

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 24 May 2001 the proposal to undertake redevelopment of residential areas at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, (RMC Duntroon) Australian Capital Territory (ACT) was referred to the Committee for consideration and report to the Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*.¹
- 1.2 The Hon Peter Slipper MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, advised the House that the estimated cost of the proposal was \$23 million. Mr Slipper further noted that subject to parliamentary and Defence Housing Authority Board approval, it was intended to commence work on the proposed redevelopment in November 2001 with a completion date by March 2003. ²

Background

- 1.3 The project being proposed by the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) is to provide 100 on-base residences at RMC Duntroon by March 2003. According to DHA's submission, these dwellings are required to meet the operational needs of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the requirements of the Department of Defence (Defence).

¹ The Hon Peter Slipper MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, moved the motion in the House of Representatives. Extract from Votes and Proceedings No. 185, 24.5.2001.

² House of Representatives, Hansard, 24.5.2001, p. 27057.

- 1.4 DHA stated in its submission that as at 30 June 2001, Defence's housing requirement for Canberra was forecast at 1,712 residences for married accompanied members. The DHA submission further noted that, with planned restructuring and relocations, requirement for Defence housing would rise to 1,744 by 30 June 2002 and remain at about that level for the next few years.
- 1.5 DHA-managed stock in Canberra as at 30 June 2001 was approximately 1,367 properties. According to DHA, other Defence needs would be met by use of short-term leases and payment of a rental allowance.³

Location of Works

- 1.6 The RMC Duntroon is located in the suburb of Campbell approximately five kilometres from Canberra's city centre. Pre-school, playground and other community facilities are provided on-base to the west of the Duntroon village.
- 1.7 The proposed redevelopment site is bound by Calculus Lane to the North, Gymkhana Road to the East and South and Vowles Road to the West.⁴

Role of RMC Duntroon

- 1.8 The RMC Duntroon is the professional home of the Australian Army Officer Corps. Since 1914, its mission has been to train officers to the Regular, or Full Time Component of the Army.
- 1.9 Today, RMC Duntroon is responsible for the initial training of all General Service Officers and Specialist Service Officers, whether full or part-time. In recent years RMC Duntroon has trained international military students.⁵

Historical Background

- 1.10 The Government acquired the freehold title to Duntroon homestead and its 370 acres from the Campbell family after the creation of the Federal Capital. The work of building the Military College began immediately.
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3 Submissions, p. 4.

4 Location Map is at Attachment 2 and Site Plan at Attachment 3.

5 Background Material, Committee File 5.1

Most of the existing dwellings within the residential precinct were constructed after the Second World War.

- 1.11 Many of the older stock of housing in the residential precinct have been removed or demolished to make way for DHA's proposed residential redevelopment.⁶

Inquiry Process

- 1.12 The Committee invited submissions to the Inquiry by advertising in *The Canberra Times* on 2 June 2001. The Committee also wrote to Government authorities, organisations, peaks bodies and individuals, with a possible interest in this reference, to provided submissions to the Inquiry.
- 1.13 The Committee invited Senators and Federal Members of Parliament representing the Australian Capital Territory as well as members of the Legislative Assembly to make submissions and to attend the inspection of the works site and the public hearing.⁷
- 1.14 On 6 August, the Committee inspected the proposed redevelopment at RMC, Duntroon. Following the inspection, the Committee held a public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra and took evidence from representatives of DHA and the National Delegate of the Australian Capital Territory and Southern New South Wales, National Consultative Group of Service Families.⁸

6 Background Material, Committee File 5.1

7 A List of submissions appears at Appendix A.

8 A list of witnesses appears at Appendix B.