

1962-63.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS.

REPORT

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE

TRAEGER PARK SCHOOL

AT

ALICE SPRINGS, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

Presented pursuant to Statute; ordered to be printed, 26th March, 1963.

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(EIGHTEENTH COMMITTEE.)

(Senators appointed 28th February, 1962, Members of the House of Representatives appointed 27th February, 1962.)

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⁽¹⁾ Resigned 9th August, 1962.

House of Representatives.

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HECTOR JAMES MCIVOR, ESQUIRE, M.P.

⁽²⁾ Appointed 9th August, 1962.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, No. 44,
DATED 3RD OCTOBER, 1962.

4. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—TRAEGER PARK SCHOOL, ALICE SPRINGS, NORTHERN TERRITORY.—
Mr. Freeth (Minister for Works) moved, pursuant to notice, That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1913-1960*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report:—Construction of Traeger Park School, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

Mr. Freeth laid on the Table plans in connexion with the proposed work.

Question—put and passed.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS— TRAEGER PARK SCHOOL, ALICE SPRINGS, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

REPORT.

By resolution on 3rd October, 1962, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report, the proposal to erect the Traeger Park School at Alice Springs, Northern Territory. The Committee have the honour to report as follows:—

GENERAL.

1. The Committee visited Alice Springs where inspections were made of existing schools and the site for the Traeger Park School. Evidence was heard from interested local organizations and from representatives of the Northern Territory Administration and the Department of Works.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION AT PRESENT.

2. There are two schools in Alice Springs which accommodate the 767 infant and primary public school children enrolled in September, 1962.

3. *Hartley-street School.*—The longer established of the two schools is the Hartley-street School where 334 children are enrolled.

4. The school has developed piecemeal and now consists of nine classrooms—two are in the original building, two are in a "Hawkesley" aluminium building and five are in "Sydney Williams" type pre-fabricated buildings. In addition, the library is being used as a classroom. The 34 children in primary Grade 7 are accommodated at the High School.

5. The school site comprises 1½ acres with only ¼ acre of playing space available. The inadequacy of this space is accentuated by the fact that many of the children are old for the classes they attend.

6. The school buildings are below modern standards and natural light is so poor in some classrooms that instruction is given under artificial light at all times. Ventilation is poor also, and although some relief has been given by the installation of unit evaporative coolers, the noise they generate brings about further disadvantages.

7. The buildings are overcrowded and this limits the opportunity to make use of some of the teaching aids now commonly used. Toilet and wash-room facilities are poor.

8. *Ross Park School.*—The Ross Park School, of cement brick construction, was completed in 1961. It consists of nine classrooms, a library, an activities room and other facilities including medical and dental rooms. There are 433 children enrolled, 36 of whom are in primary Grade 7 at the High School.

9. Two additional classrooms were due to be completed in January, 1963, and this will help to relieve the severe overcrowding in a school designed to accommodate approximately 300 children and which had 397 in attendance in September, 1962. The school was designed to permit these, and any future additions to be made.

10. *Anzac Hill High School.*—The Anzac Hill High School is a modern building consisting of five general purpose rooms and six special purpose rooms for such activities as dressmaking, typing and domestic arts. There are also the usual staff rooms and a library.

11. Six more classrooms, in two blocks, have been erected in the school grounds. Two of these rooms are occupied by primary Grade 7 classes from the Hartley-street and Ross Park Schools. The school has a maximum capacity of about 300 pupils and, with a current enrolment of 144, adequate provision for secondary education will exist for many years.

THE NEED FOR A NEW SCHOOL.

12. The number of infant and primary school children enrolled at Alice Springs in September, 1962, was 767, the average annual increase being 6 per cent. since 1956. It has been predicted that this rate will continue as Alice Springs develops and the planning of future school accommodation is based on this annual increase.

13. *Expected Enrolments.*—On these figures the predicted enrolments for each year to 1970 are—

1962 (actual)	..	..	..	..	767
1963 (estimated)	..	..	..	..	813
1964	..	..	..	..	862
1965	..	..	..	..	914
1966	..	..	..	..	969
1967	..	..	..	..	1,027
1968	..	..	..	..	1,089
1969	..	..	..	..	1,154
1970	..	..	..	..	1,223.

14. With the completion of two additional classrooms at the Ross Park School in January, 1963, it will have a normal capacity of 360. There are 300 children at the Hartley-street School and 70 Primary school children are occupying classrooms at the Anzac Hill High School. An enrolment of 813 children in 1963 will therefore mean a shortage of infant and primary school accommodation for 153 children. The figure will rise to 202 in 1964 unless there is relief.

15. Alice Springs is an educational centre for people in the remote parts of the area, there being more than 100 children living in the various hostels in the town. The establishment of a new school at Finke and improvements to the school at Tennant Creek is unlikely to affect enrolments at Alice Springs as many parents prefer to send their children to school in areas where they will experience community living rather than have them out of touch with town life.

16. On enrolment figures alone, there is a need for a new infant and primary school at Alice Springs.

17. *Hartley-street School.*—Conditions at the Hartley-street School have already been briefly described and they are such that other accommodation should be found for the children who attend.

18. If the achievement of the school building programme suffers delay it may be found necessary to continue to use Hartley-street. Should this happen the Committee stress the need to demolish some of the buildings to give more playing space and the need to limit enrolment to infant children only.

19. In order to overcome severe overcrowding, to provide a better standard of accommodation and to cope with future enrolments, there is an urgent need for a new school in Alice Springs.

THE PROPOSED SCHOOL.

20. To meet the problem of finding adequate and satisfactory school accommodation in Alice Springs, the proposal before the Committee is to erect the Traeger Park School to accommodate 660 infant and primary school children. Each department will be accommodated in a separate wing.

21. The building will be constructed of load-bearing cement brick walls with reinforced concrete columns where applicable. External walls between classroom windows will be faced with local sandstone while end walls of the main blocks will have precast concrete exposed aggregate panels. Window spandrels will be of coloured asbestos cement panels.

22. Internal walls will be rendered and painted while toilet areas will have tiled dadoes. Except in corridors and toilet blocks where vinyl tiles will be used, floors will be covered with linoleum tiles.

23. Classrooms will accommodate 30 to 35 children and will be fitted with standard chalk and pin-up boards. Cupboards and shelving will also be provided.

24. *The Site.*—The site chosen for the school is on almost flat ground alongside Traeger Park towards the southern end of Alice Springs. It is within easy distance of the town area, the new residential area towards the Gap and the older Gap settlement and is adjacent to the Connellans subdivision planned for major development in the near future. As such it will provide for the newly developing areas and is sufficiently close to the town to provide an alternative school to the Hartley-street site when it is abandoned for school purposes.

25. The area comprises 8 acres 14 perches, and although smaller than the 10 acres considered to be the desirable standard, its proximity to the sports grounds at Traeger Park, which offer ample space for organized sporting and other recreational activities, will more than compensate for the reduced size of the site.

26. There are frontages to Gap-road and Pedlar-street and access will be from both. Pedlar-street, which separates the school site from Traeger Park, is expected to carry very little traffic and easy access to the park will be available.

27. The Committee are satisfied that the proposed site is suitable.

28. *Staged Construction.*—It is proposed to erect the school in two stages. The infants' wing will be constructed first and it is planned for completion in time for the 1964 school year. The primary wing will form the second stage and it is hoped to have this completed for the beginning of the 1965 school year. The design is such that the second stage will be able to proceed with a minimum of dislocation to either school activity or contractor's operations.

29. *The Infants' Wing.*—The single-storey infants' wing will consist of eight class rooms, an activities room, an office for the headmistress with library book store, a staff room, toilets, locker rooms and a store. It will accommodate 240 children.

30. *The Primary Wing.*—The primary wing is to be a two-story structure consisting of twelve classrooms, two craft rooms, a general purpose room, a library, headmaster's office, staff room, toilets and locker rooms. The primary wing will also contain the medical and dental rooms. Accommodation will be provided for 420 pupils.

31. A covered play and assembly area, for use by both departments of the school will be erected during the second construction stage. The area will include a tuckshop.

32. *Engineering Services.*—The usual mechanical, electrical and hydraulic services and fire protection equipment will be provided

33. *Heating and Cooling.*—Alice Springs experiences extremes of climate and to meet them, it is proposed to install evaporative cooling and pre-cooling and heating. The duct system will carry cool air in summer and warm air in winter.

34. *Showers.*—The Committee were told that it is not proposed to provide showers at the school, because it was felt that showers available in Traeger Park would be adequate when organized sport takes place there.

35. There were some quite strongly expressed views by witnesses in support of the provision of showers in the school. We believe that there is a need for showers at the school to augment those which will be available at Traeger Park and we recommend accordingly.

36. *Assembly Area.*—As designed, the covered assembly area will be divided by the tuckshop and this will limit the use of the area for school assemblies and parent and citizen functions.

37. The Committee recommend that the tuckshop be relocated so as not to intrude into the covered assembly area.

38. *Estimates of Cost.*—The estimated cost of the work referred to the Committee is £325,000, of which the cost of the first stage is estimated to be £100,000. Details are as follows:—

Stage I.—

	£	£
Building work	72,000	
Sewerage	3,000	
Water supply, fire mains	3,000	
Electrical installation	3,500	
Thermal fire alarms	1,000	
Public address system	500	
Mechanical installation	13,000	
Site works, including fencing and landscaping	4,000	
		100,000

Stage II.—

Building work, including covered play area	193,000	
Electrical installation	5,000	
Thermal fire alarms	1,000	
Public address system	1,000	
Mechanical installation	25,000	
		225,000
		325,000

39. *Timetable.*—The reference of this work to the Committee was made very late in the planning stage and preliminary contract documentation was proceeding while the proposal was before us. The first stage is included in the 1962-63 Works programme and the aim is to commence construction in April, 1963. If this is achieved the infants' wing should be ready for occupation at the beginning of the 1964 school year.

40. To have the second stage ready by the beginning of the 1965 school year it will be necessary to proceed with documentation as soon as the documents for the first stage are finished. Tenders for the second stage will be called before construction of the first stage is completed.

41. Subject to the recommendations about showers and the covered assembly area, construction of the Traeger Park School to the design and size proposed is recommended.

FUTURE SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

42. If the second stage of the Traeger Park School is completed as planned by the beginning of 1965, this school and the Ross Park School will provide accommodation for 1,020 infant and primary school children. This would permit the Hartley-street School to be closed,

43. When enrolment reaches the capacity of these two schools further accommodation will need to be provided and this could be achieved either by adding additional classrooms to the Ross Park School or by commencing the first stage of a new school in the Connellans subdivision. On predicted enrolments, further school buildings will need to be ready for occupation at the beginning of the 1968 school year.

44. Provided planning proceeds along these lines, Alice Springs should have available for some years to come, adequate and satisfactory accommodation for all levels of schooling.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

45. The recommendations and conclusions of the Committee, arrived at after studying the evidence submitted, are set out below. The number quoted alongside each conclusion or recommendation refers to the relevant portion of the report.

- | | Paragraph in report. |
|--|----------------------|
| (1) To overcome overcrowding, to provide a better standard of accommodation and to cope with future enrolment, there is an urgent need for a new school at Alice Springs | 16, 17, 19 |

- | | Paragraph in report. |
|---|----------------------|
| (2) The site for the proposed school is suitable | 27 |
| (3) Some showers should be provided at the school to augment those available for use at Traeger Park . . | 35 |
| (4) The tuckshop should be re-located so as not to intrude into the covered assembly area | 37 |
| (5) The estimated cost of the work proposed in the two stages is £325,000 | 38 |
| (6) Subject to the recommendations about showers and the location of the tuckshop, construction of the Traeger Park School to the design and size proposed is recommended | 41. |

R. L. DEAN, Chairman.

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

6th February, 1963.