



CITY TO THE LAKE

Strategic Urban Design Framework

August 2015



City to the Lake Project Extent

Contents

Introduction	4
Vision and Objectives	5
Central Canberra Overview	7
Existing Place Conditions	9
Key Moves	10
Place Principles	14

Introduction



View looking west over Point Park and the waterfront to Black Mountain.

City to the Lake is a visionary idea that will transform Canberra's city centre and enhance its significance as the National Capital.

It is an ambitious long term project that will change the way Australians think about Canberra. By re-purposing under utilised land in central Canberra, it will provide a direct link from the city to Lake Burley Griffin and will create a new active waterfront foreshore in West Basin.

This document sets out the strategic urban design framework for the City to the Lake project. The framework establishes a clear structure for defining the site, the key moves, design themes and principles that underpin the development and will enable design evolution and elaboration as the project is realised.

Vision and Objectives

‘where Canberra meets the lake’

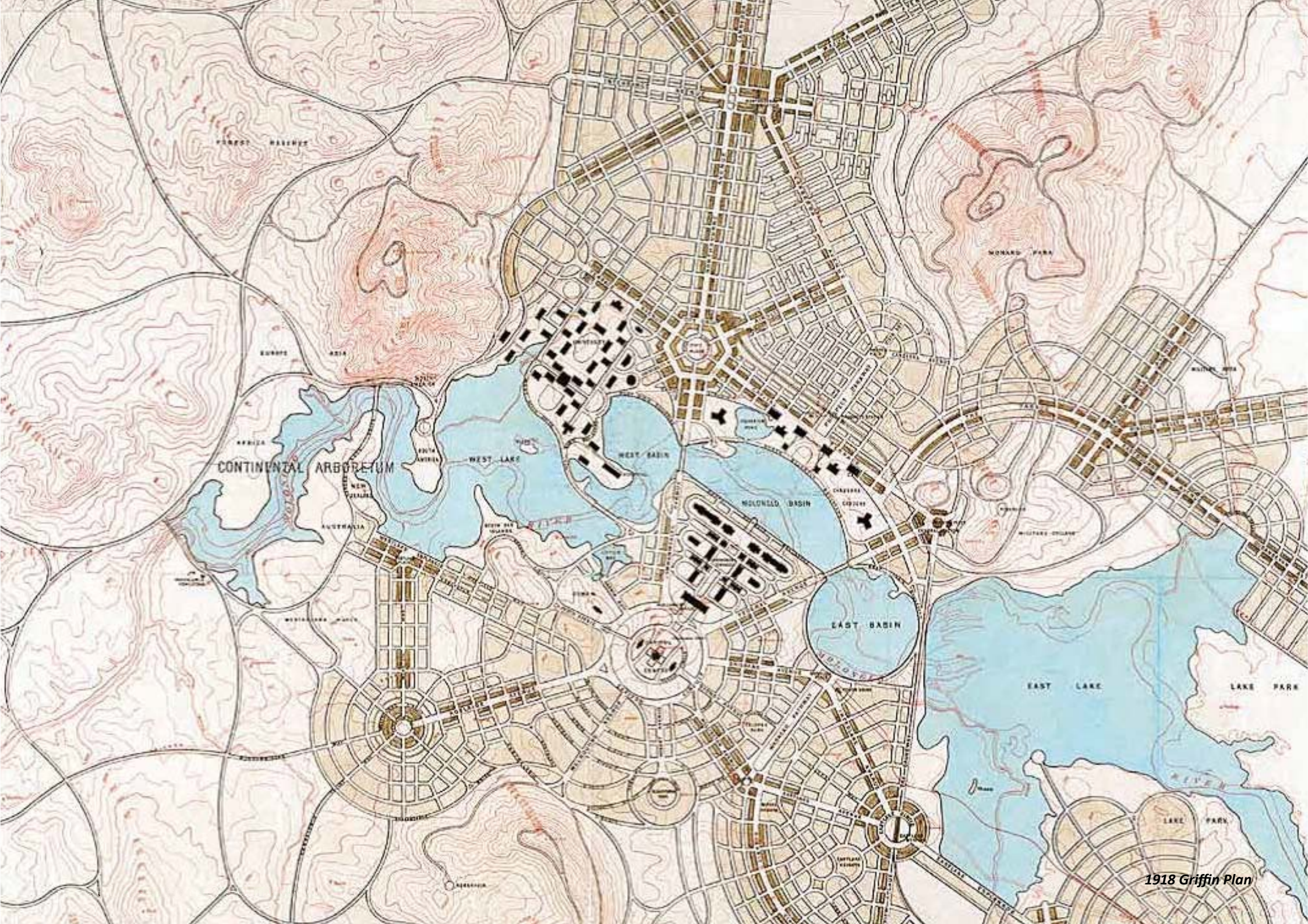
City to the Lake will be a major contributor to the heart of the National Capital where the everyday life of the city meets Lake Burley Griffin. It will be urbane, diverse and pedestrian friendly, awarded for its sustainability, authenticity and design excellence.

The waterfront at West Basin is central to the progressive transformation of the city centre of Canberra. It will be a vibrant destination, where people meet, celebrate and have fun.

Objectives:

- **Transform the city centre of Canberra by making it the living, entertainment and leisure heart of the National Capital.**
- **Anchor new mixed use precincts with cultural, entertainment and civic activities into an urbane and pedestrian friendly place.**
- **Bring the everyday life of the city to the Lake where it intersects with festivals, sporting and cultural events and activities.**
- **Create West Basin as Canberra’s great meeting and event space - a truly public waterfront for all Canberrans and visitors to the city to enjoy throughout the day and into the evening.**
- **Deliver world class public domain and architecture that is bold and inspiring and awarded for its authenticity, integration and diversity.**
- **Create diverse spaces for intimate and larger gatherings of people.**
- **Embed technology to enable an interactive environment and immersive and memorable experiences.**
- **Eliminate physical barriers so there is no formal distinction between the living city centre, the National Triangle and the national cultural institutions.**
- **Program, manage and promote the public realm and ensure exceptional standards of design and maintenance.**
- **Deliver City to the Lake as exemplar of sustainable development. It will be environmentally sustainable, economically viable, climate resilient and climate positive.**





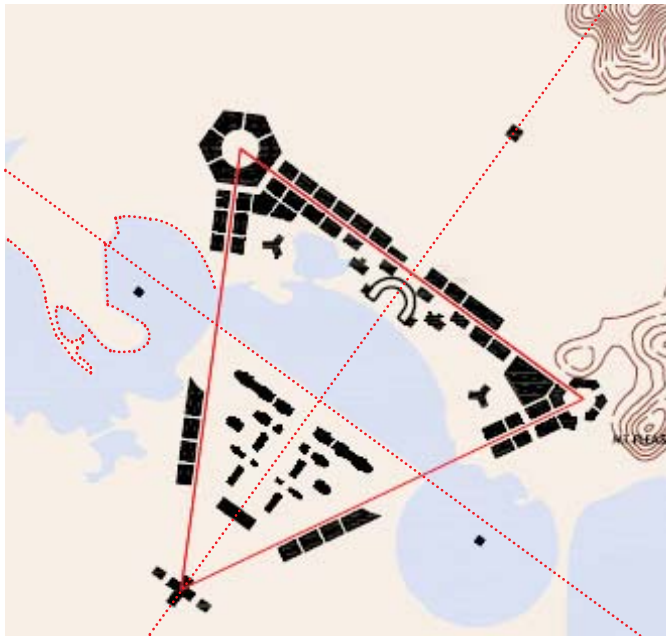
CONTINENTAL ARBORETUM

EAST BASIN

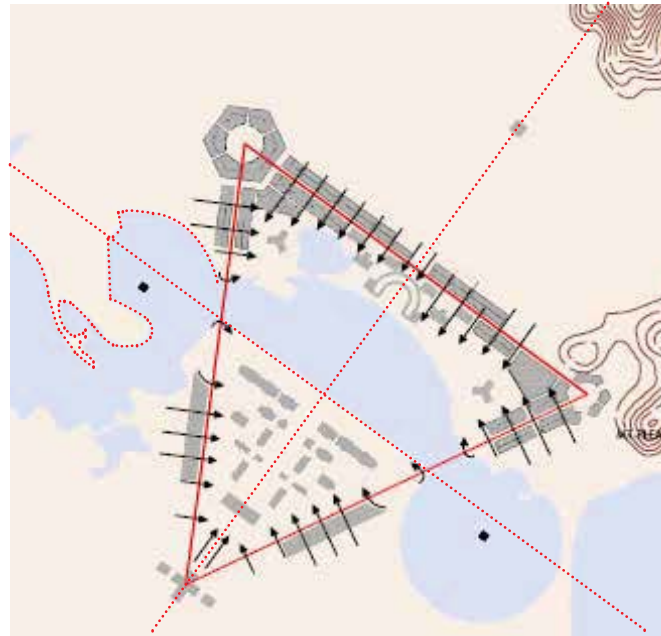
1918 Griffin Plan

Central Canberra Overview

- *The Griffins' Plan provided a model city plan generated by civic and environmental values, and a public realm drawing together the finest of historical and modern principles of city living.*
- *It included a vast central park, gracious boulevards, garden suburbs, cultural places, monuments and integration with nature.*
- *The Plan provided for a number of urban waterfront centres, judiciously located, which allowed city life to extend to the lake.*
- *The geometric arcs and circles of Griffin's central basins closely followed the natural contours of the Molonglo flood plain, and were bordered by 'boulevards for recreational motoring' and promenading. Six bridges/crossings connected the north and south sides of the lake, where today there are three.*
- *The waterfronts were intended to be urban in character and contain a relatively high density of buildings. They were served by a tram network and provided for mixed commercial and residential activity fronting broad landscaped esplanades with tree-lined pedestrian promenades following the water's edge.*
- *West Basin was intended to be a popular esplanade and create an urban waterfront for the city.*



1918 Griffin Plan - Figure Ground National Triangle



1918 Griffin Plan - Connections into National Triangle



Griffin Plan - Overlay



Clover leaf access roads prevent development of land



Surface carparks dominate West Basin

Existing Place Conditions



Parkes Way, in physical design and high speed vehicle environment, creates a barrier between the city, Lake Burley Griffin and its Parkland. Grade separation and a lack of crossing points make this environment alienating to pedestrians, cyclists, and local traffic. It is an undesirable environment for building address and frontage.



Surface carparks create major spatial discontinuities and provide no activation or contribution to city-life
Surface carparks increase urban heat island effects and greatly increase localised stormwater runoff.



The use of urban capable land as surface carparks prevents uses that maximise value of this land and diminishes the physical environment.



Existing place conditions summary

Source: LDA

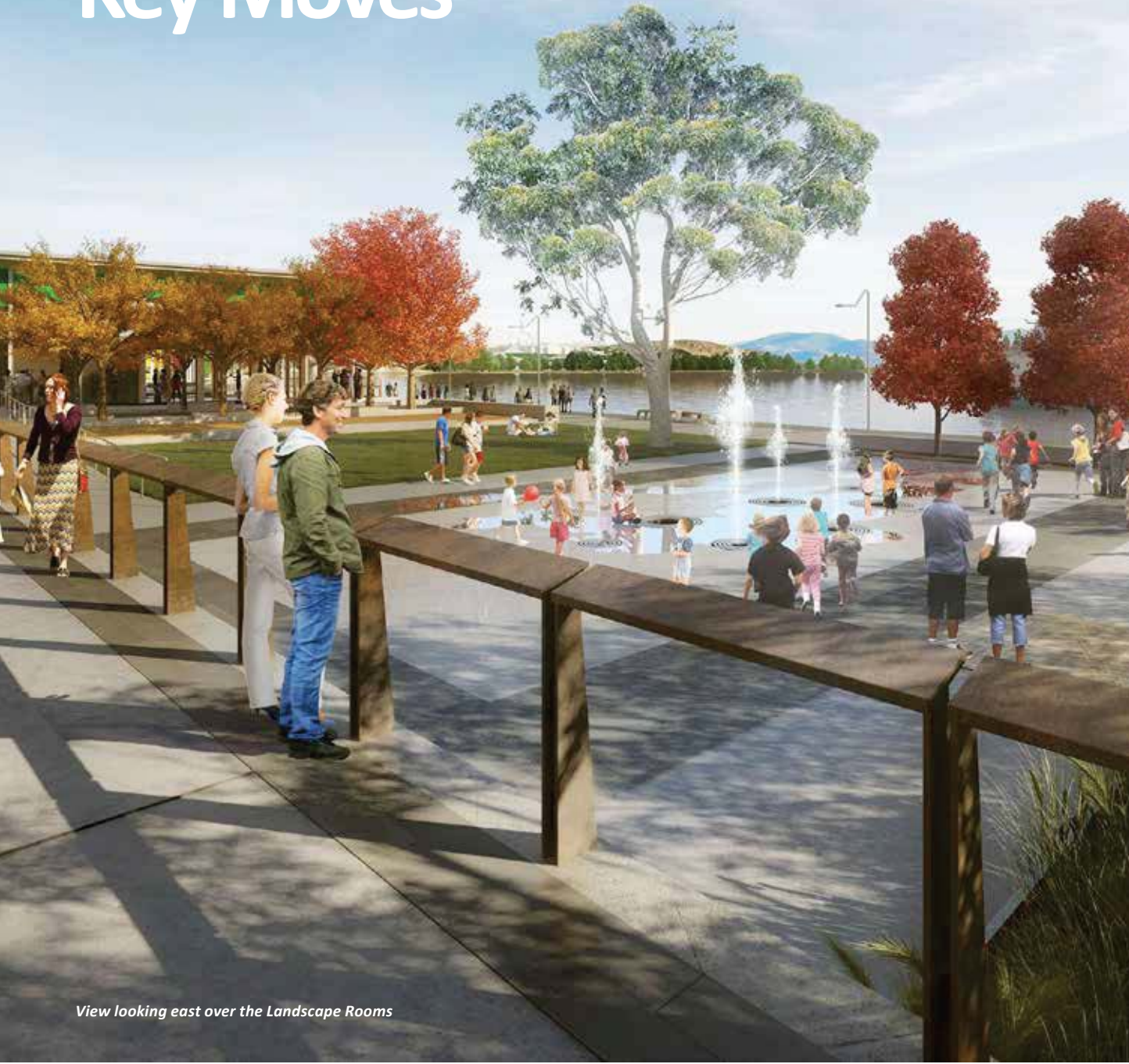


The National Museum of Australia is physically isolated from the city. There is poor pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and access to the Museum



Lakeside cycle and pedestrian links are poorly connected under bridges, undermining the important linear connections.

Key Moves

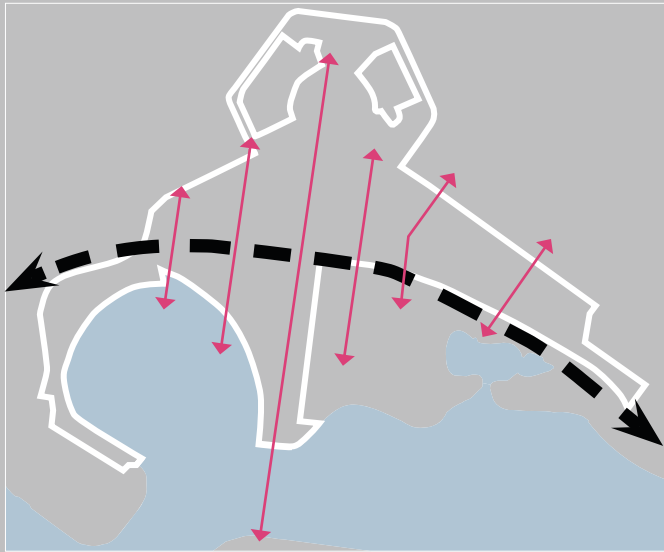


View looking east over the Landscape Rooms

The City to the Lake urban design strategy proposes six key moves that are pivotal in realising the stated vision.

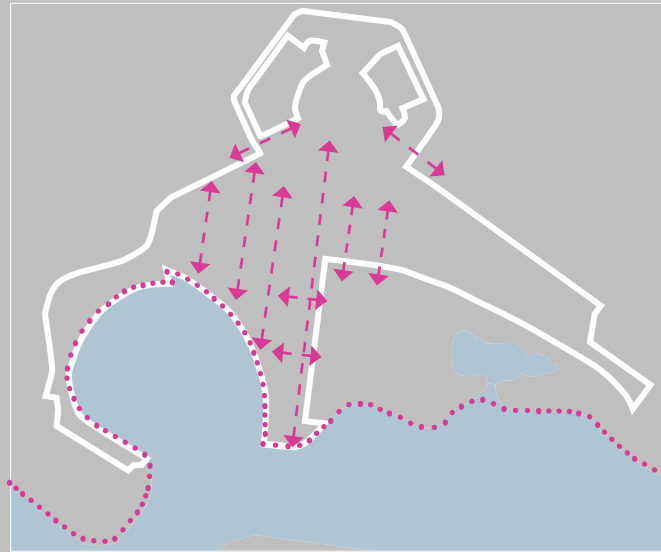
These are:

1. *Overcoming the barrier of Parkes Way*
2. *Connecting Central Canberra*
3. *Reinforcing a Civic Heart*
4. *Creating a new Public Waterfront*
5. *Creating a leisure and entertainment destination*
6. *Strengthening the Canberra landscape*



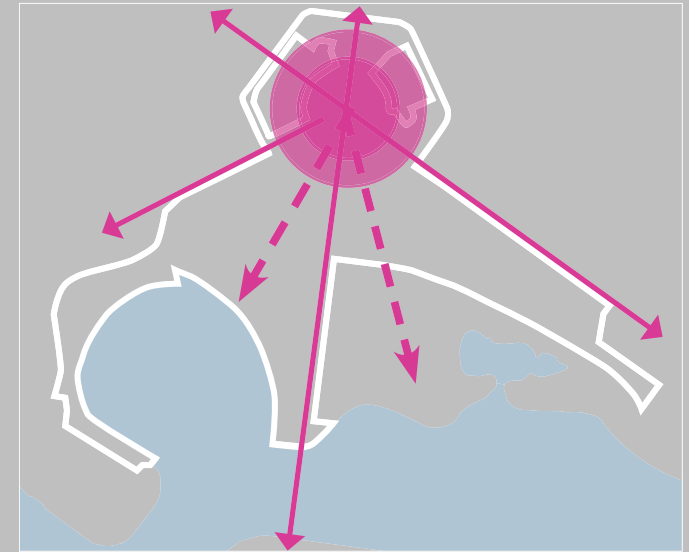
1. Overcoming the barrier of Parkes Way

- Reducing the barrier of Parkes Way
- Enabling a solution to connect the city to the lake and the lake to the city
- Creating better pedestrian and cyclist connectivity



2. Connecting Central Canberra

- Extending the permeable city grid
- Seamlessly connecting the city to West Basin and Commonwealth Park
- Providing an integrated and permeable city form by creating a network of public spaces, paths and streets
- Providing a legible fine grain network of lanes and walkable public space



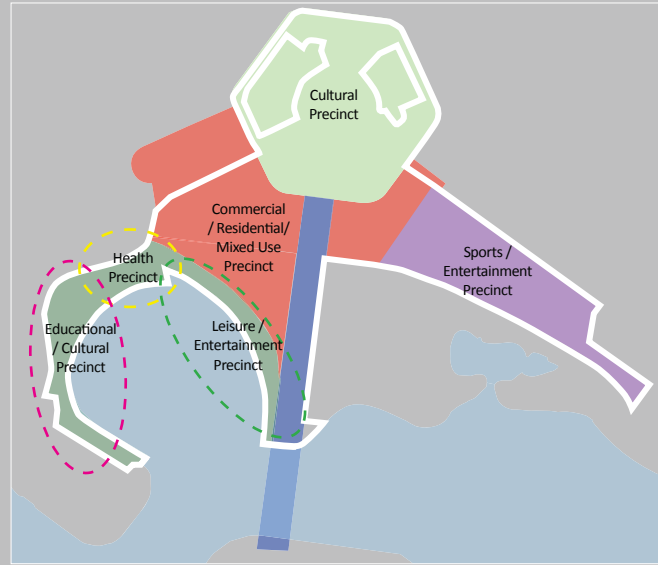
3. Reinforcing a Civic Heart

- Creating a vibrant and activated place
- Retaining City Hill as the heart of the city and as an enclosed and activated public space
- Completing Canberra's avenues and geometry
- Defining Urban Structure and form
- Expanding the city heart and footprint



4. Creating a new Public Waterfront

- Creating an active and generous waterfront public realm where daily life meets the lake
- Creating Canberra's great event and meeting space with an activation programme that benefits the National Capital and its visitor economy
- Creating a strong identity that residents are proud of and visitors want to experience



5. Celebrating a Leisure and Entertainment Destination

- Programming events and festivals to create an authentic and memorable place
- Defining a vibrant day and night time economy
- Creating an economically sustainable precinct
- Create cultural partnerships to activate the waterfront and the existing City.
- Provide health and wellbeing facilities including sport and recreation events.



6. Strengthening the Canberra landscape

- Connecting the Canberra landscape - Acton Peninsula, Black Mountain, Commonwealth Park and West Basin
- Retaining the memorable landscape identity - parks, gardens, tree lined streets
- Creating diverse new public spaces for Central Canberra



View looking west towards the new pavilions along the waterfront - incorporating entertainment and cultural facilities.

Place Principles



View looking east over the western park along the waterfront.

The place principles that will shape and influence the planning and design of the project are:

- Connected
- Vibrant
- Responsive
- Diverse
- Green

Connected

- *Creating places which are accessible, connected and offer a choice of sustainable mobility and contribute to the health and well being of the future community.*

Vibrant

- *Creating an authentic and memorable place that reflects social and cultural diversity throughout the day and night*
- *Balancing activation and vibrancy with safety.*

Responsive

- *Celebrating Griffin's Legacy while creating streets and public places that respect history and support public life, biodiversity and settings for future generations.*

Diverse

- *Providing for diverse and vibrant communities by defining a variety of building types and architectural expressions to enable and support different functions and activities in line with programming and events.*

Green

- *Ensuring a development that connects people, preserves heritage and embraces exemplary design practice to ensure continued contribution and evolution of the project over time.*



Connected



Placemaking



Responsive



Diverse



Green

01 connected

connecting people and places

- Providing a network of circulation and connection:
 - Extending R.G Menzies through West Basin
 - Dedicated commuter cycleway
 - Waterfront leisure
- Ensuring the built environment prioritises walking, cycling and public transport
- Connecting Canberra's public realm within the broader landscape setting of the city
- Providing digital connectivity – connecting people and business with city information
- Creating visual connection via a coherent and accessible ground plane
- Creating multiple access points to Commonwealth Park
- Creating a legible connection between the city and the National Museum of Australia
- Providing and retaining natural lake edge egress points for water recreation.



Figure 1.1 Connecting Canberra's public realm

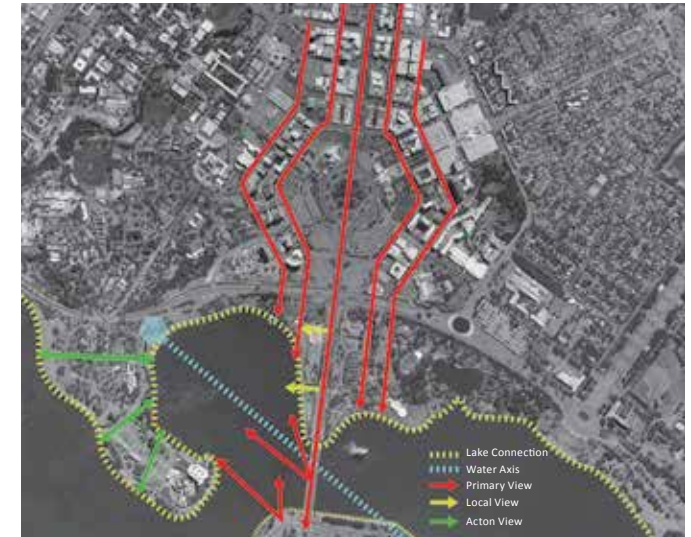


Figure 1.2 Creating visual connection



Figure 1.3 Creating a hierarchy of movement for pedestrians and cyclists



Figure 1.4 Connecting Nodes of interest



Figure 1.5 Hierarchy of space and movement



Figure 1.6 Expansive public realm spaces



Figure 1.7 Connected Strategic response

02 vibrant

character, identity and place

- Establishing a chain of new parks and open space within West Basin
- Developing an urban rhythm of landscape rooms and plazas
- Creating a vibrant and active National Waterfront through diversity of function, use and built form
- Celebrating arrival as a destination and a journey at key nodes
- Ensuring development contributes positively to the quality of the public domain- walkability, good social spaces, community facilities, sunny parks, and waterfront access
- Providing a mix of uses to create a genuine city community centre
- Allowing built form to adapt over time
- Creating new development to positively frame and contribute to the qualities of the public domain, enhancing walkability and multiple connections, sunny parks, community facilities, waterfront access and good social spaces.



Figure 2.1 Diverse and mixed use Built Form



Figure 2.2 Establishing a chain of parks



Figure 2.3 Creating a National Waterfront



Figure 2.4 Developing an urban rhythm



Figure 2.5 Responding to local context



Figure 2.6 Mixed use and active play



Figure 2.7 Vibrant Strategic response

03 responsive

heritage, context and geometry

- Celebrating the Griffins' plan and axis
- Creating a framework of streets
 - Extending the permeable city grid
 - Framing views and vistas
- Interpreting the unique Landscape Context;
 - Black Mountain
 - Acton Peninsula
 - Commonwealth Park
- Celebrating the Central National Triangle of Canberra
- Setting the West Basin lake edge in line with the 1918 Griffin Plan.



Figure 3.1 1918 Griffin Figure Ground



Figure 3.2 2004 Figure Ground

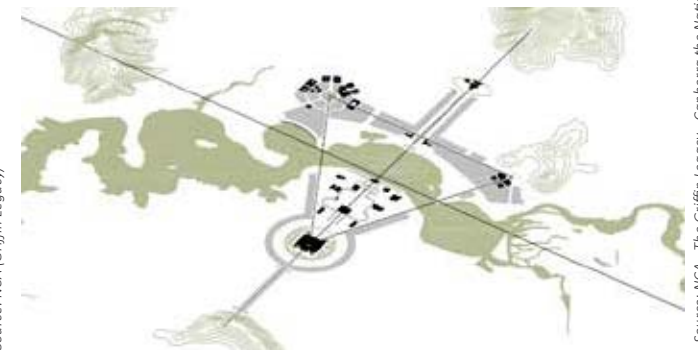
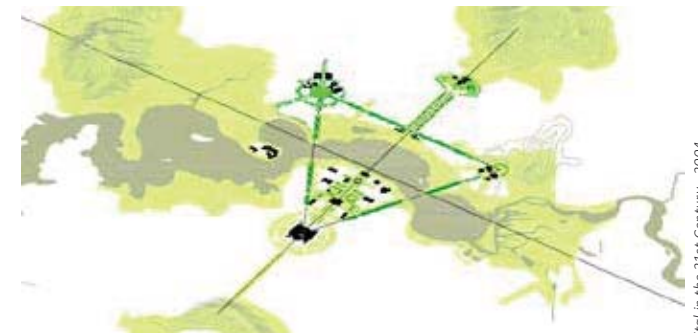
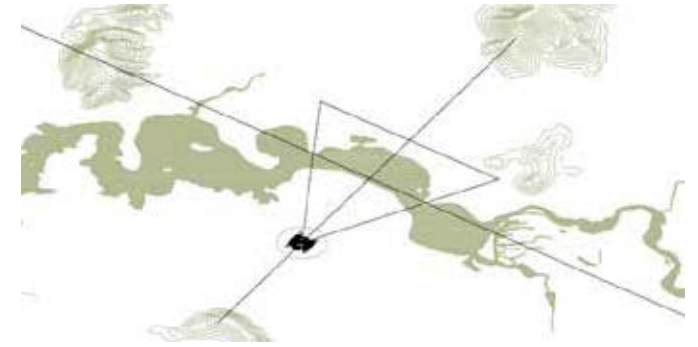


Figure 3.3 Griffin Design Dialogue

Source: NCA - The Griffin Legacy - Canberra the Nations Capital in the 21st Century - 2004.

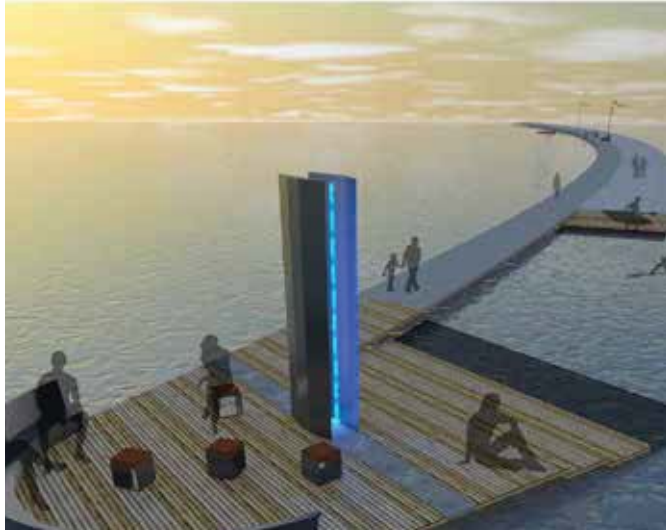


Figure 3.4 Framing the water axis



Figure 3.5 Framing views and vistas

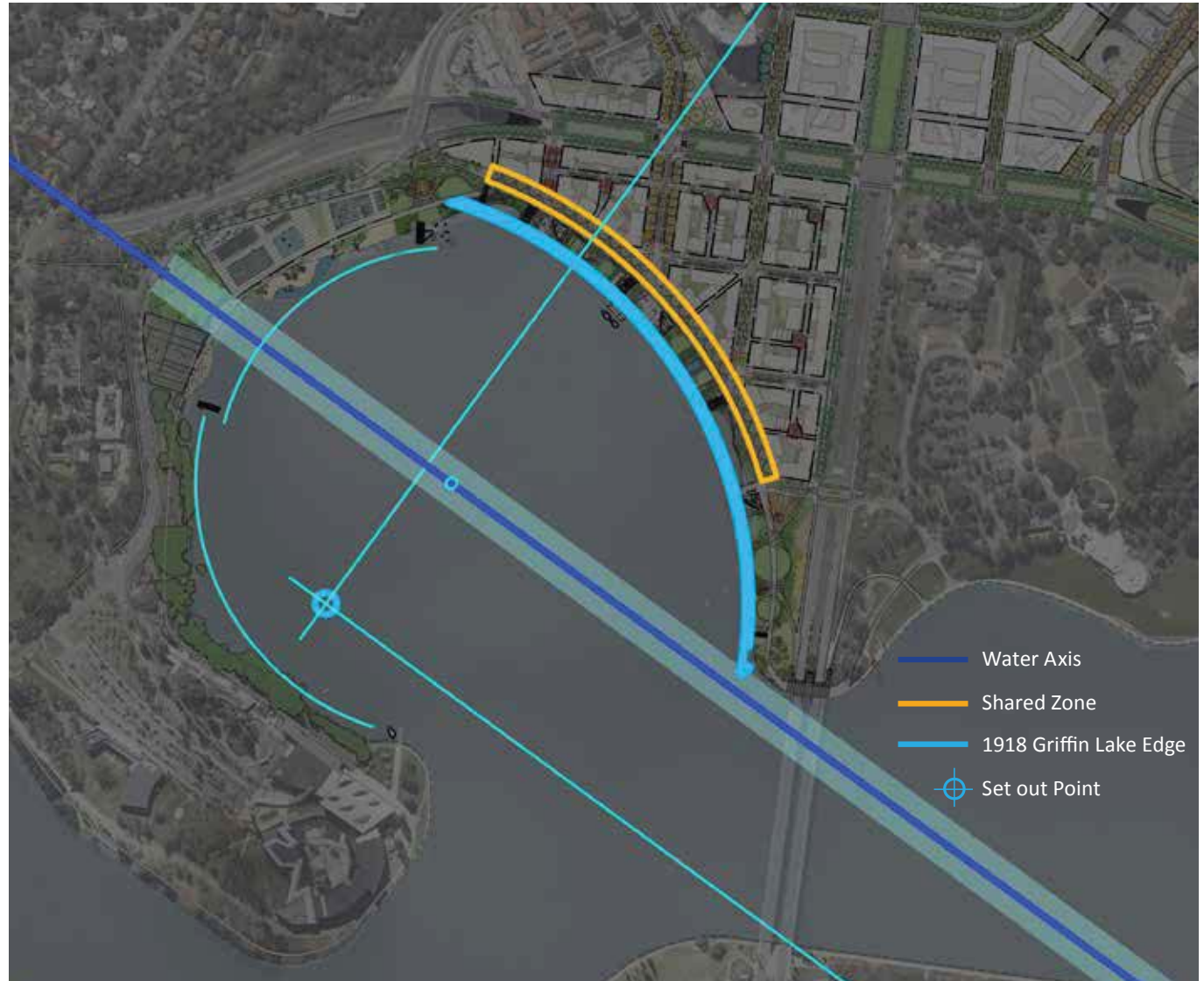


Figure 3.6 Griffin informed responsive strategic design intent

04 diverse

culture, activity and economy

- *Creating a catalyst for economic development within West Basin - Design streets and spaces to support mixed use, retail, commercial and residential*
- *Providing a diversity of event and activation – Small, Medium, Large public spaces*
- *Providing diverse land and water activity*
- *Creating diverse and vibrant places and neighbourhoods, while balancing the competing needs of residents, visitors, businesses and workers by providing places of renewal, peace and quiet and times of access for servicing*
- *Creating a vibrant day and night economy - leisure and entertainment precinct*
- *Creating a destination of cultural significance and connection*
- *Minimising prescriptive zoning mechanisms which prevent a mix of complementary uses*
- *Creating seasonal change within the landscape and open space.*



Figure 4.1 Diversity of space and function



Figure 4.2 Diversity of built form



Figure 4.3 Diverse land and water activities



Figure 4.4 - A vibrant day and night economy



Figure 4.5 Diversity of space and use



Figure 4.6 Architectural and Built Form Diversity



Figure 4.7 Diversity Strategic Response

05 green

legacy and resilience

Economic Legacy

- A sustainably economic precinct with mixed use and active frontages

Social Legacy

- A successful events programme
- A vibrant day and night economy
- Embracing the Griffin Plan

Environmental Legacy

- Integrate site specific water sensitive design solutions to capture water for reuse within development blocks
- Integrate water cleaning measures into the public domain to cleanse runoff and improve the overall quality of water entering Lake Burley Griffin from this catchment
- Significant street trees to increase canopy cover to reduce urban heat affects
- Significant deep soil within development blocks to provide mature trees to promote healthy micro-climates
- Multifunctional landscapes
- Ensuring the public realm supports sustainable, bio diverse and WSUD principles to improve health and well being.

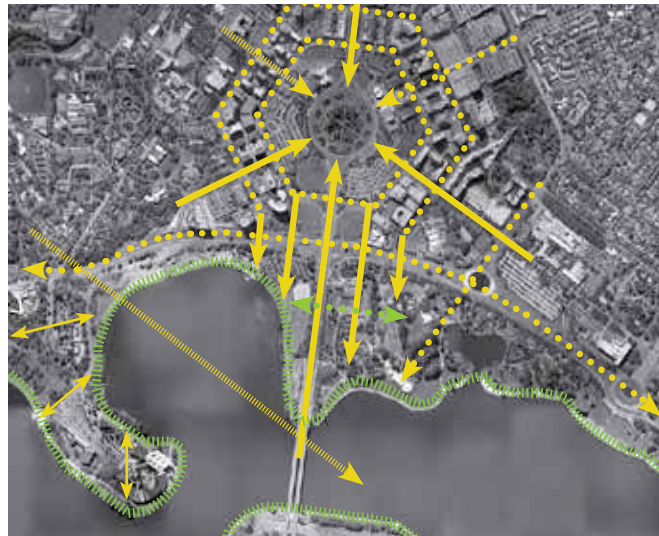


Figure 1 Cultural Heritage Legacy



Figure 2 Heritage Legacy - complete Griffin urban structure



Figure 5.3 Heritage Legacy - National Triangle



Figure 5.4 Environmental Legacy - tree lined streets



© auTimeout

Figure 5.5 Economic Legacy - retail cluster and activation



© Canberra Times

Figure 5.6 Social Legacy - events



Figure 5.7 Concept Masterplan



View looking east along the waterfront