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Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the

YORK PARK OFFICES, BARTON, ACT

(Twentieth 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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York Park Offices, Barton, ACT

(Twentieth 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

Sectional Committee on York Park Offices, Barton, ACT

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)
Mr William Leonard Taylor MP (Vice Chairman)
Mr Bruce Craig Scott MP
Senator Bryant Robert Burns

Inquiry Secretary: Peter Roberts

Secretarial Support: Sophia Konti

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

No. 146 dated Thursday, 17 September 1992

19 PUBLIC WORKS-PARLIAMENTARY STANDING

**COMMITTEE-REFERENCE OF WORK-YORK PARK
OFFICES, BARTON, ACT:** 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: York Park Offices, Barton,
ACT.

Mr Beddall presented plans in connection with the proposed work.
Question - put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
YORK PARK OFFICES, BARTON, ACT

By resolution on 17 September 1992 the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report the York Park Offices, Barton, ACT.

THE REFERENCE

1. The proposal is to construct an office building of 46 300 m² on Commonwealth land known as York Park with frontages to State Circle and Brisbane Avenue Barton.
2. The building will provide permanent accommodation for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which will occupy approximately 41 000 m². Austrade will occupy approximately 4500 m² while the balance of 800 m² is available for other uses to be determined during the project development.
3. The DFAT presently occupies 36 519 m² in the Administrative Building which is in urgent need of extensive refurbishment. The estimated cost of the building including off-site infrastructure works is \$186.832m at April 1992 prices.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

4. The Committee received written submissions from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), DFAT and the National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA) and evidence was taken from these organisations by a Sectional Committee at a public hearing in Canberra on 6 November 1992. Evidence was also taken from the following on 6 November:

- Public Sector Union (PSU)
- Foreign Affairs and Trade Association (FATA)
- National Trust of Australia (ACT)

- Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra
- Mr I W Morison and Mr E Wensing.

5. A number of other written submissions relating to the project were also received and these are incorporated in the Minutes of Evidence.

6. Prior to the public hearing the Sectional Committee inspected existing accommodation in the Administrative Building and the site for the proposed building.

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

THE NEED

Background

8. The Administrative Building in Parkes, ACT is the principal location of DFAT. Designed in the 1920s and 1930s and built in the 1940s, the building is the oldest major public service building in Canberra and has never undergone a major refurbishment. With rentable space of 36 519 m², the building is overcrowded and too small to accommodate the whole department. DFAT also occupies 958 m² in Canberra House, Civic and a further 3640 m² in the Edmund Barton Building, Barton. Austrade occupies 5900 m² of commercially leased space in Civic.

9. Deteriorating services and fire safety problems in the Administrative Building have been an increasing concern for a number of years. The problem was considered in 1986 when the then Department of Housing and Construction (DHC) was commissioned by the National Capital Development Commission to prepare a Refurbishment Master Plan for the building.

10. The Master Plan provided for staged refurbishment over seven years. At that time staged refurbishment was regarded as the preferred option because the then Department of Foreign Affairs (without Trade or Promotion Australia) occupied only a portion of the building and one entire block was shortly to be vacated by DAS. Thus, a staged refurbishment was possible while keeping the department in the one building.

11. In July 1987, Jackson & Swain Pty Ltd, Architects, were commissioned by the National Capital Development Commission to implement Stage 1 of the refurbishment proposed in the DHC report. The project did not go ahead because of the amalgamation of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Promotion Australia and elements of the Department of Trade which altered space requirements.

12. Jackson & Swain produced a new report in December 1988 to take account of the changed circumstances and to develop accommodation options based on the DHC report. The new report recommended early action to deal with the problems in the Administrative Building and canvassed two options:

- the construction of a new building for DFAT
- the construction of one or two annexes to the Administrative Building which would be used as staging space during a total refurbishment and occupied in the long term by elements of the larger amalgamated department.

13. The report recommended the construction of a new building as the most cost-effective solution.

14. In 1989, in consideration of the recommendations contained in the Jackson & Swain report, DAS identified a number of suitable building sites and put a submission to Government for a new building at the York Park site in Barton which was reserved for major policy departments requiring proximity to Parliament. At the request of Government, DAS expanded on the options in a supplementary submission in August 1990.

15. The options considered by Government in August 1990 were:

- to construct a large building which would allow DFAT to collocate from its existing five locations including the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB)
- the construction of a smaller building for DFAT (excluding AIDAB)
- the construction of a less prestigious building equivalent in size and finish to that proposed for the Department of Employment,

Education and Training which could provide staging accommodation for DFAT, Treasury and the Department of Finance while the Treasury and Administrative Buildings were refurbished.

16. The decision taken in the 1990-91 Federal Budget was that \$4m be appropriated for detailed design work, sufficient for referral to the Committee for the York Park building on the basis that it would provide general purpose office accommodation as staging space for a number of tenants including DFAT, the Treasury and the Department of Finance. This was to enable refurbishment of the Administrative and Treasury Buildings. The permanent tenant of York Park was to be decided at a later date. However, the Government did not proceed to approve construction in the 1991-92 Budget.

The Current Proposal

17. In 1991 Project Coordination Australia Pty Ltd was commissioned by the Australian Estate Management (AEM) group of DAS to provide a new report on the building. This was completed in December 1991. The Project Coordination report projected that the services in the building would no longer operate properly in two to three years which meant that the building was about to cease functioning. There were also major fire safety issues which could not be rectified without totally relocating the internal open stairs, reconfiguring the internal corridors and completely retro-fitting the mechanical and electrical services to provide a smoke exhaust system. The report also indicated that some of the problems were capable of causing life-threatening situations. An immediate Occupational Health and Safety remedial works program began in February 1992 at a cost of \$1.58m.

18. The Government decided that a response to the pressing situation needed to be made in the context of the 1992-93 Budget. The obligations of the Government as an employer to provide a safe workplace were confirmed in the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1991*.

19. One option considered was to refurbish the Administrative Building progressively over a period of seven years as proposed in the 1987 Refurbishment Master Plan. The major problem with this option is that it would not have offered a total solution to the urgent OH&S problems identified in the Project Coordination report within seven years. DFAT

pointed out that this option would not have begun to deliver a solution to OH&S problems until the second half of the third year of refurbishment. It would not deliver an OH&S solution for 50% of DFAT staff until four years. (Evidence, p. 368). This option also did not give sufficient priority to the general situation in the building where basic electrical, mechanical and hydraulic services would break down within two to three years, where there were problems with the sewerage system and where air distribution and airconditioning systems do not comply with requirements for Commonwealth premises.

20. The seven year refurbishment option would also have involved most members of the department having to shift location many times. Key sections of the department would have had to be located several kilometres apart for the whole period. It would also have involved major disruption to the department and at the end of the process some 350 officers currently housed in the Administrative Building would need to move permanently. This would have also increased the number of DFAT locations from four to five and this would have aggravated the already severe and dysfunctional fragmentation problem and done nothing to alleviate the overcrowding in the Administrative Building which was to be addressed in the strategy. This option would have cost \$140m including \$21m in expenditure, such as duplicating communications and guarding and providing couriers, which did not involve a return to the Commonwealth.

21. A further option considered was to partially refurbish the Administrative Building in stages and provide additional off-site accommodation to meet the spare shortfall. This option did not include the refurbishment of the Communications Centre and floors 4 and 5 and was costed at \$108m. This option was not considered viable as total refurbishment was considered essential. It should also be pointed out that the Committee was advised by DFAT at the public hearing that the application of current Commonwealth accommodation standards to the Administrative Building would result in up to 350 staff having to be permanently accommodated elsewhere. There are also likely to be strong pressure on heritage grounds for the light wells to be restored to their original condition. (Evidence, p. 368).

22. The alternative was to implement the York Park Project as a permanent location for DFAT. Consideration had already been given to this project previously and an original option had been for York Park to provide

for the long-term requirements of the department. The Government decided that implementing the York Park Project was the appropriate solution.

23. The assessment for AEM was whether it was more cost-effective for the Commonwealth to construct a suitable office building for leasing to departments or for the site to be made available to a developer for the construction of a building under a pre-commitment lease. Confidential cost information provided to the Committee indicated the construction option was the most economical for the Commonwealth. The proposal will achieve savings of at least \$16m over a period of 15 years in net present value terms when compared with the taking of a private sector equivalent lease over a similar period.

24. The financial viability of the York Park Project has been assessed through the use of a computer-based financial analysis model using discounted cash flow techniques which compares the real cost (without inflation, as against 'nominal' which includes inflation) of a number of delivery options over a 15 year period. This computer-based model has been endorsed by the Department of Finance as an appropriate tool for undertaking the financial analysis of construction and refurbishment proposals. AEM's model is similar to other models in current use by the private sector.

Summary

25. DFAT currently occupies a total of 41 117 m² in three separate buildings one of which, the Administrative Building, suffers from overcrowding and serious OH&S problems in respect of which a solution can no longer be deferred. DFAT's requirement, supported by the Department of Finance, is to occupy as soon as possible, 41 000 m² of good quality office space in a building which offers its employees a safe and efficient working environment.

26. In July 1992 there was approximately 53 000 m² of vacant office space in the ACT. The bulk of this is configured in small parcels of 2000 m² to 3 3000 m² unsuitable for DFAT needs. The York Park Building has the capacity to accommodate DFAT's space and operational requirements and to provide the solution to the OH&S problem in the fastest possible time frame. The Canberra office of Austrade which will occupy the bulk of the remaining 5300 m² of space is an ideal co-tenant because operational synergies will allow for economies in planning and fitout.

27. The project will move DFAT to a modern building with adequate systems and a safe working environment including fire management systems in accordance with Australian Standards.

Committee's Conclusions

28. The Administrative Building requires extensive refurbishing to meet current standards for Commonwealth Public Service office accommodation particularly in the areas of fire safety, building services and occupational health and safety.

29. There is a need to collocate the various elements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in office accommodation which meets current Commonwealth Public Service standards.

30. The York Park Project on the evidence presented to the Committee appears to be the most cost-effective of the alternatives considered for the provision of suitable office accommodation for Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

THE PROPOSAL

Government Objectives

31. This proposal is consistent with the Government's objectives of:

- locating and retaining key policy departments near Parliament House
- providing cost-effective office space for departments to enhance operational efficiency and the delivery of Government services
- meeting occupational health and safety standards OH&S by refurbishing and upgrading of the existing owned estate
- optimising the proportion of owned office accommodation
- reducing overall rental costs paid to the private sector

providing a sound investment opportunity for the Commonwealth with a viable long-term return on funds invested.

Project Description

32. The project comprises a four-storey building above ground level providing 46 300 m² net of office space with a lower ground floor and basement comprising two wings joined by a central core. It will provide parking, storage, and plant areas in the basement level under the southern wing, main entry and orientation space on the lower ground floor, with parking in the southern wing and storage and/or workshop space in the northern wings, and general office accommodation on the ground, first, second and third floors. Associated site development works comprise stormwater drainage, water and sewerage reticulation, construction of roads, car parks and associated footpaths, and landscaping. The extent of site development is considered to be the optimum level that can be sustained within the planning criteria set by the NCPA. The building will comprise two wings joined by a central core area. The main entrance to the building will be from Windsor Walk with other entrances through courtyard areas from Sydney Avenue and Brisbane Avenue.

33. The Committee was advised that the building design had to comply with NCPA guidelines. These included:

- to be set back from Brisbane and Sydney Avenues and State Circle
- a height limitation so that the views to and from Parliament House were not obscured
- the building should not dominate the streetscape
- the building should be divided into frontages of no more than approximately 70 m.

34. ACS advised the Committee that the design has an efficiency of 80% - that is, the ratio of net floor area to gross floor area. ACS also believes that given the planning guidelines within which the building was designed the design is an economical one.

35. The Committee was advised that both DFAT and Austrade have taken long-term growth projections into account when arriving at required space areas. DFAT advised at the public hearing that there was no indication of a significant increase in staff numbers in the immediate future. More efficient use of space in the new building will be achieved by:

- increased collocation of common use facilities
- more efficient space planning and layout of storage, office and circulation spaces
- more modern and efficient building design.

Market Impact of Proposal

36. During 1992 and 1993, rental values are expected to increase at a rate of 5% to 8% per annum due to the overall economic downturn in the property industry. However, market research indicates that in the medium to long term, average CBD rentals will continue to be sustained at 10% to 12% each year.

37. The vacancy rate in Commonwealth-owned office accommodation in the ACT is less than 1%, in a total stock of 435 000 m². The total office market in the ACT is 1.3 million m², of which the Commonwealth occupies 900 000 m² in owned and leased space.

38. The direct vacancy rate in the ACT at July 1992 was 4.1%, which equates to approximately 53 000 m², the majority of which is configured in small parcels of space around 2000 m² to 3000 m² in area. Much of this space is in secondary accommodation that requires refurbishment to meet Commonwealth accommodation standards. On the 1993 projection of market absorption of space of 24 000 m² per annum (which is a 53% increase over 1992) it is evident that there is less than two years supply available.

39. This proposal provides an opportunity in the medium term to reduce the leased rental costs for 957 m² of office accommodation that DFAT leases in Canberra House in the city centre. The other existing leases are in Commonwealth buildings. It is proposed to lease the DFAT space in the Edmund Barton Building to the Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

40. The Treasury Building is in need of major refurbishment in the medium term. Following refurbishment at a cost of approximately \$80m the Administrative Building will provide an alternative accommodation option for the Department of Finance and the Treasury to enable the refurbishment of the Treasury Building at an estimated cost of \$43m. AEM believes that the whole process will not be completed until about the turn of the century.

41. In the longer term, the York Park proposal enables approximately 35 000 m² of leased accommodation to be relinquished and Commonwealth departments to be relocated into owned accommodation in a refurbished Administrative Building. This will reduce the outlay on leased accommodation by approximately \$8.75m at April 1992 rental levels of \$250 m² per annum. As indicated the refurbishment of the Administrative Building will provide staging space while a major refurbishment program of Commonwealth buildings in Canberra is carried out over the next 20 years. (Evidence, p. 255).

42. Given that a refurbished Administrative Building will not come on to the market until mid to late 1998, there are six years of government indication to release this additional space onto the ACT market. This is a very long market signalling period that will enable the private sector to adjust its supply levels without cause for a major increase in vacancy rates or fluctuation in rental rates.

Committee's Conclusion

43. The Committee is satisfied that the York Park Project will meet the accommodation needs of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Energy Management

44. Energy conservation measures will be incorporated in the design of the building to minimise total running costs. Energy conservation measures include use of an outside air cycle whenever ambient conditions are suitable, variable air volume air handling system with variable speed fans and a computerised building management system to ensure all plant operates at optimum conditions. Monitoring of the energy target during the detailed design stage will be carried out using manual or computer-based calculations to assess the performance of the design against the energy target. ACS advised the Committee that it is confident the design will not exceed the

energy target which has been set in accordance with Commonwealth standards. The computer-based building management system to be installed in the building will record the actual energy consumption of the building, simplifying monitoring and assessment of energy usage during the life of the building.

45. Prior to the public hearing ACS provided the Committee with a domestic hot water study which indicated that electric hot water systems using off peak electricity tariff would be provided.

46. However, at the public hearing ACS advised that following a reassessment of the study it now believes that the use of solar is marginally economic for the York Park proposal. AEM has therefore decided to install solar hot water systems in the proposal.

Committee's Recommendation

47. The Committee recommends that an energy audit be carried out on the completed building after one year's occupation to enable an assessment of energy usage against energy targets.

Fire Protection

48. The building will be fully protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system provided in accordance with the Building Code of Australia and the requirements of the ACT Fire Brigade. A fire control room will be provided at the ground floor. All areas will also be provided with smoke control systems in accordance with the Building Code of Australia. Fire hydrants, fire hose reels, portable fire extinguishers, battery powered emergency lighting system and an emergency warning and intercommunication system will be provided throughout the building.

External Works and Landscaping

49. Access and egress for vehicles and pedestrians has been designed in consultation with the relevant authorities. The site is prominent and the landscape treatment will complement the building's setting in accordance with master planning guidelines established by the NCPA. A deep vegetation zone will provide a buffer from State Circle. Landscaping of courtyards leading to Brisbane and Sydney Avenues entrances will enhance these addresses and the main entrance off Windsor Walk will be landscaped to

screen vehicle access areas and provide a formal accessway to the porte-cochere.

Car Parking

50. Total parking for 560 vehicles will be provided in the basement, lower ground floor and in formal open car parks on the Windsor Walk frontage. Additional off-site car parking for 420 vehicles will be provided immediately north of the site.

51. This accords with the long-term planning requirements of the NCPA, which necessitates the provision of minimum operational/parking requirement of on site at the rate of one car space per 100 m² of gross floor area. Mr Morison and Mr Wensing in their submission pointed out the car parking provision is less than half of the known amount of car parking that the project will generate. They are extremely sceptical about the ability of transport management policies to achieve the massive shifts implied by the plans for this project. The NCPA believes that to provide some 1400 to 1500 on-site car parking spaces in the Barton area would be, in terms of traffic management, totally unacceptable.

52. The proposed parking strategy for the area has recognised the opportunity to move away from the provision of full car parking provision and seeks to change the modal split towards public transport. Subject to a draft amendment to the National Capital Plan being finalised, the reduction of the parking requirement to one space per 100 m² of gross floor area, lowers building costs considerably, whilst providing a framework for the private sector to establish and operate pay parking stations located in convenient parking structures. The current design for the York Park Offices is compatible with either outcome and sites for possible car park structures have been identified in the York Park Master Plan. A high quality public transport system already serves Barton and can be improved as development occurs in the precinct.

Off-site Infrastructure

53. Because of the building's proximity to the New Parliament House and the Parliamentary triangle, and the unavailability of a master plan for development of the York Park precinct, studies were conducted in October/November 1990 by NCPA, assisted by AEM, ACS and the ACT

Administration, to prepare the York Park Master Plan. These studies included:

- main stormwater drainage
- civil engineering works
- urban and landscape design
- infrastructure costs and staging.

54. Additionally, a discussion paper for public consultation was prepared jointly between the NCPA and the ACT Planning Authority for the whole of the Barton area - the setting for the York Park development. It was advertised and distributed, seeking comment from the community. A series of public meetings were held with the residents of Barton, to provide an open forum for debate.

55. Following this the preparation of the York Park Master Plan was finalised, incorporating detailed conditions of planning, design and development in accordance with the provisions of the *ACT (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*.

56. The Master Plan was revised by NCPA in July 1992 and off-site infrastructure works, including the provision of stormwater drainage, construction of roads, associated footpaths and landscaping, required for the York Park Project to proceed will comply with the Master Plan.

Fitout

57. The fitout will be carried out concurrently with the building construction in accordance with particular requirements of the tenants' briefs. (See Appendix C for details of fitout).

The Site

58. The site (section 15 Barton), known as York Park, is Commonwealth-owned with frontages to State Circle, Brisbane Avenue, Windsor Walk (to be constructed) and Sydney Avenue (to be constructed), Barton. The site area is 41 365 m².

59. York Park is unimproved and does not have basic water, sewerage and electrical services. In 1991-92 the ACT Government sponsored stage 1 of infrastructure works on York Park necessary to enable development of two Territorial leases facing National Circuit. Further infrastructure works are required to allow for servicing the York Park office site and the cost of these works \$10.229m is included in this proposal. (See paragraphs 89).

60. The Government decided on the site in 1990 following a series of options studies which examined a number of available sites in the general area.

Zoning - National Capital Plan

61. The site is in a designated area for National Capital Use under the National Capital Plan, and is administered by the NCPA pursuant to the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*.

62. In a private submission to the Committee Mr I Morison and Mr E Wensing advocated a more balanced distribution of Commonwealth employment in Canberra and believe that any proposal to develop another large office building in Central Canberra must be questioned. In their view the York Park Project will further accentuate the centralised nature of Canberra's employment which they believe is contrary to metropolitan planning policies and comes at a higher cost than town centre locations.

63. However, the NCPA believes that the construction of an office building on the site is consistent with the National Capital Plan and has been approved by the NCPA Board. The NCPA believes that it would not be appropriate for an agency such as DFAT to operate from a town centre location. It pointed out that the Government's objective has been to locate and retain key policy departments near Parliament House.

Committee's Conclusion

64. The site selected is suitable for the proposed development. The Committee believes that it is appropriate for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which is a key policy department to be located close to Parliament House.

Environment

65. The development proposal identified the habitat of a rare species of day-flying moth (*Synemon plana*) on an adjoining site, section 22 Barton, and extensive consultations have taken place with the NCPA and the Environment Assessment Branch of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories (DASET) which administers the *Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974*.

66. The Minister for Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories has assessed the project against the provisions of the legislation and has advised that neither a public environment report nor an environmental impact statement is necessary to achieve the object of the Act for this proposal.

67. Consultations with the CSIRO Division of Entomology, the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra, and the ACT Government Department of the Environment, Land and Planning have resulted in a management plan aimed at ensuring that *Synemon plana* is preserved during the building development. The NCPA also advised the Committee that it has issued a brief to a consultant to undertake a botanical survey of the York Park area which would include advice on species and/or communities which could be transplanted elsewhere.

68. In submissions to the Committee both the National Trust of Australia (ACT) and the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra stressed the importance of the need for adequate protection for the *Synemon plana* habitat which is a remnant community of native grassland. *Synemon plana* is now regarded as being restricted to about 10 known sites, most of which, like the York Park site, are not thought to be viable in the long term.

Committee's Recommendations

69. The Department of Administrative Services and the National Capital Planning Authority continue consultations with the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra and the National Trust of Australia (ACT) regarding the provision of adequate protection for *Synemon plana* (a rare species of day-flying moth) in the York Park area.

70. The National Capital Planning Authority should provide the Committee with a copy of the completed botanical survey which is being undertaken of the York Park area.

Standards

71. The design is based on the owner and tenant briefs, relevant Commonwealth and industry construction standards, the Building Code of Australia and Australian Standards.

Provision for the Disabled

72. The building design will satisfy Commonwealth Guidelines and Australian Standards covering access for disabled persons.

73. ACROD advised the Committee that it had preliminary discussions with AEM but would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the details of the proposal with AEM as the design develops to ensure that the stated objectives are realised. AEM indicated at the public hearing that further discussions will be held with ACROD during design development.

Accommodation

Basement

74. One basement level under the southern wing and central core will provide car and bicycle parking, storage, loading dock, garbage and plant areas.

Lower Ground Floor

75. This level will provide car and bicycle parking in the southern wing and storage/workshop space in the northern wing.

Ground, First, Second and Third Floors

76. These floors will provide general office accommodation.

Roof Area

77. Plant and lift motor rooms will be located at this level on both wings.

CONSULTATIONS

78. DAS has had consultations with the following organisations during development of the proposal:

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- National Capital Planning Authority
- ACT Government Department of the Environment, Land and Planning
- Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories
- ACROD Limited
- Australian Heritage Commission
- ACT Electricity and Water
- ACT Fire Brigade
- Commonwealth Fire Board
- Telecom Australia
- ACTION Buses
- Natural Gas Company
- DFAT Staff Associations.

79. The Administrative Building Occupational Health and Safety Committee has been provided with information about the conditions in the Administrative Building (including the Project Coordination Report). Staff associations were briefed on the proposal and provision has been made for a Public Sector Union representative (representing all other unions) to be a member of the New Building Coordination Group which is to be set up

to manage the planning and implementation of the project. Mechanisms have been established for other staff associations to be consulted as the project develops.

80. In submissions to the Committee both the PSU and FATA raised a number of issues of concern to staff including:

- security
- child care
- staff amenities
- canteen facilities
- OH&S issues
- information technology considerations
- energy consumption
- facilities for the disabled
- possible overcrowding
- equitable space allocation
- car parking
- need for a fitness centre.

81. Many of these issues are discussed in the report and the Committee notes the commitment of DFAT to continue consultation with staff associations during the construction period.

Committee's Recommendation

82. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should continue to consult on a regular basis with staff and staff associations during the design development and construction of the York Park Project.

CHILD CARE

83. DFAT is concerned to comply with the Government's commitment to child care. Measures for increasing the supply of child-care places include the introduction of work-based child care by public sector employers.

84. The department is committed to finding some means of making child care available for DFAT staff and still has under consideration the option of inclusion of child-care facilities in the York Park Project. There are many issues to be addressed in providing child care for DFAT staff, including the most appropriate child-care facilities for the Department, the most appropriate location, funding and management of the facility. In the period prior to completion of the York Park Project there is also a need to provide child care and the department is exploring options in this regard.

85. The department's Child Care Committee is looking at the department's current and future child-care needs. The department is engaging a consultant to provide advice about the range of child-care alternatives and comparative costs. The Department's decision on child-care facilities at York Park will be taken after consideration of all the options.

86. Both the PSU and FATA believe that a child-care facility must be provided in the York Park Project. AEM advised the Committee that a child-care facility was incorporated into the original design development proposal at the request of DFAT. DFAT stressed at the public hearing that it must consider all options as the Government requires the provision of child care facilities to be cost neutral. (Evidence, p. 367).

Committee's Recommendation

87. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should continue consultations with the Public Sector Union and the Foreign Affairs and Trade Association regarding options for the provision of child-care facilities for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff.

TIMING

88. The project is planned to be completed and ready for occupation by June 1996, subject to Parliamentary approval prior to the end of December 1992.

COST

89. The limit of cost for the project is \$186.832m inclusive of fitout, fees and allowances at April 1992 prices. The limit of cost comprises \$176.603m for the building works and \$10.229m for off-site infrastructure works including essential roadworks and engineering services.

Committee's Recommendation

90. The Committee recommends the construction of the York Park Offices, Barton, ACT at an estimated cost of \$186.832m at April 1992 prices.

DISSENT BY MR BILL TAYLOR MP, MR BRUCE SCOTT MP AND SENATOR PAUL CALVERT

91. The York Park solution is not supported by the arguments contained in this report. Insufficient attention has been paid to other options involving the Administrative Building and additional Commonwealth departmental building refurbishment. In particular the option of constructing a high security Annexe Building to be used as staging space during the refurbishment and then housing all the non-office functions of the Department, has not been fully investigated. This option would supply an extra 14 000 m² and an additional 240 car parking spaces. At an estimated cost of only \$102m, it would appear a far more cost-efficient solution than York Park, estimated to cost \$187m.

92. The York Park development is a bigger building than the existing Administrative Building yet provides only the same amount of working area. This strongly suggests that York Park is a very inefficient solution. The Foreign Affairs and Trade Association has also raised the point that the York Park proposal does not address the question of overcrowding.

93. Furthermore, the cost of the York Park proposal is not restricted to the \$187m quoted in the Report. It is estimated that the Administrative Building will cost at least \$80m to refurbish after it is vacated by DFAT. This is to ensure the Administrative Building remains a functioning component of the Commonwealth's portfolio of assets. If DFAT were to be

retained as a tenant, the Commonwealth would not face this additional cost. This \$80m cost is directly related to DFAT relocating to the York Park site. Therefore it must be factored into the cost of the York Park proposal to reflect the full cost to the Commonwealth. This brings the total cost of the development to \$267m.

94. Another dimension to the York Park proposal is that private enterprise has not been given the opportunity to compete for the right to design and develop a building able to meet the accommodation needs of DFAT. This has been restricted to ACS and AEM with serious public expenditure ramifications. It is the minority view that the private sector could complete the York Park development for substantially less than the estimated \$187m. The private sector should be given the opportunity to participate in developments of this nature.

95. Finally, when public expenditure is under extreme pressure to meet recession-induced demands from across the nation it is not timely to proceed with such a high cost option when lower cost options exist. To proceed with the project as proposed, will perpetuate the 'Taj Mahal' impression in the minds of many people in Canberra and throughout the country.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

| | Paragraph |
|---|-----------|
| 1. The Administrative Building requires extensive refurbishing to meet current standards for Commonwealth Public Service office accommodation particularly in the areas of fire safety, building services and occupational health and safety. | 28 |
| 2. There is a need to collocate the various elements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in office accommodation which meets current Commonwealth Public Service standards. | 29 |
| 3. The York Park Project on the evidence presented to the Committee appears to be the most cost-effective of the alternatives considered for the provision of suitable office accommodation for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. | 30 |
| 4. The Committee is satisfied that the York Park Project will meet the accommodation needs of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. | 43 |
| 5. The Committee recommends that an energy audit be carried out on the completed building after one year's occupation to enable an assessment of energy usage against energy targets. | 47 |
| 6. The site selected is suitable for the proposed development. The Committee believes that it is appropriate for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which is a key policy department to be located close to Parliament House. | 64 |
| 7. The Department of Administrative Services and the National Capital Planning Authority continue consultations with the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra and the National Trust of Australia (ACT) regarding the | |

provision of adequate protection for *Synemon plana* (a rare species of day-flying moth) in the York Park area. 69

8. The National Capital Planning Authority should provide the Committee with a copy of the completed botanical survey which is being undertaken of the York Park area. 70

9. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should continue to consult on a regular basis with staff and staff associations during the design development and construction of the York Park Project. 82

10. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should continue consultations with the Public Sector Union and the Foreign Affairs and Trade Association regarding options for the provision of child-care facilities for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff. 87

11. The Committee recommends the construction of the York Park Offices, Barton, ACT at an estimated cost of \$186.832m at April 1992 prices. 90



Colin Hollis
Chairman

8 December 1992

DISSENT BY MR BILL TAYLOR MP, MR BRUCE SCOTT MP AND SENATOR PAUL CALVERT

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people in Canberra and throughout the country. 95

Bill Taylor

Bill Taylor
(Vice Chairman)

Bruce Scott

Bruce Scott

Paul H Calvert

Senator Paul Calvert

11 December 1992

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES

EVANS, Mr Lindsay Stewart, Acting Executive Director (Management and Works), National Capital Planning Authority, 10 Brisbane Avenue, Barton, Australian Capital Territory 2601

FALCONER, Mr Rodney, Director, Conservation Council of the South-East Region and Canberra (Inc.), GPO Box 1875, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

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GORDON, Mr Garry Noel, Development Manager, York Park Office Project, Australian Estate Management, GPO Box 1920, Canberra City, Australian Capital Territory 2601

HUGHES, Mr Max William, First Assistant Secretary, Systems Programs and Consular Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

JOHNSTONE, Ms Diane Katrina, Co-President, Foreign Affairs and Trade Association, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

McGOVERN, Miss Margaret Rosaleen, Principal Adviser, Corporate Services Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

MORISON, Mr Ian Warren, 22 Darling Street, Barton, Australian Capital Territory

NAIR, Mr Robin, Co-President, Foreign Affairs and Trade Association, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

NEILSON, Mr Lyndsay Robert, Chief Executive, National Capital Planning Authority, 10 Brisbane Avenue, Barton, Australian Capital Territory 2601

REED, Mr David Charles, Senior Project Manager, Project Services, Department of Administrative Services, Sirius Buildings, Furzer Street, Phillip, Australian Capital Territory 2606

ROSENBAUER, Mr Robert William, Assistant General Manager, Project Services, Department of Administrative Services, 470 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson, Australian Capital Territory 2602

SELLECK, Mr Gordon William, York Park Project Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

SOLIN, Mr Ian, Chairperson, DFAT PSU Delegates Committee, Public Sector Union, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory 2600

WATERHOUSE, Dr Douglas Frew, Immediate Past President, National Trust of Australia (ACT), c/- CSIRO Division of Entomology, GPO Box 1700, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 2601

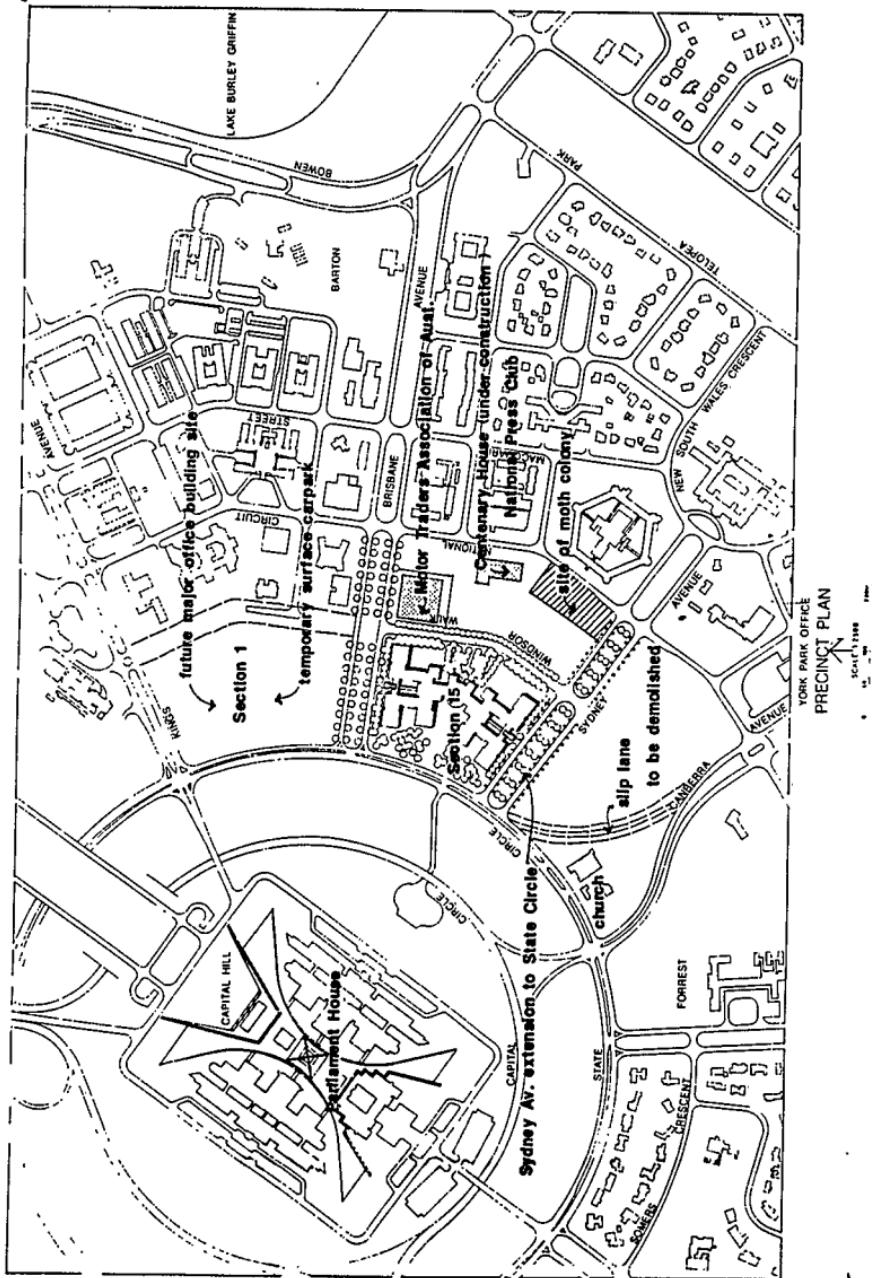
WENSING, Mr Edward George, 164 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen, Australian Capital Territory

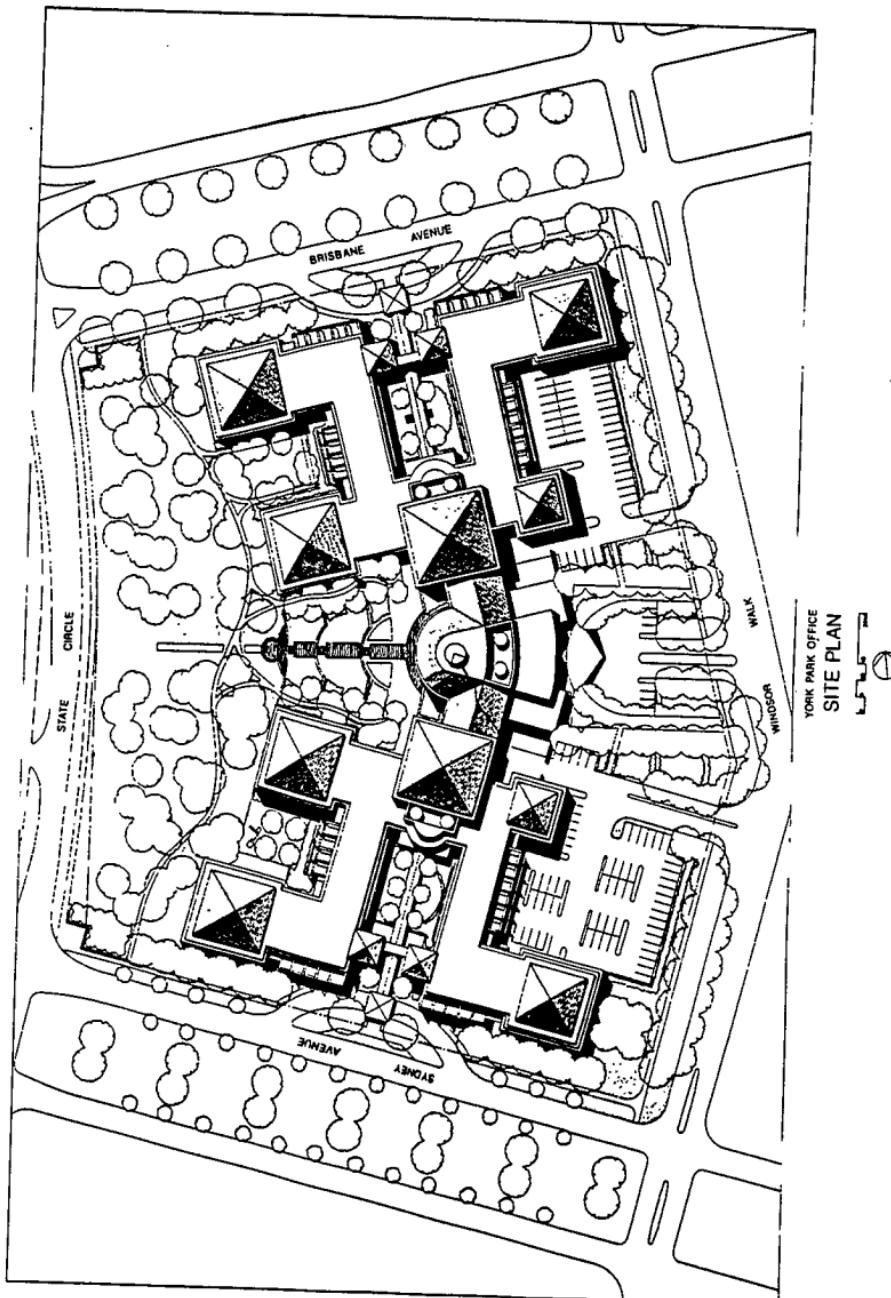
WILLIAMS, Mr Richard John, General Manager, Australian Estate Management, Department of Administrative Services, 111 Alinga Street, Canberra City, Australian Capital Territory 2601

APPENDIX B

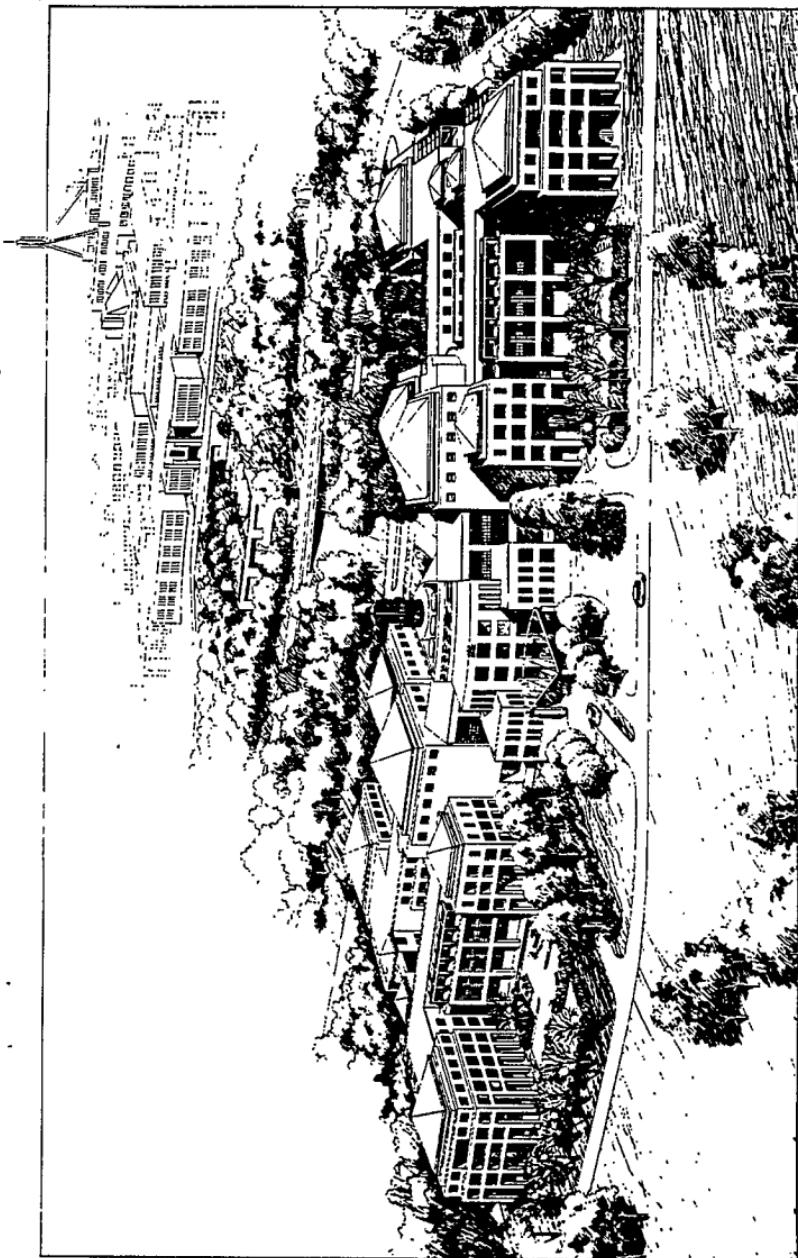
PROJECT DRAWINGS

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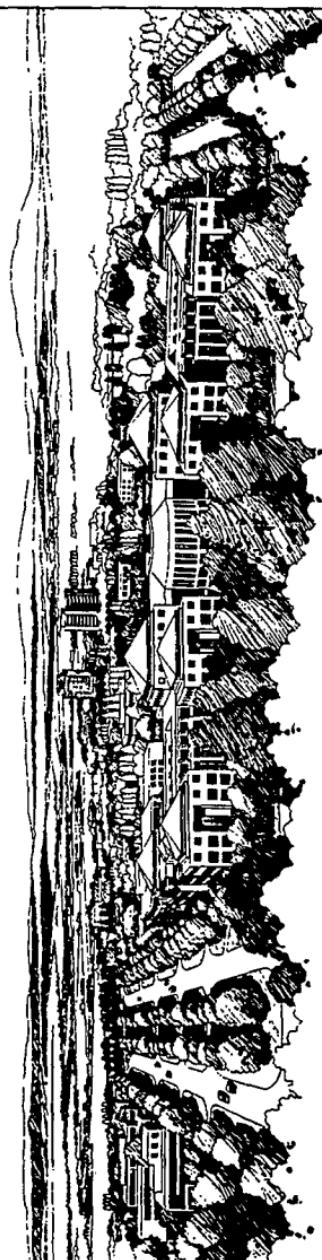




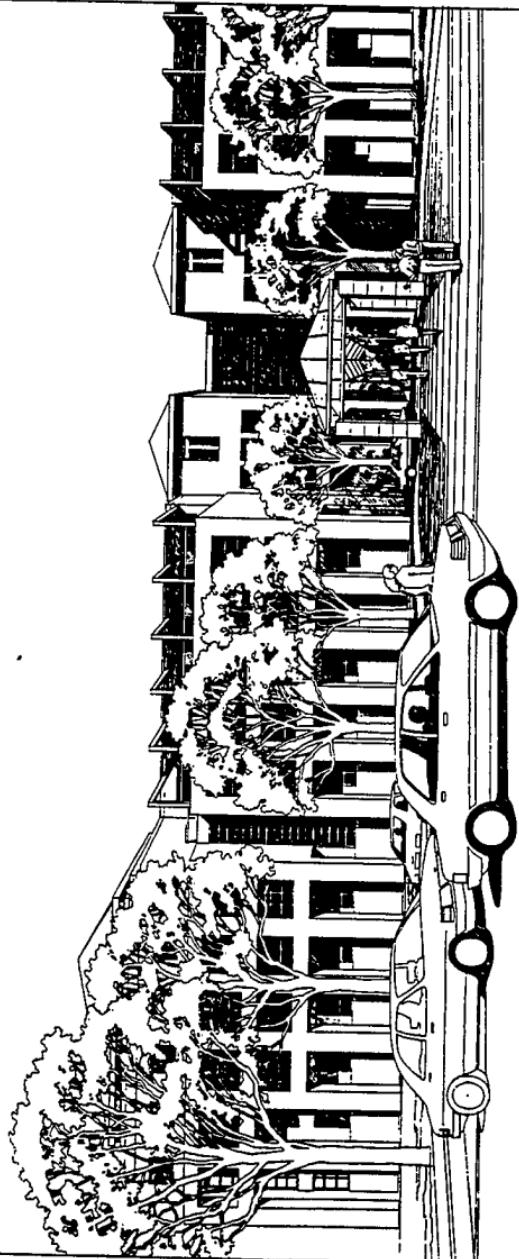
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PERSPECTIVE



YORK PARK OFFICE
PERSPECTIVE



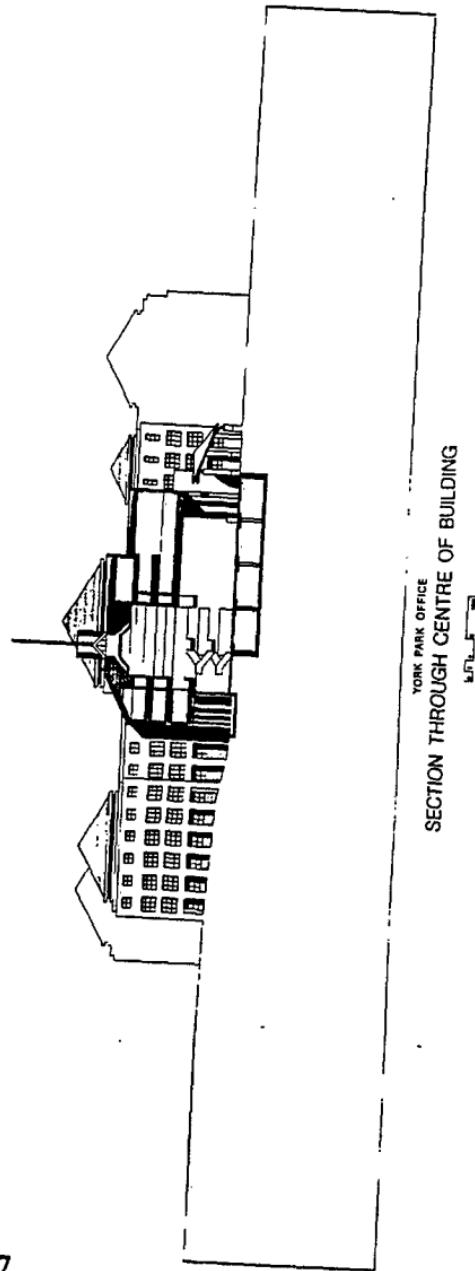
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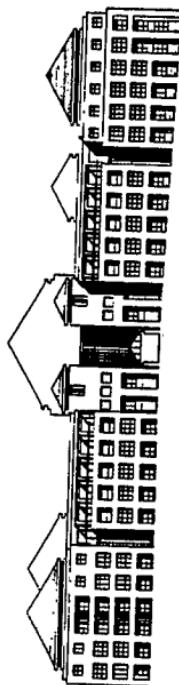




SECTION THROUGH NORTH COURTYARD

YORK PARK OFFICE



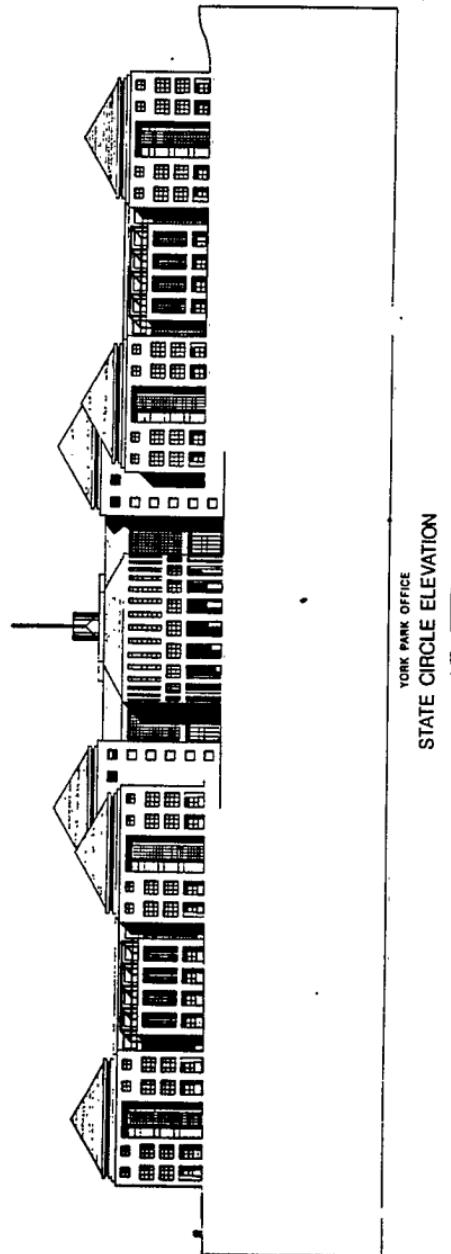


SYDNEY AVENUE ELEVATION

YORK PARK OFFICE

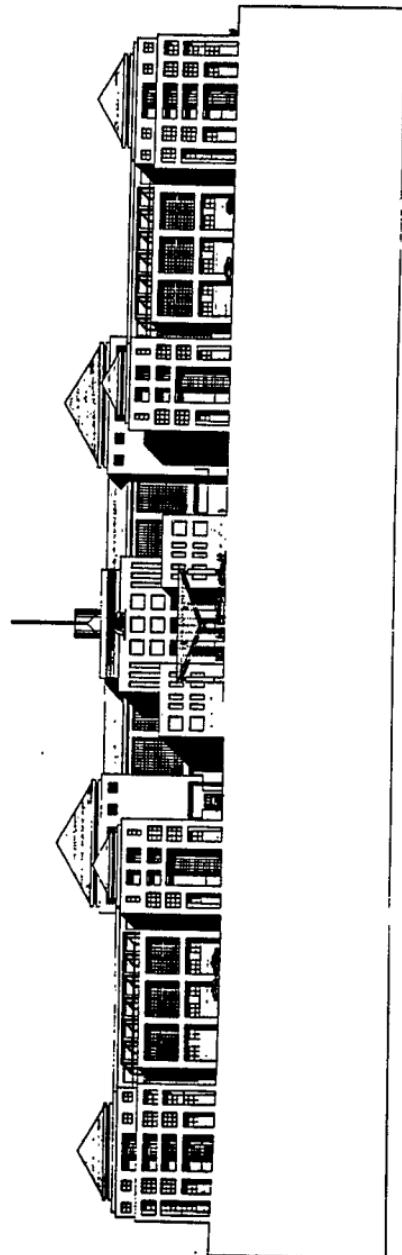
YORK PARK OFFICE
BRISBANE AVENUE ELEVATION



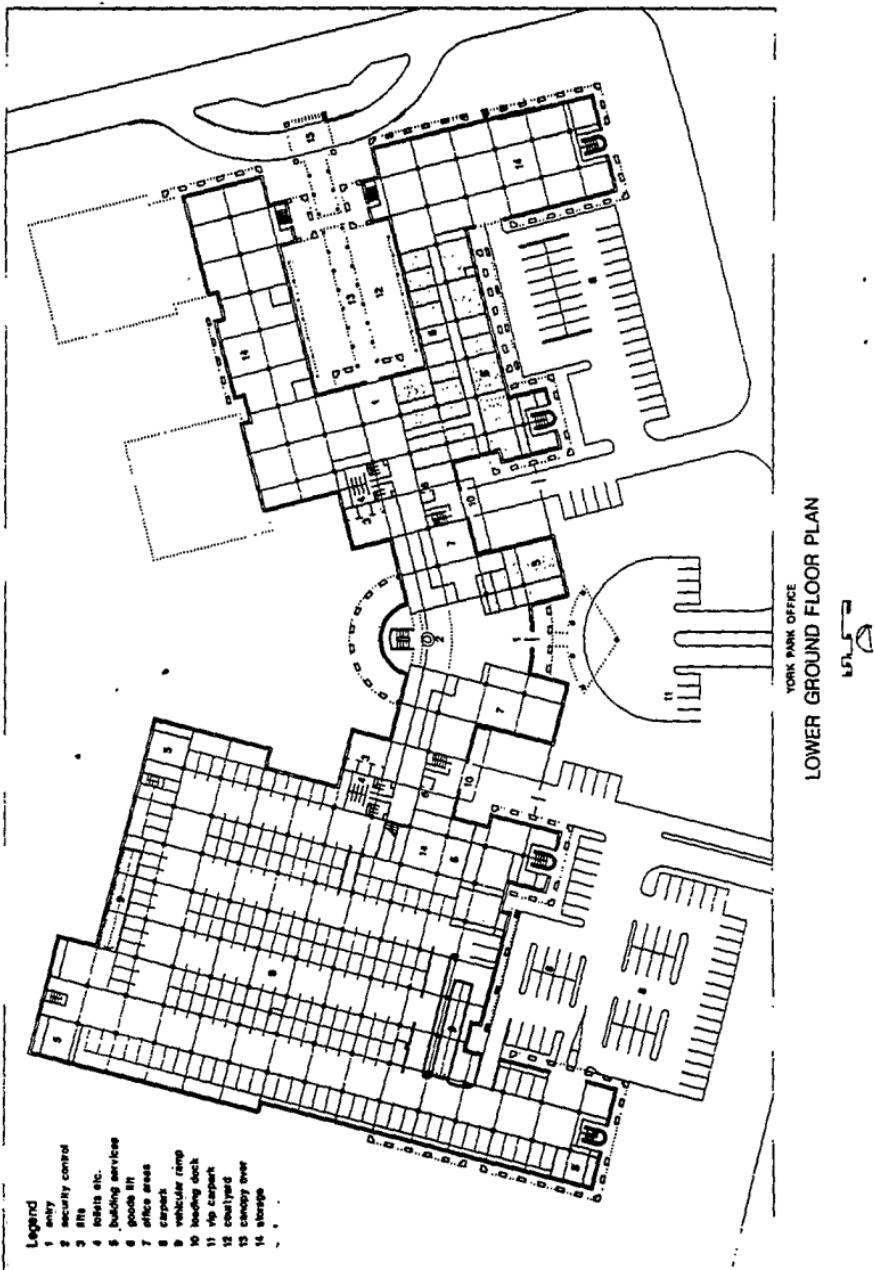


STATE CIRCLE ELEVATION

YORK PARK OFFICE

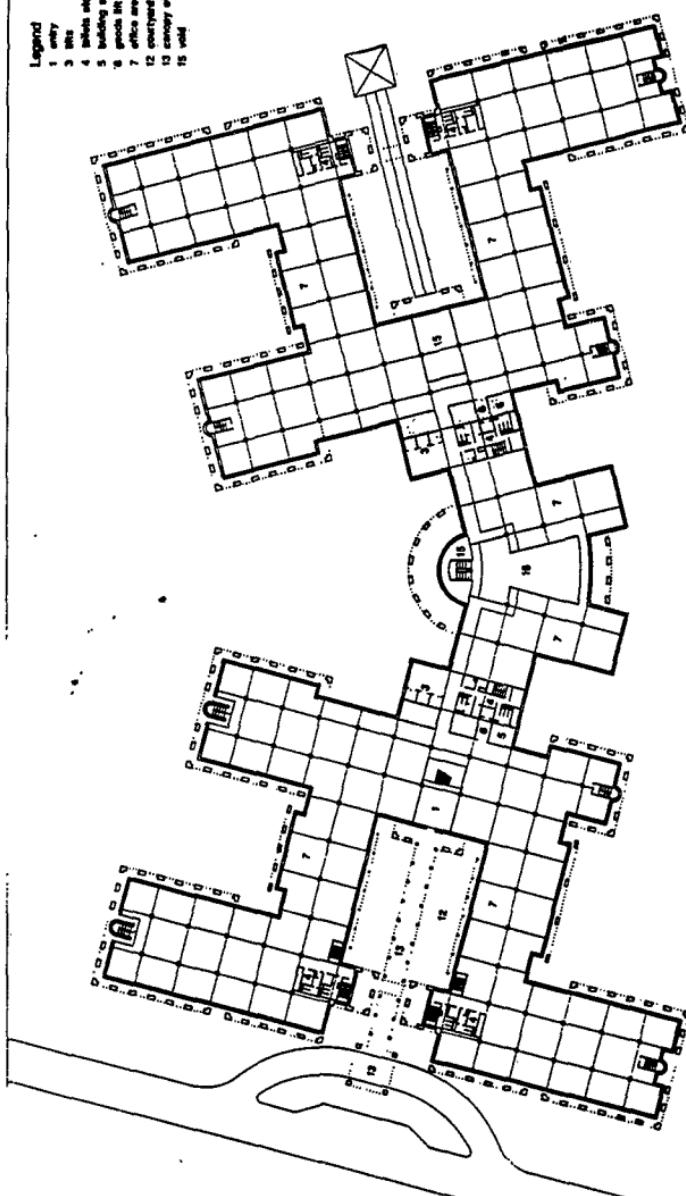


YORK PARK OFFICE
WINDSOR WALK ELEVATION
1/500

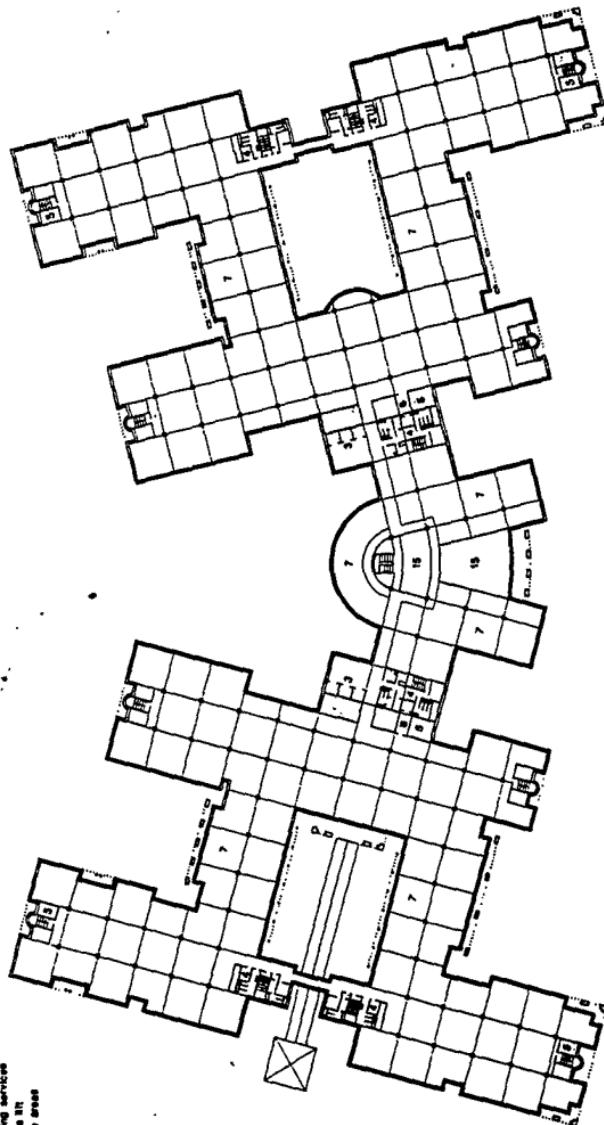


Legend

- 1. entry
- 2. site
- 3. site
- 4. site
- 5. building services
- 6. garage
- 7. office area
- 8. entrance
- 9. entrance
- 10. entrance
- 11. entrance
- 12. entrance
- 13. entrance
- 14. entrance
- 15. void



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



YORK PARK OFFICE
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Legend

| | |
|----|-------------------|
| 3 | elite |
| 4 | totale etc. |
| 5 | building services |
| 6 | goods etc. |
| 7 | office areas |
| 15 | void |

FITOUT

Scope

1. The project delivery method to be adopted will allow fitout work to be undertaken in an integrated manner - that is it will be incorporated into the building in the normal sequence of finishing trades.
2. Subject to appropriate consultations with staff fitout work will consist of the following:
 - partitions for offices, conference rooms, interview rooms, office equipment areas and other enclosed spaces.
 - low screens to define individual workpoints in open office areas with workstations planned in a clustered or similar arrangement.
 - appropriate higher standard finishes to executive areas and major public areas, entrance and lift lobbies etc.
 - provision of compactus units, storage areas, registries and vaults to designated areas of floors which have greater floor load capacity.
 - adjustable steel shelving to storage areas and adjustable timber shelving to library areas. Cupboards units and benchtops with sink and drainer to kitchen areas.
 - provision of special areas including training rooms, public areas, theatrettes, media and press areas, laboratories, darkrooms and workshops including all necessary services and built in fitments to these areas.
 - provision of accommodation for secure communications facility.
 - provision of a staff cafeteria area and recreation centre together with built in joinery, fitments and all necessary services.
 - computer and other access floors will generally be provided as shallow raised floors off the floor slab.

Fitout Standards

3. Areas for office spaces will be in accordance with DOLGAS Standards. Fitout will be in accordance with the requirements of local authorities and generally to the standards applying to Commonwealth Offices.

Partition Standards

4. Fixed partitions will generally consist of painted plasterboard on steel studs with allowance made for one wall in offices to be glazed. Skirting ducting will be utilised for power, telephone and data cabling. Separate conduits will be run for secure cabling. Fabric covered screens fitted with power, telephone and standard data cabling outlets will be provided in open office space areas. Workstations based on fabric or glazed screens will be provided with all power telephone and data cabling outlets together with integrated adjustable work surfaces and task lighting.

Furniture

5. Loose furniture is not included as it is proposed that existing furniture will be utilised where possible.

Services

Mechanical Services

6. Modifications to the basic building air conditioning systems will be undertaken to meet the needs of the various specialist areas. Supplementary air conditioning will be provided to areas of high heat load such as conference rooms, office equipment areas, laboratories, cafeteria. Supplementary exhaust systems are to be provided to kitchen areas, computer printer rooms, staff change rooms and to a range of specialised industrial and laboratory functions.

7. Separate air conditioning units will be provided for a number of areas which are regularly used outside normal working hours, for areas which are not always occupied during working hours and for areas with specialised air quality/humidity requirements. Fume cupboards will be provided where required. Built in equipment will also be provided.

Electrical Services

8. An uninterruptable power supply system (UPS) will be installed to provide no break to critical computer, communications and other equipment. Two diesel generator units will be installed to provide for emergency power supply to the building in the event of a mains power failure. Tempest shielding will be provided for the classified computer and communications area.

Electrical Security

9. The electronic security installation will be provided as part of the fitout work. Access control and closed circuit (CCTV) systems will be provided. An alarm system will be installed utilising a master alarm control and additional slave panels to cover all external doors and other necessary internal doors. All external entrances will be fitted with electrically controlled locks.

Fire Protection

10. As part of the fitout, allowance has been made for additional fire extinguishers and fire hose reels to be provided in areas of increased hazard. Additional fire detection to certain areas recommended by the Fire Safety Office will be provided by using Very Early Smoke Detectors Apparatus (VESDA).

Hydraulic Services

11. Supplementary water supply, drainage, waste and vents will be provided to special areas required in the fitout. Trade waste treatment facilities and collection will be provided where appropriate.

Telephone and Communication Services

12. PABX equipment, and telephone cabling and all communication cabling will be provided as part of the fitout.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Materials and Finishes

External Finishes

External walls will consist of polished pre-cast concrete panels to the lower ground floor and acid etched pre-cast concrete panels to upper floors.

Windows will be double glazed. Paving to entrance approaches and courtyards will consist of a high quality nonslip durable material. Roofs will be generally low pitch pre-coloured metal deck with pitched terracotta tiled roofs to selected areas. Trafficable terraces will be covered with a protected membrane and paving.

Internal Finishes

In general office areas, walls will be rendered and painted. Walls to foyers and public areas will be a combination of natural stone cladding and plasterglass. Walls to plant areas and storage areas and within car parking areas will be painted blockwork. Ceramic tiling will be provided to walls of wet areas.

Ceilings to office areas will be suspended acoustic tiles. Ceilings to foyers and other public areas will be a combination of suspended acoustic tiles and plasterboard. Ceilings to amenity areas will be acoustically treated plasterboard. Ceilings to car parking areas will be painted off-form concrete. Ceilings to plant rooms will generally be painted off-form concrete with acoustic panels applied in specific areas.

Floors to office areas will be carpeted. Internal public areas including entrance foyers will incorporate selected paving. Wet area floors will be ceramic tiles. A nonslip concrete finish will be provided to plant and car parking areas.

Engineering Services

Structure

The site is covered with silty clay, moderately plastic, containing variable amounts of sand and some fine gravel, to a minimum depth of 14m underlain by weathered rock. On the northern side the site has been filled for up to 2m with materials from the construction of the New Parliament House.

The proposed structure is of reinforced concrete construction, with flat slabs supported on columns spaced generally at 8.4m. The floors will carry normal office loads of 5 kPa including partitions, and heavier storage loads in designated areas. Permanent movement joints will subdivide the building in blocks not longer than 80m. Reinforced concrete cores in each block will, together with frame action, provide resistance to lateral forces due to wind and earthquake loads. The columns and cores will be supported on reinforced concrete footings.

Mechanical

Air conditioning will be provided to all office areas throughout the building in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.

Air handling plant will be provided at roof level. Central plant will be located at basement level with the exception of cooling towers which will be at roof level.

Other mechanical services include toilet ventilation systems, car park exhaust systems, smoke control and exhaust systems, domestic hot water systems, chilled drinking water units and boiling water units, plant room and workshop ventilation systems.

Electrical

Mains power will be supplied to the facility from the ACTEW high voltage reticulation system via indoor substations constructed as part of the development. Power will be reticulated throughout the facility via main switchrooms located on the lower ground floor and distribution switchboards located on every floor.

Provisions will be made in the development to allow tenants to install their own stand-by power plant to provide a backup owner supply to

essential equipment in the event of mains power failure. Lighting throughout the facility will be in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards. Energy conservation measures will be part of the lighting design. Ducts, conduits and risers will be provided to enable the reticulation of power and communications cabling.

Lifts

Passenger lifts will be provided in both core zones in the development. Each core will contain a bank of three passengers lifts serving all floors including the lower ground level. The lifts in the south wing will serve the basement level. A goods/passenger lift in each core will serve all floors. The arrangement of the vertical transportation system provides for a separate lift lobby for each group of lifts which in turn will enable optimum traffic movement and operation.

Communication

A system of block cabling will be provided for the distribution of telephone services throughout the facility. Duct and riser space will be provided for the reticulation of computer data cabling, master antenna television and radio system and radio base external network services. Space will provide for an increase in the cabling requirements.

Hydraulics

Hydraulic services will comprise water for domestic and fire fighting requirements and sanitary drainage, all of which will comply with relevant codes and regulations. Subsoil drainage will be provided at ground level and under the basement.

Security

Most of the arrangements for physical and electronic security will be planned and installed as part of the fitout of each tenancy. However, the design of public spaces, lifts and stairs allows economical securing of any floor or group of floors.

In addition the building will incorporate a central management and security centre to:

- control the primary access/egress

- monitor selected external areas by electronic surveillance systems
- manage an access control system for after hours access
- provide an emergency warning and intercommunication system (EWIS) for communication throughout the building.