

Art of Deception: A proposal for the Balnakailly Bunker Art Project

Starfish background

The Operation Starfish bunker on Bute is a World War II decoy site, designed to trick enemy bombers into attacking empty areas instead of real targets like the densely populated Rothesay. The bunker-controlled lights and fires simulating an airfield or town.

Purpose and theme of proposal

The theme of this artwork is deception in warfare. The works are intended to reflect the dangerous role the brave men who were deployed to the Starfish mission played in protecting the island. By creating interest in warfare deception tactics we hope to give visitors an engaging visual experience, give the bunker a much-needed upgrade and make it a destination for tourism.

Application and practical considerations

In all the rooms the intention is to use the same limited colour palette, particularly with the greens, to give a unified feel, even though the rooms have very different designs.

(A limited paint palette has the additional benefit of keeping the material costs down, as fewer individual paint colours are required).

Room descriptions

Room 1, entrance from the steps.

This is a simple visual overview, depicting a map of Bute, with bunker location highlighted, overshadowed by the silhouette of a bomber. This room will also feature an information board, giving historical context.



Room 2 (Right of the entrance)

This shows a forest lit to give the impression of an urban environment, with searchlights, intended to attract enemy bombers. This is intended to suggest the practice of decoy sites, as well as the obvious danger of deliberately attracting attack. The position of the window on the end wall will hopefully add to the impression, suggesting a moon over the nighttime forest.



Room 3 (Left of the entrance)

This room is based on the Dazzle camouflage, ship camouflage that was used in both World Wars, consisting of complex patterns of geometric shapes interrupting and intersecting each other. The intention of dazzle is not to conceal but to make it difficult to estimate a target's range, speed, and heading.

The intention in this room is to give a striking visual experience based on a famous military deception practice.

