
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Not A Town Centre:

The Proposal for Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

October 2003
Canberra

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ISBN

Cover – Aerial view of Parliamentary Zone (ACT Planning and Land Authority)
provided courtesy of the National Capital Authority



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Foreword

This is the second time the issue of parking in the Parliamentary Zone has been examined by the Committee. Although the Committee was against the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone in 1994, we, the current Committee members, commenced this new inquiry with open minds. As the agency charged with managing the Commonwealth's interests in the national capital, the National Capital Authority is seeking to introduce pay parking as a means to manage traffic in the Parliamentary Zone.

The issues relating to parking in the Zone which have become a cause for concern include traffic flow problems, limited car parking spaces, physical isolation of major buildings and iconic attractions and a poor pedestrian access network. This was evident to members of the Committee during an inspection of the parking areas in the Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest area.

The Committee is conscious of the many interests involved in this issue, as evidenced by the large number of submissions received to the inquiry. There have been strong arguments put forward by people who work in the Zone and adjacent areas who will be affected by pay parking, as well as from the national cultural institutions and Commonwealth agencies in the Zone. The Committee is well aware of the need to find an equitable solution to the overcrowding of parking areas in the Zone. The Committee is also conscious of any flow-on effect changes in parking policies or new building developments in the Barton/Forrest area may have. A majority of the submissions received were from people who work in the Barton/Forrest area.

The unanimous view of the Committee is that the Parliamentary Zone is unique and should not be treated in the same way as the commercial centres in the ACT. The Zone belongs to the people of Australia, and access to any of the culturally significant sites throughout the area should remain free.

The National Capital Authority sought the Committee's support on the principle of pay parking. Unfortunately, the Committee believes the Authority has failed to

adequately address a number of significant issues regarding the implementation of pay parking and provision for different categories of users. This has created a large degree of uncertainty for the Committee, which, at this time, finds itself unable to give the 'in-principle' support for pay parking that the Authority is seeking. The parking situation in the Parliamentary Zone and adjacent areas of Barton/Forrest remains unacceptable. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Authority, in conjunction with the ACT Government, develop a more detailed proposal that incorporates the concerns raised in this report as a matter of urgency.

The Committee is grateful to all those who participated in the inquiry.

Senator Ross Lightfoot
Chairman



Membership of the Committee

Chairman Senator Ross Lightfoot

Deputy Chair Senator Trish Crossin

Members The Hon. Ian Causley MP

Senator John Hogg

Ms Annette Ellis MP

Senator Kate Lundy

Mr Michael Johnson MP

Senator Nigel Scullion

Mr Paul Neville MP

Senator Natasha Stott Despoja
(Appointed 18/11/02)

The Hon. Warren Snowdon MP

Mr Cameron Thompson MP

Committee Secretariat

Secretary Mrs Margaret Swieringa

Inquiry Secretary Mr Quinton Clements

Research Officer Mr Justin Baker

Administrative Officer Mr Daniel Miletic



Terms of reference

On 10 December 2002, the Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, the Hon. Wilson Tuckey MP, referred the issue of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories for inquiry. The Committee is to examine the following in relation to the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone:

- the interests of visitors to the Parliamentary Zone;
- the interests of those employed in the Parliamentary Zone and adjacent areas;
- the interests of the national institutions in the Parliamentary Zone;
- tourism and related issues; and
- proposed parking policies for Forrest and Barton – areas adjacent to the Parliamentary Zone managed by the ACT Government – and the effects of these policies on parking arrangements in the Parliamentary Zone.

On 12 December 2002, the Committee agreed to accept the terms of reference from the Minister and conduct an inquiry.



List of abbreviations

ACTION	Australian Capital Territory Internal Omnibus Network
ACTPLA	Australian Capital Territory Planning and Land Authority
AFFA	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
CPSU	Community and Public Sector Union
FBT	Fringe Benefits Tax
NCA	National Capital Authority
NCDC	National Capital Development Commission
NCPA	National Capital Planning Authority
OPH/NPG	Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery
PM & C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



List of recommendations

3 The Case For & Against Pay Parking

Recommendation 1

That the National Capital Authority – in collaboration with the ACT Government and in thorough consultation with all relevant stakeholders, preferably with their consensus – develop a detailed parking policy proposal for the Parliamentary Zone that recognises the isolation of the Zone from commercial facilities and clearly defines the following characteristics:

- the infrastructure to be built – including the timeframe and funding arrangements;
- the parking fees to be introduced - including provision to exclude visitors, volunteers and people with disabilities from payment; and
- contingencies should the Parliamentary Zone experience further encroachment of commuters from the adjacent Barton precinct.



Introduction

The Parliamentary Zone

“The Parliamentary Zone will be given meaning as the Place of the People, accessible to all Australians so that they can more fully understand and appreciate the collective experience and rich diversity of this country.” – National Capital Plan.

- 1.1 Walter Burley Griffin’s plan for Canberra was designed to reflect the values of an emerging nation¹ and includes that which has come to be known as the National Triangle. The southern apex of the triangle, known as the Parliamentary Zone, is described in the National Capital Plan as “the physical manifestation of Australian democratic government and home of the nation’s most important cultural and judicial institutions and symbols”.² The institutions within the Zone represent the Australian people, their values and achievements.³ In general terms, the Parliamentary Zone includes the Parliament House site within Capital Circle and extends to the land lying east of Commonwealth Avenue and west of Kings Avenue to Lake Burley Griffin, and the land south of Lake Burley Griffin lying between the two avenues.

1 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, February 2002, p 285.

2 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, February 2002, p 29.

3 John Lauder, Submissions, p 132.

- 1.2 The Parliamentary Zone covers a total area of 1,081,048 square metres, approximately 14 per cent of which is taken up by surface parking and 5.6 per cent of which is taken up by buildings. These buildings include the national institutions which consist of Reconciliation Place, Commonwealth Place, the National Gallery of Australia, the High Court of Australia, the National Science and Technology Centre, Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, the National Library of Australia and the National Archives of Australia⁴. The Parliamentary Zone is also home to three other buildings which are occupied by Commonwealth agencies. The John Gorton Building houses the Department of the Environment and Heritage and the Department of Finance and Administration. The Treasury Building is home to the Department of the Treasury and the National Capital Authority. The West Block offices are occupied by the Australian Electoral Commission, the Australian Protective Service and some employees from Parliamentary Departments.
- 1.3 Many of the sites and buildings within the Parliamentary Zone appear on the Register of the National Estate which is maintained by the Australian Heritage Commission. Registration has legal status under the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 (Cth)*. Parliament House and Old Parliament House are central to the Parliamentary Vista which is listed on the Register. Other sites of heritage significance include Old Parliament House and its Curtilage, the National Rose Gardens, the King George V Memorial, the Commencement Column Monument, the Capital Circle Geological Unconformity, East and West Blocks, the John Gorton Building, the National Library of Australia and surrounds, and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy.⁵

Planning Responsibility

- 1.4 The responsibility for the planning, design, development and land management of the Parliamentary Zone rests with the Commonwealth of Australia. Section 5(b) of the *Parliament Act 1974 (Cth)* provides that no works are to be undertaken on land within the Parliamentary Zone unless:

...the Minister has caused a proposal for the erection of the building or work to be laid before each House of the

4 The National Archives of Australia is located in the East Block Offices.

5 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 83.

Parliament and the proposal has been approved by resolution of each House.⁶

- 1.5 The National Capital Plan (the Plan), which came into effect in 1990, is the major statutory document that outlines the Commonwealth's intentions for the development of the national capital. The Plan is established under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 (Cth)* (the Act). In the Parliamentary Zone, the National Capital Authority (NCA) is responsible for works approvals for all building and landscape projects, and for planning and management of public land, including services and public events.
- 1.6 The NCA is also responsible for enhancing and maintaining the character of the Parliamentary Zone. It does this by undertaking a range of ongoing projects which include commemorative works, parks, gardens, tree plantings, fountains, paths, jetties, signage, lighting and car parks. Section 1 of the Plan provides that developments in the Parliamentary Zone "should be sited and designed to support the prominence of national functions and reinforce the character of the area".⁷

Designated Area

- 1.7 The Central National Area which includes the Parliamentary Zone and its setting, is specified as a *Designated Area* under the provisions of the Act.⁸ Section 10.2 of the Act provides that the National Capital Plan "may set out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development in Designated Areas and the priorities in carrying out such planning design and development."⁹ In section 1.4, the Act also provides for the transport system within the Parliamentary Zone to be planned in accordance with the significance of the area:

The transport system within the Designated Area will be planned and managed for volumes of traffic and parking consistent with the significance and use of the Area.

Transport infrastructure should foster the use of transport systems which minimise adverse effects from vehicular traffic.¹⁰

6 *Parliament Act 1974 (Cth)*, Section 5.

7 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, 2001, p 29.

8 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, p 23.

9 *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 (Cth)*, Section 10.

10 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, 2001, p 32.

Table 1.1 Car Park Provision in the Parliamentary Zone

Building/Place	Long-stay (includes motor cycles and basement parking)	Commonwealth Vehicles/ Reserved Parking/ Parking for People with Disabilities	Loading Zone	Short-stay	Total
National Library	266	18	0	55	339
Questacon	370	2	0	0	372
High Court	40	93	0	18	151
National Gallery	172	17	6	197	392
John Gorton Building	874	90	0	9	973
Treasury Building	647	93	4	24	768
West Block	393	33	2	4	432
Old Parliament House	184	8	3	50	245
East Block	409	15	0	29	453
Federation Mall	56	0	0	0	56
On-street	84	17	6	267	374
Totals	3,495	386	21	653	4,555

Source National Capital Authority, Submission, March 2003.

Table 1.2 Employee Levels and Parking Rate in the Parliamentary Zone

Building	Employees* (estm)	Total Long-Stay Parking	Space/ Employee	Av. Daily Rate of Use (%)**
National Library	450	494	1.09	70
Questacon	80	158	1.97	87
High Court	100	133	1.33	65
National Gallery	200	189	0.94	60
John Gorton Building	1,200	964	0.80	92
Treasury Building	1,200	737	0.61	89
Old Parliament House	100	192	1.92	67
West Block	300	426	1.42	58
East Block	180	424	2.35	60
Totals	3,810	3,291	1.38 (avge)	

Source National Capital Authority, Submission, August 2003.

* Approximate numbers mid 2002 – excludes Parliament House

** Datacol Research Pty Ltd – *Parliamentary Zone Parking Survey Report, 2003*

Parking Availability

- 1.8 Table 1.1 shows the current provision for parking at each of the major buildings in the Parliamentary Zone, indicating the supply of both the short term parking for visitors and long term parking for employees. The total number of parking spaces in the Parliamentary Zone is 4,555. Approximately 14 per cent of these have been allocated as short-stay parking.

Employee / Visitor Numbers

- 1.9 Employment in the Parliamentary Zone, excluding Parliament House, is estimated at 3,810 employees. Table 1.2 shows the division of employment within the Zone, as of mid 2002, and the extent to which parking is provided for these employees. The information provided by the NCA shows that both the Treasury Building and the John Gorton Building have a significantly low ratio of parking spaces to employees. The data also suggests that while some areas of employment in the Zone are clearly struggling to accommodate the demand for parking, there are other areas – such as East and West Blocks – where there is parking space that is not being utilised.

Issues

- 1.10 There are a range of issues relating to parking in the Parliamentary Zone which have become a matter of public concern. This was evident to the Committee during an inspection of the parking areas in the Zone undertaken on 16 September 2002. The issues include traffic flow problems, limited car parking spaces, physical isolation of major buildings and attractions and a poor pedestrian access network. It is anticipated that without action, these problems are likely to deteriorate given the plans for future development within the Zone and the prediction that visitor numbers are likely to increase substantially. The intended long term growth and development of the Zone is identified in the Indicative Development Plan which has been incorporated into the National Capital Plan as part of Draft Amendment 33.

Draft Amendment 33: Parliamentary Zone Review

- 1.11 In 1998, having identified the need to address the issues confronting the Zone, the Federal Government commissioned the NCA to undertake a strategic review and to initiate the development of a master plan for the Parliamentary Zone. The review process included

Figure 1.1 Existing Public Parking in Parkes/Barton



Source National Capital Authority, 2003.

a statement of critical issues and consultation with key stakeholders, professional bodies and focus groups and was carried out with the assistance of a Parliamentary Zone Advisory Panel.¹¹

1.12 In March 2000, the NCA published the review as the *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report* with an aim to “refresh and promulgate the historical vision for the Zone and to provide innovative and practical ways of translating this vision into reality”.¹² Key results from the report were incorporated into a master plan for the Parliamentary Zone by way of Amendment 33 to the National Capital Plan which came into effect on 17 September 2001.¹³ The master plan is intended to guide decisions relating to development, cultural and physical planning and management within the Parliamentary Zone. The master plan contains:

- a statement of principles that the Parliamentary Zone will be given meaning as ‘the place of the people’, accessible to all Australians so that they can more fully understand and appreciate the collective experience and rich diversity of this country;
- a statement of objectives and intentions which includes to welcome people and make access easy and open;
- statements of policy relating to the formation of campuses, land use and development, roads and traffic, pedestrian pathways, orientation and interpretation and tree planting; and
- an indicative development plan.¹⁴

1.13 The aims of the proposed parking initiatives as identified in the NCA’s review are to improve the experience of visitors to the Parliamentary Zone by creating convenient and safe parking areas, balancing parking demand and supply and reducing the use of motor vehicles within the Zone.¹⁵ The initiative is also focused toward applying more ecologically sustainable management and development practices which would contribute to a ‘greener’ Zone.¹⁶

1.14 Traffic and parking problems in the Parliamentary Zone are not a new issue and have been on the NCA’s agenda for some time. For over a decade, the NCA and its predecessor, the National Capital Planning

11 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 90.

12 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p iii.

13 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 90.

14 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 91.

15 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 40.

16 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 40.

Authority (NCPA), have sought to manage traffic and parking in the Parliamentary Zone through a variety of measures in conjunction with the ACT Government. These include the introduction of limited on-site parking, the introduction of parking contributions to a centralised parking trust fund, reducing supply by the development of surface car parks and restricting on-street car parking.¹⁷ The Authority concluded that pay parking was an essential element of any long-term solution to the parking demands in the Parliamentary Zone and put this view to the Committee in 1994.

1994 Inquiry: The First Proposal for Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone

1.15 In 1994, the Committee undertook to inquire into a proposal from the NCPA to have a paid voucher parking system installed in the Parliamentary Zone. The intention of the proposal was to generate revenue to offset the cost of the NCPA's four year Restoration and Replacement Program for National Capital Assets. The then Committee recommended that Parliamentary approval not be granted for the proposed works and that alternative means of funding be investigated¹⁸, citing the following reasons:

- that the revenue targets were unlikely to be met without imposing unrealistic charges on people parking within the Zone;
- that there was no guarantee that funds raised from parking charges in the Zone would continue to be spent on National Capital assets after the four year Program;
- that insufficient attention had been paid to the likely effects of pay parking on national institutions such as decreasing visitor numbers, the operations of Fringe Benefits Tax and the impact on volunteer staff;
- that there was no guarantee that improved public transport links would be created to ensure an adequate service into the Zone at peak periods; and
- that insufficient attention had been paid to the lack of commercial and community services within the Zone.¹⁹

17 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 120.

18 A dissenting report was tabled by Senator Mal Colston who disagreed with the recommendation that Parliamentary approval not be granted for the installation of voucher parking machines and associated signs in the Parliamentary Zone.

19 Report of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital & External Territories, *The Proposal for Pay Parking in the Parliamentary Zone*, June 1994, p 26.

NCA Parking Policy for the Parliamentary Zone

1.16 In June 2002, prior to the inquiry commencing, the NCA presented a submission to the Committee which included the Authority's policy for the management of parking in the Parliamentary Zone.²⁰ This submission addressed the issues arising from the *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, and outlined the NCA's strategy for the management of parking in the Zone. The strategy included the provision of centralised parking structures which would incorporate a range of amenities and the provision of basement parking for new buildings to accommodate parking needs. However, the Authority acknowledged that in keeping with sustainable practice there is a need to "aim for a reduction in the overall rate of provision of parking and for improved public transport facilities".²¹ The NCA's policy for the management of parking in the Zone, as outlined in this original submission, involved the following components:

- there is to be a charge for off-street parking throughout the Zone on a differential basis to maximise the number of spaces made available for visitors to institutions and to avoid these spaces being occupied by commuters;
- parking necessary for operational needs for each institution and facility is to be dedicated near that institution or facility;
- as new development occurs on areas currently used for surface parking there will be spaces provided in centralised parking areas for displaced cars;
- a shuttle bus system is proposed to operate in the Zone for improved access by providing a connection between the parking areas and attractions;
- parking areas are to be provided with upgraded lighting to improve safety; and
- one fee for long stay parking areas will enable movement into and out of the area throughout the day and use of the shuttle bus for the single charge.²²

20 This original submission was the basis for the Committee resolving to conduct an inquiry. Once the inquiry began, the NCA made a second submission to the Committee on 7 March 2003. This second submission "outlines the strategic objectives for the Parliamentary Zone, the current issues associated with access and car parking, and in particular the case for the introduction of pay parking", National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 89.

21 National Capital Authority, *Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories: Parliamentary Zone Parking Policy*, June 2002, p 5.

22 National Capital Authority, *Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories: Parliamentary Zone Parking Policy*, June 2002, p 1.

- 1.17 The reasons the NCA identified for the need to introduce pay parking include:
- there is an excessive amount of surface parking in the Zone;
 - off-site parking demand is intended to be met by centralised parking areas that will need to be funded through parking charges;
 - pay parking will allow for better management in terms of meeting different requirements of commuters and visitors through the use of differential parking rates;
 - taking into account the hierarchy of roads and campus structures that are proposed for the Zone, pay parking will make it possible to achieve a better integration of traffic movement through a generally centralised parking arrangement; and
 - the introduction of parking charges will deter use of the Zone by commuters in the adjacent Barton/Forrest area seeking alternative parking spaces.²³

ACT Developments

- 1.18 The NCA's proposal has been developed in conjunction with the Territory Government's policy to promote sustainable transport options for the ACT. Parking is recognised as an important component of the ACT's strategy and any parking policies adopted by the Commonwealth in the Parliamentary Zone are likely to have implications for the Territory's transport strategy.
- 1.19 Pay parking already exists in Civic and Woden town centres, as well as in suburbs such as Deakin, Dickson, Kingston and Manuka. The ACT Government also plans to introduce pay parking in Belconnen and Tuggeranong town centres in the near future. According to the Territory Government, "the availability of parking spaces is the key factor influencing modal choice and encouraging people to always use their cars".²⁴ The ACT's *Sustainable Transport Plan* involves the implementation of pay parking consistently across the metropolitan areas of Canberra.

23 National Capital Authority, *Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories: Parliamentary Zone Parking Policy*, June 2002, p 2.

24 ACT Government, *Submissions*, p 314.

1.20 In 2002, the ACT Government advised that it would introduce pay parking in the Barton/Forrest office area. In order to avoid an unwanted overflow of commuters, the Territory and the National Capital Authority recognised the need to align the introduction of pay parking between the Barton/Forrest area and the Parliamentary Zone.²⁵ Officers of the ACT Government worked in collaboration with the NCA and developed an outline of a parking management plan for the Barton area and the Parliamentary Zone. According to the ACT, the plan takes a comprehensive approach to parking management in the area and includes:

- integrated management of public on-street and off-street parking in Government buildings and institutions;
- implementation of pay parking;
- provision for time restrictions and physical barriers to control illegal parking;
- management and enforcement measures and protocols; and
- controls on on-site parking provision for new developments.²⁶

1.21 The NCA and the ACT Government have emphasised the need for a joint approach to ensure effective implementation of the parking management strategy, including the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone and Barton/Forrest areas.

Sustainable Transport Plan – An ACT Government Initiative

1.22 The Sustainable Transport Plan is part of the *Canberra Spatial Plan*.²⁷ The plan recommends improvements and innovations to the system to encourage greater use of public transport and alternatives to private vehicle use.²⁸ A 1997 report by the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra found that most residents of the ACT made virtually all their trips by car. According to the report, this

25 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 93.

26 ACT Government, Submissions, p 317.

27 The *Canberra Spatial Plan* is being developed between 2002 and 2003 and is a component of the overall Canberra Plan. It will integrate with the *Canberra Economic White Paper* and the *Canberra Social Plan* to provide a sustainable framework for Canberra's people, economy and environment.

28 ACT Planning and Land Authority, *Sustainable Transport Plan*, www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/transport/index.htm, accessed 28 August 2003.

was “easy to understand when one considers the attractiveness of alternatives”.²⁹

1.23 Key concerns driving the Sustainable Transport Plan include greenhouse emissions, economic sustainability, increased physical inactivity, equitable mobility/access and containing urban sprawl.³⁰ The aim of the Sustainable Transport Plan is “to achieve an efficient, effective, equitable, safe and sustainable transport system for Canberra”.³¹ The objectives of the Plan are to:

- minimise the need for costly road infrastructure in the future;
- increase public transport use;
- reduce greenhouse and air quality emissions;
- increase physical activity from cycling and walking;
- make better use of existing infrastructure;
- reduce single occupant car travel; and
- reduce congestion.³²

The Role of the Committee

1.24 The Committee’s Resolution of Appointment enables it to inquire into and report on, among other things, works in the Parliamentary Zone. The Committee has an advisory role in reporting to Parliament, it is not the approving authority. An inquiry and report to Parliament by the Committee does not replace the need for approval from both Houses of Parliament. This is a statutory requirement regardless of whether a Committee does, or does not conduct an inquiry into such a ‘work’. In the case of this inquiry, the works have not been proposed. However, by convention the NCA would still need to advise the Committee of proposed works and seek Parliamentary approval under Section 5 of the *Parliament Act 1974 (Cth)*.

29 Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra, *Canberra at the Crossroads: A Way Out of the Transport Mess*, October 1997, p 12.

30 ACT Planning and Land Authority, *Sustainable Transport Plan*, www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/transport/index.htm, accessed 28 August 2003.

31 ACT Planning and Land Authority, *Sustainable Transport Plan*, www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/transport/index.htm, accessed 28 August 2003.

32 ACT Planning and Land Authority, *Sustainable Transport Plan*, www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/transport/index.htm, accessed 28 August 2003.

Conduct of the Inquiry

- 1.25 In June 2002, the Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, the Hon. Wilson Tuckey MP, wrote to the Committee advising of a proposal for a new parking policy in the Parliamentary Zone. A submission prepared by the National Capital Authority was attached. On 16 September 2002, the Committee inspected existing parking facilities in the Parliamentary Zone and adjacent areas in Barton.
- 1.26 On 23 October 2002, the Committee passed a resolution to seek to have the issue of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone referred to it for inquiry and report. On 10 December 2002, the Minister referred the proposal for pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone to the Committee for inquiry. 145 submissions were received. Twenty-six witnesses gave evidence at a public hearing on 9 May 2003. At this hearing, the Committee sought responses from people who work in the area who were following the day's proceedings via webcast, as to how they travelled to work that day and why they chose that particular mode of transport. The Committee recorded the responses of 456 employees (see tables 2.1 and 2.2) and has continued to receive feedback. A second public hearing was held on 13 August 2003 where evidence was received from the National Capital Authority and the ACT Government.

Structure of the Report

- 1.27 The report is divided into three chapters. Chapter Two examines the key issues which have arisen from the National Capital Authority's proposal for pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone. Chapter Three looks at the case both for and against pay parking, and outlines the respective views of the key groups and individuals involved in the inquiry, as well as outlining the Committee's views and recommendation.

Figure 1.2 Parking Overflow in the Parliamentary Zone



Source National Capital Authority, 2003.

The Issues

Introduction

2.1 Much of the current problem facing the Parliamentary Zone has been attributed to the 'Y-Plan' regime adopted by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in the 1960s and the reluctance of planners to shift away from the strategic planning principles that continue to guide Canberra's development.¹ The Y-Plan, so-called because "the metropolitan growth of Canberra is based on the development of separate urban districts or towns, in a linear arrangement in the form of a 'Y'",² also provided for large volumes of traffic to be carried on a peripheral parkway system.³ As one submission describes, the Y-Plan was:

...built on the premise that motor cars were affordable, cheap, desirable and here to stay. Canberra grew around the high-speed highways that cars needed, and quickly outstripped the potential for public transport to compete.⁴

2.2 A 1997 study by the Conservation Council of the South East Region criticised the way ACT planners have continued to accommodate an increasing demand for private vehicle commuting:

1 Bruce Wright, *ACT's Planning Stuck in Mid-1960s*, Canberra Times, 22 April 2003, p 11.
2 National Capital Development Commission, *Metropolitan Canberra Policy Plan Development Plan*, July 1984, p 24.
3 National Capital Development Commission, *Metropolitan Canberra Policy Plan Development Plan*, July 1984, p 24.
4 Michael Richards, Submissions, p 27.

Apart from Walter Burley Griffin himself, Canberra's planners have never seriously considered any future other than one completely dominated by the car. The freeway network was always envisaged as providing the arteries of communication between towns. And so it remains today.⁵

- 2.3 The Committee also examined evidence which notes a recent decline in public transport access and the way this has contributed to a city dominated by cars:

In recent years ... one of the central design elements of Griffin's vision – that of creating a city that embodied the Australian democratic ideals of equity and fairness, has been eroded through the loss of good public transport access to the central areas. Ironically, this diminished access may primarily be attributed to the ever increasing use of that universal symbol of modern mobility and 'freedom' – the private vehicle.⁶

- 2.4 In examining the NCA's proposal and the evidence received by the Committee, a number of issues became apparent. The Committee agrees that there are significant problems relating to parking in the Parliamentary Zone that need to be addressed. These problems relate to overcrowding, a lack of alternatives to private vehicle commuting and the isolation of major buildings and attractions from essential services. The Committee is also concerned about the possible implications a pay parking system would have for visitors to the national cultural institutions in the Zone as well as for volunteers, researchers and people with disabilities.

Implementation Issues

- 2.5 The NCA has informed the Committee that it plans to align the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone with the ACT Government's decision to introduce on-street (kerbside) pay parking in the Barton/Forrest region. The Authority acknowledges that any parking strategy for the Parliamentary Zone must take the situation in the adjacent Barton/Forrest office area into consideration and "be consistent with, and complementary to, policies adopted for those areas by the ACT Government".⁷

5 Conservation Council of the South East Region, *Canberra at the Crossroads: A Way Out of the Transport Mess*, October 1997, p 10.

6 John Lauder, Submissions, p 132.

7 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 104.

- 2.6 The NCA maintains that introducing pay parking in one area, but not the other, would be likely to create an unwanted overflow of commuters in the Parliamentary Zone as they seek to avoid parking charges.⁸ The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (AFFA) also acknowledges this concern, emphasising that if there is not a joint approach to implement parking policy in the Zone and the adjacent areas, “all we will see is a migration from one to the other of people seeking free parking”.⁹
- 2.7 The ACT Government believes that even on-street pay parking, if introduced in the Barton/Forrest area, could have “an immediate and possibly severe impact” on parking in the Parliamentary Zone.¹⁰ The Committee also acknowledges concerns that the implementation of pay parking in Barton/Forrest is likely to generate greater competition for spaces in the car parks of the national institutions in the Zone, as well as contributing to the problem of people parking illegally.
- 2.8 Despite recognition from the two authorities of the need to introduce parking regimes that are complimentary, the Committee remains concerned about the implications which could arise from having two separate parking regimes divided by a single road. While the NCA maintains that both governments are committed to managing the overall transport task in an integrated and sustainable way, the Committee understands that there is a significant contrast between the two authorities regarding the motivation behind the parking strategies and the outcomes being pursued. On one hand, the ACT Government is hoping to introduce pay parking infrastructure consistent with other town centres in the ACT as part of the overall Sustainable Transport Plan to encourage public transport commuting. The ACT Government confirmed its intention when appearing before the Committee:
- One of the incentives is to send signals to people by making sure the cost of parking is understood by people and can be seen as an offset against a bus ticket.¹¹
- 2.9 The NCA, on the other hand, proposes to introduce parking fees which will improve the management of parking in the Zone but will not be severe enough to deter visitors to the national institutions. The Committee does not envisage that proposed parking charges for each area would be the same and, even if they were, it would be highly unlikely that they

8 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 93.

9 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 66.

10 ACT Government, Submissions, p 315.

11 ACT Government, Transcript, 13 August 2003, pp 108-109.

would change in unison over time. The Committee anticipates that as a result, the Parliamentary Zone would be further affected by commuters from the adjacent Barton/Forrest area seeking to avoid greater parking fees. The Committee believes that solving the implementation issues is critical to ensuring that pay parking will be an effective tool to manage the traffic related problems affecting the Zone.

- 2.10 The NCA claims that the level of parking charges will take into account the rates applying in the Barton/Forrest areas when introduced by the ACT Government and be equitable with charges elsewhere in Canberra. The NCA states that for employee parking:

It is intended that a single charge will apply that will enable movement in and out of the Parliamentary Zone on the same business day without incurring additional cost.¹²

- 2.11 The NCA also claims that visitors will be able to move from one area to another without additional charge.¹³ However, the infrastructure which would accommodate these schemes has not been presented to the Committee. Instead, the NCA has indicated there are a number of options which could be considered if the principle of pay parking in the Zone were to be approved.

The Consultation Process

- 2.12 Although the NCA has informed the Committee that it has engaged in consultation with the national institutions in the Parliamentary Zone, the Committee has received evidence which suggests that this consultation has not been adequate. The NCA states that consultation with the national cultural institutions in the Zone on the principle of pay parking was held in 1999.¹⁴ Further rounds of consultation occurred following the release of the *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report* during May 2000 and December 2000.¹⁵ According to the NCA, a letter was sent to each of the institutions on 5 March 2003 seeking their confirmation of support for the introduction of pay parking in the Zone.¹⁶ An Implementation Working Group involving representatives from the institutions has also been

12 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 111.

13 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 111.

14 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 115.

15 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 115.

16 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 116.

formed and has met once, on 14 February 2003.¹⁷ Further meetings have been delayed pending the outcomes of the Committee's inquiry.

- 2.13 The Committee is concerned that the institutions do not appear to have been involved in the consideration and development of the proposal. Instead, they were kept informed of what the NCA was planning to introduce by way of a new parking regime. When appearing before the Committee, the National Archives noted this lack of involvement of the national institutions in the consultation process:

...(the NCA) held a meeting, and they invited the cultural institutions to attend to brief us on what they were proposing... we did not agree with their submission that pay parking should be introduced.¹⁸

- 2.14 The National Archives' claim is strongly refuted by the NCA which argues that their comments are "not factual".¹⁹ The NCA contends that "there has been considerable consultation with the different institutions over the years".²⁰ The Committee believes it is essential that, as key stakeholders, the national institutions are heavily involved in the development of any proposal which is likely to impact on their visitors, staff and volunteers. The issue of consultation is particularly significant in light of recent controversy surrounding the siting of the centenary of women's suffrage artwork, which appears to highlight shortcomings in the consultation processes employed by the NCA.

Current Parking Provision Policies

- 2.15 Most submissions and witnesses were critical of the way in which the current problems associated with parking in the Parliamentary Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest area have been allowed to deteriorate. The CPSU suggested that there has not been sufficient planning foresight in providing adequate parking for both visitors and staff in the Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest office area.²¹ Of further concern to the Committee is the NCA's *Indicative Development Plan* for the Parliamentary Zone which provides for future structural development to take place on existing surface car parks. There is a need to introduce measures to counteract the

17 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 116.

18 National Archives of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 59.

19 National Capital Authority, Transcript, 13 August 2003, p 128.

20 National Capital Authority, Transcript, 13 August 2003, p 128.

21 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 3.

current parking problems before any further reduction of surface parking is considered.

- 2.16 The National Capital Plan provides that on-site parking in the Barton precinct shall be provided at a rate of 1 space per 100 square metres of gross floor area for new offices approved throughout the Central National Area (Barton).²² The ratio at which parking is to be provided for new buildings in the Barton precinct is part of a policy to encourage greater use of public transport and is commensurate with policies implemented in other areas of commercial development in Canberra. The ACT Government acknowledges that the NCA's restriction of parking to less than that which is actually required, has increased demand for surface parking:

The NCA has allowed new developments to construct one space on site and one space off site per 100 square metres. This has resulted, over time, in increasing demand for off-site parking.²³

- 2.17 The Committee is deeply concerned that this policy appears to be contributing directly to the encroachment of commuter traffic within the Parliamentary Zone and that the problem will only increase with new development in the Barton/Forrest area. This concern is confirmed by the NCA itself, which states that:

As additional office development occurs in the Barton/Forrest area it can be expected that demand for parking in the Parliamentary Zone will further increase.²⁴

- 2.18 The Authority conducted surveys to measure pedestrian movement across the Zone. The results confirmed that there were few movements across Commonwealth Avenue on the western side of the Zone but significant movements across Kings Avenue on the eastern side of the Zone, indicating that there are already a significant number of employees from the Barton area who are using parking provided in the Zone. While the Committee appreciates that the current parking provisions are in place to encourage public transport use, it believes the respective authorities should recognise that office workers in the Barton precinct do not have access to the same facilities that workers in the other town centres enjoy. The owners of private vehicles will, therefore, continue to create further demand for parking in this area.

22 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, February 2002, p 237.

23 ACT Government, *Submissions*, p 316.

24 National Capital Authority, *Submissions*, p 379.

Alternative Modes of Transport

2.19 Given that one of the major objectives behind the proposal for pay parking is to encourage a shift from private vehicle use to public transport commuting, the Committee believes it is important to assess the viability of public transport as a means for accessing the Parliamentary Zone, as well as other sustainable modes of travel. Firstly, the Committee acknowledges that Canberra was designed as a city where the predominant mode of travel would be by car. The Chief Executive of the ACTION Authority²⁵, Mr Guy Thurston, highlights the many barriers to promoting public transport commuting in the ACT:

We are dealing with a city which has the highest car ownership in the country, the highest two-car ownership in the country, the highest income in the country, the least traffic congestion and the cheapest parking. So there are a number of issues there which do not lend themselves to good usage of public transport.²⁶

2.20 More than half of the submissions received make reference to the inadequacy of the current state of public transport servicing the Zone and therefore question the viability of Canberra's bus network as an alternative to private vehicle use. The predominant view from employees in the Parliamentary Zone is that the state of public transport servicing the Zone is generally substandard, with the current bus system being described as:

...appallingly inadequate...slow, inflexible and underutilised...disorganised during peak times and inadequate out of peak times.²⁷

As one employee in the Barton area argues:

We have inherited a city built for cars and workers who are now forced to use their cars should not be punished for using them in the absence of a decent public transport system.²⁸

2.21 These claims are contested by the ACTION Authority, which states that the bus service is "comprehensive" and that a "lack of understanding" of the bus routes by the people in the Parliamentary Zone could be

25 The ACT Internal Omnibus Network, or ACTION Buses, is Canberra's public transport system.

26 ACT Government, Transcript, 13 August 2003, p 110.

27 Boughey, Graham, Richards, Submissions.

28 Adam Kirk, Submissions, p 235.

responsible for the negative remarks attributed throughout submissions.²⁹ ACTION believes that this lack of knowledge is impacting on the confidence people have in the public transport system.³⁰ These comments from the ACTION Authority incited further criticism of the service, in the form of additional submissions, from employees in the Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest area.

- 2.22 The primary reason as to why public transport commuting is undesirable, is that it simply adds too much time to travel. For most commuters, travelling to or from the Zone via the bus network involves catching a minimum of two buses, often with substantial waiting times during the changeover. The Committee understands that this can place unmanageable time constraints on employees. This is consistent with the ACT Planning and Land Authority's finding that:

...a key factor in getting more people using non-car modes of transport is to make public transport more attractive to use. Price signals (i.e. the fare cost), frequency and reliability are all important but, interestingly, research shows that the biggest factor for Canberrans is travel time, that is, the trip time and the time to get to and from the service.³¹

- 2.23 In its study *Canberra at the Crossroads: A Way Out of the Transport Mess*, the Conservation Council of the South East Region was critical of the way public transport in Canberra had been allowed to deteriorate. The Council argued that:

The inadequacies of public transport are very much due to the fact that it has never been given a fair go: it has been under-funded and always given second place to roads.

The high cost of freeways leaves insufficient funds to provide quality public transport, while the competition offered by the freeway network keeps patronage low.

Finally, the heavy traffic, wide roads and spread-out city centre created by car-based transport policies discourage walking and cycling, as well as creating an unattractive civic centre.³²

29 ACT Government, Transcript, 13 August 2003, pp 109 - 110.

30 ACT Government, Transcript, 13 August 2003, p 110.

31 ACT Planning and Land Management, *Sustainable Transport for the ACT: An Issues Paper*, June 2003, p 5.

32 Conservation Council of the South East Region, *Canberra at the Crossroads: A Way Out of the Transport Mess*, October 1997, pp 14-15.

- 2.24 In response to the questions posed by the Committee at the public hearing on 9 May 2003,³³ the secretariat has received over 600 emails. The responses from 456 respondents have been incorporated into Table 2.1 and Table 2.2. Of the employees who responded, 96 per cent travelled to work on 9 May in a private vehicle, while a variety of reasons were cited for opting not to commute via public transport. These included length of travel, insufficient services outside of peak hours and the need for a private vehicle throughout the day.
- 2.25 Another issue brought to the Committee's attention was personal safety and, in particular, the lack of lighting at bus stops in the Parliamentary Zone. This has raised security concerns for staff – particularly female staff – who work late hours and do not feel comfortable waiting for buses in the dark. According to the CPSU, the issue of security has resulted in some agencies in the Zone employing security guards to escort employees to their cars.³⁴
- 2.26 Although public transport may provide alternative modes of travel for employees who work a regular nine to five shift, employees who work irregular or longer hours face very few options as public transport services outside of peak periods arrive at sporadic intervals. As the CPSU noted, “the ‘standard’ day of nine to five is not standard in the Australian Public Service” and therefore employees wishing to commute by bus face great difficulties in this regard.³⁵
- 2.27 Thirty respondents to the Committee's 9 May survey claimed that bus fares were too expensive and that it was more economically viable to drive to work. However, the Committee noted that in most instances this related to Queanbeyan residents who are charged substantially higher fees than ACT residents for bus travel. The Committee also noted that 19 per cent of respondents resided outside the ACT and therefore had little or no access to public transport services. Perhaps the strongest argument in opposition to the NCA's proposal is the CPSU's suggestion that pay parking will not necessarily provide the answer to the current problems of overflow in the Zone:

Most employees in the Parliamentary Zone and adjacent areas who currently use their car to get to and from work indicate that

33 The questions asked by the Committee were:
a) Did you travel to work today via public transport?
b) If not, why not?
c) Which suburb do you commute from?

34 Community and Public Sector Union, Submissions, p 63.

35 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 10.

Table 2.1 Mode of transport used by employees on 9 May 2003

Location	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Private Vehicle</i>	<i>Public Transport</i>	<i>Rode / Walked</i>
Belconnen	97	96	1	0
Gungahlin	33	31	2	0
Inner City	65	56	3	6
Outside ACT	87	86	1	0
Tuggeranong	98	95	3	0
Weston Creek	38	38	0	0
Woden Valley	38	35	3	0
Totals (% of respondents)	456	437 (95.8%)	13 (2.9%)	6 (1.3%)

Source Committee Survey, 9 May 2003

Table 2.2 Reasons* for employees not using public transport on 9 May 2003.

Location	<i>Takes Too Long</i>	<i>Family Commitments</i>	<i>Work Outside Peak Hour</i>	<i>Need Car at Lunch</i>	<i>Health/Safety Reasons</i>	<i>Fares too Expensive</i>	<i>No Buses Available</i>
Belconnen	67	21	28	21	9	9	1
Gungahlin	19	6	6	9	4	2	6
Inner City	30	17	8	21	4	4	4
Outside ACT	17	22	12	11	5	8	41
Tuggeranong	67	26	17	25	16	4	2
Weston Creek	26	10	4	18	2	3	1
Woden Valley	18	16	7	10	3	0	2
Totals (% of respondents)	244 (53.5%)	118 (25.9%)	82 (18.0%)	115 (25.2%)	43 (9.4%)	30 (6.6%)	57 (12.5%)

Source Committee Survey, 9 May 2003

* Note: Most respondents gave multiple reasons for not commuting via public transport

they will be unable to use alternatives to their cars even if pay parking is introduced.³⁶

- 2.28 In spite of the ACT Government's *Sustainable Transport Plan*, the Committee is concerned that although the NCA's proposal seeks to reduce private vehicle commuting for work purposes, in reality, employees in the Zone are unlikely to be presented with viable alternatives. One measure raised during the gathering of evidence which may assist in relieving the traffic pressures currently affecting the Parliamentary Zone would be to discourage single occupant vehicle travel by encouraging car-pooling. This practice was not addressed in great detail in the evidence. However, given that car-pooling requires a significant shift in attitude and behaviour, it is unlikely to provide an immediate solution to the parking issues currently facing the Zone.

Private Vehicle Dependency

- 2.29 Ms Kathryn Graham suggests that any comparisons between the Parliamentary Zone and other town centres such as Civic and Woden are "invalid" because these centres not only operate as a central hub for public transport, but also offer access to a wide range of services and retail outlets for employees who park and work there.³⁷ This view is shared by many employees in the Parliamentary Zone, including Mr Rob Millington who argues that:

Pay parking for people working in the Zone cannot be justified as it offers little if anything for the consumer apart from being able to attend work.³⁸

- 2.30 People working in the Parliamentary Zone and adjacent areas require private vehicles to fulfil family commitments and to access services such as banking facilities, pharmacies and catering establishments. The Committee heard evidence from employees who drive to work in the Zone despite living well within walking distance, simply because they need to run errands at lunch time or they need to be able to attend work-related meetings promptly. The CPSU surveyed over five hundred of its members. One of the questions it asked respondents is why they need a car during the day. According to the CPSU, the responses included

36 Community and Public Sector Union, Submissions, p 48.

37 Ms Kathryn Graham, Submissions, p 36.

38 Mr Rob Millington, Submissions, p 17.

banking, shopping, child care, family responsibilities and other personal business.³⁹

- 2.31 A large proportion of those employed in the area travel to work from areas outside of Canberra which are either serviced very infrequently by public transport or are not serviced at all. The Committee is concerned that although the NCA's proposal provides that "structured car parks will include some convenient amenities, such as dry cleaners, newsagents and flower shops",⁴⁰ these services are not likely to satisfy the essential day-to-day needs of those employed in the Parliamentary Zone. In addition, the land use provisions of the National Capital Plan do not allow for anything resembling a shopping centre to be erected in the Zone.⁴¹ For people working in the Zone, the use of a private vehicle is therefore necessary.

The Impact on Visitors

- 2.32 The Committee has received evidence from representatives of the national cultural institutions located in the Parliamentary Zone, all of whom shared concerns about the effects the proposed parking policy is likely to impose on their visitors. The CPSU provided evidence which suggests that the length of time visitors spend at the national institutions in the Zone is increasing.⁴² Should pay parking be introduced, the desired outcome for the cultural institutions would involve some form of mechanism which ensures visitors would still be able to enjoy free parking adjacent to their buildings. While the institutions also share concerns on behalf of their employees, their principle concern is the needs of their visiting public.
- 2.33 Despite claims from the NCA that pay parking would help to improve the visitor experience, the National Archives of Australia does not see pay parking as having a positive impact in the Zone. The Archives argues that:

There is little support for the notion that pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone is good public policy. The assertion that the introduction of pay parking in the 'place of the people' would improve the visitor experience and reduce the use of motor vehicles will do little to gain sympathy among those seriously affected by the policy.⁴³

39 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, May 9 2003, p 10.

40 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 41.

41 National Capital Authority, Transcript, 13 August, p 131.

42 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 4.

43 National Archives of Australia, Submissions, p 82.

- 2.34 The Director of the National Gallery, Dr Brian Kennedy, also pointed out that with the current parking restrictions it is the visiting public who are the most affected:

...those who complain (about incurring fines) are those who become utterly absorbed in our exhibition...who get lost in time looking at wonderful pictures.⁴⁴

The Impact on Volunteers, Researchers and People with Disabilities

- 2.35 In a scenario where everyone pays for parking, the NCA states that it is “most likely” that the cost of providing free parking to specific groups such as volunteers, researchers and people with disabilities would have to be borne by the cultural institutions themselves.⁴⁵ The imposition of an additional cost for parking would be an unwelcome burden on those institutions already affected by cuts in government funding. The Committee considers this situation to be unacceptable.
- 2.36 The Committee is concerned about the effects pay parking might have on volunteers, researchers and people with disabilities. The National Library has indicated that half of its readers are either researchers, senior citizens or the unemployed.⁴⁶ Many of the volunteers are on low incomes and parking charges could have a considerable impact on whether they continue to offer their services. Similarly, the introduction of pay parking is likely to discourage students using the national institutions.⁴⁷
- 2.37 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery (OPH/NPG) is opposed to any system which has negative impacts on staff and particularly volunteers, who it describes as “the lifeblood of our exhibitions and presentations”.⁴⁸ The Committee received a submission on behalf of volunteer workers from institutions such as the National Gallery of Australia, Old Parliament House, Questacon and the National Library. The volunteers’ aim is to protect their present capacity for free parking in the Parliamentary Zone. They point out that:

44 National Gallery of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 91.

45 National Capital Authority, Transcript, 13 August 2003, p 140.

46 National Library of Australia, Submissions, p 23.

47 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 4.

48 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 74.

Contact with our own members has made it clear that a significant number would consider whether they wished to continue working as volunteers if they were asked to make a regular payment out of their already limited income.⁴⁹

- 2.38 The Volunteers group suggested the introduction of a ticketing system, currently adopted by the ACT Government, which enables volunteers to park for free in pay parking areas controlled by the Territory. The volunteers believe that “such a system would work equally well in the Parliamentary Zone”.⁵⁰
- 2.39 The NCA recognises that the cultural institutions in the Parliamentary Zone are assisted in their operations by volunteers. The NCA itself makes use of a number of volunteers to assist in its activities. The Authority stresses that its proposed parking strategy will provide appropriate spaces for the operational needs of the cultural institutions. The Authority also identifies the need to accommodate the parking demands of volunteers who attend at various hours of the day.⁵¹ However, the Committee has not been presented with a concrete proposal which would cover the parking needs of volunteers, researchers and people with disabilities in the Parliamentary Zone.

Equity and the ‘User Pays’ Principle

- 2.40 In the *Parliamentary Zone Review: Outcomes Report*, the NCA states its intention to introduce pay parking “where commuters are displacing visitors”.⁵² The NCA believes that providing parking in the Zone involves an ongoing management cost that should be equitably borne by the user. According to the Authority, “pay parking would contribute funds to offset the maintenance of car parks and roads in the Parliamentary Zone, which at present escape the ‘user-pays’ principle”.⁵³
- 2.41 The Property Council of Australia (ACT Division) supports the principle of pay parking in all employment zones on the basis that there needs to be equity between all employees in the ACT.⁵⁴ The Property Council believes

49 Volunteers of National Institutions, Submissions, p 351.

50 Volunteers of National Institutions, Submissions, p 351.

51 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 103.

52 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 41.

53 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 41.

54 Property Council of Australia (ACT), Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 41.

a parking charge will bring Barton in line with Civic and the other areas of high employment in the ACT.

- 2.42 Despite the notion presented in the Parliamentary Zone Review that the car parking initiative will “balance the needs of the visitor with those of the commuter in a fair and equitable manner”,⁵⁵ employees in the Zone are adamant that this is not the case. One employee, Mr David Boughey, states that he is “bemused” by the Review’s concept of equity:

...(the NCA’s) proposal that workers pay for parking while visitors do not, would appear to be most inequitable if the objective is to ensure that the cost of the service is borne by the user.⁵⁶

- 2.43 Mr Phil Hambly points out that the proposed initiative will only be of benefit to visitors to the Zone and senior executive staff “who will both avoid the need to park through preferential treatment”.⁵⁷ The argument presented in the Review that ‘user pays’ is considered by Mr Rob Millington to be “a very thin argument” in view of his perception that pay parking would target only one group – public servants.⁵⁸

Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT)

- 2.44 The NCA have advised the Committee that a feasibility study carried out for pay parking indicated that the appropriate level of charges would be lower than the threshold under which the FBT accrues.⁵⁹ The NCA also states that FBT is only an issue for those provided with free-parking in an area where pay parking applies:

Specifically, FBT is payable if, within a one-kilometre radius of the premises on which the car is parked, there is a commercial parking station that charges a few for all day parking which is more than the car parking threshold.

55 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 41.

56 David Boughey, Submissions, p 38.

57 Phil Hambly, Submissions, p 242.

58 Rob Millington, Submissions, p 242.

59 National Capital Authority, *Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories: Parliamentary Zone Parking Policy*, June 2002, p 6.

A commercial car parking station is defined as one that charges a fee for all-day parking, is permanent, and is commercial (i.e. operated with a view to making a profit).⁶⁰

- 2.45 The Presiding Officers of the Parliament of Australia ask that the Committee consider the possible liability for FBT on the Parliamentary departments and the Parliament if a change to the current parking provision for occupants of Parliament House is made, noting that this cost was assessed as at least \$600,000 in the 1994 inquiry into a proposal for pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone.⁶¹

Shuttle Bus

- 2.46 The *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report* proposes that a shuttle bus be introduced which would allow visitors to leave their cars at one destination and yet still have the opportunity to visit each of the national attractions situated within the Parliamentary Zone. The report also states that “the presence of shuttle buses may also increase demand for links to other parts of the Central National Area”.⁶² The NCA argue that the intended benefits of the shuttle bus service include that it would:

- reduce the demand for car trips within the Parliamentary Zone;
- move people from the more remote car parks to their place of work;
- provide increased personal safety;
- provide an opportunity to promote the national institutions; and
- make travel between the national institutions easier for visitors.⁶³

- 2.47 Representatives from OPH/NPG informed the Committee of a shuttle bus service which the institution trialled for approximately three months which operated between its building and new Parliament House. The service was discontinued due to low levels of usage and OPH/NPG found that people were “quite happy to park at Parliament House and then drive down to Old Parliament House or elsewhere”.⁶⁴ OPH/NPG also reported that 89 per cent of its 170,000 visitors each year arrive by car, and that the

60 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 121.

61 Presiding Officers, Submissions, p 309.

62 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 42.

63 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 597.

64 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 82.

remaining eleven per cent are primarily school students who arrive by the bus load.⁶⁵

- 2.48 Mr John Lauder points out that in order to maximise the value of a shuttle bus as an effective transport management tool, “its operational route should be extended beyond the Zone to form a direct link with the major transport trunk routes and interchange in Civic”.⁶⁶ He suggests that the shuttle bus should aim to serve both the commuter and visitor markets.

Environmental & Heritage Issues

- 2.49 The NCA’s pay parking policy is aimed at reducing the number of cars entering the Zone and increasing the use of public transport. The initiative is also said to be consistent with the National Greenhouse Strategy. The Parliamentary Zone Review states that:

the parking initiative is an important step toward applying more sustainable management and development practices and in establishing a ‘greener’ Zone.⁶⁷

- 2.50 The CPSU points out that section 5.6 of the National Greenhouse Strategy provides for the implementation of mechanisms which “reduce the extent of all-day commuter parking in major centres which experience congested approach roads and with accessible public transport”.⁶⁸ The Union therefore emphasises that the reasons why employees are unable to switch from private vehicle use to public transport are critical to the debate regarding pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone.
- 2.51 Environment Australia states that it “supports measures to reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions”.⁶⁹ However, the Department asks the Committee to consider the infrastructure within the Parliamentary Zone and to determine whether pay parking would actually result in an increase in public transport commuting.
- 2.52 The Australian Heritage Commission brought to the Committee’s attention the heritage significance of the Parliamentary Vista and points out that it has a role to play in providing advice to agencies such as the NCA. The Commission noted that:

65 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 81.

66 John Lauder, Submissions, p 182.

67 National Capital Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Review Outcomes Report*, March 2000, p 40.

68 Community and Public Sector Union, Submissions, p 46.

69 Environment Australia, Submissions, p 83.

The *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* requires Commonwealth proponents of an action, likely to have a significant effect on a place entered in the Register of National Estate, to consult the Commission prior to taking any action.

The Commission considers that any action likely to result in physical changes in the Parliamentary Zone, such as policies supporting the construction of multi-level car parks, would have a significant effect on national estate values.⁷⁰

70 Australian Heritage Commission, Submissions, p 320.

The Case For & Against Pay Parking

Introduction

- 3.1 Although there has been strong opposition to the NCA's pay parking proposal, the Committee has received evidence which supports the concept of pay parking, but raises concerns as to how such a measure can be justified in light of the prevailing circumstances with regard to the Parliamentary Zone. In particular, there is concern over the absence of commercial and retail facilities and the lack of public transport options for commuters. Some of the Commonwealth agencies and national cultural institutions are not totally opposed to the idea of a pay parking regime, and can see benefits in such a system should it be implemented effectively.
- 3.2 While the ACT Government supports the NCA's policy as a measure to complement the introduction of pay parking in Barton, the proposal has also received backing from other corners. The management of Canberra International Airport and the Property Council of Australia (ACT Division), for example, are strong advocates of the NCA's policy. Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery also support the principle of pay parking and recognises that "there may be advantages of a properly managed system of paid parking".¹ However, OPH/NPG emphasises the need

1 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 74.

to avoid a regime that would affect visitor access to the institutions. Groups such as Pedal Power ACT as well as a number of employees in the Zone also offer their support for pay parking due to the environmental gains such a system implies. The Committee, however, is sceptical as to whether the environment would really benefit from the proposal as it stands, given the CPSU's suggestion that even if pay parking were introduced, the majority of those who currently drive to work would continue to do so.² The views of the significant parties who contributed to the inquiry are discussed throughout this chapter.

The NCA's Position

- 3.3 One of the functions of the NCA is to foster an awareness of Canberra as the national capital of Australia.³ The Authority recognises that the Parliamentary Zone is essential to the visitor experience and understanding of the national capital. One of the initiatives identified in the NCA's *Parliamentary Zone Review: Outcomes Report* provides that car parking may enhance the experience of tourists by "creating convenient and safe parking areas, balancing parking demand and supply, and reducing the use of the motor vehicle".⁴ The proposal is envisaged by the Authority as being introduced where "commuters are displacing visitors".⁵ The NCA maintains that:

The only way of securing a continuing balance between demand and supply is through the provision of centralised car parking structures. For such structures to be commercially viable, pay parking needs to operate in the catchment area.⁶

- 3.4 The NCA concurs with views put forward by the ACTION Authority that "the areas of office concentration are on the edges of the Zone near Avenues that have services provided at a regular frequency".⁷ The NCA points out that while an increase in public transport use would be consistent with the National Greenhouse Strategy, it is not the sole reason for the proposed pay parking policy. The NCA expects that many employees and visitors will continue to use their private

2 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 4.

3 National Capital Authority, *Consolidated National Capital Plan*, February 2002, p 2.

4 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 92.

5 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 92.

6 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 120.

7 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 410.

vehicles even after pay parking is introduced.⁸ With regard to arguments about the reliability and efficiency of the public transport services in the ACT, the NCA points out that the ACTION bus service is an ACT Government responsibility.⁹

3.5 The NCA's proposed parking policy involves encouraging a shift to public transport and other ecologically sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling or carpooling. Carpooling would be encouraged, under the new pay parking regime, through reduced costs for multiple passengers. However, the NCA have not proposed how such a system would be implemented and maintained.

3.6 Although the Parliamentary Zone is devoid of retail and service facilities the NCA believes that this does not mean commuters should not have to bear some cost for provided parking. The Authority also adds that pay parking is a measure towards being able to provide a range of services in the Zone in centralised parking structures.¹⁰

3.7 In response to the arguments that researchers, volunteers and low income visitors would be affected by pay parking, the NCA suggests that schemes can be developed to prevent costs being imposed on these groups. For instance, the Authority suggests that:

Pay parking can accommodate the particular needs of visitors, researchers and volunteers. There are technologies, including "pay and display" or boom gate control systems, that would permit differential payments, and/or ticket validation to eliminate or subsidise a specific parking charge.¹¹

3.8 The NCA also addresses the suggestion raised in submissions that structured car parks would be "visually displeasing"¹² and would affect the amenity synonymous with the Zone. The Authority notes these concerns but maintains that attention to detail in the design and operation of any parking structures will address aesthetics.¹³ The NCA also points out that by statute, the design of any such structures would need to be approved by both Houses of Parliament.¹⁴

8 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 379.

9 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 379.

10 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 410.

11 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 379.

12 Rob Millington, Submissions, p 17.

13 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 413.

14 National Capital Authority, Submissions, p 413.

The Territory's Position

- 3.9 The ACT Government has responsibility for strategic transport planning in Canberra and is aware that any parking strategies adopted by the Commonwealth in the Parliamentary Zone will have implications for the ACT Government's strategy. The Territory therefore believes that a joint approach between the ACT Government and the NCA is necessary to ensure the implementation of a parking management strategy is effective.¹⁵
- 3.10 The ACT Government has made it clear that it "strongly supports pay parking in all town centres and major commercial areas in the ACT".¹⁶ In Canberra, pay parking currently exists in Civic and Woden town centres, and at Deakin, Dickson, Kingston and Manuka, while there are plans to introduce pay parking to Belconnen and Tuggeranong town centres by 2004. The Territory's submission notes that:
- ...the ACT Government believes it is important in Barton/Forrest to progress pay parking in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, as these actions will impact on the demand for parking in the Parliamentary Zone.¹⁷
- 3.11 The ACT Government acknowledges that the introduction of on-street pay parking in Barton/Forrest will have an immediate impact on parking in the Zone, due to a major increase in demand for parking as office commuters seek the available free parking spaces on a daily basis.¹⁸ The Territory believes that this would exacerbate the existing competition for parking spaces adjacent to the cultural institutions in the Zone.

The Views of Other Affected Parties & Individuals

National Institutions

- 3.12 While most of the cultural institutions in the Parliamentary Zone agree that parking is an issue which needs to be addressed, they are concerned as to how pay parking may impact on their visitors,

15 ACT Government, Submissions, p 317.

16 ACT Government, Submissions, p 318.

17 ACT Government, Submissions, p 315.

18 ACT Government, Submissions, p 315.

employees and volunteers. At present, of greatest concern to the institutions is the propensity for employees in the Zone to occupy parking space which is intended to accommodate visitors.

- 3.13 This is evident in the National Gallery of Australia's assertion that its primary concern is the increasing number of employees from the adjacent buildings using the Gallery's public car park.¹⁹ In terms of a solution to the problem, the Director of the Gallery, Dr Brian Kennedy, states that "it is quite clear that all that is really needed is additional car parking to absorb the office commuters".²⁰ The Gallery emphasises that:

Of paramount importance to us are the needs of our visiting public. As a public institution directed towards providing public access to our building, we are concerned to ensure that barriers to access are minimised or where possible eliminated.²¹

- 3.14 With regard to the NCA's proposal, the Gallery feels that there needs to be some distinction made between the demands on visitors to the area and the demands on those who work in the area. In terms of a short term solution to the traffic problems, the Gallery does "not see much option other than to create a distinction between those who are visitors and those who are office workers".²²
- 3.15 Whilst OPH/NPG shares some of the Gallery's concerns, it is not opposed to a system of pay parking. OPH/NPG believes that with ACT Government plans to introduce pay parking in areas adjacent to the Zone and an expected increase in visitor numbers to the cultural institutions, it is "no longer feasible to retain the current arrangements of free long and short-stay parking in the entire Zone".²³ However, OPH/NPG emphasises the need to avoid "a system of parking controls that is overpriced and inflexible,"²⁴ which would undermine the growth of tourism in the area.
- 3.16 OPH/NPG also acknowledges that any new parking system should recognise that the private motor vehicle will continue to be the primary means of transportation for visitors to the Parliamentary

19 National Gallery of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 85.

20 National Gallery of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 85.

21 National Gallery of Australia, Submissions, p 279.

22 National Gallery of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 89.

23 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Submissions, p 291.

24 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 74.

Zone for the foreseeable future. It is also strongly opposed to any parking system likely to have negative impacts on staff and particularly its volunteers, who OPH/NPG describes as “the lifeblood of our exhibitions and presentations”.²⁵

- 3.17 In addition to serving as popular tourist attractions, the National Library of Australia and the National Archives of Australia also provide an excellent resource for research and as such are generally well used by students. Both institutions are concerned with affordability issues should pay parking be introduced in the Parliamentary Zone. The Library notes that half of its readers are either students, senior citizens or the unemployed. Forty-five per cent of visitors to the exhibitions are senior citizens.²⁶ The Library also points out that pay parking is likely to have more of an impact on its visitors than some of the other institutions because a number of its visitors are regular users:

Over 20 per cent of our readers visit the Library more than 50 times in a six-month period, and some 13 per cent of readers visit the Library between 21 and 50 times in a six-month period.²⁷

- 3.18 The CPSU raises concerns that if commercial car parking were to be introduced, “volunteers, students and visitors would have no more access to parking than they do today, except that they would be paying for it”.²⁸ If a pay parking regime were to be brought in, the Library favours a system that would minimise the impacts on both its readers and its seventy volunteers. The Library suggests that a boom-gate system where passes are required may be one means of managing the problems relating to parking.²⁹
- 3.19 The National Archives is of the view that if a restriction on parking is necessary, it would favour a time restriction rather than pay parking meters or boom gates which it feels would affect the amenity and the look of the area.³⁰ Director-General of the National Archives, Mr Ross Gibbs, noted the impracticality of public transport as an option for commuters:

25 Old Parliament House and the National Portrait Gallery, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 74.

26 National Library of Australia, Submissions, p 23.

27 National Library of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 23.

28 Community and Public Sector Union, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 4.

29 National Library of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 24.

30 National Archives of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 59.

Public transport in the area is totally inadequate...there is no timeliness to it...if it were going to work as an effective alternative; the numbers of buses and the stops would have to increase dramatically.³¹

Commonwealth Agencies

- 3.20 The Parliamentary Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest area are home to a number of Commonwealth agencies. The Committee gathered evidence from a number of these agencies which would likely be affected by the introduction of a pay parking regime in the Zone.
- 3.21 The Australian Public Service Commission notes the importance for employees in the Parliamentary Zone and the adjacent Barton/Forrest area, of maintaining free parking to counter the absence of essential services in the area. The Commission notes that:
- ...free parking is an important element of the context in which staff consider and appraise the value of their terms and conditions of employment.³²
- 3.22 The Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM & C) considers that the future parking policies for Barton are unlikely to be successful unless the parking arrangements in the Parliamentary Zone are also addressed and integrated policies are developed. PM & C also notes that existing public transport arrangements do not meet the needs of staff and therefore do not provide a suitable alternative. The Department suggests that:
- ...a rigorous review of commuter requirements and a significant increase in public transport availability would be required before further consideration could be given to the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone or Barton precinct.³³
- 3.23 The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is concerned about the availability of parking space. ANAO staff already make use of the on-street parking in Barton as a result of the agency not being able to meet the current demand for parking. The ANAO argues that:

31 National Archives of Australia, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 61.

32 Australian Public Service Commission, Submissions, p 306.

33 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 65.

...there is an urgent need for a parking station to be built in the Barton area to assist in alleviating the already existing acute shortage of parking facilities.³⁴

- 3.24 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (AFFA) points out that its employees do not expect to have to pay for parking in the precinct without “a commensurate improvement in access to public transport”.³⁵ AFFA also notes that irrespective of whether people are paying for parking, there is a severe lack of parking in the Barton precinct.³⁶
- 3.25 While Environment Australia supports measures to reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions, the agency questions whether implementation of the NCA’s parking policy is actually likely to lead to an increased use of public transport.³⁷

Individual Employees

- 3.26 The Committee received over a hundred submissions from individuals employed in the Barton/Parkes area. The majority of these recognise the need for improved parking management in the Parliamentary Zone. However, they also raise a number of concerns as to whether the NCA’s proposed policy is an equitable or effective way to achieve this, particularly in light of the current standard of public transport servicing the Zone.
- 3.27 One employee in the Zone, Mr Paul Starr, notes that parking is “certainly an issue deserving of serious attention”, but believes the NCA’s policy would have a negative impact if implemented before public transport was upgraded.³⁸ Mr Starr points out that it takes him fifteen minutes to travel to work via car as opposed to fifty minutes by bus.³⁹ The Committee received evidence from many employees in the Zone who would be faced with a similar situation if they commuted via public transport.
- 3.28 The suggestion that pay parking in the Zone could be justified because it would bring the Zone in line with other areas of major employment in the ACT which already have pay parking was not

34 Australian National Audit Office, Submissions, p 31.

35 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 70.

36 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Transcript, 9 May 2003, p 65.

37 Environment Australia, Submissions, p 83.

38 Paul Starr, Submissions, p 30.

39 Paul Starr, Submissions, p 29.

supported by employees. Unlike other centres of employment in Canberra, the Parliamentary Zone is isolated from retail outlets, banks, post offices and professional services such as doctors and dentists.⁴⁰ There are concerns that the NCA's proposed policy is a revenue-raising exercise rather than a genuine attempt to reduce the entry of single-occupant vehicles into the Parliamentary Zone. Mr Douglas McCloskey, for example, argues that:

Pay parking within the Parliamentary Zone is not a measure likely to reduce parking usage in light of prevailing transport conditions within Canberra. As such it can only be seen as a revenue grab, particularly in light of the absence of alternatives.⁴¹

Mr Tim Booth supports pay parking in the Zone in principle, but is deeply concerned about the lack of alternatives:

The simple introduction of pay parking into the Parliamentary Zone without viable modern, efficient, cheap, safe and frequent alternatives is intolerable.⁴²

Other Individuals / Organisations

- 3.29 Pedal Power ACT Inc. is a non-government organisation which acts as a rallying point for cyclists in the ACT and Queanbeyan.⁴³ The group supports the introduction of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone and recommends that it be complimented by an enhanced public transport system and facilities for walking and cycling which would "help the Parliamentary Zone develop into a more accessible, dynamic and healthy place for all Australians".⁴⁴
- 3.30 The Committee received evidence from some Parliamentary Zone employees who, while acknowledging the need for improvements to public transport services, endorse pay parking on the basis that it would encourage people to use more ecologically sustainable forms of transport such as cycling or buses.⁴⁵ Canberra International Airport also supports the NCA's proposal for pay parking, on the basis that:

40 Boughey, Graham, Millington, Submissions.

41 Douglas McCloskey, Submissions, p 15.

42 Tim Booth, Submissions, p 333.

43 Pedal Power ACT Inc., *Cycling in Canberra, Australia and the Region*, www.pedalpower.org.au, accessed 3 May 2003.

44 Pedal Power ACT Inc., Submissions, p 299.

45 Susie Brown, Submissions, p 13.

The conflicts of providing easy and affordable car parking access for tourists in competition with commuting workers to the Parliamentary Zone and residents can only be resolved in the future by management methods including pay parking.⁴⁶

- 3.31 In his research paper titled *Capital Transit – A Proposal to Enhance Access to the Central National Area of the National Capital*, Mr John Lauder suggests that:

Paid parking may offer a useful mechanism to manage demand and raise revenue but to achieve the objectives outlined above, a more holistic approach focussing on a high quality alternative transport system serving a larger catchment and directly linked with Civic would be required.⁴⁷

The Committee's Views

- 3.32 The current parking arrangement in the Parliamentary Zone is clearly undesirable, and the overcrowding resulting from employees and visitors competing for parking space is not only affecting the amenity of the 'place of the people', it is affecting the level of access visitors should enjoy at the cultural institutions in the Zone. The Committee agrees that some form of strategy needs to be developed to alleviate these problems. However, the greatest concern to the Committee is that the solution proposed by the NCA, the introduction of pay parking, will not address the problem and will not see a significant reduction in the number of vehicles entering the Zone.
- 3.33 The Committee's view is that the Parliamentary Zone belongs to the people of Australia, and access to any of the culturally significant sites and buildings throughout the Zone must not incur a parking fee. The Committee also concurs with the view expressed by the national institutions that pay parking may reduce the appeal of visiting these attractions and represents the withdrawal of a fundamental right. The Committee is therefore reluctant to support any measures which may discourage people from visiting such symbolic icons. While the suggestion of a shuttle bus system may have limited merit, the Committee is concerned that it may not attract the level of demand such a system requires to remain practicable.

46 Canberra International Airport, Submissions, p 285.

47 John Lauder, Submissions, p 123.

- 3.34 The Committee believes that the Parliamentary Zone is unique and therefore should not be treated in the same way as commercial centres such as Civic and Woden. Such a comparison is inappropriate and misplaced. While pay parking may be a deterrent to private vehicle commuting for employees at those town centres, the Committee recognises that the isolation of the Zone from commercial facilities suggests that pay parking will not necessarily have the same impact.
- 3.35 While control of parking is an effective tool in managing demand for travel, the Committee believes that any restrictive measures on parking in areas of substantial employment should only be imposed where public transport access is adequate. The evidence which the Committee has received suggests that the bus service is inadequate for employees in the Zone. While the ACTION Authority claims that this perception is largely due to a lack of awareness with regards to the bus service, there is consistent evidence which supports the perception that the current public transport system does not meet the needs of commuters in the Zone.
- 3.36 The Committee faces great difficulty in that it has been asked to endorse a principle – which effectively entails signing a blank cheque – without having been presented with clearly defined details of the pay parking infrastructure which would be implemented in the event that the proposal is approved. The Committee acknowledges that the NCA has advised that it is awaiting the Committee’s ‘in-principle support’ before progressing with specifics regarding fees, parking meters and the design of multi-levelled parking structures. However, the Committee’s initial reasoning for embarking on this inquiry was to seek greater detail than was evident when the NCA and the ACT Government first presented their proposal to the Committee. At the conclusion of this inquiry, based on the evidence it has received, the Committee finds itself in no better position to advise the Parliament on the idea of pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone than it was in at the outset of the inquiry. The Committee is therefore unable to give the in-principle support the NCA is seeking.
- 3.37 The Committee believes that parking ratio policies determined by the NCA in the adjoining Barton/Forrest precinct have contributed directly to parking related problems in the Parliamentary Zone. Whilst well-motivated and designed to pursue a green agenda, policies to deliberately reduce the provision for on-site parking have not had the expected effect of reducing private vehicle commuting. Rather, it has worsened the parking problem, forcing Barton and Forrest workers to park in the Zone. It is ironic that the need to

manage traffic in the Parliamentary Zone has been brought about by the NCA's own development policies.

- 3.38 The Committee is also concerned that the NCA's consultation processes have failed to adequately address the concerns of key stakeholders, in particular, the national institutions throughout the Parliamentary Zone. Evidence suggests that the approach from the NCA has been not so much as to engage the institutions in the development of the proposal, but rather to impose its own policy upon the institutions and then to seek their approval.
- 3.39 The Committee understands that pay parking is going to have a far-reaching impact on a large number of people. In particular, pay parking will affect employees, who have reasonably viewed free parking as a measure to offset the absence of services in the Zone. There are also likely to be repercussions for the cultural institutions, which face the prospect of having to purchase parking for their volunteers, researchers and people with disabilities under the NCA's proposed regime. The Committee is not prepared to support the proposal without assurances that:
- Pay parking will not apply to visitors, volunteers and people with disabilities;
 - pay parking will create a significant reduction in the number of vehicles entering the Zone over time;
 - pay parking will in no way impede or discourage visitors, volunteers, researchers and students to the national institutions in the Zone; and
 - the prospect of having two different jurisdictions, side by side, implementing two different systems of pay parking, and being driven by different motivations, will not create a predicament more disconcerting than the current situation.

For these reasons, the Committee does not support the proposal for pay parking in the Parliamentary Zone, and is unable to do so until these issues have been adequately addressed.

Recommendation 1

That the National Capital Authority – in collaboration with the ACT Government and in thorough consultation with all relevant stakeholders, preferably with their consensus – develop a detailed parking policy proposal for the Parliamentary Zone that recognises the isolation of the Zone from commercial facilities and clearly defines the following characteristics:

- **the infrastructure to be built – including the timeframe and funding arrangements;**
- **the parking fees to be introduced - including provision to exclude visitors, volunteers and people with disabilities from payment; and**
- **contingencies should the Parliamentary Zone experience further encroachment of commuters from the adjacent Barton precinct.**

**Senator Ross Lightfoot
Chairman**



Appendix A – List of Submissions

1. Friends of the National Library of Australia
2. Australian Electoral Commission
3. M. Moran
4. Mr Patrick Dodgson
5. Ms Geraldine Robertson
6. Ms Susie Brown
7. Mr Douglas McCloskey
8. Mr Rob Millington
9. National Library of Australia
10. Mr Michael Richards
11. Mr Paul Starr
12. Australian National Audit Office
13. Ms Kathryn Graham
14. Mr David Boughey
15. Ms Leigh West
16. Community and Public Sector Union
17. Mr Spiro Adamopoulos

18. Ms Anne Withell
19. Ms Tara Hewitt
20. National Archives of Australia
21. Environment Australia
22. National Capital Authority
23. Mr John Lauder
24. Ms Jenny Harper
25. Treasury Workplace Relations Committee
26. Mr Adam Kirk
27. Mr Phil Hambly
28. CONFIDENTIAL
29. National Gallery of Australia
30. Canberra International Airport
31. Old Parliament House / National Portrait Gallery
32. Pedal Power ACT Inc.
33. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
34. Australian Public Service Commission
35. Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
36. Presiding Officers, Parliament of Australia
37. ACT Department of Urban Services
38. Australian Heritage Commission
39. Mr Tim Booth
40. Property Council of Australia
41. Friends of the National Library (Supplementary Submission)
42. Pedal Power ACT (Supplementary Submission)
43. Mr John Russell

44. Ms Jennifer Brett
45. Ms Catherine Potter
46. Mr John Graham (on behalf of volunteer workers)
47. Ms Anna Wieczorek
48. Old Parliament House / National Portrait Gallery (Supplementary Submission)
49. Ms Karen Groeneveld
50. National Library of Australia (Supplementary Submission)
51. Friends of the National Library of Australia (Supplementary Submission)
52. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Supplementary Submission)
53. National Archives of Australia (Supplementary Submission)
54. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Supplementary Submission)
55. Ms Dianne Deane
56. Mr Jason Thornton
57. National Capital Authority (Supplementary Submission)
58. Ms Auli Uotila
59. Ms Karen Butler
60. Ms Lisa Pye
61. Ms Sharan Singh
62. Ms Cath Tighe
63. Ms Debbie Stephan
64. Ms Leigh West (Supplementary Submission)
65. Mr Michael Neville
66. Mr Andrew Crosthwaite
67. Ms Juliet Flook
68. Ms Angela Gillman
69. Ms Julie Benac

70. Ms Gillian Currie
71. Ms Maree Vollmer
72. Mr Robert Munro
73. Ms Wilhelmina Kemperman
74. Dr Joe Johnson
75. Mr Paul Livingston
76. Ms Jane Saker
77. Mr Marc Dal Cortivo
78. Mr Michael Warren
79. Mr Mike Smith
80. M Batten
81. Mr Ramesh Perera
82. Mr Stephen Rodda
83. Ms Laura Fulton
84. Ms Airlie White
85. Ms Erica Ryan
86. Mr David Hutchison
87. Mr Michael Nutt
88. Mr Jose Stokman
89. Ms Kristine Howard
90. Ms Sylvia Carr
91. Mr John O'Hara
92. Ms Linda Stevens
93. Ms Elizabeth Morgan
94. Ms Mani Berghout
95. Dr Angelo Valois

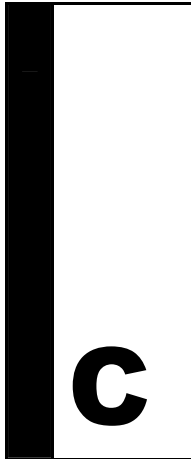
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96. Ms Gloria Gardiner
 97. Ms Melissa Sykes
 98. Ms Lyn Brown
 99. Mr Clement Dick
 100. Ms Linda Selg
 101. Mr Chris Schultz
 102. Mr Patrick Bennett
 103. Mr Peter Hancock
 104. Mr Peter Slattery
 105. Ms Melissa Stroud
 106. CONFIDENTIAL
 107. Mr Howard Conkey
 108. Ms Linda Medic
 109. Mr Charles Hatcher
 110. Ms Davina Yates
 111. Ms Bettina Soderbaum
 112. Mr John Bastin
 113. Mr Kim Brown
 114. Ms Rowena Jameson
 115. Ms Liz St Clair Long
 116. Ms Bernadette Oakes
 117. Ms Barbara van der Linden
 118. Ms Alyssa Hicks
 119. Z Stefek
 120. Ms Catherine Potter
 121. Ms Kelli Turner

- 122. Ms Peng Crawford
- 123. Mr Ron Cullen
- 124. Ms Leanne Wilks
- 125. Ms Bronwyn Asquith
- 126. Mr Greg Oliver
- 127. Ms Jane Bennett
- 128. Mr Drue Edwards
- 129. Ms Naomi Ashurst
- 130. Mr Roger Hammond
- 131. Ms Carole Fullalove
- 132. Ms Sue Stefanoski
- 133. Ms Jillian Gordon
- 134. Ms Gail Spindler
- 135. Mr Bob Blazey
- 136. Mr Matt Gleeson
- 137. Ms Margaret Considine
- 138. Mr Aaron Tyndall
- 139. Ms Mary Bomford
- 140. Mr Timothy Brinkley
- 141. Mr Graeme Marshall
- 142. Ms Carolyn Gresele
- 143. Ms Libby Amiel
- 144. Ms Jo Beath
- 145. Mr Ivan Haskovec



Appendix B – List of Exhibits

- 1 ACTION Bus Network Information including ticket pricing and maps of bus routes.
- 2 Email responses to questions asked by Chairman at public hearing on 9 May 2003.



Appendix C – Witnesses appearing at public hearings

**Canberra
Friday, 9 May 2003**

Individuals

Mr Spiro Adamopoulos

Mr Michael Richards

Australian Public Service Commission

Mr Mike Jones, Group Manager – Corporate Strategy and Support

Canberra International Airport

Mr Stephen Byron, Managing Director

Mr Noel McCann, Director – Planning

Community and Public Sector Union

Mr Matthew Reynolds, National President

Mr Vince McDevitt, Lead Organiser

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Mr William Pahl, Chief Operating Officer

Mr David Mitchell, Chief Information Officer

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Mr Terry Crane, Acting Assistant Secretary - Corporate Support Branch

Friends of the National Library of Australia

Mr Russel Doust, Chairman

Mr John Chapman, Committee Member

National Archives of Australia

Mr Ross Gibbs, Director-General

Ms Gabrielle Hyslop, Acting Assistant Director-General, Public and Reader Services

National Gallery of Australia

Dr Brian Kennedy, Director

National Library of Australia

Mr Gerry Linehan – Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services

Mr Stuart Flavell, Director – Contract and Facilities

Old Parliament House / National Portrait Gallery

Mr Arthur Blewitt, Chief General Manager – Old Parliament House

Mr Andrew Sayers, Director – National Portrait Gallery

Mr Mike Perryman, Property Manager – Old Parliament House

Mr Seamus Forde, Chairperson – Old Parliament House Volunteers' Committee

Mr Mark Cannon, Manager, Secretariat – Old Parliament House

Pedal Power ACT Inc.

Mr Peter Strang, Cycling Advocate

Mr Paul Truebridge, Member – Advocacy Group, Maintenance of Public Facilities Associated with Cycling

Property Council of Australia, ACT Division

Ms Romilly Madew, Executive Director

Mr Greg Lyons, Vice President

**Canberra
Wednesday, 13 August 2003**

ACT Government

Mr Alan Thompson, Chief Executive Officer – ACT Department of Urban Services

Mr John Larcombe, Senior Transport Economist – ACT Department of Urban Services

Mr Brian MacDonald, General Manager Road Transport – ACT Department of Urban Services

Mr Guy Thurston, Chief Executive – ACTION Authority

National Capital Authority

Ms Annabelle Pegrum, Chief Executive

Mr Ross Addison, Director of Finance

Mr Lindsay Evans, Managing Director, Business

Mr Ted Schultheis, Principal Town Planner, National Capital Plan

Mr Graham Scott-Bohanna, Managing Director, Design

