



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

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

National Capital Plan
Amendment 56

The Griffin Legacy – Principles and Policies

National Capital Plan

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Griffin Legacy – Principles and Policies

National Capital Plan

The National Capital Plan is amended by:

Elements of the Plan

a) After the first paragraph under '*Elements of the Plan*' add the following section:

The Griffin Legacy: Canberra the Nations Capital in the 21st Century
The Griffin Legacy is a blueprint for Canberra and the Territory. *The Griffin Legacy* directs future public and private investment in core areas of the capital where opportunities are created for vibrant, mixed use precincts alongside cultural institutions, government buildings and major national attractions. It restores the intended urbanity and vitality of Canberra as a cosmopolitan lakeside city.

The following general policies (derived from *The Griffin Legacy* Propositions) will form a basis for planning and urban design decisions for the Central National Area (CNA), its landscape setting and approaches. These include:

1. *Protect The Griffin Legacy by:*

- (a) fostering recognition of the 1918 Griffin Plan as a work of national and international cultural significance, and conserve those elements that contribute to this significance in a sustainable manner whilst allowing for the evolution of the city in contemporary terms.
- (b) recognising that Canberra is a young city and ensure that future development continues to give expression to the visual geometry, built form, landscape and cultural vitality of the 1918 Griffin Plan.
- (c) recognising that some elements (for example, the Australian War Memorial and Parliament House) are successful reinterpretations of the 1918 Griffin Plan which are consistent with and strengthen the framework and spirit of the Plan.

2. *Build on the Griffin Legacy by:*

- (a) maintaining the 1918 Griffin Plan as the primary organising framework of the city's urban form, landscape and symbolism.
- (b) fostering Canberra's unique sense of place that has evolved from Griffin's planning principles.
- (c) maintaining the Garden City and City Beautiful values which underpin Canberra's quality of life.
- (d) continuing to give expression to the principles of the 1918 Griffin Plan – its visual geometry, built form, landscape spaces and cultural vitality – in order to maintain its integrity as a work of cultural significance which is internationally recognised.
- (e) continuing to reinforce and, where possible, express the integrity of Griffin's visual structure by strengthening the geometry and form of main avenues, vistas and public spaces.
- (f) refocusing the symbolic framework of the 1918 Griffin Plan by consolidating development of national symbols and spaces for commemoration and celebration on the land and water axes, and within the National Triangle.
- (g) maintaining the geometry and where practicable the fine-grain pattern of the streets and blocks of the 1918 Griffin Plan.
- (h) strengthening the landscape framework from the natural setting of the hills, water courses and parks to the character of its streets as generously-scaled corridors for formal plantings of broad-canopy trees.
- (i) maintaining the metropolitan structure principles of Canberra's planning legacy of environmentally balanced urban extensions: design with nature; undeveloped hills and valleys; landscape containment and greenbelts; low traffic congestion; long-term public transport reservations; provision for walking and cycling; and protection of the Central National Area.
- (j) maintaining a mix of tree species which enriches the landscape by providing beauty, shade, shelter and wildlife habitats and enhance the built environment.

3. Revitalise the Vision with Growth in the Central National Area *by*:

- (a) reinstating Griffin's intended unity between the Central National Area, its setting and the everyday life of the city.
- (b) delivering the richness and vitality of Griffin's vision by ensuring that Civic Centre and surrounding neighbourhood precincts are strongly connected with the Central National Area, especially with Lake Burley Griffin and its surrounding parks.
- (c) accommodating growth in central Canberra to contribute to a compact, sustainable city that fosters a healthy community, and offers: increased housing, employment and recreation choices; ease of movement; integrated transport and land-use; and respect for the natural environment.
- (d) developing the central areas of Canberra, such as Civic and Constitution Avenue, to the urban scale and diversity intended to consolidate the central areas of Canberra.
- (e) managing change – particularly in terms of traffic and development – to preserve the historic landscapes, Garden City and City Beautiful values, and the dignity of the Central National Area.
- (f) using public investment in infrastructure to guide private investment, to enhance the vitality, accessibility and national significance of the public domain of the 1918 Griffin Plan, and to generate economic growth.
- (g) fostering a greater level of activity, choice, connectivity and accessibility in the central areas of Canberra.

4. Link the City to the Central National Area *by*:

- (a) reducing the physical barriers between the Central National Area, Civic Centre and surrounding neighbourhood precincts.
- (b) fostering exchange between local and national activities.
- (c) harnessing the cultural and economic links between the Civic Centre and surrounding neighbourhood precincts.
- (d) facilitating the development of physical connections and urban form to enable greater interaction and exchange between the Australian National University, the Central National Area and Civic Centre.

5. Extend the City to the Lake *by*:

- (a) developing a variety of waterfront activities on Lake Burley Griffin which are diverse in urban, recreational and ceremonial character and are accessible to the public along the waterfront.
- (b) enhancing lake-based tourist facilities and experiences.
- (c) maintaining and enhancing the ecological integrity of the lake shore through environmental management requirements for any new development adjacent to or on the lake.
- (d) developing natural drainage corridors as linear parks and pedestrian/cycle paths to connect with the lake parklands.

6. Reinforce the Main Avenues *by*:

- (a) realising the identified main avenues of Constitution, Northbourne, Commonwealth, Kings, University, Sydney, Brisbane, and part of Canberra and Wentworth Avenues as multi-use boulevards providing corridors of higher-density mixed-use development, public transport, broad tree-lined footpaths with potential for outdoor dining and street parking.
- (b) preventing the Central National Area from being overwhelmed by through traffic.
- (c) providing a flexible, efficient and sustainable public transport and pedestrian and bicycle systems that reduce car dependency.
- (d) developing a sufficient density and mix of land uses to support public transport.
- (e) improving the urban design and streetscape qualities of the main avenues as approaches to the Central National Area.
- (f) maintaining the ease and comfort of movement around the city to cater for a diversity of pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and public transport modes.
- (g) providing streets with a quality architecture and landscape character that fosters a compact, connective and pedestrian-friendly environment for central city living.
- (h) reducing the barriers of major roads to make it easier for people to access the public spaces of the city, particularly in the Central National Area.

7. Link National Attractions *by*:

- (a) maintaining the Central National Area as the appropriate setting for the presentation of events, ceremonies and celebrations of national and international significance, so that Australians might better understand their culture and history – and showcase them to the world.
- (b) consolidating national and international tourism activity in the Central National Area to enhance the visitor experience and appreciation of the symbolic role of Canberra as the National Capital.
- (c) developing existing and new national cultural attractions to complement the settings of existing memorials and national symbols, and to enhance economic benefits for the Australian Capital Territory community.
- (d) developing network concepts to link national attractions in the Central National Area, improving legibility and way finding for visitors, and linking existing public domain and transport networks.
- (e) engaging new cultural and government buildings with the daily life of the city by connecting them to diverse and mixed-use districts that support a range of public activities, including shopping, dining and entertainment.
- (f) reinforcing corridors of tourist activity with additional attractions and supportive land uses such as retail, restaurant and hotel developments.
- (g) protecting and enhancing ecological values of the Central National Area as a site for eco-tourism.
- (h) identifying opportunities for developing eco-tourism activities in the Central National Area, provide connections to the National Capital Open Space System, and reinforce Canberra's identity and environmental integrity as the 'Bush Capital'.
- (i) enhancing the provision of lake and land-based recreational and tourism opportunities within a predominantly public open space setting.
- (j) enhancing the sense of arrival for visitors to the National Capital by improving the quality of the approach routes and by progressively formalising the gateway experiences at key city thresholds, culminating in arrival at the Central National Area.
- (k) enhancing the vistas to the national attractions and icons.

b) Delete the second paragraph under '*Principles and Policies*' of the Plan below, 'The Plan sets out a wide range of permitted land uses for each Land Use Category. The use of land for a purpose not included in the specified range may be permitted where the Authority has been consulted and, after satisfying itself that a particular proposal is not inconsistent with relevant Principles and Policies of the Plan, has given its agreement in writing. The policies identifying permitted uses do not confer any rights to use land for any purpose. They set out the range from which uses may be selected for inclusion in

the Territory Plan or in Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development relating to Designated Areas of this Plan. The statutory requirement for the Territory Plan to not be inconsistent with the National Capital Plan permits consideration of any or all, or any sub-category of, the identified uses, for inclusion in the Territory Plan.

and substitute the following paragraph:

‘The Plan sets out a wide range of permitted land uses for each Land Use Category. The use of land for a purpose not included in the specified range may be permitted where the Authority has been consulted and, after satisfying itself that a particular proposal is not inconsistent with relevant Principles and Policies of the Plan and *The ‘Griffin Legacy’* and has given its agreement in writing. The policies identifying permitted uses do not confer any rights to use land for any purpose. They set out the range from which uses may be selected for inclusion in the Territory Plan or in Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development relating to Designated Areas of this Plan. The statutory requirement for the Territory Plan to not be inconsistent with the National Capital Plan permits consideration of any or all, or any sub-category of, the identified uses for inclusion in the Territory Plan.’

c) After the last paragraph under *‘Urban Development’* of the Plan add the following paragraph:

‘*The Griffin Legacy* provides an strategic framework to inform the principles and policies for urban development and redevelopment of Canberra and the Territory.’

d) Delete the fifth paragraph under *‘Designated Areas’* of the Plan below, ‘Griffin’s design incorporated the hills of (inner) Canberra - Mount Ainslie, Black Mountain, Red Hill and Mount Pleasant - and the lake and its foreshores into the Plan, as much as buildings and roads. The scale of Griffin’s concept was such that today, more than 70 years on, its implementation is still incomplete. The sense of incompleteness is compounded by subsequent departures from Griffin’s plan and by the decisions of successive authorities to reserve sites for long term National Capital uses.’

and substitute the following paragraph:

‘Griffin’s design incorporated the hills of (inner) Canberra - Mount Ainslie, Black Mountain, Red Hill and Mount Pleasant – and the lake and its foreshores into the plan, as much as buildings and roads.’

e) Delete the fifth paragraph under *‘Designated Areas’* of the Plan below, ‘Departures from these elements have occurred in relation to the arrangement of land uses at the apexes of and within the National Triangle, and in relation to the geometry of the Plan. There is no suggestion that the arrangement of land uses should revert to the particular arrangement planned by Griffin. However, the base of the National Triangle - Constitution Avenue - has not been accorded the emphasis given to Commonwealth and Kings Avenues, nor does it extend to complete the triangle. Together with the lake and the main axial roads, it is an essential element in any assessment of the special character of the National Capital.’

and substitute the following:

These elements will be implemented through *The Griffin Legacy*.

PART ONE PRINCIPLES, POLICIES AND STANDARDS, DESIGNATED AREAS, SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The Central National Area

f) After the first paragraph under '1. *The Central National Area*' add the following paragraph:

Development in the Central National Area will be guided by *The Griffin Legacy*.

PART TWO ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

g) Amend the Plan to recognise the consequential changes of Amendment 56 to page numbers, section titles and the contents page.