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Hamish Finlay  
Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Re: Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism's inquiry into a new convention centre for Canberra.

Dear Mr Finlay,

Together with Fukasas, GMB prepared the Reference Design for the Australia Forum collaborating with a broad group of stakeholders and consultants. Through this we came to understand many of the benefits to Canberra that would occur upon the construction of the Australia Forum.

Others will substantiate the benefits of the Forum being a year-round activity generator supporting activities that add vibrancy to the heart of the city up to 16 hours a day, as well as creating numerous new jobs and spending at the Forum, and associated city centre hospitality and tourism venues.

We also recognise that the Forum can be seen to support the usage of light rail, and would provide new venues of sizes and types that do not currently exist in Canberra, benefiting the Canberra community with accessibility and expanded venue choices.

As architects of the new Canberra Airport passenger terminal we are acutely aware of the benefits of the newly established international access through the new international flights, which has correlation with the Forum having a new stream of visitors that has not existed previously.

Perhaps most keenly, as associated architects for the Reference Design, we understand the urban design benefits to Griffin's Plan and the Griffin Legacy of having a building of such public significance at the key site linking the city and national areas, both visually and symbolically. Such a public venue within the Parliamentary Triangle provides the prominence of purpose appropriate to the linking urban frame of Commonwealth Avenue, Vernon Circle, and Constitution Avenue.

The opportunity to make a series of public places on Vernon Circle, Constitution Avenue, and London Circuit, as shown in the Reference Design, would be a remarkable benefit to the streetscape of Civic, and of considerable support to city life. Significantly the Reference Design's Vernon Circle plaza illustrates how a building and urban streetscape can merge into a public place of considerable inventiveness and provide a space for civic activities that exists in this manner, perhaps, nowhere else in the country.

As well as producing an exemplar urban design we believe that the Reference Design proves that the brief for the Forum has the foundation to develop architecture of excellence, and that you will appreciate the highly flexible and efficient facility through the document attached. Not only a highly workable building complex, but architecture of substantial excellence is possible that supports the role of such an important public building. You will see that the Reference design has provided a building that, unlike almost all convention centres (and the Canberra Theatre fly-tower), is open on all sides to outward and inward views providing linkages between the city and the conventioners, or for that matter, locals who may use the facilities on a casual basis.

Throughout the process of the design costs were critically evaluated and the estimated cost was \$700million, not the \$900million that we have heard reported in the media.

We write to support the Australia Forum in your considerations and to note that we would be pleased to provide any detailed information you might request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hal Guida', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hal Guida  
Director  
Guida Moseley Brown Architects

Refer Attachment A:  
*Reference Design Information Kit, 9 October 2015*