



CANBERRA
BUSINESS COUNCIL

Canberra Business Council And Kindred Organisations

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and
External Territories Inquiry into the Role of the National Capital Authority

Committed to the Growth and Development of Canberra and the Capital Region



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Executive summary

This submission has been prepared by the Canberra Business Council and its industry Kindred Organisations in response to the Australian Government's invitation for submissions to be considered by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority.

The Council focuses, in this submission, on the Commonwealth's role in the future planning and development of the Capital. In all, 15 recommendations are made, with the top 5 listed on the following page.

Recognition of the **Australian Government's role** in, and responsibility for, the planning, development and promotion of Canberra is critically important to securing a strong and sustainable future for the Nation's Capital. The Council believes that execution of this responsibility through a **statutory authority** (currently the NCA) is appropriate to ensure both independence and accountability. To increase the visibility and accountability of this body, it should reside within the portfolio of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The current roles of the NCA—**planning, maintenance** of significant facilities, estates and infrastructure etc on behalf of the Australian people and **promotion**—are the appropriate roles for the organisation charged with responsibility for the National Capital on behalf of all Australians. The NCA should retain a long-term urban design focus and capability.

Both the primacy of the Australian Government's overall responsibility for, and the legitimate interest of the ACT Government in, planning of the National Capital should be recognised. However, there is a need to **clarify and clearly distinguish the roles** of the Australian Government planning body (NCA) and ACT Agencies responsible for planning at the Territory level. To encourage a collaborative approach, there should be **mandatory cross representation** on each of the Australian Government (NCA) and ACT Government (ACTPLA) planning bodies.

A **single, overarching, National Capital Plan** for the National Capital is required to set the overall planning and development policies for all of Canberra and the ACT. The National Capital Plan should incorporate **detailed codified principles** agreed between the Australian and ACT Governments, for the whole of the National Capital. Below this document, any Strategic Plan(s) for the ACT, need to be consistent **and fully integrated** with the National Capital Plan and should be reviewed regularly (every five years) **cooperatively between both levels of government**. If

there is not a single strategic planning document for Canberra, then there must be consistency and full integration between the National Capital Plan and any ACT Government strategic planning document, such as the Territory or Spatial Plan.

Consistent with the Development Assessment Forum (DAF) model, development that occurs under the National Capital Plan and within the proposed agreed and codified principles, or under the agreed Strategic Plan(s)—both of which should require wide consultation when they are developed and reviewed—should not be subject to further delays from consultation and third party appeals.

Promotion of Canberra as the National Capital should be outwardly focused to stimulate national pride across Australia and international recognition of Canberra as the capital of Australia.

The Council's **top five** recommendations, in terms of priority and urgency, are:

TOP FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Australian Government continue to meet its responsibilities for the nation's capital on behalf of all Australians through active engagement and involvement in planning and development.

Recommendation 2: The Australian Government continue to execute its responsibilities for the nation's capital through a statutory authority (currently the NCA).

Recommendation 4: The NCA be retained as the statutory authority through which the Australian Government executes its responsibilities for the nation's capital and funding be maintained at a level appropriate to this role.

Recommendation 5: A comprehensive National Capital Plan remain under the authority of the NCA. Detailed codified principles be incorporated into the Plan to ensure the highest standards in design for Canberra and particularly for areas of national significance.

Recommendation 8: Large infrastructure projects be agreed between the NCA, ACT Government and the private sector, and submitted to the Australian Government for funding / special assistance reflecting the Australian Government's responsibility for the national capital.

The full list of recommendations from the report (the background to which is contained in the body of the report) is as follows:

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Australian Government continue to meet its responsibilities for the nation's capital on behalf of all Australians through active engagement and involvement in planning and development.

Recommendation 2: The Australian Government continue to execute its responsibilities for the nation's capital through a statutory authority (currently the NCA).

Recommendation 3: The statutory authority with responsibility for the nation's capital reside within the portfolio of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Recommendation 4: The NCA be retained as the statutory authority through which the Australian Government executes its responsibilities for the nation's capital and funding be maintained at a level appropriate to this role.

Recommendation 5: A comprehensive National Capital Plan (NCP) remain under the authority of the NCA. Detailed codified principles be incorporated into the Plan to ensure the highest standards in design for Canberra and particularly for areas of national significance.

Recommendation 6: The NCP be reviewed regularly (every 5 years), in cooperation with the ACT Government and with wide public consultation.

Recommendation 7: Consistent with the National Capital Plan, a Strategic Plan be developed cooperatively between the NCA and ACT Government and reviewed every five years.

Recommendation 8: Large infrastructure projects be agreed between the NCA, ACT Government and the private sector, and submitted to the Australian Government for funding / special assistance reflecting the Australian Government's responsibility for the national capital.

Recommendation 9: The roles and responsibilities of both the NCA and the ACT planning body (ACTPLA) be clearly defined.

Recommendation 10: Cross-representation by both Federal and ACT Governments be mandated for the NCA and the ACT Planning Authority.

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 11: A formal mechanism or framework be established for the collaborative resolution of planning issues where National and Territory interests intersect.

Recommendation 12: A Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum be re-established for Canberra and the Capital Region, involving relevant Australian Government and ACT Government Ministers, the National Capital Authority (NCA), representatives of ACT and capital region business, and with appropriate funds for an independent secretariat to service the Forum.

Recommendation 13: The NCA retain and increase its role in the promotion and marketing of Canberra as the National Capital.

Recommendation 14: 'The Centenary of Canberra' be noted as a key agenda item for the proposed Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum.

Recommendation 15: The Inquiry review its hearing schedule to incorporate hearings outside of Canberra.

Introduction

The Canberra Business Council

The Canberra Business Council is the leading business peak body of the Australian Capital Territory and Capital Region, representing 400 individual members and the interests of more than 35 industry organisations known as Kindred Organisations. Directly and through its Kindred Organisations the Canberra Business Council represents more than 5,000 businesses across the Capital Region. This stretches from Goulburn, Young and Crookwell in the north to Tumut in the west, the Victorian border to the south and to the east along the south coast from Eden to Bateman's Bay. In 2007 the Council entered into an affiliation arrangement with the NSW Business Chamber which represents over 30,000 businesses in NSW and connects over 100,000 businesses across Australia through the State and Territory Chamber Network.

The Canberra Business Council (the Council) welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories Inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority (NCA). The Council made a submission to the previous Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories Inquiry into the National Capital Authority (NCA) in 2003. This submission has been prepared by the Canberra Business Council and Kindred Organisations together with input from the Council's expert advisory Task Forces.

The Council and its Kindred Organisations remain committed to working with the Government at all levels to ensure outcomes that are conducive to stimulating the growth and development of Canberra and the Capital Region. In making this submission, the Council is mindful of the role and importance of the National Capital to all Australians and the multiple functions of Canberra as the National Capital, as a major regional hub for south-eastern New South Wales, as the home to more than 350,000 people and as an important centre for business, education, research and innovation.

Aim

The aim of this submission is to represent to the Joint Standing Committee the issues of concern to the ACT and regional business community in relation to the NCA, and to seek support for the recommendations contained herein.

Scope

While the primary focus of this submission is the Terms of Reference for the current Inquiry, the Council urges the Joint Standing Committee (the Committee) and the Australian Government to adopt a broader long-term view. That is, plan now to position the National Capital and region for all Australians and the future. Canberra is on the threshold of becoming a world city of unique style and attractiveness and an economic growth centre within the Capital Region, as well as being a significant contributor to Australia's maturing sense of national identity through its function as the National Capital. This vision of Canberra as a world city of the future recognises that the ACT is operating in a new paradigm of growth, development and maturity. Planning for today and tomorrow should be with a view to positioning Canberra for the next 20-50 years and beyond.

The Council focuses, in this submission, on the Commonwealth's role in the future planning and development of the Capital. The NCA, which is the subject of this Inquiry, is the body currently charged with discharging at least part of the Commonwealth's responsibility for the National Capital. There are 14 key issues raised in this submission and these may be grouped under the three broad headings of Australian Government Responsibility for the National Capital, A National Capital Plan, and Promotion of Canberra as the National Capital.

Australian Government Responsibility for the National Capital

The Australian Parliament has a constitutional responsibility for the nation's capital.

The seat of government of the Commonwealth shall be determined by the Parliament, and shall be within territory which shall have been granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth, and shall be vested in and belong to the Commonwealth, and shall be in the State of New South Wales, and be distant not less than one hundred miles from Sydney.

– section 125 of the Australian Constitution

The original role and purpose of the National Capital, as the Founding Fathers of the nation intended, was the establishment of a place of national significance to be protected and administered, in terms of planning and development, by the Commonwealth on behalf of all Australians. Constitutionally and legislatively the Australian Parliament, and therefore the Australian Government, has a particular responsibility for Canberra as Australia's National Capital.

The Canberra Business Council considers the Australian Government's role in, and responsibility for, the planning, development and promotion of the Canberra as critically important to securing a strong and sustainable future for the Nation's Capital. This responsibility goes far beyond merely 'owning' the site of the national capital or 'planning' issues. It requires a big-picture, long-term vision for Canberra as the Nation's Capital. It involves an ongoing, active and interested commitment to the fulfilment of its custodial role for the planning and development of Canberra on behalf of all Australians. It requires leadership to implement that vision and a commitment to building a legacy for future generations of Australians.

For the most part the Commonwealth has taken seriously its responsibility for the planning and development of Canberra as the National Capital. Since the original Walter Burley Griffin design, Canberra has been well served by planners who have strived to maintain the design intent of the original plan.

There has been a series of bodies discharging that responsibility on behalf of the Parliament beginning with Walter Burley Griffin himself in 1913, through the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in 1921 to the National Capital Development Commission which was created as a result of the findings of the 1954 Senate Select Committee on the Development of Canberra (McCallum Committee).

In 1989, following the introduction of self government to the ACT, the National Capital Authority (the **NCA**) was established under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1989*, (**the PALM Act**) to act on behalf of the Parliament to discharge its responsibilities for the planning and development of the seat of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

It is the strong view of the Canberra Business Council that the Australian Parliament and therefore the Australian Government must always be engaged in that planning and development function not only to reflect Canberra's national significance but because it has been charged under the Constitution with that responsibility on behalf of all Australians.

Recommendation 1: The Australian Government continue to meet its responsibilities for the nation's capital on behalf of all Australians through active engagement and involvement in planning and development.

Execution of Australian Government Responsibility

The Australian Government's responsibility for the National Capital is best executed through a Statutory Authority, which provides an appropriate balance between independence of planning decisions and accountability. As a Statutory Authority, some assurance is provided to the Australian public that the planning, maintenance and promotion of the nation's capital has the independence to take a very long-term perspective and not be encumbered by the short-term expediencies of election-cycles, party-politics or transient personalities and personal prejudices.

Responsibility for planning matters throughout the ACT and in the Parliamentary Triangle in particular, is currently vested in the National Capital Authority (NCA), through its responsibility to administer the National Capital Plan. The Canberra Business Council supports the role of the NCA, or a similar federally-funded statutory authority, as the principal body to oversee the National Capital's development through the National Capital Plan and believes that the Act

adequately sets out the roles and functions appropriate for such a the body - currently the National Capital Authority.

The national interest is best served by the maintenance of a well resourced statutory authority with sufficient internal resources to adequately discharge this role. To increase the visibility and accountability of this body, it should reside within the portfolio of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Recommendation 2: The Australian Government continue to execute its responsibilities for the nation's capital through a statutory authority (currently the NCA).

Recommendation 3: The statutory authority with responsibility for the nation's capital reside within the portfolio of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Governance Issues

The NCA was proclaimed by the Australian Government in 1989, the same year that the Australian Capital Territory was established, as a self-governing and separate legal entity. *The Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* provides for the NCA to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan. This is the statutory planning tool which underpins the preservation and future of the capital.

The appropriate role of the ACT Government in planning

Complementary to the vitally important role the NCA has in planning for the Nation's Capital, the ACT Government has an equally important and legitimate role in town planning at the local / Territory Government level. While the Council recognises that the ACT Government has an important planning role for the ACT outside of the designated 'national' areas, it is not appropriate for a small Territory Government to carry the responsibility for the urban design and planning of the Nation's Capital on behalf of all Australians. That is the role of the Australian Government as described in the Australian Constitution and in the legislation which underpins the NCA and its predecessors.

At a practical level the ACT Government does not have the financial resources, nor sufficient personnel with appropriate experience, to take on the responsibility for the urban design of the Nation's Capital in general, the development of the central areas which are so integral to the design of the national capital, and the development of institutions within the parliamentary triangle

in particular. While a National Government is likely to be able to attract and retain internationally recognised planners and designers, the Council does not believe that a small Territory Government planning body, with an inevitably small budget, would be able to do so. In addition, the Territory planning functions are currently fragmented across Departments with responsibility for planning, transport planning and the land development program split between portfolios.

Apart from these practical limitations, it is manifestly inappropriate for the Australian Government to transfer its responsibility for planning the nation's capital on behalf of 20 million Australians to a subset of 350,000 Canberra taxpayers. If responsibility for planning were transferred to the ACT Government, even if funds were initially transferred with the responsibility, it is unlikely that this funding transfer would continue at the appropriate level. It would likely become a target for 'savings' in future years, making the long-term urban design for the National Capital vulnerable to short-term financial expedencies. In addition, if the Australian Government were to hand over responsibility for planning in the ACT to the ACT Government, it is unlikely that it (the Australian Government) would continue to take an active interest in the National Capital including providing adequate infrastructure for the nation's capital. Nor would it have the capacity to evaluate and veto planning decisions.

The reality is that Canberra does operate on a daily basis as an integrated city which concurrently fulfils its multiple roles and functions as the National Capital, as the home to more than 350,000 people, as an important centre for business, education, research and innovation, and as a major regional hub for south-eastern New South Wales. The challenge is to integrate and streamline planning and development for Canberra and the ACT to reflect this reality.

Responsibilities and Relationships between the Federal and ACT Governments

The introduction of self government to the ACT has inevitably resulted in a degree of tension between the Commonwealth's responsibility to maintain the National Capital on behalf of all Australians and the Territory's legitimate aim to function properly as the home of a substantial and growing population. In moving to resolve this tension however, the Australian Government should not abrogate its responsibility to the people of Australia by transferring part or all of its responsibility to the ACT Government.

Rather, the solution lies in engagement and cooperation at both levels of government to manage both the Australian Government's interest in the planning and development of Canberra and the expectations of the Territory Government to deliver a sustainable, functioning environment to its

citizens. The Council's strong view is that the Australian Government should take the lead in how the National Capital develops. In this role the Australian Government, through the NCA, has been consistently driven by an urban design culture with the objective of delivering world-class urban design and a functioning city. This vision and leadership role should be retained by the NCA and adequately resourced.

Role of the NCA

Section 6 of the PALM Act, sets out the functions of the NCA. The functions of the Authority are:

- + to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan;
- + to keep the Plan under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary;
- + on behalf of the Commonwealth, to commission works to be carried out in Designated Areas in accordance with the Plan where neither a Department of State of the Commonwealth nor any Commonwealth authority has the responsibility to commission those works;
- + to recommend to the Minister the carrying out of works that it considers desirable to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital;
- + to foster an awareness of Canberra as the National Capital;
- + with the approval of the Minister, to perform planning services for any person or body, whether within Australia or overseas; and
- + with the Minister's approval, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to manage National Land designated in writing by the Minister as land required for the special purposes of Canberra as the National Capital.

The NCA has been charged with creating a national capital which symbolises Australia's heritage, values and aspirations, is internationally recognised and worthy of pride by Australians.

The broad functions and scope of the NCA (planning, asset maintenance and promotion) are appropriate and in line with international best practice. They are consistent with the responsibilities of other bodies in similar national capitals (eg Washington, Ottawa, Brasilia). For example, the entities that are members of the Capitals Alliance—organisations established to represent the national interest in planning matters for the national capitals of Australia, the US,

Canada and Brazil—have all, to one degree or another, responsibilities relating to the planning of the national capital, and for the promotion of the national capital.¹

The Council believes that the NCA's role is critical to the long-term planning and urban design of the Nation's Capital and the Council has confidence in the professionalism and quality of work undertaken by the NCA. The NCA has been a highly successful agency with specialist staff experienced in leading-edge, world-class urban design and in developing a National Capital which not only reflects the values and aspirations of Australians, but a National Capital of which an increasing number of Australians are justifiably proud. The NCA has an international reputation for its work in this regard.

The Canberra Business Council strongly supports continuing funding for the NCA and maintenance of its role at least at 2006-07 levels.

Recommendation 4: The NCA be retained as the statutory authority through which the Australian Government executes its responsibilities for the nation's capital and funding be maintained at a level appropriate to this role.

Planning – The National Capital Plan

Section 6 of the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management Act 1988 provides for the National Capital Authority to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan, to keep the Plan under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary. The National Capital Plan ensures that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance and that planning and development meets the highest standards of design.

Canberra Business Council supports a model whereby the Australian Government, through the NCA, retains primary responsibility for a single overarching Plan for the National Capital – ***The National Capital Plan*** and that any amendments to or review of the National Capital Plan are undertaken, in **cooperation** with the ACT Government and following wide community **consultation** and engagement.

¹ The functions of each entity is discussed in The Capitals Alliance document entitled *Governance Snapshot*

The National Capital Plan should continue to set the overall planning and development policies for all of Canberra and the ACT because the significance of the National Capital does not just reside in the Parliamentary Zone – it relates to the entire Australian Capital Territory.

The National Capital Plan should be reviewed regularly (every 5 years), again in cooperation with the ACT Government and with wide public consultation. The National Capital Plan will thus represent the long-term plan agreed by both levels of government for the whole of the National Capital.

The Canberra Business Council also supports the incorporation into The National Capital Plan of **detailed codified principles** underlying the plan. These codified principles would need to be agreed between the Australian and ACT Governments, for the whole of the National Capital.

Detailed codified planning principles incorporated into The National Capital Plan would ensure the highest standards in design for areas of national significance and prevent any possibility of a small jurisdiction with limited finances making planning decisions that could compromise the long-term design of the National Capital. Detailed codified planning principles would also provide a robust basis for a continually-improving application of the Development Assessment Forum (DAF) leading practice model for development assessment.

Objective and expert evaluation of applications against known policies and objective rules and tests provides efficient and transparent assessment of the majority of development applications. This would lead the way for quicker, more efficient development assessment processes and good planning outcomes. Over time, this will also lead to increased harmonisation of systems at the Australian Government and ACT levels.

Where it is not possible for all National Capital Plan planning policies to be codified into objective rules and provisions, the Canberra Business Council supports the DAF recommendation that a clear distinction be made between objective, code-assessable development and more complex applications that require some balancing of public views with the benefits and impacts of the proposed development.²

² http://www.daf.gov.au/reports_documents/doc/DAF_LPM_AUGUST_2005.doc

Finally, providing a call-in power allows the policy maker (the Australian Government) to take control of applications that will either have a significant impact on the achievement of policy or which, by their nature, are likely to establish policy.³

Recommendation 5: A comprehensive National Capital Plan remain under the authority of the NCA. Detailed codified principles be incorporated into the Plan to ensure the highest standards in design for Canberra and particularly for areas of national significance.

Recommendation 6: The NCP be reviewed regularly (every 5 years), in cooperation with the ACT Government and with wide public consultation.

Strategic Planning

Beneath the National Capital Plan, the Canberra Business Council supports an associated Strategic Plan which is agreed between both levels of Government responsible for planning in the ACT, identifies critical infrastructure priorities, is fully consistent with the National Capital Plan and is reviewed regularly (every five years) jointly by the Australian and ACT Governments.

Under this model (The National Capital Plan and an agreed Strategic Plan) the ACT Government could assume more responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of planning across the ACT within the agreed detailed codified principles and **except for those areas that are either:**

- + **critically important to the role of Canberra as the National Capital** (e.g. the National Triangle and Parliamentary Zone, some Designated Areas (to be determined), embassies, monuments and other places of national significance etc); or
- + **critical to the preservation of the primary visual features of the original Griffin plan** (including but not limited to the Central National Area, the hills and ridges, the main avenues and approach routes, and the buffer areas etc).

³ http://www.daf.gov.au/reports_documents/doc/DAF_LPM_AUGUST_2005.doc Where this occurs DAF proposes three subsidiary principles:

- "Assessment needs to take place under conditions of transparency and accountability..."
- Public consultation in such a system of assessment is about access to information and accountability, to oversee the application of criteria which were adopted with active community engagement; it is about understanding the effect of the criteria and how they might be changed, but it is not about influencing a political decision on a specific project.
- The senior executive level of a particular jurisdiction – ministers, councils, possibly agency heads, etc – should be able, in defined circumstances and/or through defined processes, call in a proposal for determination, provided that the 'jurisdictional call-in' is an explicit, public intervention for stated reasons."

Public consultation should be mandated in the development and amendment of planning documents relating to the ACT but, once developed and agreed, there should be limited opportunities for third-party appeals consistent with the DAF model.

If it is not possible for the two levels of Government to agree on a single Strategic Plan, then there should be full integration and consistency between the NCA and ACT Government planning documents for the National Capital.

The ACT Planning and Land Management Act 1988 requires the Territory Plan to be “consistent 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.”⁴. Much more needs to be done to integrate ACT planning documents with the National Capital Plan. For example, the NCA currently has a mandatory involvement in the development of arterial roads under the National Capital Plan but no arterial roads are shown on the ACT Spatial Plan. Proper recognition should also be afforded to the fact that Canberra is a central hub for the surrounding State regions and lies on the main routes between regional centres and the major cities (Sydney and Melbourne). Integration of these plans will require extensive consultation.

Recommendation 7: Consistent with the National Capital Plan, a Strategic Plan be developed cooperatively between the NCA and ACT Government and reviewed every five years.

Infrastructure

When the ACT was handed self-government, it was left with significant infrastructure deficiencies, especially around sustainable transport systems. The ACT Government, representing only 350,000 people, has limited resources to upgrade existing and build new infrastructure projects to a standard that is in accordance with Canberra’s national significance. Large infrastructure projects such as an adequate public transport system, major access roads, water supply and national facilities and institutions should continue to be recognised as largely the nation’s responsibility for the Nation’s capital. The Australian Government should be actively involved with the ACT Government in identifying and prioritising infrastructure needs for the nation’s capital and providing special assistance for strategic infrastructure investment.

⁴ ACT Planning and Land Management Act 1988 – Section 26.

Advocacy for new infrastructure projects including responsibility for events and developing the distinctive character of the National Capital should be agreed between the NCA, ACT Government and business, and a single list of priorities submitted to the Australian Government.

Recommendation 8: Large infrastructure projects be agreed between the NCA, ACT Government and the private sector, and submitted to the Australian Government for funding / special assistance reflecting the Australian Government's responsibility for the national capital.

Relationship between NCA and ACT Government planning agencies

The Council acknowledges that the working relationship between the NCA and the ACT Government planning bodies needs to improve and urges the Australian Government to take action which:

- + defines and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of both the NCA and the ACT planning body (ACTPLA); and
- + institutionalises an integrated and effective co-operative model for planning in the ACT between the NCA (with responsibilities for the National Capital) and the ACT Government (with responsibilities limited to the citizens of the city of Canberra and the ACT). At the very least, the Council recommends mandatory cross-representation of the management bodies of the planning organisations at both levels of government to cultivate a detailed understanding and appreciation of the respective roles and responsibilities and a commitment to active collaboration.

Recommendation 9: The roles and responsibilities of both the NCA and the ACT planning body (ACTPLA) be clearly defined.

A Collaborative Governance Model

Beyond mandatory cross-representation on planning bodies and to encourage a collaborative approach to planning between Federal and ACT Governments, the Canberra Business Council recommends as follows:

- + **An Australian Government Planning Authority (currently the NCA)** which retains primary responsibility for developing and reviewing The National Capital Plan, with input from the ACT Government and with wide public consultation. The Board of the Authority should have mandated representation from the ACT Government and manage planning and development for those areas directly the responsibility of the NCA under the National Capital Plan.
- + **An ACT Planning body** (currently ACTPLA) which has mandated representation from the Commonwealth body responsible for the National Capital (currently NCA).
- + **A formal mechanism or framework** for collaboratively resolving planning issues that arise between the Australian Government and ACT planning authorities where the divergent roles and functions of Canberra as the National Capital and Canberra as a functioning city inevitably intersect, for example in the Central National Areas, lake development etc⁵.

Recommendation 10: Cross-representation by both Federal and ACT Governments be mandated for the NCA and the ACT Planning Authority.

Recommendation 11: A formal mechanism or framework be established for the collaborative resolution of planning issues where National and Territory interests intersect.

The Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum

In addition to a formal mechanism for resolving planning issues that arise between the Australian and ACT planning bodies, the Canberra Business Council strongly recommends that the Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum be re-established. This Ministerial Forum met in the past to identify and prioritise key infrastructure projects that could be carried forward in the Capital Region. It was a high-level consultative / advisory forum involving the Australian Government, the ACT Government, the NCA and the Canberra business community. The Forum was chaired by the Federal Minister responsible for the ACT and was attended by the Chief Minister of the ACT, relevant Australian Government and ACT Government Ministers, the

⁵ The Canberra Business Council suggests that such a body should not be a standing authority but should be a committee convened 'as required'. It should be jointly chaired by the heads of the National Government and ACT Government planning bodies responsible for the National Capital. It should have limited numbers to facilitate decision-making and equal numbers from each level of government with no casting vote to encourage decision by agreement. For transparency, minutes of meetings of this committee should be forwarded to the responsible Ministers at both the National and ACT Government levels.

National Capital Authority (NCA) and representatives of ACT and Capital Region business. The Forum met quarterly.⁶

The Canberra Business Council strongly recommends that a consultative mechanism such as the Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum be re-established, so that issues affecting the National Capital and surrounding areas can be properly canvassed with the Australian Government and priorities for infrastructure projects in the National Capital recommended.

Recommendation 12: A Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum be re-established for Canberra and the Capital Region, involving relevant Australian Government and ACT Government Ministers, the National Capital Authority (NCA), representatives of ACT and capital region business, and with appropriate funds for an independent secretariat to service the Forum.

The Promotion of Canberra as the National Capital

Promotion of Canberra as the Nation's capital to all Australians and internationally is irrefutably a legitimate role for the Australian Government. This role has been delegated to the NCA under The Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 and should continue.

The Canberra Business Council strongly supports an increased role for the NCA in the promotion and marketing of the National Capital, in particular promotion of those events and facilities that are closely related to nationhood – Parliament House, the National Institutions and monuments and the concept of Canberra as the capital of the nation, events such as the Australia Day Concert, and the outreach education programs.

The Council's view is that the promotion of Canberra as the National Capital by the NCA should be outwardly focused to stimulate national pride across Australia and recognition of Canberra as the capital of Australia internationally. This element of the NCA's activity is more than simply a marketing campaign promoting the attributes of Canberra (which is arguably the role of Australian Capital Tourism) but rather an investment in Canberra's role as national capital.

This broader, more emotional role is aimed at '*winning the hearts and minds of Australians*' through a range of activities with the goal of fostering and building pride in Canberra's role. Canberra is appropriately the home of the 'Australian story', as reflected in the National Capital

⁶ Membership of the Consultative Forum should include Ministerial representation, senior officials from each jurisdiction and representatives of the business community but be kept to a size that facilitates efficiency of discussion and progress of proposals. The Forum should be served by a secretariat that is both appropriately resourced and independent from the Department serving the relevant minister to ensure that the agenda reflects the priority areas of Canberra and the surrounding region.

Institutions and demonstrated in the democratic process of the Australian Government; however, there is a need to acknowledge that 'the whole is greater than the sum of the individual components' and therefore there is a need to continue a strong and coordinated approach to communicating this story on a number of levels.

Some of the activities conducted by the NCA significantly contribute to this notion. These include:

- + Australia Day Live Concert on the Lawns of Parliament House
- + Operating of the national capital exhibition with flexible timing and display currency as well as expertly telling the story of the Griffin Legacy
- + Providing expert tours and advice on the many treasures and memorials located here
- + Conducting outreach education on the role, history and future of the capital
- + Maintaining the integrity and significance of the parliamentary triangle

These and other activities should be continued and expanded to ensure the ideal of Canberra is not lost in the detail of planning, commerce and the functional role of government. It is essential that these institutions retain their funding so that the presentations and exhibitions, that in turn encourage visitation levels to the National Capital, can continue. There is also a legitimate role for the ACT Government in promoting Canberra not only to Canberrans but also nationally and internationally. These roles should be complementary – the organisations should not compete with or duplicate each other's efforts.

Recommendation 13: The NCA retain and increase its role in the promotion and marketing of Canberra as the National Capital.

The Centenary of Canberra

The Centenary of Canberra will be a significant milestone in the history of the Commonwealth and presents a unique opportunity to engage with all Australians to strongly embrace and promote our history and the place that embodies the spirit of that coming together as a nation – Canberra. As such it is critical that the Australian Government be at the forefront of this celebration to ensure that the entire nation is involved. The worst outcome would be for the Centenary of our National Capital to be celebrated only in Canberra by Canberrans

As the Statutory body with responsibility for promoting the National Capital on behalf of the Australian Government, the NCA should be involved with the ACT Government in planning 'National Activities' for the celebration of Canberra's centenary..

The Canberra Business Council stands ready to contribute or participate in any discussions or exploration of ideas surrounding Canberra's Centenary and suggests that this would be an ideal agenda item for the Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum recommended above.

Recommendation 14: 'The Centenary of Canberra' be noted as a key agenda item for the proposed Ministerial Canberra Consultative Forum.

The Consultation Process

The Council notes with concern the extremely short timeframes for this inquiry into the NCA being undertaken by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories. Currently and the fact that at the time this submission was presented it appeared that the limited number of hearing days were all scheduled for Canberra. The Council believes that the subject of this Inquiry is an important issue of national significance and interest, and that broader consultation outside of Canberra should be canvassed to ensure a truly national perspective and to avoid accusations of a narrow Canberra-centric focus.

Recommendation 15: The Inquiry review its hearing schedule to incorporate hearings outside of Canberra.

Conclusion

The proper and considered long-term planning and development of Canberra as Australia's National Capital, is an important responsibility for the Australian Government. Decisions made by the planning authority charged with this responsibility will have a significant impact on the long-term design legacy of the planning and development of the National Capital, which will determine whether Australia's National Capital sits with other leading world cities, as well as the economic growth, development and sustainability of Canberra and the ACT region.

The Canberra Business Council believes that the continuation of the National Capital Authority is the appropriate mechanism through which to discharge that responsibility. However, the Council believes that by addressing the issues raised in this submission, significant improvements can be



made in terms of governance, integration, consultation and collaboration between the Federal and ACT Governments.

The Council and its Kindred Organisations remain committed to working with the Government at all levels to ensure outcomes that stimulate the growth and development of Canberra and the Capital Region.

CBC Kindred Organisations

ACTSPORT

Association of Consulting Engineers Australia
Australian Hotels Association
Australian Information Industry Association
Australian Institute of Company Directors
Australian Institute of Management NSW & ACT Ltd
Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (ACT Chapter)
Australian Property Institute (ACT Division)
Australian Society of Association Executives
Canberra Arts Marketing
Canberra Convention Bureau Inc
Carers ACT
Clubs ACT
COTA (ACT)
CPA Australia
Engineers Australia, Canberra Division
Family Business Australia
Housing Industry Association
Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia
Institution of Surveyors Australia (Canberra Division)
Law Society of the ACT
Master Builders Association (ACT)
National Institute of Accountants
Pharmacy Guild of Australia ACT Branch
Property Council of Australia (ACT Division)
Public Relations Institute of Australia (ACT) Inc.
Royal Australian Institute of Architects (ACT Chapter)
Safety Institute of Australia Inc (ACT Division)
The Australian Institute of Building
The Street Theatre
Tourism Industry Council (ACT & Region)

Map 1: The Australian Capital Region

