



## What's wrong with the Draft National Capital Plan Review ISSUES FACT SHEET

The Exposure Draft of the National Capital Plan (NCP) 2015 creates major planning and aesthetic problems as it proposes extreme developmental criteria that will be enormously detrimental to the aesthetic and heritage values of Lake Burley Griffin and Canberra in general.

### **West Basin**

This area has already seen the development of popular activity spots such as the Mr Spokes boat and bike hire and the Westside pop up centre. While activity and cultural developments such as these, that will enliven the space, should be encouraged there needs to be significant caution exercised regarding any proposal to alienate **public lakeshore land** for private residences and commercial buildings..

Developers' spin such as 'revitalise the city' and 'reclaiming the lake to reflect Griffin's geometry' written into the NCP Review are just a ruse to distort the truth to pave the way for public land alienation. Alienating lakeshore land will deprive Canberrans of vistas and access and benefit those who can afford costly lake view accommodation.

The lakeshore was finely delineated by planners after World War II to keep a semblance of Griffin's plan but adopt a shape more in line with natural topography. Griffin's West Basin was a more streamlined ellipse that extended into the current Acton Ridge area. Putting promenades in the lake water may be OK but justifying it with the Griffin stamp is not.

### **The Problem With Building Heights**

The waterfront building heights proposed in the NCP Review are confusing and are variously shown as:

- 2 storeys high on p. 131 and
- 4 storeys on fig. 57, p. 135.

Other buildings in the Basin including those alongside Commonwealth Avenue are proposed to be up to 25m—6-8 storeys.

Buildings of 25m will destroy the landscape setting of Commonwealth Avenue Bridge that now has open landscape on both sides of its approaches. The 25m buildings will certainly destroy vistas from the northern end of Commonwealth Avenue to the Brindabella and Bullen Ranges. Buildings 25m high will also shade all the areas south of them. These important vistas are noted in heritage studies.

### **West Basin Summary Points:**

- **Apartments and commercial buildings will not revitalise a park area.**
- **Commonwealth Avenue from City Hill to Capital Hill is the most significant strip of roadway in Canberra. The 25m high buildings as proposed in the NCP Review will create an ugly roadside and block vistas across the lake the ranges beyond.**
- **Canberra needs its inner city public lakeshore landscape. West Basin should not be alienated for residential or commercial buildings.**

### **City Hill**

City Hill is major landmark of the Canberra plan being one of the three vertices of the Parliamentary Triangle. Unfortunately the NCP Review will enable City Hill to be buried in buildings.

Buildings of 6 -8 storeys will be wedged into the area between Vernon Circle and London Circuit and this height will be above the City Hill flagpole. On the hill-side of the London Circuit junctions with the avenues of Commonwealth, Northbourne, Constitution, University, and Edinburgh 18 storey high buildings are being encouraged to create a 'gateway' effect. These 'gateways' are an architectural gimmick to bring in revenue and will become the landmark not City Hill. As there is already a high-rise hub in Lakeside Hotel -Nishi Building area, the gateways will create an invasion of towers spreading across the city-scape. They will also diminish the low flowing design of the proposed Massimiliano Fuksas convention centre which would create a welcome architectural feature for Canberra City.

A low-mid level horizontal city was envisaged by Griffin and is present in the best loved world cities such as Paris, Barcelona, Bath, Berlin, Washington, and Ottawa, in order to retain important landmarks of classical buildings, temples, trees or vistas. These cities should set to the model for Canberra not Dubai and Dallas.

### **City Hill Summary Points:**

- **A lower -level of building height should be enforced around City Hill.**
- **The 'gateway' buildings should be excluded from City Hill.**

**Contact: [lakeburleygriffinguardians@gmail.com](mailto:lakeburleygriffinguardians@gmail.com)**

**Check out comments on our website:**

**<http://lakeburleygriffinguardians.org.au/category/hot-topics/>**