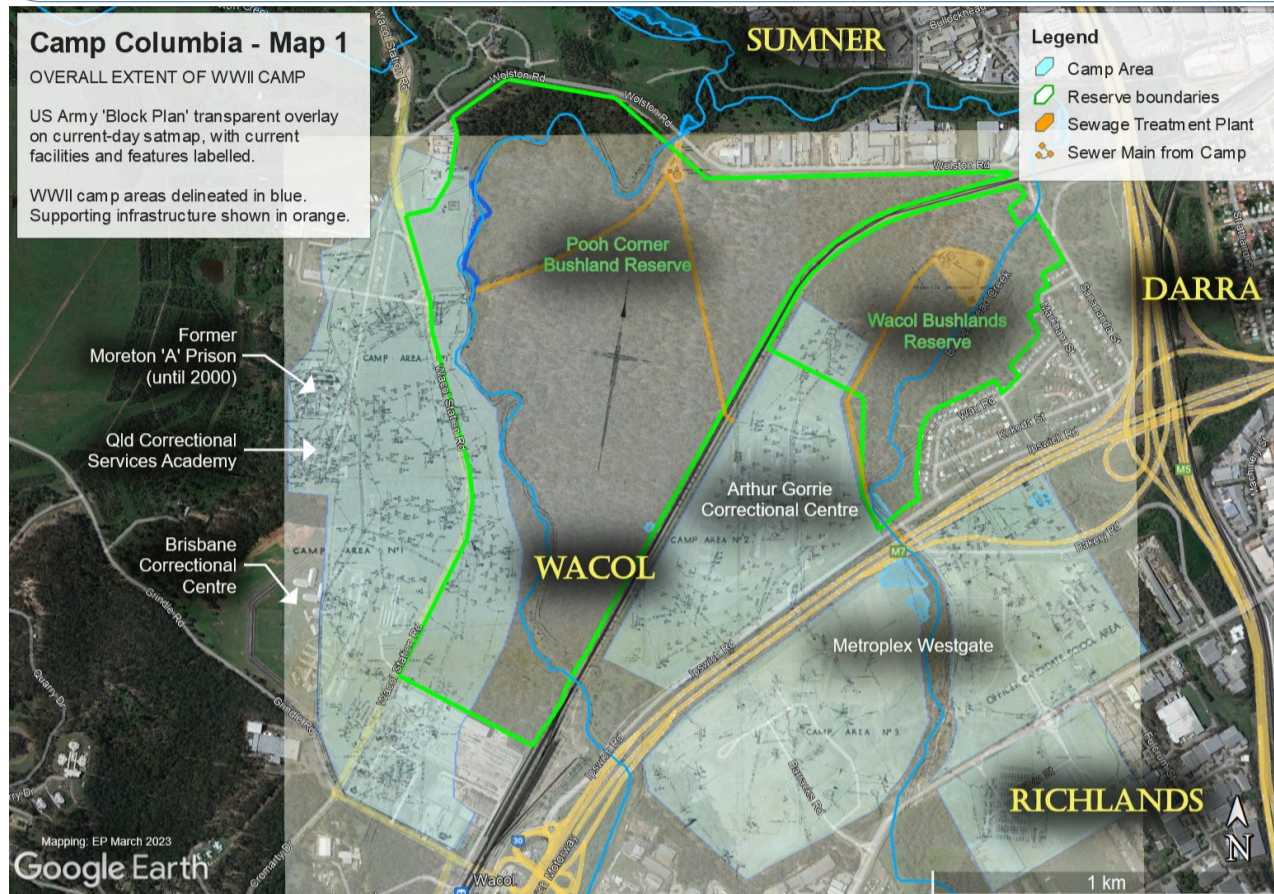


# Pooh Corner - timeline from the 1940s

## 1942 - 1944 – Camp Columbia during WWII

During World War II, the land that is now *Pooh Corner Bushland Reserve* was surrounded on its western, southern and eastern sides by **Camp Columbia**, a staging camp established in 1942 by the US General Douglas MacArthur for the liberation of the Southwest Pacific.

Map 1 below shows the extent of Camp Columbia (pale blue shaded overlay) on a satellite map marked up with current-day institutional facilities. The US 6<sup>th</sup> Army was headquartered here, on the western side of Wacol Station Road.



The more recent institutions established post-war have obliterated most of the WWII facilities. The exception is those portions of Camp Columbia that extended into Pooh Corner Bushland Reserve and Wacol Bushlands Reserve.

Those two reserves, now in the ownership of Brisbane City Council, are outlined with green boundary lines. The WWII sewage treatment plants and certain other infrastructure items remain as extant relics within those reserves.

In 1944 the Americans moved their military headquarters from Brisbane to Hollandia (Dutch New Guinea) once New Guinea was liberated.

*To find more information about Camp Columbia and the WWII history involving military facilities spread across southern Brisbane from Wacol to Archerfield, scan here →*



CC heritage

*To get involved, scan here to learn more about the Camp Columbia Heritage Association Inc (CCHA) →*



CCHA Inc

## 1944 - 1947 – Netherlands East Indies (NEI) occupies Camp Columbia

After the US 6<sup>th</sup> Army vacated Camp Columbia in 1944, the facilities were occupied by the Netherlands East Indies (NEI) Government-in-Exile. From here they organised the liberation of the Netherlands East Indies (now known as Indonesia). The last Dutch forces left Brisbane in September 1947.

## 1948 - 1980s – Surrounding immigration facilities and suburban development

From the late 1940s, the facilities that used to house the Camp Columbia war effort and the NEI Government-in-Exile were turned over to other uses, with renovations and building of new facilities. These uses included several immigration camps for immigrants arriving from post-war Europe, and emergency and public housing during the 1950s.

The immigration hostels had closed by 1989 and post-war suburban development progressed from the 1950s onwards.

## 1952 - 1954 – Pooh Corner occupied by the Australian Army

During Australia's engagement in the Korean War (1950 – 1953), from 1952 the Australian Army occupied the land that became Pooh Corner Bushland Reserve. The site was used for the training of national servicemen and housed a hand grenade training bunker for that purpose.

## 1954 - 2005 – Pooh Corner remains unused Defence property

In this intervening 50-year period, while the land was in Defence department ownership, the site remained unused for any official purposes. However, the land did suffer abuse through vandalism, off-road vehicle use and rubbish dumping.

Fortunately, from an environmental viewpoint, the site retained its natural vegetation which had remained in place for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. RAAF aerial photography of 1946 shows the site had good bushland cover which continues to the present day.

Environmental assessment in 2002 classified the most of the bushland as a threatened 'of concern' regional ecosystem.

## 2005 - 2008 – Pooh Corner Bushland Reserve established

In February 2005 the Defence department advertised the 138-hectare Pooh Corner site for sale for industrial development. By this time, the site's regional ecosystem classification had changed from 'of concern' to 'endangered' under Queensland's vegetation management legislation. After an intensive but short campaign by local environment groups, Friends of Pooh Corner (FoPC), Save Our Riverfront Bushland (SORB) and Centenary and District Environment Action (CDEA), the site was saved for conservation.

Defence 'sold' the land to Brisbane City Council (BCC) for a peppercorn one dollar and provided funding for UXO clearance work and by 2008, BCC had established the reserve for public use.