

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 59TH MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY THE  
4TH JULY, 1947, AT THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ROOMS,  
COMMONWEALTH BANK CHAMBERS, CANBERRA.

The meeting had been convened for Thursday, the 3rd July, but on account of bad flying weather, the Chairman ( Mr. B. J. Waterhouse) and Mr. R. J. Keith Harris, had been unable to reach Canberra in time and a quorum was not available. The Executive Member ( Mr. C. S. Daley) and Messrs. Rolland and Fraser gave consideration to the items of the agenda and made a number of inspections on Thursday, 3rd July, to assist the Committee's consideration on the following day.

The Committee met at 9 a. m. on Friday, the 4th July.

PRESENT:

Mr. B. J. Waterhouse ( Chairman )  
Mr. C. S. Daley ( Executive Member )  
Mr. A. M. Fraser ( Chairman, Advisory Council )  
Mr. R. J. Keith Harris  
Mr. H. M. Rolland.

Apologies were received from Senator Lamp whose duties with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works prevented him from visiting Canberra and from Mr. F. J. Walters whose professional engagements detained him in Melbourne.

CONFIRMATION  
OF MINUTES:

The Minutes of the 58th Meeting were confirmed.

NOTIFICATIONS:

The following notifications were made for the information of the Committee, viz:

- (a) Mr. Fraser reported that, in connection with the site proposed for the additional buildings for the Canberra Technical College, it was not practicable, except at great cost, to provide sewerage connections for the area suggested by the Committee.

( as the result of discussion it was suggested that further examination be made of the area immediately east of the present College to see whether sites could not be found for the additional workshop buildings. )

- (b) The Executive Member reported that he had spoken to the Secretary, Commonwealth Railways, regarding the general report on the railway question which was in preparation by Mr. Kirkbride, and had ascertained that the latter was at present in hospital but was expected to be on duty again within a week or ten days. The Secretary said that, as far as he was aware, the report had not been seen by the Commissioner but he promised to do everything possible to have it forwarded for the Committee's consideration at an early date.
- (c) The Executive Member reported also that, owing to sewerage difficulties in relation to the site for the Workmen's Hostel as suggested by the Committee, and to many objections to the site recommended by the Director of Works near Commonwealth Avenue, it had been proposed that another site be examined as to suitability. The item had accordingly been placed on the agenda for the Committee's consideration.

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HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT:

(a) Narrabundah - Sections 55, 58 and 59.

A preliminary plan was submitted by Mr. Rolland showing a suggested subdivision of the balance of Sections 55, 58 and 59 upon which it was desired to commence the erection of brick residences at an early date. He stated that the original subdivision into blocks had been revised and that, in the revised scheme for smaller blocks, it was possible to obtain an additional eight sites. It was noted that the frontages for these were about 60 feet and the depths approximately 140 feet. This provided still for a substantial unit area. In the discussion that occurred it was felt that, if the smallest types of houses were to be erected on these blocks, it would result in an uneconomical use of land. It was resolved to recommend:

- (a) that the subdivision be approved for larger types of houses;
- (b) if smaller types were to be used that the blocks be further reduced in size;
- (c) that in all cases the designs for the houses should be prepared or selected to suit the sites.

(b) Griffith - Subdivision between Captain Cook Crescent and La Perouse Street.

Suggestions were made by Mr. Rolland that the area bounded by Captain Cook Crescent, La Perouse Street, Bremer and Wild Streets, be subdivided for residential purposes. He submitted a preliminary sketch indicating the method of treatment for this area, adhering to the existing streets as planned, except for Wild Street which, when examined, was not found to be suitably located in regard to the contours and could be improved by being taken through in a straight line. After studying the plan the Committee thought that it should not be assumed that the internal roads were fixed, and that there should be freedom to consider a design for the whole area. It was agreed that, on Captain Cook Crescent especially, buildings of larger size, such as group-houses, or flats, might be provided for. It was decided to inspect the site and, after doing so, it was agreed that Mr. Rolland would arrange for a plan of subdivision to be prepared indicating sites on the lower portion of the area that might be allotted for residences of the average type in the near future, leaving more valuable sites on the higher ground for later development, but according to the plan to be adopted.

(c) Ainslie - Ebdon Street - South end.

Mr. Rolland presented for the Committee's consideration a rough sketch embodying the suggestion that an area between the southern extension of Ebdon Street and the existing stormwater drain be allocated for additional residences. Mr. Rolland stated that he was not satisfied that this suggestion could be adopted without further investigation and it was arranged that the Committee would inspect the site, either during the present meeting, if practicable, or during its next visit to Canberra.

(d) O'Connor - subdivision at western end of David Street.

The question of whether an area in O'Connor, at the western end of David Street, could be recommended for early development was raised by Mr. Rolland who presented a rough sketch indicating the present blocks and a scheme for their subdivision. It was decided that the matter would receive further consideration after the Committee had the opportunity to inspect the locality.

*B. J. M.*

(e) Areas for further development:

For the information of the Committee Mr. Rolland provided a plan of the city area showing in colour areas now under development for residential purposes and indicating other areas where it was thought development might soon occur. The plan was noted by the Committee and discussed generally in relation to progress being made. The Chairman stated that the plan was very convenient to give a general review of the question of development and would be valuable for reference in future discussions.

YARRALUMLA  
(WESTRIDGE)  
COMMUNITY  
CENTRE:

The Committee gave consideration to a plan ( Head Office Drawing No. 58, Project 25) submitted by Mr. Rolland for the proposed Community Centre at Yarralumla ( Westridge) on Section 60. After examination and discussion the Committee expressed its general approval of the plan in principle. It decided to suggest that the first portion of the shopping centre to be erected be that at the corner of Bentham and Novar Streets, as probably the equivalent of four units only would be required for a considerable period. It was also thought that consideration might be given to the question of the extent to which the shops might be amalgamated into a type of local general store, as indicated in some Scandinavian examples shown by Mr. Rolland. Discussion indicated that it was unlikely that there would be justification for an independent petrol filling station, and that this facility would probably need to be associated with the shopping centre for economic reasons. Further consideration of its siting appeared, therefore, to be necessary. Mr. Rolland stated that he would arrange for further development of the design on the lines of the discussion.

MULTIPLE  
DWELLING  
UNITS:

(a) Section 14, Ainslie.

A further amended plan ( No. C.D. 1546 - 19-6-47 ) was submitted for the Committee's consideration in relation to the layout of residential units of Section 14, Ainslie. It provided for six multiple-unit blocks and twelve single-storey residences on the western boundary of the area. The planning adopted was axial to the street frontages on the area as suggested by the Committee at its previous meeting. After discussion it was resolved that the plan be agreed to subject to consideration as to the designs for the single houses which, it was thought, should be carefully selected for suitability for incorporation in the scheme.

(b) Section 27, Forrest

Mr. Rolland presented a revised plan ( No. C.D. 1569, Canberra 35) of layout for multiple dwellings on Section 27, Forrest. The scheme provided for four blocks containing each four two-storey residences, and two blocks containing each two two-storey residences, the buildings being arranged in axial relationship to the surrounding streets. He stated that the scheme provided for 6.6 dwelling units per acre. In discussing the scheme the question was examined as to whether additional units could be conveniently accommodated on the site; whether the separate garden areas at the rear of the blocks were not too small, and whether any modification could be suggested to the internal playing or garden areas.

As a result of the discussion it was resolved that the plan be approved with the suggestions -

- (a) that the private gardens be increased in depth by moving the buildings outwards; and
- (b) that consideration be given as to whether an additional unit could be added to each of the large blocks by an adjustment of their positions.

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WORKMEN'S  
HOSTEL  
SITE:

A review was made of the question of a site for an additional Workmen's Hostel on the south side of the City in proximity to the administrative area. The Executive Member reported that the Director of Works did not favour the site of the old sewer camp, as recommended by the Committee, on account of the considerable cost of connecting it to the sewerage system. He said that he objected to a septic tank system and that the Health Department also was most unfavourable to such a proposal. In view of the many objections raised to the site marked "A", near Commonwealth Avenue, which the Director of Works himself thought to be the most suitable, an inspection had been made to ascertain whether a site near the Capital Hill Mess would not be suitable. The Executive Member suggested that the Mess itself be converted into a Hostel. The Director of Works, after an inspection of the locality, was of the opinion that a satisfactory site for the Hostel could be obtained on the lower slopes of Capital Hill, slightly to the west of the Capital Hill Mess which should be left in its present condition so as not to disturb the accommodation provided there for a number of old age pensioners.

The Committee inspected this area and decided to advise that, in its opinion, a suitable site for the proposed Hostel could be found therein.

AERIAL MOSAIC  
OF CITY AREA.

Mr. Rolland reported progress that had been made with the preparation of the aerial mosaic of the City area, stating that he had received the unit photographs from the Department of Air and that they were being assembled in his Department. He thought that the work would be completed within the next week or two. He had reminded the Department of Air in regard to the supply of further sets of pictures to the Executive Member and had been promised that these would be sent at an early date.

HOTEL CANBERRA:  
ALTERATIONS  
AND  
ADDITIONS:

A communication was received from the Surveyor-General and Chief Property Officer covering a set of plans providing for making certain alterations and additions to the Hotel Canberra. These comprised alterations to the lounge to increase its accommodation and conveniences for service, consolidation of office accommodation in portion of the present card room; enclosure of the open verandah on the north of the dining room; alterations to the private dining rooms; provision of additional staff blocks for male and female employees, and remodelling and extension of the public bar.

After studying the plans the Committee made an inspection of the hotel, in company with the Architect for private enterprise ( Mr. Gates) and the Manager of the Hotel, Mr. Hodgins.

The Committee considered that there was little objection to the scheme of alterations and additions, as proposed in the plans submitted, with the exception of those relating to the public bar. After noting the conditions that had developed in relation to the conduct of the bar and the undesirable concentration of vehicular traffic in the main drive, the Committee considered that the public bar should not be continued in its existing position and should be provided for in another location where it would not cause the difficulties at present experienced near the main entrance of Canberra's principal residential hotel.

After investigating the possibilities of a new location for the public bar, it was decided to recommend that a new building for this purpose be erected at the rear of the hotel on the opposite side of the road. This building, the Committee thought, might form an integral part of the proposed permanent garage block for which tentative designs were prepared prior to the war.

With regard to the proposed enclosure of the verandah on

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the north side of the dining room the Committee considered that clear glass should be used extending practically the whole height of the enclosure in order to preserve the open view from the dining room which is an important feature of its design.

In relation to the proposal to substitute glass louvres in the lanterns in the ceiling of the lounge the Committee was of the opinion that the lantern lights should not be interfered with but that ventilation should be placed in the ceilings of the lanterns instead. It was considered, also, that the proposed new office was too small, and should be enlarged by moving the suggested partition further into the smoking room.

In addition to the alterations shown on the plans it was ascertained from the Manager of the Hotel that some additional proposals were being submitted which provided for enlargement of the staff dining room and other general staff accommodation. After inspection of the rooms involved, the Committee decided that there would be no objection to the alterations being carried out provided that they were satisfactorily designed.

ROAD TRANSPORT  
TERMINAL.

Plans were submitted for the Committee's consideration showing a suggestion for the allocation of Perth Buildings block, City, for the purposes of a Road Transport Terminal. A report forwarded to the Minister from the Canberra Tourist Bureau indicated the rapid growth of road transport services and the present difficulties owing to the absence of adequate facilities for handling this business. Interested in the matter were the Murray Valley and Pioneer Coaches, a number of smaller touring Companies, and the three large Air Transport organisations. It was proposed that these various units should form a Company to finance the project for building the terminal. It would provide office accommodation for the Tourist Bureau, for the various Companies concerned and also for passengers. There would be resources for providing meals and also accommodation for those staying overnight. Provisions for servicing and garaging omnibuses would also be included. It was indicated that Perth Block had been suggested but it was realised that it might not be practicable for this to be allocated for the purpose.

The Minister was asked if he would indicate that a scheme of this kind was acceptable and if so whether a suitable site could be allotted.

The Committee examined the plans and, whilst it felt that no decision could be made at the moment regarding a site, pending the settlement of the railway question and incidental development for commercial and civic purposes at City, it thought that, in principle, the idea was sound and that the Minister might be informed that the Committee supported the scheme subject to the question of location for the terminal being a matter for later determination when this becomes practicable.

HOSTEL:  
BUILDINGS  
FROM  
NARELLAN.

A communication from the Director of Works forwarding plans of a proposal to locate a wooden hostel building on Section 34, Forrest, was received and considered. The letter indicated that, although this proposal had been under consideration for some time, the Director of Works had not received any approval to utilise the site suggested and he wished to have the views of the Committee as to its suitability. He indicated that working drawings of the building had been prepared, funds were available, and that he was anxious to make arrangements immediately to enter into a contract for the building to be erected. The building had been used for hospital purposes at Narellan and was considered very suitable for use as a hostel to assist in relieving the present shortage of accommodation for public servants.

The Committee studied the proposal and also inspected the site. It noted that the area adjoined the Association Tennis Courts,

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adjacent to which a wooden pavilion had already been provided, and that the site looked on to Phillip Park. It was resolved that the Committee approves of the site and sees no objection to the erection of the proposed building in that area, to meet the present situation in regard to accommodation, in accordance with the scheme as shown in Plans Nos. A.C.T. 16909 and 16910.

LEGATION  
AREA:

The Executive Member informed the Committee that, although the proposal had not been received in writing, he understood that there was a suggestion from the American Ambassador that his country should be granted a second block in the Legation area for the purpose of erecting additional houses for staff and generally to increase the grounds of the Legation. He asked the Committee for an expression of its views in the event of this matter coming forward officially for the Department's consideration. After noting that the area already granted was in the vicinity of nine acres the Committee thought this should be adequate. It also was of the opinion that sites for residences for sub-ordinate staffs of Legations should be allotted in the residential areas of the City so as to avoid building up large individual communities in the Legation area. It pointed out that the proposal originally made had in mind the provision of an official residence for the Minister and perhaps one for the First Secretary, and a Chancellory.

A proposal such as that mentioned would, if generally adopted, in course of time involve a revision of the whole proposal for the Legation area and the subdivisional treatment already worked out. The Committee felt that, in any case, from a community point of view, it was preferable for the general staff of Legations to live in residential areas, as has already occurred in Canberra and is a fairly general custom in other countries.

PRIVATE  
ENTERPRISE  
DEVELOPMENT:

Milk Depot - Section 26, Griffith:

An application was submitted by the Acting Surveyor-General from the Canberra Dairy Society requesting that it be granted a lease of the balance of Section 26, Griffith, to enable it to erect thereon a modern milk-treatment and bottling plant to admit of the delivery of milk in bottles and provide for the growing needs of Canberra.

The Committee examined the plans and also referred to its previous consideration of a somewhat similar proposal in December 1944, and in March, 1945, when it expressed the opinion that, before any additional land were granted, a review should be made to ascertain whether the proposed activities could not reasonably be accommodated on the existing site. It felt that the additional area asked for by the Society was too large and would constitute an extravagant use of land if approved. At the time it suggested that the matter should receive further consideration, especially in regard to the importance of the use of a site facing the Causeway. It was noted that the present scheme provided for building a complete factory on the additional land, the new buildings being approximately 128 feet x 81 feet. No block plan was received indicating how it was proposed to locate the building on the site, whether other buildings were proposed and what connection there would be with the existing building or for what purpose the latter would be used upon the availability of the new building. It was decided to request that fuller information regarding the project be submitted together with a block plan showing the whole of the buildings proposed to be placed on the section and their relative positions.

FORESTRY  
SCHOOL: HOSTEL  
AND FUTURE  
DEVELOPMENT:

Plans under consideration to provide for a large expansion of the activities associated with the Australian School of Forestry and the Forestry Bureau were shown to the Committee by Mr. Rolland. The Committee noted that the scheme provided for proceeding in the near future with a students' hostel and recreation grounds and later

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with a technical research building of an extensive character. Mr. Rolland stated that he did not have full information regarding the proposal and, as the plans were not submitted officially for the Committee's opinion, the general outlines of the scheme were noted but no resolution in relation thereto was passed. The Committee presumed that the scheme would, when further developed, be referred officially for its views when full information regarding the whole scheme would then be made available.

NEXT  
MEETING:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be due on the 7th and 8th August. The Chairman stated that he would be in Melbourne about that date and that if the report regarding the railway were available it would be convenient to hold the meeting in Melbourne and discuss the project with the Railway Commissioner and his engineering officers. This matter was left in the hands of the Executive Member to arrange.

The meeting terminated at 5.45 p. m.

C O N F I R M E D .



CHAIRMAN.

6<sup>th</sup> August, 1947.