

1854.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

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**PROPOSED BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.**

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**FINAL REPORT****THE SELECT COMMITTEE****ON THE****PROPOSED BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.**

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**ORDERED BY THE COUNCIL TO BE PRINTED,**  
**21 November, 1854.**

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**1854.**

**EXTRACTS FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

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**No. 4, TUESDAY, 13 JUNE, 1854.**

7. Proposed Board of Public Works :—Mr. Holroyd moved, pursuant to notice, That the Select Committee, consisting of Colonel Barney, Mr. Cowper, Mr. Martin, Mr. Russell, Mr. James Macarthur, Mr. Nichols, and Mr. Flood, appointed last Session, to inquire into and report upon the propriety of placing the construction, management, and control of the public works and buildings of the Colony, under a Board of Public Works, be re-appointed.  
Question put and passed.
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**No. 87, TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER, 1854.**

15. Proposed Board of Public Works :—Mr. Holroyd, as Chairman, brought up the Final Report from the Select Committee re-appointed, on the 13th June last, to inquire into and report upon the propriety of placing the construction, management, and control of the Public Works and Buildings of the Colony under a Board of Public Works.  
Ordered to be printed.
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**REPORT**

1854.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

PROPOSED BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

## REPORT

FROM

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE

## PROPOSED BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE of the Legislative Council appointed on the 15th June, 1853, and re-appointed on the 13th June, 1854, "to inquire into and report upon the propriety of placing the construction, management, and control of the Public Works and Buildings of the Colony under a Board of Public Works," have agreed to the following Report:—

The attention of your Committee has been especially directed to the large number of Public Works constantly in progress in this Colony, and the delay which has been inseparable from the total absence of all system in carrying them out; your Committee, after much consideration, propose an arrangement by which, in their opinion, the following objects would be attained, viz., quickness of operation, reduction in price, a more perfect superintendence, greater stability of structure, and greater chasteness in the design of works of magnitude.

Impressed with the necessity of promoting these objects, your Committee are of opinion that they cannot be accomplished by the present staff in the department of the Colonial Architect. And as works requiring Engineering as well as Architectural knowledge will be required to be carried out by the Government, your Committee have come to the conclusion that the time has now arrived when the Engineering works of the Colony (not excepting the roads) should be placed under a branch department, with a Civil Engineer at its head. But for the purposes of facilitating operations, your Committee recommend that both branches—the Architectural and Engineering—should be placed under the absolute control of a Commissioner of Public Works, who should have a seat in your Honorable House—vacating his appointment on a change of Ministry—and who, from his position, would be able at all times to afford information to the House regarding the Public Works in progress in both branches.

To such Commissioner of Public Works your Committee would recommend that all the public Buildings and Engineering works of the Colony should be entrusted, and that such Commissioner should have the arranging for, and the complete management of, their erection, construction, and completion.

For this purpose the Commissioner should send in annually to the Government an Estimate in gross, with the items in detail, of all sums required for the public Buildings and Engineering Works for the ensuing year, and that upon the Legislative Council voting such sums of money, they should be placed to the credit of the Commissioner for carrying out the proposed Works.

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But to enable such Commissioner to carry on his operations effectually, your Committee would recommend the maintenance of an effective Central Staff in Sydney, and the appointment of Local Officers to Superintend Works in the Country Districts. To these Local Officers should be committed the duties of making plans, elevations, and specifications of Works in the Country, to be submitted to the Commissioner of Public Works for approval, and when approved tenders to be called for, which tenders, when accepted, the Local Officer should see carried out, and be held responsible for the Work being completed according to contract; and to induce parties in the Country to enter readily into such contracts, your Committee would recommend that payments for such Works should always be immediately made upon the certificate of the Local Officer.

As the Local Officer would, from the very nature of his business, have to pass over frequently the Public Roads and Highways of the Colony, and as it is assumed that properly qualified persons would be appointed to the Country Districts as Local Officers, your Committee would suggest that the duties which are at present assigned to the Inspectors of Roads should be transferred to the Local Officers, thereby effecting a considerable saving to the Colony, and at the same time placing the Roads and Highways under a Department which, in the opinion of your Committee ought to have their management, construction, and control.

But to render the system which your Committee propose as perfect as possible, your Committee would earnestly press upon the House the advantages which would arise to the Colony by throwing the designing of all large Public Buildings and Engineering Works open to the competition of Architects and Engineers unconnected with the Government, and that when a plan or design should be accepted, the successful competitor should, if the Commissioner should think fit, have the management of the work subject to the approval and control of the Commissioner of Public Works, and receive the usual commission. The result of such an arrangement would be, that the Public Buildings and Works of the Colony would be better and more rapidly executed, that contractors, especially in the Country Districts, would be more ready than at present to tender for contracts from the prospect of having a more speedy means of payment than by the present dilatory process; and that the Buildings and other Works being open to competition would, by exciting professional emulation, draw out talent which would furnish chaste, elegant, and classical designs.

ARTHUR T. HOLROYD,

Chairman.

*Legislative Council Chamber,*  
November 21, 1854.

**PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE  
PROPOSED BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.**

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**TUESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER, 1854.**

**Present :—**

Charles Cowper, Esquire, in the Chair.

Lieutenant Colonel Barney,

Mr. Russell.

Committee deliberated on the heads of their Report, and adjourned.

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**WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER, 1854.**

**Present :—**

Arthur Todd Holroyd, Esquire, in the Chair.

Mr. Cowper,  
Mr. Flood,

Lieut. Colonel Barney,  
Mr. Smart.

The Chairman submitted a draft Report for the consideration of the Committee, who deliberated thereupon and adjourned.

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