

Australian Capital Territory
(Planning and Land Management) Act 1988

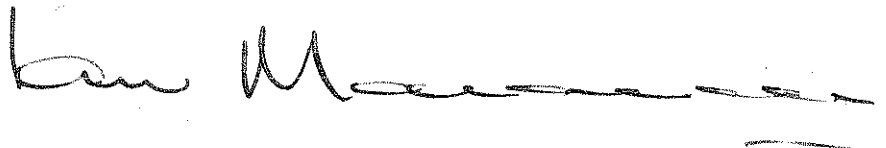
Section 19

**APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT 21
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN
(TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES POLICIES)**

I, **Ian Douglas Macdonald**, Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, pursuant to Section 19 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, APPROVE Amendment 21 of the National Capital Plan set out in the attached Schedule.

Dated this

3rd day of *June* 199*9*.



Ian Douglas Macdonald
Minister for Regional Services,
Territories and Local Government



NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

*Australian Capital Territory
(Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

**AMENDMENT 21
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES POLICIES**

June 1999

AMENDMENT 21 OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

1. **At page 55, amend policy 8.5.3(g) (Policies for Hills, Ridges and Buffer Spaces) to remove reference to the need for the preparation of a comprehensive telecommunications plan, and to add an appropriate cross-reference to the Policies for Telecommunications Facilities within section 12 (Infrastructure). The amended policy is as follows:**

Black Mountain, Mt Taylor, Tuggeranong Hill and Isaacs Ridge will continue to provide locations for current telecommunications facilities. (Refer to Policies for Telecommunications Facilities at 12.4)

2. **At page 69, amend 12.3(c) (Policies for Infrastructure) to cross-reference to the Policies for Telecommunications Facilities at 12.4. The amended policy is as follows:**

The planning and provision of electricity and telecommunications facilities should be undertaken in a manner which takes all reasonable steps to minimise the visual effects of transmission lines, substations and telecommunications facilities on the natural and built environments of the National Capital. Detailed policies for the installation of telecommunications facilities are set out at 12.4.

3. **At page 69, amend section 12 (Infrastructure) by inserting as Policy 12.4, the “Policies for Telecommunications Facilities” set out in the Schedule below.**
4. **Amend Appendix H (Design and Siting Conditions) by deleting Part 4 (Conditions for the Siting of Satellite Dishes and Other Telecommunications Equipment).**

Schedule:

12.4 Policies for Telecommunications Facilities

These Policies apply to the installation and erection of telecommunications facilities, being facilities subject to the *Telecommunications Act 1997*.

Items subject to these policies

The following items are subject to the Policies for Telecommunications Facilities:

- ground based towers, antenna masts and headframes;
- underground and aerial cabling;
- rooftop antennas, headframes and associated structures;
- microwave or satellite antennas or dishes (this includes both ground and rooftop mounted installations); and
- any equipment structures (buildings and fenced enclosures) associated with the above.

Network Master Plans

The development of network master plans in newly developing areas and established areas where no telecommunications networks exist would facilitate the process of considering and approving new facilities. Accordingly, carriers are encouraged to prepare and maintain a *Network Master Plan* for their existing and proposed operations (including cable rollout) in the ACT.

It is envisaged that *Network Master Plans* will identify existing and proposed sites and indicate the type, height and function and EME levels of the principal elements of the planned network. Carriers should consult with the relevant authority to agree to the content of the *Network Master Plan* and to agree to the process for any community consultation.

General and Specific Policies

The Policies for Telecommunications Facilities consist of General Policies and Specific Policies.

General Policies are broadly based and define the key objectives and general policies for the design and siting of telecommunications infrastructure throughout the ACT. Carriers, service providers and individuals will need to take account of the General Policies when installing facilities within the ACT. Proponents of Low-impact Facilities exempt from formal approval are required to consult with the National Capital Authority prior to carrying out works to ensure that the provisions of the General Policies are satisfied.

Specific Policies define the conditions and standards for the siting of telecommunications infrastructure within Designated Areas and on land adjacent to specified Main Avenues.

Objectives

The objectives of the General and Specific Policies are:

- (i) To ensure that the operation of a functional telecommunications service meets community expectations and does not adversely affect the character of Canberra as the National Capital, including the landscape setting of the city and the national significance of land specified in this Plan as Designated Areas.
- (ii) To minimise environmental and visual impacts arising from the construction, operation, maintenance, decommissioning and removal, and site rehabilitation of telecommunications infrastructure.

12.4.1 General policies

(a) Erection of Telecommunications Structures

Choice of site

- (i) Sites where a tower, mast or antenna will be visually incongruous should be avoided wherever possible. Where a choice of site exists, low rise, small scale residential areas should be avoided and commercial, industrial or transport related land with existing utility structures such as lighting columns or other vertical structures should be selected. Where practicable, sites having environmental, nature conservation or heritage significance, and sites of community concern such as schools, childcare

centres or where a facility may interfere with existing emergency or safety equipment, should be avoided.

Choice of antenna location and mast sharing

- (ii) The mounting of antennas on a building or an existing mast is the preferred way of accommodating a new facility. Where there are several antenna mounting and locational options, care is to be taken to choose the most appropriate option that has the least visual impact on the community and surrounds.

Electromagnetic Energy (EME) Standard

- (iii) The current Australian Standard AS2772.1 for Electromagnetic Energy applies to all proposals.

Ameliorative Actions

- (iv) Wherever possible, sites should be either screened from the most prominent views or have a backdrop of trees, buildings or high ground. Ideally sites should have both a well-screened foreground and background keeping to a minimum the height of mast and antenna exposed to view. Where parts of an antenna or mast are exposed, they are to be finished in a colour that is not highly reflective and that minimises their intrusiveness.

Decommissioning and Restoration

- (v) When a facility is no longer required, or is to be superseded by a replacement facility, the facility is to be removed from a site within a period of three (3) months and the site is to be left in a condition consistent with the surrounding land.

(b) Rollout of Cable

Method of rollout dependent on site sensitivity

- (i) For any proposal to rollout telecommunications cable, the method of rollout should be considered in relation to the sensitivity of the site. For areas of high sensitivity, such as Designated Areas, urban parks and new subdivisions, underground cabling is the preferred method.

Co-location to minimise impacts

- (ii) For any proposal to rollout telecommunications cables in areas where an existing public utility is in place, the method of rollout should be considered in relation to the existing utility infrastructure. In new subdivisions, or areas where underground infrastructure already exists, the rollout of telecommunications cable should be co-located with existing cable or undertaken in a similar manner.

Avoiding duplication

- (iii) As far as practicable and where the technology permits, cable rollout should be carried out in a coordinated fashion to avoid duplication. A proliferation of overhead telecommunications cables should be avoided in situations where a single cable is capable of delivering the proposed telecommunications service. In cases where more than one cable is proposed, carriers should demonstrate that the use of a single cable is not practical for technical, environmental or economic reasons.

12.4.2 Specific Policies

(a) Policies within Designated Areas

Large scale facilities

- (i) Large-scale facilities, such as towers and masts will only be approved where no other alternative exists and where the proposal does not create any significant disruption to the visual environment.
- (ii) No additional towers and masts will be approved on Red Hill, Mount Mugga, Black Mountain, Isaacs Ridge, Mount Pleasant or Mount Ainslie which:
 - break the natural skyline
 - significantly impact on the side slopes.

(This does not preclude the use of existing masts and towers subject to a detailed assessment of the impact of any additional antennas.)

Ground level facilities

- (iii) Ground level facilities such as equipment shelters and electrical equipment boxes are to be located in the least conspicuous position and are to be suitably screened from public view. Such facilities will generally not be permitted in front of buildings.

Satellite and Microwave Dishes

- (iv) Roof top mounted dishes will be considered only where it can be demonstrated that a ground level location is not available or is technically unsuitable. In considering roof mounted facilities, any impact on the following shall be avoided:
 - active pedestrian streets and urban spaces
 - key public spaces
 - building frontages
 - heritage buildings.

Roof mounted facilities

- (v) Roof mounted facilities should, as far as practical, be incorporated within, or integrated with, structures on the roof in a purpose designed roofscape. Where no other structure exists above the roof line, and it is practical to do so, the proposed facility should be set back from the parapet line of the building or integrated into the building design to minimise the visual impact.

Cable Rollout

- (vi) Approval within Designated Areas for overhead cable rollout will only be given where overhead services already exist and where the National Capital Authority is of the opinion that the proposed cable will not impact adversely on the locality.

Procedure

- (vii) In Designated Areas, the National Capital Authority may withhold approval in any particular case where it is of the opinion that the proposed facility would impact adversely on the appearance of the building and locality to an unacceptable degree.

- (viii) The current Australian Standard AS2772.1 for Electromagnetic Energy (EME) will be used as the basis of determining acceptable energy emissions. All proposals must meet the Australian Standard for EME.
- (ix) Applicants should seek any required clearances for access and development prior to an application being submitted to the National Capital Authority. It should be noted that the Conservator of Flora and Fauna is responsible for approving licences over land identified in the Territory Plan as Public Land.
- (x) Carriers are required to:
 - maintain network master plans showing the principal existing and proposed elements of their planned network relating to Designated Areas, and
 - make such network master plans available to support individual applications if and as requested by the National Capital Authority.

Community Consultation

- (xi) Public notification may be required by the National Capital Authority where it is of the opinion that facilities within Designated Areas will create a high visual impact. Facilities defined as Low-impact Facilities in the *Telecommunications Act 1997* are not subject to public notification.

Where public notification of a proposal is required by the National Capital Authority, the applicant will advertise the proposal in the principal newspaper circulating in the locality. The advertisement (the content of which must be agreed to by the National Capital Authority) will invite interested parties to submit written comments to the National Capital Authority. The period within which submissions may be lodged will be specified and will be not less than 14 days from the date of the advertisement. Any comments received by the National Capital Authority will be provided to carriers for their response and will be used in the final assessment of the proposal.

Information Requirements for Applications to the National Capital Authority

- (xii) The detail and level of information required should reflect the specific nature of each proposal, its context and its likely impact. Accordingly, the emphasis and detail will be much less for Low-impact Facilities. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the National Capital Authority before a proposal is submitted to better determine the extent of detail required for each proposal. The following information will be required for applications to the National Capital Authority:
 - A description of the proposal and location of the proposed activity, including the purpose and need for the facility, design drawings (plan and elevation) of the facility including antenna(s), towers and ground installation, and the description of material and finishes.
 - A description of any visual impacts from the proposal, including design and siting factors, the extent and nature of visual impact, and the scale of the impact.
 - Details of any electromagnetic emission levels.
 - A description of any environmental impacts arising from the construction and maintenance of the facility, including any impacts concerning flora and fauna, noise, health, electronic interference on community infrastructure such as emergency and safety equipment, erosion and run-off control, construction of access and power supply, and heritage and archaeological aspects.

- Evidence that a range of sites has been investigated and that the site and type of installation is the least visually obtrusive within technical operational requirements. Separate evidence from an independent source, may be required where the National Capital Authority is concerned about the visual or environmental impact of a proposal.
- A description of any mitigation measures (safeguards and contingency plans where relevant) to be undertaken to help prevent or reduce the actual or potential impacts.
- An indication that the land lessee has been advised of the proposed activity.
- Network master plans referred to in (x) above or a statement of compliance with a previously submitted network master plan, as requested.

(b) Policies for land adjacent to specified Main Avenues

The following policies are specific to the installation of facilities on land immediately adjacent to specified Main Avenues being:

- Northbourne Avenue, between Antill Street/Mouat Street and London Circuit
- Adelaide Avenue, outside the Central National Area
- Canberra Avenue, outside the Central National Area including the section of Canberra Avenue between Hume Circle and the ACT border that is defined at 2.1 as an Approach Route
- Wentworth Avenue, from Hume Circle to Brisbane Avenue
- Brisbane Avenue, outside the Central National Area
- Constitution Avenue outside the Central National Area.

- (i) The installation of facilities, including Low-impact Facilities and satellite dishes, on buildings and structures on land immediately adjacent to Specified Main Avenues, should be undertaken in accordance with the following standards:
- the facility is to be positioned to reduce the visual impact of the facility when viewed from street level and nearby vista points;
 - roof mounted facilities are to be incorporated within, or integrated with, structures on the roof in a purpose designed roof scape. Where no other structure exists above the roof line, the proposed facility is to be set back from the parapet line of the building or integrated into the building design to minimise the visual impact; and
 - if visible from the Main Avenue, the facility is to be colour matched with the surrounding finish of the building or structure to which the facility is attached.
- (ii) If it is impracticable to fully comply with the above standards, carriers and service providers must consult with the National Capital Authority to determine the best method to ensure reasonable compliance.