# Treasury Building, Parkes, ACT

![Treasury Building](Treasury Building. Source: Department of Finance, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance ID Number</th>
<th>DF-61009</th>
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| Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) Place ID Number | Treasury Building: [106258](#)  
Parliament House Vista: [105466](#) |
| Current Status (including CHL Place ID Number) | The Treasury Building is nominated to the Commonwealth Heritage List ([CHL Place ID 106258](#)).  
The Treasury Building is a contributory item to the John Gorton Building's heritage listing ([CHL Place ID 105472](#)) for balancing of the land axis within the Parliamentary Zone.  
The Treasury Building is included as part of the Parliament House Vista as contributory element ([CHL Place ID 105466](#)).  
The Central National Area has been nominated to the National Heritage List and is under consideration by the Australian Heritage Council ([NHL ID 106100](#)). |
Ownership
The Treasury Building is managed by the Department of Finance on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Location
The Treasury Building is located in the north-western corner of Canberra’s Parliamentary Zone. It is titled Block 1 Section 33 in the Division of Parkes, ACT. The block is bounded by King Edward Terrace to the north, Parkes Place to the east, Newlands Street to the south and Langton Crescent to the west.

Description
External
The building has an external feature base section of polished granite. Above this, and continuing up to the floor line of level one, is weathered pink granite cladding. Level one and above are faced with ashlar sandstone clad panels of grey sandstone. Recessed external aluminium windows have been used throughout.

The facades are vertically divided into bays by accentuated sandstone clad columns. These bays have uniform horizontal rows of windows, broken at each level by two secondary vertical, equally spaced structural columns with sandstone facing and recessed spandrel panels above and below the windows.

In a central position above the stairs to both Buildings B and C there is a large copper moulded Australian Coat of Arms by artist Mr Tom Bass (the Coats of Arms are managed by the National Capital Authority). Situated over the northern and eastern entries to Building A, the central building, are six sculptured granite entry panels (three panels above each entry). These sculptures were produced by Mr Ian Van Wieringen under a commission to design custom artwork for the new Treasury Building, and are managed by the NCA. The sculpture by Ms Norma Redpath and fountain by Mr Robert Woodward, located on the forecourt to Building A along King Edward Terrace, was also part of the commissioned artwork, which is also managed by the National Capital Authority. The Centenary of the Aged Pension Memorial, located on the northern corner of the Treasury Building (corner of Langton Cres and King Edward Terrace and landscaped grounds of the building are managed by the National Capital Authority).

Each building within the Treasury complex has a full copper sheet roof with a batten seam finish and copper rainwater headers and downpipes. The roof is covered from view by the external sandstone walls extending above the roofline. The roof is hipped and set at approximately a 10° pitch to channel rain water into box gutters positioned on the inside of the sandstone walls.
**Internal Description**

The original 1960s building interior underwent a major refurbishment between 1999 and 2000. Good quality and finely polished marble floors and terrazzo wall panels were retained during the refurbishment, and line several areas in the building complex. The office layout dates from 1999 and is typical of conventional office space. Each floor within the building is equipped with conference rooms, tea room and toilet facilities. Internal fixtures which date from 1999 such as doors, lights, light switches, taps, vanity units, sinks, and floor wastes vary in materials and finishes depending on the building area. However, all fixtures are of high quality materials, designed to last, and remain in good, sound condition.

**Building A**

Building A is occupied by Treasury, Finance and the Café, and features high quality modern office fit out throughout each office level. The Café contains modern fit out including kitchen facilities. Building A includes an extensive basement that is used for storage, secure bicycle use and large bathrooms that include change rooms for use by staff. The main foyer access from Newlands Street and King Edward Terrace include original marble flooring. The stairwells are original, with replacement handrails to meet current building code requirements. All other fit out including ceilings and light fixtures date from 1999.

**Building B**

The Department of Finance and the Abacus Child Care Centre occupy building B. Both tenancies feature high quality modern fit outs, purpose built for each specific use. The Child Care Centre includes an extensive custom designed kitchen, kitchenettes in each main playroom and customised bathroom facilities, suitable for each age group ranging from nursery to pre-school age. Original marble flooring has been retained in the foyer of the main entry accessed from Parkes Place. The stairwells are original, with replacement handrails to meet current building code requirements.

**Buildings C and E**

Treasury occupies these buildings. The interior finishes are the same quality and appearance as Building A. These finishes include original stairwells with modern handrails and ceiling and light fixtures dating to 1999. The bathroom and kitchenette facilities for staff are the same as Building A.

**Building D**

The National Capital Authority and Treasury occupy building D. The internal fit out is also modern and customised for each tenancy.

**Landscape Setting**

Well-kept grounds surround the Treasury Building. There are substantial lawns in the northern portions and small sections of lawn to the east, south and west sides. On all sides the lawns are divided by hard paved forecourt areas.

The central-northern courtyard is paved at the western end and contains tables, seating and established garden beds. The courtyard’s eastern end comprises the outdoor play area for a Child Care Centre. The rest of the courtyard is paved with a central sculpture fountain which was installed in 1969. The sculpture was designed by Ms Norma Redpath and the fountain by Mr Robert Woodward.

The northern section of the Treasury Building features the Centenary of Aged Pension Memorial. The extreme northern boundary of the Treasury Building grounds is defined by two
rows of planted, now mature, London Plane trees (Platanus acerifoilia) with a well-defined pathway leading to the northern entry to Building A.

The front entrance for Building B has small grassed areas to the north and south sides and ground level planter boxes adjacent to the stairs. The rest of this area is hard surface, made up of either driveway, parking areas or footpaths.

The southern portion of the Treasury Building includes predominantly exposed aggregate concrete pavers. Positioned in uniform square formations there are several concrete seating blocks and concrete planter boxes on either side of the building’s entry. Flanking the walkway entrance are large recessed grass areas that slope towards the building's basement level. This sloped grass area acts as a zone for fresh air intake for the basement level computer rooms. Southwards of this (away from the building) is a concrete footpath, a single row of car park spaces, Newlands Street followed by a large car park.

At the western side of the building, which is the Treasury Building’s formal entry, a circled drive-through access road provides covered entry from a car into the building. There are ground level planter boxes on either side of the main entry external stairs and two small grassed areas that extend to Langton Crescent.

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<th>Heritage Objects and Collections</th>
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<td>The Treasury Building has several NCA management elements, particularly the Norma Redpath Sculpture, which has potential heritage significance. The National Capital Authority managed elements include:</td>
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- The Norma Redpath Sculpture and Robert Woodward Fountain (located in the entry plaza on the northern side of the building)
- The two granite Mudgee Granite Panels by Mr Ian Van Wieringen (located over the north and south entrances)
- Two Australian Coats of Arms by Mr Tom Bass (located over the east and west entrances)
- The Centenary of the Aged Pension Memorial
- The immediate landscape setting bounded by King Edward Terrace, Parkes Place, Newlands Street and Langton Crescent
History and Summary of Uses

Archaeological evidence suggests that indigenous people have occupied the region for at least 31,000 years within which the Treasury Building is situated. Records by early European settlers are generally vague and limited in detail regarding indigenous populations.

Currently, four Aboriginal groups are representative of the Australian Capital Territory region including Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation; King Brown Tribal Group; Little Gudgenby River Tribal Council; and Ngarigu Currawong Clan.

First documentation of Europeans visiting the region where the Treasury Building is now located was in 1820 when Charles Throsby passed through the area looking for the Murrumbidgee River.

In 1824, Robert Campbell became the first European owner of land in the area after he was granted an estate within the Canberra/Queanbeyan region. The estate was used for sheep and livestock grazing which was probably the first European use of the land at the site, which the Treasury Building is located. The Campbell family maintained their residency some 3.2 kilometres south-east of the Treasury Building until 1903.

Due to impacts of both world wars the establishment of the Parliamentary Triangle was significantly delayed. In 1957, the Australian Parliament established the National Capital Development Commission to plan and continue Canberra’s development.

The Treasury Building’s site was selected to add symmetry to the philosophy of the Parliamentary Triangle and was designed by respected architectural firm Fowell, Mansfield, Jarvis and Maclurcan in 1961 to take on a general parallel appearance to the John Gorton Building (formerly the Administrative Building).

With construction completed in 1969 the building was occupied by its intended tenants - the Treasury, the Commonwealth Taxation Office and components of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, with the latter two being relocated elsewhere after exceeding their capacity.

Treasury relocated into the refurbished western end in 2000 and part of the Department of Finance moved into the eastern end in 2001. The National Capital Authority moved into Building D in 2002.

Department of Finance’s (Finance) updated heritage assessment

The following is Finance’s summary statement of potential heritage values.

The Treasury Building has been assessed as having significant historic and aesthetic heritage values that are derived from its connection with Walter Burley Griffin’s plan for Canberra, its strong expression of the Late Twentieth Century stripped Classical style of architecture and its visual and physical relationship with the John Gorton Building in the context of the Parliament House Vista. Key features of this architectural style that are displayed by the building include: the symmetrical facades; the horizontal skyline; the division of the elevations into vertical bays; the use of a basic column form; the expressed porticos; simple surface treatments including fine jointed dressed sandstone ashlar and polished granite blocks; anodised windows and subdues spandrels between the storeys which emphasise verticality. Design elements that retain a high level of integrity include the exterior, foyers, stairwells, central corridors on Level 1 (Parkes Place West entry) and the ground floor (Newlands Street and Kind Edward Terrace entries).

The Treasury Building meets the threshold for nomination against five of the nine Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL) criteria and is also significant against four of the twelve...
| Criterion A - Processes | The Treasury Building has a strong association with Walter Burley Griffin's plan for the central area of Canberra through its position within the Parliamentary Triangle. It also illustrates the growth of the Commonwealth Government since Federation and the importance of the role of Treasury in the administration of Australia and its economy.

The continued use and occupation of the building by The Treasury reinforces the ongoing importance of the place in providing purpose built office accommodation for the Commonwealth Government in Canberra. |
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<td>Criterion B – Rarity</td>
<td>Canberra’s history of urban planning and evolution as a Garden City through Walter Burley Griffin’s vision is unique in Australia. The Treasury Building is associated with the careful, detailed and long term planning of the Parliamentary Triangle in Canberra, which realises Griffin’s plan for this part of the national capital.</td>
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<td>Criterion C – Research</td>
<td>The Treasury Building does not fulfil this criterion.</td>
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| Criterion D – Characteristic Value | The Treasury Building is a significant example of the Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical style of architecture in Australia, which, along with its design and location in the Parliamentary Triangle, contributes to the aesthetic values of the Parliament House Vista.

Other remaining original finishes including the green marble in the foyer spaces, and the remaining terrazzo wall panels are significant elements of the interior which provide an insight into the quality finishes which were once common for interiors of Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical style in Canberra. |
| Criterion E – Aesthetic characteristics | The Treasury Building has architectural qualities valued by the wider community for its strong illustration of the Late Twentieth Century Stripped Classical style of architecture in Australia. The visual and physical relationship with the John Gorton Building opposite and the planning and architectural role the Building plays in the Parliament House Vista are also important aesthetic attributes. |
| Criterion F – Technical achievement | The Treasury Building does not fulfil this criterion. |
| Criterion G – Social Value | The Treasury Building does not fulfil this criterion. |
| Criterion H – Significant people | The Treasury Building is associated with Walter Burley Griffin’s design for Canberra as demonstrated by its inclusion within the Parliamentary Triangle. Treasury Building is a key symmetrical element within this design.

The Treasury Building is also associated with Joseph Fowell and John Mansfield, notable twentieth century Australian architects. |
| Criterion I - Indigenous tradition | The Treasury Building does not fulfil this criterion. |

**Source:** Environment Resources Management, 2014
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<th>ACT Heritage Register</th>
<th>The Treasury Building is not currently individually listed on the ACT Heritage Places Register.</th>
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<td><strong>Additional information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Property Access</strong></td>
<td>The Treasury Building is a secure government office building. The building is not open to the public. However, the foyers and cafe are public areas.</td>
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<td><strong>Consultation</strong></td>
<td>Department of Finance consulted the Environment Resources Management Pty Ltd, National Capital Authority, and internal Finance stakeholders and contractors. The Environment Resources Management consulted with the four Representative Aboriginal Organisations.</td>
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</table>
Environment Resources Management (2014), Treasury Building Heritage Management Plan, Department of Finance.  
Environment Resources Management (2013), Treasury Building Heritage Assessment, Department of Finance.  
National Archives of Australia Photographic Collection Series A3560, A1200 and A1500. |
| **More information**  | For further information regarding the Treasury Building, please contact the Department of Finance. |