

Comments for the record on the attribution and history of particular documents referred to in the 'Submission to the Inquiry, by the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees, into the performance of the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) with specific reference to Term of Reference (b): Policies and practices followed by the DPS for the management of the heritage values of Parliament House and its contents' by P.C. Bettle.

Chris Bettle sent me a copy of his submission and this is not an attempt to critique his submission or add to it but simply to clarify the record in regard to the history, development and attribution of particular reference documents. Unfortunately I am too time poor at present to make any in depth contribution to the Inquiry myself.

PC Bettle lists the particular documents to which I am referring as:

1. 'Parliament House. Assessment of Proposals for Significant Works, Draft Guidelines'; and
2. 'Parliament House. Design Integrity and Management of Change. Guidelines'

The Attribution on both documents is Australian Construction Services, Department of Administrative Services. Both documents were prepared by me while employed by Australian Construction Services (ACS) and while it may appear so in Chris Bettle's submission I would be very surprised if he was intentionally claiming any degree of authorship or intellectual input from that time (1995).

For the record, there is a third document, which is concerned with the design integrity of the Parliament House and of which I still have a copy in my possession. It precedes the two documents above and is attributed to ACS. This document is titled 'Parliament House. Protection of Design Integrity. Interim Guidelines.'

'Parliament House. Protection of Design Integrity. Interim Guidelines.' was the first document commissioned by the Parliament House Construction Authority (PHCA) as a preliminary concept document. I wrote it between February and June 1990, while on secondment to the Queensland office of ACS. Prompted by some poorly informed changes to parts of the building, the PHCA conceived it as a 'working document' and 'pilot study' for what would be acceptable to Parliament and also, to use my words, retain the design integrity of Parliament House. The assessment structure of the document developed from ideas of the PHCA and the widely known assessment structure for the conservation of heritage listed buildings, also often exposed to change. Interviews with Romaldo Giurgola and Pamille Berg confirmed the approach and Mitchell Giurgola and Thorp's (MGT) library supplied almost inexhaustible sources of written material on the Parliament House building, including the Commonwealth Government Briefs, much of which I was familiar with having worked for MGT during the design development and construction phases of the building as a senior architect.

'Parliament House. Assessment of Proposals for Significant Works, Draft Guidelines.' The PHCA decided to proceed with me to the next phase but renamed the document, eliminating reference to Design Integrity; they perhaps considered it somewhat ephemeral. I now had access to all parts of the Parliament building and with further information the text was amplified and improved. The earlier document was not illustrated and I now had the opportunity to design and illustrate the document and take a great many photographs to add to those from MGT's photo library. The final document was presented to the PHCA towards the end of 1990. The PHCA had not achieved the desired level of success in gaining acceptance of either a Guidelines document or a Parliament House Advisory Panel integral to the working of the document. Nevertheless the PHCA 'salted the document around' in the hope that it would eventually be taken up. Chris Bettle, an officer of the Joint House Department (JHD) did this. He rang Australian Construction Services in 1995 and asked to speak with the author of the Draft Guidelines document. I used this opportunity to say that I could further improve the document and he arranged through the JHD with ACS for me to do so.

'Parliament House. Design Integrity and Management of Change. Guidelines.' In 1995 I was seconded from ACS to spend full time at Parliament House in a small windowless room on the ground floor with a computer and security access to all parts of the building to revise the Guidelines. If there was a brief it was of the most general nature. The assessment system of the Draft Guidelines with the Parliament House Advisory Panel had proven untenable. The new system proposed required proposals to be tabled for an initial determination by a reference person and Chris Bettle from the Joint House Department

had carriage of this role. I reintroduced the idea of Design Integrity and over about four weeks I believe I improved the quality of the document considerably: with more expansive explanation in the introductory pages; in the text explaining the design values; the places schedule and the categories of significance. With the aid of the Guidelines, minor changes could be resolved so as to fit with the requirements for design integrity. If a proposal was determined to have reached a certain threshold of significance, established with the Guideline process, then authorised and suitably qualified advice would have to be sought outside the JHD. If the proposal was then found likely to be of an adverse affect, and not modified, then the proposal would be tabled in Parliament with a report, similar to a Heritage Impact Statement in heritage parlance, which may need to incorporate the work of a number of consultant experts.

The revised document was completed, with improvements to the design layout and a new cover and handed over to Chris Bettle to arrange for printing and reproduction. Chris Bettle had made one request while I was revising the Guidelines and that was for a definition of Design Integrity which I provided. Looking at it now it seems quite well expressed but a little further explanation may even assist with the nature of this Inquiry.

I think 'Design Integrity' is faithful adherence to the central design idea, which is the product of one mind only and the coherent expression of the design brief including the attributes of the site. Romaldo Giurgola speaks a lot about collaboration but even with the extensive collaboration required to deliver any very large project, like Parliament House, to effect design integrity there must be a controlling mind which governs decision making from beginning to end. MGT had team structures and processes which enabled Romaldo Giurgola to effect this. The architects and consultants who worked on the project were assiduous in their participation in this arrangement and the PHCA was a willing facilitator of design integrity in the implementation of the project. It remains now for the design integrity of the building to be sustained through requirements for change; this will be done by faithful adherence to the principles established and evidenced in the building which was handed over to the Parliament. The Guidelines were written to provide explanatory guidance in this process.

Rosemarie Willett

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