



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

Consultation Report

Works Approval No 101896

Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum
Amenity Improvements

July 2020

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Introduction

Under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the National Capital Authority (NCA) prepares and administers the National Capital Plan (the Plan) to ensure Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

The Plan sets out the broad planning framework for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Areas designated as having special characteristics of the National Capital are subject to detailed planning policies and guidelines.

Any buildings or structures, demolition, landscaping or excavation works in Designated Areas require the approval of the NCA. The NCA considers such proposals in the context of the relevant provisions of the Plan.

On 8 May 2020 the NCA received an internal Works Approval Application for amenity improvements located at the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum, comprising the construction of a picnic shelter, toilet facilities, pedestrian paths and associated works.

Community Consultation was undertaken by the NCA between 23 May and 15 June 2020. The NCA received 12 submissions on the proposal.

Public Consultation requirements

1.1 Commitment to Community Engagement

The NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement* details how the NCA conducts consultation. The purpose is to achieve a greater level of consistency and transparency in the NCA's decision making process.

The *Commitment to Community Engagement* describes the minimum requirements for consultation, and the process by which WA applications that are released for public consultation will be assessed.

Part 2.7 'Works Applications and Attachment C Protocol for Development Applications for Works Which Require Consultation' of the NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement* describes the consultation process for WA applications. The NCA will make an assessment of whether a proposal is consistent with the National Capital Plan and if it requires public consultation. An assessment is made in relation to adverse impacts on:

- public space and community amenity;
- environment, heritage or landscape values;
- amenity of the locality in terms of materials, finishes, scale, massing, design and quality; and
- consistency with an existing Heritage Management Plan.

When an application for works is lodged and consultation is required, consultation with the community and stakeholders will be undertaken by the applicant, the NCA or both. Where consultation is undertaken by the applicant, the NCA may choose to stipulate specific requirements that the applicant is required to implement.

The NCA may set aside the requirement to undertake full public consultation where:

- previous consultation has been undertaken on the proposal;
- minor amendments to previously approved works are required;
- the NCA determines no stakeholders will be affected; and
- proposals are given exemption, as outlined in Part 2.3 of the *Commitment to Community Engagement*.

Public consultation was undertaken on the application due to potential impacts and changes to the existing amenity at the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum, a publicly accessible open space.

Summary of Public Consultation

2.1 The public consultation process

Public consultation was undertaken by the NCA between 23 May and 15 June 2020 in the following manner:

- On Saturday 23 May 2020, publishing a public notice in *The Canberra Times* detailing the proposed works and inviting submissions to be made to the NCA in relation to the proposal ([Attachment A](#));
- Between 23 May 2020 and 15 June 2020, publishing details of the proposal on the NCA's website. This included plans and supporting documents outlining the proposal;
- Between 23 May 2020 and 15 June 2020, placing one A1 sign on site ([Attachment A](#));
- The NCA wrote to key stakeholders prior to lodgement of the works approval application (Friends of ACT Trees, The National Rock Garden Committee and The Friends of Grasslands) via email inviting comments; and
- Notification of the consultation on the NCA Facebook page.

Separate from the NCA's consultation process, a *Canberra Times* article was published on 23 May 2020 regarding the proposal, which advised how and when to make a submission to the NCA.

2.2 Submissions Received, Comments and Response

The NCA received a total of 12 submissions on the proposal. Submissions received were supportive of the proposal, with minor concerns or additional comments, as discussed further below.

Emails of acknowledgment were sent to all submitters advising them that their submissions will be taken into consideration before a decision is made on the application.

Key themes raised in submissions included:

- *Supportive of the intent to provide infrastructure and facilities improvements*
- *Concerns regarding potential changes to off lead dog walking areas*
- *Concerns regarding waste disposal due to increased use*
- *Consideration of additional amenity items such as drinking fountains and rubbish bins*
- *Development around the lake should be minimised to maintain the quiet, untouched and natural landscape of the LPNA.*

A summary of issues and the NCA response is provided below.

A list of submitters and their general response is provided at [Attachment B](#).

Additional comments raised in support of the application	
1.0	<p><i>Work on the plant material is required as that is the main point of the landscape</i></p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> In addition to the amenity improvements, the NCA will trial species of Oak trees to assess their suitability for Canberra's climate. The new tree planting will provide the opportunity for a progressive expansion of the tree collection which will yield useful performance information for an expanded range of tree species, in line with the recommendations of the Lindsay Pryor National Arboreum Master Plan.</p>

2.0	<p>Potential changes to the off leash dog walking</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> The works will not result in a change to any permitted activities at the LPNA. Dogs must be under the control of their owners at all times whether on lead or off.</p>
3.0	<p>A more aggressive approach to weed removal (including blackberries) should be undertaken.</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> The NCA has recently mapped all of the weeds across the Arboretum, focusing on weeds that present a risk to the Yarramundi Grasslands and the Arboretum. Weeds of National significance including Blackberry, Serrated Tussock and Chilean Needle Grass as well as the local weed African Love Grass have been a particular focus of weed control activities.</p>
4.0	<p>Provision to include a water fountain (for people and dogs) in the scope of works.</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> There is currently no potable water supply to the site and is not included in this scope of works. The toilet and hand basins will use rain water collected from the new shelter and toilet buildings.</p>
5.0	<p>Provision to include rubbish bins for waste disposal due to increased use</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> A new bin is proposed to be located adjacent the existing car park as shown on the Landscape Site Plan (Sheet 300 Issue C).</p>
6.0	<p>Accessibility of the new path (surface appears to be a fine loose gravel which could be quite unstable and slippery)</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> The new pathway is proposed to be well compacted (two coat seal aggregate) which will not be unstable or slippery.</p>
7.0	<p>Concerns regarding future development and potential overdevelopment of the Arboretum.</p> <p><u>NCA Response</u> The proposed works are located within the National Capital Open Space System (Lake Burley Griffin) as shown in <i>Figure 2: General Policy Plan – Metropolitan Canberra</i>, of the NCP and Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores Precinct of the Central National Area.</p> <p>The land use policy for this site is ‘National Capital Use’. Appendix A ‘Land Use Definitions’ of the National Capital Plan defines the term ‘National Capital Use’ as:</p> <p><i>“The use of any land, building or structure for the purpose of a work of special status and national interest. This includes the National Library, the National Gallery, the High Court, the National Archives, the National Museum of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, the Prime Minister’s Residence, the Governor-General’s Residence, the</i></p>

Australian National University, the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Commonwealth Offices needing prestigious locations, national memorials, National Association Offices as herein defined, a hospitality house or a Commonwealth Government conference centre and the like.”

The works are considered to be consistent with the permitted use ‘National Capital Use’ given that the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum commemorates the contribution to the nation of the late Emeritus Lindsay Pryor AO (1915-1998), an eminent Australian forest scientist, botanist and landscape architect.

The proposed works will not alter the land use policy for the site. The trees proposed for removal will be replaced by trial Oak species on site. The construction of new amenities allows greater access and community use of the area and the Lake’s foreshore. New structures have been subtly designed and carefully sited to reflect the landscape setting and to ensure the natural environment and Arboretum is maintained.

The *Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum Master Plan* (May 2011) outlines key design elements, aims and objectives for the development of the site. The LPNA provides national recognition to the important role trees and forests have in Australia’s urban, rural and natural landscapes. The LPNA provides recreational, scientific, horticultural and educational facilities for visitors and future generations to enjoy.

The LPNA Master Plan was a consultative process with key stakeholders and the public. This is reflected in the final Master Plan design and principles. The Master Plan respects the cultural value of the site and builds on the original intentions of Emeritus Professor Lindsay Pryor AO (1915-1998) and plantings by Dr Robert Boden.

The LPNA Master Plan re-establishes the site for tree trials through a design that promotes tree planting as a key functional and aesthetic design element. The proposed works are consistent with the Master Plan for the site.

Conclusion

The NCA's consultation process was carried out in accordance with the National Capital Plan and the NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement*.

The NCA has reviewed the proposal and is satisfied that the concerns of the community have been taken account of.

The proposal is not inconsistent with the provisions of the National Capital Plan, and is supported by the NCA.

The application was approved on 2 July 2020. The NCA will endeavour to complete the works over the coming years, however will not be able to commence this financial year due to funding. Please refer to the NCA's website for current projects and news.

Attachment A

The Canberra Times Public Notice and Site Notice



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

WORKS APPROVAL

Open for Public Consultation
Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum – Amenity Improvements

On 8 May 2020 the National Capital Authority (NCA) received an internal Works Approval (WA) Application for amenity improvements located at the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum, comprising the construction of a picnic shelter, toilet facilities, pedestrian paths and associated works.



The plans and supporting documentation for this WA application can be viewed on the NCA's website.

The NCA welcomes feedback on this application **by close of business Monday 15 June 2020**. Submissions can be made via email to worksapproval@nca.gov.au

Please contact the NCA for further information on (02) 6271 2888.

[f nca.gov](https://www.nca.gov.au) [t nca.gov.au](https://www.nca.gov.au) [@nca_media](https://www.nca.gov.au)
www.nca.gov.au

Figure 1: Canberra Times Public Notice



Building the National Capital in the hearts of all Australians

HAVE YOUR SAY

WORKS APPROVAL
LINDSAY PRYOR NATIONAL ARBORETUM
- AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS

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Figure 4: Site Notice – Sign 1 (Barrenjoey Drive Car Park)

Attachment B

Summary of Submissions

The National Capital Authority (NCA) undertakes an open and transparent works approval application process. As part of this process the NCA prepares a Consultation Report for publication on the NCA website, which includes a summary of each submission, along with the name of each person making the submission. Names of submitters have been omitted where a submitter requested confidentiality.

Submission	Summary of Submission
01	Irene and Paul Scholtens <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The submitter is pleased to see that some amenity improvements are proposed for the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum (the Arboretum).• The submitter supports the construction of a picnic shelter, toilet facilities, pedestrian paths and the associated works.• The submitter is pleased to see the relocation of the concrete plinth and plaque to the carpark near the entry to the Arboretum to assist visitors to understand why the Arboretum is there.• The submitter looks forward to the completion of the works and making use of the new facilities.
02	Max Bourke AM, President - Friends of the Australian National Botanic Garden <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The submitter praised the NCA for the project proposed near the Lake.• The submitter read all documents associated with the proposal, knows the site well and supports the project.
03	Steve Thomas <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The submitter noted support for the works to be carried out at Lindsay Pryor Arboretum and advised it is vital that some infrastructure is put in place to support visitation.• The submitter also noted that work on the plant material is also required as that is the main point of the landscape there.• The submitter commend the work of the NCA in advancing the arboretum.
04	Friends of ACT Trees (FACTT) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FACTT and its members have had a long time interest in this area and are pleased to see the construction of a picnic shelter, toilet facilities and the low impact pedestrian paths, as the first real infrastructure improvements for many years.• FACTT supports the NCA's initiative and endorses the developments in accordance with the plan referenced in the notification.• The Friends of ACT Trees, FACTT, commends the Works Approval Application.
05	Ian McKay <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a regular user of the Arboretum the submitter supports the proposal and welcomes the installation of the toilet block and planting of additional trees.• The submitted expressed they would be disappointed if there was any change to the off leash dog walking. The submitted noted that the area is well used and provides a superb area for dogs to run and socialise.• In keeping with the proposed improvements, the submitter would like the NCA to take a more aggressive approach to removing the increasingly widespread blackberries.
06	Sue Byrne, Chair, ACT Monaro Riverina Branch - Australian Garden History Society (AGHS)

- The AGHS aims to promote awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities, and as such this Arboretum is highly regarded by AGHS members. In 2014 the AGHS toured the Arboretum with John Gray, former landscape architect with the National Capital Development Authority and colleague of Lindsay Pryor.
- The AGHS noted support for the improvements as described in the Works Approval application and advised that it is interesting to note that the Arboretum will be trialling some species of oak trees for their suitability to thrive in Canberra's climate, a small piece of history continuing the link to the Lindsay Pryor design and earlier Griffin plan for a continental arboretum.
- The AGHS noted that recent events have shown there is a need for more recreational areas within the inner Canberra region and increased patronage and use of the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum has been reported. It is to be hoped that the historical background of the Arboretum has also become more appreciated.

07 Chris

- The planned improvement works at the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum are long overdue and will be greatly welcomed by visitors to the area.
- The submitter advised that the improvements look great and will suit the area.

08 Name Withheld

- The submitter is a regular user of the Lindsay Pryor site who looks forward to the proposed developments, particularly the addition of toilet and bin facilities. The submitter is pleased to see that the main development is near the carpark leaving the bulk of the area as it is, to maintain its natural values and open spaces.
- The submitter uses the site to walk dogs because it is the safest off-lead area in central Canberra. It is large, far from main roads and cycle paths, does not have a resident kangaroo or rabbit population, offers safe swimming in summer, and has developed a friendly community of dog walkers over the years.
- The submitter advised that it would be a shame if any of the changes made the area less accessible to dog walkers, and would be pleased to see these key values of the site maintained and that the proposed new use of the area doesn't create conflict among user groups.
- The submitter asked if the NCA could confirm that the full area will remain a dog off leash area or make clear any anticipated changes.
- The submitter suggested a water fountain for humans and dogs would be helpful.

09 Helen Rodriguez

- The submitter has been walking their dog with friends at the Arboretum for over 6 years and advised that friends have been doing so for close to 30 years.
- The submitter noted the Arboretum is a beautiful space to walk dogs off lead and to socialise.
- The Arboretum is one of the very few places in Canberra that allows the submitter to walk dogs off lead and swim in the lake.
- The submitter advised that there are lots of places around the lake with paths and picnic tables that do not permit dogs (be it off lead or on lead).
- The submitter expressed concern that the proposed works may result in the ability to walk dogs off lead.
- The submitter requests that the Arboretum remains off lead as there are many places with paths and picnic tables around the lake that do not permit dogs.

10 Maria Rodriguez

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- The submitter noted the Arboretum is a beautiful space to walk dogs off lead and to socialise.
 - The Arboretum is one of the very few places in Canberra that allows the submitter to walk dogs off lead and swim in the lake.
 - The submitter noted that currently with Covid-19, the Arboretum has provided joy by having the ability to take dogs to a safe off lead area, where owners can also sit.
 - The submitter advised that there are lots of places around the lake with paths and picnic tables that do not permit dogs (be it off lead or on lead).
 - The submitter expressed concern that the proposed works may result in the ability to walk dogs off lead.
 - The submitter requests that the Arboretum remains off lead as there are many places with paths and picnic tables around the lake that do not permit dogs.
 - The submitter provided a link to the Yarramundi Dog Walkers Facebook website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/728919243889129>

11	Kate List
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- The submitter is a long-term user of Yarramundi Reach, and appreciates the proposed upgrade of pathways and picnic areas, and the provision of toilets.
- The submitter advised that the Arboretum is their main off-leash area used for walking and socialising their dog. Usage has increased dramatically since Covid-19.
- The submitter supports the upgrade works with assurance that it will remain an off-leash area.
- The submitter advised that the works will lead to increased usage, and provision of bins in the scope of works would be appreciated.
- The submitter noted the walking path surface appears to be a fine loose gravel. The submitter uses crutches and advised that unless the surface is well compacted it could be quite unstable and slippery.

12	Georgia Hitch
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- The submitter notes that the Arboretum is an area that is used by their family consistently for nearly 30 thirty years to walk dogs, meet friends and enjoy all that Canberra has to offer.
 - A feature that the submitter likes about the Arboretum is that it hasn't been developed, manicured or fundamentally changed.
 - The submitter notes that the idea for a path and some better seating areas aren't particularly intrusive and if it means people who otherwise wouldn't be able to enjoy the area can, then that's a great thing.
 - The submitter expressed that any development now and into the future should be as minimal as possible. It is feared that once changes are made it will be easier for people in the future to make more significant modifications.
 - The submitter noted that there are enough highly developed spaces around the lake and that the NCA is to ensure that the Arboretum's quiet, untouched and natural appeal is not destroyed.
-