

## Place Details

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### Parliament House Vista, Anzac Pde, Parkes, ACT, Australia

#### Photographs



<b>List</b>	Commonwealth Heritage List
<b>Class</b>	Historic
<b>Legal Status</b>	<a href="#">Listed place</a> (22/06/2004)
<b>Place ID</b>	105466
<b>Place File No</b>	8/01/000/0075

#### Summary Statement of Significance

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## Design Importance

The Parliament House Vista is the central designed landscape of Canberra, that expresses the core of the Walter Burley Griffin design vision for Canberra. It is highly significant for its symbolic representation of the democratic interchange between the people and their elected representatives and its use of the natural landforms to generate a strong planning geometry. It expresses a masterly synthesis and ordering of topographical features and administrative functions to meet the needs of a national capital. The vista landscape embraces the central land axis and part of the water axis and most of the Parliamentary Triangle including the area known as the Parliamentary Zone. The significance incorporates Walter Burley Griffin's vision for the area, as the focus of Commonwealth parliamentary and governmental activity as well as national cultural life. This vision has been partly realised and the place is the setting for major, government, judicial and cultural institutions. The northern extent of the vista of Anzac Parade and the Australian War Memorial, despite differing from the original plan, are significant for memorial purposes developed in response to the needs of the people. Despite being modified to a lesser degree to accommodate the impact of wars on Australians, the Vista now presents as a philosophical concept expressed in urban planning, landscape and architecture, to achieve a grand vision of a symbolic, unified and visually dramatic place (Criterion F.1)

( Australian Historic Themes 7.4 Federating Australia, 8.10 , Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences)

The Parliament House Vista incorporating the central national area, is the core of the most ambitious and most successful example of twentieth century urban planning in Australia. It is important for its design pattern with large landscape and waterscape spaces with their enframement by treed avenues and at the lake by bridges, the terminal vista features of the Australian War Memorial and Mount Ainslie at the northern end and Parliament House at the southern end, with the Carillon and Captain Cook Jet creating balanced vertical features in the water plane (Criterion F.1).

The spatial setting of the buildings as features in the landscape reflects Beaux Arts planning concepts and the building masses and their careful location complement the significance of the overall landscape pattern. Across the Parliamentary Triangle, the buildings of Old Parliament House, and East and West Blocks provide a distinctive Stripped Classical architectural patterned horizontal band, that contributes to the symmetrical overall patterning of the landscape. At a higher elevation, Parliament House is a significant feature terminating the southern end of the land axis, culminating the classical landmark image of the triangle apex. The John Gorton Building (the former Administrative Building) and the Treasury Building balance the composition on King George Terrace while at the Lake edge the post-war architecture of the National Library of Australia and the High Court - National Gallery Precinct are prominent modern architectural forms and have a significant historical layering effect. The Portal Buildings provide balanced building massing at the southern end of Anzac Parade (Criterion F.1).

Avenues of trees along the terraces, roads and pathways of deciduous, pine, and eucalypt species provide colour, character, and contrast, emphasising the significance of the formal symmetrical design. Lombardy Poplars in groups of four, form sentinels at key locations. Water fountains, and statues also reinforce the significance of the total design pattern of the place. On the northern expanse of the vista the landscape pattern is the wide sweeping avenue space emphasised by red scoria gravel in the central strip and edged by large Blue Gums (Criterion F.1).

The vista landscape is significant for its richness of features. Many places in the Vista area have individual heritage significance for their architectural design and historic importance. These include Old Parliament House and Curtilage, East Block Government Offices, West Block and the Dugout, John Gorton Building, the National Library of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the National Gallery of Australia, Blundells Farmhouse, Slab Outbuildings and Surrounds, the Australian War Memorial, the Portal Buildings, The High Court - National Gallery Precinct, the Carillon, and King George V Memorial (Criteria F.1 and A3).

Within the area are important parklands and gardens enhancing the significance of the landscape setting. These include the Gardens of Old Parliament House (the former Senate and House of Representative Gardens), important for expressing their history in plantings, sports facilities, modest features and layout pattern. Also important is the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, a significant native style garden, and the National Rose Gardens. Commonwealth Park, the Peace Park, the Lakeshore Promenade and Kings Park are important landscapes for their design and popular use (Criteria F.1 and A3.)

Adding to the richness of the place is the manner in which Griffin's vision of democracy has also been emphasised, as places within the area have become identified with political protest actions by people, as exemplified in the significant Aboriginal Embassy site (Criteria F.1 and A3).

### Historic Importance

The central national area of Canberra is strongly associated with the history of politics and government in Australia and the development of Canberra as the Australian National Capital. It is significant as the home of the Commonwealth Parliament, the focus of the Federal Government since 1927, initially in the Old Parliament House and from 1988 in the new Parliament House. The various government buildings in the area reinforce the association with Australian government and political history, including East and West Blocks, the Administrative Building, the Treasury Building and the High Court. The latter, being set apart from Parliament House but facing it is symbolic of the judicial role of the High Court as a physical representation of the separation of powers (Criterion A.4, Australian Historic Themes: 7.2 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy).

The central national area has strong links with the planning and development of Canberra as the Australian Capital. The relocation of Parliament to Canberra and the central national area in 1927 was the focus of an intense period of development of the new city and gave purpose to Canberra as the Nation's Capital. Over time this association has been reinforced by the construction of major government buildings in the area, such as the Treasury Building, the Administration Building (now John Gorton Building), the Portal Buildings and latterly the new Parliament House, as well as the construction of major cultural institutions. The area as intended has become the focus of Commonwealth parliamentary and governmental activity as well as, to some extent, national cultural life. (Criterion A.4) (Australian Historic Themes: 4.1 Planning urban settlement, 7.2 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy, 7.3 Federating Australia).

The area has been associated since 1941 with the development of Australian cultural life and national identity through the presence of such institutions as the Australian War Memorial, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Science and Technology Centre and the National Library of Australia. The national cultural institutions reinforce the national character of the area and are an important symbolic group in Australia's national cultural life. The Australian War Memorial and Anzac Parade memorials and, to a lesser extent, the other memorials have and continue to play a very important role in fostering aspects of national identity, in particular the Australian War Memorial through its role as a National Shrine for all Australians (Criterion A.4, Australian Historic Themes 8.8 Remembering the Fallen).

### Social Importance

The area has strong and special associations with the broad Australian community because of its social values as a symbol of Australia and Federal Government. The values have developed over many years since Canberra's creation and the relocation of the Parliament in 1927 gave them a special focus. The special association is reflected in the use of the area as the location for national memorials, the number of tourists who have and continue to visit the area, the media portrayal of Canberra and federal politics and the continuing use of the area as the venue for occasional ceremonies and political protests by sections of the community. Memorial features include sculptures, plaques, commemorative trees, water features and gardens. The collection of sculptures, associated art and design which comprise the Anzac Parade Memorials, give expression to key aspects of the history of Australia's armed forces and Australia's war involvement, and possess high social value (Criterion G.1, Australian Historic Themes 8.8 Remembering the fallen, 8.9 Commemorating significant events and people).

The special association for the community is also the use of the area by people demonstrating against government decisions. The central national area, particularly Parkes Place in front of Old Parliament House, has been used for countless demonstrations (Criterion G.1).

The landscape spaces are important for social activities of visitors and Canberra residents and these include Canberra festivals, water events, national events and parades such as Anzac Day Parade and the Dawn Service, and other commemorative services (Criterion G.1).

### Aesthetic Value

The place has high aesthetic significance due to the visual impact of the extensive open sweeping vista along the land axis that can be experienced in two directions, the designed axes set within natural features of forested hills, patterns and textures of architectural massing accentuated by planned open spaces, water planes and tree plantings that are arranged across the area. The vista is significant for its visual drama with its ability to engage viewers in the visual perspective of the sweeping vista to the terminal features. The aesthetic significance is also a result of the large scale qualities of the axes, including the open green spaces, combined with patterns and symmetrical characteristics of the road networks and numerous designed smaller attributes. These include the

rose gardens, the Old Parliament House Gardens, Commonwealth Park, the street tree plantings, the lake-land interface and the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, and many intimate spaces rich in texture, colour, fragrance and in some cases, art works and water features (Criterion E1).

#### Associational Value

The central national area has a special association with its designer, Walter Burley Griffin. Griffin is an important figure in Australia's cultural history for his overall design of Canberra as the Nation's Capital. The special association between the central national area and Griffin results from the area being the centrepiece of the planning geometry for Canberra and perhaps the only part of his Canberra plan to survive relatively intact. The area has a strong association with Marion Mahoney Griffin who prepared the perspective drawings of the Vista. The Vista area has a strong association with numerous architects and planners, in particular John Smith Murdoch, Chief architect of the Commonwealth Government, and Thomas Charles Weston, Superintendent of Parks, Gardens and Afforestation in Canberra, and notable planners of the National Capital Development Commission such as Sir John Overall, Peter Harrison and Paul Reid (Criterion H.1).

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#### Official Values

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**Criterion A Processes**

The central national area of Canberra is strongly associated with the history of politics and government in Australia and the development of Canberra as the Australian National Capital. It is significant as the home of the Commonwealth Parliament, the focus of the Federal Government since 1927, initially in the Old Parliament House and from 1988 in the new Parliament House. The various government buildings in the area reinforce the association with Australian government and political history, including East and West Blocks, the Administrative Building, the Treasury Building and the High Court. The latter, being set apart from Parliament House but facing it is symbolic of the judicial role of the High Court as a physical representation of the separation of powers.

The central national area has strong links with the planning and development of Canberra as the Australian Capital. The relocation of Parliament to Canberra and the central national area in 1927 was the focus of an intense period of development of the new city and gave purpose to Canberra as the Nation's Capital. Over time this association has been reinforced by the construction of major government buildings in the area, such as the Treasury Building, the Administration Building (now John Gorton Building), the Portal Buildings and latterly the new Parliament House, as well as the construction of major cultural institutions. The area as intended has become the focus of Commonwealth parliamentary and governmental activity as well as, to some extent, national cultural life.

The area has been associated since 1941 with the development of Australian cultural life and national identity through the presence of such institutions as the Australian War Memorial, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Science and Technology Centre and the National Library of Australia. The national cultural institutions reinforce the national character of the area and are an important symbolic group in Australia's national cultural life. The Australian War Memorial and Anzac Parade memorials and, to a lesser extent, the other memorials have and continue to play a very important role in fostering aspects of national identity, in particular the Australian War Memorial through its role as a National Shrine for all Australians.

The vista landscape is significant for its richness of features. Many places in the Vista area have individual heritage significance for their architectural design and historic importance. These include Old Parliament House and Curtilage, East Block Government Offices, West Block and the Dugout, John Gorton Building, the National Library of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the National Gallery of Australia, Blundells Farmhouse, Slab Outbuildings and Surrounds, the Australian War Memorial, the Portal Buildings, The High Court - National Gallery Precinct, the Carillon, and King George V Memorial.

Within the area are important parklands and gardens enhancing the significance of the landscape setting. These include the Gardens of Old Parliament House (the former Senate and House of Representative Gardens) with their surviving layout, the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, the National Rose Gardens, Commonwealth Park, the Peace Park, the Lakeshore Promenade and Kings Park .

Adding to the richness of the place is the manner in which Griffin's vision of democracy has also been emphasised, as places within the area have become identified with political protest actions by people, as exemplified in the significant Aboriginal Embassy site.

**Attributes**

The concentration of buildings, parklands and gardens that support Commonwealth parliamentary and governmental activity as well as, to some extent, national cultural life. These include Old Parliament House and Curtilage, East Block Government Offices, West Block and the Dugout, John Gorton Building, the National Library of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the National Gallery of Australia, Blundells Farmhouse, Slab Outbuildings and Surrounds, the Australian War Memorial, the Portal Buildings, The High Court - National Gallery Precinct, the Carillon, King George V Memorial, Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, the National Rose Gardens, Commonwealth Park, the Peace Park, the Lakeshore Promenade and Kings Park and the Aboriginal Embassy site.

**Criterion E Aesthetic characteristics**

The place has high aesthetic significance due to the visual impact of the extensive open sweeping vista along the land axis that can be experienced in two directions, the designed axes set within natural features of forested hills, patterns and textures of architectural massing accentuated by planned open spaces, water planes and tree plantings that are arranged across the area. The vista is significant for its visual drama with its ability to engage viewers in the visual perspective of the sweeping vista to the terminal features. The aesthetic significance is also a result of the large scale qualities of the axes, including the open green spaces, combined with patterns and symmetrical characteristics of the road networks and numerous designed smaller attributes. These include the rose gardens, the Old Parliament House Gardens, Commonwealth Park, the street tree plantings, the lake-land interface and the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, and many intimate spaces rich in texture, colour, fragrance and in some cases, art works and water features.

#### Attributes

The extensive vista along the land axis, the forested hills, patterns and textures of architectural massing accentuated by planned open spaces, water features and tree plantings, art works, the terminal features plus the interplay of scale and texture in the designed landscape.

#### **Criterion F Technical achievement**

The Parliament House Vista is the central designed landscape of Canberra, that expresses the core of the Walter Burley Griffin design vision for Canberra. It is highly significant for its symbolic representation of the democratic interchange between the people and their elected representatives and its use of the natural landforms to generate a strong planning geometry. It expresses a masterly synthesis and ordering of topographical features and administrative functions to meet the needs of a national capital. The vista landscape embraces the central land axis and part of the water axis and most of the Parliamentary Triangle including the area known as the Parliamentary Zone. The significance incorporates Walter Burley Griffin's vision for the area, as the focus of Commonwealth parliamentary and governmental activity as well as national cultural life. This vision has been partly realised and the place is the setting for major, government, judicial and cultural institutions. The northern extent of the vista of Anzac Parade and the Australian War Memorial, despite differing from the original plan, are significant for memorial purposes developed in response to the needs of the people. Despite being modified to a lesser degree to accommodate the impact of wars on Australians, the Vista now presents as a philosophical concept expressed in urban planning, landscape and architecture, to achieve a grand vision of a symbolic, unified and visually dramatic place.

The Parliament House Vista incorporating the central national area, is the core of the most ambitious and most successful example of twentieth century urban planning in Australia. It is important for its design pattern with large landscape and waterscape spaces with their enframement by treed avenues and at the lake by bridges, the terminal vista features of the Australian War Memorial and Mount Ainslie at the northern end and Parliament House at the southern end, with the Carillon and Captain Cook Jet creating balanced vertical features in the water plane.

The spatial setting of the buildings as features in the landscape reflects Beaux Arts planning concepts and the building masses and their careful location complement the significance of the overall landscape pattern. Across the Parliamentary Triangle, the buildings of Old Parliament House, and East and West Blocks provide a distinctive Stripped Classical architectural patterned horizontal band, that contributes to the symmetrical overall patterning of the landscape. At a higher elevation, Parliament House is a significant feature terminating the southern end of the land axis, culminating the classical landmark image of the triangle apex. The John Gorton Building (the former Administrative Building) and the Treasury Building balance the composition on King George Terrace while at the Lake edge the post-war architecture of the National Library of Australia and the High Court - National Gallery Precinct are prominent modern architectural forms and have a significant historical layering effect. The Portal Buildings provide balanced building massing at the southern end of Anzac Parade.

Avenues of trees along the terraces, roads and pathways of deciduous, pine, and eucalypt species provide colour, character, and contrast, emphasising the significance of the formal symmetrical design. Lombardy Poplars in groups of four, form sentinels at key locations. Water fountains, and statues also reinforce the significance of the total design pattern of the place. On the northern expanse of the vista the landscape pattern is the wide sweeping avenue space emphasised by red scoria gravel in the central strip and edged by large Blue Gums.

Many places in the Vista area have individual heritage significance for their architectural design and historic importance. These include Old Parliament House and Curtilage, East Block Government Offices, West Block and the Dugout, John Gorton Building, the National Library of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the National Gallery of Australia, Blundells Farmhouse, Slab Outbuildings and Surrounds, the Australian War Memorial, the Portal Buildings, The High Court - National Gallery Precinct, the Carillon, and King George V Memorial.

Within the area are important parklands and gardens enhancing the significance of the landscape setting that include the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, a significant native style garden, and the National Rose Gardens. Commonwealth Park, the Peace Park, the Lakeshore Promenade and Kings Park are important landscapes for their design and popular use.

Adding to the richness of the place is the manner in which Griffin's vision of democracy has also been emphasised, as places within the area have become identified with political protest actions by people, as exemplified in the significant Aboriginal Embassy site.

#### Attributes

The whole of the vista, including all elements and features contained within it, as well as the natural wooded hills beyond.

**Criterion G Social value**

The area has strong and special associations with the broad Australian community because of its social values as a symbol of Australia and Federal Government. The values have developed over many years since Canberra's creation and the relocation of the Parliament in 1927 gave them a special focus. The special association is reflected in the use of the area as the location for national memorials, the number of tourists who have and continue to visit the area, the media portrayal of Canberra and federal politics and the continuing use of the area as the venue for occasional ceremonies and political protests by sections of the community. Memorial features include sculptures, plaques, commemorative trees, water features and gardens. The collection of sculptures, associated art and design which comprise the Anzac Parade Memorials, give expression to key aspects of the history of Australia's armed forces and Australia's war involvement, and possess high social value.

The special association for the community is also the use of the area by people demonstrating against government decisions. The central national area, particularly Parkes Place in front of Old Parliament House, has been used for countless demonstrations.

The landscape spaces are important for social activities of visitors and Canberra residents and these include Canberra festivals, water events, national events and parades such as Anzac Day Parade and the Dawn Service, and other commemorative services.

**Attributes**

Memorial features including sculptures, plaques, commemorative trees, water features and gardens. Also, recreational landscape spaces and gathering spaces in which the community may demonstrate.

**Criterion H Significant people**

The central national area has a special association with its designer, Walter Burley Griffin. Griffin is an important figure in Australia's cultural history for his overall design of Canberra as the Nation's Capital. The special association between the central national area and Griffin results from the area being the centrepiece of the planning geometry for Canberra and perhaps the only part of his Canberra plan to survive relatively intact. The area has a strong association with Marion Mahoney Griffin who prepared the perspective drawings of the Vista. The Vista area has a strong association with numerous architects and planners, in particular John Smith Murdoch, Chief architect of the Commonwealth Government, and Thomas Charles Weston, Superintendent of Parks, Gardens and Afforestation in Canberra, and notable planners of the National Capital Development Commission such as Sir John Overall, Peter Harrison and Paul Reid.

**Attributes**

The whole of the vista, its planned layout, and the view from the top of Mount Ainslie which illustrates the realisation of Marion Mahoney Griffin's perspective drawing.

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**Description**

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## HISTORY

The Australian Constitution left the location of the Capital to be decided by the new Federal Parliament. It declared that Melbourne would be the temporary home for the Federal Parliament and public servants until a new city was built at least 100 miles from Sydney. An agreed territory of 903 square miles included the water catchment of the Cotter River and the river valley of the Molonglo for the setting for the city. The Department of Home Affairs commenced works for services and city planning. In 1910 the Secretary of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, David Miller requested permission of Minister O'Malley to conduct a design competition to elicit ideas for the city.

At the time the Federal Capital area was proclaimed, the river flats of the Molonglo, Mount Ainslie, Camp Hill and Kurrajong Hill had been extensively denuded of vegetation from a long period of clearing and grazing. Some exotic trees were established in parts of the area, around structures such as Blundell's cottage and St Johns Church and graveyard.

### The Canberra Plan

Walter Burley Griffin won the competition for the design of Canberra in 1912. The plan was expressed in beautifully rendered illustrations prepared by Griffin's wife Marion Mahoney Griffin as plans, elevations and sections painted on silk.

The order of the city was for a great triangle aligned with the mountains which rose above the site. The triangle was to be defined by tree-lined avenues and spanned the central basin of an impounded lake. The triangle would consist of a series of terraces arranged in the functions of government and representing democracy. It was a synthesis of function and design where the Order of the Site (the natural environment) and the Order of Functions (the needs of the people) are perfectly integrated by specific geometry (Reid 2002). The Capitol was a main feature of the design

In terms of vistas, the Griffin vision was represented in two renderings drawn by Marion Mahony Griffin. In the rendering looking from Mt Ainslie towards the Capitol, the drama of the vista focuses on the Capitol, the building representing the aspirational forces in Australian national life, with the final termination in the mountains beyond. Below the Capitol, the Parliament House and the Government departments are terraced down to the Lake providing a symbol of a transparent democracy in action. The observer is standing at Mt Ainslie, a point representative of the power and influence of nature and the highest point of the vista. Griffin's plan for the ideal city, the philosophical triumvirate of humanity, democracy and nature is iconographed along the land axis which together with the water axis is the ordering geometry of the vista and the city. Griffin envisaged a dense city with a coming together of the population in a Casino (something akin to the recreational city gardens in pre war Berlin, Copenhagen, and Stockholm) and Plaisance descending from the foot of Mt Ainslie. Intersected by a busy commercial street, Constitution Avenue, the Plaisance unfolded to the area designated for cultural activity from which the people could look across the lake (or water axis) to the area of national government that was climaxed by the building symbolic of national achievement and aspiration, the Capitol.

Griffin's 1913 land use plan for the central National area indicates his intentions. Moving from north to south along the land axis, he proposed a park at the northern end of the land axis, public gardens on the north side of the lake, the lake itself (now Lake Burley Griffin), government buildings flanking a central terrace court to the south of the lake, Parliament House on Camp Hill, the Capitol building on Capital Hill flanked by the Governor General's residence to the west and the Prime Minister's residence to the east. The Capitol building was not intended to be the Parliament but rather to be for popular reception and ceremonial activities or for archives or otherwise to commemorate Australian achievements. Griffin's philosophical vision expressed in a remarkable urban planning form has been affected by the realities of Australian political and cultural life as well as by the circumstances and juxtapositions of historic events. Australian planners following Griffin have rearranged the icons to reflect the dominant realities and meanings of Australian life.

Griffin's various plans for the central National area of Canberra all included a basic planning framework, which has been constructed and survives to the present. This framework includes the land axis, joining Capital Hill and Mount Ainslie, the water axis, the radiating avenues from Capital Hill, Commonwealth and Kings Avenues, the arc of Parkes Way, the northern punctuation of the land axis by the Australian War Memorial, the roads encircling Capital Hill, State and Capital Circles and the southern punctuation of the land axis by the Parliament House of 1988. In addition to the alignment of axes and avenues which defined Griffin's city plan the triangle was a basic element on which the whole city was built. In his design Griffin had created three urban centres connected by main avenues. Capital Hill as the government centre, Mt Vernon as the municipal centre and Mt Pleasant as the market centre were integral to the plan. The northern avenue, Constitution Avenue, was the municipal axis.

Griffin prepared a preliminary plan in 1913 and a revised plan in 1918 following which the Official Plan was gazetted in 1925. Griffin left in 1920 leaving development under the control of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (FCAC) chaired by the planner, John Sulman. The Committee had been appointed to complete sufficient permanent buildings to enable Parliament to move from Melbourne to Canberra.

#### Development

Tree planting began in the early years of Canberra's development, and by 1921 some 17,000 trees were planted (Hendry). Within the Vista area tree planting commenced around 1923 in Prospect Parkway, now known as Anzac Parade. Early images show tree planting in a scalloped arrangement along the length of the avenue. For 3 years from 1925, trees were planted in association with the construction of the Provisional Parliament House. The formal structural planting around the House including Cedars, Cypresses and Lombardy Poplars was completed for the opening (Hendry). The planting proposals were finalised by Charles Weston, Superintendent of Parks, Gardens and Afforestation, and from 1926, carried out by his successor Alexander Bruce. The planting design aimed to create through the use of a balanced mix of evergreen and deciduous trees, formally shaped grassed vistas and 'outdoor rooms' in scale with the Provisional Parliament House. The formally arranged groups of Lombardy Poplars to achieve 'sentinel' features at the entrances and the pedestrian reference points in the landscape, is attributed to the involvement of John Smith Murdoch, Chief Architect for the Commonwealth Government, in the design. Cedars were used at right angles to the Land Axis. Most of the trees planted in Parkes Place were exotics with the only eucalypts planted adjacent to the Senate and House of Representatives Gardens (Gray 1995).

The first major structure to be placed within the area was the Old Parliament House, then called the Provisional Parliament House. In 1923 the Commonwealth Parliament agreed to the proposed building which was sited in front of Camp Hill, Griffin's intended location of the permanent Parliament House. At the time, Griffin protested recognising that if built, the provisional building would remove any possibility of a permanent Parliament House being built on Camp Hill. Nonetheless the Commonwealth proceeded. In 1925 the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) was established under Sir John Butters. The Commission replaced the FCAC. The FCC was responsible for moving the public service to Canberra and otherwise establishing the city in time for the opening of Parliament House.

A number of other significant projects were undertaken at the same time as the construction of (Old) Parliament House, which was designed by John Smith Murdoch and completed in 1927. Either side of the Parliament House, private gardens were established for the use of Members of Parliament. On either side of Camp Hill, two government office buildings were constructed, known as East and West Blocks and these were also completed in 1927. East and West Blocks were also designed by Murdoch in a similar style to Old Parliament House.

In 1926 a delegation of the Empire Parliamentary Association visited the new Parliament House and planted an avenue of 12 commemorative trees, to mark the event of the first use of the House of Representatives. Ten Roman Cypresses (*CUPRESSUS SEMPERVIRENS* 'STRICTA') were planted at right angles to the House with each tree planted by a delegate and marked by a brass plaque. To commemorate the opening of Parliament House in 1927, the Duke of York planted a Bunya Pine (*ARUACARIA BIDWILLI*) near Kings Avenue. The Marquis of Salisbury and Mr Arthur Henderson planted the Lombardy poplars in the courtyards of the Provisional Parliament House (Pryor and Banks 1991, Gray 1995).

In 1927 the Canberra National Memorials Committee named the area in front of Parliament House - Parkes Place, to commemorate Sir Henry Parkes. King Edward, King George and Queen Victoria Terraces, and Langton and Walpole Crescents were named for links to the first 50 years of Federation (Gray 1995).

The Gardens designed and constructed as part of the Old Parliament House Complex was conceived by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in the early 1920s and constructed by the Federal Capital Commission from the mid 1920s in time for the opening of Parliament in May 1927. Formal enclosed gardens were the style of the time and James Orwin of the Sydney office of the Director of Works for NSW prepared sketch plans that were finalised by Murdoch. Most of the trees for the Parliamentary gardens were planted by late 1925. Around the same time road patterns for the Parliamentary area following Griffin's concepts were prepared.

Formal rose gardens in front of the House were first proposed by Weston in 1924. The idea was finally realised when the National Rose Gardens were established in 1933 by the Canberra Horticultural Society in association with the Department of the Interior. The design was developed by A. Bruce based on the plan of petals of an open bloom with colours arranged from deep red in the central area progressing through yellow, white pink and coppery shades. Rose gardens were also commenced around the same time in the Senate and House of Representatives Gardens. By 1938, these gardens were established with formal garden beds and recreation courts, and surrounded by young cypresses which were later clipped into hedges (Patrick and Wallace).

Following the opening of the Provisional Parliament House by the Duke of York on 9 May 1927, the area in front of the House was used for official ceremonies for Anzac and Remembrance Days with a temporary cenotaph, until the opening of the Australian War Memorial in 1941. Initially this area had simple landscaping treatment of lawns. Rose gardens were added in the 1950s, and the car parking area in the forecourt added in the 1960s.

Weston and Murdoch were both given British Empire Awards in 1927 for their contribution to the nation.

In 1946 a major tree thinning of the Parliamentary Zone was initiated by Lindsay Pryor, Superintendent, Parks and Gardens. All the golden cypresses, white poplars, pin oaks and Lawson's cypress on King George Terrace were removed (Gray 1995).

In order to accommodate other government departments, a competition was held in 1924 for the design of the Administrative building, flanking the land axis in Parkes, which was to house about eight departments. The building was to be the first in the Parliamentary Triangle and its design was considered important because it would influence future buildings in the central National area. In 1924, G Sydney Jones won the competition. Work started in 1927 and the foundations were completed in 1928. However, work was stopped at this point because of the Depression. There were then many delays. The design of the proposed building was modified in 1946, construction started again in 1947 and the new design required the demolition of the original foundations. The building was substantially completed in 1956. The building is claimed to have been the largest Australian office building when completed. It was renamed as the John Gorton Building in 1999.

The major development at the northern end of the land axis was the construction of the Australian War Memorial. The site was agreed in 1923 and in 1928 Griffin expressed the view that the proposed site was suitable for the memorial. Construction began in 1928 but was not completed until 1941.

Although a memorial to King George V was proposed in 1936 it was not until 1941 that the architectural part was constructed but the bronze figure was not developed until after World War II. It was unveiled in 1953 but attracted criticism for blocking the vista to the Australian War Memorial. In 1968 King George Terrace was realigned and the memorial was moved to its current location west of the land axis, on a corner of the western part of the National Rose Garden.

In 1955 a Select Senate Committee of Inquiry urged tree planting and landscape works to be undertaken in Canberra under the direction of the National Capital Development Commission. The Commission sought guidance from landscape designers including Lord William Holford and Dame Sylvia Crowe. Holford recommended that a predominantly Australian character be retained around Lake Burley Griffin with autumn coloured foliage trees used in a dramatic way. Parliament House was to be built on the lakeside with a great forecourt. In 1968 the lakeshore location was rejected in favour of Camp Hill or Capital Hill. During the 1960s, the landscaping of the Parliamentary Triangle was modified to create more formality in Parkes Place. This included realigning roads, installing the four fountains in the pools in the land axis, paving and the relocation King George V statue.

The National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) Act of 1957 set in motion a significant phase in the development of Canberra with the support of Robert Menzies Liberal government. The report of British Town Planner Sir William Holford stressed the need for 'unified design' for Canberra. This view was supported by the Senate Select Committee which propagated Holford's concept of a 'park like landscape...in the heart of Canberra, in which monumental buildings functioned both as symbols of government and of Australian unity'. The visual design of this landscape, the views along the main axial lines and avenues as well as the grouping of monumental buildings were considered to be the elements upon which the success of Canberra as a city of world standing depended. Holford's recommendations included siting the future houses of parliament on the lakeside and developing two monumental buildings on the municipal axis north of a new road connection, which became Parkes Way. The NCDC's acceptance of the Holford vision set the design context for the completion of Anzac Parade and the construction of the Portal Buildings under the direction of NCDC architects and planners. The Portal Buildings have heritage significance.

After a number of schemes for Canberra's lake, detailed planning of the Lake edges was begun in 1954. Lake Burley Griffin was created in 1964 by the damming of the Molonglo River by Scrivener Dam. It reached its predicted level of 556 metres in the same year. The northern shore of the lake between Commonwealth and Kings Avenues was landscaped from about this time to create Commonwealth and Kings Parks. In 1970, two vertical features were opened in the central basin of the lake. The Carillon, located on Aspen Island in the eastern part of the central basin, was a gift from the British Government to mark the fiftieth Jubilee of the founding of Canberra in 1963. In the western part of the central basin is the Captain Cook Memorial water jet commissioned by the National Capital Development Commission as part of the Cook Bicentenary year. In 1968 a

small restaurant was built on a corner of the western part of the National Rose Garden.

NCDC architect and landscape architect Gareth Roberts and architect and landscape architect Richard Clough collaborated on the design of Anzac Parade and its architectural elements at this time. The two Portal Buildings, Anzac Park East and Anzac Park West, were completed in 1965 and 1966 respectively. With the establishment of the Australian War Memorial in the 1940s, the surrounding landscape was imbued with an associated symbolic character. This included the creation of Anzac Park and Anzac Parade. Anzac Park became the setting for a series of memorials commemorating Australian involvement and sacrifice in war. Anzac Parade was opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on Anzac Day 1965, the fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Anzacs at Gallipoli. It is the setting for a series of memorials commemorating Australian involvement and sacrifice in war and is the major national venue for the Anzac Day March and other ceremonies to commemorate those who served Australia in times of conflict. It has a deep symbolism for many Australians and its vista, linking the Memorial with Parliament House, adds aesthetic and emotional value to the place, which has become part of one of the major cultural landscapes of Australia. The notion of a ceremonial space of this grandeur is not found elsewhere in Australia.

Over time the spaces flanking the land axis to the south of the Lake have been filled with government buildings of varying character. These include the Treasury Building established 1967-70, the National Library in 1968, the High Court in 1980, National Gallery in 1982 and the National Science and Technology Centre in 1988. Associated with the Gallery is the extensive and significant Sculpture Garden established in 1982.

In 1972 an informal Aboriginal Embassy was established in front of Old Parliament House. The Embassy became the focus of a campaign for land and other rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 1992 the Embassy was re-established.

The most recent major change to the central National area was the construction of a new Parliament House on Capital Hill. In 1974, The site of Capital Hill for Parliament House, was chosen by a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. An Act of Parliament extended Parliamentary jurisdiction over work in the Parliamentary Triangle, henceforth known as the Parliamentary Zone. Completed in 1988, the building has resulted in a number of significant changes to the area. The relocation of the Parliament to the new building left the Old Parliament House without its original use. The construction of the building also resulted in the levelling of Camp Hill, Griffin's intended location for a Parliament House and its incorporation into the broader formal landscape of the new Federation Mall. Finally, the new Parliament House involved the construction of a large complex of buildings and extensive new landscape areas. The changes affected most of Capital Hill. The winning design, by Mitchell, Giurgola and Thorp Architects, considered the land axis of Canberra as the fundamental gesture of the City, a line around which all other design has evolved in circular and radial directions (Reid 2002).

During 2001-2002 new designed features were constructed across the Land Axis of the Vista landscape. These are Commonwealth Place and Reconciliation Place. In addition, a rotunda with exhibition, called Magna Carta Place is located to the west of the former Senate Garden.

Following the construction of Parliament House, emphasis was placed on the landscape of the Parliament Zone. The development of Federation Mall with its trees and central space was to balance Anzac Parade and to complete the visual Land Axis from Capital Hill to the War Memorial.

#### Use

By the turn of the century (2000-2001), the area was used for countless public events. These include memorial services such as the Anzac Day March and the Dawn Service, public protest demonstrations, celebration events, sporting activities, water races, art displays, fireworks and large-sale concerts. In addition it is used by people informally for weddings, picnics, and fairs. The area is a popular destination for tourists and schoolchildren.

#### DESCRIPTION

The central National area of Canberra is an extensive cultural landscape comprising buildings, roads, parks, tree plantings and a lake. The area is designated for Parliamentary and National Capital uses. The major features of the area include: Parliament House with its gardens and paved areas, State Circle Cutting (geological feature), Old Parliament House and curtilage, East Block, West Block and the Dugout, the John Gorton Building, the National Gallery of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the High Court - National Gallery precinct, National Science and Technology Centre, the National Library of Australia, Treasury Building, National Rose Gardens, The Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery, King George V Memorial, Aboriginal Embassy, the Portal Buildings, Australian War Memorial and memorials along Anzac Parade, Aspen Island, the Carillon, Kings Park, HMAS Canberra Memorial, Merchant Navy Memorial, Blundell's Cottage, Commonwealth Park, Kings Park, the Peace Park, Regatta Point Exhibition Building and Restaurant, Captain Cook Memorial Water Jet, the Lakeshore Promenade, and extensive mature plantings and avenues of trees such as those along Anzac Parade. The area also includes fountains, roads, car parks, landscaped areas, a restaurant, kiosk and the residence of the Catholic

Archbishop. The spaces, particularly the Land Axis, are a major feature.

The central National area has a strong sense of symmetry based on the land axis. The Parliament House, Old Parliament House and Australian War Memorial are located on the axis. In addition, the landscape features of Federation Mall, Parkes Place (the landscape feature not the roads) and Anzac Parade are also located on the axis. Other major features in the area are generally balanced about the axis such as: East and West Blocks, the gardens of Old Parliament House, the Portal Buildings, the eastern and western parts of the National Rose Gardens, Administrative and Treasury Buildings, the National Gallery/High Court group and the National Library/National Science and Technology Centre group, as well as the Carillon and Captain Cook Memorial water jet. The road system also generally reflects the symmetrical planning of the area based on the land axis.

The Anzac Parade Memorials comprises two main components, Anzac Parade and Anzac Park. Either side of Anzac Parade is bounded by Anzac Park. Treed sloping grassy strips contain 10 symmetrically placed aprons prepared for national memorials. In 2002 there were 11 memorials on Anzac Parade, tributes to the men and women of the Australian military. These memorials are: (1) the Australian Hellenic Memorial, Limestone Avenue intersection, (2) the Australian Army Memorial, near Currong Street, (3) the Australian National Korean Memorial, near Currong Street, (4) the Australian Vietnam forces National Memorial, opposite Booroondara Street, (5) the Desert Mounted Corps Memorial, opposite Amaroo Street (commonly known as the Light Horse Memorial), (6) the New Zealand Memorial (7) the Rats of Tobruk Memorial, opposite (5), (8) Royal Australian Air Force Memorial, opposite Page Street, (9) the Australian Service Nurses Memorial, (10) the Royal Australian Navy Memorial, and (11) Kemal Ataturk Memorial, Fairbairn Avenue intersection.

The array of mature tree plantings are all regarded as important. Some are classified as notable by Pryor and Banks (1991) and these include *CALOCEDRUS DECURRENS* on King George Terrace planted in 1927, *CUPRESSUS ARIZONICA* planted in 1926 on King George Terrace, *EUCALYPTUS GLOBULUS* at the Australian War Memorial, *E. MAIDENII* group planted c 1927. Commemorative trees in the Parkes area, include the *CUPRESSUS SEMPERVIRENS* 'Stricta' planted in 1926 by nine members of the Empire Parliamentary Association, *ARAUCARIA Bidwilli* PLANTED BY THE duke of York in 1927 to commemorate his visit to Canberra to open the first Parliament House and *CUPRESSUS ARIZONICA*, planted by the wife of the then United States President, Mrs Lady Bird Johnson, at the time of their visit to Canberra in 1966. Within Commonwealth Park are a *QUERCUS ROBUR* planted by Princess Marina in 1964, and a *CURRESSUS GLABRA* planted by Mrs Lady Bird Johnson. Within the curtilage of the Australian War Memorial is a *PINUS HALPENSIS* planted by the Duke of Gloucester in 1934, believed to have been raised from seed from a cone collected from Lone Pine Ridge, Gallipoli in 1915. Also in curtilage is a *EUCALYPTUS NICHOLII* to replace the *E. PAUCOFORA* planted by Queen Elizabeth in 1954 to mark the beginning of the Remembrance Driveway to Sydney (Pryor and Banks 1991).

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#### History Not Available

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#### Condition and Integrity

The central National area is an extensive cultural landscape with a variety of landscape and building features. Individual elements vary in their condition and integrity. At a general level, the area is in fair to good condition. The values relating to the cultural landscape design and special association with Griffin are degraded by the changes made over time to Griffin's plan. The location of Old Parliament House, removal of Camp Hill, location of the new Parliament House and parts of the road layout as constructed are all variations from Griffin's plan. Given these changes, the area displays only a poor to medium level of integrity with regard to these values. In 1994 the National Capital Planning Authority released details of the Central National Area Design Study. This includes proposals for significant changes to the area.

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#### Location

About 260ha, comprising the whole of the area bounded by the northern alignment of State Circle, the western alignment of Kings Avenue, the southern alignment of Parkes Way and the eastern alignment of Commonwealth Avenue, excluding the Archbishops Residence and grounds being Block 1 Section 2 Parkes; the whole of Anzac Parade and Anzac Park and the whole of Section 39, Campbell.

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