



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

18 April, 1983

Thank you for your letter of 12 April about the Report of the House of Commons Services Committee on the Development of the Bridge Street Site.

The letter that was sent to you by Tim Flesher on 2 August, 1982 recorded the Prime Minister's agreement that your Secretary of State should discuss with the Chief Secretary the implications of redeveloping the Phase 1 Site along the lines proposed. It did not give the Prime Minister's approval to the redevelopment of the site regardless of the public expenditure implications. The Prime Minister has noted that your Secretary of State will be holding these discussions with the Chief Secretary and the Lord President shortly.

I am copying this to John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

W. F. S. RICKETT

Mrs. Helen Ghosh,
Department of the Environment



10 DOWNING STREET

Note for file

I have asked the
Chief Secretary's
Office for their comments.
By ~~on~~ 19/4 ~~1~~.

WM

13/4



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

My ref: K/PSO/11801/83

Your ref:

12th April 1983

Dear Walter,

On 23 March Nick Huxtable wrote to you about the report of the House of Commons Services Committee which was published on 30 March. This report is the outcome of an investigation made by the Committee since last August when Michael Heseltine announced that the Casson Conder Partnership had been commissioned to prepare plans for the restoration of the buildings on the Phase 1 part of the Bridge Street site.

You will recall that the previous Secretary of State for the Environment minuted the Prime Minister on this subject on 22 July 1982. In a letter of 2 August I was told that the Prime Minister agreed to the redevelopment of the Phase 1 site along the lines proposed.

My Secretary of State and the Lord President will be discussing the public expenditure implications with the Chief Secretary shortly.

As far as Phase 2 is concerned, the Department will await the outcome of the further deliberations by the Services Committee before taking any further action.

Copies of this letter go to the recipients of Nick Huxtable's letter of 23 March.

Yours sincerely
Helen Ghosh

MRS HF GHOSH
Private Secretary

W F S Rickett Esq



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

23 March 1983

Dear Willie

PARLIAMENTARY ACCOMMODATION:
BRIDGE STREET SITE REDEVELOPMENT

You may like to be aware that the Services Committee of the House of Commons agreed at a meeting last week to approve a Report on a new Parliamentary building. It is proposed that the Report should be published on Wednesday, 30 March at 11.00 am. I enclose a proof copy. No special arrangements are planned to draw attention to its publication.

This is the second Report approved by the Select Committee on House of Commons (Services) during this Parliament which deals with the question of Parliamentary accommodation. The first Report was concerned with the study carried out by Casson Conder and Partners in 1979 which contained proposals for a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole of the Bridge Street site. It was intended to serve as the basis for a wide discussion of the accommodation needs of Members of Parliament and staff of the House of Commons. Despite an appreciative reception, however, the Casson Conder package was widely thought to be over-elaborate, with an estimated cost of £63 - £67.5 m. in Q1 1979 prices, and the Service Committee's Report was not debated in the House.

The Committee's latest Report adopts a fresh approach to the subject of Parliamentary accommodation and deals with the available options in two phases. The Committee recommend that the first element of the original Casson Conder proposal, which was the restoration and conversion of the buildings facing on to Parliament Street, should commence as soon as possible in order to provide some 180 offices which would be sufficient to accommodate 90 MPs

.../...

W F S Rickett Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London SW1

.. and their support staff. I attach a plan of the whole of the Bridge Street site which clearly shows the buildings which it is now proposed to convert to Parliamentary accommodation.

This work would cost £15m at 1982 prices, spread over five years, and could be finished by 1986/87. The buildings facing Parliament Street are in a very poor state of repair and will in any case shortly require at least £2m worth of remedial work to keep them in a safe condition if restoration is not commenced in the near future. Despite their poor condition, which is largely a result of 'planning blight' as they have now been designated for future conversion to Parliamentary accommodation for some 20 years, the buildings are of considerable architectural merit and the Services Committee recommend that conversion work should include a measure of restoration in order to enhance the appearance of the entrance to Whitehall. The Committee further recommend that the new accommodation should in the first place be made over to MPs and their personal staff but that, in the longer term, the objective should be for MPs to move into the Palace as suitable accommodation becomes available and that officers and staff of the House of Commons should occupy satellite buildings.

The cost of the work recommended by the Services Committee would fall to the PSA Vote. As yet no provision has been made in the public expenditure survey. The Lord President will be in touch shortly with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for the Environment on this point.

.. For the longer term (phase 2) the Services Committee publish without comment at annex II to their report the study recently completed by the surveyors Edward Erdman. Their remit was to assess the prospects for private sector participation in the development of the remainder of the Bridge Street site in such a way as to provide for a measure of Parliamentary accommodation without cost to public funds in compensation for the waiving of ground rent for a substantial period. I enclose also a copy of this study. Despite the complications inherent in such an approach, Edward Erdman conclude that the private sector organisations would be interested in undertaking construction of a mixed Parliamentary/commercial building complex which might provide sufficient accommodation for 200 - 210 MPs together with their support staff. A summary of Edward Erdman's conclusions is contained in section 2 of their study. The Services Committee state that they intend to consider further the options for phase 2 of the Bridge Street redevelopment in the light of decisions taken and views expressed by the House on their Report.

.../.

The broad thrust of the Select Committee's recommendations concerning the phase 1 development work seems likely to be welcomed by the House as representing a relatively modest set of proposals capable of producing tangible benefits within five years. This is in contrast to the more ambitious but more expensive ideas canvassed in the Casson Conder study. Once the Services Committee Report is published, the Lord President will consider the timing of a debate on the subject of Parliamentary accommodation. In view of the interest which Members are likely to show in the Select Committee's recommendations it might be desirable to arrange for this debate to take place before Whitsun.

I am copying this letter, without enclosures, to John Kerr (HM Treasury), David Edmonds (Department of the Environment), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), Bernard Ingham (No 10 Press Office) and Michael Townley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever

Nick Huxtable

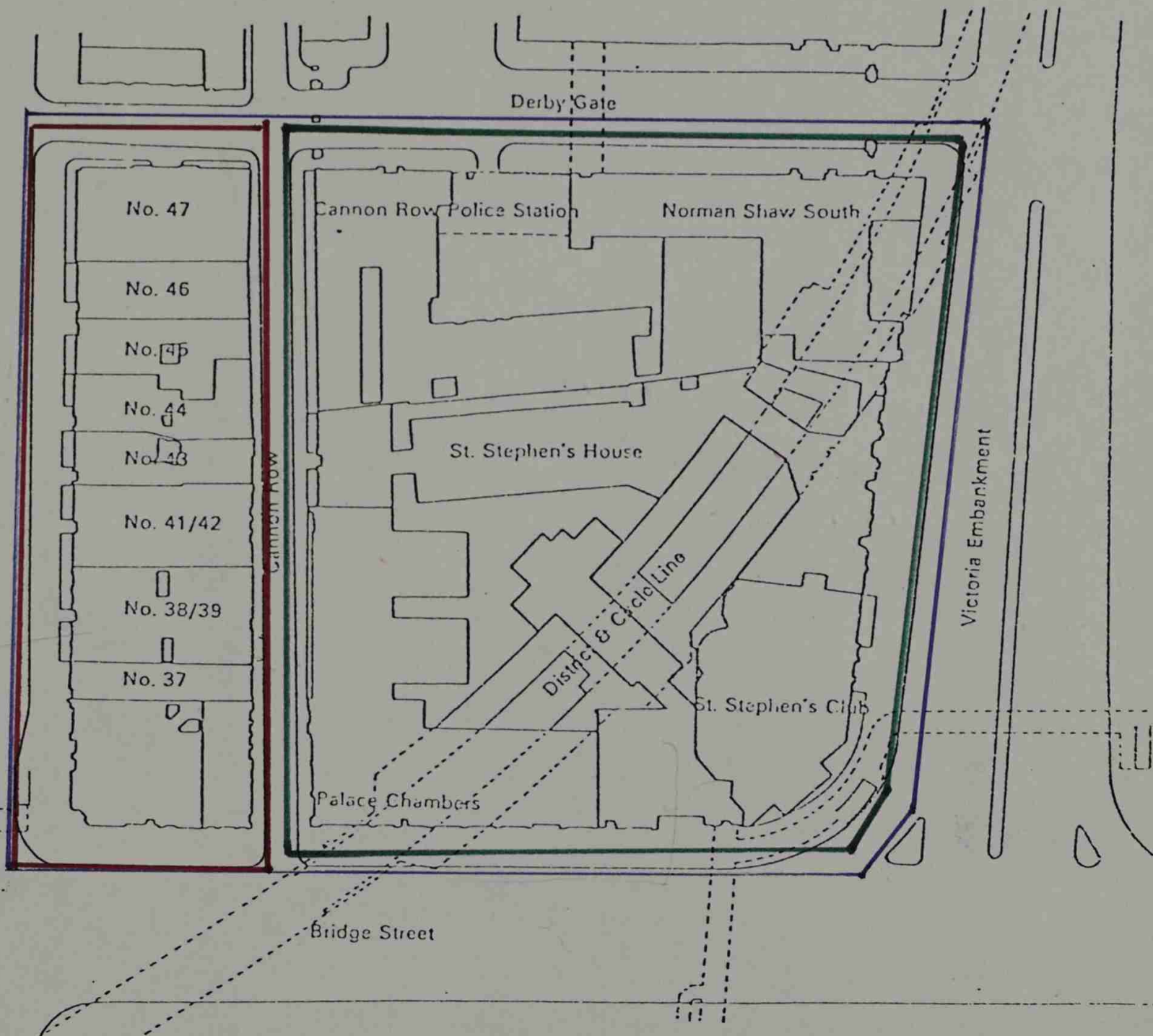
N P M Huxtable
Private Secretary

A.

WHITE HALL

Parliament Street

Derby Gate



- Limits of the Bridge Street site
- Buildings to be restored and converted in Phase 1
- Limits of the site to which the Phase 2 proposals relate

Parliament Square

New Parliamentary Building: Bridge Street May 1979
 by Casson Conway & Partners

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THIRD REPORT
FROM THE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE OF COMMONS
(SERVICES)

TOGETHER WITH THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN BEFORE THE ACCOMMODATION AND
ADMINISTRATION SUB-COMMITTEE ON
23 NOVEMBER AND 8 FEBRUARY
AND APPENDICES

NEW PARLIAMENTARY BUILDING
(PHASE 1)

Session 1982-83

Ordered by The House of Commons to be printed
16 March 1983

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

£0.00 net

HC269

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THIRD REPORT FROM

12027

Friday 15 June 1979

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Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to advise Mr Speaker on the control of the accommodation and services in that part of the Palace of Westminster and its precincts occupied by or on behalf of the House of Commons, and to report thereon to this House.

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Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Nineteen Members.

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Ordered, That Five be the quorum of the Committee.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House, and to report from time to time.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to invite any specially qualified person, whom they may select, to attend any of their meetings in an advisory capacity on any architectural or related matters.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to appoint Sub-Committees and to refer to such Sub-Committees any of the matters referred to the Committee.

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Ordered, That Two be the quorum of every such Sub-Committee.

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Ordered, That every such Sub-Committee do have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House and to report to the Committee from time to time.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to report from time to time the Minutes of the Evidence taken before Sub-Committees and Memoranda submitted to them, and reported by them to the Committee.

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Ordered, That any Sub-Committee which may be appointed to deal with the organisation of, and the provision of services in, the Library do have the assistance of the Librarian.

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Ordered, That any Sub-Committee which may be appointed to control the arrangements for the kitchen and refreshment rooms do have power to appoint persons with expert knowledge for the purpose of particular inquiries, either to supply information which is not readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Sub-Committee's Order of Reference.

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Ordered, That any Sub-Committee on computers that may be appointed shall have power to join with any Sub-Committee thereon that may be appointed by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on House of Lords Offices, to appoint persons with technical knowledge either to supply information which is not readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity relating to the matter referred to them, and to adjourn from place to place within the United Kingdom.

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The cost of preparing for publication the Shorthand Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee and published with this Report was £215.10.

The cost of printing and publishing this Volume is estimated by Her Majesty's Stationery Office at £2,376.

2081 *Ordered*, That these Orders be Standing Orders of the House until the end
of this Parliament.

2082
2083 *Ordered*, That the following Members be Members of the Committee—

2084	Mr Patrick Cormack	Mr Charles Irving
2085	Mr Paul Dean	Mr Fergus Montgomery
2086	Mr Ioan Evans	Mr Eric Ogden
2087	Mr Andrew Faulds	Mr Norman St. John-Stevas
2088	Mr Ben Ford	Mr Colin Shepherd
2089	Mr Victor Goodhew	Mr John Stradling Thomas
2090	Mr Walter Harrison	Mr Phillip Whitehead
2091	Mr Paul Hawkins	

2092
2093 *Ordered*, That the Members of the Committee nominated this day shall
2094 continue to be Members of the Committee for the remainder of this Parliament.

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2096 *Ordered*, That this Order be a Standing Order of the House.

2097
Tuesday 19 June 1979

2098 *Ordered*, That the Standing Order of 15 June relating to the Select Committee
2099 on House of Commons (Services) be amended, by adding Mr Ernest Armstrong
2100 and Mr Cyril Smith.

2101
2102 Notwithstanding the Orders of the House of 15 and 19 June 1979 relating to
2103 nomination of Members of the Select Committee on House of Commons (Ser-
2104 vices) the following changes were made for the remainder of the Parliament:

2105 *discharged*

added

2106 *Wednesday 14 January 1981*

2107 Mr Norman St. John-Stevas
2108 Mr Phillip Whitehead

Mr Francis Pym
Mr John Silkin

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2110 *Friday 27 March 1981*

2111 Mr Andrew Faulds
2112 Mr Ernest Armstrong

Mr Lawrence Cunliffe
Mr Don Dixon

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2114 *Tuesday 4 March 1982*

2115 Mr Ioan Evans

Mr Charles Morris

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2117 *Thursday 22 April 1982*

2118 Mr Francis Pym

Mr John Biffen

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2120 *Tuesday 25 November 1982*

2121 Mr Paul Dean

Mr Graham Bright

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2123 *Tuesday 22 February 1983*

2124 Mr John Stradling Thomas

Mr Anthony Berry

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THIRD REPORT

12126 The Select Committee appointed to advise Mr Speaker on the control of the
12127 accommodation and services in that part of the Palace of Westminster and its
12128 precincts occupied by or on behalf of the House of Commons and to report
12129 thereon to this House, have made further progress in the matter to them referred
12130 and have agreed to the following Report:

11009 *Introduction*

11010 1. This report comes to a number of conclusions (see page 00) about the first
11011 phase of development for parliamentary purposes on the Bridge Street site. It
11012 recognises that Members' need for offices is acute and accordingly recommends
11013 that work costing £15m (at autumn 1982 prices) be put in hand to provide about
11014 180 offices and related facilities on a portion of the site—that part of Parliament
11015 Street facing on to the bottom of Whitehall. The facades of existing buildings
11016 would be retained. The aim is that the House should take up occupation of the
11017 new accommodation in 1987–88. Initially most of the occupants would be
11018 Members, but the real priority is to provide Members with office accommodation
11019 near the Chamber. When work on Phase 1 is complete, therefore, suitable parts
11020 of the Palace itself should be converted or re-converted for the use of Members,
11021 so that in time staff transferred from the Palace would predominate in the new
11022 accommodation. We are indebted to our predecessors who put in hand the
11023 feasibility survey covering the site by Casson Conder and Partners published in
11024 May 1979, which has provided much useful detail. We hope very much that this
11025 time the attempt to solve a long-standing problem will succeed.

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11027 2. Nine years and five months after the night in 1941 when the Chamber and
11028 adjacent parts of the Palace were gutted by enemy incendiary bombs, the House
11029 moved into a new Chamber. Despite an undeniable growth in the needs and
11030 expectations of successive generations of Members, and the immediate prospect
11031 of an increase in the number of Members, securing adequate office accommoda-
11032 tion has taken much longer. A few years after the occupation of the new Chamber,
11033 a select committee came to the conclusion that only extensive building operations
11034 would meet Members' accommodation needs. Over the next thirty years, there
11035 have been some limited accommodation developments. Parts of Barry's Palace
11036 have been converted at considerable expense, much of it sub-standard accommo-
11037 dation. There has been *ad hoc* expansion into outbuildings, sometimes bringing
11038 with it acute problems of communication. What has not happened in those thirty
11039 years is identifiable progress with the "extensive building operations." We do
11040 not propose to disinter the relics of schemes which are by now very dead. The
11041 Fifth Report of 1977–78¹ contains a convenient and detailed summary of a long
11042 series of attempts to gather both general approval and the necessary funds for
11043 at least five different proposals, none of which made any real progress.

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11045 3. For our immediate purposes, the story begins with the Report quoted which
11046 in May 1978 recommended that Sir Hugh Casson PRA draw up a comprehensive

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¹ HC (1977–78) 483.

21047 scheme for redevelopment of the entire Bridge Street site,² retaining and restor-
21048 ing what was of quality, and replacing the rest to a coherent design. The House
21049 approved the suggestion,³ and Messrs. Casson Conder and Partners were com-
21050 missioned by the Department of the Environment to produce a feasibility study
21051 of how best to provide more accommodation in a phased programme. Early in
21052 the present Parliament, in May 1979, the feasibility study was presented to the
21053 responsible Sub-Committee. It went into details of design approach (including
21054 conservation), access, accommodation levels, costs and phasing. The details are
21055 not immediately relevant here, but three points are important. The works cost
21056 was to be £63 m–£67.5 m, at first quarter 1979 prices; the work was to be carried
21057 out in a number of phases—originally seven and later four, which would take
21058 nine years in all, but in which there were two possible stop-points; and the
21059 proposals covered the site in its entirety. The First Report of the Committee in
21060 1979–81¹ and the feasibility study itself² were intended to form a basis for
21061 parliamentary and public discussion, leading up to a decision by the House on
21062 whether or not the scheme outlined in the study should go ahead.

21063
21064 4. No such debate took place. The present report relies in part on the work
21065 done for the feasibility study, but proposes a rather different route towards
21066 implementation. In July 1982, the Committee resolved that the Parliament Street
21067 part of the site should be restored for parliamentary use “without further delay”.
21068 Means of developing the remainder of the site in a manner such as to safeguard
21069 the interests of Parliament were to be urgently explored.³ In effect, the Commit-
21070 tee’s decision meant finding out whether or not co-operation with private capital
21071 was a possible way of resolving longer term and larger scale financial difficulties,
21072 while hoping to rely exclusively on public funds for limited but more immediate
21073 progress. The Accommodation and Administration Sub-Committee then took
21074 evidence from the Property Services Agency (PSA) and the Casson Conder
21075 Partnership (to both of whom our thanks are due) on the prospect of development
21076 of the first Phase, that part of the site between Parliament Street and Cannon
21077 Row.¹ The evidence is annexed and most of this report deals with the issues it
21078 raises. As regards private capital and the remainder of the site, PSA com-
21079 missioned a study by a firm of consultants and part of their report is annexed.²
21080 There was insufficient time to embark on consideration of its conclusions, and
21081 we publish the result of the study only for Members’ information in the context
21082 of the more limited proposals. At the moment, a decision is required only on
21083 the latter. The Committee will be giving further consideration to the consultants’
21084 report, in the light of any decision taken by the House on Phase 1.

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21086 5. To return to the comparative timescales with which we began, the present
21087 Palace of Westminster took sixteen years to plan and build in the middle of last
21088 century; we have been nearly twice as long trying to agree on suitable office

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² The Bridge St. site may be defined as the area bounded by Whitehall (Parliament St.), Derby Gate and Bridge St. (see p. 000).

³ HC Deb (1977–78) 954, cc 2121–33.

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¹ HC (1979–80) 287.

² New Parliamentary Building: Bridge Street. Feasibility Study, May, 1979. Casson Conder & Partners.

³ HC (1981–82) 102–iv.

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¹ The Phase 1 site is the area bounded by Whitehall (Parliament St), Derby Gate, Cannon Row and Bridge St.

² Appendix 2, p 000.

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accommodation in the second half of the twentieth century. It is time progress was made.

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Costs and timing

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6. Phase 1 of the 1979 feasibility study covered exactly the same site as is now envisaged for development, and if proceeded with would have provided roughly the same amount of office accommodation. At current prices, the earlier scheme would have cost £17.9 m or £15 m excluding fees and furniture etc (Evidence, page 3). The present project differs in putting even greater emphasis on conservation and involving less new building, but the estimate—still necessarily a very broad one—remains at £15 m at autumn 1982 prices.¹ As things stand, the architects see no reason why that figure should be exceeded (Q 69) in real terms. Even in these days, £15 m of taxpayers' money is not a sum to be disposed of lightly; but at the same time, it is rather less than one year's cost of the administration of the House. Furthermore, part of the total of £15 m, should be offset by the £2 m at September 1982 prices which needs to be spent on the site—Phase 1 development or not—to avoid endangering the passing public, to keep in use those buildings which are occupied, and to bring into use those currently unused (Appendix, pp 32–33; Q 76–81).

7. The sums required will not of course fall on the House Administration vote, but on PSA. In consequence, the government will consider progress beyond the policy stage only when they are satisfied of the acceptability of more detailed plans and their cost. We naturally hope this report and subsequent action taken on it by the House will provide an adequate basis for future progress. There is one specific consequence of PSA involvement which it is right to mention at this stage. If the funding of Phase 1 goes ahead, the government evidently intend to ask both Houses—not only this House, though it is to this House that nearly all the benefit will accrue—to “consider some restrictions on other expenditure . . . as a contribution to the cost of the scheme.” What is expected is that an unspecified portion of uncommitted expenditure in the Palace itself (which might be some £4.5 m from 1984–85 onwards) should be set off against the cost of the new scheme in Parliament Street. (Evidence, pages 3–4; Q 40). A witness observed that if PSA were trying to meet half the cost in the peak years of the development, “the House would notice it. It would eat into the present programme to a fairly considerable extent.” (Q 42). We do not claim that all PSA expenditure on the Palace should be exempt from being raided in the interests of the new building, but PSA's proposals raise difficulties. In the first place, the level of expenditure on the Palace is not entirely attributable to never-ending, ever-increasing parliamentary demands. Much of PSA's expenditure arises from the correct desire to preserve in good order and enhance a highly important part of the national architectural heritage. The long programme of stone restoration is a good example. Other items of expenditure are part of continuing programmes, some already long delayed, such as renewal of lifts or the annunciators, or modernisation of the heating system. The element of expenditure accounted for by projects which amount to improvements of a character similar to Phase 1, in some sense

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¹ This figure excludes provision for certain types of communication to the Palace (see para 22). Also excluded is new sub-basement space along that part of the site abutting the central section of Cannon Row (Evidence, p 6, Q 69). This is subject to further detailed studies of structural and cost implications.

22050 in competition with it, and most liable to diminution or deferment in its shadow,
22051 seems to us likely to be small. We doubt whether it is even as large as the £1 m
22052 or so suggested by PSA. Nevertheless we are perfectly prepared to contemplate
22053 the slowing down of work in the Palace which would be undertaken during the
22054 years of Phase 1's construction, where such work is intended to provide accommo-
22055 dation effectively in competition with Phase 1. We do not however believe this
22056 arrangement should apply to the years after 1987-88 when (as we mention in
22057 para 16) works in the Palace will be needed to implement the full accommodation
22058 policy associated with Phase 1 and bring Members nearer the Chamber.
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22060 8. The funding requirement is likely to extend from 1984-85 to 1987-88,
22061 with the bulk of the expenditure being incurred in the two middle years (Evidence,
22062 page 3). Assuming that the House approves, and the government study of the
22063 cost of the proposals is completed by July (Q 29) the major works would begin
22064 in 1984, and the House could take possession of the new accommodation in
22065 1987-88 (Q 34). Matters could not realistically proceed much faster, but we
22066 express a firm hope that this time the timetable will be adhered to.
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Development policy

22068 9. We consider next the buildings on the Phase 1 site and the work which it
22069 is proposed to undertake on them. They are diverse in character and, as later
22070 paragraphs will show, the uses to which they may most naturally be put are
22071 equally varied. The architects have, however, suggested certain broad principles
22072 of action which will be common to all. One is the emphasis on conservation, so
22073 that as far as possible existing facades on all fronts but Cannon Row will remain.
22074 Another is that the buildings in Phase 1 should work efficiently and harmoniously
22075 together, even should there be no implementation of the proposals for further
22076 development on the remainder of the site. Equally, if those developments are
22077 embarked on, the Phase 1 project should be capable of relating satisfactorily to
22078 them. *We accept that these guiding principles are the right ones.*

31007 10. Behind the preserved facades and the usable accommodation which would
31008 remain, some of it in need of restoration, demolition is proposed for the ill-lit
31009 or substandard interiors at the back of the site, what Sir Hugh Casson described
31010 as taking a vertical fly-mow to the buildings. Most (though not all) of what was
31011 demolished would be rebuilt to create purpose-designed space for parliamentary
31012 use. (Evidence, page 5; Q 2-3).
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31014 11. Certain other general features of the site deserve mention. Although at
31015 basement floor level there is intended to be an unbroken horizontal circulation
31016 area to service the site as a whole, above ground the buildings would fall into
31017 three groups. The North section would comprise Nos 45, 46 and 47 Parliament
31018 Street. The Central section is Nos. 43 and 44, two small eighteenth century
31019 houses; and the largest section is the most southerly, Nos 34-42 inclusive,
31020 together with St. Stephen's Tavern. Within both the North and South sections,
31021 there would be horizontal circulation on each floor level (Q 8). To the develop-
31022 ment as a whole there would be three main access points. One would be at
31023 basement level, connected to the Palace (see para 21). The other two, at street
31024 level, would be connected to vertical circulation and lift areas, one serving the
31025 North section, the other the South. For reasons which will appear, Nos. 43 and

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11026 44 are intended to be self contained from the ground floor upwards (Evidence
11027 pp 6-7; Q 2, 8, 112).

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11029 12. Particular attention would need to be paid to the use of the ground floor
11030 premises. Problems of security, privacy and noise would be likely (Q 4, 75). The
11031 architects have proposed providing double glazing to the vulnerable sections of
11032 the site (Evidence, p 6): we are completely in agreement with this suggestion.
11033 So much accommodation is at issue on the ground floor that, whoever uses it,
11034 we believe it is worth giving a relatively high priority, financial and otherwise,
11035 to solving the associated problems. The ground floor of Nos 37 and 42, which
11036 are at present shops, would be reconverted for office use (Q 17, 75). Otherwise,
11037 the shops would remain. We accept the proposal, though where appropriate *we*
11038 *should like the liaison machinery proposed for future developments to be involved*
11039 *in determining letting policy for the shops.*

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11041 13. As we have mentioned, the current approach emphasises conservation,
11042 and it seems to us important that the right balance is struck between use and
11043 appearance. The Sub-Committee inquired about the extent and proportion of
11044 cost attributable to what might be termed the aesthetic element. As well as
11045 preserving the facades, it is suggested that the fine Victorian interiors of No. 47
11046 Parliament Street—large rooms with moulded plaster ceilings and tall windows—
11047 should be retained, and that fittings, materials and finishes should be in keeping
11048 with the quality of the original design. (Evidence, p 7). The restoration of Nos 42
11049 and 44 would be undertaken in the spirit of the original mid-eighteenth century
11050 buildings, which still house a dilapidated Chippendale chinoiserie staircase,
11051 carved and moulded ceilings, and marble fireplace friezes typical of the era of
11052 their construction. (Evidence, pp 7-8). Finally, the top two floors of the building
11053 at the south end of Parliament Street, on the corner with Bridge Street, would
11054 be removed. They are 1930's additions and visually unsatisfactory. The former
11055 aspect of the corner would be restored by reconstruction of the original dome
11056 (see below), providing a strong architectural marker at a sensitive point, and
11057 forming, with the corner tower of the Treasury building opposite, a "gateway"
11058 marking the entrance to Whitehall. (Evidence, pp 8-9). The Sub-Committee
11059 were told that, though absolute precision was impossible because all elements
11060 in the plan have a certain amount of aesthetic judgment imposed upon them by
11061 the retention of the facades, in total the cost of the aesthetic considerations in
11062 the approach would not exceed 10 per cent of the whole (Q 71). Those costs
11063 are not however unproductive even in practical terms—the dome would provide
11064 a very fine room, for example, and the gain of accommodation made by dividing
11065 other handsome areas would be small. *We therefore recommend acceptance of*
11066 *the principle of conservation and its application as set out in the evidence.*

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11068 14. As regard the predominant use to be made of the new accommodation,
11069 *we are in no doubt that what Members most require is more individual offices,*
11070 *improving the overall quality of office provision and reducing sharing. As para.*
11071 *16 makes clear, however, we prefer in the longer term to use the offices on the*
11072 *Phase 1 site to meet that need indirectly rather than directly. The original*
11073 *feasibility plan envisaged about 100 Members' "sets" or pairs of rooms on the*
11074 *site, each accommodating a Member and his secretary or other personal staff.*
11075 *In the present proposals, we understand that some 90 "sets" could be obtained:*
11076 *the rooms would not be uniform in size, because of the varied character of the*
11077 *premises being retained, and if used by Members the rooms in the "sets" would*

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THIRD REPORT FROM

31078 not in every case be adjacent (Q 9-10, 20-22). Nevertheless, we firmly believe
31079 that, when realised, *the Phase 1 building should be capable of providing as near*
31080 *180 rooms suitable for offices as may be, whoever is to use them.* Apart from the
31081 special facilities mentioned in para. 20, there will have to be a certain number
31082 of conference rooms, and in some cases, notably No 47 and Nos 34-36, those
31083 who use the building may be invited to share larger rooms. It may be the case
31084 that some smaller rooms at the top of the buildings, unsuitable for offices, could
31085 be used as bedrooms for staff on late duty (Q 93). A little temporarily vacant
31086 space will be required to allow the accommodation policy in para. 16, to proceed.
31087 In the main, however, we are in favour of the provision of individual office
31088 accommodation at every reasonable opportunity. As we understand it, general
31089 office use would not give rise to structural or loading difficulties (Q 23-26).

32005 15. On the understanding that overall priority will be given to the creation
32006 of office space, we turn now to consider the individual buildings, beginning with
32007 No 47, at the furthest northerly point of the site.¹ Apart from accommodation
32008 to be retained which can quite readily be turned into offices, No. 47 boasts two
32009 very large and fine rooms not suitable for conversion, some medium sized rooms,
32010 and a galleried area. The fine rooms, or one of them, would make excellent
32011 Committee rooms, readily accessible to the public by way of No 47's separate
32012 entrance. An alternative proposal is however made at para 20. Similarly, if the
32013 medium sized rooms are not to be shared offices, there might be another use
32014 for them in providing certain ancillary facilities. The galleried area seems unlikely
32015 in any event to be readily adaptable to office use (see para 20). If maximum use
32016 were made of potential office space, however, up to 24 Members and their
32017 personal staff or nearly 50 House staff could be accommodated (Q 82-84). From
32018 No 47, a new lobby space on each floor would link to the adjoining building,
32019 Nos 45 and 46.¹ (Evidence, page 7), where also substantial office accommodation
32020 could be created. If the large rooms in No 47 were to be Committee rooms,
32021 then certain of the offices in Nos 45 and 46 could be used in association with
32022 them (*ibid*). Passing by Nos 43 and 44, which will be considered separately, we
32023 come to Nos 34-42, where the bulk of the offices would be situated. (Evidence,
32024 pp 8-9). At this point, the newly built accommodation at the back of the site
32025 could without difficulty be designed as offices. An additional floor could be added
32026 to Nos 38-42. The rooms at the front could be used as offices or, in the case of
32027 those which are larger or "fine-ish" (Q 6), as shared office accommodation or
32028 conference rooms. This is particularly true of those parts of Nos 34-36 where
32029 there are likely to be preserved large rooms of some formality with magnificent
32030 views (Q 4), and of course the new dome. Finally, it has been suggested that St.
32031 Stephen's Tavern should be retained at basement and ground levels. A choice
32032 is offered for decision so far as concerns the 1st floor (the Restaurant) and the
32033 three floors above that. They could be incorporated in the circulation pattern
32034 of the parliamentary offices. Retention of part of the rear structure of adjacent
32035 buildings will depend on this decision (Evidence, page 9). If all floors above the
32036 ground floor were taken over in this way, the gain would be some 2,500 sq ft
32037 (Q 96). We prefer on balance to recommend the incorporation of only the second
32038 and higher floors, accepting lesser gains of space, but (we hope) retaining the
32039 restaurant in commercial hands, since it is a facility which we understand many
32040 Members welcome.

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¹ See New Parliamentary Building: Feasibility Study, pp 80-85.

¹ See New Parliamentary Building, pp. 86-91.

Accommodation policy

32042 16. Though we have argued that the major use of the new buildings should
32043 be offices, we do not propose that in the long run, all the accommodation should
32044 be occupied by Members. As we see it, *the real priority is to provide office*
32045 *accommodation for as many Members as want it as near to the Chamber as*
32046 *possible*. The implementation of this policy depends not only on the new building
32047 but also on work in the Palace. For that reason, the occupants of the new building
32048 will necessarily change as the policy is worked out. To begin with, the offices
32049 on the Phase 1 site will house principally Members, though there will probably
32050 also be an initial staff presence either on the ground floor or transferred from
32051 such premises in the main Palace as are immediately capable of occupation by
32052 Members. As the requisite conversion is done on the Palace, staff of House
32053 departments formerly in the Palace will gradually come to predominate in
32054 Phase 1, to the extent that Members take up the opportunity to leave and move
32055 nearer the Chamber. We are assured that no particular problems arise in the
32056 design and construction of offices which, to begin with, will be Members' sets
32057 occupied in pairs by Members and their staffs, and subsequently by House
32058 departments (Q 23-4, 85, 94). This policy will take some time to implement,
32059 since it will involve further consideration of the amount of space in the Palace
32060 which can be turned to Members' use by changing the function from occupation
32061 by non-Members, by bringing into play space not at present occupied, or by
32062 additional construction. Some changes of this character may in fact improve the
32063 amenity of the Palace for all concerned or make more committee rooms available,
32064 without actually freeing any office space for Members' use. We are particularly
32065 pleased to note that preliminary work has already been undertaken to identify
32066 the possibilities of this character in the Palace, mostly in the categories of transfer
32067 of staff accommodation and conversion of such unused space as still remains.
32068 These matters were discussed in some detail with the witnesses (Q 49-68) and,
32069 while we accept that in the long run the cost effectiveness of some of the proposals
32070 may not turn out to be very attractive, *we were impressed by the fact that at least*
32071 *50 and at most 85 Members could be found office space in the Palace by these*
32072 *means. (Q 67-68).*

41009 17. While planning for the Phase 1 development is proceeding, we think PSA
41010 in conjunction with the liaison machinery proposed in para 22 should survey
41011 and cost the areas in the Palace which might be converted for or newly brought
41012 into Members' use. We are assured that "given that each year there is a certain
41013 amount of new work within the programme" something should be possible
41014 (Q 90). As indicated in para 7, after 1987-88 an agreed programme of conversion
41015 and alterations in the Palace should proceed with a view to increasing the
41016 accommodation suitable for Members' use there, and effecting transfers to and
41017 from Phase 1. *In other words, the policy for the development of Phase 1 does not*
41018 *end when the buildings are complete; it continues until the accommodation policy*
41019 *ends have been achieved.*

41022 18. The use of Nos 43 and 44 presents particular problems. Among their
41023 many previous occupants was the Department of the Clerk of the House (before
41024 the fire of 1834) but for many years the houses have been deteriorating.¹ Fairly
41025 extensive interior restoration is proposed, together with the removal of the shop
41026 window and replacement of the facade in its original form, and demolition of
41027 building at the rear in order to improve the natural lighting of what remains.

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41028 What gives us some hesitation is the suggested use of the accommodation—
41029 “roomy but manageable houses . . . more appropriate for residences.” (Evidence,
41030 pp 7–8). Each would in addition have a self-contained basement flat. Sir Hugh
41031 Casson described Nos 43 and 44 as “good London terraced house stuff that you
41032 might find in Chelsea or Fulham.” (Q 18). It seemed to us a rather slender
41033 argument on which to found a decision to make over part of much needed space
41034 to a use other than offices for Members. On the other hand, the structural state
41035 of the buildings is very material. Sir Hugh told the Sub-Committee that Nos 43
41036 and 44 “probably would not lend themselves to offices, because they are very
41037 frail and vulnerable, and they certainly would not take 100 lbs of loading.”
41038 (Q 26). They could be used as office suites, “but they do not lend themselves
41039 terribly well for that”. (Q 91). What work is proposed would be making good
41040 and reinstating, and not making new. Many of the slopes, shakes and bulges
41041 which age has bestowed will still be evident. Our proposal for Nos 43 and 44
41042 is twofold. First, PSA should look again at the structural capacity of the premises,
41043 to be certain that general office use would be impossible, given the works likely
41044 to be undertaken within the budget. Second, if their original view is confirmed,
41045 and Nos 43 and 44 are considered best suited for residential purposes (including
41046 sleeping accommodation for those not resident) a survey should be carried out
41047 of the residences and bedrooms in the Palace whose present occupants might
41048 be transferred to Nos 43 and 44. When agreement in detail is reached on the
41049 transfers, and without waiting for the programme mentioned in the preceding
41050 paragraph, *PSA should budget to complete the conversion for Members’ use of*
41051 *the residential and sleeping accommodation in the Palace which is being vacated,*
41052 *so that it is available for Members as soon as may be after Nos 43 and 44 come*
41053 *into use.*

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Facilities

41055 19. Having indicated the likely pattern of occupation of the new building, we
41056 turn now to the associated facilities. Several proposals were put to us for
41057 consideration which we take this opportunity of mentioning. It has been suggested
41058 that further parking facilities should form part of the new building. We draw
41059 attention to the fact that the new premises by themselves will give rise to no
41060 net increase in the number of those with a claim on a parking space. Moreover,
41061 the inclusion of parking spaces in the Phase 1 project, accessible at basement
41062 level from Cannon Row, could be achieved only at the sacrifice of more useful
41063 accommodation, and would occupy prime day-lit space (Q 70). We cannot
41064 recommend the inclusion of parking space on that basis. Other possibilities have
41065 been canvassed. We consider the demand for office space for Members is
41066 sufficiently important to defer such ancillary suggestions to Phase 2, to be
41067 considered against competing priorities then.

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20. There are however two kinds of facilities which we believe that a complex which will house 90 Members and their staffs or House staff (or some balance of the two) should provide. Despite the fact that at present we are unable to be precise about location, we would expect any reasonable associated cost to be capable of being fitted into the £15m budget. The first is Library facilities, perhaps analogous to those in the Branch Library in Norman Shaw North, principally a reading room and reference service both to Members and their staffs. It may be that the sunken/galleried accommodation on the principal floor of No 47 will be appropriate for this purpose. Secondly, bearing in mind the

1078 complete absence of refreshment facilities serving the outbuildings north of the
1079 Palace, and the intense pressure on those refreshment rooms in the Palace open
1080 to Members' staff and staff of the House, we believe that some refreshment
1081 facilities in the new building are eminently desirable. Our first thoughts, subject
1082 to more detailed examination, are that the need is for a coffee shop open more
1083 or less office hours, rather than for a full dress restaurant. It might be possible
1084 to locate this too in No 47, using either one of the fine rooms—which indeed
1085 were used for just this purpose when the building was a club—or else some of
1086 the medium sized rooms at the back of the site which otherwise would become
1087 Members' shared offices.
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Communications

1089 21. Adequate links between the Palace and the Phase 1 development are
1090 important, and provision ought to be made for three separate types of communi-
1091 cations. The first is Members' physical access to and from the Palace. Members'
1092 offices ought not be isolated from many of the House's proceedings nor (so far
1093 as possible) ought these proceedings—such as divisions—to be further slowed
1094 down. It is clear that there ought to be some sort of tunnel between the new
1095 accommodation and the Palace. We understand that from the lift core at the
1096 rear of No 37 it is thought feasible to lead a passageway at basement level to
1097 the back of the site, from which a tunnel might be constructed by way of existing
1098 basements, to issue within the precincts of the Palace (Evidence, pp 9–10;
1099 Q 14–15). It is in our view axiomatic that this access should be private to the
1100 House (Q 111). Since the longest journey will not exceed that of the Member
1101 who at present comes to the Chamber above ground from Norman Shaw North,
1102 no pedestrian powered walkway is required. *We recommend that such a tunnel*
1103 *be constructed, to be available as soon as the new building is occupied.* We note
1104 that such a proposal is feasible (Q 111) and within the overall cost limit (Q 115).

1105 22. If the new accommodation is to be occupied by staff, the effectiveness of
1106 their operations and in particular those of any Library outstation which is from
1107 the beginning sited in Phase 1, may need to be supported by arrangements for
1108 the physical transportation of documents and materials, and the electronic
1109 transfer of data. We understand that the first of these would be likely to add
1110 £1–1½m to the overall cost. What is suggested is a system up to 1,150 metres
1111 long with a capacity to move up to 100 small containers (each of 10 kilos) at a
1112 speed of 10 mph (Q 110–4). In the same way, electronic data transfer may make
1113 possible the removal to Phase 1 of certain procedural and similar functions at
1114 present carried out in the Palace without loss of speed or accuracy. We recom-
1115 mend that as part of the refinement of the process of staff transfer to which we
1116 refer below, account should be taken in some detail of the need (a) to transport
1117 equipment and supplies; and (b) to transfer data electronically, to and from the
1118 Palace. Once that assessment is complete, a view can be taken on the need for
1119 the machinery and the associated expenditure; but we consider that there should
1120 be a presumption, as part of that assessment, that all reasonable steps should
1121 be taken to ensure achievement of the principal policy aim of moving Members
1122 into the Palace and staff out wherever consonant with efficient service of the
1123 House.
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Liaison Machinery

42006 23. Our aim in this report has been to draw out guidelines only. It is too early
42007 to be absolutely precise about the use of every square foot, within a given budget,
42008 and the choice of which staff functions can, without damage to the House, be
42009 transferred to the Phase 1 building is something on which the advice of House
42010 departments themselves will be required. Moreover, we are aware that PSA are
42011 looking for a standing body to which they can turn for authoritative advice on
42012 matters of detail. (Q 106-7). We therefore propose to appoint a Sub-Committee,
42013 which will take up its duties if and when the House agrees to this Report. The
42014 Sub-Committee's task will be:—

- 42015 (a) to liaise with PSA and the architects on the decisions on Phase 1 which
42016 may be required from time to time within the development and
42017 accommodation policy guidelines laid down here, and to report as
42018 necessary;
- 42019 (b) to consider future use by Members of accommodation in the Palace
42020 presently occupied by staff of House departments, and the resultant
42021 transfer of staff to Phase 1 in conjunction with the responsible authorities
42022 of these departments; and
- 42023 (c) to review the need for systems to assure the transportation of equipment
42024 and supplies and the electronic transmission of data between the Phase
42025 1 building and the Palace.

42026 It will be for consideration whether the best way to arrange for the advice of
42027 House Departments to be available to the Sub-Committee might be by the
42028 constitution of an informal inter-departmental working party.
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Exhibition

42030 24. If, before the House debates this report, PSA could arrange a small and
42031 preferably simple exhibition of what the proposals would look like, and what
42032 area they would affect in what way, (Q 116) we believe Members would find it
42033 very helpful.
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Recommendations

42035 25. Our recommendations are as follows:

- 42036 (i) work would be put in hand to renew for parliamentary use the buildings
42037 on that part of the Bridge Street site bounded by Parliament Street,
42038 Derby Gate, Cannon Row and Bridge Street (the Phase 1 site). In
42039 development, the emphasis should be on conservation. The facades
42040 and, for the most part, the rooms immediately behind them would
42041 remain. Certain particularly handsome rooms would be restored, as
42042 would two mid-eighteenth century houses; and a dome would be
42043 replaced on the top of the corner building in accordance with the
42044 original design. For the most part, however, the rear sections of the
42045 buildings would be demolished, and replaced by purpose-designed
42046 offices. The cost limit would be £15m at September 1982 prices over
42047 four years, with completion expected in 1987-88;
- 42048 (ii) further and separate consideration should be given to the possibility
42049 of developing the rest of the site in association with private capital;

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- (iii) the predominant use of the new site should be as individual offices. The buildings should be capable of providing as nearly as may be 90 "sets" for Members and their personal staffs or (alternatively) roughly 180 offices for staff of House departments, whatever the final mix of occupation may be. Certain of the fine rooms might be retained as Committee rooms. Conference or interview rooms and probably a few shared offices would also be provided. If certain accommodation is found to be structurally unsuitable for use as offices, it should be given over to residences and sleeping accommodation, on the condition that those premises in the Palace thereby vacated are converted to Members' use as soon as Phase 1 construction is complete;
- (iv) in accommodation terms, the real priority is to provide offices for as many Members as want it as near the Chamber as possible. Since this will naturally involve work within the Palace which is likely to be undertaken for the most part after the completion of Phase 1, offices on the Phase 1 site should on their completion be occupied principally by Members. As the work on the Palace proceeds, and after consultation, with the most efficient pattern of service to the House in mind, the appropriate numbers of staff should be transferred from the Palace, leaving space for Members. In other words, the policy for the development of Phase 1 does not end when the buildings are complete; it continues until the accommodation policy ends have been achieved;
- (v) in principle, Library and refreshment facilities should be provided in Phase 1, their exact nature and location subject to subsequent consideration;
- (vi) a tunnel giving private access on foot between Phase 1 and the Palace should be provided, and the need for systems to transfer documents, materials and data investigated; and
- (vii) to represent the House interest in detailed matters of the development and use of Phase 1, and to liaise with PSA and the architects, a New Building Sub-Committee of the Services Committee will be set up, possibly to be assisted by an official working party of House Departments.

16 March 1983

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