City Hill park – People's Panel session summary

Session 3: Saturday 25 July 2026

19 members attended

12 project team members and observers attended

Vision statement

This vision statement has been endorsed by the People's Panel and Ngunnawal community group:

> A welcoming, open, green space for all that reflects Ngunnawal Traditional Owners' continuing connection to Country and culture, the City of Canberra, and its role as the nation's capital that connects to its setting and beyond.

Consultant presentations

Owen Cafe, Blaklash
Topic: Ngunnawal engagement outcomes and cultural considerations for the concept masterplan

Rachel Jackson, GML Heritage
Topic: Heritage considerations for the concept masterplan

Matthew Chow, SCT Consulting
Topic: Movement and access considerations for the concept masterplan

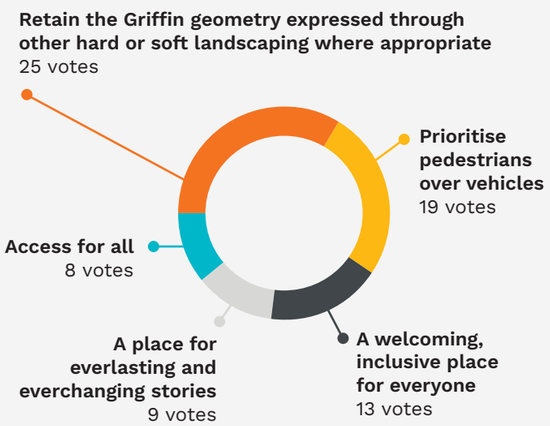
Decision making process for the panel

Panel members were divided into three groups and rotated through three themed activity stations. At each station, members developed and refined principles and design objectives for each theme. All panel members contributed to the discussion and provided input on each theme.

Following the activities, each panel member then voted on their top principles and design objectives for the concept masterplan.

Top 5 principles

The following principles were selected by the panel as highest priority:



Top 5 design objectives

The following objectives were selected as priority objectives by the panel:

12 votes
High quality public realm amenities including facilities, lighting, toilets, wayfinding and all ability access

11 votes
Remove most trees (Cypress pines) and replace with trees for shade or natives specific to Canberra

7 votes
Potential shared or pedestrianised zone*

6 votes
Challenge Heritage citation elements to acknowledge heritage significance of the place but allow for change to positively benefit the space

6 votes
Relocate centenary column and time capsule off site

Session overview

In Session 3, panel members:

- Received an update on Ngunnawal input into the final vision statement
- Heard from experts on Ngunnawal engagement, heritage, and transport planning
- Viewed a data summary of the three main themes, comparing panel feedback with data from the 2024 Ideas Exhibition survey
- Deliberated and determined principles and design objectives for the project team to take forward to the concept masterplan.

Principles for each of the themes

Theme: Heritage, existing trees and civic identity

Principles developed and agreed by the panel:

- Retain the Griffin geometry expressed through other hard or soft landscaping where appropriate
- Highlight important views/vistas
- Express both Ngunnawal and Griffin Plan values
- Express Canberra's identity as National Capital (also retain as a landmark).

Theme: Movement, access and connectivity

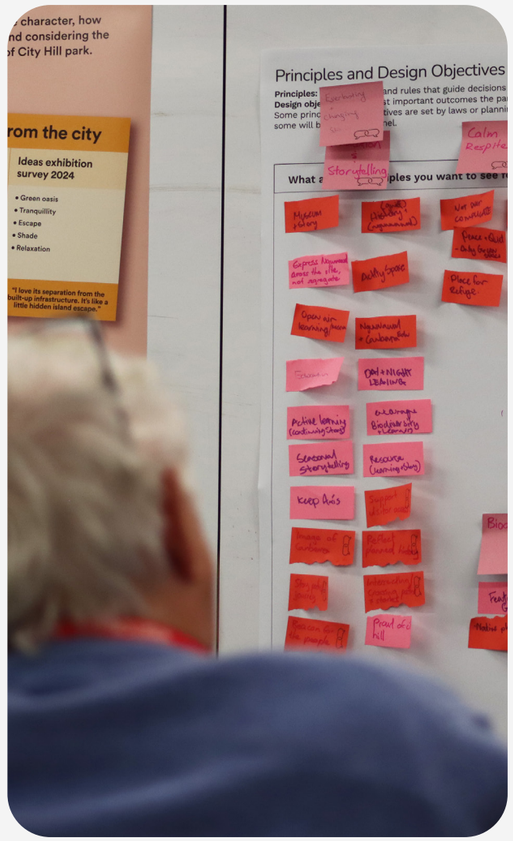
Principles developed and agreed by the panel:

- Prioritise pedestrians over vehicles
- Access for all
- Increase safety
- High-quality public realm
- Improved active transport opportunities.

Theme: Place and landscape

Principles developed and agreed by the panel:

- A welcoming, inclusive place for everyone
- A place for everlasting and everchanging stories
- A place for calm and respite
- Planting for biodiversity.



Next steps for Session 4

- Before the panel meet again, the project team will develop the material into the appropriate form for the concept masterplan.
- At session 4, the panel will test the draft concept masterplan against its vision, principles and design objectives to ensure it captures the panel's overall intent.

**A shared zone is an area where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic mix together in a slow speed environment, prioritising pedestrian movement.*