

ArchivesACT Research Guide

1912.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

FEDERAL CAPITAL CITY DESIGNS.

REPORT OF BOARD APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT AS TO
SUITABILITY OF CERTAIN DESIGNS FOR ADOPTION IN CONNEXION
WITH LAY-OUT OF FEDERAL CAPITAL;

TOGETHER WITH

PHOTOGRAPHS OF A DESIGN AND A PERSPECTIVE SKETCH SUBMITTED
BY THE BOARD.

Presented by Command; ordered by the Senate to be printed, 6th December, 1912.

[*Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; 950 copies; approximate cost of printing and publishing, £4.]

Report received. Arrange for copies of the Report to be tabled in each House, and for the original plan and the sketch which accompanied the Report to be exhibited in the Queen's Hall, Parliament House. The plan and sketch to be first photographed, with a view to reproduction.

I desire to convey to the Board my appreciation of their valuable services, and of the amount of thought and care bestowed upon their work.

It appears to me that a City laid out on the lines indicated in the Board's design—incorporating as it does the salient features of the premiated and purchased designs—should be both practical and beautiful.

KING O'MALLEY,
Minister for Home Affairs.

26th November, 1912.

Melbourne, 25th November, 1912.

The Honorable the Minister of State for Home Affairs.

In conformity with the instructions contained in your Minute of the 27th June last—Appendix marked "A" herewith—the Board assembled at Melbourne on the 3rd July, 1912, but it was not until the 14th August that the designs were available for the use of the Board.

The Board, having settled certain governing principles, continued deliberations at the site of the Seat of Government, where the three premiated designs, and the design purchased by the Minister, received consideration on the ground, having regard to the requirements of the City, the configuration of the site, together with local and general conditions.

The Board is unable to recommend the adoption of any one of the designs, and advises approval of the plan for the lay-out of the City prepared by the Board.—*Vide* Appendices marked "B" and "C."

This plan incorporates features from the premiated and the purchased designs, wherever, in the opinion of the Board, such a procedure is warranted.

The general idea governing the Board's plan for the lay-out of the City is expressed in the "Requirements" issued officially for guidance in the preparation of the competitive designs, which reads as follows:—

"The Federal Capital City will be the permanent Seat of Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, the place at which the Federal Parliament will meet, where all Commonwealth Legislation will be enacted, and where the Governor-General will have his official residence. The City will, therefore, be primarily the official and social centre of Australia."

Consequently, the dominating feature of the City is the Houses of Parliament. The site for those buildings must be suitably situate, commanding extensive views, and prominently visible on approach from the surrounding country. The lay-out of that portion of the City embracing Parliament House, the Capitol, and the official section follows broadly that expressed in the first premiated design.

The Board has taken full advantage of the effect of the great natural features of the City site, and wherever possible use has been made of the principle of introducing public buildings and other architectural features where they may be clearly viewed at convenient distances from approaching streets and avenues. This is indicated on the plan by broken red lines.

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The Board gave great consideration to the location of the railway.

Prospect of the City from approaching railways and roads has been kept in mind. Communication through the City from prominent outlying districts has been secured.

Wherever possible the cardinal idea of securing sunlight to the City blocks, by planning them at suitable angles to the meridian, has been observed.

Some considerations guiding the location of the more important structures and features are as follow :—

Vice-Regal Residence and the Prime Minister's Residence.—Within easy access of Parliament House, but affording privacy, and with commanding views of the Capitol, Parliament House, the official centre, and the ornamental waters.

Public Offices.—Within the official precincts of Parliament House, so as to facilitate administration, and architecturally to support the group of National Buildings.

Civic Centre and Business Centre.—Conveniently located with respect to the Central Railway Station and the official centre; also sheltered on its west by hills.

Amongst other matters which the Board dealt with in connexion with the design was the necessity for providing adequately for—

Courts of Justice ;
Places of Public Worship ;
University ;
Schools and School Playgrounds ;
Hospitals ;
Ornamental Lake System, and Control of
Flood Waters ;
Avenues and Boulevards ;
Residential Areas ;
Park Lands ;
Recreation Areas ;

Lake Drives ;
Grand Drives round the City ;
Centres for Distributing Traffic ;
Gradients ;
Diagonal Streets ;
Treatment of Streets ;
Facilities for Handling Freight ;
Markets ;
Tramway System ;
Disposal of Storm Waters ;
Bridges ;
Provision for City Expansion.

The Board considers that the design herewith submitted fulfils requirements; it provides for the present and the future, and should result in the creation of a City which will be practical as well as beautiful.

The Board records appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. W. A. Newman, the Secretary.

DAVID MILLER, Chairman.
PERCY T. OWEN.
CHARLES ROBT. SCRIVENER.
GEO. J. OAKESHOTT.
J. S. MURDOCH.
THOMAS HILL.

APPENDIX A.

MINUTE OF THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS.

The Board to be appointed to investigate and report as to the suitability of certain designs for adoption in connexion with the lay-out of the Federal Capital to consist of—

Colonel D. Miller, Secretary, Department of Home Affairs (Chairman).

Colonel P. T. Owen, Director-General of Works, Department of Home Affairs.

Mr. C. R. Scrivener, Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys.

Colonel Owen, to have the assistance of Messrs. Murdoch, Oakeshott, and Hill, on Board.

Should in future, it be advisable, in the opinion of the Board, that further consultative assistance be obtained, representations in the matter shall be submitted to the Minister.

KING O'MALLEY,
Minister for Home Affairs,
27th June, 1912.

DESIGN OF THE LAY OUT of the BLACK MOUNTAIN FEDERAL CAPITAL CITY OF AUSTRALIA AS PROJECTED BY THE DEPARTMENTAL BOARD

Scale 100 Feet to an Inch

25th Nov. 1912

Members of Board

David Miller Chairman
Percy T. Usher
Charles E. Stanger
George J. Gahan
J. S. Burdett
Thomas Hill

MOUNT AINSIE
HEIGHT 2742 FEET

NOTES

1. The Departmental Board has the honor to acknowledge the assistance of the Department of Public Works in the design of the City of Canberra.

2. The City of Canberra is to be situated on the Black Mountain, a height of 2742 feet above sea level.

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Charles E. Stanger



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APPENDIX C.

