

**Chronology of Events and Actions
Former Uranium Smelter
Nelson Parade, Hunter's Hill**

- 1911** Operations begin and radium extracted from uranium ore
- 1913** Liquid wastes probably discharged into harbour, solid wastes stored or dumped nearby.
- 1965** Proposed changes to residential development saw several walls and terraces constructed and solid wastes and contaminated liquids used as fill. *(Please refer to evidence from Graeme Camp)*
- "Although several locations showed high gamma dose levels and some radium uptake in plants and vegetables, the site was determined to be safe for residential use and investigations ceased in 1966." *(Mudd P. 187)*
- 1976** In light of new issues the NSW Health Commission re-investigated the site. *"It was now thought that the main reason for concern was possible exposure to radon and its radioactive progeny, not gamma radiation as previously thought."* *(Mudd P187)*
- Radiation exposure was found to be significantly above the then public standard of 5 mSv per annum. (Standard today is 1 mSv)
- Soil samples were also found to be elevated in thorium consistent with uranium processed and it was suggested that over time the decay of the thorium would lead to more radium and therefore radon.
- What is very significant here is that Mudd states that "*...this situation is different from common forms of radioactive waste that gradually decline in specific radioactivity over time, whereas that at*

Woolwich would slowly increase." (P. 188) **(Compare this to the comment from the EPA in September 1995)**

- 1978** NSW State Government announces proposal to remove 3000 tonnes of radioactive waste from six blocks of land.
- Project stalls as no permanent disposal site can be found.
- 1982** Government directive sees NSW Department of Health purchase three blocks of land. One of these was "...remediated and 'made safe', with the contaminated soil removed and transferred to the adjacent blocks for storage." (P188)
- It is presumed that this reference is to No. 11 being made safe and the contaminated material transferred to No. 7 & 9.
- 1982** No. 7 and 9 were fenced off, re-vegetated and warning signs erected. At the direction of the Secretary of DOH, acting on the 22 June 1982 resolution of State Cabinet, a small amount (3-4 cubic metres) of contaminated soil was transferred from No. 5 and 11 to No. 7 and 9.
- 1982** Around 7 September 1992, following demolition of the houses on No 7 and No 9, a 'hot spot' of radioactive contamination under the kitchen area of No 7 (which was the source of the radon hazard identified by Scott, 1977) was supposedly dug up, sealed in 200 L drums and relocated to the Lidcombe site of DOH Radiation Health Services Branch.
- 1987** DPW on behalf of DOH commission Sinclair Knight & Partners (SKP) to undertake a study and prepare a remediation plan for 7 and 9.
- 1987** SKP engage ANSTO to undertake radiation and soil testing analysis.

- 1987** June, a draft proposal for on site disposal of radioactive materials is prepared. The proposal is to demolish 7 and 9, construct four concrete sealed cylinders ('silos') on 7 and 9 and transfer approx 950 cubic metres of contaminated materials into the 'silos'.
- Proposal does not proceed.
- 1989** May, No. 11 sold by DOH.
- 1989** May, new owner lodges 754/89 for alterations and additions
- 1989** June, approval granted subject to the following special condition:
- "4. The applicant shall submit to Council written confirmation from the Department of health that the land is capable of being utilised for residential purposes, prior to the commencement of works to the site."
- 1989** August, Section 55 Certificate issued for 11 Nelson Parade by DOH.
- 1990** SKP advise Council that NSW DOH is now the property owner and that they are updating their 1987 'preliminary draft report' and seeking to clarify planning approval procedures. The advice indicates that the 'silo' proposal is being pursued in response to a State Government directive that an '...on-site rehabilitation solution must adopted.'
- 1992** June, Council consents to remaining houses on No. 7 and 9 being demolished (DA 1125/92).
- Special conditions of consent were attached as follows:
- "1. That the fencing shall be the subject of a separate application."

2. **That an on-going monitoring process be put in place by the applicant at its cost to ensure the long-term safety of the site.**
3. That the on-going monitoring take place at intervals of once each year for the first three years at intervals not exceeding five years thereafter". (Min. No. 706/92)

1992 November, Council grants consents to fencing (Min. No. 1294/92)

Fence is to be 1.5m high chain wire along eastern and western boundaries from the waterline to the existing fencing at the bottom of the cliff face from Nelson Parade.

Across the front of the property on the Nelson Parade alignment a 1.8m high open metal fence similar to swimming pool fence.

1993 February, a smaller amount of extra soil from near the pool on No 5 Nelson Parade is removed sometime between 8 February 1993 and 25 February 1993.

1993 March, Certificate of Safety issued for 5 Nelson Parade.

1995 July, as a result of a formal question (Q54/95 OM 3963), Council writes to NSW Health inquiring as to frequency and last monitoring of the sites.

1995 September, NSW Health responds and encloses correspondence from the EPA advising that no recent monitoring has occurred and that *"...The levels of radioactivity have been established in earlier investigations and as these will not change, there is no requirement for any on going measurements."* **(Compare this the comment by Mudd in 1976)**

(Note: Council did not respond to this letter, nor did they vary the condition of consent, therefore the condition still stands and there is no evidence that this condition has ever been complied with by DOH).

- 1999** DOH commissions Egis Consulting Australia to conduct a review of former study reports for 7 and 9, any further site investigation, and the production of a Remedial Action Plan. This is termed Stage One of the investigation.
- The Egis report also supports the Mudd comment in 1976 in respect of the changing nature of radiation on the site, as opposed to the EPA comment of 1995.
- 2001** Department of Urban Affairs and Planning seeks Council's opinion on the NSW Health proposed disposal.
- Council considered a report on the proposal at OM 4095 – 21.02.01 and resolved that the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning:
1. be advised that Council considers that, as this is a State Government asset, the land should be properly remediated, in accordance with the Contaminated Lands Management Act, SEPP 55 and the appropriate Australian Standards, to an appropriate residential standard prior to the sale of the land;
 2. be advised that, subject to appropriate decontamination, the subject sites are suitable for the construction of single dwelling houses in accordance with the provisions of the Hunters Hill LEP No. 1 and DCP No. 15 (Amendment 1);
 3. be requested to dedicate Lot 1 DP 641068 and an appropriate access handle for public access to the foreshore”.
- 2002** November, GHD undertakes 'Desktop Review of Appropriate Radiation Clean-up Criteria' for the remediation of 7 and 9.
- 2003** May, Council receives copy of the 'Desktop Review'.
- 2004** GHD engaged by NSW Health to provide a further report.
- 2005** May, Council receives advice from NSW Health – Notification of Contaminated Land. The notice applies to 7, 9 and the foreshore of 11. The notice is based on a further report from GHD in November

2004. This assessment was only for the status of soils on the foreshore of 7, 9 and 11 and GHD have included a very clear rider via the following paragraph...

"This report does not provide a complete assessment of the environmental status of the site, and it is limited to the scope defined herein."

- 2007** August, declaration of remediation site notices issued for 7, 9 and 11
- 2007** November, GHD engaged to prepare documentation to support an application for remediation and validation work for 7 and 9 and adjoining foreshore land.
- 2008** January, Department of Planning seeks Council comments on proposed remediation project and encloses copy of Preliminary Environmental Assessment by GHD.
- Council responds seeking further information, particularly the proposed Remediation Plan referred to in the preliminary assessment, as Council has not been provided with a copy of the report.
- 2008** February, Council receives a copy of the Department of Planning's requirements for the project and these cover the concerns raised by Council.
- 2008** February, Council considers a report on newspaper revelations and with the knowledge of the current proposal resolved that:
1. Council write to the Minister for the Department of Environment & Climate Change and Minister for Health requesting:
 - (a) The complete removal of all contaminated material from 7-9 Nelson Parade and the foreshore of 11, 13 and 15 Nelson Parade, provided that this can be done safely and to an appropriate site.
 - (b) The provision of a current risk assessment, or other current and appropriate information, on Nos. 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 Nelson Parade, that will provide Council and

the residents of Nelson Parade and Hunters Hill with certainty about the safety of these sites. (Min. No. 32/08)

Letters acknowledged, but no satisfactory response or reports have been received.

2008 June, Upper House Inquiry.