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202 AUG 1973

Seol aon fhreagra chun

AN ROINN COSANTA

AN RÚNAÍ
faoin uimhir seo:—

GEATA NA PÁIRCE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH, 8.

TEILEAFÓN : 01 - 771881

CONFIDENTIAL

Urgent

3/67169

Mr Donlon
Mr [unclear]
22/5/73

2) Lúnasa 1973

Mr McDonald left
this with me
J 3/9

An Rúnaí
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

I am directed by An tAire Cosanta to enclose a copy of a draft Memorandum about accommodation for Border units which it is proposed to submit to the Government and to inquire if An tAire Gnóthaí Eachtracha has any observations in the matter.

S. O. Carmichael

RÚNAÍ

DRAFT

3/67169

OIFIG AN AIRE COSANTA
MEMORANDUM FOR THE GOVERNMENT

Lunasa, 1973.

Accommodation for Border Units

1. It is the view of the military authorities, with which the Minister agrees, that the need for military involvement in Border security, in aid of the Civil Power, will continue for many more years; at least ten years would be a reasonable assumption on present assessments. This rules out the continued use of the existing, makeshift, sub-standard accommodation at Border posts. In any event there is not sufficient accommodation at Border posts in the Eastern Command to cater for the new Border Battalion being established there and its attachments. Irrespective of this problem, replacement accommodation must be provided for the troops in Cavan Barracks which, because of its condition, must be vacated at the earliest possible date.
2. The provision of adequate accommodation of a reasonable standard at Border posts is a vital and urgent requirement. A brief outline of the major works needed to meet the situation is given in the Appendix.
3. The cost of the works outlined at 1, 2 and 3 of the Appendix is expected to be of the order of £0.75m. This expenditure will be additional to what is provided for in the Vote for Defence for the current year and will be met from a Supplementary Estimate, if necessary. Likewise, any of the expenditure falling on 1974/75 will be additional to that provided for in the existing draft Estimate for Defence for that year. It is proposed that the Department of Defence should arrange without delay for the execution of these works, most of which would be done by contract and the balance by the Corps of Engineers.
4. Because of their magnitude it is essential to engage consultants for the works at Dundalk and Monaghan. It is proposed to engage two ex-Army Officers, Lt Col James Buchan and Capt Charles Ellison, as consultants

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for the work at Dundalk Barracks and Mr Thomas Garland, 40 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin, as consultant for the new post at Monaghan. The Department has experience of the work of Lt Col Buchan and Capt Ellison and the Minister has experience of Mr Garland's work. It is proposed that such additional consultants as it may be necessary to engage as the projects develop will be appointed by the Minister for Defence.

5. The Departments of Finance, Justice and Foreign Affairs have been consulted and

6. The Minister, having considered the advice of the Council of Defence, recommends that the Government approve the proposals mentioned in paragraphs 3 and 4 hereof.

Appendix

(1) Post and Outline of Work proposed	(2) Approximate cost of work	(3) Remarks
<p>1. <u>Dundalk:</u> Increase accommodation from existing capacity of 180 all ranks to cater for an extra 180 and improve the existing facilities to modern standards. The new accommodation would include sleeping, dining and mess accommodation, recreation hall and canteen complex, stores, magazine, workshops, offices and guardroom. A security fence is to be provided between the Barracks and adjoining factories.</p>	<p>£ 250,000</p>	
<p>2. <u>Monaghan:</u> It is proposed to set up a new military post here. A suitable 20 acre site has been selected and negotiations for the purchase of the land are well advanced. Sufficient living, administrative and stores accommodation for approximately 200 all ranks will be provided.</p>	<p>350,000</p>	<p>Estimated cost does not include cost of site which is estimated at £50,000/£100,000</p>
<p>3. (i) <u>Finner Camp and Rockhill House:</u> It is proposed to carry out general improvements at these locations, which can accommodate 430 and 140 all ranks, respectively, and with Longford Barracks, will be used for the new Border Battalion in the Western Command.</p> <p>(ii) <u>F.C.A Halls Manorhamilton and Ballyconnell</u> In order to provide more effectively for patrolling the Fermanagh border, it is proposed to improve these halls so that they will be capable of being used as temporary base points by patrols for a day or two at a time.</p>	<p>100,000</p>	
<p>(i) and (ii)</p>		

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Notes regarding other Border posts:(a) Cavan and Cootehill:

The existing accommodation at Cavan is grossly sub-standard. Approved plans for the complete rebuilding of Cavan Barracks to accommodate upwards of 120 all ranks had to be abandoned because of serious structural difficulties at the site of the existing Barracks. It is now proposed to vacate the Barracks as soon as accommodation for the troops can be made available at another location. The building of a new Barracks as a Company Post in the Cavan area is under consideration (likely cost - £0.275m approximately) but an alternative site has not yet been found; such a post would replace the present Cavan Barracks and the present rented accommodation for troops at Cootehill, which, with 142 all ranks, is overcrowded and the lease of which expires in 1977.

(b) Castleblayney:

Accommodation at this post will be satisfactory when work recently approved is completed. The work is designed to increase and improve living accommodation (cooking, dining, sleeping and recreational), catering for approximately 100 all ranks. The question of acquiring an adjacent field, to be used for recreation, helicopter landing and protective measures, is under consideration.

(c) Longford:

Some improvements are already in progress and further work is provided for in the Vote for Defence for the current year. The approximate strength of this post is 200 all ranks.

(d) General:

When these proposals have been implemented the **Border** posts will provide accommodation for a total of 1560 all ranks, distributed as follows:-

<u>Eastern Command</u>		<u>Western Command</u>	
Dundalk	360	Finner Camp	430
Castleblayney	100	Rockhill House	140
Cootehill/Cavan	130	Longford Bks	<u>200</u>
Monaghan	<u>200</u>		770
	790		

The two new battalions, with their attachments (Cavalry, Police, Medical Ordnance & Signals) will total 1466 all ranks. There will thus be spare accommodation for 94 ^{considered} necessary margin to meet contingencies