

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

REPORT

relating to the

REDEVELOPMENT OF HMAS COONAWARRA, DARWIN
NORTHERN TERRITORY

(Ninth Report of 1988)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works	iv
Referral of Reference through the Executive Council	v
	Paragraph
The Reference	1
The Committee's Investigation	4
Background	9
The Need	12
. Living-in Accommodation	13
. Wardroom for Officers	15
. Meal Preparation and Cooking Facilities for All Ranks	16
. Administration Building	17
. Health Centre	18
. Physical Fitness Centre and Squash Courts	19
. Sports Oval and Associated Facilities	20
. Assembly Hall	21
. Command Fire Station	22
. Civilian Staff Facilities for Cleaners and Groundkeepers	23
. Housing	24
. Committee's Conclusion	28
The Proposal	29
. Committee's Conclusion	36

Master Plan	37
Demolition and the Sale of Houses	38
Housing	40
. Option 1: Construction of Housing On-base	43
. Option 2: Construction/Acquisition of Housing Off-base	45
. Option 3: Leasing	47
. Design of the Houses	51
. Future Housing	56
. Committee's Conclusion	57
. Committee's Recommendation	58
Meal Preparation and Cooking for All Ranks	59
. Committee's Conclusion	65
. Committee's Recommendation	66
Amenities and Facilities	67
. Childcare Facilities	67
. Air-conditioning	68
. Car Parking	70
. Committee's Conclusion	71
Building Contract Arrangements	72
. Need for Contract Packaging	73
. Building Design to be Undertaken Locally	74
. Use of Local Materials	75
. Prequalification of Tenderers	76
Environmental Considerations	77
. Noise Levels	78
. Committee's Conclusion	81

Consultation	82
. Committee's Conclusion	87
Construction Program	88
Limit of Cost	89
. Committee's Recommendation	93
Conclusions and Recommendations	94
Appendices	Page
. Appendix A - List of Witnesses	A1
. Appendix B - Construction Details	B1
. Appendix C - Project Drawings	C1

**MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS**

Twenty-Ninth Committee

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)

Mr Percival Clarence Millar MP (Vice-Chairman)

Senate

Senator Bryant Robert Burns
Senator John Robert Devereux
Senator Dr Glenister Sheil

House of Representatives

Mr Maxwell Arthur Burr MP
Mr George Gear MP
Mr Robert George Halverson OBE MP
Mr John Graham Mountford MP

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT 1969

ORDER UNDER SUBSECTION 18(4)

I, Sir Ninian Martin Stephen, the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, in pursuance of subsection 18(4) of the Public Works Committee Act 1969 hereby, by this Order, declare that the public work described in the schedule be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report.

SCHEDULE

Redevelopment of HMAS Coonawarra, Darwin, Northern Territory

Given under my Hand and the
Great Seal of Australia
on 17 June 1988

Governor-General

By His Excellency's Command

(Signed) Stewart West

Minister of State for Administrative
Services

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

REDEVELOPMENT OF HMAS COONAWARRA, DARWIN NT

On 17 June 1988 His Excellency the Governor-General in Council referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report to Parliament the proposed redevelopment of HMAS Coonawarra, Darwin NT.

THE REFERENCE

1 The proposal provides for additional facilities at HMAS Coonawarra Naval Base in Darwin to enhance the support capabilities of the base.

2 The proposed development comprises:

- . the refurbishment, upgrading and construction of new base facilities including living-in accommodation, administration, messing, recreation, sporting, civilian employees complex, assembly areas and health services;
- . the replacement of 53 married quarters; and
- . the relocation of eight married quarters.

3 The estimated cost of the proposed work when referred to the Committee in June 1988 was \$25.2m at January 1988 prices comprising \$19.2m for the redevelopment of the base and \$6m for housing.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

4 The Committee received written submissions and plans from the Department of Defence (Defence), Australian Construction Services (ACS) and the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and took evidence from the representatives of those organisations at a public hearing in Darwin on 12 July 1988.

5 The Committee also received documents and took evidence from:

- . Australian Defence Families Information and Liaison Staff (ADFILS)
- . Department of the Chief Minister (Northern Territory)
- . Master Builders Association of the Northern Territory (MBA, NT).

A list of the witnesses who appeared at the public hearing is at Appendix A.

6 A submission also was received from Lawrence H. Howroyd and Associates and incorporated in the Minutes of Evidence.

7 Prior to the public hearing the Committee inspected existing facilities and housing at HMAS Coonawarra and the sites for the proposed works on the base.

8 The Committee's proceedings will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

BACKGROUND

9 HMAS Coonawarra is located on the Stuart Highway, 11 km east of Darwin and comprises an area of 151 hectares. The base provides basic support functions for all aspects of naval operations in the northern area of Australia. The following units are involved in those operations:

- . Headquarters for Naval Officer Commanding, North Australia Area (NOCNAA)
- . Naval Communications Station, Darwin
- . Naval Receiving Station, Shoal Bay
- . Naval Transmitting Station, Humpty Doo
- . Operational "Fremantle" Class Patrol Boats (FCPB)
- . Darwin Naval Base (DNE)
- . Oil Fuel Installation.

10 The existing facilities on the base were established in 1939 as a communication station with the base being commissioned in 1970. Existing facilities on the base (and date constructed) include:

- . Administration building (1973), guard house (1970)
- . Junior sailors - Living-in accommodation (1960, 1968 and 1970). One 1960 building was modified and rebuilt in 1977 following partial destruction by Cyclone Tracy
 - Mess and galley (1959)
 - Recreation building (1959)
- . Senior sailors - Mess and galley (1959)
 - Living-in accommodation and recreation building (1968, 1973)
- . Communications building (1971 and 1978), naval stores (1979), motor transport (1982) and chapel (house converted 1985)
- . 117 married quarters (1939-83).

Further details on the location and setting of the base are provided at Appendix C.

11 The Navy complement in the Darwin area as at February 1988 was 17 senior officers, 26 junior officers, 115 senior sailors, 410 junior sailors - totalling 568 all ranks (including the crew of four Fremantle Class Patrol Boats FCPB). Two additional FCPB will be stationed there from late 1988, thus increasing the total Navy personnel to 614.

THE NEED

12 The Department of Defence (Navy) currently is experiencing a number of unsatisfactory situations with regard to its accommodation at HMAS Coonawarra. Over the past ten years there has been no upgrading to buildings apart from repairs to damage

caused by Cyclone Tracy in 1974 and additional facilities are now required due to a steady increase in support requirements and personnel.

Living-in Accommodation

13 The existing living-in accommodation for junior and senior sailors does not meet the Service Scales and Standards of Accommodation (SSSA) and is widely separated from messing and recreational facilities. Accommodation varies from single rooms below the present scale to rooms shared by two, three or four persons. Toilet and ablution areas are communal rather than shared facilities between two or four persons. Box rooms, laundries, common rooms, furniture and fittings are generally below scale. All cabins need to be air-cooled and the dining and public rooms air-conditioned. Living-in accommodation is required for the following personnel:

. Senior officers	4
. Junior officers	18
. Senior sailors	34
. Junior sailors	304.

14 Since 1981 officers have been accommodated away from the base in a motel 4 km along the Stuart Highway which has rooms for 26 officers and is leased at an annual rental of \$84 000.

Wardroom for Officers

15 There has never been a permanent wardroom for officers at HMAS Coonawarra. Messing and recreational rooms for officers are leased with the sleeping quarters at the motel.

Meal Preparation and Cooking Facilities for All Ranks

16 The existing galley for junior sailors is the only galley at HMAS Coonawarra but because of the age of the equipment and space constraints it is not able to cater for the required demand

of up to 1000 meals per day as a central food preparation and cooking galley without modifications.

Administration Building

17 The existing administration building was built in 1973 and is now unable to accommodate all administrative functions. Demountable huts and old married quarters are being used as overflow office areas. For efficiency one building is required for 34 administrative personnel covering command, executive and supply and administrative support.

Health Centre

18 Existing health-care facilities on the base for the 394 on-base personnel are limited, overcrowded and inefficient. If personnel had to travel off-base to health-care facilities there would be time lost and added transportation costs.

Physical Fitness Centre and Squash Courts

19 There are no adequate buildings on the base for general physical fitness activities or more specialised activities such as squash. The SSSA allows for a physical fitness centre and two squash courts where the complement exceeds 499.

Sports Oval and Associated Facilities

20 There is one oval on the base; however, there are no associated toilets, change rooms or spectator facilities. A new Australian Rules oval is required consistent with the SSSA.

Assembly Hall

21 There is no assembly hall on the base and in a tropical climate an all-weather area for ceremonials, assemblies, meetings, entertainment and community activities is necessary.

Command Fire Station

22 The command fire prevention officer has the responsibility for fire prevention training, fire fighting and control within all naval units in the Darwin area. Facilities at HMAS Coonawarra are unsatisfactorily located and do not conform to cyclone standards for construction (except for the fire tender shelter).

Civilian Staff Facilities for Cleaners and Groundkeepers

23 Functions including grass cutting and the maintenance of fire breaks at the large aerial and antenna farms of Humpty Doo, Shoal Bay and HMAS Coonawarra are housed at HMAS Coonawarra. Existing maintenance facilities are old and inadequate and need to be relocated and replaced.

Housing

24 Fifty-three existing on-base houses do not meet the 1982 interim Service Scales and Standards, are not constructed to cyclone standards, are in a poor state of repair and some are located in a high noise zone subject to air and road traffic noise. The houses also have fibro cement sheeting on the outside which has an asbestos base. ACS has surveyed the buildings and recommends replacement as upgrading would not be cost effective.

25 In addition, there are eight houses built in 1978 and 1979 to cyclone standard that are in good condition, but are within a high noise zone with a noise level above that recommended for housing. Relocation of the houses is desirable and will rationalise the layout of the base to conform with the Master Plan.

26 The replacement and relocation of the houses will help alleviate Defence's annual outlay of approximately \$420 000 for temporary rental allowance. Navy presently has 45 Darwin-based personnel in receipt of temporary rental allowance because of the

shortfall of 24 houses in Navy housing stock level in Darwin (198) and a further 21 families not being accommodated because of the condition of existing houses.

27 In summary, many of the existing base facilities were built during the early 1960s and do not comply with current Department of Defence Scales and Standards of Accommodation and are inadequate to cope with the current on-base accommodation requirements.

Committee's Conclusion

28 There is a need to upgrade and extend existing facilities at HMAS Coonawarra to enhance the support capabilities of the base and bring facilities into line with current Service Scales and Standards of Accommodation. Fifty-three existing houses on the base need to be replaced with houses designed to meet the Service Scales and Standards of Accommodation and cyclone proofing conditions. A further eight houses need to be relocated out of a high noise zone.

THE PROPOSAL

29 To fulfil current on-base accommodation requirements at HMAS Coonawarra there needs to be redevelopment of base facilities and the provision of replacement housing.

30 The site for the proposed redevelopment is contained within the existing boundaries of HMAS Coonawarra Darwin. It is located 11 km east of the Darwin City Centre in an area zoned industrial. It is essentially flat with large open expanses beyond the established buildings.

31 The proposed base redevelopment comprises:

. New facilities

- 15 two-storey junior sailor accommodation blocks
- officers accommodation
- officers wardroom
- physical fitness centre and pavilion
- assembly hall
- fire station
- civilian amenities

. Upgraded facilities

- additions to existing administration building
- junior sailors accommodation (G8, G10)
- junior sailors galley (G6)
- sick bay (G31)
- senior sailors accommodation and messing (G32)

. Civil Works

- access roads, car parks, external paths and walkways
- new oval and associated toilets, change rooms and spectator facilities
- engineering services (water supply, sewerage, drainage)
- landscaping

. Demolition of junior sailors accommodation (G9).

The proposed housing comprises:

- . forty 3-bedroom houses
- . thirteen 4-bedroom houses
- . eight houses relocated
- . landscaping.

32 The design objective for the buildings is to provide for and satisfy the various functional activities in an efficient and economic manner and at the same time satisfy the particular Darwin constraints. The requirements and constraints of major influence are the provision for structural loading for cyclonic conditions; wet season high rainfall and severe lightning activity; constantly high ambient temperatures and humidity; aggressive termite and high insect population; and limited local material availability.

33 The buildings proposed incorporate construction methods suitable to local building practice and use locally available materials where possible to provide both functional and cost effective accommodation. A co-ordinated design approach will be adopted for all new buildings which will be consistent in form, construction and materials, whilst recognising a variation in character between buildings serving different functions.

34 The proposed works form part of the Government approved Five Year Defence Plan and will provide accommodation complying with all relevant codes. Particular attention will be given to the provision of facilities for personnel who will use the premises.

35 Further details on the construction of the buildings are provided at Appendix B and project drawings showing design are at Appendix C.

Committee's Conclusion

36 The Committee is satisfied that the design of the proposed on-base works will fulfil the needs as outlined for HMAS Coonawarra.

MASTER PLAN

37 In their evidence to the Committee the Department of Defence and ACS noted that the development of the proposal

highlighted some deficiencies in the previous Master Plan for HMAS Coonawarra. The Master Plan has been modified to include provision for the current redevelopment and housing and makes room for future expansion. In particular, the new Master Plan locates junior sailors, senior sailors and officers each in a separate zone near their mess, canteen and recreation centre and allows for use of cabin accommodation by either males or females. The new Master Plan is expected to fulfil needs on the base over the next 25 years.

DENOLITION AND THE SALE OF HOUSES

38 In evidence to the Committee ACS stated that one building of ten underscale cabins and an associated ablution and toilet block will be demolished because it does not conform to the cyclone building code and SSSA. The cost of upgrading the building would be approximately the same as construction of new facilities.

39 In its evidence DHA stated that it is proposed that the houses on sites identified for replacement will be sold for relocation elsewhere. Efforts will be made to maximise the return on those buildings to the Commonwealth; however, market demand for the dwellings is difficult to determine and it is unlikely that the market will absorb all of the houses. Assessment of the local market demand will be made at the time of the proposed sale and, depending on the outcome, disposal of some of the houses may need to be included as part of the construction contract.

HOUSING

40 The present stock of Navy housing in Darwin consists of ten houses at Larrakeyah Army Barracks, 62 in the suburbs and 126 at HMAS Coonawarra, a total of 198 houses. Experience at Coonawarra has shown that 80% of Navy personnel wish to live on-base for reasons outlined later in this section. However, given the current housing stock only 50% of the Navy personnel can live on-base.

41 As part of the base redevelopment proposal Defence is seeking the replacement of 53 married quarters and relocation of eight existing married quarters. As this is only an upgrade of housing the proportion of married sailors living on-base will remain at about 50%.

42 The basic options available to the DHA for providing the replacement housing are:

- . construction of housing on-base
- . construction/acquisition of housing off-base
- . leasing the required number of houses.

Option 1: Construction of Housing On-Base

43 The main advantages for constructing on-base housing are that the existing housing subdivision has sufficient capacity to accommodate the replacement and relocated houses, it is an efficient use of existing services and road infrastructure and there is no need to purchase land. It also provides better support and security for the families of sailors and officers serving at sea. This view was confirmed by the Committee during discussions with personnel at HMAS Coonawarra and was supported at the public hearing by ADFILS. In addition, building on-base retains the current proportion between on-base and off-base statistics which to date has been found to be satisfactory.

44 The disadvantages are the concentration of Navy families on-base and the DHA may be less free to trade or sell houses in the future.

Option 2: Construction/Acquisition of Housing Off-Base

45 In contrast the advantage of off-base housing is that it gives DHA access to a wider range of mechanisms for acquiring/constructing houses and allows it to take advantage of

current market opportunities and to sell housing no longer required without the necessity to excise land, as would be required at Coonawarra.

46 The disadvantages are that it is likely to be more costly than Option 1 due to the necessary land purchase cost and it isolates newly arrived families.

Option 3: Leasing

47 Leasing offers greater choice in satisfying housing needs, reduces capital investment, allows DHA to take advantage of favourable rental markets and offers greater flexibility during periods of fluctuating demand for houses.

48 Unfortunately, leasing increases recurrent expenditure by increasing an already large temporary rental allowance bill, exposes individuals to the vagaries of the rental market and also isolates newly arrived families in the wider city area.

49 In its submission to the Committee DHA stated that the Darwin housing market is depressed and if commercial aspects alone were considered, spot purchase or private leasing could be a viable option. However, on the balance of commercial grounds and the social needs of Navy personnel and their families, the construction of on-base housing is preferred.

50 It is proposed to construct 53 partially air-cooled, high-set houses on-base as follows:

- . 14 three-bedroom houses for able seamen/leading seamen
- . 10 four-bedroom houses for able seamen/leading seamen
- . 26 three-bedroom houses for petty officers
- . 3 four-bedroom houses for petty officers.

Design of the Houses

51 At the public hearing DHA told the Committee that a decision on the proposed design of the houses had not been made. However, to conform with on-base housing and because of the advantages of high-set housing in the tropics it is likely that new houses will be high-set. This style of housing is supported by the MBA, NT in its submission. In 1983 in a survey undertaken by consultants for ACS of tenants of Defence housing at HMAS Coonawarra, the occupants confirmed their general satisfaction with the style of housing currently provided.

52 Lawrence H. Howroyd and Associates made a submission to the Committee regarding the use of a design of a safety house for cyclone areas (Howroyd Thermodynamic Safety House). The concept is that the house has a wide verandah around it and a steel roof construction and during cyclones the verandah folds down. DHA undertook to assess the proposed design and report back to the Committee.

53 In its submission to the Committee ADFILS stressed the importance of maintaining open spaces in the housing development and the need to landscape those areas to create a cooler, greener, safer and aesthetically pleasing environment for on-base residents.

54 ACS and DHA will investigate the most appropriate method of producing the on-base houses. Considerations will include cost comparisons within the Darwin commercial market, required delivery time, comparison of delivery options and site works/landscaping requirements.

55 The eight existing cyclone standard houses will be relocated to existing vacated sites within the subdivision. The houses will be reconnected to existing services and minor maintenance carried out. The location of the replaced and relocated houses is shown at Appendix C.

Future Housing

56 In the longer term Defence will seek to increase the proportion of married sailors living on-base. At present, Navy has an application with Army to allow the Navy to use a further 20 blocks of vacant land at Larrakeyah Army Barracks for housing for the increase in personnel associated with the new patrol boats.

Committee's Conclusion

57 The Committee agrees that the 53 replacement houses should be constructed on-base as this is the most desirable location. However, the Committee is concerned that the Defence Housing Authority provided few details of the proposed house designs.

Committee's Recommendation

58 The Committee recommends that in future references the Defence Housing Authority provides details on proposed house designs in its submission to the Committee and that the Defence Housing Authority provides this information for HMAS Coonawarra to the Committee as soon as it is available.

MEAL PREPARATION AND COOKING FOR ALL RANKS

59 The 1983 Efficiency Review of Defence Force Food Provisioning Systems recommended that the concept of central food preparation (CFP) facilities be considered when kitchens of a Service unit are to be replaced or modified. As a result, the Chief of Naval Staff directed that all shore establishments' food service facilities be reviewed for the provision of central food preparation. HMAS Coonawarra is the first Navy establishment to be so reviewed.

60 The objective is to improve efficiency by the use of production line methods and multipurpose equipment and reduce the requirements for preparation, cooking equipment and staff.

61 In evidence to the Committee, Defence stated that it is intended to provide full CFP facilities at HMAS Coonawarra - that is, all preparation and cooking will be carried out in the junior sailors galley, which will be upgraded to serve meals delivered to the wardroom and senior sailors messes. Modern, multifunctional equipment for the handling, processing and cooking of bulk foods will be installed, food will be stored in special purpose heated containers and transported in special mobile heated units dedicated to this function. Only dining and pantry facilities will need to be provided in the new construction/refurbished wardroom and senior sailors messes, although some short order cooking equipment will be required in the pantries.

62 With CFP at HMAS Coonawarra all messes will be on general messing and the standard of meals will be the same in all messes and messing facilities can be redeveloped without an increase in catering staff.

63 Defence suggested that initial shortcomings of CFP in industry and other establishments have been removed largely from HMAS Coonawarra by providing:

- . a purpose designed flow-through operation from receipt of provisions to final serving on the line;
- . dedicated food transport systems with integral heating/chilling facilities that allow hygienic storage of foodstuffs at edible temperatures for two hours without leaching or organoleptic change;
- . multifunctional and dedicated food preparation equipment;
- . an appropriate layout of galley facilities; and
- . finishing facilities in pantries that allow for short order cooking and grills.

64 At the public hearing the Committee expressed considerable reservations to the Department of Defence about the proposed CFP approach and the fact that the Navy personnel at HMAS Coonawarra had not been consulted about the proposed change. The Committee was particularly concerned about the success of such an arrangement in an operational emergency situation in the North, the security of a single food preparation unit and the quality of food likely to be served.

Committee's Conclusion

65 Despite the manpower and cost savings the Department of Defence anticipates will be achieved by the introduction of centralised food preparation, the Committee is not convinced that the proposed change is desirable when issues such as security, operational emergency situations and the quality of the food likely to be served are taken into account. The Committee is particularly concerned that the views of base personnel have not been sought on this issue.

Committee's Recommendation

66 The Committee recommends that the proposed central food preparation system be reassessed taking into account wider issues and the views of base personnel.

AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

Childcare Facilities

67 There are about 200 children living on-base at HMAS Coonawarra. Although not a formal policy the issue of childcare facilities is being investigated at a local management level.

Air-conditioning

68 Air-conditioning will be provided in the buildings to be upgraded and constructed as part of the redevelopment.

69 In the houses it is proposed that air-cooling be provided with a multi-split unit with three fan coil units located in the bedroom, lounge/dining and kitchen. Humidity is the major problem in Darwin and during the house construction phase it is proposed to consider fitting vapour barriers to the walls of houses. In the future this will provide the opportunity for an easy retrofit to air-conditioning. At present there is no electrical subsidy for power in the Darwin area to assist with the extra electricity costs associated with air-conditioning particularly during the wet season. However, Defence (Navy) plan to investigate this issue.

Car Parking

70 Adequate parking is being built into the proposed developments at HMAS Coonawarra. The Scales and Standards Committee is at present looking at whether parking throughout Australia should be covered or not on some bases depending on the severity of weather conditions.

Committee's Conclusion

71 The Committee accepts the desirability of the provision of childcare facilities, undercover car parking and air-conditioning and also an air-conditioning electricity costs subsidy for Defence houses in Darwin and suggests that those issues be raised with the Defence Force Standards of Accommodation Committee.

BUILDING CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

72 The MBA, NT raised a number of issues in relation to building contracts. In evidence to the Committee ACS provided the following comments on those issues.

Need for Contract Packaging

73 It is ACS policy to package contracts based on a logical breakdown of the work and the sequence in which it needs to proceed. It is anticipated that the HMAS Coonawarra project will be packaged into several separate contracts varying between about \$0.5m and \$8m. Those package sizes should maximise the opportunity for a variety of locally based firms to participate in the project. Final decisions regarding the packaging of the works and tendering will be based on an assessment of the capabilities of the building industry nearer to the time of tendering.

Building Design to be Undertaken Locally

74 Where skills are available locally every opportunity is given for local business to compete for contracts and/or subcontracts.

Use of Local Materials

75 Where appropriate and cost effective, local materials are used in the construction process.

Prequalification of Tenderers

76 ACS's policy of open tendering (unless special circumstances prevail) allows free access by contractors to Commonwealth works. Careful scrutiny is made of tenders received to ensure that contracts are only awarded to firms capable of successfully completing the works. Prequalification of tenders would have the effect of reducing rather than maximising the opportunities for all firms to participate in the project. The process would inevitably favour larger firms. Three of the four qualification criteria proposed by the MBA, NT give preference to Northern Territory firms. This is in contravention of the

National Preference Agreement signed by the Northern Territory in December 1987 which prohibits preference based on State of origin.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

77 The Department of Defence advised the Committee that a Notice of Intention (NOI) had been submitted to the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories (DASETT). DASETT advised Defence that an Environmental Impact Statement was not required but noted the noise reduction safeguards outlined in Section D of the NOI. As a result, in September 1987, Defence issued an Environmental Certificate of Compliance for the proposed works subject to the adherence to the noise reduction safeguards outlined in the NOI.

Noise Levels

78 The development of the base is subject to noise from aircraft, road traffic and motor sports. Noise is generated from the base's location adjacent to:

- . the Stuart Highway (to the north) and in the future from new roads - Tiger Brennan Drive (to the south) and possibly Amy Johnson Avenue (to the west);
- . the main runway of Darwin Airport (to the northwest); and
- . a motor sports complex (to the south) which generates its own noise pollution (from sports including motor cross, drag racing, go-carts and speedway racing) and has increased the traffic flow along Hidden Valley Road, the main eastern boundary of HMAS Coonawarra.

Part of the base has been developed within the 25 Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF).

79 Noise level recordings taken by consultants employed by ACS were:

- . Stuart Highway traffic approximately 60-70 dB(A)
- . civil aircraft taking off in an easterly direction approximately 96 dB(A)
- . military aircraft approximately 106 dB(A).

The consultants reported that those noise levels exceed the appropriate building noise criteria code AS2021, which recommends 55 dB(A) for hostel sleeping areas.

80 Consequently, as specified in the NOI, a number of construction methods will be adopted for new buildings on the base to alleviate noise pollution. The location and design of buildings and houses (especially window frames, glazing, insulation, wall and roof construction) will be selected to reduce noise levels. In addition, living-in and married accommodation will be air-cooled to enable windows to be kept closed as an additional means of noise abatement. Unfortunately, those mechanisms will only reduce noise levels inside buildings to 70-75 dB(A) for intermittent civil aircraft noise and 80-85 dB(A) for military aircraft noise.

Committee's Conclusion

81 The Committee recognises that HMAS Coonawarra is an operational base and given its location, intermittent aircraft and traffic noise is inevitable. The Committee accepts that Australian Construction Services will make every effort to reduce noise levels to as low a level as possible within buildings and accommodation proposed for the base.

CONSULTATION

82 Defence and ACS informed the Committee that the following authorities and organisations had been consulted during the

development of the proposal, none of which raised any objections:

- . Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories
- . Northern Territory Department of Transport and Works
- . Darwin Motor Sports Council.

83 The proposal also was discussed with the MBA, NT. While the association supported the base redevelopment it raised a number of concerns with the proposed design, materials and likely contractual arrangements for the proposal. Details of those concerns have been discussed in earlier sections of the report.

84 In August 1986 twenty tenants of existing on-base housing were surveyed by a consultant employed by ACS to assess user reaction and obtain feedback on existing house designs. Following further consultation with ACS and Navy authorities Defence reported that the Navy wives are in favour of the preferred option for housing.

85 In March 1988 a community development co-ordinator for the Australian Defence Families Information and Liaison Staff (ADFILS) was based in Darwin. Amongst ADFILS' other tasks, it assists Defence families to put forward their views in the consultation process. In evidence to the Committee ADFILS stated that it is satisfied with the consultation that has taken place to date on the project and that more detailed consultation will occur during the construction phase of the project through a working group including ADFILS, DHA and Defence.

86 During the public hearing Defence informed the Committee that there has been regular communication between Defence and ACS with base personnel and their families on some aspects of the proposal, through formal mechanisms such as the regular base reporting and investigatory system, annual or biennial base inspections by the administration authority, the divisional structure of the Service, the National Consultative Group of Service Spouses local subgroup and ADFILS and informally through

communication between officers and base personnel. Defence assured the Committee that consultation will continue during the construction phase of the proposed works.

Committee's Conclusion

87 The Committee welcomes the Department of Defence's expressed commitment to consult with base personnel and their families on the proposed base redevelopment and believes Defence should endeavour to improve this consultation process further.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

88 The anticipated construction period for the project is two years from mid-1989 to mid-1991.

LIMIT OF COST

89 The limit of cost for the proposal is \$25.2m at January 1988 prices.

90 The limit of cost estimate includes the following:

- . buildings for base redevelopment
- . civil works
- . public address system
- . new housing
- . air-cooling for houses
- . site works and inground services for houses
- . relocation of eight houses.

91 There is an additional cost of \$350 000 to date for basic design works undertaken by consultants.

92 ACS advised the Committee that there are no additional fitout costs associated with the project. Allowances have been made in the overall project cost for the provision of fixed furnishings in the accommodation in accordance with SSSA and, in

the administration building, where there would normally be fitout costs, there are none since it is separate offices where only loose furnishings are required.

Committee's Recommendation

93 The Committee recommends the construction of the facilities for base redevelopment and housing at HMAS Coonawarra Darwin, NT at an estimated cost of \$25.2m comprising \$19.2m for redevelopment on the base and \$6m for housing, both at January 1988 prices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

94 The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee and the paragraph in the report to which each refers are set out below:

Paragraph

1. There is a need to upgrade and extend existing facilities at HMAS Coonawarra to enhance the support capabilities of the base and bring facilities into line with current Service Scales and Standards of Accommodation. Fifty-three existing houses on the base need to be replaced with houses designed to meet the Service Scales and Standards of Accommodation and cyclone proofing conditions. A further eight houses need to be relocated out of a high noise zone. 28
2. The Committee is satisfied that the design of the proposed on-base works will fulfil the needs as outlined for HMAS Coonawarra. 36
3. The Committee agrees that the 53 replacement houses should be constructed on-base as this is the most desirable location. However, the Committee is concerned that the Defence Housing Authority provided few details of the proposed house designs. 57

4. The Committee recommends that in future references the Defence Housing Authority provides details on proposed house designs in its submission to the Committee and that the Defence Housing Authority provides this information for HMAS Coonawarra to the Committee as soon as it is available. 58
5. Despite the manpower and cost savings the Department of Defence anticipates will be achieved by the introduction of centralised food preparation, the Committee is not convinced that the proposed change is desirable when issues such as security, operational emergency situations and the quality of the food likely to be served are taken into account. The Committee is particularly concerned that the views of base personnel have not been sought on this issue. 65
6. The Committee recommends that the proposed central food preparation system be reassessed taking into account wider issues and the views of base personnel. 66
7. The Committee accepts the desirability of the provision of childcare facilities, undercover car parking and air-conditioning and also an air-conditioning electricity costs subsidy for Defence houses in Darwin and suggests that those issues be raised with the Defence Force Standards of Accommodation Committee. 71

8. The Committee recognises that HMAS Coonawarra is an operational base and given its location, intermittent aircraft and traffic noise is inevitable. The Committee accepts that Australian Construction Services will make every effort to reduce noise levels to as low a level as possible within buildings and accommodation proposed for the base. 81
9. The Committee welcomes the Department of Defence's expressed commitment to consult with base personnel and their families on the proposed base redevelopment and believes Defence should endeavour to improve this consultation process further. 87
10. The Committee recommends the construction of the facilities for base redevelopment and housing at HMAS Coonawarra Darwin, NT at an estimated cost of \$25.2m comprising \$19.2m for redevelopment on the base and \$6m for housing, both at January 1988 prices. 93



Colin Hollis
Chairman
25 August 1988

APPENDIX A

LIST OF WITNESSES

- ALLEN, Mr R.D., Senior Executive Officer, Office of Policy and Planning, Department of the Chief Minister, Darwin, NT 0800
- FANNING, Mr P.G., Deputy Executive Director Master Builders Association of the Northern Territory, PO Box 2604, Darwin, NT 0801
- HAZELDINE, Mr E.J., Associate Director, Projects SA/NT Region, Australian Construction Services, Department of Administrative Services, Capita Centre, 10-20 Putuney Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
- LAWRENCE, Mr J., Project Manager Defence, SA/NT Region, Australian Construction Services, Department of Administrative Services, Capital Centre, 10-20 Putuney Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
- PARTINGTON, Captain R.N., Naval Officer Commanding the Northern Australia Area, Naval Headquarters, Larrakeyah Barracks, Private Mail Bag No. 11, Darwin, NT 0801
- SMITH, Mr B., Community Development Coordinator, Australian Defence Families Information and Liaison Staff, GPO Box 4746, Darwin, NT 0801
- TEMPLAR, Mr R.D., General Manager, Operations, Defence Housing Authority, 2 Brisbane Avenue, Barton, ACT 2600
- THOMSON, Commodore D.H., Director-General, Facilities - Navy, Russell Offices, Canberra, ACT 2600
- WILLIAMS, Mr M.B., Acting First Assistant Secretary, Defence Programs, Australian Construction Services, Department of Administrative Services, 470 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson, ACT 2602

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Junior Sailors Accommodation

240 junior sailors will be accommodated in 15 two-storey buildings. Each building will be designed to accommodate 16 sailors in four groups of four, with each group sharing a common room, shower, toilet, box room and tea making facility. One laundry per eight persons will be provided and one bath and cleaner's room per 16 persons. Individual blocks will be linked by walkways. The structural system comprises load bearing concrete block walls, concrete floor slabs and timber trusses. Floor finishes will be carpet in all cabins, ceramic tiles in wet areas and quarry tiles in all other areas.

Upgrading Junior Sailors Accommodation

Alterations to the cabin layout will provide accommodation for 27 junior sailors on two floors. Existing toilets will be upgraded with some structural alterations to the roof to bring the building up to cyclone standards. Carpets will be provided to cabins.

Upgrading Junior Sailors Accommodation

Accommodation for 26 junior sailors will be provided on two floors with a new laundry, bath and showers at ground floor level. Existing cabins and facilities at first floor level will be upgraded. Structural alterations to the roof will bring the building up to cyclone standards. Carpet will be provided to cabins and corridors.

Upgrading Junior Sailors Main Galley

The existing junior sailors main galley is to be upgraded to provide for central food preparation and cooking. Ageing equipment will be replaced. The existing galley is to be extended on the north and south to allow clearance around new cooking equipment for food trolleys. Alterations to the existing storage and amenities also are to be carried out. The existing roof of the junior sailors main galley and recreation facilities is to be strengthened and roof cladding replaced to bring the building up to cyclone standards.

Upgrading Sick Bay

The existing sick bay will be upgraded to provide a dental suite comprising surgery, officers and laboratory; medical suite comprising treatment room, nursing officers office, rest room, medical office and examination; associated administration areas,

store, dispensary; staff toilets and waiting areas. Structural upgrading of the first floor roof will be carried out to bring the building up to cyclone standards. Floor finishes will be vinyl, quarry tiles or carpet, with ceramic tiles to the wet areas.

Upgrading Senior Sailors Accommodation and Messing

This existing three-storey building will accommodate 34 senior sailors in upgraded cabins with a laundry at each of the upper two levels, upgraded toilet facilities, messing and recreation area at ground floor level. The roof structure will be upgraded to bring the building up to cyclone standards. Carpet will be provided in the cabins, common room, dining room, staff room and office; quarry tiles in the entry, corridor, kitchen and bar; ceramic tiles in wet areas.

Officers Wardroom

The wardroom will provide messing and recreational facilities for 36 officers with a capacity to seat up to 60 at formal functions. The dining, television and games rooms will be capable of being opened up to form one large space with a raked ceiling over. Toilets, cloakroom, office and telephones are provided adjacent to the entry. The kitchen is sized to cater for central food delivery and formal functions. Staff facilities include separate toilets, change room, and staff dining room. The building will be linked via covered walkways to the adjacent officers accommodation. The structure will be steel columns and beams with concrete block infill walls. Floors will be timber on concrete to dining, amenities, games, reading room and entry; carpet in the office; quarry tiles in the kitchen, bar and dry store; and ceramic tiles in wet areas.

Officers Accommodation

Accommodation for four senior officers and 18 junior officers will be provided in three separate single-storey buildings. Each pair of officers share an en suite bathroom. Senior officers will have a bedroom and living room whilst junior officers have a single room only. The blocks are designed with central access corridors which have louvred doors at the ends to promote cross-ventilation. A laundry, box room, linen store, tea room, bath and cleaner's room are located in one of the blocks. All blocks will be linked by covered walkways to the wardroom. The structure is concrete slab with load-bearing concrete blockwork supporting timber trusses. Cabins and corridors will be carpeted with ceramic tiles in wet areas.

Administration Building Extensions

The existing administration building is to be extended to provide library, conference and training rooms and other office accommodation. Due to the strong individual character of the existing design it is proposed that the extension replicate it in

both form and materials. The structural system is exposed on this building and consists of a steel portal frame and concrete slab on fill, creating a raised podium. The existing building is to be upgraded to cyclone standards. Floor finishes will be carpet with ceramic tiles to wet areas.

Physical Fitness Centre and Pavilion

The physical fitness centre is located to serve both the rugby-soccer field and the football ground. A separate pavilion with its own change rooms will be adjacent to the main oval for spectator and player use. The physical fitness centre will consist of a gymnasium, two squash courts, toilets and change facilities for players and spectators, foyer, store rooms, office, viewing gallery and activity rooms.

The structure will be steel columns and trusses spanning the gymnasium, squash courts and change room areas. External walls will be concrete blockwork with prefinished metal wall cladding. Ceilings will be flush plasterboard to the activity rooms, viewing gallery foyer, staff room, change rooms, office and welfare store. The general store will be painted concrete. The gymnasium has an acoustic lining to moderate the noise of sporting activities. The ceiling to the gymnasium will be the underside of the thermal/acoustic insulation. Floor finish to the gymnasium and squash courts will be timber parquetry over concrete, ceramic tiles to wet areas and quarry tiles or vinyl to other areas.

The pavilion consists of tiered seating for 150 people with change rooms, lockers and kiosk under. The structure is steel columns and beams with external walls being coloured concrete blockwork and prefinished metal roof cladding.

Assembly Hall

This building is to fulfil functions including lecture theatre, conference room, ceremonial hall, theatre for film viewing and theatre for stage revues. For flexibility a large open hall will be provided with a capacity to seat 200 persons and a raised stage at one end with rear working area, loading dock and change room/toilets. Office and toilets will be located off the entry foyer. The structural system will be a steel portal frame with concrete floors. Floor finishes will be timber over concrete to the hall and foyer, and ceramic tiles to toilets.

Civilian Staff Facilities

This facility will consist of a civilian amenities building implement shed, plant nursery and a flammable liquid/poison store. The building will provide toilet, locker, lunch room and offices for the foreman and fire officer. An instructional room will double as a duty cabin for fire officers during an emergency.

Fire Station

The fire station will consist of the existing fire tender building which is to be relocated and extended to provide additional storage for the fire tender vehicle and quick response vehicles. A fire maintenance store is to be constructed adjacent to the fire tender building for maintenance of fire pumps, breathing equipment and fire extinguishers.

CIVIL AND HYDRAULIC SERVICES

The existing stormwater system is adequate for the redevelopment. Consequently new drainage is required only where new buildings or pavements are to be located.

The existing roads have been surfaced and are in good condition. Access roads and parking areas to service each new facility are to be constructed with crushed rock base course and bituminous sealed surface.

The water supply for the new facilities will be provided from the existing mains system which has been augmented by an additional 100 mm diameter main to complete a ring system within the site. A watering system will be installed for all new landscaped areas. Additional on-site water storage of 0.65 Ml will be provided for fire emergency supply from a tank to be located behind the vehicle maintenance area. Water will be delivered to the mains with a separate pumping station capable of adequately pressurising the mains.

The existing sewerage system across the area of the junior sailors accommodation and along Melville Road is adequate for the proposed development. The new facilities will each be connected to this system.

The oval adjacent to the physical fitness centre and pavilion will be topsoiled and grassed and provided with a watering system.

MECHANICAL SERVICES

The mechanical services to buildings consist of exhaust and ventilation systems, air-conditioning, hot water systems, refrigerated drinking units, washing machines and dryers to laundries and kitchen equipment.

The officers wardroom, administration block, assembly hall, physical fitness centre, sick bay, senior sailors mess and recreation will be air-conditioned and all sleeping accommodation will be air-cooled. Ceiling fans with speed controllers will be provided in all sleeping accommodation. Exhaust systems will be provided to change room, toilet and kitchen areas.

Solar hot water systems will be provided to all sleeping accommodation, physical fitness centre, pavilion, officers mess, assembly hall and sick bay.

ELECTRICAL SERVICES

The existing high voltage underground reticulation will be upgraded to provide closed ring systems with additional substations provided adjacent to new load centres. Electrical services to all buildings will comprise lighting, power, telephone, fire alarm services and lightning protection. All fire alarm systems will connect back to the base master fire indicator board at the guard house and a mimic panel will be located in the fire officer's duty cabin. A public address system will be provided in all new and upgraded facilities.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping will be provided locally around each building affected by the building works and shrub and tree species will be selected to reinforce existing landscaped areas. Additional landscaping as necessary will be supplemented in areas where houses are removed.

APPENDIX C

PROJECT DRAWINGS

Figure

- 1 HMAS Coonawarra Locality Plan
- 2 HMAS Coonawarra Site Plan
- 3 HMAS Coonawarra Sketches of Proposed Buildings
 - . Junior Sailors Accommodation
 - . Officers Accommodation
 - . Officers Wardroom
 - . Administration Building
 - . Assembly Hall
 - . Assembly Hall - Section A-A
 - . Physical Fitness Centre
 - . Physical Fitness Centre Section A-A
 - . Pavilion

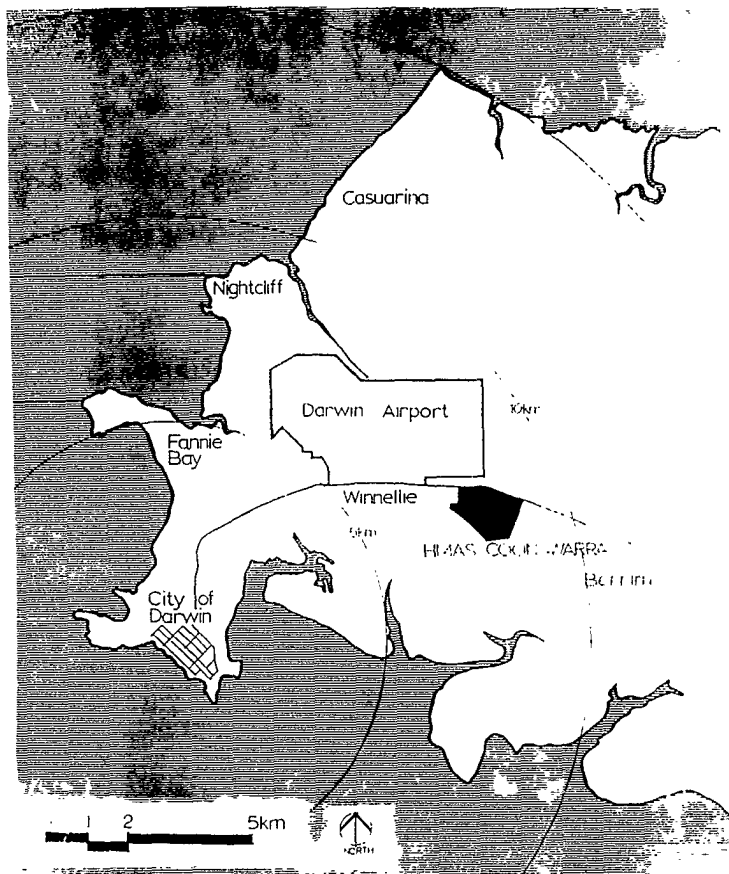


FIGURE 1: HIMAS COONAWARRA LOCALITY PLAN

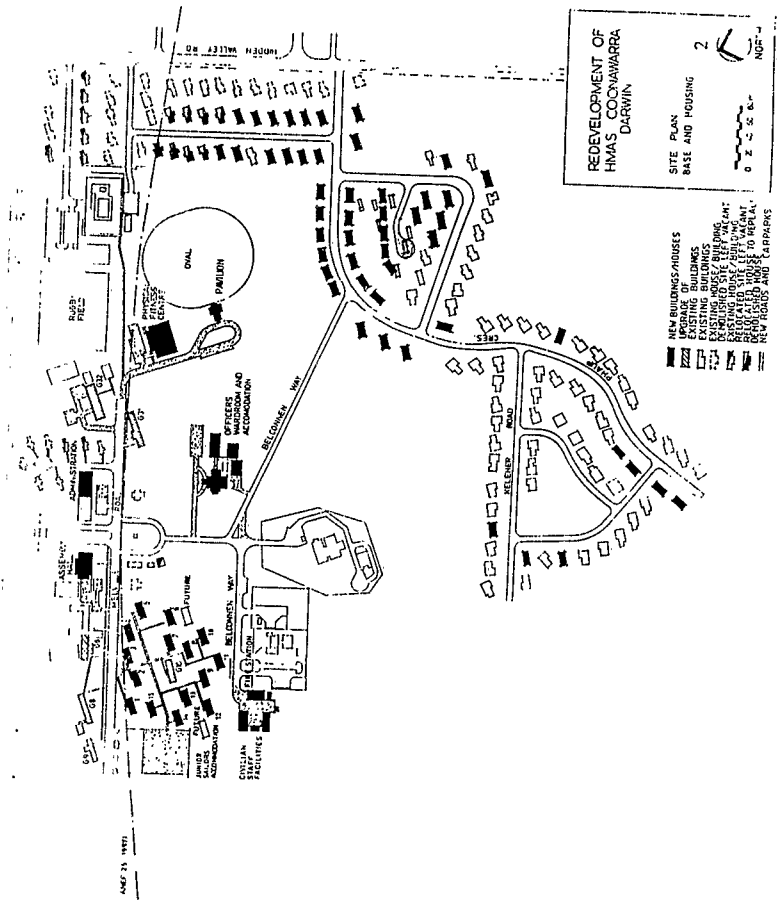
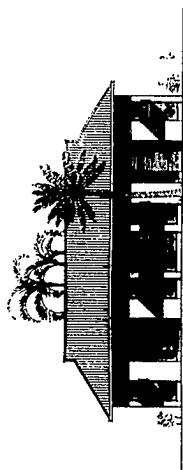


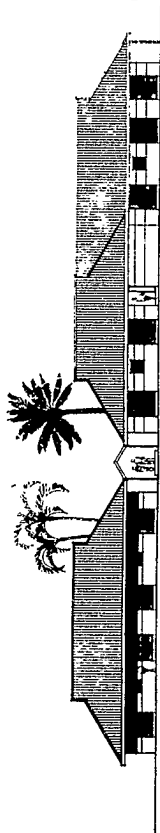
FIGURE 2: HMAS COONAWARRA SITE PLAN

FIGURE 3: HMAS COONAWARRA SKETCHES OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS



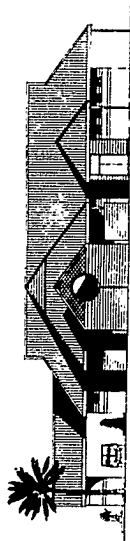
JUNIOR SAILORS ACCOMMODATION

N O R T H



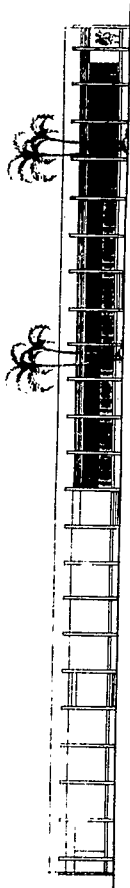
OFFICERS ACCOMMODATION

S O U T H



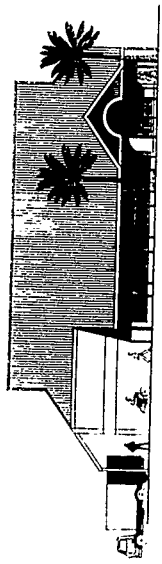
OFFICERS WARDROOM

W E S T



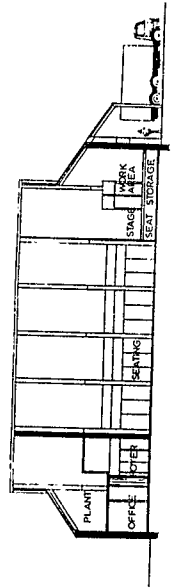
SOUTH

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING



SOUTH

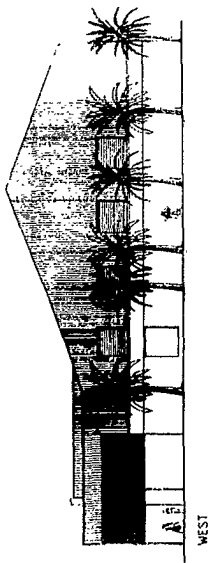
ASSEMBLY HALL



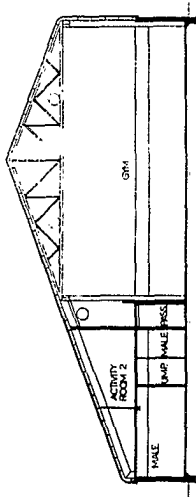
S E C T I O N A - A

ASSEMBLY HALL - SECTION A-A

PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTRE



PHYSICAL FITNESS CENTRE - SECTION A-A



C6

