



LAKE BURLEY GRIFFIN GUARDIANS

Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Territories, Local Government
and Major Projects
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

18 December 2015

Dear Minister Fletcher

Re: The National Capital Plan (NCP) Amendment 86

Amendment 86 to the National Capital Plan (NCP) is to soon be submitted to you from the National Capital Authority (NCA), for review, acceptance and signing off. There are aspects of the National Capital Plan that are the basis for serious concerns and objections. We submitted our case on these concerns during the review process only to be advised in the subsequent Consultation Report that parts of the Exposure Draft on which we commented were not relevant to the Review. We see this as a lost opportunity to attend to these troubling flawed planning concerns dating back to 2006. We regret that amending these concerns has been avoided in Amendment 86.

Because of this, we see the need to propose a further amendment to the newly Reviewed NCP and have prepared it following the procedure outlined to us by the NCA's Chief Planner.

We are forwarding this representation to you as we are anxious that your exposure to major concerns should coincide with or at least follow closely on, your first exposure to the reviewed NCP (Amendment 86).

The Lake Burley Griffin Guardians (the Guardians) comprise a number of respected and experienced professionals and other individuals who are members of esteemed volunteer groups with similar concerns. Lake Burley Griffin is not just our Lake, nor is it the property of the ACT Government to consume according to a desire for real estate revenue. The citizens of Australia own the Lake along with its environmental values, its lakeshores, its vistas, heritage and important values. The Commonwealth has an incontestable obligation to uphold and protect these values.

Historical shortcomings that blatantly detract from the national significance of the Lake have accumulated incrementally. We are trying to represent the Citizens of Australia in prosecuting the case for the Lake's protection by rewriting and repealing those sections of the National Capital Plan responsible for this erosion through the vehicle of a further Amendment. Better still would be for you to disallow Amendment 86 until the flawed planning dating from 2006 can also be amended.

Lake Burley Griffin was constructed under the direction of the Prime Minister, the Hon Sir Robert Menzies. The Lake was inaugurated by Menzies in 1964 and also named by him in honour of Canberra's designer, Walter Burley Griffin. The words spoken by Menzies at the inauguration included the following:

I see this lake ultimately not as something purely artificial in its surrounding but as a haunt of tourists coming through will be able to feed the swans and this will be quite a feature of the city.

...This is of the essence, this is the heart of the city, and I hope it will be a heart that will be quietly beating, not noisy, not uproarious – a quietly beating, restful heart for the rest of our lives.

The Lake and lakeshore as constructed by the National Capital Planning Authority came to fulfil Menzies' vision and is greatly loved by Australian citizens. The execution of the design and construction won a design award in 1986.

Currently high and dense building development is proposed in the public parkland of West Basin. Since the release of the Exposure draft for Amendment 86 of the NCP many individuals have raised concerns against this proposal in the media.

We regret that unfortunate planning for these developments has been enabled by the National Capital Plan and pushed by the ACT Government, seeking revenue by appropriating public parklands.

As part of this letter, there follows a summarised list of reasons for further amending the NCP. These were the basis of our submission commenting on Amendment 86. In addition, for your reference, the Guardians is providing you with a copy our submission on Amendment 86 as well as our recent suggested Amendments to some of the policies set out in Amendment 86.

We look forward to you reviewing our case and informing us of the outcome of your considerations.

Sincerely

Lake Burley Griffin Guardians



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Principal reasons for further amending the National Capital Plan relating to development proposal around City Hill and West Basin and Anzac Parade

Further detail on the reasons is provided in these documents:

- Submission to the NCA — Lake Burley Griffin Guardians NCP Amendment 86 (12/11/2015; attached)
- Submission to the NCA Proposed Amendment to the National Capital Plan (13/12/2015; attached)

City Hill

The proposed urban building heights around City Hill and the high gateway buildings proposed at the junctions of the major avenues with London Circuit will:

- destroy City Hill's role as landscaped landmark and its urban expression as a vertex of the National Triangle;
- destroy its visual importance as the landscaped termini with its crest of trees and flagpole, from Commonwealth Avenue from the south and Northbourne Avenue from the entry to Canberra from the north;
- the high gateway buildings on the avenues will make City Hill look like a concrete cake surrounded by concrete candles and will adversely impact the entry to Commonwealth Avenue, the national symbolic approach to Parliament House.

West Basin

The proposed West Basin building estate proposal will:

- blight the significant national route of Commonwealth Avenue to Parliament House by blocking much admired vistas from Commonwealth Avenue across the Lake Burley Griffin to the Brindabella and Bullen ranges;
- blight the vistas of the lake with its continuous lakeshore landscape from Capital Hill and Black Mountain;
- appropriate an important area of public open space that is far more valuable as an open space resource than residential and commercial buildings as it can relieve the stress on Commonwealth Park by providing an appropriate and more versatile venue for events;
- unbalance the city form, creating an unnecessary isolated city component that will conflict with the city expansion to the east and north;
- conflict with a clear urban expression of City Hill as a vertex of the Parliamentary Triangle;
- block public access to the lake, conflicting with the Griffin's prize winning Canberra plan and WB Griffin's 1913 and 1918 plans and the executed NCDC prize winning design, for a continuous public open space access to the lake foreshore;
- West Basin is a component of Lake Burley Griffin and Foreshores Precinct and should follow the precinct codes as set out in the NCP.

Anzac Parade Building Height

The Australian War Memorial building and Anzac Parade vista are national treasures but the heights proposed for buildings at the southern end of Anzac Avenue/Parkes Way (known as the Portal Buildings) will have the effect of diminishing the Australian War Memorial as seen from the southern side of the lake. New buildings at the increased height central in the Land Axis will detract from the important termini features at both ends of the land axis.