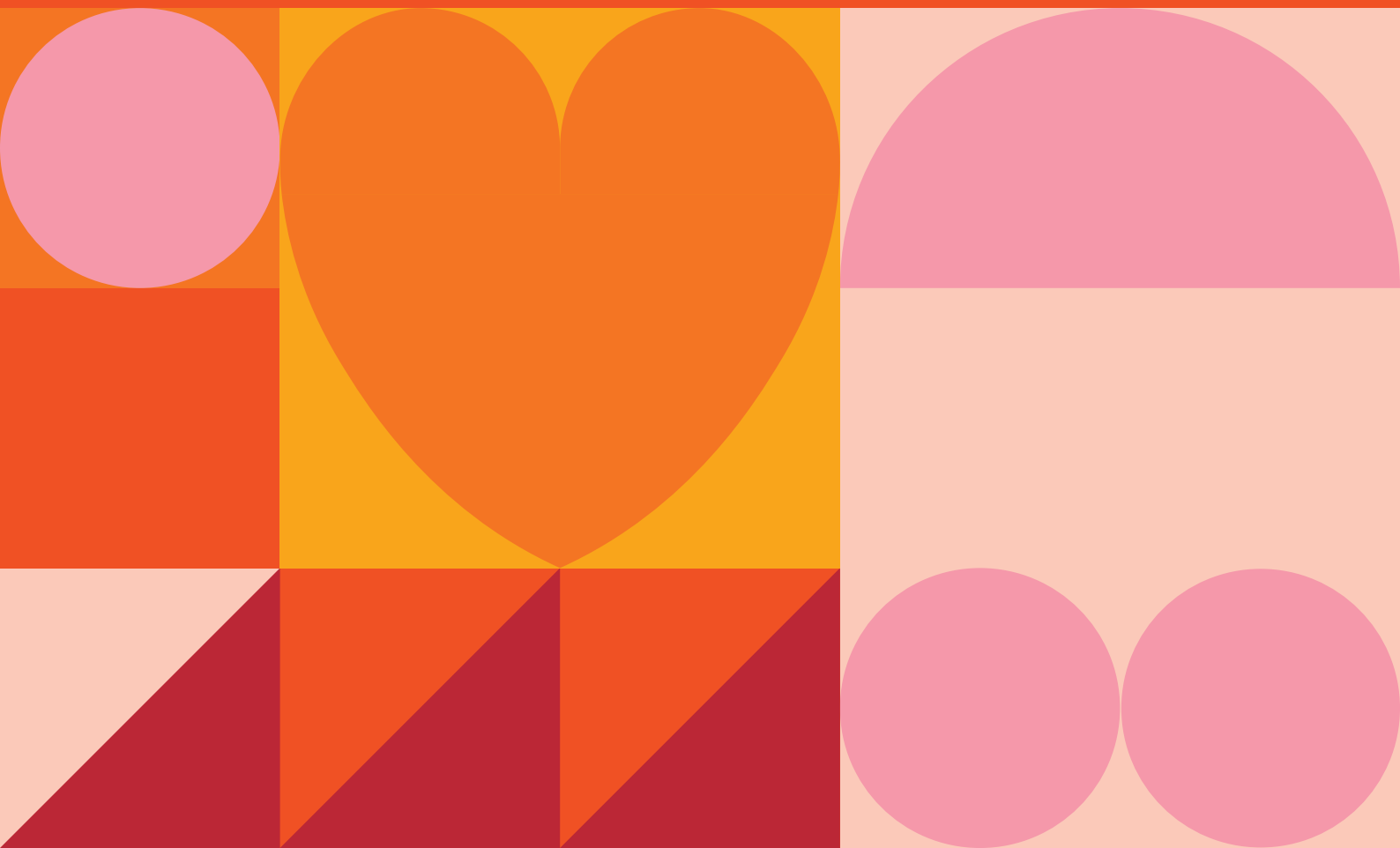


# City Hill Park Ideas Brief



**ACT**  
Government

**CITY  
RENEWAL  
AUTHORITY**



# Ideas Brief

The City Renewal Authority is seeking ideas from the Canberra community on how to make City Hill Park a more welcoming, comfortable and engaging space.

How would you like to see City Hill Park change? What features would you like to be introduced into the park? What do you not like, and would like changed?

It is important to note, however, that this initiative seeks initial ideas only. There is no immediate commitment to implement these ideas. They will, however, influence and inform future plans and help us understand what the community would like City Hill Park to become.

## Opportunities for the City Hill Park

The City Hill Ideas Exhibition is intended to rethink how the currently under-utilised City Hill Park can be transformed into the public heart of the city and the apex of the National Triangle.

To guide this process, all contributions to exhibition should consider and reflect the opportunities of the City Hill Park, which are:

- To enhance and activate the City Hill Park to realise its potential as a central urban space and heart of the Precinct.
- To provide clear and legible pedestrian connectivity between the City Hill Park and the wider precinct.
- To enhance the microclimate of the City Hill Park, to encourage greater use and facilitate recreation.
- To improve biodiversity, native habitat and sustainability.
- To create sustainable and low cost solutions.
- To support opportunities for recreation.
- To enhance existing heritage values.
- To recognise First Nations cultural heritage.



Ideas should be within the dotted orange boundary





## Constraints

- The main character of City Hill Park should remain a public park for recreation.
- Any proposed buildings or structures should be small-scale and ancillary to its use as a park.
- The flagpole cannot be moved.
- The Canberra Centenary Column must remain on City Hill.
- The geometric plantings symbolise the national capital, with each of the six major avenues that meet at the park creating its radials. Ideas should consider how the planting can be conserved to reinforce the heritage citation and Griffin Plan values of the site.



# Past



Photograph of City Hill in the late 1920s  
Source: ArchivesACT

## On Country

City Hill is located on Ngunnawal land - an ancient and diverse landscape that has been managed by First Nations people for tens of thousands of years.

For time immemorial First Nations people have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual, and economic connection to these lands and waters.

## European heritage

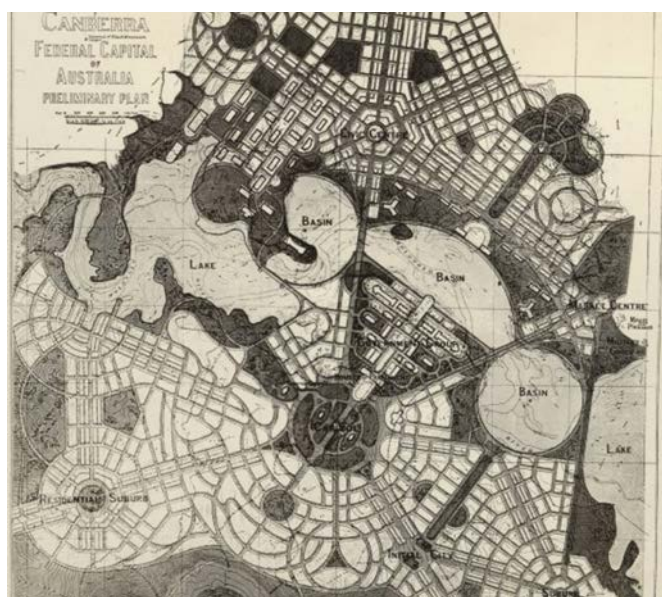
Walter Burley Griffin saw City Hill as a significant point on his prize-winning plan for Canberra. The tree-planted City Hill is a strong visual symbol marking one corner of Walter Burley Griffin's Parliamentary triangle. Its planting and formal layout is a symbolic representation of the national capital, with each of the six major avenues that meet at the park creating its radial pattern.

On 13 February 1954, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was welcomed at the foot of the hill by the people of Canberra. A plaque, at the intersection

of London Circuit and Northbourne Avenue, marks the location of the dais on which the welcoming ceremony was staged.

The ACT Legislative Assembly, the law courts, Civic Square and local administration offices were all subsequently located at the foot of City Hill within London Circuit.

City Hill is entered into the Register of the National Estate and the ACT Heritage Places Register. It is also listed by the National Trust of Australia (ACT).



Canberra Plan by Walter Burley Griffin  
Source: ArchivesACT

# Present



City Hill as it is today  
Source: Adam McGrath

City Hill Park is today a five hectare landscaped hill, surrounded by Vernon Circle. Key features include a flagpole, six avenues of trees and the Canberra Centenary Column.

While the City Hill Park is the geographic centre of the City Centre it is currently disconnected from the day-to-day life of the city.

## Tree plantings

The existing trees include double staggered rows of closely spaced Roman cypresses (*Cupressus sempervirens Stricta*) and 12 oval shaped groups of Roman cypresses, planted in the 1920s.

Also featured are six groups of Torrey pines (*Pinus torreyana*) planted in the same formation as the original plantings of Monterey pines, which were replaced in 2019.

## Flagpole

At the centre of the hill is a flagpole flying the ACT flag since 1989 when the Territory became self-governing.

## Canberra Centenary Column

The sculpture is an 8.5-metre stainless steel obelisk on a 5-metre-wide granite-dressed concrete base. Encased in the base is a time capsule containing one hundred objects, both symbolic and everyday. The time capsule is intended to be opened 100 years after its creation, during Canberra's bicentenary.

# Future

Plans are in place to transform the wider City Hill Precinct. Future indicative development of the City Hill Precinct will bring new jobs, homes, shops and cafes to the centre of the city, allowing the precinct to take its rightful place as the municipal heart of central Canberra. The City Hill Park plays a central role in this development.

It is also intended that Vernon Circle will become a low-speed urban street with a careful blend of through and local traffic, giving priority to pedestrians and providing access to City Hill Park.

For further information see the National Capital Plan: [www.nca.gov.au/planning/plans-policies-and-guidelines/national-capital-plan](http://www.nca.gov.au/planning/plans-policies-and-guidelines/national-capital-plan)



Artist's impression of indicative development of the City Hill Precinct  
Source: National Capital Plan

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as Traditional Custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.