



CORPORATE PLAN

2020-21 to 2023-24



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

Chair's Message

On behalf of the National Capital Authority (NCA), I am pleased to present the 2020-21 NCA Corporate Plan, which covers the period 2020-21 to 2023-24, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land of Canberra and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging and recognise their on-going connection to country.

Canberra has been a special meeting place for tens of thousands of years. That role continues today as Canberra fulfils its place as Australia's National Capital and the seat of the Australian Government. Canberra is home to the Australian Parliament, our Governor-General and the High Court of Australia. Canberra is where we present ourselves to the world and where we host the world's diplomatic community. Canberra is home to some of Australia's leading universities and where we house many of our important cultural institutions and collections that tell our national story.

The NCA's mission is to shape a capital that all Australians can be proud of. We do this by making sure the National Capital is well planned, managed and promoted, consistent with its enduring national significance. It is the NCA's role to consider the long-term needs of the Australian Government within its capital, while at the same time playing our part in contributing to a sustainable and well-managed local and regional city.

On 23 March 2020 the Australian Government, through an agreement with the ACT Government, secured 31.6 hectares of land at North Curtin that will facilitate the development of a new diplomatic estate to meet our national obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. A key priority for 2020-21 will be planning the future of this estate as a high quality, sustainable and attractive addition to Canberra's landscape.

At the local level, the events of the past 12 months that included on-going drought, bushfires, a significant hailstorm and then COVID-19, remind us of the importance of a well-planned and well-managed place – particularly to the health and wellbeing of its citizens. At the national level, these events highlight the importance of our Australian democracy and our federated system of government in supporting all citizens and maintaining social cohesion. Fittingly, these are the principles and ideals that underpin the original Griffin plans for Canberra as the National Capital.

Throughout the past year the NCA prioritised the safety and wellbeing of the community and our staff and supporting on-going economic activity wherever possible. We fast-tracked our business systems to digital platforms and implemented business continuity strategies to keep planning and approvals and estate management actions operating as efficiently as possible. We were able to support our major contractors remain at work and together we managed and enhanced key assets including Scrivener Dam, the walls of Lake Burley Griffin, the National Carillon and the iconic high mast lights along main routes to Parliament House.

As we move into the coming year, we will remain flexible and adaptive as we plan for a COVID-19 and hopefully post COVID -19 world. We know there will be changes in our operating environment, particularly in relation to who will be able to travel to the National Capital. At the same time we know we need to plan for an increase in people seeking to safely use the open spaces we manage.

The NCA's key priorities for the coming period include:

- continuing to encourage high quality design, landscaping and environmental and heritage management
- designing a diplomatic estate that sits appropriately within Canberra's high quality and unique landscapes
- managing and promoting safe and accessible places and experiences in the nation's capital
- enhancing Australia's natural and cultural heritage in Canberra
- continuing a program of priority asset renewal and rejuvenation

I commend the 2020-21 Corporate Plan to all Australians.



Terry Weber

Chair, National Capital Authority

31 August 2020



The National Capital Authority

The National Capital Authority (NCA) is established under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* (the PALM Act). The Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories has administrative responsibility for the PALM Act.

The NCA performs the role of trustee of the National Capital and, in this capacity, serves the interests of the Australian Government, the nation and its people. The NCA is responsible for:

- shaping the National Capital into the future
- managing and enhancing the nationally significant parts of Canberra
- fostering awareness of Canberra as Australia's National Capital.

The Authority itself comprises a Chair, a Chief Executive and three other members, all of whom are appointed by the Governor-General. The current members of the National Capital Authority are:

- Mr Terry Weber (Chair)
- Mr Dennis Richardson AC
- Ms Jenny Smithson
- Ms Sally Barnes (Chief Executive)

The Government is currently considering the appointment of the fifth member of the Authority.

The Authority is the accountable authority for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The Chief Executive has the responsibility of an Agency Head under the *Public Service Act 1999* and manages the day-to-day affairs of the NCA. The Chief Executive is a full-time officer while the other members serve as Authority members on a part-time basis.

NCA Corporate Plan – purposes and activities

The Corporate Plan is the NCA's primary strategic planning document and sets out the goals and strategies we will pursue to achieve our purpose over the next four years. The Plan provides details of the NCA's statutory role, planned deliverables, performance measures and targets, and the assessments used to evaluate our performance. The Plan also provides important contextual and supporting information.

The NCA is committed to implementing the aims and deliverables set out in the Corporate Plan in accordance with the NCA's mission:

To shape Canberra as a capital that all Australians can be proud of by ensuring it is well planned, managed and promoted, consistent with its enduring national significance.

The functions of the NCA, as set out in section 6 of the PALM Act, are to:

- prepare and administer a National Capital Plan
- keep the National Capital Plan under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary
- on behalf of the Commonwealth, commission works to be carried out in Designated Areas in accordance with the Plan where neither a Department of State of the Commonwealth nor any Commonwealth authority has the responsibility to commission those works
- recommend to the Minister the carrying out of works that it considers desirable to maintain or enhance the character of the National Capital



Photo Martin Ollman

- foster an awareness of Canberra as the National Capital
- with the approval of the Minister, perform planning services for any person or body, whether within Australia or overseas
- with the approval of the Minister, and excluding the management and regulation of the taking of water, manage National Land designated in writing by the Minister as land required for the special purposes of Canberra as the National Capital

In addition, the *National Land (Road Transport) Ordinance 2014* makes the NCA's Chief Executive responsible for the administration of pay parking on National Land.

Over the next four years, the NCA will be working to the following strategic themes:

- continuing to reinforce and advance Canberra's national role and significance
- advancing a broad program of asset renewal and rejuvenation, informed by critical analysis, active consultation and sound risk management to form a pipeline of priority projects
- encouraging people to visit their National Capital by providing quality visitor experiences and tourism opportunities within the National Triangle
- contributing to positive social, economic, heritage and environmental outcomes for all Australians
- focussing on organisational resilience and innovation.

Managing National Capital assets and attractions

The National Capital Estate covers a significant and central area of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

With a total value of almost \$970m, NCA-managed assets and attractions include:

- Lake Burley Griffin
- Scrivener Dam
- Anzac Parade and its memorials
- Australians of the Year Walk
- Blundells Cottage
- Boundless Canberra Playground
- Captain Cook Memorial Jet
- Commonwealth Place
- Diplomatic Estates
- Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum
- National Rock Garden
- Magna Carta Place
- National Capital Exhibition
- National Carillon
- National Triangle
- Old Parliament House Gardens
- Parliamentary Zone
- Peace Park
- Reconciliation Place
- R.G. Menzies Walk
- 38 bridges, including Commonwealth and Kings Avenue bridges
- 20 historic and operational buildings
- Over 130 memorials, monuments and ceremonial sites
- Over 60 kilometres of roads
- 105 car parks with around 9000 spaces
- Over 90 kilometres of pathways and cycleways
- Around 18,000 trees
- 20 listed heritage places (18 on the Commonwealth Heritage List and two on the National Heritage List).

Operational environment and challenges

The NCA operates within a complex and dynamic operational environment. Like our predecessor organisations, we maintain a national perspective and take the long-term view for all Australians when planning for the future of the National Capital. In our day-to-day operations we concentrate on areas of national significance and the development of strategies to maintain and enhance a substantial and rich heritage and asset base that make our areas of responsibility unique.

While regularly managing incidents and different operational challenges, the NCA like many other organisations in the ACT was effectively in incident management mode for most of the first half of 2020. Key staff were transferred to special roles or took on additional tasks to manage the impacts of bushfires and resultant air pollution, severe drought, a massive hailstorm and finally the COVID-19 pandemic.

The recent period highlighted issues we should progress with speed, such as greater workplace flexibility and finalising improvements to our business systems. It was a timely reminder of the importance of the health and wellbeing of our staff as they demonstrated their commitment and positive attitude to continue to deliver outcomes in the face of uncertainty.

The recent period reinforced the need to continuously monitor safety and access to open and parkland spaces as community demand and interest in using our areas for exercise, recreation, family gatherings and relaxation increased.

Our Corporate Plan focuses on consolidating these gains and making further improvements to meet ongoing challenges and to remain a healthy and resilient organisation. We will focus on renewed workforce planning; work, health and safety; streamlined, sound business practice; and engagement and collaboration with the Australian community.

The NCA is a relatively small organisation with around 57 staff. We outsource many on-ground activities and operate under a relatively flat structure reflecting the skill sets and responsibilities of our subject matter experts. In our corporate support areas, individuals often assume responsibility for a range of tasks so as to ensure the organisation has strong governance foundations. We will continue to support our people to work flexibly and to be the best staff member, parent, carer and community member they wish to be.



Managing risks

The NCA recognises that risk management is an essential part of effective governance and strategic and business planning that must be incorporated into all processes to maximise our ability to achieve our purposes.

The NCA maintains a Risk Management Policy and Framework that provides the foundation and organisational arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and continually improving the management of risks across the agency.

The Framework encapsulates the identification, monitoring and treatment of strategic risks, management risks and operational risks as part of the NCA's governance arrangements. Fraud Risks are recognised and addressed in the NCA's Fraud Control Plan 2019-21.

The NCA's strategic risks are overseen by the Authority, senior management and the NCA's Audit Committee. Management and operational risks are factored into the annual Business Plans and managed by the relevant team.

The NCA's highest strategic risks are:

- failure of significant assets such as Commonwealth Avenue Bridge due to lack of investment when required
- injury or death to staff, contractors or visitors using our assets or land

- getting the appropriate expertise and skills in place to manage high priority projects such as development of the new diplomatic estate
- diverting regular maintenance funding and resources to assets that have run to failure and require immediate attention
- responding to the challenge of a new working and operational environment brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic requiring flexibility, innovation and a strong outcome focus.

Management strategies include:

- asset management plans are regularly updated in line with the NCA's Strategic Financial Plan and business cases prepared as appropriate for Government consideration
- maintaining a positive safety culture is a priority for the NCA – safety and hazard checks are regularly undertaken to capture condition of assets and prioritise budget and work program; safety plans for major events and projects are reviewed regularly by NCA staff; the NCA takes all possible actions to prevent death or serious injury; work health and safety training is mandated for all staff.
- aligning people and resources with areas of greatest priority by implementing strategic workforce planning.

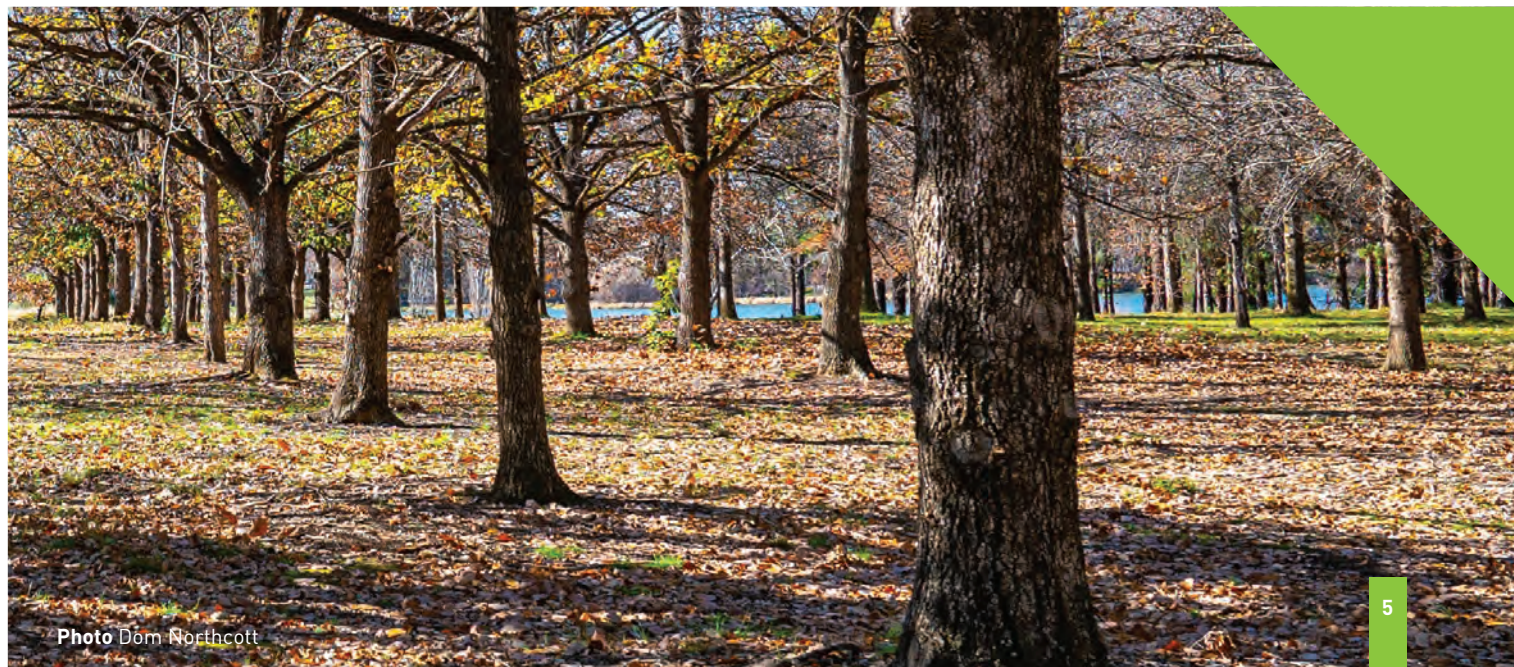


Photo Dom Northcott



Photo: Martin Ollman

The NCA's Plan for 2020-21 to 2023-24

The NCA's mission is to shape Canberra as a capital that all Australians can be proud of by ensuring it is well planned, managed and promoted, consistent with its enduring national significance.

For the purposes of identifying and reporting against significant strategic priorities, the Corporate Plan has combined the related functions under the PALM Act and related NCA activities into the following three key strategic objectives:

1. PEOPLE

Encouraging Australians and visitors to celebrate and share the story of our nation through Canberra, our National Capital

2. PLACE

Excellence in the care and stewardship of the National Capital's special and symbolic places

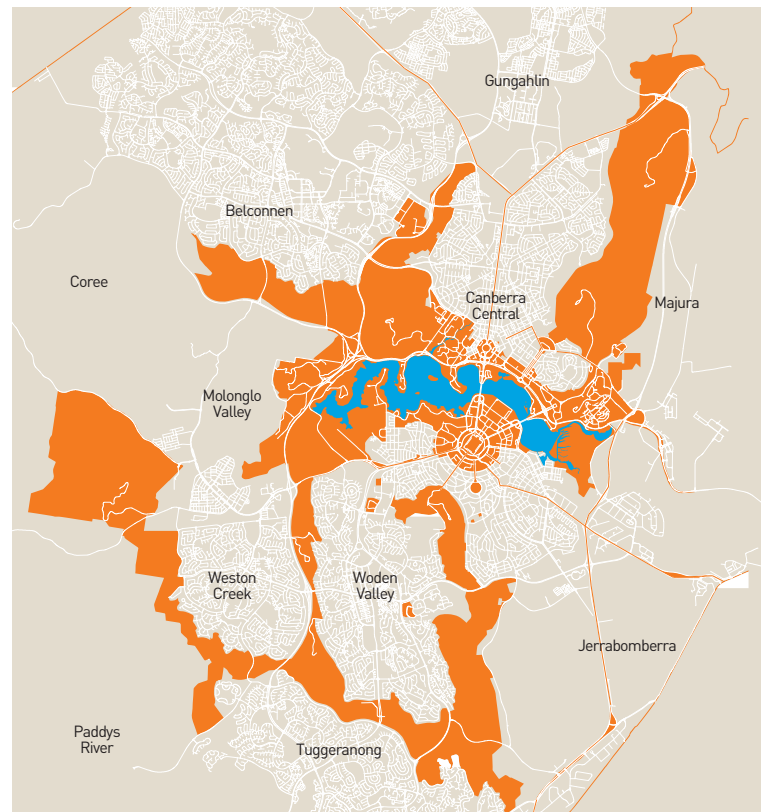
3. PLAN

Strategic planning and oversight of the places and spaces of national importance in Canberra

Details on the NCA's intended results and how we plan to achieve them, including the measures, targets and assessments, are set out below. These components will be used to measure our performance over the next four years and for the purposes of preparing the NCA's annual performance statements against each key strategic objective.



Land Managed by the NCA



Designated Areas under NCA's detailed planning control

1. PEOPLE – Encouraging Australians and visitors to celebrate and share the story of our nation through visiting Canberra, our National Capital

The current operating environment in relation to this outcome has changed with COVID-19. International borders have effectively been closed and school visits to Canberra as part of the Parliamentary and Civics Education Program in various curriculums have been put on hold. The interest in holding nationally significant events has shifted, although event organisers are pencilling in new dates for possible events when the operating environment allows.

We have pivoted and put more promotional and education resources on line. We have used the downturn in facilitating events to improve our business systems to support future events. We are improving our place finding and place travelling signage and support material.

Our volunteers were asked to stand down when there were COVID-19 cases in the ACT and will be asked to do so again if the circumstances require it. We maintained contact with our volunteers and provided training material and suggestions to help keep them connected to their important contribution to the work of the NCA.

While the future operating environment is still not clear, over the next four years the NCA will deploy appropriate strategies to foster awareness about the special role and significance of Canberra as Australia's National Capital with the following focus areas.

1. Deliver programs, events and tours to encourage Australian and international visitors to experience the National Capital
2. Maximise the access and use of National Land to promote a strong understanding of the significance of the National Capital and its role in the story of the Australian people, including programs and support for national events.

Further details about the activities, intended outcomes and relevant performance measures are set out below.

1.1. Deliver programs, events and tours to encourage Australian and international visitors to experience the National Capital

Intended result:

- Australian and international visitors are encouraged to visit and welcomed back to the National Capital as soon as possible
- high-quality visitor services, events, attractions and programs are developed, especially through the National Capital Exhibition and online
- recognition of the importance the National Triangle and its unique features and attractions.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- there is a high level of access and enjoyment of visitors to NCA-managed attractions, including the National Capital Exhibition, Blundells Cottage, the National Carillon, Anzac Parade, Commonwealth Park and the National Triangle, including through online programs and services
- the visitor satisfaction surveys and exit surveys show a client satisfaction rating of at least 90%¹ across NCA-managed attractions
- there is an increased recognition of the perspective and contribution of Indigenous Australians in the National Capital including through programs at the National Capital Exhibition.

¹ Performance criteria 1.1.1 – National Capital Authority – Portfolio Budget Statement – 2019-20

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- improving visitor experiences in the National Triangle to consolidate and connect the unique cultural experiences of the area, including improved wayfinding, signage and digital experiences
- launching an online interpretation guide for Blundells Cottage and a new Carillon program.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- working collaboratively with National Cultural Institutions to promote a unified and cohesive tourism message to market the Canberra and its National Triangle as a 'must-see' tourism destination
- partnering with EventsACT to encourage an increased national awareness of co-operative events, such as Floriade and Enlighten
- increasing the number and success of annual events held in the National Capital.



1.2. Maximise the access and use of National Land to promote a strong understanding of the significance of the National Capital and its role in the story of the Australian people, including programs and support for national events

Intended result:

- a high level of awareness and understanding of the significance of Canberra as the National Capital
- a strong and positive level of engagement with the Australian community in the National Capital, including through using new, innovative technologies
- Australians and international visitors are able to access, use and enjoy National Land for social, recreational and significant life events.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- there is strong recognition of the National Capital, its attractions and nationally-significant events within the Australian community
- National Land supports and promotes activity, good health and connectedness, including through community and cultural events, and recreation activities
- there are productive partnerships with key organisations and agencies including EventsACT, the Australia Day Council, the Reconciliation Council and Reconciliation Australia, and Canberra's National cultural Institutions
- the NCA's committed and enthusiastic volunteers are recognised and supported in their work.

Subject to COVID-19 restrictions, for 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- successfully celebrating landmark national and local events including Australia Day, Canberra Day, Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and Reconciliation Day
- improving visitor facilities and opportunities for events, concerts and functions at Commonwealth Park and Aspen Island
- developing a business case for the re-development of Stage 88 and surrounds.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- enhancing NCA supported events and activities, based on stakeholder and customer feedback
- fostering new events and an increase in the number and type of events and activities on Lake Burley Griffin
- scope a re-development of Stage 88 and surrounds if a business case is successful.



Photo Dom Northcott

2. PLACE – Excellence in the care and stewardship of the National Capital's special and symbolic places

To facilitate the effective management and enhancement of natural, cultural and built assets on National Land, the NCA will be focusing on the following key areas over the next four years:

1. Manage the NCA's ageing assets and significant sites to ensure their national importance, useability, heritage values and significance to the National Capital are maintained
2. Provide safe, functional, accessible and attractive public spaces and infrastructure in the National Capital for recreation and public use
3. Protect and enhance the ecological integrity and resilience of land and waterbodies on the National Capital Estate.

2.1. Manage the NCA's ageing assets and significant sites to ensure their national importance, useability, heritage values and significance to the National Capital are maintained

Intended result:

- long-term financial decisions and significant investment required to maintain NCA-managed assets at an appropriate standard are underpinned by Strategic Asset Management Plans and the Strategic Financial Plan
- continuous asset maintenance and renewal is undertaken to enhance the significance and amenity of the National Capital, in accordance with the National Capital Plan.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- at least 90%² of capital improvements are actioned within target timeframes
- the strategic Asset Management System (AMS) is fully integrated and used to inform strategic financial planning and programming of works.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- operationalising the Strategic Asset Management Plans and embedding the AMS into the management of our assets through the asset lifecycle
- successfully advancing high priority projects to extend asset life, improve amenity and reduce safety risks – priority projects include:
 - » Commonwealth Avenue Bridge
 - » Regatta Point redevelopment
 - » Scrivener Dam
 - » Lake Burley Griffin walls
 - » Anzac Parade landscape and memorials
 - » Kings Park pedestrian improvement works.

² Performance Criteria 1.2.1 – National Capital Authority – Portfolio Budget Statement – 2019-20





Photo Martin Ollman

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- maintaining and improving safety, asset management, spatial information and project management systems and processes to address business requirements and community expectations.

2.2. Provide safe, functional, accessible and attractive public spaces and infrastructure in the National Capital for recreation and public use

Intended result:

- the standard and presentation of National Land and assets are commensurate with their national role and significance.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- safety hazards are assessed and actioned according to their risk profile
- at least 90%³ of maintenance issues are addressed within target timeframes, according to safety risk and priority
- potential injuries to visitors, contractors and staff are minimised through timely risk identification and mitigation

- there is improved accessibility and efficiency of pay parking arrangements for users through technology enhancements, including web-based applications.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- specific priorities include:
 - » improving cycle and foot paths across the Estate
 - » improvements to public access between the National Gallery of Australia's Sculpture Garden and Lake Burley Griffin
 - » horticultural presentation and lighting improvements on Anzac Parade.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- scoping works to maintain the integrity of Parkes Way and Kings Avenue Bridge.

3 Performance Criteria 1.2.2 – National Capital Authority – Portfolio Budget Statement – 2019-20



2.3. Protect and enhance the ecological integrity and resilience of land and waterbodies on the National Capital Estate

Intended result:

- the national and cultural heritage and ecological values across the National Capital Estate are conserved and enhanced.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- there is good accessibility and active use of National Land which allows the community to enjoy the natural environment
- Indigenous cultural heritage on National Land is identified, respected and valued
- biosecurity and ecological risks are actively and effectively managed.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- continuing to provide timely and accurate advice regarding the water quality of Lake Burley Griffin
- completing the restoration of native vegetation at the former pine plantation in Stirling Park by replanting with grassy woodland species
- progressive control of Weeds of National Significance
- implementing the Flying Fox management plan for Commonwealth Park.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- reviewing networks and systems (such as electrical services) that will underpin the future development of the National Capital Estate over coming decades.

3. PLAN – Strategic planning and oversight of the places and spaces of national importance in Canberra

The NCA will be continuing to plan places and spaces on National Land and in Designated Areas to reflect their national significance while working with the ACT Government to develop a modern, liveable, accessible and thriving city through the following objectives:

1. Ensure the Capital can continue to perform its national and international functions effectively and efficiently
2. Engage and consult the Australian Community on plans for the future growth of the National Capital
3. Plan for a changing climate and its impact on National Capital landscapes, infrastructure and waterways
4. Continue to encourage high quality design and landscaping and leading practice environmental and heritage management
5. Assess and manage applications to undertake works in Designated Areas to ensure they are in accordance with the National Capital Plan.

Further details about the intended results and the performance measures for each key activity are set out below.

3.1. Ensure the National Capital can continue to perform its national and international functions effectively and efficiently

Intended result:

- the national significance and special role of Canberra is appropriately reflected in the National Capital Plan and supporting documents
- the National Capital Plan reflects contemporary planning practices and meets the needs of the local and broader Australian community
- the planning framework guides future development to ensure National Capital values are strengthened.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- detailed policy and guidelines within the Plan and other policy documents support the Australian Government's interest in the purpose and functioning of Canberra as the National Capital.



Photo Martin Ollman

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- planning the development of the new diplomatic estate in Curtin
- reviewing the Guidelines for Commemorative Works in the National Capital in accordance with the Government's response to Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories' report, 'Etched in Stone'
- producing development guidelines for the southern approaches to the Central National Area
- planning for effective and safe movement systems within the National Triangle, especially in relation to the ACT Government's Light Rail and active travel plans.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- considering longer term plans for possible institutions in the National Triangle
- continuing a program of review of the National Capital Plan, which includes review of detailed planning and design policy for nationally significant areas of Canberra and the ACT
- proposing, drafting and consulting on amendments to the National Capital Plan in accordance with an agreed strategy for review of the National Capital Plan.

3.2. Engage and consult the Australian Community on plans for the future growth of the National Capital

Intended result:

- strong and positive engagement with the Australian community using inclusive consultation techniques.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- all required National Capital Plan Amendments, Development Control Plans, master plans and/or urban design guidelines have been prepared with input from the community in line with the NCA's Commitment to Community Engagement policy
- public engagement activities include a cross-section of the Australian community, including in terms of physical location and representativeness of the community's diversity.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- reviewing the effectiveness of existing public consultation techniques and processes concerning works approvals and strategic planning matters
- preparation of a revised Commitment to Community Engagement policy.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- advancing and implementing new and innovative consultation strategies through a range of new consultation tools
- having successful partnerships with key stakeholders to ensure positive outcomes for the National Capital.

3.3. Plan for a changing climate and its impact on National Capital landscapes, infrastructure and waterways

Intended result:

- the National Capital Plan promotes excellence in design and development outcomes, including with respect to place making and environmental sustainability.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- the National Capital Plan provides a leading practice statutory framework to guide urban development that respects environmental values and ensures resilience in the context of a changing climate
- planning and design proposals are informed by policies on a changing climate and its impact on the natural and built environment
- changing climate and water quality predictions inform master plans for the National Triangle and nearby land, including Barton, the Lake Burley Griffin Foreshores and Aspen Island.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- implementing the NCA's Tree Management Policy to inform tree replacement and planting programs as well as the broader management of the treed landscape
- implementing the strategy for the sustainability of Anzac Parade plantings.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- enhancing existing policy to ensure that Canberra and the ACT continue to develop in a way that promotes environmental sustainability and reflects national concerns about the sustainability of Australia's urban areas.

3.4. Continue to encourage high quality design and landscaping and leading practice environmental and heritage management

Intended result:

- works undertaken and approved by the NCA demonstrate excellence in design and environmental and heritage management.

Intended results will have been achieved when:

- works are recognised by industry and the community as being of high quality
- works incorporate leading practice initiatives concerning environmental and heritage management and sustainability
- the heritage values of places, including Indigenous values, managed by the NCA are respected and integrated into relevant planning, projects and management activities.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- supporting and actively participating in the National Capital Design Review Panel
- renewing and publishing the NCA Heritage Strategy and supporting components

- continuing a rolling program of review of the NCA's Heritage Management Plans
- specific proposals and developments are likely to include Commonwealth Avenue Bridge and works in and around the Australian National University, the Australian War Memorial, West Block, Anzac Park, West Basin and Acton Peninsula.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- continuing the rolling program of review of Heritage Management Plans, to meet the NCA's ongoing obligations under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- ensuring that the National Capital Plan and other relevant policy provides clear guidance on design quality, landscaping, environment, heritage and sustainability
- developing good design guides and enhanced engagement with community.

3.5. Assess and manage applications to undertake works in Designated Areas to ensure they are in accordance with the National Capital Plan

Intended result:

- all applications to undertake works (development) in Designated Areas are assessed against the National Capital Plan and actioned in an efficient, timely and transparent manner, with service fees in line with the Australian Government Charging Framework.



Intended results will have been achieved when:

- all approved applications are consistent with the principles and policies of the National Capital Plan
- at least 75%⁴ of Works Approvals applications processed are assessed against the National Capital Plan within 15 working days
- where possible, all applications are lodged, processed and managed using the NCA's Works Approval eLodgement system.

For 2020-21, key activities and focus areas are:

- reviewing the and Landscape and Sustainability Guidelines – Deakin/Forrest Residential Area Precinct Code (July 2018).
- ensuring applications are processed in an efficient, timely and transparent manner
- improving the workflow and reporting functionality of the Works Approval eLodgement system, including through the use of user feedback.

For the longer term, to 2023-24, key activities and focus areas are:

- assessing all proposals against the principles and policies of the National Capital Plan with a focus on transparency and clarity
- further improving the functionality of the Works Approval eLodgement system to ensure it is an efficient and effective tool for managing works approval applications
- consulting the community in accordance with the NCA's Commitment to Community Engagement policy.

⁴ Performance criterion 1.1.1 – National Capital Authority – Performance Budget Statement – 2019-20

Supporting Strategies and Capabilities

Stakeholder co-operation and engagement

The NCA works co-operatively and productively with our key stakeholders in order to best achieve our purpose and outcomes.

The NCA is part of the Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications portfolio and works closely with the Department and other relevant Australian Government agencies to achieve agreed Government objectives and priorities.

We have an effective working relationship with the ACT Government that recognises each other's role and the importance of co-ordinated and informed interaction.

The NCA continues to work closely with Canberra's National Cultural Institutions to pool resources and have work collaboratively where indicated.

The NCA works with a range of business partners and contracted providers to help deliver the NCA's outcomes and services, such as in construction and maintenance, estate management and parking operations.

The NCA is dedicated to substantive and meaningful community engagement and providing opportunities for the community to contribute new ideas and provide their views about the NCA's work.

The NCA will continue to actively seek input and feedback from stakeholders, customers and users across all areas of our operations with the deliberate aim of using this information to improve our services and outcomes. Specific initiatives are included in the key activities and focus areas of the Corporate Plan.

The NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement* policy:

- articulates the NCA's aim to foster awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the NCA
- provides an action plan for community engagement programs and activities



- identifies fit-for-purpose communication tools to achieve the best results
- sets out formal consultation requirements, the NCA's Service Charter for planning and works approvals, and feedback and complaint handling procedures.

The NCA is reviewing the NCA's *Commitment to Community Engagement* policy to ensure it continues to be effective and reflects contemporary practice, including with respect to the NCA's national role.

Human resources

The staff, who together deliver the NCA's functions and allow the agency to achieve its objectives, are its most important asset. The NCA will focus on building on its already high levels of staff engagement and innovation to continue to deliver effectively and efficiently for the community.

To support the achievement of our statutory responsibilities and purposes, while providing effective workforce support and development, the NCA's objectives are to:

- ensure that it has the right people, with the right skills, in the right jobs, at the right time
- create challenging and engaging roles for its staff
- ensure a strong focus on work health and safety, including with respect to workload and job design
- encourage and support strong internal collaboration to operate as a cohesive organisation

- have the workforce agility and adaptability necessary to meet any changing priorities, or changing work scenarios (such as those presented by COVID-19)
- focus on excellence in outcome and service deliverables to stakeholders, the public and the Australian Government
- have a strong understanding of the agency and how it operates as an Australian Government agency
- have a motivated, well-informed and participative leadership team
- provide appropriate learning and development opportunities to all staff.

Over the next four years, the NCA will prioritise:

- strategic workforce planning to ensure the NCA is well placed and resourced, with appropriate capability to deliver future functions and responsibilities for the community
- developing a contemporary learning and development plan to ensure it is meeting the training needs of staff to build the skills, capabilities and proficiency necessary to fulfil the roles to deliver the NCA's statutory responsibilities and purposes
- strengthening its leadership group by driving accountability and enhancing our management capabilities across all levels of the NCA.

Financial strategy

The NCA's Strategic Financial Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan provide the basis for long-term financial planning and sustainability for the agency. Given the large portfolio of ageing assets managed by the NCA, these Plans are central to informing long-term infrastructure investment in the National Capital, consistent with the nature and scale of the investment. The Strategic Financial Plan includes identifying new revenue opportunities by increasing asset utilisation and optimising operating expenditure to realise efficiencies and ensure appropriate resource allocation across NCA programs.

The plans are supported by the Asset Management System (AMS). The AMS is being increasingly integrated and relied on to underpin future investment. The AMS ensures the NCA can cost-effectively manage capital expenditure and plan for future works to invest in and renew National Capital infrastructure as well as maintain appropriate safety and service standards.

Business systems including information and communications technology

The NCA uses its business systems, including Information and Communications Technology (ICT) platform, systems and capability as a key enabler to all business areas, as well as to drive performance, productivity improvements and innovation across the agency.

The NCA has developed a new business systems strategy and roadmap which seeks to:

- ensure there are sound and facilitative business systems governance and operating arrangements
- maintain fit-for-purpose business systems architecture and capabilities
- continue to provide user-centred business systems services using a Cloud-based environment featuring integrated technologies, software and business processes
- sustain and improve NCA ICT services and capabilities through:
 - » supporting and implementing ICT and business system projects
 - » managing and mitigating risks associated with the NCA's ICT service delivery, particularly in relation to cyber security and protection of personal information
 - » meeting Australian Government ICT and information management requirements and objectives, including the Information Security Manual and Protective Security Policy Framework.



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- optimise business benefits and productivity efficiencies from a co-ordinated and aligned approach to business systems investment
- increase the level of innovation and efficiency in areas such as work flow, collaboration, information management, records management, and reporting and analysis
- provide NCA customers and users with accessible and effective online services
- support the use of asset management, geo-spatial and remote use capabilities to improve and integrate business functions and stakeholder interactions.

For 2020-21, the NCA has prioritised:

- improving the efficiency of ICT operations through the engagement of the new ICT managed service provider including the implementation of the Microsoft Azure Cloud platform
- increasing ease of the community engaging with the NCA through improvements in the Works Approval eLodgement system, NCA website, workplace health and safety system, event booking system
- increasing training and support services to internal customers to improve core system and application competency and capability, including for the Asset Management System (AMS) and NCA intranet
- exploring opportunities for emerging technologies to further enhance internal efficiency, communications and service delivery standards across all business operations.
- facilitating effective and secure remote working and collaboration, outreach and e-delivery, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background – NCA development

Self-government for the Australian Capital Territory in 1988 resulted in the Australian Government and the ACT Government sharing responsibility for the further planning and development of the Territory. Under the relevant legislation, the Australian Government is responsible for Canberra's role and functioning as the National Capital, and the ACT Government has responsibilities comparable to those of Australian States in most respects.

The National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA) was established under the PALM Act, through which the Australian Government retained responsibility for planning and development related to Canberra's role as the National Capital. In 1996, the name of the NCPA was changed to the National Capital Authority.

The PALM Act requires a National Capital Plan to be prepared and administered by the NCA, to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national role and significance. The National Capital Plan and any amendments to the Plan are submitted to the responsible Minister for approval and are also subject to Parliamentary agreement.

The PALM Act also requires the ACT Legislative Assembly to establish a Territory Planning Authority (currently part of the ACT Government's Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate) to prepare and administer a Territory Plan to provide the people of Canberra with an attractive, safe and efficient environment in which to live, work and recreate. The National Capital Plan prevails over the Territory Plan, but the two plans are intended to be complementary.

The Australian Constitution provides for the Seat of Government to be within a territory vested in and belonging to the Commonwealth. This provision means that all land in the ACT is owned by the Commonwealth. Planning responsibilities are determined by the PALM Act, the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan rather than by the status of land (ie 'National Land' or Territory Land').

Canberra, August 2020

CORPORATE PLAN 2020-21 to 2023-24

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