



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

Authority Meeting A2023/6

12 December 2023

Public Record

*I endorse this Public Record of the
Authority meeting held on 12 December 2023*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Weber', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Mr Terry Weber, Chair of the National Capital Authority

This document is a public record of the National Capital Authority meeting held on 12 December 2023. As some matters discussed at Authority meetings are personal, privileged and/or confidential, this record follows but does not represent the formal minutes of the meeting.

Administration and Governance

The following Authority Members attended the meeting: Mr Terry Weber (Chair), Ms Jenny Smithson, Mr James Willson, Professor Helen Lochhead and Ms Sally Barnes (Chief Executive).

This meeting was the Authority's sixth and final regular meeting for 2023.

Before the Authority meeting, members inspected and discussed a prototype direction sign installed at the corner of King Edward Terrace and Parkes Place West.

The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members and attendees.

The Authority attended to the standard administrative and governance processes for the meeting including disclosing and managing any conflicts of interest, confirming the meeting agenda and running order, finalising the minutes and public record of the previous meeting, and reviewing the status of action items from earlier meetings.

Key Governance Matters

The Authority received and discussed a report on the NCA's key governance matters covering work health and safety (WHS), risk management, planning and performance, and governance and compliance.

The Authority discussed the background, skills and contributions of the current members of the NCA Audit and Risk Committee and agreed for their terms to be extended by one year.

On risk management, the Authority discussed elements of the current Strategic Risk Register and Treatment Plan.

The Authority noted the other information included in the report and related verbal updates.

Finance Report

NCA officers presented the Finance Report, which provided a summary of key financial events and information on the financial performance of the NCA's Departmental and Administered programs for financial year to 31 October 2023.

The Authority discussed a range of issues around the financial information and budget proposals including corporate priorities, safety aspects and appropriate asset management. The Authority noted many of the proposed projects involved activation of Lake Burley Griffin and the importance of accessibility and use of Lake and foreshore facilities.

Works Approval Report

NCA officers presented the Works Approval Report, which provided a summary of current and ongoing matters related to works approval applications as well as recent performance in processing works approval applications.

The Authority discussed several of the current developments:

- 70 Allara Street, City – NCA officers advised that the works approval application for the residential development had been approved on 9 November 2023 with further work and conditions to be met on active travel and traffic calming measures. The Authority discussed the risks and specific arrangements to ensure the specified quality is achieved through the building process.
- Anzac Park East – NCA officers advised the various works approval applications for the development had now been approved. The approvals included a range of conditions to ensure the quality of the development.
- 132kV Transmission Lines, Canberra Avenue – NCA officers discussed the background and factors that led to the siting of new power lines on Canberra Avenue between Fyshwick and HMAS Harman.

The Authority also discussed details and issues of some of the development proposals currently at the pre-application stage, including the NCA's coverage and interest in development proposals.

The Authority noted the other information in the report.

Strategic Planning Report

NCA officers presented the Strategic Planning Report, which provided an overview of the NCA's current strategic planning work.

NCA officers updated the Authority on National Capital Plan Draft Amendment 96 which proposes to widen the extent of the Designated Area along the Monaro Highway road reserve and alter the land use for a parcel of land at the Southern edge of the Hume industrial estate. They noted just one public submission had been received which had raised environmental concerns and that the NCA anticipated a submission from the ACT Government in coming days. The Authority discussed environmental aspects of the proposal and the process for the Authority's consideration of the Draft Amendment.

NCA officers outlined a proposal received to alter the land use for Block 800 Gungahlin, which would require an amendment to the National Capital Plan. They spoke to the background and reasons for considering the change, including alignment with, and concurrent consideration of, ACT Government development plans for nearby areas. NCA officers noted a range of issues that would need to be addressed in an application to the ACT Government on a Territory Plan amendment. The Authority discussed differences to similar proposals, including the block's position relative to development restrictions in nearby areas, and agreed to consider the land use change as long as the relevant issues are appropriately addressed.

The Authority noted the other information set out in the report.

Major Projects Report

NCA officers introduced the Major Projects Report, which provides an overview of the NCA's key design, construction and maintenance projects.

The Authority discussed several of the projects in the Report including the following.

- The Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Renewal Project had received parliamentary approval and the major procurement processes were now in train.
- The Westminster chimes at the National Carillon are operational again.

- The National Site of Recognition for Thalidomide Survivors and their Families was successfully dedicated by the Minister for Health and Aged Care on 30 November 2023, following a formal national apology by the Prime Minister in the Australian Parliament the day before.
- Work is progressing with the Bonner family to develop a full body figurative bronze sculpture and related pavement artwork as part of the commemoration of Senator Neville Bonner AO.
- The outcomes of public and key stakeholder engagement are being finalised as input to design development for planned works at Kings Park to continue to enhance public safety and amenity.
- A tender for design consultancy services in relation to the potential refurbishment of the Federation Fountains has been issued – the Authority discussed possible options, funding and heritage aspects of the fountains.
- Following parliamentary approval, the NCA has issued the first stage tender for the Scrivener Dam Dissipator Strengthening Project.

The Authority noted the other items and information in the Major Projects Report.

Estate Report

NCA officers introduced the Estate Management Report, which provided an update on key estate management current and planned projects and operational matters.

NCA officers talked to significant improvements in the delivery of contracted services, including for grounds maintenance, and maintaining conservation areas and tree planting services. The Authority discussed work in progress and possible innovations to address invasive weeds on the Estate.

The Authority also discussed planned and preventative maintenance and work to increase the percentage of planned maintenance as opposed to reactive maintenance, including though rolling work programs.

The Authority noted the other items and information in the Estate Report.

Forward Agenda

The Authority noted the forward agenda for its scheduled meetings in 2024.

No additional conflicts of interest for agenda items for these meetings were identified at this time (aside from those already identified and being managed).

Presentation – Update on Sydney Seaplanes

The Authority received an update from Sydney Seaplanes Pty Ltd (Sydney Seaplanes) on their proposed operations on Lake Burley Griffin.

Sydney Seaplanes advised the Authority that they anticipate operations commencing in March or April 2024.

The Authority discussed approvals processes; flight scheduling, capacity and routes; marketing; and heritage aspects of the operations.

Presentation – City Plan

The Authority received a presentation from the ACT Government representatives on the ACT Government's City Plan and City Centre Urban Design Guide.

The presentation covered the vision, drivers and key aspects of recent updates to the City Plan and Guide (undertaken in collaboration with the NCA), implementation of the Plan and Guide through planning processes and training, and interfaces with the work of the City Renewal Authority.

The Authority discussed the key differences to the 2014 Plan and Guide; key planning and design elements, including for the public realm and people-centred development; focussing on outcomes and innovation rather than technical compliance; design, accessibility, wayfinding and sightlines.

Presentation – Light Rail Stage 2B

The Authority received a presentation from the ACT Government representatives on the Light Rail Stage 2B project.

The presentation updated the Authority on Light Rail Stage 2A and work on planning for Stage 2B.

The Authority noted the information provided and processes ahead and asked that the NCA and Major Projects Canberra work collaboratively, especially on key processes, decisions and announcements.

Presentation – Sustainability and Environmental Management Plan

NCA officers presented a paper updating the Authority on progress on the NCA's Sustainability and Environmental Management Plan (the Plan).

The presentation updated the Authority on the development of the Plan and its key elements, the Plan's governance arrangements and specific actions in train, including review of the Plan by the Australian National University's Manager for their Environmental Management Plan.

The Authority discussed the Plan's implementation and environmental aspects of the NCA work including construction materials and methods used in developments, and energy use. The Authority endorsed the Plan and welcomed the enthusiasm in the NCA for its implementation.

Chief Executive Report

The Authority received a report from the Chief Executive including updates on a range of strategic issues, Parliamentary and Ministerial events, procurement activities and human resource matters.

The Authority discussed several items in the report including the following:

- the work of the Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories (JSCNCET), including their current inquiry on fostering and promoting the significance of Australia's National Capital and the Committee's regular biannual hearing with the NCA, (then) scheduled for 5 February 2024.
- the commencement of operations of the National Anti-Corruption Commission.
- discussions with the ACT Government on a concept design for Commonwealth Park, including planned public consultation.

- commercial activities on Lake Burley Griffin, including the factors that should be considered in evaluating proposals, such as activation aims, financial aspects and the impact of NCA-managed areas and assets.
- the NCA's procurement activities, noting a pleasing and significant increase in the use of open tenders for NCA procurements.

Wayfinding Interpretive Signage – National Triangle

NCA officers introduced a paper updating the Authority on the NCA's signage work, in particular presenting proposed revisions to the text for interpretive signage in the National Triangle and seeking comment on a prototype vehicular sign that was installed at the corner of King Edward Terrace and Parkes Place West – Authority members viewed the prototype sign before the meeting commenced.

The Authority approved the prototype vehicular sign and noted the other information provided on the NCA's current signage work.

Catherine Helen Spence Commemoration

NCA officers presented a paper outlining a proposal to commemorate Catherine Helen Spence, an early Australian writer, reformer and feminist who contributed to Federation and the development of Australia's Constitution, including in relation to universal suffrage and proportional representation.

The Authority discussed the proposal in detail and concluded this proposal was not the highest priority at this time.

Commemoration of Marion Mahony Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin

NCA officers introduced a paper outlining a proposal to commemorate Marion Mahony Griffin, and possibly Walter Burley Griffin.

The Authority discussed the proposal, including the background and possible locations for a memorial. Following the discussion, the Authority agreed to commemorate both Marion Mahony Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin and noted an advisory panel would be established to help inform the commemoration.

Update on Seaplanes

NCA officers presented a paper updating the Authority on seaplane operations from Lake Burley Griffin.

Lake Burley Griffin Renewal Strategy

NCA officers introduced a paper on the direction of work to increase activation of the Lake Burley Griffin and its foreshores.

The Authority discussed the alignment of Lake activation initiatives to date with the broader planning principles and influences, such as from the Griffin Legacy work, and current factors that may shape further work, such as the current inquiry by the JSCNCET. Activation work to date was assessed as valuable and valued.

The Authority agreed to invite the ACT Government to undertake a joint investigation into opportunities for further activation of Lake Burley Griffin and its foreshores, taking into account any relevant recommendations coming from the JSCNCET inquiry.

Media Report

The Authority received and noted the Media Report, which provided a summary of recent main stories, events and coverage relating to the NCA's work and profile, as well as a snapshot of issues that are likely to come up in the next few months.

Marketing and Visitor Destination Planning Report

The Authority received and noted the Marketing and Visitor Destination Planning Report which included an update on NCA events, attractions and marketing.

Other Business

Under other business, the Authority concluded 2023 was a big year and thanked everyone for their contributions to the work of the Authority and the NCA over the course of the year.

The Authority noted its next regular meeting is scheduled for 14 February 2024.