



PLANNING REPORT APPLICATION FOR WORKS APPROVAL

Willemsen Group

Block 23 Section 6 Barton

July 2022



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Table of Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE	1
2.0	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	2
2.1	Project Summary and Rationale	2
2.2	Site	3
3.0	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	5
3.1	Visual Impact	5
3.2	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC)	7
3.3	Heritage	7
3.4	Architects Moral Rights	7
3.5	Parking and Traffic	7
3.6	Signage	8
3.7	Noise	8
3.8	Wind	8
3.9	Bushfire Risk	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.10	Waste	8
3.11	Site Contamination	8
3.12	Green Initiatives	8
3.13	Water Sensitive Urban Design	8
4.0	STATUTORY PLANNING ASSESSMENT	10
4.1	National Capital Plan	10
4.2	Statements Against the Barton Precinct Code	13
4.3	Territory Plan	18
5.0	CONSULTATION	19
6.0	CONCLUSION	20

Figures

Figure 1:	Site Context	1
Figure 2:	Site Plan	2
Figure 3	Site contours	4
Figure 4	View from Brisbane Ave, facing north-east towards the site	5
Figure 5	Proposed development, facing north-east on Brisbane Ave	5
Figure 6	View from Blackall St, facing southwest	6
Figure 7	Proposed development, viewed from Blackall St	7
Figure 8:	NCA Designated Areas	10
Figure 9:	Barton Precinct Code Area	11
Figure 10:	Barton Land Use	12

1.0 Introduction & Purpose

This report has been prepared by Purdon Planning on behalf of Willemsen in Works Approval (WA) for the proposed development at Block 23 Section 6 Barton (10 Brisbane Avenue). This development is situated in Barton and is subject to the National Capital Authority's Barton Precinct code. The proposed development includes the demolition of the existing office building and carparking structure, and construction of a new eight-storey office building with three-levels of basement parking and end of trip facilities.

This report should be read in conjunction with plans and supporting information prepared by the project team and lodged as part of the WA.

Figure 1: Site Context



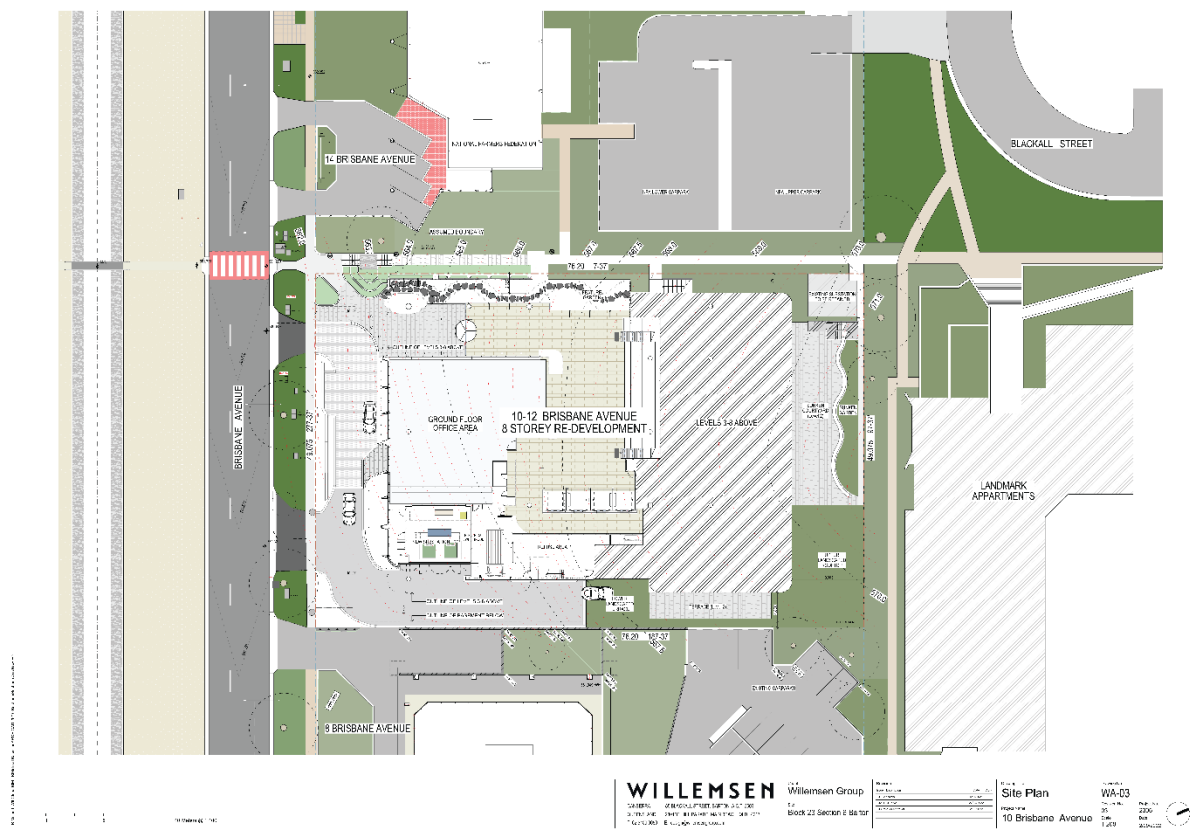
Source: Purdon Planning (ACTMAPi, July 2022)

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1 Project Summary and Rationale

The proposed development includes the demolition of the existing office building and carparking structure, and construction of a new eight-storey office building with a three-level basement. This building will provide contemporary, high-quality office space in the commercial district of Barton, contributing to the character of the well-established Brisbane Avenue office precinct.

Figure 2: Site Plan



Source: Willemssen

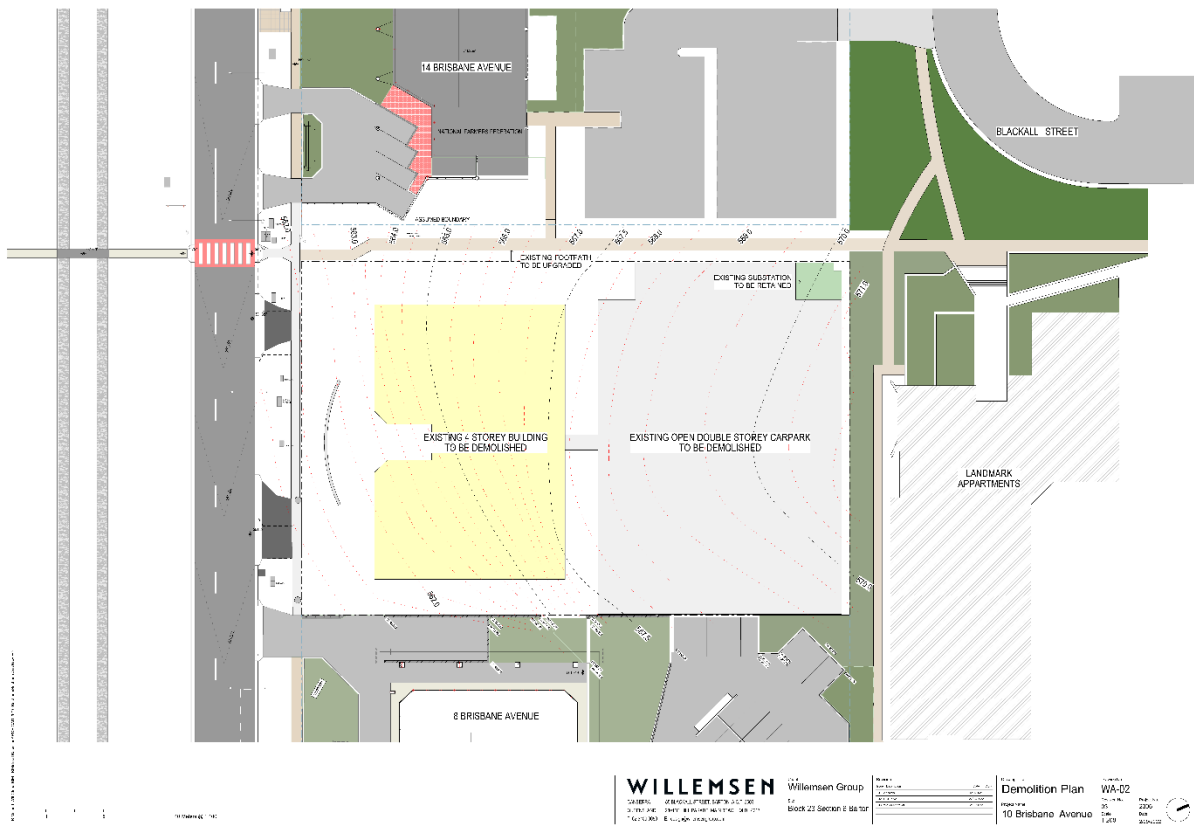
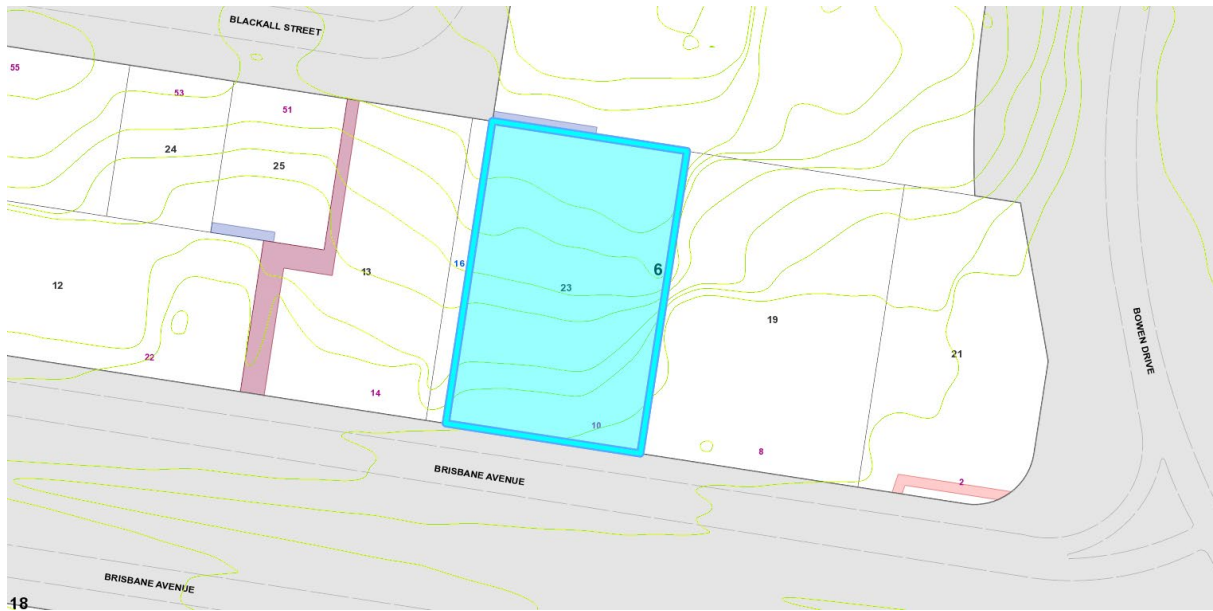


Figure 3: Demolition Plan

2.2 Site

The site has roughly an eight-metre positive elevation change between Brisbane Avenue to the south and Blackall St to the north.

Figure 4 Site contours



3.0 Impact Assessment

This section provides an assessment of the proposed works against a range of urban planning and design criteria relevant to the project.

3.1 Visual Impact

Careful consideration has been given to the appearance of the building in context of the streetscape.

Figure 5 View from Brisbane Ave, facing north-east towards the site



Figure 6 Proposed development, facing north-east on Brisbane Ave



The façade evokes the same design language already present on Brisbane Avenue and aligns with the desired character espoused in the National Capital Plan.

Clear verticality and horizontality are important design elements on the existing facades. The proposed building implements this architectural feature with large, rectangular façade segmentation and strong vertical fins. The geometry of the façade elements are intended to visually group 2 levels of the building, breaking down its apparent vertical scale.

The façade uses lightweight glass reinforced off white concrete (GFRC) panels for the visually strong grid-like elements. This is a finish typical to monumental buildings in the precinct. The lightweight glass addition to the concrete reduces the material's carbon use. The white façade and the dark glass elements create a play between solid and void, light and shadow that is continued with the subtle contrast against the landscaped setting.

Considered placement of the full-height atrium to fit against the pedestrian thoroughfare means it addresses the pedestrian movement and faces this dynamic section of the building towards Parliament House, making for an appealing view from Capital Hill. The atrium provides social amenity in the building, catering for contemporary office operation, providing a quality space where social relationships can grow and workers can rest. These uses serve the café and meeting rooms on the ground floor.

Figure 7 View from Blackall St, facing southwest



Figure 8 Proposed development, viewed from Blackall St.



The building rises eight storeys fronting Brisbane Ave and around six storeys from Blackall St due to elevation changes. This height is offset visually by its setback from Brisbane Ave, the use of transparent materials in the building, and the generous landscaping for the public path, sunken courtyard and drop-off/shared zone at the frontage of the building. These landscaped areas - both proposed and existing - continue the avenues of the Griffin Plan. The landscape emphasises the landmarks and horizontality and softens the proposed development's verticality.

3.2 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC)

The proposal does not trigger referral under the EPBC Act.

3.3 Heritage

The site does not have a Heritage overlay (ACTMapi 2022).

3.4 Architects Moral Rights

As the Commonwealth Government is the consent authority for this proposal, Architectural Moral rights have not separately been sought but consideration of Moral Rights will be undertaken by the NCA as part of the WA assessment.

Willemsen Group designed the current building that is proposed to be demolished and it is assumed that their signature on the authorisation form submitted with the WA application sufficiently demonstrates their support for the proposal.

3.5 Parking and Traffic

Car parks are supplied across three basement levels at the NCA recommendation of approximately 1 space per 50 Sq.m of net lettable area, discussed in design reviews. This results in a total of 234 car parks and 19 motorbike parks. This is understood to be sufficient parking to cater for demand from office workers of the building.

3.6 Signage

Address signage is proposed as part of this WA. No other signage is proposed.

3.7 Noise

The building is almost entirely office space. It will not generate significant levels of noise over the existing development.

3.8 Wind

The building is not in an exposed location. Outdoor areas will be protected from winds by the building form, by surrounding buildings and extensive landscaping.

3.9 Waste

Operational waste collection will be serviced adjacent to the loading dock on the ground floor.

Refer to waste management plans submitted with this WA for further details.

3.10 Site Contamination

The subject site is not listed on the ACT Register of contaminated sites.

3.11 Green Initiatives

The curtainwall glass façade will meet the required shading and thermal performance requirements as part of an overall energy model for the building in which active and passive energy efficiency elements were considered. Additionally, the three-dimensional façade elements create passive shading of the glass element.

Acknowledging the solar aspect of the atrium glazing, baffled louvring has been introduced to increase shading. It is felt that the revised design solution provides excellent natural lighting to the internal atrium spaces of the building at an acceptable solar load.

Overall building energy performance will be modelled in detail by the project sustainability consultant, external building fabric elements along with all building services will meet the specifications required to achieve a minimum 5-star NABERS rating without solar generation

A fine-grained active lighting strategy will be designed by the project electrical engineer, this strategy will seek to optimise the use of natural lighting over artificial.

A 200Kw photovoltaic energy generation array is proposed for the roof of the building.

Further sustainability measures are incorporated into the building design, such as; Bacteria Elimination, Fresh Air supplies, Passive Ventilation, Task Based Lighting, Glare Control and Triple Silver Coat Low E double glazed facades.

Planting design will maximise available soil volumes to fit a diversity of plant species that provide shade/solar access, reduce urban heat and attract native fauna. Micro-climate design will match plant species to unique building spaces such as the atrium, sculpture walk, shaded areas and podium planting.

3.12 Water Sensitive Urban Design

No specific Water Sensitive Urban Design Measures are specified by the NCP for this site. The Barton precinct code does however state adherence to the WSUD measures as an objective. The proposed building integrates water-sensitive design measures to comply with the highest sustainability standards.

The proposed building has a 5-star NABERS Water target, supported by 2000m² rainwater capture area and 2000lt water storage. Filtered water will be reused for toilet flushing and irrigation. Paving materials through the sculpture garden will be permeable to reduce water run-off and passively irrigate plant species.

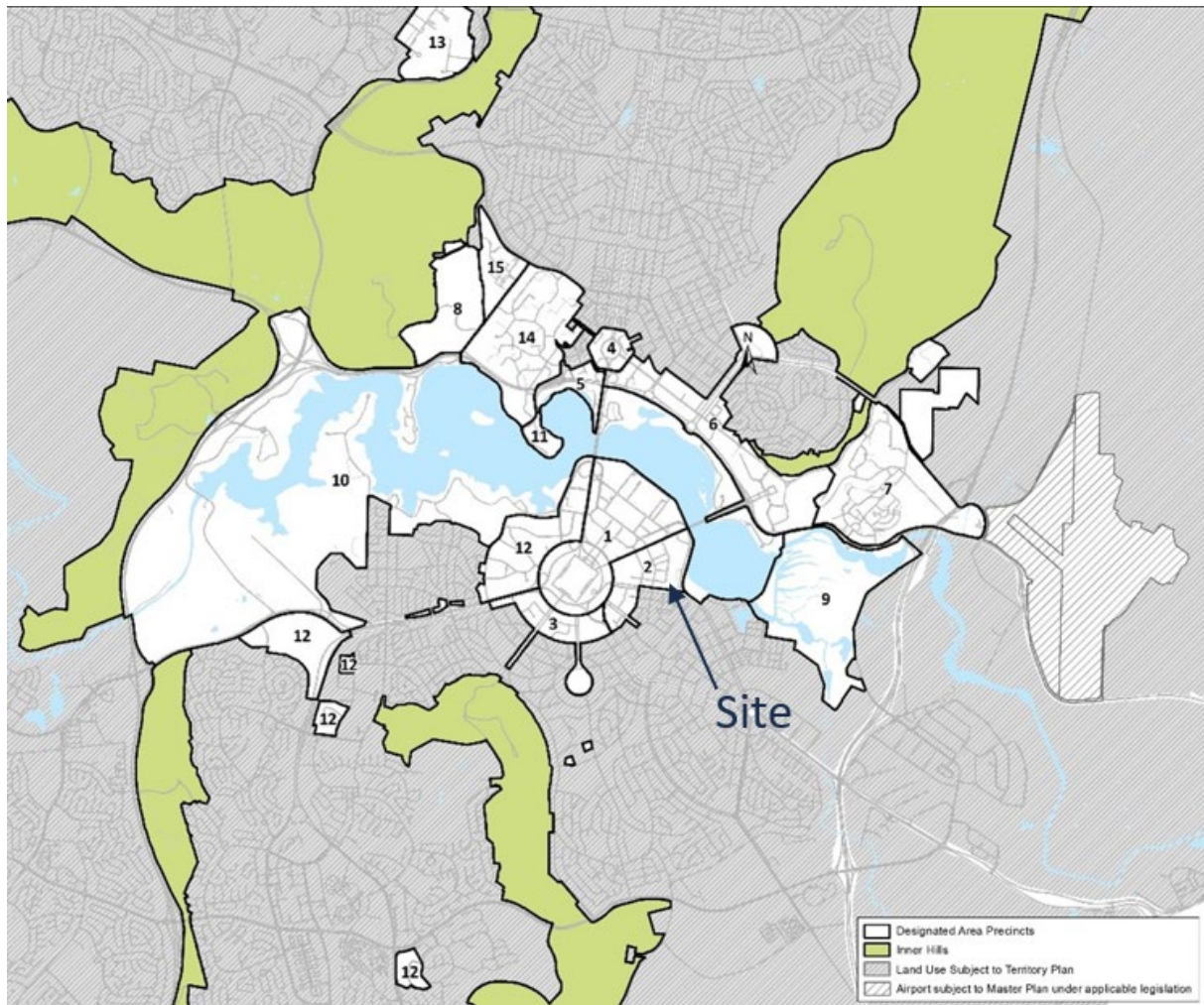
The building will not significantly change the stormwater and runoff in the area, as it has a similar footprint of hard areas to the existing office building and its carpark.

4.0 Statutory Planning Assessment

4.1 National Capital Plan

The subject site is located within the Barton Precinct (labelled as 2 on Figure 3) specified as a designated area in the National Capital Plan (NCP) (Figure 3). The land is therefore subject to the relevant provisions of its precinct code.

Figure 9: NCA Designated Areas



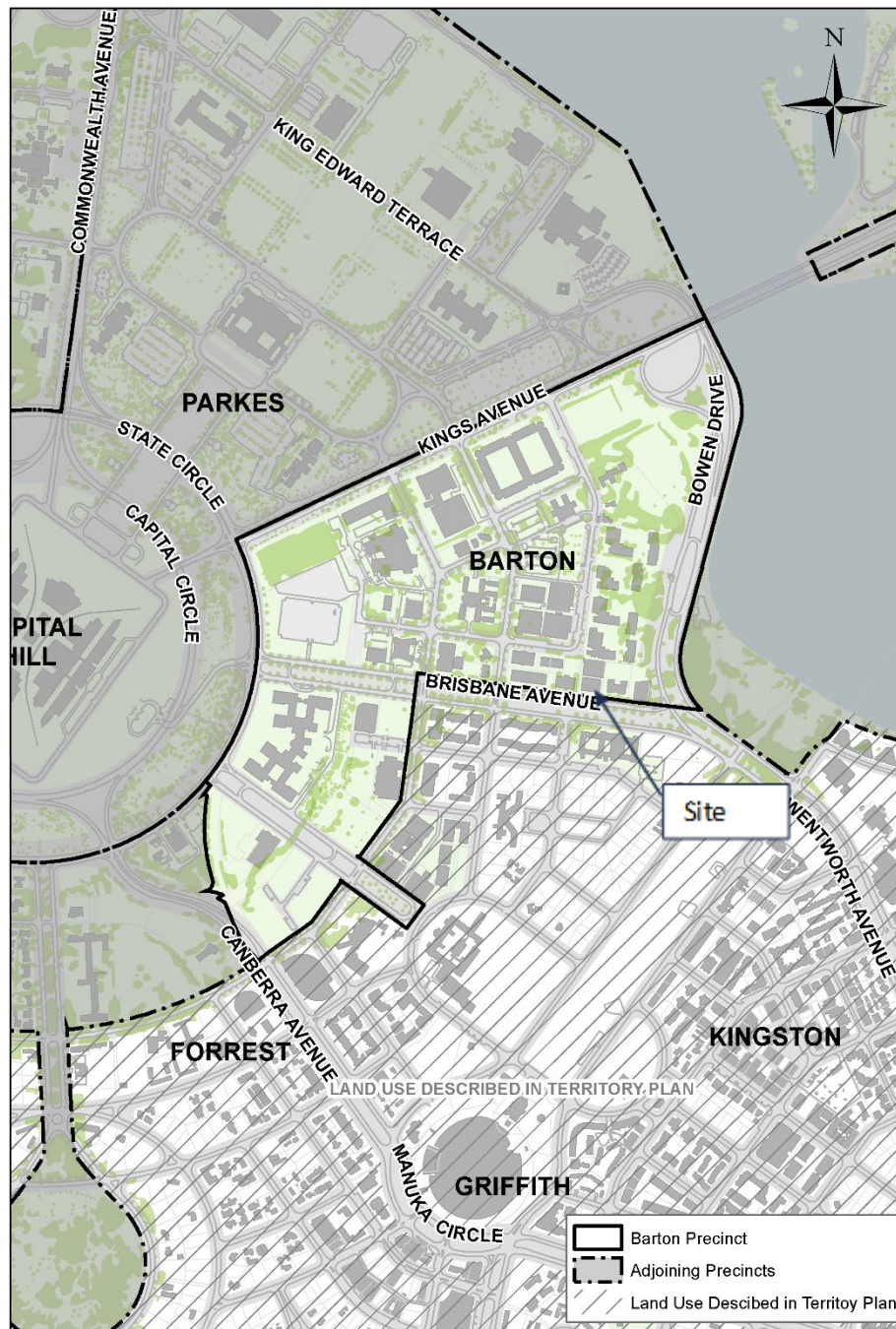
Source: NCA

The following sections address the NCP rules and criteria that apply to the proposal on the subject site.

4.1.1 Barton Precinct Code

The Barton Precinct Code aims to ensure that developments in the Barton area uphold its significance as a prestigious office location known for containing key government agencies in a generous landscape setting (Figure 4).

Figure 10: Barton Precinct Code Area

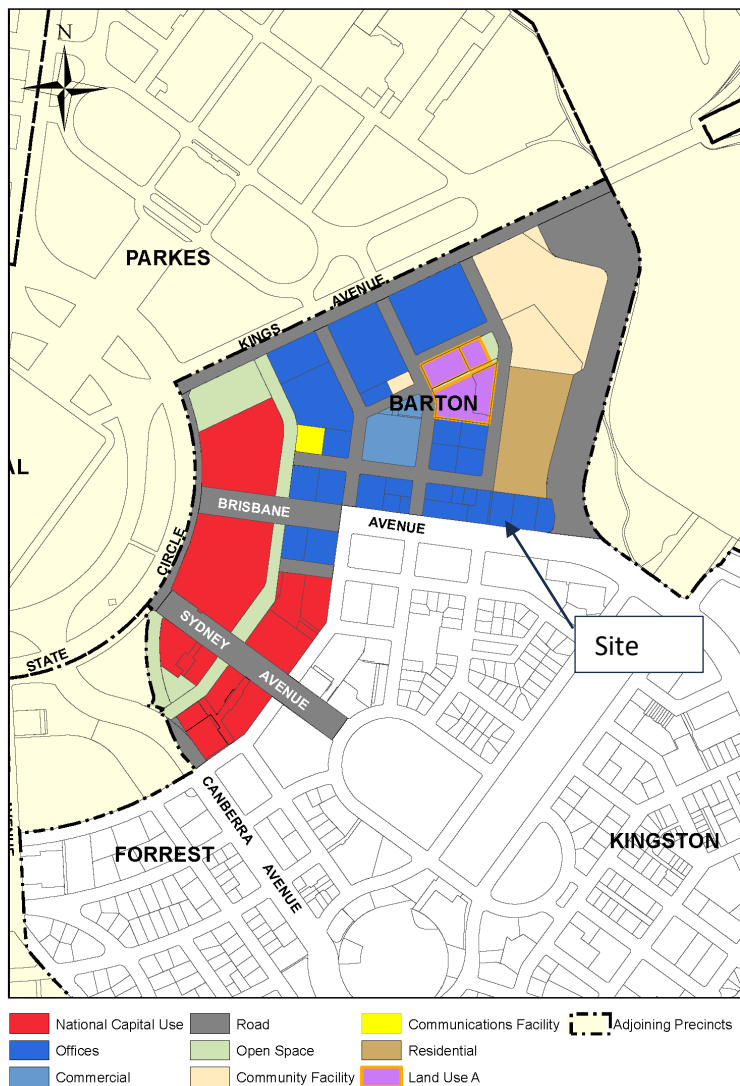


Source: National Capital Plan 4.4

4.1.2 Objectives for Barton Precinct:

1. Ensure the highest standards of architecture for all buildings in the precinct.
2. Ensure that individual buildings contribute to the coherent definition of streets, blocks and public spaces intended for the Precinct.
3. Create a legible network of paths and streets and enhance connectivity and accessibility to the Lake.
4. Encourage a mix of land uses which contribute to the vibrancy, amenity, and convenience of the Barton Precinct as an attractive place in which to work and live.
5. Ensure new development meets leading practice for environmental sustainability including energy efficiency and water sensitive urban design measures.
6. Ensure development recognises and complements the precinct character; as a major employment centre and area of national importance.
7. Recognise and reinforce the different streetscapes associated with Kings, Brisbane, and Sydney Avenues, and State Circle.

Figure 11: Barton Land Use



Source: National Capital Plan 4.4

4.2 Statements Against the Barton Precinct Code

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

Building Height

A building height limit of RL 591 generally applies to the Barton area. This level corresponds with the level of the parapet walls at all four corners of Parliament Drive and establishes an appropriate limit in terms of creating and maintaining built form relationships to Parliament House when seen from vantage points in and around the Central National Area.

Minor building elements (such as lift overruns and roof plant) that extend building height above RL 591 will be considered where this enhances the architectural quality of the building, and fosters energy efficiency, indoor amenity, appropriate urban scale, and adds visual interest to the skyline. Minor building elements should be carefully integrated within the form of buildings.

Lift overruns, plant rooms and any roof mounted aerals, masts and dishes should be designed and sited to have a low visual impact when viewed from the street or Parliament House.

Buildings should be a minimum of four storeys on the Main Avenue frontages of Kings Avenue, Brisbane Avenue and Sydney Avenue.

Response:

The building sits below the RL 591 height limit, except for the plant rooms on the top of the building which extend to RL 595. No habitable space is situated above RL591.

The rooftop plant elements are setback from the top of the roof parapet, hiding them from view within proximity of the building. Viewed from further away (e.g., Parliament House), the materiality of the plant rooms allows them to blend with their background effectively. The roof of the plant rooms will be utilised for solar PV arrays, increasing the energy efficiency of the development.

Landscaping

A high quality of landscape design is sought, and mature trees are to be retained wherever possible.

Street trees and other large trees are to be planted in deep-root soil conditions.

The design of car parking areas and arrival courts should incorporate generously scaled tree planting beds to provide shade and separation to parking bays. Quality streetscape furnishings and paving treatments are to be utilised to provide visual relief to surface car parks and vehicular areas within or adjacent to places characterised by higher levels of pedestrian use.

Response:

A high-quality landscape plan is proposed representing a contemporary blend of formal geometry and curved interfaces to fit site and community aspirations. A range of landscaping formats are proposed, including a sculpture garden walk, inspired by Asian gardens and microclimates, and a communal terraced seating area with adaptable and collaborative workspaces.

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

Materials, forms, and colours used in planting, paving and furniture are derived from classic Canberra architecture and landscape architecture and provide a strong and recognisable character throughout the development.

Feature trees will fill voids and spaces to provide colour, screening and shade. Indoor atrium planting will highlight the developments transparency between indoor and outdoor working environments. The landscape is designed to create attractive and adaptable workplace environments that foster community partnerships and individual wellbeing.

Habitats created through microclimates, bird attracting tree species and plants that require animals or insects for propagation will be utilised. Geometric forms of the atrium will be replicated in landscape screens and wall treatments

Mature trees will be retained to soften the proposed building's vertical scale. Deep-root soil areas are provided at three corners of the site to accommodate large new trees. Paving is used extensively for vehicle areas, upholding the quality landscaping. This separates vehicle areas from pedestrian areas and the asphalt of the road.

Pedestrian and Bicycle movement

Cycle ways and pedestrian paths will be provided to enable safe and convenient movement and should connect to major peripheral paths.

Pedestrian safety and visual amenity should be secured through traffic calming and appropriate streetscape design.

New development should provide a positive address to pedestrian areas, to provide visual interest, activity and passive surveillance. Blank façades and exposed service areas should generally be avoided.

Opportunities for linking the pedestrian networks of the Barton Precinct with the surrounding areas such as the trail system in the peripheral parklands of Parliament House should be addressed by new developments, particularly in the development of Section 1 Barton.

Response:

The building addresses the major pedestrian thoroughfare from Blackall St through to Brisbane Ave. It will provide an interactive façade which features direct sightlines into the central atrium space, encouraging interest in the building form.

Blank facades are minimised completely and are only present with the wall facing east to the adjacent block. Services areas are concealed around to this eastern side as well.

The vehicle layover reduces congestion and hazards for on-road cycling while providing a quality landscaped area to welcome pedestrians to the building.

Sustainable development

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

Promote environmentally sustainable development including increased pedestrian and cycle accessibility and public transport use while reducing dependency on private vehicles.

Response:

The proposed building addresses the pedestrian thoroughfare by situating the main entrance to the building at the intersection of the pedestrian crossing across Brisbane Ave. This side location of the main entrance places it in closest proximity to the bus stop, which is well serviced with two “rapid” bus services. The building promotes porosity with an exit in the rear of the building across from Blackall St. The proposed building contains world-class bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities including bike maintenance facilities on the ground level.

Off site works

Public domain works and site infrastructure should be implemented concurrently with new adjoining development.

New developments may be required to provide public infrastructure, including adjacent access roads and landscaped public spaces such as Windsor Walk, in accordance with detailed development requirements set by the National Capital Authority.

Response:

The re-construction and re-landscaping of the adjacent footpath verge area was discussed with NCA at the meeting on Wednesday the 15th of December, there is significant potential to add value to the development and overall area through its comprehensive landscape plan. The design will be evolved by the project landscape architect with the NCA.

Building Orientation

Buildings are to be sited parallel with the Avenues (Kings Avenue, Brisbane Avenue and Sydney Avenue), with National Circuit and State Circle, to provide definition to the geometry of the Griffin’s Plans with built form.

Response:

The building is sited parallel with Brisbane Avenue. And as a result improves the geometry of the Griffin’s Plan.

Car Parking

Surface car parks are inappropriate as foreground to the views from Parliament House and, to the extent they are permitted on a temporary basis, they are to be carefully screened with landscaping.

Basement car parks should be constructed below finished ground level and concealed from public streets and pedestrian areas.

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

Multi storey parking structures are to be designed to minimise their visual and physical impacts on the important public streetscapes of the Main Avenues and Windsor Walk.

Particular attention should be given to the design of roofing to parking structures to relieve the visual impact of large roof areas. A maximum height below RL 591 may apply to parking structures to relieve their visual and physical impact on the public domain.

Under croft parking, that is, open parking basements projecting above ground level, will only be permitted where the National Capital Authority is satisfied that it does not limit the opportunity to create attractive landscape areas, and will not be permitted on public street frontages and Windsor Walk.

An overall reduction in the total long-term car parking provision is proposed. This will be achieved by initially limiting the amount of on-site parking permitted in new developments.

On-site car parking should be provided, at a rate of 1 space per 100 square metres of gross floor area, for new offices approved in the York Park area. A higher on-site and/or off-site provision may be required by the National Capital Authority in specific cases, after taking into account the relationship between on-site parking, off-site parking opportunities and the capacity of public transport in the area.

Parking for non-office uses will be provided at rates consistent with the standards of the ACT Government.

Surface car parks on unleased land will be progressively replaced by strategically located multi-level parking structures and/or underground parking areas. Supplementary car parking in temporary surface car parks may be provided pending the development of these parking facilities.

If for specific sites the National Capital Authority determines that the amount of parking to be provided should be above the minimum on-site amount specified in the requirement above, this additional parking may be provided either on-site, or by way of a contribution to the ACT Government for off-site provision of that parking in the locality, or by a combination of these methods.

Response:

Car parks are provided in basement levels and their entrances are concealed from the main frontage, at the opposite side (east) from the pedestrian entry (west). Car parks are supplied at the NCA recommendation of 1 space per 50 Sq.m of net lettable area, discussed in design meeting with the NCA on Wednesday the 15th of December.

Building setbacks

Building setbacks have been established for Kings, Sydney and Brisbane Avenues within the York Park area as follows:

- » 15 metres for buildings along Kings Avenue
- » ten metres on Brisbane Avenue
- » six metres on Sydney Avenue.

Response:

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

Established ten metre setback from Brisbane Ave is adhered to on the main frontage.

Building articulation and entries

Drop off points and minor architectural elements, which articulate and enhance the building elevation, will be considered within front setback zones.

High quality paving, lighting and bollards, integrated with soft landscape treatments, are required within site boundaries to complement the standards set and maintained in the public domain.

All buildings on blocks with a frontage to Kings, Brisbane or Sydney Avenue should generally have a significant entry facing the avenue.

Spaces in front of building setbacks are to be landscaped to reinforce the theme of York Park as prestigious buildings in a landscape setting.

External security barriers, if required, such as bollards and retaining walls, should be designed as integral and attractive elements of the civic landscape of York Park.

Services and service entries should be concealed from Main Avenues and pedestrian pathways.

The number of vehicle crossings should be kept to a minimum, to enhance the amenity and safety of pedestrian paths.

Response:

Significant entry facing Brisbane Avenue uses quality materials and the same high-quality landscaping found in the rest of the development. The service entry is concealed on the opposite side of the building to the main entrance and pedestrian thoroughfare. Pedestrians do not have to cross vehicle areas to access the entrance of the building from the thoroughfare. Please refer to submitted materials schedule and landscape drawings for further details.

Building form

High quality, prestigious and durable building materials are required to be used for all developments.

New buildings should complement, but not necessarily imitate, the style, colour, form, scale and finishes of surrounding buildings.

Unpainted or galvanised metal will not be permitted on roofs, parapets or fascias.

Lift overruns, plant rooms and any roof mounted aerials, masts and dishes should be designed and sited to have a low visual impact when viewed from the street or Parliament House.

Internal courtyards of office buildings should generally provide deep in-ground planting conditions and be of a dimension suitable for establishing large trees.

Response:

Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

The proposed building complements the architectural language of the surrounding buildings. The façade incorporates lightweight glass reinforced off white concrete (GFRC) panels, reminiscent of the white architectural concrete of its neighbours. Like its neighbours, the white concrete is contrasted with dark metals finishes and glass. This creates a dark-light interplay that is a distinctive element of the Brisbane Avenue precinct. High quality, durable materials such as both anodised and powder coated aluminium and stainless steel will be used as building finishes.

Lift overruns and the plant rooms on top of the building are designed to have low impact on the visual aspect of the building. Viewed from the surrounding streets, the lift overruns and plant rooms are obscured by the building parapets because of their set back. Viewed from afar (e.g., Parliament House), the dark, busy appearance of the roof sheeting used as cladding on these rooms blends them into the background.

The internal courtyard incorporates a large shade tree to complement its terraced seating.

4.3 Territory Plan

The Territory Plan is not applicable to the subject site as it is within a Designated Area.

5.0 Consultation

Development is considered a prescribed development that needs to be referred to the National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) if it meets any of the following criteria:

- (a) a proposal for a building with 5 or more storeys;
- (b) a proposal—
 - (i) to increase the floorspace of a shop by more than 2 000m²; and
 - (ii) that is fully or partly located within 1 or more of the following:
 - (A) a residential zone;
 - (B) a commercial zone;
 - (C) a community facility zone;
 - (D) a parks and recreation zone.

From Planning and Development Regulation 2008 Part 3.1 AB 20A

The development was referred to the NCDRP as it meets criteria (a).

A presentation to the NCDRP was conducted on Wednesday 10 November 2021. Another preliminary design review session with the National Capital Authority (NCA) was undertaken on the Wednesday the 15th of December. During this session the design recommendations provided by the NCDRP were discussed.

According to feedback of these first sessions, the design was amended accordingly. A second consultation was prepared with the amended designs. After receiving the amended design, the NCDRP was satisfied and did not require another formal presentation. The NCA were also satisfied with the amended design when presented at the consultation on Monday 23 May 2022.

Community consultation notification and details were provided via the Purdon Planning website with opportunities for feedback/input open from Friday 24 June until Friday 15 July 2022 via the website form, email or phone. Nearby residents were primarily concerned with the perceived overlooking and overshadowing effects of the proposal. Copies of community comments can be provided to the NCA upon request.

6.0 Conclusion

This planning report has described the proposed development of demolition of existing office building and the erection of a new office building at 10 Brisbane Ave, Block 23 Section 6 Barton.

The proposed works are consistent with the land use policies and principles of NCP.

It is therefore **recommended** that the NCA approve this application for Works Approval for this commercial re-development.

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