

Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# CITY HILL: Review of the Draft Master Plan

Report of the Joint Standing Committee on the  
National Capital and External Territories

June 1993

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## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Joint Committee on the National Capital proposed, and the Commonwealth Minister for the Arts and Territories, the Hon Wendy Fatin MP agreed on 30 October 1992 that the Committee consider the proposal to amend the National Capital Plan to incorporate the proposed amendments generated by the Master Plan Study for City Hill.

Upon the dissolution of the 36th Parliament for the March 1993 federal election, the Committee ceased to exist.

On 27 May 1993 the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories was established and it subsequently sought to resume the inquiry. The Hon B L Howe MP, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Services agreed on 1 June 1993.



## PREFACE

Although this is the first report of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories, this inquiry was begun in October 1992 by the Joint Committee on the National Capital following a reference from the then Minister for the Arts and Territories. That Committee is no longer in existence and its responsibilities in relation to national capital issues now rest with the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories.

The Committee wishes to place on record its appreciation for the work undertaken by the former Joint Committee on the National Capital under the chairmanship of Mr J V Langmore, MP. That Committee undertook its inquiry into the proposed amendments to the National Capital Plan relating to City Hill and its environs in a manner that maximised public input and consultation. This report is largely the work of that Committee and stands as a testament to its diligence.

Our thanks also go to all of the individuals, community and professional groups and government agencies that have contributed to the Committee's deliberations.

Finally, I wish to thank all members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories for their efforts in bringing this inquiry to a timely conclusion.

R L Chynoweth, MP  
Chairman





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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACTPA</b>	ACT Planning Authority
<b>NCDC</b>	National Capital Development Commission (Commonwealth)
<b>NCPA</b>	National Capital Planning Authority (Commonwealth)
<b>NHMRC</b>	National Health and Medical Research Council
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation



## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

1.1 City Hill is an important symbol to the people of Canberra. While architects, planners and historians talk of its significance in terms of Griffin's plans or Weston's trees, residents think of a familiar landmark which has remained relatively untouched by the remarkable growth in Civic in recent years, save for the controversial construction of additional carparks. Similarly, unlike almost all the other major roads in Civic, Vernon Circle has not been altered during the past decade by roadworks and the installation of traffic lights.

1.2 Although many local residents may not know it, successive plans for the area have allowed provision for the construction of more buildings on the land between London Circuit and Vernon Circle.

1.3 Civic is growing and spreading outward. If this growth is to be controlled and the outward spread arrested, the construction of these buildings is inevitable and possibly desirable.

1.4 However, to some extent any such new development on the land between London Circuit and Vernon Circle will obscure the view of the landmark park and will contribute to traffic congestion and parking pressures. The development therefore must be carefully planned.

1.5 A Master Plan for City Hill is needed. The NCPA and the ACTPA are to be commended for recognising this and for producing, through a joint study, Draft Amendment No. 5 to the *National Capital Plan*.

1.6 If approved, The Master Plan for City Hill contained in the Draft Amendment, would result in a significant departure from the development guidelines in the *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan* of 1989. The 1989 Plan was the result of an extensive review process commencing with the release of a draft for public consultation in 1987 by the NCDC. The NCDC received 65 submissions, held four public seminars and many meetings with local groups and government authorities. A further consultation process was carried out by the NCPA in 1989 with the release of the Draft Proposals for the National Capital Plan. The land use and development guidelines for the City Hill area in the NCDC's 1989 Plan were incorporated into the National Capital Plan. Now, fewer than four years later, the community has been asked to reconsider several basic planning issues which were considered by many to have been settled.

1.7 In presenting his evidence at the hearing, Mr George Tomlins, Chief Planner, ACTPA said:

While this is a small planning change...in fact, it potentially represents in its totality a major change to Civic. It is a long term project. It may take possibly 20 to 50 years to change Civic. It will impact on the ceremonial, civic, cultural and legal heart of the Territory.

1.8 The community response to the Master Plan was divided. Some responses were very supportive and contained minor criticisms; others expressed strong opposition to key elements such as the extension of the avenues and the construction of six storey buildings on Vernon Circle. A number were critical of the process of public consultation by the NCPA.

Public consultation should imply more than being presented with one favoured solution, rather than with the pros and cons of alternatives.<sup>1</sup>

...the consultation process has been extremely difficult for the public...We have had one plan put in front of us and no other options have been given to us to make comment on.<sup>2</sup>

1.9 Professor Ken Taylor of the National Trust of Australia echoed those feelings in presenting his evidence at the hearing. He said that, after the NCPA confirmed at a workshop its strong support for the Master Plan, he 'felt a certain sense of the magnitude of the uselessness of making a comment when one was told that it was unlikely to have any effect'.<sup>3</sup>

1.10 The Committee is critical of the planners' decision to go ahead and design a six storey building whilst a three storey limit was in place in the National Capital Plan, and that no action was taken to have the National Capital Plan varied until the architectural work had been completed.

1.11 Moreover, when calling for public submissions on the Draft Amendment, the NCPA gave no indication in its advertisements that the proposed City Hill Master Plan represented changes to existing plans or even the onset of development activity in the area.

1.12 The NCPA fulfilled its statutory obligations in relation to preparing the Amendment and consulting with the public, but the Committee considers that the pressure of time prevented adequate opportunity for full public consultation. This is made all the more apparent by the contrast with the well-publicised public deliberations taking place on the planning of Acton Peninsula.

1.13 The Committee was impressed with the comments which the public made about the Master Plan. Unfortunately, there was little scope to evaluate alternative visions, and insufficient information to understand the implications of the proposals on factors such as the amenity of City Hill park, the flow of traffic within and around Civic, noise levels, parking spaces and public transport. Many witnesses remarked on the inappropriateness of considering the future of City Hill without taking into account its relationship with the surrounding areas. Certainly, the Master Plan is not intended to resolve all of these

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibit No. 4 - Professor John Mulvaney - p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence - Mr John Gray, 18 January 1993 - p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence - Professor Ken Taylor (National Trust of Australia), 18 January 1993 - p. 83.

issues, but it is on these issues that the public's acceptance of the Master Plan largely depends. The Committee is reluctant to endorse a Master Plan which has not fully considered these issues.

1.14 The Committee is particularly aware of the fact that the tastes, opinions and priorities of the community will change. Just as planners today can identify the carefully considered decisions of their expert predecessors as mistakes, so too will the decisions made now be reviewed in years to come. The Committee is loath to limit hastily, and perhaps unnecessarily, the options for the future when the only immediate decision to be made concerns a building which could be built in the same area within existing guidelines.

1.15 The Committee recommends:

- (1) that the NCPA not proceed with the certification of the Master Plan for City Hill in its present form; and
- (2) that a revised Master Plan be prepared, including the development of other alternatives, in light of the comments and suggestions made during the current consultation process.

#### Heritage Values

1.16 The heritage values of City Hill - a corner of Griffin's Parliamentary Triangle, the landscape design, the trees planted by Weston, the vistas to and from the avenues - were clearly important to many of the respondents. A high priority in their view was the need to ensure those values were protected and that future development would not diminish them.

1.17 The Committee welcomes the NCPA's commitment to preserving the park, its landscaping and the vistas and notes that consideration will be given to an appropriate landmark in the future, in conjunction with a detailed landscape design. There would certainly be value in enabling easier pedestrian access to Vernon Circle and City Hill.

1.18 Neither the Commonwealth nor the Territory heritage legislation is able to give complete protection to the heritage values of City Hill. However, with commitment on the part of both planning authorities to the spirit of the legislation, the heritage values should not be eroded.

1.19 The Committee recommends that:

- (3) in preparing the Master Plan, the NCPA take account of the heritage values of City Hill by:

- i) preparing a Conservation Plan for City Hill and ensuring the Master Plan is in conformity; (paragraphs 3.28 - 3.31)
- ii) formally consulting with the Australian Heritage Commission, as required by s.30 of the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* and taking into account the Commission's comments; (paragraphs 3.25 - 3.31)
- iii) taking account of the specific requirements for the conservation of City Hill formulated by the Heritage Council; (paragraphs 3.28 - 3.31)
- iv) investigating the effect of vehicle emissions on the trees on City Hill in order to confirm whether or not they are endangering their survival; (paragraphs 3.18 - 3.20) and
- v) ensuring that the vistas along the axes are not obscured further. (paragraph 3.4 - 3.13)

## Traffic

1.20 The key concern about the Master Plan is the proposed traffic arrangements. More than 80 per cent of the respondents commented on that issue. To its credit, the NCPA commissioned a report from traffic consultants, Denis Johnston and Associates in response to the criticisms.

1.21 Unfortunately, in the Committee's view, the report seemed to seek to justify the proposed traffic arrangements rather than examine whether the alternatives suggested by respondents, or indeed other alternatives, were viable. Had this been done a different solution to the problems, which still encompassed the design principles, may have presented itself. The traffic report did not even discuss public transport arrangements.

1.22 The Committee found the treatment of through traffic particularly confusing. On the one hand the Committee was presented with the stated aim in the design principles to reduce or eliminate it, whilst on the other hand there was no coherent information about where it would go. In fact, the NCPA stated in its submission that the consideration of bypass routes either within or adjacent to Civic, or the completion of the peripheral parkway system is independent of the City Hill precinct proposals.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 16.



1.23 The NCPA wants to create an active, vital urban space around Vernon Circle. The Committee believes that much more consideration needs to be given to the environmental conditions which would make this possible, such as the parking/drop-off/public transport lane, the traffic noise levels and the vehicle emissions. The proposed traffic arrangements, as they stand, will certainly not produce conditions which are attractive to active uses, such as street cafes and entertainment.

1.24 The Committee believes that much more study is required about the implications of the present plan and serious consideration given to alternatives. The Committee believes that the implementation scenario presented by the NCPA has the danger of 'doing a bit at a time and seeing how it will work'. This approach could lead to costly and irreversible mistakes.

1.25 Two important and far-reaching studies are in progress at present: the Future Public Transport Options for Canberra study and Canberra in the Year 2020 study. The Committee believes that it would be inadvisable to rush to enshrine a master plan for City Hill without the benefit of the results of both studies.

1.26 The Committee recommends that:

- (4) the NCPA defer the preparation of the Master Plan for City Hill until such time as it is able to take account of:
  - i) the outcomes of the Future Public Transport Options for Canberra study; and
  - ii) Canberra in the Year 2020 Study. (*paragraphs 3.32 - 3.42*)
- (5) in preparing the Master Plan, the NCPA conduct further traffic studies to:
  - i) re-assess the practical value of extending Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues and installing four sets of traffic lights on Vernon Circle; (*paragraphs 3.43 - 3.55*)
  - ii) examine alternative ways of emphasising the corner of the Parliamentary Triangle other than extending Constitution Avenue and in doing so take account of studies on the role of Constitution Avenue and the Kings Avenue/Constitution Avenue corner of the Triangle; (*paragraphs 3.44 - 3.45*)
  - iii) assess the effect 'traffic calming' measures will have on traffic noise levels on Vernon Circle, and plan to ensure the noise levels will be within acceptable guidelines; (*paragraphs 3.62 - 3.71*)

- iv) assess the level of vehicle emissions on Vernon Circle with proposed 'traffic calming arrangements' and plan to ensure that the breaches of the NHMRC recommended levels are eliminated; (paragraphs 3.72 - 3.74)
  - v) consider alternative routes, both local and peripheral, for through traffic; (paragraphs 3.37 - 3.42) and
  - vi) prepare proposals for public transport arrangements around City Hill. (paragraphs 3.56 - 3.61)
- (6) it should be noted also that the Committee recommends against the provision of short-term parking and vehicle set down on Vernon Circle. (paragraph 3.61)

#### Pedestrian Access

1.27 The Committee supports the concept of pocket parks providing access to City Hill. More work is required, though, on means for providing pedestrian access to City Hill, particularly in the light of the decision to delete underpasses from the plan.

1.28 The Committee recommends that:

- (7) in preparing the Master Plan, the NCPA reconsider pedestrian access to Vernon Circle and City Hill by:
  - i) reconsidering the location of the pedestrian pathways from the pocket parks in the light of the decision not to include underpasses in the design; and
  - ii) giving consideration to pedestrian links with Commonwealth Park and Acton Peninsula. (paragraphs 3.75 - 3.82)

#### Buildings and Heights

1.29 Building height policy was apparently the initiating reason for this proposed variation. After examining the arguments for and against changing the established building height of three storeys for Vernon Circle, the Committee was not convinced, at this stage in the development of Canberra, that there is a need for the change, particularly as the change appeared to be principally motivated by the need for the Magistrates Court building. Works approvals, which are in accordance with the National Capital Plan, could be approved for a building within the height limits set by the current Plan. This solution would allow the Magistrates Court to go ahead now and not be held up by lengthy reconsideration of the Master Plan.

1.30 The Committee recommends that:

- (8) The Magistrates Court be built within the height limits set by the current National Capital Plan. (*paragraphs 3.83 - 3.97*)

#### Land Use

1.31 Land use matters did not feature strongly in the submissions. The wide range of permitted uses allows considerable flexibility for the area and this is to be supported. Since there is no longer any need for a casino to be included amongst the permitted uses, this use should be deleted.

1.32 The Committee recommends that:

- (9) 'casino' be deleted from the land use for City Sections 63, 18 and 19 in the National Capital Plan. (*paragraph 3.110*)

#### Other aspects of Draft Amendment No. 5

1.33 The proposed additional wording to be inserted into the National Capital Plan contained in Clauses 1 and 2 of the Draft Amendment will make it clear that master plans are to be incorporated into the National Capital Plan as Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development; and will give authority and application to appended master plans respectively. The Committee accepts that this part of the Draft Amendment is desirable and is in support.

1.34 Similarly, it supports the proposed wording to be inserted into the Plan relating to City Hill making provision for the inclusion of a Master Plan at Appendix T in Clause 3, and the provision to change the land use from Commercial to Restricted Access Open Space for Section 37 (Civic Swimming Pool) in Clause 4. The latter was the result of the Committee's recommendations into Draft Amendment No. 1.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Draft Amendment No. 1 - City Sections 10, 37 and 62.



## CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

### Introduction

2.1 The proposals contained in Draft Amendment No 5 to the National Capital Plan reflect the latest in a series of visions for City Hill which have developed and changed since the first plans for Canberra were drawn.

2.2 In its vision for City Hill, the NCPA is seeking to promote the precinct as an active, vital urban space at the heart of Civic. Vernon Circle becomes a city street instead of a busy arterial. Quality six storey buildings festooned with balconies, colonnades, and porte cocheres face the Hill. The Hill beckons pedestrians from pocket parks along landscaped pathways. Perhaps light rail vehicles will one day run around a dedicated public transport lane.

2.3 The area of land affected by the proposals comprises City Hill (Section 34 of the City) and the land between Vernon Circle and London Circuit (Sections 18, 19 and 63). The land is Australian Capital Territory land, but it is also specified in the National Capital Plan as a Designated Area, being part of the Central National Area. (See Figure 10 in Draft Amendment No. 5 at Appendix A).

2.4 City Hill is one of the corners of the National Triangle formed by Commonwealth, Kings and Constitution Avenues in Walter Burley Griffin's plan. The landscaping of the hill was designed by Thomas Weston and many of his original plantings from the 1920s survive.

2.5 On the land between Vernon Circle and London Circuit there are currently six buildings. Four address London Circuit: the North and South Buildings on the eastern side and the Reserve Bank and Police Station on the west. There are two buildings on Vernon Circle: the Canberra Theatre Centre on the east and the Law Courts on the west, both of which are accessed principally from London Circuit. The remainder of the land in this area is used for surface carparks and open space.

### Draft Amendment No 5

2.6 Draft Amendment No 5 provides for:

master plans to be incorporated into the National Capital Plan as Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development;

- . authority and application to be given to master plans appended to the National Capital Plan;
- . incorporation of the Master Plan for City Hill into the National Capital Plan at Appendix T; and
- . amendment of Figure 10 in the National Capital Plan to extend Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues to Vernon Circle and to identify the predominant land use of Section 37 (Civic Swimming Pool) as Restricted Access Open Space (as per Amendment No 1 to the Plan).

2.7 The Draft Amendment is reproduced in full at Appendix A. The essential elements of the Master Plan are:

- . the reversal of current policy for building heights so that buildings on Vernon Circle would be six storeys and those on London Circuit would be three storeys. Two gateway buildings of eight storeys would be constructed at the intersection of Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue;
- . four pocket parks on London Circuit, to form entry points to a system of pedestrian pathways to City Hill;
- . improved pedestrian access to City Hill via underpasses and crossings at Vernon Circle;
- . the extension of Constitution and Edinburgh Avenue to Vernon Circle; and
- . traffic calming measures, primarily through new traffic arrangements.

### Previous Plans for City Hill

#### *Griffin's Plan*

2.8 In Walter Burley Griffin's plan of 1911 he proposed a City Hall on 'Vernon Hill' surrounded by municipal buildings. By 1918 he had revised his plan to show City Hill as a Civic Place rather than a site for a City Hall.

#### *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plans*

2.9 Early reports prepared by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) vacillated between retaining City Hill as a park and reserving it for a major civic building. In 1984 the NCDC produced a policy plan for Civic. This plan was reviewed in 1987 through a process of public consultation which led to the release of another *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan* in January 1989.

2.10 The NCDC's urban design policies relevant to City Hill, as set out in the 1989 *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan* included:

- . adherence to Griffin's 1918 plan by confirming that City Hill would remain as open space and that future development would be consolidated in the area between London Circuit and Vernon Circle;
- . a building height limit of RL 617 for the city area;
- . use of nationally recognised guidelines to assess air and noise pollution and an undertaking to pursue appropriate action to minimise impacts if necessary;
- . preparation of a Heritage Conservation Strategy for Civic;
- . monitoring of key environmental, social, transport and economic parameters;
- . extension of the mid-road plaza in Northbourne Avenue to provide direct access to City Hill; and
- . production of an urban design/landscape concept for City Hill consistent with Griffin's 1918 proposal.

2.11 The 1989 policy plan provided a detailed land use plan for the area between London Circuit and Vernon Circle. Land was primarily to be allocated for administrative uses, but other uses were permitted, including:

- . retail
- . cafe, bar, restaurant
- . personal service
- . office/professional suite
- . casino
- . tourist facility
- . indoor recreation facility
- . cultural facility
- . social/community facility
- . health centre
- . place of assembly
- . education establishment
- . scientific research establishment
- . community protection facility
- . residential
- . hotel
- . motel
- . park
- . carpark

2.12 The development guidelines in the policy plan required:

- . high quality development with a low building form in a landscape setting;
- . development opposite the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings to reflect the historical character of those buildings; and

maximum building heights of three storeys for buildings on Vernon Circle and six storeys for those on London Circuit.

### *National Capital Plan*

2.13 The National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA), as successor to the National Capital Development Commission, issued the National Capital Plan in December 1990. While revoking the *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan* so far as it related to the Central National Area, the National Capital Plan reincorporated the same land use and development guidelines for the City Hill precinct. This means that the primary use for City Hill remains as a park, although limited complementary and ancillary uses will be considered. The land between Vernon Circle and London Circuit is to be used primarily for administrative purposes but other uses are permitted.

### **The ACT Magistrates Court**

2.14 The renewed consideration of the future of the City Hill area has emerged because the ACT Government wishes to construct a five storey law courts building on Section 63 City, fronting Vernon Circle, where the current building height limit is equivalent to three storeys. In 1991 the ACT Government conducted a study of siting options for a new Magistrates Court building. In January 1992 it agreed in principle to site the new building on part of Section 63, adjacent to the existing Law Courts on the north side. Criteria, such as access by the public via private car and public transport and proximity to the existing Law Courts and legal area of Canberra, were taken into account in selecting the site, and it was considered that Section 63 met all the criteria better than any other.<sup>1</sup>

2.15 Provision was made in the Capital Works budget for construction to commence in the 1992-93 financial year.<sup>2</sup>

2.16 Because Section 63 is in a Designated Area, works proposals must be in accordance with the National Capital Plan, and the NCPA's written approval obtained<sup>3</sup>. The ACT Government asked the NCPA to consider an amendment to the National Capital Plan to allow the building to proceed. In view of the significance of the proposed changes the NCPA decided that a Master Plan for the area was first needed.

### **The Joint Study**

2.17 In February 1992 the ACTPA and NCPA commenced a joint study. A Steering Committee was formed, comprising representatives from the NCPA, ACTPA and ACT Public Works and Services. Architects Mitchell Giurgola and Thorp were engaged to undertake the study.

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<sup>1</sup> Evidence - Annabelle Pegrum (ACT Public Works), 18 January 1993 - p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Submission No. 7 - ACTPA - p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988, s.12



2.18 The NCPA provided nine design principles for the Master Plan:<sup>4</sup>

1. This apex of the National Triangle must have a landmark which is higher than surrounding development and identifies the location.
2. New buildings flanking City Hill must have a major facade and entry addressing City Hill/Vernon Circle.
3. New buildings must be designed with a symmetrical relationship to the major avenue axes while preserving views to and from the hill.
4. Solutions for improving pedestrian access from City East and West must form an important part of any design proposal.
5. Pedestrian amenity and activities must be provided around and inside the central space.
6. Through traffic should be reduced to the minimum possible, or eliminated.
7. Provision for a future public transport route should be made.
8. City Hill as a precinct should be seen as an active, vital urban space at the heart of Civic, as well as a key apex to the National Triangle.
9. Landscaping and vistas should emphasise City Hill as a corner of the Triangle, not simply as a hill terminating Commonwealth Avenue.<sup>5</sup>

2.19 On completion of the study by the architects, a Master Plan for City Hill and the area between London Circuit and Vernon Circle was prepared. It was agreed to by the relevant Territory agencies and the ACTPA and was adopted by the NCPA in July 1992 as the basis for a draft amendment to the National Capital Plan.<sup>6</sup>

#### Public Consultation by the NCPA

2.20 The NCPA is required by the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* to consult with the public when proposing changes to the National Capital Plan.

2.21 The NCPA released Draft Amendment No. 5 on 7 October 1992, along with three other sets of amendments (Nos 3, 4 and 6). Under pressure from the ACT Government to finalise the Master Plan quickly so that construction of the Magistrates building could begin, and perhaps underestimating the degree of community interest in the proposals, the NCPA initially gave the public 40 days to respond. The period was extended by a further 9 days when an error was discovered in the documentation which then had to be reissued.

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<sup>4</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 1.

2.22 A workshop was held by the NCPA on 24 November 1992 at Regatta Point, to which representatives of the professional institutes, heritage and conservation groups, other interested people and those who had made submissions were invited. Participants at the workshop were advised that late submissions would be accepted. The NCPA conducted a public hearing on 16 December 1992, at which all respondents were invited to present their views to the Authority and the following eight agreed to do so.

The Hon. Mr Justice Jeffrey Miles, Chief Justice, ACT Supreme Court  
The Hon. Mr Justice Rae Else-Mitchell CMG QC  
Ms Patricia Bootes, Chairperson, Planning & Environment Subcommittee,  
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, ACT Group  
Ms Juliet Ramsey, Chairperson, Heritage Sub-committee, Australian  
Institute of Landscape Architects, ACT Group  
Mr Eric Martin, Chair, Heritage Council (ACT)  
Ms Catherine Keirnan, Member, Heritage Council (ACT)  
Dr Maggie Indian, Committee Member, Turner Residents' Association  
Dr Mac Dickins, Committee Member, Turner Residents' Association

2.23 Following the public consultation process, the NCPA reviewed the Draft Amendment and considered it was able to confirm that the design principles it had established remained valid. In response to criticism it did delete the proposed pedestrian underpasses from the Draft Amendment.

#### **The Committee's Inquiry**

2.24 The then Minister for the Arts and Territories, the Hon. Wendy Fatin MP, wrote to the Joint Committee on the National Capital on 12 October 1992 to advise that Amendments Nos 3 - 6 had been released for public comment. Following a briefing on all of the proposals by Mr Lyndsay Neilson, the Chief Executive of the NCPA, that Committee decided to seek to conduct an inquiry into Draft Amendment No. 5. The Minister agreed on 30 October 1992.

2.25 The Joint Committee on the National Capital was aware of the tight timetable to which the NCPA was working, and was prepared to expedite its review to avoid unnecessary delays. It was also mindful of the annoyance which would be caused if the public were asked to submit comments to both the NCPA and the Committee. Accordingly, advertisements announcing the inquiry urged the public to send submissions to the NCPA on the understanding that copies would be given to the Committee. These were then accepted as exhibits. Twenty three submissions were sent to the NCPA, and a further thirteen were sent directly to the Committee. All are listed at Appendix B.

2.26 With the full cooperation of the NCPA, the Committee arranged for the architects' model of City Hill, which had been at Regatta Point, to be placed on display at Parliament House from 18 December 1992 until 18 January 1993.

2.27 On 18 January 1993, the Committee received a further briefing from the architects and planners and held a public hearing in Parliament House. Twenty four people appeared as witnesses as listed at Appendix C. Before the Joint Committee on the National Capital could finalise its report, a federal election was called. The reference was subsequently taken up by the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories, and a further public hearing held on 2 June 1993. While the dissolution of Parliament placed the formal review on hold until the new Parliament, and a new committee, could be formed, it gave all those involved an opportunity to consider the issues further. The major issues are discussed in Chapter 3.



## CHAPTER 3: THE ISSUES

### Introduction

3.1 City Hill is a symbol, a roundabout, a focus of our city, a prominent part of our parklands. It is such an integral feature of Canberra that probably most local residents rarely think about it. Yet they tend to feel strongly about any proposals to change it. The release of the Draft Amendment has raised a number of issues, many of them interrelated. In this Chapter, these issues have been grouped together under the following categories:

- . heritage values
- . traffic
- . pedestrian access
- . buildings and heights
- . other issues.

### Heritage Values

3.2 City Hill's prominence in the original plans for Canberra and the design of the park by Thomas Weston establish its importance as a symbol of our heritage, as described by the Australian Heritage Commission:

City Hill is important in defining one corner of Canberra's parliamentary triangle at the critical point where the municipal axis in Griffin's 1912 plan intersects the line along Northbourne Avenue to Capital Hill. The layout, selection and massing of the mainly evergreen trees and the flagpole, all on an eminence above the city, are appropriate to the importance of the hill's location.

The hill has special associations with the planner, W B Griffin, and T G Weston, who was responsible for selecting and planting the trees.

As a carefully landscaped hilltop which closes vistas along the city's avenues, City Hill has aesthetic significance.<sup>1</sup>

3.3 A clear indication of the importance of City Hill to the people of Canberra is evident in the submissions which were made to the NCPA and to the Committee during the inquiry. Concern was expressed about the effect of the proposed road and building construction on the views to and from the hill, the long term design and use of the park, and the health of the trees.

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<sup>1</sup> *Exhibit No. 28 - Official printout from Register of National Estate, Australian Heritage Commission - pp. 2-3.*

## *The Symbolic Landscape*

3.4 Several submissions mentioned the symbolic nature of the City Hill landscape as one corner of the Parliamentary Triangle. The National Trust of Australia, for example, said that:

City Hill is a major symbol, physically, visually and culturally. It is an essential landscape element in the plan for Canberra; its historic significance is equally contributed to by Thomas Weston whose design has remained substantially unaltered for some 70 years.<sup>2</sup>

3.5 Professor D J Mulvaney expressed similar sentiments:

This tree covered hill is a *symbolic* cultural landscape. The hill plays a crucial role in the Griffin plan, while that landscape of introduced species is a significant element also in Weston's urban design.<sup>3</sup>

3.6 The NCPA's design principles provide that landscaping and vistas should emphasise City Hill as a corner of the Triangle, views to and from the hill along the avenues should be preserved, and pedestrian amenity and activities must be provided around and inside the central space. As a corner of the Triangle, City Hill is required to have a landmark which is higher than surrounding development and identifies the location. The draft Master Plan was never intended to encompass the design of the park, but the architects recommended that a specific design study be undertaken, and that a major vertical corner marker be required. This could replace or integrate the existing flagpole.

3.7 During the inquiry, views were expressed in favour of some type of structure. Professor Ken Taylor of the National Trust, for example, suggested a monument such as a needle or carillon.<sup>4</sup> Mr Keith Storey put forward the idea that the hill could be used for an important public building at some time in the future.<sup>5</sup> The Committee welcomes the NCPA's decision to leave open for future consideration the question of a landmark structure on City Hill in conjunction with a detailed landscape design.<sup>6</sup> The Committee considers, however, that the trees planted by Weston on City Hill have heritage and landmark value and should be preserved for as long as possible.

3.8 There are differences of opinion within the community about the appropriate use of the City Hill park. Some people have suggested that the Draft Amendment potentially opens up the park to more use than is appropriate in view of its symbolic status;<sup>7</sup> others believe that there should be greater public access than the Draft Amendment allows.<sup>8</sup> The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, for example, supports improved pedestrian access but believes that more thought should be given to links with the City and Commonwealth Park.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Exhibit No. 7 - National Trust of Australia (ACT) - p. 1.*

<sup>3</sup> *Exhibit No. 4 - Professor D John Mulvaney - p. 1.*

<sup>4</sup> *Evidence - Mr John Gray, 18 January 1993 - p. 71.*

<sup>5</sup> *Exhibit No. 17 - Mr Keith Storey - p. 1.*

<sup>6</sup> *Submission No. 7 - NCPA - pp. 10, 21.*

<sup>7</sup> *Exhibit No. 7 - National Trust of Australia - p. 2.*

<sup>8</sup> *Exhibit No. 3 - Mr Greg Deas - p. 2.*

<sup>9</sup> *Exhibit No. 15 - Australian Institute of Landscape Architects - p. 3.*

3.9 The Committee considers that an essential feature of any future detailed landscape design should be that City Hill remain a park, that it be substantially retained as a permanent green monument in the City, and that consideration should be given to the wider area including Commonwealth Park and Acton Peninsula. Greater pedestrian access is desirable and will not necessarily conflict with the symbolic status of the hill, but the Committee is not in favour of intensive recreational use which would involve the provision of amenities such as barbecue areas and public toilets.

3.10 The Committee also shares the concern of the respondents who have suggested that the construction of six storey buildings on Vernon Circle might reduce the visual impact of City Hill. Buildings of the proposed maximum height of RL 595 would be 15 metres above the highest point on the hill. It has been argued that they would obscure the trees, dwarf the hill and reduce its symbolic importance.<sup>10</sup>

3.11 On the other hand, it has been suggested that buildings of the proposed maximum height would frame the hill and emphasise it.<sup>11</sup> The NCPA considers that the views to and from the hill along the avenues would not be obscured and that City Hill would become a more prominent feature if it were framed by six storey buildings.<sup>12</sup>

3.12 The Australian Heritage Commission maintains that the heritage values would be preserved by limiting six storey buildings to the east and west of Vernon Circle to provide 'sides' for the park.<sup>13</sup> The Heritage Council has pointed out that a ring of recently planted American elms on the western side of Vernon Circle, which will be very large when mature, will eventually block the views along the axes on the west.<sup>14</sup>

3.13 The Committee recommends that the vistas along the axes are not obscured further and steps should be taken to ensure this does not occur.

3.14 An associated issue is the impact of six storey buildings on the heritage values of existing buildings in the vicinity of City Hill. The Australian Heritage Commission has recommended that only three storey buildings be permitted on Northbourne Avenue between London Circuit and Vernon Circle so as to be in keeping with the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings and not to detract from their heritage values.<sup>15</sup>

3.15 In addition, the square in front of the Law Courts on Knowles Place has heritage value. ACT Public Works gave evidence that consideration is being given to connections between the podium of the Law Courts and the proposed Magistrates Court, and the design of the landscaping. The Committee was advised that there is no intention to change the square at the front of the Law Courts and that the building would retain its prominence.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Exhibit No. 15 - Australian Institute of Landscape Architects - p. 1.*

<sup>11</sup> *Evidence - Mr Geoff Butterworth, 18 January 1993 - p. 58.*

<sup>12</sup> *Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 10.*

<sup>13</sup> *Exhibit No. 18 - Australian Heritage Commission - p. 3.*

<sup>14</sup> *Evidence - Ms Catherine Keirnan (Heritage Council), 18 January 1993 - p. 85.*

<sup>15</sup> *Exhibit No. 18 - Australian Heritage Commission - p. 3.*

<sup>16</sup> *Evidence - Ms Annabelle Pegrum (ACT Public Works), 18 January 1993 - p. 51.*

3.16 The Committee considers that six storey structures adjacent to the Law Courts could reduce the existing building's status and heritage value. Similarly, new buildings to the south of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings should be designed in sympathy and should not be the height proposed in the Draft Amendment.

### *The Trees*

3.17 There are three species of trees on City Hill: *Cupressus sempervirens* (Roman cypress or pencil pine); *Pinus radiata* (Monterey pine); and *Robinia pseudoacacia* (black locust). The *Cupressus* have an estimated life of about 175 years, the *Pinus* up to 100 years and the *Robinia* are shorter lived at 40-50 years. The former two species were planted in the 1913-1928 period and it is possible that the *Pinus* were planted as a nurse crop for the *Cupressus*.<sup>17</sup> The *Robinia* probably were planted in the 1940s or 1950s, although there is some uncertainty about this.<sup>18</sup>

3.18 Concern was expressed in several submissions that additional and slower traffic on Vernon Circle would increase vehicle emissions, which would damage the trees. The Committee was told that losses of the *Cupressus* over the years have been greatest from the groups of trees closest to Vernon Circle, and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects has maintained that conifers are particularly sensitive to traffic pollution.<sup>19</sup> There is no certainty that vehicle emissions have caused the decline in the trees on City Hill.<sup>20</sup>

3.19 Even if the trees are sensitive to increases in pollution, the ACTPA considers that the existing pattern and density of vehicle emissions at peak hour on Vernon Circle would not change as a result of the new traffic arrangements, and nor would there be any appreciable difference in 25 years time.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps this indicates that Vernon Circle is already operating at maximum capacity at peak hours, or that the period of time each day that emissions approximate peak hour levels might increase. The Committee would be surprised if the installation of four sets of lights and the creation of two new intersections, which would carry traffic diverted from existing link roads between Commonwealth Avenue and Parkes Way and Commonwealth Avenue and London Circuit, did not affect pollution levels around City Hill.

3.20 If there is to be a commitment in the Master Plan to retain the present landscape on City Hill, and the Committee believes there should, the effect of vehicle emissions should be investigated more thoroughly. Otherwise, in the absence of conclusive information it is not possible to use this factor in determining the most appropriate planning decision, other than to require caution.

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<sup>17</sup> Submission No. 6 - ACTPA - p. 5.

Evidence - Mr Gary Richards (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> Evidence - Professor Ken Taylor (National Trust of Australia, ACT) 18 January 1993 - p. 82.

<sup>19</sup> Exhibit No. 15 - AILA - p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Evidence - Mr John Gray, 18 January 1993 - p. 72.

<sup>21</sup> Evidence - Mr Gary Richards (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 23.



3.21 There is similar unease about the effect of overshadowing and wind tunnels as a result of the construction of six storey buildings around Vernon Circle. The shadows caused by the construction of buildings of this height on the northern side of Vernon Circle would conflict with guidelines in the 1989 *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan*. The policy plan states that buildings on the northern side of pedestrian zones, including City Hill, will generally be limited to three storeys to maximise sun penetration in winter.<sup>22</sup> According to shadow diagrams provided by the NCPA in its submission to the Committee, six storey buildings would cast shadows well into City Hill during the morning and the afternoon in mid winter, whereas shadows from three storey buildings would be limited to the outer edges. Nevertheless, the NCPA is satisfied that six storey buildings fronting Vernon Circle would not adversely affect City Hill.<sup>23</sup>

3.22 Concerns were also expressed about the effect of wind tunnels which might be created by the buildings, but the National Capital Plan requires wind testing only for buildings that are higher than seven storeys.

3.23 There seems to be agreement about the need to ensure that the root systems of the trees are not disturbed, or that any disturbance is minimised. The proposed transformation of Vernon Circle from an arterial road to a city street would involve changing the camber from a positive super elevation which assists high speeds to a negative super elevation which tends to keep speeds down.<sup>24</sup> Other potential roadworks involve the lowering of Vernon Circle on the eastern side.<sup>25</sup> These roadworks, if implemented, may affect the historic plantings.

3.24 The Committee is satisfied that the planning authorities recognise the importance of avoiding damage to the trees' root systems during construction, and notes that the decision by the NCPA to delete the pedestrian underpasses from the Draft Amendment further reduces the danger. Construction work would be restricted to the outside of Vernon Circle and the NCPA considers disturbance to the trees from construction impacts is not likely.<sup>26</sup> The ACTPA has advised that the use of guards around the drip-line of foliage would protect the trees from both aboveground impacts and from soil compaction around the roots.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Heritage Legislation*

3.25 The heritage values of City Hill are listed in the heritage registers set up by Commonwealth and Territory heritage legislation. City Hill was proposed for listing on the Register of the National Estate under the Commonwealth *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* in 1989 and is currently on the Interim List. In 1991 the NCPA requested that placement on the Register be deferred pending the preparation of a Master Plan.

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<sup>22</sup> *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan, 1989* - (NCDC) - p. 121.

<sup>23</sup> *Submission No. 7* - NCPA - p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> *Evidence* - Mr Rod Grose (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Exhibit No. 29 - Report on Transport Issues* - Mr Denis Johnston and Associates - p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> *Evidence* - Mr Gary Richards (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> *Submission No. 7* - ACTPA - p. 5.

3.26 Section 30 of the Act is designed to discourage Commonwealth actions that might adversely affect places which are listed on the Register of the National Estate, including those on the Interim List:

Ministers are required to ensure that any Department or authority for which they have responsibility does not take any action that adversely affects a place on the Register unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative; and

Ministers, Departments or authorities must inform the Australian Heritage Commission of proposed actions that might affect, to a significant extent, a place on the Register, and give the Commission the opportunity to comment.

3.27 The Draft Amendment to the National Capital Plan is a proposed action in terms of s.30 and the NCPA is required to refer the proposed amendment to the Commission for comment. It has not formally done so, but the Commission prepared a submission in response to the call for public comment on the proposed Master Plan.

3.28 Within the ACT, the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991* provides for the establishment of a Heritage Places Register which is to identify heritage places, describe their heritage significance and specify requirements for their conservation. The ACT Heritage Council has nominated City Hill Park to the Interim Heritage Places Register and has put forward the following specific requirements for the conservation of its heritage significance:

1. The landscape qualities of City Hill Park are to be retained as an important element of Canberra's planning.
2. The integrity of the plantings is to be retained by replacing dead or damaged trees with the same species.
3. Access to the park by pedestrians is to be encouraged.
4. A commemorative plaque outlining the contribution of City Hill to Walter Burley Griffin's geometric design for the capital city and acknowledging T G Weston's plantings be set on the hill.
5. Any proposals to alter any aspect of City Hill Park be referred to the Heritage Council of the ACT prior to detailed planning and commencement of works.<sup>28</sup>

3.29 The National Capital Plan requires the two planning authorities to respect each other's heritage register. The Plan also requires that Conservation Plans for listed heritage places in Designated Areas be prepared and that planning policies and development conditions should conform with those Conservation Plans. The Committee is unaware of the existence or enforcement of a Conservation Plan for City Hill.

3.30 The Draft Amendment acknowledges the national significance of City Hill and envisages retaining it as a park with the present landscape treatment, but no specific reference has been made to heritage values and protection.

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<sup>28</sup> Exhibit No. 27 - Draft Citation, Interim Heritage Places Register - p. 3.

3.31 Clearly, the NCPA had an obligation to seek formal advice from the Heritage Commission and the Heritage Council in formulating its Draft Amendment to the National Capital Plan. It should not proceed to finalising its proposed changes until the heritage organisations have been consulted and their advice heeded.

### Traffic

3.32 There is a great deal of public concern about the proposed new traffic arrangements. It was the major issue raised in submissions to the NCPA and to the Committee and, in most cases, the respondents considered that the result would be an unacceptable increase in volume and congestion of traffic on Vernon Circle beyond that which can be expected as Canberra's population continues to grow. This view was put succinctly by Mr Roger Pegrum:

The new layout of Vernon Circle ... is guaranteed to turn the Circle into a slow moving and dangerous road, half roundabout and half highway ... The combination of drop-off zones and an active frontage will turn Vernon Circle into a nightmare.<sup>29</sup>

3.33 Mr John Gray, among others, questioned the wisdom of the proposed course of action in the long term:

Boiled down to its bare essentials the proposed solution involves spending a large amount of taxpayers money on building new roads and new traffic lights on City Hill which will deliberately create traffic congestion on Vernon Circle. By contrast, in many other cities and towns in Australia today, Governments are spending money on closing roads and buildings bypasses to reduce congestion in CBDs so as to create a better human environment.<sup>30</sup>

3.34 As a result of the comments in the submissions, the NCPA commissioned consultants, Denis Johnston and Associates, to prepare a report on the issues raised.

3.35 Termed 'traffic calming' by its supporters and 'traffic congestion' by its opponents, there is little doubt that the realignment of roads and the installation of traffic signals on Vernon Circle as proposed in the Draft Amendment would reduce vehicle speed and facilitate pedestrian access to City Hill. The Committee is concerned that 'traffic calming', while desirable, should not be done in such a way that the overall result is unsatisfactory to all road users, which appears to be the case in this instance.

3.36 As mentioned above the Draft Amendment would change Vernon Circle from a traffic arterial to a city street. The freeway-like curvatures connecting Vernon Circle to Commonwealth and Northbourne Avenues would be eliminated and replaced with signalised 'T' intersections. This would create the impression of arriving at and leaving the City where Commonwealth Avenue meets Vernon Circle, rather than at the Northbourne Avenue intersection with Vernon Circle.

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<sup>29</sup>

Exhibit No. 14 - Mr Roger Pegrum - p. 1.

<sup>30</sup>

Submission No. 2 - Mr John Gray - p. 1.

## *Through Traffic*

3.37 Vernon Circle is part of the main north-south traffic system. The design principles which the NCPA gave to the architects who produced the draft Master Plan were: that through traffic should be reduced to the minimum possible or eliminated and that provision for a future public transport route should be made. The NCPA estimates that between two thirds and three quarters of the traffic using Vernon Circle is through traffic with origins and/or destinations in places other than Civic.<sup>31</sup> The ACTPA has produced figures which indicate that just over 50 per cent of the morning peak hour traffic is through traffic.<sup>32</sup> No figures are available for interstate through traffic, but the ACTPA estimates that approximately ten per cent of New South Wales vehicles would be local traffic from Queanbeyan.<sup>33</sup>

3.38 According to the architects, repeated traffic studies have concluded that the passage of traffic through Vernon Circle is critical to traffic movements through the whole of the ACT and cannot be eliminated in the foreseeable future. They also consider that traffic could not sensibly be directed through perimeter streets, since this would produce longer trips, more congestion and more pollution.

3.39 The architects canvassed the option of a tunnel under City Hill but did not recommend it. Apart from costing approximately \$24 million, construction of a tunnel would mean the loss of half of the historic trees, it would attract more through traffic, and it would cut City Hill off from the Parliamentary Triangle.

3.40 The NCPA's position on the management of through traffic is not clear. While continuing to support the design principle that through traffic should be minimised, it has endorsed a plan which does nothing to decrease it. No information was provided to show that consideration had been given to estimating the amount of through traffic which could potentially be diverted from Vernon Circle by alternative routes, nor even to the implications that 'calming' the traffic on Vernon Circle would have on the wider area. The NCPA did point out in its submission that there is limited opportunity for local through traffic to be diverted without creating an adverse impact on other streets, such as London Circuit, Marcus Clarke Street and Cooyong/Ballumbir/Coranderrk Streets.<sup>34</sup>

3.41 The NCPA also explained that as the proposed arrangements would not reduce traffic capacity, only traffic speed, the question of alternative routes is not relevant:

... the consideration of bypass routes either within or adjacent to Civic or the completion of the peripheral parkway system is independent from the City Hill precinct proposed.<sup>35</sup>

3.42 The Committee is concerned that if inadequate attention is paid to the movement of through traffic within Civic, the community will be required to revisit the debate about the proposal to construct John Dedman East. This proposal, for a road through the O'Connor Hills and Bruce Ridge area and along the eastern side of the Australian

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<sup>31</sup> *Submission* No. 7 - NCPA - p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> *Submission* No. 6 - ACTPA - p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Evidence* - Mr Rod Grose (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 34.

<sup>34</sup> *Submission* No. 7 - NCPA - p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> *Submission* No. 7 - NCPA - p. 17.

Botanical Gardens, was included in the NCPA's Gungahlin External Travel Study which canvassed options for relieving North Canberra of through traffic as well as servicing the new town centre. The Committee reviewed the study in 1991 and recommended that the road not be built. In responding to the Committee's report, the Commonwealth Government advised that it would assess future action in relation to John Dedman East in the light of the findings of the Future Public Transport Options for Canberra study, which is currently underway. The Committee would be very critical if the proposal were to be resurrected because of the unpredicted effects of traffic arrangements at City Hill.

#### *Extension of Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues*

3.43 A significant alteration to Vernon Circle is the proposed extensions of Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues and the installation of traffic lights and special pavement treatments at the intersections of the extensions. Extending the avenues would, in the NCPA's view, provide an improved traffic circulation system within Civic, improved east-west links across the City centre and allow for the removal of the loop from Commonwealth Avenue to the anticlockwise land of London Circuit.<sup>36</sup> The possibility of also removing the ramp from London Circuit to Commonwealth Avenue was raised at the hearing.<sup>37</sup> The ACTPA considered that whilst the extensions would provide alternative routes for local traffic which presently uses London Circuit, it is not expected that the extensions would lead to new through traffic routes through the city.<sup>38</sup> From the evidence provided the Committee formed the view that these changes would result in significantly greater traffic flows on Vernon Circle.

3.44 The planning agencies consider that the extension of Constitution Avenue at its full avenue width is necessary to emphasise its importance as the baseline of the Parliamentary Triangle. However, the Committee was also told that the proposed extension is not necessary or desirable. Mr John Gray, for example, has suggested that the corner of the Parliamentary Triangle could be emphasised effectively through landscape treatment at much less cost,<sup>39</sup> and Mr Shibu Dutta does not want to see the linkages segment the hexagon design of Civic and reduce its impact.<sup>40</sup> Several respondents would like to see Constitution Avenue extended by means of a public precinct or pedestrian way rather than a traffic route. The pattern established on Ainslie and University Avenues of terminating the avenues in a square is also favoured by some people, and similar treatment for Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues has been a feature of plans for the area since the 1965 *Future Canberra Plan*.<sup>41</sup>

3.45 The Committee is of the opinion that the corner of the Parliamentary Triangle could be emphasised just as effectively with a public precinct or landscaped pedestrian extension of Constitution Avenue at less cost. The suggestion of continuing the pattern of the theatre and legal precincts, which would provide sites for low buildings across the axes of Edinburgh and Constitution Avenues, also has merit.

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<sup>36</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Evidence - Mr Rod Grose (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 18.

<sup>38</sup> Evidence - Mr Rod Grose (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 20.

<sup>39</sup> Submission No. 2 - Mr John Gray - p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Exhibit No. 16 - Mr Shibu Dutta - p. 2.

<sup>41</sup> Exhibit No. 17 - Mr K Storey - p. 2 and Exhibit No. 26, Attachment 5.

3.46 While it has been stated that the extensions would improve east-west links within the City, it is not clear that any problems with the existing east-west links would be resolved by the proposed changes. For example, a person wishing to travel west by car from the casino to Capital Towers today would encounter four sets of traffic lights: Constitution Avenue/Allara Street; Constitution Avenue/London Circuit; London Circuit/Edinburgh Avenue; and Edinburgh Avenue/Marcus Clarke Street. If the journey were taken via the proposed extensions of Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues, the driver would encounter seven sets of traffic lights: Constitution Avenue/Allara Street; Constitution Avenue/London Circuit; Constitution Avenue/Vernon Circle; Vernon Circle/Commonwealth Avenue; Vernon Circle/Edinburgh Avenue; Edinburgh Avenue/London Circuit; and Edinburgh Avenue/Marcus Clarke Street. A journey from west to east between the same two locations via the proposed extensions would be no shorter in distance than it currently is although, again, there would be more traffic lights to encounter.

3.47 Nonetheless, when roads are built, motorists take advantage of them, as Professor Taylor pointed out at the Committee's hearing:

As a former town planner, and having dealt with traffic engineering as well, I know that if you put a road in cars use it. Why else do you put it in? If Constitution Avenue and Edinburgh Avenue are extended it would bring more traffic in. I believe people would use Vernon Circle to gain access to the car parks at the rear; they would not all come from the rear.<sup>42</sup>

3.48 If the extensions of the avenues do not, in fact, improve east-west links in the City, one of the justifications for extending them has been removed.

3.49 Several submissions have drawn attention to the gradient difference between London Circuit and Vernon Circle, which would cause sightline problems and require cutting into City Hill to lower Vernon Circle in extending both avenues. The grades are relatively steep: 8.7 per cent on Edinburgh Avenue and 9 per cent on Constitution Avenue. Denis Johnston and Associates has subsequently reported to the NCPA that, while not ideal, the extensions are feasible. As the eastern side of Vernon Circle is currently one metre higher than the western side, it could be lowered by this amount, which would reduce the grade on the Constitution Avenue extension to approximately 8 per cent.<sup>43</sup> However, it was pointed out to the Committee that the construction of Vernon Circle involved cutting into City Hill and building a retaining wall of up to one metre in height. The proposal to lower Vernon Circle by one metre and cut into the hill further was unacceptable.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Evidence - Professor Ken Taylor, 18 January 1993 - p. 85.

<sup>43</sup> Exhibit No. 29 - Report on Transport Issues - Denis Johnston and Associates - p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> Exhibit No.15 - Australian Institute of Landscape Architects - p. 2.

3.50 The estimated cost to the ACT Government for the construction of each extension is \$1.2 million.<sup>45</sup> The ACTPA does not consider that construction of 8 per cent grades would pose a problem. The ramp from Commonwealth Avenue to Parliament House is of a similar grade but, as was pointed out by one witness, it is considerably longer than the avenue extensions would be.<sup>46</sup> The Committee is not prepared to approve a variation to the plan to enable these roads to be incorporated.

3.51 The traffic consultants investigated the estimated traffic flows around Vernon Circle both as a roundabout and with signalised intersections. The traffic flow through Vernon Circle from the north is currently regulated by the intersections of Northbourne Avenue with Barry Drive and London Circuit and this would continue under the proposed traffic arrangements. These intersections are currently approaching their capacity. The consultants concluded that Vernon Circle operating as a roundabout would not be able to accommodate peak period traffic demands satisfactorily and would pose a major safety problem if there were three circulating lanes. With signalised intersections, they argued, Vernon Circle would operate satisfactorily in peak periods and at other times.<sup>47</sup>

3.52 With regard to whether or not the installation of lights at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Vernon Circle would slow the traffic and cause delays and queues on Commonwealth Avenue in peak periods, the consultants concluded that the signals would not be a serious impediment. However, they qualified this finding by commenting that it was not possible to compute the exact figure for delays without an extensive analysis of all the intersections linked into that part of the system.

3.53 The traffic consultants did not consider alternative traffic arrangements which might also fulfil the objective of changing Vernon Circle from an arterial road to a city street, for example by creating signalised 'T' junctions at Northbourne Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue but not extending Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues, or the installation of pedestrian lights only at Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues. Neither did they comment on the impact of traffic lights at the Northbourne Avenue/Vernon Circle intersection on southbound traffic.

3.54 The NCPA is satisfied that the changes to the traffic arrangements on Vernon Circle will work. It has mapped out a possible scenario for the changes to be carried out progressively over a period of time in conjunction with building development. This would allow for impacts to be monitored and site specific solutions adopted.<sup>48</sup>

3.55 While welcoming the work subsequently undertaken by both planning agencies to address the issues raised during the inquiry, the Committee is of the opinion that the plan for the proposed new traffic arrangements for Vernon Circle was completed without sufficient consideration of all the implications. This view is confirmed by the traffic consultants' report which has set out to justify the plan rather than consider alternatives. Moreover, the Committee considers that the proposal to extend the avenues has not been carefully thought through, and is reinforced in that view by the traffic consultants' report.

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<sup>45</sup> Exhibit No. 25 - ACTPA - p. 4.

<sup>46</sup> Evidence - Mr Keith Storey, 18 January 1993 - p. 76.

<sup>47</sup> Exhibit No. 29 - Report on Transport Issues - Denis Johnston and Associates - p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 15.

The grades are very steep and the extensions would look like ramps rather than the continuation of elegant avenues. The actual need for the new road extensions, other than to create intersections and thereby slow down through traffic on Vernon Circle, or to justify the closure of the existing ramps between London Circuit and Commonwealth Avenue travelling south and east, is far from clear. Even taking into account the argument that the extension of Constitution Avenue is necessary to finish the base of the Parliamentary Triangle, there is no similar justification for the extension of Edinburgh Avenue other than reasons of symmetry.

#### *Drop-Off/Public Transport Lane*

3.56 The design principles specify that new buildings must have a major facade and entry addressing Vernon Circle and that provision should be made for a public transport lane around Vernon Circle. The Draft Amendment indicates that there would be vehicular set down zones on the outer edge of Vernon Circle for access to the buildings. Short stay parking could be permitted outside peak periods. No explicit provisions have been included, though, for public transport.

3.57 ACT transport policy envisages a major shift to public transport particularly for commuting purposes. Likewise the National Capital Plan contains policies to promote the use of public transport. If its policies succeed, they have the potential to reduce the commuter component of the traffic on Vernon Circle with the present traffic arrangements. This benefit could be negated by the traffic using the extensions of the avenues. At present the ACT Government and the NCPA are undertaking a joint study, Future Public Transport Options for Canberra, which will include consideration of a dedicated right of way system. If this eventuates, the NCPA advise the use of kerb or median lanes on Vernon Circle will be considered in conjunction with the City Interchange location strategies.<sup>49</sup>

3.58 The NCPA considers that further work is required before the design principle of providing a public transport lane is met. However, the outside lane of Vernon Circle, which is likely to be used for parking and set downs in off peak periods, can be reserved for a future dedicated public transport lane.<sup>50</sup> Presumably, if a decision is made to introduce a light rail system this would not be compatible with off peak parking in the kerb lane and the median land would be required.

3.59 Opposition to providing a drop-off lane was expressed by several respondents. In fact the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects considered this would destroy everything that the planners were trying to do in creating an active pedestrian space.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 16.

<sup>50</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 24.

<sup>51</sup> *Evidence* - Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, 18 January 1993 - p. 63.



3.60 The Residents Rally for Canberra raised the matter of the need to enlarge the City Bus Interchange and drew attention to a report on options prepared in 1989, one of which contemplated an underground interchange between London Circuit and Vernon Circle on either side of Northbourne Avenue.<sup>52</sup> Interchange strategies are currently being examined in the Future Public Transport Options for Canberra study.

3.61 The Committee agrees with the NCPA that it is premature to consider the set down arrangements and a dedicated public transport lane on Vernon Circle before the results of the transport study are available and the interchange location strategies formulated. Greater consideration should also be given to the impact on pedestrian movement. The Committee recommends against provision of short-term parking and vehicle set down on Vernon Circle.

#### *Noise Levels*

3.62 The Draft Amendment indicates that there should be a significant increase in pedestrian movement to, on and around City Hill park. Vernon Circle at present is one of the noisiest and busiest streets in the City. The proposed traffic changes are intended to reduce the speed of the traffic which should reduce noise levels. On the other hand if the traffic is stopping and starting at four sets of traffic lights, the opposite would occur. Several respondents have suggested that the noise levels would significantly increase, to the detriment of the park users and pedestrians on Vernon Circle.<sup>53</sup> Even though a key principle in the draft Master Plan is the provision of pedestrian amenities in and around City Hill, no evidence has been presented about the projected changes to noise levels as a result of the new traffic arrangements.

3.63 The 1989 *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan* addresses traffic noise levels in the City. The noise standard used for studies in the past was 70 dB(A) for L<sub>10</sub> 18 hour, which is the equivalent of 75 dB(A) for L<sub>10</sub> 1 hour. L<sub>10</sub> is the noise level which is exceeded for 10 per cent of the measurement period and is the measurement generally used to measure intense noise level periods. L<sub>10</sub> 1 hour is considered a more appropriate measuring period for peak hour pedestrian disturbance.<sup>54</sup>

3.64 In an assessment conducted in 1988, Vernon Circle, Commonwealth Avenue, London Circuit, Edinburgh Avenue and Constitution Avenue reached 70dB(A) for L<sub>10</sub> 1 hour and Northbourne Avenue measured 77dB(A) for L<sub>10</sub> 1 hour. At that time it was not expected that the noise levels at peak periods would increase to any great extent but that peak hour noise levels would become more common during the day. It was considered that options for reducing noise levels, such as reducing traffic speed and density, would need to be supported by land use policies. A need was also seen for buffering between zones of high noise level and areas of noise sensitive land uses such as pedestrian and recreation.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *Final Report for the City Bus Interchange Study* - R J Nairn and Partners Pty Ltd in association with Brisbane City Council - March 1989.

<sup>53</sup> *Exhibit No. 7* - National Trust of Australia - p. 1; *Exhibit No. 9* - Heritage Council - p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan 1989* - NCDC - p. 16.

<sup>55</sup> *Civic Centre Canberra Policy Plan, 1989* - NCDC - p. 138.

3.65 The OECD recommends 65 dB(A)  $L_{eq}$  for the upper limit for external daytime noise,  $L_{eq}$  being equivalent continuous sound level, ie the average of the total sound energy of the measurement period. The ideal or desirable level is below 55 dB(A)  $L_{eq}$ . Levels above 65 dB(A)  $L_{eq}$  can potentially damage hearing. The World Health Organisation (WHO) also recommends that daytime urban noise levels be below 55 dB(A)  $L_{eq}$ . There is a risk in using a  $L_{eq}$  measurement that peak noise periods will be overlooked.<sup>56</sup> A  $L_{eq}$  measurement plus 3 dB(A) would roughly equate to the  $L_{10}$  measurement used by the NCDC. Therefore, to conform with the OECD and WHO guidelines, the traffic noise in Civic should not exceed 68 dB(A)  $L_{10}$  and desirably should be below 58dB(A)  $L_{10}$ .

3.66 The Committee understands that the ACT Government has no established traffic noise guidelines. Draft Guidelines are being prepared to be included in the Territory Plan. The suggested levels are 69 dB(A) for pedestrian areas including outdoor cafes and parks, 75 dB(A) for commercial areas and 63 dB(A) for residential areas. The Committee also understands that, although there is no consistent monitoring of traffic noise, site specific noise problems are addressed for particular developments.

3.67 No current information on noise levels or monitoring in the City was presented to the Committee by the planning authorities. Mr John Gray suggested that, assuming a standard of 60 dB(A) for recreation areas, 61 per cent of City Hill did not meet that standard.<sup>57</sup>

3.68 The Committee was surprised that no guidelines were in place considering that traffic noise is the major environment noise problem. The OECD recommended in 1980 that public authorities should concentrate the main thrust of their policies and actions on traffic noise.<sup>58</sup>

3.69 As noise levels on several streets in the City, including Vernon Circle, were outside acceptable international guidelines in 1988, certainly at peak periods and possibly over longer periods during the day, it is not unreasonable to conclude they are worse in 1993.

3.70 The Committee believes that noise levels on Vernon Circle should be monitored so that current information is available to the planners to enable them to model the levels for any proposed traffic changes and buildings.

3.71 In reconsidering the traffic arrangements for Vernon Circle in the Master Plan, the NCPA should ensure that, if it is anticipated traffic noise will exceed the recommended level appropriate to the land use, abatement measures are included in the Master Plan.

#### *Vehicle Emissions*

3.72 Not only would the pedestrians in the City Hill area possibly need to cope with greater noise levels. Their enjoyment of the facilities could be affected by increased vehicle emissions, as a result of the proposed changes. In response to concerns about

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<sup>56</sup> *Assessment of OECD's Noise Exposure Limits, 1990* - Ms Judy Sinclair.

<sup>57</sup> *Evidence* - Mr John Gray, 18 January 1993 - p. 71.

<sup>58</sup> *OECD Conference on Noise Abatement Policies, 1980* - Paris - p. iv.

vehicle emissions, the ACTPA presented diagrams produced by a modelling program depicting emissions of nitrogen oxides in the City now, under both the current and the proposed arrangements, and in 25 years time. The ACTPA considers that emissions of nitrogen oxides are likely to remain stable on Vernon Circle whether or not the proposed traffic arrangements are put in place, for at least the next 25 years. However, the diagrams do not depict emissions below 640 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guideline is currently 320 ug/m<sup>3</sup> and the Council advises that a new goal is in preparation.<sup>59</sup>

3.73 No information was presented to the Committee on the levels of carbon monoxide, lead or other pollutants. During its review of Amendment No 1, in 1991 the Committee was informed that key access roads to Civic exceeded the guideline at that time of 1.5 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for lead levels. The roads included Northbourne Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, London Circuit, Constitution Avenue and Ballumbir-Coranderrk Streets. At the time of the report the Committee understood the guidelines for acceptable levels of lead were to be made more stringent. Certainly, it is expected that lead levels will decline as more motorists use unleaded petrol, but more active monitoring is essential.

3.74 The Committee is concerned that the levels of pollution from vehicle emissions may exceed acceptable standards on Vernon Circle at present and could continue to do so under the proposed traffic arrangements. The evidence presented by the ACTPA was misleading because the threshold level was twice the NHMRC recommended level and referred only to nitrous oxides. The Committee considers more information is required on current levels of pollutants on Vernon Circle and estimated levels for alternative traffic arrangements.

#### **Pedestrian Access to City Hill**

3.75 The Draft Amendment aims to encourage pedestrians onto City Hill by 'traffic calming' and improved pedestrian links. Corner parks are proposed at the points of the London Circuit hexagon, and the two on either side of Northbourne Avenue would be connected to City Hill by landscaped paths and underpasses under Vernon Circle. Traffic lights would be installed on Vernon Circle at the intersections of Northbourne, Constitution, Commonwealth and Edinburgh Avenues, and special pavement treatments would be used.

3.76 The architects who designed the Master Plan maintain that, if appropriately designed, the underpasses would be attractive and safe.

3.77 Although there was some support for underpasses, the majority who commented were not in favour. In particular, underpasses were considered unsafe and an encouragement to anti-social behaviour. Mr Geoff Butterworth commented:

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<sup>59</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council, correspondence.

Underpasses do not work as they are avoided by pedestrians who will attempt to cross the road at grade. They are a danger at night (NCDC called such things 'Furtive spaces') and they attract vandalism and graffiti.<sup>60</sup>

3.78 The ACTPA has estimated that the underpasses would cost about \$500,000 each to construct. The NCPA has since indicated that it would delete underpasses from the Final Amendment and provide for pedestrian access at the signalised intersections on Vernon Circle instead.<sup>61</sup>

3.79 The Committee recognises that the issue of whether underpasses are required depends on other aspects of the plan (such as traffic flows and installation of lights) and should be decided in the light of these planning proposals.

3.80 On the basis of the information provided, the Committee is not in favour of pedestrian underpasses.

3.81 The proposed pocket parks were designed to encourage pedestrian movement to the hill, and to create a greater awareness of it. While many respondents supported the concept, and welcomed the introduction of more patches of green, Mr John Gray suggested that, as small isolated parks, they would be of limited value.<sup>62</sup> The deletion of the underpasses from the Draft Amendment would seem to remove one of the reasons for the pathways from the two pocket parks to the east and west of Northbourne Avenue, as located on the plan. Pedestrians using these routes to City Hill Park would need to walk to the traffic lights at Northbourne Avenue to cross Vernon Circle in safety. The NCPA does not consider any relocation of these pathways is necessary and believes the safe access points at the traffic lights would allow for broader usage and an appreciation of the park than would have been the case with the underpasses.<sup>63</sup>

3.82 The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects supports the aim of improving pedestrian access but does not consider that adequate thought has been given to open space connections on a broader scale.<sup>64</sup> The Committee agrees that the wider area should be taken into account in designing the pedestrian areas, and in particular the links with Commonwealth Park and Acton Peninsula.

## Buildings

3.83 The proposal to change the building height from three storeys to six storeys on Vernon Circle was the principal reason for preparing the draft variation, and was thus the key issue in the Committee's inquiry.

3.84 The Draft Amendment provides that buildings fronting London Circuit would be between RL 580 and RL 585 (the equivalent of three storeys), those fronting Vernon Circle would be between RL 590 and RL 595 (six storeys) and the gateway buildings on Northbourne Avenue would be between RL 600 and RL 605 (eight/nine storeys). This

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<sup>60</sup> Exhibit No. 5 - Mr Geoff Butterworth - p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 17.

<sup>62</sup> Exhibit No. 12 - Mr John Gray - p. 5.

<sup>63</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 23.

<sup>64</sup> Exhibit No 15 - Australian Institute of Landscape Architects - p. 3.

reverses the present maximum building heights for London Circuit and Vernon Circle. The Amendment also provides for open space to the south of Vernon Circle, whereas the current guidelines, while permitting parks, also allow full encirclement of City Hill by buildings.

3.85 In their study, the architects considered the reversal was justified because to date only the Law Courts building conforms to the existing pattern in the National Capital Plan (ie three storeys or equivalent on Vernon Circle). They considered that to allow the current limits to remain would lead to no apparent pattern of control, nor perceptible order. The four existing buildings on the inner side of London Circuit are three storeys, but there are taller buildings on the outer side. Another consideration was that air conditioning plants on the top of three storey buildings would be visible from the Hill, whereas this would not be the case if the buildings were six storeys.

#### *Building heights*

3.86 The respondents were divided on the question of six storey buildings on Vernon Circle. Those not in favour gave reasons such as:

- . the buildings would be taller than the trees and they would obscure both the hill and the views from the hill;<sup>65</sup>
- . the buildings would not be in keeping with the present buildings on Vernon Circle, ie the Law Courts and the Canberra Theatre complex;<sup>66</sup>
- . City Hill is a natural feature and should be recognised as such, rather than downgraded as an urban space by buildings as high as eight storeys at its close proximity.<sup>67</sup>

3.87 Those who supported six storey buildings said:

...development of six storeys fronting onto Vernon Circle will bring the City up to the Hill and provide an urban backdrop to City Hill Park. Outlook to the park from these buildings will be particularly attractive to users<sup>68</sup>

We believe the location of higher buildings on the Circle would be a positive change; we support this proposal<sup>69</sup>

...six storey construction nearer City Hill is sensible and achievable, and should be supported in principle.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *Exhibit No. 4 - Professor John Mulvaney - p. 1; Exhibit No. 7 - National Trust of Australia (ACT) - p. 2.*

<sup>66</sup> *Exhibit No. 10 - The Hon Jeffrey Miles CJ - p 5; Exhibit No. 19 - Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Ltd - p. 2.*

<sup>67</sup> *Exhibit No. 16 - Mr Shibu Dutta - p. 1.*

<sup>68</sup> *Exhibit No. 5 - Mr Geoff Butterworth - p. 1.*

<sup>69</sup> *Submission No. 10 - Royal Australian Planning Institute Inc. - p. 2.*

<sup>70</sup> *Exhibit No.14 - Mr Roger Pegrum - p. 1.*

3.88 As mentioned above, the Australian Heritage Commission suggested that the six storey buildings be limited to the east and west sides of Vernon Circle and lower buildings heights be retained to the north, so as to be in keeping with the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings.<sup>71</sup>

3.89 Mr Greg Deas thought it was more important that the buildings on Vernon Circle formed a consistent and continuous edge, whatever their height, than adopting the rationale for six storey buildings on Vernon Circle and three on London Circuit of 'massing the buildings up toward City Hill'. He doubted this would be apparent from many viewing points.<sup>72</sup>

3.90 Several respondents considered the eight storey gateway buildings on Northbourne Avenue were not appropriate and the Committee opposes eight storey 'gateways'. The 'gateway' area should be marked in other ways, with a pedestrian precinct or landscape, or lower buildings. The NCPA advised that, having considered the comments received, the Authority had agreed to an RL of 595 for Vernon Circle, which would not permit the eight storey gateway buildings.<sup>73</sup>

3.91 In the Committee's opinion most of NCPA's arguments in favour of a six storey building height policy would equally apply to three storey buildings. The NCPA argued that six storey buildings would:

- . provide a policy framework which would result in a clear and coherent pattern of building;
- . maintain approach views;
- . give viewers a sense of edge definition to the hill; and
- . provide prime frontages to the Hill<sup>74</sup>

3.92 The argument that plant and equipment on the roofs of three storey buildings would be more visible from the hill than would that on six storey buildings is not convincing, particularly as the design standards in the Master Plan require roof structures to be minimised and, if necessary, screened or housed in specially designed enclosures. Moreover, the intention to achieve a uniform parapet height for buildings flanking Vernon Circle cannot be achieved unless the Theatre complex and Law Courts are replaced.

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<sup>71</sup> Exhibit No 18 - Australian Heritage Commission - p. 3.

<sup>72</sup> Exhibit No. 3 - Mr Greg Deas - p. 2.

<sup>73</sup> Evidence - Mr Lyndsay Neilson (NCPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 46.

<sup>74</sup> Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 19.

3.93 The Committee found the heritage and aesthetic arguments in favour of retaining three storey buildings on Vernon Circle convincing. It was also mindful of the lengthy review process which established the current height limit of three storeys. The fact that the development of Vernon Circle is a long term project and implications of a decision to change the maximum permitted building height is significant. The Committee does not consider there is any urgency at present in locking into a height limit that might be considered a serious mistake in years to come.

#### *The Proposed Magistrates Court*

3.94 The Committee accepts there is an urgent need for new court accommodation in the ACT and the authorities wish construction to commence as soon as possible. A perspective of the proposed Magistrates Court was tabled at the public hearing and evidence given by an officer from ACT Public Works. The building was designed within the parameters of the Draft Amendment, ie taking into account the proposed new height limit of RL 595 on Vernon Circle and the pedestrian pathway. The constraints have resulted in the design for a building of five storeys which has a narrow frontage to Vernon Circle and widens out to the rear. The primary public access is from a large external staircase on the north side, ie the side next to the pathway. The current design of the building does not completely conform to the NCPA's design principle which requires new buildings on Vernon Circle to have their major facade and entry addressing Vernon Circle.<sup>75</sup>

3.95 The NCPA, having reviewed the Draft Amendment in the light of the public consultation process, endorsed the proposal to permit six storey development on Vernon Circle. This decision, if confirmed, would permit the Magistrates Court to proceed as currently designed. The NCPA supports the project, but considers specific design issues require further consideration.

3.96 Mr Keith Storey expressed the opinion that the shape and height of the Magistrates Court was constrained by the pathway. If it were not, the building could be of three storeys and have a much better shape.<sup>76</sup>

3.97 It was apparent to the Committee that the urgency of the need for the Magistrates Court is real and was driving the Master Plan. However, it is inadvisable at this stage in the development of the City to approve such a radical change to the established building height on Vernon Circle to facilitate one building under pressure and in the face of opposition in the community and the unconvincing arguments in favour. The Committee has no desire to prevent the Magistrates Court building from going ahead and believes the accommodation could be provided, for example, by a building within the current height limits in the same area, and without coming forward towards Vernon Circle more than is allowed under the current design.

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<sup>75</sup> Evidence - Ms Annabelle Pegrum (ACT Public Works), 18 January 1993 - p. 10.

<sup>76</sup> Evidence - Mr Keith Storey, 18 January 1993 - p. 79.

## *Design Standards*

3.98 A design principle that buildings on Vernon Circle must have their primary address to, and have their main entrance from, Vernon Circle was set by the NCPA in order to overcome the 'back door' impression of the area. Both the Theatre Complex and Law Courts have their entrances in access roads off London Circuit.

3.99 Several submissions expressed the opinion that there should be no vehicular access or entrances to the buildings on Vernon Circle. Some were concerned about safety in conjunction with the proposed drop-off lane;<sup>77</sup> another suggested that the traffic flow would be impeded;<sup>78</sup> another opposed the interruption to the continuity of the building edge.<sup>79</sup>

3.100 The NCPA did not respond to these criticisms in its submission. The Committee's main concern is that the implications of the new traffic arrangements including the provision of vehicle access to the buildings on Vernon Circle have not been taken into account by the planning authorities. It would be possible for the buildings to address Vernon Circle but still be accessed by car from service roads to the rear.

3.101 The development guidelines in the National Capital Plan for Vernon Circle and London Circuit provide for high quality development with a low building form in a landscape setting.<sup>80</sup> One respondent suggested rather than a landscape setting, the buildings on Vernon Circle should have a continuous edge to reinforce the geometry.<sup>81</sup> Another respondent suggested that buildings around Vernon Circle should be curved to respect the geometry.<sup>82</sup>

3.102 The Draft Amendment provides guidance for building materials and finishes, colours, facades, colonnades, screening of roof structures, signage and floodlighting at night. Only one submission commented on this aspect of the Draft Amendment, and was critical of the restriction on colours to the off-white to warm beige range. The same respondent mentioned the difficulty of designing the buildings to be solar passive within the Draft Amendment's design constraints.<sup>83</sup>

3.103 The Committee believes that the NCPA may find merit in many of the suggestions on design standards in the submissions, and in reconsidering the Master Plan should take them into account.

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<sup>77</sup> *Exhibit No. 14* - Mr Roger Pegrum - p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> *Submission No. 3* - Mr William Smith - p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> *Exhibit No. 3* - Mr Greg Deas - p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> *National Capital Plan* - Figure 10, Area B land use and guidelines.

<sup>81</sup> *Exhibit No. 3* - Mr Greg Deas - p. 2.

<sup>82</sup> *Submission No. 4* - Mr Shibu Dutta - section 3.

<sup>83</sup> *Submission No. 9* - Ms Helen Szuty MLA - p. 4.



## Other Issues

### Land Use

3.104 The Draft Amendment does not alter the land use for the area, ie park for section 34 and mainly administrative with a variety of other permitted uses for sections 18, 19 and 63. The permitted land uses are listed in Chapter 2. While it has been suggested that the predominant land uses in the precincts be continued, ie administrative/cultural to the east, legal/judicial to the west and residential/commercial to the south,<sup>84</sup> all permitted land uses will be open in each precinct. The land on the south on either side of Commonwealth Avenue would be retained as open space in order to preserve the vista to Parliament House. The landscaping of the additional parks would be consistent with City Hill.

3.105 The land use aspects of the Draft Amendment initiated a variety of comments. One respondent considered that residential and commercial uses should not be permitted on the south side;<sup>85</sup> another thought the south side, which is to remain parkland, should be developed.<sup>86</sup>

3.106 The Royal Australian Institute of Architects considered development should be permitted on the southern area to the west of Commonwealth Avenue. Presently this area contains the ramp from Commonwealth Avenue to London Circuit for east bound traffic. Buildings on the west of Commonwealth Avenue would reinforce the boundaries of the Parliamentary Triangle, rather than maintaining the view to Parliament House.<sup>87</sup> This treatment of the base of the Triangle was reinforced by Mr Shibu Dutta in a carefully considered and clearly illustrated submission.<sup>88</sup>

3.107 The Committee considered this type of emphasis of the Triangle had merit and would also reinforce the link between City Hill and Commonwealth Park.

3.108 Several respondents commented on the area of Northbourne Avenue between London Circuit and Vernon Circle. One respondent thought it should remain undeveloped.<sup>89</sup> The Residents Rally for Canberra would like to see Northbourne Avenue from Rudd Street to Vernon Circle narrowed and centred with tree-lined pedestrian areas on either side. On the southern corners of London Circuit, opposite the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings, this would open out into north facing plazas.<sup>90</sup> Mr Roger Pegrum considered that the most serious flaw in the Master Plan was the absolute lack of any sense of city centre. He suggested that one way this could be achieved was by linking the Hill with London Circuit at the Melbourne and Sydney Buildings. He suggested a similar plaza treatment for the corners opposite those buildings.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Submission No. 6 - ACTPA - p. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Exhibit No.11 - Mrs S C Aitchison and Professor G J Aitchison - p. 1.

<sup>86</sup> Exhibit No. 17 - Mr Keith Storey - p. 4.

<sup>87</sup> Exhibit No. 20 - Royal Australian Institute of Architects - p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> Submission No. 4 - Mr Shibu Dutta - p. 10-32.

<sup>89</sup> Exhibit No. 19 - Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Ltd - p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> Exhibit No. 1 - Residents Rally for Canberra - p. 3.

<sup>91</sup> Exhibit No. 14 - Mr Roger Pegrum - p. 2.

3.109 The Committee was impressed with the variety of ideas presented in the submissions and exhibits and regretted that the public had not been given the opportunity to make their contributions earlier in the planning process. As suggested above, the Committee believes it would be worthwhile for the NCPA to give consideration to these options when reconsidering the Master Plan.

3.110 The Residents Rally for Canberra suggested that it was timely for 'casino' to be removed from the land use.<sup>92</sup> The Committee agrees and is in favour of the permitted land uses for the precinct with the exception of 'casino'. In the light of the ACT Government's decision not to permit redevelopment of Section 19 for a casino, it is no longer necessary or appropriate to include 'casino' in the land use for the area.

#### *Office Space*

3.111 The Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Ltd is concerned about the increase in the office population of the City, which would result if the area were developed according to the proposals in the Draft Amendment, and the effect on the infrastructure.

3.112 The current ACT employment policy is that no more than 20 per cent of total employment in the metropolitan areas of Canberra be located in Civic. The ACTPA estimates that keeping within the employment guidelines would allow the development of the equivalent of a Canberra Times building a year. Completion of the City Hill plan, if approved, will be in the long term. It is not seen as a major opportunity for expansion of commercial and other office space, which is one of the reasons why there is a wide variety of permitted land uses.<sup>93</sup>

3.113 The ACTPA has estimated that the total cost of providing the infrastructure for the area would be \$15.9 million. Because development of the area will be over a long period, the costs could be staged.<sup>94</sup> The infrastructure costs will be offset by the creation of development sites and the ACTPA advised that this figure is estimated at \$85 million.<sup>95</sup>

3.114 The Committee was satisfied that, as the area would be developed over a long period of time, and several of the sites would be developed for civic and administrative purposes, this would not result in problems with providing infrastructure or that a situation which would arise which would conflict with the Territory's employment location policies.

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<sup>92</sup> *Exhibit No. 1 - Residents Rally for Canberra - p. 1.*

<sup>93</sup> *Evidence - Mr George Tomlins (ACTPA), 18 January 1993 - p. 54.*

<sup>94</sup> *Submission No. 6 - ACTPA - p. 3.*

<sup>95</sup> *Evidence - Mr George Tomlins, 18 January 1993 - p. 50.*

### *Parking*

3.115 Concern was expressed that with the replacement of the present surface car parking with buildings and the increased office population in the area, parking problems would result.<sup>96</sup>

3.116 The architects' study did not include consideration of the effect of displacing the existing surface parking with buildings, but it did identify the need for a further study as a follow-on to the City Hill Master Plan. The architects' study suggested that 83 per cent of direct demand from the new buildings could be accommodated by one level of basement parking and surface parking.

3.117 The NCPA suggested, that based on the existing Civic parking policy of one space per 100 square metres of Gross Floor Area, the development of commercial office uses on parking sites would increase commuter parking supply only marginally. Parking provided for non-office uses would have little or diminishing effects on commuter parking. The NCPA considers that the development of the precinct over time allows for traffic impacts to be monitored and site specific solutions adopted which would achieve the overall policy of promoting public transport.<sup>97</sup>

### **Section 37 (Civic Swimming Pool)**

3.118 The Draft Amendment provides for the predominant land use of section 37 to be Restricted Access Open Space. In its report on Amendment No 1, the Committee recommended that 'administrative use' should be removed from the range of uses permitted in section 37 and that Civic Pool and its landscape setting remain the dominant use. The Government accepted those recommendations and the Draft Amendment will change the current permitted use from Commercial to Restricted Access Open Space. None of the submissions commented on this.

3.119 The Committee agrees with this change and has no further comments.

R L Chynoweth, MP  
Chairman

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<sup>96</sup> *Exhibit No. 19 - Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Ltd - p. 3.*

*Exhibit No. 22 - Mr George Shaw - p. 1.*

*Exhibit No. 23 - Ms Carmel Statham - p. 2.*

<sup>97</sup> *Submission No. 7 - NCPA - p. 15.*



APPENDIX A

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
(PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT) ACT 1988

DRAFT AMENDMENTS  
TO THE  
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

AMENDMENT No. 5

October 1992

## PREAMBLE

The National Capital Plan was approved by the then Minister for the Arts, Tourism and Territories on 21 December 1990.

One of the statutory functions of the National Capital Planning Authority is to keep the National Capital Plan ("the Plan") under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary.

Section 10.(1) of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* states:

"The Plan may specify areas of land that have the special characteristics of the National Capital to be Designated Areas".

Section 10.(2)(c) provides that the Plan:

"may set out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development in the Designated Areas and the priorities in carrying out such planning, design and development".

As planning studies of particular areas or aspects of the Plan are undertaken the Plan will require updating. Amendment 5 proposes amendments to the Plan generated by the Master Plan Study for City Hill.

## AN INVITATION TO COMMENT

Individuals and organisations are invited to comment. Comments in writing must be forwarded, by close of business on 25 November 1992, to:

**The Executive Director (National Capital Planning)**  
**National Capital Planning Authority**  
**10-12 Brisbane Avenue, Barton**  
**GPO Box 373**  
**CANBERRA ACT 2601**

The Authority also proposes to conduct a hearing and invites respondents to nominate to appear at the hearing scheduled for Monday 30 November 1992.

If you would like further information please contact the Authority's Director of Statutory Planning, David Wright, on (06) 271 2840 or by FAX (06)273 4427.

## DRAFT AMENDMENT

### MASTER PLANS

A Master Plan has been prepared for City Hill and this has formed the basis for the preparation of Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development which, it is proposed, will be included in Appendix T to the Plan.

**1. Amendment to 1.3 on Page 21 - Remaining Parts of the Central National Area:**

Amend the last paragraph, to make it clear master plans are to be incorporated into the National Capital Plan as Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development by inserting the following immediately after the words "National Capital Planning Authority":

*"and incorporation into the National Capital Plan as Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development".*

The amended paragraph would then be as follows:

The master plans may be prepared by or on behalf of the relevant organisations and are subject to approval by the National Capital Planning Authority and incorporation into the National Capital Plan as Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development. It is intended that approval of master plans will expedite works approval requirements, especially in relation to routine and minor activities.

**2. Amendment to 1.4 on Page 22 - Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development:**

Amend paragraph (ii) to give authority and application to master plans appended to the Plan by adding the following:

*"and, where applicable, to the provisions of a master plan set out in Appendix T".*

The amended paragraph would then be as follows:

- (ii) Other parts of the Designated Area will be used in accordance with Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development shown at Figures 5-17 and, where applicable, to the provisions of a master plan set out in Appendix T.

### CITY HILL MASTER PLAN

*Appendix T.3 - City Hill - Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development.*

**3. Amendment to 1.1.1 on Page 18 - The Central National Area - Background:**

Delete the two paragraphs relating to City Hill which begin "Of particular importance . . . .," and "The Plan includes City Hill . . . .," and replace with the following paragraphs:

**City Hill is of national significance. It forms a point of Griffin's Parliamentary Triangle and is the terminating landmark of Commonwealth and Constitution Avenues. On this basis all the land within London Circuit has been designated.**

**While City Hill has been reserved as a park, the land between London Circuit and Vernon Circle is reserved primarily for important Territorial functions and, as such, presents a major opportunity for the Territory Government to achieve a quality of development which is recognised, both in Australia and internationally, as a significant contribution to the National Capital.**

**A Master Plan - the result of a joint planning study by the National Capital Planning Authority and the ACT Planning Authority has formed the basis of Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development for City Hill and Environs which is included in the Plan at Appendix T.**

- 4 Amend Figure 10 by showing Constitution Avenue and Edinburgh Avenues extended to meet Vernon Circle and identify the predominant land use of Section 37, City, as Restricted Access Open Space to more accurately reflect the land use policies for the area defined in Amendment No.1 to the National Capital Plan.



AMENDMENT No.5  
APPENDIX T3 - CITY HILL MASTER PLAN

DETAILED CONDITIONS OF PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

**Preamble**

City Hill and its environs are of national significance. City Hill forms a point of Griffin's Parliamentary Triangle and provides a terminating feature for Commonwealth and Constitution Avenues. The land between London Circuit and Vernon Circle is set aside primarily for a range of important Territorial and Municipal functions including the ACT Legislative Assembly, the ACT Law Courts, the Territory's main cultural facilities such as the library and theatre, and the Executive arm of the ACT Government.

The manner in which this area is developed is important to both the Commonwealth and Territory Governments and offers a unique opportunity to make a vital contribution to the City of Canberra as Australia's National Capital. A joint planning study by the National Capital Planning Authority and the ACT Planning Authority produced a Master Plan to guide the future development of the precinct. The principal features of the Master Plan are set out below together with a series of Design Guidelines. Together, these form the Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development for City Hill and Environs.

**Land Use**

City Hill is to remain a park and the land between London Circuit and Vernon Circle is intended to serve as the Civic heart of the National Capital. This area of the city is intended to be used for important municipal and territorial institutions including the ACT Legislative Assembly, the ACT Law Courts, offices of the ACT Government together with a range of social cultural and community facilities including the city's main library and theatre complex.

A wide range of land uses are provided for and mixed land use developments are considered by the Authority to be desirable in this area. While the main municipal and territorial institutions are expected to be the dominant land uses in the northern part of the area, office and residential uses are expected to be the predominant uses on the southern side where London Circuit and Vernon Circle meet Commonwealth Avenue.

Additional parks are identified in the areas between Commonwealth Avenue and the extensions to Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues. A series of small open spaces are also proposed at points of the hexagon formed by London Circuit.

**Traffic and Transport**

City Hill's value as a city park is considerably diminished by its isolation from the city's residents, workforce and visitors by Vernon Circle which operates as a high speed road linking Northbourne Avenue to Commonwealth Avenue. Improved pedestrian links between the city and City Hill will be provided by formalising junctions between Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle to reduce vehicle speeds and by providing corner parks which invite pedestrians into the pathway system which will lead to and through City Hill.

This process will be further assisted by the extension of Constitution Avenue and Edinburgh Avenue to Vernon Circle. The linking of Constitution Avenue through to Vernon Circle will provide an opportunity to assert the importance of Constitution Avenue as one of Griffin's main avenues, forming the baseline of the Parliamentary Triangle. Constitution Avenue should be extended to Vernon Circle at its full "avenue" width.

Several vehicular set down zones on the outer edge of Vernon Circle will permit buses and cars to pause and pick up and drop off passengers who can gain access to those buildings facing Vernon Circle which will have their primary address points accessed from the pedestrian concourse.

Special pavement treatment across Vernon Circle at the pedestrian crossing points (Edinburgh and Constitution Avenues) may be used to accentuate pedestrian priority and tend to further reduce vehicular speeds.

### **Building Height**

It is proposed that lower buildings front London Circuit and taller buildings are located on Vernon Circle, massing the buildings up toward City Hill.

Building Height Controls have been set for different "zones" within the precinct as follows: (refer Drg. No.107/92/38.2).

Buildings fronting London Circuit	- Min RL 580 - Max RL 585
Buildings fronting Vernon Circle	- Min RL 590 - Max RL 595
Gateway Buildings on Northbourne Avenue	- Min RL 600 - Max RL 605

### **Design Standards**

Consistent with the national capital significance attached to the area within London Circuit, the requirement is for a consistently high standard of design to be achieved in all planning and development. To this end the following standards will apply.

- . Buildings on sites abutting Vernon Circle must have their primary address to, and have their main entrance from, Vernon Circle.
- . Buildings facing Vernon Circle and City Hill are to express the significance of their sites by a high standard of architectural design and the use of building materials and finishes of the highest quality.
- . Facade treatments should be modulated, presenting a lively address to City Hill through the use of projecting balconies, sun control devices and colonnades.
- . Weather protected pedestrian colonnades will be provided on London Circuit frontages and will return along the sides of buildings adjacent to the corner parks. Selected frontages of buildings surrounding Vernon Circle will also be provided with colonnades.

Ground floor uses should be active, involving commercial and retail uses where possible to generate pedestrian movement in and around the precinct.

Building entrances are to be reinforced by the use of canopies, colonnades and porte cocheres.

Materials, finishes and colours should be within the off white - warm beige range; stark white materials will not be permitted. Preference will be given to the use of natural stone claddings to give a high quality finish, especially at pedestrian level.

Unpainted metal deck materials will not be permitted on roofs, parapets or fascias. The visual impact of roof-mounted structures, including plant and communications equipment, must be minimised. Where the Authority considers it necessary, such structures will be required to be screened or housed in purposely designed enclosures.

External signage facing City Hill and the Parliamentary Zone will be subject to individual consideration.

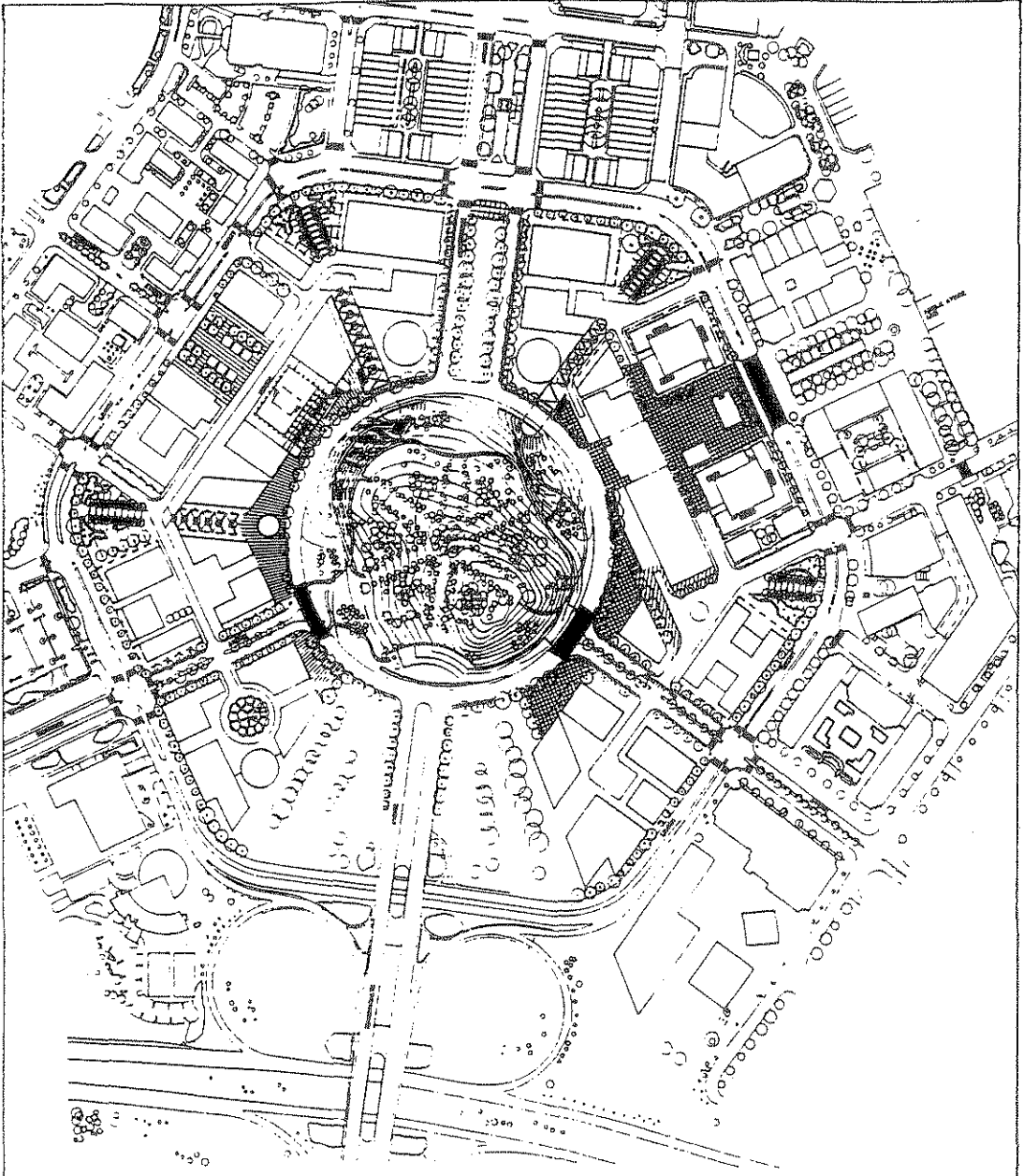
Floodlighting of buildings is encouraged but will be subject to stringent control to ensure consistency of illumination levels around City Hill.

#### **Landscape**

The existing City Hill landscape treatment is to be substantially retained in its present form with some minor modifications at pedestrian entry points. The proposed corner parks are intended to provide a consistent treatment to the corners of London Circuit and they will use plant species drawn from City Hill to reinforce the linkages and the landscape theme.

Formal avenue planting will be required on Constitution, Edinburgh, Northbourne and Commonwealth Avenues.

The pedestrian concourse and spaces in the foreground of buildings around Vernon Circle are to be landscaped to a consistently high standard.



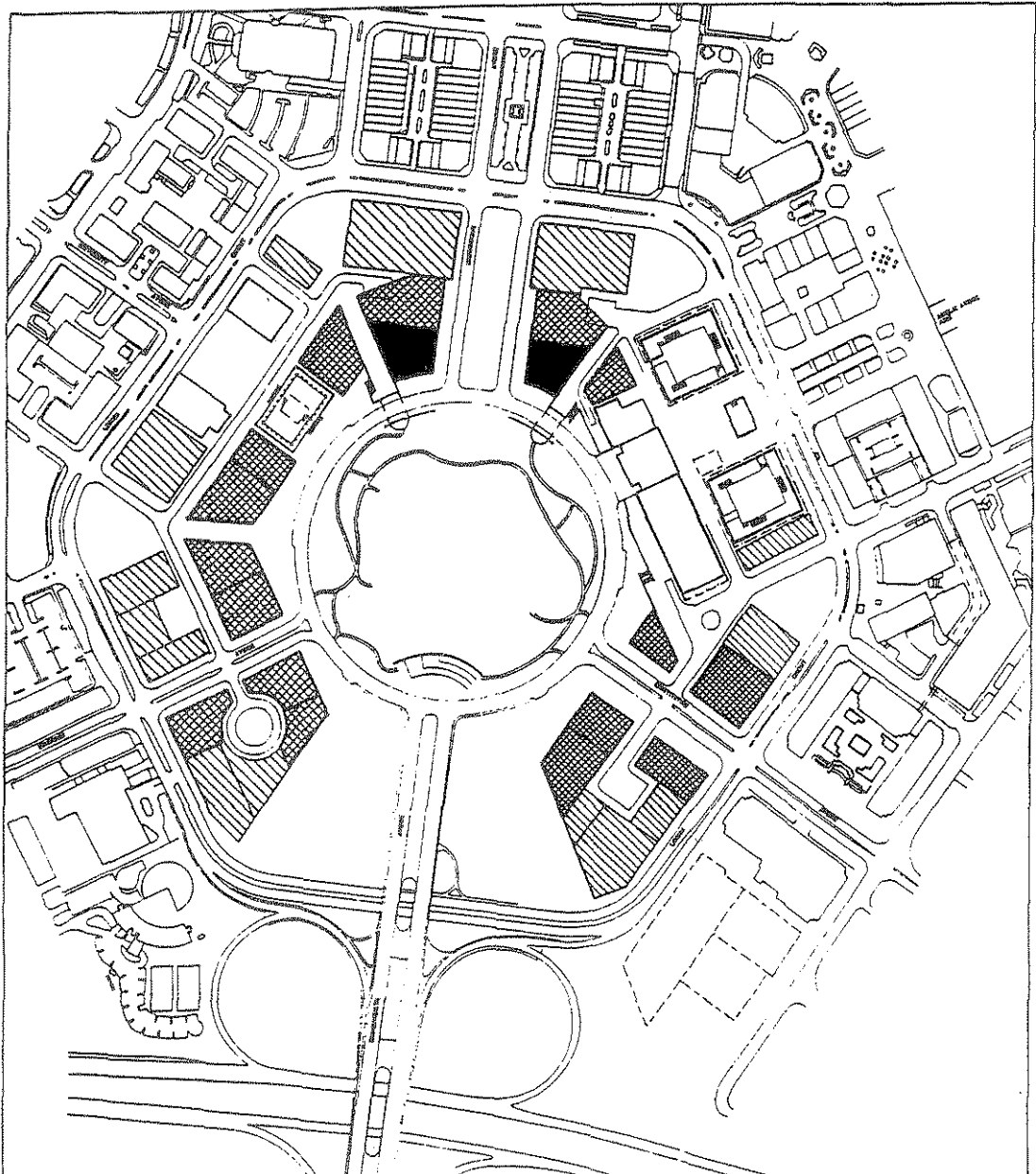
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


CITY HILL MASTER PLAN  
 Drawing No. 107/92/38.1

This Master Plan includes:  
 illustrative building configurations,  
 tree plantings, park spaces, etc.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
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 DRAWING MAY BE REPRODUCED  
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 OR BY ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC  
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 PHOTOCOPYING, RECORDING, OR  
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 AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM.



**Key to Building Heights**

-  Existing Buildings
-  Min.RL 580 – Max.RL 585
-  Min.RL 590 – Max.RL 595
-  Min.RL 600 – Max.RL 605



**BUILDING HEIGHT CONTROLS**

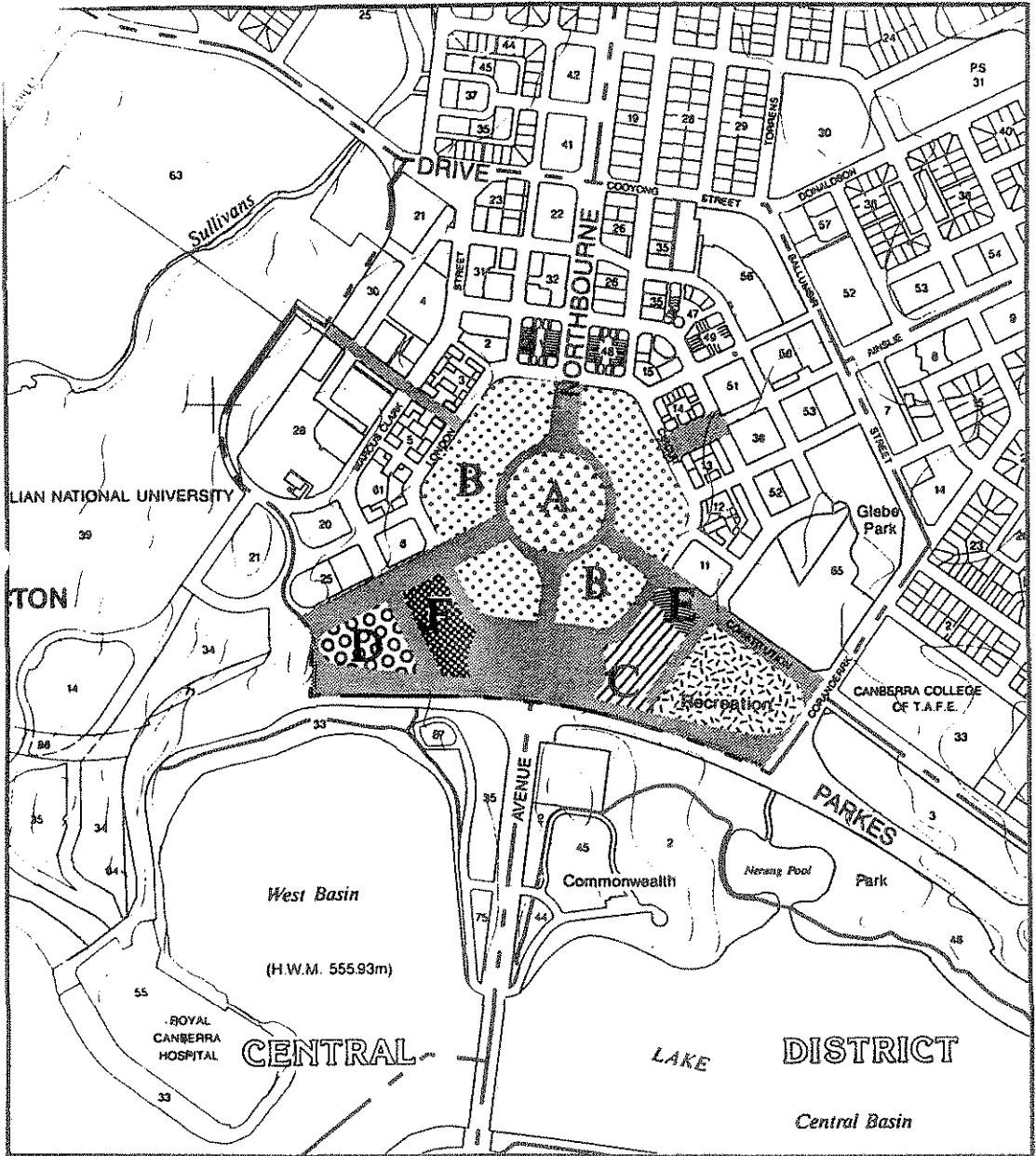
Drawing No. 107/92/38.2

JULY 1992










MITCHELL/BERNHEIM & THOMPSON ARCHITECTS

for and on behalf of

ACT PLANNING AUTHORITY &  
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING AUTHORITY



**Predominant Land Uses:**

-  Offices
-  Commercial
-  Road
-  Residential
-  Administrative/Cultural
-  Social/Community/Educational
-  Open Space
-  Restricted Access Open Space
-  Adjoining Central National Area Maps

**Figure 10**  
**The Central National Area**  
**(City)**

This is a black & white rendition of Figure 10 which appears in colour in the National Capital Plan.

INDEX OF SUBMISSIONS AND EXHIBITS

**Submissions**

- 1 Mr H N Trowbridge
- 2 Mr J E Gray
- 3 Mr W P Smith
- 4 Mr S B Dutta
- 5 Ms H Cleaver and Ms L Forward
- 6 ACT Planning Authority
- 7 National Capital Planning Authority
- 8 Mr M Ellis
- 9 Ms H Szuty, MLA
- 10 Royal Australian Planning Institute Inc
- 11 National Capital Planning Authority (supplementary)
- 12 Enrico Taglietti and Associates Pty Ltd
- 13 Mrs V A Emerton

**Exhibits**

*Submissions to the NCPA*

- 1 Residents Rally for Canberra
- 2 The Hon Mr Justice R Else-Mitchell CMG QC
- 3 Mr G Deas

- 4 Emeritus Professor D J Mulvaney AO CMG
- 5 Mr G Butterworth
- 6 Mrs M Booth
- 7 National Trust of Australia (ACT)
- 8 Mr G Wood
- 9 Heritage Council (ACT)
- 10 The Hon Mr Justice J Miles
- 11 Mrs S C Aitchison and Professor G J Aitchison
- 12 Mr J E Gray
- 13 Turner Residents' Association
- 14 Pegrum Ciolek Pty Ltd
- 15 Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (ACT Group)
- 16 Mr S B Dutta
- 17 Mr K Storey
- 18 Australian Heritage Commission
- 19 Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Ltd
- 20 The Royal Australian Institute of Architects, ACT Chapter
- 21 Mr M P M Motion-Wise
- 22 Mr G Shaw
- 23 Ms C M Statham
- Other Exhibits*
- 24 Perspective and Landscape Plan of the Magistrates Court
- 25 Construction costings by the ACTPA
- 26 Planning Concepts for City Hill - references to previous planning decisions
- 27 Draft citation on City Hill Park, Interim Heritage Places Register
- 28 Official printout from Register of National Estate, Australian Heritage Commission
- 29 Report on Transport Issues Raised in Consultation on City Hill Masterplan, prepared by Denis Johnston & Associates



WITNESSES AT PUBLIC HEARINGS

CANBERRA, MONDAY 18 JANUARY 1993

National Capital Planning Authority

Mr Lyndsay Neilson, Chief Executive  
Mr Michael Grace, Acting Executive Director, Design  
Mr Lindsay Evans, Director, Capital Works and Land Management

Australian Capital Territory Government

Mr George Tomlins, Chief Planner, ACTPA  
Mr Rod Grose, Acting Assistant Secretary, Strategic and Environmental Planning Branch, ACTPA  
Mr Gary Richards, Senior Professional Officer, Environmental Planning, ACTPA  
Mr Ian Wood-Bradley, Senior Planner, ACTPA  
Ms Annabelle Pegrum, Senior Architect, ACT Public Works and Services

Individuals

Mr Geoff Butterworth, Geoff Butterworth Armour and Partners  
Mr Shibu Dutta  
Mr John Gray  
Emeritus Professor D John Mulvaney, AO, CMG  
Mr Roger Pegrum, Pegrum Ciolek Pty Ltd  
Mr Keith Storey

Australian Heritage Commission

Dr Rosemary Purdie, Deputy Executive Director  
Mr Martin Brine, Senior Conservation Officer

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, ACT Group

Mrs Judy Butt, President  
Ms Trish Bootes, Chairperson, Planning and Environment Sub-Committee

Heritage Council (ACT)

Mr Eric Martin, Chair  
Ms Catherine Keirnan, Member

National Trust of Australia (ACT)

Associate Professor Ken Taylor, President

Residents Rally for Canberra Inc

Mr Jack Kershaw, President

Turner Residents' Association

Mr Brian McNamara, Secretary  
Dr Maggie Indian, Committee Member

**CANBERRA, WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE 1993**

Mr John Turner, Secretary, ACT Department of Urban Services  
Mr Chris Hunt, Secretary, ACT Attorney-General's Department  
Ms Annabelle Pegrum, Senior Architect, ACT Public Works and Services