

ONE CITY HILL BLOCKS 10 & 11, SECTION 100, CITY ACT

PLANNING REPORT



July 2021



Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
SITE DETAILS	3
TOPOGRAPHY AND ORIENTATION	3
HERITAGE CONTEXT	3
OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	4
WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN MEASURES	4
SITE LOCATION	7
EXISTING SITE CONDITION	8
SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT	8
MASTERPLAN & SITE CONTEXT	9
STATUTORY PLANNING PROVISIONS	11
OBJECTIVES FOR CITY HILL PRECINCT	
LAND USE FOR CITY HILL PRECINCT	13
DETAILED CONDITIONS OF PLANNING, DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT	14



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This report has been prepared by Morris Property Group to assist the National Capital Authority in its assessment of a Works Approval Application for the construction of a new commercial office building at Blocks 10 & 11, Section 100, City ACT.

This report is to be read in conjunction with the full suite of documentation submitted as part of the Works Approval Application, including:

- Architectural drawings and Design Report by GMB Architects;
- Landscape drawings by Harris Hobbs Landscapes;
- Civil engineering drawings by Spiire:
- Traffic Report & Microsimulation Analysis by SMEC;
- Waste & Recycling Management Plan and associated drawings by SMEC;
- Pedestrian Wind Environment Study by Windtech;
- Water Sensitive Urban Design drawings by Tennant Hydraulic Consulting Services (THCS);
- Construction Management Plan by MPG Constructions Canberra (MPGCC).

1.2 Pre-Application Consultation

The Proponent has met with the National Capital Authority several times throughout the design process, and the proposal was presented to the National Capital Design Review Panel on

The proposal was presented to the National Capital Design Review Panel in June 2020. Following this, the design was developed in response to the Panel's advice, and a written response provided to the NCA in November 2020. A copy of this response, and explanatory architectural diagrams, is provided in the Architectural Design Report by GMB Architects, included with this Works Approval Application.

1.3 Site Details

Blocks 10 & 11, Section 100, City is located adjacent to City Hill, and has frontages to Vernon Circle, Edinburgh Avenue and Knowles Place. The overall site area is approximately 10,186m². It is designated land under the National Capital Plan.

This proposal forms Stage 2 of a three stage development of the Section 100 precinct by Morris Property Group.

Stage 1 comprised the construction of the Edinburgh Avenue extension on Block 7 Section 100 City which was completed in December 2020 and handed over to the Territory. Stage 2 comprises Blocks 10 and 11 Section 100 City and is the subject of this Works Approval Application.

For completeness, Stage 3 comprises Blocks 8 and 9 Section 100 City fronting London Circuit with a land area of 11,524m².

The subject site has a significant frontage to Vernon Circle, and provides a prominent visual reference and contribution to the development of the future City Hill precinct. Along with the recent redevelopment of the ACT Courts precinct to the north, it is one of the first sites to be developed and plays an important role in setting the future standard for development in the City Hill Precinct.



Knowles Place Extension, connecting the current Knowles Place to Edinburgh Avenue, will be constructed through the site and surrendered to the ACT Government as a public road upon completion.

1.4 Topography and Orientation

The site is gently sloping and has a ground level difference of approximately 4m across the area of proposed development.

The western face of the site has views of Black Mountain. The eastern face of the site has views across City Hill to Mount Ainslie. The southern side of the site has views across Lake Burley Griffin to the Parliamentary Triangle precinct.

1.5 Heritage Context

The site is not identified as a local or state heritage place and is not identified as adjoining a heritage place.

1.6 Overview of Proposed Development

This development proposal is a commercial office building over seven levels, with a significant amount of retail space fronting Knowles Place Extension. It also includes 871 parking spaces over three basement levels, to be utilised as both parking for occupants of the office building above, as well as public car parking.

The development provides a highly flexible, sustainable and innovative workplace environment that will contribute positively to the urban life of Canberra City. It comprises two distinct buildings which together provide cohesive and clearly defined built forms which complement the existing urban context.

Integral to the proposal is a strong and integrated response to City Hill and Vernon Circle, with a curvilinear façade, double height colonnade and textured louvre screen which aligns with the adjacent Court building and reinforces the civic nature of City Hill.

Stage 1 Site Area	10,186m²
Building Levels	6 at Vernon Circle. 7 at Knowles Place.
Basement Levels	3
Total Gross Area	Office Area: 34,086m ²
	Ancillary Area: 6,487m ²
	Retail Area: 783m²
Building Height	597.00m to Parapet from Vernon Circle

1.7 Water Sensitive Urban Design Measures

The proposed building includes a number of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) initiatives, including:

- High efficiency sanitary fixtures and tapware;
- Rain water re-use to toilet flushing and irrigation;
- Installation of a Stormwater Quality Improvement Device to meet required pollution reduction targets.

Further details are provided in the Water Sensitive Urban Design drawings by THCS included with this Works Approval Application.





MAIN BUILDING ENTRY AT KNOWLES PLACE



STRONG & ARTICULATED BUILDING FORM TO EDINBURGH AVENUE





DOUBLE HEIGHT COLONNADE ON VERNON CIRCLE

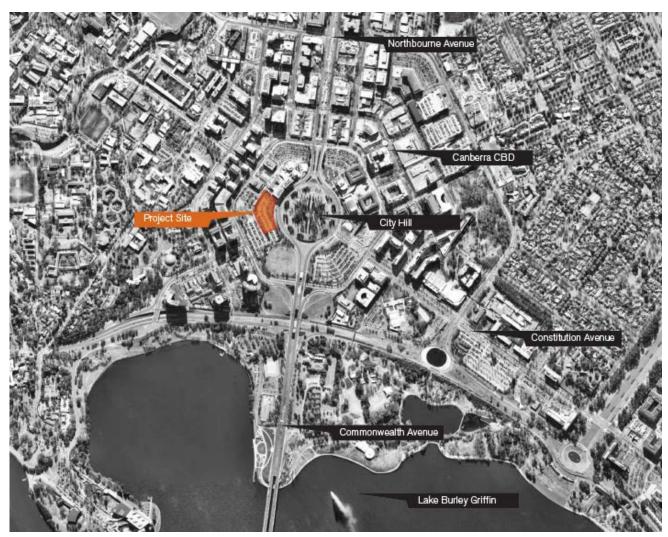


TEXTURED LOUVRE SCREEN FAÇADE ON VERNON CIRCLE



2. SITE & CONTEXT

2.1 Site Location



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SITE SHOWING BROAD CONTEXT



2.2 Existing Site Condition

The site is currently being developed in accordance with Works Approval WA101113, with the basement carparking levels nearing completion and expected to be open to the public in late 2021. This will provide a vital new addition to the current Canberra public parking supply.

Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the previous residential development proposal is no longer proceeding. This new proposal, a commercial office building, will now be constructed in its place.



VIEW OF BLOCKS 10 & 11 SECTION 100

2.3 Surrounding Development

The site neighbours the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory and ACT Policing City Watch House buildings to the north. To the west is 7 London Circuit, a seven-level office building, and the Metropolitan Apartments between Gordon Street and Edinburgh Avenue comprising two RL617 towers with interconnecting buildings of 3, 5 and 7 levels.

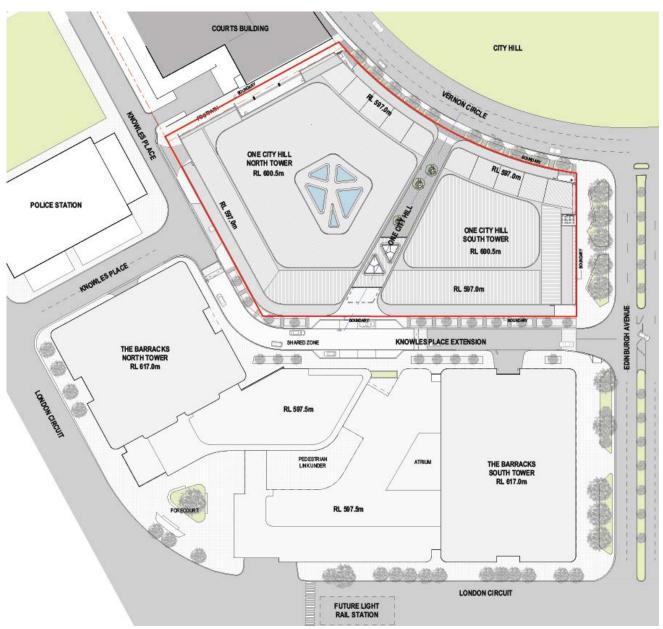
To the south of the site, across Edinburgh Avenue, is Block 21 Section 63, currently utilised as an open-air public car park, expected to be sold by the ACT Government and redeveloped in the future. The eastern frontage of the site is bounded by Vernon Circle and the City Hill parkland.



2.4 Masterplan & Site Context

This proposal forms Stage 2 of the development of the wider section. The overall development (Stages 2 and 3) consists of two landmark tower buildings to the London Circuit site corners, as stipulated in Amendment 87 to the National Capital Plan, a low rise central element to the western edge of the site fronting London Circuit, and a low rise building (Stage 2, the subject site) to the eastern edge of the site, fronting Vernon Circle.

The development of this site began with the construction of the Edinburgh Avenue extension from London Circuit through to Vernon Circle, which was completed by Morris Property Group in December 2020, handed back to the Territory and opened as a public road.



INDICATIVE PRECINCT MASTERPLAN WITH ONE CITY HILL OUTLINED IN RED.







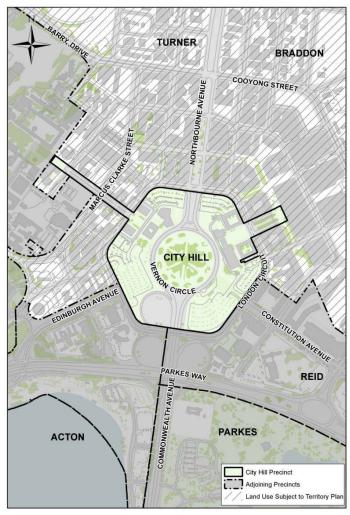
EDINBURGH AVENUE EXTENSION, RECENTLY COMPLETED BY MORRIS PROPERTY GROUP



3. STATUTORY PLANNING PROVISIONS

3.1 National Capital Plan

The site is within a Designated Area of the National Capital Plan and is located within the City Hill Precinct, and subject to the City Hill Precinct Code.



CITY HILL PRECINCT LOCATION



3.2 Objectives for City Hill Precinct

The National Capital Plan lists the following objectives for the City Hill Precinct:

- 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.
- 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.
- 3. That the City Hill Precinct provides a vibrant, interesting and lively centre with high levels of human activity.
- 4. Development must command the highest standards of urban design, sustainability, exemplary architecture and social inclusion, reflecting the character of the National Capital.
- 5. The City Hill Precinct must complement and actively relate to, and integrate with, the existing and future structure of the rest of City.
- 6. Encourage a mix of land uses, including residential uses, which contribute to a diverse and 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.

The proposed development is consistent with the above objectives.

The building is expected to be occupied by more than 2500 people on a daily basis, which, combined with the significant amount of retail space at ground level, will further promote the City Hill Precinct as the main commercial centre of Canberra.

The mixture of proposed uses (commercial office, retail, food & beverage outlets and a substantial public car park) will bring high levels of human activity to the site. The Knowles Place Extension has been designed with a pedestrian and bicycle friendly shared zone, aimed at slowing traffic and encouraging movement through the precinct.

In locating the majority of building services and vehicular access to the northern end of Knowles Place, retail frontages have been maximised and present a largely uninterrupted, activated streetscape.

The proposed office building is designed to meet a high standard of sustainability and energy efficiency, targeting a 5 Star NABERS rating and a 5 Star Green Star rating.



3.3 Land Use for City Hill Precinct

The subject site is zoned Land Use A which permits the following broad range of uses:

- 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
- Public Utility
- Residential
- Retail
- Scientific Research Establishment
- Social/Community Facility
- Tourist Facility

This proposed commercial office building with retail spaces and public car parking is consistent with above land uses permitted under the National Capital Plan.



3.4 Detailed Conditions of Planning, Design & Development for City Hill Precinct

Requirement	Response
GENERAL	
Subdivision patterns should be designed to minimise amalgamation of land and achieve a mix of development scales including fine urban grain.	In accordance with the City Hill Precinct Code, the overall masterplan for Section 100 includes a mix of building heights and scales. This first stage, known as One City Hill, consists of seven levels of office accommodation to a height of RL597. Future buildings planned on Blocks 8 & 9 include a mix
	of heights, from RL596.5 to RL617 for the landmark tower elements at the northern and southern end of the precinct.
	A number of pedestrian laneways have been included through the precinct to enhance permeability for pedestrians, as well as the Knowles Place Extension which provides vehicular connectivity.
New buildings are encouraged to be delivered through design competitions in order to encourage innovation and design excellence.	GMB Architects have a distinguished track record of design excellence in Canberra and internationally, with extensive experience in commercial, public and diplomatic buildings, as well as urban design and master planning.
The symbolic importance of the City Hill Precinct should be reinforced in the design treatment of the streetscape and public places.	The proposed landscape design by Harris Hobbs Landscapes features high quality treatments fitting of the symbolic importance of the City Hill Precinct, including granite paving accents and significant tree plantings.
	The building design includes a double height colonnade that wraps around the building, providing a comfortable and welcoming pedestrian experience.
Public art and art spaces in new development should be encouraged.	The proposed development will include a significant public art piece at the main entrance to One City Hill on Knowles Place. This will be subject to a carefully considered selection process in consultation with the NCA.
	The public laneways and outdoor plaza proposed in the future stages of the precinct, across Knowles Place, present further opportunities for public art and engagement with the community. These locations will be included in the future Works Approval Application for these buildings.



The landscape design by Harris Hobbs Landscapes incorporates high-quality soft and hard landscaping elements that respond to the geometry and formality of the Main Avenues. The granite paving used extensively along Edinburgh Avenue has been incorporated into the design of the Knowles Place Extension, with formal bands of granite aligning seamlessly with the building columns along this frontage. Where possible, physical security elements have been incorporated into the landscape design and obscured with planting to soften their visual impact.
The proposed office building has been designed with sustainability as a key consideration, with the following targets:
 Target NABERS Energy (Base Building) rating of 5 Stars; Target 5 Star Green Star (Design and As Built) rating; High quality, durable materials and finishes to maximise whole-of-life performance; Shading and glare control with vertical louvres of varying depth to east and west facades; Horizontal louvres to north façade.
The proposed development contributes to the vision for City Hill Park as an enclosed central park outlined in the National Capital Plan. On completion, the building is expected to provide workspaces for more than 3000 people, significantly increasing the human activity in the precinct.
Not applicable.
Not applicable. The proposed building is not located on City Hill Park.



New public spaces created within the Precinct must complement and not diminish the pre- eminence of City Hill Park.	The new public spaces within the development do not diminish the pre-eminence of City Hill Park.
enimence of eity rim r and	Pedestrian connectivity to City Hill Park has been increased, with the widening of the footpath along the northern frontage (alongside the Supreme Court building) and the additional pathway provided at the southern frontage along Edinburgh Avenue. New traffic signals have recently been constructed by the proponent at the intersection of Vernon Circle and Edinburgh Avenue, which will encourage greater utilisation of City Hill Park.
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.	The proposed development has a height of 25 metres to Vernon Circle.
Landmark buildings up to RL 617 (generally 14 to 18 storeys) will be restricted to the corners of the main avenues intersecting with London Circuit. See Figure 40.	Not applicable. The proposed development is not located on these corners of London Circuit.
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.	Windtech have undertaken a Pedestrian Wind Environment Study to determine the impacts of the proposed development on the public domain, and their recommendations have been incorporated into the building and landscape design.
	Recommendations by Windtech, including additional trees to Vernon Circle, have been incorporated into the design to ensure pedestrian comfort within and around the building.
	Please refer to the study provided as part of this Works Approval Application for further details.
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.	The proposed building complies with this condition, with a height of 25 metres fronting Vernon Circle.
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.	Office plant facilities, that will enhance indoor amenity and energy efficiency, are located on the roof of the building and set back, above 25 metres. Please refer to the building elevations provided in this application for further details.
	The office building is designed to target 5 Star NABERS (Energy) rating and 5 Star Green Star (Design and As Built) rating.



Minimum floor-to-ce are to be as follows:	iling heights within buildings	The required 3.6m floor-to-ceiling height is met on the Ground Level fronting Vernon Circle, with a height of 3800mm.
Ground Floor (Residential)	3.3 metres floor-to-ceiling	A significant portion of the spaces along Knowles Place also meet this requirement, despite the challenges
Ground Floor (other	3.6 metres floor-to-ceiling	presented by the level change across the site.
uses, including commercial/office use)		Further details showing this is provided in the Architectural Plans provided with this application.
	es should, where possible, be il activities should be off secondary food and	The design team has sought to maximise active frontages at street level.
beverage activities	occurring along north-south ptimise sunlight access	Knowles Place now has 121 metres of active frontage proposed, including retail shopfronts and entry lobbies. This retail frontage also wraps around the corner of Edinburgh Avenue.
		This proposal includes significantly more active frontage than the previously approved residential building, which had an additional 3 driveway crossovers toward the southern end of Knowles Place, for public car parking access and waste collection. These driveways are now consolidated into one area at the northern end of Knowles Place, allowing a far greater pedestrian experience along the length of the street.
		The End of Trip facility access has been strategically positioned on Edinburgh Avenue to increase foot traffic to this frontage.
Buildings on the average predominantly active	enues must have e frontages at ground floor.	As outlined above, the design team has maximised active frontages at the ground level, while still catering for the necessary building services, car park and waste management entries.
		Despite the challenges presented by the significant level change between Vernon Circle and Knowles Place, the Edinburgh Avenue frontage of the building includes a significant retail space that wraps around the corner of Knowles Place and Edinburgh Avenue. This will likely be home to a busy café or the like.
		A pedestrian pathway is also included at this end of the building to provide another connection from Knowles Place to City Hill.
Constitution and Ed	ns to Vernon Circle from inburgh Avenues should local traffic and pedestrians.	Not applicable. No new road connection is proposed as part of this application.



View corridors must be retained from radiating avenues to City Hill Park. No buildings should bridge these avenues.	The proposed development does not bridge any of the radiating avenues that provide view corridors to City Hill Park.
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.	The landscape design incorporates high-quality materials that respond to the neighbouring Supreme Court of the ACT building and the formality of Edinburgh Avenue. Materials chosen for street furniture are simple and hard-wearing. The physical security barriers around the building, necessitated by the potential for office tenants with high security requirements, are proposed as concrete upstands concealed with planting, rather than unsightly metal bollards.
	Seating elements have been incorporated into these where possible to enhance the public amenity.
The heritage values of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings are to be considered and addressed by new buildings adjacent to these sites.	Not applicable. The proposed development is not adjacent to the Sydney or Melbourne buildings.
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.	Not applicable. No major modifications are proposed to existing traffic arrangements.
Traffic engineering devices (e.g. slip lanes) should be designed to promote pedestrian amenity, safety and access and bicycle movements.	The Knowles Place Extension, running through the precinct, has been designed as a pedestrian and cyclist-friendly Shared Zone, where vehicular speeds will be limited to 10km/hr and pedestrians given right-of-way when crossing the street.
	This will discourage cars from travelling through the precinct at speed and encourage pedestrian movement through the precinct, from One City Hill through the future stages to the proposed Light Rail stop on London Circuit.
	Further details can be found in the Traffic Report and Microsimulation Analysis by SMEC, included with this application.



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 the City Hill Precinct.	The proposed development includes a significant amount of public car parking in its basement levels, replacing the surface-level public car parking previously situated on the site. A total of 871 car spaces are included over the three basement levels. A further 8 spaces are proposed on the Knowles Place Extension. In addition, 9 spaces are provided on the new Edinburgh Avenue extension, completed by Morris Property Group under its Deed of Agreement with the ACT Government. The future stage of the precinct (on Blocks 8 & 9 Section 100) will include another 1,093 car spaces. This stage will be subject to a future Works Approval Application. It is noted that the Proponent will ensure that 200 publicly available car spaces will be provided at all times throughout construction of the precinct, in accordance with its Deed of Agreement with the ACT Government.
Car parking for new development is to be accommodated in basements or in above ground structures that do not dominate the public domain. London Circuit should operate as the main public transport circuit for Canberra City.	Car parking for the proposed development is accommodated within three basement levels. Noted.
Redevelopment 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.	Noted.
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.	The proposed development increases the width of the laneway alongside the Supreme Court of the ACT building, connecting Knowles Place to Vernon Circle. Two laneways are proposed through the future stage of the development, on Blocks 8 & 9, Section 100, which connect Knowles Place to a new proposed public plaza on London Circuit, and the future Canberra Metro Light Rail stop. Please refer to the indicative Precinct Plan provided with this application for further details. These laneways include highly active frontages of retail spaces and building entries. It is envisaged that these will be home to a lively new mix of food, beverage and retail outlets to complement the office building above.



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.	 As outlined above, the proposed development facilitates pedestrian and bicycle movements through: The inclusion of new laneways to the precinct (refer to the Precinct Plan provided in this application); The new extension of Knowles Place with a large Shared Zone to slow vehicular traffic; An increase to the width of the pedestrian connection between this proposal and the ACT Supreme Court building; The recent construction of the Edinburgh Avenue Extension, with signalised intersection at Vernon Circle providing safe pedestrian access to City Hill Park.
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.	The proponent has recently constructed the new Edinburgh Avenue extension from London Circuit to Vernon Circle, directly adjacent the proposed development. These works include a new signalised intersection at Vernon Circle, which provides a new option for pedestrians to safely access City Hill.
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.	Noted.
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.	Noted.
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).	Not applicable. The proposed development does not front London Circuit.
New buildings fronting London Circuit must have active frontages.	Not applicable. The proposed development does not front London Circuit.