

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

Report relating

to the proposed

**Extension of National Film and Sound
Archive, Acton, ACT**

(Eleventh Report of 1997)

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

(Thirty-Second Committee)

Mr Wilson Tuckey MP (Chairman)¹
Mr Colin Hollis MP (Vice-Chairman)

Senate	House of Representatives
Senator Paul Calvert	Mr Richard Evans MP
Senator Alan Ferguson	Mr John Forrest MP
Senator Shayne Murphy	Mr Ted Grace MP
	Mr Michael Hatton MP ²

¹ Replaced Mr Neil Andrew MP as Chairman on 4 September 1997

² Replaced The Hon Michael Lee MP on 26 June 1996

Committee Secretary: Bjarne Nordin

Inquiry Secretary: Michael Fetter

Administrative Officer: Lynette Sebo

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Public Works Committee Act 1969

Order under subsection 18(4)

I, WILLIAM PATRICK DEANE, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under subsection 18(4) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* hereby declare that the public work described in the schedule be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report.

SCHEDULE

EXTENSION OF THE NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE, ACTON, ACT

L.S.

Signed and sealed with the
Great Seal of Australia on

6 August 1997

WILLIAM DEANE

Governor-General

By His Excellency's Command

(David Jull)

Minister for Administrative Services

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

**EXTENSION OF THE NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE,
ACTON, ACT**

On 6 August 1997, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report to Parliament the proposed extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT.

THE REFERENCE

1. The terms of the reference were as follows:

The existing Film and Sound Archive buildings at Acton, ACT, are suitable for the public functions of the Archive but are inadequate for its administrative and specialist technical facilities. Current use of the building does not satisfy Occupational Health and Safety building standards and is at odds with the heritage aspects of the building and site.

The new building is required to provide safe, secure and suitable facilities and accommodation for the National Film and Sound Archive. The consequential refurbishment of the existing building is necessary for the same reasons, as well as to improve access to its collections.

The proposal will include:

- construction of a new two-storey building to house the National Film and Sound Archive's administrative and technical functions, refurbishment of the existing Headquarters (including public galleries) to house the public functions of the National Film and Sound Archive;
- refurbishment of the existing Residence Building to house corporate affairs staff;
- demolition or removal for sale of the existing demountable buildings, metal-clad storage structures and nitrate vaults;

- redevelopment of the character of the site and buildings within a landscape setting; and
- retention of the existing permanent carpark with minor modifications. Additional on-site parking will be provided for approximately 25 cars and five tourist coaches.

2. When referred to the Committee the estimated out turn cost of the proposal was \$14.85 million.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

3. The reference is substantially similar to a proposal which was referred by the House of Representatives to the former Committee on 24 October 1995.

4. The former Committee received a submission and drawings from the Department of Communications and the Arts and Works Australia (the project manager—now Gutteridge Haskins and Davey) and took evidence from representatives of the two organisations at a public hearing held in Canberra on 19 December 1995. Parliament had adjourned for the summer and the former Committee planned to table a report on the reference upon resumption of Parliament in the new year. In conjunction with the public hearing, the former Committee inspected the National Film and Sound Archive's premises at Acton and viewed the Archive's Sound and Light show in the House of Representatives chamber of the Provisional Parliament House.

5. The former Committee also received written submissions and took evidence from representatives of the Australian Academy of Science and the ACT Heritage Council at the public hearing.

6. Written submissions for the inquiry undertaken by the former Committee were also received from the following organisations and were incorporated in the transcript:

- National Capital Planning Authority;
- Environment Protection Agency;
- Australian Heritage Commission;
- Commonwealth Fire Board;
- National Trust; and
- Integrated Lighting.

7. The House of Representatives was dissolved on 29 January 1996 and the former Committee was unable to report on the reference. The 38th Parliament commenced on 30 April 1996 and the present Committee met for the first time on 30 May 1996. It was not until 6 August 1997, that the proposal was referred to the Committee. A Sectional Committee was briefed on the proposal and inspected existing facilities at the Archive at the earliest available opportunity on 5 September 1997 and at the next private meeting, which was held on 25 September 1997, the Committee resolved:

that, pursuant to the provisions of section 24 of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the evidence taken by the former Committee be considered as evidence taken by the present Committee and that a further public hearing into the proposal is not necessary.

8. The Committee's Proceedings, which includes correspondence, authorised for publication, received in connection with the present reference, will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

BACKGROUND

9. It is perhaps fitting, two years following the centenary year of Australian films that the Committee reports on an organisation, housed in an historic building, dedicated to preserving moving images and sounds of previous generations. It is equally fitting that this inquiry invokes memories and traditions of past Public Works Committees. On the one hand, the inquiry focussed on the convergence and storage of historically important records, on the other, the adaptive re-use of a building examined and reported on by the Public Works Committee in 1928-29.

10. Cinema originated a century ago and from the earliest days of film-making Australia has been a pioneer and innovator. One of the first films made in Australia showed scenes of the 1896 Melbourne Cup. The world's first feature-length film, *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, was produced in Australia in 1906.

11. Australia was one of the first countries to be "born" in front of the movie camera. The signing in Centennial Park, Sydney, of the Federation documents by representatives of the States was captured on film.

Formation and functions

12. Established in 1984, the National Film and Sound Archive has as its charter the development, preservation and promotion of the national collection of recorded moving images and sound materials. Prior to the Archive's establishment, its functions were performed by the National Library of Australia. The Archive traces its origins back to 1935, when the Government established the National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library as part of the National Library. In April 1984, the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment (the Hon Barry Cohen MP) announced the creation of the Archive as a separate agency. The Minister described the role of the Archive in the following terms:

The Archive will preserve moving images and recorded sound as part of Australia's twentieth century cultural heritage. The Archive...will develop presentational material such as literature and artefacts relating to the history of Australian film and recorded sound. It will contain facilities to encourage public and industry access to the collections, and for screening old films for public viewing.¹

13. The Archive is a semi-autonomous agency, under the Department of Communications and the Arts. The Committee was advised that there is a clear understanding that the organisation is to become a statutory authority. Pending the completion of that process, the organisation operates as though it were a statutory authority and has an advisory council to oversee its operations.

The national collection

14. The Archive's national collection consists of more than one million items including discs, audio and video tapes, films, phonograph cylinders, piano rolls and artefacts and a further million items of documentation such as photographs, scripts, publicity items and newspaper clippings. A collection of artefacts is on public display in the north gallery of the Headquarters building. The artefacts demonstrate the development of phonograms, cine cameras and radios from earliest to present times. Also included is Australia's first Oscar, awarded in 1943, for *Kokoda Front Line*, a Cinesound newsreel filmed in 1942 by Damien Parer and written and directed by Ken G. Hall, the donor. It was the only newsreel ever to win an Academy award.

¹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 5 April 1984, p. 1488

15. The Archive's public, technical and administrative functions are housed at Acton in the existing Headquarters building and residence and in a number of temporary demountable buildings. Its collections are housed in several storage vaults and warehouses at Mitchell, ACT. Regional offices of the Archive are located in Melbourne and Sydney, with access centres in State Libraries in Hobart, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane.

Headquarters site

16. The site (Section 21 Acton) is located approximately one kilometre to the south-west of the Canberra central business district and to the south-east of the Australian National University. The site is bounded by McCoy Circuit and Liversidge Street.

17. The site is specified as a Designated Area in accordance with the provisions of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*.

Headquarters building—Australian Institute of Anatomy

18. The Headquarters building formerly housed the Australian Institute of Anatomy, which was constructed to hold a massive collection of dissected human and animal specimens donated to the Commonwealth by Sir Colin MacKenzie, together with the Commonwealth's national ethnological collection of Australian Aboriginal material. The Institute of Anatomy was one of the first major institutional buildings constructed in Canberra. Construction was approved by Parliament in March 1929, following the tabling of a report by the Public Works Committee recommending that the work should proceed. The building was completed at a cost of 96,306 Pounds and the adjacent Director's residence cost 3,547 Pounds. The Institute was recognised internationally, attracted many visitors, conducted lectures and held additional collections of anthropological, ethnological and zoological material. In 1942, the Institute commenced a research program on human nutrition under the Department of Health and, in the 1950s, the building was taken over by the Commonwealth Health Laboratories. In 1966, the National Biological Standards Laboratory moved into the building and remained there until July 1984.

19. Throughout the building's life it has been a public facility attracting many visitors to the collections to see the ethnological collection and *Phar Lap's* heart. This material has now passed to the National Museum of Australia.

20. The main building is a two storey masonry building with a basement. It is clad in Hawkesbury sandstone and is symmetrically placed on the site. Some

more recent development has intruded upon this symmetry, such as the carpark to the north and the temporary structures. These are transportable buildings linked by covered ways. Temporary offices and work areas have been installed in the basement.

Review of Archive

21. A major program review of the Archive, which formed part of a wider program of reviews of Commonwealth agencies, commenced in 1994 and concluded in 1995. The review represented the most substantial survey of the performance of the organisation in its ten year history. The review was open to public submissions and more than 100 were received from individuals and organisations from Australia and overseas.

22. The Steering Committee's report to the Minister for Communications and the Arts (the Hon Michael Lee MP) made a number of recommendations covering:

- the need for the Archive to become a statutory authority by July 1996;
- the further development of business and corporate planning regimes;
- a review of policies; and
- the Archive's national role.

23. The Minister endorsed the Steering Committee's findings, noting the finding that the Archive had achieved its stated program objectives within the limitations of the strategies and performance information available.

THE NEED

Deficiencies

24. The existing buildings at Acton are suitable for the public functions of the Archive but are totally inadequate for its administrative and specialist technical functions. Existing deficiencies are:

- basement specialist technical facilities are inefficient and do not satisfy current occupational health and safety standards, including in particular fire safety, the Building Code of Australia and Australian Standards relating to current use;

- the use of gallery space for office and specialist technical accommodation is at odds with the building's heritage significance and limits the space available for public exhibitions; and
- the construction of demountable buildings has substantially compromised the site's heritage significance and is not consistent with the intentions of the National Capital Plan.

25. After inspecting the specialist technical facilities in the basement and registration and accession areas housed in demountable buildings, the Committee came away with a strong perception that the Archive is indeed served by a dedicated staff. The staff have displayed stoic forbearance in very difficult working conditions. It was obvious that the major concern of staff has been to keep the facilities operating despite potential safety risks.

Alternatives examined

26. The occupation of the existing building is unacceptable on health and safety grounds and undesirable on operational efficiency and heritage grounds. Continuation of the existing arrangements (the "do nothing" option) is not sustainable. Six alternatives to the proposed course of action, involving the construction of new administrative and technical facilities on the site, were considered:

- Option 1—retain the existing Headquarters building as the Archive's public face and build new technical and administrative facilities at Mitchell, ACT, collocated with the existing collection storage facilities;
- Option 2—retain the existing Headquarters building as the Archive's public face and fit out an existing building to house the technical and administrative facilities;
- Option 3—abandon the existing Headquarters building, relocate the exhibition facilities to the Provisional Parliament House and build new technical and administrative facilities at Mitchell, ACT, collocated with the existing collection storage facilities;
- Option 4—abandon the existing Headquarters building and build new exhibition, technical and administrative facilities at Mitchell ACT, collocated with the existing collection storage facilities;

- Option 5—abandon the existing Headquarters building and build new exhibition, technical and administrative facilities on a new site in a central location; and
- Option 6—abandon the existing Headquarters building and collection storage facilities and build new exhibition, technical, administrative and collection storage facilities on a new site in a central location.

Consideration of options

27. Options 1, 2 and 3 were rejected on the grounds that the separation of the Archive's administrative and technical functions from its public functions is not acceptable.

28. Option 4 was rejected on the grounds that its remote location would be inconsistent with the Government's intention of improving public access to the Archive's collection.

29. Options 5 and 6 were rejected on the grounds that, whilst technically feasible, they are not cost effective. The existing Headquarters building provides ideal exhibition opportunities for the Archive. The Archive has a significant investment in its current exhibition and visitor facilities that would be lost upon relocation. Similarly, the replacement of existing specialised storage facilities at Mitchell, as proposed in Option 6, would be expensive.

30. The development of on-site facilities has the following advantages:

- the site forms part of the Commonwealth's special purpose estate and the implementation of the off-site options would require the purchase of additional land, significantly adding to costs;
- the Archive has a major display and visitation function and the existing building and its location are ideal for that purpose - it would be difficult to obtain another site of comparable suitability; and
- the collocation of functions on a single site would facilitate the enhancement of the Archive's operations.

31. The Committee questioned the practicalities of consolidating Archive operations on the one site at Acton. The Archive advised that the three warehouses in Mitchell, which contain over a million film and sound carriers, are very large and would not fit on the site as they would tower over the

existing building. The nitrate vaults, semi-subterranean structures which house 12 000 cans of nitrate film, are a hazardous site. Locating the nitrate vaults at Acton would require considerable space and safety clearances. The nitrate vaults have about a dozen explosion ports protruding from them, designed to carry an explosion upwards rather than laterally. Construction of a similar series of explosion ports at Acton would detract from the heritage quality of the site and buildings. For these reasons, the Committee agrees it would be impractical and unwise to locate the Archive's storage facilities at Acton.

Transport of material from Mitchell

32. The safety of the transportation of material between the storage vaults and the Headquarters building was also raised by the Committee at the public hearing. The Archive assured the Committee the bulk of the collection is not nitrate film; it is either acetate film or polyester film which does not burn very readily and are not dangerous goods. There is a danger in the handling of nitrate material, and staff who move such material are required to hold dangerous goods certification. In addition, the material is transported in small quantities.

Committee's Conclusions

33. The National Film and Sound Archive's administrative and technical accommodation is of very low quality, functionally unsuitable, inefficient and does not comply with current fire safety and occupational health and safety standards.

34. An examination of options aimed at overcoming accommodation problems revealed the construction of a new administrative and technical support building contiguous with the existing Headquarters building at Acton to be the less expensive and more practical solution.

THE PROPOSAL

Outline

35. The proposal involves the following elements:

- retention of the existing Headquarters building to house the public functions of the Archive;
- construction of a new two storey building of 4230 square metres along the north-west of the existing Headquarters building to house the Archive's administrative and technical functions. The allocation of space will be (in square metres):

- office and support areas—1144
- technical facilities—1898
- meeting and amenities—555
- engineering plant rooms—633;
- refurbishment of the south gallery for use as an exhibition space;
- demolition of the existing plant and toilet areas abutting the west wall of the courtyard and consequential refurbishment of sections of the ground floor;
- demolition of the demountable buildings, metal clad storage buildings and the nitrate vault;
- refurbishment of the residence to house the Archive's Corporate Relations Branch;
- retention of the existing permanent car park with minor modifications; and
- the provision of additional on-site parking for approximately 25 cars and 5 tourist coaches.

Changes to original proposal

36. The proposal examined by the previous Committee involved the construction of a building of 3800 square metres, with single storey links between the existing building and the extension and did not include refurbishment of the existing building. The present proposal incorporates the following changes:

- the design of the entry to the extension has been changed by adding 200 square metres of useable space at no extra cost;
- the link areas will now be two storeys. The benefits of this scheme include an improvement to the architectural configuration, the provision of additional space and improved internal configuration. This variation will be cost neutral as it exchanges the cost of the refurbishment of the Residence for the provision of an additional floor on both links;

- the project now includes the refurbishment of the Headquarters building to meet Occupational Health and Safety requirements and to provide enhanced public access to the collection. Essential Building Code of Australia works, such as sprinklers and other safety requirements, have added to the cost of the project. The Archive advised that these works would normally have been funded as part of the building's life cycle repairs and maintenance program. They have been brought forward to provide the staff and the public with a safe and healthy environment as quickly as possible; and
- modifications to the previous design will enable the Archive to accommodate all staff without the need to rely on the Residence in the short term. Refurbishment of the Residence will therefore be scheduled to the end of the construction period. The Archive advised that work on the Residence will commence in late 1999, to be completed in six months. A separate contract for work on the Residence will be let. Refurbishment of the Residence has been estimated at \$250,000, although detailed planning and costing remains to be undertaken as the planning team focussed on the proposed new building and consequential works.

Planning

37. The site is within the Designated Areas of the National Capital Plan and falls within the land use category of *Community Facility* in the plan. The National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA) is responsible for the preparation and administration of the plan. The NCPA therefore became involved in the development of the project. This commenced in September 1994, when approached by the Archive to discuss planning requirements applying to the site and any new development.

38. The site and the Headquarters building are listed on the Register of the National Estate. A conservation plan was prepared to assist in the preparation of development guidelines for the site. These guidelines were prepared and used for consideration of design siting options and the subsequent development of preliminary designs. At various stages in the process the Australian Heritage Commission, ACT Heritage Council and the NCPA were consulted. The recommendations made in the conservation plan were taken into consideration in setting the draft development conditions for the site and its development. The NCPA advised the Committee that the proposed development so far meets the recommendations made in the conservation plan. During the design

development, the NCPA had extensive discussions with the Archive and project architects. Key development guidelines which have influenced the design and siting of the proposed development are:

- new construction and development to be of two storeys and sited to the west of the Headquarters building;
- the building to be symmetrically balanced around the central axis of the Headquarters building;
- the building to be rectilinear and sited parallel to Liversidge Street with a high quality presentation to the street frontage;
- materials and design to complement the Headquarters building;
- the existing McCoy Circuit entry to be maintained as the main entrance;
- secondary pedestrian access (including disabled access) to be considered off Liversidge Street to service the new development;
- existing carparking in the north-east to be rationalised and new car and busparking to be located to the south and south-west of the Headquarters building;
- landscape design to maintain the open character of the site and reinforce the formal character of the street pattern;
- two rows of trees along Liversidge Street and McCoy Circuit to be retained and restored; and
- the Residence garden to be restored consistent with the character of the original garden.

39. The NCPA advised the Committee that the proposed building and associated development generally reflect urban design principles set for the site and its development. The siting, form and details of the development are consistent with the agreement reached with the NCPA. The proposed work has not been considered by the NCPA for works approval. This will occur following detailed design development.

40. A traffic and parking study was undertaken and the NCPA advised the Committee that the recommendations made in the study report were used to determine traffic and parking requirements. The NCPA confirmed that a minimum of 70 carparking spaces and five busparking spaces (one space to be

used for bus setdown) have been agreed to as the parking requirement for the site. This requirement can be met by rationalising existing parking on the site and providing 25 new carparking and five busparking spaces.

Design concept

41. The building has been designed to respect but not to mimic the existing building. Its proportioning and detailing are sympathetic to the existing Headquarters building.

42. The existing east-west axis of the Headquarters building is acknowledged and reinforced.

43. The siting of the building will allow for retention of the existing *Cedrus* and *Prunus* arcades to Liversidge Street and provide adequate separation between the new building and the existing Headquarters building and residence.

44. Building planning responds to the organisational and functional needs of the Archive and will have a lower ground floor, ground floor and first floor. The lower ground floor will house plant and services areas and will provide a link to the basement of the existing Headquarters building. The ground floor will house the technical areas of the Archive's preservation branch, the loading dock and staff amenity areas.

Space allocation, adequacy and future development

45. The first floor will house offices and workrooms of the Archive director, access branch, resource management branch, collections branch and the information technology unit.

46. The Committee questioned the adequacy of the building, the basis of the allocation of space, if there will be any increases in staff and efficiencies which will result from the provision of a purpose-designed facility. The Archive advised that staff are involved in four major functions:

- the development of the national collection of film and sound material;
- restoration of very old material involving the copying of nitrate film and the restoration of heritage sound material;
- the care and maintenance of more modern materials which deteriorate less rapidly; and
- the provision of public access to the collection.

47. The Archive has copied about three to four million feet of its holdings of 12 million feet of nitrate film. Nitrate film is stored in environmentally controlled underground vaults in Mitchell. The restoration of the balance of nine million feet will continue for some years. A small amount of nitrate film continues to be received by the Archive, but most has been collected through a program conducted in the early 1980s, called the *Last Film Search*.

48. The Archive does not plan to increase its staff, despite the massive task involved in restoration, and assured the Committee that the new building will meet the administrative and scientific requirements of the next ten years.

49. In terms of providing public access to the collection, the proposal will more than double the exhibition space. At present, the north gallery, containing a theatre and a limited collection of artefacts, is used to present the Archive to the public. The proposal will free up the south gallery and a number of rooms along the front of the building, now used as offices but originally designed for public functions. These are intended for use as seminar and lecture rooms and for further exhibition. The Archive receives about 80 000 visitors a year and estimates the number of visitors will double following the recovery of the south gallery.

50. The scope of the proposed building and the allocation of space was dictated in some measure by requirements for special purpose facilities such as laboratories. Office space was allocated in accordance with Department of Finance guidelines. The Archive acknowledged there is some minor capacity for expansion which relies on use of the Residence rather than the new building. The Archive also acknowledged this provides a small capacity for increased staff numbers.

51. The operational efficiencies which will result from the provision of a purpose designed facility relate mainly to collocation and a considerably enhanced occupational health and safety regime. Staff are now spread amongst a number of buildings, most of which have either occupational health and safety problems or fire safety problems. All have problems in terms of air quality. The proposal will result in collocated staff and improved workflows. Improved air quality will also add to the quality of repaired, restored and copied film.

52. The conservation plan does not permit any further development of the site, with the exception of a possible small building of the same scale as the existing residence being constructed to the south-west of the proposed building.

Structure

53. The building structure will be supported on reinforced concrete footings. The superstructure will consist of reinforced concrete floor slabs, beams and columns with steel framing to the roof.

Materials and finishes

54. External materials have been selected in response to the materials used in the existing building, the prominence of the site, the importance of the Archive as a national public institution, the need for the building to age gracefully and the need for maintenance costs to be minimised.

55. Walls will be a mix of natural stone and pre-cast concrete. Windows will be metal frame double glazed units with metal spandrel panels.

56. The roof will be pre-finished, pre-coloured steel decking with copper clad perimeter, fascias and soffits.

57. Commercial quality carpet will be provided to office areas generally with non-slip vinyl flooring to technical areas. Walls to core areas will be rendered blockwork. Partitions will generally be plasterboard or glazed, except where upgraded construction is required in high traffic areas, processing areas and auditioning and recording areas.

58. Ceilings will generally be demountable acoustic tile, except in specific technical areas with particular acoustic or dust control requirements.

59. Fire-rated construction will be provided to separate laboratory areas from the remainder of the building.

Committee's Conclusions

60. The heritage importance of the site and the existing Headquarters building are reflected in planning principles adopted for the design. The materials and finishes to be used will complement the existing Headquarters building.

61. The extent of the proposed new building will meet the requirements of the National Film and Sound Archive for at least the next ten years.

62. Construction of the new building will improve efficiency, enable display areas to be increased and will attract more visitors.

ENGINEERING

Mechanical services

63. The building will be airconditioned to maintain precise temperature and humidity control and air filtration standards required for specialist technical processing and storage areas. A centralised chilled water and heated water plant will be provided with air handling plant located in distributed plant rooms.

64. High standards of exhaust ventilation will be provided to process areas and to toilets, showers and plant rooms to remove fumes.

Electrical services

65. The existing ACTEW electrical substation serving the site will be upgraded to provide sufficient capacity to include the new building.

66. A new main switchboard with bulk metering will be provided in the lower ground floor of the new building. The existing building will be connected to this new main switchboard.

67. General purpose and special power will be provided to suit the Archive's specific technical requirements. An uninterruptible power supply will maintain power to essential computer, communications and specialist equipment in the event of power failure.

68. Special earthing, radio frequency screening and power conditioning will be provided for sensitive electronic equipment in video and audio recording studios.

69. General internal lighting will be fluorescent, with special task lighting in specific inspection and processing rooms. External security lighting and internal emergency and exit lighting will be provided. Telephone cabling and structured data cabling will be provided throughout. An electro-hydraulic goods/passenger lift will serve all levels of the building.

Hydraulic services

70. Water supply and sanitary plumbing and drainage will be in accordance with ACTEW requirements. Provision will be made to treat the trade waste from the laboratories before discharge to the sewer.

External works and landscape

71. Site landscape works will be in accordance with the recommendations of the conservation plan. The existing site character and building setting will be maintained and some aspects of the original design will be reinstated. The landscape design will include some facilities for staff passive recreation.

72. Roads and parking areas will be in accordance with statutory requirements and relevant Australian Standards.

Codes and standards

73. The building will comply with the Building Code of Australia and will be constructed in accordance with the Department of Administrative Services Building Standards and Performance Requirements for Commonwealth Leased Premises and relevant Australian Standards.

FIRE PROTECTION

Outline

74. The building will be provided with a fire sprinkler system, with VESDA smoke detection systems to computer rooms and recording and auditioning suites. Fire hydrants, hose reels and extinguishers will be provided in accordance with statutory requirements.

75. An emergency warning and intercommunication system will be provided for fire or evacuation purposes.

Commonwealth Fire Board

76. The Commonwealth Fire Board made the following points in a written submission to the Committee:

- because of hazardous substances such as nitrate film being stored and processed on the premises, design of the laboratory area should be in accordance with Australian Standard 2982 - the Laboratory Construction Code;
- a risk analysis should be conducted to provide adequate levels of smoke control and the placement of fire fighting equipment;
- appropriate egress for people with disabilities should be provided;

- child care facilities should be at ground level with easy access to the outside;
- areas with no natural lighting should be provided with emergency lighting; and
- before the building is occupied, adequate proof of conformance with relevant Codes should be provided.

77. The Archive advised that, in conjunction with Works Australia, it reviewed the risks and fire safety requirements of its operations in the proposed building. The review included issues raised by the Commonwealth Fire Board. In response to specific matters raised by the CFB, the Archive advised as follows:

- the fire protection measures specified in Australian Standard 2982 will guide consideration of risks and fire safety requirements in the proposed new building. Nevertheless full compliance with the Standard is not guaranteed for the following reasons:
 - Australian Standard 2982 is not fully compatible with the Building Code of Australia;
 - the Standard is being revised currently and its fire protection measures are likely to be rendered obsolete. The long term intention is to have all fire protection requirements for laboratories specified by the BCA and removed from the Standard;
- the working parents' room will be on the ground floor, close to the external exit from the lunch room;
- areas within the new building which receive no natural light will be equipped with emergency lighting; and
- proof of conformance with the BCA and relevant standards will be provided before occupation by a qualified experienced person independent of the design team.

Nitrate vault

78. At the public hearing, the Committee was advised that design work had been carried out in close consultation with the ACT Emergency Services

Bureau. Two small nitrate vaults, which will replace the existing on-site bunker, will be housed in the new building. The vaults will be constructed in accordance with the American Standard (NFPA 40), which exceeds the requirements of local authorities.

Committee's Conclusion

79. Engineering services and fire protection measures to be provided are consistent with requirements of a building housing both offices and laboratories and technical support facilities and can be justified on that basis.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

80. The building has been designed for optimal energy efficiency within the constraints of orientation, location and functional requirements. The building envelope will be insulated and double glazing provided throughout. The double glazing will serve two purposes, namely increased energy efficiency and sound isolation, to prevent outside noise intruding into the building.

81. Mechanical plant will be selected for maximum energy efficiency with use made of outside air economy cycles, whenever appropriate. The provision of multiple air handling units will minimise energy usage for after-hours operations.

82. A Building Management System will be installed.

83. A lighting control system using automatic off controls and local manual reset switches will be provided. Energy targets have been prepared for the building and monitoring of the building's expected performance against the energy targets will be carried out during the detailed design stage.

84. The Archive acknowledged the existing Headquarters building is energy inefficient due to high ceilings, single glazed windows and very old heating systems. The project will, however, address this inefficiency by combining the airconditioning plant for the new and old buildings. The airconditioning plant, which will be in the basement of the new building, will also serve the old building. Savings are expected from increased efficiency of maintenance and less overall complexity. The Archive also advised that it is likely that the new airconditioning system will eliminate the need for airconditioning plant in the old building.

Committee's Recommendation

85. After the building has been in use for 12 months, engineering services providing heating, ventilation and cooling of the complex should be audited to determine their efficiency.

FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

86. Access provisions are:

- one designated parking space in the public carpark with path access to the north-west entry;
- designated staff parking spaces made available to suit the demand of staff;
- entry to the north-west entry using a ramp designed to relevant Australian Standards with a gradient of 1 in 14;
- circulation to all levels of the new wing by the provision of a lift complying with relevant Australian Standards;
- access to the existing courtyard by ramps from the new building and access to the existing building via a ramp from the courtyard to the existing foyer;
- circulation within the existing building possible with the existing lift;
- one new unisex disabled persons' toilet in the public section of the new building and one provided in the existing building. Both will be at ground level and will comply with relevant Australian Standards; and
- signage will be provided throughout.

Committee's Recommendation

87. The National Film and Sound Archive should consult further with the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled about the acceptability of measures to be implemented to ensure that access to the southern main public entry does not discriminate against people with disabilities.

CHILD CARE

88. A working parents' room will be provided in the new building to allow for short-term emergency child care to be provided on an "as required" basis. The new building makes no provision for long-term child care facilities.

89. The existing use by Archive staff of local child care facilities operated by the Australian National University and the private sector will continue.

HERITAGE

Heritage importance

90. The site, the existing Headquarters building and the Residence are listed in the Register of the National Estate and, as part of the project, a conservation plan has been prepared for the site and buildings in consultation with the Australian Heritage Commission. The Australian Heritage Commission advised the Committee of its active involvement in the early stages of the project, the preparation of the conservation plan and during the design development. The AHC believes the proposal is in accordance with the guidelines set down in the conservation plan and that it is an appropriate response to the cultural heritage significance of the building and the site.

Matters raised

91. The Australian Academy of Science and the ACT Heritage Council of the ACT raised a number of matters relating to traffic and purported departures from planning principles recommended in the conservation plan.

92. The Academy of Science expressed concern about a number of options proposed in the study, commissioned by Works Australia at the request of the NCPA, of traffic and parking arrangements internal and external to the site. The Academy believes, if implemented, the options would create new opportunities for through traffic along streets surrounding the Academy building, which is located opposite the Archive. If this should occur, it would limit opportunities for making best use of the wider Acton precinct. The encouragement of through traffic is therefore unnecessary. The Archive shared the concern and undertook to consult with the Academy on traffic arrangements around the site.

93. The ACT Heritage Council submitted that the proposed provision of additional carparking spaces and new busparking are not consistent with guidelines in the conservation plan which state that the removal of trees to permit large paved areas is not to be permitted. The construction of bus and car

parking areas would require the removal of eight important trees. The removal of street trees to Liversidge Street will also be required.

94. The Archive confirmed that the conservation plan is unambiguous about the need to minimise the provision of new paved areas on the site. Additional paved areas proposed should be regarded as minimum requirements. The Archive believes the suggestion from the ACT Heritage Council that buses should continue to unload passengers on the existing semicircular driveway in front of the building would be impractical, unsafe and not consistent with health concerns.

95. Off-site parking is a problem, even if the passengers are unloaded in front of the building. For these reasons, the Archive believes it is necessary for buses to have somewhere safe and out of the way where they can load and unload onto an off-street zone rather than a street or a through traffic zone. In relation to carparking, there is a minimum requirement to move some disabled parking close to the new disabled access point at the back of the building. The Archive advised that most of the trees that will be lost are in poor condition and it is proposed to replace them in a manner consistent with the parking area.

96. Throughout the development of the project, the Archive indicated a commitment to consultation on all aspects of the development of the site. The Archive advised the Committee that relevant authorities such as the Australian Heritage Commission and the ACT Heritage Council were consulted about details of the landscape planning.

Committee's Recommendation

97. The Archive should continue consultations with the Australian Heritage Commission and the ACT Heritage Council during further landscape design development.

CONSULTATIONS

98. There have been consultations with the following organisations during development of the proposal:

- National Capital Planning Authority;
- Australian Heritage Commission;
- Environment Protection Agency;
- Australian Nature Conservation Agency;

- ACT Planning Authority;
- Heritage Council of the ACT;
- Australian National University;
- Australian Academy of Science;
- Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled;
- National Trust of Australia (ACT);
- ACT Electricity and Water;
- Telstra;
- ACT Fire Brigade; and
- NFSA Staff Associations.

PROJECT DELIVERY

99. The Committee questioned a number of aspects of the delivery of the project including:

- the type of contract;
- construction guarantees;
- payment of subcontractors;
- quality assurance;
- security of payment;
- strategies to deter collusive tendering; and
- capacity of the ACT construction industry to undertake the work.

Type of contract

100. The original project was to have been delivered using a lump-sum, fixed-time contract. Works Australia advised this delivery method was selected because it involves less administration and risk to both parties.

101. For the current proposal, it is intended to use a Construction and Instalment Payment Contract. The Committee was advised that this delivery

method was selected because, given funding and time constraints, it offered the least risk to the Commonwealth.

Construction guarantees

102. In the context of previously proposed contract arrangements the Committee was aware of complaints from the ACT Master Builders' Association about the impact of construction guarantees required of successful tenderers being a deterrent to small construction companies, in tendering for work. Works Australia advised the Committee that it recommends a guarantee of 5 per cent of the contract value be sought by its clients from the successful tenderer. In the context of a construction project estimated to cost in the order of \$12 million, Works Australia does not believe this to be an unduly severe impost. The successful tenderer will be required to provide an unconditional bank guarantee. Works Australia believes that:

a constructor envisaging himself undertaking this construction who could not raise half a million dollars worth of financial guarantee would not be a suitable organisation that we would want to do business with.²

103. Again, in the context of previously proposed contract arrangements, Works Australia also advised the Committee the main contractor would not contribute more than 15 per cent towards the cost of the works. The balance of 85 per cent will be carried out by subcontractors.

Payment of subcontractors

104. Throughout 1995, the Committee concentrated considerable attention to protecting the interests of subcontractors, workers and suppliers. Works Australia advised that procedures have been developed to ensure that, before monthly progress payments are made, the contractor must prove all creditors have been paid up. Works Australia, along with other national affiliates in the public works arena, has adopted a form of contract, Australian Standard 2124, which requires that before a contractor is paid, the contractor must certify that payments have been made for all work carried out by subcontractors during the previous month.

²Transcript, p. 45

Quality assurance

105. Works Australia advised that quality assurance has become the norm in the building and construction industry and it will be a mandatory requirement for the successful tenderer to have appropriate quality assurance processes and procedures established. Works Australia has encouraged quality assurance since 1988 and it is now mandatory.

Collusive tendering

106. A number of measures, designed to deter collusive tendering, have been developed in recent years. Works Australia advised the Committee:

We can give no guarantees as to the behaviour of the participants in the building construction industry in that regard. What we have had in place, since the Royal Commission in Sydney some five or six years ago, is the requirement that the tenderers give to us with their tender a statutory declaration that they have not colluded with any other participant in that tender process: they have not talked to one another, they have not exchanged any information whatsoever and they have been involved in no joint meetings with the Master Builders Association in any regard whatsoever in putting that tender together. We do not know where we could go after that situation. If they were found to be untruthful as a result of signing that statutory declaration, they would be subject to criminal action and civil action.³

107. Works Australia has considerable expertise in assessing tender prices, and calculates its own tender figures for benchmark purposes.

ACT construction industry

108. Works Australia believes the project is not large and envisages that it will involve about 100 people years of work on site, with a peak labour force of between 180 to 200. A similar number will be involved off-site. The major elements of the project will be precast and a considerable amount of construction will be in Sydney and Melbourne. The Committee was assured the impact of the project on the Canberra construction scene will be minimal.

³Transcript, p. 51

Timing

109. Subject to Parliamentary approval of the project, it is intended that the works will be completed by June 1999.

COST

Increases

110. The limit of cost estimate for the original project, at September 1995 prices, was \$12.447 million, including construction allowances and professional fees. The total project budget at September 1997 prices is \$14.85 million.

111. The Archive advised that the elapse in time of rereferring the project to the Committee and the expansion of the scope of the project to include the refurbishment of the existing Headquarters building have increased the cost.

112. In broad terms, the cost breakdown is:

- new works: \$14.85 million;
- related works to be funded from running costs: \$3.124 million

Funding arrangements

113. The new works will be funded through instalment purchase. It will involve the use of a tender process to select a contractor to construct and to fund construction against a subsequent purchase by the Commonwealth. The model to be used will be based on of previous arrangements entered into by the Commonwealth. The details of the arrangements are being determined by the Australian Government Solicitor's Office, a financial advisor and Works Australia. Refurbishment and the exhibition fitout will be funded from the Archive's running costs with supplementation from the Department of Communications and the Arts.

Heritage

114. Works Australia acknowledged additional costs will result from heritage constraints. The cost of the new administrative and technical support wing is estimated at \$2500 per square metre. The building will provide a combination of office and special purpose-designed accommodation. If the office component were constructed in Civic, it would cost \$1600 per square metre; at the Archive site it would cost \$1800 per square metre; the same \$200 per square metre cost penalty would apply to the special purpose-designed accommodation.

Committee's Recommendation

115. The Committee recommends the extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT at a cost of \$14.85 million at September 1997 prices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

116. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations and the paragraphs in the report to which they refer are set out below:

1. The National Film and Sound Archive's administrative and technical accommodation is of very low quality, functionally unsuitable, inefficient and does not comply with current fire safety and occupational health and safety standards. (Paragraph 33)
2. An examination of options aimed at overcoming accommodation problems revealed the construction of a new administrative and technical support building contiguous with the existing Headquarters building at Acton to be the less expensive and more practical solution. (Paragraph 34)
3. The heritage importance of the site and the existing Headquarters building are reflected in planning principles adopted for the design. The materials and finishes to be used will complement the existing Headquarters building. (Paragraph 60)
4. The extent of the proposed new building will meet the requirements of the National Film and Sound Archive for at least the next ten years. (Paragraph 61)
5. Construction of the new building will improve efficiency, enable display areas to be increased and will attract more visitors. (Paragraph 62)
6. Engineering services and fire protection measures to be provided are consistent with requirements of a building housing both offices and laboratories and technical support facilities and can be justified on that basis. (Paragraph 79)
7. After the building has been in use for 12 months, engineering services providing heating, ventilation and cooling

of the complex should be audited to determine their efficiency. (Paragraph 85)

8. The National Film and Sound Archive should consult further with the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled about the acceptability of measures to be implemented to ensure that access to the southern main public entry does not discriminate against people with disabilities. (Paragraph 87)

9. The Archive should continue consultations with the Australian Heritage Commission and the ACT Heritage Council during further landscape design development. (Paragraph 97)

10. The Committee recommends the extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT at a cost of \$14.85 million at September 1997 prices. (Paragraph 115)

Wilson Tuckey  MP
Chairman

2 October 1997

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES

BRENT, Mr Ron, Director, National Film and Sound Archive, McCoy Circuit, Acton, Australian Capital Territory, 2601.

HODGE, Mr John Gilmour, Project Manager, Australian Construction Services, Cirius Building, Furzer Street, Phillip, Australian Capital Territory, 2606

HYNDERS, Ms Danielle, Member of Council, ACT Heritage Council, National Trust of Australia, Light Street, Griffith, Australian Capital Territory, 2603

KIERNAN, Ms Catherine, Member of Council, ACT Heritage Council, Woodhead Firth Lee, c/o Cottage 5, Lanyon, Tharwa, Australian Capital Territory, 2620

RODDA, Mr Douglas James, Manager, Support Services, National Film and Sound Archive, McCoy Circuit, Acton, Australian Capital Territory, 2601

ROSENBAUER, Mr Robert William, Assistant General Manager, Australian Construction Services, 169 Gladstone Street, Fyshwick, Australian Capital Territory, 2609

TAYLOR, Dr Stuart Ross, Chair, Precinct and Building Committee, Australian Academy of Science, Ian Potter House, Gordon Street, Acton, Australian Capital Territory, 2601

APPENDIX B

PROJECT PLANS

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Proposed site	B - 4
Basement	B - 5
Ground floor.....	B - 6
First floor.....	B - 7
Elevation.....	B - 8
Elevation.....	B - 9
Sections.....	B - 10



NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

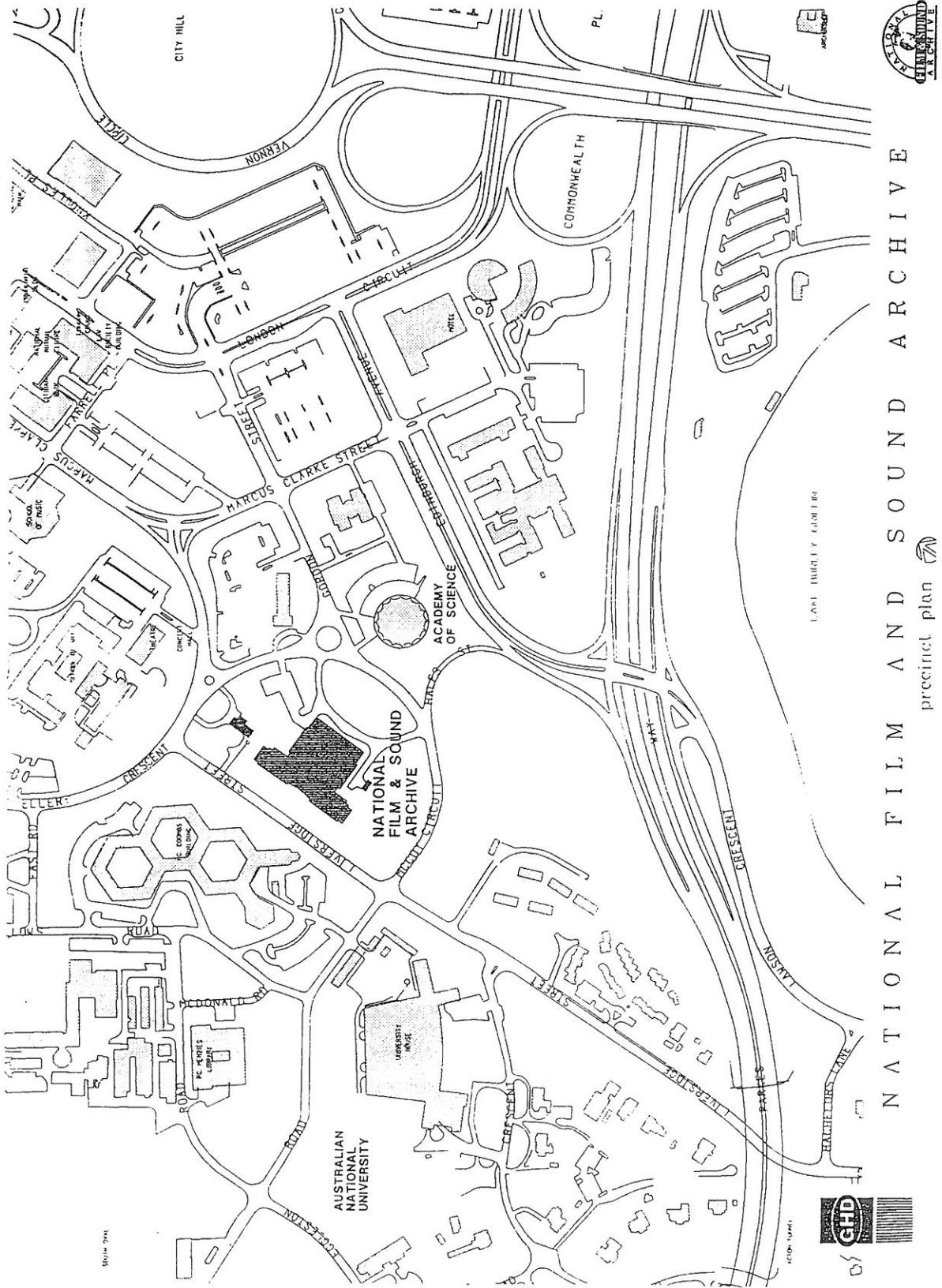
location plan

NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

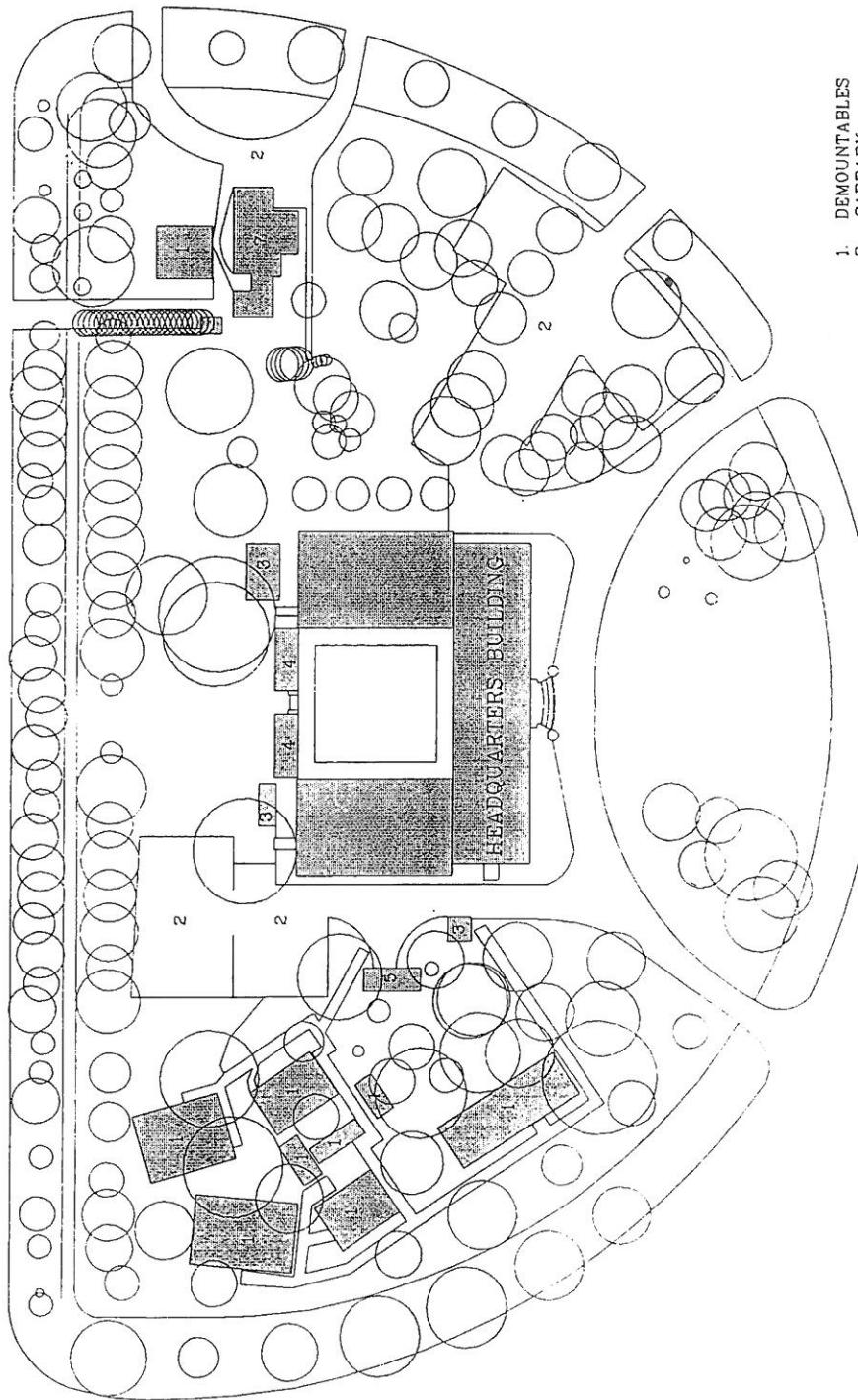
1. NATIONAL FILM & SOUND ARCHIVE
2. CANBERRA AIRPORT
3. PARLIAMENT HOUSE
4. LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN
5. CANBERRA CITY
6. WODEN
7. BELCONNEN
8. TUGGERANONG
9. WESTON
10. QUEANBEYAN
11. FYSHWICK
12. NSW/ACT BORDER

B-1





L I V E R S I D G E S T R E E T

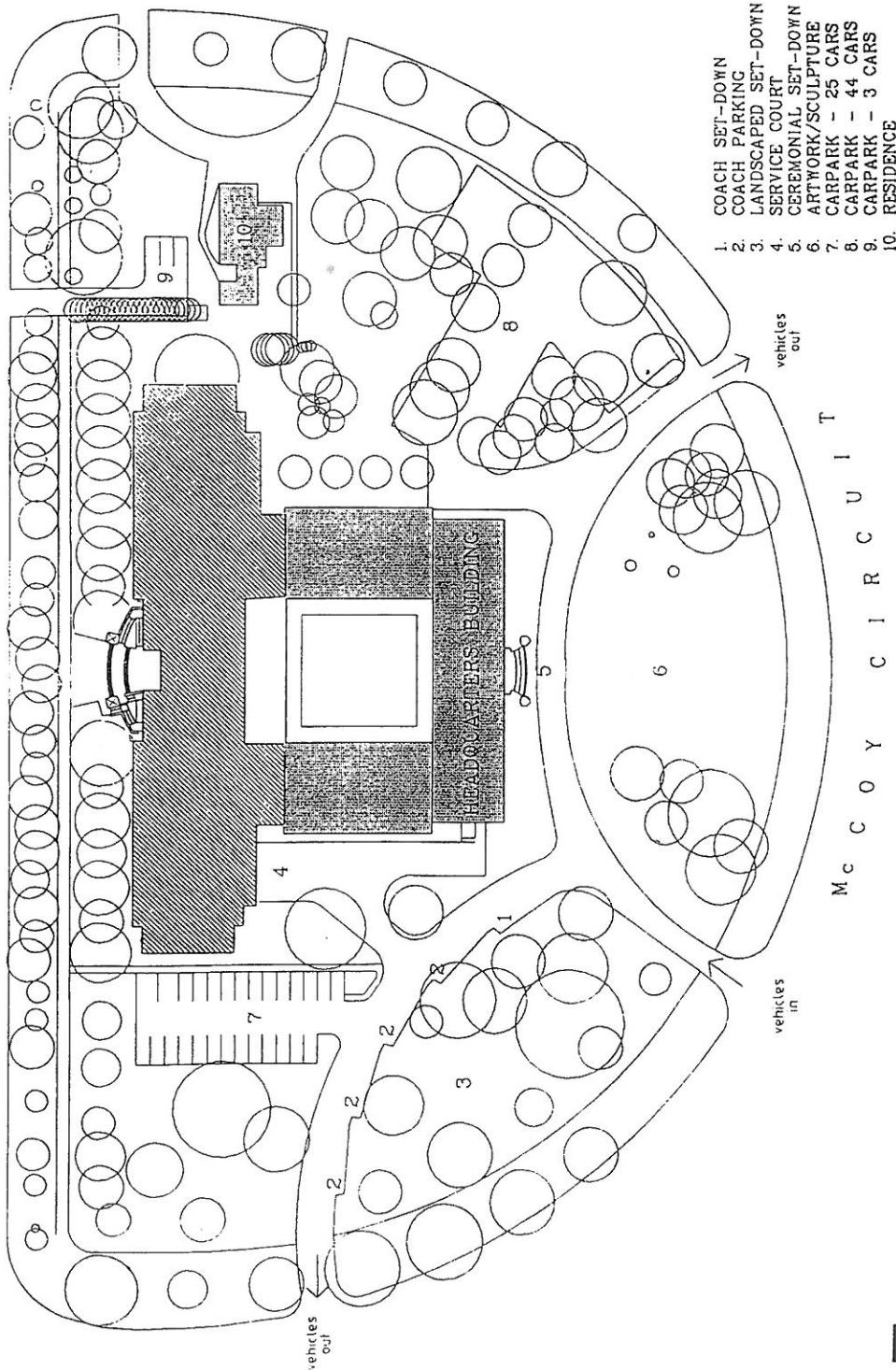


1. DEMOUNTABLES
2. CARPARK
3. TEMPORARY STORAGE BLDGS
4. PLANT/TOILETS
5. NITRATE VAULT
6. RESIDENCE

N A T I O N A L F I L M A N D S O U N D A R C H I V E

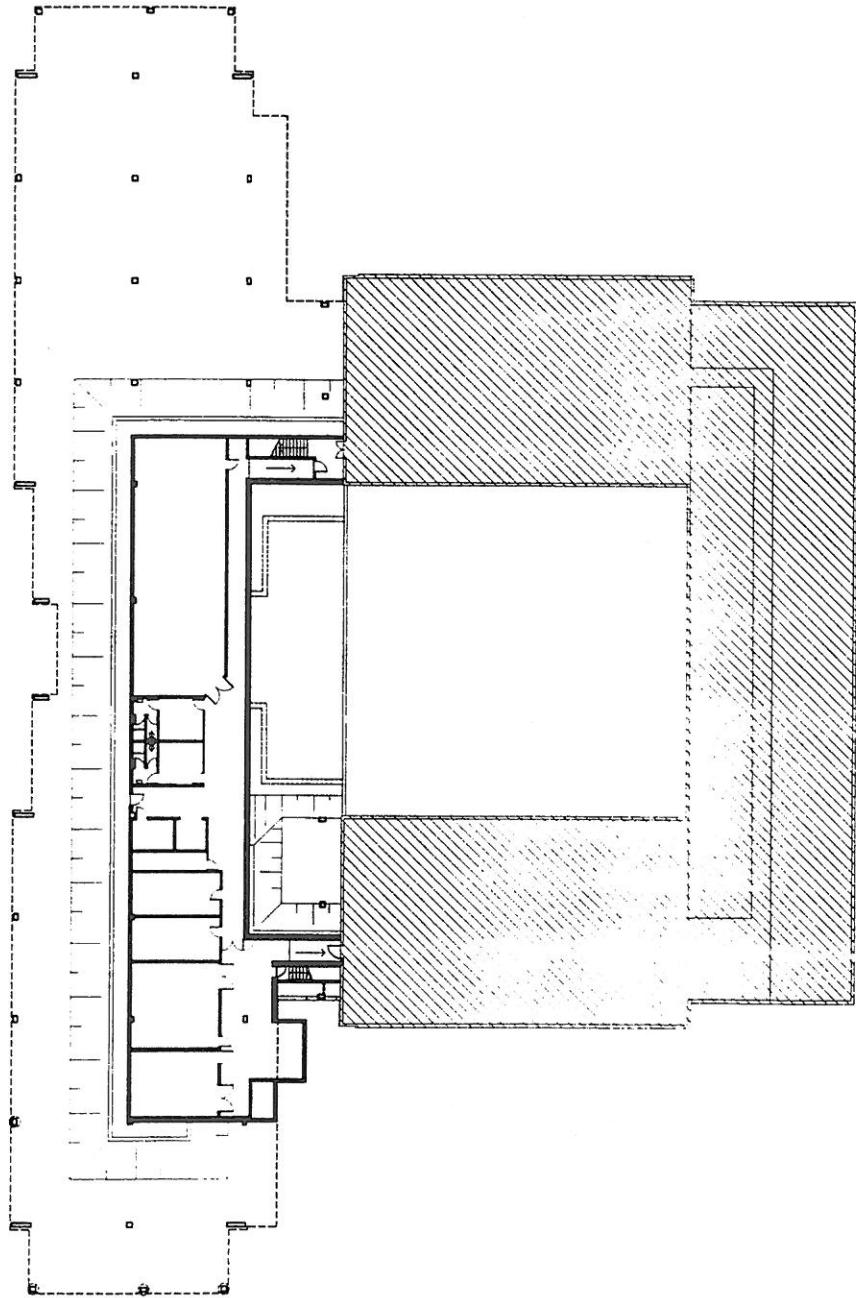


LIVERPOOL STREET



NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

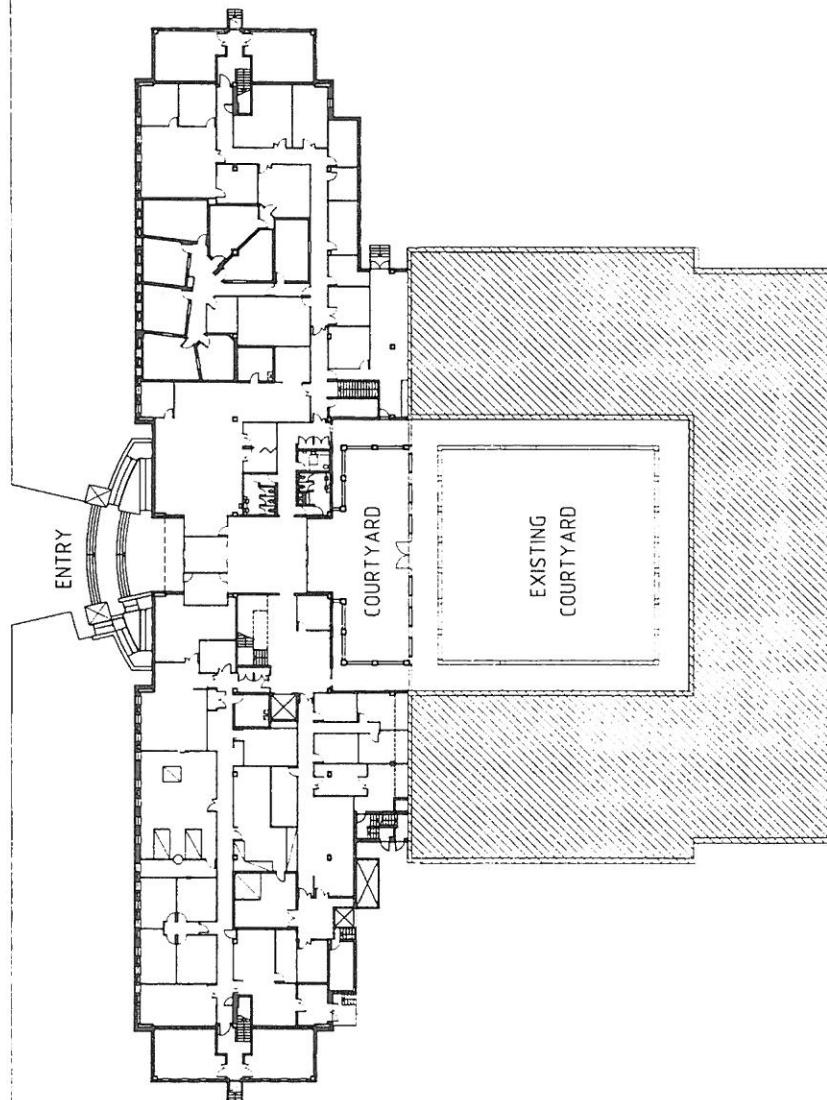




NATIONAL FILM SOUND ARCHIVE
basement plan



LIVERSIDGE STREET



NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

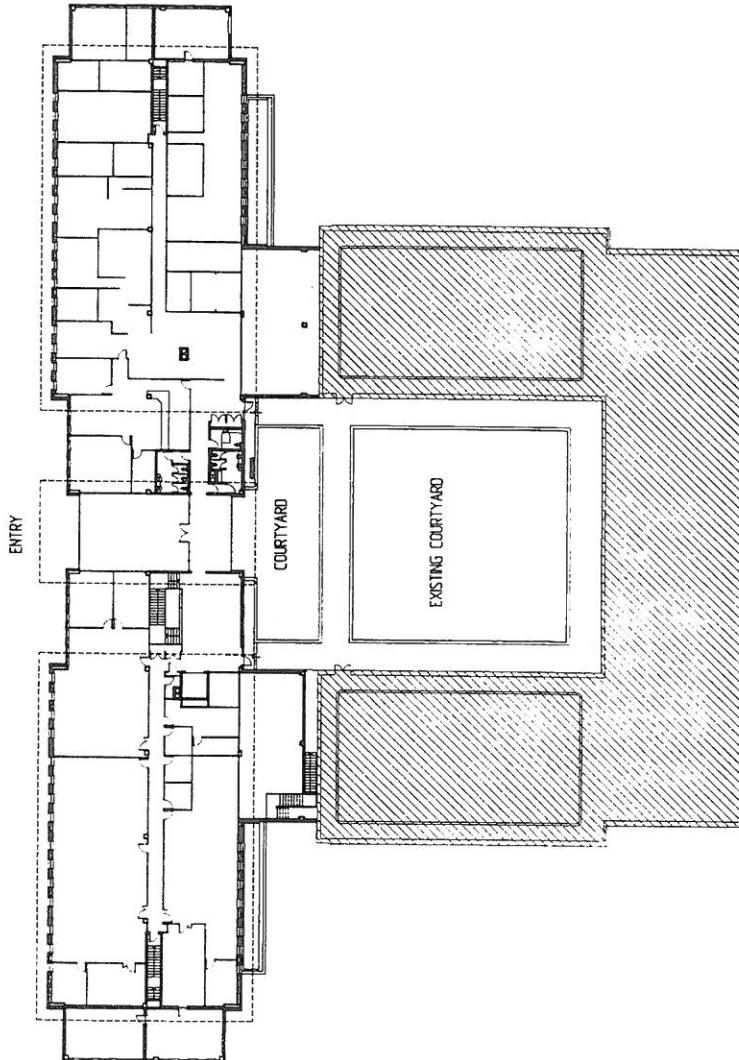
ground floor plan





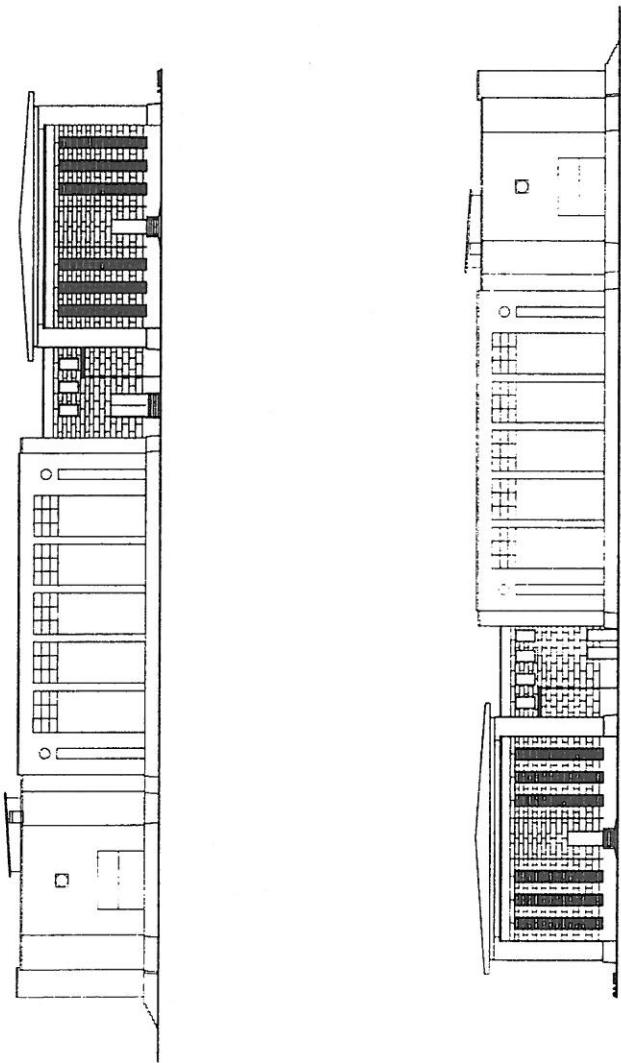
NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

first floor plan



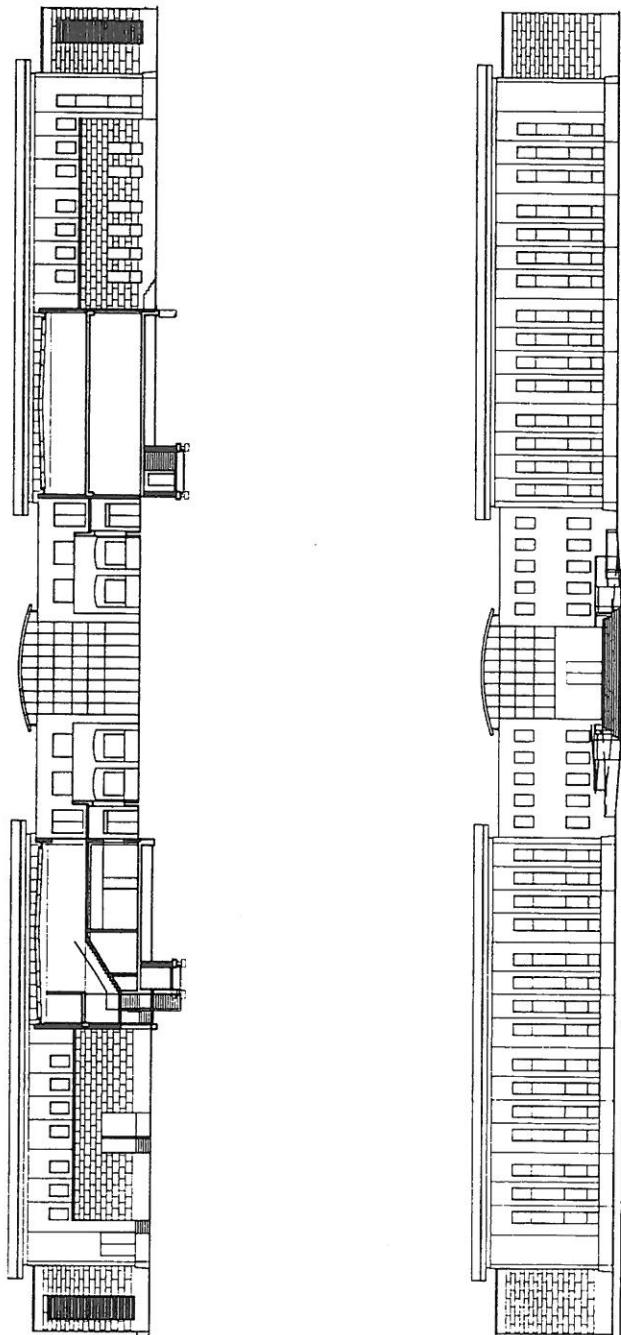


NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE
elevations





NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE
elevations





NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND
sections

