

Architectural Heritage: RAIA REPORT FORMAT

This report is to be the outcome from the data entry.

This report follows the UIA format with some additional fields and full details that will be referred to from UIA.

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Status:	
Project ID:	Parliament House, Canberra
Image:	New Parliament House Canberra

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

NOTE:

This document presents details of heritage buildings developed for Internet searches. An indexing form on the internet allows the on-line submission of this information. This document is intended to let anyone who is willing to participate forward the RAIA information about buildings to be added to the system without using the Web.

Importance of the criteria column lets you to point at the particularly importance of one or several elements of description of the building. You can here indicate (decreasing order A,B,C,D,E, ie International, National, State, Regional, Local) whether an element of description appears to you as decisive in its selection for the index.

Name of the Criteria	Importance of the criteria	Your Building

Name of the Criteria	Importance of the criteria	Your Building
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TABLE n° 1 : DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING / SITE

MODULE 1 : IDENTITY OF THE BUILDING / SITE		
Current name		Parliament House
Previous or other name(s)		Parliament House
Present owner		Joint House Department, Canberra
Status of the owner		Australian Government
Materials and techniques		Reinforced concrete frame with non load bearing precast. Granite and marble external and internal claddings. Extensive use of Australian native timber and stone finishes internally.
Description		<p>The design accepts the circular design of the site as the generating form of the Parliament Complex. Within that circle, a central linear sequence of formal meeting rooms is framed by two massive curvilinear walls which enclose within their arcs the Offices and Chambers of the Senate and House of Representatives. The curved walls related to Kings Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, Adelaide Avenue and Hobart Avenue. As a result the complex has four major elements; the Senate, the House of Representatives, a central "forum" and a separate Executive Government area.</p> <p>The exterior form of the building follows the natural profile of the hill and is surrounded by landscaped gardens and bosques containing recreational facilities and parking. At the apex of the complex, the flag of Australia is supported by a mast structure arising from the building.</p> <p>The interior spaces of the building of ceremonial, public and "common" areas are located in a linear sequence along the central zone. This sequence is functional not only for the Members of Parliament but for visitors. The two chambers lie across from each other on the east - west axis, with service offices grouped around them.</p> <p>Natural materials are used extensively throughout the building. The quality of materials and craftsmanship throughout the building is intended to convey the importance and dignity of the worth of the individual in a democracy</p> <p>An integral part of the building design was an Arts/Craft program comprised of over sixty major commissions involving over 200 artists and craftspeople and the acquisition of over 2,000 works in a variety of media for rotational use throughout the building. (MGT 2000)</p>

Year of project design		1980-1988
Year of beginning of construction		1982
Year of end of construction		1988
Initial Design (if differs from description)		-
Changes to initial changes		There have been no changes to the overall building design or principle spaces. Additional service and storage spaces have been created within the basement areas of the building since completion. Some areas have undergone fitout changes including members dining, main committee rooms, sub floor spaces, main kitchen, reception hall lighting and Prime Minister's suite.
Documentation and References		Held by: Joint House Department, Canberra and MGT Architects, Canberra. Interpreting the Art and Design of Parliament House – Douglas Smith, RAIA, 1989. Studying Australian Architecture – Judy Vulker, RAIA, 1990.

MODULE 2 : BUILDING / SITE LOCALISATION		
Postal Address: street, n°		Parliament Drive
Postal Address: town/suburb		Parkes
Postal Address: Postal code		2600
Urban centre/city		Canberra
Local Government area		Canberra
Region (State)		Australian Capital Territory
Country		Australia
Regional Context (eg Coastal, urban, rural)		Urban, central Canberra
Urban context (ex: Port, new town, etc...)		At focal point of Parliamentary Triangle

MODULE 3 : AUTHORS		(Information for Module 3 provided by MGT Architects, Canberra)
Project Design:		
Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin	A	Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects (Canberra) United States of America. The firm's permanent Head Office was established in Canberra in 1980.
Information on the author / the team		Design Architect: Romaldo Giurgola Project Architect: Richard Thorpe Design Coordination: Harold S Guida Furniture and Interiors: Rollin La France Art/Craft Coordinator; Pamille Berg Site Architect: Tim Halden Brown
Engineering:		
Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin	C	Structural: Irwin Johnston and Partners, Melbourne Civil Engineers: Maunsell and Partners Pty Ltd, Canberra Consulting Engineers (Services) Associated Consulting Engineers for the Parliament

		House (ACEPH) Joseph J Loring and Associates New York Norman Disney and Young, Sydney W.E Bassett and Partners Pty Ltd, Sydney Ledingham Hensby and Oxley and Partners, Sydney Landscape Architect: Peter G Rolland and Associates, New York Interiors: Mitchell/Giurgola &Thorp Architects , Canberra Lighting: George Sexton Associates, Washington DC Cost Planner: Rawlinson Roberts and Associates, Canberra Quantity Surveyor: Donald Cant, Watts, Hawes and Lee Pty Ltd, Canberra Acoustic Consultants: Louis A Challis and Associates, Sydney
Information on the author / the team		
Construction:		
Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		Concrete Constructions - John Holland Joint Venture, Canberra
Information on the author / the team		
Contracting Authority:		
Name, first name, (dates), job, country of origin		Parliament House Construction Authority, Canberra
Information on the author / the team		

MODULE 4 : TYPOLOGY		
Type (single building/complex)		Complex
Initial use		Federal Parliament House
Present use		Federal Parliament House
Planned use)		Continue present use
Architectural Style	C	Post Modern

MODULE 5 : EVALUATION (Analysis of significance)		
Background		<p>An Australian Design Competition for the design of a new Federal Parliament House for Australia, attracted 329 entries from throughout the world. The entry of American firm Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects was selected in 1980. The firm subsequently established its Head Office in Canberra, Australia.</p> <p>Romaldo Giurgola, Internationally recognised architect and recipient of both the American and Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medals (in 1982 and 1988 respectively), headed the design team for the project.</p> <p>The building was designed by the Architects as a place which functions both as a working place for the Parliament and the Executive Government , and as a symbolic and ceremonial place for events of national importance; a symbol of national unity and commitment to the democratic process of Government. (<i>RSTCA 1990</i>)</p> <p>The brief required a 200 year life span for the building, which initiated a project wide effort from design through construction to achieve a timeless integration of design and function which would stand through the decades of use and change. (<i>RSTCA 1990</i>)</p> <p>There is also a historical context of the design from the aboriginal artwork at the entry, white entry symbolising settlement, early years in the foyer with the use of timber with the central section symbolising today and the Committee rooms tomorrow.</p> <p>The use of colour based on the British Red – Senate and Green House of Representatives was adopted but with an Australian overlay of traditional colours of eucalypt (green) and inland Australia (red). The colours also become more intense as one moves toward the centre of the building.</p>
Technical		
Comments	B	To design a building with a 200 year life span, the use of earth covered construction and the flag mast structure show a high level of technical achievement. Each of these aspects is beyond most briefs but has been successfully achieved in Parliament House.
Social		
Comments	C	Through its function as the Federal Parliament the building, assumes its own social significance to the nation. The events which occur both within and around the building often are influential in shaping

		<p>the nation's future.</p> <p>The building is directly associated by the community with the government of the nation and the relationship between the Parliament and the people.</p>
Aesthetic		
<p>Comments</p>		<p>Parliament House has been skilfully designed to fit within the general form of Capital Hill. The curvilinear walls which embrace the chambers and offices create a new line to the hill, and simultaneously break down the scale and massing of the building. This design form allows a massive complex of over 4,500 rooms to appear to nestle within the hill where it could easily have dominated. One of the aspects which set the design apart from other competition entries was the way it successfully dealt with this challenge.</p> <p>The building design internally and externally incorporates numerous design elements which evoke symbolically the relationship between the Parliament and the people, between man and nature and European and indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The modern design relates well to its site and evokes imagery in the north elevation from the provisional Parliament House which is located directly to the north on a lower section of the hill. This imagery when viewed from the north presents the two buildings almost as one; with the earlier building nested within the curved walls of the new Parliament House.</p> <p>The aesthetic value of the building has been acknowledged by the number of civic design awards it has received</p> <p>The building demonstrates a consistently high level of craftsmanship throughout, which is testament to the skill of the tradespeople and the designers who worked on the project. This quality is also reflected within the commissioned artworks and sculptures which adorn the building including the coat of arms at the front, the Arthur Boyd tapestry in the main ballroom.</p>
Contextual		
<p>Comments</p>		<p>The building is pre-eminently sited on Capital Hill at the focus of Walter Burley Griffin's 1912 plan for Canberra and the Parliamentary Triangle. The building restates the original profile of the hill and its curved walls reach out to encompass the radial avenues established by the Griffin Plan as the primary axes of the city.</p> <p>The building's siting on the land axis creates a</p>

		<p>strong visual relationship and a linkage between the historic War Memorial and the Provisional Parliament House. <i>AHC 1999</i></p> <p>The landscape of the whole area has been designed to reflect Canberra and Australian landscapes.</p>
Historical		
<p>Comments</p>		<p>The Opening of Parliament House was planned to commemorate the bicentenary of the Foundation of Australia and the 61st anniversary of the opening of the provisional Parliament House in Canberra.</p> <p>Parliament House is associated with numerous politicians, community leaders and representatives at international, national and local level. In its 12 years of operation there have been many events occur within its walls which have significantly changed the political and social face of the nation, including the overthrow of the Labour Prime minister Bob Hawke by his own party in 1993 and the passage of legislation to introduce a Goods and Services Tax 1999.</p> <p>The siting of Parliament House at the Apex of the Parliamentary Triangle, has association with Walter Burley Griffin the designer of the Canberra Plan, as this was a significant location within his planning of Central Canberra.</p> <p>The building was designed by the internationally recognised American architectural practice of Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp Architects. The Design Architect for the project was Ronaldo Giurgola, whose talents have been recognised by Gold Medal awards in Australia and America.</p>
Originality		
<p>Comments</p>		<p>Parliament House is a unique building nationally and possibly internationally. Its site has been skilfully woven into the design to express the basic tenets of the architectural brief.</p> <p>The building design could not be successfully translated to another site, such is its integrity.</p> <p>The use of earth sheltered construction on a building of such magnitude is rare.</p> <p>The building showcases a large range of Australian natural and manufactured materials. Such a collection is rare.</p>

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE		
		<p>Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) National Sir Zelman Cowan Award 1989 Canberra Medallion, RAIA, (ACT Chapter) 1989 Civic Design Award (Art/Craft/Program), RAIA, (ACT</p>

	<p>Chapter) 1991 Canberra Medallion (Water Feature in Parliament House Forecourt), RAIA, ACT Chapter, 1991 Highly Commended, Building and Civil Design, Engineering Excellence Award, (Flagmast Structure) 1989 Special Mention for Outstanding Structures, Federation Internationale de la Précontrainte, Hamburg, 1990 BHP Australian Steel Construction Award, (Flagmast Structure), 1989 Tucker Award of Design Excellence (Landscape) Building Stone Institute, New York, 1990 Honour Award, American Society of Landscape Architects, 1992</p>
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TABLE n° 2: STATE OF BUILDING / SITE

MODULE 1 : ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE		
Building Condition		Excellent
Evaluation of danger (decreasing order A,B,C,D,E)	E	
Nature of danger		
Comments		

MODULE 2 : PROTECTION		
Current Heritage Listing		Australian Government Heritage Register (Register of the National Estate)
Administrative level of protection (Statutory or Non-Statutory)		Statutory
Authority / Institution providing listing		Australian Heritage Commission
Registration Reference		Status: Indicative Place/Historic Database No 017836, File number: 8/01/000/0380
Planned restoration		---
Current Heritage Listing		Listed in Royal Australian Institute of Architects National Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture
Administrative level of protection (Statutory or Non-Statutory)		Non-Statutory
Authority / Institution providing listing		Royal Australian Institute of Architects (National)
Registration Reference		(TBA)
Planned restoration		---

**TABLE n° 3 : CHARACTERISATION OF THE BUILDING / SITE
(Significance of the building under the Stated Criteria)**

Categories of Criteria		
MODULE 1 : PERIOD OF DESIGN / CONSTRUCTION		
Outstanding national importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design.	B	<p>Parliament House simply by the nature of its use is a rare building within Australia. It falls within the limited international collection of National Parliament buildings, and could be amongst the most exceptional as an architectural masterpiece</p> <p>The building is associated with the bicentenary of the colonisation of Australia. The opening of the building on 9th May 1988 by Queen Elizabeth II was a landmark national event in the year of celebrations.</p>
MODULE 2 : FORMAL ARCHITECTURAL VALUE		
Outstanding national importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.	A	The building demonstrates a strong architectural concept clearly articulated in the buildings plan, form and massing. The consistency of design detail and construction quality throughout the building is testimony to the exceptional skill of design architect Ronaldo Giurgola and his ability to communicate his concepts to all levels of the project.
MODULE 3 : RELATION TO THE LOCATION		
Outstanding national importance in establishing a high degree of creative achievement.	A	<p>Parliament House is a landmark building throughout Canberra. Its siting on Capital Hill gives it an elevation and exposure which enables it to be seen from many areas of the city for some kilometres distant.</p> <p>The building, particularly its curvilinear walls and flag mast, is a strong symbolic and sculptural element in the landscape. (AHC 1999)</p>
MODULE 4 : MONUMENTAL OR SYMBOLICAL SIGNIFICANCE		
Having outstanding monumental and symbolic importance to the development of architecture and the history of architecture.	A	<p>Parliament House at the time of completion was the largest building constructed in Australia. The site was so large that to manage its construction, the site was divided into project zones. The successful interface of these zones physically and in programming was in itself a significant achievement.</p> <p>The building has significant landmark qualities in Canberra and nationally. It has become an icon of Canberra with the flag mast in particularly being interpreted in many promotional logos.</p> <p>The use of native timbers and natural materials and the integrated art/craft program are monumental in size and extent.</p> <p>Parliament House is the winner of a major international design competition.</p>

MODULE 5 : ATYPICITY		
Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of outstanding importance to our history.	B	<p>Parliament House is a building of significant creative achievement, nationally and internationally. It is a unique building by its function concept and site integration.</p> <p>The building is a unique symbol of nationhood and the process of government.</p> <p>The quality control systems developed for Parliament House were the forerunner of Quality Assurance procedures for the Australian Construction industry.</p>
MODULE 6 : CONSTRUCTION / STRUCTURE		
Outstanding national importance in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement of a particular period.	C	The design and construction of a building to last 200 years is a rare achievement. The earth covered structure and the flag mast show a high degree of technical innovation and achievement.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	
	<p>Parliament House is a landmark building which has become an icon of Canberra with the flagmast. It is a building of great creative achievement, nationally and internationally, designed by Mitchell/Giurgola & Thorp. Ronaldo Giurgola was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architect Gold Medal in 1988.</p> <p>As the home of the Parliament and the seat of Government, this building has a significance unique amongst buildings in Australia, which is quite independent of its architectural, aesthetic and townscape values. Its historic value is already being established as the site in 1992 of the overthrow of the Labour Party Prime Minister, by his own party.</p> <p>The fundamental significance of the building lies within its concept of making a national place. It functions both as a working place for the Parliament and as a symbol and ceremonial place for events of national importance: a symbol of national unity and commitment to the democratic process of government. The building with its integrated works of commissioned art, craft and specially designed furnishings, reflects the history, cultural diversity, development and aspirations of the nation. The building's design and siting on the land axis create a strong visual relationship and a linkage between the historic War Memorial and Provisional Parliament House. The building is pre-eminently sited on Capital Hill at the focus of Walter Burley Griffin's 1912 plan for Canberra and the Parliamentary Triangle. The building design re-states the original profile of the hill and its curved walls reach out to encompass the radial avenues established by the 1912 Griffin plan as the primary axes of the city. The building, particularly the curved walls and flagpole, is a strong symbolic and sculptural element in the landscape. It was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) National Sir Zelman Cowen Award and the RAIA (ACT Chapter) Canberra Medallion in 1989, and the Civic Design award in 1990.</p>

IMAGE and PLAN	
Image:	New Parliament House Canberra
Plan	New Parliament House Canberra Plan provided by MGT Architects