

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received SEP 16 1980
date entered JUN 26 1981

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Isley Field Historic District

and/or common Isley Field

2. Location

street & number Saipan International Airport not for publication

city, town As Lito, Saipan vicinity of congressional district

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

state code county code 96950

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Government

street & number (Administered by the CNMI Airport Authority)

city, town Saipan vicinity of state CNMI

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lands Entity,

street & number Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Field Survey of Isley/Aslito Airfield has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Office

city, town Saipan state CNMI

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The area commonly known as Isley Field/Saipan International airport is located on the southern end of Saipan.

Official/U.S. military histories and local spellings of the World War II airfield are incorrect. The airbase was named after Commander Robert H. Isley of VT-16. Prior to the American capture of Saipan it was a Japanese forward maintenance and fighter base named Aslito. Construction of Aslito began in 1934 and continued to the time of the invasion of Saipan in June 1944.

Aslito airfield was secured by troops of the U.S. Army 27th Division on 18 June, 1944. P-47's of the 318th Fighter Group flew into Aslito on 22 June. Aviation/Engineers and a Naval Construction Battalion moved four million cubic meters of earth to construct a 2,667 meter runway for the B-29 superfortresses that were to bomb the Japanese homeland. The first B-29 landed on the completed runway on October 12, 1944. By November 1944 15,000 members of the 73rd Bomb Wing had arrived as well as the aircraft of this unit.

The first B-29 raid on Japan was launched on 24 November, 1944.

Isley field was deactivated in 1949. In October 1973 construction was begun on the Saipan International airport. The present runway is located on top of the Isley field south runway. The terminal building is situated at the site of a Japanese hanger and revetted munitions building. The Isley field district has three distinct areas; the Japanese Aslito field complex, the two Isley runways, taxiways and 110 hardstands, and the 73rd Bomb Wing Headquarters and living area.

Located within the Aslito field complex are twenty-seven intact Japanese constructed buildings. Brief descriptions of a sample of the buildings is offered below. Attached are elevations for one of the more significant buildings. Additionally, there are hundreds of foundations of American buildings and relics of Isley Field. The foundations and building functions are delineated in a 1980 survey of the district.

Intact Structures

Operations Center

This former Japanese Operations Center was employed by the U.S. 73rd Bomb Wing for similar purposes. Today it is adjacent to the Saipan International Airport terminal and is a fine example of adaptive reuse.

WWII Bomb damage to the building has been repaired, the building has been painted, and new tile floors have been installed. It now serves as a tourist information center and office of the Marianas Visitors Bureau.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1934-1949 **Builder/Architect** Japanese Military/U.S. Air Corps

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Marianas were captured (and Guam recaptured) for their tactical importance in the B-29 neutralization of Japan. It was from these islands that the war in the Pacific was brought to the Japanese homeland and ultimate victory achieved in large part by the B-29 bombing raids. Of the B-29 bases in the Marianas Isley Field was the most important and has the greatest number of features that recall its World War II history. As indicated in section 7 there are 27 intact structures, two runways, and hundreds of hardstands and foundations from the U.S. period. Concrete and asphalt roads have survived as have other relics of the Japanese and American bases.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Crowl, Phillip A. Campaign in the Marianas. World War II. United States Army in World War II. Washington D.C. 1959
 Rust, Kenn C. Twentieth Air Force, Historical Aviation Album Temple City, CA. 1979

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
 AREA NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 1,189.35
 Quadrangle name 55 Quadrangle scale 1,25,000

UMT References

A	5 5	3 6 3 6 0 0	1 6 7 3 5 0 0	B	5 5	3 6 3 8 4 5	1 6 7 3 4 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	5 5	3 6 4 1 9 0	1 6 7 3 0 4 5	D	5 5	3 6 4 5 9 0	1 6 7 3 2 9 0
E	5 5	3 6 5 1 0 0	1 6 7 2 6 2 0	F	5 5	3 6 5 3 0 0	1 6 7 1 9 9 9
G	5 5	3 6 4 7 2 0	1 6 7 1 4 2 0	H	5 5	3 6 4 2 0 0	1 6 7 1 1 6 0

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Isley Field Perimeter Road has been selected to define the boundaries of the Historic District because it encicles all pertinent historic features from both the Japanese and American Periods of construction and use.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Duane Denfeld, Phd Historic Achaeologist
 organization Historic Preservation Office date 1 July 1980
 street & number Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas telephone _____
 city or town Saipan, CNMI state _____

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James B. Pangolinan
 title Chief, Division of Historic Preservation date 5/6/81

For HCERS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
John B. Grosvenor date 6/26/81
 Keeper of the National Register
 Attest: Patricia Andrews date 6/26/81
 Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1 of

Extant is the original wood ceiling, wiring conduits, steel doors, and windows. The interior configuration retains the original floor plan.

This concrete building survived the bombardment of Saipan with major damage limited to a bomb hole (1m + 1.50 m.) in the operations office (today, director of the Visitors Bureau Office). The hole was repaired during the construction of the Saipan airport. The original 2 cm. thick steel plate doors and window covers are in place.

Elevations of this building are attached.

Gas Drum Storage Bunkers (4)

These concrete and rebar bunkers are 8.4 meters high, and the walls are 80 cm. thick. Windows and doors are sheltered by steel plates 2 cm. thick. The inside dimensions are 14.20 m. x 16.00 m.

Bomb damage, including penetration, is present at each of the bunkers.

The interiors are open and contain four roof support posts. The roof interiors in two bunkers are spalling.

Other Intact Buildings

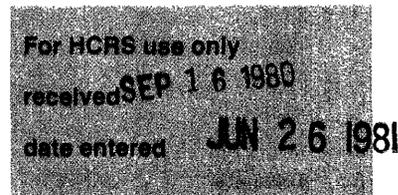
A bunkered, two story, power plant building and a two story generator building have survived. There is also a semi-underground bomb storage building, revetted by a L shaped concrete and soil wall 150 x 50 m. A gun emplacement is on the soil covered roof of this structure. This is the only remaining example of this type of building in Micronesia, and the structure is in excellent condition.

Another unique building is a semi-underground fuel storage facility (inside dimensions 10.45 x 14.80 meters), with three large fuel tanks. Adjacent to the fuel storage building is a pump house, upon which camouflage paint is still visible.

Additional buildings are a torpedo regulating shop, 11 concrete air raid shelter, and a cold storage building.

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Continuation sheet Isley Field

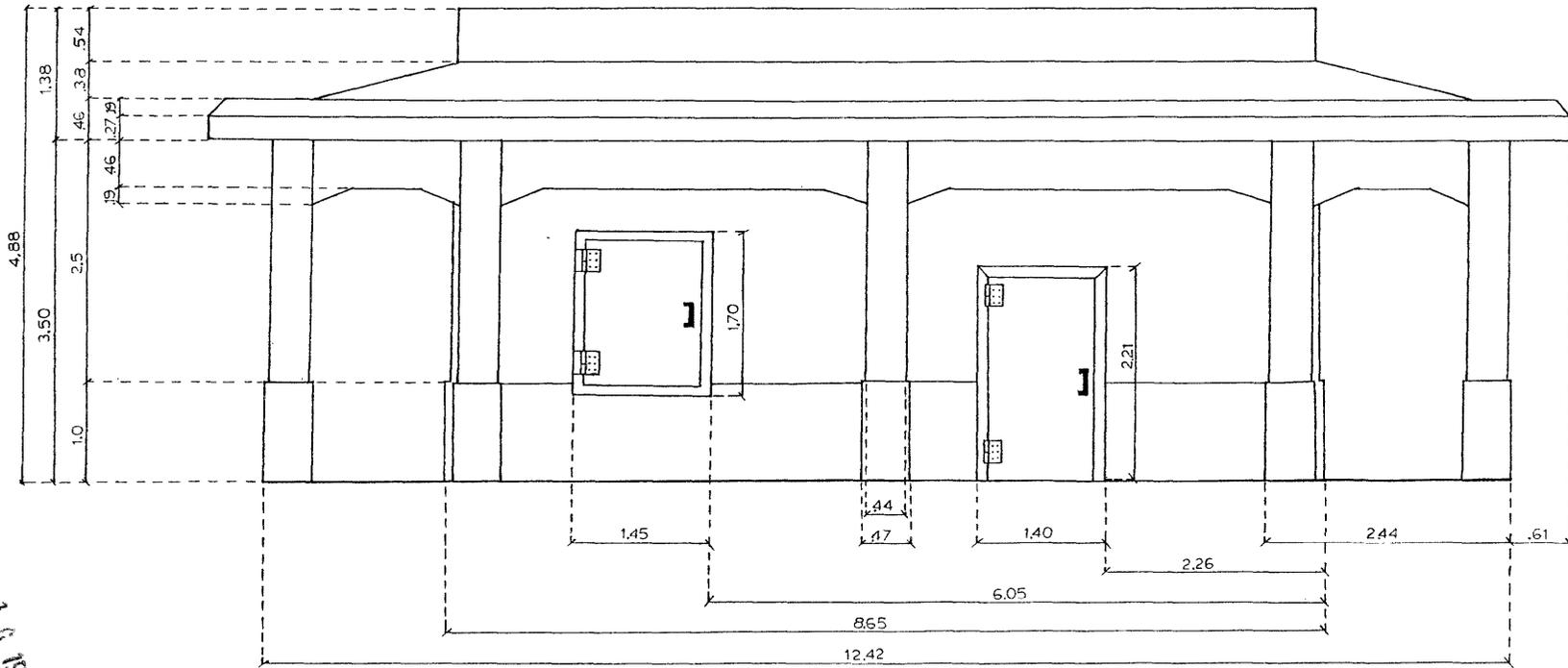
Item number 10

Page 1 of 1

Geographical Data: UTM References

	<u>ZONE</u>	<u>EASTING</u>	<u>NORTHING</u>
I.	55	363 210	1671 460
J.	55	362 930	1671 370
K.	55	362 430	1671 430
L.	55	361 920	1671 410
M.	55	362 250	1671 930
N.	55	362 950	1673 050

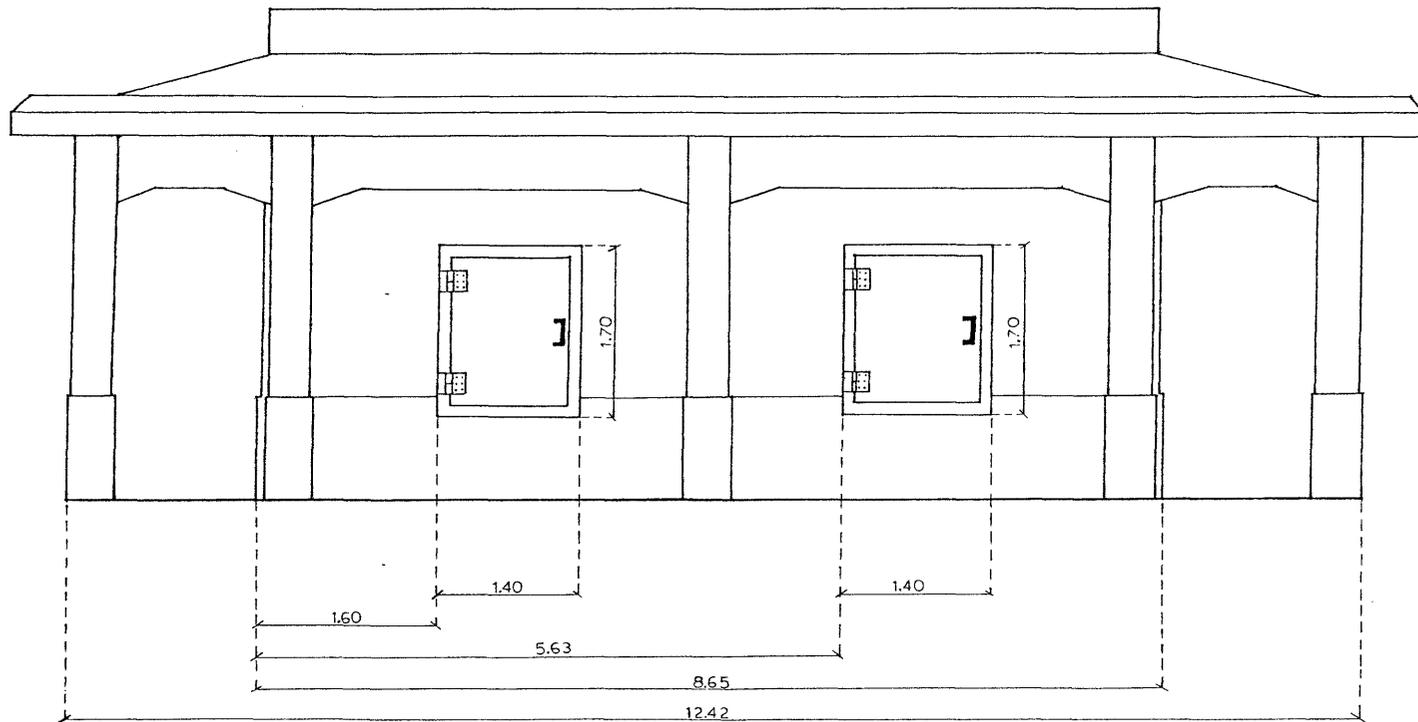
SEP 10 1980



ALL MEASUREMENTS GIVEN IN METERS

FIGURE 1. OPERATIONS BUILDING: MARIANAS VISITORS BUREAU BUILDING, ISLEY FIELD, SAIPAN (North Elevation)

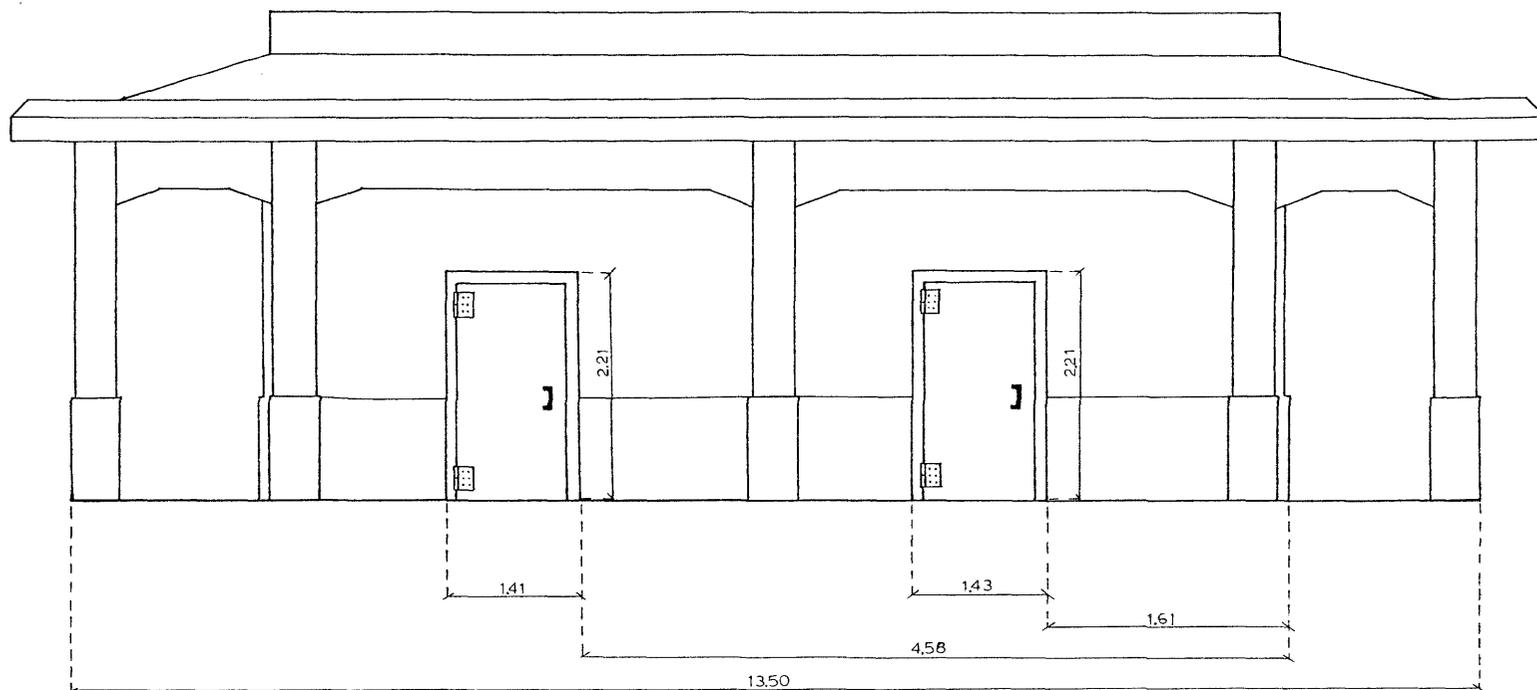
JUN 26 1981



ALL MEASUREMENTS GIVEN IN METERS

FIGURE 2. OPERATIONS BUILDING: MARIANAS VISITORS
 BUREAU BUILDING, ISLEY FIELD, SAIPAN
 (South Elevation)

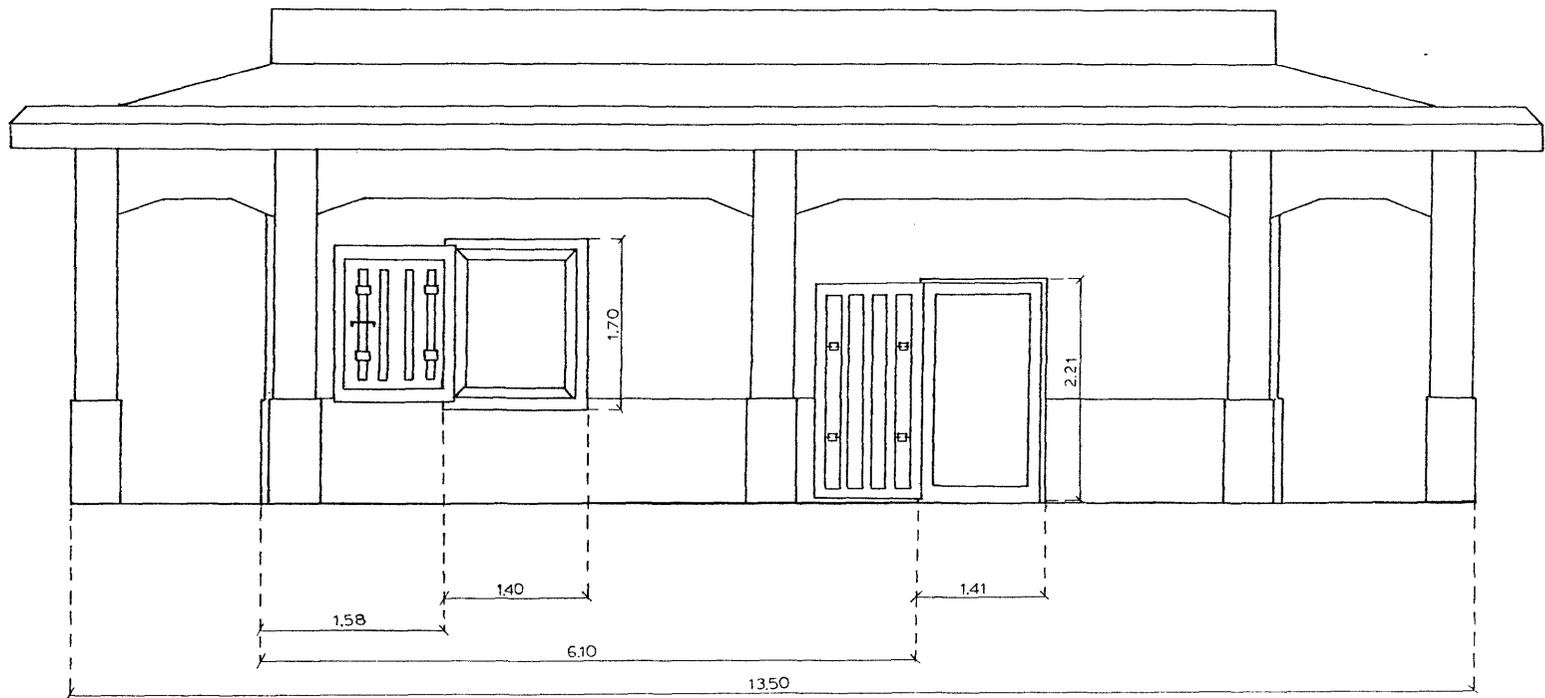
JUN 26 1981



ALL MEASUREMENTS GIVEN IN METERS

FIGURE 3. OPERATIONS BUILDING: MARIANAS VISITORS
BUREAU BUILDING, ISLEY FIELD, SAIPAN
(East Elevation)

JUN 26 1981

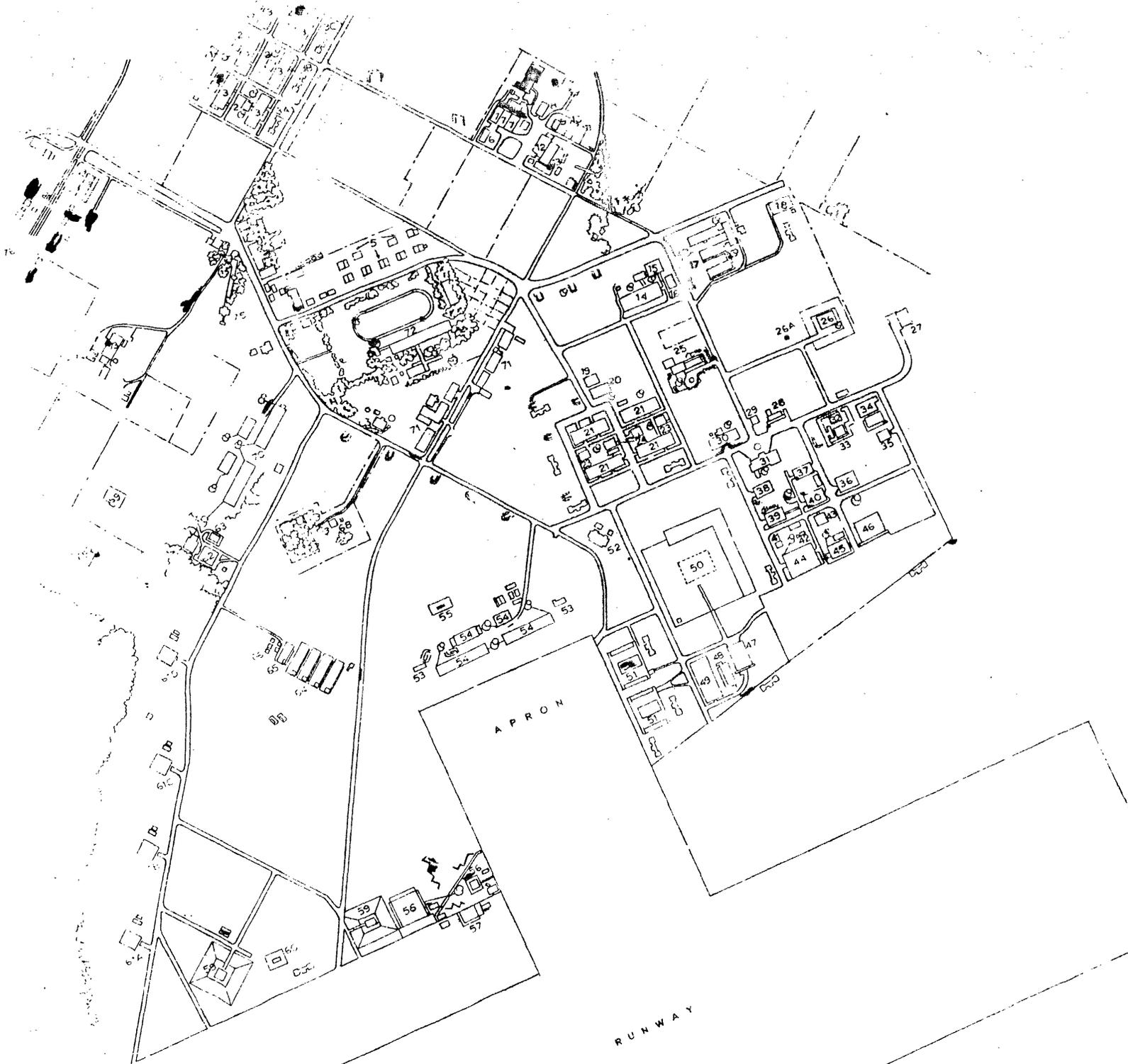


ALL MEASUREMENTS GIVEN IN METERS

FIGURE 4. OPERATIONS BUILDING: MARIANAS VISITORS
BUREAU BUILDING, ISLEY FIELD, SAIPAN
(West Elevation)

JUN 26 1981

SEP 16 1980



◯ or ◻ Water tank
 □ Air raid shelter

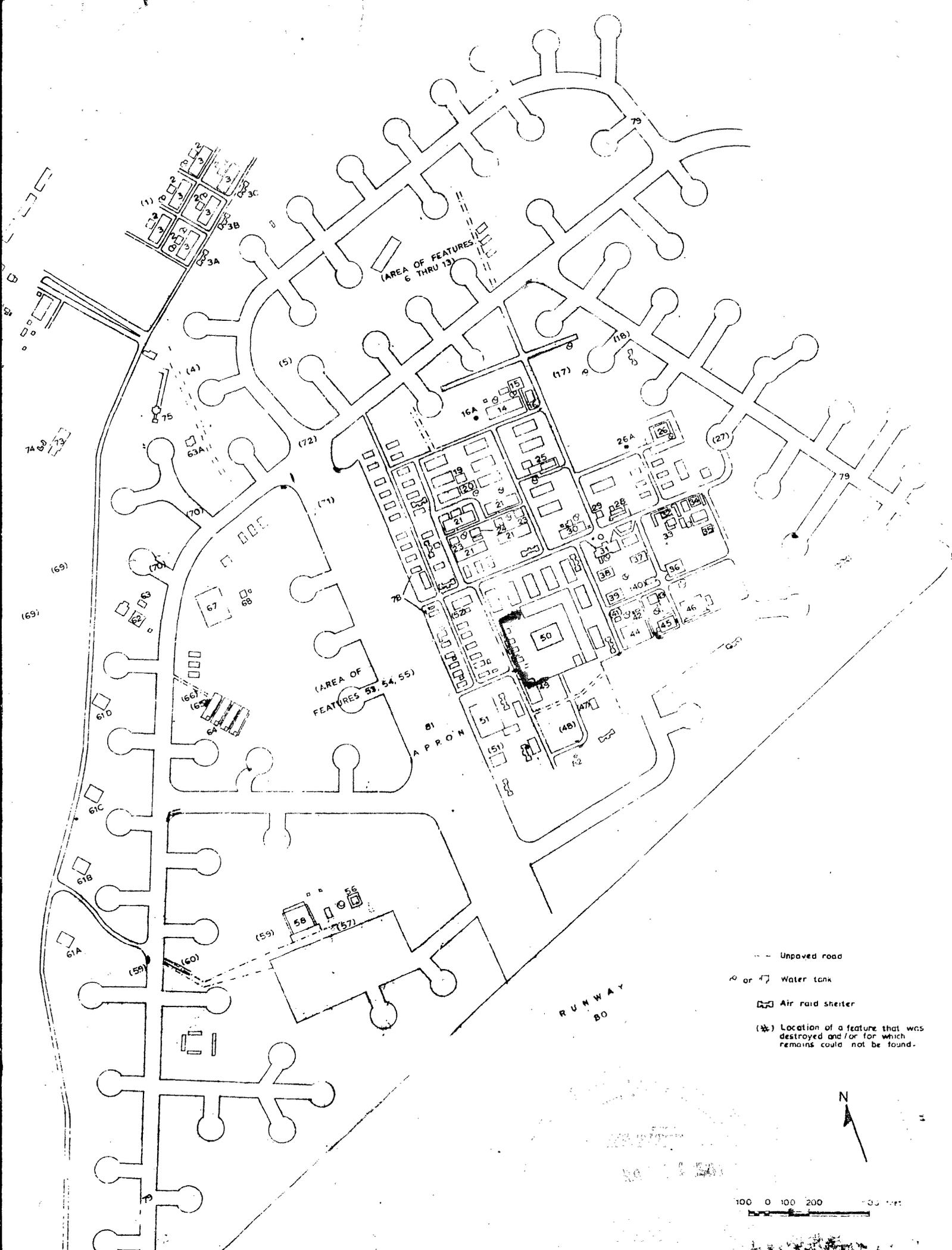
RECEIVED
 MAY 14 1981
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100 0 100 200 500 feet

30 0 30 60 150 meters

FIGURE 50. ASLITO AIRFIELD, SAIPAN, 1944
 (JAPANESE PERIOD)

JUN 26 1981



(AREA OF FEATURES
6 THRU 13)

(AREA OF
FEATURES 53, 54, 55)

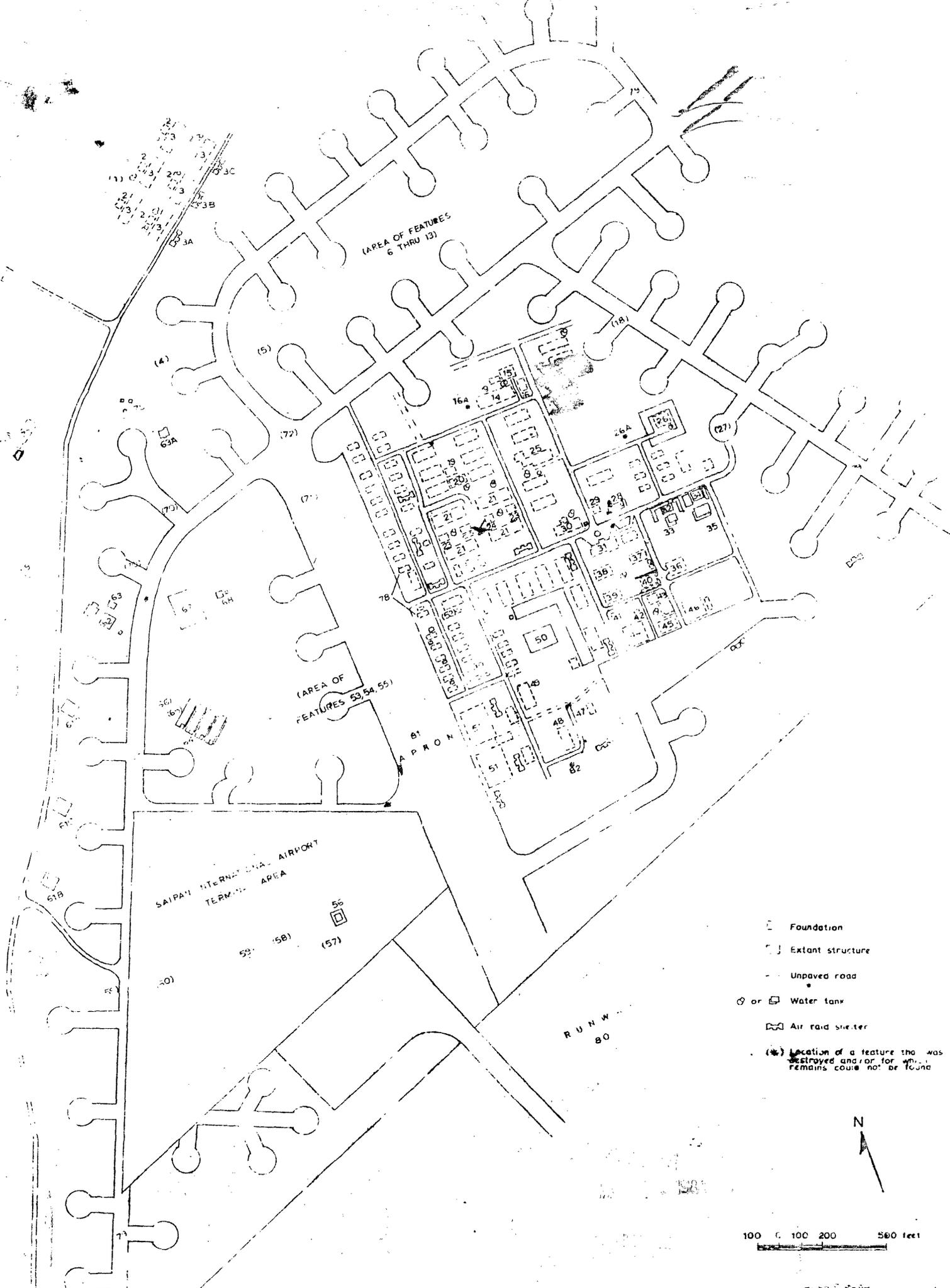
APRON
81

RUNWAY
80

- Unpaved road
- or ◻ Water tank
- ◻ Air raid shelter
- (*) Location of a feature that was destroyed and/or for which remains could not be found.



100 0 100 200 300 feet



AREA OF FEATURES
6 THRU 13

AREA OF
FEATURES 53, 54, 55

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
TERMINAL AREA

APRON

RUNWAY
80

- Foundation
- ▭ Extant structure
- - - Unpaved road
- or □ Water tank
- ☐ Air raid shelter
- (*) Location of a feature that was destroyed and/or for which remains could not be found



100 0 100 200 500 feet

30 0 50 100 150 meters