

# WORKS APPROVAL PLANNING REPORT

CANBERRA LYRIC THEATRE

BLOCK 23 SECTION 19 CITY

16 SEPTEMBER 2025



**PURDON**



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# 1.0 Introduction & Purpose

This report has been prepared by Purdon on behalf of Multiplex in support of a Works Approval (WA) application to the National Capital Authority (NCA) for the proposed development of the Canberra Lyric Theatre (the project), located on part Block 23 Section 19 City (the site). It forms a critical component of the broader vision for the Canberra Theatre Precinct, delivering a new Theatre and associated enabling works to improve the precinct's cultural and civic role within the National Triangle.

Additional Minor Work Approval applications have been lodged with the NCA to support the progression of Canberra Lyric Theatre, including investigative works for geotechnical studies and an early works package comprising site preparation, temporary fencing, signage and traffic management measures. Together, these applications form part of a coordinated delivery strategy that balances the complex operational requirements of the precinct with its broader urban and cultural aspirations.

This submission responds to the statutory framework set out in the National Capital Plan (NCP), including detailed assessment against the City Hill Precinct Code and Central National Area outcomes. It demonstrates how the proposed development aligns with the objectives and planning principles of the NCP, ensuring the design contributes positively to the precinct's historic, cultural and civic character. The report should be read in conjunction with architectural plans and supporting documentation prepared by the project team and lodged as part of this application. It also reflects the outcomes of extensive consultation undertaken with key agencies and stakeholders, including Infrastructure Canberra (iCBR), City Renewal Authority (CRA), Transport Canberra and City Services (now TC under CED) and NCA.

These collaborative discussions have informed a refined and pragmatic design response that is consistent with the objectives and detailed conditions for planning, design and development set out in the NCP.

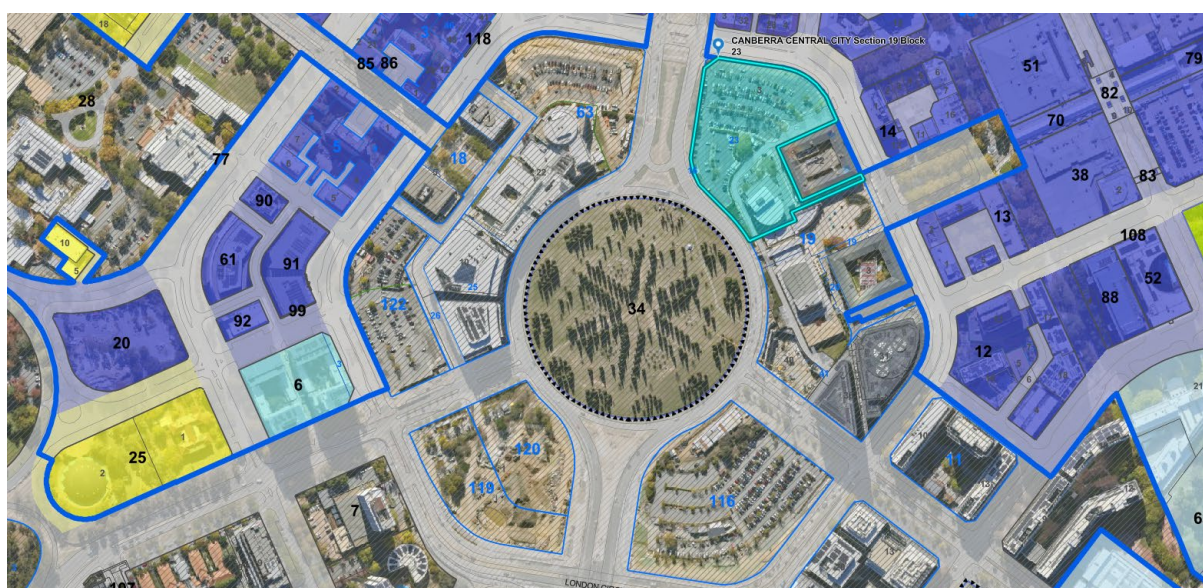


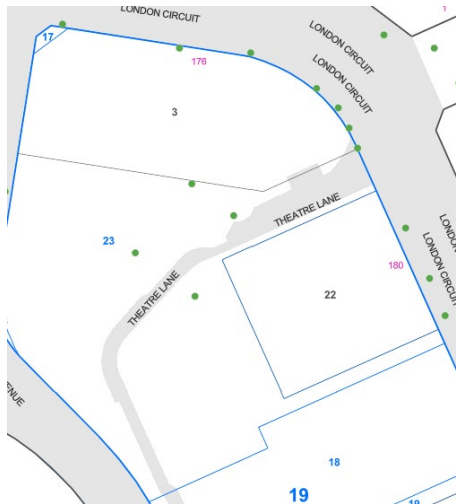
Figure 1: Site Context

Source: ACTMAPi 2025



## 2.0 The Site

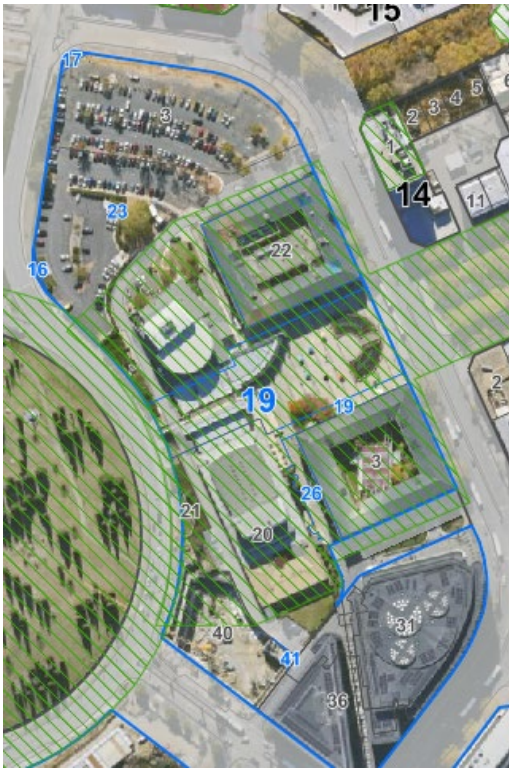
The site is part Block 23 Section 19 City. Other site characteristics include:

<b>Site Area</b>	Block 23 Section 19 has an area of 16,976m <sup>2</sup> , however the block is to be subdivided to allow for part Block 23 (Holding Lease Block 3 Section 100 City) to be put to market for a separate development. The remainder of the block will be to accommodate the new Canberra Lyric Theatre and related access, landscaping etc.
<b>Current Use</b>	Canberra Theatre, Library
<b>Land Custodian</b>	TC, PATOC
<b>National Capital Plan</b>	The site, including Theatre Lane, is subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan – City Hill Precinct Code
<b>Territory Plan Zoning</b>	The site is currently zoned as Designated Land.  The verge adjacent London Circuit is unleased Territory Land – zoned TSZ1: Transport
<b>Existing Access</b>	Vehicle access to the site currently is via London Circuit and Theatre Lane
<b>Existing Parking</b>	On-grade parking <sup>1</sup>
<b>Vegetation</b>	Minor vegetation surrounding the site. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Registered/regulated trees</b>	<p>ACTmapi, 2025, shows a few mature trees mainly in the car park area (green dots).</p>  <p>Figure 2: Mature Trees Source: ACTmapi 2025</p>
<b>Adjacent Uses</b>	Adjacent land uses include Playhouse, Canberra Theatre Centre, Library, Canberra Museum and Gallery.

<sup>1</sup> Parking alterations are subject to a separate works approval

<sup>2</sup> Existing vegetation on the site is subject to a separate works approval



<b>Topography &amp; Drainage</b>	The site is relatively flat. The site drains to the surrounding street network.
<b>Heritage</b>	<p>Part of the site is a Registered Heritage Place – Civic Square Precinct</p>  <p>Figure 3: Heritage Overlay ACTmap<i>i</i> 2025</p>
<b>Easements</b>	No registered easements are noted on site. (ACTMAP <i>i</i> , 2025)
<b>Site Servicing</b>	The site is currently serviced to the existing uses on the block.
<b>Contamination &amp; Hazardous materials</b>	<p>Analysis of the site and prior uses identifies that contamination is not expected, and an Unexpected Finds Protocol would be established with the works to address.</p> <p>No demolition of buildings or major excavation is proposed as part of this Works Application and as such no hazardous material is expected. Demolition, site preparation and bulk excavation are the subject of a separate works approval.</p>
<b>Associated Work Approvals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early works/Geotechnical WA</li> <li>• Enabling works WA</li> <li>• Temporary works WA</li> <li>• External Lighting and External Signage WA</li> </ul>



## 3.0 Proposed Development

### 3.1 Project History

The project has undergone significant design evolution since its inception, reflecting the complex cultural, operational, and financial imperatives associated with its Civic location. Earlier concept design iterations were developed with a broader scope and more extensive spatial and programmatic requirements. Following this, the project underwent multiple rounds of review and received detailed feedback from key stakeholders. Feedback from the NCA and the Design Review Working Group emphasised the importance of reinforcing the precinct's civic character and ensuring the proposal's scale and materiality were contextually appropriate. This process prompted a more considered and nuanced approach, resulting in a refined staging strategy that better aligned with delivery priorities along with existing surrounding site constraints. The intent was to enable a staged outcome that ensured a greater responsiveness to site context, supporting a more calibrated approach to build form outcomes across the City Hill Precinct.

### 3.2 Schedule of Proposed Works

This WA includes construction of Canberra Lyric Theatre, with the proposed list of works including:

- In ground Services (building specific - non-utilities)
- Lift & Stair Core Bases
- Substructure & Slab on Ground
- Loading Dock pavement, chamber substation and associated logistics areas in Theatre Lane
- Concrete & Steel Superstructure - incl. Auditorium
- Building Envelope
- Building Services
- Auditorium Specialist Services
- Internal Finishes, Fitments & Specialist Equipment
- External Landscaping - including verge area to Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle

**Notes:**

- Piling & Excavation including retention piles and wall to Vernon Circle are undertaken with Enabling Works Approval
- External Lighting Strategy and External Signage are subject of separate Works Approval





## 4.0 Design Statement

This section of the planning report describes the overall design intent including architectural design rationale and should be read in conjunction with architectural plans and Architecture and Urban Design Report lodged as part of this Works Approval submission.

### 4.1 Design Principles

The current design submission represents a deliberate pivot towards refinement and pragmatism. The proposed works centre on the delivery of a standalone new theatre, strategically planned to allow all venues, both new and existing, to remain fully operational upon completion. This approach enables a focused outcome that meets project delivery timelines, reduces risk, and upholds the civic and cultural aspirations of the site.

Key design principles that guided design of Canberra Lyric Theatre:

1. Designing with Country
  - Honours the First Nations cultural and spiritual connections through materiality, spatial experience, and storytelling.
  - Reflects local geology and topography in the building's form, textures, and layering.
  - Fosters multisensory engagement with land, water, sky, light, sound, and texture to evoke connection to place.
2. Civic Integration and Legibility
  - Ground-level interfaces along Knowles Place are activated to enhance pedestrian connectivity and precinct vitality.
  - Views and sightlines to significant natural landmarks including Black Mountain, Mount Ainslie, and the Brindabellas are framed to embed the theatre in the city's collective memory.
3. Architectural Expression and Massing
  - Verticality and layered façade layered with materiality treatment emphasised as a 'living curtain' filtering light and framing views.
  - Built form volumes stepped and oriented to respect axes of the National Capital Plan and align with adjacent cultural buildings.
4. Accessibility and Inclusivity
  - Universal accessibility ensured in public, performance and support/staff spaces, enabling equitable experiences.
  - Welcoming and flexible gathering spaces created to encourage community engagement beyond performances.



#### 5. Sustainable and Sensory Design

- Passive environmental strategies integrated including, daylighting, and thermal performance suited to Canberra's climate.
- Biodiversity uplifted through native planting and habitat support at the public realm interface.
- Reduction in life cycle carbon target through use of low-carbon and recyclable materials.

#### 6. Operational Efficiency and Urban Amenity

- Servicing and loading functions have been consolidated into a discreet shared dock to reduce vehicle impacts and enhance pedestrian safety.
- Theatre Lane to be closed to public traffic to improve safety and calm the precinct edge.
- Infrastructure designed to support future precinct linkage and urban growth consistent with the broader masterplan vision.

These principles collectively shaped the Canberra Lyric Theatre as a culturally resonant, environmentally responsible, and urbane outcome that enriched Canberra's Civic and Cultural District as a vibrant centre for arts, community, and place.

Refer to the Architecture and Urban Design Report for further information.

## 4.2 Designing with Country

The proposal for the Canberra Lyric Theatre embeds Designing with Country as a central design driver, ensuring the built form responds to the cultural, ecological and spiritual values of Country. The design is guided by principles developed through engagement with local First Nations communities, which emphasise storytelling, connection to landscape, and custodianship of place.

Three core themes shape the approach. *Topography of Performance* draws on the surrounding landmarks of Mount Ainslie, Black Mountain and the Brindabellas, integrating references of geological textures, ochres and natural forms into the building's materiality and spatial experience. *Immersed in Country* informs a sensory design language, using sound, light, texture, and planting to evoke stories of water, ecology, and seasonal change, encouraging visitors to feel, hear, and see Country. *Restoration and Reflection* provides quiet, contemplative spaces inspired by the Molonglo River, inviting moments of pause before and after performance. This has been reflected through design in light, texture and sound, echoing natural rhythm. Together, these principles ensure the Canberra Lyric Theatre is not simply a performance venue but also a place of cultural expression and education.

For detailed analysis, refer to the Consultation Report and Architecture and Urban Design Report.

## 4.3 Sustainability

The Canberra Lyric Theatre has adopted holistic sustainability which integrates environmental, cultural, and social dimensions, demonstrating integrated sustainable design. The approach reflects an intention to reduce operational and embodied carbon emissions in alignment with the ACT



Government's climate action targets and the National Capital Plan's objectives to promote environmentally sustainable outcomes.

Key environmental initiatives include:

- All-electric design powered by the ACT's 100% renewable electricity supply, with provision for rooftop solar PV and battery integration in the future.
- Near-zero operational carbon through efficient HVAC, LED lighting, advanced commissioning, and offsets for residual refrigerants and diesel/emergency power.
- Low-carbon materials and circular economy strategies, reduction in embodied carbon, responsible product procurement, and design-for-disassembly.
- High-quality indoor environments, including daylight access, enhanced ventilation, low-toxicity finishes, and acoustic performance.
- Water-sensitive design, with efficient fixtures, native/drought-tolerant planting, on-site detention systems, and WSUD measures.
- Climate resilience measures addressing extreme heat, bushfire smoke, stormwater management, and adaptive management over the theatre's lifecycle.
- Cultural and social sustainability, embedding inclusion, accessibility, storytelling, and community co-design.

These principles establish a regenerative, culturally grounded, and performance-oriented architectural vision that is responsive both to Country and to the needs of present and future community members.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report.

## 4.4 Traffic, Parking and Access

The parking strategy for the new Canberra Lyric Theatre has been developed to ensure convenient, accessible and safe access during both the construction and operational phases. The approach balances existing city centre capacity with targeted measures to address accessibility, information provision and integration with public and active transport.

### 1. Accessible Parking and Drop-off

Accessible parking and drop-off facilities are a central part of the strategy. Multiple accessible parking spaces will be retained in proximate locations, including City Hill and Hobart Place. Dedicated drop-off areas will be provided on Knowles Place near the Courtyard studio (DDA compliant) and on London Circuit, with future consideration of an accessible drop off on Vernon Circle and connection to the basement carpark in the Block 23 development. These arrangements prioritise equitable access for people with disability, mobility needs and older persons, supported by clear wayfinding and surface treatments.

### 2. Service Vehicles

Vehicle access for deliveries and services for Lyric Theatre will be managed primarily via Theatre Lane, which will be restricted to authorised vehicles only and closed to public traffic for safety. The Lyric Theatre loading dock, accessed from Constitution Avenue via Theatre Lane, is designed to accommodate large vehicles, including 19m trucks, with dedicated loading bays and passing areas to



prevent congestion. Similar arrangements apply to the Playhouse and Canberra Theatre loading docks.

### 3. Parking Supply

General parking supply within the Civic and Cultural District remains substantial, with more than 5,000 existing public spaces available within a comfortable walking distance of the site. Key facilities include the Canberra Centre, City Hill, Constitution Place and Nangari Street car parks. While the closure of the Theatre Lane surface car park from October 2025 for use as the main construction compound will result in the permanent loss of spaces at that location, there is sufficient surrounding capacity to accommodate displaced demand. In the longer term, replacement parking will be delivered as part of the redevelopment of Block 23, guided by the City Renewal Authority's District Master Plan.

### 4. Wayfinding and Information

Wayfinding and information will play an important role in supporting patrons during construction and into operation. A publicly available parking and pedestrian access map will be prepared and distributed through ACT Government communication channels, including the YourSay website, stakeholder updates and site signage. Digital tools and updates, such as social media and newsletters, will direct visitors to the most convenient parking locations. Consistent signage and colour-coded markers will also be installed across the precinct to improve clarity and legibility.

### 5. Traffic and Construction Coordination

During construction, temporary traffic and pedestrian detours will be required around Knowles Place to accommodate service relocations and utilities upgrades. Localised impacts such as vibration, dust and intermittent road closures will be managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. Advance notification will be provided to nearby businesses and theatre patrons to minimise disruption. Coordination with other major projects in the City Centre, including light rail Stage 2A, will ensure cumulative transport and parking impacts are considered and effectively managed.

### 6. Public and Active Transport Integration

The parking strategy also emphasises public and active transport integration. The site is located within walking distance of multiple bus routes and will benefit from improved accessibility once light rail Stage 2A reaches London Circuit. Taxi and rideshare bays will be clearly signposted to support efficient passenger pick-up and drop-off. Pedestrian and cycling connections through the Civic and Cultural District will be maintained, with safe detours provided where required. End-of-trip bicycle parking facilities will also be provided to encourage active travel.

### 7. Strategic Alignment

This parking strategy is consistent with the ACT Government's Parking Strategy (2018), which prioritises efficient use of existing supply, provision of accessible spaces and support for public and active transport. It also aligns with the National Capital Plan's objectives for integrated transport and civic accessibility, ensuring the proposed Canberra Lyric Theatre contributes positively to the broader Canberra Civic and Cultural District.

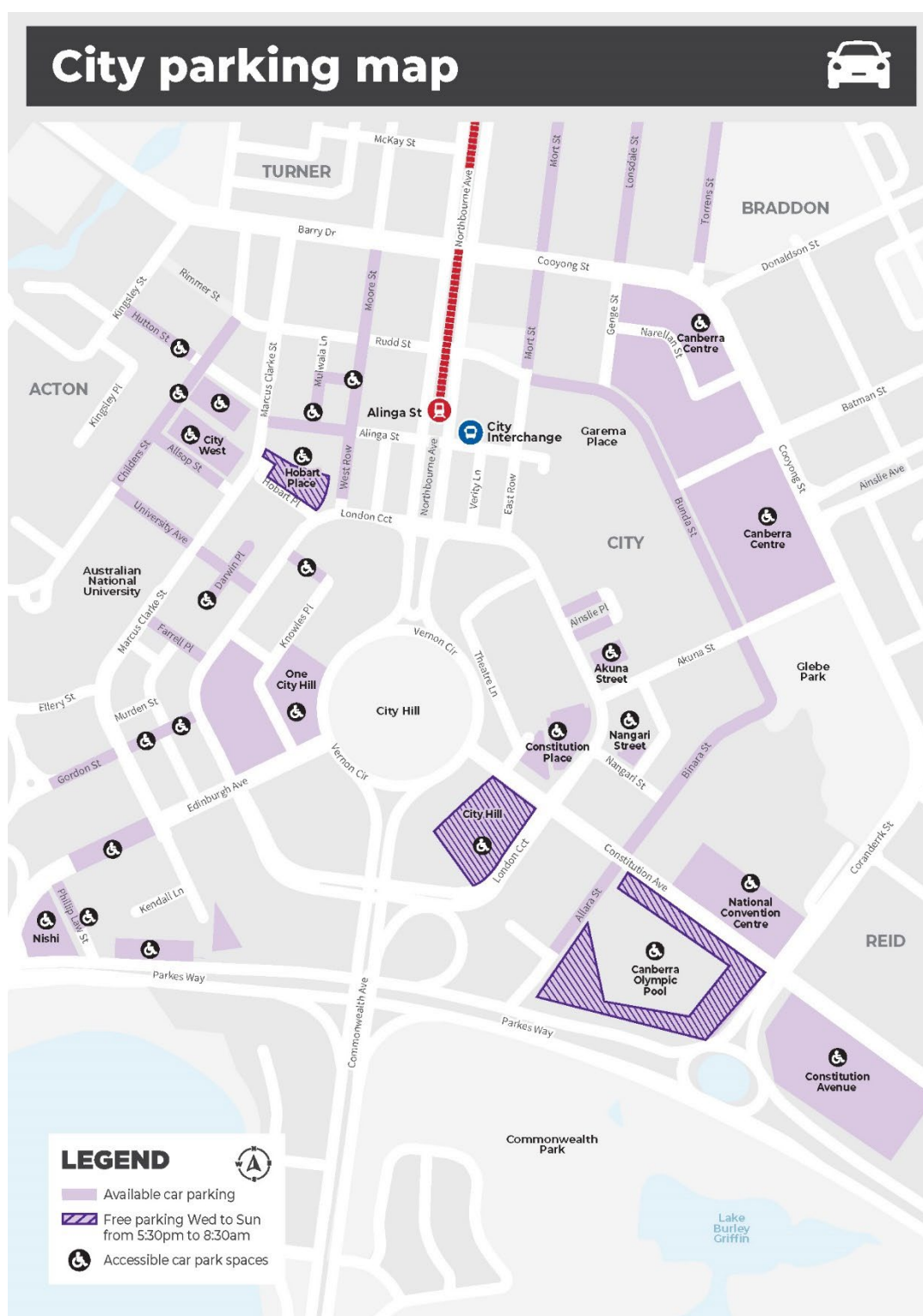


Figure 4 : City Parking Map

Source: Infrastructure Canberra

For detailed analysis, refer to the Traffic and Parking Report.





## 4.5 Water Sensitive Urban Design

The theatre's irregular water demand profile limits the feasibility of rainwater harvesting and greywater reuse. Potable water use will instead be reduced through high-efficiency fixtures, including taps, urinals, toilets and showers. Complementing these measures, the theatre's landscape design reinforces water conservation objectives. Planting will prioritise native and drought-tolerant species suited to Canberra's climate, thereby minimising irrigation demand while contributing to biodiversity and landscape resilience. Where irrigation is required, efficient systems will be adopted to further reduce water loss through evaporation and oversupply.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report.

## 4.6 Waste Management

The proposal adopts an integrated waste management strategy that balances operational efficiency with the protection of public realm amenity. Waste storage areas are positioned in the Theatre Lane Loading Dock area, with access from the southern end of Theatre Lane and Constitution Avenue and are screened through a continuation of façade and landscape treatment. This approach consolidates operational functions and efficiency while eliminating potential visual clutter from the streetscape. The facilities have been designed to accommodate collection of multiple waste streams, including general waste, recyclables, and organics, in accordance with environmental standards and ACT Government requirements. Vehicular access is provided via the Theatre Lane Loading Dock and accommodates the manoeuvring of waste trucks for collection and facilitates a forward in and forward out movements for the site.

Refer to Waste and Recycling Management Plan.

## 4.7 Heritage

The proposed Canberra Lyric Theatre is sensitively designed to respect and respond to the heritage significance of the Civic Square Precinct, which is listed on the ACT Heritage Register. Located to the north of the Playhouse Theatre and set well back from Civic Square and the City Hill to Mount Ainslie vista, the theatre avoids direct impacts on key heritage fabric and significant sightlines. Its architectural expression draws on the material palette, vertical fenestration patterns, along with complimenting tonality of the surrounding precinct buildings, ensuring a sympathetic yet contemporary addition.

The design also maintains important laneways such as Knowles Place for ongoing access and aligns with conservation policies to preserve the precinct's spatial qualities and openness. Measures are in place to protect heritage fabric during construction, including vibration monitoring and structural assessments. Overall, the Lyric Theatre supports the precinct's cultural vitality and social values while carefully managing its impact on heritage significance.

Refer to Heritage Statement.



## 5.0 City Renewal Authority

As noted on CRA's website *City Renewal is charged with shaping the growth of central Canberra, envisioning the City Centre as a captivating gathering place where creativity, work, life, and leisure come together.*

*City Renewal delivers design-led and people-focused urban renewal with a focus on social and environmental sustainability, working within the City Renewal Precinct across Dickson, Braddon, the City Centre, Northbourne Avenue, Haig Park, and Acton Waterfront.*

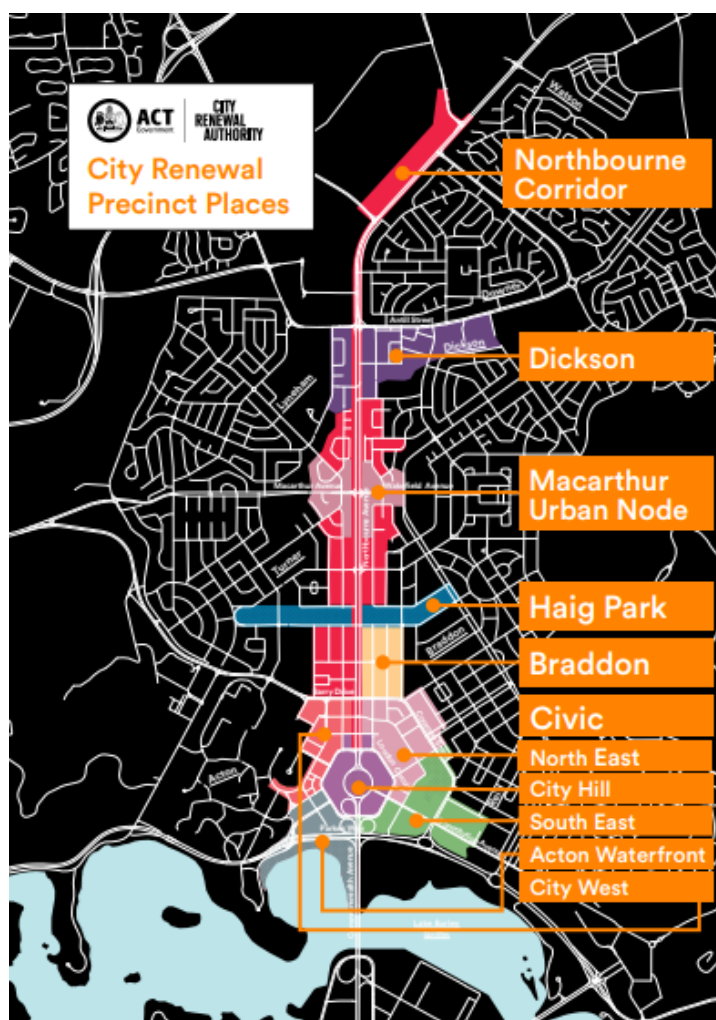


Figure 5: City Renewal Precinct Place

Source: CRA Website

The Canberra Lyric Theatre sits as part of the City Hill – City Renewal Precinct Place, as illustrated in the image above.



## 5.1 Design Principles

City Renewal collaborates with City and Environment Directorate (CED) to encourage high-quality design, sustainability, and community wellbeing outcomes.

As noted in CRA's key document, City Precinct Renewal Program, *Design excellence isn't just about making things that look great, although creating a sense of civic pride is important. It's about providing demonstrable social, economic and environmental benefits for our community as we undertake together the transformation of our growing city*

Using nine key design principles, City Renewal provides advice and endorsement to the CED, achieving desired outcomes from development activity.

These have been responded to in detail below.

### City Renewal Authority - Design Principles

#### 1. Context and neighbourhood character

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Namely, the relationships and interactions of natural and built forms with consideration of the social, economic, health and environmental conditions they create. Well-designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area, including adjacent sites, streetscapes and neighbourhood. Consideration of local context is important for all sites, including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change. Place planning is considered an appropriate form of demonstrating neighbourhood character and place intent. Proposals with clearly defined place propositions and place plans are required to be submitted in support of Principal 1.

#### Response:

The Canberra Lyric Theatre is embedded within the civic fabric of the city centre and holds a pivotal role in framing the relationship between the City Hill precinct and the surrounding cultural institutions. The proposal respects this context by aligning its massing and orientation to reinforce key view corridors to Black Mountain and City Hill, while simultaneously providing a civic-scaled cultural landmark.

The proposal responds sensitively to the adjacency of Civic Square, balancing its prominence with a deference to heritage-listed assets and neighbouring public spaces. The design approach amplifies the cultural and social vitality of the precinct, complementing the pedestrian experience along London Circuit, Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle. It reinforces a sense of place that reflects Canberra's unique identity as a planned capital city, while anticipating the area's evolution into a more active, people-focused cultural hub.

#### 2. Built form and scale

Good design achieves a scale, bulk and height appropriate to the existing or desired future character of the street and surrounding buildings, inclusive of considerations of building alignments, proportions, building type, articulation and the manipulation of building elements. The built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.



## City Renewal Authority - Design Principles

### Response:

The development proposal achieves a visually considered scale which addresses both the existing character of Civic and the anticipated future intensification of the precinct. The Lyric Theatre's volumetric composition and stacking respects the horizontality of institutional buildings such as ACT Legislative Assembly and Canberra Museum and Gallery, while its articulation introduces rhythm and depth to mitigate visual bulk. The built form progresses street definition along Theatre Lane, Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue, improving the legibility of public spaces and strengthening pedestrian connections. Vertical proportions, recesses, and material transitions create a dynamic façade treatment that responds to different viewing perspectives, especially along Northbourne Avenue merging into Vernon Circle, while maintaining coherence with the broader urban grain.

### 3. Density

Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents through density appropriate to the site and its context. Appropriate densities are consistent with the area's existing or projected population. Densities can be sustained by existing or proposed infrastructure, public transport, access to jobs, services, community facilities and the environment.

### Response:

The proposed development introduces a cultural density rather than a residential one, strengthening the site's activity profile and supporting the projected increase in audiences and visitors to the precinct.

The theatre's building scale and massing reflect functional requirements for a 2,000-seat venue while being carefully articulated to respond to surrounding heritage structures and public spaces, thereby supporting an amenable urban fabric without overwhelming the precinct. The design respects established open space, sightlines, and the overarching Griffin Legacy framework, contributing to a density that uplifts cultural vibrancy without compromising spatial quality or heritage values.

This density is further sustainable due to the precinct's robust infrastructure, including existing and planned public transport nodes such as the nearby Light Rail stop on Northbourne Avenue, comprehensive pedestrian connectivity, and access to a range of civic, cultural, and community services within walking distance.

This cultural density is in harmony with Civic's mixed-use character and is sustained by existing public transport infrastructure, proximity to employment centres, and integration with planned public realm upgrades that encourage active transport and civic participation.

### 4. Sustainability

Good sustainable design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Good sustainable design includes use of natural cross ventilation and passive solar design to reduce reliance on technology and operation costs. Other elements include recycling and reuse of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials, and deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.



## City Renewal Authority - Design Principles

### Response:

Canberra Lyric Theatre demonstrates a commitment to sustainable outcomes through its focus on an all-electric design and Green Star aspirations.

The project incorporates a comprehensive suite of environmental initiatives, including an all-electric design supported by the ACT's 100% renewable electricity supply with future provision for solar PV and battery storage. Operational carbon will be minimised through efficient HVAC, LED lighting, advanced commissioning, and offsets for residual emissions, while embodied carbon is addressed through low-carbon materials, circular economy strategies, and design-for-disassembly. High-quality indoor environments are prioritised through daylight access, enhanced ventilation, low-toxicity finishes, and strong acoustic performance. Water efficiency and resilience are embedded through efficient fixtures, drought-tolerant planting, and on-site detention systems. The design further integrates climate resilience strategies to respond to extreme heat, bushfire smoke, and stormwater challenges, ensuring long-term adaptability across the theatre's lifecycle.

Together, these sustainable design elements combine to reduce environmental impact, foster occupant wellbeing, and sustain cultural and natural connections, fulfilling the project's commitment to a socially inclusive and ecologically responsible cultural landmark.

### 5. Landscape

Good landscape design recognises that built and natural systems operate as an integrated system. Landscape design strongly influences the amenity and contextual fit of a development sited within the streetscape and surrounding neighbourhood. Good landscape design enhances the development's environmental performance by retaining positive natural features that contribute to the local context, co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy, habitat values, and preserving green networks. Good landscape design optimises usability, privacy and opportunities for social interaction, equitable access, respect for neighbours' amenity, provides for practical establishment and long-term management.

### Response:

The landscape design for Canberra Lyric Theatre recognises the critical interplay between built and natural systems within Civic's urban context.

It addresses thermal comfort, pedestrian movement, flexible event use, accessibility, and future site interfaces to deliver a diverse and adaptable public realm. Along the northern façade, temporarily named Limelight Lane, landscape elements manage level changes while supporting event activation through movable planters and furniture. Breakout spaces with seating and native buffers are proposed to the west, while the eastern façade is primarily hardstand to accommodate foyer and stage access. The design integrates consistent hardscape treatments, native vegetation buffers, and climbers to screen service areas, with street trees aligned to broader Civic works. A varied native species palette establishes distinct character zones, enhancing identity, biodiversity, and resilience across the site.

The design preserves green networks around City Hill, fostering visual and physical connections which promote a sense of continuity between the natural and civic landscapes.





## City Renewal Authority - Design Principles

### 6. Amenity

Good design positively influences internal and external amenity for residents and neighbours. Achieving good amenity contributes to positive living environments and resident well-being. Good amenity combines appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.

#### **Response:**

The development elevates amenity for both theatre patrons and the wider community by creating an inclusive, inviting environment. Internal spaces are configured to maximise access to daylight and views, and clear circulation paths that cater to users of all abilities. The building has two public entries, provided at grade for ease of access for all and clear and equitable access to the Stage Door for staff and performers.

Externally, forecourts and gathering spaces are designed to encourage activation beyond performance times, contributing to Civic's transformation into a lively cultural destination. Consideration of acoustic privacy and lighting strategies ensures the building integrates into the surrounding urban setting, minimising impacts on neighbouring uses while enhancing nighttime vibrancy.

### 7. Safety

Good design optimises safety and security, within the development and the public domain. It provides for quality public and private spaces that are clearly defined and fit for the intended purpose. Opportunities to maximise passive surveillance of public and communal areas promote safety. A positive relationship between public and private spaces is achieved through clearly defined secure access points and well-lit and visible areas that are easily maintained and appropriate to the location and purpose.

#### **Response**

Good design for safety and security is integral to the Canberra Lyric Theatre project and the surrounding public domain. The design clearly defines public and private spaces, ensuring they are fit for purpose and easy to navigate. Public areas are designed for passive surveillance, with large, glazed building edges and lighting which promote visibility and a sense of security during both day and night. Vehicle and service access are consolidated and located discretely along Theatre Lane, which is restricted to authorised vehicles only, minimising conflicts with pedestrians and improving safety.

Security measures are embedded through design strategies that promote natural surveillance and clear sightlines across public gathering areas and shared zones. Access points are securely controlled, balancing operational functionality for theatre staff and performers with open, welcoming experiences for visitors. Pedestrian safety is prioritised by separating pedestrian pathways from delivery and service vehicle movements, with all vehicles required to enter and exit site in a forward direction to reduce risk.



## City Renewal Authority - Design Principles

### 8. Housing diversity and social interaction

Good design achieves a mix of dwelling sizes, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets. Well-designed housing responds to social context by providing housing and facilities to suit the existing and future social mix. Good design involves practical and flexible features, including different types of communal spaces for a broad range of people, providing opportunities for social interaction among residents.

#### Response

While Canberra Lyric Theatre does not include residential components, it contributes to social diversity and inclusion through spaces that cater to a broad demographic. The Lyric Theatre is envisioned as a cultural anchor that facilitates community engagement, education, and participation across generations.

Informal gathering spaces, accessible terraces, and programmed public art installations encourage interaction between diverse user groups, fostering a sense of belonging and ownership. The design supports year-round activation, strengthening Civic's role as a socially inclusive precinct.

### 9. Aesthetics

Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structure. Good design uses a variety of materials, colours and textures. The visual appearance of well-designed housing responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.

#### Response

The architectural expression of Lyric Theatre is grounded in proportion, balance and a considered use of materials. The Lyric Theatre's façades adopt a muted palette of textures and tones that draw from Canberra's natural setting and Country, with surfaces referencing the hues of local stone and vegetation.

Nuanced articulation, screened elements, and well-framed openings contribute to a layered visual quality that shifts elegantly from day to night. The building strikes a balance between civic presence and restraint, establishing itself as a cultural landmark while respecting the scale and character of its surrounds.



## 5.2 Sustainability Strategy 2021- 25

The Authority has a legislated obligation to coordinate cohesive urban renewal that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. The CRA's current Strategic Plan acknowledges this and has adopted it into 4 key principles. This has been responded to below:

Sustainability Strategy 2021- 2025 – Strategic Approach		
Elements	Objectives	Outcomes
Resilience and Climate-Wise Design	Climate resilient, healthy and natural places for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Urban environment is fit for purpose and well adapted to climate change (heat waves, heavy rain events, drought).</li><li>A greener city with abundant living infrastructure: tree cover, native plants and wildlife and green spaces/roofs/community gardens that improve local microclimates and minimise the urban heat island effect.</li></ul>
	Climate positive developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reduced reliance on fossil fuels, all electric in-fill projects.</li><li>Developments targeting zero emissions and best practice performance ratings. Buildings have high thermal integrity (both summer and winter).</li><li>Buildings and welcoming open spaces encourage health and social connectedness and improve wellbeing.</li></ul>
	Prioritise health and comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Buildings and welcoming open spaces encourage health and social connectedness and improve wellbeing.</li></ul>



## Sustainability Strategy 2021- 2025 – Strategic Approach

### Response

Canberra Lyric Theatre responds to climate resilience through pragmatic and refined design strategies with consideration to climate events. The proposal incorporates passive environmental measures, high-performing building envelope performance, durable materiality, heat recovery and integrated water management. Landscaped zones with diverse selection of planting supports biodiversity, impacts mitigation of urban heat and improves local microclimates bettering comfort for pedestrians and performers alike.

The building's all-electric systems reduce reliance on fossil fuels and align with ACT's climate action targets. The decarbonisation strategy includes consideration of low-carbon materials, recycled content and optimised structural systems, aiming to provide a significant reduction in embodied carbon. The design aims for high thermal performance across the envelope ensuring energy efficiency in both summer and winter, supporting long-term operational sustainability.

Public spaces have been designed to encourage social interaction, cultural exchange and community wellbeing. Forecourts and landscaped terraces provide inclusive, accessible areas embedded with First Nations cultural narratives, contributing to Civic's identity as a cultural hub.

### Social and Economic Vibrancy

#### Diversity, density and affordability

- Access to a full range of dwelling sizes.
- Access to affordable housing options.
- Thriving commercial and social enterprises.

#### People-centred urban design and liveability

- Flexible mechanism for excellence and innovation.
- Developments designed for social interaction of residents.
- Inclusive, accessible facilities available to meet local needs, including access to fresh food.

#### Inclusive, accessible places for all

- Public space that celebrates a living thriving culture for Ngunnawal people and other Traditional Custodians.
- Places that are accessible for all. Age friendly, child friendly city achievements



## Sustainability Strategy 2021- 2025 – Strategic Approach

The proposal strengthens Civic's cultural and economic diversity by introducing a major performance venue that attracts a wide audience and supports a range of artistic and community uses.

The rationalised built form balances functional performance with affordability, delivering a significant civic asset within project constraints. The design prioritises people-centred urban outcomes through forecourts, terraces and improved pedestrian connections that encourage movement, gathering and engagement.

Shaded pathways, inclusive public spaces and accessible circulation uplift liveability while reinforcing the precinct's role as a cultural and civic heart. Universal design principles underpin all public and private interfaces, ensuring equitable access for patrons, staff and performers.

The design embeds First Nations feedback a reflection of Country creating spaces that are supportive of community wellbeing. Together, these interventions reflect a commitment to an inclusive, social and accessible precinct that serves diverse community needs.

Sustainable Use of Resources	Highly efficient use of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Energy and water efficiency maximised</li><li>• Passive solar design principles employed including solar gain for space and water heating, shading for summer cooling.</li></ul>
	Capture and beneficial re-use of finite resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Garden city' character is enhanced, supported by best practice water sensitive urban design.</li><li>• Circular economy, share and repair culture, waste minimisation and reuse supported and diversion of organics from landfill.</li></ul>
	Adaptive re-use of structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Existing buildings, structures and landscapes are adapted and reused where appropriate to help create a sense of place and reduce emissions embodied in construction.</li></ul>





## Sustainability Strategy 2021- 2025 – Strategic Approach

### Response

The proposed design demonstrates a comprehensive approach to sustainability by integrating energy and water efficiency measures alongside passive solar design principles. The building orientation, shading devices and façade treatments optimise solar gain for heating in cooler months while mitigating summer heat through effective shading and ventilation strategies.

Water efficiency measures include use of , high-efficiency fixtures including taps, urinals, toilets and showers. Complementing these measures, the theatre’s landscape design reinforces water conservation objectives. Planting will prioritise native and drought-tolerant species suited to Canberra’s climate, thereby minimising irrigation demand while contributing to biodiversity and landscape resilience. Where irrigation is required, efficient systems will be adopted to further reduce water loss through evaporation and oversupply.

Studies to reduce embodied emissions have been undertaken, reinforcing a sense of place through continuity with the site’s built history. These strategies reflect a commitment to environmentally responsive design that aligns with the National Capital Plan’s objectives for sustainable urban development.

### Enhanced Active Living and Travel

Active travel including public transport

- Improved quality, design and connectivity of public and private realm to encourage walking, cycling and public transport.

Innovative solutions to car parking

- Increased use and enjoyment of walking, cycling and public transport. Reduced share of short-distance trips by car.
- The community is supported to adopt healthy active living habits for all ages. Increased numbers of walkers and length of trip.
- Car parking delinked from apartment sales.
- Sustainable vehicles prioritised: car share and electric vehicles (EV) and planning for autonomous vehicles.



## Sustainability Strategy 2021- 2025 – Strategic Approach

### Response

The Canberra Lyric Theatre design prioritises improved quality, design, and connectivity of both public and private realms to encourage active transport modes such as walking, cycling, and public transport. The site is well-served by extensive pedestrian infrastructure, including footpaths, plazas, and shared zones such as Knowles Place, alongside integration with the Canberra cycling network featuring dedicated lanes and end-of-trip facilities. This promotes higher use and enjoyment of sustainable transport options while reducing short-distance car trips within the city.

Multiple accessible parking spaces are retained in proximate locations, including City Hill and Hobart Place. Dedicated drop-off areas will be provided adjacent to the main entry on Knowles Place, supplemented by secondary points at Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue.

Public transport accessibility is robust, with the Lyric Theatre located within close walking distance to major transport nodes including Alinga Street and City South Light Rail Stations, the City Interchange bus station, and London Circuit bus stop. These connections, combined with general parking supply within the Civic and Cultural District which has more than 5,000 existing public spaces available within a comfortable walking distance of the site, support a modal shift away from private vehicle use, encouraging healthy, active living habits for all ages and increasing the prevalence and length of walking and cycling trips in the precinct.



## 6.0 ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019- 2025

In ACT Government's climate change response to 2025, actions by the Government will be outlined to meet its legislated emission reduction target of 50– 60% (below 1990 levels) by 2025 and establish a pathway for achieving net zero emissions by 2045.

Priorities include:

- Efficient climate-wise buildings help insulate against heat stress (adaptation) and provide improved thermal comfort while also allowing people to use less gas for heating and cooling, reducing emissions (mitigation).
- Cycling or walking instead of driving reduces emissions (mitigation) and can also result in improved health and reduced strain on the health care system (adaptation).
- Planting large shade trees cools the city, helping to protect people from heat stress and creating a more liveable urban environment (adaptation) while also sequestering carbon and potentially reducing summer air-conditioning cooling requirements in buildings (mitigation).
- Increased vegetation cover (trees, shrubs, grass and pasture) increases carbon sequestration (mitigation) while improving soil productivity and ecosystem resilience and reducing excessive heat (adaptation)
- Achieving net zero emissions through reductions in gas in the residential sector
- Separation of household waste
- Increasing local carbon storage through planting

### Response:

Canberra Lyric Theatre incorporates a range of design strategies which align with both climate change and mitigation objectives.

The proposed development has been designed to improve thermal performance and reduce reliance on mechanical heating and cooling systems through a high-performance envelope with glazing, insulation, external shading and a focus on airtightness, supported by efficient HVAC, enhanced ventilation, daylight to public and staff spaces, and by prioritising passive design. These measures lower energy demand and improve occupant comfort. The building is fully electric and supplied by the ACT's 100 percent renewable electricity supply, which removes gas use and reduces operational emissions

Improved pedestrian connectivity within the precinct encourages walking and cycling as viable alternatives to private vehicle use, reinforcing health and environmental benefits. The site is also centrally located near bus routes and the light rail corridor further improving sustainable mobility.

The landscape strategy emphasises increased vegetation cover through the planting of large shade trees and native species, which cools the urban environment, mitigates heat stress, and contributes



to carbon sequestration. This approach also reduces the demand for summer air-conditioning by providing natural shading to adjacent façades.

In parallel, embodied carbon has been addressed through a considered approach to material selection and construction methodologies. The development aims to achieve reduction in embodied carbon, through a combination of low-carbon strategies and iterative material testing. Low-carbon concrete mixes incorporating supplementary cementitious materials will be pursued, while steel, aluminium and glass will be sourced with high recycled content and renewable energy inputs. Beyond construction, the design emphasises durability, adaptability and design-for-disassembly, with a Life Cycle Assessment planned to measure and guide further reductions across the theatre's lifespan.

Waste management facilities have been configured to promote separation of waste streams, supporting responsible resource recovery and minimisation of landfill contributions.

Together, these measures demonstrate a commitment to creating a climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable precinct while contributing to Canberra's broader emissions reduction targets and urban liveability aspirations.



## 7.0 City Centre Urban Design Guide

As noted in the City Centre Urban Design Guide, *The ACT Government has developed a new planning system to promote better outcomes for the ACT and support the well-being of those who live and work here.*

*The City Centre scale focusses on bringing together the key precincts that make up the City Centre collectively as a whole. City Centre strategies relate to the seven key themes above and focus on built form and public space outcomes, with a key focus on the interface between these elements, to encourage a holistic approach to development for the City Centre.*

*The City Hill precinct vision will be Canberra's iconic cultural and civic core and the apex of the National Triangle. The precinct's future release and development potential make it one of the most significant renewal sites in the City Centre.*

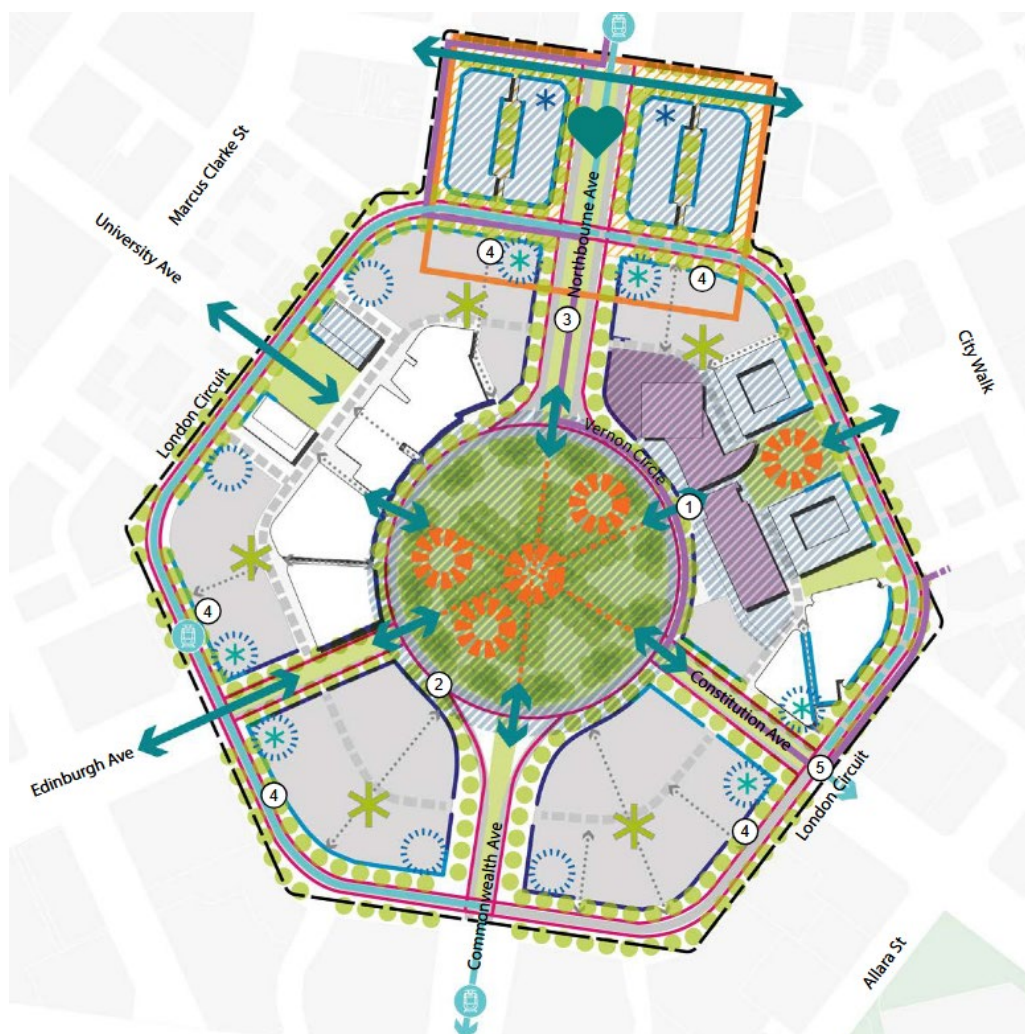


Figure 6: City Hill Vision

Source: City Centre Urban Design Guide





Although the subject site is zoned as Designated Land, the vision articulated by the ACT Government for City Hill is consistent with the intent of the Canberra Lyric Theatre. The proposal reinforces City Hill's role as a cultural and civic destination within the broader city centre, supporting the government's objectives for place-making, activation, and integration of significant public institutions.

## 7.1 Priority Directions

- i. Reinforce the precinct's role as the civic and cultural heart of the City Centre.
- ii. Provide clear and legible pedestrian links to facilitate greater pedestrian connectivity within and between City Hill park and the wider precinct.
- iii. Enhance and activate City Hill park to realise it's potential as the heart of the City Centre, reinforcing its cultural prominence as a point in the National Triangle.
- iv. Encourage a fine-grain density around City Hill precinct with activity focussed on the cultural economy.
- v. Use the legacy of the Griffin Plan to guide the planning and design approach to the City Hill precinct while accepting contemporary realities.

### Response:

The Canberra Lyric Theatre strengthens Civic's identity as the cultural and civic heart of the city with the introduction of a major cultural venue that enhances the precinct's role as a centre for artistic expression and community gathering. The Lyric Theatre reinforces the precinct's cultural economy by bringing year-round activity and drawing diverse audiences into Civic, supporting its transformation into a vibrant destination. The design also acknowledges the significance of City Hill Park, with public realm improvements and activated edges encouraging stronger pedestrian flows to and from this central green space.

Pedestrian connectivity is a key focus, with the proposal improving access through well-landscaped forecourts and linkages that stitch into the existing network of streets and public spaces. This aligns with aspirations to create clear, legible connections between City Hill Park, Civic Square, and surrounding institutions, reinforcing the precinct's permeability and accessibility. The development also engages with the Griffin Plan's legacy by respecting important view corridors and civic axes while responding to contemporary urban realities. The building's massing and orientation maintain sightlines towards City Hill and surrounding landmarks, ensuring the precinct retains its symbolic and functional significance within the National Triangle.

Visually interesting frontages, informal gathering areas and a publicly permeable ground plane invite movement and engagement, reflecting the precinct's emerging human-scale character. These elements support a diverse cultural economy and contribute to Civic's evolution as a lively, people-focused quarter that balances its civic heritage with contemporary needs.



## 7.2 Objectives

- i. The design objectives for City Hill precinct will achieve the following:
- ii. Be the place for celebration, attracting a diverse range of people and activities
- iii. Establish London Circuit as a premier address for business, with a pedestrian and public transport focus
- iv. Have a mix of uses integrated with varied cultural, entertainment and civic uses to reinforce the area's economic and civic specialisations while encouraging variety and activity around City Hill precinct
- v. Enhance its historic and geographic importance through high-quality buildings and public spaces
- vi. Reinforce gateway sites on Northbourne and Commonwealth avenues through landmark buildings that enhance historic views
- vii. Build upon the emerging fine grain and human-scale character in targeted sections of the precinct to establish a unique character and drive the economy.

### Response:

The Canberra Lyric Theatre will actively support the City Hill precinct objectives by serving as a dynamic cultural destination that attracts diverse audiences and activities, fostering a vibrant and inclusive environment for celebration and engagement. Positioned as a key component within the Civic and Cultural District, the theatre's design encourages regular public gatherings, enhancing the precinct's role as Canberra's cultural heart.

Aligning with the vision of London Circuit as a premier, pedestrian and public transport focused business address, the Canberra Lyric Theatre improves connectivity through integration with the surrounding transport infrastructure, including nearby light rail stops and pedestrian pathways. The development contributes to a balanced mix of cultural, entertainment, civic, and commercial uses, ensuring ongoing activation and supporting economic growth within the precinct.

Furthermore, the theatre respects and celebrates the precinct's historical and geographic significance by employing high-quality architecture that complements important sightlines, such as those to Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie, and by incorporating design elements that resonate with the precinct's heritage. The building's articulated massing and human-scale features reinforce the emerging fine grain character of the area, contributing to a distinctive sense of place that supports local business and community vibrancy.



## 8.0 Statutory Planning Context

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.

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 Authority to reflect its interests and carry out its intentions.

The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that the Commonwealth's national capital interests in the Territory are protected, without otherwise involving the Commonwealth in matters that should be the prerogative of the Canberra community.

### 8.1 National Capital Plan

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* establishes the requirements for the National Capital Plan and its administration. The plan specifies areas of land that have the special characteristics of the National Capital to be Designated Areas

The subject site is located within Designated Areas of the National Capital Plan and is subject to the Central National Area and City Hill Precinct Code. The Designated Areas around the site also include Civic Square, City Hill, Magistrate Court and Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory.

#### **The proposed works are identified in the NCP as Cultural Facility**

The definition for the above-mentioned use is set out in Land Use Definitions under the National Capital Plan as listed below:

Table 1: Land Use Definition (NCP, February 2025)

Land use	Definition
<b>Cultural Facility</b>	<i>A building or place used or intended for use for the purpose of cultural activities and may include a library, museum, theatre, concert hall, art gallery other than a gallery operated for the principal purpose of selling or trading in art works.</i>
<b><i>The proposed use is consistent with the definition listed above under the NCP. It is recommended that the proposal be assessed against the above listed uses.</i></b>	



### 8.1.1 The Central National Area

The block is wholly located within the Central National Area (City Hill precinct) of the NCP (refer to number 4 on the map of the Central National Area below).

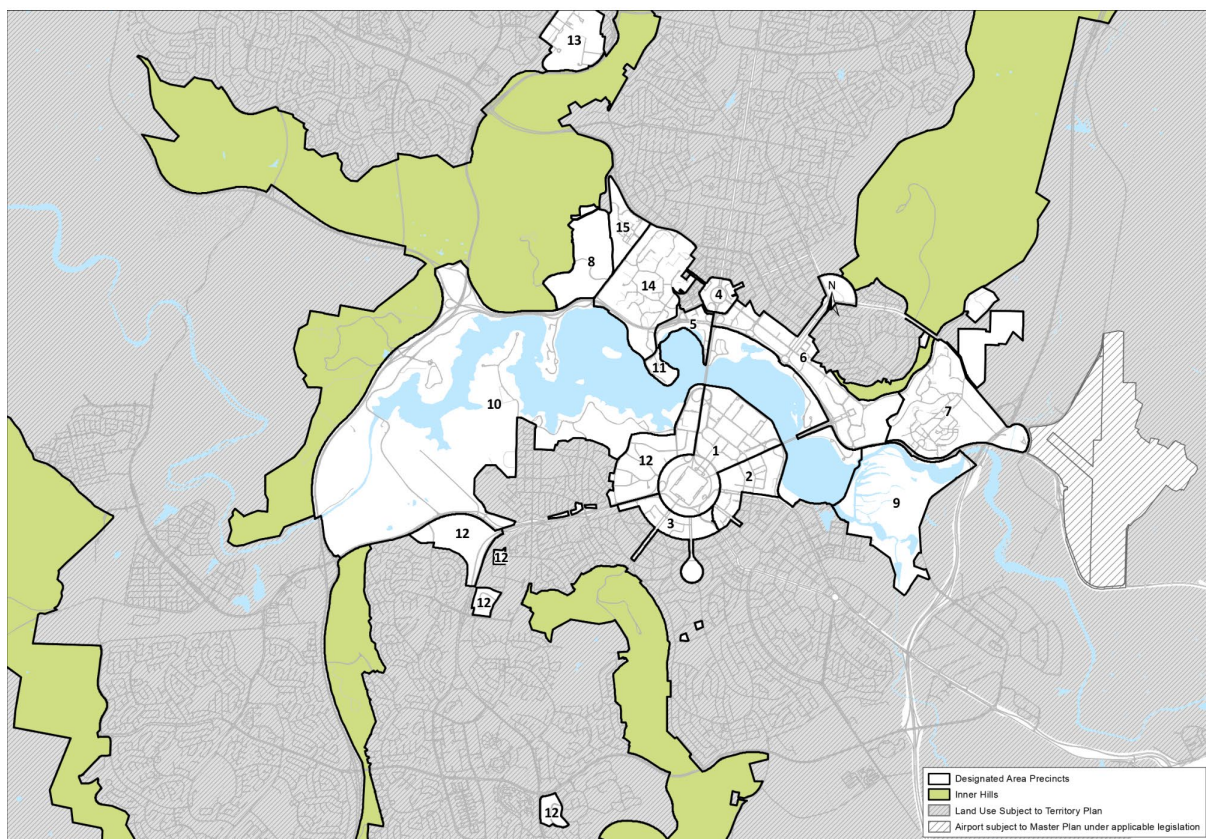


Figure 7: Central National Area (NCP, February 2025)

Source: Consolidated National Capital Plan February 2025

**Table 1: General policies for the Central National Area**

#### NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

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



## NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

### Response:

- a) The design of the Canberra Lyric Theatre actively recognises and honours the 1918 Griffin Plan as a work of national and international cultural significance. Key principles from the plan, including recognition of the geometric layout and integration of natural landscape features, are embedded in the project. The building harmonises with the Griffin legacy through considered massing, articulation and continuous sightlines to the broader landscape which conserves and express these elements sustainably, while enabling the theatre to contribute to the evolving modern city.
- b) The theatre's architectural language and site planning reflect the ongoing expression of Canberra's identity as shaped by the 1918 plan. Employing strong axial connections and framing important sightlines such as those towards Mount Ainslie and Black Mountain, it aligns with the visual and cultural frameworks established by Griffin. The design respects that Canberra's development is continually evolving, with the theatre representing a contemporary interpretation that complements and builds upon the supply of civic and cultural spaces.
- c) Canberra Lyric Theatre is situated in the City Hill Precinct, which is a different area from where the Australian War Memorial and Parliament House are located. While it does not reinterpret aforementioned landmarks, it contributes a contemporary cultural landmark that strengthens the overall framework and vitality of the City Hill precinct in a sustainable and respectful manner.

### 2. Building on the Griffins' vision by:

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





## NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

transport reservations; provision for walking and cycling; and protection of the Central National Area

- j. maintaining a mix of tree species which enriches the landscape by providing beauty, shade, shelter and wildlife habitats and enhances the built environment.

### Response:

a) The Canberra Lyric Theatre upholds the 1918 Griffin Plan as the city's organising framework by aligning its massing and orientation with key precinct axes and open spaces in City Hill. The building's stepped massing respects the scale hierarchy envisaged by Griffin while enabling contemporary urban expression.

b) The design embodies Canberra's evolving sense of place by embedding First Nations cultural narratives and connections to Country, drawing on local geology and experiential landscapes. Internal spatial sequences create a journey reflecting the city's topographical and cultural layers, reinforcing the unique identity birthed from Griffin's vision.

c) Garden City and City Beautiful values guide the integration of native plantings, generous setbacks, and publicly permeable surfaces. The theatre's public realm improvements around Knowles Place improves environmental quality and promotes community wellbeing in line with these ideals.

d) The auditorium and public spaces showcase the principles of clarity, geometry, and natural integration from the 1918 Plan. The formal language of vertical fins and layered facades mediates light and air, reinforcing cultural vitality and design integrity recognised internationally.

e) Visual and spatial geometries are reinforced through alignment with key axis, framing views to Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie. The theatre's siting respects existing sightlines and open spaces, contributing to the legibility and coherence of these foundational axes.

f) While the theatre site is outside the primary commemorative zones, it strengthens the precinct's cultural framework by creating prominent civic spaces and landmarks that complement Canberra's symbolic geography and support national-level cultural expression.

g) The fine-grained pattern of streets and blocks around Knowles Place and neighbouring laneways is maintained, facilitating rich pedestrian connectivity and human-scaled urban activity consistent with the original street grid aspirations.

h) Planting strategies prioritise the restoration and improvement of existing landscape framework with large-canopy shade trees along public corridors and layered native vegetation, reflecting the city's natural setting and contributing to urban cooling and habitat networks.

i) Sustainable movement principles are embedded via prioritising pedestrian, cycling, and transit links, with prioritised vehicle access and structured servicing. The design respects the original environmental balance by maintaining ecosystem corridors and integrating green infrastructure addressing water and energy efficiency.

j) Diverse native and climate-adapted species are employed throughout the landscape, fostering biodiversity and ecological resilience while improving amenity through shade, shelter, and visual richness at the microclimate scale.





## NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

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

### Response:

- a) Canberra Lyric Theatre respects and reinforces the 1918 Griffin Plan's primary organising framework by aligning its massing and orientation with Knowles Place, Northbourne Avenue and City Hill, integrating landscape elements that honour the natural setting.
- b) The design contributes to Canberra's unique sense of place by embedding First Nations narratives and culturally responsive design, expressing the evolving identity rooted in the Griffin principles and Canberra's ecological context.
- c) The project supports compact and sustainable growth by increasing cultural infrastructure within the heart of Canberra, enhancing mixed-use integration and promoting public transport access, thereby fostering a healthy, accessible community.
- d) Canberra Lyric Theatre contributes to the urban scale and diversity of the central city through its articulated massing and programmatic mix, complementing the fine grain of Civic.
- e) Change management is embedded in strategies such as consolidating loading and service access to minimise traffic impact, preserving key heritage elements, and enhancing the existing Garden City qualities through sensitive landscape design and public realm improvements.
- f) The project leverages public investment in cultural infrastructure to attract complementary private investment, catalysing activation of the public realm and supporting Canberra's national significance as a cultural destination.



#### NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

g) The theatre's design encourages greater activity and connectivity through pedestrian links, including connections to transport nodes and neighbouring precincts, activating laneways such as Knowles Place and integrating public spaces that foster vibrant community interaction.

#### 4. Link the city to the Central National Area by:

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

#### Response:

a) Canberra Lyric Theatre supports ease of movement improving pedestrian connectivity through activated laneways such as Knowles Place and creating accessible, high-quality public spaces linking City Hill with adjacent precincts. The consolidation of service and delivery access minimises vehicular intrusion, facilitating pedestrian flow between City, City Hill, and the National Area.

b) Canberra Lyric Theatre aims to function as a dynamic cultural hub hosting local, national, and international performances, thereby fostering rich exchange between community activities and national events. The programming and design invite diverse audiences, supporting cultural dialogue and understanding across scales.

c) The theatre leverages extensive connections to public transport, including proximity to multiple light rail and bus stops, promoting sustainable travel between the City Centre, National Area, and surrounding universities. This networked approach improves economic and cultural linkages across precincts.

d) Physical connections are reinforced through planned pedestrian routes and eventual covered walkways linking the Lyric Theatre with nearby institutions such as the Australian National University and the National Area. These connections enable dynamic urban interactions and cultural exchange consistent with broader city movement strategies.

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

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

**Response:** Due to the location of the site, this is not applicable.



## NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

### 6. Reinforce the Main Avenues by:

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

### Response:

a) The design complements the vision for Main Avenues, particularly Northbourne Avenue, by contributing to a mixed-use urban fabric with active frontages, pedestrian amenity, and planting replacing existing on grade car park and providing a landmark cultural building at the edge of Northbourne Avenue, reinforcing its hierarchy as a Main Avenue.

b) Vehicle access is restricted to essential service routes like Theatre Lane, reducing through traffic near the Theatre.

c) The project is integrated with adjacent high-frequency light rail stops and bus services, promoting public transport use. Improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, including footpaths and secure bicycle facilities, aligns with strategy for flexible, efficient, and sustainable movement systems that reduce car dependency.

d) The significant increase in cultural infrastructure density supports broader land use diversification within City Hill and the Central Area, strengthening the market for transit services and sustaining urban vitality aligned with transit-oriented development principles.

e) High-quality architectural articulation and landscape treatments along the Canberra Lyric Theatre's frontages and adjacent public spaces improve the character and urban design quality of adjoining Northbourne Avenue. Through sensitive massing, material palette, and integrated street furniture, the Theatre enhances the approach experience to the Central Area.

f) The design of pedestrian routes and servicing ensures ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, and vehicles. Clear separation of modes and accessible entries optimise comfort and circulation, reflecting the policy to cater to diverse transport modes effectively.

g) Canberra Lyric Theatre's architecture delivers human-scale elements at pedestrian level, with glazed facades, layered shading devices and environmentally responsive features fostering a



### NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

welcoming, compact, and connective urban environment. Landscape design provides canopy tree cover, further softening urban spaces and uplifting the street environment.

h) Canberra Lyric Theatre's traffic circulation strategy minimises barriers by separating pedestrian pathways from vehicular and service vehicle access. Loading and waste collection are consolidated and managed via Theatre Lane and Knowles Place, designed for efficient manoeuvring of medium rigid vehicles without impacting shared pedestrian zones. This reduces vehicle movement across main pedestrian routes, improving safety and accessibility.

#### 7. Link national attractions by:

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



## NCP Central National Area – General policies for the Central National Area

### **Response:**

The development strengthens the Central National Area's role as a cultural and civic destination by enhancing the theatre precinct's capacity to host nationally significant performances and public gatherings. It contributes to Canberra's tourism and cultural offering by consolidating activity within the city centre and supporting the visitor experience through improved public realm legibility and connections to adjacent civic spaces.

While the proposal does not directly deliver eco-tourism or lake-based recreational initiatives, its landscape design incorporates native and exotic species that reinforce ecological values and the identity of a Capital City set amongst natural setting. The refined façade treatment and streetscape along Vernon Circle contribute to a sense of arrival and maintain important vistas within the National Triangle, supporting the symbolic and functional role of the precinct in the National Capital.



Table 2 below provides an assessment of the project against the detailed conditions of planning, design and development in the Central National Area.

**Table 2: Detailed conditions of planning, design and development**

NCP Central National Area – Detailed conditions of planning, design and development	
1. In the Parliamentary Zone (the area bounded by the southern edge of the Lake, 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 that complement and enhance the function and character of the area.	
b. Development must be guided by the principles, policies and Indicative Development Plan for the Parliamentary Zone set out in the Parliamentary Zone Precinct Code.	
<b>Response:</b> Not applicable as the subject site is not located in the Parliamentary Zone.	
2. Other parts of the Designated Areas will be used in accordance with relevant Precinct Codes.	
<b>Response:</b> The development addresses the City Hill Precinct Code (refer section 8.2.2 ).	
3. Land uses will relate primarily to national functions. This should not, however, preclude the establishment of appropriate ACT Government functions, suitably located.	
<b>Response:</b> The development aligns with the intent for land uses, providing a cultural facility of regional significance.	
4. Consideration of commercial uses in those parts of the Designated Area that lie in the City will have regard to the planning effects on City as well as on the Central National Area.	
<b>Response:</b> Canberra Lyric Theatre is a Cultural Facility as per National Capital Plan – Land Use Definition. Therefore, this assessment is not applicable.	
5. 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.	
<b>Response:</b> The development delivers a cultural and entertainment use that complements the function and character of the Designated Area, setting its role as a civic and cultural precinct within the Central National Area.	
6. 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.	





## NCP Central National Area – Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

### **Response:**

The proposed design considers traffic capacity and arrangements to ensure safe and dignified access for all users. Refer to section 4.4 of this report alongwith the Traffic and Parking Report for details.

7. 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.

### **Response:**

The transport system within and around the Canberra Lyric Theatre is planned to carefully manage traffic volumes and parking consistent with the significance of the cultural precinct and its role in the city. Vehicle access is minimised on main thoroughfares, with loading and servicing consolidated via dedicated access points off Theatre Lane and restricted to authorised vehicles. This approach limits local traffic congestion and preserves the pedestrian-friendly environment of City Hill and the surrounding Central National Area.

The integration with high-frequency public transport, including nearby light rail and bus services, incentivises event attendees and staff to use sustainable modes of travel. Extensive pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure supports active transport, encouraging modal shift away from private cars. Parking provision is intentionally limited on site, with reliance on existing and planned nearby public car parks, managing overall vehicle demand in accordance with precinct capacity.

Traffic circulation plans for service vehicles include controlled vehicle entry to prevent overspill onto city streets, ensuring efficient movement and safety.

Overall, the transport infrastructure and operational strategies embedded in the theatre project foster a low-impact, well-connected, and sustainable transport network that minimises adverse effects from vehicular traffic in this nationally significant area.

Refer to Traffic and Parking Report.

8. 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 the Griffins' plans.

### **Response:**

The urban design achieves an integrated outcome of high quality through controlled building height and bulk, consistent frontage alignments, and façade articulation. Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report submitted as part of this submission for further details.

9. New development should seek to respect the design and character of adjacent buildings in terms of scale, colour, materials, massing and frontage alignment.



## NCP Central National Area – Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

### Response:

The Canberra Lyric Theatre's design respects and responds to the character and context of adjacent buildings, drawing on detailed architectural strategies reflected in the design documentation. The building's massing is articulated through stepped volumes and podium forms that align with neighbouring structures, particularly the Playhouse Theatre and the existing Canberra Theatre, promoting continuity along key street frontages such as Vernon Circle and Knowles Place.

Material selection and façade treatments have been chosen to harmonise with the precinct's established palette. The use of textured aluminium panels with earthy tones and off-white shades resonates with the sandstone, concrete, and masonry finishes of surrounding heritage buildings, while contemporary elements such as vertical fins evoke the rhythm and proportionality of surrounding building façades while maintaining a distinct and contemporary architectural expression. This approach balances heritage sensitivity with contemporary expression.

The alignment and scale transitions ensure that the development integrates into the urban grain, maintaining the human scale at street level through active frontages and glazing, particularly along pedestrian routes and plaza areas. These design moves reinforce the fine grain character of the precinct, providing visually engaging public realm edges and preserving important sightlines.

10. Individual development proposals will be assessed on their merits in respect to sunlight penetration, amenity, pedestrian and vehicle access. No buildings taller than RL617 will be permitted in the Designated Area, but the general building height will be 3 4 storeys except where the National Capital Authority determines otherwise.

### Response:

The proposed Canberra Lyric Theatre aligns with the National Capital Plan requirements concerning general building heights, sunlight penetration, amenity, and access, as demonstrated in the architectural drawings and Architecture and Urban Design Report.

The maximum building height of the Lyric Theatre is controlled, with the highest point being a small portion of the development, which is the fly tower reaching RL 599.350. This sits within the precinct's allowable limit of RL 617.

The buildings massing remains predominantly at 3 to 4 storeys, consistent with the broader City Hill precinct scale, promoting harmonious integration with adjacent buildings such as the existing Playhouse Theatre and Canberra Theatre.

Architectural section drawings illustrate modulation of building volumes with step-backs and articulated forms that optimise sunlight amenity into adjoining public spaces, including Knowles Place, Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle. This design approach mitigates overshadowing effects on pedestrian areas, ensuring daylight access and amenity for outdoor gatherings and circulation routes.

Furthermore, elevations illustrate consideration for visual permeability and human scale at street level, with glazed façade treatments and vertical articulation creating a welcoming, comfortable environment that supports active frontage and communal use.

Refer to architectural drawings.

11. Buildings in the area must show an appropriate quality of architectural design consistent with their location in this area of special national importance.



## NCP Central National Area – Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

**Response:** The proposed architectural design exhibits a high level of refinement and quality, reflecting the site's prominence within the Central National Area. The design outcome has been informed by comprehensive analysis, stakeholder engagement and detailed studies, with supporting drawings and reports provided in the accompanying submission.

Refer to the Architecture and Urban Design Report for a detailed analysis.

12. 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.

### **Response:**

The Canberra Lyric Theatre traffic assessment confirms that direct access to and from major roads, particularly London Circuit and Northbourne Avenue, and Constitution Avenue will be permitted where practicable without compromising traffic safety. The primary vehicular access is consolidating service, loading, and drop-off zones via Theatre Lane and Knowles Place, which connect to the major road network, enabling orderly ingress and egress.

Traffic modelling shows that this consolidation will not exacerbate congestion on the surrounding road network, and that vehicle circulation within the precinct is designed to prevent conflicts and support safe movements.

Multiple accessible parking spaces will be retained in proximate locations, including City Hill and Hobart Place. Dedicated drop-off areas will be provided adjacent to the main entry on Knowles Place, supplemented by secondary points at Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue. General parking supply within the Civic and Cultural District remains substantial, with more than 5,000 existing public spaces available within a comfortable walking distance of the site.

Wayfinding and information will also play an important role in supporting patrons during construction and into operation. A publicly available parking and pedestrian access map will be prepared and distributed through ACT Government communication channels, including the YourSay website, stakeholder updates and site signage.

Landscaping within and around access ways will be of a consistently high quality, with native planting, including tree-lined buffer zones that provide shade, soften visual impacts and reinforce the precinct's civic character.

Refer to Traffic and Parking Report.

13. 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 the Griffins' plans. 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. Setbacks for buildings adjacent to Kings and Commonwealth Avenues should generally be 15 metres. Setbacks for buildings adjacent to eastern side of Kings and western side of Commonwealth Avenues north of Lake Burley Griffin should be 10 metres.



## NCP Central National Area – Detailed conditions of planning, design and development

### **Response:**

The subject site does not front Commonwealth Kings or Constitution Avenue, yet it upholds height principles to preserve consistency and continuity within the broader framework of the National Triangle.

14. 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 masterplan to be prepared by the National Capital Authority which particularly emphasises the following landscape themes:

- a. the formal and consistent landscaping of Main Avenues and mall spaces
- b. the combination of formal and informal landscaping which occurs around the Lake's edge and is the setting for Parliament House and its adjacent area.

**Response:** Not Applicable - Subject site is not located adjacent Lake Burley Griffin or Parliament House.

15. Residential blocks must not be subdivided for separate occupation.

**Response:** Subject site is not a residential block. The proposed land use is 'Cultural Facility' as per Land Use definition in the National Capital Plan.

16. Any proposal to subdivide land within the Central National Area will require the approval of the National Capital Authority

**Response:** Not Applicable – The proposal does not seek to subdivide.



## 8.1.2 City Hill Precinct Code

Subject site is identified as being within designated area as shown below.

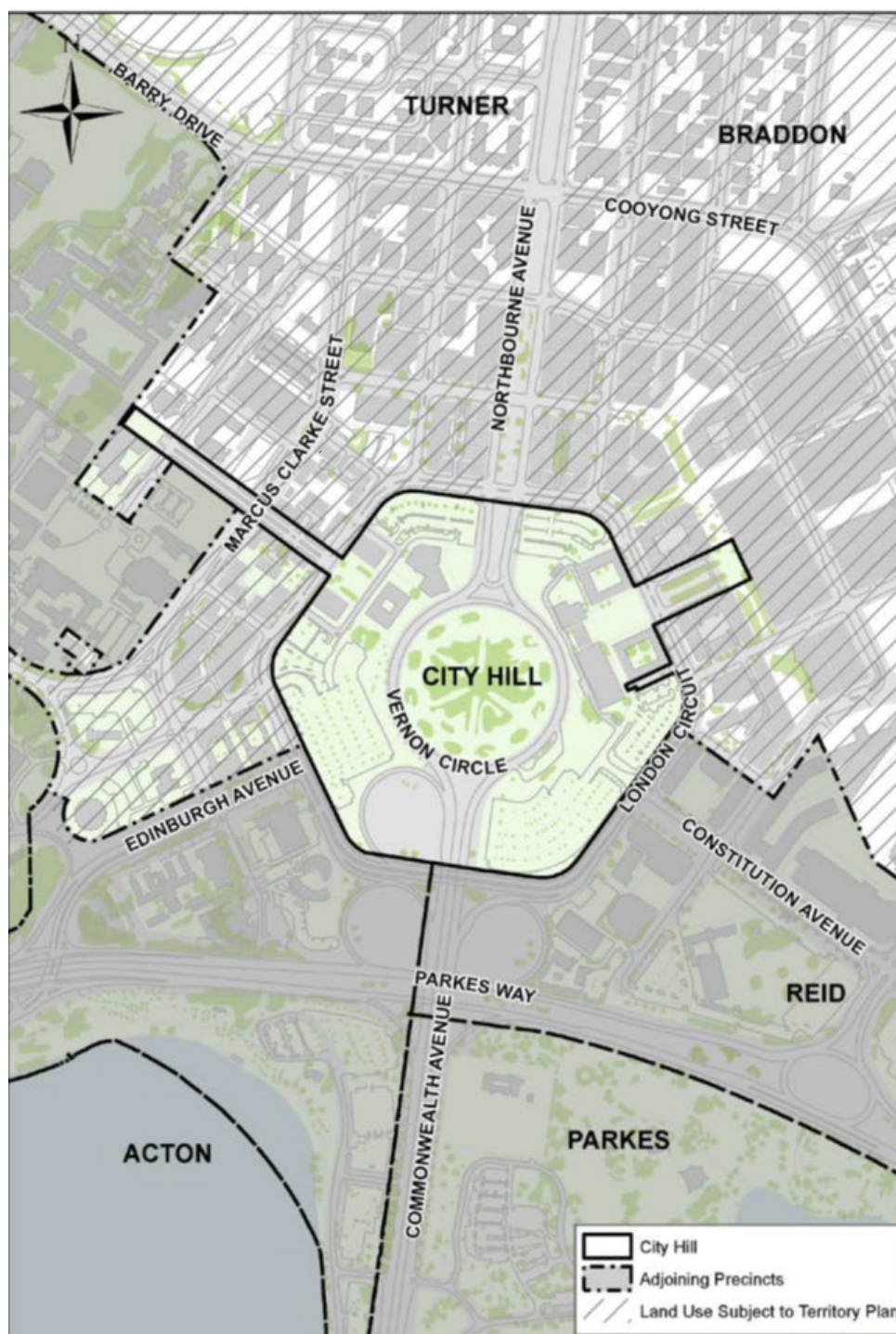


Figure 8: City Hill Zoning Extent

Source: National Capital Plan

The Table below provides an assessment of the project against the land use policies and principles relevant to any future development of the site.





**Table 3: Objectives for City Hill Precinct**

Objectives for City Hill Precinct
<p>1. Maintain and promote the City Centre as the main commercial centre of Canberra and the region – with the City Hill Precinct as the pre-eminent heart of City.</p>
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The proposed development strengthens cultural offering within the City Centre by introducing a contemporary performing arts facility that supports Canberra’s position as a regional hub. While not a commercial use, the Canberra Lyric Theatre increases the city’s attraction as a destination for cultural tourism, contributing to economic activity and reinforcing the precinct’s role within the broader framework</p>
<p>2. The design of buildings and the amenity and environmental quality of the main public spaces should result in an accessible, attractive, high quality and distinctive centre, consistent with the City’s role as the major metropolitan centre and its location at one point of the National Triangle, the major organising element of the Central National Area.</p>
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The proposed theatre’s design responds to its position along the outer edge of the National Triangle by expressing architectural form and materiality that respects the area’s symbolic importance. Public spaces surrounding the theatre are designed for universal accessibility, integrating landscaping, seating, and shading to create a welcoming civic forecourt that supports both everyday use and major events. This approach contributes to a distinctive and high-quality public realm reflective of Canberra’s metropolitan character.</p>
<p>3. That the City Hill Precinct provides a vibrant, interesting and lively centre with high levels of human activity.</p>
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>Canberra Lyric Theatre contributes to the vibrancy of the City Hill Precinct by generating continuous foot traffic before and after performances, encouraging spillover activity into adjacent public spaces. The design of the ground plane prioritises activation through visual permeability, landscaped terraces, and connections that invite public use beyond theatre patrons.</p>
<p>4. Development must command the highest standards of urban design, sustainability, exemplary architecture and social inclusion, reflecting the character of the National Capital.</p>
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The proposed Canberra Lyric Theatre meets the highest standards in urban design and architecture required for a site of national importance. The project delivers a 2,000-seat theatre designed to host major productions, addressing Canberra’s need for a venue capable of accommodating musicals, ballet, and opera. Rooted in key design principles informed by Country, the building’s form and materials respect the precinct’s character while introducing contemporary elements that strengthen the city’s cultural identity.</p> <p>The development integrates sustainability with an all-electric design and prioritises universal accessibility. Public spaces around the theatre promote community engagement and pedestrian connectivity, activating the precinct as a cultural and social destination consistent with Canberra’s role as the capital and a major metropolitan centre.</p>





## Objectives for City Hill Precinct

5. The City Hill Precinct must complement and actively relate to, and integrate with, the existing and future structure of the rest of City.

### Response:

The proposal improves connectivity between Civic Square, Knowles Place, and Vernon Circle, ensuring integration with the city's broader pedestrian network. These interventions align with future development frameworks by reinforcing east-west and north-south movement corridors across the precinct.

6. Encourage a mix of land uses, including residential uses, which contribute to a diverse and active character.

### Response:

Although the proposed development is focused on cultural use, it supports mixed-use precinct vitality by drawing diverse users into the city centre and complementing surrounding residential, retail, and hospitality offerings. The increased cultural programming fosters a dynamic environment that contributes to the precinct's active character.

7. Major buildings of municipal or cultural significance should be located adjacent to City Hill Park, with their main address to Vernon Circle.

### Response:

Canberra Lyric Theatre's primary address shift from Vernon Circle to Knowles Place is a considered response to both functional and urban design imperatives.

This shift is a strategic response to both urban design and operational realities. While Vernon Circle traditionally frames City Hill Park and hosts key civic and cultural buildings, the presence of Theatre Lane, a laneway running parallel but at a lower elevation, acts as a physical and functional barrier. As this laneway continues to service the Playhouse and Canberra Theatre, it limits active frontages and pedestrian accessibility on Vernon Circle for the proposed development.

By orienting the main public entrance toward Knowles Place, the Lyric Theatre activates a more pedestrian-focused and accessible urban environment. This frontage fosters engagement through active edges and accessible public spaces, creating a stronger connection with the community.

Simultaneously, Vernon Circle maintains its role as a ceremonial and civic edge, with loading and servicing areas suitably screened through civil, architectural and landscape treatment.

This approach balances precinct hierarchy, functional requirements, and urban vitality, delivering a theatre complex that respects the National Capital's planning intent while enhancing cultural and pedestrian activation where it is most effective.



### 8.1.2.1 Land Use for City Hill Precinct

Land use for the City Hill Precinct should be in accordance with below figure.

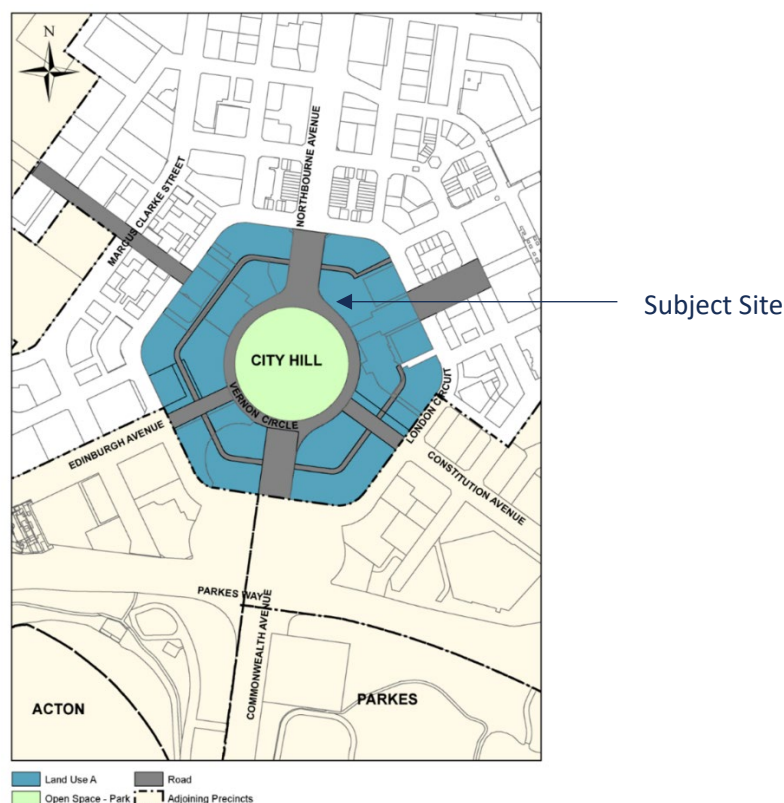


Figure 9 :Land Use for the City Hill Precinct

Source: National Capital Plan

The subject site is identified as 'Land Use A' in the below figure and permitted land uses for 'Land Use A' are:

▪ Administrative Use	▪ Car Park
▪ Café, Bar Restaurant	▪ Casino
▪ Community Protection Facility	▪ Cultural Facility
▪ Diplomatic Mission	▪ Education Establishment
▪ Hotel	▪ Health Centre
▪ Motel	▪ Indoor Recreation Facility
▪ Office	▪ Park
▪ Personal Service Establishment	▪ Place of Assembly
▪ Public Utility	▪ Residential
▪ Scientific Research Establishment	▪ Social/Community facility
▪ Tourist facility.	



Any buildings located within City Hill Precinct must be subsidiary to the permitted use as a park and must be designed, sited and of a scale that complements the landscape character.

**Response:**

**The proposed development is a Cultural Facility and in alignment with permitted used of 'Land Use A'.**

## 8.1.2.2 Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

Table 4 provides an assessment of the proposed works against the detailed policies and principles of the precinct.

**Table 4: Detailed conditions of planning, design and development**

### Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

#### GENERAL

New or altered buildings must ensure that:

- Sunlight access to open space within the City Hill Precinct and major pedestrian areas is maintained.
- The vista to City Hill Park is framed and enhanced by new development.
- Predominantly active frontages are provided at ground floor level for building elements fronting London Circuit and the Main Avenues that radiate from City Hill.

**Response:**

The development maintains sunlight access to adjoining open spaces (City Hill Park) and key pedestrian areas (Civic Square).

The proposed massing and façade articulation frame maintain vistas towards City Hill Park, strengthening the precinct's relationship with this central open space.

Additionally, the development reinforces an active ground plane through a welcoming forecourt, glazed lobby entries, visually striking architectural elements within the built form and landscaped edges which encourage public interaction along all building edges, connecting Knowles Place to Civic Square

**Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report.**

Subdivision patterns should be designed to minimise amalgamation of land and achieve a mix of development scales including fine urban grain.

**Response:** Not Applicable. No subdivision is proposed as part of this submission.



### Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

New buildings are encouraged to be delivered through design competitions in order to encourage innovation and design excellence.

#### Response:

The original design was selected through a design competition, and this submission represents a further refinement of the design intent established by the winning entry.

The symbolic importance of the City Hill Precinct should be reinforced in the design treatment of the streetscape and public places.

#### Response:

The design reinforces the symbolic role of Vernon Circle and City Hill through high-quality public realm treatments, layered diverse landscaping, and pedestrian-focused interventions that bolster civic legibility.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report.

Public art and art spaces in new development should be encouraged.

#### Response:

Opportunities for integrated public art have been considered within the theatre's forecourt and entry sequence, complementing the cultural significance of the precinct.

Refer to Landscape Plan and Architecture and Urban Architecture and Urban Design Report.

Landscape and streetscape treatments are to be of a high quality emphasising the geometry and formality of the Main Avenues.

#### Response:

The proposed landscaping design incorporates bold, simple, and elegant materials such as granite paving, aligning with the formal geometry of surrounding avenues like Vernon Circle and Constitution Avenue.

Street trees and planting beds are arranged to emphasise axial alignments and spatial order, improving legibility and users' experience of the precinct's grand urban form. Physical security elements like bollards are integrated discreetly within planting to soften visual impacts.

Pedestrian-friendly environments are created with provision of pedestrian pathways, seating, and outdoor lighting (subject to separate works approval application), supporting safety and accessibility along Knowles Place and the Northbourne Avenue verge. Collectively, these elements ensure the precinct's landscape both complements and elevates the National Capital's urban character and formality.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

New development should exemplify sustainability principles and demonstrate excellence in urban design, landscape and architecture.



Indicative Development

Figure 40: City Hill – Indicative development

### Response:

The Canberra Lyric Theatre has adopted holistic sustainability which integrates environmental, cultural, and social dimensions, demonstrating integrated sustainable design.

Key environmental initiatives include:

- All-electric design powered by the ACT's 100% renewable electricity supply, with provision for rooftop solar PV and battery integration in the future.
- Near-zero operational carbon through efficient HVAC, LED lighting, advanced commissioning, and offsets for residual refrigerants and diesel/emergency power.
- Low-carbon materials and circular economy strategies, reduction in embodied carbon, responsible product procurement, and design-for-disassembly.
- High-quality indoor environments, including daylight access, enhanced ventilation, low-toxicity finishes, and acoustic performance.
- Water-sensitive design, with efficient fixtures, native/drought-tolerant planting, on-site detention systems, and WSUD measures.
- Climate resilience measures addressing extreme heat, bushfire smoke, stormwater management, and adaptive management over the theatre's lifecycle.
- Cultural and social sustainability, embedding inclusion, accessibility, storytelling, and community co-design.

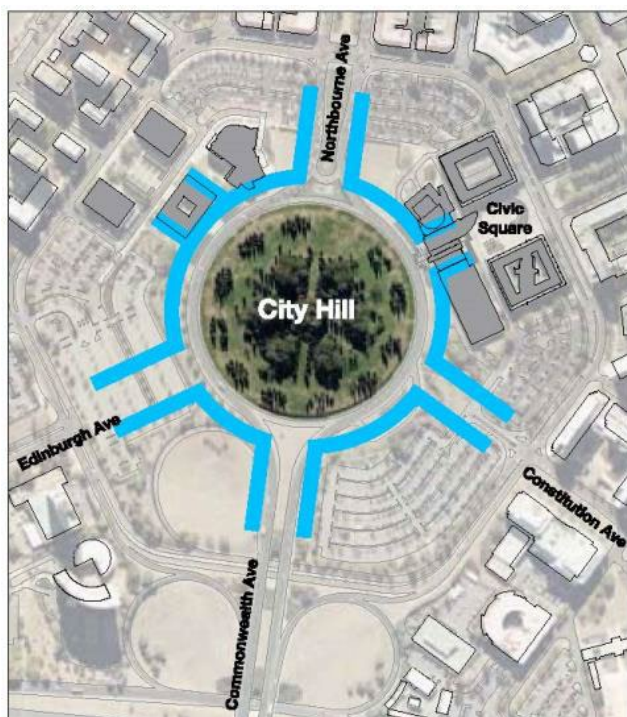
Refer to Architecture and Urban Architecture and Urban Design Report.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### CITY HILL PARK AS A CENTRAL OPEN SPACE

City Hill Park should be retained and enhanced as an enclosed central park serving a functional role within an urban built form.



City Hill Park as a central open space

General built form

Figure 10: City Hill – City Hill Park as a central open space

Source: National Capital Plan - Figure 41

#### **Response:**

The proposal respects City Hill Park's function as a central open space and enhances its relationship to surrounding built form through considered stepped massing and landscape transitions.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Architecture and Urban Design Report

The topography of City Hill Park may need to be modified to create an urban park, accommodate pedestrian desire lines and integrate with Vernon Circle.

#### **Response:**

The proposed development does not modify the park's topography. The theatre's landscaped edges along Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue are designed to support pedestrian network and connectivity to City Hill Park. Refer to accompanying landscape drawings.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Architecture and Urban Design Report and Landscape Drawings





## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

City Hill Park is the primary public space for the Precinct. Any buildings located on City Hill Park must be ancillary to this purpose and be designed, sited and of a scale that complements the landscape character.

### Response:

No new buildings are proposed within City Hill Park. The theatre precinct respects its primacy as the central public space and complements its character through adjacent landscape treatments.

New public spaces created within the Precinct must complement and not diminish the pre-eminence of City Hill Park.

### Response:

The proposed developments forecourt and public realm design complement City Hill Park by supporting a hierarchy of civic spaces rather than competing with the park's central role.

## **BUILDING HEIGHT**

Building heights of up to 25 metres (generally six to eight storeys) above adjacent kerb levels of London Circuit, Vernon Circle and Northbourne, Edinburgh, Constitution and Commonwealth Avenues are permissible in all areas of City Hill Precinct.

### Response:

The maximum building height of the Lyric Theatre is controlled, with the highest point limited to the fly tower, which reaches RL 599.350. When measured against the undulating Natural Ground Level offset, the fly tower exceeds the 25-metre height limit by approximately four to five metres.

Predominantly the buildings massing remains at 3 to 4 storeys and under 25m, consistent with the broader City Hill precinct scale, promoting harmonious integration with adjacent buildings such as the existing Playhouse Theatre and Canberra Theatre.

Architectural section drawings illustrate modulation of building volumes with step-backs and articulated forms, creating visual permeability and human scale at street level.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report and architectural drawings, including sections and elevations for further details.

Landmark buildings up to RL617 (generally 14 to 18 storeys) will be restricted to the locations identified in Figure 42, generally being the corners of the main avenues intersecting with London Circuit.

## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

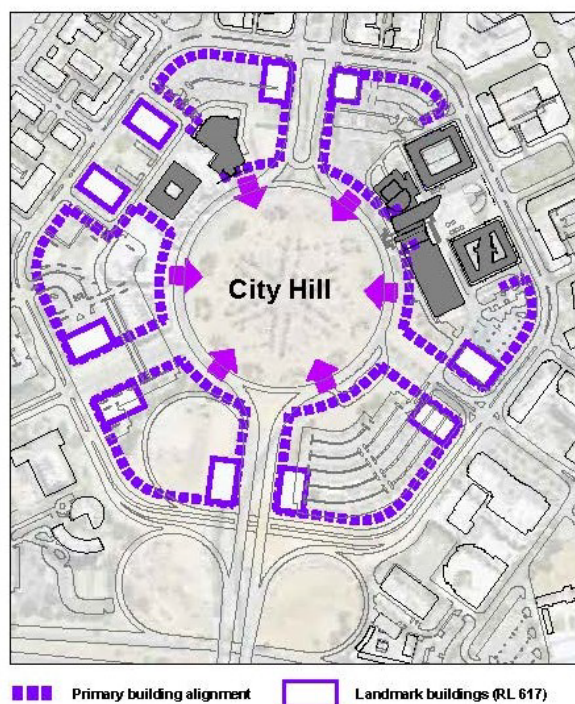


Figure 11: City Hill – Indicative building form, height and landmark buildings

Source: National Capital Plan - Figure 42

### Response:

The maximum building height of the Lyric Theatre is controlled, with the highest point being a limited portion of the development, which is the fly tower reaching RL 599.350. The proposed fly tower is positioned in alignment with the existing Playhouse Theatre, allowing the new and the old to sit comfortably within the existing skyline and sits within the precinct's allowable limit of RL 617.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report and architectural drawings, including sections and elevations for further details.

Buildings more than 25 metres in height are to be the subject of wind testing, including down draught conditions and turbulence, to ensure development does not have adverse impacts on building entrances and the public domain.

### Response:

Wind report submitted as part of this application.

Buildings fronting Vernon Circle should have a minimum height of 16 metres (equivalent to four storeys) to create a sense of enclosure around City Hill Park.

### Response:

The proposed development's frontage to Vernon Circle establishes a built form height that reinforces enclosure and provides civic definition along this important edge. A minimum height of 16 metres is maintained, complemented by step-backs and articulated building volumes that



### Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

introduce visual and solar permeability along with landscaped supporting pedestrian friendly public realm.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report and architectural drawings, including sections and elevations for further details.

Minor building elements that extend building height above 25 metres will be considered where this enhances the architectural quality of the building and fosters energy efficiency, indoor amenity and appropriate urban scale.

#### Response:

The maximum building height of the Lyric Theatre is carefully controlled, with the highest point limited to the fly tower, which reaches RL 599.350. When measured against the rolling NGL offset, the fly tower exceeds the 25-metre height limit by approximately 4 to 5 metres.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report and architectural drawings, including sections and elevations for further details.

### Minimum floor-to-ceiling heights within buildings are to be as follows

Location	Min. floor height	Response
Ground Floor facing Constitution Avenue and roads where 'Indicative Active Frontages' are located	6.5 metres floor to ceiling (mezzanine level permitted over 30% of ground floor)	The subject site does not face Constitution Avenue. Additionally, the City Hill Precinct Code in the National Capital Plan, does not identify 'Indicative Active Frontages'.
Ground Floor (Residential)	3.3 metres floor-to-ceiling	No residential use. Not applicable.
Ground Floor (other uses, including commercial/office use)	3.6 metres floor-to-ceiling	No commercial/office use. Not applicable.
Residential (general)	<p>2.7metres floor-to-ceiling minimum for all habitable rooms, 2.4 metres is the preferred minimum for all non-habitable rooms however 2.25 metres is permitted.</p> <p>For two-storey units, 2.4 metres minimum for second storey if 50 percent or more of the apartment has 2.7 metre minimum ceiling heights.</p> <p>For two-storey units with a two-storey void space,</p>	No residential use. Not applicable.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

2.4 metre minimum ceiling heights.

Attic spaces are permitted, with a 1.5 metre minimum wall height at edge of room with a 30 degree minimum ceiling slope.

### **ACTIVE FRONTAGES**

Street level frontages should, where possible, be active. Primary retail activities should be off London Circuit with secondary food and beverage activities occurring along north-south laneways so as to optimise sunlight access during peak periods.

#### **Response:**

The Canberra Lyric Theatre design prioritises active street-level frontages to enliven the public realm, in line with the planning outcome. Streets and laneways surrounding the theatre are, Knowles Place, Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle.

Knowles Place forms the primary active frontage for the proposed development. The multi-storey glazed facade of the Canberra Lyric Theatre fronting Knowles Place establishes a clear visual dialogue between interior public spaces and the external pedestrian realm, encouraging transparency, activity and engagement at street level. At the prominent corner of Knowles Place and Northbourne Avenue is positioned the main staircase which operates not only as a functional circulation element but also as a civic marker, reinforcing the theatre's presence within the public domain and marking a ceremonial point of arrival

From key sightlines along Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit, the staircase provides a direct visual connection to the theatre frontage, guiding movement and drawing attention to the entrance.

Together, the staircase and expansive glazed frontages along Knowles Place and Northbourne Avenue deliver a highly legible and activated streetscape. This strengthens the Lyric Theatre's identity as a civic landmark and establishes Knowles Place as its primary public address within the City Hill precinct.

Additionally, due to the proposed development being a Cultural Facility, there are limitations to food and beverage activities.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report, architectural and landscape drawings.

Buildings on the avenues must have predominantly active frontages at ground floor.

#### **Response:**

The proposed development partially sits along Northbourne Avenue and Vernon Circle, incorporating an active frontage strategy that balances operational needs with urban activation.



### Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

The building edge along Northbourne Avenue is designed to be predominantly glazed and landscaped, maintaining strong visual permeability that connects the theatre with its urban surroundings. This glazed frontage creates visual activation along the street and allows natural light to penetrate through the interiors of the theatre while providing visual interest for pedestrians. Only a small section of the building fronts Vernon Circle and thereby Theatre Lane which sits parallel but lower to Vernon Circle. This section of the building includes a secure sunken loading dock accessed via Theatre Lane, which is visually screened from Vernon Circle by a thoughtfully designed façade. This screening preserves Vernon Circle's function as a formal and ceremonial urban edge while architectural and landscaping design elements continue to support pedestrian activation along verges of Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue.

The ensures that the streetscape along Vernon Circle remains visually engaging through articulation of the building form, use of high-quality materials and landscape treatment.

### AVENUE CONNECTIONS AND VISTAS

New road connections to Vernon Circle from Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues should facilitate access for local traffic and pedestrians.

#### **Response:**

No new road connections are proposed to Vernon Circle from Constitution and Edinburgh Avenues.

View corridors must be retained from radiating avenues to City Hill Park. No buildings should bridge these avenues.

#### **Response:**

The design maintains view corridors from Vernon Circle to City Hill Park, preserving axial alignments and sightlines that reinforce the Griffin Plan geometry. No structures encroach upon or bridge these avenues.

A limited palette of high-quality pedestrian pavement materials, street furniture and lighting will be used. Pavement and landscape design should have an elegant, simple and bold design emphasising the geometry and formality of the main avenues.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development



Indicative Avenue Connections and Vistas

Figure 12 : City Hill – Indicative Avenue Connection and Vistas

Source: National Capital Plan

### Response:

Public realm treatments adopt a restrained yet high-quality materials palette, including durable paving, contemporary seating, and integrated lighting. These elements emphasise the formality and geometry of the National Triangle while supporting accessibility and user comfort.

Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report, architectural and landscape drawings.

### HERITAGE

The heritage values of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings are to be considered and addressed by new buildings adjacent to these sites.

### Response:

The proposal does not sit directly adjacent to the Sydney or Melbourne Buildings; however, the design respects Canberra's broader heritage values through scale, materiality, and landscape integration consistent with the precinct's civic character.

Refer to Heritage Statement.





## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### TRAFFIC

Major modifications to the existing traffic management arrangements are dependent upon the continuing implementation of peripheral parkways and city bypass routes including Gungahlin Drive, Majura Parkway, Clunies Ross Street, Fairbairn Avenue, Marcus Clarke Street and Cooyong/Ballumbir Streets and the removal of the Parkes Way cloverleaves.

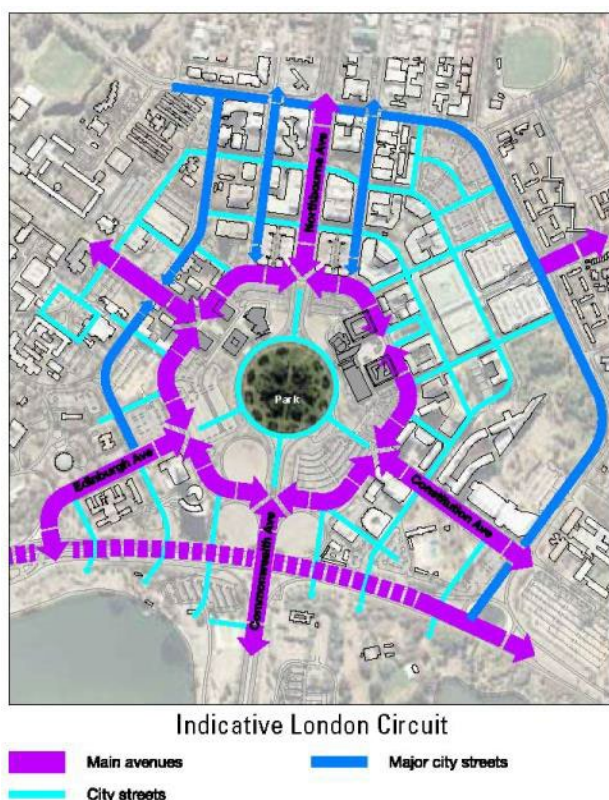


Figure 13: City Hill – Indicative Road Hierarchy

Source: National Capital Plan

#### Response:

Traffic arrangements have been reviewed in the context of the precinct's role within Canberra's wider road network. Refer to Traffic and Parking Report, which confirms that servicing and vehicle access have been designed to minimise impacts on pedestrian amenity and maintain the ceremonial character of Vernon Circle.

Traffic engineering devices (e.g. slip lanes) should be designed to promote pedestrian amenity, safety and access and bicycle movements.

#### Response:

The design reduces potential conflicts by consolidating vehicular access via Theatre Lane and improving pedestrian priority along Vernon Circle's edges.

Refer to Traffic and Parking Report.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### **PARKING**

Replacement of existing surface car parks and public car parking should be provided for as identified in the ACT Government Parking Strategy. Development of existing surface car parks will need to demonstrate that an adequate public car parking provision (on street or in appropriately designed structures) will meet the needs of City Hill Precinct.

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## **Response:**

The parking strategy for the new Canberra Lyric Theatre has been developed to ensure convenient, accessible and safe access during both the construction and operational phases. The approach balances existing city centre capacity with targeted measures to address accessibility, information provision and integration with public and active transport.

### **1. Accessible Parking and Drop-off**

Accessible parking and drop-off facilities are a central part of the strategy. Multiple accessible parking spaces will be retained in proximate locations, including City Hill and Hobart Place. Dedicated drop-off areas will be provided on Knowles Place near the Courtyard studio (DDA compliant) and on London Circuit, with future consideration of an accessible drop off on Vernon Circle and connection to the basement carpark in the Block 23 development. These arrangements prioritise equitable access for people with disability, mobility needs and older persons, supported by clear wayfinding and surface treatments.

### **2. Service Vehicles**

Vehicle access for deliveries and services for Lyric Theatre will be managed primarily via Theatre Lane, which will be restricted to authorised vehicles only and closed to public traffic for safety. The Lyric Theatre loading dock, accessed from Constitution Avenue via Theatre Lane, is designed to accommodate large vehicles, including 19m trucks, with dedicated loading bays and passing areas to prevent congestion. Similar arrangements apply to the Playhouse and Canberra Theatre loading docks.

### **3. Parking Supply**

General parking supply within the Civic and Cultural District remains substantial, with more than 5,000 existing public spaces available within a comfortable walking distance of the site. Key facilities include the Canberra Centre, City Hill, Constitution Place and Nangari Street car parks. While the closure of the Theatre Lane surface car park from October 2025 for use as the main construction compound will result in the permanent loss of spaces at that location, there is sufficient surrounding capacity to accommodate displaced demand. In the longer term, replacement parking will be delivered as part of the redevelopment of Block 23, guided by the City Renewal Authority's District Master Plan.

### **4. Wayfinding and Information**

Wayfinding and information will play an important role in supporting patrons during construction and into operation. A publicly available parking and pedestrian access map will be prepared and distributed through ACT Government communication channels, including the YourSay website, stakeholder updates and site signage. Digital tools and updates, such as social media and newsletters, will direct visitors to the most convenient parking locations. Consistent signage and colour-coded markers will also be installed across the precinct to improve clarity and legibility.

### **5. Traffic and Construction Coordination**

During construction, temporary traffic and pedestrian detours will be required around Knowles Place to accommodate service relocations and utilities upgrades. Localised impacts such as vibration, dust and intermittent road closures will be managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. Advance notification will be provided to nearby businesses and theatre patrons to minimise disruption. Coordination with other major projects in the City Centre, including light rail Stage 2A, will ensure cumulative transport and parking impacts are considered and effectively managed.



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### 6. Public and Active Transport Integration

The parking strategy also emphasises public and active transport integration. The site is located within walking distance of multiple bus routes and will benefit from improved accessibility once light rail Stage 2A reaches London Circuit. Taxi and rideshare bays will be clearly signposted to support efficient passenger pick-up and drop-off. Pedestrian and cycling connections through the Civic and Cultural District will be maintained, with safe detours provided where required. End-of-trip bicycle parking facilities will also be provided to encourage active travel.

### 7. Strategic Alignment

This parking strategy is consistent with the ACT Government's Parking Strategy (2018), which prioritises efficient use of existing supply, provision of accessible spaces and support for public and active transport. It also aligns with the National Capital Plan's objectives for integrated transport and civic accessibility, ensuring the proposed Canberra Lyric Theatre contributes positively to the broader Canberra Civic and Cultural District.

Please refer to the Traffic and Parking Report, for further details.,.

Car parking for new development is to be accommodated in basements or in above ground structures that do not dominate the public domain.

**Response:** See above response.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

London Circuit should operate as the main public transport circuit for Canberra City.

### **Response:**

The proposal does not alter public transport infrastructure along London Circuit.

Development of the City Hill Precinct should take place in the context of an integrated public transport plan. Mechanisms should be introduced to give priority to public transport.

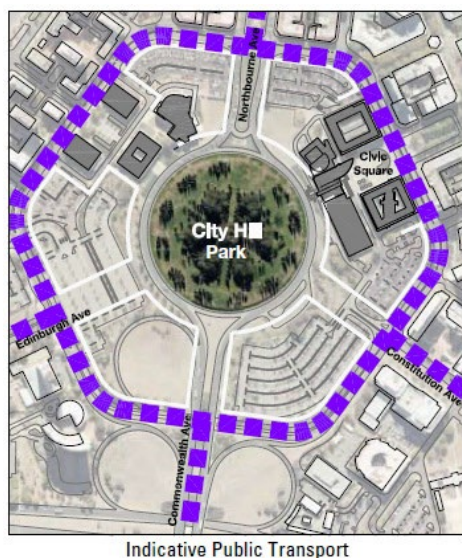


Figure 14: City Hill – Indicative Public transport

Source: National Capital Plan

## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### Response:

The proposal supports integration with existing networks along London Circuit by improving pedestrian permeability across Knowles Place.

### LANEWAYS

Existing laneways should be retained and new laneways created to provide permeability and create service access. Opportunities should be identified to create laneways with active frontages, particularly in relation to heritage and public buildings and at intersections.

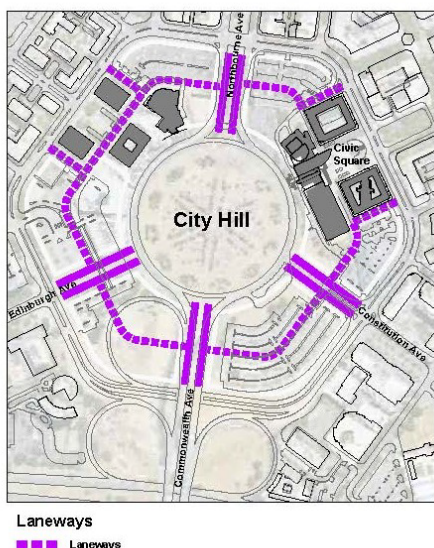


Figure 15: City Hill – Indicative Laneways

Source: National Capital Plan

### Response:

Knowles Place is being retained and uplifted as a laneway as it forms the primary active frontage for the proposed development. The multi-storey glazed facade of the Canberra Lyric Theatre fronting Knowles Place establishes a clear visual dialogue between interior public spaces and the external pedestrian realm, encouraging transparency, activity and engagement at street level. At the prominent corner of Knowles Place and Northbourne Avenue is positioned the main staircase which operates not only as a functional circulation element but also as a civic marker, reinforcing the theatre's presence within the public domain and marking a ceremonial point of arrival.

From key sightlines along Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit, the staircase provides a direct visual connection to the theatre frontage, guiding movement and drawing attention to the entrance.

Together, the staircase and expansive glazed frontages along Knowles Place and Northbourne Avenue deliver a highly legible and activated streetscape. This strengthens the Lyric Theatre's identity as a civic landmark and establishes Knowles Place as its primary public address within the City Hill precinct.



## PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE LINKS

New development, including public spaces, will facilitate pedestrian connectivity and bicycle movements within the City Hill Precinct and between the City Hill Precinct and Canberra Central.

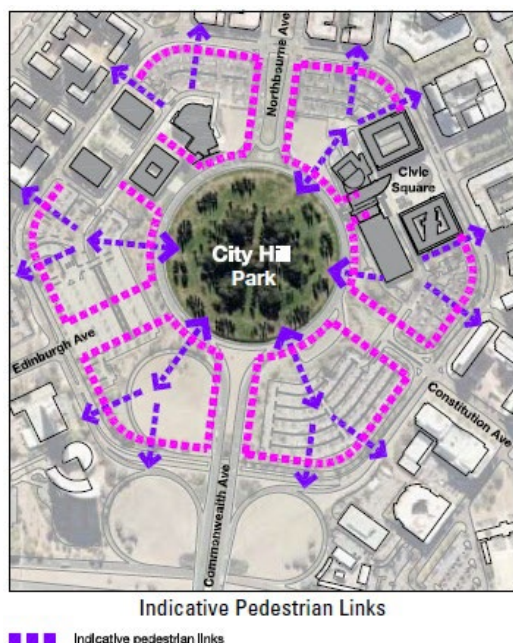


Figure 16: City Hill – Indicative Pedestrian Links

Source: National Capital Plan



Figure 17: City Hill – Indicative Street Cross Section (Constitution Avenue to City Hill Park)

Source: National Capital Plan



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

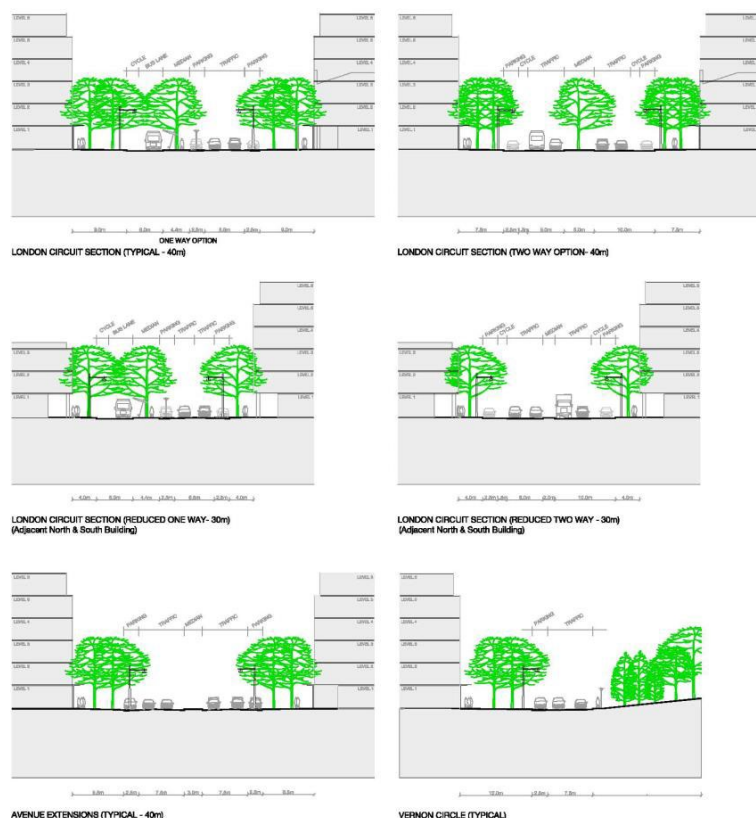


Figure 18: City Hill – Indicative Street Cross Sections

Source: National Capital Plan

### Response:

The development supports pedestrian connectivity through improved links between Civic Square, Knowles Place, and Vernon Circle, ensuring the intent of the Indicative Pedestrian Links and Indicative Cross Sections are met. Landscaped edges and universal design elements along uplifted Knowles Place, encourage cycling and walking within the precinct and to adjacent city areas.

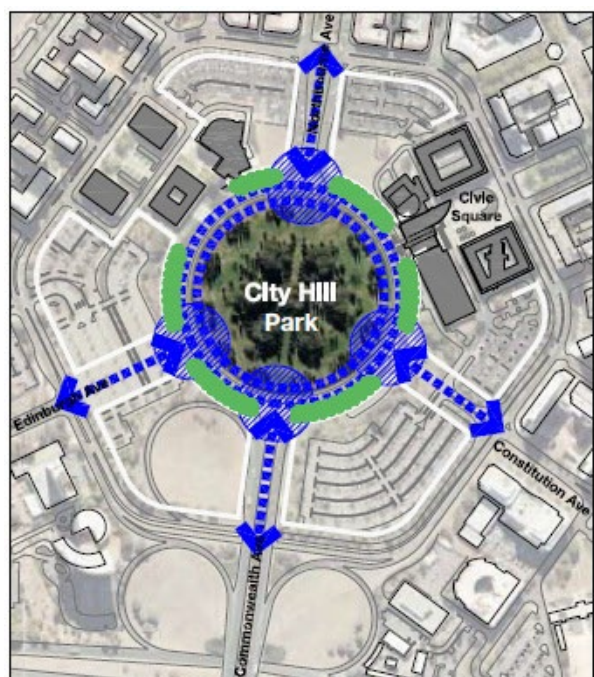
Refer to Architecture and Urban Design Report, architectural and landscape drawings.

## LOCATION SPECIFIC

### Vernon Circle

Vernon Circle should serve as a ceremonial road leading to Parliament House and for public events for the city of Canberra. Any major redevelopment of the City Hill precinct should consider alternative options for traffic to allow easy pedestrian access to City Hill via Vernon Circle.

Over time, the existing major cultural and municipal buildings adjacent to City Hill Park (and extensions to them) could be reconfigured to address Vernon Circle.



Indicative Vernon Circle

- ■ ■ ■ Avenue connections
- Signalled pedestrian crossings
- Street tree planting

Figure 19 : City Hill – Indicative Vernon Circle

Source: National Capital Plan



Figure 20: Artist's impression of Vernon Circle

Source: National Capital Plan



## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development

### Response:

Vernon Circle's role as a ceremonial road leading to Parliament House and a venue for public events in Canberra is a key consideration in the Canberra Lyric Theatre development. The design and traffic arrangements respond sensitively to this by minimising heavy vehicular intrusion along Vernon Circle and prioritising pedestrian access and amenity in line with its ceremonial function.

Only a small section of the building fronts Vernon Circle and thereby Theatre Lane which sits parallel but lower to Vernon Circle. This section of the building includes a secure sunken loading dock accessed via Theatre Lane, which is visually screened from Vernon Circle by a thoughtfully designed façade. This screening preserves Vernon Circle's function as a formal and ceremonial urban edge while architectural and landscaping design elements continue to support pedestrian activation along verges of Vernon Circle and Northbourne Avenue. This has been further detailed in the landscape drawings.

As noted in the Traffic and Parking report, all service and delivery vehicle access for the Lyric Theatre is managed via Theatre Lane, closed to public traffic, thereby reducing heavy vehicle movements on Vernon Circle itself. This approach maintains Vernon Circle as a calm urban edge.

Regarding the precinct's long-term future, the City Hill masterplan and precinct strategy envision that adjacent cultural and municipal buildings, including potential extensions, could be reconfigured over time to engage Vernon Circle more directly.

This would reinforce the formal and ceremonial significance of Vernon Circle, enhancing City Hill Park's accessibility and prominence as a civic destination, consistent with the National Capital Plan and City Hill Precinct objectives. The Lyric Theatre development thus acts as a foundational step, maintaining pedestrian priority and easing traffic pressure on Vernon Circle while supporting future possibilities for precinct-wide urban transformation.

### London Circuit

London Circuit should serve as a gateway, providing a transition between the boulevard character of the avenues and the urban scale of the inner City Hill Precinct. The transition should be achieved through the use of urban design and traffic engineering treatments that serve to physically and psychologically divert traffic from the avenues onto London Circuit, thereby limiting access to the inner City Hill Precinct to predominantly local traffic. London Circuit should operate as the main public transport circuit for Canberra Central.



Figure 21: City Hill – Indicative development (an aerial perspective looking northwest towards the National Triangle)

Source: *National Capital Plan*





## Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design and Development



Figure 22: City Hill – An artist's impression of City Hill Park looking towards the National Triangle

Source: National Capital Plan

### Response:

The proposal does not front London Circuit directly but contributes indirectly to its role as a gateway by reinforcing adjacent pedestrian connections along Knowles Place and supporting its activation.

Buildings must be set back from London Circuit a sufficient distance to establish a tree-lined boulevard character (two rows of trees and wide pavements).

### Response:

Not applicable to the proposal does not front London Circuit. However, landscaping along Vernon Circle maintains a sense of enclosure and complements the boulevard character of surrounding avenues.

New buildings fronting London Circuit must have active frontages.

### Response:

Not applicable, as the proposal does not front London Circuit.



## 9.0 Conclusion

This report is submitted in support of the Works Approval application for the Canberra Lyric Theatre on Block 23 Section 19 City.

This Planning Report provides a comprehensive description of the proposal, thoroughly outlines the relevant planning context, and addresses all applicable requirements of the National Capital Plan pertinent to this site. The Canberra Lyric Theatre exemplifies exceptional architectural design, integrating active ground-level uses that enhance employment opportunities, pedestrian connectivity, and social engagement within the city.

The development adheres fully to the design and siting criteria set forth by the National Capital Plan, demonstrating consistency with the broader civic and cultural objectives of the City Hill Precinct. It represents a significant and positive contribution to Canberra's urban fabric and cultural landscape.

Based on this compliance and the quality of the proposal, it is recommended that the National Capital Authority grant approval for this Works Approval application.

**Purdon**  
**September 2025**

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