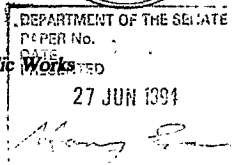




*Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works*



## REPORT

relating to the

# CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX IN HANOI, SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

(Fifth Report of 1994)

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

Report Relating

to the

**Construction of an Australian Embassy  
complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of  
Vietnam**

(Fifth Report of 1994)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Members of the 31st Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works	vi
Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of 24 March 1994 and 12 May 1994	vii
THE REFERENCE	1
THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION	1
THE NEED	2
Role of the Overseas Property Group	2
Existing Facilities	2
The Chancery	3
Official Residence	3
Staff Accommodation	4
Recreational Facilities	4
Committee's Conclusions	5
THE PROPOSAL	5
Proposed Site	6
Committee's Conclusion	7
Committee's Recommendation	7
Building Design	7
Committee's Recommendation	9
Design Brief	9
Site Planning Principles	9
Orientation	10
Planning	10
Views	10
Road Access Within the Site	10
Staged Construction	10
Open Space and Landscaped Gardens	11
CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	11
Chancery	11

Official Residence	12
Staff Apartments	13
Recreational Facilities	13
<b>STRUCTURE</b>	14
General	14
Chancery	14
Official Residence	14
Staff Apartments	14
Child Care Facilities	15
Materials and Finishes	15
Mechanical Services	17
Air Conditioning	17
Ventilation	17
Domestic Hot Water	18
Committee's Recommendation	18
Other Services	18
Electrical Services	18
Hydraulic Services	19
Fire Protection Services	20
Site Works and Landscaping	20
Provision for People with Disabilities	20
Energy Conservation	21
Security	21
Planning Approval	22
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	22
<b>PROGRAM</b>	23
<b>CODES AND STANDARDS</b>	23
<b>AUSTRALIAN CONTENT</b>	24
<b>PROJECT COST</b>	24
Committee's Recommendations	25
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	26

## APPENDICES

Appendix A	-	List of Witnesses	A1
Appendix B	-	Project Drawings	B1-B8

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

(Thirty-First Committee)

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)  
Senator Paul Henry Calvert (Vice-Chairman)

**Senate**

**House of Representatives**

Senator Bryant Robert Burns  
Senator John Robert Devereux

Mr John Neil Andrew MP  
Mr Raymond Allen Braithwaite MP  
Mr Russell Neville Gorman MP  
Mr Robert George Halverson OBE MP  
Hon. Benjamin Charles Humphreys MP

Committee Secretary: Peter Roberts

Inquiry Secretary: Bob Bednarz

Secretarial Support: Sue Whalan

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

No. 64 dated Thursday, 24th March 1994

**7 PUBLIC WORKS - PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE -  
REFERENCE OF WORK - CONSTRUCTION OF AN  
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX, HANOI, SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.**

Mr Sciacca (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Administrative Services), pursuant to notice, moved - That, in accordance with the provision 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 in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Mr Sciacca presented plans in connection with the proposed work. Debate ensued.  
Question - put and passed.

No. 71 dated Thursday, 12 May 1994

**22 PUBLIC WORKS - PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE -  
REFERENCE OF WORK - CONSTRUCTION OF 12 STAFF  
APARTMENTS, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES,  
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX, HANOI, SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.**

Mr Walker (Minister for Administrative Services), pursuant to notice, moved-That, in accordance with the provision 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 12 staff apartments, and recreation facilities, in the new Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.  
Mr Walker presented plans in connection with the proposed work. Debate ensued.  
Question - put and passed.

## **PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS**

### **CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COMPLEX IN HANOI, SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

By resolutions on 24 March and 12 May 1994 the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report to Parliament the proposed construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

#### **THE REFERENCE**

1. The proposed construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi includes a new chancery, head of mission residence, staff apartments and recreational facilities.
2. The estimated cost of the total complex is \$23.605m at March 1994 prices comprising \$15.919m for the chancery, head of mission residence and \$7.686m for the staff apartments and recreational facilities. (See paragraphs 112-117).

#### **THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION**

3. The Committee received written submissions from the Overseas Property Group (OPG) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Evidence was taken from representatives of OPG and DFAT at a public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra on 17 May 1994. Evidence was also taken from representatives of the Australian Public Sector, Professional, Scientific Research, Technical, Communications, Aviation and Broadcasting Union (PSU).
4. 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.
5. A number of written submissions were also received from other organisations and these are incorporated in the Minutes of Evidence.

## **THE NEED**

### **Role of the Overseas Property Group**

6. Under the Administrative Arrangements Order of 24 July 1987 the Department of Administrative Services is responsible for the acquisition, leasing, management and disposal of land and property overseas. This activity is undertaken by OPG 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.

### **Existing Facilities**

7. The current Australian Embassy premises consist of a 2-storey French style villa used as the chancery, adjoining villas on either side and a purpose built block of 4 AS1 staff apartments behind the chancery. There is also a swimming pool and a surrounding recreational area. One of the two adjoining villas is the Ambassador's residence and the other contains three apartments for use by officers at AS3 and AS4 level although the standard of these apartments is at the AS1 and AS2 level.
8. The chancery was first occupied in 1978 and the two adjoining buildings were occupied only in 1991, after extensive renovation. The remodelling and refurbishing of the staff apartments at the rear was finished in the same year.
9. While the chancery is old, it is attractive with high ceilings and patterned ceramic floor tiles. Although the building has been extensively renovated by Australian tradesmen and completely rewired, maintenance of the building remains a constant problem. The chancery is unfortunately already too small for current requirements and will be converted into a senior staff apartment as part of this proposal.
10. The Overseas Property Committee has accorded the Hanoi project a high priority among proposed capital works projects because of the inadequacy of both the office and residential accommodation. Hanoi is the highest priority followed by Islamabad, London and Shanghai.

11. DFAT endorses the construction of the new custom built chancery and official residence as it will make an invaluable contribution in promoting Australia's identity in Vietnam and will demonstrate Australia's firm commitment to developing a substantial, long term, multi-dimensional relationship with Vietnam.

12. Australia's relations with Vietnam are likely to continue to grow at a rapid rate. In 1993 and 1994, the United States lifted economic and trade embargoes against Vietnam, opening the way for a resumption of lending to the country by the international financial institutions and major bilateral donors such as Japan. These developments will stimulate economic growth in Vietnam, and will increase commercial opportunities for Australian companies.

13. The relationship can be expected to grow in other areas, with the continuing growth in bilateral trade and investment. This will place increasing demands on the Australian Embassy in Hanoi, which is already operating at what can only be described as beyond full stretch in servicing the current level of relations.

#### **The Chancery**

14. The construction of the new chancery recognises the importance and expansion of Australia's relations with Vietnam and seeks to establish a representative office commensurate with the level of Australia's interest in Vietnam. This will further enhance our ties, create a positive image of Australia, and will reflect the growth of our interests in Vietnam. It is expected to be well received by the Vietnamese authorities and, as importantly, it will improve the quality of life, the working environment and the security of Australian and Vietnamese staff working there.

#### **Official Residence**

15. The present official residence, while presenting well, is below the agreed area standard for a head of mission and would not be functional if the incumbent had children. Due to the difficulty in finding suitable alternative accommodation for the head of mission, the only viable alternative is to construct a new residence.

#### **Staff Accommodation**

16. The staff accommodation within the present compound is below standard and there is a lack of appropriate alternative accommodation available on the open market. Where residential accommodation is obtainable, extensive refurbishment is required. However, refurbishment costs are high and even the best accommodation may still be substandard after refurbishment has been completed.

17. The construction of well built accommodation within the chancery compound will enhance the physical security of staff while also providing for emergency power and filtered water supplies. There will also be significant savings in the long term to the Commonwealth resulting from rental savings and lower maintenance costs.

18. A number of Embassy staff are currently accommodated off-compound in Vietnamese built apartments and free standing houses. Rental costs are rising rapidly and will be exacerbated by the recent lifting of the US trade embargo on Vietnam.

19. Occupation of the existing Ambassador's residence and converted chancery by staff currently living in rented apartments, will relieve the Commonwealth of high rents associated with this form of accommodation in Hanoi.

20. The Committee queried whether it is worth converting the existing chancery to staff accommodation at an expense of \$500 000 with the unknown leasing arrangements currently in place. OPG stated that the leasing arrangements have been on a year by year basis since 1976 and although no termination date has been specified, OPG is confident that the lease will continue to be renewed and value for money is being achieved. Based on the very high local rents that it is currently paying for rental accommodation, OPG believes that enough time is available to recoup the expenditure on the conversion of the existing chancery to staff accommodation.

#### **Recreational Facilities**

21. Hanoi has few recreational facilities available for the staff. There are no clubs in Hanoi and there are very few sporting facilities of suitable standard available for casual hire. The present chancery compound has a small recreational area with a swimming pool. The construction of a recreational

complex in Hanoi would ensure that staff are provided with much needed recreational facilities in what is an extremely difficult living and working environment.

#### Committee's Conclusions

22. A need exists to construct a new Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam to replace existing unsatisfactory working and living accommodation.

23. The Committee agrees that the development should include appropriate recreational and sporting facilities.

24. The Committee agrees that the existing chancery should be converted to staff accommodation.

#### THE PROPOSAL

25. The proposed works comprise:

- . the construction of a three-storey chancery building. The chancery provides office space, multipurpose rooms, staff amenities, workshop storage areas, associated plant rooms, and basement parking for official vehicles
- . the construction of a two-storey official residence. The residence provides for both representational and private living and dining spaces, storage areas and associated domestic spaces such as bedrooms, bathrooms, family room and kitchen
- . staff and visitor car parking including motor scooter/bike parking for locally engaged staff
- . associated site works, servicing and landscaping
- . conversion of the existing chancery into a senior staff apartment. This work will be undertaken after the completion of the new complex

- . the construction of a four-storey apartment block housing twelve staff apartments including associated plant rooms and parking for private vehicles

- . a recreational centre that includes a tennis court, swimming pool and squash court

- . the site masterplan also allows for the future long term provision of ten staff apartments.

#### Proposed Site

26. The site of the proposed Embassy complex is located in the Van Phuc district which is approximately 15 minutes drive from the existing Embassy.

27. This area in Van Phuc is being developed as a diplomatic enclave and already accommodates a number of diplomatic missions and their associated residential apartments. The Japanese, Korean and Singapore Governments are all currently negotiating for land leases close to the Australian site.

28. The site is currently part of a small freshwater lake, as are all non developed sites in this area. The site will be flat when reclaimed using local river sand. The site is regular in shape having a depth of 128 m, a main frontage of 91.5 m and a rear frontage of 80 m.

29. The site is situated adjacent to a proposed motorway to the airport that is currently under construction. A secondary school is located on the northern boundary with a future access road to be constructed on the western boundary.

30. There are no defined planning and building regulations or standards, however at this stage it has been determined that a 6.0 m setback is required to the southern boundary of the site with a 3.0 m setback on all other boundaries.

31. The site of 1.17 hectares has been formally leased from the Vietnamese Government for a period of sixty years. OPG proposes to develop the site to optimise its long term potential.

32. The Committee queried whether the proposed site which was allocated by the Vietnamese Government is suitable for this project. OPG stated that



the Van Phuc area is the diplomatic area for chanceries and that Sweden has had an embassy there for some 20 years. The Russian embassy was also in the area.

33. The Committee sought an assurance from OPG that the construction of the Embassy complex on reclaimed land would not present difficulties. OPG advised that it believed that the site would be suitable although further geotechnical advice would be sought and there would be a cost loading in terms of the extensive piling systems required.

34. While OPG advised the Committee that the presence of unexploded ordnance on the site was not expected there had been some commercial interest expressed in undertaking a metal detector survey of the site. The Committee notes the evidence from OPG that most of the bombing in and around Hanoi was confined to the industrial areas and the airport. However the Committee believes that a metal detector survey of the site should be undertaken before construction commences as a precaution against the possible presence of unexploded ordnance.

#### Committee's Conclusion

35. The Committee accepts the advice provided by the Overseas Property Group that the site when reclaimed, will be suitable for the construction of the Embassy complex.

#### Committee's Recommendation

36. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group undertake a metal detector survey of the site before construction commences, as a precaution against the possible presence of unexploded ordnance.

#### Building Design

37. The local building industry in Hanoi is characterised by a combination of comparatively cheap and unskilled labour with a high work ethic. The industry is labour intensive, with minimal mechanical equipment being available, although as the country is opened up to foreign investment, this balance will shift towards a more mechanised industry. Reinforced concrete frame and slab with brickwork infill is the common construction medium. Timber and steel is used infrequently.

38. All proposed Embassy buildings will be simple in form and structure to take cognisance of the local building industry both in relation to the short term construction requirements and longer term maintenance factors. Increased investment in Vietnam has resulted in a further dilution of the limited available local skills across a range of construction projects. To achieve the necessary building quality it will be essential that expatriate trade and specialist services supervision form part of the construction program. All imported materials will come through the port of Haiphong which could become an area of delay to the project as trade activity increases.

39. In response to a suggestion from the Committee that the design of the proposed complex did not adequately portray the image of a dynamic country that sees its future in Asia and did not reflect the influence of Hanoi's French colonial architecture, OPG made the following points:

- the site for the complex in Van Phuc is a newly developed area where there is no French colonial architecture which is in fact confined to a small section of the city
- the design takes cognisance of the fact that it is going to be logistically difficult to undertake the construction in Hanoi - the expressions of the buildings have therefore been kept simple
- while representational buildings do have a prestige nature the designer has to be conscious of the fact that overly elaborate buildings can be seen by the host country as being too prestigious
- the design as shown to the Committee will be the subject of some further refinement and elaboration
- the buildings will be modern in context and the material components will be of 80% Australian content and will be a showcase for Australian materials.

40. While the Committee understands and accepts the practical constraints which led to the design solution for the Hanoi complex, it does not believe that the design reflects the positive and dynamic image which Australia should be projecting in Asia. The Committee believes it is unfortunate that OPG did not seek designs from a number of architects in relation to the project. The Committee is of the view that OPG could hold a design competition when a project of this nature is being developed in future. The Committee believes

that OPG does not have an underlying design philosophy which would enable its architectural consultants to express a sense of an Australian identity in building projects. The Committee considers that OPG should develop such an underlying design philosophy.

41. This is not the first time the Committee has raised concerns regarding the design of embassy projects. The Committee notes that in the report on the construction of an Australian Embassy complex, Jakarta, Indonesia (*Committee's 4th Report of 1991, Parliamentary Paper 98/1991*) the following comment was made:

While not wishing to enter into a debate on the architectural merits of this project [Jakarta] the Committee believes that the design rationale for Australian embassies should be reassessed. In particular OPG should determine what designs are meant to achieve for example a sense of Australian identity, a prestige image or merely a functional solution to suit a particular design requirement. (Paragraph 80 page 26).

#### **Committee's Recommendation**

42. **The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group develop a design philosophy for future overseas projects, which would enable a sense of Australian identity to be expressed.**

#### **Design Brief**

43. A design brief has been prepared on the basis of the OPG approved accommodation standards and has addressed the specific requirements of Hanoi such as climate factors, energy conservation, availability of materials and industry skills. OPG has obtained preliminary approval for the project from the local authorities and does not foresee any difficulties in obtaining final approval.

#### **Site Planning Principles**

44. The site has been masterplanned to accommodate the works proposed in this proposal and also ten blocks of staff apartments should those be required in the future.

45. An analysis of the scope of development and examination of the site and its context have enabled some clear planning principles to be stated and these include the following.

#### **Orientation**

46. The buildings where possible, should be aligned on an east-west axis facing north and south to enable the maximum control of solar penetration in summer and winter. The residential units will be planned to provide living spaces that open onto the private landscaped grounds of the complex. Building massing should be consolidated along the main road boundary.

#### **Planning**

47. Residential units should be located away from potential noise sources and sited to obtain visual benefit from the landscaped zones. Residential units and the chancery should not overlook the head of mission residence. The recreational facilities should open on to garden and lawn areas. Recreational facilities are to be located and planned to avoid creating a noise nuisance to the residences.

#### **Views**

48. As there is no external view worth exploiting, the planning will focus on maximising internal landscaped space with trees, shrubs, grass and ground cover.

#### **Road Access Within the Site**

49. Access within the site will be planned to allow direct access and parking to the chancery and official residence, without one function restricting the flow of traffic to the other. A separate access to the residence will be provided to allow easy traffic flows during official functions. A separate service access will be provided to the chancery and recreational complex. Road access to the residential units will be separate from the chancery and official residence access. Limited visitor parking will be available on site with covered motor scooter and bicycle parking provided for the locally engaged staff.

#### **Staged Construction**

50. The building associated with the long term development of ten additional

staff apartments will be sited to ensure minimal construction disruption to the earlier provided facilities. Provision has been made for the possible future expansion of the chancery. (See paragraphs 55-56).

#### Open Space and Landscaped Gardens

51. The design concept allows for the proposed buildings to be located along the perimeter of the site allowing a central landscaped area to be established. This proposal maximises the open space which is considered a very important part of the proposal, and one strongly supported by the various user groups.

### CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

#### Chancery

52. The design form results as a direct response to the scope of development, climate, site planning principles and local building practice, and consists of a simple 4 level building including a half basement.

53. OPG indicated to the Committee that although there was no evidence that existing buildings in the area had been flooded in the last 20 years, precautions against flooding would be taken, as the site like much of Hanoi is in a low-lying area. The ground floor level is to be raised 800 mm above the adjoining natural ground level. This would also provide the building with a sense of increased presence. Floodgates will also be installed at the bottom of the ramp to the basement while sumps and pumps will also be provided to accommodate any heavy rainfall that could result in localised flooding.

54. The basement level of the chancery houses secure parking for official and service vehicles and plant areas. The ground floor accommodates the public reception, multi-purpose room, Austrade offices and some service areas. A separate entry to Austrade allows for independent access and usage. The Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (DIEA) and DFAT consular sections are located on the first floor with public access to each. Further AIDAB and the DFAT restricted and secure areas are located on the second floor. The AIDAB section is connected by an internal stair. Access for people with disabilities is provided to all levels of the chancery.

55. The current staffing at the chancery is 18 A-Based and 25 locally engaged staff. The chancery has been designed to cater for 22 A-Based and

52 locally engaged staff which reflects staff projections provided by departments and agencies. The design allows for an additional area of 600 m<sup>2</sup> to be constructed over two floors above the lunch room complex. It would also be possible to construct additional space on the tennis court site with the tennis court being moved to the roof.

56. The Committee sought the views of OPG regarding the advisability of constructing the 600 m<sup>2</sup> of additional space as part of this project. OPG does not believe that there is sufficient justification to provide additional space at this time as projections of future staffing levels are not firm enough. OPG also pointed out that Australia will soon open a consulate in Ho Chi Minh City which is a major trading and commercial centre. OPG believes that growth in Ho Chi Minh City may be greater than in Hanoi.

#### Official Residence

57. The design for the official residence results as a direct response to the scope of development, climate, site planning principles and the need to separate representational and private areas.

58. The residence is a two-storey building with the major area being at ground level. The ground floor level is partly raised 800 mm above natural ground to provide protection against flooding and a visual presence to the building, while separating the public external terrace areas from the porte cochere and entry.

59. The ground floor accommodates facilities for official functions with the reception area opening on to landscaped terraces and gardens. The first floor level accommodates the private family living areas. The residence makes use of pergolas and roof overhangs to provide sun control and act as a transition between internal and external spaces. A private enclosed service court is visually screened from the common landscaped areas. Access for people with disabilities is provided to the public areas of the residence. The master bedroom, ensuite and dressing room will be designed as the safe haven areas within the residence.

60. The Committee queried the discrepancy between PSU's concern that the safe haven should encompass all bedroom areas and the OPG proposal, based on advice from DFAT, that the safe haven be limited to the master bedroom and wet areas. DFAT assured the Committee that should the threat increase appropriate adjustments to the safe haven can be made.

## **Staff Apartments**

61. The design for the apartments results as a direct response to the scope of development, climate, site planning principles and the need to provide each unit with privacy. Stage 1 of the development of 12 apartments comprising 3 AS2(4 bedroom), 3 AS3(4 bedroom) and 6 AS3(3 bedroom) in a stepped building. The building is stepped from 4 to 2 storeys. The half level basement accommodates the residential car parking, storage and service areas.

62. Each apartment is designed with its living/representational areas and master bedroom facing into the landscaped common area. The master bedroom, ensuite and dressing room will be designed as the safe haven area. Access for people with disabilities via a lift is provided to all units within the 4-storey section of the building. The 2-storey section is served by stair access only, with the ground floor units having access for people with disabilities.

63. The apartments are located to prevent overlooking of both one another and also from overlooking the official residence. Vehicular access to the units is gained via separate site access to basement parking areas. Pedestrian access is also possible from the landscaped common area. Stage 2 of the Residential development could consist of a further 10 apartments.

## **Recreational Facilities**

64. The recreational facilities consist of an 8 m by 15 m swimming pool and a squash court. A tennis court will be designed for multi sport use including volleyball, badminton and basketball. Access to the facilities can be gained from the street or via the residential areas of the complex. Service to the facilities will be gained from the chancery service access point. At the public hearing the Committee queried whether the swimming pool was large enough for the number of people at the post. OPG indicated that there are swimming pools of various sizes throughout Australia's diplomatic compounds. A pool 7 m by 14 m was recently installed in Phnom Penh. OPG believes it to be more than adequate for a similar number of people to that in Hanoi. It was also pointed out that the proposed pool is twice as big as the pool in the existing compound.

## **STRUCTURE**

### **General**

65. The majority of the site is located on an existing shallow lagoon. It is thus anticipated that the subsoils are soft alluvial deposits and it is therefore proposed to use driven piles for the building foundations. A geotechnical survey will be carried out on the site to ensure the integrity of the structure.

66. Environmental loads, wind and earthquake, appropriate to the site will be used in the design of the structures. OPG advised the Committee that historical evidence has shown that Hanoi itself has not suffered from any major seismic disturbances although some have occurred within a radius of some 100 km. It is proposed to design the building to withstand seismic loads in accordance with the Australian standard.

### **Chancery**

67. The chancery building will be constructed of reinforced concrete frame and floors with external walls of masonry infill. Columns will be located on a grid of 6 m x 6 m throughout the structure. The office floors are designed for loads of 5 kPa with selected areas capable of supporting heavier storage loads of 10 kPa. A steel fabricated roof structure will support a metal deck roof.

### **Official Residence**

68. The residence will consist of a reinforced concrete frame and floors with masonry infill walls. Columns will be located to suit the architectural needs but limited to maximum grid dimensions of 6 m x 6 m. The floors are designed for residential loads of 3 kPa typically. A steel fabricated roof structure will support a metal deck roof.

### **Staff Apartments**

69. The apartment complex will be constructed with reinforced concrete frame and floors with external walls of masonry infill. Columns will be located to suit architectural needs but limited to a maximum grid of 6 m x 6 m. The floors are designed for residential loads of 3 kPa within apartments and 4 kPa in the external areas such as lobbies. A steel fabricated roof structure will support a metal deck roof.

### Child Care Facilities

70. In its submission the PSU indicated that its policy is to insist on work based, fully funded, child care in all new Commonwealth buildings. The PSU request to OPG to include a child care facility in the Hanoi complex was not granted. However, PSU suggested that as officers in Hanoi can obtain local domestic assistance which caters in part for child minding needs that an occasional child care facility could be incorporated into the proposed recreational facility.

71. DFAT advised the Committee that while it does not have a formal policy of posting families without children to Hanoi current living conditions are difficult and not suitable for children. Medical and educational facilities are inadequate and residential accommodation is unsuitable for families with young children. DFAT stressed that if living conditions in Hanoi improve and families with children are posted there, the plans for the future development of residential accommodation would provide the opportunity to incorporate the child care facility proposed by the PSU.

### Materials and Finishes

72. Final decisions on the nature of materials and finishes will be reached after input from the selected building contractor. The following information provides an indication of anticipated finishes at this stage.

73. External walls will be rendered brick veneer construction with a textured paint finish. The 800 mm high plinth up to ground floor level to all buildings will be finished with local stone faced panels.

74. Internal walls generally will be painted plasterboard on steel stud, acoustically treated as required. The walls to wet areas will be tiled brickwork. Plant and service areas will be painted rendered brickwork.

75. Ceiling finishes will include acoustic tiles and sheeted plasterboard on a suspended ceiling system. Profiled ceilings will be installed into special areas such as the chancery entry foyer and conference rooms and to the residence reception and dining areas. Ceilings to service areas will be painted concrete.

76. Floor finishes will include carpet throughout the office and living areas in all residential accommodation with granite tiles to the public foyer spaces and ceramic tiles to wet areas. External terrace areas will be paved with non-

slip ceramic tiles. Plant and other service areas will be epoxy paint finished.

77. The pitched roofs will be formed with fabricated steel trusses and insulated pre-coloured metal deck roofing. Window frames will be powder-coated aluminium, with reinforced mullions as required. Glass will be tinted and will meet the requirements of DFAT security and offer appropriate sound attenuation. Doors throughout will be solid core.

78. At this stage it is envisaged the following building items will have to be imported:

- . structural steel
- . glazing and window units
- . plasterboard wall and ceiling finishes
- . insulation
- . acoustic ceiling tiles
- . floor and wall finishes including tiles and carpets
- . doors and door hardware items
- . electrical equipment including light fittings, switchboards, cables etc
- . mechanical plant and equipment
- . security equipment including ballistic barriers, security airlocks and door locks
- . joinery items
- . white goods
- . paints and sealants
- . lifts

- . PABX and telephone equipment
- . loose furniture and fittings
- . water treatment plant, sanitary ware and other plumbing materials
- . standby generators
- . tanks and pumping equipment.

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

#### **Mechanical Services**

##### **Airconditioning**

80. Each functional area on each floor of the chancery will be airconditioned by its own packaged airconditioning units with ductwork and associated equipment. The units will be a reverse cycle system with air cooled condensing units. Large areas will be served by a ducted air distribution system with smaller service areas being served by split wall mounted units.

81. Smoke exhaust systems will be provided as required by relevant Australian Standards and the Building Code of Australia (BCA). The entire airconditioning system will be based on simplicity, low maintenance requirements and low life cycle costing. Each room in the future staff apartments will be airconditioned with its own unit. The units will be of the reverse cycle split configuration, with remote condensing units.

82. Each bedroom and study in the head of mission residence will be airconditioned using similar units to those in future staff apartments. The dining room and reception area will be served by their own ducted systems.

##### **Ventilation**

83. Mechanical ventilation systems will be provided to car parks, toilets, store rooms, workshop and similar areas as required by relevant Australian Standards.

#### **Domestic Hot Water**

84. Investigations are continuing as to the type of hot water system to be used. Currently localised electric hot water units have been costed for all facilities. In its submission to the Committee OPG advised that the possibility of using a solar water system with electric boosters in the chancery and residential accommodation would be further investigated. The Committee has now been advised that a solar water system with electric boost will be provided in the chancery. However OPG is still investigating whether it is economic to install solar hot water units in the residential accommodation. The Committee sees the Hanoi project as an avenue for Australian industry to demonstrate recent advances in solar technology and believes that a solar water system with electric boost, would also prove economic for the residential accommodation.

#### **Committee's Recommendation**

85. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group install a solar water system in the residential accommodation.

#### **Other Services**

86. The following mechanical services will also be provided:

- . fuel tanks and associated equipment for standby diesel generators
- . cool rooms associated with the commissary
- . Building Automation System (BAS).

#### **Electrical Services**

87. The site will be supplied at high voltage from the Hanoi Electric Power Department with a substation on the site. The main switchboard for the site will be located in the chancery. Three 250 kV standby diesel generators will be provided to supply the site automatically in the event of a mains failure.

88. OPG believes that even though some improvements have been made in power generation the three standby generators are fully justified. Electrical power generation problems will be exacerbated as more buildings are built and therefore increasing the demand for energy.

89. Internal lighting will generally be fluorescent or compact fluorescent with an in-service average illumination in accordance with the requirements of AS1680. Telephone cabling and limited data cabling will be provided throughout. A complete electrical earthing system complying with both local and Australian standards will be installed. A lightning protection scheme will be installed. An emergency evacuation system will be provided for the chancery. External security lighting will be provided throughout in addition to internal emergency lighting.

90. An automatic fire alarm system using thermal and smoke detectors will be provided throughout all areas of the chancery, official residence and staff apartments. The main fire indicator panel will be located in the chancery entry foyer area with a sub fire indicator panel located in the communications area. A very early smoke detection alarm system will also be provided in the communications area. At this stage no allowance has been made for a uninterrupted power supply system. Both internal and external security systems will be incorporated into the design. Communication and TV satellite dishes will also be installed.

#### Hydraulic Services

91. The site will be served by septic tanks, which will connect to the town combined stormwater and effluent main which runs along the southern boundary. During the next phase of this project, an investigation will be made of a packaged treatment plant to assess its suitability for this project. This system would be installed as an alternative to septic tanks.

92. Stormwater drainage works will be designed to incorporate relevant aspects of the site works and landscaping design. Generally roof water run off will be removed by downpipes to the ground level system. The roof design will allow for safe overflow under conditions of excessive rainfall intensity.

93. Town water is available but is regarded as unreliable and of doubtful quality. Treatment of incoming water will include filtration, UV (Ultra Violet) sterilisation and softening as required. A seven day storage reserve based on total site occupation will be provided. In its submission OPG indicated that a bore will be sunk on the site to provide water to landscape and garden areas. However at the public hearing OPG advised the Committee that the provision of a bore was being reconsidered as the sinking of numerous fresh water wells in Hanoi has lowered the water table by some three or four metres leading to problems with buildings moving and cracking.

#### Fire Protection Services

94. Fire detection to the chancery and residential accommodation will include an automatic fire alarm system using thermal and smoke detectors. The master indicator panel will be located in the foyer area of the chancery, with alarm extensions provided as required. Fire sprinklers will be installed in the chancery, the official residence and in all basements and kitchens in the staff apartments. Fire hydrants, hose reels and extinguishers will be provided in accordance with Australian Fire Safety Standards.

95. The Committee sought an assurance regarding the adequacy of the fire protection equipment to be provided, particularly as OPG has indicated that the local fire service is unreliable. OPG believes that as the fire protection equipment will be provided to Australian standards, the buildings will be well protected.

96. Following a number of comments from the Commonwealth Fire Board, OPG has indicated to the Committee that the design team will review the existing provisions for fire protection and prevention during the detailed documentation stage.

#### Site Works and Landscaping

97. The site is currently underwater, as are all undeveloped sites in this area. The ground floors of all habitable buildings will be set at 800 mm above the natural ground level, after filling has been carried out. Landscaped treatment will consist of trees, shrubs, lawn and paved areas. It will be used to visually soften security walls and assist in maintaining privacy to the various residences and recreational facilities. The public outdoor areas adjacent to the recreational facility and to the official residence will be landscaped to cater for outdoor official gatherings. Australian native trees and shrubs may be imported for use in landscaped areas.

#### Provision for People with Disabilities

98. Access for people with disabilities is provided to all levels of the chancery with a toilet provided in the ground floor public areas. The Committee queried whether one toilet for people with disabilities would be adequate. OPG has now advised the Committee that a toilet for people with disabilities will be provided on each level of the chancery. Access for people with disabilities is provided to the ground floor public areas of the residence.

Access for people with disabilities is provided to ten of the twelve staff apartments.

### Energy Conservation

99. The building energy usage target has been assessed as 760 megajoules/square metre/year. Passive energy conservation provisions incorporated in the building design include:

- . sun shading afforded by overhanging roofs, balconies and by the use of sun screens over windows
- . thermal insulation to walls and roofs
- . building orientation.

Active energy conservation provisions include:

- . individual controls of operation of VAV airconditioning in each apartment
- . use of VAV airconditioning units in the office areas
- . use of adjustable timing controls on airconditioning and ventilation systems
- . flexible lighting controls and appropriate lighting levels.

100. OPG advised that savings in the order of 15% to 20% in running costs are envisaged due to the energy saving measures to be adopted.

### Security

101. The site is surrounded by a perimeter fence built to the standards required by DFAT security with controlled site access. The main gate and staff apartment entry point will be controlled from a guard post manned by Embassy locally engaged staff. The chancery building will have secure lobbies (air locks) controlled by receptionists. Entry from public areas to general office areas will be via secure air locks. The site and buildings will utilise closed circuit television for electronic monitoring of the perimeter of the complex, and entry points into the buildings. The official residence and each

of the staff apartments will have a safe haven located in the bedroom areas. Lighting will be installed throughout the grounds to satisfy security requirements.

102. DFAT advised the Committee that it assesses security threats in the following categories:

- . hostile intelligence
- . crime
- . civil
- . disorder
- . politically motivated violence.

103. These threats are rated from extreme, very high, moderate to low. The hostile intelligence rating for Hanoi is very high. For crime, politically motivated violence and civil disorder the threat in Hanoi is rated as moderate.

### Planning Approval

104. Local planning and utility service authorities have been contacted regarding the proposed development. The planning and preliminary design of the project has been based on advice and planning requirements provided by the local authorities. Preliminary approval has been obtained from the local authorities and final approval is expected.

### CONSULTATION

105. To ensure that the brief and the planning of the proposed Embassy complex reflects the needs of staff, consultations have been held with representatives of staff associations, user departments and the Embassy during which planning options have been discussed in detail.

106. The following organisations were invited to participate in those consultations:

- . Australian Public Sector, Professional & Broadcasting Union (PSU)



- . Australian Defence Force
- . Australian International Development Assistance Bureau
- . Australian Trade Commission
- . Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- . Department of Defence
- . Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
- . Foreign Service Families Association
- . Foreign Affairs and Trade Association
- . Family Liaison Officer of DFAT.

107. In evidence to the Committee the PSU indicated its broad support for the Hanoi project while raising concerns regarding the safe havens and child care issues. (See paragraphs 60, 70-71). The Committee believes that OPG should continue consultation with the PSU during the design development and construction phases of this project.

#### **PROGRAM**

108. Subject to a favourable report by the Committee and Parliamentary approval, it is intended to appoint a managing contractor in June 1994. The contractor will be appointed initially to assist and advise during the documentation period and subsequently to manage the construction phase. It is anticipated that construction work would commence in September 1994 and be completed by September 1996. OPG believes that this is a conservative estimate and is confident that the September 1996 target will be met.

#### **CODES AND STANDARDS**

109. There is a lack of recognised Vietnamese building codes and standards. As far as possible design and construction of the works will be carried out to Australian Codes of Practice.

#### **AUSTRALIAN CONTENT**

110. Australian Construction Services (ACS), a Division of the Department of Administrative Services has been commissioned as the principal architectural and engineering consultant for the preparation of the design and documentation phases. A contractor with significant Australian connections, and with experience in the region, will be selected to undertake the management of the construction.

111. Following recent construction experience in Beijing, Jakarta and Phnom Penh and in order to achieve the desired project quality it is envisaged that a considerable number of Australian trade and specialist supervisory personnel will be employed during the construction phase. The contractor will be required to specify and use Australian products wherever possible. Australian manufactured furniture will be used throughout all buildings.

#### **PROJECT COST**

112. The limit of cost estimate for the chancery and head of mission residence is \$A15.919m at March 1994 prices.

113. The limit of cost estimate for the 12 staff apartments and recreational facilities is \$A7.686m at March 1994 prices.

114. The total cost of the project is \$A23.605m at March 1994 prices. There will be no impact on the budget as funds will be made available from the sale of properties in Singapore. OPG stated that sale of Singapore properties will also finance the construction of a chancery in Islamabad, refurbishment of Australia House in London, the purchase of land for housing in Shanghai and also the construction of a modern residence for the Australian High Commissioner in Singapore.

115. In view of the difficulties likely to be experienced during the construction of the project, the Committee sought an assurance from OPG that the cost of the project would not rise significantly as had been the case in Beijing. OPG stated that unlike the Beijing project an Australian project manager will be appointed with OPG taking control of the project from the initial stages. In Beijing OPG was tied to a Chinese construction company and also did not have direct control of the project.

### Committee's Recommendations

116. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group advise it on a quarterly basis during construction, of the cost of the project.

117. The Committee recommends the construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam at an estimated cost of \$23.605m at March 1994 prices.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

	Paragraph
1. A need exists to construct a new Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam to replace existing unsatisfactory working and living accommodation.	22
2. The Committee agrees that the development should include appropriate recreational and sporting facilities.	23
3. The Committee agrees that the existing chancery should be converted to staff accommodation.	24
4. The Committee accepts the advice provided by the Overseas Property Group that the site when reclaimed, will be suitable for the construction of the Embassy complex.	35
5. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group undertake a metal detector survey of the site before construction commences, as a precaution against the possible presence of unexploded ordnance.	36
6. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group develop a design philosophy for future overseas projects, which would enable a sense of Australian identity to be expressed.	42
7. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group install a solar water system in the residential accommodation.	85

8. The Committee recommends that the Overseas Property Group advise it on a quarterly basis during construction, of the cost of the project. 116
9. The Committee recommends the construction of an Australian Embassy complex in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam at an estimated cost of \$23.605m at March 1994 prices. 117



Colin Hollis  
Chairman

15 June 1994

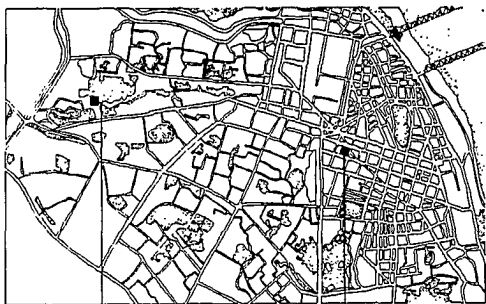
#### WITNESSES

- HANCOCK**, Mr Brian Richard, Director, Construction Management, Overseas Property Group, Department of Administrative Services, 111 Alinga Street, Civic, ACT, 2600
- PLATT**, Mr Paul Richard, Principal Architect, ACT Office, Australian Construction Services, Department of Administrative Services, Sirius Building, Furzer Street, Phillip, ACT, 2600
- WILSON**, Mr Dennis Patrick, Acting General Manager, Overseas Property Group, Department of Administrative Services, 111 Alinga Street, Civic, ACT, 2600
- OAKMAN**, Mr Kenneth Ambrose, Director Security Operations, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, ACT, 2600
- OLIVER**, Mr John Graham Weldon, Assistant Secretary, South Asia and Indo-China Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, ACT, 2600
- RIGG**, Mr William John Alexander, Director, Resources Projects Section, Acting Assistant Secretary, Resources Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, ACT, 2600
- GIBBONS**, Mr Patrick, DFAT Public Sector Unit, c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, Parkes, ACT, 2600
- SOLIN**, Mr Ian, Secretary, Branch Committee on Overseas Conditions, Public Sector Union, c/- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Administrative Building, ACT, 2600

## **APPENDIX B**

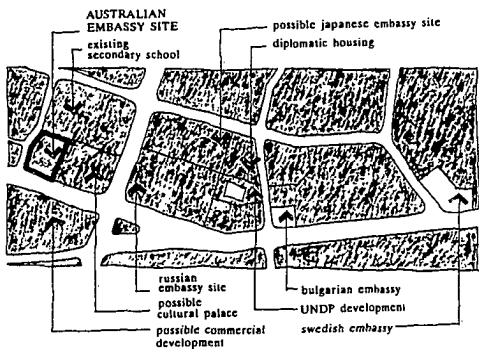
### **PROJECT DRAWINGS**

	<b>Page</b>
Locality Plan	B-1
Site Plan	B-2
Site Plan - Ground Floor	B-3
Chancery - Elevations	B-4
Chancery - Elevations	B-5
Ambassador's Residence - Elevations	B-6
Staff Apartments - Elevations	B-7
Perspective View - Proposed Masterplan	B-8



PROPOSED EMBASSY

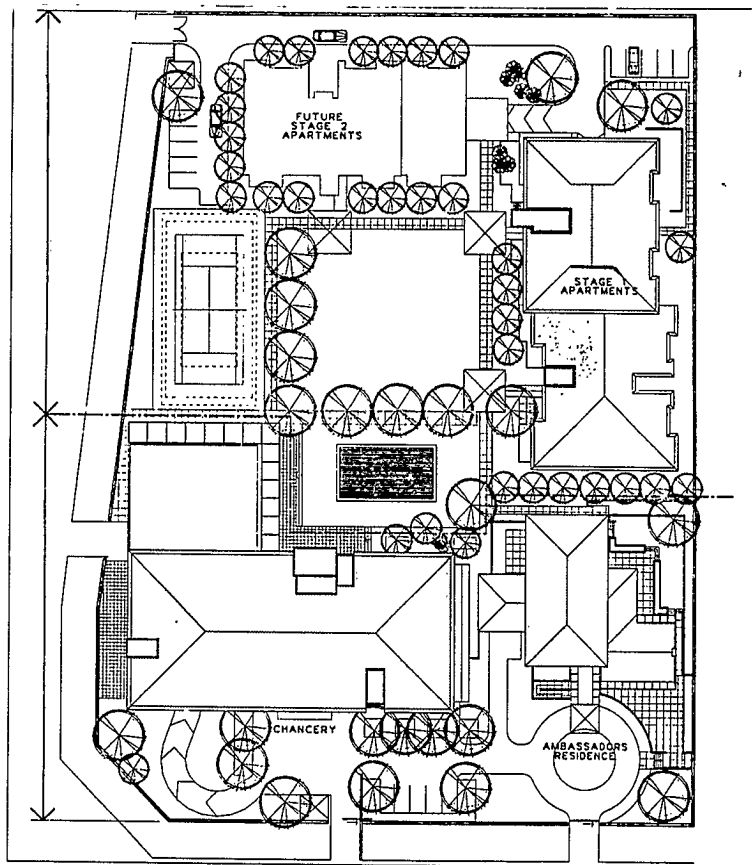
EXISTING  
EMBASSY COMPLEX



LOCALITY PLAN

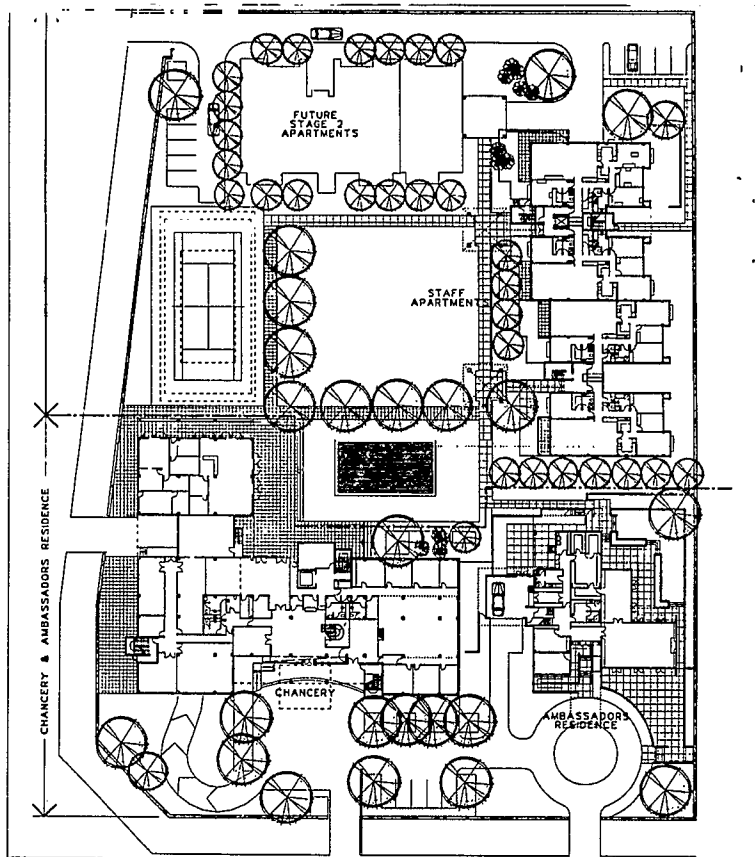
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
SCHEMATIC DESIGN





SITE PLAN

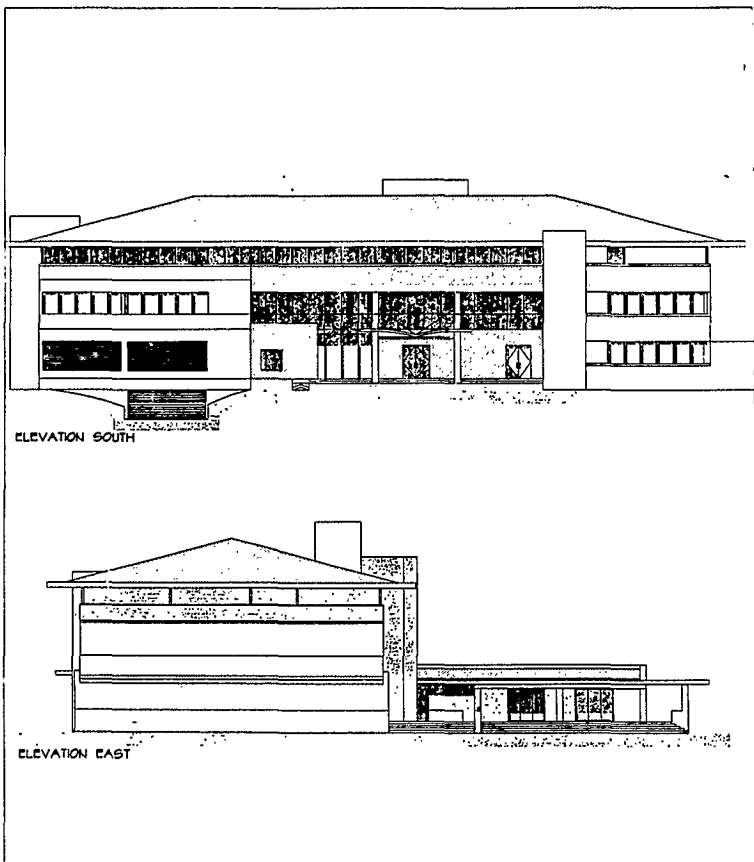
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SCHEMATIC DESIGN



SITE PLAN  
GROUND FLOOR

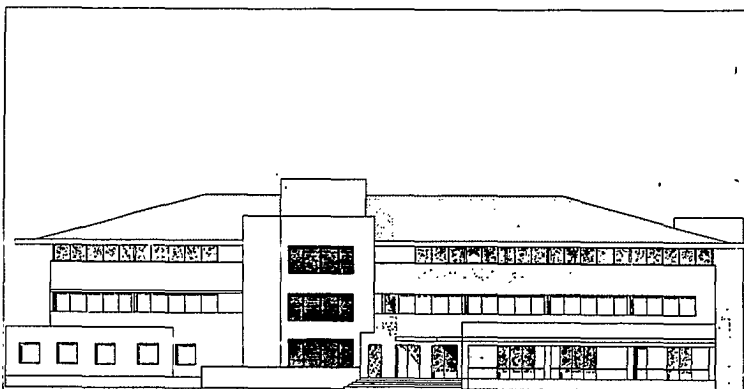
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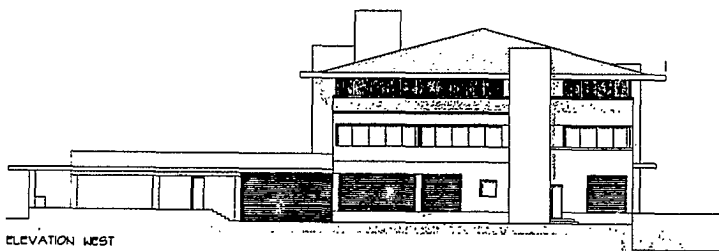


CHANCERY  
 ELEVATIONS  
  
 AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
 SCHEMATIC DESIGN





ELEVATION NORTH



ELEVATION WEST

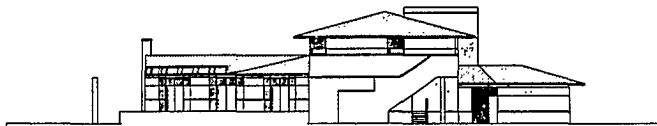


CHANCERY  
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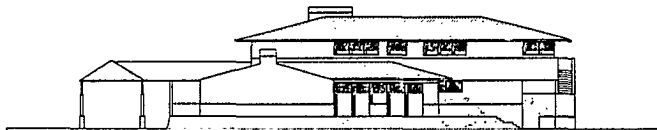
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
SCHEMATIC DESIGN



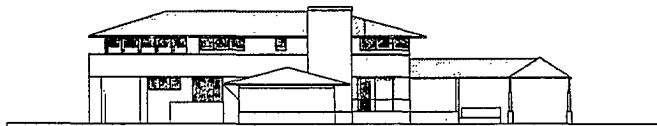
ELEVATION SOUTH



ELEVATION NORTH



ELEVATION EAST



ELEVATION WEST



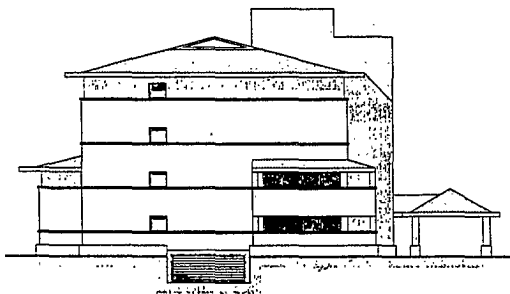
AMBASSADORS  
RESIDENCE

ELEVATIONS

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
SCHEMATIC DESIGN



ELEVATION WEST

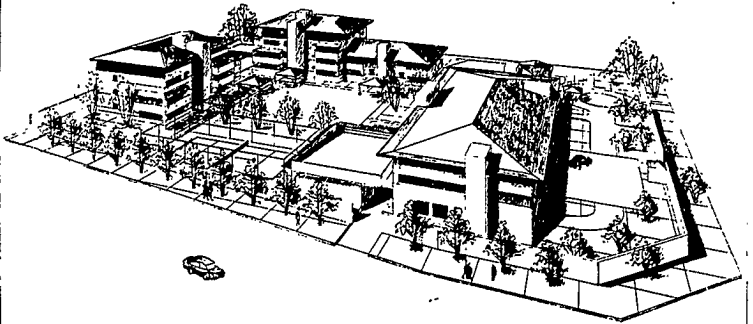


ELEVATION NORTH



STAFF  
APARTMENTS  
ELEVATIONS

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
SCHEMATIC DESIGN



PERSPECTIVE VIEW  
PROPOSED MASTERPLAN

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, HANOI  
SCHEMATIC DESIGN