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THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS.

TWENTY-SEVENTH GENERAL
REPORT.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

TWENTY-SEVENTH GENERAL REPORT.

*To His Excellency the Right Honorable Viscount De L'Isle, V.C., P.C., G.C.M.G., K.St.J., Governor-General
in and over the Commonwealth of Australia:*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

In pursuance of the requirements of Section 11 of the *Public Works Committee Act 1913-1960*, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works have the honour to submit the following report on their proceedings during the third session of the Twenty-third Parliament:—

SEVENTEENTH COMMITTEE.

1. The members of the Seventeenth Committee were appointed in the Senate on 19th February, 1959, and in the House of Representatives on 24th February, 1959. They are Senators K. M. Anderson, E. B. Maher and J. H. O'Byrne and Messrs. W. J. Brimblecombe, R. L. Dean, A. Fairhall, C. E. Griffiths, H. J. McIvor and W. P. O'Connor. The Chairman is Mr. A. Fairhall and the Vice-Chairman is Senator J. H. O'Byrne.

TIMING OF REFERENCES.

2. Of the eight proposals reported on during the period under review, the evidence on three of them revealed that the timetable for completing detailed drawings, calling tenders, letting a contract and construction was scarcely long enough for the works to be ready by the time they will be needed.

3. A more even flow of proposals and earlier reference of ones where the time factor is so important would avoid leaving the Committee with the feeling that we are under pressure to reach hasty conclusions.

REFERENCES DEALT WITH.

4. Eight proposals, involving the hearing of evidence from 48 witnesses, were examined by the Committee during the period under review. The gathering of evidence and the inspection of sites necessitated visits to Melbourne, Toowoomba, Canberra and Sydney.

The proposals were:—

	£
General Laboratory Building, Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, Parkville, Victoria	470,000
Chemical Physics Laboratory Building, C.S.I.R.O., Clayton, Victoria	415,000
Commonwealth Offices, Toowoomba, Queensland	91,000
Cadets' Barrack Blocks, Royal Military College, Duntroon, Australian Capital Territory	341,000
Engineering Services to Rapid Creek Sub-Division, Stage 2B, Darwin, Northern Territory	361,800
Science Block, R.A.A.F. Academy, Point Cook, Victoria	190,000
Weapons Workshop, H.M.A. Naval Dockyard, Garden Island, Sydney, New South Wales	420,000
Permanent Barracks and Administrative Accommodation, H.M.A.S. Kuttabul, Sydney, New South Wales	985,000

SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES.

5. What follows is a brief comment about each of the proposals examined by the Committee.

GENERAL LABORATORY BUILDING, COMMONWEALTH SERUM LABORATORIES, PARKVILLE, VICTORIA.

6. The proposed building, estimated to cost £470,000 will have a total floor area of 33,000 square feet in a basement, ground and four upper floors. It is required to relieve overcrowded conditions, provide some space for research, give some reserve against demands which will arise from future population increases, and permit the Laboratories to meet an emergency.

7. The Committee found that there is an urgent need for the new laboratory building and recommended the construction of it to the design and size proposed.

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

(SEVENTEENTH COMMITTEE.)

(Senators appointed 19th February, 1959; Members of the House of Representatives appointed 24th February, 1959.)

Honorable ALLEN FAIRHALL (Chairman).

Senator JUSTIN HILARY O'BYRNE (Vice-Chairman).

Senate.

Senator KENNETH MCCOLL ANDERSON.
Senator EDMUND BEDE MAHER.

House of Representatives.

WILFRED JOHN BRIMBLECOMBE, ESQUIRE, M.P.
ROGER LEVINGS DEAN, ESQUIRE, M.P.
CHARLES EDWARD GRIFFITHS, ESQUIRE, M.P.
HECTOR JAMES MCIVOR, ESQUIRE, M.P.
WILLIAM PAUL O'CONNOR, ESQUIRE, M.P.

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CHEMICAL PHYSICS LABORATORY BUILDING, C.S.I.R.O., CLAYTON, VICTORIA.

8. The proposal involves the erection, for the Division of Chemical Physics of C.S.I.R.O., of a two-storey building with three wings on a site approximately 38 acres in area alongside the Monach University at Clayton, Victoria. The Committee were impressed by the wide field of activities in which the Division has played a part and the many subjects of significance in the industrial development of Australia in which the Division is active.

9. The Committee found that there is an urgent need to provide new accommodation for the Division of Chemical Physics to overcome overcrowded and unsatisfactory conditions in the existing buildings at Fishermen's Bend where there is an increasing concentration of heavy industry.

10. The site, which will eventually accommodate all the C.S.I.R.O. laboratories concerned with industrial chemistry, is adjacent to an area zoned for general industrial purposes. Evidence was given that any foreseeable problem of ground transmitted vibration could be overcome and that there were distinct advantages to be derived from being close to a university, handy to areas from which staff would be drawn and near technical and industrial centres with which there is a need for contact.

11. In the proposal as referred to the Committee provision was made for limited air conditioning, evaporative cooling and heating. The C.S.I.R.O. requirement was for full air conditioning and the Committee found that the requirement was justified.

12. The estimated additional cost was £34,000 and the proposal, as recommended by the Committee, was estimated to cost £449,000.

COMMONWEALTH OFFICES, TOOWOOMBA, QUEENSLAND.

13. The proposal referred to the Committee was for the construction of a building of three floors and estimated to cost £91,000 on a Commonwealth-owned site in Ruthven-street, Toowoomba. On the main street frontage stands a brick building occupied by a branch post office and the office of the *Federal Member for Darling Downs*. *Centralization of Commonwealth activities in Toowoomba is to be achieved by providing space in the building for the Divisional Engineer's Office and the District Telephone Office of the Postmaster-General's Department, the Department of Labour and National Service, the Divisional Returning Officer and the Department of Social Services.*

14. The design of the building was such that, when required, additional space could be provided by completing a second floor and building forward to the Ruthven-street alignment after demolition of the post office building.

15. It was concluded that the poor standard of accommodation occupied by the offices for which space is to be provided and the desirability of centralizing Commonwealth activities in Toowoomba, established the need for the new building.

16. The Committee were unimpressed with the proposal insofar as the existence of a small building on the main street alignment would prevent architectural treatment in keeping with the concept of Commonwealth offices.

17. An alternative design, involving demolition of the existing post office building, was submitted to the Committee.

18. The alternative proposal, estimated in the first stage to cost £7,000 more than the original one, but with an estimated net saving of £3,000 on completion of the second stage, was recommended.

19. The reference of this proposal to the Committee arose from the suggestion that the examination of it might assist in establishing principles to be adopted in planning similar buildings elsewhere. In the report the Committee listed matters for consideration when similar buildings are being planned in cities of comparable size to Toowoomba.

CADETS' BARRACK BLOCKS, ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, DUNTRON, AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY.

20. In order to provide accommodation for a planned increase in the number of cadets to be taken into the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and to overcome the need to continue the use of temporary buildings, unsuitable for cadet living and study accommodation, it is proposed to erect two new barrack blocks.

21. One, which will be required by January, 1963, will accommodate 79 cadets and the other, which will be required by January, 1965, will accommodate 99 cadets. The smaller building was estimated to cost £163,000 and the larger one £178,000.

22. The Committee found that an urgent need exists to provide additional living and study accommodation for cadets, recommended the construction of the buildings to the sizes and designs proposed, and urged that strenuous efforts be made to complete the smaller block by January, 1963, in order to avoid renovating more temporary accommodation in buildings which are reaching the end of their economic life.

ENGINEERING SERVICES TO RAPID CREEK SUB-DIVISION, STAGE 2B, DARWIN, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

23. The engineering services to be provided are main water surface drainage, water supply, sewerage, electricity supply and roads including kerbs, channels, carriage ways and footpaths. The services have been designed to the appropriate recognized standards. The estimated cost of the work referred to the Committee was £361,800.

24. The Committee reached the conclusion that by the end of the 1962-63 financial year, the yield of serviced blocks would not meet the estimated demand and recommended that the engineering work proposed should proceed without delay.

25. During the course of the inquiries, reports were current in the press alleging that bombing exercises on the R.A.A.F. range at Leanyer Swamp had caused damage to residences in the Nightcliff area which adjoins Rapid Creek.

26. The Committee gave attention to this matter although we did not seek to establish the liability for, or the cause of, the damage.

27. The evidence revealed that damage was of a very minor nature. The Committee's comment on this matter was confined to suggestions for closer consultation between the Department of Territories and the Department of Air when proposals for residential development near the range are under consideration and for a close examination of the possibility of activities on the range causing inconvenience and damage to areas of development at Darwin.

SCIENCE BLOCK, R.A.A.F. ACADEMY, POINT COOK, VICTORIA.

28. The proposed science block is required in order to give better teaching accommodation at the R.A.A.F. Academy and to provide space to establish laboratories and other facilities without which instruction in the third year of a science degree course cannot be given.

29. A two-storey building, estimated to cost £190,000, was proposed. *It will contain laboratories, lecture rooms, lecturers' offices, common room, library, tutorial room, store, plant room and toilets.*

30. The Committee gave attention to the master plan of the Academy of which the science block is to be the first permanent building, with the thought that a re-arrangement might give the Academy more identity. However, all the evidence supported the master plan and construction of the proposed building as sited and designed was recommended.

31. Any delay in the construction of the proposed building would prevent instruction in the third year of the science degree course being given to those cadets who reach that stage of their training in 1963. The need to have the building ready for occupation at the beginning of the 1963 academic year was therefore emphasized.

WEAPONS WORKSHOP, H.M.A. NAVAL DOCKYARD, GARDEN ISLAND, SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

32. It is proposed to erect a weapons workshop alongside the fitting-out wharf at Garden Island at an estimated cost of £420,000.

33. The Committee found that there is an acute shortage of workshop space at the dockyard and that it is not possible at present to achieve centralization and co-ordination of weapon repair facilities.

34. Having established that an urgent need exists for a new workshop, the Committee recommended construction of it to the size, design and layout proposed.

PERMANENT BARRACKS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOMMODATION, H.M.A.S. "KUTTABUL", SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

35. It is proposed to erect a multi-storey building on a site in Wyld-street, Potts Point, which is largely Commonwealth-owned and on which stands a number of outmoded structures which provide inadequate accommodation for naval activities and for living quarters for ratings.

36. The Committee found that there is an urgent need for the erection of the proposed building which will provide accommodation ashore for the crews of ships undergoing refit, improved and augmented accommodation for shore-based ratings working in the area and improved administrative accommodation.

37. It was concluded that there is a strong case for the proposed site to be used to provide living and administrative accommodation for naval personnel in the Potts Point area and construction of the building as sited and to the dimensions proposed was recommended.

38. The only minor amendment suggested was the provision of access between the wings at each upper floor level. The additional cost of this variation was estimated to be £1,000 and the estimated cost of the building, as recommended by the Committee, was £986,000.

APPRECIATION.

39. Shortly after the date of this report, the members of the Committee will, upon the dissolution of the House of Representatives, cease to hold office. We wish to take the opportunity to record our appreciation of the assistance rendered to the Committee by the many witnesses who readily responded to requests to give evidence and who have aided us so much in our deliberations.

40. We would also like to thank the Principal Parliamentary Reporter and his staff for their help in the faithful recording of evidence presented.

ALLEN FAIRHALL,
Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Parliament House,
Canberra, A.C.T.,
26th October, 1961.

APPENDIX.
RECORD OF INQUIRIES.

Date Proposal Refered.	Proposed Work.	Date of Report.	Date Report Forwarded.	Expenditure Incurred when Report Forwarded to the Committee.	Expenditure Approved by the Committee.	Amount Approved and Proposed.	Amount Proposed but not Approved.	Date Meeting of Expenditure Panel.	Remarks.
16.11.60	General Laboratory Building, Parkville, Victoria Chemical Physics Laboratory Building, Clayton, Victoria	2.5.61	3.5.61	£ 470,000	£ 470,000	£ ..	£ ..	10.5.61	Recommended as proposed
16.11.60		20.4.61	20.4.61	415,000	449,000	34,000	..	10.5.61	
23.11.60	Commonwealth Offices, Toowoomba, Queensland	12.4.61	19.4.61	91,000	98,000	7,000	..	10.5.61	The proposal did not provide for full air conditioning, although this was a requirement of C.S.I.R.O. The Committee was of the opinion that the requirement was justified and recommended accordingly. Otherwise the work was recommended as proposed
1.6.61	Cadet's Barrack Blocks, Royal Military College, Duntroon, Australian Capital Territory	11.7.61	17.8.61	341,000	341,000	..	..	26.9.61	
6.6.61	Engineering Services to Rapid Creek Sub-Division, Stage 2B, Darwin, Northern Territory	28.9.61	3.10.61	361,800	361,800	..	..	12.10.61	Alternative proposal, involving demolition of existing building, recommended as proposed
12.7.61	Science Block, R.A.A.F. Academy, Point Cook, Victoria	28.9.61	3.10.61	190,000	190,000	..	..	11.10.61	Recommended as proposed but attention drawn to need for consultation between Department of Air and Department of Territories re: proximity of bombing range to site to be developed residentially
10.8.61	Weapons Works, H.M.A. Naval Dockyard, Garden Island, Sydney, New South Wales	12.10.61	17.10.61	420,000	420,000	..	..	25.10.61	
10.8.61	Permanent Barracks and Administrative Accommodation, H.M.A.S. Kuttabul, Sydney, New South Wales	24.10.61	25.10.61	985,000	985,000	1,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed Recommended generally as proposed