

National Capital Planning Authority

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

DECEMBER 1990

FOREWORD

A little over a decade from now, in the year 2001, Australia will celebrate the centenary of Federation — 100 years of existence as, in the words of the Preamble of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900, the “one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth...under the Constitution hereby established,” whose home is the National Capital.

Canberra symbolises above all else this conscious act of Federation which took Australia from a group of imperial colonies to a nation, and by which colonists became Australians. The creation and subsequent development of the National Capital in its own Territory, independent of the former colonial settlements, expressed the nation’s desire to start from fresh fields and to make its own mark.

Canberra is a planned city, and a conscious creation of an emerging nation. It is still only partly developed and it is still maturing. By international standards it is still small.

In many ways, the city remains the Bush Capital, set into an environment as Australian as bush flies. It reflects both the imposition of European settlers’ ideals on to the harsh setting of the new continent, and, perhaps fortuitously, the gradual education of Australians in the ways of adapting to and respecting the environment which the earliest settlers, the Aborigines, had themselves learned over thousands of years.

During the next decade, in the lead up to the centenary of Federation, the National Capital needs to reflect and symbolise the changing and maturing character of the nation as a whole.

To date, the city has developed primarily under the influence of that segment of Australian society whose cultural values, origins and intellectual biases were essentially British in origin.

But Australian society today comprises a number of major cultural groups with widely varied origins and backgrounds. These include:

- Aborigines
- Australians of British extraction
- Australians of European extraction
- Asians

and many subgroups within these broad categories. All these groups make important contributions to Australian society.

In the coming decades of Canberra’s development, it is important to establish ways in which the influence of these major cultural streams on Australian society can be reflected in the form and character of the National Capital.

In the lead up to the centenary of Federation, a celebration of nationhood, it is fundamental that the change in the nature of Australian society in the 100 years since the nation was established and the National Capital was first conceived, is firmly identifiable.

Precisely how this is to be achieved is an open issue. At one end of the spectrum of possibilities there is always scope, in a city of Canberra’s character and role, for monuments and memorials, commemorating the contributions to Australian society of key groups and individuals. Indeed, as the nation matures, an Australian equivalent of the Lincoln Memorial might be seen as a powerful symbol of the nation — although who might occupy its central place of pride is a matter which would not easily be resolved.

At the other end of the spectrum lies the continuing need to ensure that there are opportunities now and into the future for activities and organisations of a national and international character to locate in and form part of Canberra, shaping its character and its functions.

Increasingly, Canberra's public buildings, monuments, activities and landscape need to represent and symbolise the achievements of the past, the Australia of today, and the emerging Australia of the future. This need for symbolism must combine and harmonise with the day-to-day Canberra of public activity, commerce, industry, agriculture, education, culture and community life.

With these ideals before it, the National Capital Planning Authority has prepared this first National Capital Plan to guide the development of Canberra and the Territory towards the close of the first 100 years of Federation and the beginning of the second.

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INTRODUCTION

Australia's National Capital officially came into being in January 1911, when title to 911 square miles of land in the "district of Yass — Canberra" was passed to the Commonwealth by the State of New South Wales. The Seat of Government Acceptance Act of 1909 provided that the Territory would be acquired by the Commonwealth for the Seat of Government and that it would be known as the Federal Capital Territory.

Today, almost eighty years later, Canberra's role as Australia's National Capital is firmly established. Its significance as the Commonwealth's Seat of Government was brought into national and international prominence with the opening of the new and permanent Parliament House on Capital Hill in 1988. This major new national building replaced the original, provisional Parliament House, which had been the home of the Commonwealth Parliament since 1927.

Canberra's function as the Seat of Government and as the nation's Capital has been the basis for the establishment here of Australia's principal governmental, judicial, cultural, scientific, educational, and military institutions. It has resulted in foreign governments establishing legations and diplomatic residences, and in an increasing number of national organisations and institutions seeking a presence in the Capital.

The gradual accumulation of important national functions has been accompanied by a growing awareness of Canberra's significance in Australia's national and international life.

The present city of Canberra is far bigger than most of its founders ever imagined. But at each stage of its growth, care has been taken to maintain a quality and standard of development appropriate to the National Capital.

The introduction of self-government for the Australian Capital Territory has created a circumstance where two governments, the Commonwealth Government and the ACT Government, now share responsibility for the further development of the Territory.

The ACT Government is responsible for managing the affairs of the Territory on a parliamentary, legislative, administrative and financial basis comparable to the Australian States. The ACT Government also manages those functions which, in the States, are performed by local government. The ACT Legislative Assembly has the general power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Territory.

Canberra's role and functioning as the National Capital remains a responsibility of the Commonwealth Government.

The Australian Constitution provides that:

The Seat of Government of the Commonwealth shall be determined by the Parliament, and shall be within territory which shall have been granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth, and shall be vested in and belong to the Commonwealth...

Under the Constitutional provision, the Commonwealth remains the owner of land in the Territory, even after the granting of self-government. The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* provides that land used by or on behalf of the Commonwealth may be declared National Land, and managed by the Commonwealth. The remaining lands of the Territory are Territory Land and these lands are managed by the ACT Government on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Management of National Land in the Territory is a function shared by the Commonwealth Department of Administrative Services and the Commonwealth Department of the Arts,

Sport, Environment, Tourism and Territories. Certain other Commonwealth agencies, such as the Department of Defence, also manage land on which their activities are located.

Financing of the construction of Commonwealth facilities in the Territory is a responsibility shared among the many Commonwealth Departments and authorities.

Maintenance and development of certain National Land is undertaken by the ACT Government on behalf of the Commonwealth, but is financed by the Commonwealth.

In order to maintain a broad oversight of planning in the Territory as a whole, and to ensure its involvement in the planning, design and development of those areas having the special characteristics of the National Capital, the Commonwealth established the National Capital Planning Authority to reflect its interests and carry out its intentions.

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

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* was proclaimed on 31 January 1989.

The Act introduced new arrangements for the planning and development of the Territory, designed to provide for continuing Commonwealth involvement in the development of the National Capital, while ensuring that the interests of the people of Canberra are both fully represented and protected.

The necessity for the new planning arrangements was a consequence of the Commonwealth's decision to introduce selfgovernment to the Australian Capital Territory. This was provided for by the *Australian Capital Territory (Self Government) Act 1988* which established the ACT Legislative Assembly to govern the Territory. Elections for the membership of the new Assembly were held in February 1989, and by May 1989 the first ACT Government had assumed office.

The self-government legislation conferred on the citizens of the ACT the rights and responsibilities associated with the introduction of State-style government, including most State and municipal functions found elsewhere in Australia. The Commonwealth nonetheless retains a fundamental interest in the future of the Australian Capital Territory as the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth and the National Capital, and the Authority's functions and responsibilities embody the planning aspects of that Commonwealth interest.

The Authority and its Functions

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* established the National Capital Planning Authority as a Commonwealth Government agency with the following functions:

- a) *to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan;*
- b) *to keep the Plan under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary;*
- c) *on behalf of the Commonwealth, to commission works to be carried out in Designated Areas in accordance with the Plan where neither a Department of State of the Commonwealth nor any Commonwealth Authority has the responsibility to commission those works;*
- d) *to recommend to the Minister the carrying out of works that it considers desirable to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital;*

- e) *to foster an awareness of Canberra as the National Capital; and*
- f) *with the approval of the Minister, to perform planning services for any person or body, whether within Australia or overseas.*

[S.6]

The National Capital Plan must be accepted by both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament, after approval by the Minister responsible for administration of Commonwealth legislation relating to the Australian Capital Territory.

The Act also requires that there shall be a Territory Plan prepared by a Territory planning authority responsible to the ACT Legislative Assembly. The Act requires that the Territory Plan shall not be inconsistent with the National Capital Plan.

Scope of the Plan

The object of the National Capital Plan is “to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.” [S.9]

In prescribing matters to be covered in the National Capital Plan, the Act [S.10(2)(a) and (b)] requires the Plan to set out:

- the planning principles and policies for giving effect to the object of the Plan
- standards for the maintenance and enhancement of the character of the National Capital
- general standards and aesthetic principles to be adhered to in the development of the National Capital
- general policies for land use, and for the planning of national and arterial road systems throughout the Territory.

The Act [S.10(1) and 10(2)(c) and (d)] also provides that the Plan may specify:

- areas of land that have the special characteristics of the National Capital as Designated Areas. The Plan may set out detailed conditions of planning, design and development in Designated Areas, including priorities for carrying out these activities
- special requirements for the development of any area, being requirements that are desirable in the interests of the National Capital.

In other words, the National Capital Plan at its most general policy level provides a framework determined by the Commonwealth Parliament, for land use and development throughout the Territory. At its most detailed level, it becomes the means for guiding the planning, design and development of the Designated Areas — those areas having the special characteristics of the National Capital.

The Territory Plan

The object of the Territory Plan is “to ensure, in a manner not inconsistent with the National Capital Plan, the planning and development of the Territory to provide the people of the Territory with an attractive, safe and efficient environment in which to live and work and have their recreation.” [S.25(2)]

The Act [S.25(3)] requires the Territory Plan to define the planning principles and policies for giving effect to the object of the plan and provides that it may include the detailed conditions of planning, design and development of land and the priorities in carrying out such planning, design and development.

The Territory Plan does not apply to land included within Designated Areas of the National Capital Plan [S.25(1)(b)(i) and S.25(6)]. In all other areas, and within the framework of the National Capital Plan, the Territory Plan will guide the day to day planning and development of Canberra and the Territory.

Effect of the National Capital Plan

Section 11 of the Act states that:

- (1) *An enactment that is inconsistent with the Plan has no effect to the extent of the inconsistency, but an enactment shall be taken to be consistent with the Plan to the extent that it is capable of operating concurrently with the Plan.*
- (2) *The Commonwealth, a Commonwealth authority, the Territory or a Territory authority shall not do any act that is inconsistent with the Plan.*

It is noteworthy that this is the only provision of any planning legislation in Australia that is binding on the Commonwealth.

Section 26 of the Act describes the specific nature of the relationship between the Territory Plan and the National Capital Plan:

The Territory Plan has no effect to the extent that it is inconsistent with the National Capital Plan, but the Territory Plan shall be taken to be consistent with the National Capital Plan to the extent that it is capable of operating concurrently with the National Capital Plan.

The National Significance of Canberra and the Territory

In order to establish an effective relationship between the Commonwealth's interest in the planning and development of Canberra and the Territory as the National Capital, and the ACT Government's interest in the planning and development of the Territory in the interests of good government of the Territory, it is essential to have as complete an understanding as possible of the implications and intent of the concept of "national significance" as presented in the object of the National Capital Plan.

Canberra is recognised as one of Australia's great achievements — a beautiful city of identifiably Australian character, in which the National Capital's roles and functions operate efficiently and with proper regard to their place and importance in a modern federal democracy. It is a city which offers a high quality of life for its citizens, many of whom came to Canberra to contribute to the nation through employment supporting the Parliament and Executive, national administration, and national institutions. It is a city which symbolises Australian life and achievement, and is the actual as well as symbolic home of the key elements of our federal democracy and other aspects of national life.

The character and setting of Canberra are unique. Many elements of the planning which has produced today's Canberra are of great practical import: they have produced a city in which the work of government and national institutions, as well as the life of its citizens, can be conducted efficiently. Of no less import are the visual elements of the plan, those which have created fitting spaces, approaches and backdrops for the institutions, symbols and ceremonies of our federal democracy, and those which create the setting for the National Capital.

This achievement is the realisation of the dreams and aspirations of those charged with expressing the national interest in the first days of Federation. Almost from the time of Federation the setting of the National Capital and its structure, its beauty and its efficiency, were seen by the representatives of the people as of national significance.

Realisation of the aspirations of the “founding fathers” has served only to heighten the sense of significance attached to preservation of the character of the National Capital and the Australian Capital Territory established to accommodate it, and of the effectiveness with which national capital functions can be fulfilled in the city.

In his 1907 analyses of potential sites for the National Capital Sir John Forrest included as significant selection criteria that the site must have the potential for “water frontage for recreation, sport and beauty; good approach and commanding views”, as well as “commanding sites for public buildings” and “surrounding and adjacent scenery with great natural features, and within convenient distance”.

In sending the District Surveyor, Mr Scrivener, to examine the Yass — Canberra district in 1908 to identify a suitable site for the Seat of Government the then Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Hugh Mahon, commanded that “the Federal Capital should be a beautiful city, occupying a commanding position, with extensive views and embracing distinctive features which will lend themselves to the evolution of a design worthy of the object, not only for the present but for all time”.

An international competition for the design of Australia’s National Capital was announced in 1911. Walter Burley Griffin’s winning plan, on which the development of Canberra was first based, was more than sympathetic to the aspirations of those in Federal Parliament. Griffin used the topography to provide fitting sites, approaches, outlooks and backdrops for great buildings to house the nation’s major institutions of democracy, for ceremonial occasions, and for other purposes related to the national functions of the city. The open space system, the hills, and grand avenues accentuate natural axes and become both the symbolic and functional base for the Capital. Griffin tried to ensure that sensitive areas were protected from excessive traffic, while providing for an efficient transport system.

Adherence to the vision of the National Capital as a “great and beautiful city”, has ensured that the immediate landscape setting of the City as well as the distant mountains in the Australian Capital Territory have been consciously protected from development; has protected the environment of the ACT from excessive pollution; has created the open space system which separates the individual towns yet binds the whole together into the city of Canberra; and has preserved the integrity of land and buildings for national purposes.

It has ensured that fitting sites are available for overseas missions and others establishing a presence in Canberra because it is the National Capital. It has maintained grand avenues and protected sensitive areas while providing for the reasonable traffic and transport demands of a growing city.

The major criteria defined in the aspirations of our first Members of Parliament and translated so eloquently in Walter Burley Griffin’s plans, are the keys to the character of the Canberra of today. These principles and the city they produced were judged to be of national significance when first espoused in 1907, and remain so today.

Matters of National Significance in the planning and development of Canberra and the Territory include:

- The pre-eminence of the role of Canberra and the Territory as the National Capital.
- Preservation and enhancement of the landscape features which give the National Capital its character and setting.

- Respect for the key elements of Walter Burley Griffin's formally adopted plan for Canberra.
- Creation, preservation and enhancement of fitting sites, approaches and backdrops for national institutions and ceremonies as well as National Capital Uses.
- The development of a city which both respects environmental values and reflects national concerns with the sustainability of Australia's urban areas.

The National Capital Plan

As required by the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the object of this National Capital Plan is to ensure that Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

Within the framework of this legislative object or goal, key objectives of the National Capital Plan are to:

1. Recognise the preeminence of the role of Canberra and the Territory as Australia's National Capital.
2. Further develop and enhance a Central National Area which includes the Parliamentary Zone and its setting and the main diplomatic sites and national institutions, as the heart of the National Capital.
3. Emphasise the national significance of the main approach routes and avenues.
4. Respect the geometry and intent of Walter Burley Griffin's formally adopted plan for Canberra.
5. Maintain and enhance the landscape character of Canberra and the Territory as the setting for the National Capital.
6. Protect the undeveloped hill tops and the open spaces which divide and give form to Canberra's urban areas.
7. Provide a plan offering flexibility and choice to enable the Territory Government properly to fulfil its functions.
8. Support and promote environmentally responsible urban development practices.

The draft National Capital Plan was prepared in two volumes.

Volume One, published in July 1989, dealt with the proposed Designated Areas. Volume Two, published in October 1989, responded to the remaining statutory provisions for the scope and content of the National Capital Plan by setting out the principles and policies of the draft Plan and special requirements for the development of selected areas.

Both volumes were the subject of public consultation as required by the Act. The consultation programme undertaken by the Authority included the Australia-wide distribution of the draft Plan, accompanied by an invitation to comment, and the organisation of public seminars, meetings and workshops, both locally and interstate.

A draft Plan which combined both volumes and which incorporated many alterations as a result of the comments received and the Authority's own deliberations, was "certified" by the Minister on 9 March 1990 under Section 16(2) of the Act. Certification, which remains in force for 6 months unless sooner revoked, gives the draft Plan a measure of

legal authority while it is being further considered. The period of certification was extended by the Minister on 21 August 1990 under Section 16(4) of the Act.

At the same time as the Authority was undertaking its consultations, the Commonwealth's Parliamentary Joint Committee on the ACT enquired into Volumes One and Two of the draft Plan. After tabling its findings on Volumes One and Two in the Senate, the Joint Committee reviewed the certified draft Plan.

This final Plan is substantially the same as the certified draft Plan. However it incorporates a number of changes in matters of detail. These changes have resulted primarily from the Joint Committee's report on Volumes One and Two, from discussions with the Joint Committee during its review of the certified draft Plan, and from further consultation with the Territory planning authority and Commonwealth Government Departments and agencies.

At one level, the Plan describes the broad pattern of land use to be adopted in the development of Canberra and the Territory. The Plan adopts seven major categories of land use ranging from Urban Areas at one end of the spectrum to Mountain and Bushland Areas at the other. For each category the Plan sets out planning policies, including a range of permitted uses.

General policies of the Plan also cover such matters as policies relating to National and Arterial Roads, location of Commonwealth employment, heritage issues and other relevant matters of broad policy.

At a more detailed level, the Plan identifies areas which have the special characteristics of the National Capital — Designated Areas — and sets out detailed conditions for their planning, design and development.

Finally, the Plan sets out Special Requirements for the development of selected areas, not being Designated Areas. In general, the requirements seek to ensure that the development of National Land accords with agreed plans, and that the Territory Plan contains appropriate development controls in certain sensitive areas. For areas that are Designated or affected by Special Requirements, the General Policies of the Plan will continue to also apply.

Elements of the Plan

The National Capital Plan is required to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance. A separate Territory Plan deals with the particular qualities of the Territory which affect the day to day lives of Canberra citizens. The National Capital Plan provides a framework for the Territory Plan while advancing those aspects of Canberra and the Territory which are special to the National Capital role.

Principles and Policies

To meet the obligations imposed by the Act, general principles and policies of the Plan combine to set the broad framework for land use in the Territory. The Plan shows which areas are planned for urban development and which areas are not to be developed. It also contains provisions relating to aesthetics and the environment, to protect and enhance the character of Canberra and the Territory.

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.

Urban Development

The Plan provides for additional urban development within the Territory. The urban areas of North and South Canberra, WodenWeston Creek and Belconnen have already been substantially developed. Additional urban development in these areas will largely take place through measures generally described as urban consolidation. In the case of Belconnen, some additional urban development may be accommodated at the north-west fringe of the township on currently rural land.

Tuggeranong is still being developed at its southern extremities, but is expected to be substantially completed by 1991/92. The opportunity remains for intensification within Tuggeranong, guided by the provisions of the Territory Plan.

It is anticipated that the ACT Government will commence to release land for urban development in the new town of Gungahlin during the 1990s, and that "greenfields" subdivision in Gungahlin will continue over the subsequent 10 to 15 years.

The National Capital Plan provides for the continuation of urban development in the form of separate and distinct townships set in broad landscaped valleys, with the immediate hills, ridges and the Molonglo River Valley providing separation between towns, and the distant mountains providing a natural landscape backdrop.

Employment and Offices

The major concentration of employment, at least for the next decade, will continue to be in Civic, in Parkes and Barton, in Russell, and in related areas such as Constitution Avenue.

In terms of broad land use policy, the Plan envisages Civic as being the dominant centre for business activity, retailing, commerce, culture, entertainment and recreation, and for those government activities, ACT or Commonwealth, whose purpose is to meet the needs of the ACT community. Residential development in and around Civic is also encouraged. Civic is not seen as the major longterm location for Commonwealth Government employment whose functions have little or no relationship to the daily life of the Territory.

Accordingly, the Plan provides that such functions would either be located in Russell, Campbell Park and on National Land in Constitution Avenue in the case of Defence; in Parkes and Barton in the case of central policy agencies requiring close links to the Executive and Parliament; and in town centres, office parks or other non-central locations for the majority of Commonwealth employment. This approach is consistent with the Commonwealth's current employment location policies.

Broadacre Land Uses

To the east of the city, substantial areas of land are set aside in the Plan for broadacre uses. These areas offer the opportunity longterm for the siting of future industry, transport facilities, defence installations, institutions and other activities requiring significant and large sites. These areas will become of considerable economic importance to Canberra over time,

and offer a basis for the future economic development of the city in a manner complementary to its function as the National Capital.

Much of this land is presently reserved for Commonwealth use, most notably the Majura Field Firing Range utilised by the Department of Defence. If land ceases to be utilised by the Department of Defence at some time in the future, there may be scope for other development on some of this land.

The Plan shows areas under investigation for urban use at Jerrabomberra-Symonston and in the south Mitchell/north Lyneham area. Final resolution of land uses in these areas will be made following the completion of detailed studies.

Future Urban Land and Areas Under Investigation

Consistent with the above approach to urban structure which characterises the Capital, and after assessment by both the Territory planning authority and the National Capital Planning Authority, land considered suitable for future urban development has been identified around the northwest fringes of Belconnen.

Detailed proposals for specific land uses and development patterns within these areas are a matter for the Territory planning authority, and will be determined after appropriate public consultation by that authority. When final proposals for the development of these areas are available, appropriate adjustments will be made to the information contained in the National Capital Plan to reflect final boundaries and any other relevant matters. It is expected that this process will be completed during 1990/91.

Land at Jerrabomberra-Symonston and at south Mitchell is identified in the Plan as under investigation for urban use in the future. In the case of Jerrabomberra-Symonston, decisions on the nature, scale and timing of urban development in this area need to be taken in the context of a wider land use policy review. The review would consider the need for a buffer zone around the National Biological Standards Laboratory which is located within this area, and the future of major Defence facilities such as the Bonshaw radio facility. This review would encompass longterm land use and transport relationships and address, from the view point of both the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan, the key issues of traffic flows and transportation infrastructure in the city's inner areas, especially in the Parliamentary Zone and its setting. The review would be conducted jointly with Territory agencies.

The impact of the proposed Very Fast Train (VFT) could be of major importance in determining the land uses preferred for Jerrabomberra-Symonston if the route of the train were to pass through this area.

Various proposals exist for the use of land at south Mitchell for the development of a business park and for additional facilities for the Canberra Racecourse and the National Exhibition Centre. In addition, it is possible that route decisions for the proposed Very Fast Train may have an impact on this area. The resolution of final routes for the proposed arterial road link between the Federal and Barton Highways and the public transport links between north Canberra and Gungahlin also affect this area.

Joint studies will be commenced with the Territory planning authority on the area, and amendments will be prepared to the National Capital Plan when detailed plans for the future of the area are resolved, and incorporated after public consultation.

Non-Urban Land Use

Beyond the urban areas, the Plan contains a variety of non-urban land use categories which provide a setting for the city and possible recreational opportunities, conservation of the

National Capital's bushland environment, and land resources for rural and future urban purposes.

A major feature of Canberra and the Territory is the system of hills and ridges which form part of the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS). Also included within NCOSS are the river corridors and mountain bushland areas.

Another major feature is Namadgi National Park. The Plan provides for its long-term maintenance through a special requirement that the development of the area conform to the existing Namadgi Policy Plan.

In a similar manner, the Plan incorporates the provisions of the Murrumbidgee River Corridor Policy Plan as a special requirement guiding development of the Murrumbidgee as it passes through the Territory. The river corridor provides a major environmental and recreational resource which, under the terms of the policy plan, is also a long-term natural asset of the Capital.

The Plan also provides a basis for the continuation of longer-term rural production in the Territory, by identifying as rural lands, areas where the continuation of sustainable rural pursuits is considered both feasible and highly desirable.

National and Arterial Roads

The Plan sets out general policies with respect to the planning of national and arterial roads within the Territory.

For the purposes of this Plan, National roads are deemed to include the major approach routes to the city which link Canberra with other capital cities and with the national highway network. These are the Federal, Barton, Kings and Monaro Highways from the Territory border to their eventual junction at State Circle in the vicinity of Parliament House. In addition, all roads within the National Triangle formed by Commonwealth, Kings and Constitutions Avenues, are classed as National Roads.

The arterial road network in the Territory comprises two elements — the arterial roads within Canberra's urban areas, which are major traffic collectors and distributors, and the network of peripheral parkways which serves to carry traffic between towns along routes lying largely at the periphery of the builtup areas.

Designated Areas

The Act provides that the National Capital Plan may:

- specify areas of land that have the special characteristics of the National Capital to be Designated Areas
- set out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development in Designated Areas and the priorities in carrying out such planning, design and development.

In identifying lands that have the "special characteristics of the National Capital" and deciding the extent of the Designated Areas, three primary factors are relevant:

- Canberra hosts a wide range of National Capital functions — activities which occur in Canberra because it is the National Capital and which give Canberra a unique function within Australia.
- Griffin's strong symbolic design for Canberra Central has given the National Capital a unique and memorable character.

Canberra's landscape setting and layout within the Territory have given the Capital a garden city image of national and international significance.

The National Capital functions include Parliamentary uses; key Commonwealth Government policy departments which have a close association with Parliament; official residences of the Prime Minister and the Governor General; embassies, legations and high commissions of foreign countries; major national institutions such as the High Court, Australian National Gallery and the like; and major national associations.

Land has also been set aside and developed for non-building uses. Examples are Anzac Parade, which performs a ceremonial purpose as well as functioning as a roadway, and Anzac Park which is effectively set aside for memorials. All of these examples and like activities and functions have the "special characteristics of the National Capital", and should be included within Designated Areas of the Plan for their national significance to be recognised, and assured.

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.

Griffin's design had four main elements:

- The use of **topography** as an integral design feature and as a setting
- A **symbolic hierarchy** of land uses designed to reflect the order and functions of democratic government
- A **geometric plan** with the central triangle formed by grand avenues terminating at Capital Hill, the symbolic centre of the nation
- A **system of urban centres**.

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.

Canberra has been developed as a series of separate but linked towns, established in valleys and shaped and separated from each other by a system of open space. This arrangement has protected the major hills and ridges from development, and has created a scenic backdrop and natural setting for the urban areas. It has reinforced the garden character for which Canberra is renowned. This landscape setting makes a major contribution to the environmental quality which is a feature of Canberra's character. There is a need to conserve and enhance the landscape setting.

Within Designated Areas the National Capital Planning Authority will have responsibility for determining Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development, and for Works Approval.

The use of land within a Designated Area for a purpose not specifically set out in the Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development may be permitted by the

Authority where it is satisfied that a particular proposal is not inconsistent with relevant Principles and Policies of the Plan.

Any proposal to subdivide land within a Designated Area will require the approval of the Authority.

The Designated Areas comprise:

- Lake Burley Griffin and its Foreshores
- the Parliamentary Zone
- the balance of a Central National Area adjoining the lake and the Zone, and extending from the foot of Black Mountain to the airport
- the Inner Hills which form the setting of the Central National Area
- the Main Avenues and Approach Routes between the ACT border and the Central National Area.

Within the Designated Areas, the Authority believes that significant additional developments should be proposed for the next decade, the lead-up to the centenary of Federation. In particular:

- a programme of works in the Parliamentary Zone is proposed to complete the Mall roads linking the new Parliament House and the lake; to provide a setting for the old Parliament House and to provide sites and buildings flanking the Mall for appropriate National Capital functions
- completion of the Lake Foreshore promenade within the Zone, and the completion of cycle paths and walking tracks around the entire lake are key proposals
- further development of Anzac Parade as a formal memorial avenue is intended
- the possibility of extending Constitution Avenue, both to establish it as a formal urban avenue reflecting its role in Griffin's plan, and to provide for increased traffic, is being examined
- the development of foreshore activities in selected development nodes around the lake, including at Kingston, Acton, Yarralumla and at Yarramundi Reach is a possibility
- development of Kings Park as a more formal park, with an emphasis on suitability for large public gatherings, is proposed
- improvements to the landscaping and signage of the main avenues and approach routes to establish a consistency of treatment between them and a planned approach to landscape development which ensures that each has a character appropriate to its role, will be an on-going programme.

Special Requirements

The Plan also sets out special requirements which take effect under the Territory Plan, for certain areas where the requirements are desirable in the interests of the National Capital.

The difference between Designated Areas and areas where special requirements apply is that in Designated Areas the National Capital Planning Authority has the planning responsibility, including works approval, whereas in areas where special requirements apply,

any development proposal is administered through the Territory Plan by the Territory planning authority in compliance with the special requirements specified in the National Capital Plan.

Given this dual system of planning requirements and in order to make the system as simple as possible, "Development Control Plans" are proposed as an appropriate mechanism for specifying and applying special requirements. Such plans can be prepared jointly between the Territory and the Commonwealth and subsequently administered by the Territory.

Development Control Plans may be maps, drawings, photographs, specifications and written statements. They should include sufficient detail for the guidance and management of development in the area, and may include design, siting, scale, purpose, timing and phasing, construction, landscaping and other relevant matters.

Development Control Plans may be prepared by either the National Capital Planning Authority or the Territory planning authority, or undertaken jointly by agreement. For certain large sites like the University of Canberra, and in particular on National Land, the occupiers of the sites, or agents acting on their behalf, may be responsible for the preparation of the plan.

For Territory Land, requirements for Development Control Plans may generally be met through the normal processes of preparing and approving the Territory Plan for the areas specified. Prior to release for public consultation, draft proposals must be agreed by the Authority as meeting its requirements, and the Authority may require elements of the plan to be identified as Special Requirements of the National Capital Plan (and therefore not able to be altered through the processes of the Territory Plan). The Authority may then incorporate these elements in the National Capital Plan as its Special Requirements.

As an interim arrangement pending the introduction of Development Control Plans, the gazetted planning policies for the ACT, as varied by the NCPA or the Territory planning authority, are accepted as the current Development Control Plans.

Review of Broad Land Use Policies

The areas identified as urban, future urban and areas under investigation for urban use have a capacity, at current population densities, to accommodate a population of the order of 400 000 people. Lead times for urban development, however, are substantial and planning needs to commence in the near future for development which will be required to meet the needs associated with population growth beyond that level.

Additional areas for urban expansion, if required, will be identified as a consequence of a review of Canberra's longterm urban development options. Possibilities which need to be considered, in terms of land use, economic development, transport and traffic implications, infrastructure costs, environmental and social issues and related concerns, and the impact on Commonwealth and ACT Government finances, include at least the following:

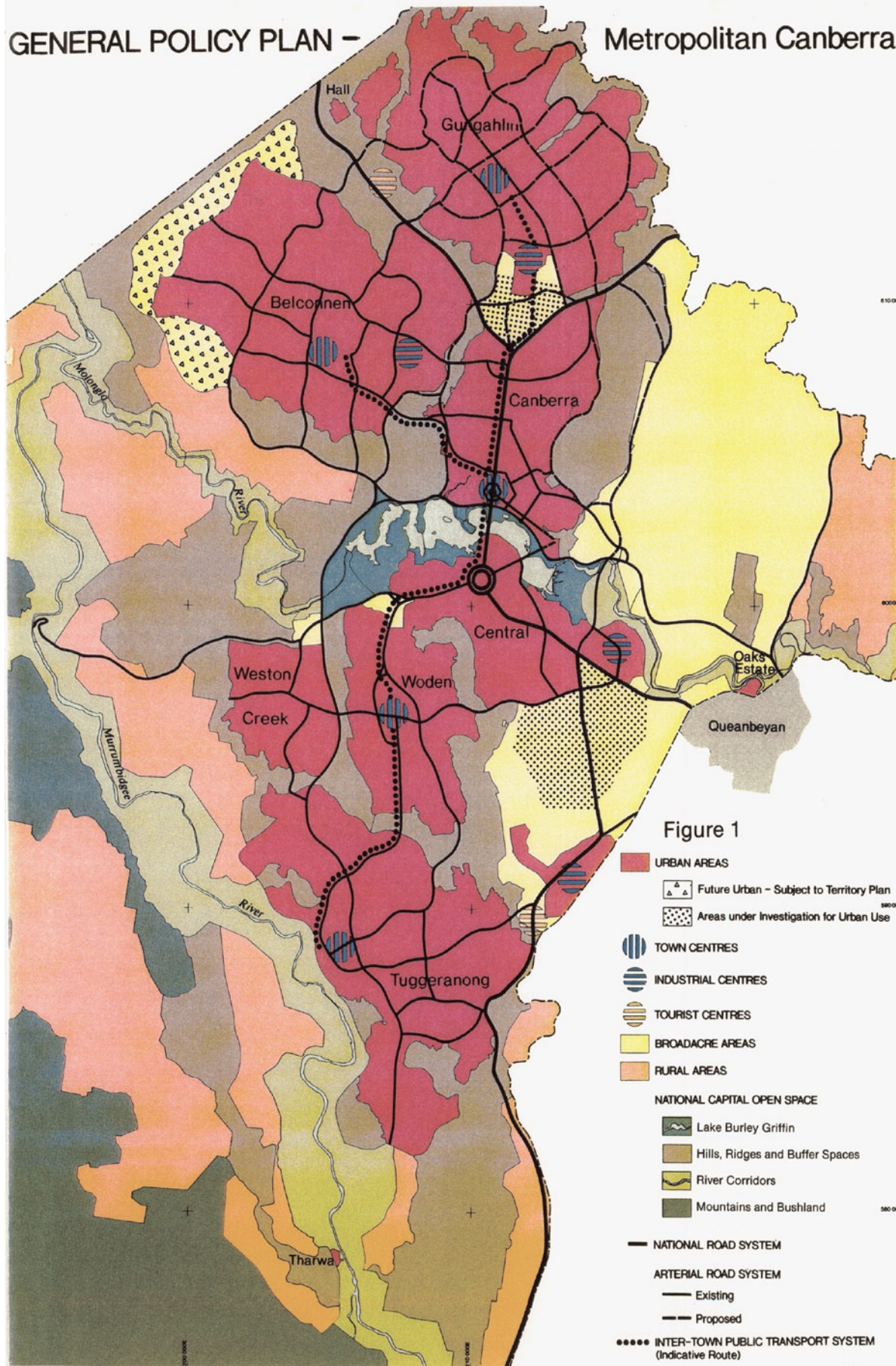
- the maximum possible concentration of future urban development within the boundaries of the Territory, compared with alternatives such as extensive urban development outside the Territory boundaries
- alternative possible scenarios for the location of various types of employment within the Territory and beyond
- strategies which maximise the potential for the use of public transport for major trip purposes
- strategies which minimise the volumes of traffic and hence the need for major road infrastructure in the vicinity of the National Triangle

strategies which maximise economic returns on capital invested in infrastructure and facilities to date, and/or which minimise Commonwealth and Territory outlays for future urban expansion.

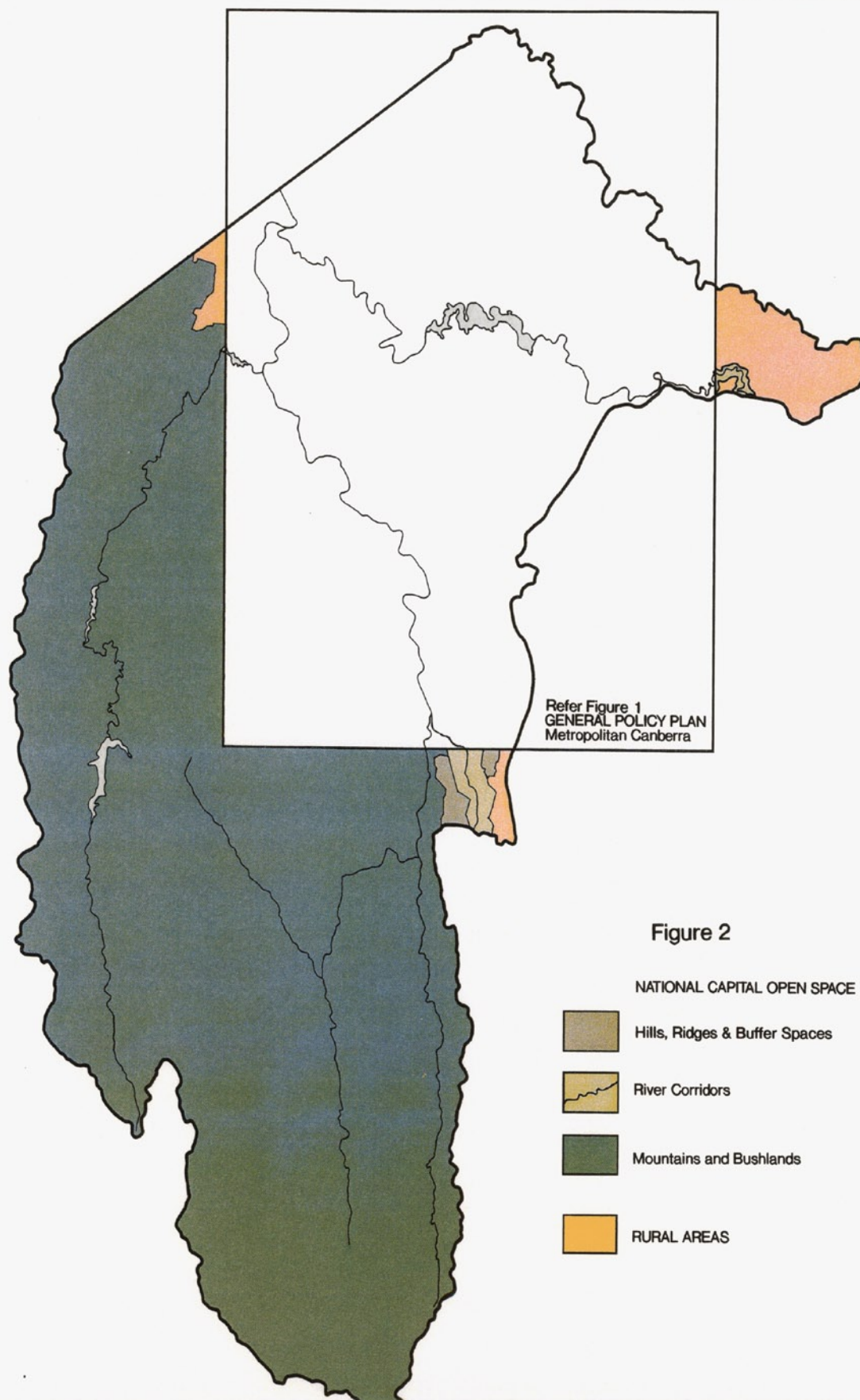
The review which addresses these possibilities will result in amendments to the National Capital Plan.

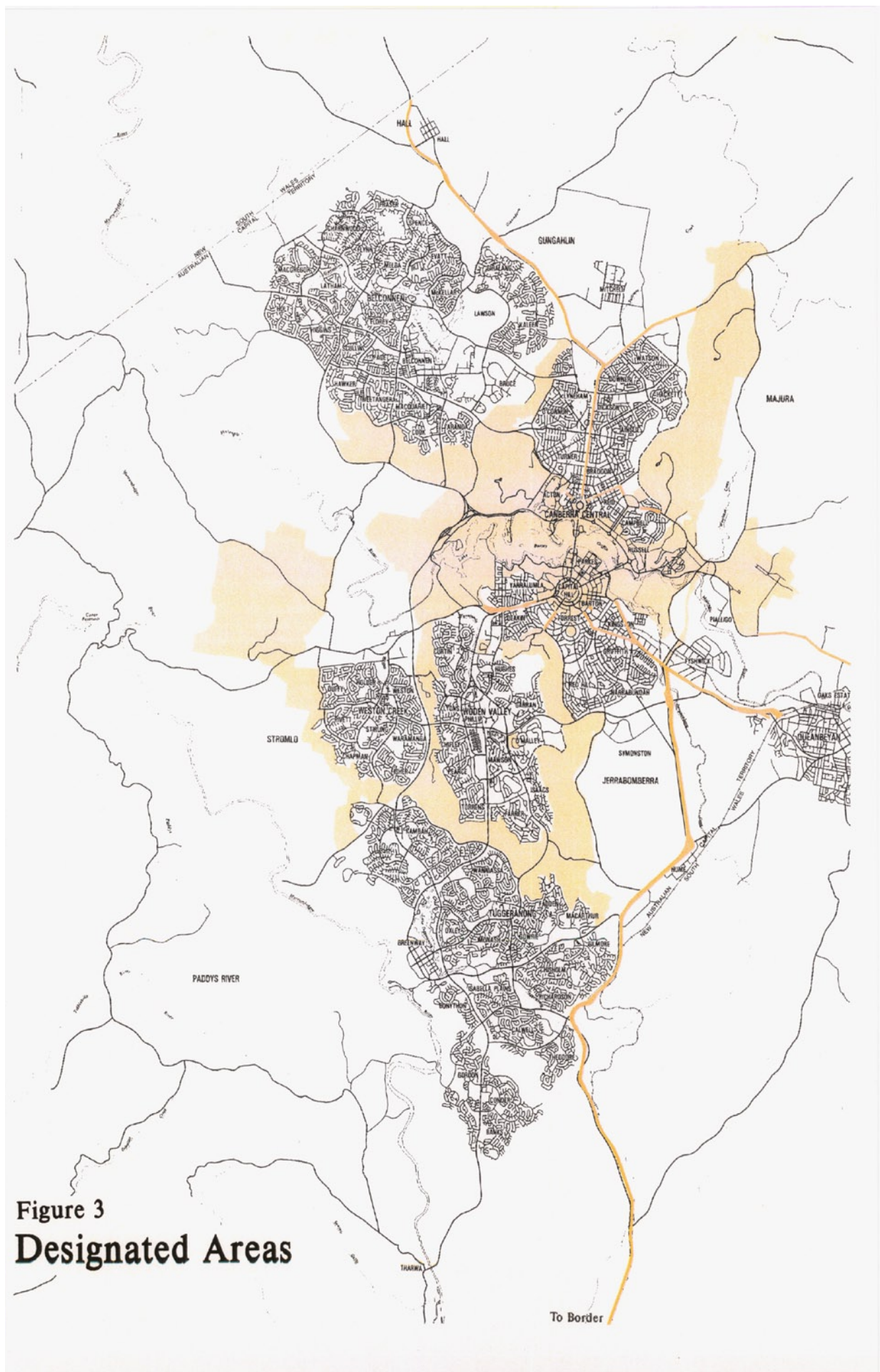
GENERAL POLICY PLAN -

Metropolitan Canberra



GENERAL POLICY PLAN – Australian Capital Territory





PART ONE

**Principles, Policies
and Standards**

Designated Areas

Special Requirements

1. The Central National Area

The Central National Area shown in Figure 4 is specified as a Designated Area under the Provisions of Section 10.(1) of the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988.

The Central National Area includes the Parliamentary Zone and its setting; Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores; the Australian National University; the Australian Defence Force Academy; Duntroon; Campbell Park and Canberra Airport/RAAF Base Fairbairn. Also included are the diplomatic areas at O'Malley and West Deakin.

1.1 The Parliamentary Zone and its Setting

The Parliamentary Zone and its setting are defined in Figure 4 as areas 5-8 and 10-12.

1.1.1 Background

The National Capital and Seat of Government is the legislative, judicial, administrative, executive, ceremonial and symbolic centre of the nation.

The role of Canberra as the National Capital warrants high environmental and aesthetic standards for development generally. It also requires that national functions are located where they may operate effectively and efficiently.

Areas that clearly exhibit the special characteristics of the National Capital primarily have the Parliamentary Zone and its setting as their focus. They embrace the main National Capital uses and national institutions, and other centrally located areas of National Land, the diplomatic areas, and nearby lands where planning, design and development are critical.

The core of those areas is the Parliamentary Zone (Figure 5) — the physical manifestation of Australian democratic government and the home of the nation's most important cultural and judicial institutions and symbols.

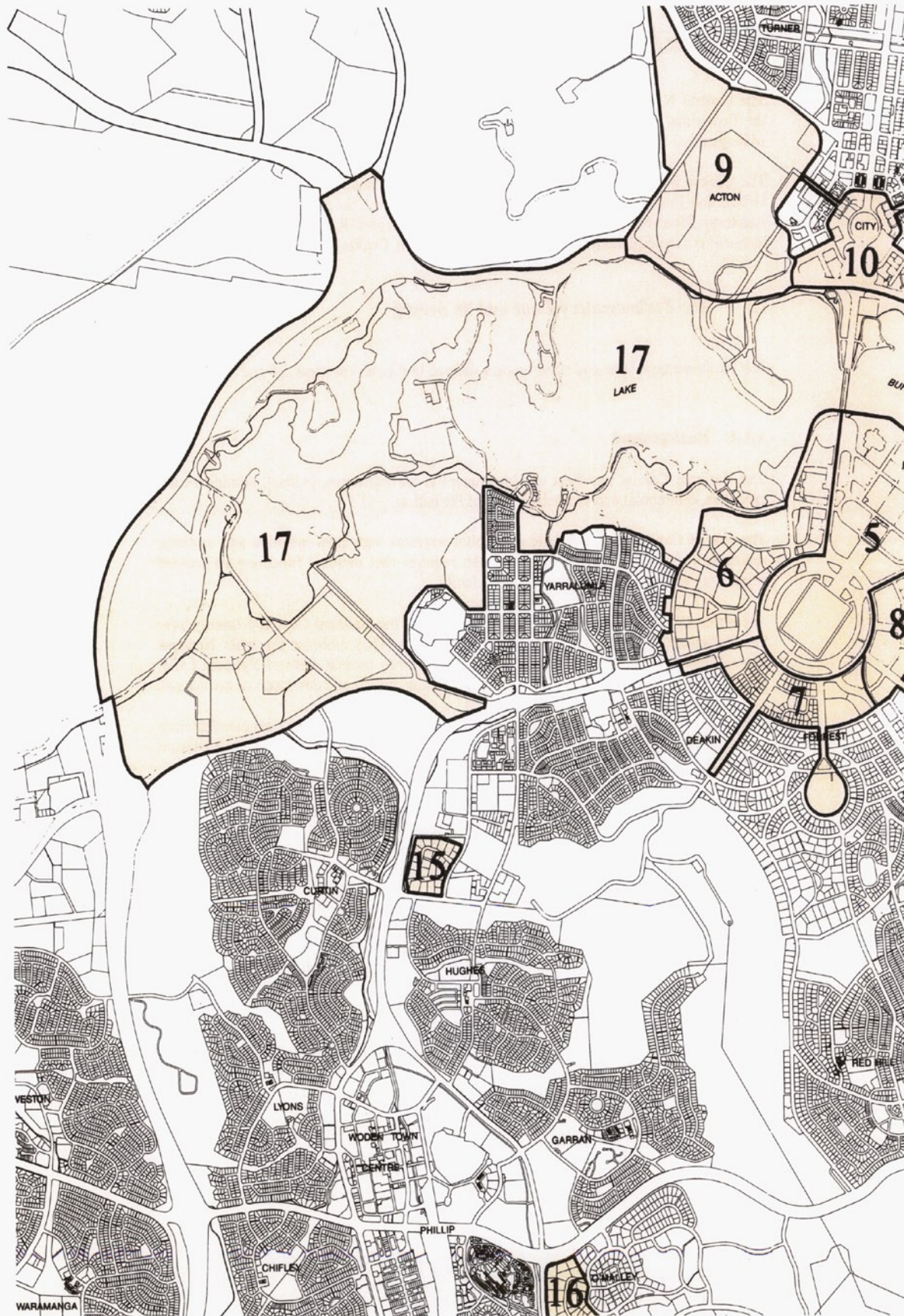
The area designated ensures that the essential relationships between Parliament and its setting are planned, developed and conserved in an integrated way, with the Commonwealth providing the requisite leadership of design and ensuring that construction and maintenance operations are carried out to the highest standards.

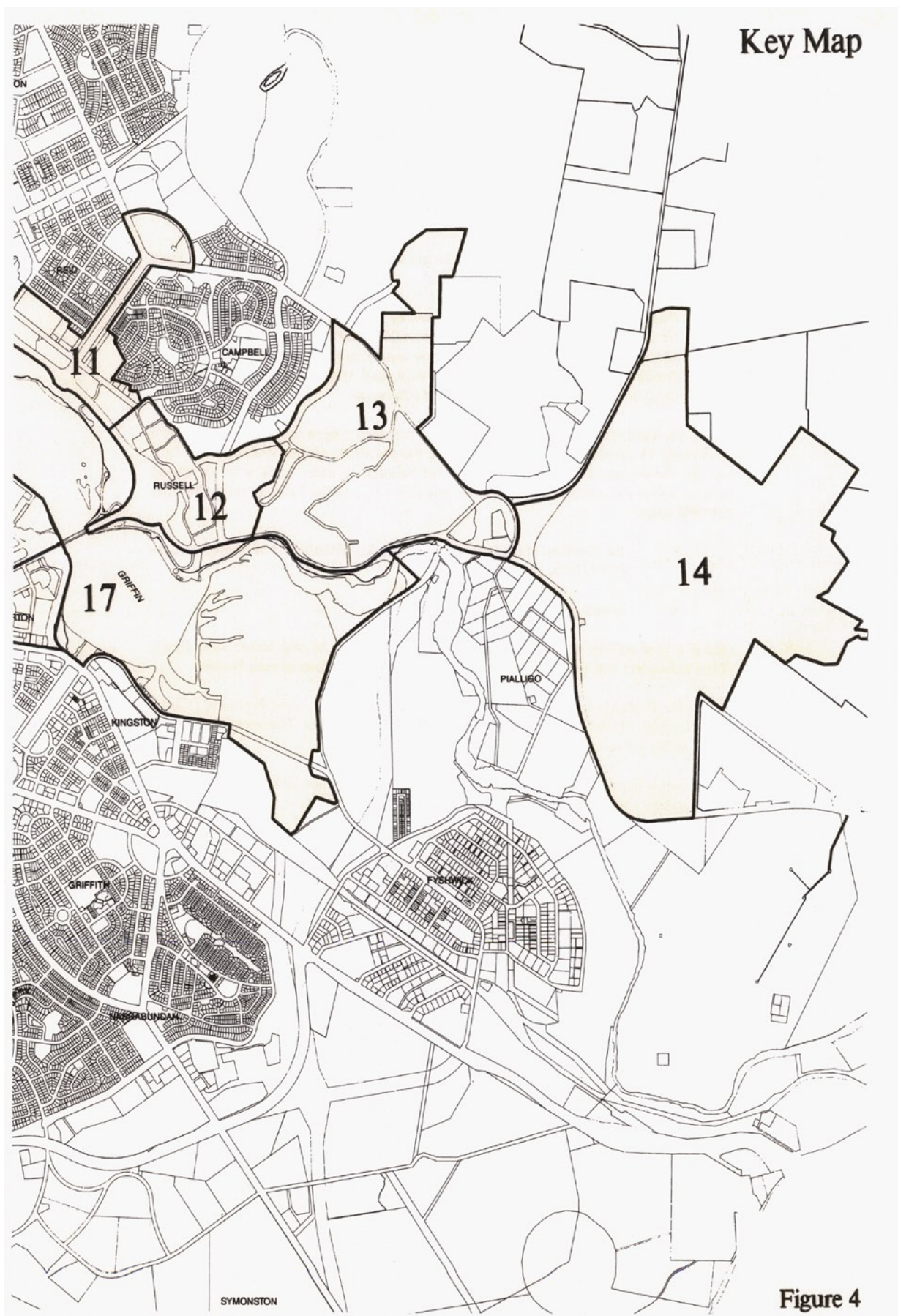
Urban design is concerned with the arrangement of buildings and spaces to achieve harmony, interest, attractiveness, vitality and legibility. Specific urban design policies are concerned with ensuring that the quality of the built environment results in a composition which is consistent in scale and image.

The subject area is the centre for all the nationally significant activities of Parliament, the Judiciary and government and is the focal point of visitor interest in the National Capital.

A Parliamentary Zone Development Plan was approved by Parliament in 1987 and is the document which governs all future development.

The Central National Area





The four principles of the Parliamentary Zone Development Plan are:

Firstly, to link the New Parliament House, the Provisional Parliament House and the various national institutions near the lake by completing Griffin's "land axis" mall.

Secondly, to identify sites for future buildings.

Thirdly, to progressively improve the quality of the landscape environment from its present shabby and fragmented state.

Fourthly, to improve transport and parking facilities in the expectation that the New Parliament House will generate one million visitors per year within five years of its opening in 1988 and to provide an appropriate range of consumer facilities (including recreation facilities) for an estimated 1990 daytime Zone population (workforce plus tourists) of 10 000 — 11 000 people.

Within the Parliamentary Zone, the Authority's statutory responsibility for the approval of works in Designated Areas is subordinate to the provisions of the *Parliament Act 1974* and the *Parliamentary Precincts Act 1988*. No building or other work is to be erected on land within the precincts as defined by subsection 3(1) of the *Parliamentary Precincts Act 1988* unless

- the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives jointly have; or
- in any other case the Minister has;

caused a proposal for the erection of a building or work to be laid before each House of the Parliament and the proposal has been approved by resolution of each House.

Within the Parliamentary Precincts that is, within State Circle — the Presiding Officers (the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives) have responsibility for control and management.

Of particular importance in the near future will be the resolution of future development in and around City Hill in Civic.

The Plan includes City Hill and the area inside London Circuit as part of the Designated Area. City Hill is one of the three corners of the National Triangle formed by Commonwealth, Kings and Constitution Avenues, and as such the character of its future development and that of the area adjoining it is crucial to the longterm character of the National Capital. There is a major opportunity for the Territory Government to achieve development within London Circuit which is outstanding in national and international terms, and this should clearly be the objective.

Linking City Hill with Russell is Constitution Avenue, and over the next decade the Plan will provide for development beside the Avenue which establishes it as a formal urban avenue. Since design issues will be crucial in setting the character of the Avenue, both sides of Constitution Avenue are included in the Designated Areas, except in the immediate Civic area.

Land fronting the approach routes and avenues which were an important symbolic component of Griffin's plan is also considered to have special National Capital interest. Special requirements have been established for these areas.

1.1.2 Principles for the Parliamentary Zone and its setting

- (1) Canberra's role as Australia's National Capital is of continuing and paramount importance. National functions, organisations and activities are actively encouraged to locate in Canberra. They should be housed and located in prominent positions where they serve, individually and collectively, as effective symbols of the nation and its Capital.
- (2) Opportunities should be taken progressively to enhance the international role of Canberra as Australia's National Capital. Diplomatic representation, the establishment in Canberra of international organisations, and the holding of international events in Canberra are all encouraged as means of enhancing the National Capital's international role.
- (3) The planning and development of the National Capital will seek to respect and enhance the main principles of Walter Burley Griffin's formally adopted plan for Canberra.
- (4) The Parliamentary Zone and its setting remain the heart of the National Capital. In this area, priority will be given to the development of buildings and associated structures which have activities and functions that symbolise the Capital and through it the nation. Other developments in the area should be sited and designed to support the prominence of these national functions and reinforce the character of the area.
- (5) Planning and development of the Territory beyond the Parliamentary Zone and its setting should enhance the national significance of both Canberra and the Territory.

1.1.3 Policies for the Parliamentary Zone and its setting

- (a) Major national functions and activities that are closely connected with workings of Parliament or are of major national significance should be located in or adjacent to the National Triangle formed by Commonwealth, Kings and Constitution Avenues, to provide a strong physical and functional structure which symbolises the role of Canberra as the National Capital.
- (b) The preferred uses in the Parliamentary Zone are those that arise from its role as the physical manifestation of Australian democratic government and as the home of the nation's most important cultural and judicial institutions and symbols. The highest standards of architecture will be sought for buildings located in the Parliamentary Zone.
- (c) Diplomatic activities should be established in places which are prestigious, have good access to Parliament House and other designated diplomatic precincts, and meet security requirements. They should be planned and designed to establish a distinct character and setting for each area reflecting their national and international significance.
- (d) National and international associations and institutions will be encouraged to locate in Canberra, and whenever practicable the District of Canberra Central will be the preferred location for them.

1.2 Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores

1.2.1 Background

Lake Burley Griffin is an integral part of the design of Canberra and is a vital and key element in the plan for the National Capital. The lake is not only one of the centrepieces of Canberra's plan in its own right but also forms the immediate foreground of the Parliamentary Zone.

Lake Burley Griffin has become an important recreational resource for Canberra's residents and visitors, but there is a need to identify ways in which the lake can be used to further unify the city as a whole both functionally and in landscape terms.

The Authority will support the development of recreational, tourist and National Capital uses of the Lake and its foreshores. A well defined system of lakeside drives, park access roads and public transport access should be maintained so that residents and visitors can get to the lake and its parks without disturbing nearby areas unduly.

The lakeside pedestrian/cycle path around the entire lake needs to be completed. The link around the eastern part of the lake is to be built in a manner which does not compromise the conservation values of the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. If it is commercially feasible a ferry service from the ferry terminal to the Parliamentary Zone and other tourist nodes will be supported.

Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores are part of the National Capital Open Space System. The principle and policies set out at 8.2 and 8.3 will apply as well as the principle and policies below.

1.2.2 Principle for Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores

To conserve and develop Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores as the major landscape feature which unifies the National Capital's central precincts and the surrounding inner hills; and to provide for National Capital uses and a diversity of recreational opportunities.

1.2.3 Policies for Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores

- (a) Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores should remain predominantly as open space parklands while providing for existing and additional National Capital and community uses in a manner consistent with the area's national symbolism and role as the city's key visual and landscape element.
- (b) Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores are intended to provide a range of recreational, educational and symbolic experiences of the National Capital in both formal and informal parkland settings with particular landscape characters or themes. These should be maintained and further developed to create a diversity of landscape and use zones which are integrated into the landscape form of the city and reflect the urban design principles for the National Capital.
- (c) Jerrabomberra Wetlands will be protected as a wildlife refuge in a National Capital and urban context, with facilities designed to realise the area's potential as a significant conservation and education resource for Canberra residents, tourists and international visitors.
- (d) The water quality and hydraulic operation of the lake should be maintained in a manner designed to protect Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores' visual and symbolic role and its water uses as set out in Appendix E.

(e) The range of uses permitted in Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores will be the following:

- Aquatic Recreation Facility
- Club (related to lake use only)
- Community Facility
- Landscape Buffer
- National Capital Use
- Outdoor Education Establishment
- Pathway Corridor
- Public Utility
- Regatta Point Exhibition
- Reserve
- Restaurant
- Road
- Scientific Research Establishment

The nature of uses permitted in Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores is defined in Appendix A.

1.3 Remaining Parts of the Central National Area

The remaining parts of the Central National Area include the Australian National University, ADFA, Duntroon, Campbell Park and Canberra Airport/RAAF Base Fairbairn.

The Authority will ensure that these areas also achieve high qualities of planning and development within a design context appropriate to their localities.

The Authority will liaise directly with the ANU, Department of Defence and Federal Airports Corporation on the preparation of master plans for these major sites.

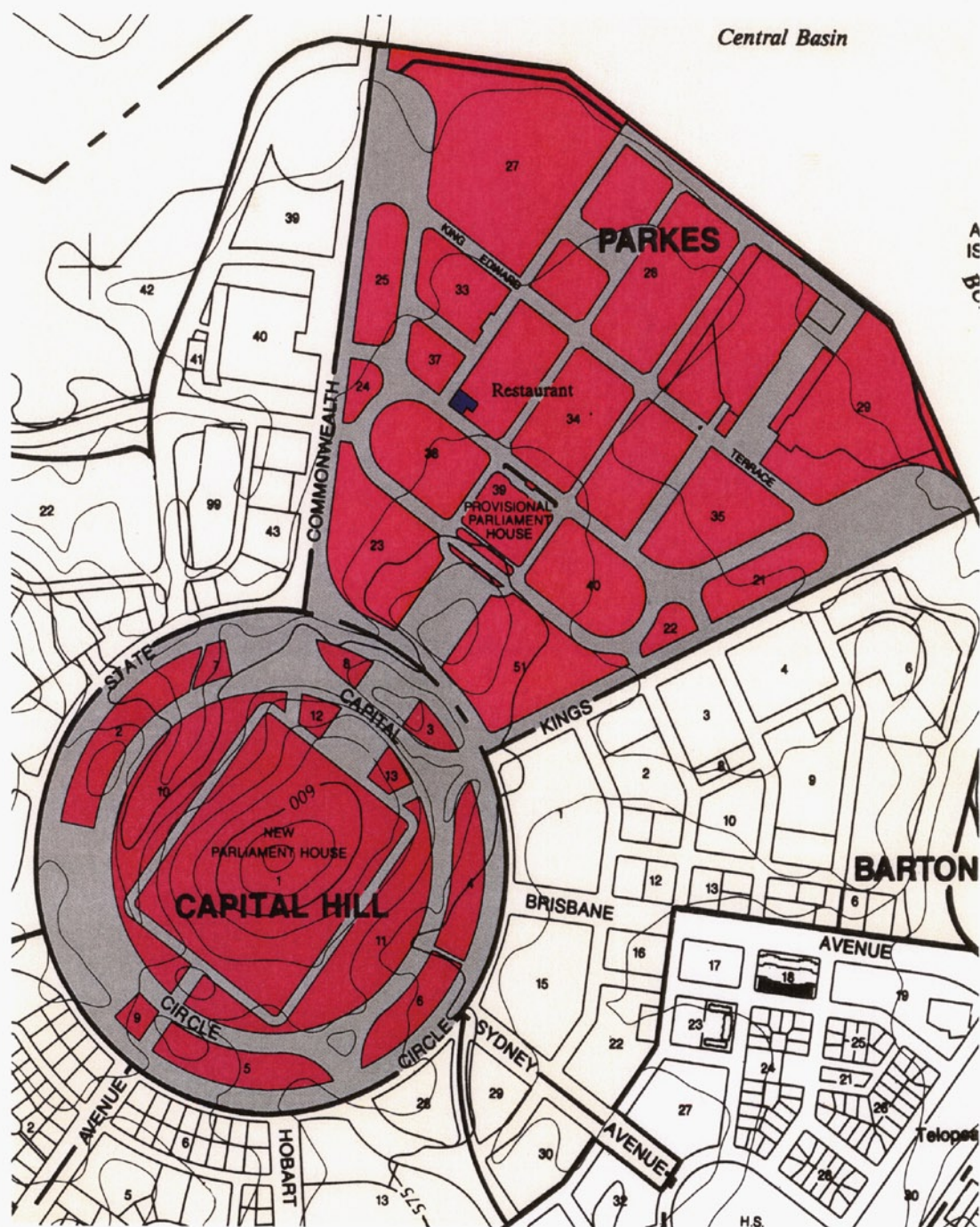
The master plans may be prepared by or on behalf of the relevant organisations and are subject to approval by the National Capital Planning Authority. It is intended that the approval of master plans will expedite works approval requirements, especially in relation to routine and minor activities.

1.4 Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

The following apply to the Central National Area:

- (i) In the Parliamentary Zone (the area bounded by the southern edge of Lake Burley Griffin, Kings Avenue, State Circle and Commonwealth Avenue)
 - (a) land uses will comprise:
 - Parliamentary Uses and National Capital Uses, including national legislative, judicial and executive functions, and Commonwealth cultural institutions
 - such other uses, including a limited range of commercial uses and tourism facilities, as may be approved by Parliament, which will complement and enhance the function and character of the Area.
 - (b) development shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Zone Development Plan approved by Parliament in April 1987 (refer Figure 29).
- (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.
- (iii) Land uses will relate primarily to national functions. This should not however preclude the establishment of appropriate ACT Government functions, suitably located.
- (iv) Consideration of commercial uses in those parts of the Designated Area that lie in the City Division will have regard to the planning effects on Civic Centre as well as on the Central National Area.
- (v) Special consideration will be given to community, cultural, residential, tourism, entertainment and leisure uses which complement and enhance the function and character of the Designated Area.
- (vi) Traffic capacity and traffic arrangements on major routes in the Designated Area will be planned to ensure safe and dignified access for all ceremonial occasions, and for residents, staff, tourists and visitors.
- (vii) The transport system within the Designated Area will be planned and managed for volumes of traffic and parking consistent with the significance and use of the Area. Transport infrastructure should foster the use of transport systems which minimise adverse effects from vehicular traffic.
- (viii) The urban design of the Area is to achieve an integrated design of the highest quality by managing building height and bulk, and by encouraging building forms and layouts on consistent building alignments which enhance the structure of Griffin's plan.
- (ix) New development should seek to respect the design and character of adjacent buildings in terms of scale, colour, materials, massing and frontage alignment.
- (x) Individual development proposals will be assessed on their merits in respect to sunlight penetration, amenity, pedestrian and vehicle access. No buildings taller than RL 617m will be permitted in the Designated Area but the general building height will be 3-4 storeys except where the Authority determines otherwise.

- (xi) Buildings in the Area must show an appropriate quality of architectural design consistent with their location in this area of special national concern.
- (xii) Direct access to and from major roads will be permitted where practicable and not inconsistent with traffic safety requirements. The design and maintenance of all roadways and parking areas, including their associated landscaping, signs and lighting, will be of a consistently high quality.
- (xiii) Commonwealth, Kings and Constitution Avenues, the avenues connecting the nodal points of the National Triangle, are of critical significance in delineating the geometric form of Griffin's plan. They are not only the primary movement routes but they are powerful generators of structure and urban form. Their formal expression is paramount and is to be achieved by strong avenue planting, consistent road design, special lighting and detailing. Building heights and setbacks will be planned to ensure consistency and continuity.
- (xiv) Landscaping is to enhance the visual setting of the Designated Area and integrate the buildings with their landscape setting. This will be carried out in accordance with a landscape master plan to be prepared by the Authority which particularly emphasises the following landscape themes:
- the formal and consistent landscaping of main avenues and mall spaces
 - the combination of formal and informal landscaping which occurs around the lake edge and is the setting for Parliament House and its adjacent areas.
- (xv) Residential blocks shall not be subdivided for separate occupation.
- (xvi) As soon as practicable after this Plan comes into operation, building, road and landscape maintenance is to conform with Management Plans prepared by the Authority in consultation with the Department of Arts, Sport, Environment, Tourism and Territories and the ACT Government, which will consider traffic and parking operations, temporary uses and ceremonial events. The Management Plans will also establish levels of maintenance for land, water and infrastructure appropriate to the principles and policies for the Area and shall take into account the Technical and Management Guidelines for Lake Burley Griffin at Appendix J.

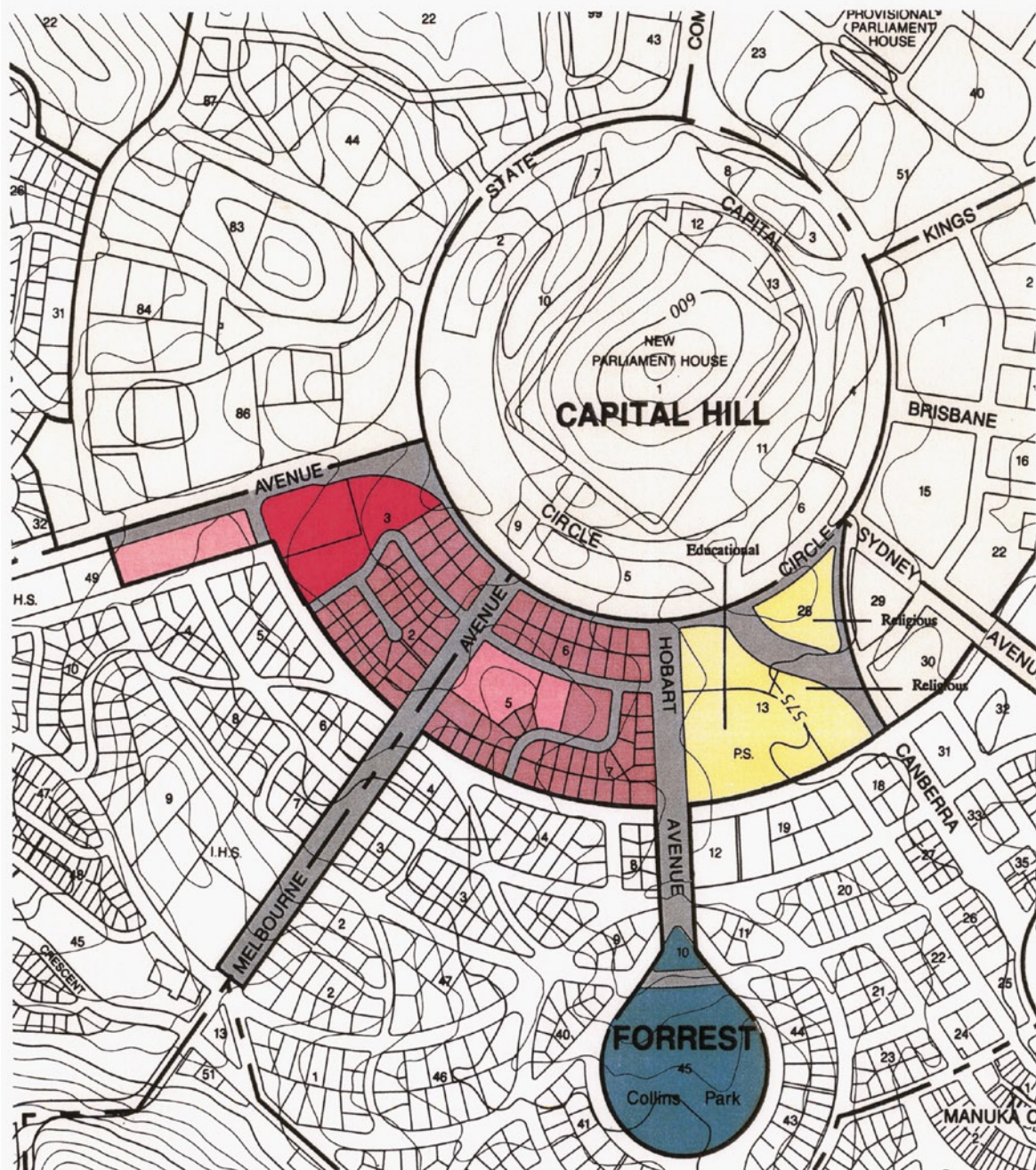


- Parliamentary Use
- National Capital Use
- Commercial
- Road
- Adjoining Central National Area Maps

* Refer to Appendix H for Design and Siting Conditions which apply to all blocks

Figure 5

The Central National Area (The Parliamentary Zone)



- National Capital Use
- Diplomatic Mission
- Community Facility
- Road
- Residential
- Open Space - Park

Adjoining Central National Area Maps

* Refer to Appendix H for Design and Siting Conditions which apply to all blocks

For all blocks located within Residential Areas, refer to Appendices for the following policies which apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Appendix M Residential Land Use | Appendix P Dual Occupance of Detached House Blocks |
| Appendix N The Conduct of Business on Residential Land | |
| Appendix O Aged Persons Accommodation | |

Figure 7

The Central National Area (Deakin & Forrest)