

Issues and Conclusions

Planning Considerations

Consultation with Planning Authorities

- 3.1 As a National Institution located on ACT land, the AIS site at Bruce is subject to both ACT planning legislation and to the Special Requirements for National Land set out in the Commonwealth-administered National Capital Plan. The agency responsible for the development and administration of the Plan is the National Capital Authority (NCA).¹
- 3.2 The National Capital Plan requires that any development at the AIS conform to the Development Control Plan (DCP) approved by the NCA. At the public hearing, both the ASC and the NCA stated that the current DCP, finalised in 1997, would require some changes to accommodate the proposed redevelopment. The NCA added that a review of the general AIS Master Plan, developed in 1992, was also needed and discussions with relevant planning authorities had commenced.²
- 3.3 Both the Commission and the NCA expressed satisfaction with the consultation that had occurred to date in relation to these issues, between themselves and with the ACT Planning and Land

1 Submission No. 3, paragraph 3 – 3.2

2 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 3

Management group. Neither the Commission nor the NCA could foresee any undue delays arising from the planning approval process.³

- 3.4 The NCA granted approval for the proposed improvements to the AIS rowing facility at Yarralumla on 6 March 2003.⁴ As the Yarralumla site is located within a Designated Area of the National Capital Plan, local government approval was not required.

Long-term Planning

- 3.5 In its main written submission, the Commission asserted that it:

“... has evaluated its capital investment needs for the next twenty years, distilling the most important and pressing of those needs into a four year investment plan.”⁵

The Committee was interested to know what other developments were planned to follow the completion of works detailed in the current proposal.

- 3.6 The Commission replied that, due to the rapidly changing nature of sports technology, it was difficult to predict specific future requirements, but identified child care and accommodation facilities as areas that would require attention within the next ten years.⁶

Gungahlin Drive Extension

- 3.7 At the public hearing, Committee members raised the issue of the proposed Gungahlin Drive extension, the final route of which has implications for the development of the AIS.
- 3.8 The Commission explained that the ACT Government had been considering two possible routes for the new road:
- a western alignment passing within approximately 120m of the AIS residences and playing fields; and
 - an eastern alignment curving behind the AIS soccer fields.⁷

3 ib id, pp. 3 and 13

4 Submission No. 3, paragraph 3

5 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 24

6 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 9

7 ib id, p. 5

- 3.9 On 29 May 2003, after more than a decade of consultation and debate, the ACT Government selected the eastern alignment as the future route for the new road. This decision was welcomed by the ASC, as the western route would entail increased noise and pollution impacts for the AIS, and would also inhibit future expansion of the campus.⁸
- 3.10 Witnesses from both the Commission and the NCA attested that the issue was not completely resolved. The NCA stated that the amendment to the National Capital Plan confirming the selection of the eastern alignment was the subject of a disallowance motion in the Senate, due to be discussed in September 2003.
- 3.11 The NCA was uncertain what might occur if the disallowance motion were to succeed, but did not believe the impact upon the proposed AIS redevelopment would be great.
- 3.12 The Commission was of the view that if the disallowance motion were passed, the ACT Government would have to review alternative routes for the road, as the western alignment was no longer considered viable. The Commission stated further that, although their works proposal does not depend upon the timing of the decision, they would
- “...certainly have some concerns if the alignment were to change in any way.”⁹
- 3.13 The Committee was interested to know how an alteration to the alignment of the Gungahlin Drive extension may impact upon the proposed redevelopment works, particularly in relation to project costs. The Commission stated that while no major re-siting of facilities would be required, project deadlines - and therefore costs - may be affected.¹⁰

Local Building Industry

- 3.14 The Committee wished to know how increased competitiveness in the ACT construction sector, arising from the demand incurred by the January bushfires, may impact upon the timing and costs of the AIS redevelopment project.

8 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 5

9 ib id, p. 16

10 ib id, p. 17

- 3.15 The Commission responded that, according to recent newspaper reports, the expected surge in construction activity had not yet eventuated, but local industry leaders believed that they would be able to meet the increased demand.
- 3.16 The Commission added that they were not in a position to gauge the impact of increased demand on construction pricing, as the tender process had not commenced. However, it is hoped that more usual market conditions will prevail when the bulk of the AIS construction works commence in some 18 months' time.¹¹

Costs

Level of Detail

- 3.17 The Committee was generally satisfied with the quality of evidence presented to the inquiry, but requested that the Commission provide a more detailed cost breakdown for the athlete's residents and associated dining and recreational facilities, as these constitute a significant proportion of the total project budget. As one member stated:

“Our role as a committee is to ensure that the Commonwealth has value for money, and just having overall figures really does not give us an indication.”¹²

- 3.18 The Commission subsequently provided the requested figures in a letter dated 7 July 2003.

Contingency Costs

- 3.19 The confidential limit of cost estimate supplied to the Committee contains a contingency allowance which, according to the Commission's main submission:

“... takes account of risk associated with latent conditions expected within the refurbishment element within the project.”¹³

11 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 8

12 *ib id*, p. 9

13 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 68

- 3.20 At the public hearing, the Committee enquired as to the nature of these latent conditions and the magnitude of additional costs they may incur.
- 3.21 The Commission explained that, in any refurbishment project:
- “...when you take the lining off a wall you are not sure what is going to be behind it.”¹⁴
- An allowance for latent conditions is, therefore, included in refurbishment projects to cover the cost of any additional works that may be required to ensure that all building elements meet current codes and standards.
- 3.22 As the existing facilities at the AIS are not more than 25 years old, the Commission does not anticipate the costs incurred by latent conditions to be significant.¹⁵

Provision for People with Disabilities

- 3.23 During their inspection of the AIS, Committee members were concerned to learn that existing dining and accommodation facilities do not cater adequately for persons with a disability.
- 3.24 At the public hearing, the Commission assured the committee that addressing these shortcomings was a high priority. It is intended that wheelchair access facilities and elevators be provided throughout the complex.¹⁶

Greenhouse Issues

- 3.25 The Commission’s main submission detailed a number of energy conservation measures proposed for the redevelopment project and stated that the energy efficiency of the new building would be audited within twelve months of occupation, as required by the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO).

14 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 7

15 ib id, pp. 7 - 8

16 ib id, p. 10

- 3.26 In its submission to the Committee, the AGO commended the AIS for its commitment to the implementation of energy efficient measure, but added that the Commission must also provide the AGO with a report by a suitably qualified person outlining the buildings' expected performance against:
- the 1994 Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Energy Guidelines; and,
 - for residential buildings, against Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS).¹⁷
- 3.27 At the public hearing, the Committee requested assurance from the Commission that any unresolved issues relating to greenhouse emissions and energy efficiency would be addressed in consultation with the AGO.
- 3.28 The Commission responded that it had a good record of environmental management and intended to incorporate the Property Council of Australia energy management guidelines into the design of the proposed new facilities. The Commission added that the NatHERS standards were not applicable to multi-storey apartment buildings of the type planned for athlete residences at the AIS.¹⁸

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the proposed redevelopment of the Australian Institute of Sport at Bruce, ACT proceed at the estimated cost of \$65.4 million.

Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

20 August 2003

17 Submission No.7

18 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, p. 11