

1964-65-66

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

*Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works*

## REPORT

relating to the proposed erection of a

## MIGRANT HOSTEL

at

Springvale, Victoria

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*Presented pursuant to statute; ordered to be printed, 20th October 1966*

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[*Cost of Paper*:—Preparation, not given; 989 copies; approximate cost of printing and publishing, \$180]

MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS  
(NINETEENTH COMMITTEE)

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Senator EDGAR WYLIE PROWSE

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(2) Chairman from 1st September 1966  
(3) Vice-Chairman to 1st September 1966  
(4) Vice-Chairman from 1st September 1966

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EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, No. 183  
DATED 28TH SEPTEMBER 1966

7. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—REFERENCE OF WORK—ERECTION OF MIGRANT HOSTEL, SPRINGVALE, VICTORIA.—  
Mr. Freeth (Minister representing the Minister for Works) moved, pursuant to notice, That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1913–1965*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report:—Erection of a Migrant Hostel at Springvale, Victoria.

Mr. Freeth presented plans in connexion with the proposed work.

Question—put and passed.

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Osborne, C. D., Esq., M.B.E., First Assistant Director-General (Architecture), Department of Works, Yarra Street, Hawthorn, Victoria .. .. .	25-31
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# PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

## MIGRANT HOSTEL AT SPRINGVALE, VICTORIA

### REPORT

By resolution, on 28th September 1966, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report, the proposal to erect a migrant hostel at Springvale, Victoria.

The Committee have the honour to report as follows—

#### THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

1. The Committee received submissions and drawings from the Departments of Labour and National Service, and Works and took evidence in Canberra and Melbourne from representatives of those departments, the Department of Immigration, Commonwealth Hostels Ltd. and the Windsor Estate Residents Committee. We inspected the site of the proposed hostel at Springvale and the existing migrant hostels at Brooklyn and Holmesglen in Melbourne.

#### PRESENT PROPOSAL

2. The proposal submitted to the Committee is for the construction of a migrant hostel in permanent materials on Commonwealth owned land at Springvale, a Melbourne suburb. The hostel proposed is specifically for migrant families of four or more and is to accommodate up to 1000 persons including staff.

3. The plan of the living accommodation will ensure flexibility in the use of facilities and simultaneously enable families to live in as normal a family setting as is practicable within the hostel system. Meals are to be provided in a centralised dining hall.

#### MIGRANT HOSTELS

4. Since January 1952 the Commonwealth's migrant hostels have been operated by Commonwealth Hostels Ltd., a company established by the Commonwealth for this purpose. Previously they were managed by the Department of Labour and National Service whose Minister is still responsible for matters of policy, including standards of accommodation, admissions and tariff charges. The Department of Immigration provides funds for sites, new hostels, maintenance purposes and the subsidies which permit the application of concessional tariffs in respect of dependants.

5. There are 30 migrant hostels in Australia with a total capacity of about 25,000 beds. Fourteen of these are in New South Wales, nine in Victoria, three in South Australia, two in Queensland and one each in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

6. In August 1963, it was decided that the migrant hostels at Bunnerong and Bradfield Park in Sydney, and Brooklyn and Holmesglen in Melbourne, should be replaced. To date, sites for two new hostels, have been secured, one at Randwick in Sydney and the other in Melbourne in Westall Road, Springvale.

7. The Committee reported to Parliament on 22nd March 1966 on the proposal to erect a hostel at Randwick recommending that the proposal proceed on the basis submitted but with the inclusion of a toilet in each family unit. This recommendation has now been accepted. The hostel planned for Springvale is almost identical to the redesigned Randwick proposal.

8. *Objectives of Migrant Hostels.* About one third of the assisted passage intake of migrants is entitled to hostel accommodation. In 1965-66 this was about 20% of the total intake. The form of transitory accommodation offered by the Commonwealth is known to migrants before they arrive. The migrant is also aware that permanent family accommodation is not being offered but that nevertheless, on arrival he is free from immediate concern about shelter and food for his family. He knows that there will be time to orientate himself, to make decisions about his future, his family accommodation requirements and his financial position.

9. The aim is that transitory accommodation in hostels should—

- (a) compare with initial accommodation that might be arranged for other migrants but not disturb the pattern of intake under sponsorship arrangements or of migration on individual initiative which has no hostel entitlement;
- (b) have regard to the relatively large numbers involved;
- (c) not discourage families from moving into the general community as soon as circumstances and resources permit;
- (d) permit the most intensive use of capital invested by encouraging families to move out into the community. Flexibility is needed in the transitory accommodation, so that it is adaptable to families of varying sizes and for varying periods;
- (e) provide opportunities for persons with a wide range of financial resources to develop the ability to make a move; and
- (f) allow for the vagaries of the economic climate.

10. To meet these objectives the Commonwealth provides transitory accommodation in the form of board and lodging with communal use of facilities and a tariff structure which permits the application of concessional tariffs to a wide range of family circumstances, and in particular to meet needs of large families in lower income groups. The prime objective is to provide reasonably comfortable surroundings which, nevertheless, are not a substitute for long term family accommodation.

11. *The Continuing Need for Hostel Accommodation.* The increase in Australia's population through migration is an established long term policy and the trend has been to increase the annual programme of assisted migrants, especially British migrants. Migrant hostels provide transitory accommodation for Commonwealth Nominated migrants and special Commonwealth Groups arriving under assisted passage arrangements. These migrants are selected on a pre-determined occupational basis having regard to the state of the economy and the needs of the labour market, as well as to the availability of hostel accommodation. Priority is generally given to skilled workers to help meet the continuously increasing requirements of secondary industry.

12. Almost 71,000 British assisted migrants arrived during 1965-66, exceeding the target of 70,000. Of these, about 26,000 used hostel accommodation on arrival. The immigration aim for 1966-67 is 148,000, including 71,000 assisted migrants from Britain. It is thought that the number requiring hostel accommodation may be greater than in the last financial year. In addition to British

migrants, non-British assisted migrants are also eligible for hostel accommodation. In 1966-67, the number of migrants in this category expected to use hostels is over 6,000.

13. There is no suggestion that a migration programme of at least the present dimensions will not be maintained for some years to come. There is also no indication that the future rate of home construction will enable all migrants to be provided with dwellings on arrival. It is equally unlikely that migrants will receive priority for housing over other members of the community. In any event we believe that transitory accommodation in hostels will always be valuable as a means of providing new migrants with a breathing space after arrival.

14. Nevertheless, the rate at which housing becomes available does influence the volume of transitory accommodation required in hostels. The rate at which migrants in hostels can acquire alternative accommodation affects the rate at which they move through hostels and this in turn affects the number who can be provided with transitory accommodation within the present capacity of hostels.

15. The Committee were pleased to note that an accommodation advisory service, recently commenced on a pilot basis by Commonwealth Hostels Ltd., to assist migrants obtain private accommodation, has been most successful. It seemed to the Committee that if this service is extended to all migrant hostels significant increases in the rate at which migrants pass through hostels would result.

#### HOSTELS IN THE MELBOURNE AREA

16. Migrant hostels in the Melbourne metropolitan area, and their respective capacities, are—

Altona	..	..	530
Broadmeadows	..	..	1,010
Brooklyn	..	..	1,030
Fishermen's Bend	..	..	510
Holmesglen	..	..	470
Maribyrnong	..	..	1,150
Nunawading	..	..	730
Preston	..	..	470

17. These hostels are operating almost to capacity and the Committee were informed that this situation is expected to continue as long as the migration programme stays at its present level. Should the level rise, the hostels would be strained to cope with accommodation demands.

18. *Need for Improved Accommodation.* The Committee were told that in the recruitment of migrants in the competitive conditions now obtaining overseas, the quality of accommodation available on arrival is increasingly important to the success of Australia's efforts. Growing prosperity, rising social standards and a high level of employment exist in most of the countries from which migrants to Australia are now recruited. This situation contrasts to the political and economic conditions which stimulated migration in the immediate post war period. We agree with the submission that if Australia is to continue to attract and retain suitable migrants, the standard of transitory accommodation must be improved.

19. Efforts are made to improve the appearance and surroundings of hostels by landscaping, garden planting and the provision of outdoor amenities. Child minding centres operate where there is a sufficient demand so that working mothers can leave their children in the care of trained attendants. Recreation halls and kiosks for the purchase of personal necessities are available, as also, where the land permits, are sports fields and playing areas. Most hostels have social committees which arrange functions for the benefit of residents and there are trained youth leaders in the larger hostels to organise recreation for young people.

20. Internally, the living quarters in hostels are furnished with divan type beds for parents and double decker beds for children, in an effort to create more living

space for families. Generally bathrooms, showers, toilet and laundries are in communal blocks separated from the living accommodation.

21. Despite the measures taken to improve conditions and to make surroundings as attractive as possible, the hostels we inspected retain the character of accommodation provided to meet the immediate post war emergency and must create a poor impression on incoming migrants.

22. However, we were pleased to note that apart from plans to improve transitory accommodation by the construction of new hostels to replace the less satisfactory establishments, steps are being taken at some existing hostels to provide ablutions, toilets, etc. under the same roof as sleeping accommodation, by reconstruction or erection of new accommodation units.

23. *Brooklyn Hostel.* This hostel, which is located in Millers Road, Brooklyn on land owned by the Australian Wool Board, was brought into operation in 1955 when alternative accommodation was virtually unobtainable. The family accommodation is in Nissen type huts. The kitchen and community dining room are in a large converted wool store. There have been two fires at this hostel, but fortunately without injury to residents—in 1962 the dining room and kitchen were totally destroyed, and in 1964 the recreation hall.

24. Since the 1962 fire the Wool Board has been pressing for the removal of the hostel from the area, pointing out the unsuitable and unsatisfactory nature of the accommodation it provides. This view was substantiated during our inspection. The buildings are old and both the living quarters and the amenities are difficult to present attractively despite obvious efforts by the management. The site is particularly unsuited for a hostel, having a cattle yard and abattoir at the rear and being crossed by vehicular traffic to the stores area of which the hostel forms two separate sections. There is also a sewage treatment works adjacent.

25. *Holmesglen Hostel.* This hostel is located in Warrigal Road, Holmesglen and also comprises Nissen huts. It operates under the handicap of a busy public road separating the sleeping quarters from the catering area. The site is owned by the State and the current lease expires on 30th September 1967. Thereafter the site will be available to the Commonwealth on a month-to-month basis only.

26. *Committee Conclusions.* Facilities at Brooklyn and Holmesglen provide only a minimum standard of accommodation and amenity. Although every effort has been made to maintain the facilities at an appropriate standard, the fact is that the buildings were originally built for other purposes and converted to meet an accommodation emergency.

27. The Committee are satisfied that there is a need to maintain the migrant hostel capacity of the Melbourne area at about the present level. We believe that the Brooklyn and Holmesglen hostels do not provide an appropriate standard of accommodation for newly arrived migrants and should cease to be used as soon as replacement accommodation can be completed. We consider that the need has been established for new migrant hostel accommodation in the Melbourne area.

#### THE SITE

28. The present eight hostels in the Melbourne area are so dispersed that migrant workers can be employed in an extensive range of industries over a wide area. In addition, hostels are located in areas of residential development where migrants will have opportunities to obtain nearby private accommodation without having to change their employment.

29. A hostel sited at Springvale would serve the industrial areas developing in the area generally south-

reasonably easy access to the city and other suburbs. Thus, there are available employment opportunities in a wide range of occupations for dependants as well as breadwinners. Continuing residential development in the immediate and surrounding districts seems to be assured.

30. Whilst the closing of the Brooklyn hostel will be a loss to industry in the Footscray, Williamstown and Altona areas, these industries will continue to be served by the Maribyrnong and Altona hostels.

31. The site at Springvale is just over 17 acres and has frontages to Westall Road, Windsor Avenue and Villa Road. It is about 14 miles from the city and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of the Westall station on the main Gippsland railway line. The land has a diagonal fall of 20 feet from north-east to south-west. The main access will be from Westall Road by means of a service road required under the Springvale Council's proposed road widening scheme. A secondary access will be to Villa Road.

32. We believe that the site at Springvale is an appropriate location for the erection of the proposed hostel.

### BUILDING PROPOSALS

33. *Design Requirements.* As with the redesigned Randwick hostel, there is a requirement for bedroom accommodation in family units, each containing a toilet and wash basin. Communal ablution and laundry facilities are required in the accommodation blocks which are to be connected by covered ways to the central amenities building containing dining room and recreation and service facilities. Private residences are required for the House, General and Catering Managers, and separate domestic quarters for other staff. Other basic design requirements include a minimising of distances between bedrooms and the dining room, and bedrooms and the ablution facilities and a 2-storey limit on the height of the buildings.

34. *Amenities Building.* The focal point of the hostel is this building which is a small community centre comprising a dining hall, a kitchen and associated areas and facilities, recreation facilities, library, kiosk, post office, bank, child minding centre, youth centre, boiler house, electricity sub-station and the maintenance and stores areas.

35. Seating in the dining hall will be provided for 75% of the residents at the one time. A hall of two wings is planned to avoid the disadvantages of large dining halls and to reduce the distance between service counters and tables. One wing only need be used for midday meals during the week. The dining room will be heated and cooled as required and acoustically treated to minimise noise. The cafeteria counter will have three service points, each with facilities for hot and cold meals. The kitchen facilities will be capable of providing a complete meal service for 1000 persons, including cut lunches and diets.

36. The amenities building will include storage and issuing facilities for linen and other equipment. On the main concourse there will be space for banking facilities, a post office and a kiosk for the sale of day-to-day requirements, public telephones, a first aid room and a health centre where visiting doctors or infant and maternal welfare sisters can consult residents.

37. The child minding centre to care during the day for up to 120 pre-school children of those mothers who go to work, will be located in the amenities building. The youth centre with a floor area of 3,800 square feet, is also to be located in this building. The centre is for indoor activities of all age groups. Hostel children are to be encouraged to take part in physical and cultural activities in leisure time, including gymnasium and craft activities, ball games and dancing.

it by a covered way, will house the reception area, information centre and the hostel's general offices. A recreation hall to seat 500 will be located on the lower ground floor of this building. The hall will have film projection facilities.

39. *Accommodation Blocks.* The plan submitted to the Committee is for three separate 2-storey buildings, each designed to accommodate 320 migrants in family units of two, three or four bedrooms.

40. Each building has been planned with six wings radiating from the central core which is to contain communal bathroom and limited toilet facilities for both sexes. The central core, which will be naturally lit, will also contain laundry drying cubicles, public telephones, cleaners stores, garbage disposal and bin washing rooms. A small utility room has been provided in each wing of all blocks. Laundry, drying and ironing facilities are located at roof level.

41. The layout of the bedroom wings will permit maximum and flexible use of space by the sub-division into family units of various sizes. A wash basin with hot and cold water and a toilet are provided to each unit and bedrooms have built-in wardrobes and dressing tables. A table at which children can study is included in each minor bedroom, together with individual cupboards for coats and room cleaning equipment. Divan type bed settees are proposed in the main bedrooms of each unit and bunks or single beds in the other rooms.

42. The laundry facilities in each block will include steam heated boilers, troughs, washing machines, ironing rooms and drying areas. Provision is also made for the installation of a coin operated laundromat in the central accommodation block.

43. *Staff Accommodation.* Three-bedroom brick houses are to be provided for the General Manager, the House Manager and the Catering Manager. They will be located near the accommodation blocks.

44. A 2-storey staff quarters of seven single rooms and two double rooms is also planned. These quarters will also include a self-contained one-bedroom flat for the Relieving Manager. A store for migrants' heavy baggage is to be located on the ground floor of this building.

45. *Car Parks, Bicycle Shelters and Roads.* A sealed gravel car park will be located adjacent to each accommodation block and the amenities building. A total of 151 on-site car spaces are proposed. Under-cover racks for 80 bicycles are also included. Bituminous surfaced one-way roads will connect the various building units.

46. *Outdoor Recreational Facilities.* The proposals submitted to the Committee included a sports oval and two basketball courts on low ground in the south-west corner of the site near the entrance from Westall Road. Two playgrounds fitted with swings, slides and playground equipment will be located between the accommodation blocks.

47. *Foundations.* Site investigations have shown that the ground is generally uniform comprising a soft clay overlying a sandy clay material to a depth of 8 feet to 10 feet below which is compact sand. The Committee were told that pier and beam foundations will be required. Piers 10 to 14 feet long bearing on the sand and spaced at about 5 feet centres are proposed under all walls and as required at isolated columns.

48. *Structure.* The amenities building will have reinforced concrete floor slabs bearing on the ground and suspended reinforced concrete floors at the end of each wing where the ground falls away. Steel portal frames are to support a steel roof structure. The 2-storey office block and recreation hall will be framed in steel with reinforced concrete floors. The first floor will be of suspended reinforced concrete suspended on steel beams and internal columns. The external steel columns and beams will be encased in concrete. The ground floor slab will bear on

49. The 2-storey accommodation blocks will be of load bearing brick construction with reinforced concrete floor slabs. The roof slab over the central core will also be of reinforced concrete. The ground floor slabs will bear on the ground. The roofs over each wing and the laundries will be supported on steel purlins and rafters. The 2-storey staff accommodation block will be of similar construction.

50. *Materials and Finishes.* We were told that with a constant turnover of residents, including large numbers of young children, building maintenance costs at hostels can be high unless finishes are durable and easily and economically maintained, preferably by unskilled labour. Thus, where possible, painted work has been eliminated in favour of ceramic or sprayed plastic finishes.

51. External cladding to all buildings will be face brick and windows will be aluminium framed. Except for the three residences where cement tiles will be used, roofing is to be galvanised steel decking. The covered ways will be framed with galvanised steel columns and covered with steel roofing. Vertical adjustable aluminium sun screens will protect the western wall of the dining room. The open air drying spaces on the roofs of the accommodation blocks will be shielded from view by open concrete block screens.

52. Internal wall finishes in the amenities and office buildings and accommodation blocks will be face brick sprayed with vinyl. The dining room, recreation hall and child minding centre will have walls of glazed face brick. The floor of the concourse in the amenities building will be concrete slabs with a coloured aggregate finish. Quarry tiles will be used on the floor of the kitchen and terrazzo tiles on the floors of toilets and ablutions areas. Elsewhere, floors will be surfaced with selected vinyl tiles and skirtings.

53. A sprayed vermiculite ceiling finish will be used generally except in the dining room and child minding centre where acoustic tiles are proposed. The kitchen, toilet and wash room areas will have ceramic wall tiling and fibrous plaster ceilings. Opening window sashes will be fly screened.

54. In storage and service areas, walls will be face brick or off-form concrete, ceilings off-form concrete and floors granolithic.

55. *Mechanical Engineering Services.* A central oil fired boiler suitable for conversion to natural gas, will be located in the amenities building to provide steam or hot water requirements in the kitchen, laundries, bin cleaning facilities, domestic hot water calorifiers and hot water radiators.

56. Space heating in the bedrooms of the accommodation blocks will be by hot water radiators and the drying cubicles in the same buildings will have hot water unit heaters. In the dining hall, child minding centre, recreation hall and youth centre, a ducted warm air system will be used. The office accommodation will be heated by hot water baseboard convectors. Domestic hot water and space heating in the staff accommodation will be from gas fired boilers and hot water radiators. In the managers' houses, gas fired appliances will be used for space heating in the lounges and to provide domestic hot water supply.

57. The automatic laundry in the central accommodation block will be equipped with domestic washing machines, hydro-extractors and drying tumblers. Wash boilers and spin dryers will be provided in each accommodation block.

58. Exhaust ventilation systems will serve the kitchen, toilets in the living areas, laundries and drying rooms.

59. *Electrical Engineering Services.* The State Electricity Commission will supply electricity by underground cable to the sub-station in the amenities building, from where electricity at medium voltage will be distributed to the

Artificial lighting will be provided by fluorescent tubes and power outlets will be installed in the living quarters on the scale of two in the main bedroom and one in the other bedrooms and elsewhere as required. Area security lighting, basketball court lighting and public address and television antenna distribution systems, will be provided.

60. *Fire Protection.* A thermal fire alarm system connected to the nearest Country Fire Authority station will be installed. Hydrants, hoses, hose reels and fire extinguishers will be provided to give the hostel a full fire protection.

61. *Hydraulic Services.* Water is available from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works mains in nearby streets. Reticulation within the hostel area will be a combined fire and domestic system. Fixed garden sprinklers will be provided in areas near buildings and quick coupling valves for sports areas watering. Other areas will be covered from standpipes.

62. There is an existing sewer main 800 feet west of Westall Road and under development proposals for the area, the extension to the hostel site will not take place for four to five years. However, it will be possible to obtain a connection to this main at the appropriate time.

63. Stormwater from the site will be piped to an existing 21 inch main which skirts the southern boundary of the site.

64. *Landscaping.* Areas near buildings will be landscaped, using trees and grass to blend with nearby residential development.

65. *Committee Conclusion.* The Committee recommend the construction of the works in this reference.

## PROGRAMME

66. It has been estimated that after an approval to proceed is given, 14 months will be required to complete working drawings and contract documents, invite tenders and let a contract. The contract period has been estimated to occupy 18 months.

## ESTIMATES OF COST

67. The estimated cost of the works when referred to the Committee, was \$4,250,000 as follows:—

			\$
Building work	..	..	2,785,000
Engineering services:			
Mechanical	..	..	705,000
Electrical	..	..	262,000
Hydraulic	..	..	273,000
Site work, including landscaping, car parks, etc	..	..	225,000
			<hr/> 4,250,000

## WINDSOR ESTATE RESIDENTS COMMITTEE

68. A representative of this Committee, whose members live in the newly developing residential area immediately to the south and east of the hostel site, presented a well documented case to us against the erection of the hostel on this site. The bases of the submission were that when the adjacent housing sub-divisions were sold it was planned that the hostel site, too, would be sold for housing purposes, the residents consider that a hostel is not an appropriate development on this site, that the amenity of the area will be adversely affected and property values will depreciate.

69. We concluded, after a close examination of each of the points submitted, that a well planned and managed



amenities and recreational facilities, and suitably landscaped, is an appropriate development on this Commonwealth-owned land. We believe that a first class migrant hostel would be in keeping with the domestic nature of the nearby development and is not inconsistent with the requirements of the Springvale Council for the erection of flats in an area set aside for "reserved living". When the area is built up, we think that property values will reflect trends elsewhere.

70. As a result of the representations of the Residents Committee, the location of the various elements of the hostel complex has been re-examined and we were told that the basketball courts and the staff quarters can be relocated without loss of efficiency in the layout. We think that every effort should be made to preserve the amenity of the area and therefore recommend that, if possible, the basketball courts and staff quarters should be resited.

#### FUTURE HOSTELS

71. The Committee endorse the approach to the provision of transitory accommodation for migrants as proposed at the Randwick and Springvale hostels. We do consider, however, that the form of this accommodation to be built in the future for migrants should be reviewed from time to time. To ensure the economic use of funds consistent with immigration policy and obligations, consideration could be given, for example, to building accommodation in which migrants can maintain themselves.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

72. The summary of recommendations and conclusions of the Committee is set out below. Alongside each is shown the paragraph in the report to which it refers.

	<i>Paragraph</i>
1. There is a need to maintain the migrant hostel capacity of the Melbourne area at about the present level .. ..	27
2. The Brooklyn and Holmesglen hostels do not provide an appropriate standard of accommodation for newly arrived migrants .. ..	27
3. The need has been established for new migrant hostel accommodation in the Melbourne area .. ..	27
4. The site at Springvale is an appropriate location for the erection of the proposed hostel .. ..	32
5. The Committee recommend the construction of the works in this reference ..	65
6. The estimated cost of the works when referred to the Committee was \$4,250,000	67
7. The proposed hostel is an appropriate development on this Commonwealth-owned land .. ..	69
8. The basketball courts and staff quarters should be resited if possible .. ..	70

*Alex Buchanan*  
Chairman.

Parliamentary Standing Committee  
on Public Works,

Parliament House,  
CANBERRA, A.C.T.  
19th October 1966.

1964-65-66

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

*Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works*

# MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

relating to the proposed erection of a

## MIGRANT HOSTEL

at

Springvale, Victoria

## WITNESSES

	Paragraphs in Evidence
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Brown, R. Bruce, Esq., General Manager, Commonwealth Hostels Ltd., 31 Carabella Street, Milson's Point, New South Wales .. .. .	1-24
Kangan, M., Esq., First Assistant Secretary, Department of Labour and National Service, 125 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Victoria .. .. .	1-24 45
Osborne, C. D., Esq., M.B.E., First Assistant Director-General (Architecture), Department of Works, Yarra Street, Hawthorn, Victoria .. .. .	25-31
Stoddart, R. G., Esq., Chairman, Windsor Estate Residents Committee, 74 Windsor Avenue, Springvale, Victoria .. .. .	32-44

# PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

## MIGRANT HOSTEL AT SPRINGVALE, VICTORIA

### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

(Taken at Canberra)

TUESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER 1966

Present:

Mr. BUCHANAN (Chairman)

Senator Branson.	Mr. Bosman.
Senator Dittmer.	Mr. Fulton.
Senator Prowse.	Mr. Griffiths.

Mr. Myer Kangan, First Assistant Secretary, Department of Labour and National Service, was affirmed and examined.

Mr. Robert Edward Armstrong, First Assistant Secretary, Department of Immigration, and

Mr. Robert Bruce Brown, General Manager, Commonwealth Hostels Ltd., were sworn and examined.

Chairman

1. The Committee will now take evidence on the proposed new Commonwealth migrant hostel at Springvale, Victoria. Have you a prepared statement, Mr. Kangan?—  
(Mr. Kangan) Yes, it is as follows—

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Since January, 1952, the Commonwealth's migrant hostels have been operated by Commonwealth Hostels Ltd., a company established by the Commonwealth for this purpose and registered in Victoria under the Victorian Companies Act. Previously, the hostels were run by the Department of Labour and National Service, whose Minister is still responsible for all matters of policy, including standards of accommodation, admissions to hostels, and tariff charges. The Department of Immigration provides through its votes the finance necessary to acquire sites and to erect and maintain hostels. To enable concessional tariffs to apply to dependants living in migrant hostels, the hostels are subsidised, the subsidies also being carried on the vote of the Department of Immigration. Attachment 1 is a brief summary of the early history of migrant hostels in Australia.

2. In August, 1963, Cabinet decided that the migrant hostels known as Bunnerong, Bradfield Park, Brooklyn and Holmesglen should be replaced and that action should be taken to secure replacement sites. To date, two sites have been secured, one in Sydney taking in a portion of the former Commonwealth Rifle Range at Randwick, and the other in Melbourne in Westall Road, Springvale.

3. Designs for a new type hostel on the Randwick site were, in accordance with the usual procedure, submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in October, 1965. Reporting on the proposal in February, 1966, the Committee recommended that the project proceed but on the basis that each family unit include an individual toilet.

4. Cabinet has since endorsed the Randwick project as recommended by the Parliamentary Works Committee. It has also approved submission of this present Springvale proposal to the Committee.

#### THE PRESENT PROPOSAL

5. The present proposal is for a new migrant hostel on the site which has been acquired in Westall Road, Springvale. The site is identified on Attachment 2. When the hostel is constructed, the present unsatisfactory hostel at Brooklyn will be closed. Whether it will be possible to close Holmesglen Hostel when the new hostel is constructed will depend on the demand for hostel accommodation. Since Cabinet's decision in August, 1963, the migrant intake has increased considerably.

6. The proposed new hostel is, with minor variations, identical in design with the Randwick Hostel as recommended by the Parliamentary Works Committee. The variations, which are in the main dictated by site differences, will be explained by the Department

7. The proposed hostel is planned for a capacity of 1,000 persons in family groups. It will provide transitory accommodation for new migrants needed to meet the strong and growing demand for labour in the developing industrialised sector to the southeast of Melbourne.

8. Brooklyn Hostel is located in Millers Road, Brooklyn, and can accommodate 1,030 persons. The land is owned by the Australian Wool Board. Brought into operation in 1950 when alternative accommodation was virtually unobtainable and building materials were in short supply, it was one of the first migrant hostels in the Melbourne area.

9. The family accommodation at Brooklyn is in Nissen type huts. The kitchen and community dining room are in a large converted wool store. There have been two fires at the hostel, but fortunately without injury to residents; in June, 1962, the dining room and kitchen were totally destroyed and in December, 1964, the recreation hall.

10. After the fire in 1962, the Australian Wool Board (then the Wool Bureau) wrote to the Chief Property Officer, as follows: "It has been apparent for some time that the store's compound at Brooklyn is completely unsuitable for use as a Migrant Centre and this view is now reinforced by the loss of the above unit. The Bureau suggests this is an appropriate time for serious consideration to be given to the removal of the Migrant hostel from the compound . . ."

11. The Department agrees with the Board's view. The buildings are old and both the living quarters and the amenities are difficult to present attractively, despite the Company's ceaseless efforts. The site is particularly unsuited for the purpose, having a cattle yard and abattoir at the rear and being crossed by vehicular traffic to the stores area of which the hostel forms two separated sections.

12. The Holmesglen Hostel is located in Warrigal Road, Holmesglen, and can accommodate 470 persons. It is of Nissen hut construction. It operates under the handicap of a busy public road separating the sleeping quarters from the dining room. The current lease expires on 30th September, 1967, and thenceforth the site will be available to the Commonwealth on a month-to-month basis.

13. Over the years, there have been numerous complaints about both hostels from hostel residents and criticisms voiced in Parliament and elsewhere about features over which the Company has little control. Despite their unsatisfactory features, however, the hostels have operated successfully and made an important contribution to the migration programme, a tribute to the efforts of Commonwealth Hostels Limited in coping with the physical limitations imposed by the sites and the buildings.

#### THE NEED FOR AN IMPROVED ACCOMMODATION STANDARD

14. It is clear from actual experience in the recruitment of migrants in the competitive conditions obtaining overseas that the quality of accommodation available to them on arrival is increasingly important to the success of Australia's immigration programme. Since the immediate post-war period, growing prosperity, rising social standards and a high level of employment exist in most countries from which migrants are recruited; this is in contrast to the political and economic conditions which stimulated migration immediately after the war. If Australia is to continue to attract and retain suitable migrants in the light of these developments, the standard of transitory accommodation must be progressively improved.

15. Particular efforts are made to improve the appearance and surroundings of hostels by programmes of landscaping, garden planning and the provision of outdoor amenities. Child-minding centres are provided, wherever there is sufficient demand, so that working mothers can leave their children in the care of trained attendants. Recreation halls and kiosks for the purchase of personal necessities are available, as also, where land permits, are sports fields and playing areas. Most hostels have social committees which organise dances, concerts and other functions for the benefit of residents, and there are trained youth leaders at the larger hostels who organise recreation for the younger people.

16. Internally, the living quarters in hostels are furnished with divan-type beds for parents and double-decker beds for children, with the effect of creating more living space for families. The room construction varies from hostel to hostel.

17. Generally speaking, bathrooms, showers, toilets and laundries are in communal blocks, separate from the accommodation quarters.

18. Despite what has been done to improve hostel conditions and to make hostel surroundings as attractive as possible . . .

the emergency of the immediate post-war period and must create a poor impression on incoming migrants. Brooklyn, in particular, falls in this category.

19. The proposed new hostel at Springvale will remove sources of criticism which, in stressing the physical appearance of the establishments, more than neutralise the strong attempts that are made to care for the welfare of the migrant residents. And the more urgently this can be achieved the greater the potential benefits.

#### APPROPRIATENESS OF THE SPRINGVALE LOCATION

20. The eight migrant hostels in Melbourne are listed and described in Attachment 3. Capable of accommodating a total of 5,900 persons, they are presently all operating to capacity, the occupancy figure having been 5,600 at the end of July, 1966.

21. Migrant hostels need to be so dispersed that migrant workers can enter a wide range of industries over a wide geographical area. Attachment 2 shows how this has been achieved in Melbourne. In addition, it has been policy to locate them in areas of residential development where migrant residents will have opportunities to seek private accommodation in the vicinity without having to change their employment, and to become integrated into the community.

22. The proposed hostel is so sited as to serve the growing industrial areas of Springvale, Oakleigh, Clayton, Noble Park, Dandenong, Bentleigh, Moorabbin, Highett, Cheltenham and Mentone. The public transport available also gives reasonably easy access to the city of Melbourne and other suburbs. So there are available also employment opportunities in a wide range of occupations for dependants as well as breadwinners. Continuing housing developments in the immediate and surrounding districts would seem to be assured.

23. Whilst removal of the Brooklyn Hostel will be a loss to industries in the heavily industrialised areas of Footscray, Williamstown and Altona, reference to Attachment 2 shows that these areas will continue to be served by the Maribyrnong Hostel with a capacity of 1,150 residents, and Altona Hostel with a capacity of 550 residents.

24. The proposed new hostel will have almost the same operational capacity as the Brooklyn Hostel. It is to be noted, however, that the capacity of a hostel is greater than the actual number of migrants that it accommodates at any one time because of continuous movement, in and out. The hostel system is based on the principle that families should move to self-found accommodation as soon as possible. The rate of turnover varies from hostel to hostel. For the Commonwealth as a whole, the average length of time a family stays in a hostel is currently 38 weeks; at Brooklyn, the average is 47 weeks.

#### THE CONTINUING NEED FOR HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

25. The increase in Australia's population through immigration is established long-term policy, and the trend has been in the direction of increases in the annual programme of assisted migrants, especially British migrants. The migrant hostels provide transitory accommodation for the Commonwealth Nominated migrants and special Commonwealth Groups who arrive under assisted passage arrangements. These migrants are selected on an occupational basis pre-determined in consultation between the Department of Labour and National Service and the Department of Immigration, having regard to the state of the economy and the needs of the labour market, as well as the availability of hostel accommodation. Established policy in respect of the worker content of the migrant programme is for priority for skilled workers to help meet the continuously increasing requirements of secondary industry in particular.

26. Since their inception, the migrant hostels have provided transitory accommodation for 395,000 migrants.

27. 70,754 British assisted migrants arrived during the financial year 1965/66, achieving the target of 70,000 which was approved by Parliament in October, 1965. Of these, approximately 25,600 were admitted to hostels. The Government's immigration aim for the current financial year—1966/67—is 148,000 settlers, including 71,000 assisted migrants from Britain. The number requiring hostel accommodation could be greater than in 1965/66.

28. In addition to British migrants, non-British assisted migrants are also eligible for accommodation in Commonwealth hostels on arrival in Australia. For the financial year 1966/67, the number of non-British migrants expected to avail themselves of hostel accommodation will be 6,125.

29. A programme of this dimension strains suitable available hostel accommodation. It is difficult to envisage in the foreseeable future any such change in migration policy as to call for a programme of lesser dimensions. Larger programmes will be necessary if the rate of population growth is to be maintained.

30. There is no indication that the rate of housing or equivalent construction will become such in the foreseeable future as to provide dwellings for all migrants on arrival. As well, it is difficult to expect a general housing policy giving favoured treatment for migrants. In any case, two factors are very relevant. Transitory

as to a settled place of residence. Second, if ever the situation where less hostels were needed, there is a number of satisfactory class which could be closed.

31. Nevertheless, the rate at which housing becomes available will have an effect on the volume of transitory accommodation required in hostels. The rate at which migrants in the area acquire alternative accommodation affects the rate at which they move through hostels and this, in turn, affects the number of migrants who can be provided with transitory accommodation within the capacity of the hostels.

#### CONCEPT OF THE PROPOSED SPRINGVALE HOSTEL

32. Migrants are told before they arrive in Australia about hostel entitlements and are aware that hostels are intended for temporary accommodation. About one-third of the total migrant intake is entitled to hostel accommodation and this represents approximately one-fifth of the total migrant intake. For about 80 per cent., accommodation is arranged by sponsors, relatives and employers and may vary from housing to lodging.

33. The transitory accommodation provided for the needs of incoming migrants should be of a form:

- (a) to compare with the kinds of accommodation initially made for other migrants but not such as to reflect the pattern of the migrant intake under arrangements and on individual initiative which is not an entitlement;
- (b) to have regard to the relatively large number of migrants involved;
- (c) to provide opportunities for persons of a wide range of financial resources to develop the ability to manage their own affairs;
- (d) not to discourage families from moving into the community as their circumstances and resources permit;
- (e) to enable the most intensive use of the capital in the transitory accommodation. Flexibility is needed in the transitory accommodation, adaptable to families of varying lengths of time;
- (f) to allow for the vagaries of the economic climate. The post-war period has been characterised by fluctuations in employment there have been short periods in the labour market have made it difficult for migrants to be fitted into employment immediately on arrival.

34. To meet these objectives, the Commonwealth transitory accommodation in the form of board and communal use of some facilities and a tariff structure, the application of concessional tariffs, to meet the needs of family circumstances and, in particular, to meet the needs of families in lower income groups. The prime objective is to provide reasonably comfortable surroundings which, however, are not seen as a substitute for long-term family accommodation.

35. The proposed Springvale Hostel is planned for four and more, with an overall capacity of a thousand persons comprised of breadwinners and their dependants. Transitory accommodation is planned to provide the greatest use of available space and simultaneously to enable migrants to live in as normal a family setting as is practicable within the system. Meals will be provided in a large centrally hall. The Department of Works will be supplying planning in its evidence; the operational requirements from the Department of Labour and National Service in Attachment 4.

36. The whole hostel population is regarded as requiring appropriate amenities of the kind described in paragraph 15 as having been developed in the larger hostels. But, of course, there will be no closed situation; no normal shopping facilities, schools, and so on.

#### ADVICE TO INTERESTED BODIES AND

37. Details of this proposal have been communicated to Victorian State authorities listed below and no further advice has been received:

The Premier's Department  
The Department of Education  
The Department of Health  
The Chief Secretary's Department.

38. The proposal has been discussed with the Spence Committee and with representatives of the Windsor Estate Committee—this Estate adjoins the hostel site. Initially, the local residents expressed concern at the siting of the hostel in the area. They have since been assured that the standard of building and site development is to the satisfaction of this Committee. Site plans and a model of the proposed site development have been made available for the senior officers of the Department of Labour and National Service, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Works made themselves available at meetings to answer queries.

39. Following Council discussions, the Springvale Town Clerk, Mr. Williams, addressed a circular dated 30th July, 1964, to residents in the area in the following terms:

"I feel that I should also say that my Council shared your fears that the proposal would result in the development of a migrant hostel similar to the Holmesglen centre. Naturally, the proposal was vigorously opposed with every means at our disposal, with the result that we are now assured that the area, when developed, will be a show place and a thing of beauty rather than an eyesore.

As a result of a number of lengthy conferences with Executive Officers of both the Department of Labour and National Service and the Department of the Interior, we are now able to advise you that the development of the area will provide that—

- A. Not more than 1,000 people will be accommodated on the land which is a population density not in excess of the density for flat accommodation development.
- B. All buildings will be of double storey brick construction.
- C. The whole area will be landscaped and ample beautified areas will be provided between buildings.
- D. Ample sporting and recreation areas and facilities will be provided.
- E. Generally, the whole development will be along acceptable and sound Town Planning principles.

In addition, all of the accommodation to be provided will be of the family unit type and accommodation for unmarried migrants will not be provided."

40. The representatives of the Residents' Committee expressed their satisfaction with what was proposed, but said they may still wish to appear before this Committee to give evidence on specific features of layout of the proposed hostel. I submit the attachments.

**Chairman.**—Does the Committee agree that the attachments should be taken as read? I rather imagine that quite a few points in Attachment 4 will come up for questions, but this does not really present any difficulty.

#### Mr. Fulton

2. Are you quite satisfied that the Council and the residents are convinced now by your efforts of persuasion that the hostel will fit in with the surroundings?—I am absolutely convinced about the Council. We had discussions only two or three weeks ago with the Mayor and some of the leading councillors and the proposal has since been discussed by the Council. As to the residents, I must confess that I am still vague. The fact is that the representatives of the residents did say at the combined meeting they had with the Council and ourselves that they were satisfied but that there were still some views they would like to bring to the attention of the Committee. I do not know precisely what they are.

**Chairman.**—The residents of the Windsor Estate have asked to appear before the Committee.

**Mr. Fulton.**—I will leave it until then.

#### Mr. Bosman

3. Mr. Armstrong, how does our hostel accommodation compare with that in other countries, first as to existing accommodation and secondly proposed accommodation?—**(Mr. Armstrong)** As far as we are aware, no other immigrating country has accommodation of a type with which we could make a comparison. We know that South Africa provides temporary accommodation for assisted migrants in ordinary commercial hotels. We know that in Germany employers bring in labour from a number of European countries and provide hostel accommodation for workers. I believe this is not family accommodation. I am not competent to describe the type of accommodation provided for those workers in Germany. These are the only examples I can think of where comparisons can be made.

I was going to refer to the situation in Canada.—I am not aware of the position in Canada. **(Mr. Kangan)** As far as I know there is no other country providing accommodation in the same sense as we are for families prior to moving into the general community. This is subject to a check.

It may be useful if we could get some information in due course—I shall try within the next week or so.

one country which provides accommodation specifically for migrants as transitory accommodation upon arrival, but this is open to further inquiry.

I notice that South Africa's figures are increasing significantly as far as immigration is concerned and I wonder whether South Africa is doing better than we are. **(Mr. Kangan)** I do not know.

Are you happy with the new plans?—**(Mr. Armstrong)** These arrangements have been discussed with the Department and the Minister for Immigration, who has agreed with them.

Are you happy with them?—Yes.

What other requests have you made for accommodation? Have you made requests for a speed-up in change-over from the old type of accommodation?—This matter of improving existing accommodation has been under consideration for some years. As the evidence has revealed, there has been progressive improvement in some of the existing accommodation. If I could take some of our recent requests, in Western Australia we requested additions to the Graylands hostel. The additions which will be made there will represent superior accommodation to that which has existed up to date. This will provide additional accommodation at the hostel for about 260 people. One of the main improvements will be that the toilet and ablution facilities will be under the one roof, which is an advance on the existing accommodation. So you have there the two types of accommodation side by side. We agree entirely with what has been said about the unsatisfactory nature of Brooklyn and Holmesglen hostels in Victoria for the reasons stated by Mr. Kangan and we have been party to the request for a new hostel to replace them.

Have you another plan to follow this one?—**(Mr. Kangan)** There is no design in existence but you will have noticed that Cabinet has approved in principle the replacement of the Bradfield Park hostel. Negotiations are in hand for the purchase of land on the northern side of Sydney. What kind of construction it will be I could not say at this stage. We have been experimenting. For example, before this Committee heard the first new hostel proposal we had started to improve accommodation, bringing toilets and ablution facilities inside buildings. Mr. Armstrong has mentioned Graylands. This was happening also at Wacol in Brisbane. Following the recommendations on the Randwick proposal, 200 beds will be provided in six buildings with the toilets in the individual units, similar to Randwick, as an addition to the Nunawading hostel. We will experiment to see what this means in terms of the various problems we have indicated previously.

#### Chairman

4. What sort of construction will it be?—Besser brick in the main—small huts of Besser brick, because the land lends itself to this treatment. I would hope that if these experiments show themselves to be reasonably acceptable procedures, it would be possible to engage in a progressive programme of these kinds of constructions so that as opportunity occurs the less suitable sleeping quarters could be taken away altogether.

#### Mr. Bosman

5. You seem to be well planned with this hostel. Have you gone in for children and youth activities in any previous planning to the same degree as here?—This has been a progressive effort on our part. **(Mr. Brown)** All of our hostels are serviced by youth leaders, either on a full time or part time basis. This is not new in the newly constructed hostels at Randwick and Springvale but they are different in the sense that we are able here to plan with new facilities. We have had to make use of improvisation

For example, at Matraville there was a new child minding centre constructed. In all of our hostels where the need is sufficient there is a child minding service which provides for the care of the children of working mothers between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.

I notice that you have a sporting oval here. Is this the first one?—(Mr. Kangan) There is a playing ground at Bunnerong. (Mr. Brown) There is a sporting field at Brooklyn.

I was significantly impressed by the planning and layout, whether it only shows up in the detail you have now given or whether I have been lacking in observation previously I do not know.—(Mr. Kangan) This is a perceptive comment. We have previously added; we are now providing in advance. That is the big difference.

Mr. Brown, in your field in particular this also seems to be the case as far as kitchens and general food requirements are concerned. The layout seems to be first class.—(Mr. Brown) Yes. I think it represents the most modern of the developments in our field which are available. We have had the opportunity to look at first class establishments both in Australia and overseas, and I have chosen the best layouts and the best equipment.

You have had extensive experience overseas looking at these things?—I have made two visits for this purpose.

I gather from those comments that you had no difficulty with the Department of Works so far as obtaining your requirements and the standards you would be looking for are concerned?—No problem. The Department of Works, as usual, has been most co-operative.

#### Senator Branson

6. It is stated in the evidence that the average length of stay of families is 38 weeks yet at Brooklyn, which was one of the worst I have inspected, the average is 47 weeks. Do you envisage, seeing that you are erecting this highly desirable and very fine accommodation, that this period of stay will be extended?—(Mr. Kangan) This is a critical question. We would like the period of stay to be less. At this stage it might be appropriate for Mr. Brown to explain what has been introduced into the company's procedures since the last time we appeared before this Committee. Before Mr. Brown does that, could I just add that the length of stay at each hostel varies significantly and that the factors which affect this are many and complex; the immediate availability of housing in the surrounding areas is not the least. (Mr. Brown) As an alternative to high cost capital construction for new hostels the need is to accelerate—this is needed anyway—the movement of migrants through these transitory establishments. The Commonwealth Immigration Planning Council has agreed to a scheme whereby the company now employs accommodation advisory officers whose activities start from the point that every migrant family coming in has a housing need. Their function is regularly to interview the head of each family to discuss their housing needs related to their incomes, to find rental accommodation and housing and to discuss with them what is available. This service has been operating now for 10 weeks on a pilot basis. It is restricted at the moment to four places in Sydney, two in Melbourne and one in Perth; and the result for the first 10 weeks of the pilot scheme is that 139 families, representing 620 people, have in fact positively been moved by the activities of the accommodation advisory officers. (Mr. Kangan) In addition to those who would have moved anyway. (Mr. Brown) Yes. The recommendation has now been made for this service to be extended to all hostels in Australia.

The one in New South Wales and the one in Victoria we are looking at now will be on such a high standard that I wonder whether you have given any consideration to the fact that often a family will stay in a hostel for

you may require some punitive loading on rental to discourage people staying on and on and on.—(Mr. Kangan) "Punitive" is a difficult word.

I will withdraw it. I meant something to discourage them.—In respect of the new type additions we are making at Graylands and Wacol, we are experimenting currently with a surcharge of \$2 per family per week for the better type accommodation.

This is after what period?—Immediately. We are seeking also to provide a limit on their stay. I underline the experimental nature of this. We have not yet finally decided what policy to pursue with the even more advanced accommodation being added to Nunawading. We have not, because of this experimentation decided what might be appropriate for the new hostel at Randwick and the one proposed for Springvale. Part of the problem in my mind is the question of progression. In my view it is highly desirable that migrants coming into this country and provided with transitory accommodation should see themselves as moving from hostels to a better class of accommodation in the community. It would be possible, if one may theorise for the moment, to say for these highly advanced types of accommodation that we will impose a time limit, say, of 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, and if they do not move out by then they will transfer into the normal type hostels and be replaced by other people in the advanced type. But what are the implications of doing this? Immediately the notion could be created that there is first class and second class accommodation. We are disturbed about that possible implication and are not sure this is the way it should be tackled. We are not running away from the problem. We understand it and at least in the time it will take to get these two new hostels under construction, assuming the Committee recommends the present one, we will have had experience where we are deliberately experimenting with different notions that may be practical.

#### Chairman

7. Could I follow that up? Will the people going into the better class accommodation be the new arrivals or will people be able to move up from the present accommodation?—I could answer but prefer to leave it to Mr. Brown because it is really operational in the sense of what is happening, not what might happen? (Mr. Brown) What we have done so far is to give those already there—those who have been there for not too long—the opportunity to move to the better class accommodation. If it comes to a question of selection as between applicants we give preference to those with the most and youngest children in the family. To the extent that the accommodation is not taken up—this could well be the case in the Wacol hostel—newcomers will have the opportunity, provided they are prepared to give an undertaking to move to private accommodation within six months, which is about the average length of stay in the Wacol hostel at present.

You have in mind that the Springvale and Randwick hostels, when they are built, will be for new families, have you, Mr. Kangan?—(Mr. Kangan) We have not really got to that point yet. We are deliberately not getting to that point until we see how the experiments work out. You will recall that in my evidence I said that this hostel was a replacement for both Brooklyn and Holmesglen. If it became possible, supposing the immigration intake dropped, for whatever reason—perhaps I am looking too far ahead here—my thinking is that the Holmesglen people for sure could be offered this alternative. In the case of Brooklyn, where people are locally employed, the opportunity would be given to those people to move into other hostels. In other words, we would start to taper the intake into the Brooklyn hostel. But I am not sure what



**Mr. Bosman**

8. It occurs to me that this innovation in respect of housing seems to be a very positive approach in that you are leading people out of a hostel rather than pushing them out of a hostel. I would have been interested in another twelve months of activity in this field in order to see what results could be achieved. The results are quite good in the short period, but it would have been quite interesting to see them over a longer period. I think this is much more positive thinking than the use of punitive measures to get people out of hostels. Have you any comment on that?—Yes. Who knows what could come from the development of what has started experimentally? As Mr. Brown has indicated, it is not inconceivable that this kind of service, which now caters for people who are working during the day and do not have the same opportunities, could lead to our getting rid of any particular period of entitlement. The entitlement period is two years in some cases at the moment. We might be able to simply ride on a proposition that people will be provided with transitory accommodation but will be expected to move as soon as practicable, when we have positive assistance. **(Mr. Brown)** May I make an addition to what I said earlier? I would not want it to be thought that this idea of an accommodation service for migrants is brand new. In fact, the Department of Immigration has had this service going for some years now and, I understand, will be continuing it for those who are not in hostels.

**Mr. Bosman.**—While we are on this subject, Mr. Chairman, we had better hear the other side, namely, what the Department of Immigration has achieved in this field and what it covers.

**Chairman.**—We are getting a little away from the point.

**Mr. Bosman.**—This is of interest to us in relation to the point that Senator Branson raised as to the possibilities of this new approach.

**Senator Branson.**—My point is that when we have accommodation of such a very high standard—this is very high standard accommodation—I can see some difficulty in respect of a few migrants—not a lot—in persuading them that they should have their own homes.

**Senator Branson**

9. Do you agree with that?—**(Mr. Kangan)** You will get no argument against that from me.

**Chairman.**—I think we had better leave the point that Mr. Bosman has raised. It is getting out into the field of general help by the Department of Immigration. However, it is very encouraging to have it confirmed that the Department of Immigration is helping in the general field of migrants apart from those in hostels. But they do not come within our scope at the moment.

**Senator Prowse**

10. I wish to follow up Senator Branson's questions. We have had the advantage of hearing the discussion on policy with regard to the Randwick hostel. It was argued substantially by your Department that it was not advisable to make the accommodation too comfortable and that the length of stay would be affected by the degree of comfort experienced by the migrant. One establishment—admittedly it is the very worst of your establishments—has an average length of stay of 47 weeks. You say that it is a complex problem. There, apparently, the comfort of the migrants is not affecting the length of stay. One would have expected that they would have got out of Brooklyn as quickly as possible. One would imagine that another of your complex problems would be housing in the area, as you suggested. Is there any indication that the siting of this new accommodation centre will be better in respect of housing in the area?—I cannot answer that question positively. The indications are that it will be

the south eastern area—the number of private dwellings, both occupied and unoccupied, increased from 51,458 to 69,447 between 1958 and 1964. That is an absolute increase of 17,989 dwellings, or 35 per cent. On the best information that we can get—we are working from Bureau bulletins all the time—the absolute and percentage increases in 1964-65 maintained that trend. In that year there was an increase of 2,964 dwellings, or 4.3 per cent., on the previous year. From our own observations—looking at land development and so on that has taken place in the whole of the adjacent area—it seems that opportunity there will continue. The second part of the answer relates to prices. The best of our studies indicate that the kind of housing development that is going on in this area covers a very wide financial range. A lot of it is within what we assess to be the income range of these people. As against that, as you will recall, you have to assess the effects of the concessional tariffs that apply in hostels and this becomes a matter of personal judgment for the family itself. Can I make a comment on your reference to the length of stay and the implication in what you have said that if Brooklyn is the kind of hostel where so much improvement is needed, why is it that people stay a long time? I spent most of my earlier years in the Public Service as a researcher into human relations in factory situations. One of my most absorbing interests was labour turnover. Why do people leave some establishments, and why do not such a large proportion leave other establishments? I can assure you that people can still complain about conditions at some establishments which one would consider to provide the least satisfactory physical arrangements and nevertheless remain there longer than in some of the most glamorous establishments we have in Australia. There are complex factors which intrude into this, besides the standard of accommodation.

**Mr. Fulton**

11. Does not a lot of it have to do with the people themselves?—Yes, that is one factor.

**Senator Prowse**

12. The departmental arrangement is a partnership between the Department of Labour and National Service and the Department of Immigration. To what extent is co-operation sought from the Department of Housing?—The Department of Housing is a relatively new department as you know. In respect of the development of criteria and so on, we have not sought its advice but over the last 12 months, we have been in repeated consultation with the Department of Housing as to experience with Housing Commission developments and related matters and directly in the context of migrant accommodation.

You say that about one-third of the assisted passage intake is entitled to hostel accommodation. What is the qualification that entitles an assisted migrant to hostel accommodation?—I think my phrasing in that context is poor. **(Mr. Armstrong)** The simple answer is that if you take the assisted British migration scheme, a high proportion would be nominated by friends and relatives in Australia to come to accommodation that is provided by the nominator on arrival of the migrant. Those people are not entitled to Commonwealth hostel accommodation. But from the very beginning, the concept of providing hostels for migrants and their families was to supplement the personal nominations. If we had to depend on personal nominations alone for our intake from a country like the United Kingdom, the intake would not be very large. Therefore, to provide for those people who have not any one in Australia to provide this personal nomination, we have the Commonwealth nomination scheme. This gives the Commonwealth the opportunity to make a selection of migrant workers according to occupation; to give preference to skilled and semi-skilled workers over unskilled workers. This is one of the big advantages of the Commonwealth



and therefore it has to provide necessary accommodation for them on arrival. (Mr. Kangan) It would be more accurate in this context to use the phrase "is estimated to seek entitlement to".

This statement that your present policy with regard to migrant centres is of value in integrating these people into the Australian way of life is interesting, but apparently it is not necessary with four-fifths of the migrants. You find it is necessary with the people you bring through the migrant hostels and yet the policy is something that is absolutely foreign to the Australian way of life. I refer to community living. My question is this: To what extent is this plan determined by the policy of insisting on community living for migrants?—I am having a problem with your phrase "community living".

#### Chairman

13. Would "institutional living" be more appropriate?—I am having a problem with that phrase also. There has never been a policy that has stated we will bring people here and they will live in communities. That is what is implied in the question by Senator Prowse and in the Chairman's question. The policy has been, and is, to provide transitional accommodation to people that meets the various criteria I have tried to list and to help the people assimilate. This is in the form of board and lodging. There are large numbers involved, and when there are large numbers involved and in family groups, it is inevitable no matter how you build or what you do, it will be tabbed "an institution" sooner or later by the very meaning of the term "institution". Communal living is another such phrase and we ourselves have used it; but in fact, what it means is accommodation not acceptable to families on a long term basis. In other words, it should be such as not to encourage them to want to say: "This will do us indefinitely". It is not a question of seeking to make people uncomfortable so that they will get out. It is rather a question of not providing people with a form of accommodation which they will find acceptable as long term accommodation for their families. Now, when you put this into practical terms, you come to the sharing of some facilities, not the least of which are the feeding and ablution facilities and so on. If you go to various hostels as members of this Committee have done, you cannot but be struck with the tremendous advance that has in fact been made in this conception. So I do ask the Committee not to over-emphasise this communal or institutional aspect because it is involved in the general concept of trying to do the best we can.

#### Mr. Griffiths

14. Is it not a fact that the migration scheme would not have been nearly so successful if that position had not applied to intending migrants who wanted to get away from the Old Country? It has been successful because they were told this accommodation was available?—Yes.

Does not that apply equally to the fact that there are certain types of people coming here with their families who have not the ability to raise themselves beyond the cost of accommodation in communal living, plus whatever wages they are earning or surplus they may have? Has not that a tendency to keep a lot of people in communal living much longer than would be the case if the Government provided incentives, through housing loans and so on, for them to get out into their own homes?—Mr. Brown might place on record for you the facts relating to how long families have been in hostels. The numbers of long-term dwellers are far smaller than people think.

#### Senator Prowse

15. What I am getting at is that the present policy of the Department with regard to the treatment of migrants upon reception to these homes imposes a certain design on your buildings. When we take into consideration the

of treating these migrants, is the policy economic? Would it not be possible to design accommodation for 1,000 migrants in a flat type of building, the sort of thing they will go to eventually, rather than this particular type which seems to me to be the most expensive type of building possible of design by the wit of man?—Obviously, as time goes on, one continues to try to do a lot of arithmetic. It is almost certainly a fact that if one were to provide self-contained accommodation of the kind that private investors are putting up by way of home units and so on, the overall capital cost would be less than that of providing this kind of construction and this for a number of very crucial reasons. You would not have the large child-minding centres, nor the communal facilities. In Housing Commission arrangements these are not provided. It is equally obvious that it would be less expensive to the Commonwealth in operational costs for the families to do all their own work. The other side of the answer to your question is that in terms of my arithmetic, to provide the kind of self-contained accommodation that you are envisaging would in effect mean transferring from the Commonwealth to the migrant part of the operational costs in this initial period. Under your scheme, food and other costs to the migrant would be higher. In fact, it would mean that the concessional arrangements which the Commonwealth now makes for dependants, for children in particular, would be borne by the family itself and to that extent the capacity of the family to save would be lessened. There are different views about this, and, not speaking particularly about migrants now, but from my own association with them, I am quite sure that many people arriving in a new situation would not want to be thrown into the "keeping house" situation immediately on arrival. Some prefer to have an opportunity of finding out just how one goes about living in a new country.

But about four-fifths of the migrants already do it?—I understand that is so.

#### Senator Branson

16. But they are sponsored—they have someone to go to?—Yes. I am talking about people who are not sponsored. Only a few weeks ago I had occasion to give advice in a personal capacity to some migrants who arrived here by way of South Africa. They are in self-contained accommodation. I was very interested to hear the problems which the woman was having in doing her shopping. I do not mean that she was having trouble in asking for a pound of butter but rather in knowing how to spend her money to best advantage in a country where conditions are strange to her. For all those reasons as well as others, I think that irrespective of whether self-contained accommodation propositions prove acceptable at any point of time to the Government—and that is for the Government to decide—you will always have a need for this kind of hostel accommodation because there will always be incoming migrants who need this kind of breathing space to become adjusted.

#### Senator Dittmer

17. This is somewhat similar to Randwick. In this case, did you give consideration to providing showers for individual units, or did you just follow the pattern?—I can only say that we have no doubt that this Committee gave very careful consideration to these matters when we put up the Randwick proposition. We have presented you with the identical proposals which you recommended for Randwick only a few months ago.

#### Senator Prowse

18. My only purpose in pursuing this is further to investigate the position that we did admittedly look at. What concerns me is that if the departmental policy is to perpetuate this as against the individual accommodation, one will never get a comparison between the two. A policy decision in relation to this can only be tested against experi-

to this unless at some point of time individual accommodation is tried.—The original approval in 1963 which we had for Cabinet was in terms of the submission we made to Cabinet for replacement hostels for those I have indicated. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then. Since this notion of improvement has come to the fore, a lot of people have had ideas and not always identical ideas. I can assure you that the kinds of things you are talking about are under active consideration by the Department as to feasibility, experimentation and so on. What the practical outcome will be, I am not in a position to say. But you can rest confident that these matters are not dormant, they are being actively looked at, but not in the context of Randwick and Springvale where we acquired sites for a particular purpose.

#### Senator Branson

19. The Department's view must be coloured by the fact that Senator Prowse has suggested that you build a self-contained unit, whether it is a flat or a type of house. In my opinion, the Department would certainly want to look seriously at this, because this is a suggestion to provide readymade accommodation for a person just arriving in Australia while you have thousands of people born in Australia who do not have this accommodation.—The Department can only explore. It is for the Government to decide to make a change in its conception of the kind of accommodation. The point you are getting at, of course, is the point that causes so much headache. Quite apart from your suggestion of favoured treatment, the other question is for how long and what do you do if people will not vacate.

**Chairman.**—I think you must take into consideration the fact that when these people arrive they do not have linen, sheets, furniture and so on.

#### Mr. Griffiths

20. Emphasis has been placed on the fact that since Cabinet took its decision to replace several hostels, there has been a considerable increase in the intake of migrants. Evidence also shows that all hostels are being used to capacity. Would that imply that, in Victoria in particular, home building is running in excess of requirements or is there any intention by the Department of Immigration to build further hostels? What is the reason for at least reducing the number of people who can be accommodated in this hostel by 30, due to the fact that you accommodate here only families of four or more, but not less? How do we get on with families of three? Where do you propose to accommodate those in the future if there is still to be a further increase each year in the intake of migrants?—This proposed Springvale Hostel is one hostel out of a number in Melbourne. The smaller families, and it is only the one child families that you are talking about, can be assumed to have a greater capacity to pay and to save. I do not consider that they are a problem in any sense. It is perfectly true that a few of them for reasons other than financial principally do overstay their time, but they are very few. There are the other hostels. As for childless couples who have an entitlement, there are at the moment I think 45 childless couples in hostels, most of them on the south coast of New South Wales. Their entitlement is limited to six months, just to give them the necessary breathing space. I do not consider them to be a problem. I am not saying that in time some future hostel may not be added to what is needed in Melbourne and provision made for families with one child. It is a question of getting the most economic use of the space at this time. As for the other part of the question, that there is here provision for 30 less, this is a fact, of course.

And you also say you might be able to close Holmesglen with 470 in it.—Should circumstances permit. I think I

I am linking that with the continued increase in quotas.—The answer is very simple. I did mention that we were putting up 200 extra beds at Nunawading and that will compensate.

Is the 1,000 person hostel the optimum number you propose to reach?—I will let Mr. Brown answer that one. I would simply say as a matter of policy we would not want to go beyond it. Could I again bring to the Committee's attention with as much force and emphasis as I possibly can that it is misleading to take the capacity of a hostel as the number of beds there at any one time. What really determines the capacity of the hostel is the rate of turnover. You have already heard Mr. Brown mention the active steps that can be taken. I would say the capacity of the proposed Springvale Hostel would be much more than it would have been one year ago.

What I was looking at there was, according to our sketch plan, immediately opposite the administration centre you show a playing field. On the opposite side you show vacant land and behind it sand hills. If it was necessary to increase the optimum size of this place, why could not a wing have been put on the playing field and look for the playing field somewhere close by? We are spending a lot of money on an administration centre, child minding facilities and all that. Could not the money have been more economically used by having a further wing immediately there?—And increasing the accommodation?

Yes.—I will let Mr. Brown answer. (Mr. Brown) I think I said at the last meeting that our experience indicates that a hostel with a capacity of about 1,000 is the optimum. Let me illustrate in terms of economic factors the difference in operating costs per capita per week between Brooklyn, which is about 1,000, and Holmesglen where we have 450. At the end of June the operating cost at Holmesglen was \$8.44 a week compared with \$7.63 at Brooklyn—a difference of 81 cents per person per week. Over the years we have found that most of our troubles in hostels have stemmed from hostels that are too large—where there are problems of management and where there is loss of contact between management and the migrant on a human relations basis. We would not advise building hostels with a capacity of more than 1,000 persons.

#### Mr. Fulton

21. Have you noticed that English migrants are more quickly assimilated into the community than others? Do they stay less time in the hostels? Is it a question of language and customs which prevent other migrants to any degree leaving the hostels?—(Mr. Kangan) I cannot answer the question about assimilation because I have never done any systematic research into it. (Mr. Brown) The Committee is familiar with both Bunnerong and Matraville hostels. The only comparison I can give is that the population at Bunnerong is 95 per cent. British and at Matraville about 90 per cent. non British. The average length of stay at Bunnerong, according to the latest figures, is 48 weeks and at Matraville 21 weeks.

#### Chairman

22. In our report on Randwick there was a recommendation that close attention should be given to the possible need of transitory accommodation for migrants in country areas. Mr. Kangan, have you done any thinking on this which has enabled you to get any practical ideas?—(Mr. Kangan) The answer to the first part of the question is that a tremendous amount of thinking has gone into this. I do not think an answer can possibly be divorced from the purposes for which the accommodation is intended. It may well be that in some centres the kind of assistance necessary may be given in one way. In other centres it may be more appropriate to give it in other ways, such as along the lines in which Senator Prowse

although you can build a small hostel it is just not an economic proposition. We are thoroughly canvassing this in close association with the Department of Immigration. I do not think I should go beyond that except to say that we are still writing papers between us so that our ideas can become clearer. (Mr. Armstrong) I only wish to confirm that a great deal of time and thought has been given to everything for and against the line of thinking of this Committee. It is under very active and very serious consideration and everything that can be done by the departments concerned in consultation to put the pros and cons to the Government has, I think, been done.

We have Commonwealth sponsored British migrants and, running parallel with this, we have State sponsored migrants who go into State hostels. Quite recently the Commonwealth made a substantial grant in the form of a 50-50 arrangement for some rebuilding in Western Australia. I am not quite sure where my question leads to because this is something about which we do not know very much. I think it revolves around this question: Should we be running two parallel systems and would the migrant hostels be better if they were all under Commonwealth control?—May I explain the role of the States? Going right back to 1947, at the very inception of the post-war immigration programme—bearing in mind that at that time the Commonwealth had no facilities whatever for the reception and after care of migrants—it was agreed at a Premiers' Conference that the States would be responsible for the reception and after care of British migrants. British migrants were the ones envisaged at that time. There was no assisted non-British migration at that time. The facilities provided by the States in some cases do not represent any more than overnight accommodation for migrants until they move on to a destination, perhaps, some distance from their disembarkation point. They move on to accommodation provided by their personal nominators. The States receive these personal nominations in the first instance. Each State has its State Immigration Office to receive personal nominations for British migrants. The States deal only with British migrants. The Commonwealth does everything that has to be done in regard to non-British migrants.

#### Mr. Fulton

23. That is nominations from industries as well as from individuals, is it?—Yes. The States are responsible for the reception of these personally sponsored migrants, which means that they have to accommodate them only until they move to the private accommodation that has been guaranteed by their sponsors. There is no question of their remaining in these places more than perhaps overnight, in the case of personal nominations. In regard to the case in Western Australia that you mentioned, that State decided that it would make a special effort to attract an increased number of skilled migrant workers to Western Australia because of the special needs of its developmental programme. It sent a State mission to London. In co-operation with the Agent-General for Western Australia in London and our Chief Migration Officer at Australia House in London, the mission conducted a special recruiting campaign, specifically for the benefit of Western Australia. When those workers and their dependants arrive, they arrive as what are called State group nominees. It is for these people that Western Australia requires the accommodation which it has at present at Point Walter and which it now considers should be replaced with more suitable and up to date accommodation. From the beginning it was agreed at the Premiers' Conference in 1947 that the Commonwealth would meet, on a £1 for £1 basis—now a \$1 for \$1 basis—any costs incurred by the States in providing temporary accommodation for assisted British migrants on arrival. It was in accordance with that long standing agreement that the Commonwealth recently agreed to con-

Creek in Western Australia. It is, in effect, a replacement for the existing Point Walter hostel.

#### Chairman

24. One of the points is that the Commonwealth is providing a fair amount of money in this case, but we have no say in what the standard of the accommodation will be. I understand that it will not be as good as the type of accommodation that is proposed by the Commonwealth in its future programme.—The Commonwealth did have the opportunity to consider the plans and specifications proposed by the Western Australian Government for this hostel. The Commonwealth had full opportunity to consider the standard of accommodation before agreeing to its financial participation.

(The witnesses withdrew)

Mr. Clive Debenham Osborne, First Assistant Director-General (Architecture), Commonwealth Department of Works, Head Office, Melbourne, was sworn and examined.

#### Chairman

25. Mr. Osborne, you have a statement to put before the Committee, have you not?—(Mr. Osborne) Yes. It reads as follows—

#### SPRINGVALE HOSTEL INTRODUCTION

- 1.00. *Status*  
The proposal before the Committee was included in Design List 'C' in September 1964 at an estimated cost of £1,700,000 (\$3,400,000). Accommodation will be provided in the proposed buildings for 1,000 persons, including staff.
- 1.01. *Brochure*  
The Department has prepared a brochure containing the following material illustrating the proposal:—
- |  |    |    |           |
|--|----|----|-----------|
| 1. Locality Plan                               | .. | .. | HA 66/690 |
| 2. Site Plan                                   | .. | .. | HA 66/691 |
| 3. Amenities and Office Building (plans)       | .. | .. | HA 66/692 |
| 4. Amenities and Office Building (perspective) | .. | .. | HA 66/693 |
| 5. Accommodation Block (plans)                 | .. | .. | HA 66/694 |
| 6. Accommodation Block (elevations and detail) | .. | .. | HA 66/695 |
| 7. Staff Accommodation and Residences          | .. | .. | HA 66/696 |
| 8. Aerial Perspective                          | .. | .. | HA 66/697 |

#### GENERAL

- 2.00. *Site*  
The selected site was purchased in October 1964, for the purpose of erecting permanent hostel accommodation for migrants. It was previously developed as a market garden and is approximately 14 miles from Melbourne G.P.O., and about half a mile south of Westall railway station on the main Gippsland Line. The land has an area of approximately 17 acres, and is part of Crown Allotment 1, Section 12, Parish of Mordialloc. It is located on the north-east corner of the junction of Westall Road and Windsor Avenue, with a frontage of 915' 11½" to the former (partly set back behind existing residential properties) and 934' 6" to the latter, again set back in part behind residential subdivisions. On the north it is bounded by Villa Road, and on the east by the rear fences of existing houses. The land has a fairly gradual fall totalling 20 feet diagonally across the site from north-east to south-west. The main access will be from Westall Road via a service road required under the Springvale Council's proposed road widening scheme. A second access will be provided to Villa Road on the northern boundary.

#### DESCRIPTION OF BUILDINGS

- 3.00. *General*  
The design proposed provides accommodation for about 1,000 persons including staff and is substantially identical with the hostel approved for Randwick, N.S.W., which was reviewed by your Committee in 1966. The hostel will accommodate migrant families of not less than four (4) persons all housed in three separate accommodation blocks, connected with covered ways to the central amenities building which will contain dining and recreation facilities. There will be private residences for the House, General and staff.

provided in family units each containing individual toilets and wash basins. Bathing and showering facilities have been planned on a communal basis.

### 3.01. Requirements

As with Randwick, the Department of Works was requested to produce a design which would—

- (a) provide covered ways between accommodation blocks and the dining room in the amenities building;
- (b) limit the maximum walking distance from bedrooms to the dining room to 600 feet;
- (c) limit the maximum walking distance between bedrooms and ablution facilities to 100 feet; and
- (d) limit the building height to two (2) storeys.

### 3.02. Amenities Building

The Amenities Building will be the community centre of the Hostel comprising a dining room with seating for 600, served by a fully equipped kitchen, including preparation areas, cool rooms, stores, etc. There will also be a youth centre fitted with gymnasium equipment, a small lounge with supper and tea making equipment, a library, kiosk, post office, banking facilities, and a linen exchange. In addition, a child minding centre has been included for children of working mothers. This minding centre is to be planned with staff rooms, toilets, stores for toys and sleeping cots, a first aid room and clinic. Covered and open playing space is also provided for the young children in an area under supervision wired off from the general grounds for protection. A boiler room, sub-station, maintenance and stores areas will be included in the amenities building for convenience and centralised location.

### 3.03. Office

The office which is also the information centre and reception area to which migrants will be taken on arrival from overseas, is a separate unit adjacent to the central concourse of the amenities building and linked to it by covered access. The office will provide space for individual and general offices, tea room, staff toilets, etc. A recreation hall capable of seating 500 persons has been located on the lower ground floor of this building. Access to the hall will be by stairways leading off the verandah adjacent to the entrance to the office. The hall will have film projection facilities, and separate toilet provision.

### 3.04. Accommodation Blocks

These consist of three separate two-storey buildings, each designed to accommodate 320 migrants in family units of two, three, or four bedrooms; all have their own toilets. Each building has been planned with six bedroom wings radiating outwards from a central core which will contain communal shower, bathroom and minimum toilet facilities for both sexes. The core also contains lockable drying cubicles, public telephones, cleaners' stores, garbage disposal and bin washing rooms. Laundry, drying and ironing facilities have been located at roof level. A small utility room will be provided to each floor of each wing. The sub-division of the various wings has been planned to give management the choice of alternative arrangement of accommodation by opening or locking communicating doors between units, thus catering for the varying sizes of migrant families. A toilet and a wash basin with hot and cold water will be provided in each unit, and all bedrooms will have built-in furniture on the following scale—

- (a) **Entrance Lobby:** Coat cupboard and shelves. Utility cupboard for room cleaning equipment. Wash basin with hot and cold water W.C. unit.
- (b) **Main Room:** Wardrobe and drawer unit, dressing table with mirror. Bed/settee and mattress.
- (c) **2nd Room:** Bunks or single beds with mattresses as required. Table with drawers under, usable as a writing desk. Wardrobe unit.
- (d) **3rd Room:** As for 2nd room.

Each unit is separately metered electrically and hot water heating from a central plant is proposed for the winter months of the year.

### 3.05. Staff Accommodation Block and Managers' Residences

A two-storey staff block will contain seven single and two double bedrooms, and a flat for a relieving Manager. A storage area for migrants' luggage will be located on the ground floor of this building. Three identical three-bedroom residences conforming to Commonwealth standards will be built for the managers.

### 3.06. Car Parks and Bicycle Shelters

Sealed gravel car parks will be provided for each of the three accommodation blocks providing a total of 126 car spaces. A separate office and visitors' car park will be located adjacent to the main office block giving a further 25 car spaces, making a total provision on the site for 151 cars. Provision has also been made along the covered ways for three bicycle shelters each accommodating approximately 80

### 3.07. Sports Grounds and Playgrounds

The Department of Labour and National Service requested the provision of a sports oval and two basketball courts for teenagers and adults. These are planned on the low level ground in the south-west corner of the site near the entrance driveway from Westall Road, and extending along Windsor Avenue.

Two playgrounds fitted with swings, slides and other play-ground equipment will be located between the wings of the three accommodation blocks.

### 4.00. CONSTRUCTION

#### Amenities Building

This building will have reinforced concrete floor slabs bearing on the ground and suspended reinforced concrete floors at the ends of each wing where the ground falls below the proposed floor level. Steel portal frames will support the steel purlins and a metal deck roof.

#### 4.01. Office Block and Recreation Hall

This two-storey block will be framed in steel with reinforced concrete floors and a metal deck roof. The first floor will be a suspended reinforced concrete floor supported on steel beams and two internal columns. The roof structure will also be steel with steel purlins. The external steel columns and beams will be encased in concrete. The ground floor slab will bear on the ground.

#### 4.02. Accommodation Blocks

These two-storey blocks will be of load bearing brick construction with reinforced concrete floor slabs; the roof slab over the central core housing the laundry and drying areas will also be of reinforced concrete. The reinforced concrete ground floors will in all cases bear on the ground. The roofs, over each wing and over the laundries, will be of steel deck construction supported on steel purlins and rafters. The staff accommodation block will be of similar construction except that the first floor slab over the bulk store area will be supported on reinforced concrete beams and columns.

#### 4.03. Foundations

Preliminary site investigation has indicated that the ground throughout the site is substantially uniform, consisting of a soft clay overlaying a sandy-clay material which extends to a depth of from 8 to 10 feet below ground surface. Below this level the ground becomes a compact sand.

The surface clay is considered to be unsuitable as a bearing material and the sandy-clay is subject to considerable moisture content variation, therefore it is anticipated that pier and beam foundations will be necessary. The piers will be 10 to 14 feet long, bearing on the sand and spaced approximately at 5 feet centres under all walls and as required at isolated columns.

A full investigation into the properties of the foundation material will be made before commencing detailed designs.

### 5.00. PROPOSED FINISHES

#### General

In early discussions, the Department of Labour and National Service indicated that difficulties had been experienced in the past with the maintenance of hostel-type buildings; accordingly, the external and internal finishing materials throughout have been selected in close collaboration with the client. It will be appreciated that with a constant changeover of occupants, all of whom will have families of young children, maintenance costs can assume undue proportions unless finishes can be easily and economically maintained—preferably by unskilled labour. Where possible, painted work has been eliminated in favour of ceramic or sprayed plastic finishes which are hard and durable, and easily cleaned by a simple washing operation. The materials proposed have low maintenance cost factors and have been chosen for their durability, ease of cleaning, and aesthetic appeal. However, at the time of documentation it may be found that there are other suitable materials within the same cost range, and some freedom of choice may be exercised.

Schedules indicating the various finishes proposed for external and internal work appear at Appendices 'A' and 'B'.

### 6.00. SPECIAL FEATURE

#### Kitchen

A fully equipped kitchen designed by the client department in conjunction with Commonwealth Hostels Ltd. has been incorporated in the plans. The kitchen, adjoining the dining room in the amenities building, will provide a full catering service for all migrants, including the provision of cut lunches and special diets, if required.

Cool rooms and ancillary storage space have been incorporated in the plan to meet requirements. A loading dock will be provided for bulk deliveries and garbage clearance, and this will also serve the adjacent equipment store and maintenance workshop.

#### 6.01. Linen Exchange

A linen exchange will be included in a central location off the main concourse of the amenities building. Migrants will exchange linen at this point under the supervision of the

- 6.02. *Laundries*  
Laundries, equipped with wash boilers, troughs, and spin dryers, will be provided in each accommodation block, and in addition, a coin-operated laundromat is to be installed on the roof of Block B. Special attention has been given to drying areas for migrants' laundry needs. At each floor of the accommodation blocks a number of cubicles have been located which can be individually locked. These will contain warmed air circulation and drying racks. In addition, an open space on the roof of each block has facilities for drying washing, screened from view by open type masonry screens. This will provide fully automatic washing and drying facilities.
- 6.03. *Public Address System*  
A public address system will be installed throughout the hostel.
- 7.00. **ENGINEERING SERVICES**  
*Mechanical Engineering Services*  
A central oil-fired boiler plant, suitable for conversion to natural gas in future, will be provided in the amenities block. From this plant will be reticulated steam and condensate, or high pressure high temperature hot water, or heat transfer oil, whichever is found to be most economical in the design stage. Reticulation will be designed to meet the requirements of the central kitchen, laundry equipment, bin cleaning facilities, domestic hot water supply calorifiers and heat exchangers for hot water space heating. Calorifiers and heat exchangers will be located in individual buildings.
- 7.01. *Space heating* in the living rooms of the accommodation blocks will be by hot water radiators, and the drying cubicles of these blocks will have small hot water unit heaters. Space heating in the dining hall, child minding centre, recreation hall, and youth centre in the amenities block will be by ducted warm air systems. The small offices in this block will be heated by hot water base board convectors. Space heating and domestic hot water in the staff accommodation block will be from gas-fired boilers and hot water radiators. In the residences, gas-firing will be used for space heating in the lounges and for domestic hot water supply.
- 7.02. *Domestic hot water* will be supplied, in insulated copper piping, to all basins, sinks, showers, washing machines and kitchen equipment where applicable.
- 7.03. *Equipment for the central kitchen* will be steam, gas or electrically operated as is most suitable. Kitchen equipment in the staff accommodation block and in the residences will be gas or electrically operated.
- 7.04. *A central automatic laundry*, located in Accommodation Block "B", will be equipped with domestic washing machines, hydro extractors and drying tumblers and will operate under supervision. In addition, wash boilers and spin dryers will be provided in each accommodation block. Domestic washing machines have been allowed for in the staff accommodation block and the residences.
- 7.05. *Exhaust ventilation systems* will serve the kitchen, toilets in the tenants' rooms only of the accommodation block, laundries, drying rooms, etc.
- 7.06. *Miscellaneous mechanical services* will include cool room plant, refrigerated drinking water units, garbage can washers, sanitary incinerators, air curtains and hand fire extinguishers.
- 8.00. **ELECTRICAL SERVICES**  
Electricity supply from the State Electricity Commission of Victoria will be by underground cable to a transformer sub-station at the amenities building, from where the electricity at medium voltage will be reticulated by underground cable to the various buildings. The State Electricity Commission of Victoria will provide the sub-station and metering equipment, and will render its charges from that metering.
- 8.01. *Meters* for each family unit will be installed at the various distribution boards so that individual electricity consumptions can be ascertained; the S.E.C. of Victoria will not, however, be concerned with the individual unit usage.
- 8.02. *Artificial lighting* will generally be provided by fluorescent tubes, and power outlets will be installed as required. Area security lighting, basket-ball court lighting, and television antenna distribution systems will be installed. Provision will also be made for some public telephones.
- 8.03. *A thermal fire alarm system* will be installed and connected to the nearest Country Fire Authority Station.
- 9.00. **FIRE PROTECTION**  
Hydrants, hoses, hose reels and fire extinguishers in accordance with the recommendations of the Country Fire Authority will be provided to give full coverage to the Hostel. In addition portable fire extinguishers will be placed in each building with the exception of the residences.
- 10.00. **WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE**  
*Water*  
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works mains are available in adjacent streets. The internal reticulation subject to M.M.B.W. approval will be a combined fire and domestic reticulation. Alternative supplies will be available to the site. Fire hydrants will be located throughout the area and buildings to give complete cover.
- 10.01. *Garden Water*  
Fixed sprinklers will be allowed for in area adjacent to the building, and quick coupling valves for sports oval watering. All other areas will be covered by stand pipes.
- 10.02. *Sewer*  
An M.M.B.W. sewer main exists approximately 800 feet west of Westall Road. The sewer will be operative in about twelve (12) months time on completion of the M.M.B.W. treatment plant serving this area. The extension of the sewer main east of this line up to the hostel site will be completed in four to five years time under a normal development programme. However, if the sewer is required before this date there will be no difficulty in making the necessary arrangements with the M.M.B.W. The point of connection to the hostel property will be at the south-west corner which will command the site by gravity.
- 10.03. *Stormwater*  
A 21" diameter stormwater pipe exists along the southern boundary of the hostel site at a sufficient depth to provide the main outlet for stormwater from the site.
- 11.00. **ROADS, PATHS AND LANDSCAPING**  
Bituminous surfaced one-way roads and sealed gravel car parking areas will be located as shown on the site plan. The area around the various buildings will be landscaped with groups of trees, and general grassing to blend in with the gardens of the existing residential development surrounding the hostel.
- 11.01. *Paths*  
Connecting foot-paths between the various buildings will be provided in addition to the covered ways.
- 12.00. **ESTIMATES**
- 12.01. *Documents*  
The estimated time required for the production of contract documents, invitation and consideration of tenders and letting of a contract is 14 months.
- 12.02. *Construction Time*  
Following the acceptance of a contract, it is estimated that a construction period of 18 months will be required to complete the buildings and landscaped surroundings.
- 12.03. *Estimate of Cost*  
The total estimated cost of all buildings, services, and site works is \$4,250,000, made up as follows:—
- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Building work .. .. .                                     | \$ 2,785,000     |
| 2. Engineering Services .. .. .                              | 705,000          |
| a. Mechanical .. .. .  | 262,000          |
| b. Electrical .. .. .  | 273,000          |
| c. Hydraulic .. .. .   | 225,000          |
| 3. Site work, including landscaping, car parks, etc. .. .. . | 225,000          |
| <b>Total .. .. .</b>   | <b>4,250,000</b> |
- 13.00. **AUTHORITIES**  
The sketch plans of the proposal have been discussed with the relevant State and local government authorities listed below.  
Springvale City Council.  
State Electricity Commission.  
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.  
Country Fire Authority.



## APPENDIX 'A'

## PROPOSED SPRINGVALE MIGRANT HOSTEL

## SCHEDULE OF EXTERNAL FINISHES

Building	Walls	Roofs	Windows	Remarks
1. Amenities .. .. .	Face brick .. .. .	Steel metal deck	Aluminium	Vertical adjustable aluminium sunscreens to west wall of diningroom
2. Office and Recreation .. .. .	As above, or full length glazed panels as indicated	As above	As above	
3. Accommodation Blocks .. .. .	Face brick .. .. .	As above	As above	Concrete block screen walls to drying areas on roofs
4. Staff Block .. .. .	As above	As above	As above	
5. Managers' Residences .. .. .	As above .. .. .	Cement tile	As above	
6. Covered ways and bicycle shelters	Galvanized pipe columns	Metal deck	..	Paving slabs to be non-skid

## APPENDIX 'B'

## PROPOSED SPRINGVALE MIGRANT HOSTEL

## SCHEDULE OF INTERNAL FINISHES

Building	Floors	Walls	Ceilings
1. Amenities .. .. .	Concrete slab with coloured aggregate to concourse Elsewhere vinyl tiles and skirtings	(a) Generally, face brick, vinyl sprayed (b) Glazed face brick to dining and child minding centres	Sprayed vermiculate  Acoustic tiles to dining and child minding areas
2. Office and Recreation .. .. .	Vinyl tiles and skirtings	As (a) above As (b) above to recreation area only	Sprayed vermiculate
3. Accommodation Blocks .. .. .	As above	As (a) above	As above
4. Staff Block .. .. .	As above	As (a) above	As above
5. Managers' Residences .. .. .	As above	Vinyl on render	Fibrous plaster
6. Kitchen in Amenities Block .. .. .	Quarry tiles .. .. .	Ceramic tiles	As above
7. All toilet areas .. .. .	Terrazzo tile	As above	As above
8. All storage areas .. .. .	Granolithic	Natural brick or off-form concrete	Off-form concrete

## Senator Prowse

26. At the outset, the estimated cost of the proposal in 1964 was \$3,400,000. It is now \$4,250,000. What is the reason for the difference?—Firstly, there has been a greater understanding by the Department of what was to be included in the various buildings. Much of the equipment and detail of the plan was unknown at the time when the original estimate was made. Further to that, there has been a general increase in building costs. The numbers of people provided still remain the same.

You say, "Meters for each family unit will be installed at the various distribution boards so that individual electricity consumptions can be ascertained." Is this a requirement of the client Department?—Yes.

What would be the cost of supplying meters for each family unit?—I cannot give you the individual cost of the meters, but I will ascertain the figure and let you have it.

## Senator Branson

27. I understand that 17 acres of land were bought. Have you any idea of the cost of that?—I have not, but

A lot of young children will be there and we are making provision for them. Is there any provision for kindergartens or are there kindergartens and schools available in the area?—There are State schools in the near vicinity and there probably are kindergartens. There will be some provision for the very young, of course. The hostel authority will virtually operate a kindergarten, as I understand it.

I cannot find any figure of the approximate cost of the three managers' residences. They are all just lumped in the one.—The present estimate of the residences, leaving out associated services which are hard to estimate, would be \$11,500 each.

We are providing exhaust ventilation systems for the kitchen and toilets in the tenants' rooms only of the accommodation block. Does that mean that the communal toilets and bathing facilities do not need this?—That is correct. They are planned so that they can get cross ventilation through them.

You say that power outlets will be installed as required. Do you mean as required by the individual tenant?—No.

Would you know whether they are providing one power point or three or what number?—No. I think it would be unwise for me to hazard a guess, but if you like I can tell you what the estimates will cover.

You sometimes see a place festooned with double power plugs and wires running everywhere. I think we should decide whether they are sufficient.

**Chairman.**—I take it there is a scale. In the Randwick evidence we were told that power points will be provided in each unit on the scale of two in the main rooms and one in others.

#### Senator Branson

28. They have no kitchen worries, have they?—No, no kitchen. The requirement is exactly the same as Randwick.

It is going to take almost as long to call tenders and process the documents as it is to build the whole establishment—14 months before we get started and 18 months to build. Is this an undue period?—No. The empirical rule is that it takes as long to document as it does to build.

#### Mr. Bosman

29. With all steel decking roof, is there any provision for insulation?—Yes.

What sort are you using here?—We will use sisalation.

As far as costs are concerned and not setting aside the particular point that Senator Prowse brought forward that there is a substantial difference in the estimated cost of 33½ per cent., but dealing more specifically with the factors you give in your estimate of cost, you show an increase of \$235,000, which is an increase of 10 per cent. over a period of two years. That is fairly substantial but not beyond the powers of comprehension. I will deal with the engineering services. I am using some of the Randwick figures and I appreciate that the area would be different. With mechanical, you have an increase of \$305,000 over Randwick, a difference of some 75 per cent., but in the hydraulic you have the reverse. Randwick is some 80 per cent. more than Springvale. Can you give us some indication of the cause of this?—Taking mechanical, the increased cost over what is required in Sydney comes about for climatic reasons. There is a longer and much colder winter in Melbourne and for this reason the mechanical engineers have recommended that the main central block be supplied with a ventilation system, which I referred to in the evidence. This is the major reason for the increased capital cost. The hydraulic is shown at \$273,000. This is very much less than Randwick. The reason here again is purely a comparison of sites. In Sydney we had considerable work to do to drain the site and this was costly. In Springvale we did not have that problem.

Do you mean miscellaneous drainage work from all over the property down to the focal point at the bottom?—Yes.

You say that you have discussed the proposal with the relevant State and local government authorities. Have you encountered any difficulties? Have there been any difficult approaches by these authorities? Let us take Springvale City Council. Is it completely happy with what you are doing?—To the best of our knowledge now, it is happy. A previous witness referred to numbers of meetings and discussions with the Council. We know that the residents wish to talk to you. We understand that they have now been convinced that the Government's proposals are not detrimental to their properties and the neighbourhood.

Dealing specifically with matters affecting your Department, is there anything about which the City Council is not happy?—No. In every respect what we are proposing complies with local requirements and regulations.

#### Mr. Fulton

30. What are the main differences between this host and the one at Randwick?—Taking the central block, the main differences are that this building at Springvale will be mechanically ventilated. In the general provisions with the building, it is very similar to Randwick. When we come to the accommodation blocks the differences are connected perhaps to the slight change in planning in the central core. We have reduced some of the facilities in the core, such as toilets, and placed them in the accommodation wings. We have also placed laundry and drying units on the third floor in the central core. The topography of the site does not make it possible to put facilities for teenagers at the ends of some of the wings as we had in Randwick. In order to accommodate this facility we have had to place facilities for teenagers in the main central block, which is a better place for supervision purposes. The playing arrangements for the younger children are perhaps better in that we have placed playground areas in the courts between the three star shaped accommodation blocks and where some families at least will be able to look down on the activities and see what is going on.

#### Chairman

31. I note that a thermal alarm system is to be installed which was not included in Randwick. What is the reason for this change and what is the difference in cost?—I am not sure why we have not referred to thermal protection for Randwick. This might have been an oversight in the evidence. In buildings of this kind we normally provide thermal protection.

At Randwick you refer to the provision of hydraulic hose reels and fire extinguishers. We find a difference of about \$100,000 in the cost of the two proposals. Springvale you provide only for hose reels.—I do not think we would erect Randwick without thermal protection. I think it is included. We have here a figure of \$262,000 for electrical equipment, including public address and fire alarms at \$50,000.

The comparable figure at Randwick is only \$200,000.—Yes.

Can we take it from this that in Randwick it will be necessary to add something for thermal alarms?—No, I think they are included.

Would you have this matter examined and let the Secretary know?—Yes.

At Randwick and Springvale you say there are 3 persons in each accommodation block. When I came to count the beds in the plan in drawing No. 6, to be full capacity there will be a total of 384 in each block, which gives a grand total of 1,052 persons. That is considerably more than the 960 envisaged in the evidence. The figure in the planning would be the aggregate number of beds to take it.—This would be so.

There could be a discrepancy here because they are units and each family might not occupy the full number of beds.—That is so. It is a varying figure, within limits.

There are two sports ovals at Randwick and one at Springvale. Is this because of the room available?—It is purely the total amount of land available.

The size of the oval is not given. Would it be big enough for Australian Rules?—It is a small oval.

Would it be big enough for cricket?—I think so. I think it is satisfactory for most games.

The roof of this hostel will be steel deck construction. At Randwick, to emphasise the residential character of the buildings so that they would blend with surroundings, they are using cement tiles. What is the reason for the change?—It is one of economy. It is cheaper for us to use steel deck. In this particular location the general terrain is relatively flat.

designed them more in keeping with the general characteristics of buildings of this kind in Melbourne which have flat roofs. From all aspects of this group of buildings it will not be possible to see the roofs. All that will be seen is the silhouette and mass of the buildings defined by the eaves line.

On page 13 of your statement you indicate that a sewer will be operative in about 12 months and you mention that the extension of the sewer main east of this line up to the hostel site will be completed in four or five years. However, the hostel itself will be completed within three years. Does this imply that the Commonwealth will have to put the sewerage back to join up with the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works main?—I think this is expected. On the other hand, we hope that development in the area might cause the sewer to extend beyond the 800 feet area into the hostel zone at an earlier date. If the Commonwealth has to advance moneys to link in, that is to construct an outfall of 800 feet to this point, there will be certain recoverable moneys from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

(The witness withdrew)

*The Committee adjourned*

*(Taken at Melbourne)*

FRIDAY, 14TH OCTOBER 1966

**Present:**

MR. BUCHANAN (Chairman)

Senator Branson.  
Senator Dittmer.  
Senator Prowse.

Mr. Fulton.  
Mr. Griffiths.

**Chairman.**—This hearing is a continuation of the reference to the Committee concerning a Commonwealth migrant hostel at Springvale. Preliminary evidence has been given to the Committee by the Department of Works which prepared the plans and also by other witnesses connected with the proposed work. This morning, the Committee looked at the site and some of the present hostel accommodation which the proposed migrant hostel at Springvale will replace. Mr. Stoddart representing the Windsor Estate Residents' Committee has requested that he be heard by the Committee today and we will now proceed to hear his evidence on behalf of this Committee and the people concerned in the locality.

Mr. Ronald George Stoddart, Chairman of the Windsor Estate Residents' Committee, was sworn and examined.

**Chairman**

32. You have a prepared statement?—(Mr. Stoddart) Yes. I have a statement. Might I mention that my address is 74 Windsor Avenue, Springvale.

Will you read your statement?—Yes. It is as follows—

The Windsor Estate Residents' Committee, which I am acting as spokesman for, desire to present our viewpoint on the placement of the proposed Migrant Hostel in our midst. Our Committee is representing residents and owners of building blocks on the estate directly involved.

I understand that all this Committee have personally viewed over the Windsor Estate this morning and will thus be familiar with certain features which I will be placing before you.

Throughout all the proceedings leading to this investigation discussions with our Committee have been conducted amicably and I ask that I be extended a courteous hearing and if questions are to be raised they be withheld until I have completed this statement.

The first sub-division of the estate, I refer to the South side of Windsor Avenue, took place at an auction on 24th March 1962.

Have I the right to place before the Committee certain

You can place whatever documents you like before the Committee?—Thank you. This document shows the allotments that were disposed of at that auction.

The second sub-division auction occurred on 23rd November 1963 at which both the vendor and the auctioneer in replying to questions raised by buyers before sale commenced advised—

- (a) One block donated by the vendor for Council purposes.
- (b) Shop sites in Ellen Street to be erected within 18 months and would be the only ones on the estate.
- (c) Only dwellings consisting of brick, brick veneer, masonry or stone would be permitted and a covenant placed on the titles to ensure this.
- (d) Eventual sale in further sub-division of estate for housing.

The whole development promised to become one of the choicer residential areas of Melbourne.

This is the second sub-division to which I referred in that area. I place that before the Committee.

The area was zoned "reserved living" and flat dwellings not permitted although the Commonwealth are not bound by Local Government Act.

It has been alleged that vendor made arrangements with the Springvale Council to release sub-divisions each year to ease taxation burden and provide further moneys for development.

Being unable to produce actual overall pre plans for the whole of the area I ask leave to refer to certain newspaper quotes to confirm that the Springvale Council have such plans recorded. The Dandenong Journal of 22nd July 1964 quotes the Town Clerk "site had been planned for residential sub-division similar to adjoining land already sub-divided."

I present that newspaper quotation to the Committee.

The Melbourne Herald of 8th July 1964 "pre planned residential area."

I submit that reference to the Committee.

Ninety-two building blocks of a proposed overall plan for development of 218 home sites were thus released to the public prior to the purchase of area shown on the proposed plan for a Migrant Hostel.

I refer to the area enclosed in the evidence submitted in Canberra. I refer especially to the site plan.

All members of the Committee, I should point out, have studied that plan.—Very well.

On 3rd July 1964 residents on the estate were alarmed and indignant to read in the daily and local papers of a proposal before the local Council to erect a Migrant Camp for 2000 people on balance of land. A petition was collected and presented to Council protesting at the location of the camp. This was tabled at the Council meeting on 7th July 1964 and featured in the press with Council backing the petition.

The newspapers I now hand to the Committee cover this report on the protest and the admission of the original petition.

At a meeting of local residents and block owners on 2nd August 1964 a Committee was elected to handle action from the legal viewpoint and to further protest at location of Hostel. Cleary, Ross and Doherty Solicitors were approached to investigate certain features.

Mr. Kangan was present at a meeting in Council Chambers with our Committee and the three Ward Councillors on 16th August 1964.

I might point out that one of those ward councillors is no longer on the Council. That is not intended as any criticism. It is merely a comment.

Mr. Kangan gave verbal answers to some of a questionnaire submitted previously as requested but declined to comment on certain points raised. I will refer to this questionnaire at a later stage.

Here is a copy of the questionnaire submitted.

A general meeting of residents was held on 28th August 1964 when the Committee was given authority to proceed with legal position of seeking an injunction to restrain the vendor from selling.

On 31st August I sighted two overall pre plans for whole of the estate in Council offices and a later detailed plan incorporating the second sub-division. The initial overall pre plans indicated that housing was to occupy the estate which was zoned "reserved living."

I am unable to produce those plans. The rough outline is on the basis of the sketch on this paper which I now show you.

M.M.B.W. pre plan only showed to the second sub-division and they had been advised by the Commonwealth Public Works, note some six months previous to 1st September 1964, of intention to acquire balance for a hostel.



placed in the South side of Windsor Avenue to cope with future housing on the north side, which cost the vendor more than estimated.

Gas Company advised on 3rd September 1964 that gas mains were laid on the South side of Windsor Avenue and the extension of avenues to 18 inches beyond the building line on the north side. Gas Company not aware of proposed hostel.

S.E.C. reported that poles were placed in extensions and a transformer placed in Wilberton Drive for future housing in area as they were not aware of hostel scheme.

P.M.G. District Engineer placed cables in Windsor Avenue on the north side for survey figures based on housing for the estate. Up to 4th September 1964 they had not been advised of proposed hostel.

Numbering of houses of extensions of the South side shows provisions for anticipated housing through to Villa Road.

At this juncture it may now reasonably be conceded that the original overall pre plan and intention of the vendor was to incorporate housing on the whole of the estate and on that basis I submit the following points as separate items to be considered and evaluated.

1. All public utilities were planned and installed to cope with future housing on the estate.
2. Insufficient land purchased by the Commonwealth to accommodate the Hostel as envisaged being unable to provide the ample sporting and recreational areas as listed in the assurances given by Mr. Bland. The original concept was for purchase of some 20 acres not the 17 acres remaining for the project.
3. No concrete assurances have been given as to details of supervision of certain facets of the hostel. I refer to Child Minding Centre where personnel cease duty at 5.00 p.m. with no week-end cover and in particular to supervision of the Amusement Hall and Youth Centre where dances can be held. These three points could become a serious source of nuisance to the immediate outside residents. Trained youth leaders have been mentioned to supervise schoolchildren and teenagers but again they would work to specific hours.
4. Being Commonwealth property local police have no authority to intervene if complaints made by nearby residents (e.g. drinking parties on playing areas or excessive noise level from area.)
5. Despite the assurances given re the limitation of stay we know of families who have remained at centres up to 14 years and being of an improved standard can anticipate that certain delaying tactics will be adopted. Mr. Hellmuth whom I will quote later himself lived 6 years in a hostel and later worked there as a Supervisor of Maintenance.
6. The proposed plan of the moment suggests severe cramping with buildings now closer overlooking nearby housing and encroaching upon their privacy.
7. The lack of responsibility displayed by occupants of hostels towards property on the area and surrounding nearby property would suggest a buffer zone a most desirable feature.
8. With a Hostel of this size individual communities could become an established fact conflicting with view hoped for of early assimilation.
9. New Australians who are now members of our community express fear gained from past experience of the ever-present scope of lawlessness in these centres, loose morals and bad influences exerted on family life. They desire that consideration be given to strict policing of the area to prevent these undesirable features spreading to nearby families.
10. It would be reasonable to assume that the Commonwealth had an alternative site in mind in another area of Melbourne and it may well be that the other site is still available.
11. There appears to be ample land still available on the S.E.C. site adjoining Volkswagen in Centre Road which would permit easier access to public transport. The briquette site has been limited and buildings for that project completed.
12. Older residents can recall the location of a spring in the area which could have a detrimental effect on foundations being laid.
13. Floodlighting on basketball courts will be a source of annoyance to shift workers nearby if the facilities are used to late evening periods.
14. If families are unable to tolerate living conditions in such close proximity to the hostel and sell out, safe to assume at a loss, they are automatically disqualified from the Commonwealth housing grant (\$500).
15. Loss of valuation not apparent at the moment although people are now unable to sell out without some inducement to the buyer. After Hostel is in operation values will be considerably below that expected had housing occupied the area. No person would purchase next to a Hostel unless a cash inducement influenced his decision and I challenge you as individuals to refute that remark especially if you have a young

16. Mr. Kangan stated there would be no fencing of property but was not prepared to state view taken if residents property. Some clarification needed re trespassing. cyclone fence is requested to protect adjacent residents a possible source of annoyance if the side streets are parking areas whilst visitors entered area as guests or visitors used as entry or exit points.

17. The letter from Mr. Bland does not contain assurances and even some of those mentioned have disputed and varied. I refer to accommodation for migrants. The statement that Souter "offered his land to the Commonwealth" is grossly misleading.

I show the Committee that letter. I would prefer to show it, but it is available for reading by the Committee.

18. Many of the present owners on this estate are New Australians who have expressed dismay and loss of faith in the method adopted to procure sale of land. Two such owners sold out at a loss in excess of \$400 (Mr. Schneider and Mr. Hellmuth) when the site chosen became public news.

19. We know from reliable sources including that the Attorney-General that vendor had no desire to conclude sale and raises the issue of what pressures were applied to what concession made to influence conclusion of sale.

20. The sale of the land was concluded during period in which Attorney-General promised further inquiries into alternative sites after informing our Committee of Commonwealth intention to compulsorily acquire residue of estate. Vendor was reluctant to conclude the sale alleging higher price was wanted by him. As we all know, the person to whom I refer as Attorney-General is our local member Mr. Snedden. Acting on the information of intent to acquire we withdrew our proceedings to obtain an injunction after incurring \$250 expenses. Mr. Voumard, Q.C., has been briefed and was to handle our case.

I put before the Committee a document setting out the details of the legal fees.

21. At the moment we are paying off our homes, some of which include a second mortgage, and as individuals are unable to finance legal action in regard to the representations made by the vendor and agents at the time of our purchases of the whole of the estate was for housing, the late divisions to consist of brick, brick veneer or mixed dwellings. A special condition (clause 7 of the sale) in the contract of sale was made for land released at the sub-division although no covenant was made to the title promised.

I have here a document showing the clause to which I refer. I present it to the Committee with an extract of the title. Not being my property I request Committee to return them and they be returned at end of this hearing.

22. The latest plan submitted makes reference to a public access system which if wired to outside surroundings could be a source of complaint from the nearby residents if used at times.

23. The latest plan submitted includes provision for a road along Wilberton Drive across the land owned by Council may however be merely an error by the artist responsible for drawing of the perspective.

24. The limitations imposed by the inadequate area purchased highlighted by the fact that Metylene Avenue extension now been utilised as portion of the playing field. Both outdoor recreational centres have been placed fronting the street with no provision for high fencing to prevent children from endangering their lives whilst playing sport.

I now refer to the questionnaire submitted Mr. Kangan who was given the opportunity to refer items to the Commonwealth Department concerned before he attended the first meeting in Council Chamber.

The Commonwealth wrote to 48 estate agents in the area offering purchase of land around 20 acres in a residentially zoned area near to transport and industry and in a reasonably square block. They were instructed not to reveal who they were acting on behalf of and were not advised purpose of purchase.

This is understandable.

Dandenong Estate Agents—Peter Aubin and Co., approached the vendor and asked if remaining portion of estate was for sale at what price. As the sales of the Ellen Street Sub-Division had been moving slow due to credit squeeze the vendor quoted his price and awaited further advice. Some two or three weeks later the vendor and Co. advised him their client would buy at the price quoted and to contact his solicitor to begin negotiations for sale. I did not until the vendor did this that he was informed the Commonwealth were buying his land but was not given advice of what he intended to use it for and I am led to believe never been officially informed.

I again quote from the Melbourne Herald of 8.7.64 that Williams Town Clerk received letter on April 15 from Department

cluding Migrant Hostel Rehabilitation Centre and Works Depot for Department of Works. Council recommended Government confine activities to an undeveloped area west of Westall Road".

Our advice is that the vendor made representations to withdraw from the sale prior to publicity given to the proposed Hostel and feared that if he pursued that attitude any further the Commonwealth would compulsorily acquire the land including his own home in the deal and for that reason was never prepared to meet our Committee.

The conditions of sale restricting type of housing for the remainder of the estate and that the residents were seeking legal action were facts known to the Commonwealth but at our initial meeting with Mr. Kangan he was not prepared to comment on those points.

I draw your attention to a Supreme Court ruling given on 13th September 1965 for erection of flats in Grange Road, Toorak, Melbourne, where a covenant had been in force. The application to have the covenant varied failed in that instance.

I present to the Committee the newspaper reports on that matter.

We claim that our position is basically the same. If investigation had been made into our allegation of misrepresentations by the vendor and agents, also the restrictive condition in the contract for sale surely the Purchasing Officer responsible suffered some misgivings as to the outcome. Mr. Kangan acting for the Commonwealth was aware of our intention to initiate legal proceedings on those issues.

As individuals we realise that migrants have to be placed somewhere, and that Hostels have to be of an improved type of structure and lay-out to encourage migrants to enter this country. However, the placement should never have been located on this estate where previous commitments had been made. When you order and pay for a car you hardly expect to accept delivery of a push bike.

Our Chairman and Secretary met Mr. Snedden, the local Commonwealth member for the electorate, for the first interview on 18th September 1964. He took names and addresses of two new Australians who had sold out at a loss. He promised to instruct the Purchasing Officer not to finalise contract until the 25th pending further inquiries into alternative sites.

On 25th September 1964 our Chairman received a phone message from Mr. Snedden advising the Commonwealth proposed to compulsorily acquire and not purchase irrespective of the outcome of our obtaining an injunction.

A second interview was obtained with Mr. Snedden on 2nd October 1964 and assurances given our Chairman, Secretary, and a Mr. Varga that consideration and further investigation would be given to the alternative sites suggested including in particular that of the Jago Estate. On 23rd October 1964 a reply telegram was received from Mr. Snedden promising information at a certain date.

I put before the Committee the telegram to which I have referred.

An advice letter from Mr. Bland which was received on 3rd November 1964 and dated 27th October 1964 reported completion of sale to the Commonwealth. I have referred to this particular letter earlier.

I now put before the Committee that letter.

To sum up our Committee registers a strong protest at the siting of this proposed Hostel in our midst. Under our democratic system Parliament is responsible for the framing and passing of laws and the judicial body empowered to enforce those laws and to be referred to in cases where some alteration to existing status quo is desired, warranted or objected to by individuals. Surely Parliament has an obligation to ensure that they in no way infringe the special conditions of contract of the sale applicable to the proposed building sites for the remainder of the estate.

The Commonwealth is now the owner of the property in question, the actual purchase being concluded during the period in which we considered further satisfactory investigation, from our point of view, was being made into an alternative site.

Coming from such a reliable source the advice of Commonwealth intention to compulsorily acquire was apparently put forward to discourage and did in fact influence us that it was futile and a waste of money to continue with litigation to seek an injunction to stop this particular sale.

We claim the right to express the opinion that the Commonwealth was aware of the legal obligation of the vendor to continue the subdivisions as planned and condones the whole affair if it persists in its intention to go ahead and build the Hostel or retains the land for other purposes if this Parliamentary Standing Committee does not make a recommendation in favour of the scheme.

That concludes my statement.

#### Senator Dittmer

33. Has Mr. Souter said anything to you or other people living in the area as to the failure to exercise the

legal proceedings. On our advice, we considered that there was a lot of money at stake and if this indication was correct it would not be wise to continue. As stated in my evidence, Mr. Souter was most reluctant and refused to meet our committee.

**Mr. Griffiths.**—The presentation of the written statement concerns me. It refers to the case made out for a migrant camp. I hardly think that the reference before the Committee concerns a migrant camp. This reference includes some of the most advanced planning that the Department has undertaken. I resent that aspect of the statement. I notice also that the witness says that this hostel is supposed to be for 2,000 people. I understand from the evidence put before the Committee that the hostel will be for 1,000 people, half the number put forward in the statement.

#### Chairman

34. Have you anything to say to that?—The first advice we received was the newspaper report which referred to 'a migrant camp for 2,000.' The first advice we had was that it would be for 2,000 people.

#### Mr. Fulton

35. Your Committee withdrew its litigation against the vendor?—We have a copy of the legal costs.

Why did you withdraw? What was the real reason?—The real reason was that it would have been useless to continue if the threat was meant. The threat was there, that compulsory acquisition would take place irrespective of the result of the application for an injunction.

#### Senator Prowse

36. The claim is made in your evidence that the introduction of migrant families into an area will affect the morals of the community. Have you any evidence to support this statement?—On this Committee I have had to interview a number of these migrants. They speak with conviction. I have never lived in one of these hostels. Personally speaking, I cannot deny, refute or even improve upon some of the statements made to me. These statements come from New Australians in the area. I am looking around the room now to see whether some of our New Australian representatives are here because they could speak with authority having lived in such areas.

I presume that when these people come out of the camps they will take their morals with them on the same level into the rest of the community?—Put it this way: If you have a group of people, a certain friction develops. A certain atmosphere develops which is not applicable to where individual housing is. I think that I can refer to a recent report by Professor Appleyard—I think that is the name of the gentleman concerned—who quoted this same argument, that they were not conducive to proper family life. I do not know whether the report was made at parliamentary level. Whatever he meant by that, he must have also had some fears and some argument to back up that statement.

You quote the fact that some families were in a hostel for 14 years. This is not borne out by the figures supplied by the Department. On your evidence, I would think that these people who were 14 years in a hostel were in fact employed as anybody in the community would be employed in such a situation so that the argument that you are putting forward is surely an exaggerated argument in relation to the duration of stay of these people?—The information that I received was from Mr. Varga. It referred to the centre at Benalla. Mr. Hellmuth also made the stipulation that he lived in a hostel six years and was later a supervisor of maintenance. He made no mention of the fact that this other family was employed at the place and gave the information that they were still there living in the area and not employed there. They were not content

We have figures of course setting out the average stay of these people. The average stay given for the Brooklyn Hostel was some 49 weeks. The point that interests me is in relation to the statement that the camp would affect property values in the adjacent area?—I think you people would be the first to understand what I am to say. If migrants move in and out normally under the average figure that has been quoted they are not long enough there to establish themselves to be a source of nuisance. It is the exception that I am quoting, the person who is not prepared to move and with whom the Department has to be comparatively difficult in order to shift. It is this element of people who do not want to get out and make their homes that I mention.

Is there any evidence that the property values adjacent to this particular migrant camp, if I can use that word, is affected by the presence of the migrants?—Well, it applies at the moment in that if you noticed this morning along Windsor Avenue there are still four vacant blocks where people have tried to sell these blocks at the price they paid. They cannot sell them.

That is not my question. I said "to this particular camp". We are now at the Holmesglen Hostel estate. Is there any evidence in this area that property values have depreciated?—I cannot speak with authority on this area. I do not live here. I am away from this area.

Is it not rather that you are anticipating something that you fear might happen instead of using any substantial basis for your fears?—No. The fact at the moment is that the house on the corner of Metylene Avenue and Windsor Avenue has been for sale for six months and has not yet reached the reserve price.

This is on the basis of fears of things that might happen rather than on the basis of any evidence that such a thing will happen?—That applies at the moment.

But you have had no experience of a migrant housing area such as is proposed in this reference. There has never been one of this type in Melbourne.—Again I propose to answer expressing the statement of one of the New Australians in this area. I think two of the councillors present could substantiate this. The statement was that if it was covered in gold the people in there are still migrants. In other words, he did not want this aura, this air, being placed in our midst.

#### Chairman

37. Pardon me interrupting, but this is a sweeping sort of statement which is not really applicable to the problem that we have to consider. After all, we have 1 million migrants coming to Australia.—Am I giving the impression that we are against migrants? Look, I want it understood that in private homes when they have gone out and bought, we have no objection. I suppose I have the best neighbours in the world right behind me and they are migrants. I have no complaint.

Might I point out to you that according to the policy applicable to the immigration programme this is purely a transitory medium. Your fears that migrants will be in the hostel for 14 years are quite groundless. I am sure that I can say that with confidence because the whole of the efforts of the Department of Immigration are directed towards assimilating these people towards our way of living. These hostels are purely a transitory stage.—We do not argue that point. The point is that there are occasions when this situation arises. I am referring to those people who refuse to help themselves.

This is an entirely different problem that the Department has well in hand.—I might mention also that statements have been made by the Presbyterian State General Assembly referring to people staying too long in migrant hostels.

That is why I am saying that the Department has this matter well in hand. It is outside the scope of the Com-

that we have to hand. We have the right to make that point?

Yes.—That is one of our fears. As I said, I am not objecting to immigration. I recognise that that has to be. They have to be placed somewhere. But I object in relation to the few who remain in excess of the average figure quoted.

Senator Dittmer.—I think we understand the point.

#### Senator Prowse

38. You would not have any objection to the migrant hostel being in any other place in Melbourne?—I would be very sympathetic if it went elsewhere to a position similar to ours. But there are areas of Melbourne where future commitments to the areas have not been made. I think that the Commonwealth has land available that could be used for this purpose and which outside influences have no kick against.

#### Mr. Fulton

39. I think the Committee understands the feelings of the residents of the area. But a lot of your opinion has been based on newspaper reports and so forth. In common with other members of the Committee, I have not heard that the hostel will accommodate 2,000 people. You say in your evidence that the area was zoned residential with flat dwellings not permitted. It is my understanding that flats can be built in the area.—The legal advice we received was on reserved living and flat dwellings were not permitted although the Commonwealth is not bound by the local government Act.

The Commonwealth does try to work in with the local government authority. I have been informed by a member of the Council that flats can be built.—That is surprising news to us.

#### Chairman

40. The Committee will investigate the matter. If you are referring to the Grange Road case, this is an entirely different matter.—That is right. I believe that I was to be given the opportunity to add something to my statement?

You can add to your statement if you wish. Please continue.—As late as yesterday, another particular aspect came up. This relates to protective fencing. You people inspected the area this morning. The protective fencing that would exist would be on Ellen Street along Windsor Avenue. It has been suggested that 8 ft. 6 in. fencing be erected with a barbed wire top to deter any potential violation of property. The present 5 ft. odd—

Are you referring to people coming onto Commonwealth property?—No, coming off the hostel straight into ours. The present paling fence presents no hazard to any would be trespasser. More than 50 per cent. of the existing fencing has railing facing towards this area. I refer to the evidence submitted as to the actual size of the land. I refer to the site plan. The picture presented in the evidence would convey that there is a larger quantity of land than closer investigation reveals. The frontage of 915 feet facing Westall Road and the frontage on Windsor Avenue of 936 feet would be considerably reduced if you took into account the area not covered and which is still owned by the vendor. I have heard that the area shaded in this section still belongs to the vendor. I am unable to qualify that statement. If so, that would further reduce the area. The Council land, if averaged out, would take a considerable amount.

Could you give a better description of the location for the purposes of the record?—I refer to the northern side extending to the area still retained by the vendor.

On Westall Road?—Yes, and the Council block on Windsor Avenue. If we imagine that moved across, and then split the difference, this would take further off the

Yes. I think it is irrelevant.—But the picture presented conveys that there is a greater area there than there is.

What you have in front of you is only the site plan to convey the picture of what is happening?—Yes. But the figures quoted relate to this frontage. The point I am making is that the frontages quoted suggest that there is a certain distance which in terms of fact there is not.

**Mr. Griffiths**

41. It would not make the buildings encroach on anything?—From looking at this whole plan I can say that the previous plan submitted to us in April showed the location of the staff block on the other side.

**Chairman**

42. You must stick to the map before the Committee.—I see. In relation to the reduction of area of land the whole plan has been pushed over closer to the nearby housing. That is the point I wish to bring up.

The Committee will discuss that matter with the Department of Works. Have you anything further to add?—You come to the overall measurement quoted for Westall Road which does not take into account the loss of land that would apply in terms of depth from the Council block to the block beyond Souter Avenue. In other words the picture presented shows that there is a greater area than there is in point of fact.

We will take that up with the Department of Works also.—I come to the road widening. I think the story was that it was to be 12 feet. But with 16 ft. road widening on—

You are only acting on surmise. We understand that there are three figures in relation to this matter.—Where are they?

You are arguing on surmise on this point.—It is included on the plan. That is all I am permitted to comment on. I am permitted to comment on the fact that it is 16 feet as listed on the plan. If it extends through to Regent Avenue, there is the position of the house on the corner being cut. One wall will come out of it.

Evidently, that was realised by whoever drew the plan.—Yes, but there is nothing in the evidence to indicate that there is an alternative plan in fact.

You are quite correct. That is true.—The local Council has not given evidence here today. I bring this forward as a point to be considered.

You do that quite properly.—There is one further point in relation to the evidence submitted by the Department of Labour and National Service. I refer to paragraph 39. I wish to qualify any misinterpretation on this point. Our Committee approved the plans on the proviso that if we were unable to stop the scheme proposed and it went through despite our protests—well, we were making sure that our residents got the best deal possible. At no stage have we ever conceded that the hostel should be on this site. The particular plan that we commented on at that meeting had no provision for road widening on Westall Road and presented an entirely different concept being further from present housing. With reference to the plan that we saw with regard to Metylene Avenue still in this project, I think the figure quoted to us at that meeting was that the nearest point of any of these accommodation blocks was 250 feet from the nearest house. As you can see, it is a much closer position now with the move back up the hill due to the road widening.

The Committee can see your point.—Would it be possible to ask: Do we get advice or do we have to get it from the papers or as an interested body are we informed as to the outcome of this inquiry?

What will happen is this: The Committee will examine the total evidence. Your own evidence will be given study

that you have brought up. We understand your point of view. We will go further into such things as the size of the area. This is a matter for checking. After considering the matter, the Committee will then report to the Parliament on its finding in relation to the reference. It will be published. Our finding will be public property. Whether our decision is favourable or unfavourable to your case, or to the reference before us, it will be published in "Hansard". If we report favourably on the proposal, the Minister concerned will move that it is expedient to go ahead with the proposal. Perhaps you will read this in the newspaper. It is certainly available in "Hansard". If you like, we could make sure that you receive copies of that. We would be quite happy to do so.—Can we request that?

Yes. We will do that. What you are studying at the moment are drawings of the proposal. Naturally, they do not go into detail down to the last inch. The Department of Works will not do this until such time as it is ready to go ahead. You will have noted from the evidence that it will take 14 months for the preparation of the documents. Then the Department will call for tenders on this matter. If you are interested at that stage, doubtless you could obtain some information by making inquiries. Up to that stage, there would not be any information to give?—I see.

**Mr. Fulton**

43. Our only duty is to report to the Parliament on the reference to us.—I understand that.

**Chairman**

44. With regard to the actual detail that you mentioned concerning distances, etc., I am quite sure that the Department of Works will take this fully into consideration in preparing the final drawings. Remember that the drawings that you have commented on in your submission are only drawings, not plans.—I understand that.

I do not think that there is any way in which I can suggest that you would be given access to the final accurate measurements until such time as the proposal goes to tender. Have you anything further to add?—No.

I return to you the documents that you have submitted. I remember the Grange Road case to which you refer. You have referred to other matters also. These early newspaper reports are not entirely accurate.—Yes. I have been reminded of the reference to compulsory acquisition as mentioned in Mr. Bland's letter. Let me quote from the letter. It reads: "There is no need further to consider the question of compulsory acquisition. Mr. Souter offered his land to the Commonwealth and the sale has now been completed." That is the reference we were making. It bears out our statement that it is not just hearsay that compulsory acquisition was mentioned.

**Chairman.**—I thank you for your evidence.

(The witness withdrew)

Mr. Myer Kangan, First Assistant Secretary, Department of Labour and National Service, was recalled and examined.

**Chairman**

45. You have heard the evidence given this afternoon. There are one or two points that you might be able to add some detail to and probably there are one or two things which you would like to answer?—(Mr. Kangan) Yes. It is perfectly true, as mentioned a number of times by Mr. Stoddart, that certain questions were put to me and that I declined to answer. I would like to make it very clear that my inability to answer, which is probably a more accurate description, was because the questions were raised at a

things might be further developed. Other questions related to matters of a legal nature and, of course, I am not competent to answer such questions as I have no legal background. I cannot speak on behalf of the Commonwealth in this regard.

We have, Mr. Chairman—and I speak here on behalf of all the Departments involved—sought from the very earliest stages to provide the fullest possible information we could consistent with the state of activities at any particular time. I wish to record very strongly that I would not like any misinterpretations to be made of the comments and fears expressed by Mr. Stoddart in respect of migrants in the area. It is a matter of fact, not a matter of opinion, that some 6,500 migrant families enter migrant hostels per annum. The amount of difficulty experienced is infinitesimal, so much so that any particular instance or incident finds its way into newspapers as a matter of news. This is sufficient comment in itself.

I wish to deal with another question of fact. The reference to 14 years stay does not relate to a migrant hostel at all. It refers to the Benalla accommodation centre which is under the authority of the Department of Immigration. Special circumstances relating to some families there exist which do not concern this hearing.

As to the comment that has been made about the philosophy and possible influence of migrant families on family life, we have of course kept under close study the behaviour and mode of living of people in hostels. There is no evidence at all that can be substantiated to indicate that migrants in general live any different life from other members from any other section of the community overall. I go on from that to say that I would hope that in putting forward the suggestion that a particular kind of fence should surround this hostel the proposers are not implying

in any way that migrants need to be separated off from the rest of the community.

I might add a small point in relation to our experience as member of Parliament of migrants. Our migration committee has examined this matter very thoroughly; the results of our inquiries confirm what you have said. Migrants provide a very good example of the type of life that we expect in Australia.—Thank you. It remains to think, for me to answer only one other question of fact and I am sticking to questions of fact alone. After the commanding centre personnel cease duty at 5 p.m., your leaders then take over and are available until about 9 p.m. when we would hope most of the children would be in bed.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I did meet with Mr. Stoddart and one of the gentlemen from the area yesterday on the question of the layout of the hostel. We are quite prepared to ask the Department of Works to look at any particular problem of location and particular matters relating to overall design in an endeavour to obtain the best possible layout we can.

There is one point on which you may be able to help the Committee. Mr. Stoddart did mention the back fence along Ellen Street. This concerns the houses in that street. Is it proposed that there will be any new fencing there? Will there be screening by trees or is anything else proposed?—What the plan calls for is a line of trees along the back fences.

Along the full depth?—Yes, to the Ellen Street properties, if we can call them that.

**Chairman.**—Thank you, Mr. Kangan, for your further evidence.

(The witness withdrew)

*The Committee adjourned*