

DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PART 4 NO. 1087
DATE 7 JUN 1984
PAGES
M. L. ...
Clerk of the Senate



THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE
NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE

REPORT ON THE
FUTURE USE OF THE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE

May 1984

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE
NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE

REPORT ON THE
FUTURE USE OF THE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE

May 1984

Membership of the Committee
(Thirty-third Parliament)

Joint Chairmen

Senator the Hon. D. McClelland
President of the Senate

Hon. Dr H.A. Jenkins, MP
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members

Hon. T. Uren, MP
Minister for Territories and Local Government

Senator M.A. Colston

Senator G. Georges

Senator K.J. Martin

Senator M.E. Reid

Senator K.W. Sibraa

Senator B.C. Teague

Hon. J.D.M. Dobie, MP

Mrs R.J. Kelly, MP

Mr B. Lloyd, MP

Mrs H. Mayer, MP

Mr L.B. McLeay, MP

Mr P.M. Ruddock, MP

Secretary to the Committee

Mr D.M. Piper

TERMS OF REFERENCE

In June 1982 the National Capital Development Commission published its report "Parliamentary Zone Development Plan" in which it noted that "...In the absence of any decisions about the use of the Provisional Parliament House after it is vacated in 1988 it has been assumed that it will remain in its present form."

Concurrently it was recognised that detailed planning of the interior of the new Parliament House will be affected by any decisions to incorporate material from the Provisional Parliament House (the existing building) and that logically such decisions should not be taken until the future of the latter has been determined.

It was thus clear that a decision on the future use of the provisional House was an essential step not only in developing an overall plan for the Parliamentary Zone but also in determining which items of historical or artistic merit should be used in the new Parliament House.

A major reason for the uncertainty about the future of the provisional House is the fact that there is no obvious procedure for determining the matter. Furthermore under the Parliament Act 1974 all buildings and works within the Parliamentary Zone must be approved by Parliament.

Because of this uncertainty the Joint Committee proposed to the Minister for Territories and Local Government (Hon. T. Uren, MP) on 6 May 1983 that the Committee's terms of reference be amended by inserting a new clause requiring that the Committee consider and report on the use of the Provisional Parliament House after it is vacated by Parliament.

On 25 May 1983 the House of Representatives agreed to a resolution moved by the Minister that the Committee's resolution of appointment be amended by inserting after paragraph 3 the following new paragraph:

"(3A) That the Committee consider and report on the use of the Provisional Parliament House after it is vacated by Parliament."

On 26 May 1983 the Senate concurred in the resolution of the House.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. THE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE SHOULD NOT BE DEMOLISHED (Paragraph 4.13)

2. BECAUSE OF THE HISTORICAL AND HERITAGE MERITS OF THE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE IT SHOULD REMAIN BASICALLY AS IT IS SUBJECT TO THE MODIFICATIONS REQUIRED TO THE SOUTHERN FACADE AND THE ROOFLINE TO ENHANCE THE VIEWS OF IT FROM CAPITAL HILL (Paragraph 4.18)

3. THE MOST APPROPRIATE FUTURE USE WOULD BE AS A MUSEUM RELATED TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION, FEDERATION AND THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT (Paragraph 4.30)

4. THE PARLIAMENTARY MUSEUM SHOULD BECOME THE CUSTODIAN OF THOSE PAINTINGS AND OTHER ITEMS OF ARTISTIC MERIT WHICH ARE PART OF THE NATIONAL COLLECTION AND WHICH HAVE PARLIAMENTARY OR POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Paragraph 4.33)

5. THE PROVISIONAL HOUSE SHOULD REMAIN UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS ADVISED BY A JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE APPOINTED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE PURPOSE (Paragraph 4.34)

6. FUNDS SHOULD BE PROVIDED IN THE 1984/85 FINANCIAL YEAR FOR A CONSERVATION ANALYSIS AND PLAN TO BE CARRIED OUT ON THE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE (Paragraph 4.37)

7. THE CONTINUED LONG-TERM USE OF THE PROVISIONAL HOUSE BY THE PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS IS NOT APPROPRIATE (Paragraph 4.38)

CHAPTER 1

THE INQUIRY

Advertisements and Submissions

1.1 Submissions from interested persons were invited by advertisements in the national press on 25 June 1983. In addition the Committee wrote to all Senators and Members and a large number of organisations and individuals known to be interested, drawing attention to the inquiry and inviting submissions. Appendix 1 lists the sources from which the submissions were received.

Appointment of Sub-Committee

1.2 The Committee resolved that the inquiry should be conducted by a sub-committee. Mr President and Mr Speaker (Joint Chairmen), Senator M.A. Colston, Senator M.E. Reid, Mrs R.J. Kelly, MP and Mr P.M. Ruddock, MP were appointed as members of the Sub-Committee. The Secretary to the Sub-Committee was Mr M. Adamson.

Briefings, Public Hearings and Inspections

1.3 Because of its relevance to the inquiry, and the main thrust of the Committee's work on the new Parliament House, as well as to the short and long term plans for the development of the Parliamentary Zone, the Committee was given a briefing by officers of the National Capital Development Commission on 14 October 1983. The briefing, at which the Committee was joined by members of the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory, was based on the Commission's "Parliamentary Zone Development Plan" (June 1982) and the "Parliamentary Zone Development Plan - Second Report" (September 1983).

1.4 Public hearings were conducted in Canberra on 14 October and 28 November 1983, on 13 and 14 February and 17 May 1984. Details of the public hearings are at Appendix 2.

1.5 During the inquiry the Sub-Committee viewed the Provisional Parliament House and the new Parliament House from vantage points on

Mt Ainslie, the Australian War Memorial, Anzac Parade, Parkes Place and Camp Hill.

1.6 Because a number of submissions made to the Committee referred to the development of a Constitutional Museum in Adelaide the Sub-Committee inspected that Museum on 21 March 1984. The Sub-Committee also inspected the conservation and restoration work carried out by the New South Wales Department of Public Works on the Royal Mint, the Hyde Park Barracks and Parliament House in Sydney on 22 March 1984.

CHAPTER 2

PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Historical Background

2.1 The responsibility imposed on the Parliament by Section 125 of the Constitution "in determining the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth" was discharged by the passage of the Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909. The Schedule to the Act contained an agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of New South Wales providing the area now known as the Australian Capital Territory as the Seat of Government for the establishment of the Capital City.

2.2 As a result of world-wide competition for a design of a layout for the new Capital, the design submitted by Walter Burley Griffin of Chicago was awarded first prize on 23 May 1912. The City was named Canberra at a foundation ceremony on Capital Hill on 12 March 1913.

2.3 The Griffin plan provided a site on Camp Hill for a monumental Parliament House.

2.4 In 1914 a world-wide architectural competition was invited for the design of the new Parliament building but owing to the outbreak of World War I it was postponed. Again in 1916 architects were asked to compete but in November of that year at the request of the Royal Institute of Architects there was another postponement because of the war.

2.5 In January 1921 the Federal Capital Advisory Committee which had been appointed by the Government to have the Capital formally established as the Seat of Government and the Centre of Administration put forward the first program for the building of Canberra. It recommended that because of the prevailing economic conditions the parliamentary and administrative buildings in the first stage should be temporary and that the erection of permanent official buildings should be deferred until later stages of the City's development.

2.6 Accordingly plans for the erection of a Provisional Parliament House were drawn up by the Department of Works and Railways. They were submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on 9 March 1923 for consideration and report.

2.7 The Committee in its report tabled on 12 July 1923 recommended that either

- the nucleus of a permanent building be erected on Camp Hill; or
- a provisional building be erected on the site immediately below Camp Hill on the Land Axis of the Griffin plan.

2.8 The House of Representatives in considering the Committee's report agreed on 26 July 1923 that because of economic constraints the provisional building should be erected on the site below Camp Hill rather than the permanent building.

2.9 Work commenced on 28 August 1923 and the Provisional Parliament House was completed and ready for occupation in 1927. It was officially opened by the then Duke of York, on 9 May 1927. A photograph of the building taken in 1927 and an artist's impression of the eastern side of the building as it was at the same time is at Appendix 3.

Parliament House 1927

2.10 The building which was erected in two sections connected by covered ways included

Main Building

- Senate Chamber
- House of Representatives Chamber
- Kings Hall
- Library - newspaper and reading rooms and associated accommodation
- suites for use of Prime Minister, President of Senate, Speaker of House of Representatives and Leader of Government in Senate
- six party rooms
- five committee rooms

- twenty-two rooms for press
- sixty-three individual offices

together with interview rooms, strangers' rooms, basement, a housekeeper's flat, toilets, bathrooms, rest rooms, stores, post office and attendant boxes.

Parliamentary Refreshment Room Block

- main dining room
- Members' lounge and Members' guest room
- Members' bar and Members' guest room
- billiard room
- staff and press dining room
- kitchen, offices, stores, toilets.

2.11 The parliamentary gardens covering 10 acres on the eastern and western sides of the building also provided 5 tennis courts and a bowling green.

2.12 The composition of the Parliament in 1927 was 36 Senators and 73 Members of the House of Representatives. Apart from Ministers, Presiding Officers, Chairmen of Committees, Party Leaders and Whips no office accommodation was provided. Private Senators and Members used Party rooms to prepare speeches and deal with correspondence.

2.13 In 1927 Cabinet consisted of the Prime Minister and 12 Ministers and it was not usual for them to use their offices in the House except when Parliament was actually sitting. The Cabinet Room was in West Block and Ministers also used offices in their departments or in one of the secretariat buildings. Accommodation provided in the House for Ministers usually consisted of an office for himself and in certain cases one for his secretary. The Cabinet Room was transferred to Parliament House adjoining the Prime Minister's suite in 1933.

Modifications since 1927

2.14 Important changes to the building in the form of alter-

ations and additions have taken place progressively since 1927. These changes have followed as a consequence of a number of factors including

- the location of the Cabinet Room in the building
- the expansion of the Ministry and the need for Ministers to employ staff located in the building
- the expansion of Parliament itself to the point where there are now 64 Senators and 125 Members all of whom have their own individual offices
- expansion of services to Senators and Members including library facilities etc
- expansion of committee work.

2.15 The principal building changes have been

- the Library was extended just prior to World War II
- in 1942 two double storey wings were added, one on the House of Representatives side, the other on the Senate side which enclosed the courtyards
- a third storey was added to the 1942 wings in 1947. The Lower Ground and Main Floor were also extended at this time. Additional accommodation for the Press was also provided on the Upper Floor adjacent to the Chambers
- structural strengthening was provided under Kings Hall and both Chambers in 1947 and the building was re-roofed in 1958
- in 1965 a second three storey wing was added to the House of Representatives side of the building, providing 2 Committee rooms, Ministers suites and offices for Members
- in 1972 a similar wing to the 1965 addition was constructed on the Senate side of the building. Some additional accommodation on the roof was also provided at this time
- the front-west additions were completed in 1972 and the front-east in 1974
- further minor extensions to the Library have taken place in 1963, 1971 and 1973.

A plan of the ground floor of the building showing where the post-1927 additions have been made is at Appendix 4.

Accommodation

2.16 The nett usable area of the building comprises a number of different types of space ranging from large spaces such as Kings Hall and the Chambers to small attendants' spaces. The following table summarises the usable areas of the building into four types, viz under 20m², 20m² to 40m², 40m² to 80m² and over 80m².

Type of Space	Lower Floor m ²	Main Floor m ²	Upper Floor m ²	Total m ²
Under 20m ²	1937 (26.1%)	1777 (25.8%)	1569 (67.4%)	5283 (31.8%)
20 to 40m ²	1775 (23.9%)	1287 (18.7%)	469 (20.2%)	3531 (21.3%)
40 to 80m ²	1295 (17.5%)	872 (12.7%)	290 (12.4%)	2458 (14.8%)
Over 80m ²	2408 (32.5%)	2940 (42.8%)		5348 (32.1%)
TOTAL	7415	6875	2327	16618

2.17 For a structure its size on only three levels the space it contains is now very spread out. This has led to circulation problems, inefficiencies and confusion for users. The building is difficult to secure.

Conditions of Building

2.18 Although built and modified at various times the structure of the building is generally sound and the comparatively few defects are of minor significance. The original buildings were largely of load bearing brickwork with timber floors and timber roofs, some supported from a structure of clinker concrete. Later additions used framed structures either of steel or reinforced concrete.

2.19 External walls are generally rendered and painted brickwork and are in good condition except where some minor cracking has occurred. Internal walls are a mixture of rendered and painted brickwork in the older parts of the building and plaster sheeted stud framing in newer areas or where renovation has taken place. Internal walls are in good condition.

2.20 The building's original malthoid roofing was expensive to maintain and has been re-covered with a superimposed timber structure

sheeted with steel decking. This operation has been carried out twice, the second re-covering now being in its final stages.

2.21 Floors in the building are timber except in Kings Hall and in the 1965 and subsequent additions where they are of concrete. Floors are generally covered in carpet and are believed to be in reasonable condition.

2.22 Other elements of the structure including ceilings and joinery are in reasonably good condition.

Condition of Services

2.23 Most, but not all, of the building is air conditioned in one form or another. Major systems service the two Chambers and the main Library, the Prime Minister's suite, the President's suite, the Speaker's suite, the 1965 wing, the 1971 wing and the Refreshment Rooms. In addition there are 102 small installations throughout the building resulting in a variety of equipment and standard of service as well as a proliferation of roof-top enclosures to house equipment. The condition of the equipment varies from good to fair.

2.24 The six electric boilers serving the airconditioning and hot water radiator systems, three steam generators and the centralised domestic hot water system are all in good condition.

2.25 All the main light and power switchboards are in good condition as is the wiring in all parts of the building. There is no standby generator to provide power in an emergency.

2.26 Six of the seven passenger lifts and five of the six dumb waiters are in good condition. A passenger lift and a dumb waiter in the Library are in fair condition and may require replacement in the near future.

Fire Protection

2.27 Extensive improvement of fire protection measures has been made over the years and is still being made to provide adequate fire protection. Major additional work is still required to improve means of escape, compartmentation and fire isolated stairways.

CHAPTER 3

SITING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

New Parliament House

3.1 To provide the finalists in the design competition for the new Parliament House with a clear directive about the Provisional Parliament House and in the absence of any decision on its future use the Second Stage Competition Documents stated:

"In considering the relationship between the building and the Parliamentary Triangle as seen from the Land Axis it should be assumed that:

- . the present Provisional Parliament House will be retained; and
- . the Triangle will be developed to more nearly accord with Griffin's intentions for building massing. In particular, the Land Axis between the Provisional Parliament House and the Lake will be strengthened by defining it more strongly with both buildings and landscaping."

3.2 In their Second Stage Report on the design, the Architects, Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp, drew heavily on the concept of the building design merging with the surrounding landscape. They stressed the importance of the Land Axis as the fundamental element in the Griffin plan and emphasised the relationship between the new House, the Land Axis and the surrounding landscape.

3.3 The retention of the Provisional Parliament House was seen as an important element in providing a visual base for the new House when viewed along the Land Axis. The design of the Great Verandah of the new building picks up the architectural rhythm of the Provisional Parliament House and presents a harmonious composition at the apex of the Parliamentary Triangle.

3.4 One of the four general criteria adopted by the Assessors in adjudicating the winning design concerned the sensitivity with which it related to the site, its environment and Griffin's overall plan. They reported that the winning design responded to these requirements in the most unique manner and pointed out that the

design admirably resolved the difficulty posed by the closeness of the new and the old Houses. They reported:

"A very important design constraint imposed by the Capital Hill site is the likely permanent retention of the existing provisional Parliament building. The view along the land axis looking south positions the new Parliament House directly above the existing building. It is imperative, therefore, to unify the two buildings architecturally in order to avoid the impression of one building resting on top of the other. In the opinion of the Assessors, the winning design has resolved this immensely difficult contextual problem in a brilliant way.

The most important visual characteristics of the existing building are its fenestration and its whiteness. The winning design achieves the essential unity by creating a screen wall in front of the entry which is perforated so as to relate to the rhythm of the fenestration of the provisional Parliament House. No other fenestration is visible from this important vantage point as the new Parliament House merges itself with the natural landscape, thus avoiding the appearance of two distinctly different buildings in a simple way..".

3.5 Design development by the Architects since the competition has continued to assume that the Provisional Parliament House will remain. In particular the design of the Forecourt and the Great Verandah and the overall concept of the building nestling into Capital Hill have recognised the need for a correlation between the two buildings. The design of the Land Bridge and Mall and the other site works north of the new House take as their objective the linking of the two structures in both a symbolic and physical sense.

Approved Parliamentary Zone Developments

3.6 As part of its planning and development responsibilities the National Capital Development Commission prepared a draft Development Plan for the Parliamentary Zone in 1982. The Plan which assumes the retention of the Provisional Parliament House includes proposals relating to certain road works associated with the new Parliament House which are now under construction. It also included work on Adelaide and Melbourne Avenues, State and Capital Circles and the Land Bridge being constructed to link the new and Provisional Parliament Houses. The design of the Land Bridge will require a rearrangement of roads at its intersection with Queen Victoria

Terrace at the rear of the provisional House.

3.7 The concept of the Land Bridge linking Capital Hill and Camp Hill is based on Griffin's original plan and is fundamental to the design of the Forecourt of the new Parliament House. It will comprise twin carriageways lined with trees and separated by a broad grassed median. It is to be carried over Capital Circle as a single full width bridge and over State Circle in the form of two separate bridges. Late in 1982 these proposals were agreed to by the Parliament on the recommendation of the Committee pursuant to the Parliament Act 1974 and considered and reported on by the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory about the same time, as variations to the plan of the layout of the City of Canberra as required by its terms of reference.

3.8 A drawing which shows the proposed road and landscaping joining the two buildings is at Appendix 5.

Proposed Parliamentary Zone Developments

3.9 Between the Provisional Parliament House and Lake Burley Griffin the Parliamentary Zone Development Plan proposes a series of landscaping and road works. Apart from specifying the location and nature of these works the Plan also provides an overall framework within which long-term development can take place in a way which will complement the new House.

3.10 Proposals for these works have yet to be tabled in Parliament as required by the Parliament Act 1974 and have therefore not been considered and reported on by this Committee as provided for in its resolution of appointment. However the overall design embodied in the Development Plan has been approved in principle by the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory.

3.11 The works planned will complete a unified design along the Provisional Parliament House/Lake section of the Land Axis which overall extends from Mt Ainslie to Capital Hill. In the area north of the present building a Mall is proposed. The Plan provides for future national institutions to address this Mall which is to become a major connection between them and the present and the new parliament buildings. The first of these institutions is to be the National

Archives headquarters adjoining the Lake near the National Library.

3.12 On the basis of these planning proposals and works in construction the Development Plan provides for the retention, restoration and re-use of the Provisional Parliament House after it is vacated by the Parliament in 1988. It will then form an historic and functional link between the older part of the Parliamentary Zone and the new House.

3.13 Hitherto there have been no long views of the Queen Victoria Terrace elevation of the Provisional House because they have been obscured by the crest of Camp Hill. That will change with the construction of the Land Bridge and the levelling of Camp Hill. Near views from the front of the new House will take in what is now the back of the building which will become a transitional point on the Land Axis.

3.14 The realignment of Queen Victoria Terrace which is part of the present work will perform three functions. It will provide a more fitting connection with the northern end of the Land Bridge as the ceremonial approach to the new House. It will also provide an opportunity for the southern facade of the provisional House to be modified and given an address of its own in keeping with its nature and significance. Finally it will allow the access provided by the Land Bridge connections to flow around the provisional House to the northern part of the Zone.

3.15 Some matters regarding siting were raised with the Sub-Committee during the Inquiry. They were considered when the conclusions were being reached.

CHAPTER 4

THE COMMITTEE'S DELIBERATIONS

4.1 The submissions received by the Sub-Committee and the evidence taken from witnesses at public hearings all dealt with one or other of the following three propositions:

- . Should the Provisional Parliament House be demolished or preserved?
- . If it is to be preserved, should any or all of its post-1927 additions be demolished?
- . If it is to be preserved what post-1988 use options are appropriate?

4.2 The Committee's discussion of each of these three propositions now follows. The Committee's recommendations and conclusions are listed at page. (iv). They are underlined in the text as they occur.

To Demolish or not to Demolish?

4.3 The most common view put to the Committee during the inquiry was that because so much of Australia's post-Federation political history has been written in the Provisional Parliament House and because the building itself is a fundamental and important part of Australian culture it should be preserved for posterity.

4.4 The Australian Heritage Commission took action in February 1980 to enter the Provisional Parliament House and its curtilage on the Interim List of the Register of the National Estate. The Committee noted that this listing was a recognition by the Commission of the value of the building "...for future generations as well as for the present community." (Transcript, page 160)

4.5 The Commission's intention to enter the Provisional Parliament House on the Register of the National Estate was objected to in 1980 by the then Presiding Officers who questioned whether it was appropriate for a Parliamentary building to be classified in this way particularly as it brought into question the authority of the Parliament over its own premises. Notwithstanding that objection, the

Commission resolved in April 1983 to proceed with the listing. However it was put to the Commission by the Presiding Officers during the hearings of the Sub-Committee in October 1983 that it was untimely for the registration to go ahead at that time particularly while the future use of the building was being examined by this Committee. As a consequence the Commission has deferred the proposed listing action.

4.6 The Commission's views on the significance of the provisional House were expressed in its submission to the Committee as follows:

"The Provisional Parliament House is significant as the scene of events critical to the nation's history, and the building has become the symbol of political life in Australia. It is the most familiar of Canberra's public buildings and is a fine example of the simplified Classical Revival architecture of the 1920's. This style of architecture has Classical form in the tradition of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, with in this case geometric details rather than applied Classical orders. The major functions are expressed in a restrained, dignified manner both externally and internally. It is imperative that a building of such importance must be retained and used appropriately."
(Transcript, page 160)

4.7 The Committee noted that the listing action proposed by the Australian Heritage Commission is supported by the National Trust of Australia (ACT) which in its own right had 'classified' the building. Similar action had also been taken by the ACT Heritage Committee.

4.8 The case for retention was supported by the fact that the competition conditions for the new Parliament House assumed that the existing building would remain and continue as a strong influence in the future planning of the Parliamentary Zone. The Parliamentary Zone Development Plan prepared by the National Capital Development Commission in 1982 and subsequently modified in 1983 "shows how the Provisional Parliament House can be integrated into the Parliamentary Zone and be given new purpose after Parliament has vacated the building in 1987/88."

4.9 On the other hand the submissions made by Mr J.A. Pettifer, a former Clerk of the House of Representatives and Mr R.K.H. Johnson, Head, School of Environmental Design, Canberra College of Advanced

Education, proposed that the Provisional Parliament House should be demolished. In essence the reason for this approach was that the building will be an unnecessary and uncomfortable intrusion on the Land Axis between Mt Ainslie and Capital Hill. Furthermore it will detract from views of the new House along the Axis especially when seen from Parkes Place south of Lake Burley Griffin and from the views in the opposite direction from the new House after the Land Bridge is completed. This will especially become the case when the southern facade of the Provisional Parliament House is exposed by the removal of the crest of Camp Hill.

4.10 From Parkes Place on the southern side of Lake Burley Griffin the only part of the new House which will be visible will be a small central section of the roof and the flag pole. From the northern side of the Lake adjoining Anzac Parade the two buildings appear to sit one on top of the other with the Provisional Parliament House dominant because of its comparative closeness and its vivid whiteness. In more distant and higher views the relationship is less direct with the visual separation between the two increasing with the height of the viewpoint. It was submitted that it was imperative that views of the Nation's most important single building, particularly from the centre of the Parliamentary Zone, should not be compromised by the continued presence of what was planned and built as a temporary structure 60 years ago.

4.11 Because work on the Land Bridge is still in progress and the completion of the work on Camp Hill is some time away, it is only possible to imagine at this stage how significant will be the intrusion on the Land Axis of the provisional House in views from the new House. It is clear however that the present rear facade and roof line will be most untidy and will require substantial modification if the building is to be preserved.

4.12 It was noted that in 1969 the Joint Select Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House recommended that the new House should be on Camp Hill, which was Griffin's original choice. In arriving at this recommendation the Committee had received advice from the National Capital Development Commission and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects that the provisional House should be demolished on completion of the new one. The recommendation on that site was rejected by the Parliament largely on the grounds that

as the building should be pre-eminent in the Capital City it should be located on Capital Hill. The present Committee was told that a decision to retain the Provisional Parliament House would in effect be denying the wishes of the Parliament in finally choosing Capital Hill as the site for the new House because of the dominance and obstruction it will exercise over views of the new House from important viewpoints.

4.13 The Committee acknowledges the merit of the strong arguments in favour of demolition. Had the building not been of such historical merit and heritage significance the Committee may have supported that view. However it is fundamental that a major part of Australia's post-Federation political history has been written in the building and it has a further useful life. That is not to say however that in the future new developments and considerations may require further study of this question and demolition may then be desirable. The Committee therefore recommends that the Provisional Parliament House not be demolished.

To Preserve or to Restore?

4.14 The second question examined was whether the Provisional Parliament House should be preserved in its entirety or whether it should be restored to the form it had when first occupied in 1927. Associated with this question is the matter of the external modifications thought to be required particularly to the southern facade and to the roof line to give it a more appropriate relationship with the new House at the other end of the Land Bridge.

4.15 The interests of the principal proponent for restoration, the National Capital Development Commission, being based in the total Parliamentary Zone Development Plan have ramifications not only for the future use of the Provisional Parliament House but also for the overall planning of the Zone. In particular the Commission has a concern that pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems in the Mall between the Provisional Parliament House and the Lake should be continuous with access between the two Houses over the Land Bridge. The Plan makes provision for future national institutions to address the Mall which will then become a connection between them and the 2 Houses.

4.16 When the Provisional Parliament House was completed in 1927 the rear two-storey section was linked to the front by the Library with side loggias defining the landscaped courtyards which in turn opened out onto Members' gardens at the sides of the building. Extensions to the building have enclosed the courtyards so that they no longer have any relationship to the gardens and the side roads are now very close to the building. The Commission submitted that restoration of the building to its 1927 form would not only restore the connection between the courtyards and the gardens but also provide the building with a better setting and permit a freer-flowing connection between the Mall and the Land Bridge.

4.17 The Committee has sympathy with the planning problems in the Parliamentary Zone associated with arranging an appropriate connection between the Mall and the Land Bridge. Nevertheless it is not convinced that a satisfactory solution to this latter problem cannot be found without removing part of the existing building.

4.18 Regardless of whether the preferred option is for restoration or alternatively for preservation the Committee believes that there is a fundamental need to enhance views of the provisional House from Capital Hill. Arriving at the most satisfactory solution to this problem will be a matter for detailed examination by architects and planners. Whatever measures are finally adopted careful consideration will need to be given not only to the southern facade of the building but also to the roof line. Because of the historical and heritage merits of the Provisional Parliament House, it should remain basically as it is subject to the modifications required to the southern facade and the roofline to enhance the views of it from Capital Hill.

4.19 Two other matters were raised during the inquiry touching on the future use of the Provisional Parliament House whether it is to be preserved or restored. Each of these will clearly need to be considered when planning of the Parliamentary Zone is being advanced. They concern:

the forecourt to the southern address of the Provisional Parliament House and proposed changes to the alignment of Queen Victoria Terrace

- . car parking in the vicinity of the Provisional Parliament House.

4.20 The Committee supports the view that if the future use of the Provisional Parliament House involves public use and large numbers of visitors passing through it, any building alterations made should facilitate movement through the building from north to south. On emerging from the southern end of the building the vista should be one rising up the Land Bridge and terminating in the new House. This matter touches on both the way in which the southern facade is modified as well as the design of the forecourt to the Queen Victoria Terrace frontage.

4.21 The earth works being carried out on Camp Hill to form the Land Bridge and the future road works linking the Mall with the Land Bridge around the sides of the Provisional Parliament House both imply a considerable loss of car parking spaces immediately adjacent to the building. Furthermore it is doubtful whether in the long term surface car parking should be permitted at all near the Provisional Parliament House. This factor raises the question of whether car parking generated by the future use of the Provisional Parliament House should be provided by an underground facility. This planning difficulty will need to be given serious consideration in the light of the extremely high costs involved.

4.22 Having agreed that the Provisional Parliament House should remain basically in its present form the Committee then considered the more than 50 submissions which made suggestions about its future use. The principal options put forward, not necessarily in any order of importance, suggested that the building be used for:

- . the nucleus of the Museum of Australia
- . a museum dealing with the political, constitutional and parliamentary development of Australia including the events leading to Federation
- . a residence for the Royal Family and associated ceremonial uses
- . a Government conference centre with accommodation for associated purposes and Government commissions and inquiries

- . the National Portrait Gallery
- . an Australian Peace and Development and Research Institute (Ministry of Peace)
- . an Australian Centre for Contemporary Art
- . a Centre for Aboriginal Development and a Museum of Aboriginal history
- . an Annex to accommodate Parliamentary departments
- . accommodation for Aboriginal organisations and the National Aboriginal Conference
- . a residence and office for the Prime Minister and visiting Heads of State
- . headquarters for the South West Pacific Forum, the Pacific Basin Economic Council, and the South West Pacific equivalent of the Council of Europe/European Parliament building in Strasbourg
- . an ACT Museum and art gallery pending the establishment of permanent premises

4.23 In examining these possibilities the Committee considered both the short and long term implications of each, the significance of this particular area of the National Capital and the functions which are appropriate for location in the Parliamentary Zone.

4.24 Before dealing with the result of the Committee's deliberations on the future use options comments on two of the proposals are relevant. The Committee believes that in the future a case may exist for the building of a gallery specifically to house the National portrait collection but until that occurs it is not appropriate to bring the collection together in the provisional House because of the physical nature of the building and its location. However until a permanent home for the collection is available those items from it which relate to the post-1988 use decided for the building should properly be located there.

4.25 The political and parliamentary implications of the submission made by Senator P.E. Rae for the building to be used as a centre for international common interest groups from the South West Pacific and the Pacific Basin interested the Committee. The issues of

locating the South West Pacific Forum and the Pacific Basin Economic Council, and similar groups and the equivalent of the Council of Europe in Australia or even in Canberra have widespread implications. While the Committee acknowledges the considerable merits of the proposal and believes that Australia and in particular Canberra would be an admirable venue for such a headquarters it does not regard the Provisional Parliament House as a suitable building for that purpose.

Post-1988 Use Options

4.26 The Committee's consideration of what post-1988 uses for the provisional House would be most appropriate was influenced by three principal considerations. The first was that the Parliamentary Zone lies at the heart of Canberra, is the national centre of the activities of the Parliament, the Judiciary and the Executive Government and is the focus of visitor interest in the National Capital. Within this area are located national institutions which are key features of the National Capital such as the National Library, the National Gallery, the High Court as well as the central offices of key Government departments. The Government has attempted to establish the Parliamentary Zone as a National symbol for all Australians.

4.27 The second consideration was that in its present role the Provisional Parliament House is the main focus of activity within the Zone, being not only used for Parliamentary and Government purposes with ceremonial use but its environs are also used for large meetings and demonstrations. All of these activities attract considerable numbers of visitors including tourists.

4.28 It was relevant to the Committee's considerations that although the new House will assume the Parliamentary identity in 1988, now the role of the provisional House, it will not necessarily be its function to accommodate all of the material of significance in the provisional House, including artworks and memorabilia, furniture and furnishings.

4.29 The Committee concluded that in determining the post-1988 uses of the provisional House the following criteria should apply:

- . only nationally rather than locally (Canberra) oriented uses should be considered;
- . regular use by the public including visitors and tourists should be encouraged rather than a static use such as *general office accommodation* or intermittent occupation such as a conference centre;
- . in view of its history and close relationship with the new Parliament House future use should have a Parliamentary bias.

4.30 Applying these criteria led the Committee to the conclusion that the most appropriate future use would be as a Museum related to the Australian Constitution, Federation and the Commonwealth Parliament.

4.31 In reaching this conclusion it was recognised that to the visiting public the new Parliament House will not have an *educative* function. A principal function of the Museum would thus be to provide visitors with an understanding of and a background to Federation, the Australian Constitution and the role of the Parliament in Australia's form of democratic government. Particularly for first-time visitors to Canberra and for school children a visit to the Parliamentary Museum will be a logical preliminary to a visit to the new House.

4.32 Portraits and sculptures of notable figures in various walks of Australian life have been collected for about 70 years under the direction of the Historic Memorials Committee. The largest part of this collection is of Governors-General, Prime Ministers, Presidents of the Senate and Speakers of the House of Representatives. In the absence of a permanent home for the collection a number of individual items are presently used to decorate public spaces and corridors in the provisional House.

4.33 The Committee believes that it would be consistent with the recommendation in paragraph 4.30 for it to also recommend that the Parliamentary Museum should become the custodian of those paintings and other items of merit which are part of the National collection and which have parliamentary or political significance.

4.34 Having recommended that the Provisional Parliament House be retained substantially in its present form, become a Parliamentary Museum and a repository of works of art of parliamentary significance, the Committee then examined the mechanics of how these objectives might best be achieved. Since in its new role the provisional House will continue to have a largely parliamentary function the Committee recommends that the provisional House should remain under the control of the Presiding Officers advised by a joint parliamentary committee appointed specifically for the purpose.

4.35 It was clear that a necessary preliminary to a closer study of how the museum function can be accommodated in the provisional House is the completion of a Conservation Analysis and Plan. The aim of this examination would be to provide a detailed understanding of the building's structural history, present condition, its architectural and historical significance and how the uses proposed might be achieved in a way which is consistent with its proper conservation, both internally and externally.

4.36 The Conservation Analysis and Plan should follow the guidelines adopted by Australia's ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) with the aim of establishing the cultural significance of the building and particularly the two Chambers including the aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values and any other important facts. The study should then consider how the building can be treated, managed and used in a way which preserves and enhances its cultural significance.

4.37 The Committee noted that the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction has had a long experience in this work area both in its own right and through the use of consultants. It is recommended that funds should be provided in the 1984/85 financial year for a Conservation Analysis and Plan to be carried out on the Provisional Parliament House.

4.38 The Committee received submissions from the Permanent Heads of several of the Parliamentary departments signalling the fact that even when the new House is completed not all of their functions will be able to be accommodated in the building. They suggested that it would be appropriate and convenient for the overflow of staff and

resources of the Parliament to continue to be located in the present building. While this may be a reasonable arrangement for a short period immediately following the occupation of the new House the Committee believes that the continued long-term use of the provisional House by the Parliamentary departments is not appropriate.

4.39 Depending on the extent of the overflow accommodation required from 1988 onwards consideration will need to be given to the best means of providing for this need close to the new House. Possibilities which might be examined include dedicating East Block or West Block exclusively for Parliamentary purposes or constructing a special-purpose building perhaps in the area between the State and Capital Circles.



(D. McCLELLAND)
President of the Senate



(H.A. JENKINS)
Speaker of the House of
Representatives

Canberra

May 1984

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

ORGANISATION/INDIVIDUAL

ACT Fire Brigade

ACT Heritage Commission

Anthony, Rt Hon. J.D., MP

Armstrong, Dr D.P.

Australian Heritage Commission

Australian National Gallery

Australian War Memorial

Ball, Mr P.

Baume, Senator the Hon. P.E.

Braithwaite, Mr R.A., MP

Cameron, Mr I.

Canberra Development Board

Canberra & District Historical Society

Canberra Tourist Bureau

Cristison, Miss W.

Coates, Senator J.

Curtnoys, Miss P.

Department of Administrative Services

Department of Finance

Department of the House of Representatives

Department of Housing and Construction

Department of the Parliamentary Library

Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff

Department of the Senate

Department of Territories and Local Government

Edmond and Corrigan (Architects & Planners)

Evans, Senator the Hon. G.J., QC

Everingham, Hon. D.N., MP

2.

Favre, Mr J.

Federation of Australian Historical Societies

Holding, Hon. A.C., MP

Hunt, Hon. R.J.D., MP

Johnson, Mr R.K.H.

Joint House Department

Katter, Hon. R.C., MP

Longland, Mr B.

Macklin, Senator M.J.

Maguire, Senator G.R.

Martin, Mr G.

McDonald, Mr D.I.

Minister for Home Affairs and Environment

Museum of Australia, Interim Council

National Australia Day Committee

National Capital Development Commission

National Library of Australia

National Trust of Australia (ACT)

Parliament House Construction Authority

Pettifer, Mr J.A., CBE

APPENDIX 1

3.

Rae, Senator P.E.

Reid, Mr P.S.

Royal Australian Institute of Architects

Schneider, Mrs S.

Shirley Spectra Pty Ltd.

Spicer, Dr G.

Willmot, Mr E.

Wilson, Mr G.

APPENDIX 2DETAILS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Place/Date	Individuals and Organisations	Witnesses
Canberra 14.10.83	National Capital Development Commission	Mr A.J.W. Powell Mr G.J. Deas
	Parliament House Construction Authority	Mr N.M. MacPhillamy Mr G.R. Peatey Mr J.D. Fowler
	Mitchell/Giurgola/Thorp Architects	Mr R. Giurgola Mr R.G. Thorp Ms P. Berg
	Department of the House of Representatives	Mr D.M. Blake Mr B.C. Wright Mr I.C. Cochran
Canberra 28.11.83	Department of Housing and Construction	Mr W.B. Bowden Mr P.M. McGrath
	Australian Heritage Commission	Dr W. Nicholls Mr K.D. Charlton
	National Trust of Australia	Col. J. Harvey Mr E. Martin
	ACT Heritage Committee	Mr C.G. Cummings
	Australian National Gallery	Mr J. Mollison Mr G. Andrews
	Australian War Memorial	Mr B.E.W. Kelson
	National Library of Australia	Mr W.D. Thorn
	Mr R.K.H. Johnson	
	Department of the Senate	Mr A.R. Cumming Thom Mr R.W. Alison
	Department of the Parliamentary Library	Mr H.de S.C. MacLean Mr M.J. Brudenall
Department of the Parliamentary Reporting Staff	Mr J.W. Roberts Mr J.M. Campbell	
Joint House Department	Mr J.M. Jorgensen Mr F.W. Bradley Mr L.N. Kelly	

APPENDIX 2

2.

Place/Date	Individuals and Organisations	Witnesses
Canberra 13.2.84	Mr P.S. Reid	
	Department of Administrative Services	Mr R. Kohlhasse Mr L. Milkovits
	Department of Territories and Local Government	Mr R.A.L. Bradford Mr D.W. Hamence
	Royal Australian Institute of Architects	Prof. R.N. Johnson Mr G.T. Butterworth
Canberra 14.2.84	Canberra and District Historical Society	Mr R.T. Winch
	Museum of Australia	Dr D.F. McMichael Mr B.W. Palmer
	Federation of Australian Historical Societies	Mrs N. Phillips
	Department of Housing and Construction	Mr W.B. Bowden Mr G.H. Setchell
Canberra 17.5.84	Mr P.R. Corrigan	
	Mr J.A. Pettifer, CBE	
	Senator P.E. Rae	

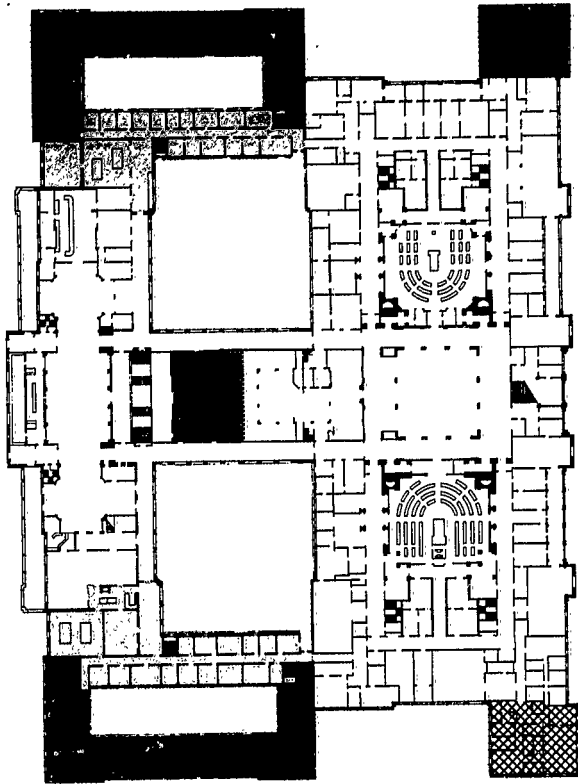


The Provisional Parliament House 1927.



The Provisional Parliament House (1927) viewed from the Members' Garden.

APPENDIX 4



PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CONSTRUCTION STAGES

1939



1972



1942-47



1974



1964



