



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

Authority Meeting A2019/6

9 December 2019

Public Record

*I endorse this Public Record of the
Authority meeting held on 9 December 2019*

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

Mr Terry Weber, Chair of the National Capital Authority

This document is a public record of the National Capital Authority meeting held on 9 December 2019. As some matters discussed at Authority meetings are personal, privileged and/or confidential, this record follows but does not represent the formal minutes of the meeting.

Administration and Governance

The following Authority members were present at the meeting: Mr Terry Weber (Chair), Mr Glenn Keys, Mr Dennis Richardson and Ms Sally Barnes (Chief Executive).

This meeting was the Authority's sixth regular meeting for 2019.

The Authority noted it was Mr Glenn Keys' last meeting. The Authority thanked Mr Keys for his service to the Authority over his five-year term.

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

Work Health and Safety Report

The Authority received and considered an update on Work Health and Safety (WHS) involving the NCA which included the work the NCA's Health and Safety Committee, work on the NCASafe program, progress re-developing hazardous material management plans, and summary reports on incidents and hazards.

Risk Management

The Authority received and considered the presented report on risk management in the NCA.

The Authority discussed current risks and appropriate responses including in relation to the risk of cyber-attack.

Planning and Performance

The Authority received and discussed the presented paper on planning and performance matters.

The Authority congratulated relevant NCA staff for the strong recent performance in processing works approval within the performance standard and for very high satisfaction ratings from visitors to the National Capital Exhibition and other NCA attractions.

Governance and Compliance

The Authority received and discussed the presented report on current governance and compliance matters including work on protective security arrangements and membership of the NCA Audit Committee.

Following deliberation, the Authority agreed to the proposed membership of the NCA Audit Committee. The Authority asked that an Authority Member attend Audit Committee meetings as an observer to ensure there is good linkages and information flows between the Authority and the Committee.

Human Resources (HR) Report

The Authority received and discussed aspects of the presented HR report including factors underlying staff turnover and the APSC staff census. On turnover, the Authority noted some churn in casual staff working at the National Capital Exhibition and stability in the NCA's senior leadership cohort.

Finance Report

The Authority received and discussed the presented finance report, which included financial results for the financial year to end-October 2019. NCA officers advised the NCA is on track to achieve a balanced budget outcome for 2019-20 and that the NCA's capital budget is being reviewed to ensure the best use of funds including possible re-allocations between projects where indicated.

The Authority discussed possible work on the Federation Centenary Fountains to either restore their function and operation or perhaps look at another way the area could be re-developed such as through landscaping. The discussion included the elements and staging of possible works, initial and ongoing budget implications, and heritage aspects. The Authority asked for an options papers to be prepared.

The Authority received an update on and discussed aspects of current NCA procurement work.

Forward Agenda

The Authority noted its forward agenda for meetings to be held in 2020. No specific conflicts of interest regarding agenda items for future meetings were identified.

Presentation – Draft Amendment 94 – National Arboretum Hotel Proposal

The Authority received a presentation from representatives of the National Arboretum Canberra on a proposal for a hotel development at the Arboretum.

The presentation covered the general background of the Arboretum and the details of the proposed Eco Lodge development, featuring boutique accommodation, a central lodge, wellness facilities, and related plantings and infrastructure.

The Authority discussed aspects of the proposal with the proponents including the design aims and drivers, heritage implications, fire resistance, proposed uses across the facility over a typical weekly cycle, and access and traffic implications. The Authority noted the potential scale of some proposed uses.

The presenters outlined the next steps in progressing the project, and thanked the NCA for their input to date and the Authority for consideration of the proposal. The Authority discussed aspects of water use at the Arboretum more generally in the context of prevailing dry conditions. The Authority thanked the proponents for their presentation.

Following the presentation, the Authority concluded further clarity and specificity of the Draft Amendment is required to ensure the scale of the development is appropriate and fully meets the aims of the National Capital Plan. The Authority asked that the presented Draft Amendment be refined to be address matters discussed, ahead of public consultation.

Presentation – CRA Update on Key Issues of Interest to both CRA and NCA

The Authority received a presentation from the Chief Executive of the ACT Government's City Renewal Authority (CRA) on current projects of mutual interest to the CRA and the NCA.

The Chief Executive provided an outline of the key issues, principles and approach in developing the Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct Plan, and the City Hill Precinct Urban Design Framework. The Authority discussed a range of issues arising from the presentation including heritage aspects; transport, parking and access; and trees and open spaces in the presented plans.

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Acton Waterfront development, noting the project is awaiting resolution of the status of land proposed to be reclaimed from the lake.

The Authority thanked the Chief Executive for his presentation and looked forward to continuing to exchange information on these and other relevant developments.

Presentation – Light Rail Stage 2

The Authority received a presentation by officers from Major Projects Canberra, ACT Government, on the Light Rail project, focussing on Stage 2A.

The presenters sought the Authority's input on the project's processes, next steps and key design elements, including proposed stop locations; road alignment; landscaping; and traffic arrangements, intersections and signals; and shared zone propositions. The presentation also covered the possible location and form of the traction power substation, and proposed stop designs.

The Authority noted significant implications of Light Rail Stage 2 across a range of the Authority's responsibilities and interests, and that Stage 2A cannot be considered in isolation from Stage 2B. The Authority also noted the need for a co-ordinated and coherent approach to development plans being worked on by Major Projects Canberra and the City Renewal Authority.

The Authority thanked the ACT Government officers for their presentation and looked forward to continuing to work on the project, noting the ambitious timelines being pursued.

The Authority discussed further some key aspects of the proposal including traffic and access implications (and underpinning assumptions and studies) and a range of key issues and requirements.

The Authority asked that the NCA write to Major Projects Canberra setting out the Authority's position on the matters discussed. Further, the Authority asked to arrange for Members to walk the proposed route to enhance their understanding of the relevant issues and to ask Major Projects Canberra to provide another presentation to the Authority at their first meeting in 2020.

Chief Executive Report

The Authority received a detailed report from the Chief Executive covering a range of strategic matters that have commenced or progressed since the previous Authority meeting.

The Authority discussed elements of the report including Lake Burley Griffin's current lower water level and its implications for the NCA. The Authority noted mitigation measures being pursued including reduced and targeted water usage, as well as communication initiatives.

The Authority also discussed plans for statues of former Prime Ministers, and financial and related aspects of developing a new diplomatic estate.

The Authority asked that the NCA offer members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories a tour of the National Estate, and to ask relevant organisations for up-to-date information on women in Parliament to inform a discussion about possible increased recognition on the Estate.

Hazardous Materials Management

NCA officers presented a report updating the Authority on a Hazardous Materials Survey which is currently nearing completion.

The Authority noted the report and good progress in the project. The Authority welcomed confirmation that the survey identified a negligible number of new potentially-contaminated sites, including following extensive sampling and testing at the site of a possible carpark on Acton Peninsula. Development of this site can now be progressed, with an appropriate protocol regarding possible unexpected finds. The Authority asked for plans to remediate sites identified as having lead-based paint.

Anzac Parade Hebes

NCA officers presented a paper on the proposed approach to managing the Hebe plants on Anzac Parade.

The Authority discussed aspects of the report including the probable causes of the Hebes not thriving, short-term plans to manage the situation in the lead up to Anzac Day 2020, and a longer-term replacement and management strategy.

Following deliberation, the Authority agreed to the proposed short-term and long-term measures to address the issue, and thanked relevant officers for preparing the paper.

Sunsetting Legislation

NCA officers presented the Authority with a report updating them on the sunseting legislation process.

The Authority noted the presented report and looked forward to an update on the policy implications of the sunseting process at the Authority's February 2020 meeting.

Media and Communications Report

The Authority received and noted the Media and Communications Report, which included key media coverage of NCA-related issues.

Events and Place Activation Report

The Authority received and noted the Events and Place Activation report.

The Authority discussed possible works to re-furbish Stage 88 and related financial issues, and asked for a paper on the issue for the Authority's February or April 2020 meeting.

The Authority welcomed the range of new events being secured and pursued.

Works Approval Report

The Authority received and noted the Works Approval Report, which included an update on key current developments, pre-application meetings and recent processing rates.

Strategic Planning Report

The Authority received and discussed the Strategic Planning Report, which provided an overview of current key development proposals and related work, including possible designs for a proposed memorial for victims and survivors of institutional sexual abuse.

Following discussion, the Authority agreed to an initial investigation into the landing of a sea plane on Lake Burley Griffin, on the basis that there would be no expectation of eventual approval of ongoing operations.

The Authority asked for a review of the effectiveness of the Landscape and Sustainability Guidelines (Deakin/Forrest Residential Area Precinct Code, July 2018) at the end of the financial year.

Major Projects Committee Report

The Authority received and noted the report on the work of the Major Projects Committee, which included details of key projects being undertaken by the NCA.

The Authority discussed a range of matters relating to the Detailed Business Case for the Upgrade of Commonwealth Avenue Bridge, including the status of consultations with key stakeholders and proposed project governance arrangements.

Audit Committee Report

The Authority received and noted the report provided on the work of the NCA Audit Committee, especially relating to their most recent meeting held on 29 November 2019.

ICT Committee Report

The Authority received and noted the ICT Committee Report and agreed that the CIO of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development, join the Committee.

Other business

No other business was raised.

The Authority noted its next regular meeting is scheduled for 12 February 2020.