

Attachment 8.1

**Proposed Leopard main battle tank memorial at Gemmel Tassie Reserve
McLaren Vale**

8 pages

INTRODUCTION

Life for the McLaren Vale & District RSL Sub Branch began with a meeting of local World War I veterans in the Institute Hall (Main Road, McLaren Vale) on Friday 10th October 1919 when a representative of the Adelaide Branch of the Returned Soldiers Association (RSA) addressed the meeting and explained the object of the Association. There were 31 in attendance and it was unanimously agreed to form a Sub Branch of the RSA.

The Sub Branch has a proud association with the local community. Examples are the formation of a local Returned Soldiers Vine Grower's Association in 1921, RSL Labourers assisting in repairing districts roads in 1922, Sub Branch volunteer members assisting local grape growers after the outbreak of war in 1940, financial assistance for the construction of the War Memorial Hospital in the 1950's, and the establishment of a community men's shed in 2003.

Initially, ANZAC Day services were conducted at the WWI memorial located in front of the Institute Hall on Main Road. After many years this site became unsafe due to increasing vehicular traffic. Approximately 10 years ago, the Sub-branch decided on a new venue for all its community commemoration services. A tablet memorial was paid for and installed by members at the McLaren Vale & District War Memorial Hospital. Although this site served our local community well, it also became unsuitable for the ever increasing numbers that attended our ANZAC Day Dawn Service, due to numerous tripping hazards, access issues and its inability to accommodate large crowds.

After consultation with stakeholders in late 2007, it was agreed that all future commemoration services will be held at the Memorial Park which is located within the Gemmel Tassie Reserve on Valley View Drive.

The Memorial Park is used for all local commemoration services – Dawn service on ANZAC Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and Remembrance Day. Attendance at the Dawn Service on ANZAC Day this year exceeded 1,500 members of the local community, with participation by a number of schools. In addition, Sub Branch members served over 350 cooked breakfasts to members of our local community during our Gunfire Breakfast after the Dawn Service.

The Memorial Park contains a number of significant memorials, namely:

- 50th Anniversary of the end of WW II, with 50 trees representing those years surrounding the memorial paved area.
- Replica of the Cross at Long Tan, Vietnam.
- 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam.
- Commemoration Park Benches commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam (the back rests are a collage of prints depicting the battle).
- 90th Anniversary of the Battle of Gaza-Beersheba.
- 40th Anniversary of the Battles of Coral Balmoral.
- Community War Memorial Tablet.

We have installed 3 flagpoles which are used to fly the three service flags (Navy, Army, Air Force), during commemoration services.

The Sub Branch, through a grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs has replaced the 1 metre X 1 metre bronze plaque which was stolen from the WWI Memorial on Main Road on 13 August 2008.

At this time, the Sub Branch has submitted a grant application to the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish a memorial commemorating those Australians who fell during the Korean War. The Sub Branch will contribute \$1,000 towards that memorial.

BACKGROUND TO THE LEOPARD TANK PROJECT

In September 2007, The Hon Dr Brendon Nelson MP, who was the Minister for Defence at that time, offered to gift 30 decommissioned Leopard Main Battle Tanks to Ex Service Organisations (including RSL Sub Branches) around Australia. The Leopards played a central role in maintaining national security, operating for almost thirty years. They were retired in 2007 when the Australian Army received the advanced M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank. Interested Ex Service Organisations were asked to put forward an Expression of Interest to obtain a de-commissioned Leopard Tank.

After consultation with members, the McLaren Vale RSL Sub Branch put forward an Expression of Interest addressing the following points:

Proposed purpose for which the applicant will use a de-commissioned Leopard Tank.

The Leopard Tank will be used as a tri-service memorial to Australian Peacekeepers, commemorating their service and in many cases their sacrifice. Many Australian Peacekeepers have served on missions and operations in foreign countries and have not received any recognition as the regions they served in were not deemed to be warlike. This is despite the fact that many faced hostile acts in those regions. The Leopard Tank has never 'fired a shot in anger; and is therefore a fitting tribute to those men and women. The Leopard Tank Project reinforces one of the objectives of our Sub-branch, which is 'to highlight and commemorate the service and sacrifice of our veteran community in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.'

Secondly, the tank will provide a visible link to the fore bearers of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps (RAAC), the Australian Light Horse.

Detailed information as to the historical or cultural significance of the Leopard Tank to the applicant organisation.

The Fleurieu Peninsula is closely linked with the Australian Light Horse as it was a major recruiting ground during the First World War. LTCOL Carew Reynell MID, vigneron and wine maker of Reynella SA, was the Commanding Officer of the 9th Light Horse AIF at Gallipoli. He died of wounds in the service of his country during the 'Great August Offensive' at Hill 60, Northern ANZAC, Gallipoli on 28 August 1915.

In the Palestine Campaign at Beersheba, the 3rd Australian Light Horse (ALH) won high acclaim for its part in the battle. Many men of the 3rd ALH came from the Fleurieu Peninsula Region. In fact, an Australian Light Horse school and adjutant was located at O'Halloran Hill.

The RAAC is the successor to the Light Horse Regiments. Horses were replaced in the Armoured Corps during the Second World War by motorised machine gunners, armoured cars and medium tanks. A Leopard Tank will make a fitting tribute to the men who fought and died with the Light Horse and their successors during the Second World War and later conflicts, particularly those men from the Fleurieu Peninsula Region.

In a Media Release from the Minister for Defence dated 13 November 2007, the Minister said:

'RSLs and veteran organisations have shown overwhelming interest in the de-commissioned tanks. In recognition of the contribution of veterans to defending Australia, its people, interests and values, they have been given priority in the distribution. Subject to recipients demonstrating the necessary local government approvals and support, and the tanks being able to be adequately located and maintained, the organisations in the attached table will receive a de-commissioned Leopard Tank.'

Over 350 enquiries Australia wide were made to the Department of Defence. 30 organisations were successful in their bids. McLaren Vale RSL was one of 5 organisations that were successful in SA. One organisation has since declined the offer. The other successful recipients are: Echunga RSL, Mt Gambier RSL, and Pt Augusta RSL.

McLaren Vale RSL and Echunga RSL are the only two Ex Service Organisations in SA that stated in their Expressions of Interest that they would like the tanks to be located in a memorial park for all in the community, rather than in front of their clubrooms.

The acquisition of a de-commissioned Leopard Tank will also right one of the great wrongs immediately after the Great War of 1914 – 1918. The Commonwealth Government offered war trophies to communities from which men had enlisted, as an everlasting tribute to their sacrifice. The war trophies were mainly in the form

of captured enemy guns, many of which survive in council parks to this day. Although per capita of head, McLaren Vale's contribution was substantial, it was not deemed worthy of the allocation of a war trophy.

The Sub Branch was advised in 2007 that the de-commissioning process and the obtaining of necessary approvals from the German Government and manufacturer in Germany (where the Leopard Tanks were made) could take up to 5 years. It was also unclear if the Department of Defence would deliver the tanks on site. An indicative quote suggested that it would cost approximately \$10,000 to move the tank from the nearest defence node at Warradale Barracks to McLaren Vale. The Sub Branch could not have met this cost. Consequently, the Sub Branch could make no formal approach to the Council until the issue of transportation was resolved. On 14 May 2010, The Hon Greg Combet MP, Minister for Defence Materiel and Science announced in a Media Release that the Commonwealth Government would fund the transport and positioning costs for all of the gifted tanks.

Benefits of the Leopard Tank Project to our local community are:

The Leopard Tank will be dedicated as a memorial to the men and women who have served, and continue to serve on Peacekeeping Operations. This will allow our community to have an opportunity to honour these Australian men and women who have sacrificed so much for our nation.

Displaying the Leopard Tank in the community will allow civilian and Defence members to honour Australia's proud military history. The tank will take pride of place in our community and assist in putting the country's history back into community hands.

Build on the sense of pride of those who attend commemoration services such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, and Vietnam Veterans Day.

Raise awareness and support and build on links between members of the community, young people and veterans through a visual and real connection to history (opportunity to comprehend the experiences of war from those who lived through them - veterans themselves).

Young people (such as students) by talking directly to veterans can become aware of the human aspect of past events and appreciate the meaning of days of remembrance and commemoration.

The Leopard Tank will be a valuable community asset and become a tourist attraction within the town and council region.

APPROVAL & ASSISTANCE SOUGHT FROM THE CITY OF ONKAPARINGA FOR THE LEOPARD TANK PROJECT

The McLaren Vale & District RSL Sub Branch formally requests the following from Council:

Approval

Approval for the Leopard Tank to be placed in the Gemmel Tassie Reserve (adjacent to the Memorial Park) in McLaren Vale. Specifically, at the North West corner of the park at the corner of Valley View Drive and the car park immediately behind the CFS Station on Main Road. The centre of the slab to be approximately 19 metres in from each roadside kerb.

Mounting

Assistance to mount the Leopard Tank through funding and construction of a concrete plinth (slab). The following Slab specifications were provided by the Department of Defence:

Length 9.0m x Width 6.0m (1m larger than the tank), minimum depth of 150mm, 10mm steel mesh reinforcing with 150mm to 200mm spacing located in the top and bottom of the slab, minimum cover for the steel reo to the edge of slab of 40mm, and minimum 25 MPA concrete strength.

Ongoing Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance in the form of maintaining the park surrounding the tank and adjacent memorials. The RSL will take on the responsibility for the maintenance of the tank in the form of painting as required and the immediate removal of graffiti should it occur. No other forms of maintenance are anticipated.

RSL responsibilities regarding ongoing maintenance are detailed in the Deed (Council has a copy of the draft Deed).

Liability Cover

Assistance through liability cover for the tank. We are currently in discussion with our Insurance Company. They have not previously had such a request, but will provide us with advice over the coming weeks.

Ownership

The Sub Branch will be required to enter into a Deed with the Commonwealth of Australia. Under the terms of the Deed, the Commonwealth is the owner of the Leopard Tank and has unencumbered title. Specifically, Section 5 of the Deed states:

5. Title and Risk
 - 5.1 The Commonwealth is the owner of the Leopard Tank and has unencumbered title.
 - 5.2 Subject to Clause 7, 8, and 11 the Commonwealth transfers full legal and beneficial ownership in the Leopard Tank to the RSL free of encumbrances and all other adverse interests with effect upon Delivery of the Leopard Tank.
 - 5.3 The parties to this Deed acknowledge and accept that the risk in the Leopard Tank passes to the RSL upon Delivery.
 - 5.4 The RSL Club is responsible for arranging all appropriate licences, permits and authorisations (including all local, state or federal government and utility company approvals) required to receive, maintain and display the Leopard Tank at the relevant premises.
 - 5.5 The RSL Club is responsible for ensuring it has appropriate insurances providing coverage for the display of the Leopard Tank.
 - 5.6 The RSL Club undertakes not to:

- a. transfer the Leopard Tank or any part or component of the Leopard Tank by sale, lease, release, assignment, loan, conveyance or any other means to any government, entity, international organisation, person or other third party without first obtaining the Commonwealth's prior written consent, such consent may be withheld at the Commonwealth's absolute discretion. In considering any such proposal the Commonwealth may also need to seek written consent of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and Krauss-Maffei (now Krauss-Maffei-Wehrtechnik (KMW)) (the original equipment manufacturer);
 - b. Use or permit the use of the Leopard Tank or any part of the Leopard Tank (including technical information) for any purpose other than as a display item.
- 5.7 The RSL Club is responsible for making such contracts and arrangements, including but not limited to obtaining all appropriate authorisations referred to in Clause 5.4, necessary to facilitate the movement of the Leopard Tank through the Local Area so as to ensure the Leopard Tank can be transported to the RSL Premises.

The Sub Branch will provide a copy of the Deed made out to the McLaren Vale & District RSL Sub Branch to Council as soon as it becomes available.

Sub Branch Contribution

The Sub Branch will contribute to the project through the provision of an information board (similar to others detailing historical buildings within the town) and a memorial to Australian Peacekeepers.

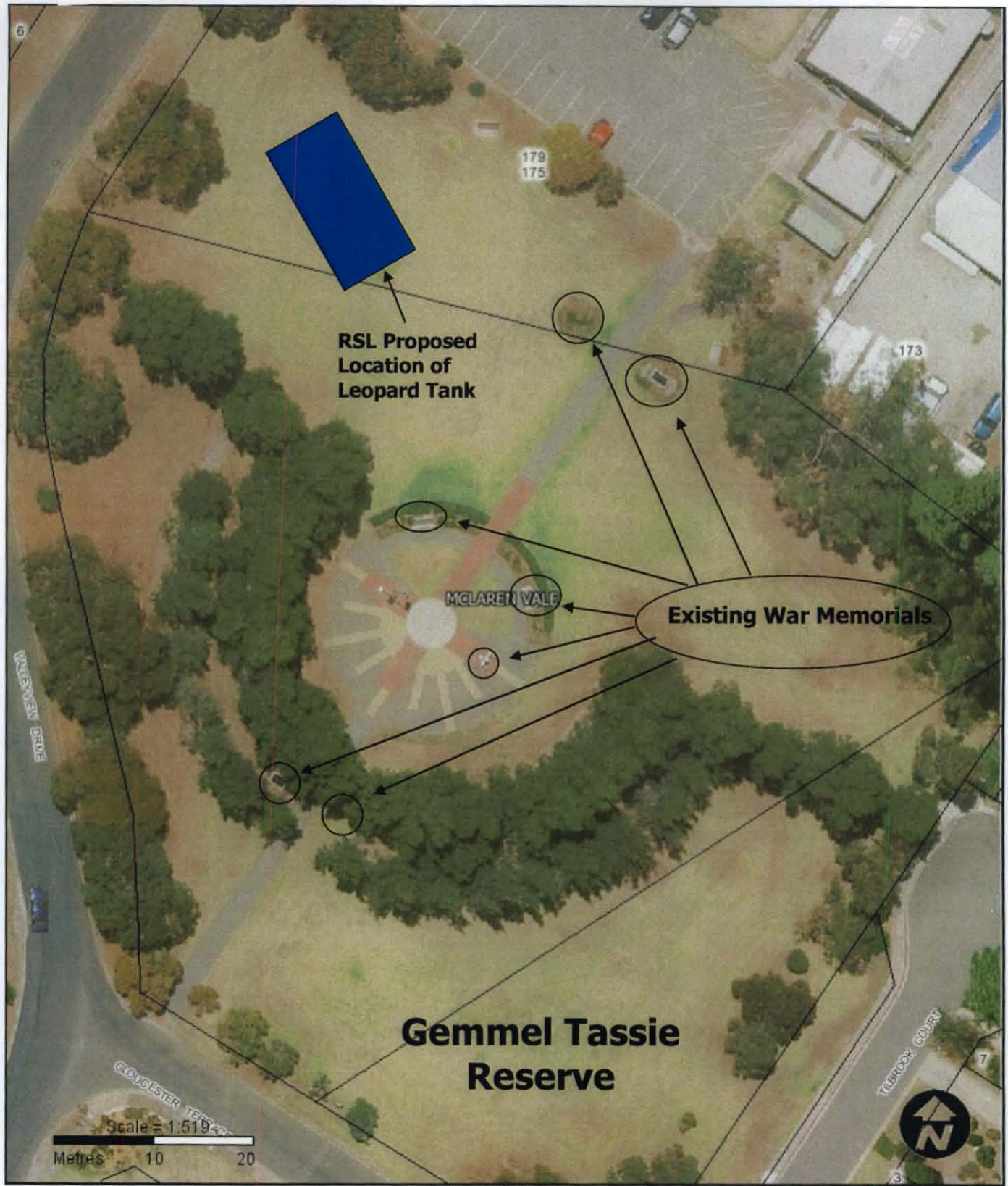
Commonwealth Government Contribution

The Government will pay for the decommissioning of the tanks. In addition the Government will cover the cost of transportation of the tank to McLaren Vale and the provision of a suitable crane to unload it with. This contribution is estimated to be about \$22,000. The Leopard is expected to be delivered in the second half of this year (approximately October).





Attachment 1—Proposed Leopard Tank memorial at Gemmel Tassie Reserve, McLaren Vale



Proposed Leopard Tank memorial at Gemmel Tassie Reserve

McLaren Vale

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