

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE

REPORT RELATING TO PROPOSED WORKS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

COMMENCEMENT COLUMN MONUMENT

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE
NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE
(Thirty-fifth Parliament)

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PROPOSED WORK IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ZONE

COMMENCEMENT COLUMN MONUMENT

Under Clause 4 of its resolution of appointment, the Joint Standing Committee on the New Parliament House is authorised to consider and report on matters coming within the terms of section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974 as may be referred to it by the Minister responsible for administering the National Capital Development Commission Act 1957, or by resolution of either House of the Parliament.

Section 5 of the Parliament Act 1974 gives Parliament control over the erection of buildings or other work within the Parliamentary Zone which is defined in the Act. Sub-section 5(1) of the Act provides as follows:

No building or other work is to be erected on land within the Parliamentary Zone unless the Minister has caused a proposal for the erection of the building or work to be laid before each House of Parliament and the proposal has been approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.

COMMENCEMENT COLUMN MONUMENT

On 18 September 1987 the Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories referred a proposal for the relocation of the Commencement Column Monument to the Joint Standing Committee on the New Parliament House for its consideration and report.

The Parliament House Construction Authority proposes to relocate the Commencement Column Monument (also known as the Commemoration Stone) on the land axis between Mount Ainslie and Capital Hill at the point on the landbridge just south of the inner edge of Capital Circle. This area is within the Parliamentary Zone. A location diagram and elevation drawing is attached to this report as Appendix A.

BACKGROUND

On 12 March 1913 the commencement column monument to commemorate the founding and naming of Canberra as the National Capital was laid on Capital Hill. Foundation stones were laid by Lord Denman, the then Governor-General of Australia, Mr Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister, and Mr King O'Malley, the Minister of Home Affairs. Copies of photographs of the commencement column monument are at Appendix B. After the foundation stones were laid Lady Denman officially named the city Canberra.

The monument was originally designed to have a 20 metre column to signify the Commonwealth. This column was to be erected on the hexagonal base which was made of six granite blocks, one from each of the original States of the Commonwealth. The column was never constructed but the base containing the three foundation stones remained a feature of Capital Hill.

The commencement column monument was intended to be on the land axis between Capital Hill and Camp Hill but was erected slightly to the east of the planned point. In 1981 the 63 stones which made up this monument were removed from Capital Hill and stored prior to the commencement of excavation work for the new Parliament House.

CONSULTATIONS

In order to identify a new location for the commencement column monument, consultations were held between the Parliament House Construction Authority, the Canberra National Memorials Committee, the ACT Heritage Committee and the National Capital Development Commission and the position has been chosen and submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on the New Parliament House.

The position which has been agreed to is on the land axis just north of the Parade Ground. It is close to the original location and in the vicinity of the new Parliament House.

RELOCATION CEREMONY

Plans are being developed to hold a suitable ceremony for the relocation of the monument. It is anticipated that this will take place on Canberra Day, 12 March 1988. This date is the seventy-fifth anniversary of the original ceremony.

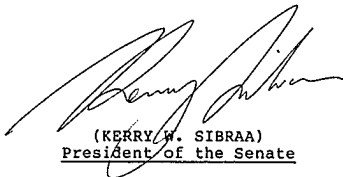
RECOMMENDATION

The Committee has considered the proposal to relocate the commencement column monument and has agreed to the proposed location.

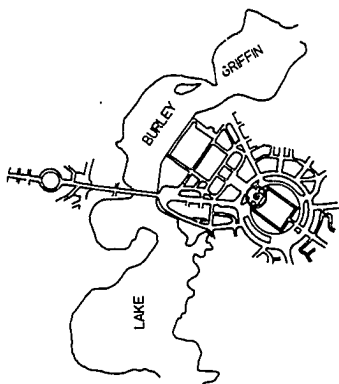
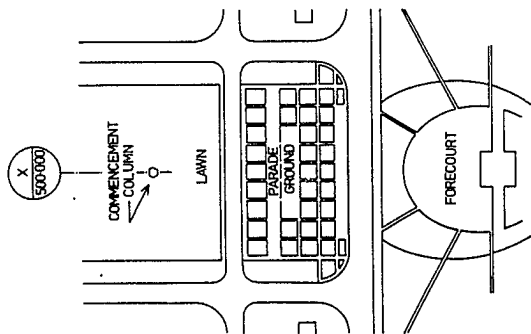
The Committee recommends that the Parliament approves the proposal to relocate the commencement column monument on the land axis immediately north of the parade ground associated with the new Parliament House.



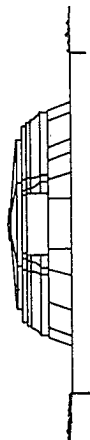
(JOAN CHILD)
Speaker of the House
of Representatives



(KERRY W. SIBRAA)
President of the Senate



LOCATION DIAGRAM



COMMENCEMENT COLUMN - 1913 STONES
ELEVATION

