



DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE
PAPER No. 8546
DATE
PRESENTED
14 DEC 1992
<i>Mary Evans</i>

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the:

CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX IN SUVA, REPUBLIC OF FIJI

(Fourteenth Report of 1992)

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
1992

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works



Report Relating

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Construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Suva, Republic of Fiji

(Fourteenth Report of 1992)

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

(Thirtieth Committee)

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)

Mr William Leonard Taylor MP (Vice-Chairman)

Senate

Senator Bryant Robert Burns

Senator Paul Henry Calvert*

Senator John Robert Devereux

House of Representatives

Mr Ewen Colin Cameron MP

Mr Lloyd Reginald O'Neil MP

Mr Russell Neville Gorman MP

Mr Bruce Craig Scott MP

*Appointed on 24.8.90 following the retirement of Senator
Dr Glenister Sheil

Committee Secretary: Peter Roberts

Inquiry Secretary: Denise Denahy

Secretarial Support: Sue Whalan

**EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

No. 146 dated Thursday, 17 September 1992

- 18 PUBLIC WORKS - PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE - REFERENCE OF WORK -
CONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
COMPLEX, SUVA, REPUBLIC OF FIJI:** Mr Beddall
(Minister representing the Minister for Administrative Services),
pursuant to notice, moved - That, in accordance with the
provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the
following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and
report: Construction of an Australian Embassy complex, Suva,
Republic of Fiji.

Mr Beddall presented plans in connection with the proposed work.

Question - put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX IN
SUVA, REPUBLIC OF FIJI

By resolution on 17 September 1992 the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report the construction of an Australian Embassy complex, Suva, Republic of Fiji.

THE REFERENCE

1. The proposal is for the construction of a permanent Chancery to replace the present unsatisfactory leased one; the renovation and extension of the current residence on the property for use as a Head of Mission (HOM) residence and the construction of Australian-based staff accommodation.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

2. The Committee received a written submission from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) - Overseas Property Group (OPG) and evidence was taken from its representatives at a public hearing held in Canberra on 23 November 1992.

3. The following organisations also presented submissions and appeared before the Committee at the public hearing:

- . Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- . Public Sector Union (PSU)
- . Foreign Service Families' Association (FSFA).

Submissions and letters were also received from the following:

- . National Trust of Australia
- . Commonwealth Fire Board

- . ACROD Ltd
- . Mr J P Laver
- . Embassy Property Committee
- . Department of Immigration Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA).

A list of witnesses who gave evidence at the public hearing is at Appendix A. The Committee's proceedings will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

4. Due to the restriction in the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* on meetings of the Public Works Committee outside Australia and its external territories, the Committee was unable to inspect the proposed site or existing accommodation in Suva. As pointed out previously by the Committee (see report relating to the Construction of Australian High Commission and Defence Housing, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, Ninth Report of 1990), this is completely contrary to the Committee's normal practice as it has always regarded site inspections as an integral and extremely important part of the consideration of a project.

5. The Committee has therefore been hampered in its consideration of the project, particularly in relation to the suitability of the proposed site, and has had to rely solely on the evidence put to it. The Committee has approached the Minister for Administrative Services, who is responsible for the administration of the Act, seeking his agreement for the removal of the restriction on Committee or Sectional Committee meetings being held outside Australia.

Committee's Conclusion

6. The Committee again draws attention to the continuing difficulty it faces in assessing overseas projects, as under current legislation it is unable to meet outside Australia or its external territories. Until this legislation is amended, to enable site inspections to be carried out overseas, the Committee continues to reluctantly give approval for construction of projects which, in its view, it has been unable to properly assess.

BACKGROUND

7. Under the Administrative Arrangements Order of 24 July 1987, DAS is responsible for the acquisition, leasing, management and disposal of land and property overseas. This activity is undertaken by the Department's Overseas Property Group which, in managing the overseas estate, is the funding and constructing authority for new works. In administering this function, the Department is advised by the Overseas Property Committee, which comprises senior representatives of user, service and regulatory departments.

8. In February 1991 the Australian Government purchased a block of 3.7 hectares (7.5 acres) as a site for a Chancery, official residence, staff accommodation and recreational facilities. The site is located in a prestige area of Suva about three kilometres from the Central Business District (CBD). The land, at 37 Princes Road Tamavua, contains the remains of a prestigious estate.

9. The site was purchased with an offset from the proceeds of sale of the previous HOM, which will continue to be occupied by the Head of Mission until the renovation of the proposed residence is completed. The sale will then be finalised and the previous Deputy's residence which has been leased back at \$1770 per month relinquished.

THE NEED

10. Property holdings in Suva consist of an unsatisfactory leased Chancery on two floors of a high rise office building, an Ambassador's residence which has been sold to part fund the purchase of the new site and 11 leased and 10 owned staff residences. (One of the residences is owned by Austrade).

11. The present Chancery is in a dilapidated state and services such as lifts and airconditioning are run down. The building does not cater for the needs of staff and there are problems with physical security. The present landlord will not renew the lease on the premises and has provided notice to that effect. November 1994 has been specified as the termination date of the lease.

12. It is anticipated that rents will rise substantially in Fiji in the future with the introduction of a Value Added Tax.

13. A custom built Embassy complex will promote Australia's identity in Fiji and enhance the Embassy's overall effectiveness.

Committee's Conclusion

14. A need exists in Suva to provide suitable premises for use as a Chancery, Head of Mission residence and staff accommodation.

THE PROPOSAL

15. It is proposed to build a Chancery, renovate and extend the current old residence on the site for a Head of Mission residence and build a staff residence to replace the one sold to help purchase the site.

16. The total planned development for the site includes:

- the construction of a new two-storey Chancery building. The Chancery provides office space, multipurpose rooms, staff amenities, storage areas and associated plantrooms
- the upgrading and extension of an existing colonial residence to HOM residence standards, including the provision of public representational areas, family living and bedroom areas, storage and plant rooms and a landscaped swimming pool
- the construction of HOM residence domestic quarters for three live-in staff
- the construction of six Australian based staff residences
- the construction of recreational facilities for use by all staff, including a 25 metre swimming pool, wading pool, squash court, tennis court, barbecue area, change rooms and meeting/function room
- staff and visitor car parking
- associated site works and servicing
- landscaping.

The present proposal is to proceed with all components of the development with the exception of five Australian-based staff residences and the recreational facilities.

The Site

17. The site at 37 Princes Road, Tamavua, Suva, of approximately 3.7 hectares, is three kilometres from the existing Embassy in the Suva CBD and less than one kilometre from the existing HOM residence. It is located in a prime residential area, approximately 90 metres above sea level and commands 270° panoramic views over Suva City and its environs. Numerous other Embassy residences are located in the area. The land is held under freehold title.

18. Purchase by the Australian Government was subject to rezoning for Commercial D use by the Director of Town and Country Planning and the Suva City Council. Following the normal procedures, during which public comments were invited, the site was rezoned to permit the proposed development and the Australian Government assumed legal title on 29 January 1991. Since the property was acquired, re-alignment of the public road reserves and exchanges of land with the Suva City Council have resulted in minor variations which are at present being consolidated into one certificate of title.

19. Princes Road forms the north-east boundary, Reservoir Road the east and south boundaries. The west and the north boundaries adjoin residential areas. From the west boundary the land falls away very steeply with the nearest houses sited approximately 30 metres below the site.

20. A substantial residence, erected on the crown of the site, and dating back to the turn of the century, commands widespread views over the Suva peninsula and hinterland. Numerous additions and modifications had been constructed since the original residence was first built.

21. The site has a large variety of both indigenous and imported trees. The expansive lawns and gardens have been well maintained, and in the past were open for public inspection one day per year, the proceeds going to selected charities.

Committee's Conclusion

22. The site at 37 Princes Road, Tamavua, Suva is in a prime residential area. Rezoning of the site will enable development for an Australian Embassy complex.

Chancery

23. The Chancery is to be of a standard appropriate to Australia's representational requirements in Fiji. It is required to facilitate the political, cultural, immigration, aid and defence interests, supporting Australia's national interests and objectives. It will be constructed in a prominent position on the block, at the confluence of Princes and Reservoir Roads. It will be separated from the HOM residence by mature landscaping and roads. Particular care has been taken with the siting of the Chancery on the plot to retain mature trees and keep site disturbance to a minimum.

24. In accordance with the projected staffing estimates of the represented departments, the Chancery has been designed to accommodate the existing office staff of 22 Australian based and 38 locally engaged staff, and has the capacity to absorb another six A-based and three locally engaged staff in the initial building envelope by using all of the visiting officer facilities. A further three A-based and three locally engaged staff can be located by taking up the majority conference room space. Provision has been included for a 200 m² multi purpose/display room which could be incorporated in the building as office premises in the longer term. It is also possible to extend the building envelope to add a further 100 m² of floor space at each end if necessary.

25. The Chancery building will be divided into an upper level containing:

- a secure complex
- a restricted access executive and political area, containing the HOM suite and offices for senior diplomatic and Defence staff
- an administrative area, catering for administration and consular staff
- Austrade

- a multi purpose/display room opening out to a landscaped area on the same level.

and a lower level containing:

- Immigration
- AIDAB
- a staff lunch room
- storage and services areas.

26. The Chancery has been designed to have access at both the upper and lower levels for ease of access by visitors. Toilets for the disabled have been provided at both levels.

27. To control movement of persons visiting the Chancery, to prevent unauthorised entry both into the building and between various areas of the building, and to protect classified material from unauthorised personnel, the Chancery will include security measures to the approved standards. A controlled pedestrian access will be provided to the lower level for immigration enquiries.

Head of Mission Residence

28. The current residence on the site is being renovated and extended to become the HOM residence. Part of the building, the bedroom wing constructed in 1972, which did not meet the current earthquake code and would have required extensive and expensive work to meet the code and which had asbestos sprayed ceilings, was demolished. The area of the residence constructed in 1950, consisting largely of the living and entertainment areas, is being refurbished and extended to provide outdoor entertainment areas in keeping with the lifestyle in Suva. A new bedroom, family and utility area is being added to the building, and new garage and storage facilities will be provided. Construction is due to be completed at the end of 1992.

29. The residence will be required to cater for official functions, with varying number of guests, as well as provide the usual requirements of a private residence.

30. Major features of the residence include four bedrooms, a family area and service facilities in the new construction, and reception room, dining room, kitchen and study in the renovated area. Servants' quarters have been provided in a new building separate from the main residence building. The grounds and residence have been designed to cater for larger gatherings which can flow from the reception rooms to the outdoor entertainment areas and grounds, as is the custom in Suva, because of the generally acceptable climate.

31. The grounds of the site are enclosed by a 2.4 m high security wall, which will provide both security and acoustic protection for the residence.

32. The building materials and equipment are selected on grounds of minimal and uncomplicated maintenance, in recognition of the limited technology and supplies prevailing in Suva.

Staff Residence

33. It is proposed to construct one AS3 residence on the site with provision for an additional five houses in the future.

34. The FSFA expressed concern that the construction of five staff houses would crowd the lower part of the block. OPG advised the Committee that the area of land to be allocated for residences is 8560 m², which will provide for an approximate distribution of one residence per 1700 m². OPG considers that this is a good balance for effective land use in the environment and compares favourably with the Australian 1/4 acre block of about 1000 m².

35. The likelihood of flooding in Zone 4 where the staff houses will be located was raised by the FSFA. OPG assured the Committee that once the area is cleared and cut-off drains installed, there will be no problem with excess water.

36. OPG advised the Committee that it has responsibility for accommodating Australian staff in Suva and these are housed in eight owned residences and 11 leased residences.

37. OPG advised that AS3 accommodation is provided for counsellors, first secretaries and equivalent. AS2 accommodation is provided for second secretaries and equivalent. However, use by more junior officers is possible.

The actual allocation to specific units of accommodation is the responsibility of the Ambassador, having regard to the standards, family composition and operational needs. In terms of available housing stock, the most difficult accommodation to secure for lease or purchase is housing for officers at the AS3 accommodation level.

38. OPG advised that the detached accommodation proposed is generally in keeping with that available on the market for rent or purchase. OPG considers it important that accommodation provided for officers not vary significantly from that available in the market, that is, OPG matches what exists. This prevents dissatisfaction arising from what occupants of leased or owned accommodation may perceive as inequities.

Recreational Facilities

39. It is not proposed to construct the general use recreational facilities at this time, but in the future it is proposed that a tennis court, squash court, swimming pool and recreational/club facilities be constructed. A freeform swimming pool is included in the Head of Mission residence development.

PLANNING AND DESIGN

40. The Master Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Design Brief prepared by OPG and recommendations made as a result of consultation with staff at the Australian Embassy in Suva and relevant staff associations in Australia. The brief sets out user and security requirements, structural, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering services and fitout requirements. The brief also covers design limitations imposed by local zoning regulations, seismic and climatic factors.

Accommodation Standards

41. DFAT has examined the design proposal and is satisfied that the design solutions meet the needs of the users, and conform to the relevant standards for office and residential accommodation.

42. The site has been divided into four separate development zones:

- Zone 1 - Head of Mission Residence, domestic quarters and car park

- Zone 2 - Chancery, car parking and electrical substation
- Zone 3 - Recreational facilities, including clubhouse, swimming pool, tennis court, squash court and a future AS2 residence
- Zone 4 - Residential area, including four AS3 houses and one AS2 house.

43. The buildings have been carefully located to take into account the prevailing climatic conditions, the substantial and established gardens which include a number of unique species, the site topography, panoramic views and access.

44. Vehicle access is limited to two controlled points with one off Princes Road and the other off Reservoir Road. An emergency exit is provided from Zones 1 and 2 on to Reservoir Road. The perimeter of the site is fenced to security standards appropriate to the Mission.

45. Access to the Chancery and HOM residence is via the main site entry off Princes Road. The main site parking area is located at the western end of the Chancery so as to be easily accessible to the Chancery, HOM residence and recreational facilities.

46. A separate controlled pedestrian access has been provided off Reservoir Road to gain direct access to the waiting area for immigration enquiries.

47. A common serviced corridor will combine power, water, emergency and security services in separate ducts, linking all buildings.

Chancery

48. The design of the Chancery results as a direct response to the brief, site features, climate and local building practice. It consists of a simple low rise (two-storey) building with each level being accessible from ground level. The building will be connected by a two-level central foyer which forms the planning hub.

49. As a two-level structure, the Chancery design provides:

- . better security for upper level office accommodation
- . a building which blends into the landscape rather than dominates it
- . distant ocean views from the upper level
- . views from both levels into the established gardens
- . natural light to all habitable spaces.

50. The main entry to the Chancery via a lightweight porte cochere/bridge on the upper level, is linked to the lower level by a public stair.

51. The lower level of the Chancery accommodates both public, private and service areas including immigration, AIDAB and the staff lunch room and showers.

52. The upper level houses the HOM office, the restricted area and balance of general office areas. Generally, office staff are located in open plan office areas which will contain modular work stations and screens to provide visual and acoustic privacy. Access to the staff areas of the Chancery is via secure lobbies.

53. The PSU expressed concern over occupational health and safety considerations related to screen-based equipment. OPG advised that the planning of office layouts is indicative only, and final positioning of freestanding units is to some extent determined by the occupant. Workstation furniture and general lighting will conform to the relevant Australian Standards relating to screen-based equipment. As a matter of policy, OPG only installs furniture which meets current ergonomic practices and standards. OPG stressed that it willingly participates in a high level of consultation with users, staff associations and unions and will continue to engage in such practices.

54. OPG assured the Committee that working conditions at Suva are covered by Commonwealth health and safety regulations.

55. The multi-purpose room is linked to the main entry via an external balcony/walkway for public access. Staff access to the multi-purpose room is provided within the building.

56. The external character of the Chancery relies on simplicity of roof shape, the linear shape of the elevations coupled with the proportions of solid and opaque elements carefully detailed to provide a play of light and shade across the building facade. The main entry to the building is identified by a porte cochere, while the public access to the multi-purpose room is identified by a modelling of the roof. The multi-purpose room opens directly onto an external functions area at the western end of the Chancery.

57. The Chancery's roofline overhangs the walls to provide protection from solar gain and tropical downpours. A pitched roof has been incorporated into the design to enable the Chancery to blend into the landscape, rather than to dominate it, while providing a visual link to the design form of the HOM residence.

58. Secure parking for five cars with provision to park nine cars overnight, is provided to the lower level of the Chancery. Staff parking is located at the western end of the building.

Head of Mission Residence

59. The HOM residence reflects the design of the original colonial residence. The two storey masonry wing has been demolished. The major sections retained were upgraded to meet current construction standards for seismic and hurricane design. The new areas are of reinforced masonry construction on concrete strip footings, and include a porte cochere, formal visitor entry, public washrooms, kitchen, family area, services and store rooms and a double garage.

60. Materials salvaged from the demolished sections of the existing building were re-used where possible.

61. The residence is single storey, with basement storage areas under part of the original structure, and provides:

- representational areas with formal, covered vehicle entry

- family privacy from the representational areas
- storage areas
- allowance for prevailing climatic conditions, that is, natural cross ventilation, screening from the westerly sun (the main view is to the west) and protection from the tropical rain (wide eaves and verandahs)
- maximum advantage of the panoramic views over the city, coast, mountains and distant islands
- privacy from the resident domestic quarters and service areas
- security requirements.

62. The domestic quarters have been located in a new separate structure in the north-west corner of the site on the Princes Road frontage, limiting access from these quarters to a minimal area of the total site.

Staff Residences

63. The Australian staff residences will reflect the colonial theme of the HOM residence. The same design criteria for climate, privacy and security will apply as in the HOM residence. Domestic staff and storage facilities will be located in the basement of the residences. Four AS3 type and two AS2 type units are included in the Master Plan, although only one AS3 is included in the current proposal.

Recreational Facilities

64. Recreational facilities to be constructed at a later date include:

- a building incorporating a staff function/lunch room, bar, squash court, pool change rooms and indoor recreational facilities (darts, table tennis, billiards etc.)
- 25 m x 10 m swimming pool
- children's wading pool

- tennis court

- barbecue area.

Provision for the Disabled

65. Access for the disabled will be provided to both levels of the Chancery, and toilets for the disabled are provided at each level. Ramped access is provided at the main entrance to the HOM residence. The family areas of the HOM residence and all other staff residences have direct ground level access.

66. Concern was expressed by the PSU concerning wheelchair access between floors of the Chancery. OPG advised that the building design enables the installation of a motorised stair mounted platform system to allow internal wheelchair access between the upper and lower levels of the Chancery if this is required at a future time.

67. Two car parking spaces have been allocated for the disabled.

Committee's Recommendation

68. The Committee notes the Overseas Property Group's commitment to provision of facilities for the disabled. The Committee recommends that attention be given to the possible future installation of a motorised stair mounted platform system, to allow internal wheelchair access between floors of the Chancery should this be required.

Materials, Structure and Finishes

Local Industry Standards

69. OPG advised that:

- the local construction industry relies heavily on labour, although it could not be classified as labour intensive

- the larger construction companies are capable of producing a standard of finish equal to that acceptable in Australia

- the installation of hydraulic, mechanical and electrical services is generally to Australian standards. Sophisticated electronic installations would require expatriate tradesmen and supervision.

Materials

70. The design of all buildings will make use of locally available materials and equipment where they are considered appropriate. At this stage it is envisaged the following building items will have to be imported:

- structural steel
- glazing
- plasterboard wall and ceiling finishes
- insulation
- acoustic ceiling tiles
- floor finishes
- hardware and fixture items
- electrical fittings
- mechanical equipment
- electronic security equipment.

71. Emphasis will be given to importing items of an Australian origin.

72. External walls will be of reinforced block construction with a render finish, protected by the roof overhang against direct solar radiation and rainfall.

73. Windows will be aluminium framed with either laminated glass, or standard glass with an applied shatter resistant film, to satisfy security requirements. All windows will be protected by storm shutters. The roof will be insulated pre-coloured metal deck.

74. The internal walls will be a combination of reinforced concrete, masonry or lightweight plasterboard partitions. Concrete and masonry walls will be either rendered and painted or painted, depending on their locations. Ceramic wall tiles will be used in toilet and kitchen areas. Ceiling finishes will include painted suspended plasterboard and acoustic tiles to office areas. Floor finishes to office areas will generally be carpeted, with timber or tiled floors to the residences. Wet areas will be ceramic tiled.

Structure

75. The structural system for all buildings will be designed to provide resistance to both cyclonic and seismic forces in accordance with relevant Australian and New Zealand codes. OPG therefore believes that the buildings will withstand such events. A geotechnical survey of ground conditions on the site has been undertaken. The results of this survey indicate that a conventional pad and strip footing can be utilised.

76. The Chancery building is a suspended reinforced concrete floor structure with band beams, columns and shear walls. The roof will be a steel framed construction with metal deck.

77. The residences will have a combination of reinforced masonry walls, ground and suspended concrete floors and timber framed construction. The roofs will be timber framed construction with corrugated prefinished metal decking. Mesh will be incorporated into the roof to satisfy security requirement.

Mechanical Services

Chancery

78. All habitable areas of the Chancery, except the multi-purpose room, will be airconditioned to provide appropriate comfort conditions for personnel.

79. Forced mechanical ventilation will be provided for toilets, cleaners' rooms, and the kitchen. The Multi-purpose Room will be designed for natural cross-flow ventilation and will be equipped with ceiling fans. The sheltered car parking area will be designed for natural cross-flow ventilation.

80. Domestic hot water for use in toilets, showers and the kitchen area, will be provided by roof mounted solar hot water units.

Residences

81. The residences will have split unit rotary type air conditioners installed in all bedrooms and in addition, to the study and family room of the HOM residence.

82. All habitable rooms will be fitted with ceiling fans. Kitchens and bathrooms will have appropriate extraction systems. Heating is not required.

83. Hot water will be provided by solar hot water units fitted with electric boosters.

Electrical Services

84. Electrical power will be provided by the Fiji Supply Authority from existing underground 11kv cables in Reservoir Road to a substation located within to the boundary to the site. An area main switch board and standby diesel generator will be collocated near the substation with underground cables distributing essential power at normal voltage throughout the site.

85. Surge diverters will be connected to all incoming cables to the Chancery to minimise damage to the electrical installation due to voltage spikes.

86. A small emergency generator will be provided within the Chancery building to maintain essential electrical services in the secure areas.

87. Battery powered emergency lighting will enable safe egress from the Chancery in the event of total loss of electrical supply.

88. Low level security and general external lighting will be provided throughout the grounds.

89. Underground telephone circuits will be provided to all buildings with the site MDF and PABX located in the Chancery. Communication cabling will be installed throughout the Chancery.

Energy Usage and Consumption Targets

90. The Chancery building and its system will be designed to meet an appropriate energy target. Lifecycle costing will be used for optimisation of the design.

91. The preliminary design for the Chancery has been evaluated using site weather data and an energy modelling program developed by ACS. A number of design features and operational factors have been analysed to assess their impact on energy usage. These include:

- . alternative methods of shading the building
- . the effect of building orientation
- . various forms of wall construction and insulation
- . lighting levels and lighting controls
- . airconditioning systems, controls and usage patterns
- . office equipment power usage management
- . the use of solar heating for domestic hot water.

92. The energy modelling indicates that a likely energy consumption without special conservation measures, but with good design practices and normal plant utilisation is 950 MJ/m²/annum. The analysis work shows that by optimising various elements of the project which impact on its energy usage, by providing appropriate operational controls, and efficient management, a 20% reduction in the projected energy consumption to 760 MJ/m²/annum is achievable without incurring a significant capital cost penalty. This is the energy target for the building.

Hydraulic Services

93. Mains water from Princes Road will be linked to the water main in Reservoir Road, providing for dual sources of water supply to the site. Water will be distributed internally through 100 mm and 80 mm diameter submains.

94. The buildings will be serviced by branches taken from the internal submains. Hosecocks will be provided throughout the site as considered necessary, to facilitate maintenance of the landscape.

95. Sewage disposal will be through septic tanks connected to leach drains and soakage pits.

96. The HOM residence, each of the other residences, the domestic quarters, the guardhouse, and the Chancery will be connected to individual septic systems. All systems will be sized to suit the assessed loadings.

97. Stormwater systems feed into existing natural drainage and formed channels where practicable.

98. A combination surface/piped stormwater system will be utilised for roadworks and car parks.

Fire Protection

99. All buildings will be constructed and equipped to accord with the fire safety requirements of the National Building Code - Fiji and will include:

- automatic thermal and smoke alarm system, complying with New Zealand Standard NZS 4512, connected to the Suva Fire Brigade
- external fire hydrants
- internal fire hose reels complying with AS 1221 and AS 2441
- early warning intercommunication system complying with AS 2220
- smoke control
- fire extinguishers to comply with AS 2444.

100. The main swimming pool will serve as a back up to the fire hydrant installation.

101. The Committee was advised that the Building Code of Australia and the National Building Code of Fiji do not require fire sprinklers in buildings less than 25 metres in effective height. The effective height of the Chancery is 3.6 metres. The overall height is less than 12 metres.

102. The building is designed in fire compartments (with block fire rated walls to the roof) of 1000 m² or less. A building with occupancies of excessive hazard is required to have fire sprinklers when it contains a fire compartment with a floor area in excess of 2000 m². The Chancery building is well within these safety margins. The building is an isolated building on an open site and this further reduces the fire risk.

Security

103. The north, west and south boundaries will be enclosed by a 2.7 metre high mesh fence topped with security wire. The HOM residence and Chancery will be enclosed behind a masonry wall erected on the Princes Road and Reservoir Road boundaries.

104. Concern was expressed over security fencing on the site. OPG advised that briefings provided did not indicate a significant level of personal threat in Suva. Nevertheless, in developing internal perimeter fencing, conventional precautions were taken by proposing a 2.7 metre chainwire fence topped with razor wire. On the public streets an upgraded design is proposed incorporating masonry, chainwire and metal infills. OPG believes that the relative security advantages of one type of fence over the other is problematical in the face of a determined attempt to enter the grounds. It should be, however, noted that the official residence has its off street fencing in chainwire.

105. There is an emergency vehicle exit from the Chancery and HOM residence zones to Reservoir Road. All site access points will be controlled.

106. The Chancery building itself will have a secure lobby for consular inquiries controlled by the receptionist within a secure booth. This checkpoint will monitor access to the DFAT general office and restricted zones on the upper level. Access to the general office areas of Austrade, DILGEA and AIDAB is also via controlled access lobbies. The site and building will utilise CCTV for electronic monitoring of secure entry points.

107. Each of the residences will have a safe haven located in the bedroom areas, which will include at least one bathroom, a direct external telephone/radio link and an escape hatch.

108. Lighting will be installed throughout the grounds to satisfy security requirements.

109. The PSU expressed concern over the ability to limit public access to the Embassy grounds. OPG advised the Committee that a shelter for a guard will be provided adjacent to the pedestrian access off Reservoir Road, to enable the gate to be controlled during the public access hours to the Migration Section. A further control point will be provided at the main entry on Princes Road which will be the location of the 24 hour guarding service. The grounds will be monitored by appropriately located circuit cameras.

LANDSCAPING

110. The site has been developed over 75 years into one of Suva's finest gardens. A detailed survey of the existing garden has been prepared and the many plant species identified and classified as either suitable for retention or removal.

111. The development of the Master Plan recognises the historical and horticultural significance of the garden. Buildings, roadways and car parks have been carefully located to preserve the original landscape.

112. In areas where excavation will expose the underlying soapstone bedrock, topsoil will be imported to the site.

113. To the north of the Chancery a terraced area will separate the road from the building providing an outlook and allowing light penetration to the lower level offices.

114. The Committee queried the cost of maintaining the 3.7ha site. OPG advised that the estimated annual cost of maintaining the grounds is approximately A\$13 000. This estimate includes wages for three full time and one part-time (two days a week) gardeners, maintenance of plant and equipment, purchase of fuel, fertiliser and other gardening requirements.

115. While the annual cost may increase slightly when the Chancery and residential units and recreational facilities are operational, it is not expected that the increase will be significant.

CONSULTATION

116. To ensure that the Brief would reflect the needs of the staff involved, consultations were held with officers of user Departments, and with staff associations.

117. The user departments and authorities involved in the development of the proposal were:

- . Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- . Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs
- . Department of Defence
- . Australian Trade Commission (Austrade)
- . Australian International Development Bureau (AIDAB).

118. The following staff associations were invited to participate:

- . Foreign Service Families' Association
- . Foreign Affairs and Trade Association
- . Public Sector Union
- . Family Liaison Officer - Department of Foreign Affairs
- . Australian Journalists Association
- . Professional Officers' Association
- . Metals and Engineering Workers Union.

119. Input was received from:

- . Public Sector Union
- . Foreign Affairs and Trade Association
- . Foreign Service Families' Association
- . Foreign Affairs Family Liaison Office.

Committee's Recommendation

120. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group continues discussions with user groups during construction of the proposed buildings.

PROGRAM

Chancery

121. Australian Construction Services has been engaged to carry out Design and Contract Documentation.

122. Construction is scheduled to begin in May 1993 with an estimated time for construction of 18 months.

Head of Mission Residence

123. Adrian Sofield Architect (ASA) Ltd have been engaged to design, document and administer construction of the HOM residence and one AS3 residence.

124. Construction of the HOM residence is scheduled to be completed in December 1992.

Staff Residences and Recreational Facilities

125. The Committee was advised that the program for the construction of the remaining residences and the recreational facility has not been established.

Authorities Consulted

126. Consultation has taken place with all relevant authorities. Approvals are required by each of the following, and applications must be submitted for each structure, including fencing and swimming pools:

Town Planning:	Suva City Council - Department of Town and Country Planning
Building Permit:	Suva City Council - (Includes health and structural requirements)
Electricity:	Fiji Electricity Authority
Water:	Ministry for Infrastructure and Public Utilities Suva Water and Sewerage Section
Septic Tank Systems:	Suva City Council
Fire Protection:	Suva Fire Brigade
Communications:	Fiji Post and Telecommunications.

127. Planning approvals have been obtained for the overall site development as per the Master Plan. Building permits have been issued for:

- the perimeter security fencing
- the sub station
- the HOM residence and domestic quarters.

Codes and Standards

128. The following codes and standards will apply:

General construction	-	New Zealand
Fire	-	New Zealand, Australia
Wiring	-	Australia

Cyclonic design	-	Australia
Seismic design	-	New Zealand.

129. Performance and product standards to NZ and Australian Codes are generally understood by the Fiji construction industry.

AUSTRALIAN CONTENT

130. ACS, a Division of the Department of Administrative Services has been commissioned for the design of the Chancery. Adrian Sofield Architects, headed by an expatriate Australian practising in Suva has been commissioned for masterplanning of the site and design of the Head of Mission residence and staff accommodation.

131. Australian or Australian affiliated subconsultants are being commissioned for the project as much as possible. There are a number of Australian and New Zealand affiliated professional practices in Suva whose services are being used.

132. It is proposed that Australian and/or Australian affiliated companies active in the Pacific area who have the necessary experience and authority to operate in Fiji will be invited to tender for the Chancery project.

133. A Fijian based contractor is undertaking the Head of Mission residence work.

134. The local industry is familiar with Australian conditions of contract and it is proposed to call selected tenders on a lump sum basis with rise and fall provisions allowed for selected items.

135. The consultants and contractors will be urged to specify and use Australian products to the extent practicable.

136. Australian carpet and furniture will be used throughout the Complex where appropriate.

Committee's Recommendation

137. The Committee recommends the use of Australian - manufactured furniture and fittings where appropriate.

ECONOMIC EVALUATION

138. All buildings in the Complex have been designed to minimise construction costs, being uncomplicated in design, and allowing for traditional, less costly and achievable construction methods.

139. The current unsatisfactory interim Chancery is leased at \$A248 000 per annum (as at 16 August 1992) so rental savings of this amount will be realised for office accommodation.

140. The present Head of Mission residence was sold to partly fund the purchase of the site and is available only until the proposed residence is completed. Alternative accommodation would be expected to cost \$A4 100 per month.

Delay in Referral of Project

141. The project for the Chancery and one residence was forwarded to the Minister for Finance in January 1992 for approval for referring to the Public Works Committee. At November 1991 prices the outturn cost was \$7.335m.

142. However, the proposal was not referred to the Committee until September 1992. By that time the outturn cost had increased to \$9.368m at July 1992 prices. Factors contributing to the increase were:

- . building cost increases of 6%
- . introduction of a 10% VAT on goods and services from 1 July 1992
- . exchange rate variations \$A = FD 1.173 to 1.023.

143. On the evidence given to the Committee, it appears that this increase in cost has been due to the delay by the Department of Finance in referring this proposal to the Committee.

ESTIMATE OF COST

144. The estimated cost of the proposed work at July 1992 prices is \$9.368m.

Committee's Recommendation

145. Taking into account reservations expressed in Recommendation 1, the Committee recommends the construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Suva, Republic of Fiji at an estimated cost of \$9.368m at July 1992 prices.

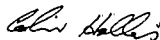
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

146. The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee and the page in the report to which each refers are set out below:

	Paragraph
1. The Committee again draws attention to the continuing difficulty it faces in assessing overseas projects, as under current legislation it is unable to meet outside Australia or its external territories. Until this legislation is amended, to enable site inspections to be carried out overseas, the Committee continues to reluctantly give approval for construction of projects which, in its view, it has been unable to properly assess.	6
2. A need exists in Suva to provide suitable premises for use as a Chancery, Head of Mission residence and staff accommodation.	14
3. The site at 37 Princes Road, Tamavua, Suva is in a prime residential area. Rezoning of the site will enable development for an Australian Embassy complex.	22
4. The Committee notes the Overseas Property Group's commitment to provision of facilities for the disabled. The Committee recommends that attention be given to the possible future installation of a motorised stair mounted platform system, to allow internal wheelchair access between floors of the Chancery should this be required.	68
5. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group continues discussions with user groups during construction of the proposed buildings.	120
6. The Committee recommends the use of Australian - manufactured furniture and fittings where appropriate.	137

7. Taking into account reservations expressed in Recommendation 1, the Committee recommends the construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Suva, Republic of Fiji at an estimated cost of \$9.368m at July 1992 prices.

145



Colin Hollis

Chairman

7 December 1992

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES

ATKIN, Dr Noraidah, President, Foreign Service Families Association, 34 Finniss Crescent, Narrabundah, Australian Capital Territory, 2604

KENT, Mr John Mervyn, General Manager, Overseas Property Group, Department of Administrative Services, Canberra City, Australian Capital Territory, 2601

NASH, Mr Michael A., Executive Officer, Diplomatic Security Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

O'LEARY, Mr David John, Assistant Secretary, South Pacific Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

RICHARDS, Ms Penelope Ann, Assistant Secretary, Resources Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

SINKOVITS, Mr Thomas Joseph, Fiji Desk Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

SOLIN, Mr Ian, Secretary, PSU Branch Committee on Overseas Conditions of Service, Public Sector Union, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

WHITWELL, Ms Helen Louise, Member, PSU Branch Committee on Overseas Conditions of Service, Public Sector Union, Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, Chan Street, Belconnen, Australian Capital Territory, 2616

WILSON, Mrs Christine Isanne, Vice President, Foreign Service Families Association, 58 Hyndes Crescent, Holder, Australian Capital Territory, 2611

WILSON, Mr Denis Patrick, Assistant General Manager, Overseas Property Group, Department of Administrative Services, Canberra City, Australian Capital Territory, 2601

APPENDIX B

PROJECT DRAWINGS

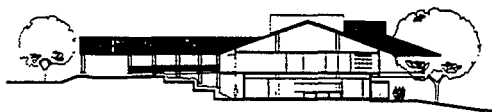
	Page
Chancery - Perspective	B-1
Chancery - Sections	B-2
Chancery - Elevations	B-3
Chancery - Elevations	B-4
<i>Chancery</i> - Upper Level Floor Plan	B-5
<i>Chancery</i> - Lower Level Floor Plan	B-6
<i>Chancery</i> - Site Plan	B-7
Residential Units - Elevations	B-8
Embassy Residence - Ground Floor	B-9
Embassy Residence - Basement	B-10
HOM Perspective	B-11
HOM Residence - Elevations	B-12
HOM Perspective	B-13
HOM Residence - Elevations	B-14
HOM Residence - Ground Floor Plan/Basement Plan	B-15
Embassy - Master Plan	B-16
Embassy - Locality Plan	B-17



PERSPECTIVE
SEPTEMBER 1991



AUSTRALIAN CHANCERY
SUVA: FIJI



CROSS SECTION



LONGITUDINAL SECTION

SECTIONS
SEPTEMBER 1981



AUSTRALIAN CHANCERY
SUVA : FIJI



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

ELEVATIONS
SEPTEMBER 1991



AUSTRALIAN CHANCERY
SUN: PUT



EAST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION

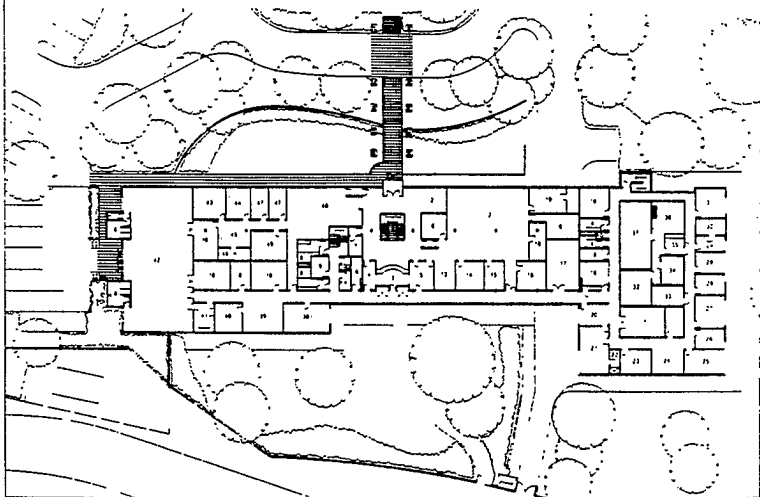
ELEVATIONS
SEPTEMBER 1961



ALSTRAALIAN CHANCERY
SUVA, FIJI

LEGEND

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 POWER | 19 STORE | 35 OFFICE |
| 2 READING AREA | 19 REGISTRY BUILDING | 36 OFFICE |
| 3 RECEPTION | 20 ADMIN ASSISTANT WAITING | 37 OFFICE |
| 4 SECURE JOINT | 21 HEAD OF MISSION | 38 VISITOR CONFERENCE |
| 5 SECURE INTERVIEW | 22 HIGH ENCLAVE | 39 INFORMATION RECEPTION |
| 6 MECHANICAL PLANT | 23 1ST SECRETARY | 40 1ST SECRETARY INFORMATION |
| 7 DISABLED TOILET | 24 ADMIN ASSISTANTS | 41 KITCHEN |
| 8 TOILET | 25 COUNSELLOR | 42 MULTIPURPOSE ROOM |
| 9 REST ROOM | 26 2ND SECRETARY | 43 SENIOR TRADE COMMISSIONER |
| 10 CLEANER | 27 DEFENCE ATTACHE | 44 1ST SECRETARY |
| 11 TEAROOM | 28 DEFENCE ASSISTANT | 45 SECRETARY |
| 12 CHIEF GENERAL OFFICE | 29 ASSISTANT DEFENCE ASSISTANT | 46 COMPUTER |
| 13 CONSULAR ASSISTANT | 30 STORE | 47 MARKETING OFFICER |
| 14 1ST SECRETARY | 31 1ST SECRETARY | 48 AUSTRALIAN GENERAL OFFICE |
| 15 2ND SECRETARY | 32 OFFICE | 49 LIBRARY |
| 16 VISITOR | 33 OFFICE | |
| 17 CONFERENCE ROOM | 34 OFFICE | |



UPPER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

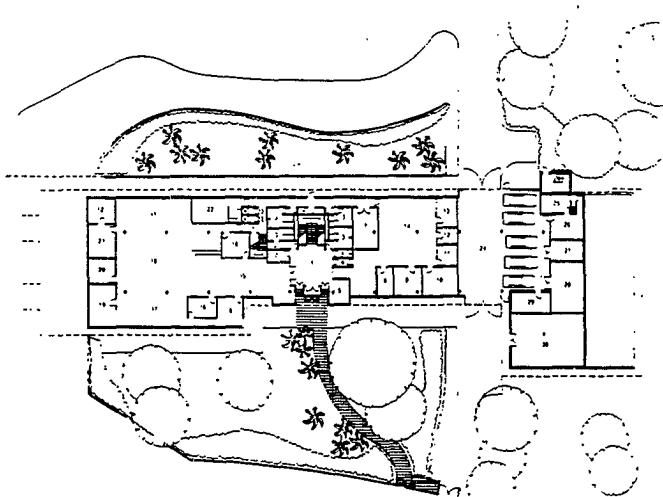
SEPTEMBER 1991



AUSTRALIAN CONSULAR
 SURV: FUI

LEGEND

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 COVER | 16 INTERVIEW |
| 2 DISABLED TOILET | 17 IMMIGRATION GENERAL OFFICE |
| 3 TOILET | 18 REGISTRY CONTACTS |
| 4 CLEANER | 19 PRINCIPAL IMMIGRATION OFFICER |
| 5 ADAS WAITING | 20 COMPUTER |
| 6 SECURE LOBBY | 21 STORE |
| 7 CONFERENCE ROOM | 22 LUNCH ROOM |
| 8 INTERVIEW | 23 SHOWERS |
| 9 1ST SECRETARY | 24 SECURE PARKING |
| 10 COUNSELLOR | 25 PLANT |
| 11 LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF | 26 PLANT |
| 12 MECHANICAL PLANT | 27 SWITCH ROOM |
| 13 2ND SECRETARY | 28 HEAT REJECTION PLANT |
| 14 ADAS GENERAL OFFICE | 29 COUNSELLOR |
| 15 IMMIGRATION WAITING | 30 STORE |

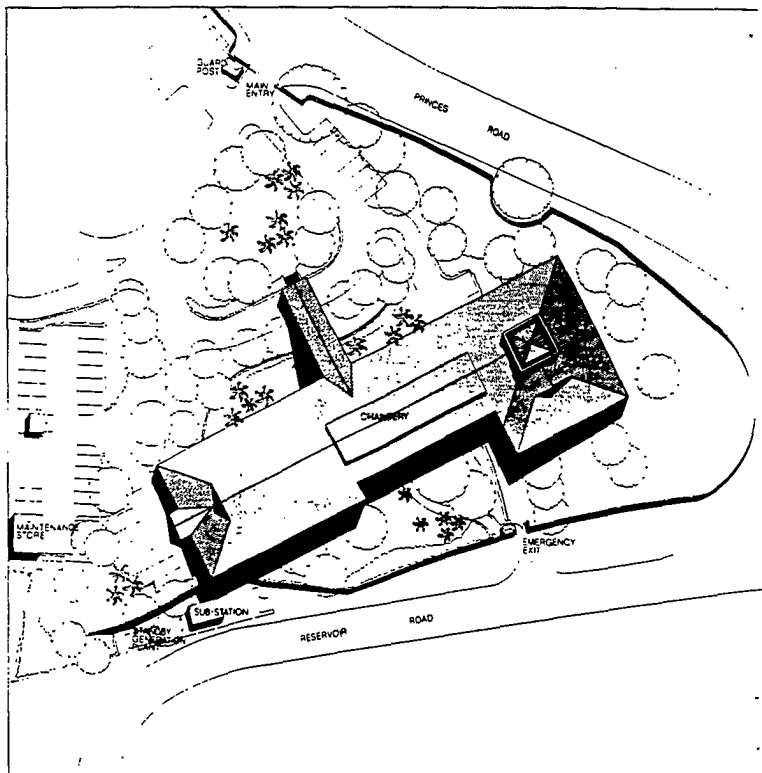


LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1991



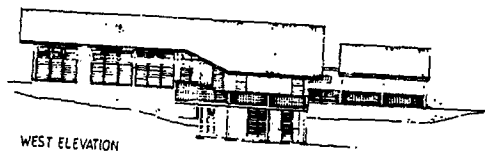
AUSTRALIAN CHANCERY
SUVA : FIU



SITE PLAN
 SEPTEMBER 1991



AUSTRALIAN CHANCERY
 SUVA, FIJI



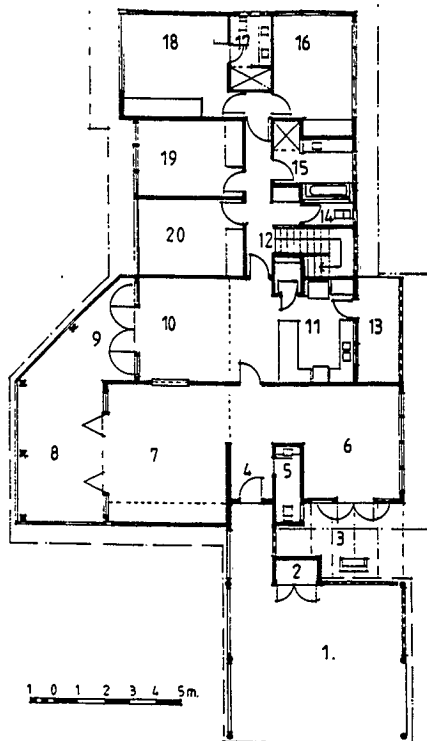
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

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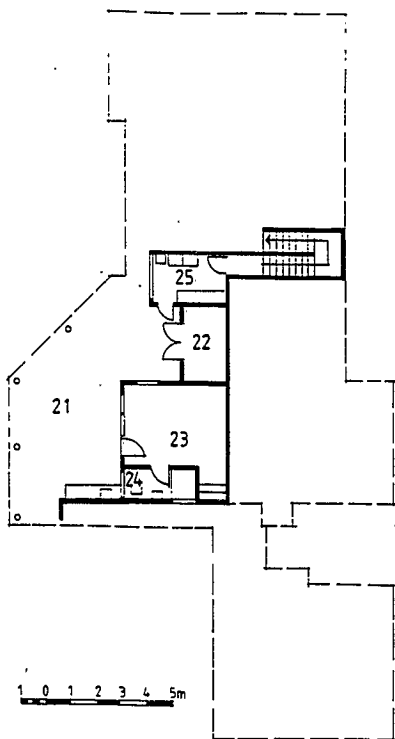
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
PROPOSED AS3
RESIDENTIAL UNITS SUVA
ELEVATIONS



GROUND FLOOR.

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
SUVA AS.3 RESIDENCE

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|------------------|
| 1 | CARPORT | 11 | KITCHEN |
| 2 | GARDEN TOOLS | 12 | STAIRS |
| 3 | COURTYARD | 13 | VERANDAH |
| 4 | ENTRY | 14 | W.C. 1 |
| 5 | W.C. 2. | 15 | BATH 2. |
| 6 | DINING | 16 | BEDROOM 2. |
| 7 | LIVING | 17 | BATH 1 |
| 8 | DECK 2 | 18 | BEDROOM 1 |
| 9 | DECK 1 | 19 | BEDROOM 3. |
| 10 | FAMILY | 20. | BEDROOM 4/ STUDY |



BASEMENT.

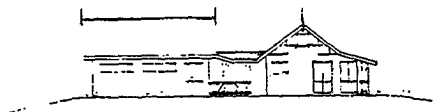
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
SUVA AS.3 RESIDENCE

- 21 VERANDAH.
- 22 BOX ROOM
- 23 STAFF QUARTERS
- 24 BATH / W.C
- 25 LAUNDRY

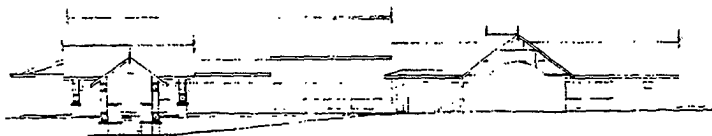


H.O.M. PERSPECTIVE
SEPTEMBER 1991

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
SUVA, FIJI



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

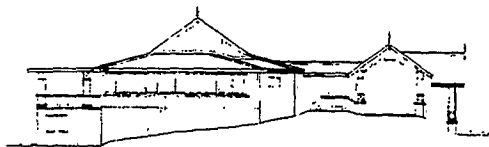
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AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
HOM RESIDENCE SUVA
ELEVATIONS

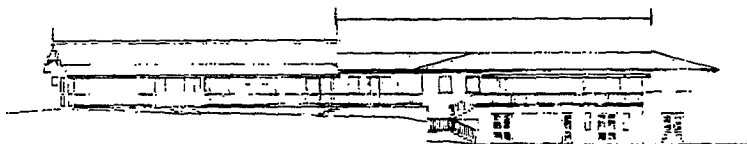


HOM. PERSPECTIVE
SEPTEMBER 1991

ALSTRIAN EMBASSY
SUVA, FIJI



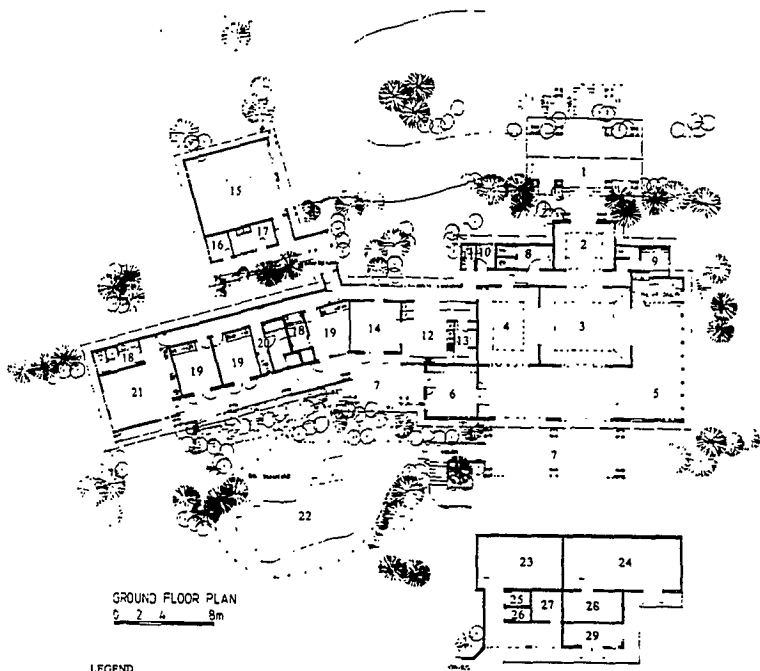
SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

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AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
HQM RESIDENCE SUVA
ELEVATIONS



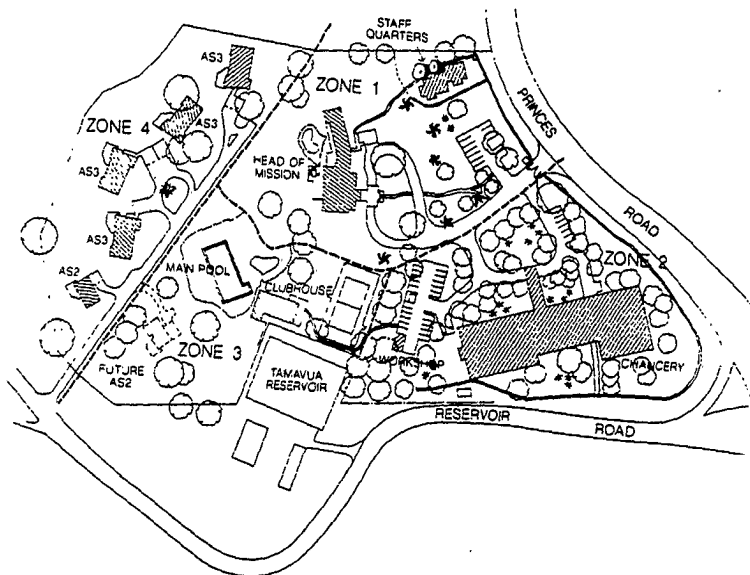
LEGEND

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|------------------------|
| 1 | PORTE COCHERE | 16 | RUBBISH |
| 2 | ENTRANCE PORCH | 17 | LAUNDRY |
| 3 | LIVING | 18 | ENSUITE |
| 4 | DINING | 19 | BEDROOM |
| 5 | ENCLOSED VERANDAH | 20 | BATHROOM |
| 6 | STUDY | 21 | MASTER BEDROOM |
| 7 | TERRACE | 22 | SWIMMING POOL |
| 8 | POWDER ROOM | 23 | POOL EQUIPMENT |
| 9 | MALE WASHROOM | 24 | BOX ROOM |
| 10 | STORE | 25 | SHOWER |
| 11 | STAFF WASHROOM | 26 | W.C. |
| 12 | KITCHEN | 27 | CRANSE |
| 13 | PANTRY | 28 | REPRESENTATIONAL STORE |
| 14 | FAMILY | 29 | GARDEN STORE |
| 15 | DOUBLE GARAGE | | |

0 2 4 8m



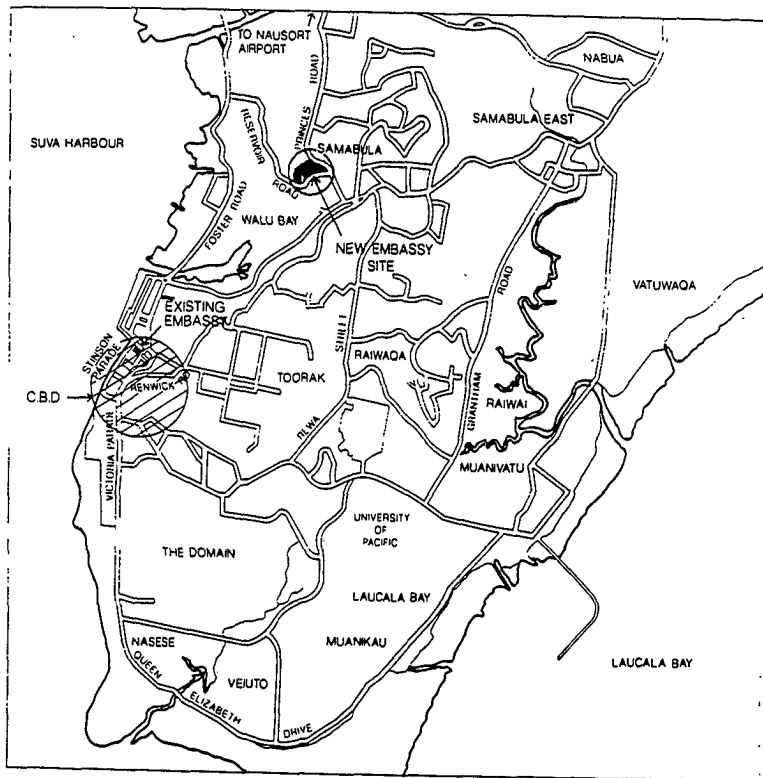
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
HOM RESIDENCE SUVA



0 10 20 40m



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
COMPLEX
SUVA FIJI
MASTER PLAN



LOCALITY PLAN
SEPTEMBER 1991



0 100 400M

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
SUVA : FIJI