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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# **Development of a New Collection Storage Facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT**

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

December 2004  
Canberra

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## **Membership of the Committee**

**Chair**            Hon Judi Moylan MP

**Deputy Chair**   Mr Brendan O'Connor MP

**Members**        Mr Harry Jenkins MP

Senator Richard Colbeck

Mr Peter Lindsay MP

Senator Alan Ferguson

Mr Jim Lloyd (to 12 August)

Senator Michael Forshaw

Mr Bernie Ripoll MP

Mr Barry Wakelin MP (from 12 August)

## **Committee Secretariat**

**Secretary**            Ms Margaret Swieringa

**Inquiry Secretary**   Ms Vivienne Courto

**Research Officer**    Ms Sara Edson

**Administrative Officer** Ms Emily Davis





## List of Abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTPLA	ACT Planning and Land Authority
AGO	Australian Greenhouse Office
DCP	Development Control Plan
GST	Goods and Services Tax
NCA	National Capital Authority
NLA	National Library of Australia



# **Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives**

No. 184 dated Thursday, 24 June 2004

## **35 PUBLIC WORKS—PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE— REFERENCE OF WORK—DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW COLLECTION STORAGE FACILITY FOR THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA AT HUME, ACT**

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with the provisions 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: Development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT.

Question—put and passed.





## **List of Recommendations**

### **3 Issues and Conclusions**

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Committee recommends that the proposed development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT, proceed at the estimated cost of \$9.9 million.

## Introduction

### Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 24 June 2004 the proposal to develop a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT, was referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report to the Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).<sup>1</sup> On 6 December 2004 the work was re-referred. The proponent agency for this work is the National Library of Australia (NLA).
- 1.2 The Hon Peter Slipper, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, advised the House that the estimated cost of the proposed works was \$9.9 million. Mr Slipper noted further that, subject to Parliamentary approval, construction of the facility would commence in April 2005, with completion and occupation expected by March 2006.

### Background

- 1.3 The NLA is a major national collecting institution with a statutory obligation to maintain and develop a collection of library material relevant to the Australian people.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.4 The NLA currently houses some 9 million items. Over the past six years, the collection has been growing at an average annual rate of 2 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives, No. 184, Thursday, 24 June 2004

2 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 1

3 ib id, paragraph 37

- 1.5 The NLA's legislative obligations in respect of building and facilitating access to a national library collection are set out in the *National Library Act 1960* (Section 6)<sup>4</sup>. In addition to this, the NLA's Service Charter specifies that the library strives to:

“...deliver 90 per cent of items requested from an off-site store from within 90 minutes of courier cut-off times.”<sup>5</sup>

- 1.6 Currently, the NLA has storage facilities at:
- the main library building in Parkes, ACT;
  - Hume Warehouse repository at Hume, ACT; and
  - Hume Annexe repository, also at Hume, ACT.<sup>6</sup>

## The Site

- 1.7 It is proposed that the new storage facility will be constructed on ACT land at Block 7, Section 1, Hume, ACT (one of Canberra's three industrial suburbs). The site is presently being used by the ACT Government for the temporary storage of road base.<sup>7</sup>
- 1.8 It is anticipated that the site will be acquired through a Direct Sale of Land process.<sup>8</sup> The site is yet to be released for sale,<sup>9</sup> however the NLA has applied to the ACT Land Development Agency for the direct sale of the lease on the land, conditional upon Public Works Committee approval of the works proposal.<sup>10</sup>

## Inquiry Process

- 1.9 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million<sup>11</sup> and report to Parliament on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
  - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
  - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;

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4 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 22

5 ib id, paragraph 24

6 ib id, paragraphs 15 – 21

7 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, Executive Summary and paragraph 59

8 ib id, paragraph 62

9 ib id, Executive Summary

10 ib id, paragraph 63

11 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

- the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
  - the present and prospective public value of the work.<sup>12</sup>
- 1.10 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in *The Canberra Times* on Saturday 3 July 2004. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, local government, private organisations and individuals, who may be materially affected by or have an interest in the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and other information relating to the inquiry on its web site in order to encourage further public participation.

### Inspections and Public Hearing

- 1.11 The Committee travelled to the Hume site and inspected at first hand the scope and environs of the proposed works. A public hearing was held at Parliament House in Canberra on 13 August 2004.

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12 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 17



## The Proposed Works

### Objective

- 2.1 The primary aim of the proposed work is to construct a facility with the capacity to support the NLA's ongoing storage needs within the legislative requirements of the *National Library Act 1960* and the Library's Service Charter.<sup>1</sup>

### Need

- 2.2 In order to fulfil its legislated role, and to meet the delivery obligations of its Service Charter, the NLA has a requirement for additional storage space within close proximity to the main library building.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 All of the library's current facilities are at, or nearing, full capacity. Storage capacity at the main library and Hume Annexe repository will be exhausted by early to mid-2006; while the Hume repository is full.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.4 Further, the NLA's lease on the Hume Warehouse repository expires on 30 June 2006, with a one-year option to renew. The facility lacks appropriate insulation and air-conditioning and is deemed to be unsuitable for long-term use by the NLA.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 41

2 ib id, paragraphs 1 – 4

3 ib id, paragraphs 17 – 18 and paragraph 21

4 ib id, paragraphs 18 - 19

- 2.5 The lease on the Hume Annexe repository expires on 17 May 2013. The building in its current form is considered to be suitable for long-term library storage use, but will reach full capacity in 2006.<sup>5</sup>

## Scope

- 2.6 The NLA proposal describes a single facility comprising two modules accessed by an Operations Area.<sup>6</sup> Module 1, intended for the storage of hard copy newspapers, will be three storeys high with a total footprint area of 1, 100 square metres. Module 2, designed for the storage of other paper-based materials, will be one storey high with a total footprint area of 2, 000 square metres.<sup>7</sup>

- 2.7 Work elements required to meet the NLA's objectives comprise:

- bulk earthworks and site preparation;
- services infrastructure;
- building envelope works and services;
- siteworks and landscape; and
- building fit-out, equipment and furnishings.<sup>8</sup>

- 2.8 Works to specific areas will include:

### **Operations Area**

- public entry;
- work space for one to three staff;
- staff lunch area/kitchenette;
- public reading area;
- toilets; and
- loading dock.

### **Module 1**

- two levels of 2.5 – 2.6 metre clear height mezzanine floor structure;
- access stairs;
- handrails; and
- access hoist.

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5 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraphs 20 – 21

6 ib id, Appendix 1, Footprint Reduction Diagram

7 ib id, Attachment A, pages 4 - 7

8 ib id, Attachment A, page 13

## Module 2

- double-sided high rise adjustable shelving;
- steel guide rails for stock picking machine; and
- walkways and fire egress paths.

## Exterior

- 1.8 metre perimeter security fence;
- automatic sliding access gate;
- four car-parking spaces;
- truck turning space;
- security lighting;
- safe roof access system; and
- hard and soft landscape treatment for dust minimisation.<sup>9</sup>

2.9 It is intended that the proposed facility will have a design life of 40 years.<sup>10</sup>

## Project Delivery

2.10 The NLA proposes to adopt a design and construct project delivery system in an attempt to reduce the risk presented by time constraints associated with the expiry of the Hume Warehouse lease in 2006.<sup>11</sup>

## Cost

2.11 The total estimated cost of the proposed works is \$9.9 million. This cost includes:

- management and design fees;
- land purchase;
- capital works;
- book relocation; and
- contingencies.<sup>12</sup>

2.12 The cost estimate does not include:

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9 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, Attachment A, pages 6 - 7

10 ib id, paragraph 33

11 ib id, paragraph 78

12 ib id, paragraph 77



- Goods and Service Tax (GST).<sup>13</sup>

## **Value for Money**

- 2.13 The NLA believes the proposed development to be a cost-effective property solution. The NLA considered eight options to meet its project objectives.<sup>14</sup> Of these, Option 3 was identified by the NLA as being the most “beneficial” and also “the most acceptable on the basis of a risk and benefits analysis.”<sup>15</sup>
- 2.14 In addition, the NLA expects the project to benefit the local ACT community by generating employment opportunities for sub-contractors and skilled tradespeople.<sup>16</sup>

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13 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 77

14 ib id, paragraphs 42 - 47

15 ib id, paragraph 49

16 ib id, paragraph 76



## Issues and Conclusions

### Land Acquisition

- 3.1 The NLA's main submission states that:
- “A preferred site for the proposed facility has been identified in Hume (Block 7, Section 1, Hume), but is not yet purchased.”<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2 The NLA anticipates, however, that the site will be acquired through a direct sale of land process and has applied to the ACT's Land Development Agency for the direct sale of the lease on the land conditional upon the Public Works Committee's approval of the works proposal.<sup>2</sup>
- 3.3 In their submission, the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) confirmed that the direct sale of the site will require the support of the ACT's Land Development Agency before a Development Application for the proposed facility can be accepted.<sup>3</sup>
- 3.4 At the public hearing, the Committee inquired into the status of the NLA's application for the direct sale of the site and whether there was any risk that the Library will not be able to purchase its preferred site.<sup>4</sup>
- 3.5 The NLA replied that while it had not yet been formally advised on the status of its application, there was

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1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 11

2 *ib id*, paragraphs 62 - 63

3 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 7

4 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 3

“...no evidence to suggest that there is any objection to it at this point...<sup>5</sup>

- 3.6 Later, in a letter to the Committee, the NLA confirmed that the ACT Government had agreed to the sale of Block 7 Section 1 Hume to the Library.

## Site Access

- 3.7 A new road will provide access to the proposed development site and will be constructed in conjunction with the new storage facility.<sup>6</sup> At the hearing, the Committee wished to learn whether construction of the road might impede the designated site access.<sup>7</sup>
- 3.8 The NLA told the Committee that Tralee Street (an existing road that runs along the side of the block) could serve as an alternative access road if required.<sup>8</sup>
- 3.9 The Committee asked the NCA to indicate what approvals were required should the library need an alternative site access during the construction of the new road. The NCA informed the Committee that Roads ACT (which is part of the ACT Department of Urban Services) is the regulatory body responsible for deciding whether or not to permit temporary access from a major thoroughfare.<sup>9</sup>

## Future Expansion

- 3.10 It is anticipated that the proposed storage facility will become operational in February 2006.<sup>10</sup> Given the NLA’s indication that further storage will be required within only seven years of the completion of this project,<sup>11</sup> the Committee asked the Library to comment on whether the current facility is the most cost-effective solution to its storage needs in the long-term.<sup>12</sup>

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5 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 3 – 4

6 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, A

7 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 7

8 ib id, page 8

9 ib id, page 17

10 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, Executive Summary

11 ib id, paragraph 32

12 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 4

- 3.11 The NLA told the Committee that there is some capacity to provide further storage of material at the existing facility in Parkes. The proposal currently before the Committee seeks to address the library's immediate storage requirements. The NLA said that it is also considering its longer term storage needs, in consultation with other agencies:

“We are working on a second stage of a portfolio storage plan to look at all those longer term requirements. I would expect that as part of that process we may look at larger facilities and greater sharing of facilities.”<sup>13</sup>

## Site Selection

- 3.12 The NLA submission outlined the eight storage accommodation solutions which it had considered.<sup>14</sup> The submission describes Option 3, the development and ownership of a new storage facility by the library, as the preferred option. At the hearing, the Committee asked the Library to elaborate on why the Hume site was the best choice.<sup>15</sup>

## Preferred Site

- 3.13 The NLA explained that there are already repositories in Hume and for reasons of efficiency of retrieval it is advantageous to locate the new storage facility there. The library informed the Committee that it had also considered other sites within the ACT, in Fyshwick and Mitchell. However, land costs were higher in Fyshwick and the Mitchell site would be less accessible.<sup>16</sup>

## Other Options

- 3.14 Further to earlier comments made in respect to the capacity for additional storage at the Parkes site, the Committee wanted to know if the library could develop underground storage at the current Parkes site. The NLA informed the Committee that the high costs of this option precluded its consideration.<sup>17</sup>

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13 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, pages 4 – 5

14 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraphs 42 - 47

15 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 5

16 *ib id*, pages 5 - 6

17 *ib id*, page 6

## Compliance with the Development Control Plan

- 3.15 Under the National Capital Plan, the National Capital Authority (NCA) is responsible for the planning and management of 'Designated Areas', which are areas exhibiting special characteristics of the National Capital. The Plan also sets out 'Special Requirements' for the development of non- 'Designated' areas, if those requirements are in the interests of the National Capital.<sup>18</sup>
- 3.16 The proposed storage facility is situated on ACT land outside the 'Designated Areas' stipulated in the National Capital Plan. Such sites under the National Capital Plan are required to prepare a Development Control Plan (DCP) for approval by the NCA, and are subject to assessment and approval by the ACT Government. An assessment must ensure that any proposed land use is not inconsistent with the provisions of the DCP.<sup>19</sup>
- 3.17 According to the NCA submission, the "Concept Design Drawings" appended to the NLA's main submission show three features which are inconsistent with the DCP, namely:
- the proposed setback, which is less than the required ten metres;
  - with the addition of the proposed future extensions (Stage 2 and 3), the building will cover more than the stipulated 50 per cent of the site; and
  - the gable end of the building must face the street.<sup>20</sup>

## Proposed Setback

- 3.18 At the public hearing, the NLA tabled an amended design plan for the proposed development, further to that provided in its original submission.<sup>21</sup> The new version shows a reconfiguration of the building on the site to meet the NCA's requirement for a minimum setback along the Monaro Highway of 10 metres.
- 3.19 The Committee questioned the NCA on whether it had seen the revised design. The NCA replied that it had been advised of the change and had no further issues with that particular aspect of the DCP.<sup>22</sup>

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18 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 3, paragraph 2

19 *ib id*, paragraph 3

20 *ib id*, paragraph 4

21 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 2

22 *ib id*, page 14

## Proposed Future Expansions

3.20 At the hearing, the Committee asked the NCA to expand on the DCP's requirement that the maximum area of the site to be covered by building is not to exceed 50 per cent of the total site area.<sup>23</sup> The NCA explained that it used a plot ratio of one to one to determine the appropriate site cover,

“which means that if the site is about 13, 000 square metres you can build up to 13, 000 square metres in floor space terms. If you take a site coverage of, say 50 per cent, which means your float plate would have to be, say, 6, 500 square metres – half of it- and you have two storeys of it, then you can easily have your 13, 000.”<sup>24</sup>

3.21 The NCA noted that if the library's proposed development maintains 50 per cent site coverage, it will have a potential Gross Floor Area measuring 9, 000 to 9, 500 square metres which

“...is a reasonable amount, and ...should meet the Library's requirement.”<sup>25</sup>

3.22 The NCA emphasised that it employs the plot ratio as a guideline. The DCP is 10 years old and site coverage is not a specific requirement in the ACT Planning and Land Authority's Territory Plan. In view of these factors, the NCA is willing to negotiate with ACTPLA about what would constitute reasonable site coverage.<sup>26</sup>

## Gable End of the Building

3.23 At the hearing, the Committee sought clarification from the NCA in respect to the DCP's roof pitch requirement that the gable end of the proposed building face the street. The Committee observed that the development is bounded by not one, but three streets and wanted to know which street the gable end of the building will face.<sup>27</sup>

3.24 The NCA explained that in this instance “the street” refers to the Monaro Highway. The Committee commented that this was not specified in the evidence provided to it. The NCA noted the need to clarify that point for the record.<sup>28</sup>

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23 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 3, paragraph 4

24 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

25 *ib id*

26 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

27 *ib id*, page 16

28 *ib id*

## Fire Protection and Security

- 3.25 At the hearing, the Committee wished to learn what measures the library will take in relation to fire protection and security.<sup>29</sup>
- 3.26 With regard to fire protection, the NLA assured the Committee that the new storage facility will be built to the Building Code of Australia's standards.<sup>30</sup>
- 3.27 At an earlier confidential briefing, the NLA mentioned that a sprinkler system will be installed in the new building. In response, the Committee expressed concern about the potential for water damage to storage items.<sup>31</sup>
- 3.28 At the hearing, the library reiterated that water fire-suppression systems were favoured because
- "...we are fairly familiar with dealing with the problems of wet paper. Generally speaking, the kinds of material that would be stored would be damaged by sprinklers, but it would be damage that we could deal with...The alternatives introduce another range of problems. Most of them work better in a smaller environment – a smaller, closed vault-where there are no staff working."<sup>32</sup>
- 3.29 On the issue of security, the library reported that the new building will have security arrangements similar to those already in place at other repositories at Hume, and will include high fences and security alarm systems.<sup>33</sup>

## Environmental Sustainability

- 3.30 In its main submission, the NLA stated its commitment to incorporate energy efficiency measures into the proposed facility. Conservation measures will include energy efficient plant, equipment, air-conditioning and lighting systems, water recycling and the use of insulation materials.<sup>34</sup>
- 3.31 In view of these matters, the Committee asked the library if it had consulted with the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) to ensure
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29 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 9

30 ib id

31 ib id

32 ib id, page 10

33 ib id, page 9

34 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 70



that the highest possible standards of environmental sustainability are achieved in the new building. The NLA confirmed that it intends to consult with the AGO.<sup>35</sup>

## Consultation

- 3.32 In addition to the AGO, the NLA listed seven other Commonwealth and ACT Government agencies with which the library has held, or plans to hold consultation sessions.<sup>36</sup> At the hearing, the Committee wanted to know which of these agencies had already been consulted and whether any significant issues were identified in the course of discussions.<sup>37</sup>
- 3.33 The library said that it had liaised with the home department for the portfolio, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, on all the arrangements; the ACT Land Development Agency, in regard to site availability and service requirements; Environment ACT, on issues such as tree locations; the National Capital Authority, in relation to the area's development control plan; and the Commonwealth Department of Finance and Administration, in respect to funding.<sup>38</sup>

## Local Employment

- 3.34 It is anticipated that the proposed work will  
“...generate a limited amount of short-term employment mostly in the sub-contractor and skilled trade work areas.”<sup>39</sup>
- 3.35 In light of recent indications that the local ACT construction industry is currently operating at or near capacity, the Committee wished to know whether there might be any difficulties in sourcing contractors. The NLA responded that no problems had been identified at this stage.<sup>40</sup>

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35 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

36 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 56

37 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

38 *ib id*

39 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 76

40 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 11

## **Recommendation 1**

**The Committee recommends that the proposed development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT, proceed at the estimated cost of \$9.9 million.**

Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

8 December 2004



## **Appendix A – List of Submissions and Exhibits**

### **Submissions**

1. National Library of Australia
2. Environment ACT
3. National Capital Authority
4. Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
5. National Library of Australia (supplementary)
6. National Library of Australia (supplementary)
7. ACT Planning and Land Authority

### **Exhibits**

1. Supplementary Information to Statement of Evidence, dated 12 August 2004, National Library of Australia



## **Appendix B – List of Witnesses**

Mr Michael Boyle, Project Manager, Building and Security Services, National Library of Australia

Ms Natalie Broughton, Senior Planner, National Capital Authority

Ms Margy Burn, Assistant Director-General, Australian Collection and Reader Services, National Library of Australia

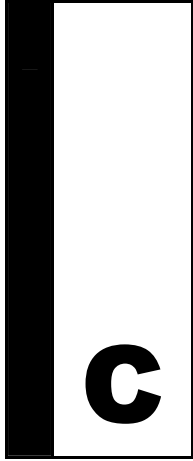
Mr Shamsul Huda, Principal Planner, National Capital Authority

Mr Gerry Linehan, Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services, National Library of Australia

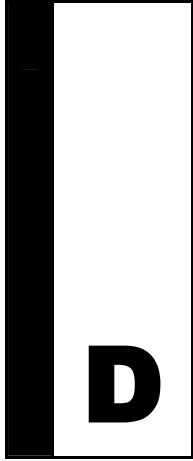
Mr Michael Raymond, Associate Director, Property Services, KPMG, Consultant to National Library of Australia

Mr Lawrie Salter, Manager, Stack Services, National Library of Australia

Mr Colin Webb, Director, Preservation Services, National Library of Australia



**Appendix C – Submission No. 1 from the  
National Library of Australia**



## **Appendix D – Official Transcript of Evidence**