

Proposed Toilet Facilities, Royal Engineer's
Complex, (H 30 A and H 30 B).

KAVHA and Report 8 part II

June 1982

Commonwealth Department of
Transport and Construction.

Robert V.J. Varman,

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Introduction

This report is the result of the commission as outlined in the Departmental brief, reference 80/6365, dated 2 June 1982, p. 4, Nos 2 and 3(a), which was based on a meeting held on the 25th of the previous month between Messrs P. Mc Hugh and G. Millett of the Department and myself.

As the site of the proposed toilet facilities are now focused on the Royal Engineer's Stables (H 30 B) it has been thought convenient to combine parts 2 and 3(a) of the Departmental brief into a single report.

A meeting was held at Norfolk Island on the 17th June to assess various sites for the proposed toilet facilities. The following were present; Messrs D. Buffett, P. Mc Hugh, P. Taylor, P. Anderson and myself. After considering several options, Structure H 30 B was concluded to be the most suitable option.

Although part 2 of the Departmental brief is no longer relevant to the siting of the toilet facilities, it is presented here for the benefit of future considerations as to the use of room 4 of the Royal Engineer's Office, (H 30 A).

The remainder of the report, which is relevant to part 3(a) of the Departmental brief, is presented in terms of the present intentions to convert it for use as toilet facilities.

Royal Engineer's Office, Room 4, (east-most room).

Report on Proposal to Convert Room 4 into Public and Museum
Toilet Facilities.

1:0 Description of Room 4.

1:1 Flooring.

The flooring consists of circular sawn butted boards running in a north-south direction. The boards range between 0.144m and 0.147m in width and are 22mm thick. These rest on joists (100mm by 75mm) which in turn rest on the stone footings of the walls and a concrete baulk running along the middle of the room.

The floor dates to a post WW II date, judging by the nails and timber treatment. Three boards were removed so that the below floor situation could be examined. It was found that the deposit is composed of compacted and levelled calcarenite, most likely the remains of the mason's rubble from the building period.

The timber floor is about 60mm higher than that of room 6 (adjacent room to the west) but is level with the stone threshold, leading out to the courtyard.

1:2 Ceiling.

Presently of board and batten construction of Norfolk pine, dating around the late 1940s. Above this are the remains of the original lath and plaster ceiling.

1:3 Walls.

The north, east and south walls are of board and batten construction over plaster and render walls. The cladding is of the same vintage as the ceiling. The west wall is rendered; the rough cement surface, at least, dates to the early 1960s.

The cupboards are of timber and are built onto the timber wall cladding. These date to the installation of the cladding. The position of the cupboards may be seen in ill. 1.

1:4 Doors.

The north wall door and enframements date to the late 1940s or a little later.

The west wall door dates to the same period as the north wall door. The jambs and architraving appear to belong to the original construction period.

1:5 Window.

The sashes and enframements date to the late 1940s. The aperture does not belong to the original construction period, (as can be seen from an early twentieth century photograph). The aperture does appear to date to an earlier period than the present sash and enframements.

2:0 Comment.

2:1 The installation of toilet facilities in this room would not complement the original function of the building or its projected use for museum functions. (A toilet facility already exists in the south-east corner of the Royal Engineer's complex).

2:2 It is to be noted that a septic tank exists near the southern end of the eastern elevation and pits associated with this near the eastern end of the southern elevation.

2:3 Water tanks could be set up in the north-east corner of the courtyard as formerly existed. Water pressure would present a problem as a pressure tank could not be set up in the roof. (There is little room in the attic area and the timbers would need to be strengthened). During the 1940s to 1960s a pressure tank existed in the courtyard but was unsightly as it projected well above the height of the courtyard wall.

2:4 Under no circumstances should a door be installed in place of the window as such action would contravene the letter and the spirit of the Management Plan and the Burra Charter, (ie, destroying the fabric and character of the area).

2:5 Any means of access would have to be through the north elevation courtyard wall door and then through the north door of room 4.

2:6 The points raised in items 2:4 and 2:5 will undoubtedly result in space problems, in an already long and narrow room, considering that toilets and wash facilities are called for, for both males and females.

3:0 Recommendations.

3:1 The conversion of room 4 into toilet facilities should only be considered after all other options have been exhausted as possibilities.

3:2 Under no circumstances should a door be created in the east wall of room 4.

3:3 The architraving and jambs of the western wall door should remain in situ. There would be no objection to the sealing up of the door aperture as long as the action is reversible.

3:4 As the window aperture is of recent origin, as are the sashes and enframements, there would be no objection to the closing of the aperture. The aperture should not be enlarged.

3:5 All post 1940 modifications and additions may be removed.

3:6 The original roofing timbers and the lath and plaster remains should be retained where possible.

3:7 The compacted below-floor deposit should be considered as a sealed deposit. Any excavations made for plumbing should be done by the supervising archaeologist. Any disturbance of the below-floor area should be kept to a minimum.

3:8 All installations of partitions and flooring should be reversible and should not damage existing stonework or original fabric.

3:9 Holes made in the walls for plumbing should be kept below ground level. Holes for water supply and electricity through walls should be made as discrete as possible.

Royal Engineer's Stables, Recommendations for Conversion
as Toilet Facilities.

4:0 Introduction.

The following report is a modification of part 3(a) of the Departmental brief (see p. A) which was to provide conservation recommendations to check further deterioration.

The conversion of the Structure to toilet facilities should be, with minor exceptions, totally reversible.

Apart from the installation of plumbing and internal partitions, the following recommendations should be viewed as a fulfillment of part 3(a) of the Departmental brief.

Previous reports: KAVHA Arch. Report 1, parts 1 and 2; Report 5, parts 1 and 2; and Report 8, part 1.

4:1 Roof.

4:1a Comment.

The re-roofing of the structure was recommended in KAVHA Arch. Rep. 5, part 1, p. 24. The latter report was written at a time when the post WW II roof was still in place; this roof was demolished during the latter half of 1981.

4:1b Recommendations.

It is recommended that the roof be rebuilt along the lines of the existing roof of the main western section of the Royal Engineer's Office. The original coping of the gables, the last of which appears to have survived into the 1930s, should be restored using the coping of the Royal Engineer's Office as a model in all respects. The coping

stones may need to be moulded in lime mortar as their reconstruction of stone is impractical at present.

Original fabric should not be interfered with during the rebuilding of the roof.

4:2 Exterior Elevations, (north, east, south and west).

4:2a Comment.

The exterior elevations have been weathered since the last bagging was carried out. Joints where the mortar has blown out need attention. The south and west elevations were in need of bagging.

Sufficient remains of the original wall treatment survive to show that the exterior wall treatment was the same as that of the Royal Engineer's Office.

4:2b Recommendations.

Re-render all exterior walls and restore "quoining" at corners using the existing remains, as seen on the north and south elevations, as a guide. The surviving quoining should be incorporated into the new work.

The string coursing of the north and south gables should also be restored as seen on the north gable.

4:3 Interior Walls.

4:3a Comment.

Parts of the coursing has become unstable due to weathering. The few remaining clues as to the Structure's former function may be seen along the east wall and the eastern ends of the north and south walls.

4:3b Recommendations.

As valuable clues would be permanently obscured by internal rendering of the walls, it is recommended that thin stud framing be used to cover the existing walls. Some of the joints should be filled with lime mortar, before covering the walls, to prevent further deterioration.

4:4 Flooring.

4:4a Comment.

It was agreed that the below-ground deposits must not be disturbed consequent the discovery of valuable archaeological deposits and the original cobble floor during last February's excavation.

4:4b Recommendations.

A platform should be built above the present earth floor level as the floor for the toilet facilities. The plumbing should be laid between the platform and the earth floor.

The pipes to the septic tank should be taken through the western floor foundation at the extreme southern end. This inside area may be excavated providing that the excavation does not exceed 0.250m to 0.300m in depth or extends further out from the south wall than by 0.500m. This area was excavated last February and back-filled.

4:5 Plumbing to Septic Tank.

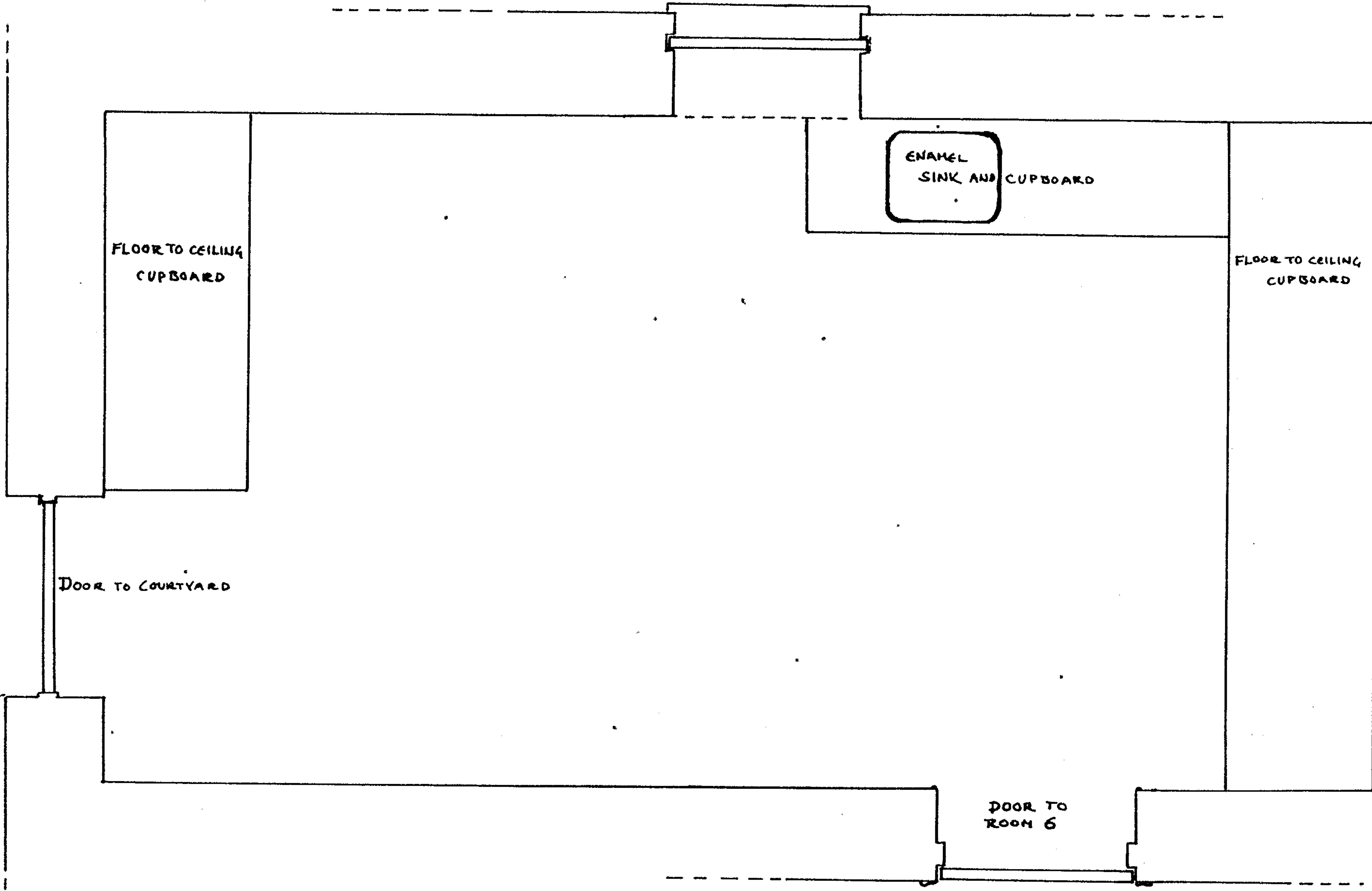
The trench for the septic tank pipe from the southern end of the west exterior elevation to the septic tank should be excavated by the supervising archaeologist.

4:6 Door and Windows.

The installation of glazing and a door should incorporate all existing significant features, destroying no original fabric.

H30 A ROYAL ENGINEER'S OFFICE, ROOM 4.

← NTH



SCALE 1:25
10.6.1982 RVJV