


Answers to Questions on Notice – National Capital Authority Biannual Briefing – Thursday, 29 June 2023

#	Question	Response
1.	The main problem I have the NCA is the fact that there are no clear design principles for how we develop the ACT into the future. Walter Burley Griffin had a pretty clear vision for what he thought the city should look like. Ideas like the “y plan” and the “bush capital” with extensive planting of trees and green spaces were part of a vision that produced a very livable city. The current plan seems to be driven more by greed than concepts of livability. Apartments are built with not enough parking for the residents or visitors isolating tenants socially. I could accept this if public transport was up to scratch but it isn’t and won’t be for a very long time. We are building massive heat islands in our new suburbs with little or no green spaces to help cool the environment. This will drive up energy requirements massively. Where are the sustainable design principles that help us avoid this?	<p>The NCA’s principles and policies for the future of the national capital are embedded in the National Capital Plan (NCP) and supplementary policy documents such as our heritage management plans and the NCA’s Tree Management Policy. The National Capital Plan embodies the principles of the Griffins’ plan for Canberra.</p> <p>The NCP details matters such as land use, design quality and landscape standards.</p>
2.	NCA, where are the V8 Supercars.	The Canberra 400 (V8 supercars) was an event held in Canberra from 2000 to 2002. The NCA supported but did not sponsor the event. The NCA understands that the event was discontinued for financial reasons.
3.	The ‘PALM Act’ stipulates that “The Territory Plan has no effect to the extent that it is inconsistent with the National Capital Plan, but the Territory Plan shall be taken to be consistent with the National Capital Plan to the extent that it is capable of operating concurrently with the National Capital Plan.” How has the NCA satisfied itself, and to what extent, that the proposed Territory Plan is consistent with – and can operate concurrently with – the National Capital Plan, and ii) on what basis has it undertaken this analysis, and iii) where are the results published? If it has not undertaken this work, why not?	<p>ACT Government legislation mandates consultation with the NCA for any changes to the Territory Plan.</p> <p>The NCA considers all draft variations to the Territory Plan to ensure that any changes proposed by the ACT Government are consistent with the National Capital Plan</p>

4.	Part Two of the National Capital Plan in Section 2.4 states that “Buildings in Canberra Central should be of a height generally not greater than the height of the mature tree canopy (typically 3-4 storeys), except where otherwise permitted by the Plan.” To what extent has the NCA reviewed the actual progress of development within Canberra Central and the extent of alignment with the principle that have be achieved? If no such analysis or review has occurred, why not?	<p>The ACT Government reports the NCA’s comments in its consultation report.</p> <p>The NCA has undertaken several reviews and assessments of the planning and design environment in Canberra. The relationship between building heights and landscape has informed these assessments. Most notable of these was the Griffin Legacy. Policies arising from that work were embedded into the National Capital Plan in 2006 and reviewed and renewed in the 2015 rewriting of the Plan.</p>
5.	the ‘PALM Act’ directs that the National Capital Plan “will set general standards and aesthetic principles to be adhered to in the development of the National Capital”. The NCP states that, among other things, in Part 2 Section 2.4 “Development in the National Capital should seek to achieve harmony between architecture and landscape to give continuing effect to the City Beautiful and Garden City characters of the city.” Given NCP is mandated to set principles concerning aesthetics, and has explicitly made reference to bot Garden City and City Beautiful paradigms that underpin the Griffin design – how has the NCA ensured that aesthetic requirements are being met in policy through the Territory Plan and in practice the actual realised built environment within the Territory? If the NCA has not reviewed these aspects or so satisfied itself, why no, given its legislated role?	
6.	Has the NCA undertaken any internal review of its resourcing, both financial and staffing, to assess the extent to which there are any resourcing barriers to it being able to fully meet its objects and role requirements under the ‘PALM Act’? If so, what are the results of that review analysis?	NCA has adequate resourcing to deliver on the requirements of the PALM Act. We review and prioritise projects and deliverables to ensure we deliver on the objectives of the PALM Act. We are able approach Government for additional resources to fund specific works as required, such as for current work to strengthen Commonwealth Avenue Bridge.
7.	The ‘PALM Act’ mandates that the object of the Territory Plan is, among other things, to provide and “attractive” environment for the people of Canberra, the Act also stipulates that the NCP will set out aesthetic principles for planning and design across the Territory. The proposed Territory Plan references the mandatory object but makes no reference to what constitutes an attractive city nor does it set any specific requirements or principles of what constitutes	<p>The Territory Plan, by recognising the need to attractive environment, has complied with the legislative requirements of the PALM Act.</p> <p>Aesthetics assessment, in part, require judgement regarding the appropriateness of a design solution in its context.</p>

	attractive architecture that would meet the requirements of the ACT. This is in stark contrast to bot WB Griffin’s lack of fear in making such specifications, as well as the NCA’s predecessor NCDC, which also set out basic requirements, best evidenced in “Tomorrow’s Canberra” of 1970 (see for example page 55). How does the NCA form an assessment of its own alignment to the requirement of the Act, as well as that of the Territory Plan, given this inherent gap between mandatory objects and further specifications in either the NCP but especially in the Territory Plan?	
8.	Where can I launch my off-the-beach sailing dinghy?	Personal watercraft, including kayaks, windsurfers, stand up paddle boards and other craft designed to launch from a shoreline may use defined beaches to launch. These areas include Yarralumla Beach, Black Mountain Peninsula Beach, Weston Park East Beach and Grevillia Beach (East Basin).
9.	Why is access to this area controlled by a private entity? 	The area in the photo is ACT Government land licensed to Canberra Yacht Club. The area may be used for launching personal water craft; however, users will need to gain access through the Sothern Cross Club car park via Marina Place.
10.	Is the NCA best placed to be in charge of a musical instrument such as the National Carillon?	The NCA manages and maintains the National Carillon as part of its responsibility under the <i>Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988</i> to carry

	<p>Looking after the building in which the Carillon is housed is one thing, but taking care of a complex musical instrument seems to me to be another.</p> <p>Would it be better for the Carillon to be looked after by people with relevant skills - for example the Music Department at the Australian National University?</p>	<p>out works to maintain and enhance the character of the National Capital.</p> <p>The National Carillon is a significant artifact of Australia's cultural narrative. As one of the world's largest musical instruments, the National Carillon provides both visual and acoustic contributions to the character of the National Triangle.</p> <p>The National Carillon requires ongoing funding to maintain and enhance both the building and the instrument it houses.</p> <p>In managing the National Carillon, the NCA has an established stakeholder group, including representatives from the Australian National University. This stakeholder group supports the NCA to manage both the physical aspect of the National Carillon and in training and providing academic programs to encourage people to continue the art of composing for and playing the instrument. The NCA values the established relationship that has been fostered with the ANU to support the National Carillon.</p>
11.	<p>How does the NCA view its role in enabling housing in the ACT, particularly in well-located areas close to employment hubs and economic opportunity (in particular, NCA designated areas near the National Triangle)? How does it engage with the ACT Government in relation to housing policy?</p>	<p>The NCA supports concentration of housing along public transport routes and commercial hubs, such as town centres and group centres.</p> <p>This support is stated in the NCP and is reflected in precinct codes.</p>
12.	<p>How does the NCA view the relationship between the interests of residents of Canberra (including the staff working in Commonwealth agencies and national institutions) in the city in which they live, and the interests of Australians more broadly in the national capital?</p>	<p>Under the relevant legislation, the NCA and the relevant ACT Government agency share responsibility for the ongoing planning and development of the ACT. The NCA has responsibility for, and focusses primarily on, Canberra's role as Australia's National Capital. That said, The National Capital Plan, the NCA's core planning document, includes principles and guidance for development and planning across Canberra and the ACT. In practice, the NCA aims to</p>

		appropriately balance Canberra's national role with the needs and aspirations of the citizens of a modern, dynamic city.
13.	The 2000 Parliamentary Zone Review provided a plan for the NCA to deliver greater amenities and better urban design outcomes for both workers and tourists in the National Triangle, along with recommendations for delivering this infrastructure in stages over a 50-year time frame. We are now approaching 25 years since the Review. How many of the Review's outcomes have been successfully implemented? When was the last time the NCA assessed its implementation of the Review?	The Parliamentary Zone review has guided the development of the Parliamentary Zone since its inclusion in the National Capital Plan in 2001. The review remains current. Initiatives which have been informed by this include Bowen Place Crossing, parks adjacent to Questacon, the refurbishment of the National Library Forecourt, the National Portrait Gallery, and Reconciliation Place. Most recently this work has guided the design and siting of a multi-storey carpark adjacent to the John Gorton Building and the siting of a sculpture adjacent to the National Gallery of Australia.
14.	What are the NCA's plans for National Triangle infrastructure over the short to medium term?	The NCA is currently focussing on the northern side of Lake Burley Griffin. A review of Commonwealth Park is in its formative stage, whilst work to improve pedestrian and cycle safety in Kings Park is at an advanced stage. We are also looking to extend a pathway between West Basin and Acton Peninsula.
15.	Why are there not pedestrian crossings or consistent footpaths along the main axis between the lake and Parliament House - as recommended by the Parliamentary Zone Review - and what does this suggest about the NCA's approach to welcoming pedestrians in the parliamentary triangle?	A strong pedestrian connection currently exists between Parliament House and Queen Elizabeth Terrace via Federation Mall and Old Parliament House Rose Gardens.
16.	How is the NCA working with the ACT Government to encourage active travel in line with the ACT Active Travel Plan, and deliver active travel infrastructure in line with the new ACT urban intersections best practice design guide?	<p>The NCA has undertaken several projects to enhance active travel. These include Bowen Place Crossing, RG Menzies Walk and conversion of Wendouree Drive to a dedicated cycle path.</p> <p>The proposed design for the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge renewal includes creation of a 5m wide shared pedestrian and cycle path on both sides of the bridge.</p>

17.	How is the NCA engaging with the ACT Government regarding planning for Light Rail Stage 2B? What steps are the NCA taking to ensure that planning approvals for Stage 2B progress as rapidly as possible?	The NCA continues to work actively with the ACT Government on its Light Rail proposal. The NCA has not, however, received a works approval application for Stage 2B.
18.	What are the NCA's public transport and active transport mode share targets for the National Triangle? What is the NCA doing to achieve these targets? How has the NCA integrated public and active transport goals into parking provision and demand management policy?	The NCA works with the ACT Government to encourage use of a range of transport modes. The NCA introduced pay parking which is a measure that is an incentive for public and active transport modes and has planning policies that restrict growth of parking supply.
19.	How often are community groups invited to present at meetings of the NCA Board? How are those groups selected, and how can community groups engage with the NCA Board if they haven't been approached to present?	The Authority receives presentations from community groups from time to time. For example, the Authority received a presentation from the Yarralumla Residents Association at their June 2023 meeting to provide their views on a proposed development in their suburb. Such presentations are usually on the basis of a specific issue or development and at the request of the relevant community group.
20.	Some areas of the National Triangle are beginning to look run down. Are the NCA's financial arrangements suitable to ensure adequate investment in maintenance? Could the introduction of more office buildings within the Triangle (in proximity to Light Rail Stage 2) be an avenue to improve the NCA's finances?	NCA has adequate resourcing through budget funding to maintain the Estate adequately. We review and prioritise projects and deliverables to achieve this objective.
21.	What is the NCA doing to facilitate City to the Lake projects, including Acton Waterfront, and deliver the vision of the Griffin Legacy project?	<p>The NCA's Griffin Legacy Project put in place the broad planning and design framework for the renewal of the Central National Area. This work has enabled land owners, including the ACT Government, to undertake a range of development projects.</p> <p>The NCA works actively with all stakeholders to ensure these projects are designed and constructed to a standard befitting the National Capital.</p>

National Capital Authority

13 July 2023