Dr Andréa Cullen—Canberra ACT, Australia

Contact: andrea.cullen@uon.edu.au

Conservation, renewal, rebuilding, retrofit and construction of Parliament buildings: a case study analysis of the impact of these architectural interventions on parliamentary democracy

Over the last decade or so, many parliament buildings across the globe have undergone, are undergoing, or their respective Parliament or Legislature is debating the case for conservation, renewal, rebuilding, retrofit or construction of their respective buildings. In some instances, these changes have marked significant anniversaries for the original buildings.

This includes: the refurbishment of the Finnish Parliament, with the project completed to observe Finland's independence centennial in its new and improved chamber in December 2017; the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster—with MPs voting on 1 February 2018 to support a full program of refurbishment work that requires the Commons and Lords to relocate to venues in Whitehall and the City of Westminster respectively from the middle of the next decade; Australia's Federal parliament in May 2018 marked 30 years since the construction of its new parliament house; the Canadian Parliament is currently in the process of a 20 year project to rebuild its parliament buildings; the opening of the new Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales buildings in 2004 and 2006 respectively; and the Austrian Parliament commencing renovation of its parliament building in 2017.

Using case studies this paper will present an analysis of the impetus, design and symbolism of the architectural interventions of conservation, renewal, rebuilding, retrofit and construction of parliament buildings on parliamentary democracy. In doing this, it will seek to answer two questions: (i) can you design for democracy—that is, how do you design a parliamentary building to support and facilitate democracy?; and (ii) does it matter if you don't get it right?

Introduction

Over the last decade or so, many parliament buildings across the globe have undergone, are undergoing, or their respective Parliament or Legislature is debating the case for conservation, renewal, rebuilding, retrofit or construction of their respective buildings. In some instances, these changes have marked significant anniversaries for the original buildings.

Many of the current housing options for legislatures, in some form, have had their origin/genesis in the nineteenth century, and in some cases, even earlier. While the twentieth century saw the construction of more brand-new parliaments than any other preceding period, and a few new legislature buildings have, to date, been constructed in the twenty first century, the salient point is that parliaments are rarely fixed institutions and whether built or commissioned in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries they must be fit for purpose to operate in the twenty-first century.

For example, a recent study (2016) by a Norwegian architectural firm documenting and comparing the plenary halls of all 193 United Nations member states, found that the identified five typologies or footprints for seating in existence across these representative assemblies had hardly changed since the nineteenth century.[1] Further, several legislature buildings are of an age, where significant conservation work is now needed to preserve the building as an asset and to ensure that it is fit for purpose in the twenty-first century. This work includes: modernisation of technical infrastructure; and modifications to improve safety, environmental sustainability and accessibility.

Notwithstanding this heightened level of interest and activity as it concerns the buildings that house legislatures across the world, as Flinders and others have noted[2], there is 'very little research that applies 'good design' or 'intelligent design' frameworks to parliaments and legislatures' and further, there is a 'lack of comparative political analysis on the design or architecture of parliaments around the world, let alone on the political dynamics underlying critical design and architectural decisions'.

This purpose of this paper is to propose a design framework that can be applied to parliaments and legislatures for comparative research as it concerns buildings that house legislatures across the world. In doing this it will seek to explore and answer the following two questions:

- Firstly—can you design for democracy—that is, how do you design a parliamentary building to support and facilitate democracy?; and
- Secondly—does it matter if you don't get it right?

Designing for democracy

The notion that designing for democracy is an achievable goal is well illustrated in the early representative assemblies—specifically, the Parliaments of the Viking age. These gatherings well understood the democratic design components underpinning an effective assembly and are

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[1] The 5 typologies or footprints for seating: (i) semicircle; (ii) opposing benches; (iii) horseshoe; (iv) circle; and (v) classroom [de Lara, Max & van der Vegt David. (2016) *Parliament*, XML, Amsterdam.

[2] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), pp. 151; 166.

considered to have marked the dawning of 'parliamentary democracy'—exhibiting 'strong proto-democratic' traits.[3]

The archaeological study of these assembly practices demonstrates the 'diverse relationships of designated assembly sites to pre-existing landscapes, resource patterns, and social structures'. Importantly, connections between the 'architecture' and location of these sites are emphasised with regard to 'their role in the creation, maintenance, and signalling of collective identities'.[4]

The earliest form of a representative assembly, over a thousand years ago, is the old Icelandic Althing (meaning the all thing or general assembly)—first established in the year 930AD at Thingvellir (the 'assembly fields' or 'Parliament Plains'). The Icelandic Althing, as an institution, served as a general assembly for the whole country, answering the need for a central decision-making body.[5] Notwithstanding, its open-air architecture, the democratic design components of these general assemblies included:

- The Althing would be assembled around mid-June every year and the gathering or session lasted for about two weeks. The month of June was chosen as it was a period of uninterrupted daylight and had the mildest weather. The mild weather pre and post the gathering also provided citizens safe conditions for their journey to and from the gatherings.
- Any free and law abiding citizen could attend. Those attending resided in temporary camps on the banks of the Axe River (running through the site of the Althing). These camps provided safety and refuge and ensured that those attending were free to observe the proceedings.
- The location of the assemblies, the Parliamentary Plain of Thingvellir (today, an Icelandic national park, as well as a UNESCO World Heritage site), together with its natural beauty made it a suitable place for large outdoor gatherings. Thingvellir is also home to the largest lake in Iceland, Lake Tingvallavatn, which was a sustainable source of food for those in attendance.
- Decisions were made on legislation and disputes settled at each assembly. At the centre of the open-air assembly was the Lögberg, or Law Rock—a rocky outcrop which the Law speaker, the presiding official of the assembly, would be seated. From this vantage point, the Law speaker recited the existing laws to the assembled parliament. Later, the site of the Law speaker was moved to the foot of the Almannagjá cliffs within Thingvellir— archaeologists advance that this relocation may have been because the cliffs acted as a natural amplifier, broadcasting the voices of the speakers across the assembled crowds.
- Whilst important matters of governance were key items on the agenda, the gatherings were also an important social event—heralding a festival like atmosphere. The annual assembly was well attended by hundreds of people from all over Iceland, including farmers, traders,

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[3] Bycock, J. (2002) 'The Icelandic Althing: Dawn of Parliamentary Democracy', in Fladmark, J. M. (ed.) *Heritage and identity: shaping the nations of the North: papers presented at the 2001 Heritage Convention*. Shaftesbury, Dorset: Donhead (The Robert Gordon University Heritage Library), p. 1.

[4] Semple, S. and Sanmark, A. (2013) 'Assembly in North West Europe: Collective Concerns for Early Societies?', *European Journal of Archaeology*, 16(3), pp. 518–542.

[5] Bycock, J. (2002) 'The Icelandic Althing: Dawn of Parliamentary Democracy', in Fladmark, J. M. (ed.) *Heritage and identity: shaping the nations of the North: papers presented at the 2001 Heritage Convention*. Shaftesbury, Dorset: Donhead (The Robert Gordon University Heritage Library), pp. 1–18; Parliament of Iceland. (2016) *Althingi*, accessed 14 April 2016 from: www.althingi.is.

craftsmen, pedlars, brewers of ale and young Icelanders seeking spouses. During the two weeks that the assembly was in session, new friendships and political alliances were forged, news and information was passed on from one person to another, disputes were settled, and business was transacted.[6]

Transitioning from an outdoor to an indoor architectural setting—the UK House of Commons debates in 1834 and 1943—concerning the reconstruction of the Westminster building after fire and the rebuilding of the Commons Chamber after it was bombed, respectively—also demonstrate that designing for democracy is achievable. Further, these debates introduce the politicking dimension that can become an inherent part of the decision making process as it concerns building architecture and design options.

The notion that the architecture of parliamentary buildings, including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal and informal spaces—can impact parliamentary democracy is well captured in these debates.

The 1834 debate concerning the reconstruction of the Westminster parliament building after the two Houses were burned down, considered a range of democratic design matters, including:

- A desire to stay in the Westminster location, as its proximity to the Thames, offered a getaway option for MPs from 'inflamed mobs' via the Thames watermen.
- Proposals to rebuild the rectangular shaped chamber as a circular or semi-circular chamber modelled on Irish, French and American assemblies were considered but all were rejected on the grounds of poor acoustics of such chambers—though, it was considered that these were excuses to conceal a decision based on ideological grounds, if not outright prejudice.
- It was widely felt that the reconstruction of the Westminster parliament was an opportunity for change and as such it ought to be conducted in accordance with 'Reform principles'. Not only should the building itself encapsulate the incipient democratisation of the gathering it housed (not least through the articulation of access and openness in the form of press galleries), but also in respect of the accountability of the planning procedure.
- A clear decision was made to avoid handing the 'contract to an insider' with the holding of a public competition.
- That the process be under parliamentary, rather than executive supervision.
- Notwithstanding, the 'The New houses of parliament were not designed to house a new constitution. For neither Barry's buildings, nor the interior decoration approved by the Fine Arts Commission, showed that Britain's *ancien regime* had come to an end.'[7]

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Jones, C. and Kelsey. S (eds.) (2002) *Housing Parliament—Dublin, Edinburgh and Westminster*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, p. 15.

During the 1943 debate about the rebuilding of the House of Commons chamber after it was destroyed by enemy bombs in 1941, some MPs[8] suggested that this was an opportunity to make changes to the chamber—such as increasing its size or footprint and seating capacity. Some even went further to suggest that this was an opportunity to change the style of politics, for example, by introducing a new seating arrangement, such as a circle or semi-circle, in the hope that it would support a more consensual style of politics. Churchill, however, was of the view that the chamber should be rebuilt to its original footprint or specifications:

> …if the House is big enough to contain all Members, nine-tenths of the debates will be conducted in a depressing atmosphere of an almost empty or half-empty chamber…We wish to see our Parliament as a strong, easy, flexible instrument of free debate. For this purpose a small chamber and a sense of intimacy are indispensable…The conversational style requires a fairly small space, and there should be on great occasions a sense of crowd and urgency…We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.[9]

To which Somerset De Chair (MP for South West Norfolk) responded:

> That is very true, but do they shape us so very well?...We may not, therefore, conclude that the type of building we had before will necessarily produce the most sparkling Legislatures in the future…[10]

As to whether rebuilding the chamber to its original footprint would allow for the future, Nancy Astor[11] was of the view that Churchill was looking 'backwards instead of forwards' and concluded: 'I am certain that the Prime Minister is not in touch with the world that is coming, if he thinks that we ought to build a House of Commons exactly like the one we had'.[12] Astor added further, noting concerns with the present seating arrangement of the government directly facing the opposition, telling the House that:

> I have often felt that it might be better if Ministers and ex-Ministers did not have to sit and look at each other, almost like dogs on a leash, and that controversy would not be so violent. I do not think there is any merit in violent controversies, and I do not believe that the fights in the House of Commons helped democracy.[13]

Churchill was strongly of the view that maintaining continuity, by rebuilding the Chamber to its original footprint was fundamental to effective debate, arguing that it 'was a crucial force in influencing the character of the debates that had occurred within'[14]. Added to this was the importance of signaling during wartime, that whilst the Germans had destroyed the Common's chamber, that the ideals of parliamentary democracy were first and foremost in the minds of its elected representatives. A desire to rebuild the Chamber to its original specifications was

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[8] Member of Parliament

[9] Winston Churchill, *Hansard*, Commons, 28 October 1943, col. 403; also quoted in: Rogers, R. & Walters, R. (2015) *How Parliament Works* (7th edn.), Routledge, Oxon, p. 160.

[10] Somerset De Chair, *Hansard*, Commons, 28 October 1943, col. 463.

[11] The first woman to take a seat in the Commons.

[12] Nancy Astor, *Hansard*, Commons, 28 October 1943, col. 417.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Macintyre, C. (2008) 'Parliamentary Architecture and Political Culture', August, *Papers on Parliament*. This paper was presented as a lecture in the Senate Occasional Lecture Series at Parliament House, Canberra on 9 May 2008, p. 4.

considered important 'to inspire the most essentialist idealisation of the parliamentary constitution, even to sustain them all the while that real power has ebbed away'[15].

Churchill's motion in 1943 for the rebuilding of the Commons 'was carried by 127 'Ayes' to 3 'Noes'.[16] Some suggest that Churchill was acting as a veto player regarding the design options for rebuilding the Chamber. Equally important is that Churchill's role can be viewed from different perspectives—thus rendering him either an institutional or partisan veto player.[17]

As it concerns designing for democracy, the Parliaments of the Viking age together with the 1834 and 1943 UK House of Commons debates highlight that designing a building for democracy is two-fold—it encompasses; firstly—the strategic intent (and necessity) and associated decision making for the desired change; and secondly—the specific architectural features, including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal (and informal) spaces. Each of these parameters is equally important in its contribution (either positively or negatively) to parliamentary democracy.

Architectural interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings[18]

Prior to discussing how a building and its precinct can give form to the functions of a parliament or legislature, it is useful to define what is meant by architectural interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings. Whilst the literature and associated discussion uses a range of terms, some interchangeably, no known typology or classification for these interventions in a parliamentary context is known.

Architectural interventions are defined as physical changes to existing or original materials in the case of an existing building or structure and construction as it concerns a new building. Architectural interventions are the tools that can be used to deliver a physical form to parliamentary functions. Architectural interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings include: conservation; renewal; rebuild; retrofit; and construction/new build. A proposed typology of these interventions applied to parliamentary buildings and precincts is detailed at **Table 1**.

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[15] Jones, C. and Kelsey. S (eds.) (2002) *Housing Parliament—Dublin, Edinburgh and Westminster*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, p. 20.

[16] Riding, C. and Riding, J. (2000) *The Houses of Parliament. History Art Architecture*, Merrell, London, p. 150.

[17] Tsebelis, G. (2011) *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.

[18] Meadowcroft, L. (2015) Minimum intervention: or the art of doing less, accessed 5 July 2019 from: http://www.leemeadowcroft.com/2015/02/minimum-intervention-or-art-of-doing.html; Rappoport, P. (2015) Conservation means 'minimum intervention', *Heritage 21*, 13 March, accessed 5 July 2019 from: https://www.heritage21.com.au/conservation-means-minimum-intervention/;

Table 1—A typology of architectural interventions applied to parliamentary buildings and precincts

Intervention	Definition/scope

Conservation	-Conservation interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings are focused, through careful planning, on prolonging the material, historical, and design integrity of any built heritage within the building and its precinct.
	-For historic buildings, such as parliaments, whilst such interventions are focused on maintaining the asset in a good state of repair, they are often desirable to ensure a building is kept fit for purpose and in regular use. This can include adaptive re-use to improve building performance, such as energy efficiency, to respond to changes in building legislation, or to provide additional capacity to accommodate changes to work of a legislature over time—such as transition to fulltime members, increase in number of members, expansion in the business of the legislature such as increased prominence of the role of committees.
	-The Burra Charter[19] identifies three levels of conservation repair for heritage structures.[20] These are:
	   ■ ***Preservation***: maintaining a place in its existing state and preventing further deterioration.
	   ■ ***Restoration***: returning a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing elements without the introduction of new material.
	   ■ ***Reconstruction***: returning a place to a known earlier state but is distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material.

Renewal[21]	-Renewal interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings can encompass structural and/or functional dimensions of improvement as it concerns the building structure and functionality for users within the building. -Four levels of renewal are identified for buildings: ***Renovation*** (or refurbishment): means changing worn parts, that is, traditional repair and maintenance. The parts have to be replaced due to two sets of dysfunctions: (i) functionality—the parts are no longer functional or have deteriorated in performance; and (ii) structural—internal or external structural components have decayed due to the use. ***Modernisation***: means that a part, worn or not, is replaced by another part using new technologies. The replaced part should fulfil all previous functions and its introduction should seamlessly interconnect with other parts—for example, when a new technology is more reliable, desirable, or robust than the old one, such as changing an analogical screen of a desktop computer with a LED screen is a structural modernization. Modernization can also target one or several functions. ***Extension***: means where new functions are added to the existing ones. Rarely, are new structures installed within an existing building without a new or complementary function being delivered. Therefore, the main origin of an extension is functional. However, again the impacted functions and parts have to be analysed in terms of possible necessary modifications. This could include: a radical adoption of ICT to link the physical footprint to the digital footprint. ***Conversion***: means where the main functions of a system are modified in order to answer to a new set of user's expectations. Converting means responding to new expectations by adding new functions or improving existing ones which in turn require structural changes by eliminating, adding or improving some parts. This could include: creation of a new chamber seating arrangement; introduction of gender sensitive toilets; increasing numbers of female toilets and showers; and implementation of enhanced security measures.
Rebuild	-Rebuild interventions include: (i) knock down and rebuilding of the entire parliament building or components of the building; and (ii) rebuilding the parliament in a new location—with the former parliament building being repurposed.
Retrofit	-Accommodating new parliaments in pre-existing buildings—at the start or commencement of a parliamentary democracy or accommodating existing parliaments temporarily in pre-existing buildings whilst rebuilding, conservation and/or renewal work is being undertaken. -Retrofit interventions always require the adaptive re-use of buildings and this work entails a range of constraints and other considerations.
New build/ new construction	Purpose built parliament buildings—to house new governments in new nation states—marking the start or commencement of a parliamentary democracy and the symbolic forging of identity as a nation state. The twentieth century saw the construction of more brand-new parliaments than any other preceding period, with a couple of new legislature buildings constructed to date in the twenty first century.

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[19] The Burra Charter defines the basic principles and procedures to be followed in the conservation of Australian heritage places. The Charter is recognised as having pioneered the understanding of cultural heritage as going beyond the mere preservation of the built environment.

[20] Australian International Council on Monuments and States (ICOMOS). (2013) *The Burra Charter.*

[21] Zolghadri, M.; Couffin, F.; Leclaire, P.; Collart-Dutilleu, S. (2014) 'Complex systems renewal: positioning, concepts and architectural issues', *Proceedings of the 19th World Congress The International Federation of Automatic Control*, Cape Town, South Africa, 24–29 August, pp. 8731–8763.

It is clear that architectural interventions are indicative of gradations of change ranging from significant, such as a new building or a conscious decision to change the style of politics, to minor, such as signage improvements.

Flinders and others[22] in the context of the architectural project underway at the Palace of Westminster identified gradations of parliamentary restoration and renewal—ranging from major (macro-reform) through modest (meso-reform) to micro (minor-reform)—from which to 'understand developments, positioning and game-playing in relation to' the Project.[23] This framework is a useful guide from which to consider how gradations of change to functionality are indicative of the level of parliamentary reform being sought. A modified framework for this purpose is proposed in **Table 2**.

Table 2—Gradations of change to functionality as applied to parliamentary buildings and precincts

Scale of reform	Definition/scope	Examples—elements of the design and physical fabric of parliament building as applied to changes in functionality
Macro-parliamentary [Major] Macro-political reforms seek to dramatically 'renew and restore' the nature of parliamentary democracy	Primary or principal elements of the physical fabric and design of parliament, which provide the structure and function (foundation) of a system indicative of a pattern or model of democracy. Conscious decision to change or transform the strength of the parliament in relation to the Executive—shift in the power of the influence of the dominant political tradition in the design and physical fabric—to significantly reform the power of parliamentary democracy.	-Creation of a new parliamentary building. -Creation of new chamber typology and/or size of chamber. -Change in chamber seating—shift away from adversarial (or consensual) seating layout. -Spatial significance allocated to the work of committees—either via increasing committee footprint in the parliamentary building or where the work of committees takes place in other buildings in the parliamentary precinct—relocating committees within the building. -Redesign of spaces to fully incorporate public stakeholders in parliamentary activities. -Radical adoption of ICT to link the physical footprint to the digital footprint. -Changes to the physical proximity of the Executive to the legislature -Shift in the allocation of permanent meeting rooms for cabinet and other parties within the building—introduction in generic meeting rooms that used on a rotation basis -Creation of additional physical space for the work of parliament either by the construction of an additional building in the parliamentary precinct or an extension to the main parliamentary building.
Meso-parliamentary [Modest]	Secondary elements of the physical design of parliament that are shaped by or stem from the primary meta-constitutional dynamic.	-Changes to committee rooms—either additional rooms and/or modifications with regard to layout and seating arrangements etc. -Introduction of electronic voting in Parliament. -Creation of new public spaces. -Moves towards a child-friendly environment. -Significant changes to environmental sustainability -Significant physical changes to enhance security within the building and its precinct – for example, erection of fencing or installation of purpose designed barriers in public forecourts, adjustments to public access in the building and precinct -Re-purposing of unused spaces or other space *per se*. -Increased public access to the building—via options as a venue for holding meetings or other public events, access to parliamentary library; upgrades to parliamentary precinct, to provide space and facility for peaceful protest and gatherings.
Micro-parliamentary [Minor]	Third-order elements that amend or supplement existing physical arrangements of parliament, without impacting on the underpinning logic of the political system.	-New visitor centre -Increased refreshment and amenity areas -Improving gender sensitivity and equality within the building—for example—more female or gender-sensitive toilets and shower facilities -Improved accessibility such as installation of additional lifts, ramps etc. -Increased signage. -Improved environmental sustainability—installation of sensor lighting, upgrade of bathroom facilities -Repainting and refurbishment of existing infrastructure -Improvements to security infrastructure –for example, introduction of scanning machines. -Improved public transport access to the building.

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[22] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), p. 153.
[23] Ibid., pp. 153-154.

Defining parliamentary democracy—structure follows function

A system can be defined thanks to its structure, its functions and the mapping between functions and the structure.[24]

A parliament building and precinct from its inception and throughout its lifespan should be so designed and maintained to support and facilitate the fulfillment of parliament's functions. Functionality for example, arises from structuring space in particular ways, making space available, providing amenity, and creating mediums or conduits for engagement—physical or technological.

It is acknowledged that there are a range of variables that impact on parliamentary democracy. Institutional design, such as physical space, is one of these variables, in that it has the potential to either impede or assist parliamentary democracy. There are other contributing factors such as party discipline; debate rules and practices; relationship between procedural arrangements of the business of the House and scope for use to generate political conflict; and the nature of government formation, such as majority, minority or coalition government.

The physical fabric and design aspects of the building and precinct together with the associated functionality generated should always be geared towards strengthening parliament. The Parliament as an entity should always dominate within the building and its precinct.

For the purposes of this paper—parliamentary democracy is considered through the potential impact that various architectural design options may have on how a parliament stands in relation to the Executive and how it stands in relation to the people.[25] Parliament's four primary functions—of linking, representation, control/oversight and policy making—encompass these two relationships.

As mentioned previously, designing a building for democracy is two-fold, in that giving form to parliament's functions encompasses two stages—firstly, via the strategic intent (and necessity) and associated decision making for the desired change; and secondly, the specific architecture including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal (and informal) spaces. Each of these stages is equally important in its contribution (either positively or negatively) to parliamentary democracy. A summary of the stages encompassed in designing a building for democracy is set out at **Table 3**.

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[24] Ulrich, K. T. (1995). 'The Role of Product Architecture in the Manufacturing Firm', *Research Policy*, Vol. 24, Issue 3, pp. 419–440.

[25] Norton, P. (2011) Effective capacity building: The Capacity to do what*?, International Conference: Effective capacity building programmes for parliamentarians*, Bern (Switzerland), 19–20 October, p. 2.

Table 3—Stages for designing a building for democracy

1. Strategic intent and associated decision making for a desired change -What do we want and how do we get it? As opposed to what do we have and how do we adapt?	(a) Strategic requirement/objective for the desired change
	(b) Politics of the decision making and design process
	(c) Inclusiveness of the consultation process and level of public engagement

2. Specific architecture including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal (and informal) spaces—giving form to functions		
(a) Location or siting of building		
(b) Symbolism (symbols) of parliament—building and decoration		
(c) Spatial characteristics and features—includes formal and informal spaces		
	Formal spaces	+The Chamber—shape and size
		+Prominence of committees in the parliamentary building
		+Prominence of the Executive in the building .
		+Prominence of meeting spaces for opposition, minor parties and other stakeholders in the building
		+Prominence of (and appropriate access to) facilities in the building and its precinct that support the work and representative nature of the Parliament
	Informal spaces	+Informal spaces, communal and casual interactions
(d) Contemporary tools		
		+Improving sustainability and environmental credentials
		+Modernising technical facilities .
		+Physical and technological changes to enhance security within the building and its precinct
		+Using technology to assist with key legislative functions, for example—introduction of electronic voting.

Stages encompassed in designing a building for democracy

Further detail regarding each of the stages and their related components are discussed following.

1. Strategic intent and associated decision making for a desired change

The strategic intent and associated decision making for a desired change to the status of a building in which a parliament is housed—whether that be conservation, renewal, rebuilding, retrofit or the construction of a new building—encompasses three core components. These are the: (a) strategic requirement/objective for the desired change; (b) politics of the decision making and design process; and (c) inclusiveness of the consultation process and level of public engagement. Each of these components is outlined briefly.

(a) The strategic requirement/objective for the desired change. This component is concerned with the impetus for the change and the scale of the desired change being undertaken. The desired scale of change informs the additional, modification or expansion of functions that is being sought.

This in turn informs the architectural, or combination of architectural interventions, that will be used to deliver the desired change. In concert with the nominated architectural interventions (desired structural changes) are the gradations of change being sought (desired functionality changes).

Applying the modified framework proposed in **Table 2**—macro-reform would involve a conscious decision to change or transform the strength of the parliament in relation to the Executive to significantly reform the power of parliamentary democracy. This could include: a shift in the power of the dominant political tradition in the design and physical fabric of the building by changing the style of politics in the chamber from an adversarial to a consensual style.

Meso through to minor-reform would include: refurbishment to mark for example an independence centennial; conservation in terms of asset management; modernising technical facilities and structures to improve safety, energy-efficiency, sustainability and accessibility; improving the functionality of the building by repurposing of unused areas; improving gender sensitivity and equality within the building; enhancing security; and aiming to make the Parliament more accessible and transparent to the public.

(b) Politics of the decision making and design process. A key focus of this component is the extent to which the process is managed by parliament and not the Executive. Notwithstanding designation of the parliament as the primary authority for the decision making and design, there is still scope for the Executive to dominate the process. Flinders and others[26] highlight the extent to which the Executive can still 'utilise their formal and informal resources within the existing institutional framework' to veto decision making and design options that it defines as threatening to its position. This can occur, for example, by ensuring that the government has a majority on the parliamentary committee that is established to serve as an advisory authority on behalf of the Parliament. In addition to a majority, it may also appoint members who support its desired position.

An architect, Hal Guida, involved with security upgrades to Australia's new parliament house in 2005 acknowledged the shortcomings of a system where elected officials are in charge and the consequent impact this may have on design outcomes. As a solution, Guida suggested that the independent authority (with its own team of professionals), which was established during

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[26] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), p. 154.

Parliament House's construction, be re-created to maintain and oversee the building.[27] This would mirror the practice in Washington DC, where the Architect of the Capitol is an independent agency established in 1876 that maintains and oversees the US Congress and Supreme Court facilities.[28]

(c) Inclusiveness of the consultation process and level of public engagement. This component extends to the comprehensiveness of the design brief as it concerns best practice for design of parliamentary buildings, whether a competition process was used and the extent to which opportunities are provided for public involvement in the process.

It goes without saying that opening up architectural design processes to the public can risk losing some control over the process, providing opportunities for those advocating significant change to seize the agenda or risk unexpected options (not favoured by the political elites) gaining traction and becoming 'the focus of populist pressures'.[29] However, removal of the general public from the process of architectural production, in particular, where it concerns institutions of democracy/accountability, aside from diminishing trust between the governed and those that govern, leads to a sense of alienation of the users, whose participation is critical in a parliamentary democracy.[30]

Public engagement opportunities in architectural design processes can be organised on a continuum ranging from a position that is expert-led with narrow and controlled consultative opportunities through to a position that is inclusive and participatory that positively embraces and promotes public involvement.

The salient point when designing a building for democracy is the extent to which architectural design processes invite, embrace and promote public involvement. This can be indicative of the scale of reform that is being encouraged and welcomed. In practical terms, it signals where the balance of power in the process resides. Significant reform in this regard, as it concerns an existing building, has the potential to renew, reform and refresh 'the nature of parliamentary democracy'.[31] In the case of the construction of a new building, it has the potential to contribute to establishing the foundations for parliamentary democracy in a new nation state—now and into the future.

2. Specific architecture including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal (and informal) spaces—giving form to functions

(a) Location or siting of building

When parliamentary buildings are located or sited 'on ground of special cultural significance' such as a 'place of historic or symbolic importance' they can act to 'preserve', condition and perpetuate the content of a nation's political culture and its subsequent evolution.[32] Goodsell refers to this as a

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[27] Hal Guida as cited in: Belby, M. (2018) Parliament House, Canberra: whose vision will win*?*, *AFR Magazine*, 3 April.

[28] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), pp. 287–302.

[29] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), p. 161; Blundell-Jones. P. and Meagher, M. (2014) *Architecture and movement*, Routledge, London.

[30] Blundell-Jones. P. and Meagher, M. (2014) *Architecture and movement*, Routledge, London.

[31] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), p. 154.

[32] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), p. 289.

preservation function and 'is illustrated by how parliament buildings occupy sacred sites, symbolize the state and assure the continuity of legislative traditions'.[33]

Further, aside from location signaling a nation's historic and cultural connections, it is also important in connecting parliament with the people. It can do this, where it is a prominent landmark, or dominant feature, in the urban landscape. In this way it is accessible to the people and connected with the everyday lives of the people to which it represents and on whose behalf, it legislates.

There are many cities where the parliament building is a dominant feature in the urban landscape. Conversely, there are examples where the parliament building is 'hidden away' or some distance from the city precinct.

(b) Symbolism (symbols) of parliament—building and decoration

Interpretation of the motifs and symbols of the building decorations and ornaments is one way of studying parliamentary buildings in depth. Symbolism can be two-fold—it can articulate or illustrate the journey in forging identity as a nation state and the stabilisation of a 'newly created order' or constitutional situation and it can communicate parliamentary symbolism about the role and function of the building.[34]

(c) Spatial characteristics and features

Spatial characteristics include formal and informal spaces. Some examples include:

Formal spaces

-The Chamber—shape and size

The debating chamber—in terms of physical layout, size, seating format and design—is the fundamental component of any parliament.

Chamber shape—there are some views that the footprint or shape of the chamber in terms of seating arrangements can influence the tone and atmosphere of parliamentary speaking or character of debates.

A rectangular shaped chamber (e.g. UK House of Commons) with seating arrangements where the Government faces the Opposition, and its horseshoe shaped derivation, is thought to encourage adversarial behaviour and confrontational debate. Whereas, a semi-circular shaped chamber with seating arrangements orientated towards the Speaker/Presiding Officer (e.g. Welsh Assembly, Scottish and European Parliaments) is considered to generate a more consensual style of debate. This equally applies to the set up in committee rooms. The semi-circle is reported as the most common seating pattern[35] and is found in about two thirds of the world's national legislatures.[36]

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[33] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), p. 287.

[34] Ibid., p. 289.

[35] A recent study (2016) by a Norwegian architectural firm documenting and comparing the plenary halls of all 193 United Nations member states—classified 5 typologies or footprints for seating: (i) semicircle; (ii) opposing benches; (iii) horseshoe; (iv) circle; and (v) classroom [de Lara, Max & van der Vegt David. (2016) *Parliament*, XML, Amsterdam.

[36] Coghill, K. and Babbage, D. (1991) 'Seating in Legislatures', *Legislative Studies*, Vol. 5 No. 2, p. 19.

Interestingly, contrary to views about the influence of seating footprints, the literature suggests that those parliaments where confrontational events[37] have occurred, and which have led to physical altercations and violence, are more commonplace in semi-circular shaped chambers than in Westminster style oppositional chambers.[38] This fact may in part be explained on the basis that:

> …managed and ritualised conflict is part of the design of the Westminster system. By institutionalising and accommodating conflict in the seating and the oppositional form, the chance of 'unmanaged' and more physical conflict is diminished. Part of it, of course, also reflects the very different political practices that operate in different parliaments and the diverse political parties and representatives that varied electoral systems generate.[39]

Size of chamber—there are some views that the size of the chamber—big or small—can influence the mood and dynamics of debate. This is on the basis that how people behave depends on what is around them. In large and more spacious chambers—i.e., where Members are spread out from each other (e.g., the European and Scottish Parliaments)—this can lower the temperature of debates, make them less interactive, less interesting and limit spontaneity in exchanges. Alternatively, smaller and cramped chambers, whilst increasing tension can confer a sense of 'crowd and urgency', lend greater importance to matters under discussion, and lead to more intimate and lively debates.[40] For example, when the UK House of Commons was damaged during WWII, the House of Lords moved temporarily to the Queen's Robing Room and the Commons sat in the Lords Chamber.[41] According to some, there were noticeable changes in behaviour of Members, attributed to the different seating patterns and a more spacious chamber.[42] Furthermore, the debate for the rebuilding of the Commons chamber took place in the Lords and one Member observed:

> …a distinct change in the nature of this House of Commons since we have come into this actual place. I have noticed more difficulty in controlling the Government, as it were, a lack of intimacy, a falling off in the quality of Members' speeches, owing to the great size of this Chamber.[43]

The previously referred to study (2016) by a Norwegian Architectural firm documenting and comparing the plenary halls of all 193 United Nations member states that classified 5 typologies or footprints for seating also found that a comparison of the size of assembly halls revealed that the scale of the halls seems to be inversely proportional to the country's rank on the Democracy Index, i.e., parliaments in the least democratic countries convene in the largest hall.[44]

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[37] For example—South Korean National Assembly (numerous events); Taiwan Legislative Yuan (numerous events); Ukrainian Parliament; and the Japanese Parliament.

[38] Macintyre, C. (1997) 'Designing Debate: the Implications of Parliamentary Architecture', *Legislative Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 46–47.

[39] Macintyre, C. (2008) 'Parliamentary Architecture and Political Culture', August, *Papers on Parliament*. This paper was presented as a lecture in the Senate Occasional Lecture Series at Parliament House, Canberra on 9 May 2008, p. 7.

[40] Winston Churchill, *Hansard*, Commons, 28 October 1943; Shaw, S. (accessed 2015) 'Gender and Linguistic Participation in the Devolved Parliaments of the UK—Language politics in the 2007–2011 term', *Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Project*.

[41] Godfrey Nicholson, *Hansard*, Commons, 28 October 1943.

[42] Rogers, R. & Walters, R. (2015) *How Parliament Works* (7th edn.), Routledge, Oxon, p. 160.

[43] Stamp, G. (2000) '"We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us." Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and the Rebuilding of the House of Commons' in *The Houses of Parliament. History Art Architecture*, C. Riding & J. Riding. (2000), London, Merrell, p. 150.

[44] de Lara, Max & van der Vegt David. (2016) *Parliament*, XML, Amsterdam.

-Prominence of committees in the parliamentary building

Housing committees in the parliament building, as opposed to an annexed building, is an important signal in the strength of a parliament. Further, the footprint allocated to the work of committees in the parliamentary building is another signaling factor. A sizeable footprint is significant, in that committees, as creatures of the chamber, strengthen the parliament in relation to the Executive. A building that gives prominence to the work of committees via appropriate space allocations clearly establishes and signals the priority of the committee function.

-Prominence of the Executive in the building—proximity of the legislature to the Executive

The proximity of the Executive to the legislature is important—symbolically and practically in terms of the strength of the parliament.

At one extreme, in a separation of powers system—approximately 4 kms separates the Capitol and White House in Washington. In fused power systems, in Britain, the Executive is located close together in Whitehall. In Ottawa, the Canadian Prime Minister's offices are across from Parliament Hill.

In new or expanded buildings there is merit in considering the relative proximity of the legislature to where the Executive is housed and the ease of movement between them. The Parliament House of New Zealand, built in 1918, is directly connected to a drum-like office building built next door in the 1960s, known locally as the 'beehive'. Prior to the construction of the 'beehive', the executive were located in the parliament building in close proximity to backbenchers.[45]

In Australia—the housing of the Executive within the Parliament is a distinct feature. It has its genesis due to a shortage of nearby office accommodation at the time the provisional parliament building was being constructed. The then Presiding Officers granted space within the provisional building for the exercise of executive actions by Ministers in administering their Departments. The construction of the new Parliament House provided an opportunity to remedy the housing of the Executive to outside the building. Not only did this not occur, the prominence of the Executive in the new building was increased.[46]

-Prominence of meeting spaces for opposition, minor parties and other stakeholders in the building

This includes space allocated for party rooms, other meeting rooms, members' lounge and a media briefing room in the building.

There is a spatial variable of importance to partisanship, when special rooms are set aside in the parliament building for party caucuses. When these rooms are used exclusively by one party over the years, they can become 'museums of party lore and sanctuaries for the party faithful'.[47] Whilst this is a common practice, it becomes disproportionate for the strength of a parliament, when the Executive and governing party has special rooms set aside for its cabinet meetings and caucuses, respectively, but the same privileges are not afforded to the opposition and minor parties. Rather, opposition and minor parties are relegated to meeting in different rooms, losing the opportunity to

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[45] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), p. 300.
[46] Fewtrell, F. (1985) 'A New Parliament House—A New Parliamentary Order', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 44, No. 4, December, pp. 9; 324–325.
[47] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), p. 298.

harness a collective identity. Ideally, in terms of parliament strength, no rooms should be designated for partisan purposes.

-Prominence of (and appropriate access to) facilities in the building and its precinct that support the work and representative nature of the Parliament

Facilities that support the work and representative nature of the Parliament include:
(i) parliamentary libraries; (ii) gender sensitive facilities; (iii) facilities that improve gender equality within the building—for example—more female or gender-sensitive toilets and shower facilities (many buildings were constructed at a time, when most politicians were men and there is a consequent disparity in shower and toilet facilities for female members[48]); (iv) facilities that increase public access to the building—via options as a venue for holding meetings or other public events such as receptions and exhibitions, readings and musical performances and public access to parliamentary libraries; and (iv) upgrades to the parliamentary precinct, to provide space and facility for peaceful protest and gatherings.

Informal spaces

Informal spaces (those spaces outside of the Chamber and committee rooms) are important to the work of parliament. These are spaces for members to interact informally with one another—and according to Norton (2018)—can contribute to the 'institutionalisation of a legislature through facilitating autonomy'. This is on the basis that 'informal spaces provide an arena for socialisation, information exchange, lobbying and mobilising political support'.[49]

The loss of informal and communal space in a building can diminish casual interactions which can be detrimental to the work of a parliament. The significance of such a loss is highlighted in the difference between Australia's new and old parliament houses. Casual interactions which were a prominent feature in the old building diminished considerably in the new building. It has been advanced that the diminishment of casual interactions, due in part, to the new building isolating the Executive in its own wing, together with the loss of functionality of informal and communal space, that when moves were being made to challenge former Prime Minister Rudd, the work of the backbenchers in this regard was not visible to the Executive.[50] Other design features that contributed to loss of informal and communal space in Australia's new parliament building include:

- Casual interaction was a prominent feature of King's Hall in the Old Parliament House and a place where informal and formal business was transacted. The equivalent space in the new building—Members' Hall—does not work in the same way. Whilst it provides the link between the two chambers, in the same way King's Hall did, it no longer serves as a central point for interaction—it is a thoroughfare and no longer a meeting place. Further, the general public cannot access this space in the same way they could access King's Hall. As it concerns functionality, the change in this central space 'means that there is not the same

[48] Needham, K. (2016) 'Female MPs stage successful loo coup as NSW Parliament returns', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February. Available at: https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/ladies-loo-win-as-nsw-parliament-returns-20160212-gmsyft.html (Accessed: 27 August 2018); Partridge, E. (2015) 'Loo coup: Women protest about lack of toilets at NSW Parliament', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 October. Available at: https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/loo-coup-women-protest-about-lack-of-toilets-at-nsw-parliament-20151028-gkkk93.html (Accessed: 27 August 2018).
[49] Norton, P. (2018) 'Power behind the Scenes: The Importance of Informal Space in Legislatures', *Parliamentary Affairs*, April.
[50] ABC Radio National. (2016) Margaret Throsby—Classics at midday, Interview with Journalist Sarah Ferguson, 25 May, available at: https://radio.abc.net.au/programitem/peaQJgmp4L

sense of energy and bustle as was the case in the Old Parliament House. Anyone who had the chance to stand in the middle of King's Hall and watch the interaction of the ministers, members, press and public while the Parliament sat in that building will see a stark contrast with the level of engagement that takes place in Members' Hall here'.[51]

- The new building provided members with enhanced office accommodation that came complete with kitchenettes and other improved facilities. Members no longer needed to venture out to the cafeteria and other common meeting places for meals with a consequent loss of casual interactions.

(d) Contemporary tools

Whilst the functions of legislatures, as espoused centuries ago, have not changed, legislatures today have a range of contemporary tools, which if used wisely, can assist with these functions. These tools include:

- Technologies to improve sustainability and environmental credentials—such as the introduction of sensor lighting and more sustainable heating and cooling options to improve energy efficiency; upgrades to kitchen and amenity facilities to promote water conservation.
- Equipment to enhance security within the building and its precinct—for example, erection of security fencing or installation of purpose designed barriers in public forecourts, and installation of metal detectors at entrances.
- Modernising technical facilities such as a radical, or graded, adoption of ICT to link the physical footprint to the digital footprint. This can lead to improvements in all aspects of legislative organisation.

A case in point to illustrate the pros and cons for using technology to assist with a key legislative function is electronic voting. The presence or absence of electronic voting is important. Electronic voting functionality provides for more rapid casting of ballots but shortens the time available for last minute negotiations.

When machines are used the very design of the tally display boards can have subtle implications. Where boards display results—how the results are displayed, in addition to where the board is located, can have implications—for example, if results are displayed by party, it can emphasize the importance of partisan behaviour, as opposed to results shown only by member or representative. Display on the back wall or in a miniature schematic representation can also be important.[52]

Where electronic voting is not used—the use of division lobbies, whilst making time available for last minute negotiations, can also emphasise partisan behavior. In this context, the introduction of electronic voting can have an important effect on the cut and thrust of the parliamentary political contest, as significant tactical advantage can be derived at times from the current division system.[53]

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[51] Macintyre, C. (2008) 'Parliamentary Architecture and Political Culture', August, *Papers on Parliament*. This paper was presented as a lecture in the Senate Occasional Lecture Series at Parliament House, Canberra on 9 May 2008, p. 9.

[52] Goodsell, C. T. (1988) 'The Architecture of Parliaments: Legislative Houses and Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, 18(3), p. 298.

[53] Fewtrell, F. (1985) 'A New Parliament House—A New Parliamentary Order', Australian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 44, No. 4, December, p. 331; Solomon, D. (1978) *Inside the Australian Parliament,* Sydney, George Allen & Unwin, p. 66.

Designing for democracy—does it matter if you don't get it right?

To answer the question does it matter, if you don't get it right when designing for democracy, four case studies are presented as an analytic medium. The case studies are representative of all the different types of architectural interventions, or combinations of, that can be applied to legislatures. The legislatures profiled are representative of: bicameralism and unicameralism; have differences in longevity; and different political traditions—adversarial and consensual styles of politics (as dominant political paradigms).

The case studies distill aspects of the interventions to selectively illustrate different ways that architectural design and the associated decision making can either impede or assist a legislature in the performance of its functions. The designing a building for democracy framework as detailed at **Table 3** is used as a comparative reference point for the case study analysis.

The four case studies and a precis of the key findings are:

- Conservation, renewal, retrofit—UK Houses of Parliament—Palace of Westminster

The focus of this case study is the strategic intent and associated decision making processes for the Project, in particular the politics of the project and the decision, as Flinders and others (2018) have observed, to pursue a minimalist approach with regard to change. Notwithstanding that an architectural project of the scale underway at Westminster provides an opportunity for widespread parliamentary reform, it would appear that the decision to pursue a minimalist approach in this regard is a missed opportunity.

It has been suggested that this outcome has been achieved by careful management of the strategic intent and associated decision making processes for the project by those who currently benefit from the dominant political paradigm and therefore have a vested interest in maintaining it. For all intents and purposes, on the surface, it would appear that the various decision making processes related to the project have been inclusive and within the control of the Parliament. However, Flinders and others (2018) highlight some shortcomings with the inclusiveness of the processes that would suggest a skewing towards partisan veto players with an interest in maintaining the status quo as it concerns the dominant political paradigm.[54]

- Conservation, renewal and retrofit—Austrian Parliament Building

The focus of this case study is the strategic intent and associated decision making processes for the Project, in particular the inclusiveness of the Parliament's involvement in the decision making and the preparation of a comprehensive feasibility study encompassing a range of design options which were also benchmarked with internationally similar buildings facing the same challenges.

The inclusiveness of the Parliament's involvement in the decision making is significant. At the time a decision was made to proceed with the Project, acutely aware of the deteriorating state of the building, all six parliament parties assumed responsibility and decided on a general renovation of the

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[54] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), pp. 144–168.

building. The principal decision about the extent of the renovation[55] and its cost[56] were passed unanimously into law in 2014 by both chambers of the Austrian Parliament.[57]

- Construction/new build—National Assembly for Wales

The focus of this case study is the strategic intent and associated decision making process for the new build and its architectural and design features that give form to a range of functions that strengthen the role of the Assembly.

The significance of a National Assembly for Wales as a political and architectural landmark and a first in Welsh history was a key feature of the design brief for the building.[58] The specifics of the design brief, stipulated that the building be an exemplar for access, that sustainable strategies and renewable energy systems be implemented throughout, that the building have a minimum 100 year lifespan, and that, wherever possible, Welsh materials be used.[59] Further, a key objective of the design process was to avoid the adversarial style of politics of Westminster and implicit in that desire was that the overarching building design should facilitate and support a consensual style of politics.[60]

It goes without saying that a purpose built building provides significant opportunities for innovation in design that are not possible in the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. The Welsh National Assembly extracts every ounce that it can from such an opportunity.

- Rebuild—Australian new and old Parliament house

This case study provides an opportunity to examine the differences in architectural design between Australia's Provisional Parliament House (opened 9 May 1927, now known as Old Parliament House) and Australia's new and permanent parliament house (opened 9 May 1988) in time for Australia's bicentennial in 1988.[61] Both buildings were purpose built and products of design competitions.[62]

In comparing the new building with its predecessor, strong criticism has been levelled by members and other stakeholders as it concerns the size of the building, the loss of functionality arising from changes to formal and informal space allocations in the chamber, areas of common activity and public access.[63] Further, the construction of the new building provided an opportunity to relocate

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[55] Referred to as a 'Sustainable Renovation'.
[56] With an overall budget of 400 million Euros.
[57] Schnell, H. (2016) 'The Austrian Parliament Building', *The Zine*, Fall, accessed 21 August 2018 from: http://www.austrianinformation.org/fall-2016/the-austrian-parliament-building; Republic of Austria Parliament, Renovation of the Austrian Parliament, accessed 25 August 2018–from: https://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/GEBF/SAN/
[58] Richard, R.; Fishlock, T.; and Molyneux, A. (2010). *Senedd—The National Assembly for Wales building*, Graffeg publishing, Cardiff, p. 4.
[59] Ibid., p. 188.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Sudjic, D. and Jones, H. (2001) *Architecture and Democracy*, Laurence King Publishing, London, p. 102.
[62] McCann, J., Hough, A. and Heriot, D. (2018) *The 30th anniversary of Australia's Parliament House*, Parliamentary Library, Politics and Public Administration Section, viewed 21 August 2018 from: https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/parliament_house_chronology/Creating_the_national_capital
[63] Weirick, J. (1989) 'Don't you believe it: critical responses to the new Parliament House', *Transition*, Summer/Autumn, p. 9; Macintyre, C. (2008) 'Parliamentary Architecture and Political Culture', August, *Papers on Parliament*., Senate Occasional Lecture Series, Canberra on 9 May 2008, pp. 1–18; Fewtrell, F. (1985) 'A

the offices of the Executive away from the building. Not only did this not occur, the prominence of the Executive in the new building was increased. The implications for the Parliament which flow from the distinct presence of the Executive in the building are of relevance to the strength of the Parliament.[64] The new building, however, gave greater prominence to the work committees, clearly establishing the function in the new building. This was a specified requirement in the design brief for the new building.

Conclusion

In concluding—at the start of this paper two questions were posed.

In answer to the first question—*can you design for democracy—that is, how do you design a parliamentary building to support and facilitate democracy?*

Yes, a building can be designed to support and facilitate democracy. There is a relationship between the physical design of a parliament building and its precinct and parliamentary democracy. A parliament building and precinct from its inception and throughout its lifespan should be so designed and maintained to support and facilitate the fulfillment of parliament's functions.

Over the last decade or more, there has been a heightened level of interest and activity as it concerns various architectural interventions to the buildings that house legislatures across the world. However, as Flinders and others[65] have noted, there is 'very little research that applies 'good design' or 'intelligent design' frameworks to parliaments and legislatures' and further, there is a 'lack of comparative political analysis on the design or architecture of parliaments around the world, let alone on the political dynamics underlying critical design and architectural decisions'.

To assist, this paper proposes a designing a building for democracy framework that can not only be used as a basis for comparative research as it concerns the buildings that house legislatures but also as a decision making or planning tool. This framework acknowledges that designing a building for democracy is two-fold, in that giving form to parliament's functions encompasses two stages— firstly, via the strategic intent (and necessity) and associated decision making for the desired change; and secondly, the specific architecture including the design and contents of chambers, and other formal (and informal) spaces.

Further, this paper has also sought to define what is meant by architectural interventions as applied to parliamentary buildings. Whilst the literature and associated discussion uses a range of terms, some interchangeably, no known typology or classification for these interventions in a parliamentary context is known. This paper also proposes a typology and application of these interventions to parliamentary buildings and precincts.

New Parliament House—A New Parliamentary Order', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 44, No. 4, December, pp. 323–331; Jones, B. (2007) *A Thinking Reed*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW.
[64] Fewtrell, F. (1985) 'A New Parliament House—A New Parliamentary Order', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 44, No. 4, December, pp. 9; 324–325.
[65] Flinders, M., Cotter, L-M., Kelso, A. and Meakin, A. (2018) 'The Politics of Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal: Decisions, Discretion, Democracy', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 71(1), pp. 151; 166.

Ultimately, there has to be a willingness on behalf of the decision makers debating the case for various architectural interventions to their respective buildings to: (i) understand the relationship between building design and democratic functions; and (ii) have a desire to use such a relationship as an opportunity to strengthen parliamentary democracy (as opposed to retaining or instituting design features to support a vested or dominant political paradigm).

In answer to the second question—*does it matter if you don't get it right?*

Yes—it does matter—as the case studies demonstrate—different architectural interventions provide an array of opportunities to strengthen parliamentary democracy. This can include: introducing design features that support different ways of working; and improving connections between the parliament and its citizens. In some cases, depending on the scale of change, the design features can dramatically change the way politics is practiced. Further, in an environment of declining trust in parliaments and its members—it can also be a key opportunity to rekindle trust between citizens and the institution.

It is interesting to note that, as it concerns reforming or strengthening the role of legislatures in a democracy—invariably, the discussion and related strategies will focus on legislative organisation; strategies for engagement; education and outreach functions; and electoral reform. The role of the building in which a legislature is housed and its contribution to either assisting or impeding a legislature's ability to carry out its functions receives limited attention.

190 of 193 countries studied in 2012 have some form of functioning parliament[66]—many of these parliaments are in buildings that were built in the 19th century—and while some of these parliaments are currently undergoing significant architectural work to their respective buildings— many will need to be considering such work in the future. These parliaments should consider using any such architectural interventions as opportunity to strengthen their respective parliament.

Two thousand years ago, the Roman architect Vitruvius[67] identified three elements necessary for a well-designed building—in that good buildings should have firmness, commodity and delight.[68]

By this Vitruvius meant that well-designed buildings should be really well built, have utility, be fit for purpose and solid; should be easy to use; ergonomic; they should appeal to the heart; and they should bring happiness and joy.[69]

Well-designed parliament buildings should therefore make us feel like better human beings, they should lift the spirits of a nation, and they should not only make a contribution to place but also to civilisation in their form and pursuit of democratic ideals.[70]

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[66] IPU and UNDP. (2012) *Global Parliamentary Report—The changing nature of parliamentary representation*, Executive Summary, p. 3.
[67] In his treatise on architecture, *De Architectura.*
[68] University of Chicago, 2011; *European Architecture Series*, undated.
[69] University of Chicago, 2011*; European Architecture Series*, undated; Kevin McCloud (Architectural historian), Grand Designs, Channel 4 Television—aired 9 October 2016, ABC TV.
[70] Kevin McCloud (Architectural historian), Grand Designs, Channel 4 Television—aired 9 October 2016, ABC TV.