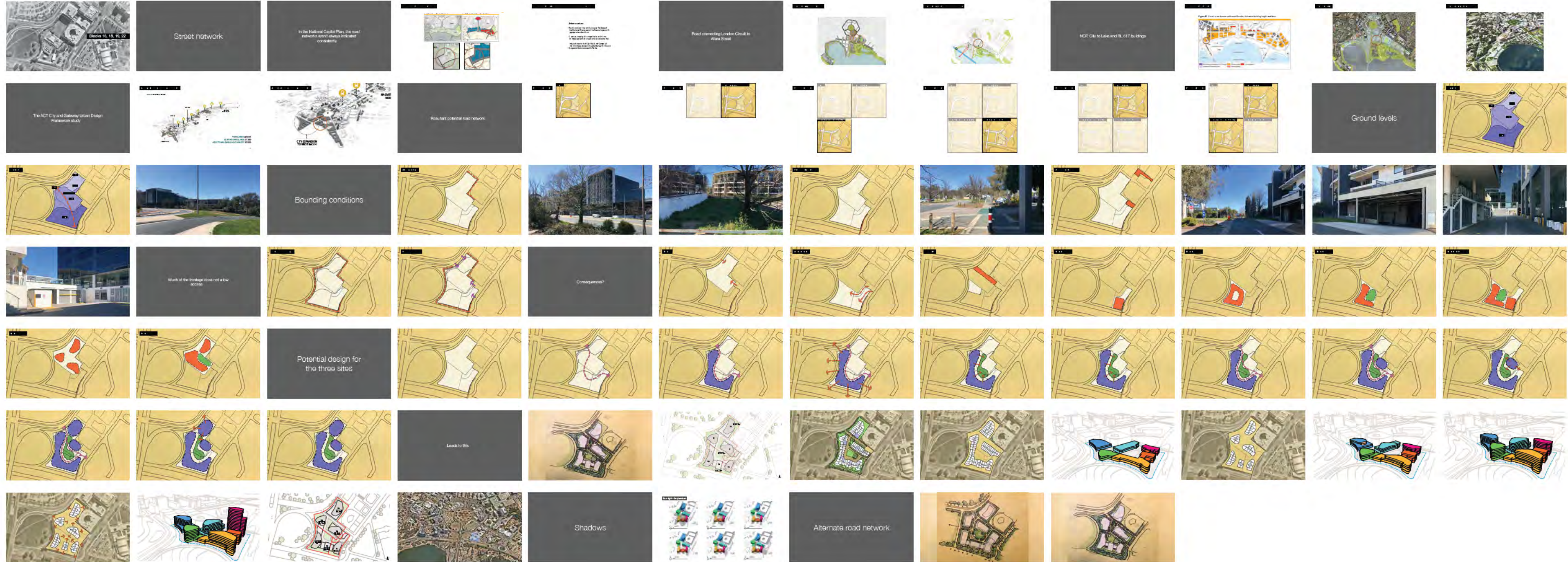
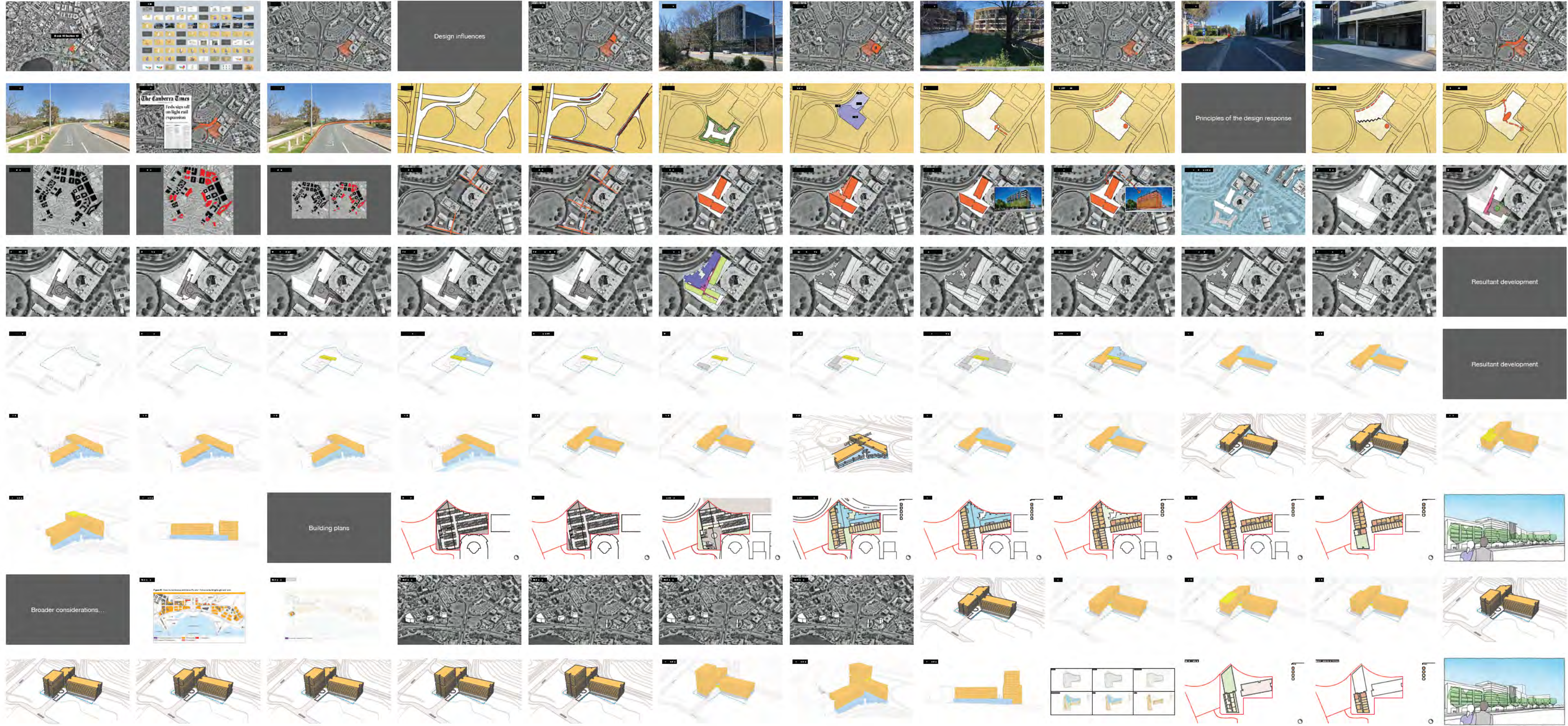
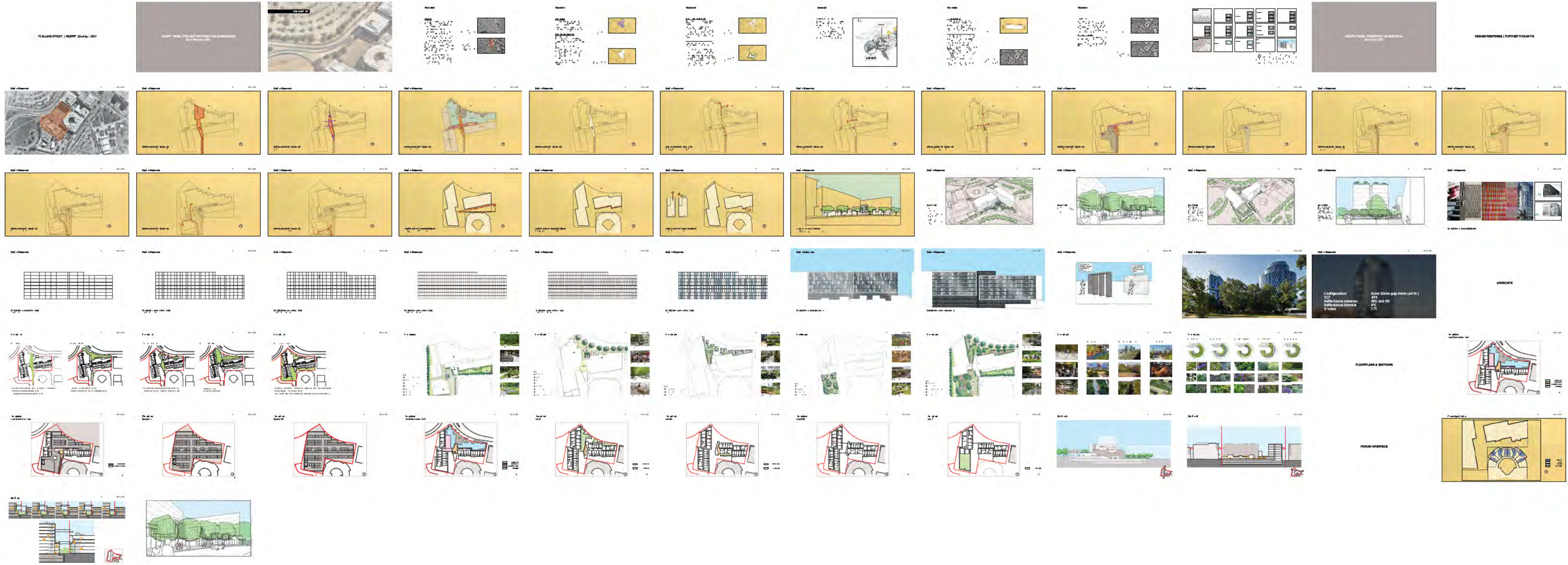
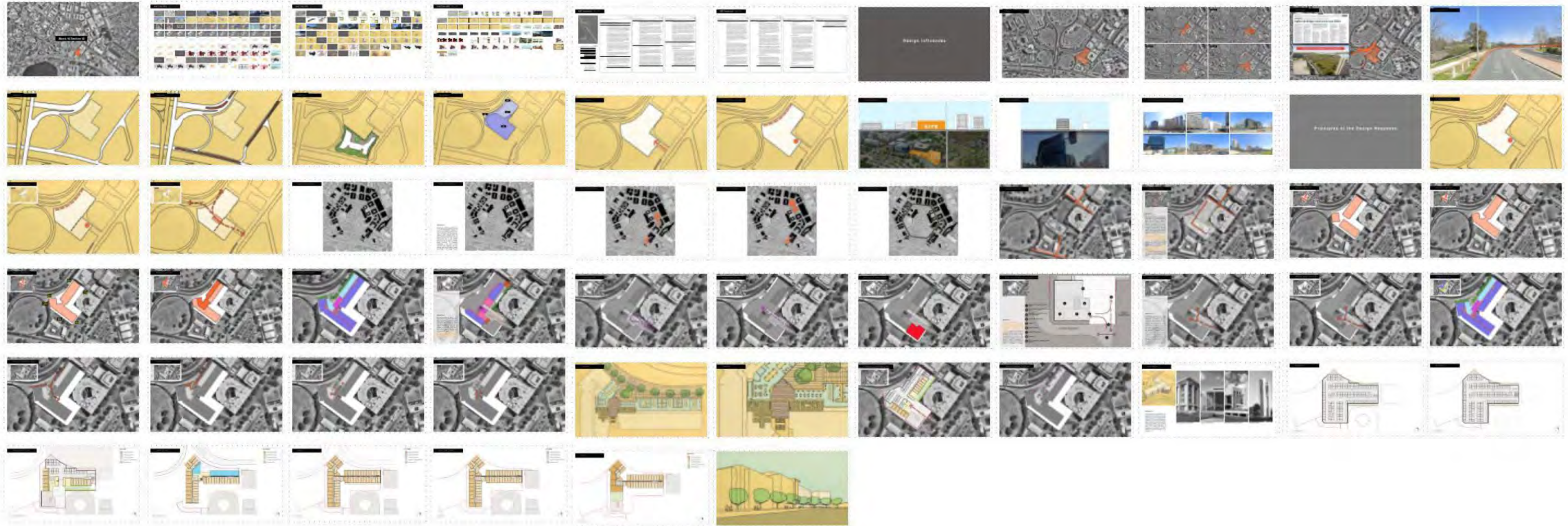
An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood. The image shows a dense grid of houses and streets. A prominent feature is a large, circular driveway or cul-de-sac in the center. A red arrow points to a specific lot within the grid, located just south of the central circular area. A black rectangular box with white text is overlaid on the image, pointing to the red arrow.

**Block 16 Section 10**











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NATIONAL CAPITAL DESIGN REVIEW PANEL  
THE PANEL'S ADVICE

Date issued:	Thursday 6 May 2021
Project:	70 Allara Street
Review date:	Thursday 22 April 2021
Meeting location:	Meeting held online via Microsoft Teams
Site visit:	No site visit conducted due to COVID-19 social distancing measures
Panel members:	Catherine Townsend, Chair and ACT Government Architect [Redacted] at the National Capital Authority
Apologies:	[Redacted] Co-chair was unable to attend the full session
Prepared by:	GEODON
Observers:	Representatives from the: Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) City Renewal Authority (CRA) National Capital Authority (NCA) Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS)
Conflicts of interest:	None
Confidentiality of the Panel's Advice:	Design review considers concept proposals at various stages throughout the design process that are frequently subject to change and improvement in relation to feedback from the NCDRP. Throughout this time a commercial in confidence status is maintained for proposals that engage with the NCDRP.  In accordance with Section 139 of the Planning and Development Act (2007) (the Act) prescribed development proposals are required to provide a copy of the Panel's Advice and the proponent's 'Response to the Panel's Advice' in writing when the Development Application is submitted. Section 30 of the Act identifies the design advice and the proponent's written response to that advice as associated documents. Therefore the most recent Panel's Advice and the proponent's response become public documents once a Development Application is publicly notified for community comment.

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MEETING SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Property address: 70 Allara Street (Block 16 Section 10 City)

**Proposal:** The 70 Allara Street site is located at the south-east quadrant of London Circuit with a street frontage to London Circuit. The site is connected to, but setback from the Allara Street main road reserve by a perpendicular road reserve 27m long and 13m wide. The site is zoned DES: Designated Land and is subject to development conditions of the Constitution Avenue and Anzac Parade Precinct Code of the National Capital Plan, is located within the City apex of the National Triangle and fronts the City Hill Precinct.

The site occupies the south east knuckle of London Circuit and is adjoined by four (4) Designated Land sites within Section 10 including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) building (Block 20) to the north east, The Forum apartment building (Block 4) to the east, disused Department of Defence compound (Block 19) and an access road to Block 19 (Block 22) to the south and south west. Additionally, the Parkes Way exit ramp onto Commonwealth Avenue is located to the west of the site. Sites to the south and west are noted as possible future redevelopment sites. Furthermore, potential modification to the level of London Circuit, associated with the future Light Rail intentions is also noted by the Secretariat and is likely to have implications for development of the subject site.

The proposal is for a predominantly residential development including 350 dwelling across two building forms up to 8 storeys/25m as well as two (2) levels of basement car parking and 1,500m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space fronting London Circuit. The site level change (approx. 4 metres from north west to south east) is proposed to be accommodated in the central lobby zone which provides a pedestrian connection between Allara Street to London Circuit and provides access to residential lobbies and commercial tenancies. A drop off zone is proposed to be located adjacent Allara Street which provides vehicle access to basement car parking as well as waste/ deliver/ loading facility.

The proposal also includes ground level landscaped courtyards to the east of the northern apartment building (Building 1) and to the south of the southern apartment building (Building 2). Landscaped rooftops are proposed to the commercial tenancies (fronting London Circuit) and to the southern rooftop of Building 2.

**Proponents' representative address to the panel:** The proponent's design team, represented by [Redacted] of Fender Katsalidis, commenced the presentation by providing the panel with an overview of the context studies undertaken for the proposal including identification of adjacent existing and future developments, the local street network and the onsite level changes. An analysis of the planning controls in relation to the National Capital Plan was also presented, including consideration of the City and Gateway Urban Design Framework and the previous City to the Lake studies.

The initial design response was then presented as a series of sketches demonstrating the arrival and entry sequences, organisation of use across the site and the proposal's design response to the interface with the

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adjacent Forum Apartments. Further sketches illustrating the modulated commercial frontage to London Circuit, overall aerial views and the laneway approach from Allara Street highlighted the intended scale transition between use as well as providing an indication of landscape intervention and public domain treatment.

The architect went on to present the façade articulation principles which allowed different building elements to create patterns in the predominantly glazed façade by utilising reflectivity, tone and panel size to create the overall composition. Parque, Melbourne was positioned as the reference project to demonstrate the aesthetics and façade performance envisaged for the development. The use of a façade engineer was confirmed noting a high-performance glass is proposed which the proponent stated will provide suitable levels of light transmission, reflectance and u value appropriate to a residential development.

The projects landscape architect, represented by [Redacted] Oculus, presented the landscape proposition including the public movement corridor with an integrated 'green veil' to London Circuit. The overall scheme proposed a landscape strategy which transitions from formal, usable rooms addressing London Circuit and decreasing in formality as the pathway and site levels descends to Allara Street. Continuous pavement treatment to the length of the pathway was presented as providing a feeling of shared space while communal roof gardens on level 7 of the southern apartment building (accessible from both residential buildings) provides onsite amenity for residents including views. An emphasis on seasonal colour change and biodiversity underpins the landscape vision for the proposal.

**Recommendation:** Based on the documentation provided prior to the design review panel session and the proponents presentation, the following comments and recommendations are provided:

The Panel is pleased that the development proposal has been presented to NCDRP at this early design concept stage. Engaging early with the Panel has provided the opportunity for a meaningful discussion about the key elements of the proposal and to identify how the design concepts could be further enhanced for the benefit of the proponent, future residents and the broader community.

The Panel acknowledges the challenges faced by the proponent team in responding to the civic responsibility of the site in relationship to London Circuit and the nationally symbolic National Triangle as well as future planning outcomes envisaged for Constitution Avenue and the City Hill Precincts. As such, the proponent is requested by the Panel to undertake engagement with the National Capital Authority (NCA), City Renewal Authority (CRA) and Major Projects Canberra (MPC) to provide coordination between future adjacent and adjoining development and surety for the proposal moving forward. This engagement should be used to identify alternate siting, geometry, form and massing options to provide a stronger, civic architectural response to the site context and to 'hold the knuckle' on London Circuit. The Panel also requests the proponent team undertake a thorough analysis of the current and future context at the city scale,

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including interface conditions between the built form and London Circuit and CRA master planning strategies on adjoining sites.

A mixed used development for the site is supported by the Panel, however the proponent team is requested to further investigate options of increasing the mix of use proposed as the current proposition disproportionately favours one dominant use. This may include consideration of uses to support occupancy by the target residential market as well as integration of appropriately designed and located spaces for adaptive re-use which may respond to future block structures, roads and pathways. To ensure the proposal achieves a standard of design excellence befitting its nationally significant location the proponent is encouraged to reconsider elements of the transition of scale, architectural expression, articulation and materiality of buildings to more appropriately align with the established civic character and urban fabric.

Given the early stage of design phase of the proposal, the Panel requests further consideration and details of residential mix and amenity, landscape character and definition, architectural expression and materiality, and sustainability aspirations and commitments. Further development of these aspects of the proposal will be essential in realising a design excellence outcome for this prominent, nationally significant site. The Panel recommends and looks forward to further design review for the proposal, once the proponent has conducted adequate engagement with the NCA.

**Key Issues and Recommendations:** The *Key Issues and Recommendations* provide detail advice to the proponent, consistent with the above recommendation.

To achieve the best possible design outcome for the proposal, the proponent is encouraged to consider the following issues through the next stages of the design development:

**1.0 Context and character**

**1.1** The contextual analysis presented for the proposal was considered by the Panel to be missing critical macro analysis including consideration of the greater city site context and the symbolic National Triangle. The Panel observes that significant works are anticipated to be undertaken within the vicinity of the subject site including planning changes and works associated with the National Capital Plan's Constitution Avenue and Anzac Parade Precinct Code, the City Hill Precinct and Light Rail Stage 2. The proponent is requested by the Panel to undertake engagement with the NCA, EPSDD, CRA and MPC to provide coordination between future adjacent and adjoining development and surety for the proposal moving forward. This includes consideration of future new local streets, pedestrian and cycle pathways, land use and planning controls for adjoining and adjacent sites (including an understanding of building setbacks and massing) and future road levels to London Circuit. The proponent is therefore encouraged by the Panel to revisit the site analysis for the proposal to include a broader analysis of existing and future desired outcomes. The Panel requests the proponent presents documentation to demonstrate how analysis of these future city changes has been considered, and how the proposal

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has responded to these considerations at the next design review session.

1.2 The proposed alignment of the residential and commercial buildings is not supported by the Panel and is considered to lack the required formal response in its address to London Circuit or provide an appropriate civic response commensurate with the prestigious site location in the National Triangle. Acknowledging the proponent's intent for the commercial component of the proposal to align with London Circuit and the adjacent DFAT building, the Panel considers that the scale and fragmented nature of this offering does not provide a satisfactory civic response in its geometry or scale. Furthermore, the Panel is unconvinced that the alignment of the proposed residential buildings to Parkes Way is justified, noting that the form and scale of the residential buildings are considered by the Panel to dominate the proposal. The proponent is therefore encouraged by the Panel to return to 'first principles' including reconsideration of their understanding of the site context and planning principles. Additionally, the Panel strongly recommends that the proposal should more formally address and align to the London Circuit geometry through greater consideration for axis' in Griffin's plan. The Panel recommends that this be demonstrated by presenting options at the next design review session. (See also 5.0 and 6.0)

**2.0 Landscape**

2.1 The Panel notes that the presentation included landscape documentation not previously provided to the Panel for consideration. Given the early design phase of the proposal, the landscape design was not discussed in detail at design review. As the landscape concepts presented were focussed on the current design strategy, the Panel requests the proponent prepare and present revised landscape concepts that respond to refinements to the architecture and siting arising from the Panel's Advice. The proponent team is requested to provide details regarding the long-term management strategy proposed for this development in relation to the proposed community gardens. The Panel encourages the proponent team to review siting and design outcomes to achieve appropriate public and private domain amenity, deep root planting and sustainability to be presented for discussion at the next design review session.

**3.0 Sustainability**

3.1 Given the early design phase of the proposal, sustainability was not discussed in detail at design review. The proposed fully glazed façade was however not supported by the Panel as further consideration in relation to sustainability, façade interest and appropriateness in its response to the proposal's setting is required. The Panel requests that the proponent prepares and presents a robust sustainability strategy for the development at the next design review session, including details of sustainability measures, their influence on siting and massing, passive design proposals and commitments proposed to be implemented within the proposal.

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**4.0 Density and connectivity**

4.1 The Panel supports the proponent's intention to provide a multifunctioning, publicly accessible through-site connection (i.e. the 'nexus') from London Circuit to Allara Street, however the Panel considers that the proposed public entries to this through-link are not clearly legible nor welcoming to the public. Furthermore, the Panel considers that the 'front door' of the development is unclear in the current proposal. The Panel encourages the proponent team to explore opportunities to increase the generosity of the through-site connection in both width and amenity. This may include strategies to increase the legibility as a public access entry from London Circuit as well as increasing outlook, considering compatibility of adjacent land uses/ activities and opening internal spaces to the sky.

**5.0 Built form and scale**

5.1 The geometry of built form presented in the current proposal is considered by the Panel to require reconsideration specifically in relation to the proposal's response to the urban geometry at the 'knuckle' on London Circuit. The Panel strongly recommends the proponent explore alternate options for siting, articulation and transitions in scale of the built form which better responds to the existing built form of the precincts surrounding City Hill, which are generally built up to the site boundaries and contain central courtyards or substantial throughways. This should include consideration for future block structures, new local streets, pedestrian and cycle pathways, land use and planning controls for adjoining and adjacent sites and future road levels to London Circuit.

5.2 The Panel considers the scale of the commercial component currently proposed to be disproportionate and incompatible with the scale and built form of the proposed residential buildings when viewed from London Circuit. Overall, the Panel is unconvinced that the current proposal provides an appropriate outcome on this prestigious site. The proponent is strongly encouraged by the Panel to review the siting and design outcomes as well as articulation and modulation of built form to provide a better contribution to the city fabric and achieve stronger relationships between building forms both on site, and to adjacent and adjoining developments.

**6.0 Functionality and build quality**

6.1 A predominantly residential development proposal on this site is considered by the Panel to be a missed opportunity and requires reassessment noting that the Panel is unconvinced that the current commercial offering is appropriate in quantity, scale or configuration for a development of this size and in this location. Furthermore, the Panel considers the intended use of the commercial offering is currently unclear. Acknowledging the proponent concern for commercial viability located away from future development (i.e. West Basin), the Panel encourages the proponent to explore opportunities to provide a considered mixed-use development. This may include synergies of use such as appropriately located and designed spaces for

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adaptive re-use in the future, work from home arrangements or collaborative workspaces.

**7.0 Legibility and safety**

7.1 The Panel considers the location of the waste enclosure and service zones at the entry of the drop-off courtyard at Allara Street requires reconsideration to create a comfortable, active frontage and facilitate the creation of a safe environment for future users and pedestrians. Noting the size and extent of the proposed basement, the proponent is encouraged by the Panel to explore opportunities to embed these zones within the development to provide a more attractive shared space. The Panel also recommends consideration be given by the proponent towards opportunities to redistribute bulk and scale of the apartment building form away from the narrow entry to provide increased amenity.

**8.0 Diversity and amenity**

8.1 The Panel notes that the detailed design of the apartment buildings was not discussed at the design review session. Given the early design phase of the proposal, the Panel encourages the proponent team to clearly articulate the developments target market and consider how the development will be experienced by future residents including identification of the developments 'front door', entry pathways, privacy, security, recreation and how these spaces will interface with the public domain. The Panel requests that the proponent provides detail apartment building designs which demonstrate the appropriateness of resident experience including the length of corridors, daylight and solar access, cross ventilation, and adequate onsite amenity at the next design review session. This should include a waste management strategy and detailed apartment layouts with associated courtyards/balconies which demonstrate natural cross flow ventilation, solar access, privacy and liveability.

**9.0 Community and public domain**

9.1 A pedestrian connection from London Circuit to Allara Street though the proposed development is supported by the Panel, however, the Panel considers that further exploration of how this connection will be activated and will operate as a shared accessway is still required. As such the Panel requests that the proponent prepares and presents further analysis of the public and private functionality of this pathway and their relationship to the adjacent spaces at the next design review session. This should include demonstration of how the proposal is anticipated to be experienced by the public (i.e. how it is made inviting for public use throughout the day and evening) and contributes to the public domain on site, as well as exploration of the resident experience such as community interaction, entry procession and arrival, recreation and privacy.

**10.0 Visual appearance**

10.1 The Panel notes that the materiality of the proposal was not discussed in detail at the design review session however, the Panel considered the current extensive glazed façade presented to be incongruous with

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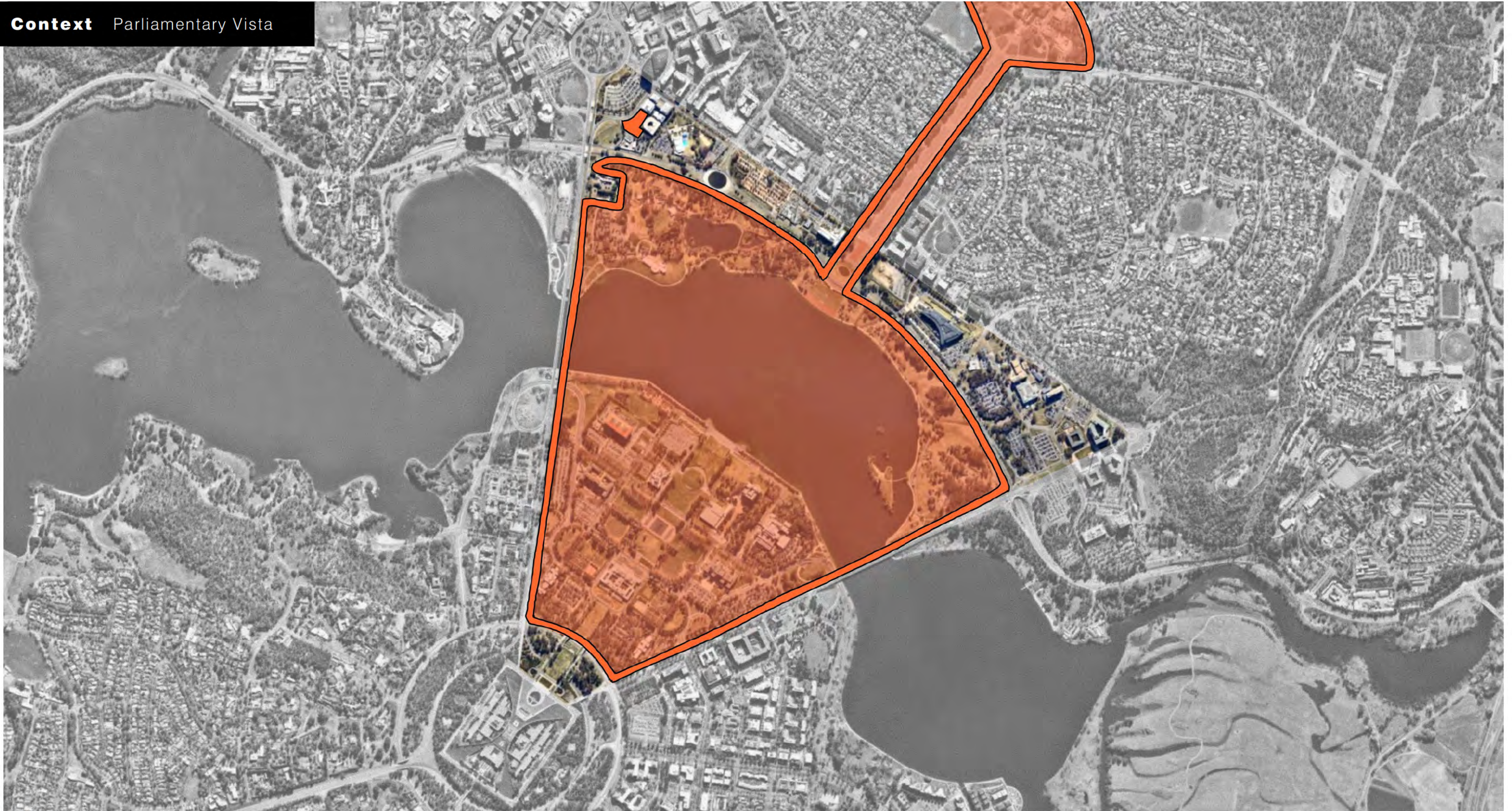
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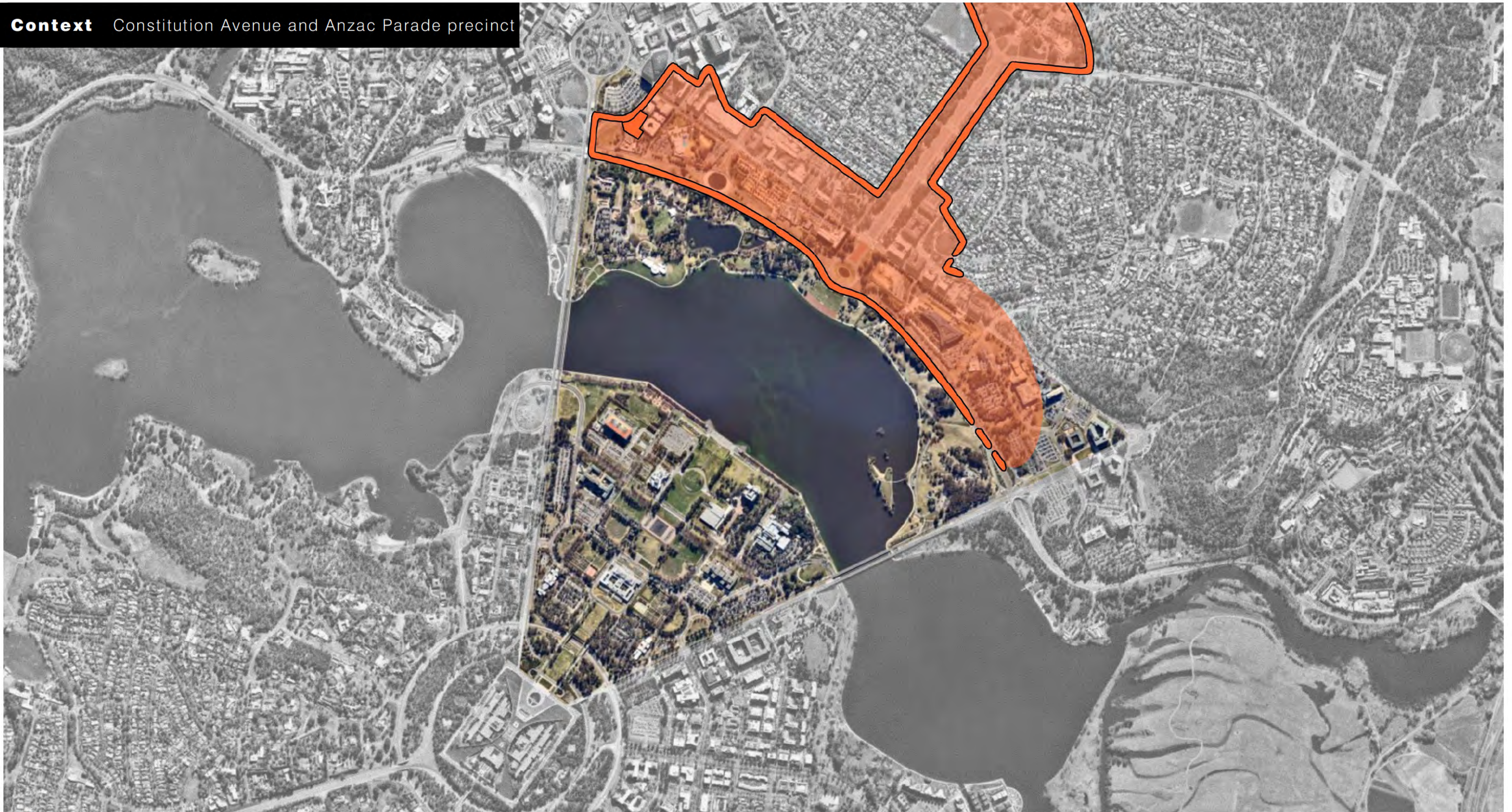
the setting of a proposed development within the National Triangle. Given the early design phase of the proposal, the Panel encourages the proponent team to develop a strong vision for the proposal which is 'of place' and consider implementing a materiality and architectural expression appropriate to the residential use as well as the civic nature and setting of the development.

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The site



**Urban context** The adjoining DFAT building



**Urban context** The adjoining Forum Apartments



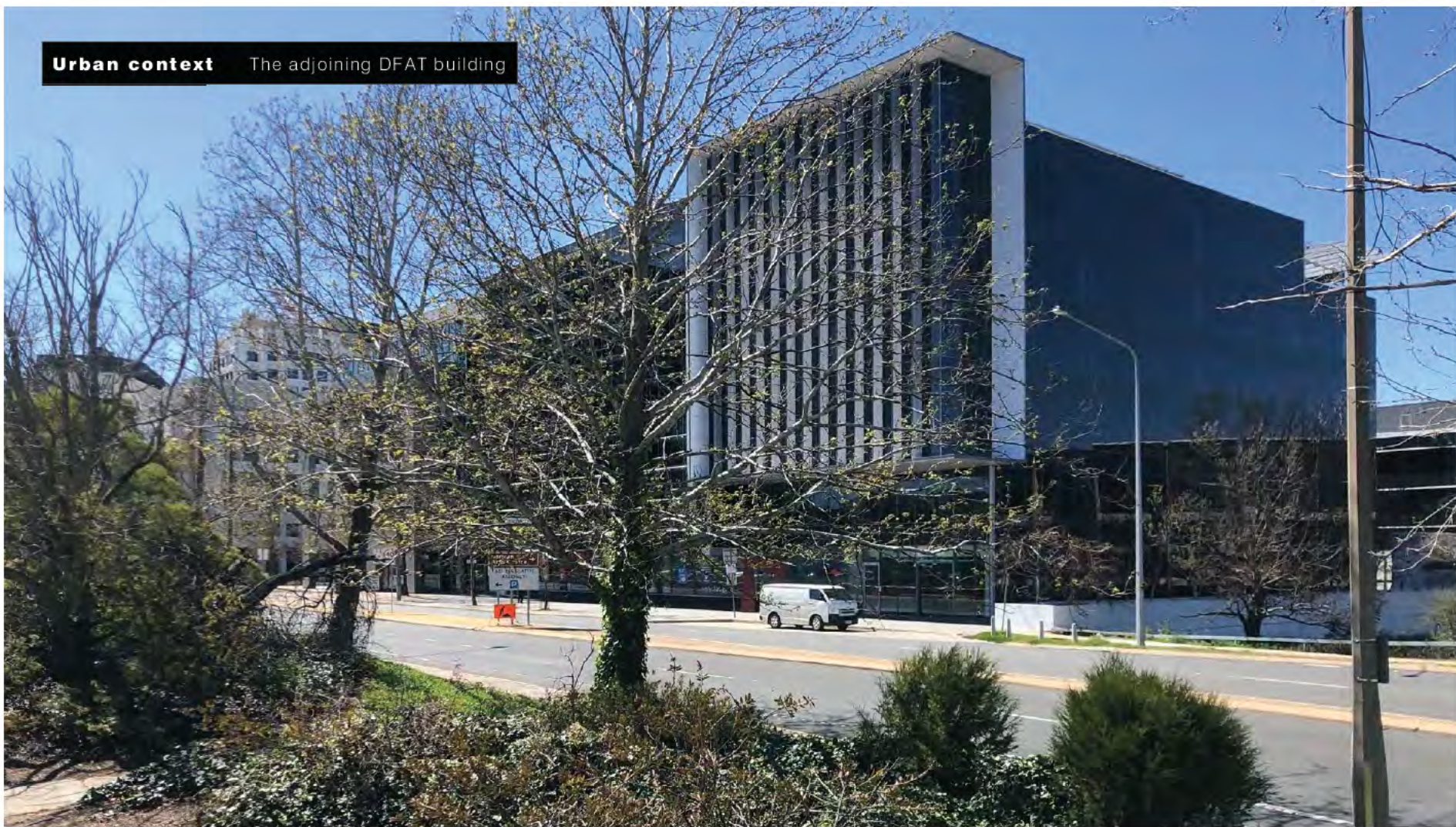
**Urban context** The access street to the site



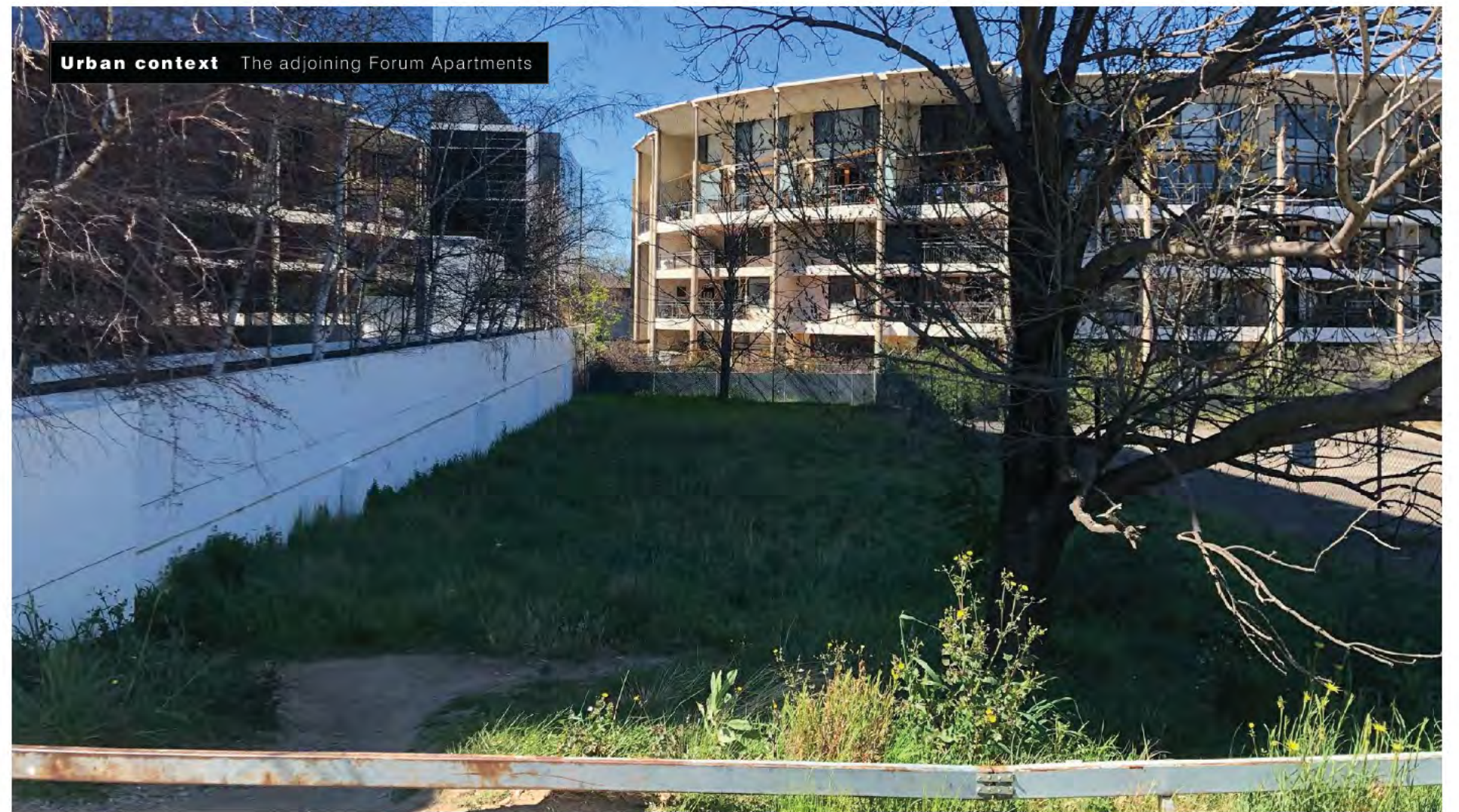
**Urban context** The form of London Circuit and adjoining clover



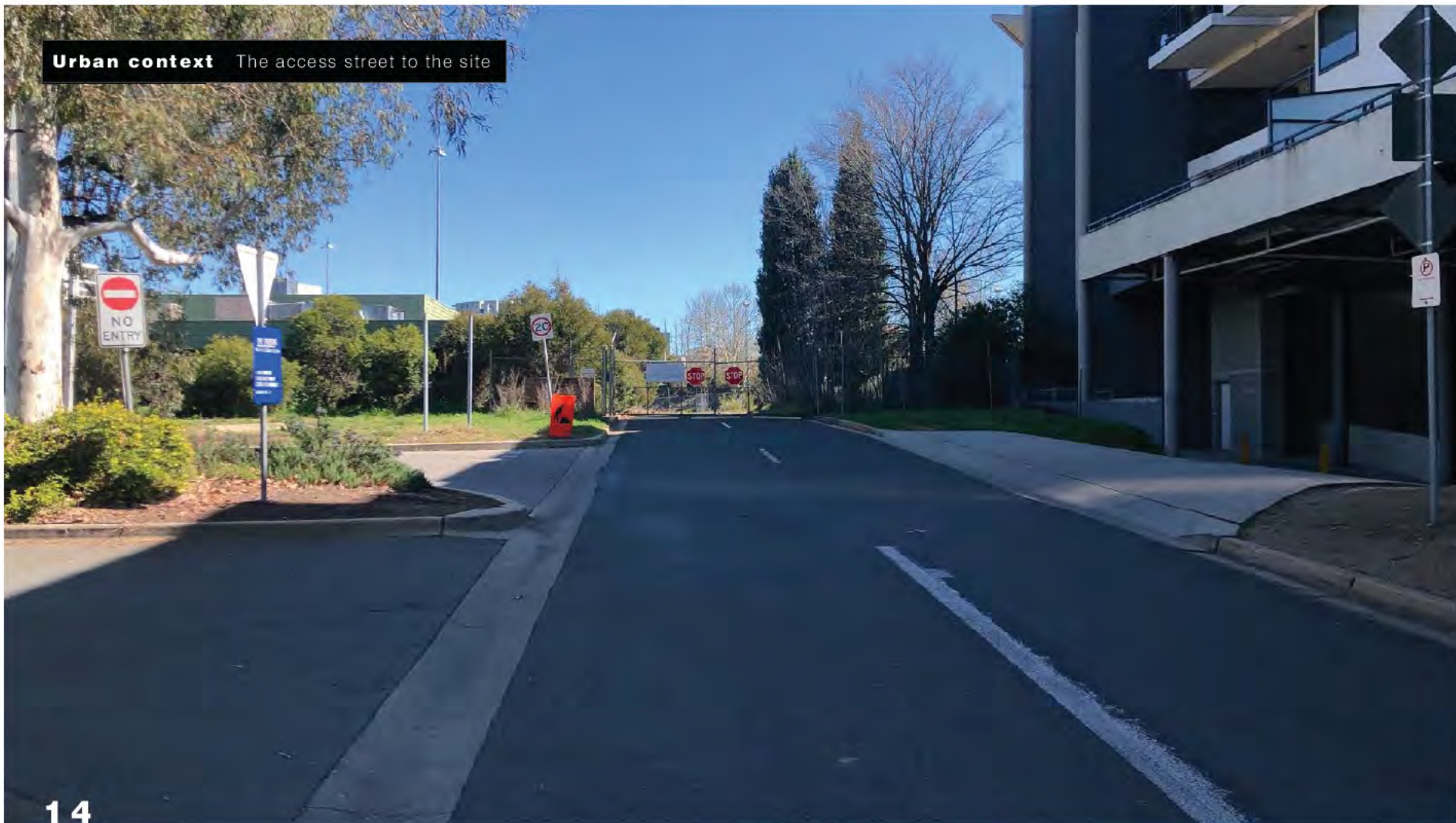
**Urban context** The adjoining DFAT building



**Urban context** The adjoining Forum Apartments



**Urban context** The access street to the site



**Urban context** London Circuit



**TRANSPORT** Early construction work set to begin on stage 2A later this year

# Light rail design contract to cost \$90m

Jasper Lindell, Alex Crowe

ENGINEERS have completed preliminary designs for the complicated task of raising London Circuit to allow the next stage of Canberra's light rail project to join Commonwealth Avenue.

Work is expected to begin on the light rail's next stage the end of the year, with the ACT government on Wednesday announcing the appointment of technical advisers.

The \$90 million contract to design the second stage of light rail between the city and Woden was awarded to multinational infrastructure consultants AECOM.

Transport Minister Chris

Steel said he was confident the ACT government would secure works approval from the National Capital Authority to allow the project to proceed.

"We've got two governments - the federal and the territory governments - now supporting this project with funding and we're looking forward to working closely with the NCA through the works approval process," Mr Steel said.

Initial works will begin before the works approval is granted to remove and relocate utilities along the route.

"Work will certainly be progressing at a much faster clip from now on," Mr

## Work will certainly be progressing at a much faster clip from now on.

Transport Minister Chris Steel said.

The ACT government released a new indicative timeline on Wednesday, showing the development and works approval applications for the project would be submitted in late-2021.

Work to raise London Circuit is expected to begin in early to mid-2022.

Mr Steel said AECOM would be working on designs for the complete second stage of the light

rail project while its first section - from Alinga Street to Commonwealth Park - is being built.

"The public can expect to start seeing work occurring on the light rail stage 2 project, which is a very exciting, important project for our city, and one that we hope will deliver the same benefits that we've seen on stage 1," he said.

AECOM ACT area manager Karen Billington said

the firm brought extensive experience working on light rail projects globally and 170 roles would be required to work on the Canberra project.

"We're bringing all of those insights, those lessons learnt, that experience over a number of years right here to our city," Ms Billington said.

Ms Billington said AECOM had done preliminary designs for raising London Circuit and it was similar to other work the firm had designed.

Mr Steel acknowledged works to raise London Circuit would be disruptive for people who live and work in the city.

"This is a very large

infrastructure project and it's going to be very disruptive for our city, but it will provide the long-term benefits of frequent, reliable transport as our city grows to half a million [people] by 2030," Mr Steel said.

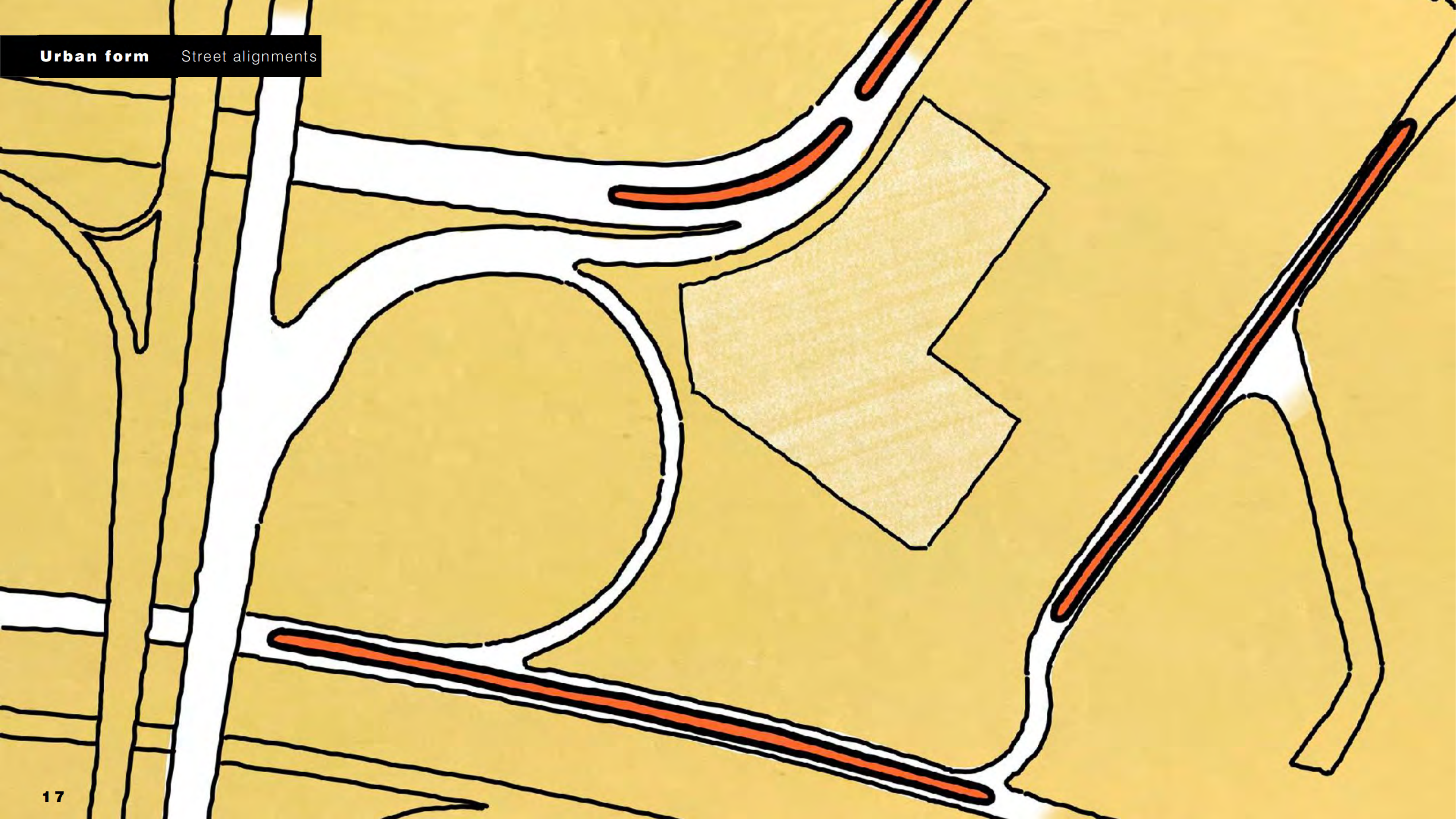
"We're going to be communicating really clearly with the community, businesses along the route and other stakeholders involved."

The project will include three new traffic light intersections, on London Circuit at West Row, University Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue.

Light rail stage 2A is jointly funded by the ACT and the Commonwealth.







**Urban form**

Potential future adjoining built form



Ground levels

