Permanent Staff Numbers

The number of staff at MIDC is commercial in confidence; however, with the increase in resident capacity, the staff numbers will increase commensurately.

PROJECT DELIVERY SYSTEM

DIMIA proposes to procure the buildings and infrastructure under a construction management arrangement. This will allow the construction to be staged. The new building construction zones are isolated from the rest of the facility by the use of construction hoardings and barricades where appropriate. The site will be handed back in a staged fashion with the new administration area being the early benefit followed by the accommodation zones, new visits and refurbished administration. The refurbishment works to existing areas will be staged after the new accommodation complex has been provided and is operating.

Sketch Plans Annexure

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