



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

Consultation Report

Works Approval No. WA-001896

Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Renewal – Permanent
Works

Canberra

December 2025

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Introduction

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

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

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

On 11 November 2025 an application for works approval was received by the NCA from Seymour Whyte on behalf of the National Capital Authority. The application is for the permanent works associated with the Commonwealth Avenue Birdge Renewal Project located on the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge, Canberra.

This Consultation Report outlines the NCA's review of the key issues raised during the consultation period and consideration of the Works Approval application.

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

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

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Public Consultation requirements

1.1 National Capital Plan (NCP)

Under the NCP, requirements for public consultation apply to:

- Major developments proposed for Section 9 Barton;
- A landmark building to RL617 adjacent to Commonwealth Avenue (within the Constitution Avenue and Anzac Parade Precinct);
- Detailed plans for development at Academy Close, Campbell;
- High-impact telecommunications facilities;
- All residential proposals within the Deakin/Forrest Residential Area Precinct; and
- All residential and commercial development proposed for Section 5 Campbell.

This application was not required to be publicly notified by the National Capital Plan.

Public consultation was undertaken for the application because of strong community interest and the significant scale of the proposed works.

1.2 Commitment to Community Engagement

The NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement* guides the way in which the agency engages with the community to keep people informed about decisions that have already been made and to offer opportunities for input to decision-making. The NCA considers how best to approach public participation processes having regard to the training curriculum delivered by the International Association for Public Participation.

The *Commitment to Community Engagement* sets out the following engagement principles:

Intentional

- Be clear about what we are trying to achieve.
- Be clear about the scope for people to influence outcomes and where other processes have made recommendations and decisions.
- Be clear about limitations and constraints for community comment and involvement.

Inclusive

- Use a variety of methods allowing as many Australians as possible to participate if they wish.
- Proactively seek appropriate participants where there are missing voices.

Timely

- Allow sufficient time for the community to participate in consultation processes.
- Begin engagement at the earliest appropriate stage in the life of a project.

Feedback

- Let people know how their input and feedback was used.
- Meet or exceed all statutory engagement requirements.

The NCA assesses whether a proposal is consistent with the National Capital Plan and if it requires public consultation. An assessment is made in relation to impacts on:

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

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

Summary of Public Consultation

2.1 The Public Consultation Process

Public consultation was undertaken on the application by the NCA between Saturday 15 November 2025 to 5:00pm on Friday 05 December 2025. Consultation took the form of:

- On Saturday 15 November 2025, the NCA published a public notice in The Canberra Times detailing the proposed works and inviting submissions to be made to the NCA in relation to the proposal.
- Between 15 November and 05 December 2025, the NCA published the proposal and plans on the NCA's website.
- Between 15 November and 05 December 2025, A1 size signs were installed to the perimeter of the site at key junctions.

2.2 Submissions Received, Comments and Response

The NCA received a total of two (2) submissions on the proposal. Submissions were generally supportive of the proposal however raised particular issues regarding elements of the proposal.

Key issues raised in the submissions included:

- The location of particular bollards.
- Access and usability of paths and connections.

Emails of acknowledgment were sent to submitters advising them that their submission would be taken into consideration before a decision is made on the application. Key themes raised and NCA's response is outlined in Part 2.3 below.

2.3 Key Issues Raised

Issues raised in the submissions have been summarised below, with NCA consideration and comment.

Submission 1 – Private Citizen	
Key Issue Raised	NCA Response
"I am very pleased to see the widened pedestrian/bicycle paths – this will be a huge improvement. I would like you to reconsider the 3 stainless steel bollards that are indicated at the entrance to those paths at the north and south ends on both sides – three bollards across the 5 metre width means that they will potentially be standing directly in the way of the path, and particularly bicyclists may run into them if they don't see them. The purpose of the widened path is to ease the flow of pedestrians and bikes across the lake, but then creating these pinch points with an obstruction in the way seems counterproductive and potentially dangerous".	The bollards have been removed from the proposal at the entrances to the new 5-metre-wide shared paths across the bridge. Instead, a combination of targeted signage, line marking and a change in surface treatment will be used to highlight the change in conditions and encourage cyclists to slow where there is greater interaction with pedestrians.
"Another small point I noticed was on the south end of the bridge on the western side, the new ramp and garden seem to prioritise people coming up from the lake (as shown in drawing CAB-SMM-UD-DRG-050024). This garden with lawn, seating and stepping stones is a great idea, however the access into this ramp from the bikes coming northwards along Flynn Drive seems a bit stop-start with tight curves and potentially	Regarding the geometry of the new ramp at the southern end, we note comments about the tight curves and sight lines for cyclists travelling north along Flynn Drive. The layout has been designed to create a lower-speed environment and reduce the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

obscured sight lines. Noting that many people riding from Woden to Civic follow this route, making sure that those bikes can join the ramp easily is important”.	
Submission 2 – Pedal Power	
Key Issue Raised	NCA Response
<p>“Page 42 of the Urban Design, Landscaping and Architecture Report shows the wide active travel paths on either side of the bridge separating to accommodate the abutments which rise up to provide significant, necessary obstructions. We understand the path will be marked indicating that bikes should use the inside part of the path, while pedestrians should take the outside option. We also note a plan to install three bollards on the path on the bridge side of the abutments. The risk of path users failing to see and avoid bollards is real, especially where there are valid reasons for path users to focus their attention on other issues, such as path traffic. We suggest the abutment itself is a far more significant obstruction in its own right, and we cannot contemplate how the bollards could reduce the risk of a collision compared with the abutment”.</p>	<p>The bollards have been removed from the proposal at the entrances to the new 5-metre-wide shared paths across the bridge. Instead, a combination of targeted signage, line marking and a change in surface treatment will be used to highlight the change in conditions and encourage cyclists to slow where there is greater interaction with pedestrians.</p>
<p>“Page 48 of the Urban Design, Landscaping and Architecture Report describes the proposed detailed design under the north end of the bridge, stating:</p> <p>The shared road conditions of Barrine Drive are extended from Henry Rolland Park, under the bridge heading east, which extends the slow speed and pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment around to the north eastern approaches to the bridge and into Commonwealth Park.</p> <p>The following page shows the cycle lane is a part of the existing Barrine Drive shared road. At the moment, many bike riders choose to use the existing foreshore promenade to ride under the bridge, based on the limited space and visibility on the shared road. This happens because the shared road is not perceived as ‘cyclist friendly’ by today’s users, and we expect that perception to continue unless some infrastructure design details are included to increase the perception of ‘friendliness’”.</p>	<p>The new shared zone along Barrine Drive will operate with a 10 km/h speed limit to create a safer, more inclusive space for everyone using the area and prioritise cyclist and pedestrian safety over vehicle movements. The design ties the existing road surface into the adjoining shared paths, giving pedestrians and cyclists seamless, level connections throughout.</p> <p>Lighting will be upgraded to meet P2 standards, including beneath the bridge. Shared-zone regulatory signage will also be installed to ensure drivers are clearly aware of the changed traffic conditions.</p> <p>Concrete pavement is proposed within the shared zone to differentiate it from the surrounding road network and reinforce the low speed, shared environment.</p>

<p>“Pedal Power remains alert to the possibility of poor connections between the active travel routes on either side of the bridge with the proposed active travel routes beyond the bridge from each corner. We have not identified any problems immediately abutting the bridge, however clarity has not yet been provided on the path designs more distant from the bridge itself. While we acknowledge this concern is strictly outside the scope of this consultation, we remain aware that problems may easily develop where adjacent projects connect”.</p>	<p>Coordination is ongoing between agencies and adjacent projects to ensure an integrated approach at the project boundaries, including for active transport connections. We also note that there will be separate consultation processes held for adjacent projects as required.</p>
<p>“Pedal Power will continue to take a strong interest in the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Renewal project. We see this as a significant opportunity to enhance active travel connections at a critical point in Canberra’s network, and we are keen to ensure the final design delivers the safest and most accessible outcomes for all path users”.</p> <p>“Accordingly, we request that before the plans are finalised, Pedal Power be provided with the opportunity to review the detailed designs and offer further comment”.</p>	<p>The final design remains consistent with the plans previously reviewed and commented on by Pedal Power. The main change is the removal of the bollards on the shared-path approaches to the bridge, reflecting the feedback provided by Pedal Power.</p> <p>NCA are happy to hold further briefings with Pedal Power to discuss the project, noting that the design will be finalised to allow construction to commence in January 2026.</p>

Conclusion

The NCA’s consultation process was carried out in accordance with the Plan and the NCA’s ‘Commitment to Community Engagement’. The NCA has considered issues raised in the submissions as part of the assessment process.


The NCA has assessed the proposal as being not inconsistent with the provisions of the NCP and that the concerns of the community are considered to have been (or will be) addressed.

The proposal is not inconsistent with the provisions of the NCP and is supported by the NCA.

On 18 December 2025, the NCA approved the proposal.

Attachment A

The Canberra Times Public Notice and Site Notice



Australian Government
National Capital Authority


WORKS APPROVAL

Open for Public Consultation

Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Renewal Project – Permanent Works

The National Capital Authority (NCA) has received a works approval application for construction of new and upgraded infrastructure associated with the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge Renewal Project. The proposal includes bridge strengthening, widening of the shared paths along the bridge, new and improved connecting shared paths, new viewing platforms on the bridge, new lighting across the length of the bridge and landscaping.

This application relates only to the permanent works associated with the project. Temporary works including traffic management associated with the construction phase of the project are subject to separate minor works approval processes.





The plans and supporting documentation can be viewed on the NCA's website at <https://www.nca.gov.au/planning/works-approval/wa-under-consultation>.

Submissions can be made by email to: WAconsultation@nca.gov.au.

The NCA welcomes feedback on this application by 5:00pm, Friday 5 December 2025.

For further information, contact the NCA on (02) 6271 2888.

 nca.gov  nca_gov_au  @nca_media

Find out more at: www.nca.gov.au

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Australian Government
National Capital Authority

HAVE YOUR SAY

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE BRIDGE RENEWAL PROJECT

PERMANENT CONSTRUCTION WORKS

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This application relates only to permanent works associated with the project. Temporary works including traffic management for the construction phase of the project are subject to separate minor works approval processes.



The plans and supporting documentation can be viewed on the NCA's website at <https://www.nca.gov.au/planning/works-approval/wa-under-consultation>.

The NCA welcomes feedback on this application via email to: WAconsultation@nca.gov.au by 5:00pm Friday 5 December 2025.

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

www.nca.gov.au

Attachment B

List of submitters

1. Pedal Power
2. One Private Citizen