



**Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee—2  
Additional Estimates Feb 2008**

**Parliament Portfolio, Department of Parliamentary Services**

**Answers to Questions on Notice**

**Topic: Open space reserved for future office space in Parliament House**

**Question P8, F&PA 23**

Senator ROBERT RAY—I had some dim memory that, when this building was designed and opened, some of the open space was always reserved as a possibility for future offices. Was that the case? I thought it was.

Mr Kenny—I am sorry, Senator; I do not know. We could go back through our records to see whether there was any of that. When I saw this review that I just referred to, when I saw that draft report, I do not recall any reference to that, although there were some observations by the consultants who did the review that the space in the building could be used differently.

**Answer**

1 DPS is not aware of any open space at Parliament House being intended for use in the future as offices.

2 Further information can be found in the attached extracts from the *Central Reference Document*. This paper was authored by a member of the original architectural team, to assist with decision making with regard to alterations and modifications to Parliament House.



## INTRODUCTION: THE ARCHITECT'S INTENT FOR THE DESIGN OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE

In introducing the following document, it may be useful to begin by describing what it is not, rather than what it is.

This text is not a catalogue of each space in the building which identifies every aspect of its specifications and construction. It does not describe the detailed functional parameters of each space, and it has no intention of providing a chronicle of the history of the building's design and construction.

The only purpose of this document is to express the Architect's most basic intent in the design of the building and its surroundings.

To that end, the document has two primary uses and functions:

- These volumes are intended to provide a timeless, permanent record of the Architect's design intent prepared by a member of the original Design Team for the building, rather than by an architectural historian or other design professional peripheral to Romaldo Giurgola AO FRAIA FAIA and the small group of his colleagues and staff who were responsible for the project's design. To this end, the document is intended to be held permanently in the archives of Parliament House as an accessible record of the key ideas and aspirations which shaped the building's design and character.

Within this purpose for the document, it was critical that the text be written while the significant Parliament House Design Team members of the firm of Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects were still alive and practicing professionally, who were able when requested to critique and to comment on each section of the document to ensure its correct expression of the ideas.

- The purpose of these volumes is also to ensure that the Department of Parliamentary Services and the Presiding Officers have a text to which reference can continually be made in the daily management of the Parliament House when decisions on functional change, proposals for alterations, and replacement of fittings and furniture are required. The format of the text is intended to facilitate that ongoing management process and the need for single-issue, intermittent reference within the expression of the building design's conceptual framework of the whole.

Given these purposes for the document, the *Central Reference Document's* intent is to provide general answers to the questions of 'why' the overall form of the building, the character of each space, the materials and detailing of its interiors, the provision of its furniture and fittings, and its unusual degree of provision for the incorporation and display of contemporary art and craft were originated as they were. The document approaches the answering of

these questions of 'why' through several means:

- The pertinent sections from key formal briefing documents, such as the *Parliament House Canberra: Conditions for a Two-stage Competition*, Volumes One and Two, (PHCA, April 1979) and the *Brief for Parliament House Canberra: Attachment 1 Functional Requirements* (PHCA, August 1980), are quoted directly in this document, as in most cases the detailed prescriptions of the Brief constitute one of the most fundamental reasons why the spaces of the building were conceived as they were. The content, wording, and inflections of the Brief are therefore essential to understanding the Architect's design response.
- Wherever possible, the words of the Architect at the time of the design, whether recorded in written reports to the Authority Board and the Joint Standing Committee on New Parliament House, pertinent extracts from the conceptual briefs written by the Architect for commissioned artists and craftspeople, or through internal records in the files of Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects, are directly quoted in explanation of the concepts for the building. The re-use of these original words, whenever available, minimises the desire to 're-write the history' of the ideas at the time of preparation of this document, more than fifteen years after the building's completion.

From this writer's perspective, there is a third specific purpose of the preparation of this document: that in our time it is rare for a society, through its government, to give a brief to an architect clearly asking and hoping for the design of a highly symbolic place, capable of speaking continuously for centuries about who we are as a culture. This document intends to remind those who use it that the capacity of this building to 'speak' at so many levels is not merely the invention of the Architect, but was ardently and repeatedly demanded through the Brief by the society which commissioned it. Australia's unique good fortune was that it had public servants and commissioned professionals of remarkable vision at the critical moment in time who were able to formulate that desire into a remarkable series of briefing documents, approved repeatedly by the Parliament, which demanded so much conceptual richness from the Architect in the design responses.

Whether that conceptual richness comes through, and the building continues to speak incisively and strongly in future centuries about this generation's sense of itself and its pluralist culture is hoped for, but unknown.

Lastly, it must be noted that this document is unfinished in many respects, and is inevitably a product of the significant limitations on the time and means by which it was produced within a consultancy framework. Mike Bolton, Secretary of the Joint House Department in Parliament House, should be remembered for his vision in commissioning and supporting the writing of these volumes. Many additions, clarifications, revisions, and much more time for the project would be required to transform it into the ideal document for its purpose. It is hoped by this writer that the means by which this can occur

may be available in the near future, thereby rendering the document as a much more complete record of the essential ideas which shaped Parliament House.

The text was written with the assumption of considerable illustration by photographs and drawings in each chapter, but financial constraints at the time of its completion have unfortunately prevented the Parliament House from commissioning the preparation and inclusion of the visual material. Interim indications of the nature of the visual material which was intended to be included have been bound into some chapters of the text as a means of reminding readers that this important task should still be undertaken in the future.

Given the purpose for which this text has been prepared, it is not assumed that readers will peruse all of the volumes in sequence from cover to cover, but rather that they will seek out information intermittently from single chapters or topics at a time. For this reason, the reader will find that some information on key design principles is repeated or re-stated where necessary in several chapters, rather than being recorded in relation to only one space.

It is important to record that Romaldo Giurgola AO FRAIA FAIA generously read, critiqued, and commented on all of the chapters and Harold Guida FRAIA AIA provided comment on many in our mutual effort to ensure that these texts correctly represent the essential ideas of the building. Any errors which may have occurred are my own.

Pamille Berg AO Hon. FRAIA  
July 2004

## CHAPTER 10. THE ARCHITECT'S DESIGN INTENT FOR CORRIDORS, NODES /LIFT LOBBIES, AND ASSOCIATED ATTENDANT STATIONS

The circulation areas within the so-called 'General Circulation' in the Brief, the name given to the non-public circulation zones of the building, are an important element of the design of the building. Much attention and care were focussed upon what the Design Team called 'the language' of the circulation areas during the design process.

The reasons for the importance of the circulation areas of the building are apparent from the earliest briefing documents for the Design Competition, pertinent excerpts of which are included below.

### Requirements for Circulation Areas in the 1979 Competition Brief

The key descriptions of the requirement for circulation zones within the Parliamentary spaces of the building are expressed as follows in the 1979 Brief:

*Parliament House is characterised by large numbers of people—both permanent occupants and visitors—who have relatively high levels of interaction. For example, on a sitting day a Member, who may be in the building for fourteen hours, might make six trips from his or her suite to the Chamber, two or three trips to the Refreshment Rooms, or the Committee Rooms and so on. The efficiency of the building—as perceived by a user—will in large part depend on movement times, ease of movement, the quality of circulation spaces and ease of orientation. The circulation systems, for people and goods, will be some of the enduring parts of the building, and will largely determine how adaptable the building is in the long term.*

*Given the size of the complex, it is inevitable that some movements may take several minutes. Certain movements must be given priority:*

- *Ministers, Senators and Members to the Chambers in the event of a division;*
- *The transfer of urgently-required documents, for example, from the Table Office to the House of Representatives; and*
- *Frequent movements, for example, Members and staff from their offices to the Refreshments Rooms.*

*Infrequent or routine movements, such as those of a maintenance man repairing a door or a clerical assistant delivery files, can be given a lesser priority.*

*Ease of movement will largely depend on whether the building is horizontally or vertically organised. A vertical solution may seem feasible in arranging space to minimise travel time. Competitors should, however, bear in mind that in an ordinary day a Member may make*

many other trips from his or her office... Competitors should evaluate carefully the implications of forcing Members to rely on lifts to make these trips. Escalators may have advantages in coping with vertical movement over short distances.

The size and architectural treatment of circulation spaces will largely determine the character of the building. Spacious corridors with adequate ceiling height, good lighting, views outside and interpenetration of levels are needed to give a sense of generosity and ease. These qualities must be balanced against the cost of providing more than the space dictated by function.

To facilitate user orientation there should be a hierarchy of movement systems. Movement of casual visitors should be separate from other circulation systems, and with a minimum number of interfaces. Major routes should by-pass usable floor space within an element as much as possible. For example, ministers and staff going from the Executive Government element to the Refreshment Rooms should not have to use a circulation system flanked by Senators' suites.

All parts of the building must be accessible by trolley for the distribution of food, meals and documents and should cater for the handicapped... (PHCA 1979, *Parliament House Canberra: Conditions for a Two-stage Competition*, vol. 2, pp. 11–12).

Several key principles which are the basis of the design of the circulation areas are contained in this section of the Brief, i.e. that:

- a) the efficiency of the entire building is dependent upon the quality of the circulation spaces;
- b) the circulation spaces will, in the long term, be 'some of the enduring parts of the building', and thereby will determine its long-term adaptability;
- c) the circulation system design should be based upon a hierarchy of movements, rather than a generic response to all movement requirements for people and goods;
- d) dealing effectively with the hierarchy of circulation may depend largely upon decisions regarding the organisation of the building into horizontal or vertical circulation systems in relation to its basic configuration;
- e) the design of the circulation systems is the primary determinant of the degree to which the Users maintain their sense of direction and orientation in such a large structure, and hence is a major determinant of the comfort and amenity of Parliament House as a work-place;

- f) the very important perception that '...the size and architectural treatment of circulation spaces will largely determine the character of the building', given its inherent massiveness and the high levels of interaction inherent in the functions of the Parliament which require movement throughout the day; and
- g) the degree of care taken in the conception of the circulation spaces will to a great extent determine the capacity of the building to be extended or expanded effectively over time.

The Architect's interpretation of each of these principles in the circulation space design is summarised below.

## Architect's Design Response to the Brief for Corridors and Nodes/Lift Lobbies

### Corridors

The bilateral symmetry of the building as a whole is intentionally reflected in a similar bilateral symmetry in the circulation system in the House and Senate Office Wing corridors, thereby ensuring that an occupant or visitor to one side of the building has a similar sense of orientation on the opposite side.

The basic north/south orientation of the monumental spaces along the central zone is reflected in the similar north/south orientation of the Office Wings, with east/west access corridors aligning with and continuing across the intermediary courtyards via the glazed 'link' structures. This north/south and east/west grid, carefully-oriented and calibrated, provides a linear, rectangular continuous movement pattern of unfettered Parliamentary circulation for occupants and official visitors across the central curved wall zone and along both perimeters of the building. The exit points from the corridors within this movement pattern are carefully related to key functional and symbolic points within the core of the building.

In volumetric terms, the design of the corridor is based upon a number of simple principles:

- in response to the extreme length of the corridors, the terminus to the corridor is always glazed or significantly perforated, providing views to the exterior and the penetration of natural light.

For Users, these views into the landscape and directional light penetration are significant aids to orientation in the building, subliminally as well as directly identifying for the User whether she/he is approaching the north, south, east, or west perimeter or a similarly-oriented intermediary point of the building;

- all corridors have roughly three-metre-high ceilings in relation to the careful calibration of their width, intentionally reducing the subtle sense of claustrophobia caused by the diminishing perspective created when a User views a long corridor ahead as he/she moves through the Office wings;
- whether double-loaded or single-loaded with communicating rooms, all corridors are periodically and rhythmically interrupted at intervals along their length by 'break-out' or 'pause' spaces. These areas provide a widening of the corridor zone into an orthogonal space, flanked by windows or full-height glazing, which creates a natural place for meeting, talking, waiting, or merely for unconscious relief from the ongoing cadence of the linear corridor. The design of the glazing adjacent to the portions of single-loaded corridors in the House and Senate Wings is intentionally different from all other window glazing for



particular rooms and monumental spaces, conveying the scale and cadence of corridors rather than the static views occurring from rooms with fixed viewpoints.

- An important aspect of the design of these pause spaces is the fact that at various times of the day, they intentionally bring the corridor's Users in contact with direct sunlight for limited periods of time which reflects off of surfaces, makes shadow patterns, and in general enlivens the space, once again providing yet another means of bringing building occupants in direct contact with the outdoors in the course of their work-day;
- The volumetric form of the corridor is visually defined by the creation of a cast-plaster, curved cove forming the junctions of the walls and ceiling along the entire length of the corridor.

This curved cove provides a precise, continuous, geometric junction between wall and ceiling, preventing the visually untidy architectural solution in which two plasterboard or other planar surfaces are joined at right angles between ceiling and wall, and in which all inevitable slight misalignments and aberrations are visually apparent along such lengthy corridors. The curved surface also reflects ambient light in both directions along the planes of the ceiling and wall, creating a soft luminosity in the corridor which is difficult to achieve by other means.

Based upon these simple volumetric design elements, the determination of form and the choice of materials and finishes in the corridors occur through a second set of simple design ideas:

- The walls and ceilings of all corridors are painted a matte-finish 'Parliament House white', a carefully-determined white colouration which was formulated in the Design Teams in collaboration with Colour Consultant Peter Travis to be completely neutral between the reds and greens forming the essential colour spectrum for the building.

The Parliament House white paint conveys a fresh, pristine character without glare and without the austere blue tones often inherent in commonly-used white office paints. Joinery elements in the corridor are painted or lacquered in a satin-finish version of the same white, thereby establishing the same relationship among finishes along an elevation as on the granite cladding of the curved wall, where the central portion of the wall is given a honed (matte) finish, while the capping stones and lowest stone courses along the base of the wall are of polished granite, providing a reflective finishing element responding to movement along its perimeter.

- To provide a transition between the hard plasterboard planes or wall

surfaces and the carpet of the floor, a timber parquetry edge strip is present along both sides of the corridor floor, framing the central carpeted zone.

In visual terms this parquetry 'warms' the corridor with the introduction of natural materials and provides a rich, contrasting frame to the central carpet; the parquetry edge strips also intentionally serve as a transition in materials and tonality between the planar anonymity of the plasterboard walls and the cut-pile carpet. The parquetry also serves as a visual 'base' which accentuates the applied Entry joinery to each Suite. In the Ministerial Wing, the parquetry edge strip expands to become a timber floor within the alcove of the Entry to the Minister's Suite, thereby providing a transitional zone which clearly signals the leaving of the circulation space and the entry into a significant office.

In functional terms the continuous parquetry edges also serve as a "guide" which prevents the wheels of trolleys from passing from the central carpeted surface of the corridor onto the parquetry surface, thereby minimising the abrasion marks and damage to walls from trolley impacts.

- Skirting boards at the base of the walls are designed to be flush-mounted as an integral element of the wall, rather than being a moulding sitting proud of the wall surface which, in design terms, appears visually as a "splice" or "add-on" to the essential aspects of the wall. A bronze or painted "bead" separates the wall and the flush skirting element, again maintaining the principle throughout the building of utilising shadow lines, contrasting materials, or different geometrical profiles to provide a graceful visual transition between different materials and functions which visually accommodates the natural variations among dimensions and edge finishes.

These shadow lines or contrasting separating elements require skill and excellence of fabrication in their assembly and quietly demonstrate that attention to detail throughout the building's life, rather than the utilisation of applied surface-mounted or joints clearly intended to mask the lack of precision, skill, and care in the fabrication and installation of the wall. This principle of the demonstration of care and excellence in work throughout the detailing of all materials in the building is found repeatedly in instances throughout its exterior and interior as a significant determination of the building's character.

- Entry doors into Members', Senators', and Ministers' Suites in their respective corridors are 'marked' through the use of a 'plant-on' or applied door frame designed to stand proud of the wall surface as an intentional signification of the importance of each Suite's Entry, similar to a building or house's address along a street.

By contrast, the exit or service door to each Suite is flush-mounted within the wall, rendering it less noticeable, and thereby establishing a visual rhythm along the wall surface in which the entry doors are hierarchically

prominent and easily identified by visitors and staff, and exit doors are visually recessive.

In the Ministerial Wing, the white applied door frame of the House and Senate Wings is conceptually expanded through being combined with a deep alcove at the door, a special bronze suspended light fixture, and the alcove's clear-finished timber lining and frame to imply not only the entrance to a Minister's Suite but also the formal entrance to a ministry per se for important overseas and government visitors.

- A window has been integrated adjacent to each Entry door to the Member's or Senator's Suite, giving views into and out of the Reception Room of the Suite. This window was intended to be left open, without screens, blinds, or window coverings, in order to give life and variation to the corridor (rather than blind surfaces along its continuous wall surfaces) and in order to provide prior notice to the receptionist in the Suite that a visitor was about to open the Entry door. A similar function and logic is achieved in the Minister's Entries through the use of vertical glazed bronze apertures from floor to ceiling along the inside edge of the formal timber doors to each Ministerial Suite.
- The services, including light fittings, air supply, sprinklers, clocks with division bells, and fire detection sensors and alarms, are organised within the ceiling within central metal access panels framed by the cast plaster cove.

Rather than being random penetrations within the ceiling tiles, each element of the services in the corridors has a logic and language of placement, related to other services' elements, which maintains to the maximum degree possible a regular cadence and spacing of ceiling penetrations.

- The Office Wing corridor carpet patterns and colours are carefully formulated as an essential element of the symbolic colour relationships extending from the Chambers to the building exterior. As explained in more detail in this document's chapter entitled "Design Intent of Fabrics and Carpets in Relation to Colour in Parliament House", the Chamber colours form the origin or benchmark for all other variants of the House green or the Senate red throughout the building. Within the development of the building's colour principles, the depth of colour at the heart of the two Chambers slowly becomes lightened or reduced in its colour saturation as it reaches areas of high light penetration from windows and entry areas, or areas which flank the building exterior or courtyards.

The base colour of the House Wing corridor carpet and red of the Senate Wing corridor carpet is juxtaposed with a contrasting 'fleck' or 'spot' pattern whose lighter colour is still related to the Chamber colour spectrum. The Design Team's creation of this 'fleck' pattern through

utilising graphite pencil dots on drawing paper, and then enlarging them on a photocopier to the desired size, was part of the Architect's intent that the circulation area carpets should have a sense of 'non-design', by which he meant the avoidance of rigid or repetitive geometries in these confined spaces. The basic tonality of this corridor carpet 'fleck' is then combined with a significantly 'faded' version of the same colour to become the two tones used for the Member's or Senator's Office carpet with its central medallion or visual 'rug' and contrasting pattern, which forms the formal visual focus to this important room.

These interrelated carpet colour tonal variations not only evolved in a strict relationship to the Chamber and its colour language. They were simultaneously also modulated and adjusted during the early development of the building's colour language to form acceptable and enhancing relationships with the colour spectrum established in other natural materials such as the building's essential timbers, for example, brush box, jarrah, turpentine, grey box, etc.

This overall colour logic can be identified not only in the relationships between the Chamber carpets, the relevant Office Wing carpet, and the relevant Member's or Senator's Office carpets, but also in virtually all carpets and their surrounding materials and locations throughout the building.

The carpet in the Executive Wing corridors is not patterned, but rather is a formal, grey-blue cut-pile carpet whose tonality was carefully formulated as part of the overall colour language of the furniture and fabrics of the Executive area.

As described in more detail in the chapter of this document dealing with carpet and fabric design intent, the reflective quality of the yarns in the cut-pile carpet is an essential part of the corridor carpet's design intent, as the carpet visually lightens considerably when seen across a distance, as in the linear extent of a corridor, while being richly coloured when perceived close to the viewer.

- The graphics and signage included as an essential part of the circulation in the corridors is explained in detail in this document's chapter entitled 'Design Intent of Signage and Graphics'. Locations for signage are strictly planned and controlled, and follow the standard glass plaque design language with text and orientation map developed for the building as a whole.
- Any hanging or installation of works of art, photographs, or other added graphic elements along corridors on wall surfaces was intentionally omitted in (and thereby prohibited) by means of the 'Preliminary Report: Locational Listing and Descriptions of Works of Art and Craft', vols 1-2, MGT September 1983) which the Architect prepared for the Construction Authority and Art Advisory Committee and which was subsequently refined and approved as documenting the agreed locations for the purpose of acquisitions of art and craft for the building.

The reason for this prohibition is that the design of the corridors intentionally sets up a visual rhythm or cadence of applied door frames, the carpet pattern, the ceiling penetrations, etc. which give visual interest to the corridor without impinging upon its simple continuity of white walls and ceilings which determines its spaciousness. The hanging of works of art or additional graphics on the corridor walls would reduce this air of spaciousness, and would set up a functional conflict between the linearity and emphasis on continuous movement which is the basis for the design of the corridors, in which they are not conceived or dimensioned as a gallery space, with viewers stopping to examine or gaze upon works of art along its length. As will be noted below, locations for works of art adjacent to the corridors are established as an important design element of the nodes or lift lobbies, where their natural function as primarily enclosed places where visitors and users pause in their daily routine make the provision of focal works of art entirely appropriate.

By means of these eight simple design concepts which determine the form and ambience of the corridor spaces, a specific character, sense of elegant calm and dignity, and a spaciousness despite restricted dimensions is achieved which, as the Competition Brief states at the outset, significantly 'determine the character of the building' and 'give it a sense of generosity and ease'.

The utilisation of those basic design concepts to develop the character of generosity and ease can be further understood through looking at its expression through the functional organisation along the Office Wing

corridors, as well as through the characterisation of the glazed links across the Curved Wall Courtyards and Office Wing courtyards.

With respect to the characterisation of the corridors, in addition to the principle of the terminus of each north/south and east/west corridor being a large-scaled glazed element to allow landscape views and the directionality of natural light to serve as orientation guides for Users, the north/south corridors in the House and Senate Wings and the east/west corridors in the Executive Wings all conclude in the location of a Staff Lunchroom slightly off-axis as the terminus of the circulation. These Lunchroom locations were not accidental or merely fortuitous, but rather intentionally strengthen the sense of the building's devotion to being a pluralist work-place in which common spaces and shared amenities take precedence wherever functionally possible.

As part of this provision of common amenity in such a prominent location within each Office Wing, the design and positioning of each Staff Lunchroom at the corridor ends was planned to offer choice, variety, and diversity of views: e.g. views into the distant panorama of the lake from one room, and more intimate and controlled views into the internal Office courtyards from another. The retention of the preciousness and value of this variety of views for general staff use is a critical aspect of the building's design intent, rather than allowing functional demands over time to begin to sequester these spaces into single-purpose, private functions or offices.

Similarly, the design language of the glazed links forming part of the east/west corridors in the building was carefully evolved to be expressive of a number of concepts to Users. Within the early design process from 1980 through 1982, the Design Team investigated in great detail the possibility that the links could remain open and primarily unglazed, or perhaps utilising a simple roof and vertical glass louver system to provide some protection from wind and wind-blown rain during the winter months. The focal reason for this desire for the links to remain open was again the making of a good workplace, and the desire to provide varied experiences to the building's occupants each day, including the opportunity to 'step outside' and experience the outdoors in the course of performing basic daily tasks.

Following considerable investigation, the Design Team concluded that the idea was simply impracticable. As a result, however, it was the Architect's intention that the glazed links should be detailed in such a manner as to penetrate the building rather than being attached to it, and to minimise their structure, sense of enclosure, and their sense of separation from the Courtyard landscapes through which they pass. To that end, the links provide actual access to the landscape at Ground Floor, even allowing lawn mowing and gardening equipment to drive through the links along the courtyards, while the detailing at upper floor levels intentionally allows the glazing to move beyond the concrete structure and emphasises the ephemeral quality of the link in the manner in which it joins the curved wall at all levels.

Despite the care of intention and detailing reflected in these examples, The character spoken of in the Brief which originates in the treatment of the circulation areas of the building is easily disturbed and eroded, and adherence to the principles of the logic, locations, and typologies specified for each of these nine design concepts is an essential aspect of maintenance of the ongoing continuity and dignity of these corridors as spaces under continuous use.

#### Nodes or Lift/Stair Lobbies and Attendant Stations

The crossings of corridors within the Office Wings and the open spaces adjacent to lifts and service stairs were termed 'nodes' by the Design Team as a means of conveying their basic functional character and form.

The design of these areas of the building's circulation is a natural extension of the principles summarised above for the design of the corridors, and need little further explication here.

Where nodes occur, the timber parquet edge strip of the corridor conceptually expands to become the entire floor surface, supplanting the carpet. The reasons for employment of this design element are obvious: in aural terms, the movement from carpet onto parquet signals to occupants and official visitors traversing the building that they are about to encounter a 'change in traffic' or choice in direction, similar to the equivalent use of change in paving surfaces in roadways to alert drivers to approaching intersections or pedestrian crossings. Furthermore, the higher traffic and movement of users and goods occurring within a circulation node is accommodated more practically with a non-carpet surface. As with the use of the parquet edge strip as a visual emphasis which reveals and emphasises the applied door frames of entries to Members', Senators', and Ministers' Suites, so the full parquet surface within the circulation node gives visual prominence to the articulated frames of the lifts and colour and textural contrast to the service stair entries, with their white terrazzo flooring visible beyond the parquet.

By contrast to the corridors, node areas were planned and detailed to accommodate the presence of large-scale works of art on their walls. Through the intentional absence of stylised architectural elements in these areas, the wall spaces can accommodate a wide variety of contemporary paintings and other large-scale wall-mounted works, which were acquired through the Art Advisory Committees serving both pre-1988 and post-1988 with the specific brief to enliven the work-place and to 'speak' about the highly diverse issues of community, identity, origins, and national or regional character which are addressed daily in the Parliament's work.

The Architect's response to the 'making of the building's character' through the circulation spaces noted in the Brief is exemplified in the design, detailing, and subsequent development and fabrication of the lift indicator lights, which are of cast clear glass. When product searches by the Design Team found only standardised plastic lift indicator housings available, and no

glazed indicators, the Team contacted Australian hot-glass artists Warren Langley and Brian Hirst of New South Wales, who subsequently developed the casting methodology and arranged for the Corning Glass factory to halt temporarily its production line for a portion of a day to enable the casting of all of the Parliament's lift light indicators.

This collaboration of the Architect, of Australian craftspeople who are designer/makers, and of industry to produce a unique functional element of the building was not accidental, but rather was part of the intentional and permanent demonstration of the value of good work and common goals in the context of Australia's symbolic place of democracy. As an integral part of that intention, expressed in scores of individual projects within the building's design and construction, the lift light development and fabrication exemplifies what is expressed in H D Fosdick's famous quotation,

*...democracy is based on the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.*

An additional element of the circulation nodes which is a critical element of their design intent is the presence at most major lift lobbies and nodes of an Attendant Station. In addition to the obvious functional requirements which the Attendant Stations were designed to meet, their location adjacent to the circulation crossing and waiting point was intended in architectural terms to 'humanise' the space, to contribute a presence of



life, activity, and functions common to all within the space, and to provide a location in which multiple functional items could be stored and hidden from view below the high counter area, thereby increasing the order and dignity of the circulation areas.

Within the continuous functional change which is expected to occur during the building's life, the intent was that these Stations would continue to function as the repository of movable equipment, paper goods, office machines, etc., thereby preventing the location accretion of these objects, as well as trolleys and transport equipment, in circulation areas.

Any tendency towards latter is perhaps one of the most serious threats to the maintenance of the integrity of the design of the circulation spaces in the building, as recognised by the Brief from the outset of the Design Competition, since it immediately changes the character, standing, and sense of consciousness of the symbolic importance of the building, both as Australia's premier work-place and as its formal public face to occupants and visitors.

## CHAPTER 29. ARCHITECT'S INTENT REGARDING FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE BUILDING

### Early Functional Brief Prescriptions Regarding Expansion Capacity in the Building

Perhaps the clearest and most revealing statement of the way in which the requirement of initial provision of space and future expansion was to be addressed in the new and permanent Parliament House lies in the *Report on the Proposed New and Permanent Parliament House for the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia*, (March 1970), prepared by the Joint Select Committee on the New and Permanent Parliament House (see Appendix 'A' for a copy of the Report).

The whole of this Report, written primarily by the Committee's Secretary, Mr J A Pettifer, Clerk Assistant of the House of Representatives, addresses the question of expansion and future needs. In the initial executive 'Summary' of the document, under the heading 'The Need for an Adequate Plan', the Report states:

10. *Your Committee believes most strongly that the Statement of Requirements put forward should be firm, definite and adequate—that while it should permit the necessary flexibility in the preparation of design, it should also provide a firm basis for effective control of the project when it is put in hand by the Government.*
11. *One of the most significant points which was brought home to the Committee repeatedly during its overseas visit was the inevitability of growth of Parliamentary requirements. The history of every building visited overseas, was of a Parliament outgrowing its quarters. In fact, every existing Parliament building visited needed more space and, in almost every case, proposals were under way to meet this need. This applied not only to older buildings which, like the present provisional building in Canberra, were becoming increasingly inadequate, but also to the newer buildings, even one under construction where alterations had led to greatly increased costs.*
12. *In some places additional space was being leased in private buildings, in others, Parliamentarians' office accommodation was at excessive distances from the Parliament. In many places library space, dining areas, refreshment areas and even quiet work areas had been commandeered for office or committee space. Generally, the almost inevitable growth of Parliamentary membership and duties had led to a deterioration in office accommodation and the necessary growth of committee operations had resulted in a poor standard of committee accommodation.*

13. Our advisers in almost every capital urged the Committee to 'make no little plans'. The trend of their comments is conveyed by the statements below, which were gathered from a variety of cities:

*'Avoid temporary economies which can cost millions.'*

*'Plan ahead for the increased circulation space needed for increased visitors and increased Parliamentary activity.'*

*'Build big enough at the start. It has always cost much more to add space.'*

*'The United Nations has never constructed a building which did not run out of space within ten years. On an average, additional space has been required within five years.'*

*'Place all the accent on a clear final Statement of Requirements and adhere to it. This has proved to be the only effective way of controlling costs and avoiding escalation of estimates.'*

14. The foregoing statements served to confirm your Committee's thinking, and its recommendations have been made against this background. In some instances, of course, the Committee's recommendations have had to be based on assessments, which have, however, been stated. But in no case does it feel that its proposals, when viewed in the longer term, have been over-generous or extravagant. (ibid., pp. 8-9).

The Report addresses in detailed sections the likely expansion of the House and Senate, the almost certain requirement for the capability of the ongoing expansion of the Parliamentary Library, and of the accommodation for the Press '...within the Parliamentary complex of buildings'. However, with respect to press accommodation, the Report also goes on to add:

448. At the same time, your Committee considers that as Canberra grows and assumes the role of the cultural, tourist and educational centre of the nation, the growth in population and status of the City will bring with it an increase in the number of extra-Parliamentary events and Parliamentary authorities will need to make a fresh assessment of the work undertaken in the Press wing. It would seem inevitable that in time a separate private Press building will be required to handle local news and the television interviews of people outside the Parliament (the interviewing of whom would not be permitted in the Press Wing), for the reporting of non-Parliamentary news, for the entertainment by the Press of VIPs and other Press Club activities such as are carried on in Washington and Ottawa. (ibid., p. 94).

## Expansion Requirements as Expressed in the Design Competition Brief

Nine years later, the issue of future expansion of the Parliament House was formally addressed in the 1979 *Conditions for a Two-stage Competition* to which all architectural design competitors worked.

The most potent addressing of the conceptual issue of expansion occurred in that document under the section entitled 'Symbolism', where the issue of how future growth and change might affect the language of expression chosen for the building was addressed:

Parliament House must be more than a functional building. It should become a major national symbol, in the way that the spires of Westminster or Washington's Capitol dome have become known to people all over the world. Yet those two buildings have different connotations.

The Capitol building, massive and of monumental scale, is approached by huge flights of steps and is surmounted by a dome of the scale of St. Peter's or St. Paul's.

Westminster, on the other hand, whilst still a vast building, is more informal, and romantic rather than classical. Big Ben is the most photographed and well known part of the building, a symbol of London as well as Parliament. It has very different connotations to the Capital dome.

The provisional Parliament House has a different language altogether. In terms of scale, it is less powerful than Washington or Westminster, yet it has its own grace and simplicity.

Competitors should consciously evaluate these factors during the design process. They should question whether it is appropriate that a building of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century use the language of bygone eras. What would be the connotations—in the mind of the visitor—of a building with a monumental scale, sited on a hill? Does significance necessarily mean bigness? Should the functional aspects of the building be moulded into an abstraction of checks and balances (Brasilia)? Does the nature of the requirements imply an acknowledgement of the forces of growth and change?

A major determinant of the symbolic quality of the building will be its massing. The massing will be influenced by the nature of the building. It will grow, as the number of Senators and Members grows, staff numbers increase and functions change.

The building must be capable of taking incremental growth, which may at a particular time produce asymmetry. The disposition of accommodation about the two Chambers affects massing. The requirements are not symmetrical. The Senators' office accommodation is half the size of that of the House of Representatives. Symmetry cannot be obtained at the expense of functional efficiency. (ibid., p. 15).

The second portion of the 1979 Competition Brief which addresses how future change should be accommodated is the section on 'Flexibility', which is sufficiently important to be quoted in its entirety:

The ability to extend the building or to change the use of existing accommodation is fundamental to the long-term success of the building. The history of the provisional Parliament House demonstrates

*that Parliament's accommodation needs change constantly, often in unpredictable ways; the architects for the original building could not have envisaged the establishment of the Legislative Research service within the Parliamentary Library or the expansion of the committee system.*

Broadly, four kinds of accommodation are required:

- custom made...;
- office space...;
- repetitive suites...;
- light industrial... .

All will be subject to growth and change. Growth is basically of two kinds: addition and expansion.

Addition:

With an increase in the number of Senators and Members, additional suites would be required. Ideally these additional suites should be adjacent to existing suites.

An increase in the number of Senators and Members may also cause an increase in those areas directly involved in providing services to Senators and Members, for example, in the Refreshment Rooms and the Administration sections of the Senate and House of Representatives Departments.

Expansion could arise from:

- each Senator and Member being granted more staff, in which case each suite would have to increase in size;
- some or all Ministers requiring more staff if the workload increased;  
or
- the provision of additional services, for example, in the Parliamentary Library.

It would be preferable if those elements which may be subject to expansion—see diagram—could remain as a single package. In the case of the Executive Government element, for example, it must be possible to expand the element either by the usurpation of other accommodation adjacent to it or by the construction of new, adjacent accommodation.

No firm guidelines can be given to the extent, timing or sequence of growth or change. The building must therefore be flexible. For example, at some time in the future it may be preferable to convert offices initially planned for parliamentary departments into suites for more Senators and Members, in order to give better accessibility to the Chambers.

As far as possible, fixed parts of the building—stairs, lifts, toilets—should not impinge on usable floor space to the extent that flexibility is

diminished. Those 'custom-made' elements which are unlikely to be subject to a change of use but may grow—for example, the committee rooms—should be able to expand into adjacent accommodation of a suitable kind.

The brief requires Competitors to show how the building can expand to provide additional suites for 24 Senators and 40 Members. (ibid., p. 8).

The requirements of future expansion were also addressed in the 1979 Competition Brief with respect to parking requirements:

Consideration must be given when developing a parking strategy for the building, to the possible future expansion of on-site parking, to the following total numbers:

Priority Allocation Parking	130 spaces
Long-stay Parking	1370 spaces
Short-stay Parking	360 spaces
Total	1860 spaces (ibid., p. 76).

#### Architect's Response to Expansion Requirements in the *Second Stage Competition Report*

In the Architect's May 1980 *Second Stage Competition Report*, the firm's response to the requirements for expansion was summarised as follows:

- 2.10 *The overall image of the Parliament House, established in the design, can tolerate considerable modification and expansion without compromise to the basic identity of the building.*
- 2.11 *The ceremonial and public elements of the Parliament are located in the north and central part of the scheme. We have considered these elements as major form generators and as such they will remain fixed. The House and Senate Chambers, together with their axial connections to Entrances, are also considered fixed; whereas the adjacent modular office areas are readily expandable. Future addition of suites is foreseen and will be accommodated by adding to the single-loaded corridors on the House and Senate perimeters.*
- 2.12 *Similarly, the Executive Government area is an easily expandable building, with space for future growth available inside the new road. The Library, located above the Executive Government areas, can expand to the south, if needed.*
- 2.13 *Within the Refreshment areas for Members on the third level, excess*



space has been provided in the form of lounges and generous corridors. If expanded facilities were required in the future, the need could be met with little disruption.

- 2.14 The building generally has been provided with generous allocations of space for services and mechanical systems. This is predicated on the knowledge that future technological advances will need accommodation within the existing building fabric (ibid., pp. 22–23).

Also included in the Architect's *Second Stage Competition Report* was the diagram of 'Building Expansion' (reproduced here on the following page) which demonstrates a total expansion capacity on the outer House of Representative Wing of forty additional suites for Members, and on the partial outer Senate Wing an expansion of twenty-four additional suites for Senators, thereby meeting the Competition Brief requirement, as well as the First and Second Floor expansion space for the Executive. The Architect's Competition Brief design of parking capacities also meets and exceeds the requirement of a long-term achievement of 1860 parking spaces by identifying the means of providing a total of 1902 parking spaces through a combination of underground garages and surface parking areas on the periphery (ibid., p. 79).

#### Functional Brief Requirements for Expansion in the May 1980 Brief

In general, the requirements for flexibility and the capacity for future expansion of the building in the August 1980 Brief repeat those already cited above in relation to the 1979 Design Competition Brief (the section under 'Design Issues' entitled 'Flexibility').

With respect to suites for Senators, the Brief states that '...it should be shown how an additional 24 Senators' suites can be added in a way that will provide the same access to the core of the building as the original 41 suites' (PHCA August 1980, *Brief for Parliament House Canberra: Attachment 1 Functional Requirements*, p. 9/15). The same language occurs with respect to the instruction to the Design Team to '...show how an additional 40 Members' suites can be added in a way that will provide the same access to the core of the building as the original 77 suites' (ibid., p. 10/13).

The occupancy and seating requirements of the House of Representatives and Senate Chambers from initial to ultimate capacities also remained the same in the Competition Brief and the 1980 Brief, with an initial seating capacity for 170 Members in the House Chamber and an ultimate capacity of 240, and an initial capacity for 88 Senators in the Senate Chamber and an ultimate seating capacity of 120.

Within the requirements for the Parliamentary Library, no specific expansion targets were listed in the 1980 Brief, but the need for flexibility within the total library space was emphasised to accommodate changing use patterns, library operations, and changing technology affecting library management

concepts (ibid., p. 17/9).

Lastly, with respect to expansion requirements for the Executive Government area of the building, the Brief states:

*While it is unlikely that the number of Ministers forming the Executive Government will increase in the near future, ministerial staff numbers may increase—either for individual Ministers or for the Executive Government as a whole. For this reason, the element should be planned to ensure maximum flexibility in allocation of space between Ministers' suites and to ensure that the area can be extended while remaining both secure and self-contained. Provision is to be made in the design to allow for expansion of about 10%. (ibid., p. 20/7).*

### Architect's Pre-1988 Design Response to Expansion Requirements for Office Wings

In 1983 the so-called *Representation Bill 1983* passed through the Parliament, and the Joint Standing Committee on New Parliament House instructed the Construction Authority to proceed with the design of extensions to the new building to accommodate the additional Senators and Members arising from that Bill.

At its 6 April 1984 meeting, the Joint Standing Committee deliberated on two papers submitted for its consideration, one dated 29 March 1984 by the Construction Authority, and a second dated 30 March 1984 by the Secretariat to the Committee in conjunction with the House of Representatives Department. Copies of both are included in the 'Appendix' to this document.

Both papers address two issues:

- the concept of provision of an interim number of Members' and Senators' suites to accommodate the increased membership prescribed by the Bill, and
- the additional number of suites remaining to be provided in the distant future, comprising the total expansion capacity for Members' and Senators' suites in the building.

The Construction Authority's paper and Architect's comments identify that on the evidence of preliminary design studies, the 24 additional Senators' suites and in the order of 28 additional Members' suites could be provided in immediate expansion in keeping with the architectural principles of the building. The 1984 expansion proposal for the Senate Wing thereby comprises the total future expansion capacity of the Senators' Offices, finalising the ultimate completed form of the Senate Offices wing.

With respect to the eventual maximum form of the House Offices wing, The

Architect noted in the nearly four years of design development since the finalisation of the building's August 1980 Brief requirements for expansion capacity, the means of providing expansion space had been studied in detail. The following photographs of details of the Architect's Second Stage Design Competition model demonstrate the clear conceptual intent about the visual relationship between the curved wall, the Chambers, and the office wings in the building design.

The design issues involved were based on preserving the memory of the profile of Capital Hill in relation to the building's massing:

*The massing of the office wings of the building is principally one stepped in both plan and section to give a progressive central dominance to the complex. The plans and the Schematic model above clearly show this emphasis and the receding nature of elements as they are distanced from the Parliamentary Axis of the two Chambers. It is necessary to maintain this massing to understand the 'hill-like' form of the building. Another basic aspect of the building is the position of the office wings within the arc of the two curved walls, the principal gesture of the design. This is an important conceptual and compositional reference between the major elements. For this to be perceived one must be able to 'see' the foreground building with the background wall beyond with a correspondent scale where elements are in close proximity.*

*When seen from the Kings Avenue approach, the massing required to achieve 40 additional suites as shown above necessarily results in a 'blunt' end to the office wing and thereby obliterates the stepping character which can be maintained with 28 suites as shown below. The end above is also visually too big for the thin, low profile of the curved wall.*

*As seen from Parliament Drive, the length required to achieve 40 additional suites virtually eliminates the stepped plan configuration. Twenty-eight suites, do, however, provide the stepping plan and a progressive scaling down toward the curved walls.*

*In summary, twenty-eight suites is the maximum construction which allows the 'stepping' in plan to be maintained and be perceived, as well as retaining a reduced massing at the wings' end to relate properly to the smallest scale of the curved wall, and we recommend that this be the limit of construction. (op.cit., pp. 5-8).*

This view was not shared by the Secretariat to the Joint Standing Committee; their paper argues that:

*The requirement to provide additional suites for up to 24 Senators and 40 Members was written into the Brief after careful consideration. The figures were judged to be a realistic provision for future expansion of the Parliament and allowed for some of the additional Members to be accommodated as Ministers in an enlarged Executive Government*

area.

*[It is recommended] that the Joint Standing Committee re-affirms the Brief requirement for building expansion which will provide ultimately for an additional 40 Members' suites, 28 of which are to be provided for occupation in 1988. (op. cit., p. 1).*

After considering the issue, the Committee resolved that the original Brief requirement for forty additional suites would be amended:

*...for building expansion to provide ultimately for an additional 38 Members' suites, 30 of which are to be provided for occupation in 1988, and that the Parliament House Construction Authority present to the Committee a proposal for the additional 8 suites. (Minutes, JSC Meeting, 6 April 1984, Item 8, pp. 3-4).*

This resolution maintained the Department of the House of Representatives' desire for retaining close to the maximum expansion space while acknowledging in part the Architect's desire to pull back from the 'blunt end' which would be required of the House Office wings to achieve forty additional suites. At its 8 October 1984 Meeting, the Joint Standing Committee approved the subsequent developed design for the building extensions accommodating an additional 24 Senators and 30 Members in relation to the size of the Eastern Carpark and loading dock configurations.

#### Architect's Post-1988 Intent on Future Building Expansion

In April 1992, four years after the building's completion, office accommodation was already under pressure in the building from a variety of causes. The Architect was requested by the Joint House Department to tender on the provision of consultancy services to assess the space requirements by all five Parliamentary Departments, examining, among other related issues:

- the office accommodation requirements for all of the Parliamentary Staff and functions;
- the possibility of converting non-office space for use as offices;
- the possibility of making additions to Parliament House; and
- the need for space external to the Parliament House.

The study subsequently did not proceed.

In November 1995 the Architect was commissioned under a reduced brief by the Joint House Department and submitted a report entitled 'Parliament House Canberra: Architectural and Structural Feasibility Study' (a copy of this Report is included in the 'Appendix' to this document). The purpose of

the Report was to consider in structural, architectural, and environmental terms the feasibility of adding one additional floor to the Senate and House of Representatives office wings. The conclusions reached were negative; MGT Founding Partner Romaldo Giurgola's cover letter submitting the Report stated in part:

*As a result of these conclusions, it is my opinion that in no circumstances should any additional floors be contemplated on the above-mentioned office wings.*

The Report reiterates the same principles outlined above with respect to the key role played by the carefully-structured massing relationships of the building, and notes that all of these relationships would be seriously compromised:

*The present building responds to the original design brief in terms of functions as well as in terms of related architectural significance. Whilst it has been designed considering the potential of changes occurring in its uses and needs in time, the building has been given a precise form in order to achieve a lasting aesthetic balance among its elements and in relation with its surroundings.*

*A significant changing of such form will alter this balance with the consequent loss of identity, deterioration of the symbolic content, and depreciation of the building's overall authenticity.*

*Independently from structural and technical considerations, the addition of a storey would be a significant alteration because of the following:*

- the roofline of the offices for the House and the Senate will be visually obstructing the profile of the curvilinear walls, thus conflicting with it. This will be further accentuated in moving around the building at different distances from it;*
- the present hierarchical difference between offices and Chambers will be altered significantly with loss of definition of the building elements. Furthermore, the addition of one floor in the sector above the entrance to the Senate and House of Representatives offices will definitely obliterate the view of the Chamber roofs with disastrous consequences to the integrity of the design;*
- the environmental conditions of the courtyards will be hindered by reducing the natural light value within the courtyards and in the building interiors. An increase in the height of the building will have a detrimental impact on the present design and character, greatly altering the scale and proportion of the courtyards.*

*In the design of the courtyards the building mass and scale, and the*

*relationship of the width of the courtyard to the height of the building and the changing pattern of overshadowing, were a determining factor in the developed design and practical use.*

*The reduction in light will result in an alteration to the existing environmental conditions causing problems with the grass quality, the removal of many of the shrub plantings and substitution with more shade-tolerant species and a probably adverse impact on many of the smaller trees.*

*In view of the above, we do not recommend the addition of extra storeys to the office wings in any location. (MGT November 1995, Report, op.cit., p. 3).*

Similarly, the structural engineering portion of the Study came forward with negative conclusions:

*Based on the original design brief for office accommodation, it is not structurally possible to add another storey to either the two or three storey office wings utilising the existing structural systems.*

*Only by adopting [a] severely reduced criterion for loadings, coupled with a different construction for the roof, is it theoretically possible to provide an additional storey. The reduction of the loading criterion down to the loads the structure can accommodate, namely 3kPa live load and 0.5kPa partitions, would neither meet the Australian Standards nor the Commonwealth Australian Property Group Standards. It is on this basis that we could not recommend the addition of the extra storey. (ibid., p. 8).*

In summary, a clarity of intent remains throughout all of the Architect's statements from the *Second Stage Competition Report* in 1980 to this post-occupancy Study fifteen years later regarding the opportunities and limits on the future expansion of the building. It is critical to note that the Architect continued to believe that opportunities for expansion of the building do exist, but that their implementation would be highly complex and non-formulaic in design terms:

*The hierarchy of the architectural volumes is of vital importance in the conception of the Parliament building both from a compositional and symbolic standpoint. The calibrated relationship between the top of the central spine, the roofs of the Chambers and of the offices is parallel to their symbolic role in the complex, whilst maintaining a considered connection with the landmarks of the city at large.*

*The design of the courtyard elevations of the curvilinear wall, of the Chambers and office wings has been studied, in its recesses and window openings, to reflect their juxtapositions and their proportional agreement with the volumes of the structures defining the courtyards. A successful balance between space configuration, materials, landscape, and*

*ambient light has been achieved in these courtyards...*

*Technically, areas of expansion are possible in various sectors of the complex of the Parliament. These expansions may be obtained by internal alterations or structural additions. But the process of this eventual addition can only be highly selective, discreet, and localised, rather than the subject of a general statement. (MGT November 1995, Report, op.cit., p. 2).*

To be consistent with the intent of the original design of the building, therefore, any proposals for structural additions to the Parliament House would need to follow the same exhaustive, uniquely intense process of the original Design Team.

To equal the care and consideration of the original design process, any proposals for building alterations or additions would need to be studied in both two- and three dimensions, including each and every affected and adjacent elevation, internally and externally; the language of penetration of those elevations one to another; the study of massing and void and the demonstration of those relationships through multiple study models; the affect on the symbolism of the building's architectural volumes; and exhaustive demonstrations of the design considerations among space, materials, landscape, and ambient light.

It should also be noted that the Architect understood clearly as part of the firm's design recommendations about growth that expansion of facilities would need to occur in the future life of the Parliament House; there was no mistaken sense that the functions of the Parliament would be frozen in time upon the building's completion. The Architect's assumption was that in addition to the capacity for some degree of careful expansion within the Parliament House building, planning would occur early on for the designation, reserve of, or staged resumption of sites around the perimeter of the base of Capital Hill for such facilities as future House and Senate Office buildings, the dedicated Press building already described in the 1970 *Joint Select Committee Report on the Proposed New and Permanent Parliament House*, possible child care facilities for staff and visitors as discussed over the past twenty years, and other such space demands.

The process by which this occurs in relation to long-term urban design master planning was described by Romaldo Giurgola in September 1982 with respect to the U.S. Capitol expansion:

*...the aesthetics of the [Parliament House] building is valuable but subject to changes over time. The only guarantee for the durability of the aesthetics is given by making the relationship between architecture and land form clear, by eliminating any ambiguous distinction between environment and landscape.*

*Only buildings with concrete programs [i.e. briefs] produce real places: the attempts often made to work around Griffin's plan of the*

*Parliamentary Triangle area with hypothetical buildings and places with no program appear inconsequential. Places give form to a site and are suggested by concrete experiences: no design is truly possible without the concrete demands produced by the dynamics of life.*

*For example, the temporary Parliament House stands on a site charged with history: thus it is a building which must be preserved, not as a relic but as an active element of the city. Its historical density and its graceful lines provide the necessary continuity between the National Area and the new Parliament House. Truly, its setting could be enhanced in the future by other structures to produce a continuity. This will happen when there will be programs [briefs] for them.*

*But in the building of cities it is not necessary to have always programs of large scope and leading to monumental solutions. In fact the cliffs of Delphi were built with small constructions charged with meaning; and equally, cities like Rome and London were built by a succession of small but wonderful parts by people that, most importantly of all, believed in the future of their city. Thus the periodical dedication of an open space, the construction of small symbolic or utilitarian structures will be sufficient to maintain a gradual continuity of historical and visual value and the good feeling that something is going on. Indifference to the places of our life is indifference to life itself.*

*In a similar endeavour, for the past five years we have also been acting as a Consultant to the Architect of the U.S. Capitol in the formulation of a new 75-year Master Plan for all of Capitol Hill. In the face of suggestions which had been made to complete the old MacMillan Plan for the area (which would have eventually involved filling in all major open building sites around the Capitol with adjunct legislative buildings), we advocated maintaining the existing park between the train station and the Mall as an element that has become 'natural' in the general use and configuration of the area. By the same token, we approached the definition of a precise limit or 'edge' for the Capitol District through use of an urban landscape treatment. By this means, we hoped not to make a rigid 'enclave' of the District, but rather to create that physically elusive and yet precise sense of belonging which places have here in Canberra... (Giurgola, R 1982 'A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place', Walter Burley Griffin Memorial Lecture, Canberra, 8 September, p. 8 [see Appendix to this document]).*

This Master Plan, which identifies the sites for adjunct office buildings and other functional requirements of the U.S. Congress adjacent to the Capitol for the next seventy-five years of growth, was subsequently approved by both houses of the Congress and gazetted as the official Plan of the District.

Its existence parallels the Architect's view of what will be required to prevent undue pressure for alteration and expansion to the Parliament House beyond the building's capacities and at detriment to its long-term value as the



nation's symbol and asset.