



**ACT**  
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Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

## **Legislative Assembly Copy**

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the *Planning and Development Act 2007*

# **Variation to the Territory Plan 342**

**Belconnen Town Centre: Zone changes and  
amendments to the Belconnen precinct map and  
code**

February 2019

Australian Capital Territory

# Planning and Development (Plan Variation No 342) Approval 2019

**Notifiable instrument NI2019-**

made under the

**Planning and Development Act 2007, s 76 (Minister's powers in relation to draft plan variations)**

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## **1 Name of instrument**

This instrument is the *Planning and Development (Plan Variation No 342) Approval 2019*.

## **2 Approval of draft plan variation**

(1) I approve under section 76 (2) (a) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* draft plan variation No 342 to the Territory Plan.

(2) In this section:

*draft plan variation No 342 to the Territory Plan* means the draft plan variation in the schedule.

  
Mick Gentleman MLA  
Minister for Planning and Land Management

11/2/2019

## Schedule

(See section 2(2))

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**ACT**  
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Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

*Planning and Development Act 2007*

# **Variation to the Territory Plan No 342**

**Belconnen town centre:  
Zone changes and amendments to the  
Belconnen precinct map and code**

Final variation prepared under s76 of the  
*Planning and Development Act 2007*

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# **1. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

## **1.1 Background**

The variation incorporates the key planning policy recommendations contained within the Belconnen town centre master plan approved in 2016.

While a number of recommendations from the previous 2001 Belconnen master plan have been realised, there have been a number of strategic planning documents released since then, such as the ACT Planning Strategy 2012, which encourage the consideration of urban intensification measures for the centre.

In addition to the zone changes for a number of specific sites, the review of the provisions applying across the town centre has also involved the identification of the need for additional measures in the Belconnen precinct code. This includes stipulation of maximum building heights for the town centre, identifying new development opportunities and improving pedestrian activity through the centre.

## **1.2 Summary of the Proposal**

Variation to the Territory Plan No 342 (V342) Belconnen town centre incorporates the key recommendations of the approved 2016 Belconnen town centre master plan, which provides guidance on the desired future built form and character of the town centre as it develops over the next 10 to 20 years.

The Belconnen master plan's vision for the centre identifies that the town centre's features, including the lake, open spaces, layout and nearby institutions provide unique economic and environmental advantages. The master plan aims to improve and strengthen these aspects to ensure the town centre is an attractive, accessible and desirable place for people to live, work and enjoy.

V342 rezones a number of areas within the town centre and surrounding areas, including:

- two blocks within the service trades area from service trades commercial to urban open space to retain access to existing open space areas for workers and visitors
- an area along Lathlain Street from trades and services to commercial business zone and urban open space, to promote activity west of the mall and revitalise the area; and
- a residential area on College Street from suburban core to high density residential to expand the existing area of high density residential development close to the town centre, and provide a more appropriate interface between the centre and surrounding residential land.

The variation further amends the permitted uses in selected areas within the town centre, including prohibiting residential use in the service trades area and permitting a supermarket within the commercial business zone near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection. The variation also introduces building heights to the centre up to 28 storeys in selected locations, accommodating the height of approved development within the town centre. Building setbacks and active frontage requirements in accordance with the approved master plan are incorporated to ensure interesting and safe public spaces for pedestrians. Awning requirements are also included to ensure all weather protection along the main pedestrian areas.

### **1.3 The National Capital Plan**

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* established the National Capital Authority (NCA) with two of its functions being to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan (NCP) and to keep the NCP under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary.

The NCP, which was published in the Commonwealth Gazette on 21 January 1990 is required to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance. The Planning and Land Management Act 1988 also required that the Territory Plan is not inconsistent with the NCP.

In accordance with section 10 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the National Capital Plan defines the planning principles and policies for Canberra and the Territory, for giving effect to the object of the NCP and sets out the general policies to be implemented throughout the Territory, including the range and nature of permitted land uses.

It also sets out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development for areas that have special significance to the National Capital known as designated areas and identifies special requirements for the development of some other areas.

### **1.4 Site Description**

The subject area is the Belconnen town centre and a section of the residential area to the south, as identified in Figure 1. This figure also identifies the sites to be rezoned under V342. The town centre lies to the south of Lake Ginninderra, an artificial lake providing stormwater management and recreation opportunities for the town centre.

The town centre is a significant employment base within the ACT, with Commonwealth departments and retail businesses being the biggest employers. The centre also contains a number of important community, education and recreation uses including Belconnen library, Lake Ginninderra College and the Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, from the single and two storey service trades area to the central business area with development ranging from four storeys up to 27 storeys.

Surrounding areas are predominately low density residential suburban to the south, west and north of the centre, and the University of Canberra within walking distance of the town centre to the east.

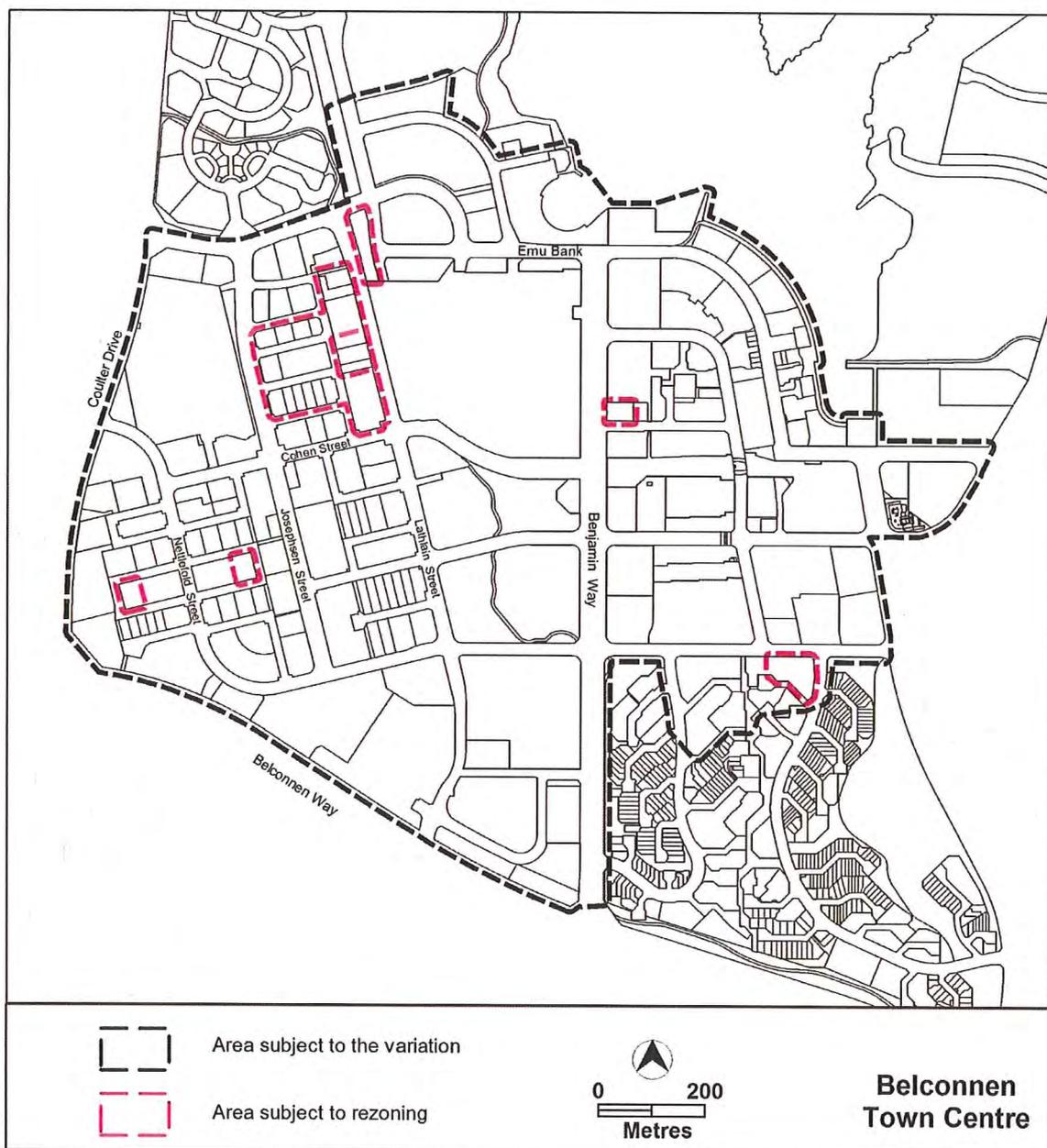


Figure 1 Site Plan

## 1.5 Current Territory Plan Provisions

The Territory Plan map for the area subject to this variation is shown in Figure 2.

The town centre is predominately zoned CZ2 commercial business zone, with a central CZ1 core zone containing the Westfield Belconnen shopping centre adjoining the lake. The town centre also contains a substantial CZ3 service trades area forming the western portion of the town centre, containing the predominant service trades uses.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, with the CZ3 zoned area predominately single and two storeys, while the CZ1 core and CZ2 business zone ranging between six to 12 storeys, along with an approved 28 storey tower development.

Development along Lake Ginninderra within the subject area is zoned CZ6 leisure and accommodation zone, with single and two storey buildings, with RZ5 High Density Residential zoned land behind containing a number of multi storey unit complexes around four storeys tall.

The town centre is subject to the Commercial Zone development code and the Belconnen precinct map and code. The adjoining residential areas are subject to the Residential Zones Development code, Single Dwelling Housing development code and the Multi Unit Housing development code. The community facility land is subject to the Community Facility Zones development code, with the public open space subject to the Parks and Recreation Zone development code. The general codes may also apply.

It should be noted that Belconnen sections 43, 44, 45(part), 49 and 50, while being identified as being subject to the Territory Plan provisions, are 'National Land', and are subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan and associated Development Control Plans. In this regard, the Territory Plan provisions do not apply to these sites.

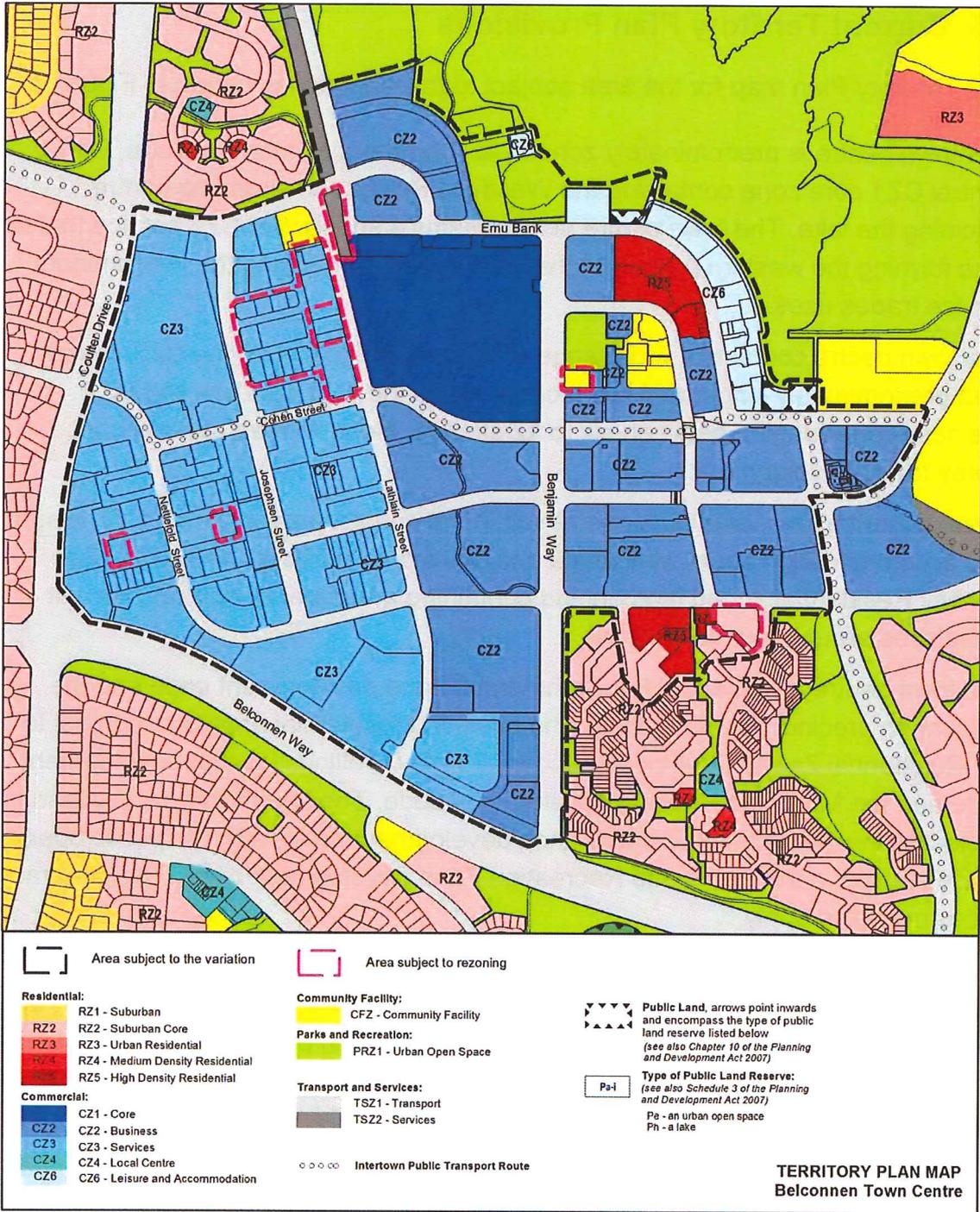


Figure 2 Territory Plan Zones Map

## 1.6 Changes to the Territory Plan

Detailed changes to the Territory Plan are noted in section 2 of this document.

## 1.7 Consultation on the Draft Variation

Draft Variation No 342 (DV342) was released for public comment between 4 May 2018 and 22 June 2018. A consultation notice under section 63 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (P&D Act) was published on the ACT Legislation Register on 4 May 2018.

A total of twenty one written submissions were received, which included 9 submissions from Belconnen residents, 8 submissions from commercial interests, or groups representing commercial interests, within the centre, 3 submissions from community organisations and one submissions from a cycling advocate.

Main issues raised by submitters included:

- Concern with the proposed building heights, with the majority of submissions seeking additional building heights over one or more sites, and several submissions concerned with the proposed 16 storey building height permitted on the corner of Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way
- Concern with the rezoning of the community facility zoned land adjacent to Margaret Timpson Park, block 41 section 54 to commercial business zone, and potential future use of the site
- Concern with the proposed rezoning of the CZ3 services area west of Lathlain Street through potential impacts of development and potential loss of a future employment area
- Concern with the two storey restriction and prohibition on residential uses in the CZ3 services area; and
- Comments around the provision permitting a supermarket along the northern end of Eastern Valley Way, outside of the central commercial area, with both support and objection to the proposal.

The above issues were considered and are detailed in a report on consultation, which is available at [www.act.gov.au/recommendedvariations](http://www.act.gov.au/recommendedvariations). Changes to the draft variation 342 were informed by the issues raised in the public submissions.

## 2. VARIATION

### 2.1 Variation to the Territory Plan map

The Territory Plan map is varied as indicated in Figure 3.

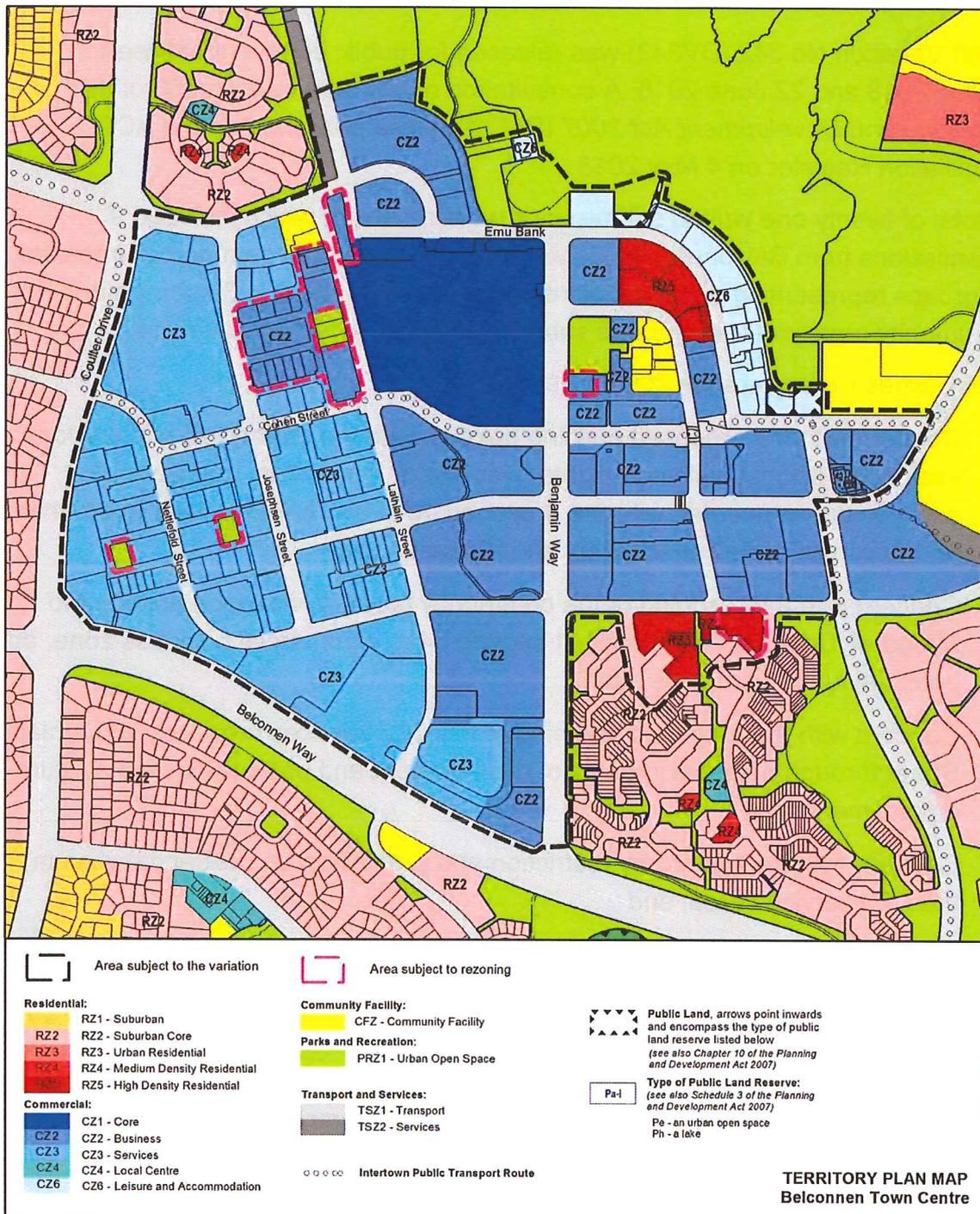


Figure 3: Areas subject to rezoning

## 2.2 Variation to the Territory Plan

The Territory Plan written statement is varied in all of the following ways:

### Variation to the Belconnen precinct map and code

<b>10 Precinct maps and codes, Belconnen precinct map and code</b>
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*substitute the following with the nominated attachment:*

Belconnen precinct map and development tables with **Attachment A**

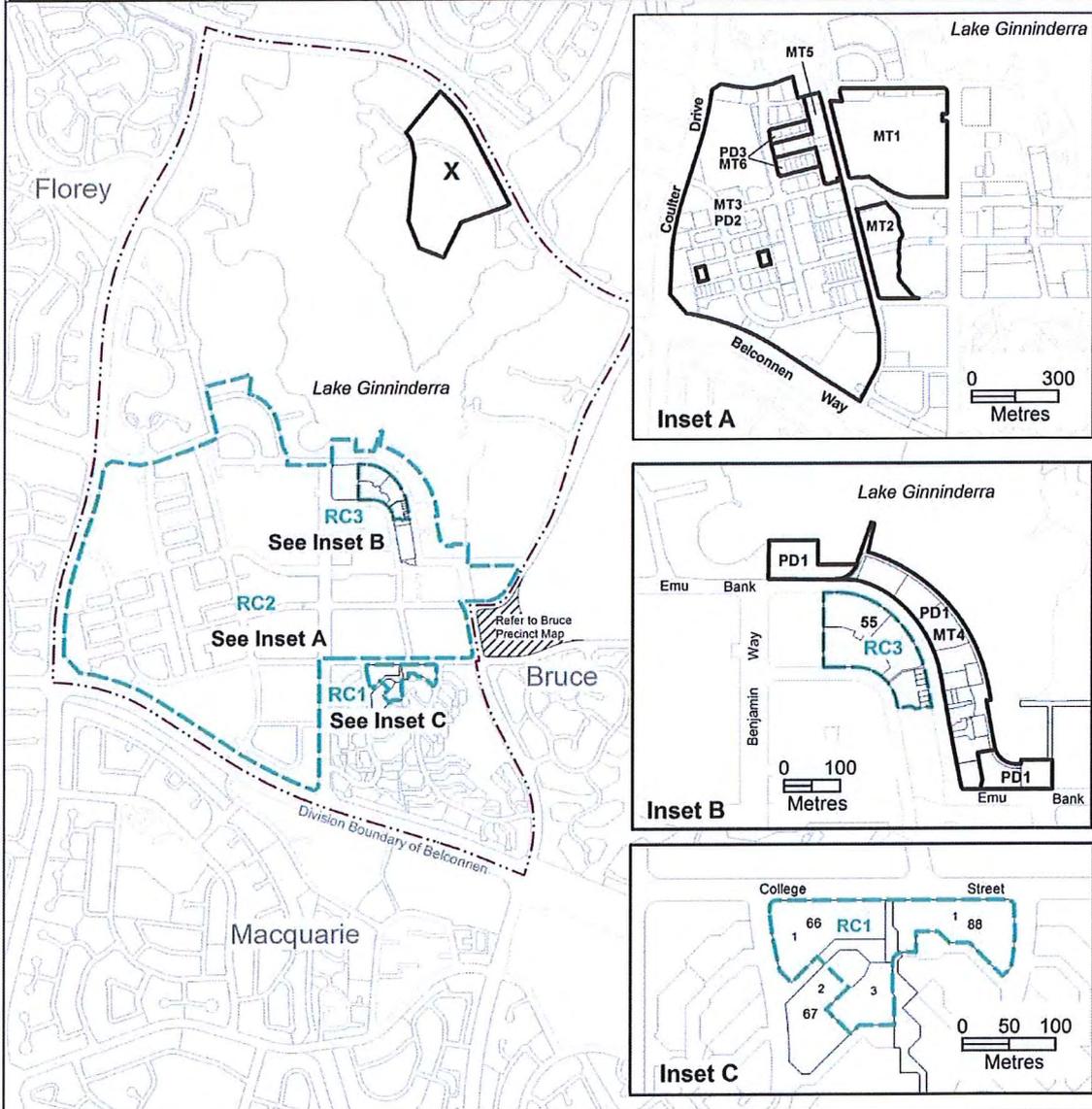
RC1 – Residential area 1, RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre and RC3 – Residential area 2 with **Attachment B**

## Interpretation service

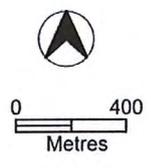
ENGLISH	If you need interpreting help, telephone:
ARABIC	: إذا احتجت لمساعدة في الترجمة الشفوية ، إتصل برقم الهاتف :
CHINESE	如果你需要传译员的帮助，请打电话：
CROATIAN	Ako trebate pomoć tumača telefonirajte:
GREEK	Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα τηλεφωνήστε στο
ITALIAN	Se avete bisogno di un interprete, telefonate al numero:
MALTESE	Jekk għandek bżonn l-għajnuna t'interpretu, çempel:
PERSIAN	: اگر به ترجمه شفاهی احتیاج دارید به این شماره تلفن کنید:
PORTUGUESE	Se você precisar da ajuda de um intérprete, telefone:
SERBIAN	Ako vam je potrebna pomoć prevodioca telefonirajte:
SPANISH	Si necesita la asistencia de un intérprete, llame al:
TURKISH	Tercümana ihtiyacımız varsa lütfen telefon ediniz:
VIETNAMESE	Nếu bạn cần một người thông-ngôn-hãy gọi điện-thoại:

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# Belconnen Precinct Map



- PD<sub>n</sub>** Additional prohibited development applies see Table 1
- MT<sub>n</sub>** Additional merit track development applies see Table 2
- RC<sub>n</sub>** Additional rules and criteria apply see Belconnen Precinct Code
- X** Urban open space - not public land
-  Refer to Bruce Precinct Map



# Assessment Tracks

The following tables identify the additional prohibited development and additional merit track development for blocks and parcels shown in the Belconnen Precinct Map (identified as PDn or MTn). Development that is exempt from requiring development approval, other prohibited development and the minimum assessment track applicable to each development proposal is set out in the relevant zone development table.

The following tables constitute part of the relevant zone development table.

**Table 1 – Additional prohibited development**

Additional prohibited development		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
PD1	CZ6	caravan park / camping ground drive in cinema group or organised camp overnight camping area
PD2	CZ3	RESIDENTIAL USE
PD3	CZ2	RESIDENTIAL USE

**Table 2 – Additional merit track development**

Additional merit track development that may be approved subject to assessment		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
MT1	CZ1	produce market
MT2	CZ2	service station
MT3	CZ3	corrections facility
MT4	CZ6	office RESIDENTIAL USE
MT5	CZ2	Industrial trades light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse
MT6	CZ2	light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse

add definitions to Belconnen precinct code:

**Active Frontage:** ground level building facades adjoining public spaces that encourage pedestrian interaction through display windows, public entrances, shop fronts and the like.

**Podium:** refers to the lower storeys of a building addressing public space, designed to present a human scale to the public space. Upper floor levels are set back to reduce apparent bulk and scale.

## RC1 – Residential area 1

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC1 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

### Element 1: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>1.1 Number of storeys</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	C1 Buildings are predominately the lesser of three <i>storeys</i> and 11 metres, with a maximum <i>height of building</i> the lesser of six <i>storeys</i> and 21 metres where development addresses College Street.
<b>1.2 Solar access</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	C2 Development does not significantly impact on solar access to main daytime living areas and areas of principal private open space of dwellings on adjacent blocks.

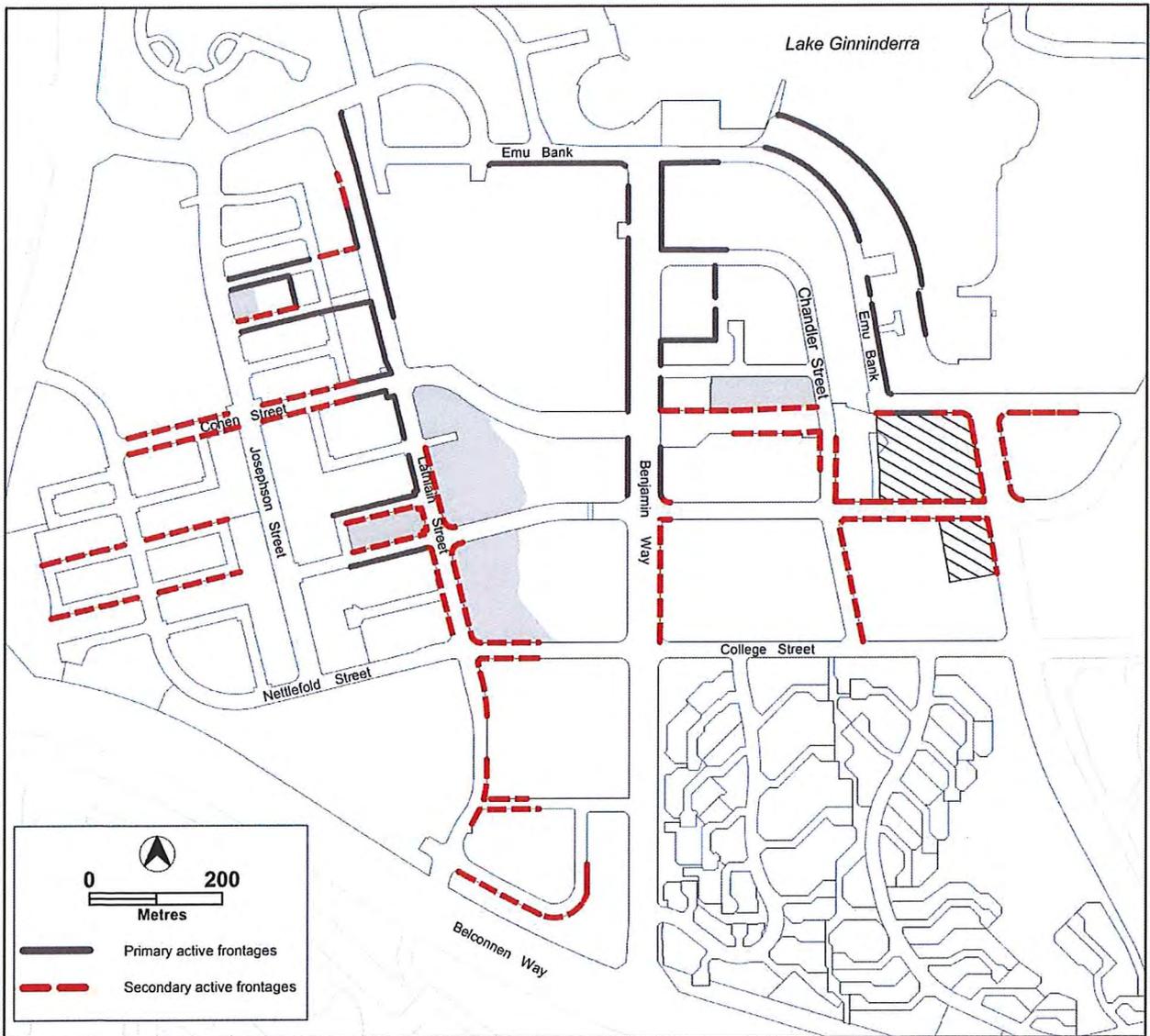
## RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre

This part applies to area RC2 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map. RC2 includes the larger part of the Belconnen Town Centre. See also the Bruce Precinct Code which contains part of the Belconnen Town Centre.

### Element 2: Use

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.1 Ground floor uses</b>	
<p>R3</p> <p>This rule applies to sites in CZ1 with boundaries to primary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Only the following uses are permitted along the primary active frontage at the ground floor level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>business agency</i></li> <li>b) <i>club</i></li> <li>c) <i>community activity centre</i></li> <li>d) <i>drink establishment</i></li> <li>e) <i>financial establishment</i></li> <li>f) <i>hotel</i></li> <li>g) <i>indoor entertainment facility</i></li> <li>h) <i>indoor recreation facility</i></li> <li>i) <i>public agency</i></li> <li>j) <i>restaurant</i></li> <li>k) <i>SHOP.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C4</p> <p>This criterion applies to sites in CZ2 and CZ6 with boundaries to primary active frontage shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Buildings incorporate uses on the ground floor that generate activity in the public space.</p>
<b>2.2 SHOP – floor area limit</b>	
<p>R5</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2.</p> <p>The maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of any <i>SHOP</i> is 200m<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>In the hatched area shown in figure 1, the maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of supermarket is 1,500m<sup>2</sup> per section.</p>	<p>C5</p> <p><i>SHOPS</i> are limited to a scale appropriate to providing convenient shopping and personal services for the local workforce and residents.</p> <p>This criterion does not apply to supermarket in the hatched area in figure 1.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.3 Office and residential use</b>	
<p>R6</p> <p>This rule applies to section 65 in CZ6.</p> <p>The following uses are not permitted on the ground floor level:</p> <p>a) <i>office</i></p> <p>b) <i>RESIDENTIAL USE.</i></p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

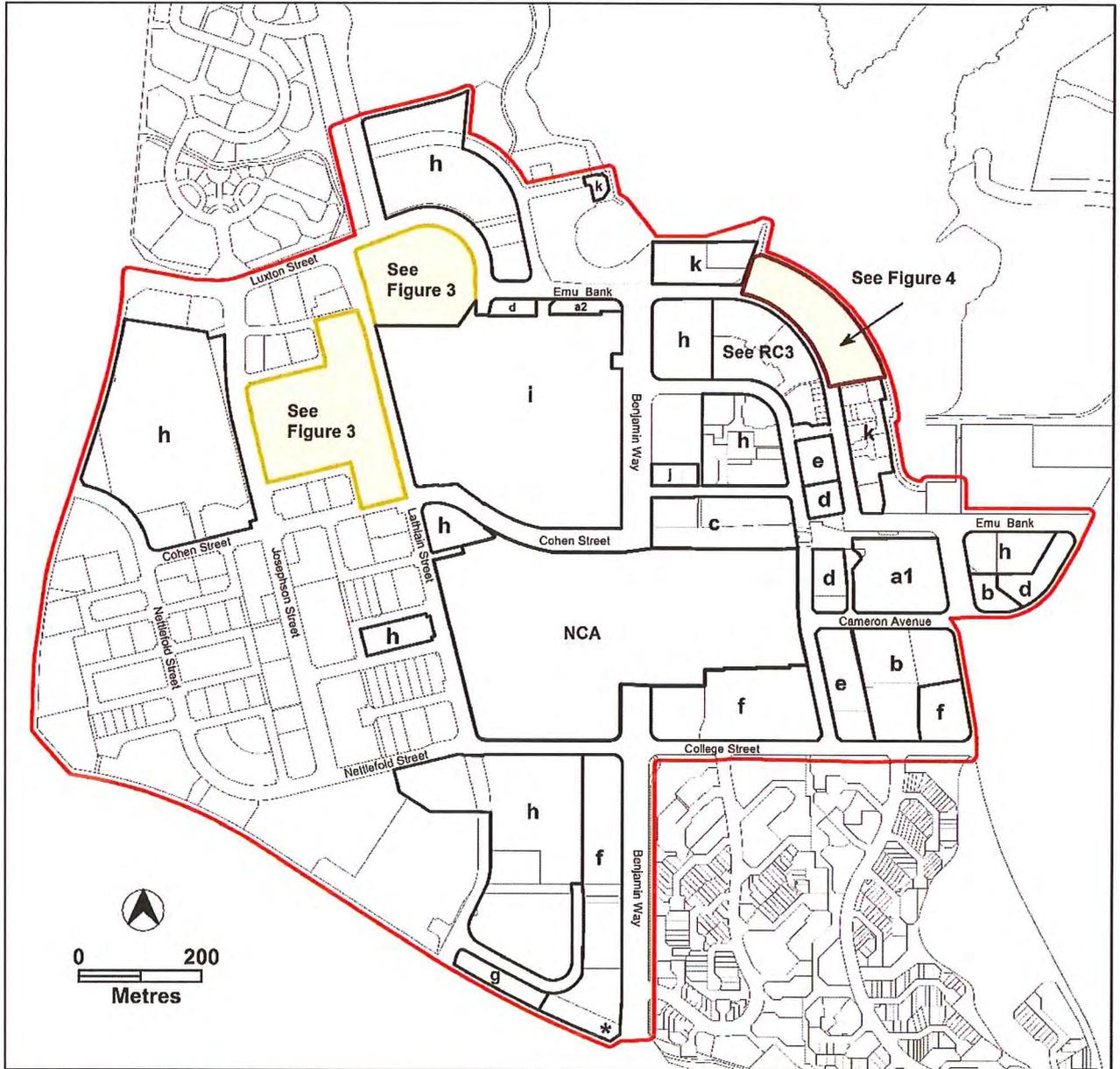


**Figure 1 Active frontages, car parking areas and permitted supermarket area in CZ2**

Rules	Criteria
<p>R7</p> <p>This rule applies to section 23 and 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted on the ground and/or first level along Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>R8</p> <p>This rule applies to section 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted within 100m of block 23 section 21.</p>	<p>C8</p> <p>Development applications for development that includes residential use are submitted with written endorsement from the Environment Protection Authority.</p>
<p><b>2.4 Service station</b></p>	
<p>R9</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development of a service station, where permitted by the Belconnen precinct map, is only permitted in association with a structured <i>car park</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p><b>2.5 Development on nominated car parking areas</b></p>	
<p>R10</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the existing number of car parking spaces is retained on the site and made available for public use at all times; and</li> <li>b) provides car parking that is generated by the development on site in accordance with the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i> in addition to the spaces required by item a).</li> </ul>	<p>C10</p> <p>Development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) any additional parking provision requirements (under the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i>) for the development; and</li> <li>b) makes a substantial contribution to the long term publicly accessible parking supply at the town centre as endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul>

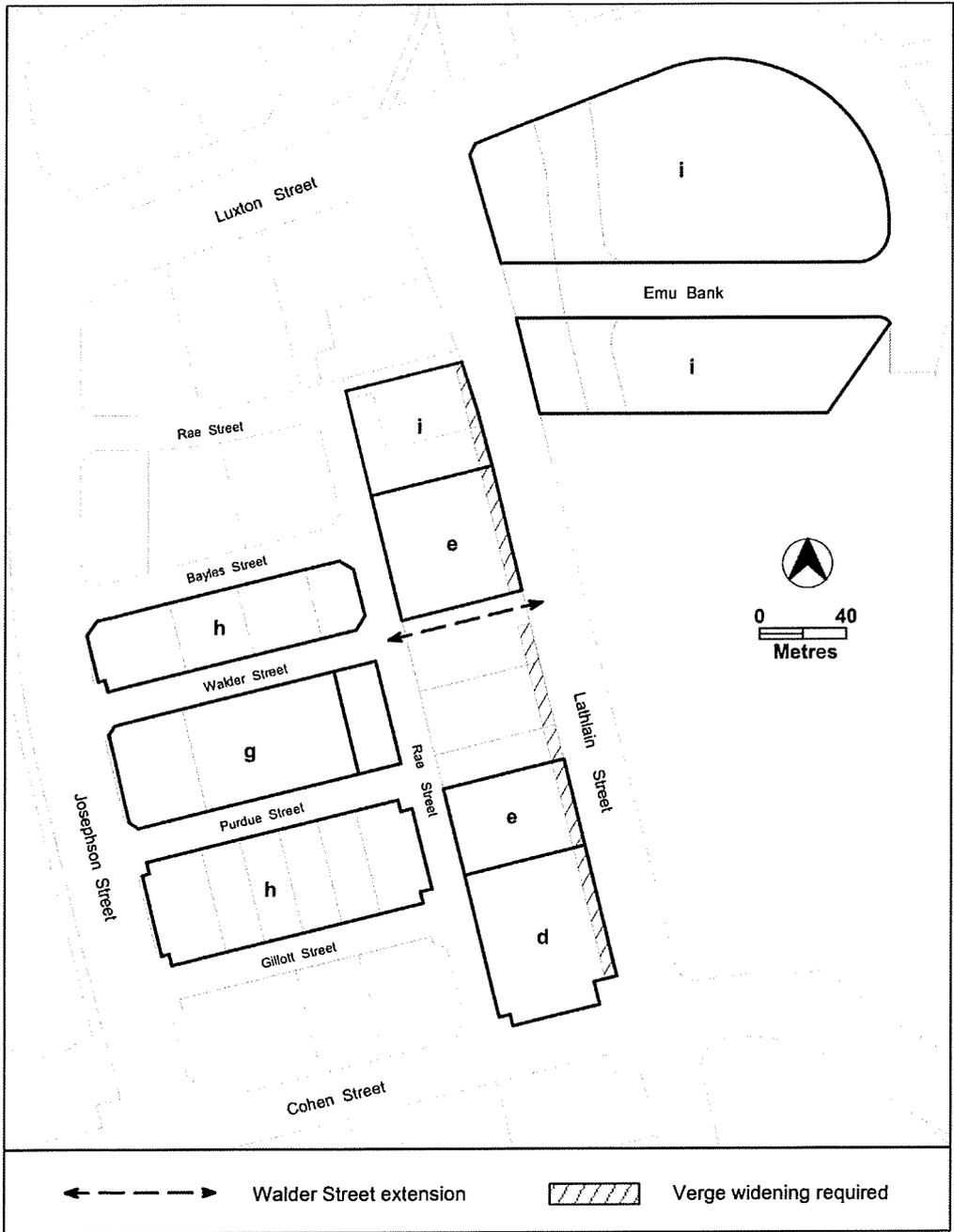
### Element 3: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.1 Building heights</b>	
<p>R11</p> <p>This rule applies to areas shown in figure 2 and figure 3.</p> <p>Maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) for area 'a1': the lesser of 28 storeys and 96m</li> <li>b) for area 'a2': the lesser of 25 <i>storeys</i> and 80m</li> <li>c) for area 'b': the lesser of 23 <i>storeys</i> and 76m</li> <li>d) for area 'c': the lesser of 20 <i>storeys</i> and 66m</li> <li>e) for area 'd': the lesser of 18 <i>storeys</i> and 60m</li> <li>f) for area 'e': the lesser of 12 <i>storeys</i> and 42m</li> <li>g) for area 'f': the lesser of 10 <i>storeys</i> and 35m</li> <li>h) for area 'g': the lesser of 8 <i>storeys</i> and 29m</li> <li>i) for area 'h': the lesser of 6 <i>storeys</i> and 23m</li> <li>j) for area 'i': the lesser of 4 <i>storeys</i> and 16m</li> <li>k) for area 'j': the lesser of 3 <i>storeys</i> and 12m</li> <li>l) for area 'NCA': RL613.7</li> <li>m) for area k: the lesser of 2 <i>storeys</i> and 9m.</li> </ul> <p>Plant room set back a minimum of 3m from the building facade of the floor immediately below is not included in the number of <i>storeys</i>.</p> <p>Plant room screening and other non gross floor area rooftop architectural features are not included in building height.</p> <p>Note: Maximum building heights that are not nominated in Figure 2 are as per the relevant zone development code requirements.</p>	<p>C11</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> in areas 'b' and 'c' may be increased by an additional four <i>storeys</i> or twelve metres, whichever is the lesser, where development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) where a block contains more than one taller building element, there is clear difference in height between elements</li> <li>b) the development achieves a high quality design outcome; and</li> <li>c) development is close to public transport stops and/or stations.</li> </ul>



**Figure 2 Building heights**

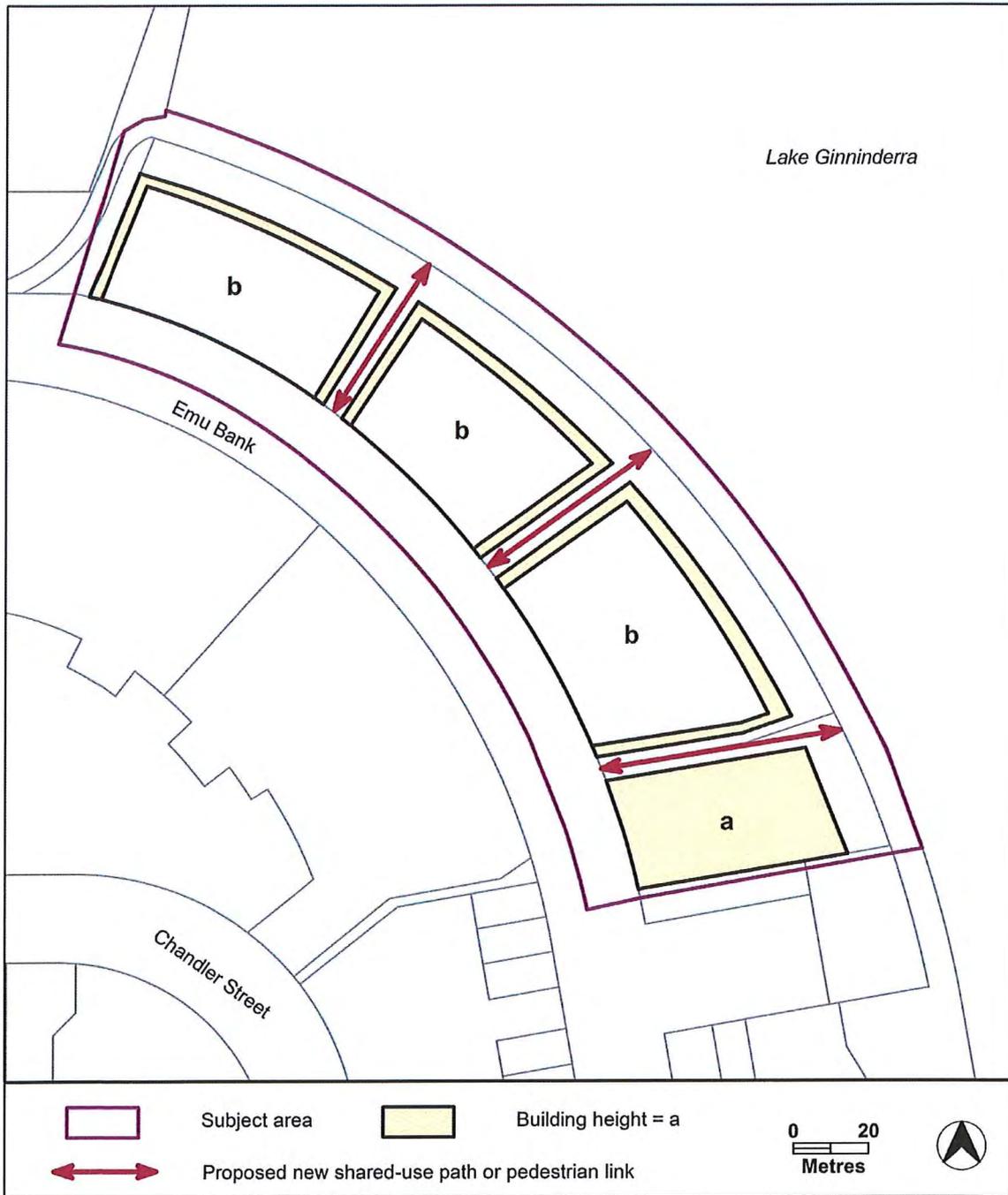
Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p><b>C12</b></p> <p>This criterion applies to development in the area indicated by an asterisk shown in figure 2, at the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way.</p> <p>One higher building element up to the lesser of 16 storeys and 55m may be permitted where development suitably addresses the adjoining Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way intersection.</p>



**Figure 3 Lathlain Street precinct**

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C13</p> <p>This criterion applies to area 'i' in section 52 and section 151, shown in figure 3.</p> <p>Development up to the lesser of 12 <i>storeys</i> or 42m, measured from the Emu Bank frontage, is permitted subject to the preparation of a master plan for the site that achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank.</li> <li>b) Opportunities for the lower levels of the block to be used for a structured carpark.</li> <li>c) vehicle access to be provided from Joynton Smith Drive or Emu Bank only</li> <li>d) Enable the existing road (Joynton Smith Drive) and proposed cycle / pedestrian path to continue under the development.</li> <li>e) Any podium levels along Lathlain Street are limited to a maximum two storey height limit to Lathlain Street.</li> </ul>
<p>R14</p> <p>This rule applies to the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The maximum <i>height of building</i> is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) in area 'a' – the lesser of two <i>storeys</i> and 9 metres</li> <li>ii) in area 'b' – the lesser of four <i>storeys</i> and 15 metres</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) The minimum building setback to Ginninderra Lake boundary, including basements, is 10m</li> <li>c) The four storey elements located between Emu Bank and Lake Ginninderra comply with all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) the total combined area of all of the four storey elements within a block does not exceed 40% of the block area</li> <li>ii) each four storey element is separated from the pedestrian connections shown in figure 4 and each side boundary by a minimum of 4m</li> <li>iii) each four storey element has a maximum width of 16m when viewed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
from Emu Bank front boundary, and iv) each four storey element has a minimum separation from any other four storey element of 10m.	



**Figure 4** Emu Bank development

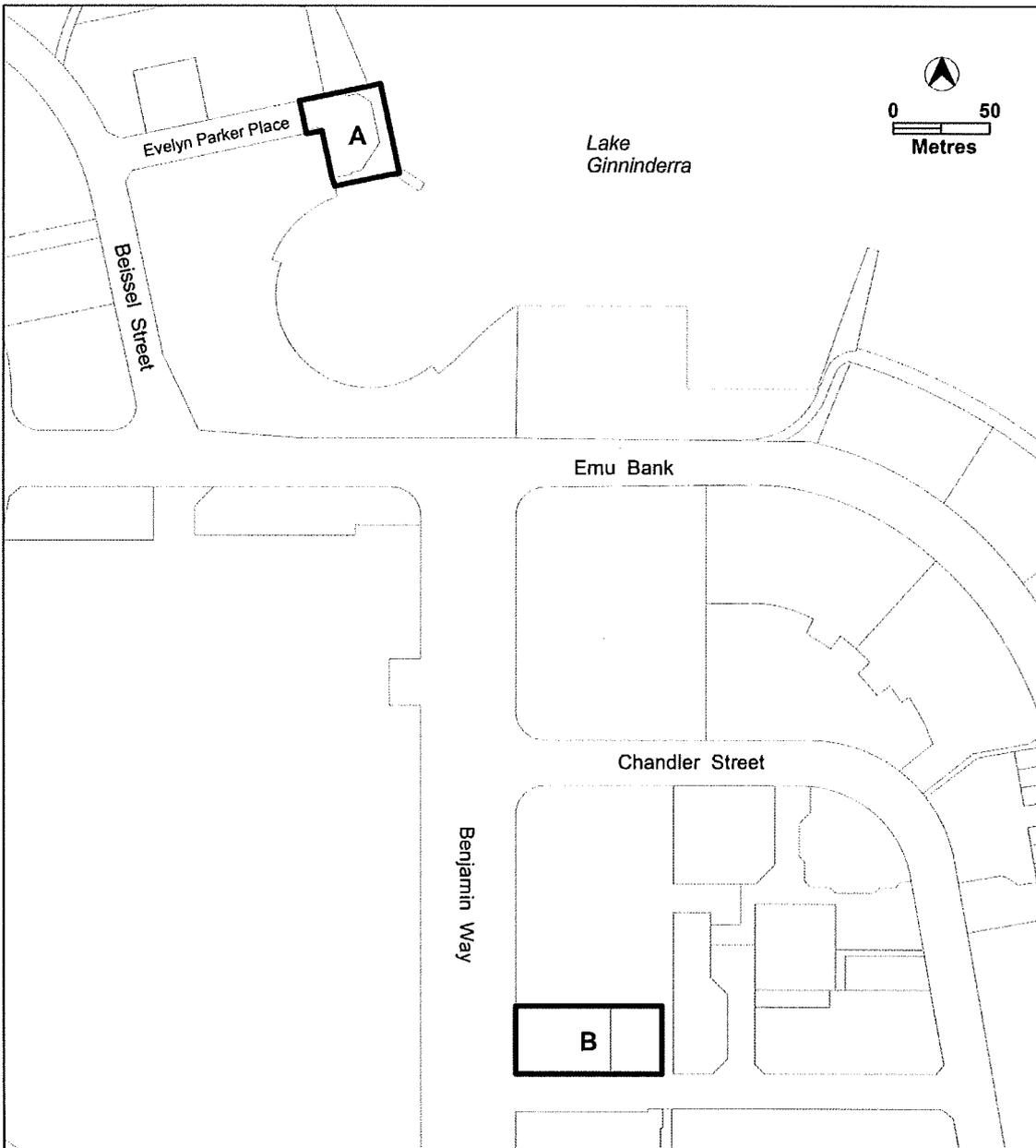
Rules	Criteria
<b>3.2 Built form</b>	
<p>R15</p> <p>This rule applies to development of 12 <i>storeys</i> or more.</p> <p>Buildings are built to the <i>front boundary</i> at the ground floor level.</p> <p>The minimum front boundary setbacks above ground floor level are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 0m for the portion of development up to 6 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>b) 3m for the portion of development above 6 <i>storeys</i> up to 12 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>c) 6m for the portion of development above 12 <i>storeys</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>C15</p> <p>Minor departures from the building setbacks are permitted at the ground level up to 6 <i>storeys</i> where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) contributes to the pedestrian orientated environment</li> <li>b) reflects the existing street character; and</li> <li>c) accommodates active uses, building entrances and/or landscaped areas.</li> </ul> <p>Departures from the building setbacks above 6 <i>storeys</i> are permitted where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) demonstrates exceptional design quality</li> <li>b) provides a strong relationship with the public domain; and</li> <li>c) avoids towers that continue to the ground.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C16</p> <p>This criterion applies to development of 8 <i>storeys</i> or more in height.</p> <p>Development applications include a visual impact assessment that addresses landscape setting of the town centre and analysis of the town centre urban form to demonstrate how the development positively contributes to the future desired character. The assessment will include a site context plan that illustrates the developments relationship to primary pedestrian routes, streetscape and nearby development.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C17</p> <p>Large blocks supporting more than one building above 12 <i>storeys</i> are required to provide a clear variety in building heights, and avoid having several buildings all at or near the maximum height limit.</p>
<b>3.3 Consolidation</b>	
<p>R18</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2 zoned blocks in section 22, 185 and section 186.</p> <p>Development of more than 2 <i>storeys</i> in each section is not permitted until all of the <i>blocks</i> in each section are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>C18</p> <p>Development above 2 <i>storeys</i> in sections 185 and 186 demonstrates that adjoining blocks within the section are capable of developing up to the maximum building height.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>R19</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area B shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development of 2 <i>storeys</i> or more is not permitted until all of the blocks are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<b>3.4 Subdivision</b>	
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C20</p> <p>Development of section 5 and/or section 11 includes subdivision of the section to retain the PRZ1 zoned land as a separate block.</p>
<b>3.5 Boundary re-alignment</b>	
<p>R21</p> <p>This rule applies to the hatched area in figure 3. Development incorporates a re-alignment of the Lathlain Street boundary to ensure a minimum 6m verge width to Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<b>3.6 Structured car parks</b>	
<p>R22</p> <p>This rule applies to structured car parks or podium car parks located along active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Structured car parks, or the podium car park component of a building, comply with all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have a maximum <i>height of building of six storeys</i></li> <li>b) have commercial development along the street frontage at ground level</li> <li>c) do not permit vehicle access along the frontage to main pedestrian areas</li> <li>d) provides an unimpeded, permanently open pedestrian path of travel from the front boundary to public car parking spaces within the development.</li> </ol>	<p>C22</p> <p>Structured car parks and podium car parks provide active frontages at street level, minimise potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and where public parking is provided, ensure public access is provided at all times.</p>
<b>3.7 Building design</b>	
<p>R23</p> <p>The minimum ground floor level floor to ceiling height is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in CZ1 and CZ2 – 3.6m</li> <li>b) in CZ3 – 4m.</li> </ol>	<p>C23</p> <p>The ground floor level of buildings is adaptable for commercial uses.</p>

Rules	Criteria
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C24</p> <p>Buildings achieve all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) contribution to the character and amenity of adjacent public spaces</li> <li>b) interesting, functional and attractive facades that contribute positively to the <i>streetscape</i> and pedestrian experience; and</li> <li>c) articulated building forms.</li> </ul>
<p>R25</p> <p>Residential development along primary or secondary active frontages shown in figure 1 or public open space areas includes balconies and/or windows to main living areas addressing each street frontage and public spaces.</p>	<p>C25</p> <p>Residential development provides opportunities for passive surveillance of public spaces and pedestrian areas.</p>
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C26</p> <p>Ground floor public entrances, including residential lobby and lift areas are clearly visible from external public spaces.</p>
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C27</p> <p>Ground floor dwellings addressing unleased territory land retain privacy and safety for the residents without obstructing opportunities for passive surveillance.</p> <p>This may be achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) elevation of private open space areas above the territory land level</li> <li>b) providing sill heights that minimise sight lines into dwellings, and/or</li> <li>c) integrating constructed or vegetative screens into the external design.</li> </ul>
<b>3.8 Setbacks to Lake Ginninderra</b>	
<p>R28</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>The minimum setback to each boundary is 0m.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.9 Section 22 setback</b>	
<p>R29</p> <p>This rule applies to section 22.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <p>a) Buildings, including basement, are setback a minimum of 20m from the Rae Street front boundary.</p> <p>b) Development within the setback area is limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) landscaping</li> <li>ii) pedestrian paths</li> <li>iii) awnings</li> <li>iv) street furniture</li> <li>v) utilities</li> </ul> <p>and remains publicly accessible at all times.</p>	<p>C29</p> <p>Development provides a substantial area of landscaped publicly accessible open space along the Rae Street front boundary.</p>
<b>3.10 Pedestrian access</b>	
<p>R30</p> <p>This rule applies to development in the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>A pedestrian easement is provided in each of the areas identified as containing a proposed new shared-use path or pedestrian link that complies with all of the following:</p> <p>a) has a minimum internal unobstructed width of 6m</p> <p>b) provides direct pedestrian access between Emu Bank street frontage and Lake Ginninderra frontage</p> <p>c) remains permanently open and publicly accessible.</p>	<p>C30</p> <p>Development provides permanently accessible unobstructed pedestrian access between Emu Bank front boundary and the lake.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C31</p> <p>Development of large sites provides a fine grain and permeable movement network that supports filtering of pedestrians through the centre, and supports the main pedestrian areas.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C32</p> <p>Commercial and or residential units located on the ground floor have individual entries directly accessible from public space.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.11 Solar access</b>	
<p>R33</p> <p>Development retains a minimum 3 hours solar access to the main daytime living areas and <i>private open space</i> of dwellings on adjoining blocks between the hours of 9am and 3pm on the winter solstice (21 June).</p>	<p>C33</p> <p>Development retains reasonable solar access to <i>dwellings</i> on adjoining <i>blocks</i> and their associated area of <i>principal private open space</i>.</p>



**Figure 5**

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.12 Active frontages</b>	
<p>R34</p> <p>For buildings located along primary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and/or shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities</li> <li>c) any small areas of walls without windows contain displays, showcases and/or public art, with a maximum of 30% blank frontage per tenancy</li> <li>d) blank facades, open structured car parks and/or loading docks are not located along the frontage.</li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>R35</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p>C35</p> <p>Development at ground floor level achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is adaptable for shops</li> <li>b) where building access is provided, direct pedestrian access at street level, and</li> <li>c) provide opportunities for views into and out of the building.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C36</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontages, building facades are not dominated by extensive lengths of blank facades, open structured carparks, loading docks, substations or other service infrastructure</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C37</p> <p>Utility infrastructure such as electricity substations and water boosters located along primary active frontages shown in figure 1 are minimised and/or screened where possible.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C38</p> <p>This criterion applies to development along primary and secondary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Commercial uses with both internal public access and external public access are designed to ensure the external frontage provides the primary public access point.</p>
<p><b>3.13 Awnings</b></p>	
<p>R39</p> <p>This rule applies to buildings fronting primary active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Awnings are provided that comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) extend the full length of the building frontage</li> <li>b) are a minimum height of 3m above finished pavement or ground level of the verge</li> <li>c) are integrated into the building design at the first floor level, and</li> <li>d) have a minimum 3m cantilever depth, except where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) opposing primary active frontages are 6m apart or less, awning depth may be reduced to ensure awnings are separated by at least 0.5m, and/or</li> <li>ii) a reduction in awning depth is required to accommodate existing infrastructure and/or street trees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>C39</p> <p>Awnings provide continuous all weather pedestrian shelter and activity in a form compatible with existing awnings.</p>
<p><b>3.14 New roads</b></p>	
<p>R40</p> <p>This rule applies to development in section 21. Redevelopment incorporates the proposed road shown in figure 2.</p>	<p>C40</p> <p>Development does not preclude the future provision of an access road connecting Walder Street to Lathlain Street.</p>

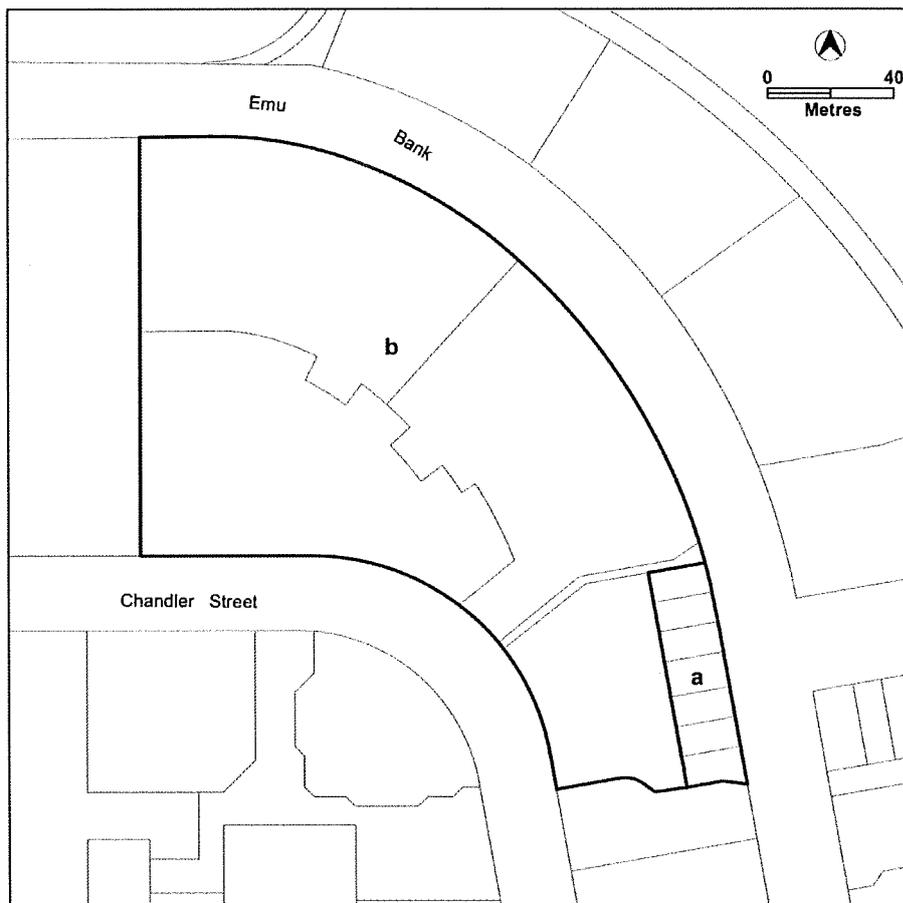
Rules	Criteria
<b>3.15 Easements</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C41</p> <p>This criterion applies to area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A right of way easement is provided along the entire eastern and southern boundaries to facilitate pedestrian access along the lake foreshore</li> <li>b) Any and all encroachments over utility easements are endorsed by the relevant utility provider; and</li> <li>c) any and all encroachments over right of way easements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) do not obstruct access to the right of way, and</li> <li>ii) are endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3.16 Parking rate – CZ6</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C42</p> <p>This criterion applies to development in CZ6. Short and/or long stay parking is located on site or within 500m of the subject site.</p>

## RC3 – Residential area 2

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC3 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

### Element 4: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>4.1 Number of storeys</b>	
<p>R43</p> <p>This rule applies to the area shown in figure 6.</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <p>a) in area 'a' – the lesser of four <i>storeys</i> and 14 metres</p> <p>b) in area 'b' – the lesser of six <i>storeys</i> and 20 metres.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>



**Figure 6** building heights

## Schedule

(See section 2(2))

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**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

*Planning and Development Act 2007*

# **Variation to the Territory Plan No 342**

**Belconnen town centre:  
Zone changes and amendments to the  
Belconnen precinct map and code**

Final variation prepared under s76 of the  
*Planning and Development Act 2007*

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# **1. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

## **1.1 Background**

The variation incorporates the key planning policy recommendations contained within the Belconnen town centre master plan approved in 2016.

While a number of recommendations from the previous 2001 Belconnen master plan have been realised, there have been a number of strategic planning documents released since then, such as the ACT Planning Strategy 2012, which encourage the consideration of urban intensification measures for the centre.

In addition to the zone changes for a number of specific sites, the review of the provisions applying across the town centre has also involved the identification of the need for additional measures in the Belconnen precinct code. This includes stipulation of maximum building heights for the town centre, identifying new development opportunities and improving pedestrian activity through the centre.

## **1.2 Summary of the Proposal**

Variation to the Territory Plan No 342 (V342) Belconnen town centre incorporates the key recommendations of the approved 2016 Belconnen town centre master plan, which provides guidance on the desired future built form and character of the town centre as it develops over the next 10 to 20 years.

The Belconnen master plan's vision for the centre identifies that the town centre's features, including the lake, open spaces, layout and nearby institutions provide unique economic and environmental advantages. The master plan aims to improve and strengthen these aspects to ensure the town centre is an attractive, accessible and desirable place for people to live, work and enjoy.

V342 rezones a number of areas within the town centre and surrounding areas, including:

- two blocks within the service trades area from service trades commercial to urban open space to retain access to existing open space areas for workers and visitors
- an area along Lathlain Street from trades and services to commercial business zone and urban open space, to promote activity west of the mall and revitalise the area; and
- a residential area on College Street from suburban core to high density residential to expand the existing area of high density residential development close to the town centre, and provide a more appropriate interface between the centre and surrounding residential land.

The variation further amends the permitted uses in selected areas within the town centre, including prohibiting residential use in the service trades area and permitting a supermarket within the commercial business zone near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection. The variation also introduces building heights to the centre up to 28 storeys in selected locations, accommodating the height of approved development within the town centre. Building setbacks and active frontage requirements in accordance with the approved master plan are incorporated to ensure interesting and safe public spaces for pedestrians. Awning requirements are also included to ensure all weather protection along the main pedestrian areas.

### **1.3 The National Capital Plan**

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* established the National Capital Authority (NCA) with two of its functions being to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan (NCP) and to keep the NCP under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary.

The NCP, which was published in the Commonwealth Gazette on 21 January 1990 is required to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance. The Planning and Land Management Act 1988 also required that the Territory Plan is not inconsistent with the NCP.

In accordance with section 10 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*, the National Capital Plan defines the planning principles and policies for Canberra and the Territory, for giving effect to the object of the NCP and sets out the general policies to be implemented throughout the Territory, including the range and nature of permitted land uses.

It also sets out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development for areas that have special significance to the National Capital known as designated areas and identifies special requirements for the development of some other areas.

### **1.4 Site Description**

The subject area is the Belconnen town centre and a section of the residential area to the south, as identified in Figure 1. This figure also identifies the sites to be rezoned under V342. The town centre lies to the south of Lake Ginninderra, an artificial lake providing stormwater management and recreation opportunities for the town centre.

The town centre is a significant employment base within the ACT, with Commonwealth departments and retail businesses being the biggest employers. The centre also contains a number of important community, education and recreation uses including Belconnen library, Lake Ginninderra College and the Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, from the single and two storey service trades area to the central business area with development ranging from four storeys up to 27 storeys.

Surrounding areas are predominately low density residential suburban to the south, west and north of the centre, and the University of Canberra within walking distance of the town centre to the east.

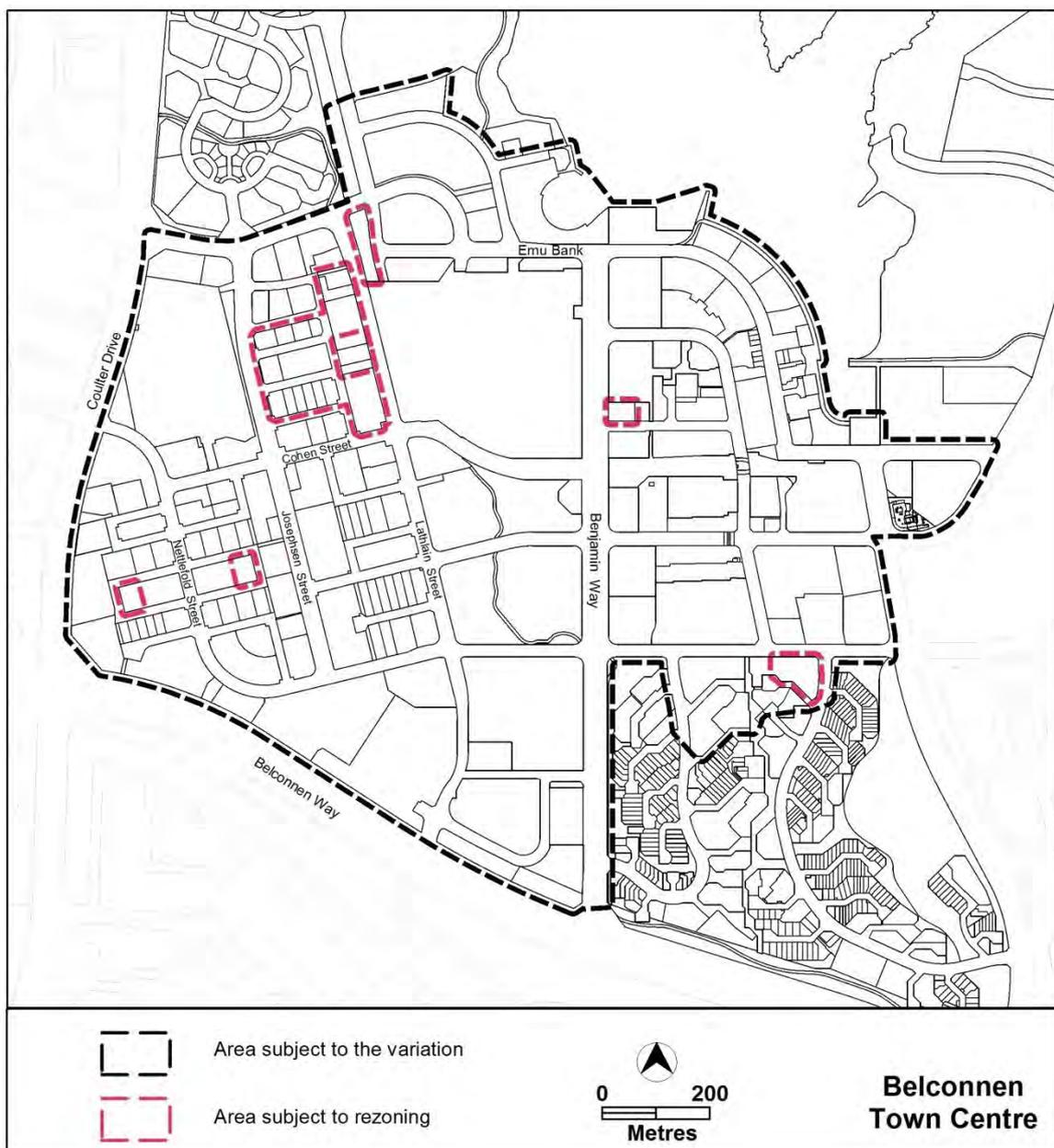


Figure 1 Site Plan

## 1.5 Current Territory Plan Provisions

The Territory Plan map for the area subject to this variation is shown in Figure 2.

The town centre is predominately zoned CZ2 commercial business zone, with a central CZ1 core zone containing the Westfield Belconnen shopping centre adjoining the lake. The town centre also contains a substantial CZ3 service trades area forming the western portion of the town centre, containing the predominant service trades uses.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, with the CZ3 zoned area predominately single and two storeys, while the CZ1 core area and CZ2 business zone ranging between six to 12 storeys, along with an approved 28 storey tower development.

Development along Lake Ginninderra within the subject area is zoned CZ6 leisure and accommodation zone, with single and two storey buildings, with RZ5 High Density Residential zoned land behind containing a number of multi storey unit complexes around four storeys tall.

The town centre is subject to the Commercial Zone development code and the Belconnen precinct map and code. The adjoining residential areas are subject to the Residential Zones Development code, Single Dwelling Housing development code and the Multi Unit Housing development code. The community facility land is subject to the Community Facility Zones development code, with the public open space subject to the Parks and Recreation Zone development code. The general codes may also apply.

It should be noted that Belconnen sections 43, 44, 45(part), 49 and 50, while being identified as being subject to the Territory Plan provisions, are 'National Land', and are subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan and associated Development Control Plans. In this regard, the Territory Plan provisions do not apply to these sites.

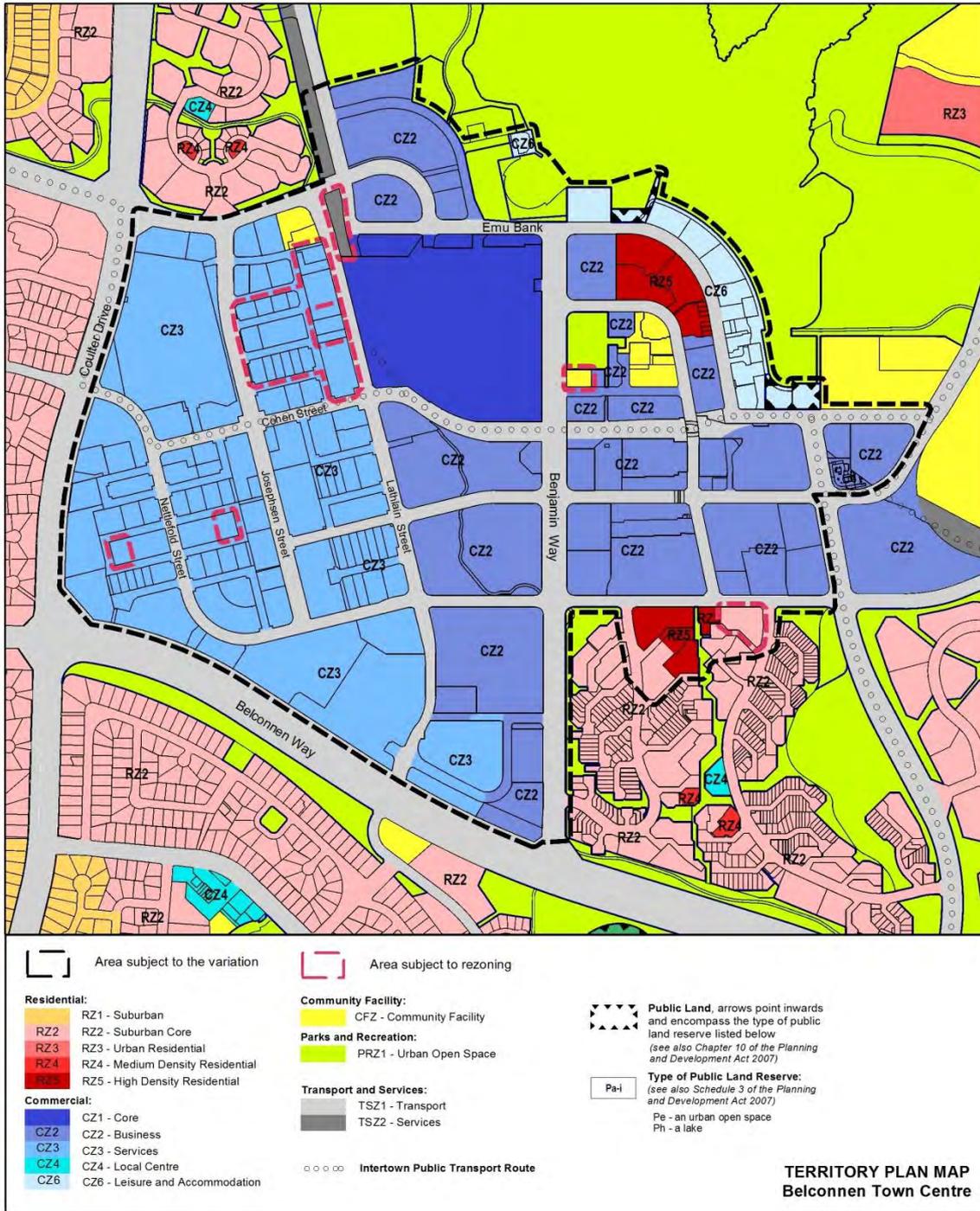


Figure 2 Territory Plan Zones Map

## 1.6 Changes to the Territory Plan

Detailed changes to the Territory Plan are noted in section 2 of this document.

## 1.7 Consultation on the Draft Variation

Draft Variation No 342 (DV342) was released for public comment between 4 May 2018 and 22 June 2018. A consultation notice under section 63 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (P&D Act) was published on the ACT Legislation Register on 4 May 2018.

A total of twenty one written submissions were received, which included 9 submissions from Belconnen residents, 8 submissions from commercial interests, or groups representing commercial interests, within the centre, 3 submissions from community organisations and one submissions from a cycling advocate.

Main issues raised by submitters included:

- Concern with the proposed building heights, with the majority of submissions seeking additional building heights over one or more sites, and several submissions concerned with the proposed 16 storey building height permitted on the corner of Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way
- Concern with the rezoning of the community facility zoned land adjacent to Margaret Timpson Park, block 41 section 54 to commercial business zone, and potential future use of the site
- Concern with the proposed rezoning of the CZ3 services area west of Lathlain Street through potential impacts of development and potential loss of a future employment area
- Concern with the two storey restriction and prohibition on residential uses in the CZ3 services area; and
- Comments around the provision permitting a supermarket along the northern end of Eastern Valley Way, outside of the central commercial area, with both support and objection to the proposal.

The above issues were considered and are detailed in a report on consultation, which is available at [www.act.gov.au/recommendedvariations](http://www.act.gov.au/recommendedvariations). Changes to the draft variation 342 were informed by the issues raised in the public submissions.

## 2. VARIATION

### 2.1 Variation to the Territory Plan map

The Territory Plan map is varied as indicated in Figure 3.

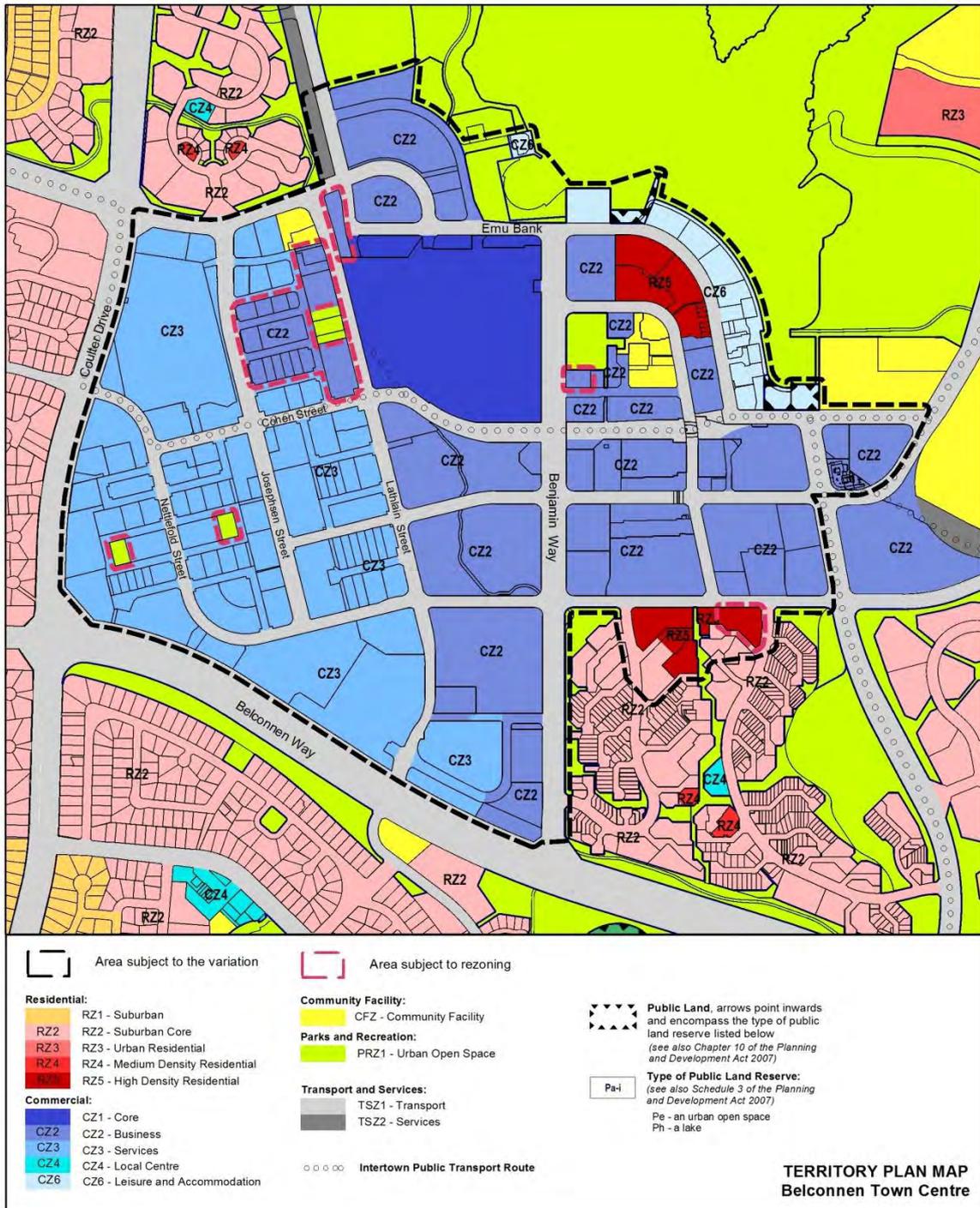


Figure 3: Areas subject to rezoning

## 2.2 Variation to the Territory Plan

The Territory Plan written statement is varied in all of the following ways:

### Variation to the Belconnen precinct map and code

<b>10</b> <b>Precinct maps and codes, Belconnen precinct map and code</b>
---

*substitute the following with the nominated attachment:*

Belconnen precinct map and development tables with **Attachment A**

RC1 – Residential area 1, RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre and RC3 – Residential area 2 with **Attachment B**

## Interpretation service

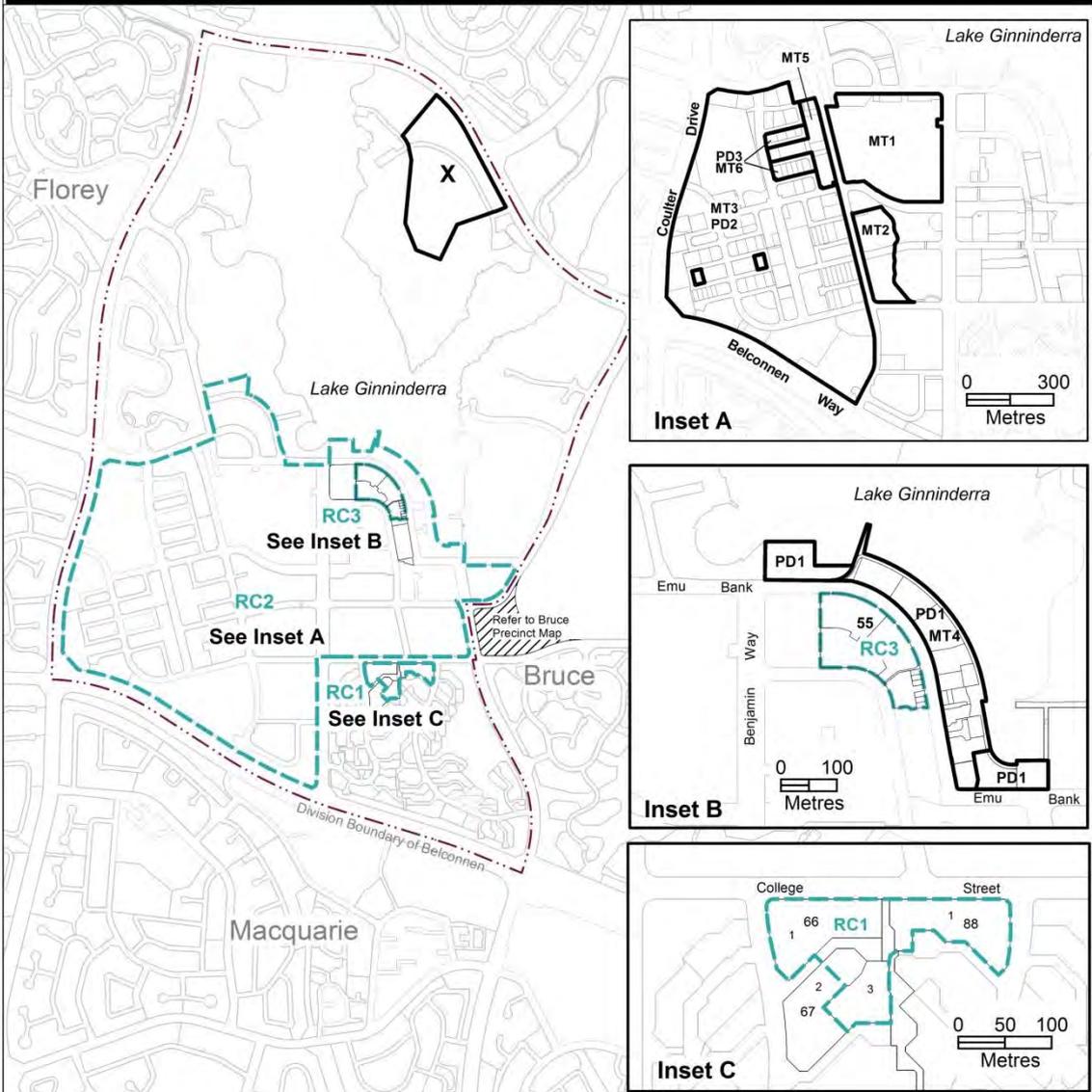
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ARABIC	: إذا احتجت لمساعدة في الترجمة الشفوية ، إتصل برقم الهاتف :
CHINESE	如果你需要传译员的帮助，请打电话：
CROATIAN	Ako trebate pomoć tumača telefonirajte:
GREEK	Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα τηλεφωνήσετε στο
ITALIAN	Se avete bisogno di un interprete, telefonate al numero:
MALTESE	Jekk għandek bżonn l-għajnuna t'interpretu, çempel:
PERSIAN	: اگر به ترجمه شفاهی احتیاج دارید به این شماره تلفن کنید:
PORTUGUESE	Se você precisar da ajuda de um intérprete, telefone:
SERBIAN	Ako vam je potrebna pomoć prevodioca telefonirajte:
SPANISH	Si necesita la asistencia de un intérprete, llame al:
TURKISH	Tercümana ihtiyacınız varsa lütfen telefon ediniz:
VIETNAMESE	Nếu bạn cần một người thông-ngôn hãy gọi điện-thoại:

### TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE

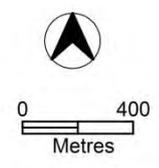
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# Belconnen Precinct Map



- PD<sub>n</sub>** Additional prohibited development applies see Table 1
- MT<sub>n</sub>** Additional merit track development applies see Table 2
- RC<sub>n</sub>** Additional rules and criteria apply see Belconnen Precinct Code
- X** Urban open space - not public land
-  Refer to Bruce Precinct Map



# Assessment Tracks

The following tables identify the additional prohibited development and additional merit track development for blocks and parcels shown in the Belconnen Precinct Map (identified as PDn or MTn). Development that is exempt from requiring development approval, other prohibited development and the minimum assessment track applicable to each development proposal is set out in the relevant zone development table.

The following tables constitute part of the relevant zone development table.

**Table 1 – Additional prohibited development**

Additional prohibited development		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
PD1	CZ6	caravan park / camping ground drive in cinema group or organised camp overnight camping area
PD2	CZ3	RESIDENTIAL USE
PD3	CZ2	RESIDENTIAL USE

**Table 2 – Additional merit track development**

Additional merit track development that may be approved subject to assessment		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
MT1	CZ1	produce market
MT2	CZ2	service station
MT3	CZ3	corrections facility
MT4	CZ6	office RESIDENTIAL USE
MT5	CZ2	Industrial trades light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse
MT6	CZ2	light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse

add definitions to Belconnen precinct code:

**Active Frontage:** ground level building facades adjoining public spaces that encourage pedestrian interaction through display windows, public entrances, shop fronts and the like.

**Podium:** refers to the lower storeys of a building addressing public space, designed to present a human scale to the public space. Upper floor levels are set back to reduce apparent bulk and scale.

## RC1 – Residential area 1

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC1 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

### Element 1: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>1.1 Number of storeys</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	C1 Buildings are predominately the lesser of three <i>storeys</i> and 11 metres, with a maximum <i>height of building</i> the lesser of six <i>storeys</i> and 21 metres where development addresses College Street.
<b>1.2 Solar access</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	C2 Development does not significantly impact on solar access to main daytime living areas and areas of principal private open space of dwellings on adjacent blocks.

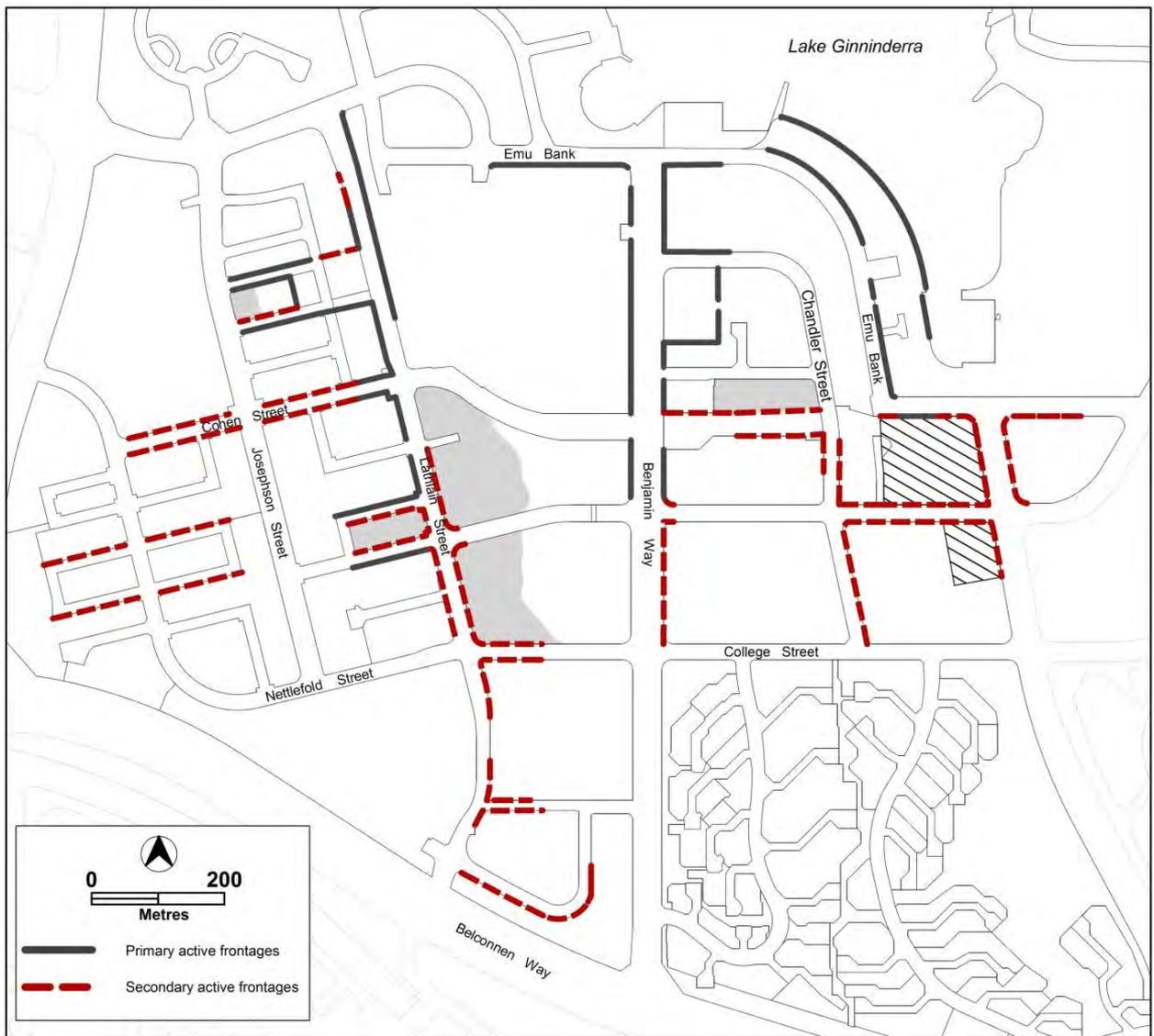
## RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre

This part applies to area RC2 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map. RC2 includes the larger part of the Belconnen Town Centre. See also the Bruce Precinct Code which contains part of the Belconnen Town Centre.

### Element 2: Use

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.1 Ground floor uses</b>	
<p>R3</p> <p>This rule applies to sites in CZ1 with boundaries to primary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Only the following uses are permitted along the primary active frontage at the ground floor level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>business agency</i></li> <li>b) <i>club</i></li> <li>c) <i>community activity centre</i></li> <li>d) <i>drink establishment</i></li> <li>e) <i>financial establishment</i></li> <li>f) <i>hotel</i></li> <li>g) <i>indoor entertainment facility</i></li> <li>h) <i>indoor recreation facility</i></li> <li>i) <i>public agency</i></li> <li>j) <i>restaurant</i></li> <li>k) <i>SHOP.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C4</p> <p>This criterion applies to sites in CZ2 and CZ6 with boundaries to primary active frontage shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Buildings incorporate uses on the ground floor that generate activity in the public space.</p>
<b>2.2 SHOP – floor area limit</b>	
<p>R5</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2.</p> <p>The maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of any <i>SHOP</i> is 200m<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>In the hatched area shown in figure 1, the maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of supermarket is 1,500m<sup>2</sup> per section.</p>	<p>C5</p> <p><i>SHOPS</i> are limited to a scale appropriate to providing convenient shopping and personal services for the local workforce and residents.</p> <p>This criterion does not apply to supermarket in the hatched area in figure 1.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.3 Office and residential use</b>	
<p>R6</p> <p>This rule applies to section 65 in CZ6.</p> <p>The following uses are not permitted on the ground floor level:</p> <p>a) <i>office</i></p> <p>b) <i>RESIDENTIAL USE.</i></p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

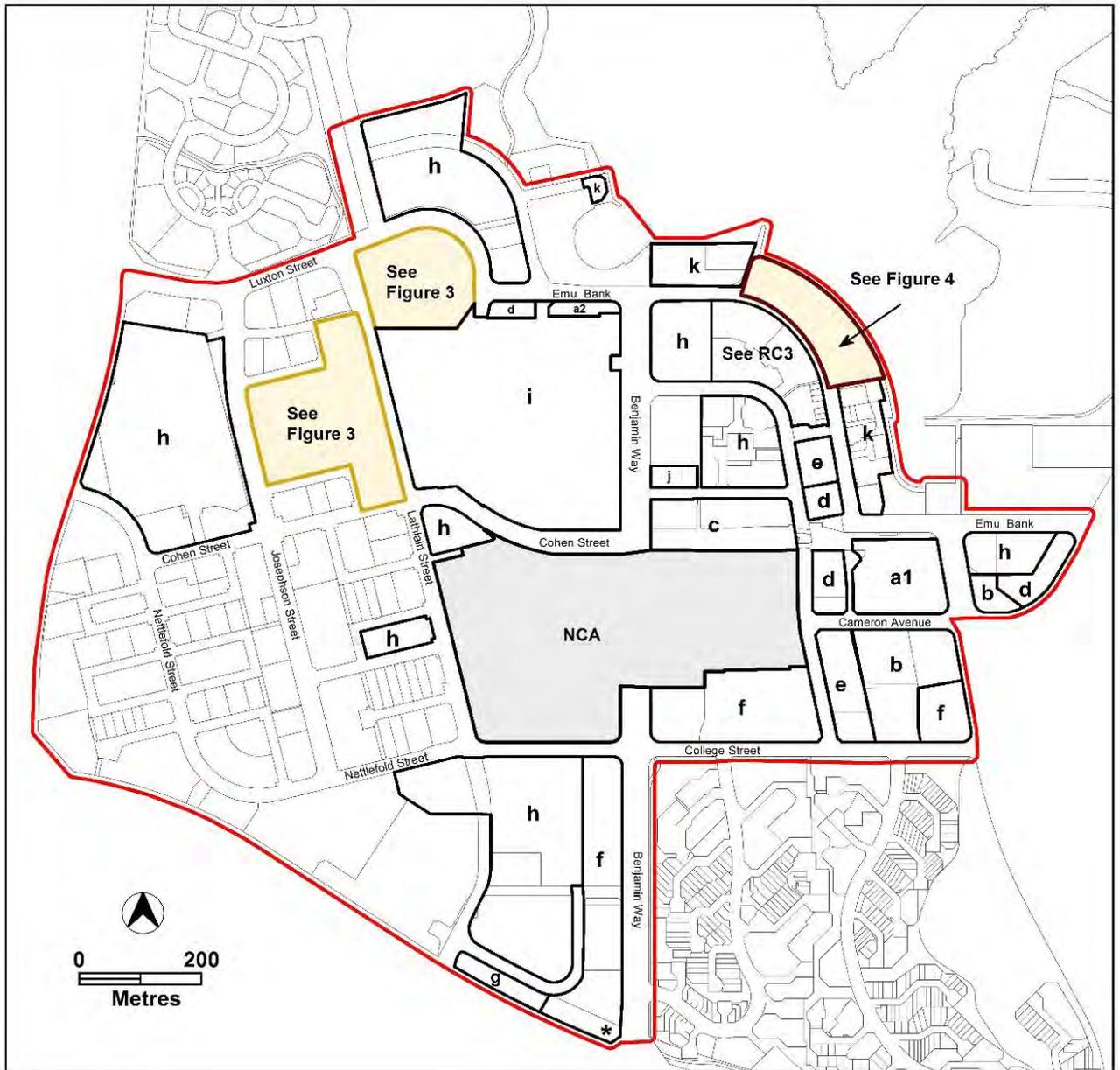


**Figure 1 Active frontages, car parking areas and permitted supermarket area in CZ2**

Rules	Criteria
<p>R7</p> <p>This rule applies to section 23 and 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted on the ground and/or first level along Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>R8</p> <p>This rule applies to section 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted within 100m of block 23 section 21.</p>	<p>C8</p> <p>Development applications for development that includes residential use are submitted with written endorsement from the Environment Protection Authority.</p>
<p><b>2.4 Service station</b></p>	
<p>R9</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development of a service station, where permitted by the Belconnen precinct map, is only permitted in association with a structured <i>car park</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p><b>2.5 Development on nominated car parking areas</b></p>	
<p>R10</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the existing number of car parking spaces is retained on the site and made available for public use at all times; and</li> <li>b) provides car parking that is generated by the development on site in accordance with the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i> in addition to the spaces required by item a).</li> </ul>	<p>C10</p> <p>Development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) any additional parking provision requirements (under the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i>) for the development; and</li> <li>b) makes a substantial contribution to the long term publicly accessible parking supply at the town centre as endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul>

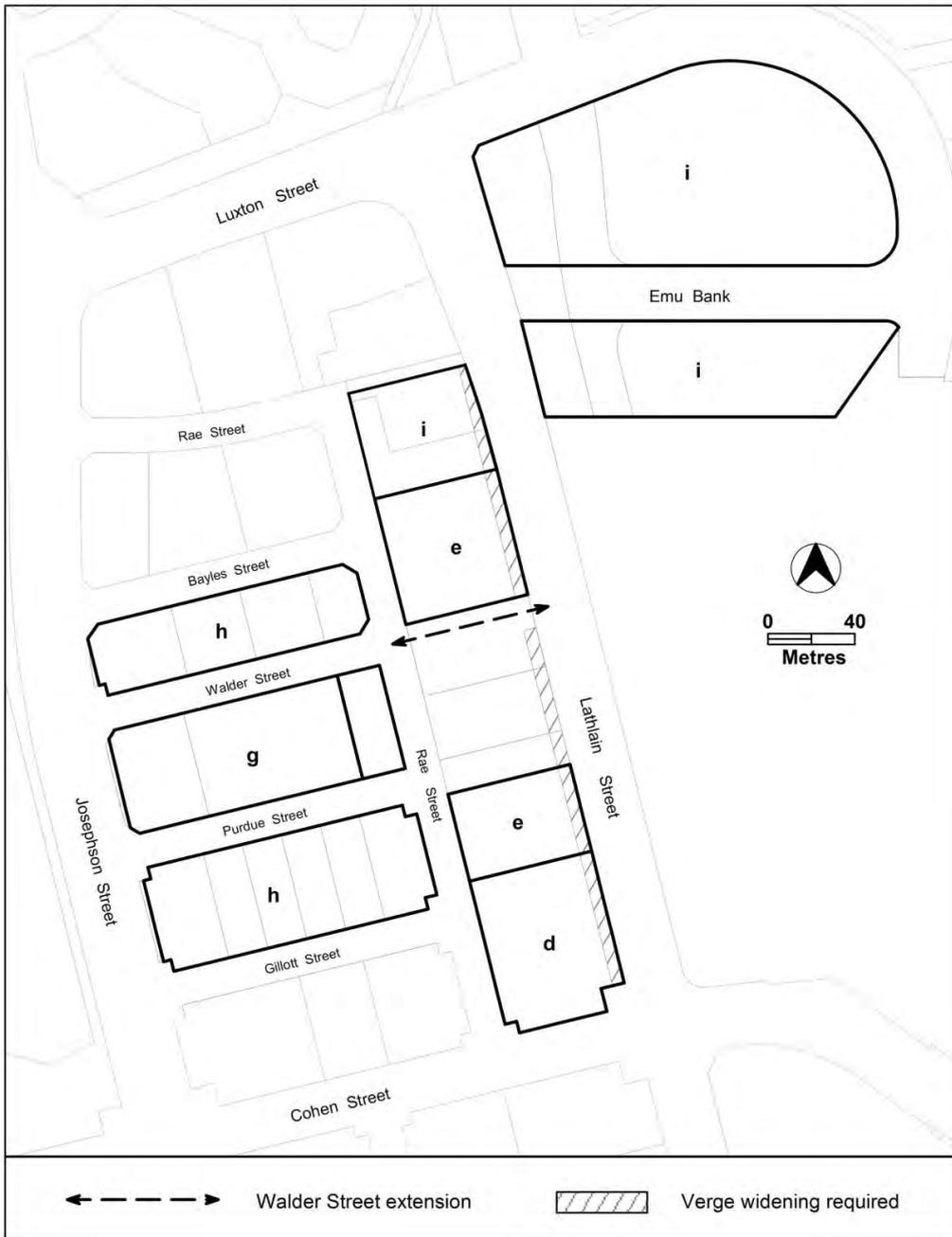
### Element 3: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.1 Building heights</b>	
<p>R11</p> <p>This rule applies to areas shown in figure 2 and figure 3.</p> <p>Maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) for area 'a1': the lesser of 28 storeys and 96m</li> <li>b) for area 'a2': the lesser of 25 storeys and 80m</li> <li>c) for area 'b': the lesser of 23 storeys and 76m</li> <li>d) for area 'c': the lesser of 20 storeys and 66m</li> <li>e) for area 'd': the lesser of 18 storeys and 60m</li> <li>f) for area 'e': the lesser of 12 storeys and 42m</li> <li>g) for area 'f': the lesser of 10 storeys and 35m</li> <li>h) for area 'g': the lesser of 8 storeys and 29m</li> <li>i) for area 'h': the lesser of 6 storeys and 23m</li> <li>j) for area 'i': the lesser of 4 storeys and 16m</li> <li>k) for area 'j': the lesser of 3 storeys and 12m</li> <li>l) for area 'NCA': RL613.7</li> <li>m) for area k: the lesser of 2 storeys and 9m.</li> </ul> <p>Plant room set back a minimum of 3m from the building facade of the floor immediately below is not included in the number of <i>storeys</i>.</p> <p>Plant room screening and other non gross floor area rooftop architectural features are not included in building height.</p> <p>Note: Maximum building heights that are not nominated in Figure 2 are as per the relevant zone development code requirements.</p>	<p>C11</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> in areas 'b' and 'c' may be increased by an additional four <i>storeys</i> or twelve metres, whichever is the lesser, where development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) where a block contains more than one taller building element, there is clear difference in height between elements</li> <li>b) the development achieves a high quality design outcome; and</li> <li>c) development is close to public transport stops and/or stations.</li> </ul>



**Figure 2 Building heights**

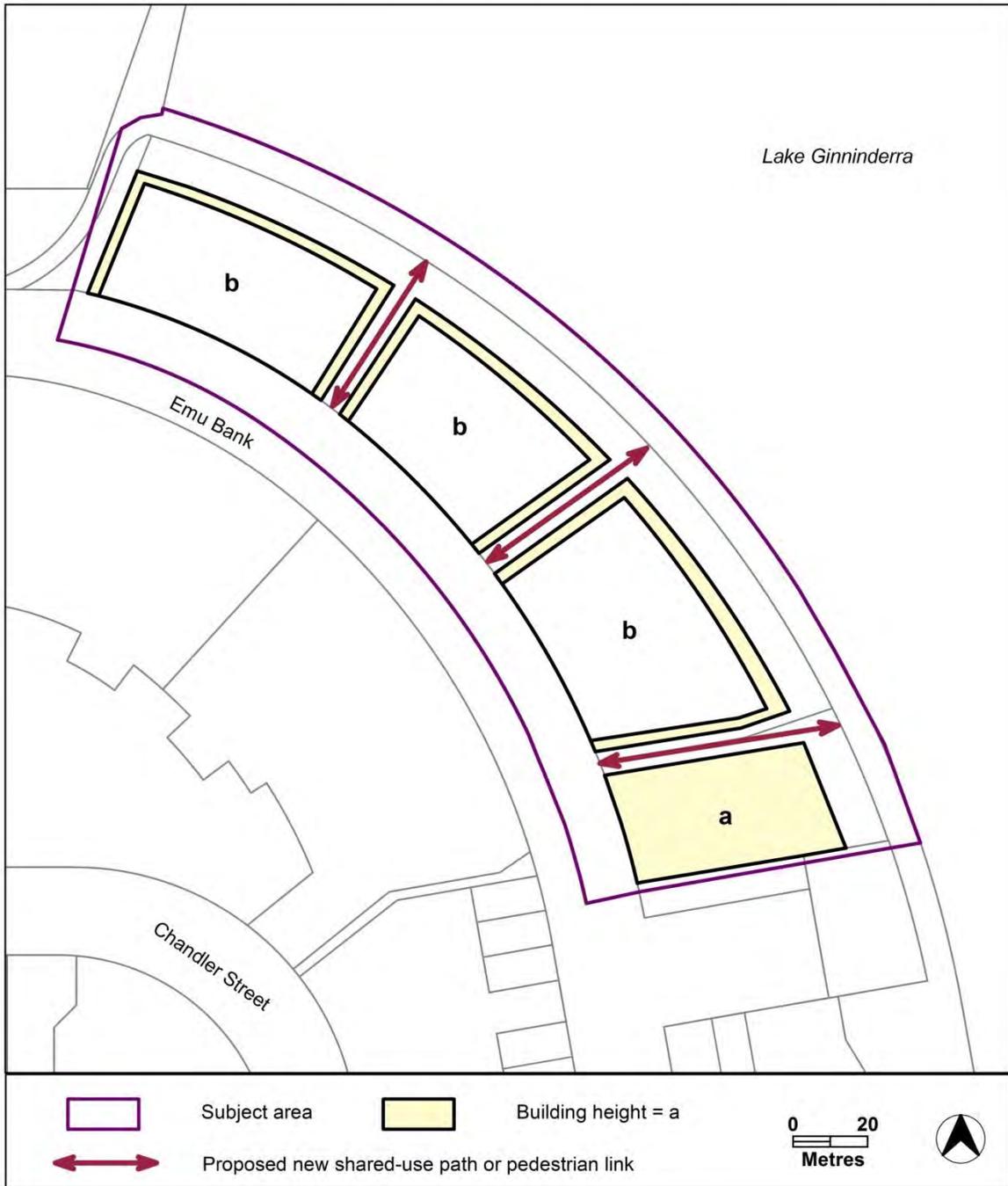
Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C12</p> <p>This criterion applies to development in the area indicated by an asterisk shown in figure 2, at the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way.</p> <p>One higher building element up to the lesser of 16 storeys and 55m may be permitted where development suitably addresses the adjoining Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way intersection.</p>



**Figure 3 Lathlain Street precinct**

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C13</p> <p>This criterion applies to area 'i' in section 52 and section 151, shown in figure 3.</p> <p>Development up to the lesser of 12 <i>storeys</i> or 42m, measured from the Emu Bank frontage, is permitted subject to the preparation of a master plan for the site that achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank.</li> <li>b) Opportunities for the lower levels of the block to be used for a structured carpark.</li> <li>c) vehicle access to be provided from Joynton Smith Drive or Emu Bank only</li> <li>d) Enable the existing road (Joynton Smith Drive) and proposed cycle / pedestrian path to continue under the development.</li> <li>e) Any podium levels along Lathlain Street are limited to a maximum two storey height limit to Lathlain Street.</li> </ul>
<p>R14</p> <p>This rule applies to the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The maximum <i>height of building</i> is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) in area 'a' – the lesser of two <i>storeys</i> and 9 metres</li> <li>ii) in area 'b' – the lesser of four <i>storeys</i> and 15 metres</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) The minimum building setback to Ginninderra Lake boundary, including basements, is 10m</li> <li>c) The four storey elements located between Emu Bank and Lake Ginninderra comply with all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) the total combined area of all of the four storey elements within a block does not exceed 40% of the block area</li> <li>ii) each four storey element is separated from the pedestrian connections shown in figure 4 and each side boundary by a minimum of 4m</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
iii) each four storey element has a maximum width of 16m when viewed from Emu Bank front boundary, and iv) each four storey element has a minimum separation from any other four storey element of 10m.	



**Figure 4** Emu Bank development

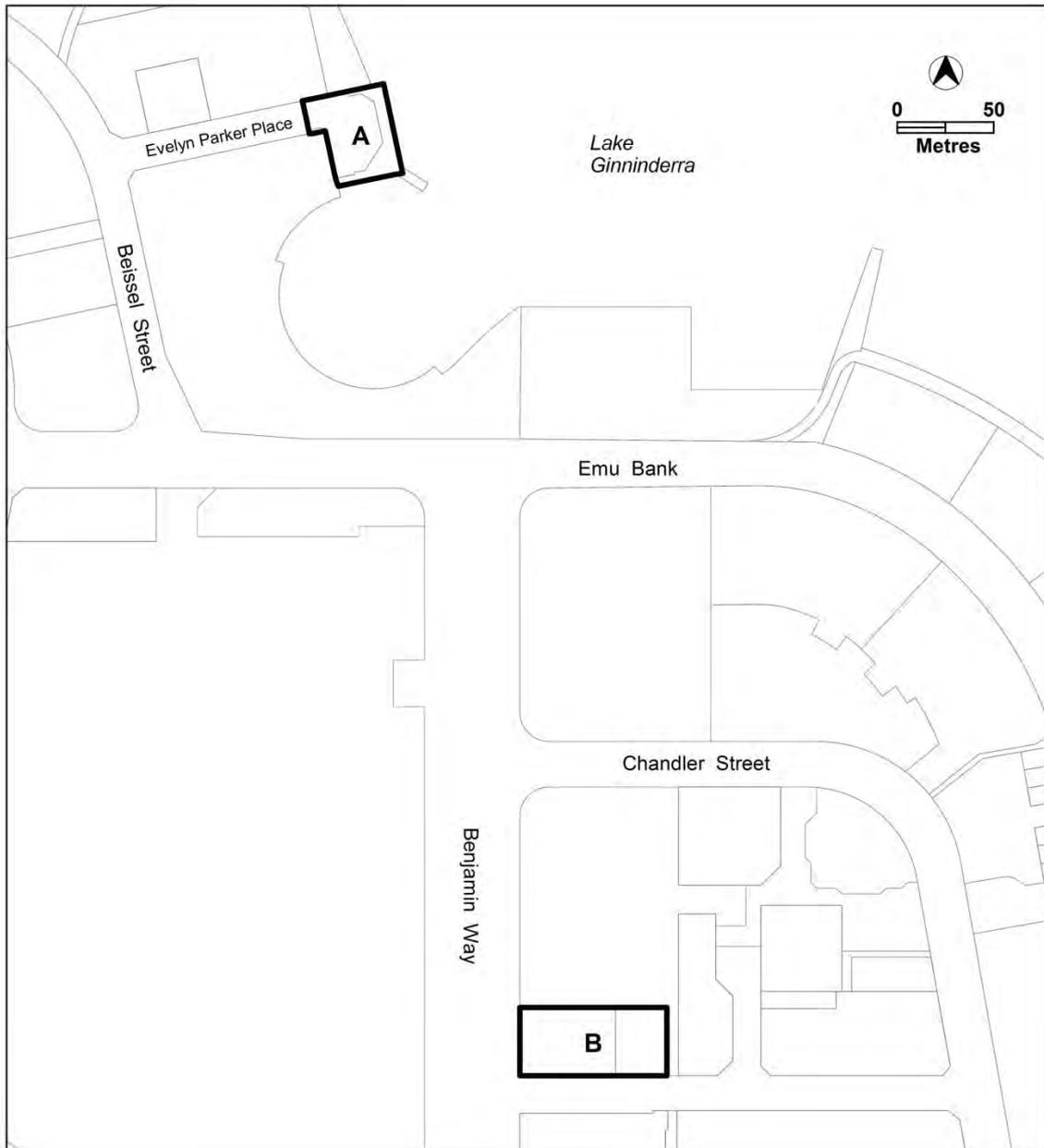
Rules	Criteria
<b>3.2 Built form</b>	
<p>R15</p> <p>This rule applies to development of 12 <i>storeys</i> or more.</p> <p>Buildings are built to the <i>front boundary</i> at the ground floor level.</p> <p>The minimum front boundary setbacks above ground floor level are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 0m for the portion of development up to 6 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>b) 3m for the portion of development above 6 <i>storeys</i> up to 12 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>c) 6m for the portion of development above 12 <i>storeys</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>C15</p> <p>Minor departures from the building setbacks are permitted at the ground level up to 6 <i>storeys</i> where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) contributes to the pedestrian orientated environment</li> <li>b) reflects the existing street character; and</li> <li>c) accommodates active uses, building entrances and/or landscaped areas.</li> </ul> <p>Departures from the building setbacks above 6 <i>storeys</i> are permitted where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) demonstrates exceptional design quality</li> <li>b) provides a strong relationship with the public domain; and</li> <li>c) avoids towers that continue to the ground.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C16</p> <p>This criterion applies to development of 8 <i>storeys</i> or more in height.</p> <p>Development applications include a visual impact assessment that addresses landscape setting of the town centre and analysis of the town centre urban form to demonstrate how the development positively contributes to the future desired character. The assessment will include a site context plan that illustrates the developments relationship to primary pedestrian routes, streetscape and nearby development.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C17</p> <p>Large blocks supporting more than one building above 12 <i>storeys</i> are required to provide a clear variety in building heights, and avoid having several buildings all at or near the maximum height limit.</p>
<b>3.3 Consolidation</b>	
<p>R18</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2 zoned blocks in section 22, 185 and section 186.</p> <p>Development of more than 2 <i>storeys</i> in each section is not permitted until all of the <i>blocks</i> in each section are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>C18</p> <p>Development above 2 <i>storeys</i> in sections 185 and 186 demonstrates that adjoining blocks within the section are capable of developing up to the maximum building height.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>R19</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area B shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development of 2 <i>storeys</i> or more is not permitted until all of the blocks are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p><b>3.4 Subdivision</b></p>	
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C20</p> <p>Development of section 5 and/or section 11 includes subdivision of the section to retain the PRZ1 zoned land as a separate block.</p>
<p><b>3.5 Boundary re-alignment</b></p>	
<p>R21</p> <p>This rule applies to the hatched area in figure 3. Development incorporates a re-alignment of the Lathlain Street boundary to ensure a minimum 6m verge width to Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p><b>3.6 Structured car parks</b></p>	
<p>R22</p> <p>This rule applies to structured car parks or podium car parks located along active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Structured car parks, or the podium car park component of a building, comply with all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have a maximum <i>height of building</i> of six <i>storeys</i></li> <li>b) have commercial development along the street frontage at ground level</li> <li>c) do not permit vehicle access along the frontage to main pedestrian areas</li> <li>d) provides an unimpeded, permanently open pedestrian path of travel from the front boundary to public car parking spaces within the development.</li> </ol>	<p>C22</p> <p>Structured car parks and podium car parks provide active frontages at street level, minimise potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and where public parking is provided, ensure public access is provided at all times.</p>
<p><b>3.7 Building design</b></p>	
<p>R23</p> <p>The minimum ground floor level floor to ceiling height is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in CZ1 and CZ2 – 3.6m</li> <li>b) in CZ3 – 4m.</li> </ol>	<p>C23</p> <p>The ground floor level of buildings is adaptable for commercial uses.</p>

Rules	Criteria
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C24</p> <p>Buildings achieve all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) contribution to the character and amenity of adjacent public spaces</li> <li>b) interesting, functional and attractive facades that contribute positively to the <i>streetscape</i> and pedestrian experience; and</li> <li>c) articulated building forms.</li> </ul>
<p>R25</p> <p>Residential development along primary or secondary active frontages shown in figure 1 or public open space areas includes balconies and/or windows to main living areas addressing each street frontage and public spaces.</p>	<p>C25</p> <p>Residential development provides opportunities for passive surveillance of public spaces and pedestrian areas.</p>
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C26</p> <p>Ground floor public entrances, including residential lobby and lift areas are clearly visible from external public spaces.</p>
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C27</p> <p>Ground floor dwellings addressing unleased territory land retain privacy and safety for the residents without obstructing opportunities for passive surveillance.</p> <p>This may be achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) elevation of private open space areas above the territory land level</li> <li>b) providing sill heights that minimise sight lines into dwellings, and/or</li> <li>c) integrating constructed or vegetative screens into the external design.</li> </ul>
<b>3.8 Setbacks to Lake Ginninderra</b>	
<p>R28</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>The minimum setback to each boundary is 0m.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.9 Section 22 setback</b>	
<p>R29</p> <p>This rule applies to section 22.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Buildings, including basement, are setback a minimum of 20m from the Rae Street front boundary.</li> <li>b) Development within the setback area is limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) landscaping</li> <li>ii) pedestrian paths</li> <li>iii) awnings</li> <li>iv) street furniture</li> <li>v) utilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>and remains publicly accessible at all times.</p>	<p>C29</p> <p>Development provides a substantial area of landscaped publicly accessible open space along the Rae Street front boundary.</p>
<b>3.10 Pedestrian access</b>	
<p>R30</p> <p>This rule applies to development in the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>A pedestrian easement is provided in each of the areas identified as containing a proposed new shared-use path or pedestrian link that complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) has a minimum internal unobstructed width of 6m</li> <li>b) provides direct pedestrian access between Emu Bank street frontage and Lake Ginninderra frontage</li> <li>c) remains permanently open and publicly accessible.</li> </ul>	<p>C30</p> <p>Development provides permanently accessible unobstructed pedestrian access between Emu Bank front boundary and the lake.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C31</p> <p>Development of large sites provides a fine grain and permeable movement network that supports filtering of pedestrians through the centre, and supports the main pedestrian areas.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C32</p> <p>Commercial and or residential units located on the ground floor have individual entries directly accessible from public space.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.11 Solar access</b>	
<p>R33 Development retains a minimum 3 hours solar access to the main daytime living areas and <i>private open space</i> of <i>dwelling</i>s on adjoining blocks between the hours of 9am and 3pm on the winter solstice (21 June).</p>	<p>C33 Development retains reasonable solar access to <i>dwelling</i>s on adjoining <i>blocks</i> and their associated area of <i>principal private open space</i>.</p>



**Figure 5**

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.12 Active frontages</b>	
<p>R34</p> <p>For buildings located along primary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and/or shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities</li> <li>c) any small areas of walls without windows contain displays, showcases and/or public art, with a maximum of 30% blank frontage per tenancy</li> <li>d) blank facades, open structured car parks and/or loading docks are not located along the frontage.</li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>R35</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p>C35</p> <p>Development at ground floor level achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is adaptable for shops</li> <li>b) where building access is provided, direct pedestrian access at street level, and</li> <li>c) provide opportunities for views into and out of the building.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C36</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontages, building facades are not dominated by extensive lengths of blank facades, open structured carparks, loading docks, substations or other service infrastructure</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C37</p> <p>Utility infrastructure such as electricity substations and water boosters located along primary active frontages shown in figure 1 are minimised and/or screened where possible.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C38</p> <p>This criterion applies to development along primary and secondary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Commercial uses with both internal public access and external public access are designed to ensure the external frontage provides the primary public access point.</p>
<p><b>3.13 Awnings</b></p>	
<p>R39</p> <p>This rule applies to buildings fronting primary active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Awnings are provided that comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) extend the full length of the building frontage</li> <li>b) are a minimum height of 3m above finished pavement or ground level of the verge</li> <li>c) are integrated into the building design at the first floor level, and</li> <li>d) have a minimum 3m cantilever depth, except where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) opposing primary active frontages are 6m apart or less, awning depth may be reduced to ensure awnings are separated by at least 0.5m, and/or</li> <li>ii) a reduction in awning depth is required to accommodate existing infrastructure and/or street trees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>C39</p> <p>Awnings provide continuous all weather pedestrian shelter and activity in a form compatible with existing awnings.</p>
<p><b>3.14 New roads</b></p>	
<p>R40</p> <p>This rule applies to development in section 21.</p> <p>Redevelopment incorporates the proposed road shown in figure 2.</p>	<p>C40</p> <p>Development does not preclude the future provision of an access road connecting Walder Street to Lathlain Street.</p>

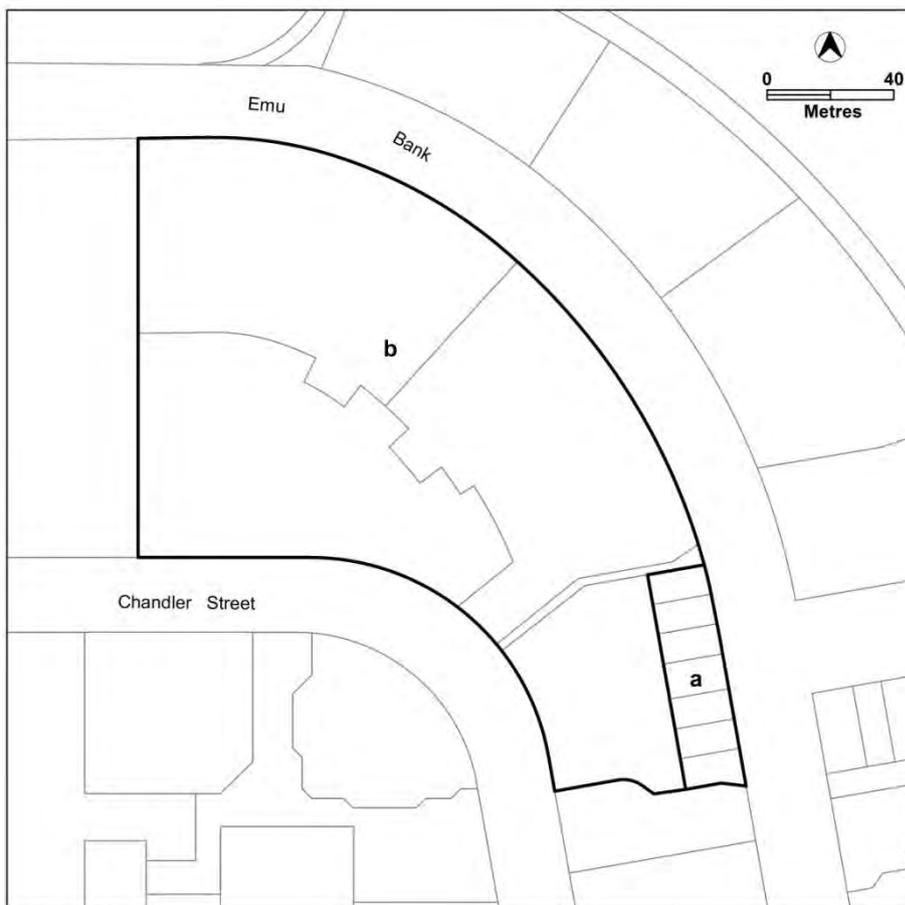
Rules	Criteria
<b>3.15 Easements</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C41</p> <p>This criterion applies to area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A right of way easement is provided along the entire eastern and southern boundaries to facilitate pedestrian access along the lake foreshore</li> <li>b) Any and all encroachments over utility easements are endorsed by the relevant utility provider; and</li> <li>c) any and all encroachments over right of way easements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) do not obstruct access to the right of way, and</li> <li>ii) are endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3.16 Parking rate – CZ6</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C42</p> <p>This criterion applies to development in CZ6. Short and/or long stay parking is located on site or within 500m of the subject site.</p>

## RC3 – Residential area 2

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC3 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

### Element 4: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>4.1 Number of storeys</b>	
<p>R43</p> <p>This rule applies to the area shown in figure 6.</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in area 'a' – the lesser of four <i>storeys</i> and 14 metres</li> <li>b) in area 'b' – the lesser of six <i>storeys</i> and 20 metres.</li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>



**Figure 6** building heights



**ACT**  
Government

# BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE

## MASTER PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2016





## **Environment and Planning Directorate**

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# DEFINITIONS

**Active frontages** occur when people can interact between the buildings and the streets and public spaces, such as shop fronts, building entrances and transparent building facades.

**Active travel** is travel that involves physical activity such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair or other personal mobility device, whether for general transport or recreational purposes. Use of public transport generally includes an active travel component.

**Active uses** are uses that generate activity at the ground floor. Active uses include cafes, shop fronts and building entrances.

**Blocks and sections** are how areas of land are identified in the ACT. The city is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks. The Territory Plan zoning determines what activities/uses can occur on the blocks. Blocks are usually leased to one entity

**Built form** relates to the buildings, associated structures and surrounding public spaces.

**GFA** or Gross Floor Area means the sum of the area of all floors of the building, measured from the external faces of the exterior walls.

**Human scale** reflects a sympathetic proportional relationship between the built form and human dimensions where people are not overwhelmed by the built form. Human scale contributes to a person's perception of buildings or other features in the public domain. It is typically referred to when discussing the bulk and scale of development.

**Land use zones** are allocated by the Territory Plan to all land within the ACT. They define what land uses can or cannot occur on a piece of land. See more about the zoning system at [www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27)

**Mixed-use development** involves a mix of complementary land uses, such as residential, small offices or convenience stores. This can include horizontal and vertical mixes.

**Podium or building base** refers to the lower storeys of a building which includes active frontages. It is designed to present an appropriate human scale to the streets and public spaces. Podiums can be used to transition down to lower-scale buildings, and minimise the impact of parking and servicing areas.

**Public domain** refers to spaces that belong to or are available to the public, including parks, streets and other public spaces such as plazas, courtyards and open spaces.

**Shared-use path** is a path that is restricted to non-motorised transport, with the exception of motorised wheelchairs and power assisted pedal cycles. Both pedestrians and cyclists share these paths.

**Shared zone** (or shared spaces) is a road or place where the road space is shared safely by vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. A shared zone may include the removal of traffic lights, pedestrian barriers, road markings and kerbs to give equal priority to all users and require negotiation between users.

**Solar access** is the ability of a building or public space to receive sunlight without obstruction from other buildings.

**Spatial framework** sets out the long term structure of the centre. It shows how land use, public domain and connections could be arranged and delivered.

**Surveillance** (or passive surveillance) is the 'eyes on the street' from residents and people going about their daily activities to create a sense of safety on streets and public spaces.

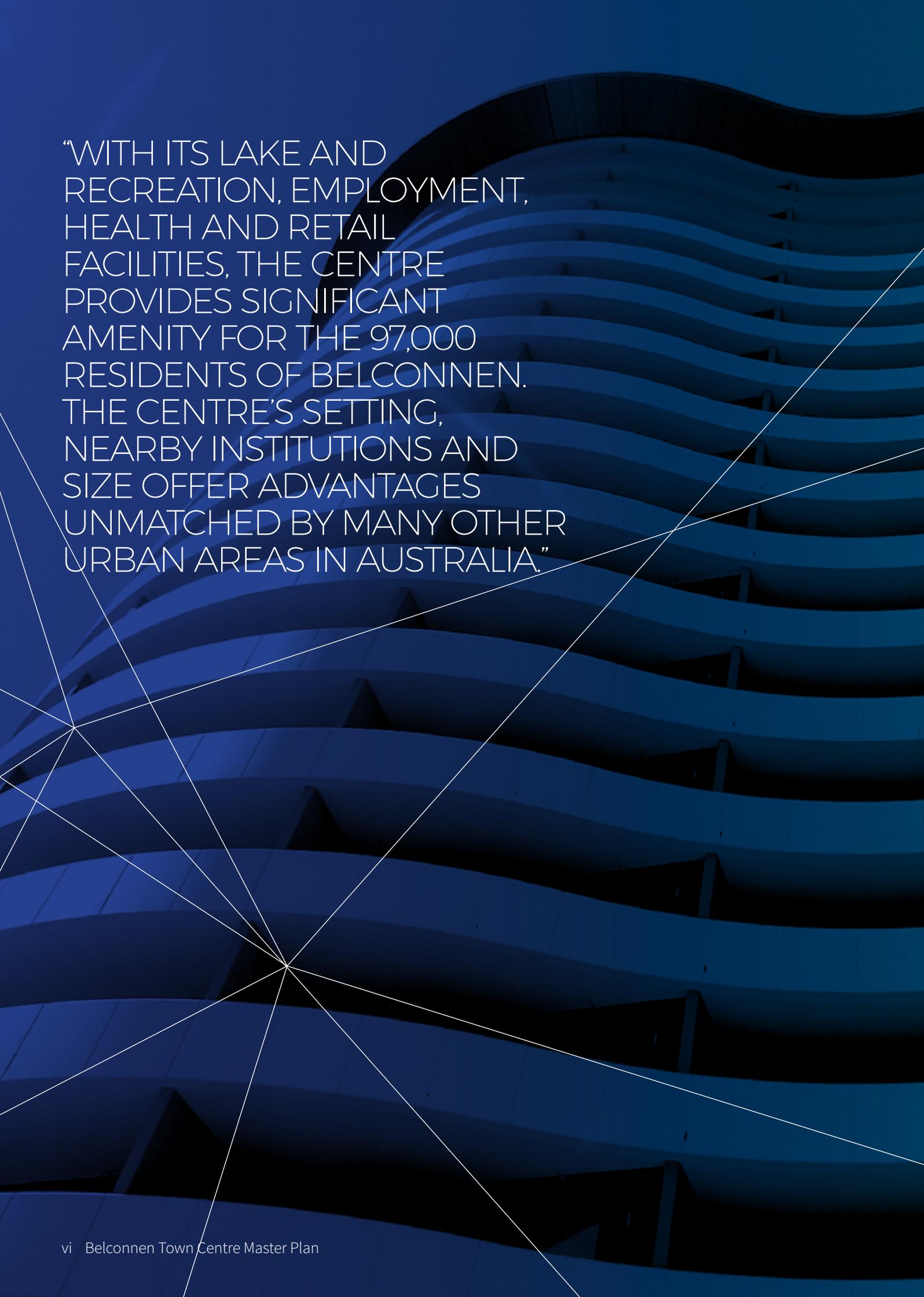
**Transit-oriented development** is the creation of compact, walkable communities located around high quality public transit systems.

**Urban grain** is the street pattern, size and distribution of blocks, scale of buildings and their relationship to each other. Urban grain includes the hierarchy of street, the pedestrian connections, public places and linkages to public transport.

**Visual cues** are elements in the public domain that contribute to a person's understanding of a place. For example, higher or unique elements provide an understanding that you are approaching a major centre.

**Water sensitive urban design (WSUD)** is the planning, design or construction of the built environment to minimise water runoff and ensure any runoff causes the least amount of damage. It is also about the wise use of that water to improve our urban environment.

**Wind shear** refers to the potential for down draughts from taller buildings or accelerated winds from tunnelling between buildings onto public spaces.



“WITH ITS LAKE AND RECREATION, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH AND RETAIL FACILITIES, THE CENTRE PROVIDES SIGNIFICANT AMENITY FOR THE 97,000 RESIDENTS OF BELCONNEN. THE CENTRE’S SETTING, NEARBY INSTITUTIONS AND SIZE OFFER ADVANTAGES UNMATCHED BY MANY OTHER URBAN AREAS IN AUSTRALIA.”



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN PROVIDES THE LONG-TERM VISION, PLANNING STRATEGIES AND POLICIES TO GUIDE THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTER OF THE TOWN CENTRE. THIS MASTER PLAN AIMS TO STRENGTHEN THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE'S (THE CENTRE'S) UNIQUE QUALITIES BY RECOGNISING ITS ADVANTAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH.

The master plan has been informed by the comments and suggestions provided during community engagement and a review of previous master plans, including the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan. It responds to a range of broader strategic planning policies for the ACT and the issues identified during background analysis studies of the centre.

Two stages of community engagement were undertaken, providing an opportunity for Belconnen residents, local businesses, key stakeholders and ACT Government agencies to detail their concerns and aspirations for the centre. Feedback was very useful in the development of the plan. This consultation was greatly assisted by the Belconnen Community Council.

While a range of concerns were identified, community feedback confirmed the public is generally happy with how the centre is developing. With its lake and recreation, employment, health and retail facilities, the centre provides significant amenity for the 97,000 residents of Belconnen. The centre's setting, nearby institutions and size offer advantages unmatched by many other urban areas in Australia.

These advantages should be strengthened and capitalised on to ensure the centre improves and grows, small business can thrive, natural areas are enhanced and the centre becomes an even better place for the Belconnen community to visit, work and live. Growth and improvement will contribute to meeting key ACT Government priorities for sustainable economic growth, environmental improvements, climate change adaptation, urban renewal and transport improvements.

While the centre has great opportunities, it also faces considerable challenges. The ACT Government has prepared this master plan to guide how these challenges and opportunities can be met.

The master plan provides an opportunity to improve the public domain and increase the 'liveability' of the centre to make it a place where people want to visit or live. A range of strategies have been developed to guide and improve the future development of the centre, which include:

- introducing incentives for developers to provide public domain improvements, better design outcomes, more sustainable buildings and to enable more active destinations to grow
- identifying locations where lively destinations for the community could be provided
- maintaining and improving areas that provide a choice of unique services
- a recommendation to provide improvements and consistency to the public domain, including the provision of large street trees
- improving cycle and pedestrian connections and infrastructure to help change the focus from cars to healthier alternatives of walking and cycling
- introducing measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce our large ecological footprint
- introducing a better strategy for parking to ensure supply meets demand
- improving employment diversity, and
- providing clear building height requirements and design guidelines to provide certainty for the community, developers and government.

The master plan provides a new vision for Belconnen town centre:

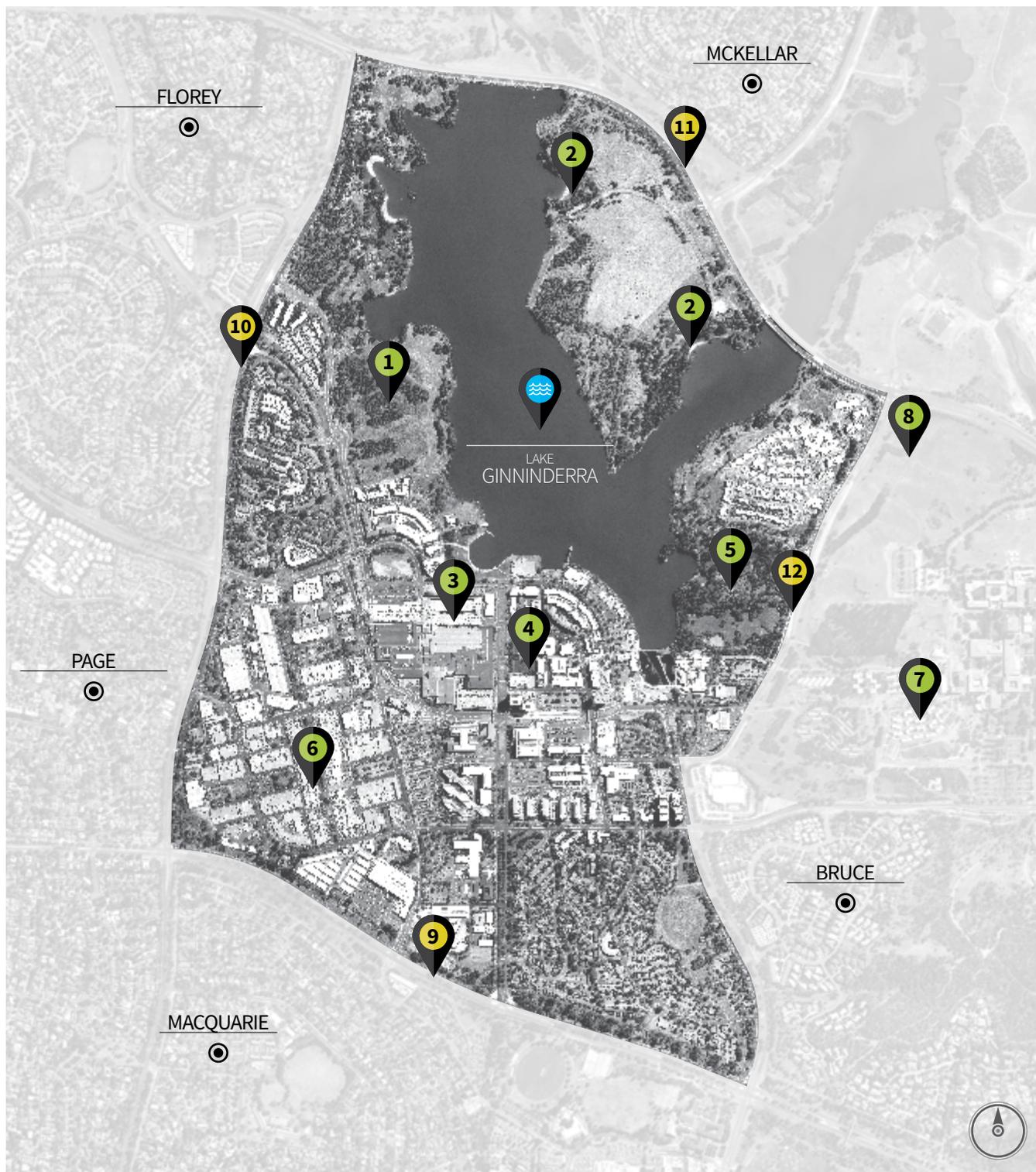
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**BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE'S FEATURES AND POTENTIAL SET IT APART FROM OTHER PLACES. THE LAKE, OPEN SPACES, LAYOUT AND NEARBY INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE UNIQUE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVANTAGES. THESE WILL BE IMPROVED AND STRENGTHENED TO ENSURE THE TOWN CENTRE IS AN ATTRACTIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND DESIRABLE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK AND ENJOY.**

---

# BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN

Map 1: Master plan study area



PLACES

- 1** Western Foreshores
- 2** Diddams Close Park
- 3** Westfield Belconnen
- 4** Belconnen Town Centre

- 5** John Knight Memorial Park
- 6** Services Trades
- 7** University of Canberra
- 8** University of Canberra Public Hospital

ROADS

- 9** Belconnen Way
- 10** Coulter Drive
- 11** Ginninderra Drive
- 12** Aikman Drive

# 1. INTRODUCTION

IN 2001, THE ACT GOVERNMENT RELEASED A MASTER PLAN FOR THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE (THE CENTRE) THAT ANALYSED A SERIES OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS TO GUIDE THE FUTURE GROWTH OF THE CENTRE. THE CENTRE'S DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN GUIDED BY SEVERAL MASTER PLANS, EACH BUILDING ON EARLIER PLANNING. THE 2001 BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN PROVIDED VALUABLE STRUCTURAL CHANGES, INCLUDING ROAD EXTENSIONS AND CHANGES TO BUS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES.

Since then, the centre has experienced considerable growth, with developers showing strong confidence in the centre through significant investments. The ACT Government has also provided substantial improvements including a new community health facility, police station and public transport infrastructure, as well as rebuilding lakeside recreational areas. These improvements provide the centre with the amenity to support continued growth.

Over the past few years, key strategic planning documents for the ACT were introduced including the Minister for Planning and Land Management's Statement of Planning Intent (2015), the ACT Planning Strategy (2012), Transport for Canberra (2012), the Active Travel Framework (2015), the Business Development Strategy (2015) and AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT (2012). The ACT Planning Strategy encourages a more compact city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along major public transport routes. A review of the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan was identified as a key outcome of the ACT Planning Strategy.

Work on this master plan started in November 2014 with a series of engagement events to gain an understanding of the community's concerns and aspirations for the centre. Community feedback was valuable and provided direction for the future of the centre.

This master plan has considered these community comments, together with background studies. It recommends a series of planning strategies that set a framework for how the centre should grow and improve into the future while retaining the unique Belconnen character.

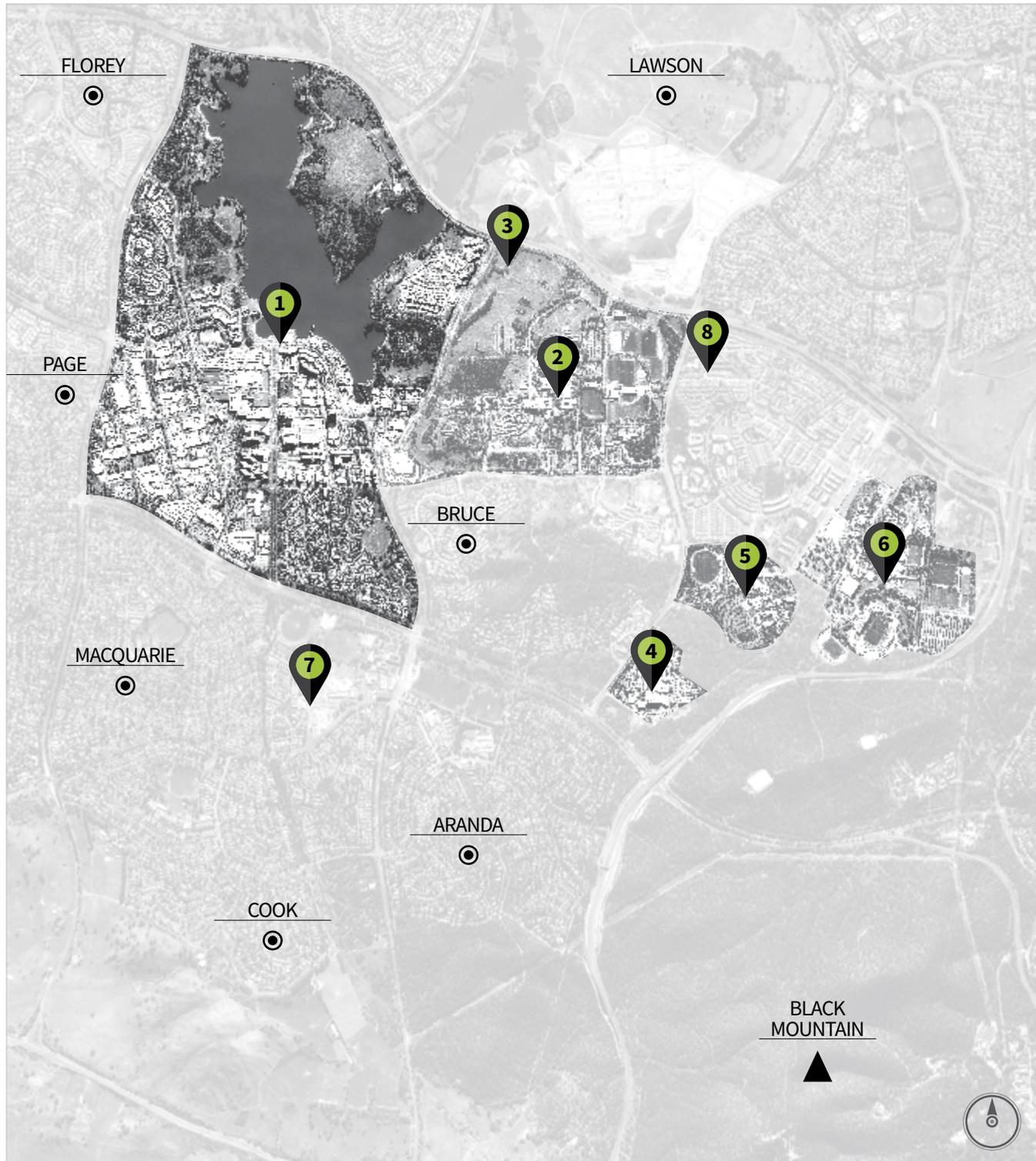
In 2014, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) ranked Canberra as the best place in the world to live due to a range of reasons including employment, housing and environment. It is vital to keep and improve these advantages.

The centre reflects a lot of what is good about Canberra, as well as what needs to be improved. While the centre has good amenity and potential, it also faces challenges that this master plan seeks to address.

The ACT Government would like to acknowledge the organisations that helped raise community awareness of the master plan, particularly the Belconnen Community Council and Pedal Power.

The policies and strategies detailed in this master plan will inform the review of the Belconnen Precinct Code, which will form part of the Territory Plan and provide the rules and criteria to guide development in the centre.

Map 2: Master plan study area and surrounds



PLACES

- |          |   |          |   |
|----------|---|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <i>Belconnen</i>                              | <b>5</b> | <i>Canberra Institute of Technology</i> |
| <b>2</b> | <i>University of Canberra</i>                 | <b>6</b> | <i>Australian Institute of Sport</i>    |
| <b>3</b> | <i>University of Canberra Public Hospital</i> | <b>7</b> | <i>Jamison Centre</i>                   |
| <b>4</b> | <i>Calvary Hospital</i>                       | <b>8</b> | <i>Public Hospital</i>                  |

## 1.1 MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA

The study area for the review of the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan is illustrated by the white line in **Map 1**. The study area is located in the suburb of Belconnen and bound by Belconnen Way, Coulter Drive, Ginninderra Drive, Aikman Drive and Eastern Valley Way.

The study area includes the core centre area, the Belconnen service trades area, Emu Ridge and Totterdell Street residential areas, Emu Bank and Lake Ginninderra and surrounds.

While focused on the suburb of Belconnen, the master plan also considers the centre's important relationship with the University of Canberra, other institutions including Calvary Hospital, the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), and the surrounding suburbs, as indicated in **Map 2**.

The centre has diverse uses, with large areas of open space and recreational areas surrounding Lake Ginninderra, a distinct service trades area, Australian Government office area, medium-density housing, Westfield Belconnen and the higher density residential area emerging towards the east of the centre.

## 1.2 BLOCK AND SECTION MAP

Under the Territory Plan, Canberra is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks, with blocks usually leased to one entity. Blocks and sections are referred to in this document. **Map 3** provides a quick reference to help the reader identify blocks and sections within the master plan area.

## 1.3 WHAT A MASTER PLAN DOES

A master plan defines what is important about a place and identifies opportunities for preserving and enhancing the quality of that place. A master plan offers a town or group centre a long-term planning framework for urban renewal. It is guided by key actions and strategies identified in the ACT Planning Strategy for a more compact and efficient city by focusing urban intensification in these areas.

This master plan provides a vision, a spatial framework and strategies to guide the development of the Belconnen town centre over the next 20+ years.

A master plan is a non-statutory planning document that can recommend the following:

### 1.3.1 PLANNING POLICIES

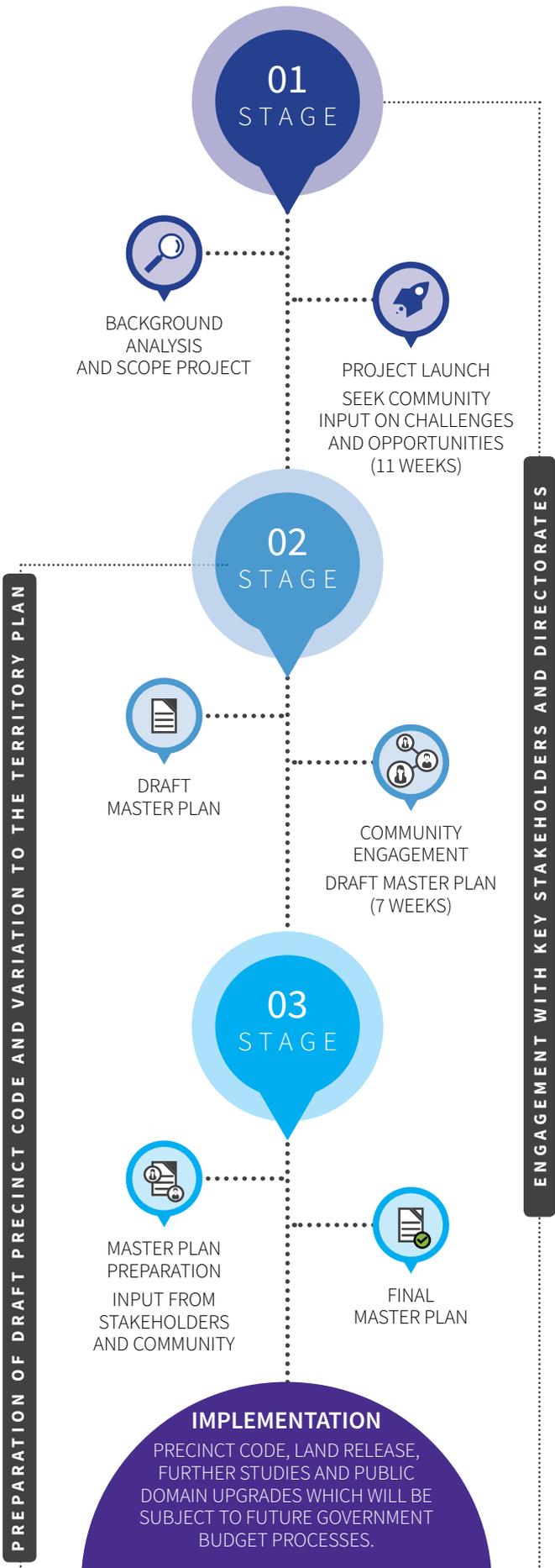
The Territory Plan is the key ACT statutory planning document that provides the policy framework for the administration of land use and planning in the ACT. It specifies what can and cannot happen on each block of land. Potential changes and inclusions in the Territory Plan take the form of a new precinct code. A precinct code sits within the Territory Plan and provides place-specific planning controls. This master plan is informed by community feedback and makes recommendations for a new precinct code for the Belconnen town centre that considers appropriate land use, building heights, building setbacks and location of active frontages.

### 1.3.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAND RELEASE

Land release is the sale of Territory-owned land. The supply and release of land in the ACT considers factors such as forecast population changes, household changes, demand for land and the capacity to cost effectively deliver key infrastructure and services.

### 1.3.3 PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

Infrastructure and public space improvements are required to realise the vision and some of the strategies of this master plan. There are opportunities for the private sector to contribute to the public domain through partnerships with the government or as part of off-site works. Works undertaken by the ACT Government will



involve further investigations by various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budget processes. Public domain upgrades undertaken by the ACT Government are based on a number of considerations including population growth, the age of existing assets and infrastructure and the wider budget context within the Territory.

### 1.3.4 FURTHER STUDIES

These may be required to progress some strategies that are either outside of what a master plan can achieve or may take more time to investigate.

The Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan responds to broader strategic planning policies for the ACT and background analysis on issues and opportunities in the centre. Community and stakeholder engagement played an important role in the development of the master plan, with the Environment and Planning Directorate consulting with Belconnen residents, local businesses, community groups, other ACT Government agencies and private interest groups. Background analysis and community engagement processes helped identify priorities for improving the centre, which informed this master plan.

## 1.4 MASTER PLAN PROCESS

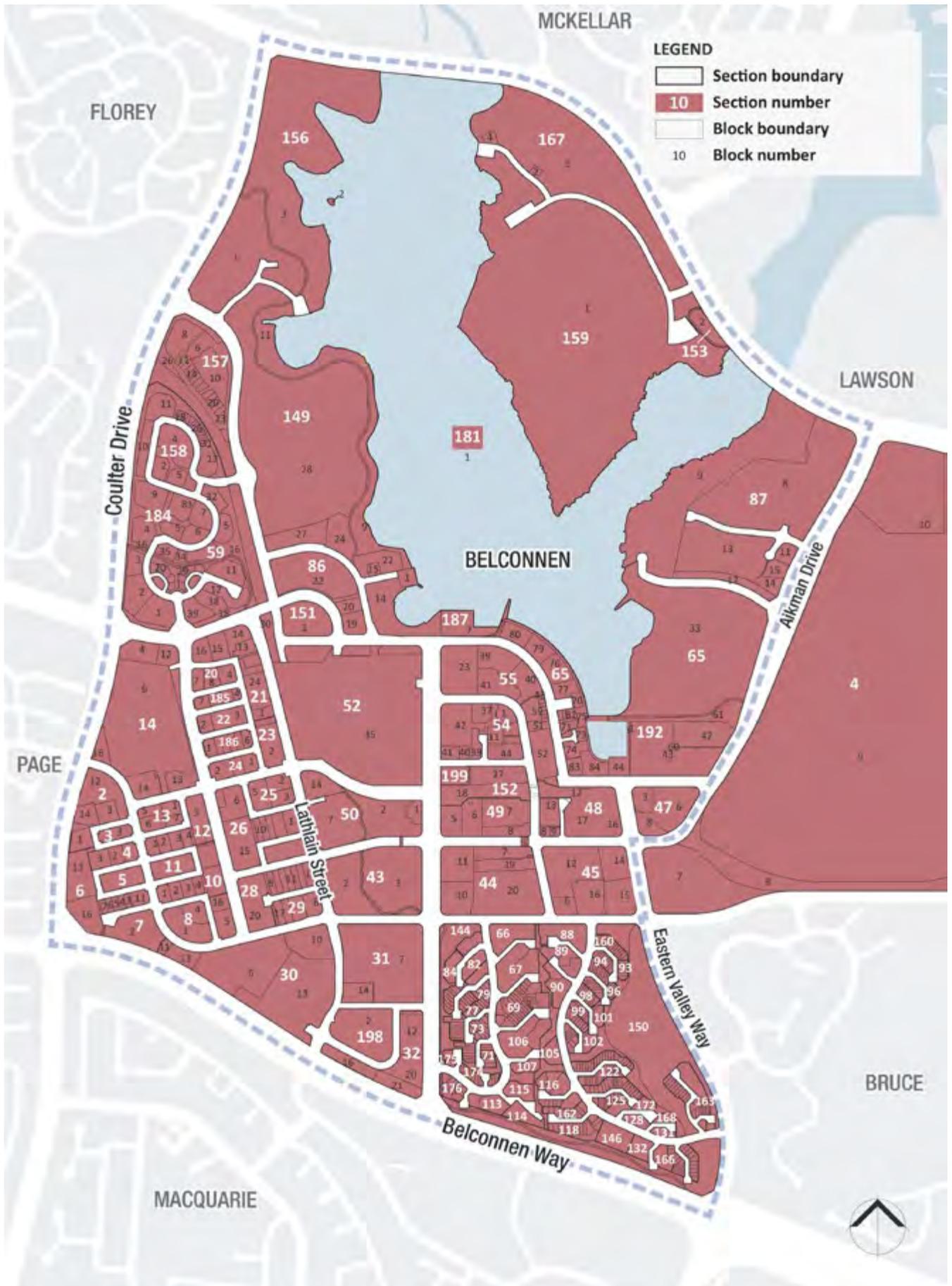
The master plan process includes three main stages as illustrated in **Figure 1**, with opportunities for stakeholders and the public to provide input in stages 1 and 2.

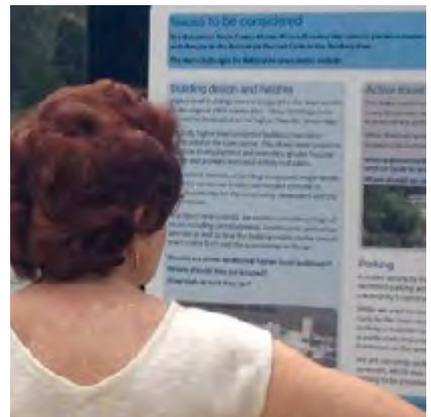
The process commenced with Stage 1, the gathering and analysis of information, including community engagement, to help inform the preparation of the draft master plan.

The draft master plan represented Stage 2 of the process. Feedback received from stakeholders and community during the seven week engagement period informed Stage 3, the development of the final master plan. The implementation of the master plan may include new planning controls in the form of a precinct code in the Territory Plan, potential land release, capital works recommendations and potential further studies.

**Figure 1:** Master plan process

Map 3: Block and section map





## 1.4.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement forms a critical part of the analysis in the early stages of the master planning process and in refining the recommendations provided in the draft master plan.

The background and analysis section of this master plan and the Stage 1 and 2 community engagement reports provide details of how community engagement has been undertaken and a summary of messages received from each stage of community engagement. The engagement reports can be found at <http://haveyoursay.planning.act.gov.au/belconnen>.

## 2. PLANNING CONTEXT

### 2.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan is a strategic policy document that seeks to translate the ACT Government’s broader metropolitan policies at a local level.

The following section outlines the policy context that applies to the centre.

#### 2.1.1 THE STATEMENT OF PLANNING INTENT

The Minister for Planning and Land Management released his Statement of Planning Intent in 2015. The statement sets out the key planning priorities for the ACT Government for the next three to five years.

The statement establishes four key planning priorities and associated actions:

- Creating sustainable, compact and liveable neighbourhoods with better transport choices
- Delivering high quality public spaces and streets through placemaking
- Delivering an outcome-focused planning system to reward design excellence and innovation, and
- Engaging with the community, business and research sectors to optimise planning outcomes

The Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan incorporates and progresses the detail of these priorities.

#### 2.1.2 ACT PLANNING STRATEGY

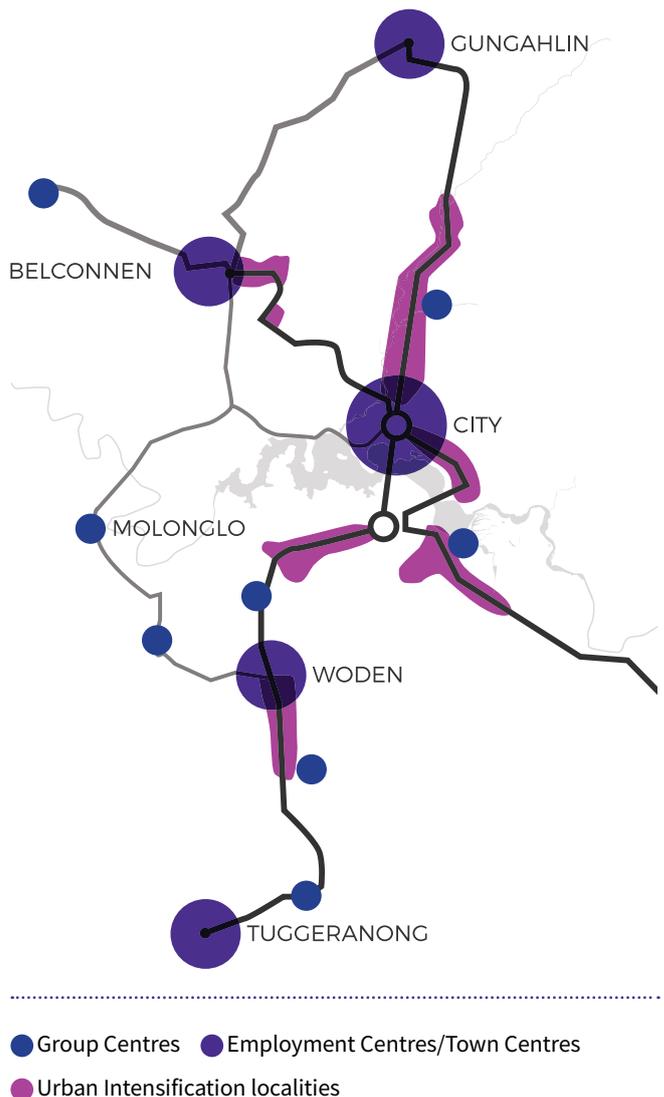
The ACT Planning Strategy (2012) responds to changes in the ACT’s economic, demographic and environmental circumstances that have occurred since the release of the Canberra Spatial Plan in 2004. The strategy outlines a series of strategies that will create a more sustainable city including:

- focusing urban intensification in town centres and group centres supported by public transport to improve the vitality of centres
- improving the urban quality and liveability of Canberra

- managing the land and natural resources of the area to conserve where appropriate and to manage growth to ensure a prosperous region, and
- supporting convenient access to a range of facilities, services and opportunities for social interaction by reinforcing the role of group centres as community hubs.

The ACT Planning Strategy’s first strategy is of particular relevance to this process and promotes a more compact and efficient city by focusing urban growth in town centres, around group centres and along main transit corridors, as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

**Figure 2:** ACT Planning Strategy focuses urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along transport corridors.



### 2.1.3 TRANSPORT FOR CANBERRA

Transport for Canberra (2012) is a companion policy to the ACT Planning Strategy (2012). It seeks to integrate urban planning and transport to improve services in Canberra over the next 20 years. Its key policy directions include:

- integrating land use and transport through the Frequent Network of public transit corridors
- making walking and cycling the easiest travel options to encourage active travel, and
- strategically managing the road network and parking.

In addition, the importance of building an integrated transport network will help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Canberra’s transport network. Integrated transport networks generate economic opportunities and jobs. They are also a catalyst for creating active and attractive urban environments.

### 2.1.4 CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT (2012) is the ACT Government’s strategic policy on climate change. AP2 guides the Territory’s strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% of 1990 levels by 2020 and to transition the ACT to zero net emissions by 2060.

AP2 provides a pathway to achieve emission reductions through energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy. It also identifies opportunities for improved environmental performance of buildings and infrastructure.

The projections for the ACT and region are for an increasingly hotter and drier climate with more extreme weather events. Since 2009, the ACT Government has been taking mitigation actions and assisting the community to increase its resilience.

Examples of significant mitigation measures are:

- legislating emission reduction targets for the ACT in 2010: zero by 2060; 80% by 2050; 40% by 2020 (based on 1990 levels)
- investing in renewable energy sources (solar and wind) to meet the ACT’s renewable energy target of 100% by 2020 (announced in 2015)

- introducing the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme obliging ACT electricity retailers to help customers save energy
- adopting the Carbon Neutral ACT Government Framework with its target of zero net operational emissions by 2020, and
- investing in public transport, including light rail, and improving the cycle and pedestrian networks.

### 2.1.5 ACT WATER STRATEGY

The ACT Water Strategy 2014–44: Striking the Balance was endorsed by the ACT Government in July 2014. The strategy incorporates three themes and a detailed implementation plan. It will guide the management of the Territory’s water supply, water resources and catchment practices over the next 30 years. It builds on the original ACT Water Strategy, Think Water, Act Water. While the emphasis on the original strategy was on water security following the 2003 bushfires and the Millennium Drought, the new strategy also focuses on improved water quality in lakes and streams and greater community participation in a number of key components, such as improving catchment health.

### 2.1.6 THE ACT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The ACT Business Development Strategy, Confident & Business Ready: Building on our strengths (2015), aims to provide a strong, sustainable economy and jobs growth through an important range of strategies that build on Canberra’s competitive strengths and opportunities.

Key strategies relevant to the Belconnen town centre include progressing opportunities presented by the University of Canberra to grow and develop its campus, as well as focusing on strengthening the relationships between the university and adjacent sports and health institutions. The development of a Sports Technology Cluster and Health Innovation Cluster will provide research, education and community facilities, as well as diversifying employment opportunities and supporting a ‘knowledge economy’.

## 2.2 STATUTORY PLANNING

### 2.2.1 NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN

The National Capital Plan is the strategic plan for the ACT that is managed by the National Capital Authority (NCA). It ensures Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

The National Capital Plan includes 'designated' areas, which are areas considered to be of national importance and include the central national area, national institutions, diplomatic areas, Lake Burley Griffin, approach routes to the city and hills, ridges, and buffers.

The National Capital Plan also includes areas that are considered 'National Land' due to the use of these sites for Australian Government offices. Several of these sites are in the Belconnen town centre.

The NCA prepares development control plans (DCPs) to guide the future development of sites on National Land and assesses all development proposals. Where a DCP applies to land under control of the ACT Government, development proposals are assessed by the Environment and Planning Directorate and must be in accordance with the DCP.

DCPs identify a range of issues that new development must comply with, including building height, landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular access points. Building heights are currently limited to RL 613.7 metres, which equates to between five and eight storeys for a commercial office development.

### 2.2.2 TERRITORY PLAN

The Territory Plan is the ACT Government's key statutory planning document, providing the policy framework for the administration of land use and planning in the ACT. The purpose of the Territory Plan is to manage land use change in a manner consistent with strategic directions set by the ACT Government, Legislative Assembly and the community.

The Territory Plan provides the controls that govern development outcomes. It provides direction on the use of certain locations and requirements for specific development types.

The Belconnen town centre is mostly zoned for commercial land uses, as shown in **Map 4**, however there are also large areas of land zoned as residential and urban open space.

While some land is under NCA control, it is also zoned under the Territory Plan and must comply with aspects of the Territory Plan.

A variation to the Territory Plan is a likely outcome of the master plan when land uses or substantial changes to development controls are proposed. The variation will implement a new precinct code into the Territory Plan to update the current Belconnen Precinct Code.

### 2.2.3 THE BELCONNEN PRECINCT CODE

A precinct code outlines place-specific planning controls such as land use, building heights, building design elements, building setbacks and where active frontages should be located. Precinct codes generally take precedence over other codes.

Development applications for development in the centre are submitted and assessed against the Belconnen Precinct Code and other general codes of the Territory Plan, including the parking code.

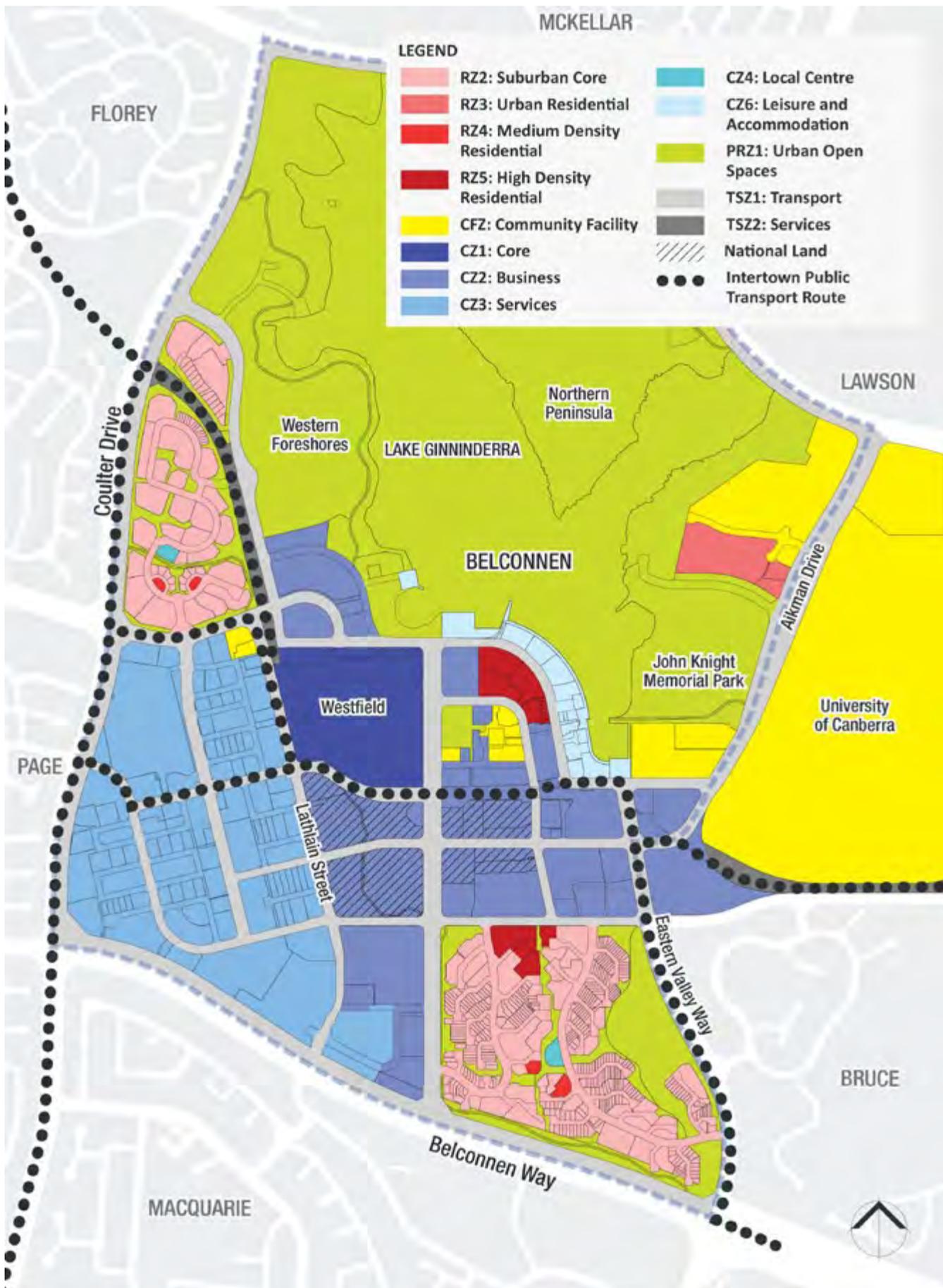
The Belconnen Precinct Code (2012) contains 13 rules and criteria for the centre, providing direction on additional uses, active frontages, heights and setbacks.

The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan proposed good aspirational qualities for the centre, but these were not all able to be translated into the precinct code, which is reliant on quantifiable measures such as building heights or setbacks.

Recent development applications have revealed the limitations of the current precinct code, particularly in regards to building heights and the interpretation of the term 'desired future character'. Other aspects of the code, such as the extent of required active frontage, could be dispersing uses such as retail too broadly across the centre.

A review of the Belconnen Precinct Code, informed by this master plan, is expected to provide better outcomes and increased certainty to the community, developers and the government.

Map 4: Territory Plan land use zones



## 2.3 SPATIAL CONTEXT

The need to accommodate Canberra's growth was carefully considered during the early 1960s by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) through the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra.

Belconnen was one of several districts identified for development. Each district was separated by open space and linked by arterial roads, and planned with a hierarchy of commercial centres comprising town, group and local centres. Town centres serve their wider district as the main commercial focus with employment, recreation and retail services. Group centres provide shops and services for a group of surrounding suburbs and local centres typically cater for a single suburb or precinct. This structure helped to develop strong communities that had good access to services and jobs, and reinforced Canberra's relationship with its setting. This decentralised approach provides transport efficiencies and has been adopted by other cities, including Perth and Brisbane.

The Belconnen Town Centre is located towards the middle of the Belconnen District and is separated from Inner North Canberra and the Molonglo area by the bushland of the O'Connor and Bruce ridges to the east and The Pinnacle/Mt Painter to the south. The topography of the centre is varied with slopes down to Benjamin Way and Eastern Valley Way, and a ridge centred on Chandler Street. The land to the north is relatively flat providing backdrop views to One Tree Hill. The centre's perimeter arterial roads provide good connections to the city centre while avoiding separating sections of the town centre.

As a retail and employment destination, the centre is a significant attractor for people throughout Belconnen and beyond the district. The centre also provides a significant level of cultural, recreational, entertainment, educational and health services to the wider district. The ACT Planning Strategy supports the centres hierarchy approach and encourages a more compact city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along the major public transport corridors.

## 2.4 PLANNING HISTORY

The creeks, grassland, woodland and forest areas surrounding the Ginninderra Plain area, where much of Belconnen is now located, falls within the boundaries of the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal people. Evidence of Aboriginal occupation and links with the land remain, with several artefact sites located close to the town centre.

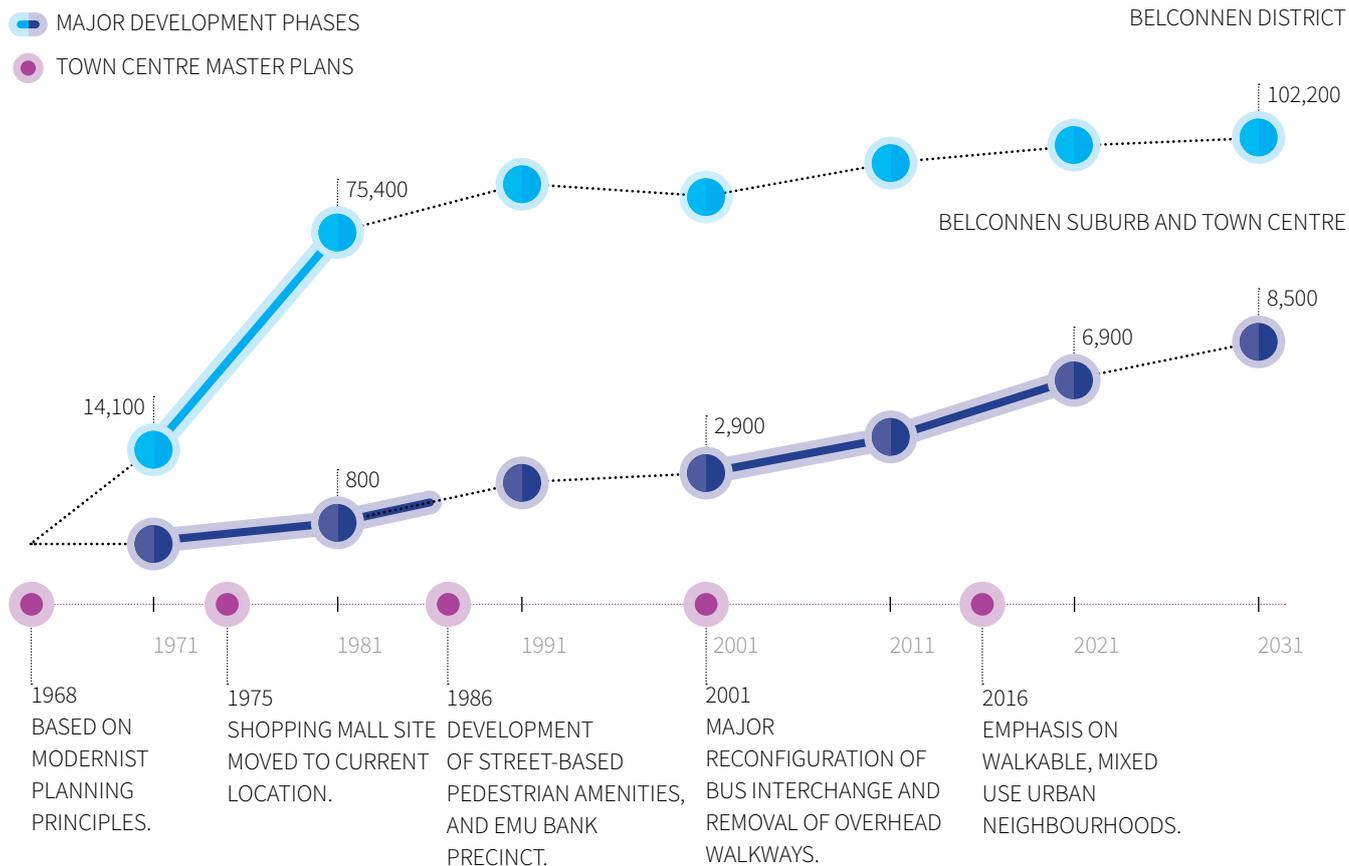
The name 'Belconnen' resulted from an early explorer asking a local Aboriginal what the name of the land was. They replied 'Belconen', translated as 'I don't know'.<sup>1</sup> The name was given to land granted to Captain Charles Sturt in 1837 and subsequently the district.

The first European settlers were graziers, who were granted large areas of land during the 1830s. The *Free Selection Act 1861* encouraged the settlement of remaining land and establishment of local farming communities. This land was largely divided into square mile lots, influencing the location of the tracks, some of which carry through to current road locations.

The community was centred on the Weetangera School, built in 1875, and the post office. By 1881 the area had a population of 554 (half the population of Queanbeyan at the time). The Belconnen Naval Transmitting Station Village at Lawson was established in 1938 and demolished in the 1980s.

Canberra's increasing population and office space requirements led the NCDC to expand the plan for Canberra in 1959 to include the Belconnen and Woden districts. The site for the Belconnen town centre was selected due to its central location and proximity to watercourses, arterial roads and topographical features that could 'provide interesting urban and landscape design opportunities'.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to development, the site was occupied by Ginninderra Station, with the station's Emu Bank homestead on the ridge close to where the Belconnen Library now stands. A remaining elm tree and plaque mark the homestead site. Creek lines either side of the ridge were piped under Benjamin Way and Eastern Valley Way.



**Figure 3:** Belconnen population growth and town centre master plans

### 2.4.1 EARLY PLANNING REPORTS

The first master plan for the centre, as indicated in **Figure 4**, was developed by the NDCD and endorsed in 1968. Roger Johnson, who designed the Canberra College of Advanced Education campus (now the University of Canberra), was a key contributor to the master plan.

The 1968 master plan sought to reinforce the site’s characteristics by locating taller buildings and the core area along the main Emu Bank ridge line with parking, lower buildings and open space located in the valleys. The lake was seen as an integral part of the centre and was not to become a ‘lake in a park’.

The core area was based on an upper-level pedestrian spine along Chandler Street. This linked the residential area of Emu Ridge, offices, the bus interchange and retail mall to cultural and entertainment facilities at the lake edge.

Landscaping was integral to the early plan, with a distinctive Australian character providing a unifying element in the town centre. This was strengthened through plantings of eucalypts to the perimeter of the centre and around the lake.

While the 1968 plan identified towers up to 20 storeys, a key feature was large floor area office buildings surrounded by large surface car parks. Combined with the scale of the town centre, this resulted in streets that provided little pedestrian amenity. Another key feature was the intention to develop the areas to the north and west of the lake as residential areas.

A review in 1975 recommended the mall be relocated from the Margaret Timpson Park area due to topography limitations. This enabled a larger building, but diluted the initial core area planning.

A further review in 1986 directed future development to provide better pedestrian amenity and relationships to the street. It also clarified the intention to develop the Emu Bank area, which had been halted due to concerns from a community group. This was at a time when the centre was expanding and the intended uses such as restaurants opened in the service trades area instead. A summary of development of the town centre over time is provided in **Figure 3**.

Figure 4: 1968 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan



## 2.4.2 2001 BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN

The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan enabled significant changes to the structure of the centre and will have an enduring benefit to the town centre.

The 2001 master plan's key goal was to 'protect and strengthen the town centre's role as a diverse, vital and viable place' through better use of existing infrastructure, better links between areas of the centre and opportunities for development.

The master plan included strategies to:

- improve road connections
- provide an active frontage to the mall
- make Benjamin Way the 'Main Street'
- enliven Margaret Timpson Park
- improve the southern lake foreshore
- relocate the bus interchange
- change the character of Lathlain Street
- construct wetlands beside Eastern Valley Way
- place recreation areas on the western side of the lake
- develop the eastern side of the lake, and
- establish a location for an indoor swimming pool.

While the issue of heights and building design was considered in detail, maximum heights were generally not specified. Instead, the plan detailed principles that should be considered on individual sites when assessing heights. A key component of the 2001 master plan was the implementation schedule, which detailed the timing and funding mechanism for each initiative. Key intents of the master plan were adopted into the Territory Plan through the Town Centres Land Use Policies. This was converted into a rule and criteria format in 2008, before being converted into place-specific precinct codes in 2012.

While the plan has been successful in achieving significant change within the centre, many of the detailed requirements were not translated into enforceable rules within the precinct code.

Planning controls in the Territory Plan were evaluated as part of this master plan review, which may result in changes to the existing Belconnen Precinct Code and Map.

“KEY INTENTS OF THE  
MASTER PLAN  
WERE ADOPTED INTO  
THE TERRITORY PLAN...”

## 3. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

THIS SECTION PROVIDES AN OUTLINE OF A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES WHICH INFLUENCE THE FUTURE PLANNING OF THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE. IT IS INFORMED BY A VARIETY OF SOURCES, INCLUDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, ANALYSIS UNDERTAKEN BY CONSULTANTS AND PREVIOUS MASTER PLANS. ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THIS SECTION ARE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE PLANNING STRATEGIES DETAILED IN SECTION 5, THE MASTER PLAN.

### 3.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Consultation for the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan included two main stages. Each stage informed the master plan as it evolved.

#### 3.1.1 STAGE 1 – ISSUES STAGE

The first stage of community engagement was undertaken from 10 November 2014 until 30 January 2015. It identified the key issues from the community and stakeholders to inform development of the draft master plan.

Postcards outlining the project were sent to Belconnen district residents and displays were held at Belconnen and Kippax libraries, the University of Canberra, Westfield Belconnen and the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets. Meetings with key stakeholders, several ‘meet the planners’ sessions and a community design workshop were held. Approximately 640 people participated in discussions or provided comments on the project.

Local community groups publicised the project widely. In particular, the Belconnen Community Council undertook a survey, public display and a joint event with the Belconnen Arts Centre and Belconnen Community Service. Pedal Power also undertook a survey. Their efforts are appreciated and greatly assisted in ensuring the wider Belconnen community was able to contribute to this stage of the project.

The community provided 92 submissions and hundreds of individual comments, detailing a range of issues. The key messages included:

- the centre’s public domain and amenity requires improvement, particularly street trees, children’s play areas and remaining open space
- people want to cycle into the centre, but the cycle paths are not continuous and lack legibility
- parking provision requires improvement, particularly for commuters

- general support for increased residential development, with a need to clarify building heights and improve design quality
- destinations need to be enhanced, particularly at Emu Bank, to take better advantage of its location as a quality dining precinct, and
- the usability of Margaret Timpson Park needs to improve.

Further information on feedback from the engagement can be found in the Stage 1 community engagement report available at <http://haveyoursay.planning.act.gov.au>. Where appropriate, key messages and relevant background information has informed the development of this master plan.

#### 3.1.2 STAGE 2 – DRAFT MASTER PLAN

The second stage of community engagement sought feedback on the initiatives suggested in the draft master plan. Postcards were sent to all Belconnen district residents and businesses in the centre notifying the community engagement period. Letters were also sent to the lessees of commercial blocks in the centre.

The engagement ran for seven weeks during October and November 2015, and included poster displays at the Belconnen Town Centre Library and Westfield Belconnen. Two ‘meet the planners’ sessions and numerous meetings with the community and other stakeholders were held.

Comments provided on the draft master plan were generally positive with 38 emailed submissions and 117 responses to either the online survey or through written feedback forms.

Key messages included:

- general support for the overall draft master plan and with how the centre is developing
- strong support for creating a more active destination precinct at Emu Bank; however there was some concern that parking needs to be adequately addressed

- strong support for the suggested redevelopment of the Territory-owned sites fronting Lathlain Street; however there were concerns with the height of 18 storeys
- strong support for the proposed cycle network for the centre, with suggestions to improve the network design, and
- a wide range of opinion on maximum building heights; however there was support to provide incentives to ensure better outcomes.

Further information on community feedback from the engagement can be found in the Community Engagement Report — Stage 2 available at <http://haveyoursay.planning.act.gov.au>. Where appropriate, these key messages informed the development of this master plan.

### 3.1.3 FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement will also be undertaken on a variation to the Territory Plan, including a precinct code, through a separate consultation process.

## 3.2 CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

Following the adoption of the 1968 master plan, development began in 1970 with construction of the Cameron Offices. The NCDC's original intentions for the site were five 15-storey buildings; however the architect, John Andrews, provided an alternative solution of nine 4-storey wings, which were more responsive to the site.

The Cameron Offices were innovative with column free floor space, floor to ceiling windows and a cooling system that used lake water. The system's pump station remains on Emu Bank. Themed courtyards provided an attractive outlook in what was a bare town centre.

While compromised by the demolition of six wings in 2007, the Cameron Offices is one of only ten Australian buildings listed on the International Union of Architects' World Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture. It is also listed on the Commonwealth Heritage list.

The use of off-form concrete in the Cameron Offices set a precedent for the use of the material in the centre. Most major buildings constructed in following years utilised concrete, which provided a distinct, unifying character to the centre. Concrete has been used in recent construction, such as the *Linq* apartments and

the Belconnen Community Health Centre, reflecting the architectural style and character of earlier buildings.

The centre's large area, topography, wide roads and planning, which segregated uses, has established areas of distinct character, including:

- the service trades area to the west of Lathlain Street
- the mid-rise retail and office core centred on Benjamin Way
- the 'municipal' area of Margaret Timpson Park
- the medium-density residential areas of Emu Ridge and Totterdell Streets.
- the lake and surrounds
- the lakeside strip along Emu Bank, and
- the emerging high-density residential area of College and Chandler Streets.

The heritage significance of several sites within the centre was previously considered; however, John Knight Memorial Park is the only place in the suburb of Belconnen listed on the ACT Heritage Register.

### 3.2.1 POTENTIAL NEW HERITAGE PLACES OR OBJECTS

A heritage assessment of buildings, places, objects and artwork was undertaken to assess the potential for additional items of heritage significance within the centre.

The Belconnen Town Centre Library and Tumbling Cubes at Margaret Timpson Park were considered to have sufficient qualities to meet the assessment requirements of the ACT Heritage Act. While the English Elm is a heritage item, being an individual tree it can only be listed on the ACT Tree Register.

These places and objects have not been nominated to the ACT Heritage Register and require further assessment to determine if they are of heritage value. It is recommended these items undergo further investigation for heritage significance and be nominated to the ACT heritage and tree registers.

### 3.2.2 PLACES OF ABORIGINAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

A preliminary Aboriginal heritage assessment was undertaken to identify locations in the centre that may be significant. While there are no recorded Aboriginal sites in the centre area, there are sites in the surrounding area including Bruce.

Three areas have been identified as being relatively undisturbed by construction activity and have moderate potential for archaeological deposits to occur. These areas are in public open space, close to the lake and are unlikely to be developed.

It is recommended that if any ground-breaking or development work is proposed for these areas, an archaeological survey and heritage assessment be undertaken to identify the need for any further heritage investigation of these areas.

### 3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

#### 3.3.1 POPULATION

The 1968 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan indicates the district of Belconnen was planned to support a community of 120,000 people with 10,700 residents living in the centre. In June 2015 the estimated population of the Belconnen district was 96,600 with 6000 people living in the centre.

Population growth in Belconnen town centre is currently much higher than in the wider Belconnen district. Most growth in the district is concentrated within the centre.

The centre was also intended to be an important employment hub for Canberra, supporting 20,000 employees. In 2015 an estimated 13,550 people worked in the centre.

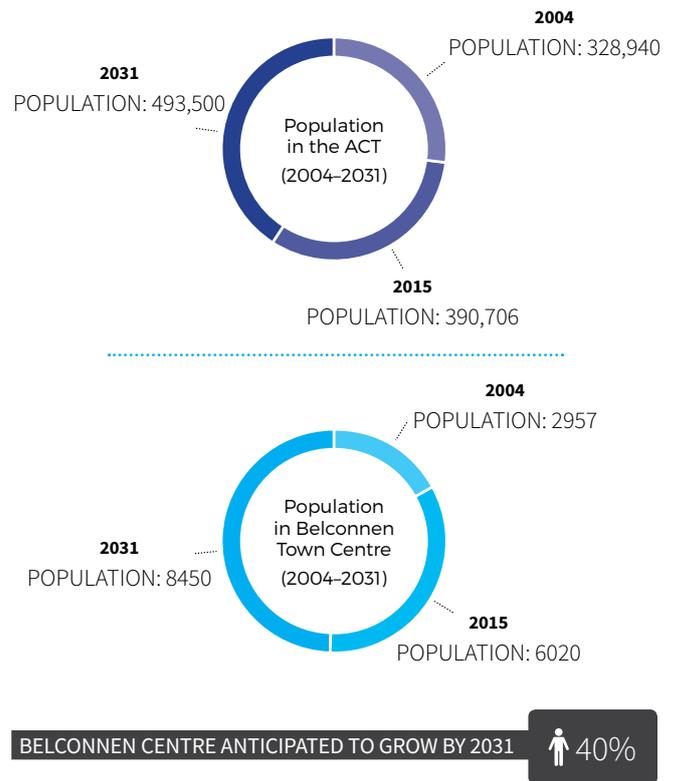
As summarised in **Figure 5**, Canberra’s population is estimated to grow from 390,706 in 2015 to a projected population of 493,500 by 2031. The centre is projected to grow to 8450<sup>3</sup> during the same period. This growth will require additional retailing, housing and employment locations. The 2012 ACT Planning Strategy provides clear strategies to accommodate this growth, reduce urban sprawl and increase sustainability. A key outcome is to focus urban intensification in town centres.

The population of the Belconnen district is estimated to grow to 114,000 by 2031<sup>3</sup>, including the future development of West Belconnen.

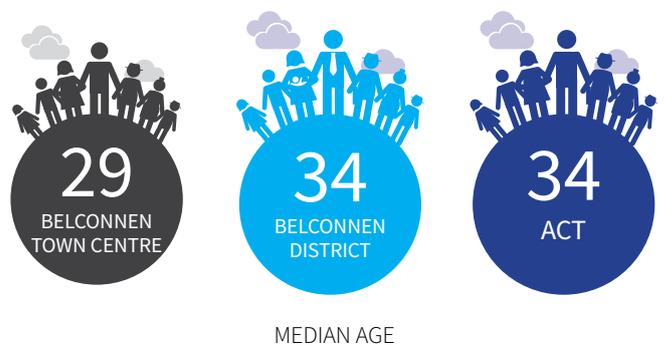
The centre’s age profile is skewed towards 20–34 year olds, with 50% of the population within this age bracket compared to 25% for the rest of the ACT. However, Belconnen has a lower proportion of people under 20, with 14% of the population within this age group compared a Canberra average of 25%.<sup>4</sup>

It is estimated around 12% of apartments<sup>3</sup> within the centre core house children; however, neither the apartment complexes nor the centre core provide play

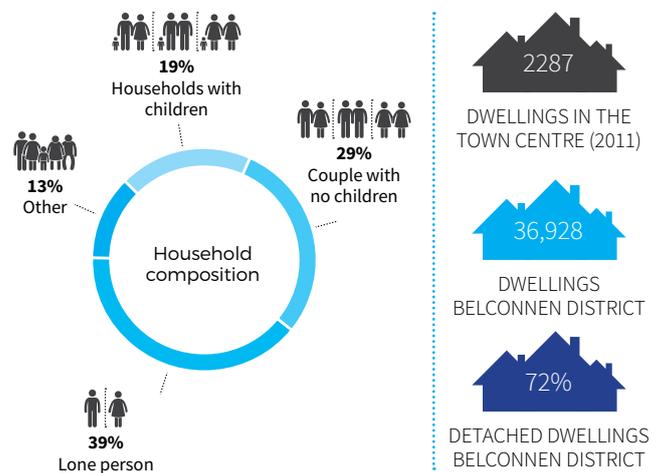
**Figure 5:** Snapshot of Belconnen town centre



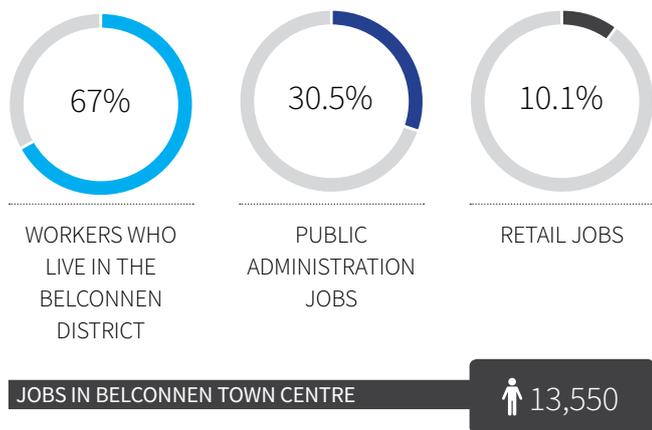
**Figure 6:** Median age



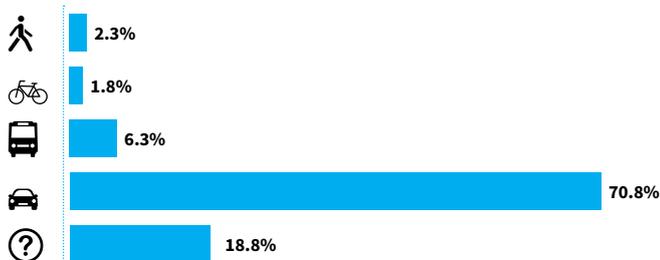
**Figure 7:** Household composition and dwellings



**Figure 8:** Employment in Belconnen town centre (2015)



**Figure 9:** Mode of transport used by Belconnen district residents to get to work



**Figure 10:** Mode of transport used by workers to Belconnen town centre



”...ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT LIES IN STRENGTHENING BELCONNEN’S EXISTING ADVANTAGES.”

spaces or facilities specifically for children. A large number of children visit the centre when families go shopping or when visiting people who live there (Figure 7).

Around 11% of the population in both the Belconnen district and centre are aged over 65<sup>4</sup>, and this proportion is increasing. The centre should be easy to move around and feel safe for people of all ages.

Another group requiring consideration is young people. Young people need to have space that is safe and that meets their needs.

### 3.3.2 EMPLOYMENT

The centre is an important employment location. In 2015, the Belconnen town centre employed an estimated 13,550<sup>3</sup> people, around 6.1% of the ACT’s total workforce of 227,300. The main employers are retail and the Australian Government, particularly the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (3600 employees), and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1468 employees).<sup>5</sup>

Providing employment within the town centres was a key early planning principle. This employment helps support local businesses, decentralises traffic congestion across Canberra and improves property values. As indicated in Figure 8, a large number of people who work in the centre also live in the Belconnen District.

Canberra has experienced an economic downturn during 2014 and 2015, largely attributed to uncertainty caused by the reductions in Australian Government employment. This resulted in a high office vacancy rate, low retail growth, and stagnating wages. Canberra’s unemployment rate was predicted to grow from 3.6% in 2014 to 6.7% in 2017.<sup>13</sup> However, while unemployment grew, it fell back to 3.6% in June 2016, which was the lowest in Australia.

The threat of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection relocating out of the centre was a significant issue during 2015. Employment by the department equates to almost 25% of jobs in the centre and any movement of jobs away from the centre will have a significant impact on the local economy. A decision was made to retain the Department in the centre, however it is understood there may be long-term plans to relocate elsewhere. This highlights the need for Belconnen to diversify its employment base and reduce the reliance on the Australian Government to provide jobs.

Part of the opportunity for additional employment lies in strengthening Belconnen's existing advantages. The proximity of the centre to the University of Canberra, Calvary Hospital and AIS, along with the new University of Canberra Public Hospital, provides Belconnen with strong potential for employment growth.

Rather than developing these facilities in isolation, they should be integrated, enabling relationships and new jobs to grow. Integration of planning for the centre with the university will ensure these benefits are realised; that services, transport and amenities are effectively provided; and the area becomes a competitive and attractive location for investment. The University of Canberra has recognised these benefits and is actively working towards integration with the centre.

The economic and employment opportunities of this area have been recognised by the ACT Government's Business Development Strategy, released in June 2015. This strategy promotes the development of a sports technology cluster based on the AIS, Australian Sports Commission and University of Canberra, as well as a health innovation cluster recognising the relationship between the health faculty at the university, Calvary Hospital and the new University of Canberra Public Hospital.

There is some community concern that the sale of Territory-owned sites within the centre may compromise the ability to provide for future employment. The area is considered to have sufficient capacity for additional employment purposes well into the future.

If the Australian Government does relocate jobs out of Belconnen, there is likely to be pressure to enable the residential development of vacant office buildings. The retention of these sites for employment is fundamental to keeping the diversity of uses in the centre.

## 3.4 LAND USE

### 3.4.1 LAND USE ZONES

Land uses were generally segregated in the centre's initial planning, resulting in distinct areas that lacked diversity. This has changed over time, with most areas developing a broader range of uses and increased activity. As indicated in **Map 4**, allowable uses are determined by the Territory Plan's land use zones, which specify the type of development that can occur. While allowable uses are listed for each zone, these are often further limited by individual leases.

The Core Zone (CZ1) requires commercial uses that contribute to a diverse and active character. This area is largely taken up by Westfield Belconnen.

The Business Zone (CZ2) is mainly office areas; however this is expanding to include a mix of uses including clubs and high-density residential. The Services Zone (CZ3) is generally west of Lathlain Street and is intended for lower rent commercial uses. Residential uses are allowed, despite possible conflict with other uses.

There are other zones supporting specific uses, including Leisure and Accommodation Zone (CZ6) at Emu Bank, Community Facility Zones (CFZ) to support uses such as schools and churches; and two CZ4 areas intended for local shops.

The centre has three large areas of medium-density housing developed during the 1980s and 1990s, mainly zoned Suburban Core Zone (RZ2). The planning and density of these areas are now considered more appropriate to a suburban area than a town centre. Future redevelopment of these areas to a more appropriate density will be difficult due to restrictive block and road layouts and separate leases.

Residential use is permitted in all commercial land use zones in the centre.

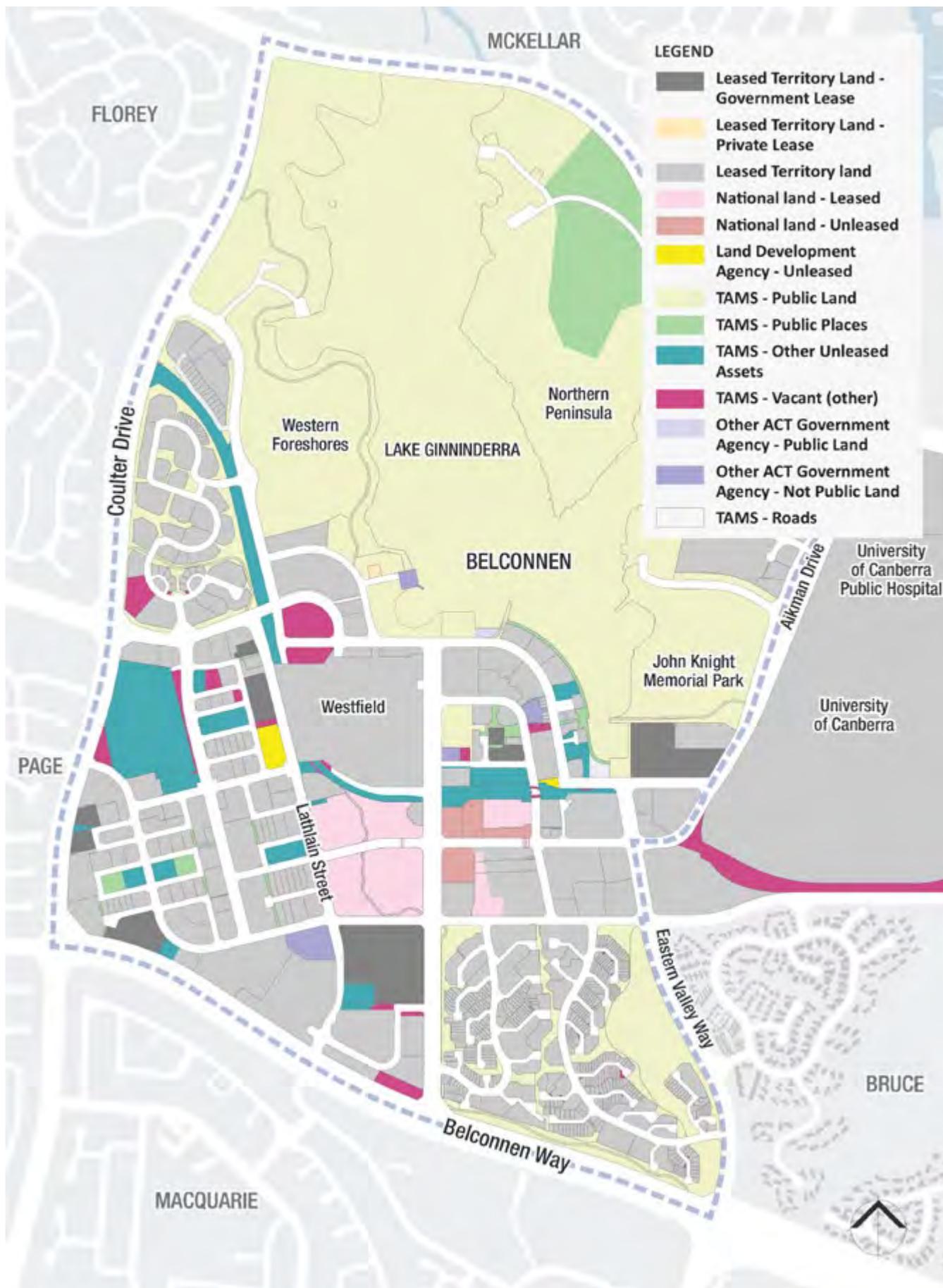
Most sites in the centre are now privately leased, as illustrated on **Map 5**. While there are comparatively few vacant sites or carparks still owned by the ACT Government, there are several sites including the Belconnen Bus Depot and the Winchester Centre that may be suitable for distant future redevelopment. Any redevelopment of these sites would be dependent on any need of the current facilities to relocate or reduce their size in the centre, which is unlikely for some time.

### 3.4.2 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

With an estimated 6020 people living in the centre in 2015 and an estimated population of 8450 in 2031, the centre will accommodate growth of around 2430 additional people by 2031.<sup>3</sup> A high proportion of single and group households choose to live in the centre, reflecting its diverse housing options and proximity to employment and the University of Canberra.

The centre has sufficient capacity to house additional residents without the need to increase the development potential of the majority of the service trades area, the residential areas at Totterdell Street and Emu Ridge, or public open space near the lake.

Map 5: Land custodianship in the centre



Comments were received during community consultation indicating the need to provide more medium-density housing rather than apartments in the centre. While there is demand for this housing type, it already forms 30% of the developed area of the centre.

Taller residential buildings assist to reduce urban sprawl and have the advantage of being close to services, employment and public transport. The town centres and city centre are considered appropriate locations to provide the housing choice offered by taller buildings. These developments were initially thought to mainly attract investors and students, but are attracting a wide variety of people including those wanting to downsize but stay in the area. Discussions with residents indicate that strong communities are also forming within taller buildings.

### 3.4.3 COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL

Belconnen has an estimated 221,000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail and services floor area and an estimated 184,000 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial office space. The biggest source of retail floor space is Westfield Belconnen with 290 retailers and 94,700 m<sup>2</sup> floor area.

Westfield Belconnen was Australia's biggest shopping centre when it opened as the Belconnen Mall in 1978. It underwent significant expansion in 2012, providing a bus waiting lounge and active frontage to Lathlain Street.

The developing high-density residential precinct between Benjamin Way and Eastern Valley Way will possibly accommodate an additional 5500 residents (more than the current population in the suburbs of Macquarie and Cook), which may support additional retail uses in this area, such as a small supermarket.

Canberra experienced its highest ever office vacancy rate in January 2015, calculated at 15.4%.<sup>6</sup> The ACT's retail sector was also Australia's weakest performing in 2014, with turnover growth of 0.1% compared to NSW's growth of 6.7%.<sup>7</sup>

Many small businesses have found the recent period of economic down turn difficult. The threatened relocation of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection out of the centre would have further impact the viability of these businesses. Other concerns with commercial and retail activity in the centre include parking capacity and the long-term development plans of the University of Canberra. Recent changes will enable an extensive range of uses to be developed at the university, which may compete with existing centre businesses.

However, the ABS indicates the ACT economy grew by 3.1% during the June 2015 quarter, which was

the strongest in the country.<sup>14</sup> This indicates the ACT economy has become more resilient and diversified.

The centre is in a good position to become the preferred location for shopping and business in Canberra.

### 3.4.4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The centre supports a range of community facilities for the wider district including:

- five churches
- five childcare centres
- the Belconnen Senior Citizens Club
- the Belconnen Labor Club
- medical facilities, including the new Belconnen Community Health Centre
- Lake Ginninderra College
- Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts
- Belconnen Police Station
- Kangara Waters aged care facility and residences
- the Belconnen Arts Centre
- the Belconnen Library, and
- the Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre (CISAC).

The location of community facilities is indicated in **Map 6**. While Belconnen has a broad range of community facilities there is a comparatively low amount of land zoned as Community Facility Zone (CFZ).

An increase in the residential population of the centre may increase the demand for community facilities, however there are currently no plans for additional community facilities in the centre.

The Belconnen Community Service and Belconnen Library are both seeking relocation to a new site fronting onto Lathlain Street, due to issues with convenient access and running costs. These facilities provide services for the wider Belconnen district. If this relocation proceeds, close consideration will be required to ensure the new space provided for these uses is suitable for the long term growth of the Belconnen district, not just growth within the town centre.

### SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The centre is fortunate to be close to a range of quality sporting and recreation facilities. Lake Ginninderra provides an attractive background to many of these

Map 6: Community, sport and recreation facilities



uses, including the shared pedestrian and cycle path, play areas, off-lead dog park, and swimming and sailing opportunities.

Other facilities such as CISAC, ten pin bowling, multi-use courts at the community centre and Lake Ginninderra College, cinemas, facilities at the Labor Club, the Canberra City Gymnastics Club and the basketball centre have significantly improved the range of facilities in the centre. The Belconnen Skate Park is rated by skating organisations as one of Australia's best.

While not in the centre, the Jamison enclosed oval, tennis courts and Big Splash Water Park are all within walking distance. Some AIS and the University of Canberra facilities are also available to the public.

Apart from the proposed expansion of the basketball centre, there are currently no plans for additional sports facilities in the centre.

### BELCONNEN COMMUNITY SERVICE

Belconnen Community Service (BCS) provides a large number of services including youth, disability, and children's support and recreation programs. BCS also operates the Belconnen Community Centre, providing space for theatre events, community classes and child care.

BCS has a limited budget and is seeking ways to reduce operating costs, which may involve relocation to the Lathlain Street redevelopment area.

### BELCONNEN ARTS CENTRE

The Belconnen Arts Centre opened in 2009 and has helped change the character of Belconnen through an increased opportunity for access to art, cultural and community activities and workshops. The facility offers a range of live performance and visual art exhibitions, events, classes and workshops, adding to the diversity and activation of this area during the day and night.

Expansion of the arts centre was approved in 2015, with funding for the construction of this second stage being sought at the time of preparation of this master plan. The second stage of the centre is designed to enable it to become a full multi-arts facility with a multipurpose auditorium. High quality external spaces and facilities are also planned to extend the range of community and cultural activities. Critical to the success of this project will be a landscape design that integrates the extended building with

the surrounding site, the lake foreshore and the broader town centre and completes the missing link in the Lake Ginninderra foreshore promenade.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

The emergency services group were some of the first buildings constructed in Belconnen. The group comprises the former Belconnen Police Station, remand centre, ambulance station and fire station. With the opening of the Alexander Maconochie Centre in 2009, the remand centre became redundant, as did the police station in 2012 when the new Belconnen Police Station was constructed. Construction of a new emergency services facility in Aranda to house ambulance and fire services is anticipated to be completed in 2016. The relocation of services out of Lathlain Street will enable this area to be redeveloped.

## 3.4.5 UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

The University of Canberra opened as the Canberra College of Advanced Education (CCAЕ) in 1970. In 2016 the University of Canberra had 17,500 students, including 4500 international students, and provided accommodation for 2400 people.

The higher education and research sector, including the university, are significant contributors to the ACT's economy, adding \$2.75 billion each year and providing significant employment.<sup>15</sup> International students are recognised as the ACT's biggest single export earner.

The ACT Government has recognised the significant opportunity for growth at the University of Canberra by amending the *University of Canberra Act 1989*, to encourage further development of the campus and partnerships with private research-based businesses. An improved relationship between the centre and the university will provide new employment opportunities and a unified, efficient and cohesive urban environment.

The 2014 University of Canberra Urban Plan sets a clear path for future development of the campus. Future revisions of the urban plan to better align with the opportunities provided by this master plan should focus on achieving a much greater integration of the university and the centre. In particular, consideration should be given to the opportunities to locate more business and enterprise focused uses close to or within the centre, and to introducing road connections and a formal entrance to the university campus from the centre.

“BELCONNEN TOWN  
CENTRE SUPPORTS  
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OF BUSINESSES,  
OFFERING A DIVERSE  
RANGE OF SERVICES,  
THROUGHOUT THE  
CENTRE.”



Planning for the AIS, CIT and Calvary Hospital did not provide main frontages to Haydon Drive, and now require an additional local bus service instead of utilising the adjacent rapid service. Convenient access to rapid public transport services should be a key consideration of the new University of Canberra Public Hospital.

The successful redevelopment of the Childers Street area in the City has enabled the Australian National University (ANU) to effectively integrate with the city centre. A similar future integration of the University of Canberra and the centre will ensure Belconnen becomes a 'university town'.

### 3.4.6 CANBERRA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (CIT)

Although outside of the core study area, the CIT Bruce campus is an important institution in the area and requires consideration. The campus is relatively large and is located away from the rapid transport route. Changing student and teaching requirements, together with increasing operation and maintenance costs, may lead the ACT Government to consider more cost-effective alternatives to the current facility over time.

These alternatives may involve relocation to the town centre core in a smaller and more efficient building close to public transport, or combining the campus with other similar community or education uses.

### 3.4.7 ENTERTAINMENT

Belconnen town centre has a range of bars, restaurants, cinemas, clubs and theatres. However, they are dispersed throughout the centre and lack a clear destination or 'brand'. Restaurant patrons often have little incentive to stay in the centre after a meal, with no obvious connection between activities or venues in many locations.

A large group of taverns and bars opened in Weedon Close during the 1980s. While lacking character, the grouping attracted people and the area became a popular destination. The last of these—The Pot Belly—remains a popular live music venue.

The Canberra Labor Club opened in Chandler Street in 1979 and has provided an important venue for the Belconnen community. The club was popular for concerts and its 'singles party nights' during the 1980s and 90s. Being close to the growing higher density residential area, the potential conflict between uses at the club and adjacent residential uses needs to be recognised to ensure the club can continue to provide a range of services and grow.

People from Belconnen go to places such as Manuka, Bunda Street and Kingston because they are recognised as offering choice and activity in one area. As a centre serving almost 97,000 people, Belconnen should be able to offer a similar destination that provides choice, is competitive, busy, attractive and desirable.

### 3.4.8 SERVICE TRADES AREA

Belconnen town centre supports a large number of businesses, offering a diverse range of services, throughout the centre. These businesses are often locally owned and provide significant employment and activity in the centre.

Many of these businesses are located in the service trades area, an area intended for lower rent uses and those with noise and odour issues. The area supports a successful group of car dealers along Josephson Street, providing a competitive destination for car buyers.

Maintaining suitable and convenient areas for these kinds of businesses is important. Development controls currently allow residential uses and permit buildings higher than two storeys. If residential development occurs, it could conflict with surrounding uses.

The service trades area is divided by Cohen Street, with the southern areas of Oatley Court and Weedon Close having greater activity and identity than the area to the north. The area to the north, dominated by the bus depot and emergency services, is less active due to limited access.

Comments from small business owners include a range of concerns that require consideration including:

- a lack of suitable short-term parking adjacent to their business; many spaces are used by office workers and car dealers or repairers
- a lack of parking enforcement, with parking at the rear of businesses preventing deliveries
- a lack of overall amenity; the area has around 180 businesses but lacks toilets, bike racks and street trees and has poor paving
- a lack of identity or 'brand' association to the area
- a lack of controls to prevent large franchised business moving in and forcing out long-term, locally-owned businesses, and
- concern about regulation and limiting aspects such as signage and outdoor seating.

### 3.4.9 FORESHORE PRECINCT

The Foreshore precinct has a good mix of areas and uses including the Belconnen Arts Centre, retail and commercial uses, restaurants, the skate park, Lake Ginninderra College, a bowling centre, a church, residential areas and Emu Inlet Park. The mix of activities, together with the shared path linking John Knight Memorial Park and the University of Canberra, attract a large range of people during the day and night.

As detailed earlier, the area adjacent to the lake was always intended as an entertainment precinct and is zoned Leisure and Accommodation (CZ6). The precinct code also has an allowable use of residential, an option not taken up until recently.

Community engagement revealed both a strong desire to encourage more uses that take advantage of the location, and dissatisfaction with building design and sites being dominated by parking.

The buildings are generally located close to the lake to maximise parking areas. This has resulted in limited opportunities for outdoor dining. The fast food drive-throughs are considered unattractive and a poor use of the location. However, the fast food outlets are popular and add to the area's diversity.

Given the location and mix of uses, this area has potential to be a key destination for Canberra. It should be more attractive and busy.

## 3.5 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

The centre's transport system has a sound structure, with perimeter arterial roads and a clear central public transport spine. It generally lacks the congestion or division by arterial roads that many urban centres experience.

As indicated in **Map 7**, the reconfiguration of bus routes to service three main stops has enabled better access to public transport across the centre, and the future possibility of light rail to the town centre could further improve this.

The centre's transport system will need to support a number of large new developments in the near future.

The proposed University of Canberra Public Hospital near Aikman Drive and new apartment buildings near Eastern Valley Way may increase traffic as well as parking and public transport demand.

### 3.5.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan recommended changes to the bus operations in the centre, including removing the existing bus interchange and relocating the buses to on-street bus stops. This proposal has been realised and enabled the re-development of the original interchange and the creation of new stops on Lathlain Street and Cohen Street. These changes have led to improved pedestrian connections between bus stops, shopping areas and new mixed-use developments. They have improved street verges, making the centre a more attractive place for pedestrians.

Some bus stops in the centre may come under increasing demand in coming years, particularly the existing stops on Eastern Valley Way between Aikman Drive and Emu Bank and the Westfield bus station, which is almost at capacity.

#### LIGHT RAIL NETWORK

The ACT Government is currently investigating the potential for the expansion of a light rail network across Canberra. The outcomes of the investigation will inform future decision making about extensions to stage 1 of light rail (between the city centre and Gungahlin). The light rail network builds on work already undertaken on integrated land use and transport planning, and delivers on ACT Government policies, including Transport for Canberra and the ACT Planning Strategy.

Map 7: Public transport



### 3.5.2 ACTIVE TRAVEL

The Active Travel Framework, prepared in 2015 as part of the ACT Government’s integrated transport planning strategy, recognises walking and cycling as essential parts of Canberra’s transport system and outlines initiatives to increase participation. Active travel provides a range of benefits including health, economic, environmental and social benefits. The Active Travel Framework aims to increase the number of people walking and cycling to work in Canberra to 7% by 2016. It includes objectives which are directly relevant to this master plan:

- Work within a clear hierarchy of planning:
  - > Integrate land use and transport planning and relevant funding decisions.
  - > Identify main walking and cycling routes that are consistent with ACT planning and transport strategies.
- Design networks of continuous, convenient connections:
  - > Enable short walking, cycling and riding trips for transport purposes.
  - > Improve access to and within major centres of employment, education, retail and community facilities, focusing on ‘20-minute catchments’ (the equivalent of walking 2 kilometres or cycling 5 kilometres).
- Facilitate active, vibrant communities:
  - > Develop places with a range of activities such as cafes, shops and playgrounds that attract people to visit, play and stay and are connected to surrounding neighbourhoods and paths.

During consultation to inform the Minister for Planning and Land Management’s Statement of Planning Intent (2015), the community and stakeholders emphasised the need to focus on pedestrians first, cyclists second, public transport third then private vehicles when planning, designing and managing public spaces and development.

“ACTIVE TRAVEL PROVIDES A RANGE OF BENEFITS...”

### WALKING

While the 2011 Census indicates 14.2% of people living in the town centre used walking as the only method to get to work, only 1.8% of Weetangera residents and 3.1% of Page residents walked to work.

Analysis and comments received during consultation revealed a number of factors which may influence people’s choice to walk:

- Several footpaths are perceived as unsafe; for example, underpasses without lighting or areas which are secluded with no passive surveillance.
- Key pedestrian routes are often unclear, with a variety of surfaces and the quickest routes not obvious.
- Footpaths are lacking in some places or the quality is poor, with changing materials, or are obstructed by signage or lighting.
- There is a lack of clear directional signage for pedestrians.
- Footpaths should be attractive and easy to use.

**Map 8** indicates the existing pedestrian network. Given one in five Australians has a disability, the centre should be accessible and usable by everyone.

### CYCLING

Canberra has the nation’s highest cycle usage rate. However, as indicated on **Figure 9**, the 2011 Census indicates only 1.8% of employed people living in the Belconnen district chose to ride to work, despite being close to employment.

Cycling infrastructure improvements attracted the highest number of consultation comments. This was reinforced by the survey of cycling issues in the town centre provided by Pedal Power, which revealed 73% of respondents considered cycling to the centre was easy, but only 29% considered cycling within the centre easy.

Analysis of the area’s cycle infrastructure, as indicated in **Map 9**, reveals some key issues:

- A lack of cycle infrastructure on Belconnen Way, west of Coulter Drive means cyclists must use a busy car lane or the footpath and risk cars reversing out of driveways.
- Some on-road cycle lanes terminate without an off-road alternative.

Map 8: Existing Pedestrian Network



- A lack of clear connections linking the centre to the University of Canberra, Calvary Hospital, CIT, the AIS and Radford College.
- A need for better links to the centre from the north-west, including Florey and Evatt.
- A lack of suitable cycle lanes on Lathlain Street that could link Westfield Belconnen with the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets and Jamison.
- A possible shortage of secure bicycle parking at key destinations.
- A 'bike hub' that provides bike parking, change facilities and repair services would be valued.
- Some shared paths are too narrow to accommodate the demand, particularly the shared path on the Ginninderra Drive Bridge and some sections around Lake Ginninderra. Several people suggested separating cyclists from pedestrians on the lake shared path.
- A lack of cycle connections within the centre. Cycle lanes and shared paths terminate at the edge of the centre, requiring cyclists to use footpaths or ride on the road.
- Paths within the centre are often narrow and obstructed with street lights, bollards or traffic signals, making it difficult for cyclists to travel on.

Safe, connected and legible cycle infrastructure that links to key destinations is important. The centre is ideally suited to cycling, with wide roads, dispersed destinations, good topography and a population who enjoy cycling.

Cycling has a range of benefits including improved health, reduced traffic congestion and reduced pollution. A study by the Heart Foundation<sup>8</sup> has highlighted the economic benefits of cycling, with each car parking space generating \$6 per hour for local businesses, compared to \$31 per hour for bicycle parking.

The centre has tremendous potential to improve the rate of cycling, increasing health and economic benefits and improving sustainability and social equity.

### 3.5.3 ROAD NETWORK AND TRAFFIC

Traffic movement into and around the centre has been aided by the extension of a number of roads identified in the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan. However, cars searching for spaces to park still create congestion on several streets, including Lathlain Street at peak times.

The growth of the centre has created additional strain on many of its entry roads. Luxton Street suffers some peak hour congestion between Josephson Street and Coulter Drive, as does Joynton Smith Drive between Morrell Close and Beissel Street. The duplication of Aikman Drive will reduce its current peak hour congestion and enable it to accommodate additional traffic from the new suburb of Lawson and the new University of Canberra Public Hospital.

Some arterial roads around the edge of the centre are also congested in peak periods. This includes stretches of Ginninderra Drive and Belconnen Way between Coulter Drive and Lathlain Street. This slows traffic entering the centre and traffic to other destinations.

Lathlain Street between Belconnen Way and Market Street suffers high levels of congestion during the afternoon peak period and weekend mornings. Suggestions were made during consultation to remove on-street parking along other areas of Lathlain Street to improve traffic flow and speed. This parking is valuable for local businesses and helps make the centre a lower speed and safer area.

**Map 10** indicates the existing traffic volumes on the centre road network during the morning peak hour.

The volume and speed of traffic on Emu Bank presents some safety concerns. While the extension of Aikman Drive to meet Eastern Valley Way has reduced the amount of traffic, many drivers still use Emu Bank to access Westfield Belconnen from Aikman Drive. Consideration could be given to providing a continuous link for traffic from Emu Bank to Cohen Street. This would allow private vehicles to use the community bus station roadway, which is currently limited to buses and not gazetted as a road. This would enable a direct link to the Westfield carparks and increase surveillance of the bus station.

Map 9: Existing cycle network



Map 10: Existing peak traffic volume during morning peak hour



### 3.5.4 PARKING

Background analysis and community engagement on parking in the centre found:

- Small businesses in the service trades area are reliant on short-stay spaces near their businesses for customer parking. These are often used for all day parking by commuters or by other businesses.
- There is a perception there is insufficient parking provided to meet peak demands.
- Developments approved without providing on-site parking are now reliant on adjacent carparks for their long-term needs.

The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan considered parking was adequate, with supply considered to exceed 10,000 spaces and peak demand at 6000 spaces. The current supply is estimated to be around 12,100 spaces and peak demand at 10,400 spaces. The location of current carparks is indicated on **Map 11**.

A survey and analysis of parking was undertaken throughout the day and evening on the peak days of Thursday and Saturday, as outlined in **Table 1**.

Key findings:

- Parking at Westfield Belconnen is often nearing capacity (98%) at peak times on Saturdays.
- The undersupply of all day car spaces for offices in the central area is encouraging commuters to use short-stay spaces in the service trades area or park in other areas.

A 90% utilisation rate is considered to be the capacity of a carpark. Although the total peak demand of the centre is 86%, there are several large public carparks where the demand for spaces is at 95% or greater.

The Parking and Vehicular Access General Code includes two key provisions for the Belconnen town centre that require review:

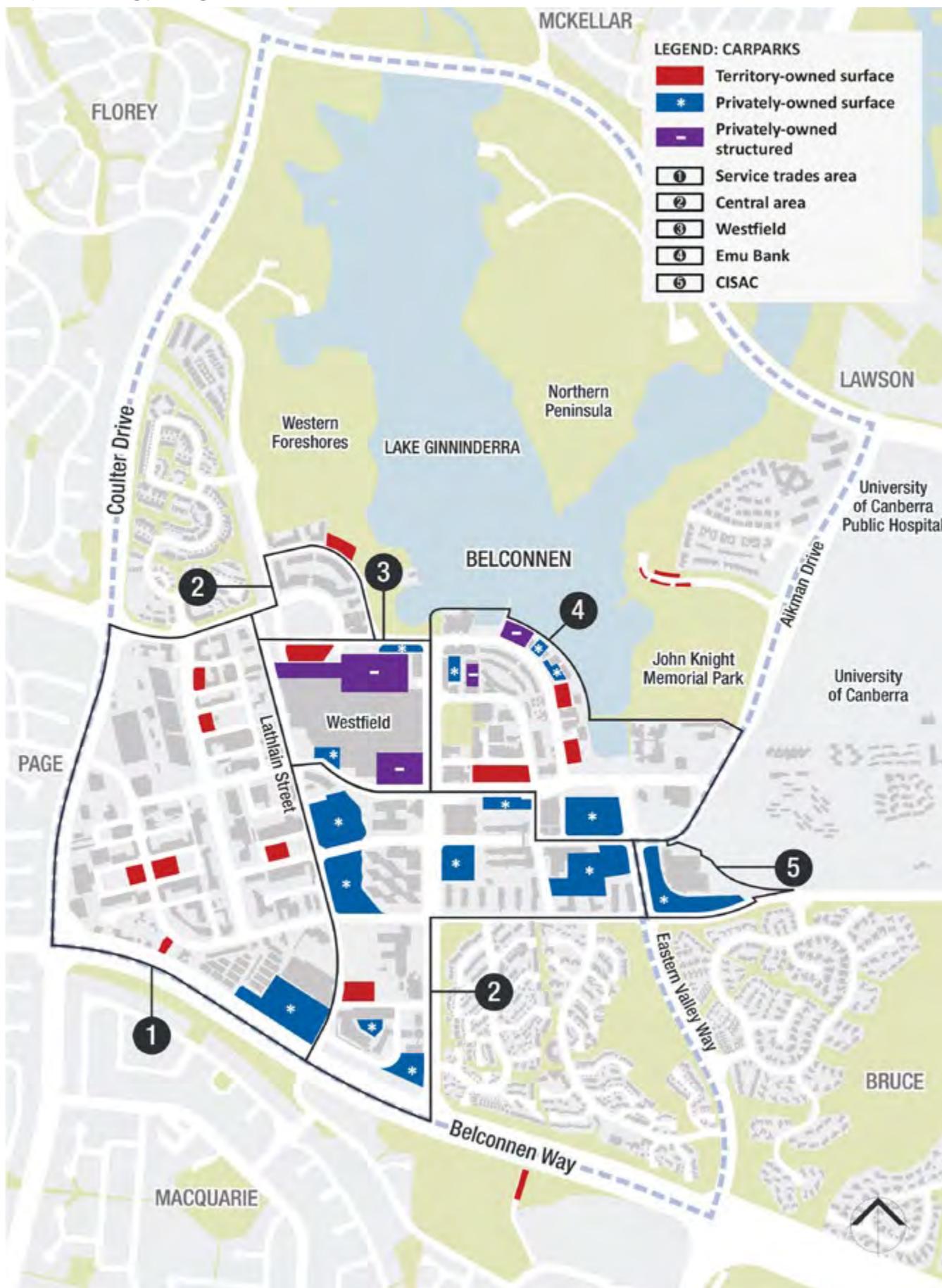
- Office developments in the CZ2 zone in the city centre are required to provide two spaces per 100 m<sup>2</sup> GFA, whereas Belconnen is only required to provide one space per 100 m<sup>2</sup> GFA.
- There is no requirement to provide parking for residential uses in the town centres or the city centre.

Other aspects that require consideration when determining parking requirements:

- Transport for Canberra aims to increase people walking, cycling or using buses to get to work from 15.4% in 2006 to 30% in 2026.
- The ACT Government's Parking Action Plan (2015) provides a policy for the provision of parking to ensure it is more effectively and fairly provided.
- The ACT Government is considering implementing 'smart parking'. Smart parking provides real-time information to drivers on parking availability via a smart phone app and LED signage.
- Apartment buildings provide carparks for each dwelling, however not every dwelling requires the car space. Currently the public are unable to use these vacant spaces.
- The possible relocation or expansion of Australian Government departments will have a significant impact on parking. An expansion will require additional parking to meet the demands of 1500 additional employees.
- 'Park and Ride' car parks are provided at Walder Street and adjacent to the community bus station, allowing free all-day parking for people catching buses to other locations. These spaces would be better used to meet the parking demand by people working or shopping in the centre. A study is required to assess if the alternative 'Park and Ride' facility at College Street is sufficient or if additional spaces are required at a more suitable location.
- The lack of suitable short-stay parking for motor homes and people towing caravans was raised during consultation on the draft master plan. Providing convenient spaces for these—and tourist buses—will help attract additional business to the centre.

“...RELOCATION  
OR EXPANSION  
OF AUSTRALIAN  
GOVERNMENT  
DEPARTMENTS WILL  
HAVE A SIGNIFICANT  
IMPACT ON PARKING.”

Map 11: Existing parking areas



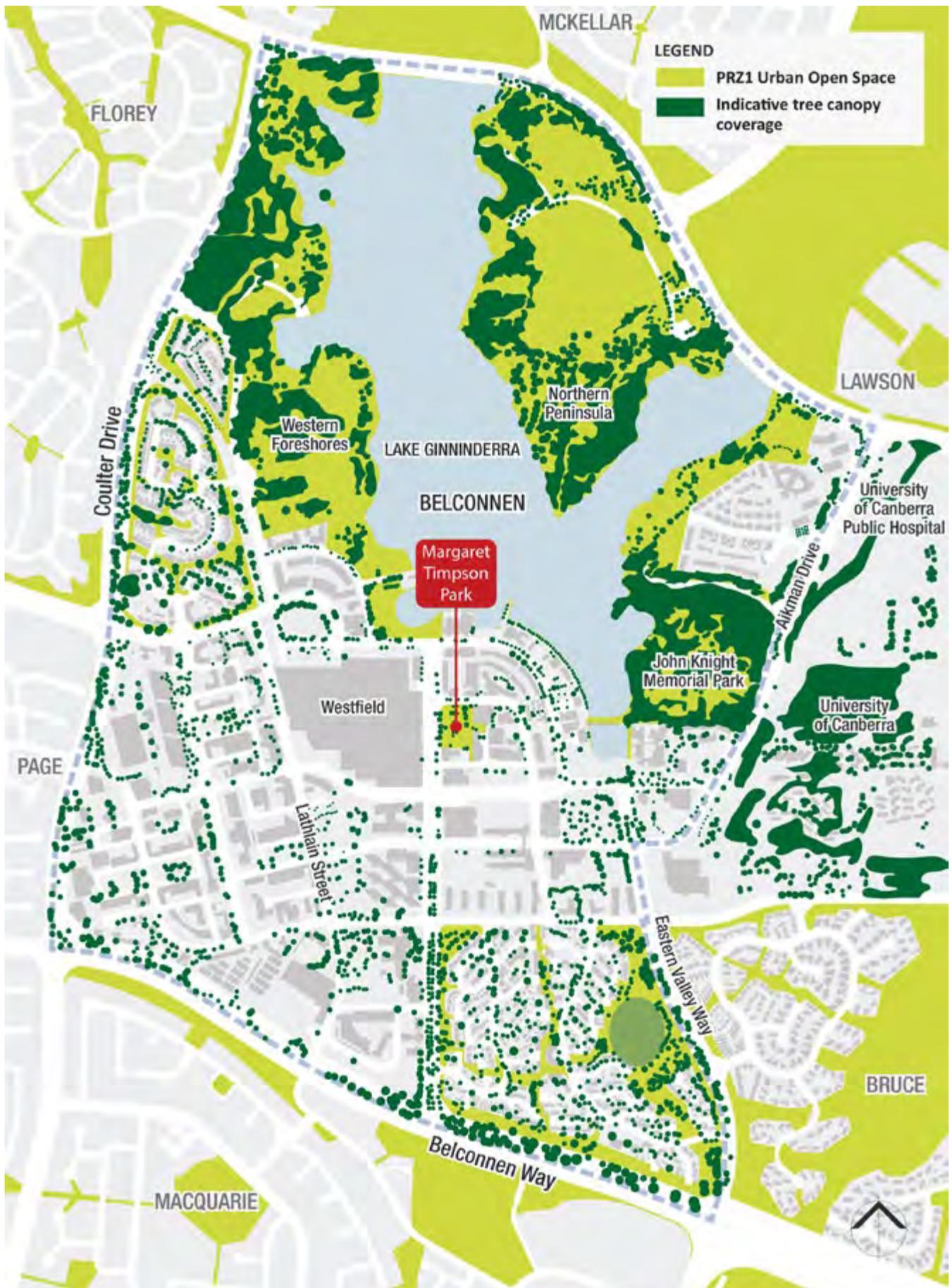
**Table 1:** Current parking demand in the town centre

PARKING RESTRICTION AND CAPACITY	PEAK WEEKDAY DEMAND*	PEAK SATURDAY DEMAND*
<b>SERVICE TRADES AREA</b>		
Less than 1 hour: 126	75%: 95	70%: 89
1–2 hours: 1243	91%: 1126	84%: 1041
3–6 hours: 94	89%: 84	86%: 81
6–9 hours: 394	94%: 372	79%: 313
Unrestricted: 144	85%: 123	78%: 113
Park & Ride: 27	96%: 26	89%: 24
Private / permit: 2174	71%: 1545	67%: 1456
Disability parking: 24	62%: 15	75%: 18
<b>TOTAL: 4226</b>	<b>80%: 3386</b>	<b>74%: 3135</b>
<b>EMU BANK AREA</b>		
Less than 1 hour: 64	51%: 33	50%: 32
1–2 hours: 426	82%: 349	85%: 363
3–6 hours: 65	85%: 55	90%: 59
6–9 hours: 596	83%: 496	88%: 524
Unrestricted: 266	64%: 171	26%: 70
Private / permit: 464	72%: 334	22%: 102
Disability parking: 31	61%: 19	75%: 17
<b>TOTAL: 1912</b>	<b>76%: 1457</b>	<b>61%: 1166</b>
<b>CENTRAL AREA</b>		
Less than 1 hour: 22	100%: 22	25%: 4
6–9 hours: 1281	100%: 1281	32%: 418
Unrestricted: 55	80%: 44	98%: 54
Private / permit: 1169	95%: 1113	15%: 175
Disability parking: 6	100%: 6	16%: 1
Westfield: 2785	85%: 2367	98%: 2730
<b>TOTAL: 5318</b>	<b>91%: 4833</b>	<b>63%: 3382</b>
<b>CISAC</b>		
Paved spaces: 486	41%: 200	90%: 404
Gravel overflow: 120	0%: 0	22%: 27
<b>TOTAL: 606</b>	<b>33%: 200</b>	<b>71%: 431</b>
<b>PARKING IN SUBURBAN STREETS</b>		
Assumed to be going to central area	500	
<b>TOTAL: 12,062</b>	<b>86%: 10,376</b>	<b>69%: 8322</b>

\* 2PM Thursday 26 June and Saturday 28 June 2014.

The areas above are indicated on **Map 11**.

Map 12: Open space network



## 3.6 PUBLIC DOMAIN

The centre’s key public spaces, including streets and parks, should be of a high quality and reflect Belconnen’s character as the district’s principal community and commercial area.

During consultation, the community said the improvement of the public domain was a significant issue. Retaining existing open spaces, improving maintenance and establishing a community garden were suggestions requiring consideration.

### 3.6.1 KEY AREAS OF PUBLIC LIFE

Belconnen’s early planning resulted in buildings having little relationship to surrounding streets. Main destinations such as the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets, the library, Westfield Belconnen and the University of Canberra were widely spaced, had narrow connecting footpaths and no activity along the way, resulting in people driving to these destinations.

Providing a better quality public domain in busy areas encourages district precincts and more efficient allocation of construction and maintenance funding.

The current precinct code identifies an extensive ‘main pedestrian area’ where active frontages are required. Given the limited capacity for additional active frontage in the centre this is leading to vacant commercial space and dispersed uses.

A better outcome could be to reduce the active frontage requirement to key areas and increase flexibility for alternative outcomes, depending on market demands (refer **Map 23**). For example the ground floor units of *Altitude* are largely commercially adaptable, enabling both the current residential and future commercial uses.

### 3.6.2 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The centre has a high proportion of open space, mostly located around Lake Ginninderra. As indicated on **Map 12**, land zoned as Urban Open Space (PRZ1) in the core area is limited to Margaret Timpson Park.

The ‘court’ areas at Oatley Court, Weedon Close and Walder Street were intended as open space, but have now been largely replaced by carparks. The remaining open space areas in these locations offer poor amenity and are under-utilised. These blocks are zoned as CZ3 Services Zone, which may enable them to be sold in the future.

Consultation revealed open space within the centre is highly valued by the community. However, there was some concern with the maintenance of open space and the extent of litter, particularly around the lake. The Government will continue to work proactively to address these concerns in line with community expectations.



Shared path at Emu Bank

## MARGARET TIMPSON PARK

Margaret Timpson Park provides the municipal core area of the centre, emphasised by its formal, symmetrical set out, distinctive landscaping and surrounding uses. The park provides Belconnen town centre with a formal space for important or district focused events.

Providing more activity in the park was an issue in the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, which suggested new cafes and a new road to the east as a solution. Many people still consider the park to be underused and lacking facilities.

## LAKE GINNINDERRA

Since its establishment in 1974, Lake Ginninderra has become intrinsic to Belconnen's character. It is highly valued by the community, providing space for recreation and contemplation.

Many consider it more attractive than Lake Burley Griffin, with better water quality. The variety of spaces and landscapes, combined with high quality recreation areas, is partly what makes the lake special. These are also important in providing an outlook to and from the centre.

From its initial planning, the lake was intended to have an urban edge to the centre. This edge was to provide a high level of quality and variety; however, the contrast between the landscape and built form of the centre was to be maintained and strengthened by retaining land at the north and west of the lake as open space.

The recreation areas at John Knight Memorial Park, Diddams Close and Macdermott Place are high quality and well maintained. While demand for these areas is often high, additional maintained areas are not currently required. An issue is the need for additional parking at John Knight Memorial Park, which has no capacity for overflow parking.

Fishing, swimming and sailing has declined since the 1980s; however, there is growing demand for access to the lake from groups including the Sea Scouts and Girl Guides. Consideration is required as to how these groups can be accommodated.

The northern peninsula provides a valuable landscape outlook from the centre and has ecological and possibly archaeological value. It also has potential for vegetation restoration and improved canopy connections (**Map 14**). This area is zoned Urban Open Space (PRZ1), with the central area identified as 'not public land' in the existing precinct code, reflecting the grazing which is undertaken there, partly to maintain it.

The western side of the lake has landscape, ecological and possibly archaeological value. This area was originally intended for development; however, it was decided it should remain as open space and planned roads were degazetted. This area is close to developed areas and offers potential for other uses including community gardens and vegetation restoration.

Work completed at Emu Inlet in 2011 extended the recreational space and reconfigured the lakeshore to improve water circulation. Plans have been prepared for a second stage of work that would complete the recreational infrastructure and enable the open space to be far more useable.

For discussion on the ecological and water quality aspects of Lake Ginninderra, see section 3.9.

## 3.6.3 COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens provide a range of benefits; they encourage more food to be grown locally and provide an opportunity for communities to form. They are valuable for people without garden space, such as those living in apartments. The closest community gardens to the centre are currently at Charnwood and behind Cook.

Establishing a community garden within the centre will increase the liveability and sense of community of the centre. While suggestions have been made for locating a community garden at Margaret Timpson Park and the service trades area, there are possibly better locations such as the western side of the lake.



**Figure 11:** Walder Street

### 3.6.4 STREET TREES

The centre was intended to have a ‘distinctively Australian landscape character’<sup>9</sup>, with mass plantings of eucalypts around the perimeter of the centre and native trees used as street trees throughout. While some have been successful, including the casuarinas on Josephson Street, many failed and were not replaced. The intended character was also diluted by later plantings of elms and plane trees.

As shown in **Figure 11**, many streets now do not have trees or the trees are on privately leased blocks and could be removed.

Analysis of the area’s street trees was provided in a 2008 report<sup>10</sup> which listed all tree species and provided recommendations for replacements. Many of the recorded tree species were found to be in poor health, stunted and providing limited canopy cover.

The elms planted along Benjamin Way provide an attractive formal entry to the centre. Ideally these plantings would have continued to Emu Bank; however, this has been prevented by five 1.8 metre diameter stormwater pipes in the northern median of Benjamin Way. A key focus of future public domain improvements should be the provision of large canopied street trees. These provide character, improve amenity for pedestrians and cyclists and value of areas and can significantly reduce the impact of heat on urban areas.

### 3.6.5 PAVING, LIGHTING AND STREET FURNITURE

The paving and street furniture of the centre is largely uncoordinated, having been provided over an extended period of time. Paving in particular is varied, with combinations of asphalt, stencilled concrete, various paver types and concrete. Segmented pavers have generally proved unsuccessful as they are lifted by tree roots and cracked by vehicles.

Currently, off-site works associated with residential developments generally follow the requirements of the Canberra Central Design Manual. The manual was developed for use in the city centre and has proved very successful, providing a consistent approach to paving, street trees, lighting and street furniture. A key issue is whether this manual should be adopted for general use in the Belconnen town centre or a new one developed.

### 3.6.6 PUBLIC ART

Public art lifts an area beyond the basic requirements. It builds character and allows artists to respond to a location. While at times controversial, an artwork can become a loved and intrinsic part of an area. For many years the public art in Belconnen town centre was limited to two sculptures:

- *Tumbling Cubes* by Bert Flugelman (1979)
- *Optical Galaxy* by Gerald Gladstone

As the centre developed, additional public art was installed, including:

- *About Face* by Wellspring (2001)
- *Running Lights* by Thylacine Art Projects (2006)
- *Ark in the Ark and Beyond* by Wataru Hamasaka (2009)
- *Dancers on a Lakefront* by Konstantin Dimopoulos (2010)
- *The Ability to Imagine* by Peter Tilley (2010)
- *Winds of Light* by Peter Blizzard (2011)
- *Owl* by Bruce Armstrong (2011)



Street art at Belconnen Skate Park

The Belconnen Arts Centre provides an important opportunity for a wide range of art, including dance, to be available and promoted to the wider Belconnen community. It helps ensure art is perceived as an integral part of the centre.

The provision of new street furniture, including seating, provides an opportunity for additional public art. A legal graffiti wall is provided under the Ginninderra Drive Bridge; however, consideration could be given to creating an additional wall as part of any future upgrades of the Belconnen Skate Park to allow local street artists to continue to contribute to the emerging character of Belconnen.

“...AN ARTWORK CAN  
BECOME A LOVED  
AND INTRINSIC PART  
OF AN AREA.”

### 3.6.7 NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY CONTROLLED LAND

There is a concern that some redevelopment on NCA-controlled land has not produced the public domain outcomes expected in the centre. Footpaths have not been provided in some areas and requirements for building frontage to key streets have not been enforced. This has resulted in dirt tracks and unused areas.

The current height limit of RL 613.7 metres on the NCA-controlled land is partly to ensure no buildings will be above the Cameron Offices (RL 614.0 metres). Due to the existing topography, this will result in building heights ranging between five and eight storeys. Given the recommended higher building heights on adjacent sites through this master plan, it would be appropriate to work with the NCA to review the RL 613.7 metres requirement to ensure height controls remain relevant.

## 3.7 BUILDING DESIGN AND HEIGHT

### 3.7.1 HISTORY

The initial development of Cameron Offices, Benjamin Offices and Westfield Belconnen provided the centre with a low scale, dispersed character. This was at odds with the original intention of a dense, active core area.

Construction of the service trades area began in 1974. Development within this area was tightly regulated with consistent building design and materials. This consistency provided unity but limited variety and features such as effective awnings.

The residential areas of Emu Ridge and Totterdell Street, developed during the late 1980s, were generally limited to two storeys. The Emu Ridge townhouses were notable as an interpretation of historic Sydney terraces; however, the area's layout has resulted in a poor streetscape.

The centre's development trajectory can be described in four main phases:

DEVELOPMENT PHASE	MASTER PLANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1970–1980:</b> first period of major development within the centre, guided by the 1968 and 1975 master plans</li> <li>• <b>1980–2005:</b> catchment population stabilises and development in the centre slows</li> <li>• <b>2005–2015:</b> second major phase of development in the centre, including large-scale residential apartment developments and the expansion of Westfield Belconnen</li> <li>• <b>2016–2021:</b> new phase of human scale urban development and continued expansion of the new residential and commercial role of the centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1968 master plan:</b> according to distinctly modernist planning principles. Use-based precincts, large arterial boulevards with limited local access, overhead pedestrian walkways connecting buildings, central bus interchange and busway, large-scale commercial office development, large areas of surface car parking</li> <li>• <b>1975 master plan:</b> retail mall proposed in current location</li> <li>• <b>1986 master plan:</b> proposed improved street-based pedestrian amenity and development of the Emu Bank area.</li> <li>• <b>2001 master plan:</b> proposed major reconfiguration of the bus interchange and removal of the pedestrian overhead walkways. Some changes proposed to primary road network within the centre, within the 'superblock' structure</li> <li>• <b>2016 master plan:</b> encouraging integrated, walkable precincts, active destination areas, better cycle connections and integration with the University of Canberra.</li> </ul>

### 3.7.2 TALLER BUILDINGS



**Figure 12:** 1974 Model indicating towers in the core area

The centre was always intended to have a variety of building heights and forms. The core area and taller buildings were intended to be located along the central ridge, adjacent to Chandler Street, with large floor area offices and carparks in the valleys. This emphasised the area’s topography and gave prominence to the central core.

Modelling of the centre undertaken in 1974 indicated four towers ranging in height from 13 to 20 storeys (**Figure 12**).

Ensuring the landscape remained the dominant visual factor was a key consideration of the NCDC. The 1964 book *The Future Canberra* states ‘The districts would be built in adjoining valleys and the intervening hilltops and ridges would be preserved in their natural state. This would give every resident of Canberra a view of tree-clad hills’.

“THE CENTRE WAS ALWAYS INTENDED TO HAVE A VARIETY OF BUILDING HEIGHTS AND FORMS.”

The 1975 policy document, *A Land Use Plan for the ACT*, identified the landscape qualities of Canberra and included the statement ‘the strongest impression of Canberra is that of a set of buildings rising from the trees and silhouetted against the distant range’.

Submissions to the 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Draft Master Plan recommended towers be constructed to mark the centre and make it ‘feel’ like a town centre. The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan suggested several locations where ‘higher development is encouraged’ but remained silent on maximum heights beyond development being ‘to desired future character’ and limiting overshadowing impacts.

The first taller residential building, *Altitude*, was completed in 2013. At 18 storeys, and in the area originally intended for taller buildings, it is considered a good example of higher density residential development. It provides a high quality verge and street trees, increased surveillance of the skate park and Chandler Street and included an upgrade to the adjacent public open space.

Existing building heights are shown in **Map 13** and include *Altitude* (18 storeys) and the *Sentinel* Apartments (20 storeys). Other approved development includes the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets (up to 16 storeys), Westfield Belconnen (up to 24 storeys) and the *Wayfarer* (27 storeys). These developments are dispersed and several are in positions which are considered 'marker' buildings.

Taller residential buildings are a substantial investment and indicate confidence in the future of the centre. They have increased the number of residents in the centre and improved the public domain and perception of safety within the centre. They provide employment during construction and ongoing benefits to local businesses. While these buildings have resulted in some overshadowing, the impact is considered minor.

When determining heights, a range of factors has been considered, including previous policy, sites suitable for additional taller development, the long-term demand for additional residential development, overshadowing impacts, the desired streetscape and the view of the centre from surrounding areas. A key consideration is how taller buildings in the centre relate to the surrounding landscape and topography, as detailed in the visual impact analysis in **Figure 13**.

During the first stage of community engagement on issues to inform development of the draft Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, a variety of opinion on building heights was received, including general acceptance of the height of buildings already constructed (*Altitude* and *Sentinel*). The draft master plan provided maximum heights for all sites in the centre, up to a maximum of 27 storeys on some sites. Consultation on the draft master plan resulted in an even split, with approximately a third of respondents considering the suggested heights were too high, a third considering them about right and another third considering them to be too low. There were also requests for a consideration of height increases on particular sites, which were carefully considered.

Given community opinion, the capacity for additional development within the centre and the visual analysis, it was decided to generally retain the height limits suggested in the draft master plan.

*Bridge on main path from the University of Canberra*



Map 13: Existing building heights



## VISUAL IMPACT OF EXISTING TALLER BUILDINGS

### MT PAINTER LOOKING NORTH (A)

As indicated in **Figure 13**, the centre core sits in a slight valley, with higher land to the east, south and west. While the taller buildings are visible from the south and west, they sit within the wider landscape and are not prominent.

### BAINTON PLACE, MELBA, LOOKING SOUTH (B)

Views of the centre from the north and east are generally only available from higher areas or open space. The view from the side of Mt Rogers at Melba indicates current heights sit below the Aranda / Cook ridgeline and are dominated by adjacent hills and the Brindabellas beyond.

### CRISP CIRCUIT, BRUCE, LOOKING WEST (C)

Where taller buildings are visible from the east, such as the side of Gossan Hill, they are more prominent. However current heights are at about the same level as Mt Rogers and the Brindabellas.

### GINNINDERRA DRIVE, LOOKING SOUTH (D)

Views of the centre are most prominent at Ginninderra Drive Bridge. Although Mt Painter provides a prominent backdrop, taller buildings tend to dominate this view.

These images demonstrate the current heights are generally contained by the surrounding landscape. If heights were doubled, for example, buildings would break through the landscape horizon and dominate the view.

Key heights in the centre are:

- the *Altitude* apartments—18 storeys, RL 648.5 metres
- the *Sentinel* apartments—20 storeys, RL 642.6 metres
- the *Wayfarer* apartments—27 storeys, RL 664.35 metres

Mount Painter is at RL 741 metres and Mount Rogers is at RL 704 metres. The prescribed airspace for Canberra Airport above the centre is at 720 metres.

The location of suitable sites for new higher level development is constrained when the issues of existing development, NCA requirements and minimising overshadowing is taken into account.

Apart from the sites where higher level development has already been approved, future higher level development within the town centre is generally limited to:

- Block 17, Section 152
- Block 1, Section 200 (48)
- Block 15, Section 45
- Block 16, Section 45.

Other sites where redevelopment may occur but height is considered constrained by the relationship to surrounding buildings include:

- Block 1, Section 151
- Section 23, fronting onto Lathlain Street
- Blocks 43 – 49, Section 55.

## 3.7.3 BUILDING DESIGN

The centre contains a few examples of exceptional or innovative architecture, and has a good representation of architectural styles of the past 40 years. Retaining these layers of history adds character and will be important as the centre grows. Recent buildings such as the *Linq* apartments and ABS House have a considered design and material choice, adding character and high quality design outcomes to the centre.

This master plan seeks to address some key issues in terms of building height and design:

- The Territory Plan provides for minimum acceptable outcomes, rather than encouraging best practice design. Consideration should be given to more explicit controls and providing incentives to encourage design quality.
- The *Altitude* apartments provide a high quality streetscape to Chandler Street and *library walk* between Chandler Street and Emu Bank, which improve the appearance and value of the development, benefiting the whole community. Future developments should be encouraged to provide similar public domain improvements.
- Podiums are now the preferred method of providing carparks, but need to be well designed and provide surveillance to main pedestrian routes.
- Other aspects requiring clarity through the precinct code include pedestrian shelter, active frontages and the relationship with surrounding buildings.

**Figure 13:** Analysis of town centre's form in the landscape



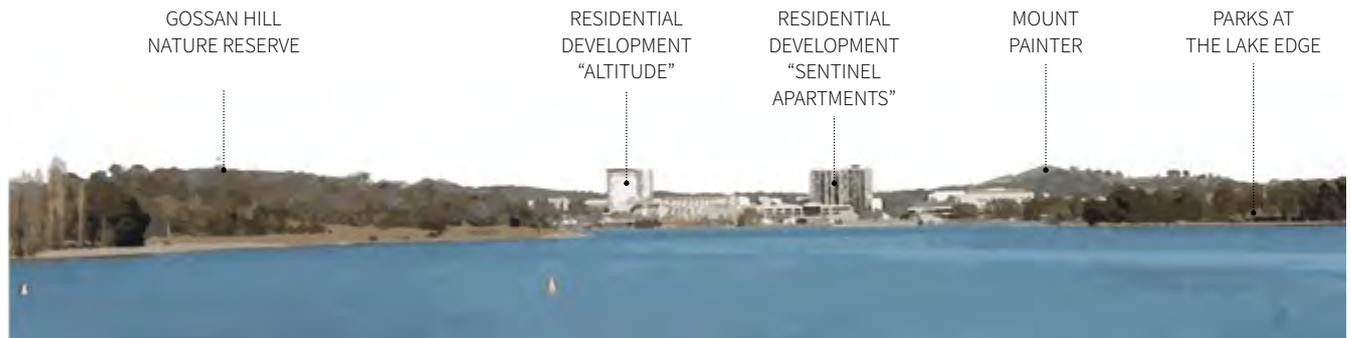
*Mt Painter looking north (A)*



*Bainton Place, Melba, looking south (B)*



*Crisp Circuit, Bruce, looking west (C)*



*Ginninderra Drive, looking south (D)*

### 3.8 PUBLIC SAFETY

A perception that a place is unsafe leads to areas becoming inactive and can encourage people to drive rather than walk or cycle. ACT Policing consider the perception of public safety could be improved, despite their figures showing a low level of incidents reported within the centre.

The closure of the Belconnen bus interchange in 2009 is considered to have significantly reduced the number of crime-related incidents in the centre. Most incidents are now considered by the ACT Policing to be between people who know each other.

The adoption of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles when designing areas can greatly improve the perception of safety. For example, the Belconnen Skate Park combines a good facility and lighting, adjacent active uses and passive surveillance from nearby apartments and traffic. This has resulted in an area that young people feel safe using until well after dark.

During consultation on issues to inform the master plan, the community raised concerns about the safety at night of several specific areas in the centre. Many of these concerns are also related to improving the walkability of the town centre:

- People felt unsafe when crossing from the lake pedestrian bridge to the library, and when walking along the lake at Emu Bank and John Knight Memorial Park.
- The lack of lighting to underpasses, such as under Coulter Drive to Page, deters people from using them.
- A lack of activity and passive surveillance to key areas, such as the lake side of Emu Bank and Margaret Timpson Park, deters use of these areas.

**Table 2** compares crime statistics between the city centre and Belconnen town centre.

**Table 2:** Crime statistics - ACT Policing

INCIDENT	BELCONNEN 2010	BELCONNEN 2016	CITY 2016
Homicide	0	0	0
Sexual assault	0	2	7
Burglary	26	20	13
Theft	180	141	144
Property damage	74	50	37
Assault	40	21	87
Offence against a person	1	24	6
Robbery	4	3	2
Motor vehicle theft	16	4	7
Other	157	139	238
Traffic infringement	173	107	108

“...THE EMU INLET AND EASTERN VALLEY WAY INLET HAS IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF WATER FLOWING INTO THE LAKE.”

## 3.9 ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### 3.9.1 AREAS OF ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

While there are no major biodiversity constraints within the area, there are remnant patches of endangered Box-Gum Woodland (listed as critically endangered nationally) and endangered Natural Temperate Grassland. These areas are potential habitat of three threatened animal species, the Perunga Grasshopper, Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard. **Map 14** indicates where these species have been recorded, along with threatened plant and bird locations.

#### LAKE GINNINDERRA

The shrubs and trees around Lake Ginninderra are utilised by the Crested Shrike-tit and White Winged Triller, while Iron-bark plantings at Weedon Close and the AIS provide a food resource to the nationally threatened Superb Parrot and Regent Honeyeater. Superb Parrots have also been sighted in trees along Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way.

Recent work at the Emu Inlet and Eastern Valley Way Inlet has improved the quality of water flowing into the lake. Further work could be considered, including improving the run-off from the service trades area to the lake.

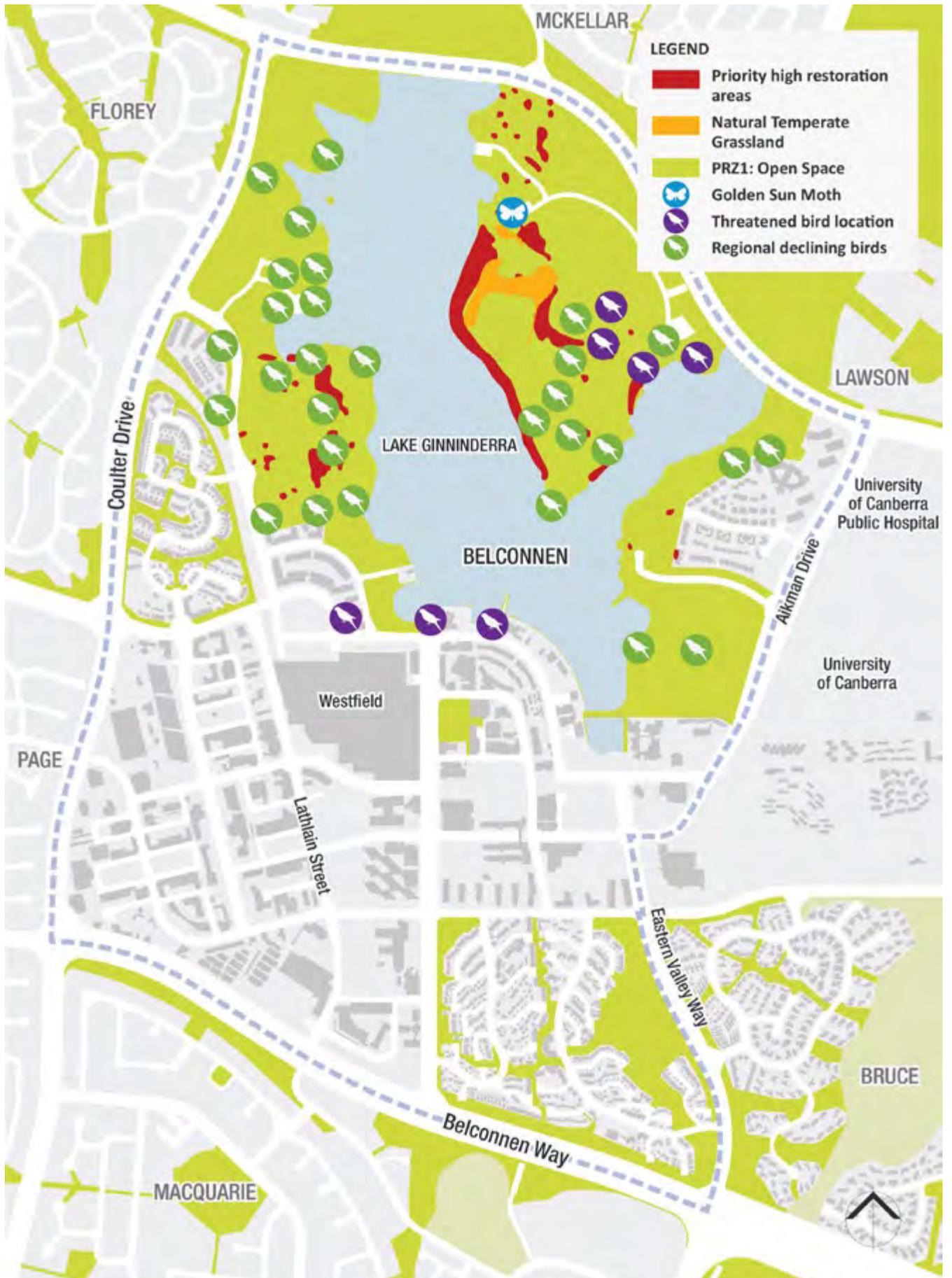
The lake is formed by damming the Ginninderra Creek, which flows from Gungahlin and connects with the Murrumbidgee River. Two minor creek lines feed into the lake from the south along with stormwater from several surrounding suburbs.

The 2001 Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan recommended a water quality control pond and a new gross pollutant trap be constructed on the disused Eastern Valley Way oval, however this has not been constructed due to the Eastern Valley Way Inlet and wetland being considered a better alternative. Depending on the success of the new wetland, the Eastern Valley Way water quality control pond and new gross pollutant trap could be given further consideration. The current gross pollutant trap on Eastern Valley Way is difficult and expensive to clean, with a new facility further upstream potentially providing significant savings.

### 3.9.2 HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

The ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013–23 aims to enhance the resilience of natural areas on a broad scale. This strategy proposes a range of measures to enhance habitat connectivity and ecosystem function and the biodiversity value of urban areas. Mapping has been undertaken to identify areas of significance. **Map 14** illustrates the priority restoration areas and areas of ecological value close to Lake Ginninderra.

Map 14: Ecological value



### 3.10 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is critical to the landscaped and built environment. ACT Government policies and strategies provide guidance for integrating sustainability measures into our urban environment.

The following are key environmental sustainability principles to be considered in the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan and its implementation.

- **Climate change**

Responding to climate change takes two forms:

- > Mitigation—reduce greenhouse gas emissions by minimising use of fossil fuels for heating, cooling and transport, and increase the efficiency of energy use.
- > Adaptation—adapt the urban environment to be resilient to the risk of a changing climate.

- **Resources consumption**

- > Reduce the amount of land used for the growing city with urban renewal and intensification.
- > Reduce the amount of energy and water used in urban environments and invest in living (green) infrastructure.
- > Respect and conserve natural and cultural heritage.
- > Respect and conserve the significant landscapes and its features.
- > Enhance biodiversity with habitat connectivity.

- **Buildings**

- > Improve the design and construction of buildings.
- > Increase choice in housing to meet diverse needs.

- **Urban planning and design**

- > Reduce reliance on private vehicles.
- > Create opportunities for social interactions.
- > Integrate passive solar design principles into building and site design.
- > Reduce the heat island effect in urban areas and improve microclimate through landscape design.

Master plans provide opportunities to address climate change adaptation at a place-specific scale. The projections for the ACT and region are for an increasingly hotter and drier climate with more extreme weather events. The place-based risks to people and assets from a hotter and drier climate are heat, severe storms (flash flooding) and bushfire.

To address these risks, the interventions may include:

1. Reduce city heat and increase amenity in outdoor spaces for healthy living
  - > Increase shade trees to roadways and carparks.
  - > Use light coloured pavements.
  - > Increase shade to pathways and parklands for human comfort and wellbeing.
  - > Include seats and drinking fountains with water bottle recharge taps.
  - > Increase use of vegetation.
2. Reduce city heat and achieve cooler buildings
  - > Design buildings, streets and parks to be ‘climate wise’. This means improving the design and choice of materials for the built environment to lessen the effects of climate change.
  - > Use solar passive design.
  - > Use light coloured materials.
  - > Introduce green infrastructure such as green roofs and walls.
3. Intense rain events
  - > Reduce runoff from impermeable surfaces within the sub-catchment.
  - > Capture and use rainwater/stormwater in redevelopment projects.
  - > Retrofit roadside kerb and gutter systems using water sensitive urban design (WSUD).
4. Reduce the risk of bushfire in urban areas
  - > Initiate an asset protection zone.
  - > Ensure no continuity of fuel from the ground to the crown of the tree.
  - > Plan for emergency service access.

The following opportunities were identified to incorporate environmental sustainability measures in the master plan.

## “A DISTRICT ENERGY SYSTEM IN THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE COULD PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE CLEANER ENERGY FOR THE CENTRE AND CONTRIBUTE TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.”

### 3.10.1 ENERGY

The stated objectives of the ACT Sustainable Energy Policy 2011–20 are to achieve reliable and affordable energy, smarter use of energy, cleaner energy and growth in the clean economy.

A district energy system could contribute to achieving these objectives and be commercially viable with a commercial/residential development or expansion. District energy systems produce electrical energy locally and use ‘waste heat’ from electricity generation to heat and cool buildings.

Electricity and/or thermal energy is generated close to where it is used. Energy systems such as cogeneration (electricity and heat) or trigeneration (electricity, heat and cooling) need the combination of commercial and residential uses to be efficient, as the peak load for commercial is during the day and the peak load for residential is generally out of hours. The use of such energy systems can achieve social, economic and environmental benefits.

A district energy system in the Belconnen town centre could provide an alternative cleaner energy for the centre and contribute to a sustainable future. Further investigations would be required to determine if a district energy system would be viable, how it could be delivered and in context of future budgets.

### 3.10.2 WATER

Water is an important natural resource that is under significant pressure from population growth and climatic conditions. There is also a need to reduce broader social, economic and environmental costs associated with potable water distribution.

The irrigation for a number of playing fields in the ACT has been switched off due to water restrictions for potable water.

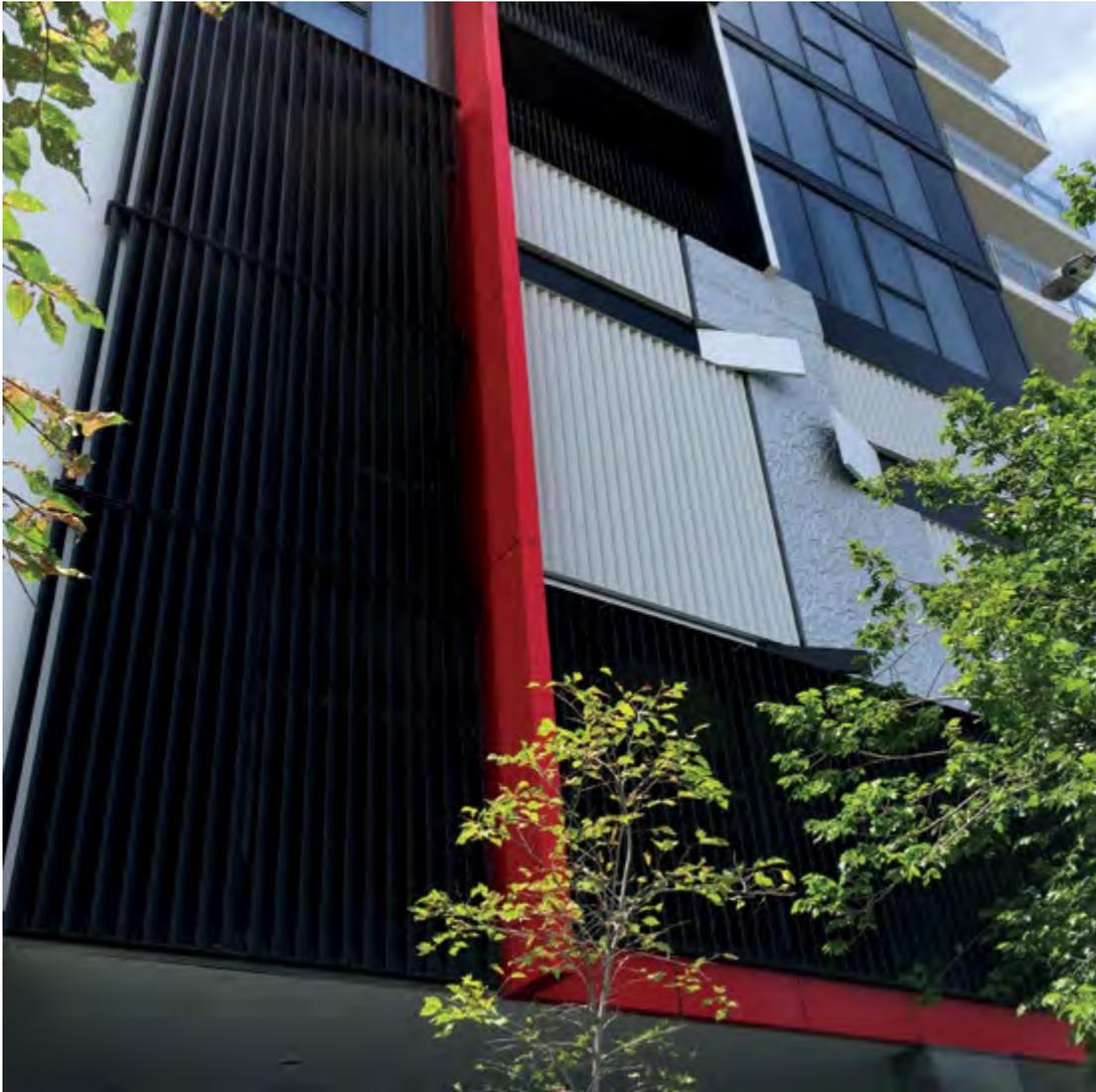
Potable water consumption for domestic or commercial use could be minimised if other solutions were investigated, such as using stormwater.

### 3.10.3 HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

An urban heat island is a metropolitan area which is significantly warmer than its surrounding areas. The main cause of the heat island effect is the materials that store and radiate heat to surrounding areas such as concrete and bitumen.

Thermal comfort can significantly change the way we use outdoor areas. Urban environments, such as the Belconnen town centre, contain significant areas of concrete and asphalt in the roads and footpaths. Higher temperatures may be acceptable in the cooler months, but some urban environments can become uncomfortable in summer.

The built environment can be designed to reduce the urban heat island effect with the use of lighter building materials, permeable paving materials and by increasing shade for summer with shading structures and trees on main pedestrian routes and public places.



### 3.11 INFRASTRUCTURE

An infrastructure capacity study was undertaken to determine if the existing services were able to support the additional residential development proposed in the centre. Study outcomes indicate there are no immediate constraints to development, although future improvements are proposed to sewer, stormwater, electricity and gas in the town centre area.

The ACT Government recently introduced free Wi-Fi along Emu Bank and the Belconnen Skate Park, providing a significant benefit to people using the area and in turn local businesses. A further improvement to infrastructure which will also bring important advantages for business in the centre will be the introduction of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

# 4. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE MAIN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE ARE OUTLINED BELOW AND INDICATED IN MAP 15 AND MAP 16. THIS LIST HAS BEEN INFORMED BY ISSUES RAISED DURING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND BACKGROUND STUDIES. WHILE NOT EXHAUSTIVE, IT PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR DEVELOPING THIS MASTER PLAN AND SUBSEQUENT REVISION TO THE BELCONNEN PRECINCT CODE.

## 4.1 CHALLENGES

### 4.1.1 TOWN CENTRE EMPLOYMENT

Any future relocation of the Australian Government employment out of the centre could have a critical impact on businesses in the town centre. A reduced employment base is currently a challenge faced by other town centres in Canberra and highlights the need to diversify employment opportunities. Belconnen is in a good position to meet this challenge with significant adjacent institutions, and space for additional development.

### 4.1.2 POOR CONNECTIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

Despite being within walking distance, the centre and the university are connected by only two formal footpaths. To effectively achieve the economic and employment potential offered by this relationship, the town centre and the university need to be much better integrated. Recent legislative changes will enable the university to develop a wide range of uses, including commercial and residential. It is important these uses are planned to integrate with the centre.

### 4.1.3 PARKING NEARING CAPACITY

Parking issues were raised by the community during both stages of consultation and through the Belconnen Community Council's survey. While it is important to ensure sufficient parking for people who need it, a more balanced approach is required to the provision of parking.

As the centre matures, the ability to provide large amounts of low-cost parking is reducing. Providing parking is a significant cost for developers and property purchasers, and influences the viability of development proposals.

Significant parking issues include ensuring sufficient provision of both long and short-stay spaces and managing peak demands at Westfield Belconnen. The demand for long-stay carparks currently exceeds the available capacity, resulting in commuters using short-stay service trades spaces and residential streets. This reduces the parking available for local businesses. Suitable sites for structured long-stay carparks need to be identified.

While the Emu Bank area has sufficient parking, it dominates the area and the current parking requirements restrict possible redevelopment. Sufficient parking choices must be provided to ensure the on-going viability of the area. One option is to relocate parking to an off-site structure to enable redevelopment, however there is a lack of suitable ACT Government-owned sites where this could be the required use.

Westfield Belconnen's peak demand can reach 98% of capacity. However, large carparks nearby at Lathlain Street are at only 21% of capacity at this time. Better knowledge of these would be assisted by a 'smart parking' initiative.

Map 15: Challenges



#### 4.1.4 LIMITED OR POOR QUALITY PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN THE CORE AREA

The centre has a large amount of open space around the lake and through Emu Ridge, which provides a valuable resource for the community. However, zoned open space within the core area is limited to Margaret Timpson Park.

Areas of open space in Oatley Court and Walder Street are on blocks which may be sold for development. Similarly, open space on the Belconnen Way and Coulter Drive perimeter is zoned for transport use and may be required for additional roadworks. Ensuring remaining opportunities for open space are retained will become increasingly important as the centre continues to grow.

Margaret Timpson Park is Belconnen's 'municipal' space, but suffers from a lack of use. The park will become increasingly important as more people live in the centre, including children. The central town centre area currently provides no children's play areas or equipment. Margaret Timpson Park is an ideal place to provide children's play areas, possibly incorporating water play, which would also attract people from outside the area.

The public domain in the centre is generally characterised by fragmented built form and poorly defined public spaces. Large open carpark areas, wide roads, and large disconnected buildings dominate the public domain in many parts of the centre. The service trades areas, with a finer grain and street-oriented buildings, offers better elements for well-defined street-based public domain, but this is not realised due to poor pedestrian infrastructure. This presents a major challenge to the creation of attractive and active public spaces.

#### 4.1.5 A POOR PERCEPTION OF BELCONNEN AS A DESTINATION

Belconnen town centre has good restaurants, bars and locations, yet lacks a clear destination and an inviting urban quality. The centre requires the brand recognition that other places have—such as New Acton or Braddon—if it is to compete with these locations.

#### 4.1.6 A LACK OF FEATURES TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Canberra's climate is predicted to become warmer and drier into the future, with less frequent but more severe rainfall events. The centre must have the resilience to respond to the impact of these conditions. Ensuring the centre is cool and attractive during hot periods will reduce possible health problems and increase the centre's appeal.

#### 4.1.7 TRAFFIC CONGESTION

The centre's entry and exit points become congested during the morning and afternoon peak periods, particularly along Ginninderra Drive, Aikman Drive, Luxton Street and Joynton Smith Drive. A number of intersections within a relatively short distance are beginning to create issues for traffic on Nettlefold Street between Coulter Drive and Cohen Street, as well as for several areas of Lathlain Street, particularly near Belconnen Way.

“THE CENTRE HAS A LARGE AMOUNT OF OPEN SPACE AROUND THE LAKE AND THROUGH EMU RIDGE, WHICH PROVIDES A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR THE COMMUNITY.”

## 4.2 OPPORTUNITIES

### 4.2.1 ATTRACT MORE PEOPLE TO LIVE IN THE TOWN CENTRE

The residential population of the centre is predicted to grow from 6020 in 2015 to 8450 by 2031. Targeting growth within town centres reduces redevelopment demands within the suburbs, prevents further urban sprawl and allows people easy access to employment, retail, transport and other services. The ACT Planning Strategy recognises these advantages and includes the policy for 50% of new housing to be delivered through urban intensification. Growth within the centre provides greater housing choice and additional services, which benefits the greater Belconnen district.

### 4.2.2 IMPROVE CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN LINKS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE

Constructing clear and safe cycle and pedestrian links across the centre and cycle facilities will encourage more people to walk or cycle to the centre, meeting healthy living and sustainable development policy goals of the ACT Government. Better connections received significant support during both stages of consultation, including utilising the former Joynton Smith busway as a cycle path. As indicated in **Map 26**, this could provide a clear cycle path linking the Florey shops to Westfield Belconnen, the bus station, the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets and Jamison. This also has potential to create a 'place' rather than just a thoroughfare by considered design and landscaping.

There is potential to create a clear cycle connection between the suburb of Macquarie and the lake along Benjamin Way through either separated, one-way cycle lanes or utilising the wide median. A two-way cycle path between the median trees would provide a memorable cycling experience.

Improved cycling access along College Street and through the University of Canberra would provide a safe east-west connection through the centre from the university, Radford College, Fern Hill and the AIS. Cycle paths exist along some sections of College Street but end abruptly, creating unsafe conditions for cyclists when navigating vehicular traffic.

Pedestrian connections into the centre require improvement in places, particularly from the University of Canberra. Consideration is required of aspects such as pedestrian desire lines, the amenity of main routes including shade and weather protection, passive surveillance of main routes and safety, particularly lighting. The legibility of main routes requires improvement; main paths should be clear and wide, unlike several of the current paths, which are often narrow with a variety of surfaces and damage, and where driveways take priority.

Better consideration is required of the quality of paving within the centre; narrow paths with thin grass verges are no longer a suitable outcome for a town centre.

### 4.2.3 EXPAND THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

The growth of the centre will provide opportunities to expand the local public transport network. This includes the possible connection of light rail from the city centre to Belconnen and Kippax. Feasibility and alignment studies will inform how and where light rail will travel through the centre if it is deemed feasible.

Improved bus facilities are also likely to be required on the eastern side of the centre to cater for the increasing numbers of residents.

### 4.2.4 ENCOURAGE WELL-DESIGNED BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC DOMAIN

Well-designed buildings and public domain will attract more people and further investment in the centre, as well as providing lasting benefits to the wider community.

#### BUILDINGS

While taller buildings are generally accepted by the community in the centre, this is qualified by a need to ensure good design quality. Recent buildings generally achieve a high design quality; however, the Territory Plan currently provides for the minimum acceptable outcome and has few incentives to encourage or reward better quality design.

It is preferable to limit the amount of prescriptive controls to ensure innovation is achieved, although clarifying expected outcomes for new buildings can help achieve a better result.

Aspects which require consideration include:

- the appearance of taller buildings and how they relate to the street level
- encouraging a range of apartment buildings and dwelling types to encourage a broader range of households and incomes
- the design of balconies, podiums and communal open space
- clarifying height and setback controls and assessing potential overshadowing impacts
- active frontage requirements and the design of ground floor apartments
- encouraging sustainability features beyond standard requirements, such as on-site power generation, green walls, communal car schemes and reduced water use, and
- a variety of building heights on sites where several taller buildings are possible.

## PUBLIC DOMAIN

A clear hierarchy of public domain areas is required to ensure public domain improvements can be prioritised. Upgraded areas of open space should be coordinated with the main pedestrian routes and new developments into the future.

Places that people enjoy visiting often have similar key characteristics that should be incorporated into the centre to ensure its public domain becomes a place where people want to be:

- Places are memorable, not just functional. Strengthen the area's existing character and provide opportunities for surprise and delight.
- Streets are enclosed with buildings and trees at a scale which feels comfortable.
- Places are provided for people to gather and socialise.
- Active shopfronts are more closely spaced in locations that are busy and attractive to customers.
- Awnings or colonnades that are consistent and connected are provided in main pedestrian areas.
- Key areas and streets have wider footpaths.
- Spaces feel safe with good lighting, surveillance and no entrapment spaces.

- Areas are legible—views are reinforced and way-finding features are provided, including signage or public art.
- Lighting is interesting, incorporating up-lighting into trees or lighting to artwork.
- Podium carparks are wrapped with offices or residential dwellings where they front onto key public spaces. Main footpaths and open space are overlooked by building users.
- Successful places are capable of holding events. The public domain should be able to have concerts, markets and community barbecues.
- There are no unused or left over areas.

## 4.2.5 DEVELOP SOLUTIONS FOR PARKING

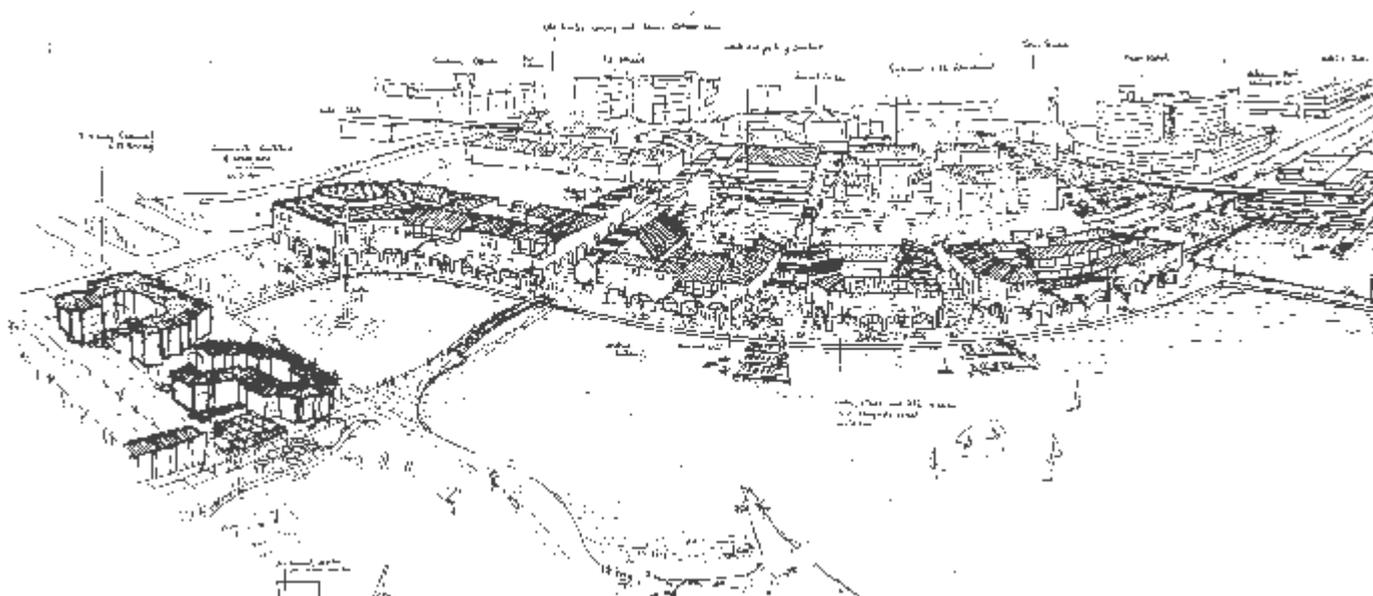
The possible introduction of 'smart parking' measures will allow more efficient use of existing parking spaces. Real-time signage detailing the number of parking spaces available could help reduce congestion within carparks and on surrounding roads.

There are other opportunities to make better use of under-utilised parking spaces, such as those to the rear of CISAC. The future provision of parking in the centre will largely be through the development of structured carparks run as viable commercial operations utilising the proposed 'smart parking' initiative.

The centre still has some opportunities to locate viable structured carparks, as identified on **Map 27**. It is important the use of these sites for public carparks, combined with other uses, is given serious consideration.

## 4.2.6 PRESERVE THE QUALITY OF LAKE GINNINDERRA

Lake Ginninderra and its surrounds are highly valued by the community and provide an attractive point of difference over other urban areas. The qualities and diversity of areas around the lake need to be preserved and strengthened to maintain the lake's attractiveness, recreation facilities, habitat potential and business viability. Providing better pedestrian and cycle connections to the lake will enable better utilisation of the lake's features.



**Figure 14:** Emu Bank, 1983 Roger Johnson sketch (courtesy of Neil Renfree)

#### 4.2.7 WIDE STREETS

Streets in the centre are wide, often with median strips. This provides a great opportunity for separated cycle lanes, onroad parking and attractive landscaping within the street. This reduces the need to impact on narrow verges, which may also require the relocation of services.

Wide streets are also better able to accommodate taller buildings while still feeling comfortable.

#### 4.2.8 CONFIDENCE IS ENCOURAGING INVESTMENT

The level of investment in the centre by both government and private developers indicates a clear confidence in the future of the centre. People are choosing to live in the centre over competing locations because of the attractive outlook and amenities provided within Belconnen. This is also reflected in the feedback provided by the community, with a number of respondents commenting they are pleased with how the town centre is developing.

This places the centre in a good position to attract further investment.

#### 4.2.9 ENABLING ATTRACTIVE DESTINATIONS

To meet the challenge of a lack of clear ‘brand’ or destination, opportunities presented by existing locations in Belconnen should be strengthened and utilised more effectively. There are two areas indicated in **Map 16** that have significant potential to become better destinations:

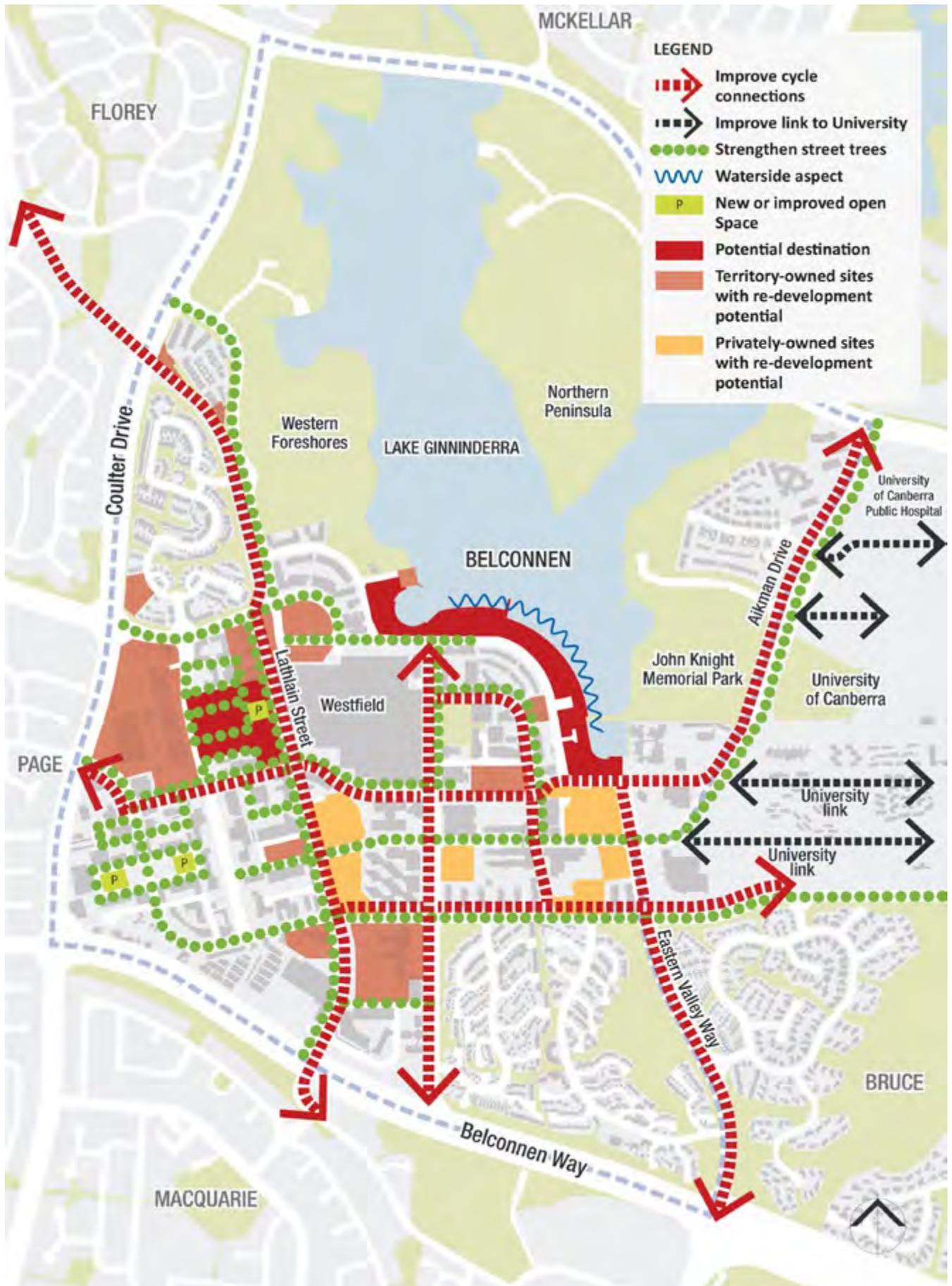
##### EMU BANK

The Foreshore precinct, including Emu Bank, presents a clear opportunity to add to the existing venues and utilise the attractive outlook to provide a quality outdoor dining precinct that could attract patrons from across Canberra.

Emu Bank was always intended as a busy entertainment area. Sketches prepared in 1983 by Roger Johnson were used to show how the area should develop (**Figure 14**). These indicate three storey buildings containing clubs, offices and residences, as well as a parking structure.

TCCS have completed the first stage of improvements to Emu Inlet, reconfiguring the shoreline and providing new landscaping. The second stage of improvements will complement work proposed by artsACT to provide a shared path on the lake side of the Arts Centre and the proposal by the Land Development Agency to sell the former water police site on Block 1 Section 149.

Map 16: Opportunities



Issues with the design of the Emu Bank commercial precinct are covered at section 3.4.8. These issues require close consideration to ensure any changes result in an attractive and viable destination.

## LATHLAIN STREET

The development of the bus station and more active frontages at Westfield Belconnen, along with the new community health centre, has shifted the core area of activity in the centre from Benjamin Way to Lathlain Street.

The future redevelopment of the former Belconnen Police Station and remand centre and the proposed relocation and redevelopment of the ambulance and fire brigade sites present an opportunity for Lathlain Street to develop as a more traditional main shopping street for Belconnen, providing benefits for the wider area. This would not replace Benjamin Way as the centre's most important street.

The Belconnen Community Service and Belconnen Library are both seeking relocation due to issues with convenient access and running costs. The library in particular has poor access to car parking and public transport. Redevelopment at Lathlain Street could facilitate the relocation of these uses, bringing community services closer to the main shopping area, public transport and parking. This area may also be suitable for a distant future relocation of the CIT from its Bruce campus.

Together with the long-term reconfiguration or redevelopment of the bus depot, the area's proximity to public transport, retail and services will enable it to support a much broader range of uses and buildings than currently provided.

# 5. THE MASTER PLAN

## 5.1 MASTER PLAN STRUCTURE

The master plan structure in **Figure 15** indicates how the planning strategies and policies support achievement of the vision and principles. **Figure 16** indicates some of the key master plan assumptions that were used to develop the principles and planning strategies.

## 5.2 VISION

The vision for the Belconnen town centre has been developed with feedback from the community. It captures what is valued about the centre and sets out what the centre could be in the future.

BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE'S FEATURES AND POTENTIAL SET IT APART FROM OTHER PLACES. THE LAKE, OPEN SPACES, LAYOUT AND NEARBY INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE UNIQUE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVANTAGES. THESE WILL BE IMPROVED AND STRENGTHENED TO ENSURE THE TOWN CENTRE IS AN ATTRACTIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND DESIRABLE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK AND ENJOY.

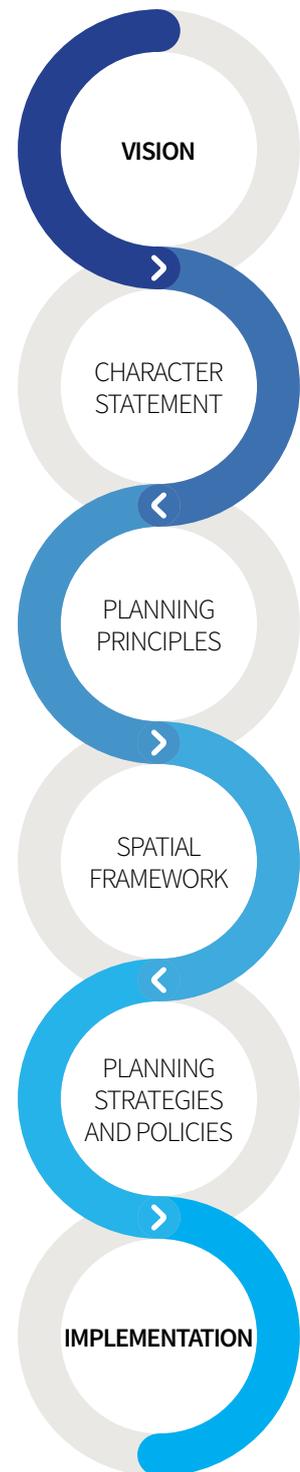
## 5.3 CHARACTER STATEMENT

Belconnen town centre's character has grown strongly and resiliently over the years. The centre has evolved into a place of choice, culture and variety. The arts centre, library, gymnasiums, ten pin bowling alley, skaters, restaurants, meetings, parks, cinemas, shops, clubs, workers, basketball stadium, Lake, dog walkers and artwork are helping make the centre a place people now want to live in, as well as work or visit.

The centre's evolving character is partly due to more diverse uses developing in areas that were previously only carparks or offices. Several clear precincts are emerging, as shown in **Map 17**, based on the established land use zones. These are described below.

- **Cameron Avenue precinct**—will undergo significant change from largely surface carparks to an area dominated by well designed taller residential development. This also offers an opportunity to provide better integration with the University of Canberra.
- **Retail and Office precinct**—will continue to provide important shopping and employment facilities, particularly with Westfield Belconnen, the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets and Australian Government offices. Employment demands may result in the construction of additional office buildings to front onto Lathlain Street.

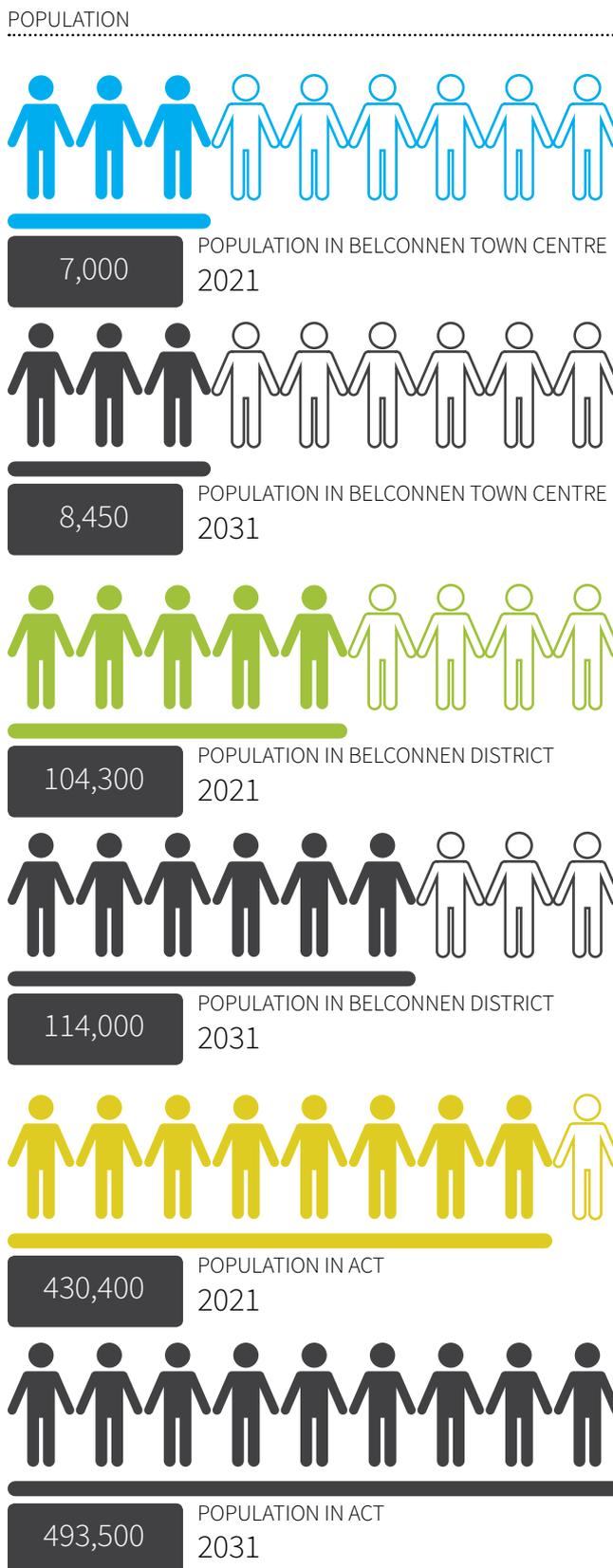
**Figure 15:** Master plan structure



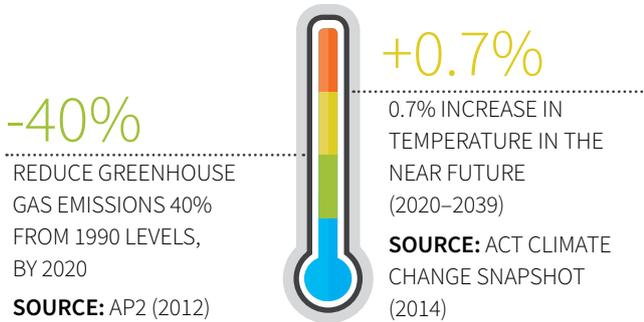
- **Foreshore precinct**—the opportunities provided by its northern outlook over the lake and existing diverse mix of uses, together with further improvements to the arts centre and Emu Inlet Park, will make this area become a key destination for Canberra. While stronger links to Margaret Timpson Park, the higher density residential area and the existing lakeside shared path will allow more people to enjoy the precinct, planning controls will require careful consideration.
- **Service trades precinct**—this will improve and should be promoted as the key location for small business, service trades and live music venues. Residential development may conflict with established uses and should be avoided for the time being.
- **Residential living precincts**—these will continue to provide a choice of medium density and aged care housing, and will benefit from being close to the increasing benefits and amenity of the town centre.
- **Community recreation and parkland precinct**—will remain as a district level environmental and recreational resource.
- **Margaret Timpson precinct**—will remain the formal core area of the centre with a wide mix of facilities. The use of the park will increase as it becomes the ‘front yard’ for the higher density residential area, with improved facilities and play areas. Additional residential uses will overlook the park and provide after-hours activity, making it safer.
- **Lathlain Street precinct**—will become an active area of the centre with an increased mix of business, community and residential uses following future comprehensive urban renewal.
- **University of Canberra precinct**—the integration of the University of Canberra with the town centre will ensure a more efficient, active and attractive town centre.

“BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE’S CHARACTER HAS GROWN STRONGLY AND RESILIENTLY OVER THE YEARS.”

Figure 16: Table of assumptions



ENVIRONMENT

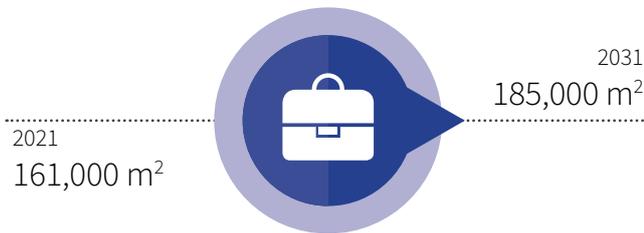


RETAIL

EMPLOYMENT IN THE ACT/QUEANBEYAN



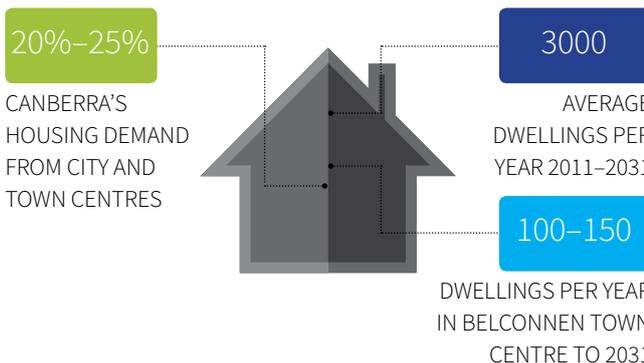
OFFICE FLOOR SPACE (GFA) - BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE



RETAIL FLOOR SPACE (GFA) - BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE



DWELLINGS



## 5.4 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The following planning principles are applied to guide the implementation of this master plan, its vision and strategies. The principles reflect the future desired outcomes for the centre. **Table 3** shows how the planning principles are supported by the planning strategies.

### 5.4.1 ENCOURAGE A MIX OF RESIDENTIAL, EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

The most active and successful urban places are those which are attractive, accessible and safe. They offer a choice and variety of complementary activities and land uses, which together generate street life throughout the day and week, encourage multi-purpose trips, and provide the economies of scale that support business activity. People want to visit or live in such places. More people in these places makes them more active and safer, and will further improve the area's character.

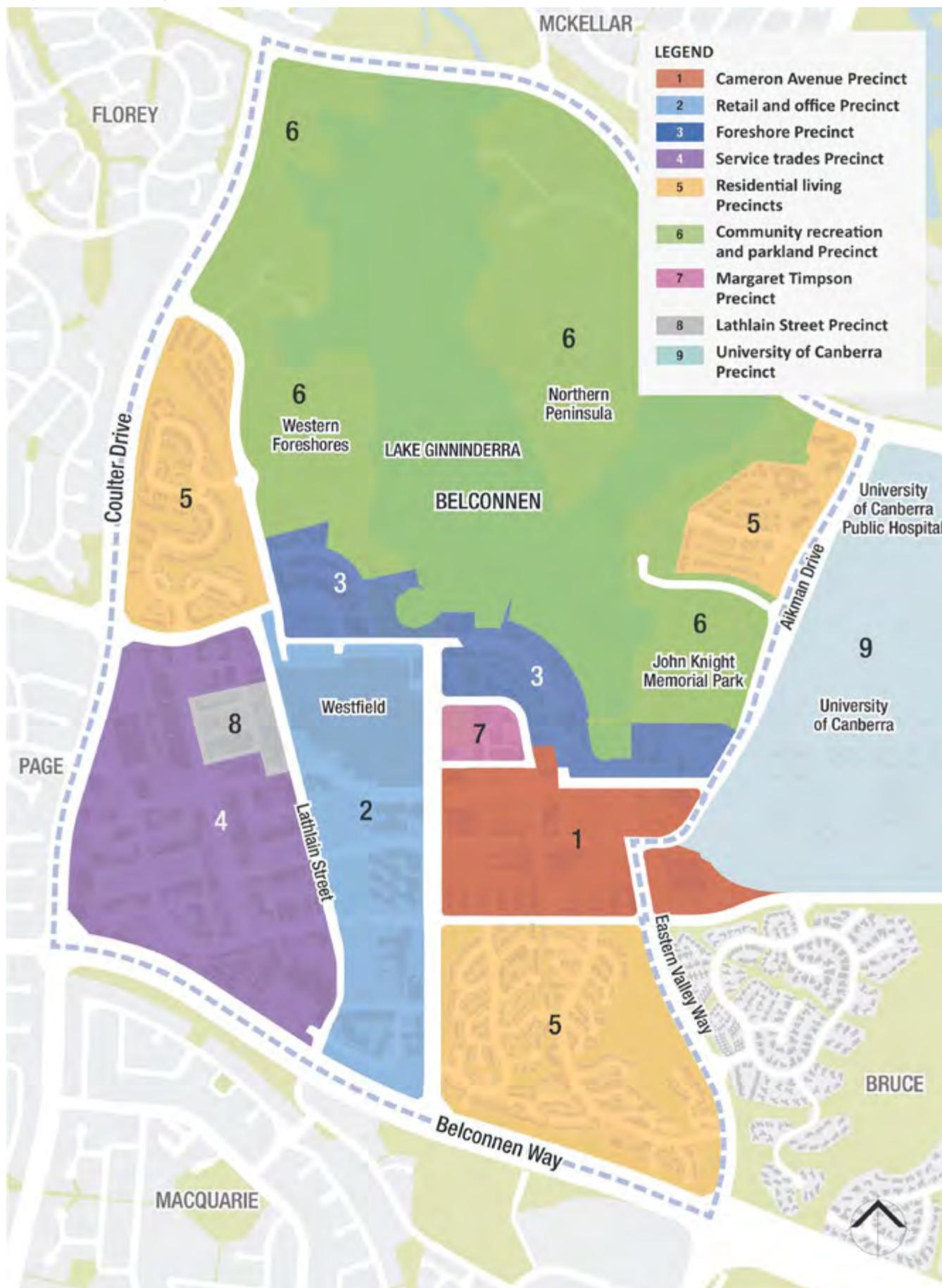
Belconnen town centre's advantages of location, amenities and a large surrounding population should be utilised to provide active destinations, particularly at Emu Bank. These will be supported by an improved public domain through features such as street furniture, paving, lighting and street trees.

Supporting a strong local community is a key factor in ensuring the 'liveability' of the centre. Taller residential developments are often criticised for a lack of 'community'; however, factors such as places to meet, gardens and community-run events can strengthen a community and help integrate new and existing residents.

The possibility of the centre losing a substantial part of its employment base highlighted the need to reinforce and diversify employment opportunities. Its relationship with the University of Canberra and other institutions provides significant economic advantages that have not been fully realised. Integrating the university and new University of Canberra Public Hospital with the centre will create opportunities for new employment and should be a priority.

A large number of businesses outside Westfield Belconnen provide substantial employment in the centre. However, these businesses lack a unified identity and marketing focus that could promote the area and allow it to compete more effectively. Other initiatives, such as establishing low-rent office space for business start-ups that are connected to high speed broadband, should be considered.

Map 17: Character precincts



Consideration of how and when development occurs on remaining vacant sites is important to ensure active destinations and enhance economic returns. This extends to considering the future of current office employment sites if Australian Government departments relocate.

### 5.4.2 TRANSITION TOWARDS A HUMAN SCALE AND INVITING PUBLIC DOMAIN

A central design principle for lively urban centres is that they are designed to respond to the 'human scale' and have an inviting and attractive public domain. Human scale refers to an urban environment that is sensitive and responsive to the proportions and sensory characteristics of human beings. For example, the most popular urban spaces are typically no wider than the distance at which human facial expressions are differentiable (about 20 metres). Aspects of the built environment that should respond to the human scale are dimensions of roads and public spaces, building heights and designs, distances people are required to walk to undertake their activities and streetscapes. Treatment at street level should contribute to the liveability and quality of the public domain.

The centre has a legacy of planning based on the requirements of cars, resulting in only a few human scale and inviting places within the centre. The master plan recommends strategies that promote this type of public space design to transition towards a more attractive and lively town centre.

### 5.4.3 GROW THE SHARE OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND PROVIDE BETTER PARKING MANAGEMENT

Growth in sustainable transport, including walking, cycling and bus travel, presents major opportunities for the centre, increases liveability and reduces the environmental impacts of transport. Sustainable transport is well-suited for access to the centre due to its efficiencies, low emissions and positive relationship to public life. Sustainable transport has diverse individual and public benefits including health and lifestyle benefits.

Sustainable transport requires a concerted effort, including support through land use and building design, traffic infrastructure, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, public transport service levels, and marketing and promotion. This could help improve cycling rates to the centre. At present, although a large number of people work in the centre and live within cycling distance, less than 2% cycle to work.

Safer roads, improved operation of some intersections and a refined public transport system that accommodates increased demand and the future possible provision of light rail are needed. Ensuring more efficient provision and usage of parking supply through measures including identifying locations for parking stations and implementing 'smart parking' can help create a safer and easier-to-navigate centre.

### 5.4.4 ENCOURAGE BUILT FORM THAT CONTRIBUTES POSITIVELY TO THE TOWN CENTRE.

The relationship of buildings to streets and open space is important to consider in the development of attractive and safe streetscapes. Buildings define urban spaces and add to their character, amenity and level of activity. Some recent buildings have successfully contributed to the centre; however, there should be better guidance to ensure better quality design and more coordinated outcomes.

Consideration of issues such as building heights, form, scale, setbacks, provision of awnings or colonnades, innovative building design and defining where active frontages are required would help ensure better quality built form and public spaces. In particular, a buildings' first six floors should serve to activate and provide passive surveillance of the public realm by means of residential balconies, occupied office space or other features. Other important considerations are the impact that taller buildings may have on wind tunnelling, overshadowing and their relationship with the surrounding landscape.

### 5.4.5 ENABLE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT TOWN CENTRE

Belconnen town centre provides an opportunity to help reduce Canberra's large ecological footprint and achieve a better environment.

The quality of stormwater flowing to the lake can be improved and areas around the lake enhanced for wildlife habitat and connectivity. The use of open space for activities, including community gardens, will be considered, and the community encouraged to take ownership of rehabilitation, maintenance and revegetation projects.

The construction of more energy-efficient buildings will be encouraged and planting of street trees will ensure the streets will be pleasant places on warmer days. Better infrastructure encourages more people to walk or cycle to work, and enables more efficient water use.

Map 18: Spatial framework



## 5.5 SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

The spatial framework (**Map 18**) sets out how the broad structure of the centre could be arranged in the long term. The spatial framework shows how land use, public domain and connections could be arranged and delivered.

The spatial framework recognises the challenges in the centre and brings together the opportunities, vision and planning principles to illustrate how the Belconnen town centre could change over the lifetime of this master plan.

**Table 3:** Summary of principles and strategies

PRINCIPLE	STRATEGY
Encourage a mix of residential, employment and other opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the development and renewal of active destinations</li> <li>Encourage town centre living</li> <li>Improve the relationship with the University of Canberra and other institutions</li> <li>Provide improved amenity for business activity in the service trades area precinct</li> <li>Retain sites for employment</li> </ul>
Transition towards a human scale and inviting public domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve quality and use of open space areas</li> <li>Improve the public domain</li> <li>Ensure buildings enable active streets</li> </ul>
Grow the share of sustainable transport and provide better parking management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve conditions for walking and cycling</li> <li>Encourage greater use of public transport</li> <li>Manage parking</li> <li>Encourage safer roads</li> </ul>
Encourage built form that contributes positively to the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage appropriate building height, bulk and setbacks</li> <li>Encourage innovation in building design</li> <li>Ensure buildings enable active streets</li> </ul>
Enable an environmentally responsible and resilient town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance ecological value of green spaces and living infrastructure</li> </ul>

The spatial framework comprises the following main structural elements:

- Key activity areas and streets:
  - > Westfield Belconnen, fronting Lathlain Street and Benjamin Way
  - > Emu Bank and the Lake Ginninderra foreshore
  - > The higher density residential area of Cameron Avenue, including the proposed mixed use development on Section 48
  - > The Belconnen Fresh Food Markets
  - > Clear road connections into the University of Canberra
  - > Oatley Court and redevelopment at Lathlain Street.
- Large sites either side of Cameron Avenue offer opportunities for future mixed-use development supported by a network of mid-block streets and laneways. This will transform Cameron Avenue into a lively east–west oriented street through the main residential and commercial parts of the town centre.
- Benjamin Way, with its avenue of elm trees in the wide median, serves as both a strong ‘ceremonial’ boulevard and a high activity street adjacent to Westfield.



**Figure 17:** Artist's impression showing buildings along Emu Bank

- Lake Ginninderra, which provides a natural setting for the northern edge to the town centre, gives the centre a strong regional character.
- The service trades area offers a fine grain structure, however many links are pedestrian only. Buildings in this area are limited to two storeys, with a wide variety of uses.
- Perimeter arterial roads bypass the centre and provide the centre's major arrival points. They present barriers to local pedestrian access from surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Emu Bank and Lathlain Street are identified for mixed use urban renewal. Each can support substantially increased development and offer more active destinations.
- A number of urban parks and public spaces, including Margaret Timpson Park, Lathlain Street, Oatley Court, Emu Bank, Library Place and Short Close.
- The three medium-density residential areas which will benefit from a more walkable and lively town centre.
- The sloping topography, which adds character and interest while presenting challenging development conditions in some locations.

## 5.6 PLANNING STRATEGIES

The planning strategies are informed by the vision and planning principles in the previous section. They provide direction and guidance for the future development of the centre over the long term, considering the broad range of issues identified in Chapter 3: Background and analysis. These strategies include:

1. Encourage the development and renewal of active destinations
2. Encourage appropriate building height, bulk and setbacks
3. Encourage innovation in building design
4. Ensure that buildings enable active streets
5. Encourage town centre living
6. Provide improved amenity for business activity in the service trades area precinct
7. Retain sites for employment
8. Improve the relationship with the University of Canberra and other institutions

9. Improve the public domain
10. Improve the quality and use of open space areas
11. Improve conditions for walking and cycling
12. Encourage greater use of public transport
13. Manage parking
14. Encourage safer roads
15. Enhance ecological value of green spaces and living infrastructure

The planning strategies will be achieved through private sector investment, provisions to be included in the Territory Plan, land releases, public domain upgrades (which will be subject to consideration by the ACT Government through future budget processes) and completion of further studies.

### 5.6.1 ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL OF ACTIVE DESTINATIONS

There is a desire by the community to see attractive and active locations established within the centre, particularly for night-time use. Rather than dispersing activity across the centre, it is preferable to concentrate it in key areas. Emu Bank and Lathlain Street are two locations where more active destinations could be viable.

A key issue will be to ensure conflict between new and existing uses is minimised; for example, existing uses such as service trades, music venues and restaurants should not be forced to close due to complaints from new residents. Likewise, existing residential areas should not suffer from noise created by new uses.



**Figure 18:** Artist's impression showing Emu Bank Foreshore



**Figure 19:** Emu Bank cross section

## GENERAL

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

The Territory Plan requires the impacts of noise to be reduced, for example when sites are redeveloped to accommodate potential noise sources or when new residential development is near existing noise sources. To ensure these noise requirements are effective and that developers consider the issue of noise early in the planning of new development, it is recommended:

- Identify zones where noise may be an issue and new residential developments will be required to comply with the noise attenuation requirements of the multi-unit housing development code. This will address noise from existing noise sources including the Belconnen Skate Park, bus stations, service trade uses and entertainment venues.
- When a noise management plan is required, identify existing noise levels by monitoring of the noise source and address the higher noise level of either the code or what was recorded.
- Suggest methods to reduce the possible impact of noise that could be considered during early stages of design, including the orientation of bedrooms and balconies away from the noise source or incorporating ‘wintergarden balconies’, which provide an additional noise barrier.

- Where new noise sources are proposed near to existing or proposed residential areas, require the noise management plan to meet maximum noise levels on the noise source block, rather than at the boundary of impacted (residential) blocks.

The expansion of Westfield Belconnen to provide an active frontage to Lathlain Street has been very successful. Providing a similar active frontage to Westfield’s Benjamin Way frontage will open up the centre to Margaret Timpson Park:

- Consider measures that may assist Westfield Belconnen to provide a range of uses along its frontage to Benjamin Way that provide after-hours activity and help engage the centre with Margaret Timpson Park.
- As part of measures to improve pedestrian and cycle routes in the town centre, additional verge space may be possible adjacent to Westfield Belconnen.

“THE TERRITORY PLAN REQUIRES THE IMPACTS OF NOISE TO BE REDUCED,”

Map 19: Emu Bank lakeside promenade



## FORESHORE PRECINCT

A key attraction of Emu Bank is the wide diversity of uses, including Ginninderra College, the Belconnen Skate Park and Belconnen Arts Centre and the connections to John Knight Memorial Park and the University of Canberra. This diversity must be encouraged to attract a wide range of people at different times. For example, complaints about noise from future residents should not limit the skate park's current operating times.

The approved expansion of the arts centre, together with the proposed extended lakeside shared path to the north of the centre, will provide an opportunity for better integration of cultural and community events with the area. The land to the east of the centre has potential for a range of commercial and community uses, which would link the arts centre to other uses on Emu Bank. Close consideration of the best use of this land is required, which would maintain a relationship with the lake and town centre.

The Belconnen Skate Park is highly rated but needs a plan of management to ensure continued improvement. For example, additional shade, drinking fountains and rubbish/recycling bins could be considered.

As detailed under section 4.2 Opportunities, this precinct has strong potential to better utilise its lakeside aspect and become a more attractive destination. The community strongly supported this. A lakeside dining promenade would form the core of this precinct, with larger, better quality outdoor dining areas facing the lake, a greater choice of venues that includes takeaway facilities as well as higher-end restaurants and a more attractive presentation to both the lake and the street at Emu Bank.

The strategy to achieve this includes a limited increase in building heights to stimulate redevelopment of existing sites, requirements for building set-backs and orientation to provide active edges to the street and lake foreshore, improved pedestrian links and public domain upgrades. Building height increases are recommended for four blocks to increase the allowable height from two to four storeys, as indicated on **Map 19**. The four-storey components will be positioned to enable views from the Mirimar apartments opposite.

The current parking requirements have impeded redevelopment in this area and have resulted in the visual dominance of surface car parking. Reconsidering the on-site parking requirements could provide an incentive for redevelopment and better outcomes.

The suggestion to construct an additional structured carpark at Emu Bank was identified in the draft master plan, however this is now unlikely to proceed. It is considered a better outcome will be achieved by requiring the future parking demand to be met by a combination of on-site parking and better awareness and utilisation of existing carparks. Adjacent carparks, including Westfield Belconnen, the rear of Nature Conservation House and future structured carparks on sections 48 and 152 currently have significant after-hours capacity.

Future possible views of Emu Bank are provided at **Figure 17** and **Figure 18**, and a possible future section is at **Figure 19**.

## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

On blocks 76, 79 and 80 of Section 65:

- Buildings will be permitted up to four storeys on 60% of the four-storey zones indicated on **Map 19**, provided the buildings are set back a minimum 6 metres from side boundaries and are orientated to retain some existing views to the lake from the apartments opposite and avoid a four-storey 'wall' to either the lake or Emu Bank.
- Consider adjusting existing car parking controls for the area to ensure redevelopment is a viable outcome.
- Adopting the 'smart parking' initiative will enable the more efficient use of nearby carparks and avoid the need to construct additional structured car parks.
- Require a minimum 10 metre setback from the lakeside block boundary to the building line of redevelopment sites to encourage landscaped outdoor eating areas at the same level as the shared path.
- Require a minimum 3 metre wide pedestrian easement on each side boundary, apart from the north-west boundary of Block 80, Section 65 to maintain pedestrian connections from Emu Bank to the lake.



*Westfield Belconnen Bus Station*

On sections 65, 149 and 187

- Provide a precinct code control that over-rides the current rule requiring a 6 metres setback to all block boundaries. This currently makes redevelopment unachievable on small blocks.

#### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Improve the visibility and way finding of the path connecting Chandler Street to Emu Bank, on the north side of Padthaway Gardens apartments. Providing an additional raised pedestrian crossing on Emu Bank to align with this path will increase safety and will connect Emu Bank to additional car parking along Chandler Street.
- Improve the lakeside shared path beside Section 65. This paving has become unstable and requires replacement or repair.
- Consider constructing a timber boardwalk adjacent to the existing Emu Bank lakeside shared path. This could be at the level of the path and would accommodate increased numbers of pedestrians and cyclists. This was suggested by several people during consultation and was indicated in the Belconnen Lakeshore Master Plan (1998) but has not progressed.
- Enhance the lighting of main pedestrian areas, particularly along the shared lakeside path, from the Belconnen Arts Centre to John Knight Memorial Park to provide a greater level of safety and amenity to these areas.

- Support TCCS in progressing the second stage of improvements to Emu Inlet. The first stage has provided substantial changes to this key area, however completion of the second stage will greatly improve the usability of the area.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAND RELEASE

- Investigate the future potential for redevelopment of Padthaway Gardens apartments on Section 55 as a combined carpark and residential development. This may enable better development outcomes on Section 65, fronting onto to the lake.
- ArtsACT is progressing the construction of a shared path next to the lake, beside the Belconnen Arts Centre. However the future use of the land created needs to be determined. While sale of this land may assist in funding projects such as the second stage of the Belconnen Arts Centre, retention as community space associated with the Belconnen Arts Centre could be more appropriate.

#### RECOMMENDED FUTURE STUDIES

- Together with TCCS, Sport and Recreation Services and users, develop a management strategy for the Belconnen Skate Park to ensure its ongoing improvement and maintenance.



**Figure 20:** Lathlain Street precinct – artist’s impression looking south west

## LATHLAIN STREET PRECINCT

Renewal of the Lathlain Street precinct, led by redevelopment of several large Territory-owned sites, presents an opportunity for Lathlain Street to become the main shopping street of the town centre, as indicated in **Map 20** and **Figure 20** and **21**. Given the proximity to existing amenities, including the bus station and Westfield, this area has considerable potential to support a much greater level of activity through the development of medium-rise buildings and an increased range of uses, including residential, commercial, retail and community uses.

As outlined at section 5.6.3, both the Belconnen Library and Community Centre want to relocate to this area.

Following consultation on the draft master plan, the layout and proposed height limits of some blocks in this area have been amended to provide a more comfortable scale and relationship between Lathlain and Rae Streets.

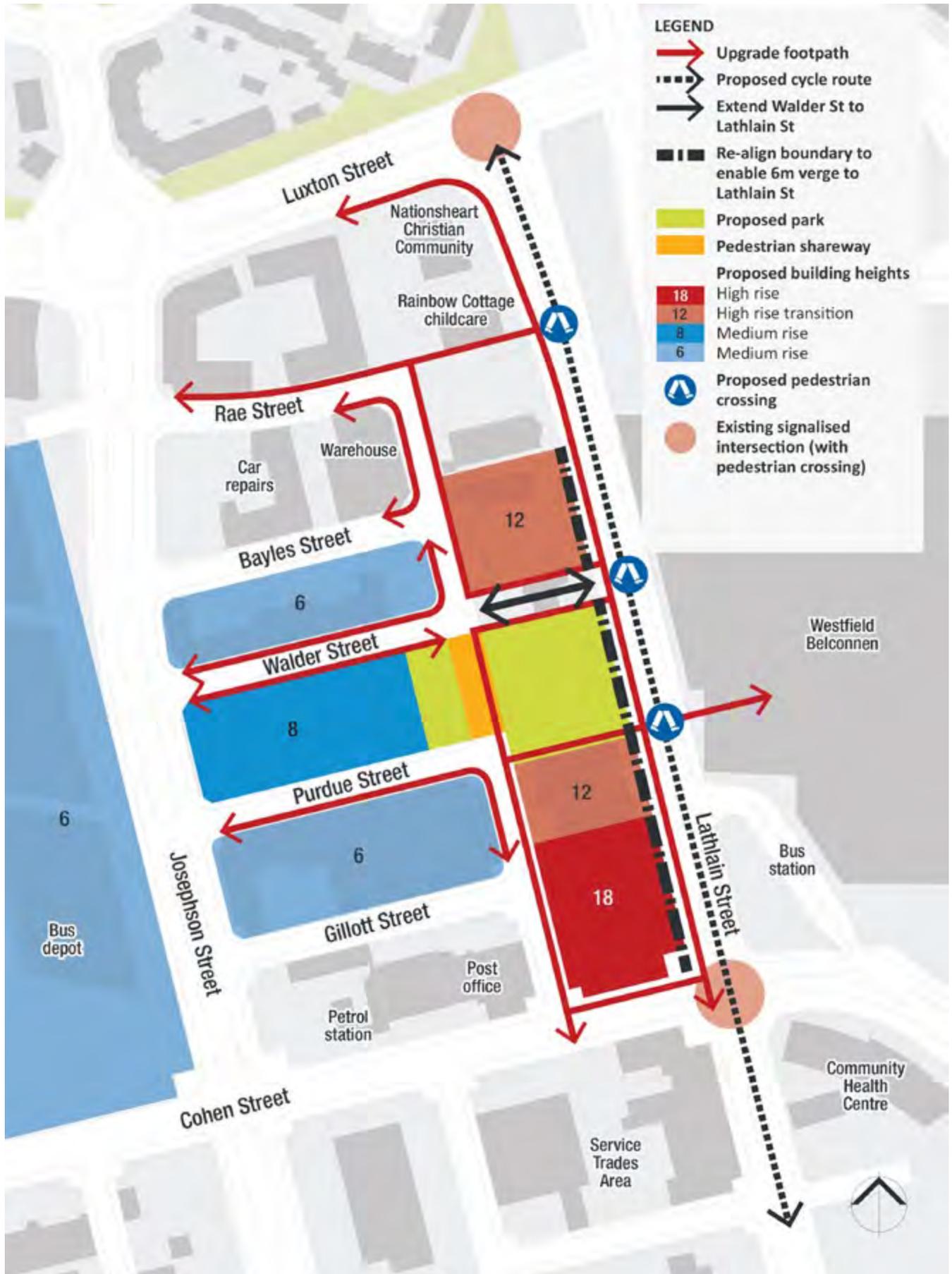
A focal point for the precinct will be the proposed urban park next to Lathlain Street at Walder Street, which will provide an important setting for community facilities and

enjoying public life and outdoor dining. The urban park will provide an entry point to the precinct from Lathlain Street and Westfield, as indicated in **Figure 20**. A proposed shared traffic zone at Rae Street will allow the urban park to transition into a large open forecourt to future development on land between Walder Street and Purdue Street.

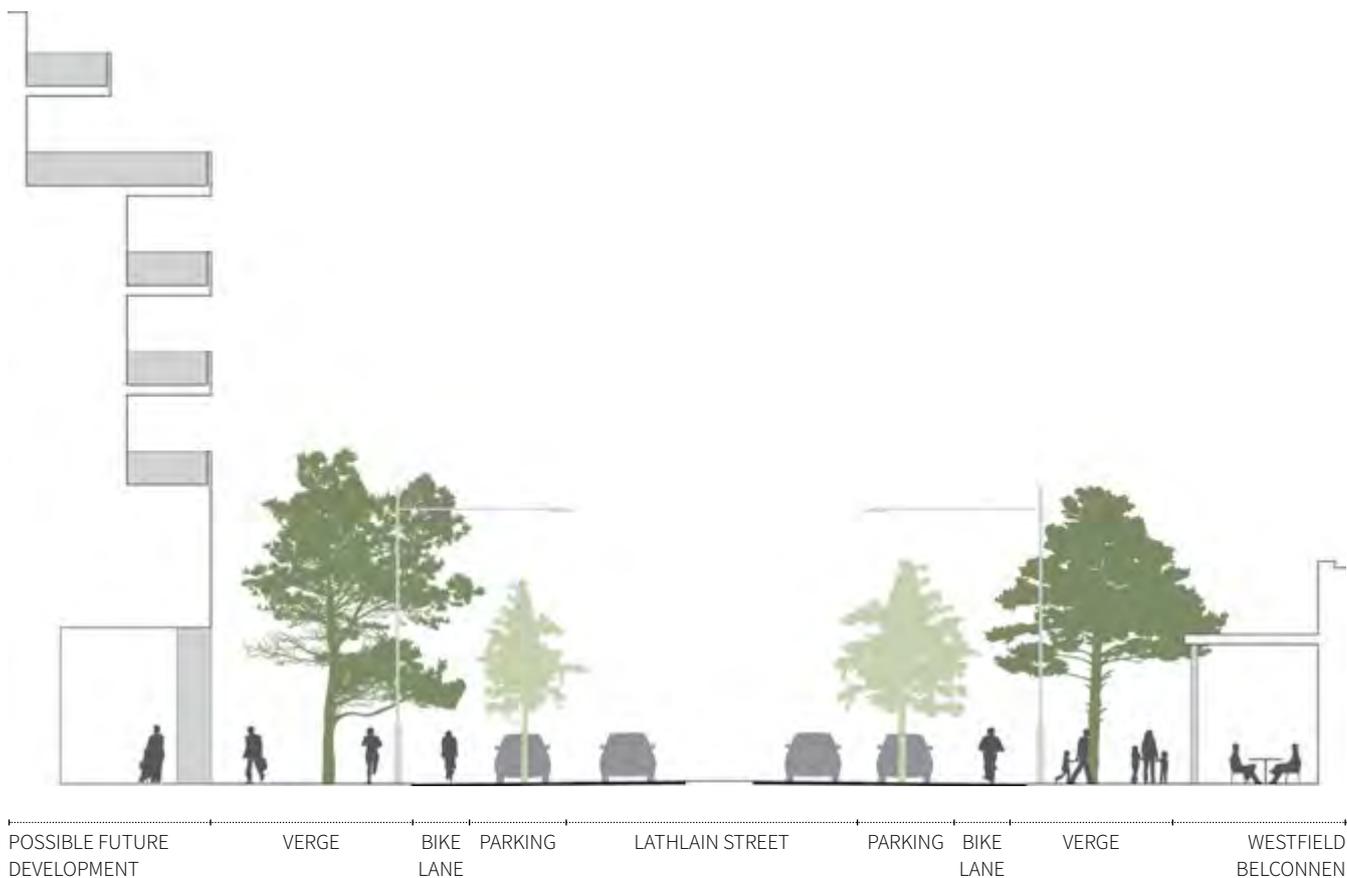
Walder Street is proposed to be extended to connect through to Lathlain Street to support increased activity and circulation within the precinct. Together with a pedestrian pathway terminating Purdue Street, connections between activity on Lathlain Street and any possible future redevelopment of the bus depot will be easy and clear.

Redevelopment of sites fronting onto Walder Street and Purdue Street for upper level residential development will take advantage of increased activity and close proximity to the bus station. To encourage greater flexibility and the possible development of additional small office space, it is proposed to restrict residential uses from the first floor level. It is recommended that the zoning of these areas be changed to ‘Business Zone’ (CZ2).

Map 20: Lathlain Street precinct map



**Figure 21:** Lathlain Street cross section



Blocks 22 and 23, Section 21, which front onto Lathlain Street, currently contain a car wash and motor vehicle repairer. The draft master plan indicated a possible increase in allowable height to enable mixed-use development. Given the need to retain successful service trades uses and the capacity of the adjoining area to accommodate additional mixed use development, it has been decided to retain the current two-storey height limit and Service Trades (CZ3) zoning.

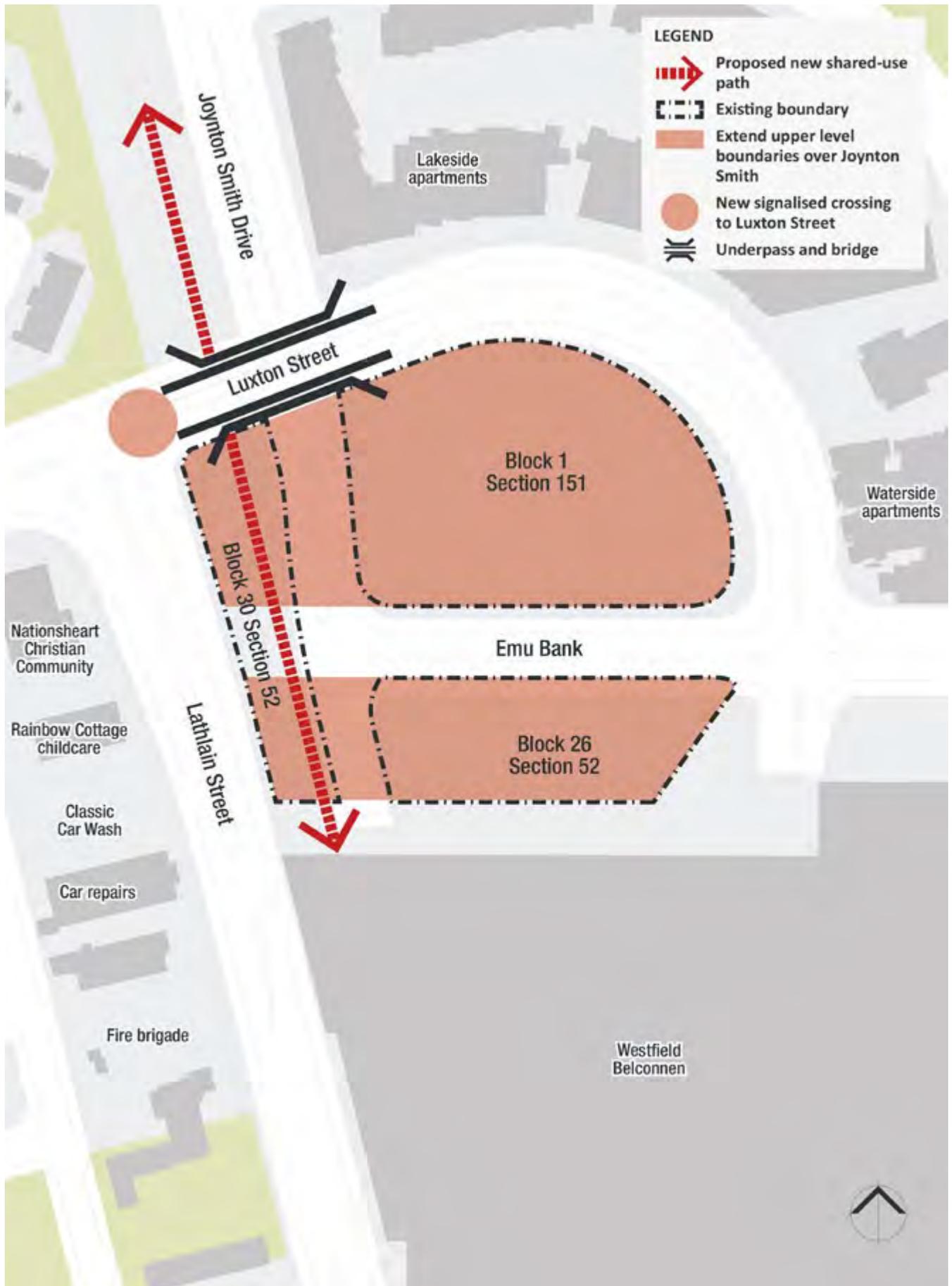
Block 30, Section 52 fronts onto Lathlain Street and, at the lower level, Joynton Smith Drive. This block is narrow and difficult to develop, with the lower level backing onto a retaining wall. A better outcome may be to connect this block with Block 1, Section 151 and with Block 26, Section 52 at an upper level, as indicated in **Map 21**. This will enable Block 1, Section 151 to be 30% larger and Block 26, Section 52 to be 36% larger. This will require Block 30, Section 52 to be rezoned from Transport Zone to either Core Zone (CZ1) or Business Zone (CZ2)

These changes would have multiple benefits: buildings would front onto Lathlain Street, the Joynton Smith busway could be preserved as a cycle way and Joynton Smith Drive would remain.

Development of these two blocks should facilitate activation of the abutting east-west section of Emu Bank. Given the size of Block 1, development should include the creation of a publicly accessible and usable open space, including the creation of a high quality and convenient pedestrian connection between Lathlain Street and Emu Bank. Block 1, Section 151 is also a suitable location for a public car parking structure (**Map 27**).

“...IT IS PROPOSED TO RESTRICT RESIDENTIAL USES FROM THE FIRST FLOOR LEVEL.”

Map 21: Detail of proposed block configuration at Lathlain Street renewal precinct





*Cameron Offices*

## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Establish controls to limit building heights in accordance with **Map 20**:
  - > Sections 185 and 186 up to six storeys
  - > Sections 22 up to eight storeys
  - > Block 2, Section 23 up to 18 storeys including a six storey podium
  - > Part Block 24, Section 21 up to 12 storeys including a six-storey podium
  - > Section 151, block 1 and Section 52, block 26, up to 12 storeys including a structured carpark, subject to a development master plan.
- Restrict subdivision of land that could compromise the ability to achieve the development outcomes or land use intensity envisaged for the precinct.
- Consolidate blocks 2 and 3, Section 22 to enable mixed-use development with active uses at ground floor, as indicated on **Map 20**. This site could be suitable for use as a structured carpark, however if the primary use is residential, the first floor is to be used as commercial, to provide additional small office space.
- Set back development on Section 22 to 20 metres from the Rae Street site boundary to enable a landscaped park area, which will form a visual extension of the new park proposed to front onto Lathlain Street. The construction and maintenance of the park on Section 22 will be the responsibility of the block lessee.
- Sections 22,23, 185, 186 and part 21 are to be rezoned from Services Zone (CZ3) to Business Zone (CZ2).
- Rezone Block 4 Section 22 from CZ3 to road reserve to enable a wider verge to Josephson Street.
- Sections 185 and 186 are to have active frontage to Purdue or Walder streets at ground level and commercial space at first floor, with residential uses permitted above. The first floor commercial is intended to provide space for small offices and provide a buffer between residential uses and possibly noisy ground floor uses.
- Maintain space for community uses with a substantial ground floor presence.
- Reconfigure blocks 1 and 24, Section 21 and Block 3, Section 21 into new blocks to enable the construction of a public park between Rae Street and Lathlain Street, an extension of Walder Street through to Lathlain Street, and the construction of a maximum 12-storey building on the northern portion.
- Form a left in / left out intersection where the proposed Walder street extension meets Lathlain Street.
- Rezone the proposed new Walder Street Park from Services Zone (CZ3) to Urban Open Space (PRZ1).
- Rezone the extension of Walder Street and associated verges from CZ3 to road reserve. Rezone the northern portion of existing Block 24, Section 21 from CZ3 to Business Zone (CZ2).
- Rezone Block 2, Section 21 and Sections 185 and 186 from CZ3 to Business Zone (CZ2).
- Given the existing 4.4 metre width is not sufficient, adjust the Lathlain Street boundaries of Blocks 1 and 24, Section 21 and Block 3, Section 21 to provide a minimum verge width (from the gutter to the block boundary) of 6 metres to ensure the verge provides suitable space for pedestrians and large canopied street trees.

## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Upgrade streetscapes on Walder Street and Purdue Street frontages of Sections 185 and 186 to meet usage requirements in this location.
- Extend Walder Street through to Lathlain Street. This should continue with footpaths and street tree planting to provide a clear link between Rae Street and Lathlain Street as indicated in **Map 20**. This could be provided as part of off-site works for redevelopment of adjacent blocks.
- Require all redevelopment in the area to provide awnings or continuous colonnades where buildings front a public footpath. Awnings are to be a minimum 3 metres wide and 3–4 metres high.

## RECOMMENDED FUTURE STUDIES

Investigate the feasibility of subdividing, consolidating and enabling air rights over Joynton Smith Drive to Block 26 and 30, section 53 and Block 1, Section 151.

Block 3, Section 23 provides an overland flow path. Investigate how this can be retained and incorporated into the proposed new Walder Street Park as a water sensitive urban design feature. The redundant underpass will be filled to provide a pedestrian link between Purdue Street and Lathlain Street.

Determine the feasibility of changing Purdue Street and Walder Streets to one-way streets to enable greater amounts of on-street parking.

### 5.6.2 ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE BUILDING HEIGHT, BULK AND SETBACKS

As detailed in section 3.7.2, the community is generally supportive of the suggested range of maximum building heights, up to a maximum of 27 storeys. However, this was largely conditional on achieving a higher design quality.

In determining the maximum allowable heights, basic principles were developed in addition to considering the potential capacity, sites where redevelopment is likely to take place and how the character of precincts should develop. Key principles include:

- The centre should be contained below the surrounding ridgelines to allow the landscape to remain dominant when the centre is viewed from a distance.

“...THE CENTRE SHOULD BE CONTAINED BELOW THE SURROUNDING RIDGELINES TO ALLOW THE LANDSCAPE TO REMAIN DOMINANT WHEN THE CENTRE IS VIEWED FROM A DISTANCE.”

- Higher level buildings are generally graduated back from the lake front to allow for northern views and solar access.
- To reinforce the boulevard of Benjamin Way, a consistent height that relates to the current NCA height was generally adopted.
- The existing residential areas at Emu Ridge and Totterdell Street will retain the current generally two storey limit and RZ2 zoning, apart from a site fronting College Street, where the height limit and zoning will be changed to better relate to the higher development opposite.
- Higher level buildings to be generally limited to the Cameron Avenue Precinct.

To achieve a high design quality, along with other aspects such as public domain improvements, it is recommended to offer developers incentives, in the form of height increases, through a revision to the precinct code. To gain additional building height, developers will need to meet a range of criteria. The suggested criteria and assessment method are outlined at section 5.6.3, ‘Encourage innovation in building design’.

Map 22: Proposed maximum building height limits



## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Revise the Belconnen Precinct Code to specify a range of maximum height limits for all areas of the centre. The following maximum heights are dependent on satisfying a number of the criteria outlined in section 5.6.3:

**Table 4:** Building heights

HEADINGS	BUILDING HEIGHT IN STOREYS			
Maximum base height allowed on site	4	9	14	21
Potential additional storeys subject to meeting at least 5 of the 7 criteria outlined in section 5.6.3.	2	3	4	6
Resultant maximum height, as indicated in <b>Map 22</b> .	6	12	18	27

- Large blocks that can support several taller buildings are required to provide a clear variety in building heights, rather than several buildings all at or near the maximum height limit.
- Incorporate a clear base, middle and top for taller buildings (12 storeys or above) unless demonstrating exceptional design quality. Buildings must provide a strong relationship with the public domain and avoid towers that continue to the ground.
  - > Building bases or podiums will define entrances and provide attractive and active frontages to main pedestrian areas.
  - > The middle of taller buildings will be set back in accordance with **Table 5**.
  - > The top of taller buildings will provide an appropriate finish to the building form and be designed to integrate or conceal plant rooms.

## RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Continue to work with the National Capital Authority to determine any requirement to adjust the current Development Control Plans for the Belconnen Town Centre to ensure they remain consistent with this master plan.

## BUILDING SETBACK

- The proposed general minimum setback controls for sites with no site-specific setback requirements are provided in **Table 5**.
- Where a zero setback to the front property boundary is required by **Table 5**, additional setbacks are allowed where active uses, entrances and landscaping are provided.

**Table 5:** Setbacks

HEIGHT	SETBACK
Podium up to 6 storeys	0 metres
Towers from 7 to 12 storeys	3 metres
Tower from 12 storeys and above	6 metres

## 5.6.3 ENCOURAGE INNOVATION IN BUILDING DESIGN

The current Territory Plan controls generally do not provide building height limits or incentives to encourage better development outcomes in the centre. Recent larger residential developments, such as *Linq* and *Altitude*, demonstrate that high quality design, increased building sustainability features or substantial improvements to the public domain are achievable. These outcomes will be encouraged with all new development in the centre through the proposed range of height increases outlined at section 5.6.2.

Buildings or items that have exceptional design or have become part of the centre’s history need to be recognised and retained where possible. The Belconnen Library and the Tumbling Cubes sculpture have been recognised through a preliminary study as having possible value for inclusion on the Heritage Register.

The possible relocation of the library and community centre to a new site at Lathlain Street is strongly supported by the management and many users of these facilities. This is an opportunity to construct an innovative, accessible and efficient facility to meet the future needs of the Belconnen district. It is vital that a community facilities needs assessment is undertaken to determine if additional community facilities are required and the actual floor area that should be provided in a new library and community centre building.

Further to this, a more detailed consideration is required of how the existing library and community centre buildings should be used or developed into the future. This is important given the possible heritage significance of the elm tree and library building, key pedestrian routes and significant level changes.

#### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Establish development controls that provide incentives for good development outcomes on sites where the base maximum allowed height is four storeys or higher. To achieve additional storeys in accordance with **Table 4**, it is recommended that a number of the following criteria will be required to be met. This provides flexibility for site or design constraints:
  - > The developer provides a clear demonstration of how the development exceeds the minimum statutory requirements for environmentally sustainable development (e.g., energy rating, Water Sensitive Urban Design, solar access). Residential buildings should be designed to optimise solar access, energy efficiency and cross ventilation.
  - > The development contributes to the public domain through providing a suitable amount of street trees, street furniture and/or paving either on adjoining verge areas or elsewhere in the centre.
  - > The design contributes to the character of the centre, through consideration of building form, materials, the relationship to main pedestrian routes, the streetscape and nearby development.
  - > The number of required adaptable units is increased.
  - > The development contributes towards active travel or active living infrastructure.
  - > The development provides a good mix of apartments with 1, 2 and 3 or more bedrooms.

- > The development provides an innovative and a diverse choice of apartment design/layout such as dual key, double height spaces, dual aspect and winter garden balconies to support the diverse lifestyles of residents.
- > The development minimises its impact on the centre's micro climate, including minimising overshadowing of main public spaces and residential buildings, providing clear measures to reduce wind shear, and introducing measures to reduce heat gain, such as living (green) infrastructure.

#### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Continue with the improvements to public areas and amenities in Belconnen town centre to ensure it remains an attractive and desirable place to live. Simple improvements such as trolley collection bays in the higher density housing area could encourage people to walk rather than drive to supermarkets.
- Site planning for large sections, such as Section 98 or Section 45 must provide for public access across the site.

#### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Undertake further heritage assessments of the Belconnen Library and 'Tumbling Cubes' sculpture to determine their heritage value and potential nomination for inclusion on the ACT Heritage Register.
- Undertake a community facility needs assessment.

#### 5.6.4 ENSURE BUILDINGS ENABLE ACTIVE STREETS

Buildings are a significant contributor to active and interesting streets and public space due to their design, function and land use. To help ensure key areas are active and to avoid vacant shopfronts, the requirements for either primary or secondary active frontages have been identified in **Map 23**.

Primary active building frontages are intended to ensure areas of activity are concentrated and identifiable. This requires the ground floor of buildings to have shop windows and a minimum number of tenancies directly accessible from the street that can support retail or similar uses. These areas are to avoid blank walls or large office spaces at the ground floor. At upper floors, residential or commercial uses with opportunities to overlook the street will be required.

Map 23: Active frontages



Secondary active frontages are intended to provide flexibility to accommodate future active uses. This could take the form of commercially adaptable residential units, or frontages that can be easily altered to provide shop fronts. Note these requirements will not prevent active uses being established in areas not identified.

People are more comfortable and streets are more active where the surrounding buildings have a human scale. This can be achieved by ensuring buildings fronting onto active streets are generally six storeys or less, there are opportunities for balconies and other spaces that overlook the street, and there are a variety of uses in the buildings.

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Ensure all buildings within the centre provide at least one primary street frontage, articulated by street-oriented entrances, glazing, shelter for public space, etc.
- Where primary active frontage is indicated on **Map 23**, the building be designed to support retail, commercial or community uses, with the primary frontage incorporating shop front style glazing, a minimum number of tenancy entries and higher ceiling levels. This frontage should avoid large areas of blank walls and supports residential or commercial uses at upper floor levels that overlook the street.
- Avoid locating entrances to carparks and service areas on primary active frontages.
- Avoid arcades which provide dual frontages to shops. These often result in the street frontage being closed off.
- Where secondary active frontage is indicated in **Map 23**, the building will be required to be adaptable to support future active uses, including higher ceiling levels at ground floor. Where permitted, this could include ground floor residential apartments with separation from public space provided through either courtyards or a maximum 1 metre height difference. Use of small office/home office ('SOHO') adaptable apartments may be suitable in these situations. Other examples are offices or workshops that could be altered to provide multiple tenancies and entrances.
- Structured car parks are not to be located on areas identified as primary or secondary active frontage unless they provide ground floors that can support active use. Structured carparks fronting primary active frontage areas must also provide a 'skin' of offices or residential at upper level areas where overlooking main pedestrian routes.

- Ensure ground floor apartments and commercial tenancies have individual entries from public space.
- Design communal entrances, lobby and lift areas to be clearly visible from external public spaces.

### 5.6.5 ENCOURAGE TOWN CENTRE LIVING

Living in the centre has a range of benefits, including being close to employment, public transport, retail, entertainment, community and recreation facilities. The centre supports large areas of medium-density development and recent apartment construction has broadened the choice of dwelling types. These are proving to be attractive for young professionals, students and people wanting to downsize while remaining close to their local community.

The emerging high-density residential area near Eastern Valley Way will accommodate a significant population in a comparatively small area. The public domain must have the quality and capacity to accommodate this population and the facilities must be able to meet the demand. In this regard it is considered necessary to revise the current floor space limitations on retail uses in this area to enable the development of a small convenience style supermarket and other uses.

Placemaking and community building initiatives should seek to establish strong communities to further enhance the centre as a desirable place to live. Community groups can take a lead in organising events, rehabilitation initiatives and maintenance projects that promote ownership and pride in the area.

The Territory Plan rule that apartment developments in the centre are not required to provide parking for residents should be retained. Currently apartment developments provide car spaces for each apartment, whether they are required or not. This increases the purchase price of apartments and results in unused carparks which are not accessible to the public. A better outcome would be to encourage the construction of parking stations at the base of apartment buildings where residents can lease carparks, rather than buy one associated with an apartment. This would reduce the cost of apartments and free-up unused residential spaces for public use.

## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Encourage a range of apartment building types within the centre. Alternatives such as SoHo or shop-top housing should be provided. This could be facilitated by redevelopment in certain areas.
- Support increased building heights to stimulate residential development within the town centre. For building heights see section 5.6.2.
- Review the precinct code rule limiting the floor area of 'shop' to 200 m<sup>2</sup> to enable the development of convenience supermarkets up to 1500 m<sup>2</sup> to better serve the high-density residential area.

## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Provide a variety of public facilities for families and children within the centre, including play spaces.
- Provide attractive and safe outdoor meeting places.

### 5.6.6 PROVIDE IMPROVED AMENITY FOR BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN THE SERVICE TRADES AREA PRECINCT

The service trades area supports a large number and range of small businesses. It is a valuable and accessible place for uses that may be unsuitable in other locations.

Despite supporting a comparatively large number of businesses and services, the area lacks pedestrian amenity, including weather protection, toilets and street furniture. Improving the amenity and walkability will ensure the area is competitive and attractive to customers.

The CZ3 Services zone currently permits residential use, which may result in conflict with noisy businesses and the possible closure of those businesses. It is recommended to remove residential as a permitted use, and to encourage a range of small businesses suited to this zone, including live music venues.

Consideration was given to increasing the current two-storey height rule, given the low level of ground floor vacancies and limited potential for new development. However, it is anticipated that additional development potential elsewhere in the centre will attract many of the non-trade uses from the area, which will free up space. Limiting the potential for redevelopment should also enable the lower rents of the area to be maintained. It is considered the two-storey rule, with a criteria that

allows additional height, should be retained at present. Where redevelopment occurs, ground floor areas must be suitable to accommodate service trades uses, with high floor to ceiling heights and convenient rear access.

## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- To minimise potential conflicts between land uses and ensuring service trades uses are protected and retained, remove the current provision allowing residential uses.
- Require all redevelopment in the area to provide awnings where buildings front a public footpath. Awnings are to be a minimum 3 metres wide and 3–4 metres high.
- Enable accommodation for service trades uses by providing a minimum 4 metre ground floor ceiling height and convenient rear access to new development.
- Subdivide and rezone part of sections 5 and 11 at Oatley Court from Services Zone (CZ3) to Urban Open Space (PRZ1) to ensure the existing open space and parking spaces are retained.
- Encourage local business to establish a united approach to promoting the area and ensure it becomes a recognisable destination. Events such as the Cohen Street waterslide attract large numbers of people and should be encouraged and supported by business in the area.
- The service trades area has strong potential to attract additional live music venues and become a popular night-time destination. Encouraging new uses that are potentially noisy to locate in the service trades area will avoid conflict with residential uses in other areas.

## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- As part of a proposed streetscape master plan for the town centre, detailed at section 5.6.9, develop a comprehensive plan for improvements to the service trades area, including the park areas. This will determine the location for amenities including public toilets, lighting, signage, bike racks, seating and drinking water outlets. It will also detail a street tree planting plan, aimed at retaining existing eucalypts where possible, to ensure new large canopied trees are provided throughout the service trades area.
- Continue the use of asphalt paving to the service trades area and replace all damaged areas. Asphalt provides a cost effective and distinctive character to the service trades area.

## 5.6.7 RETAIN SITES FOR EMPLOYMENT

Providing a substantial base of employment was a key driver for establishing the town centre. Decentralised employment has provided significant benefits such as reduced road congestion, improved property values and reduced commuting time. Several large, centrally located sites provide unique strategic value for large floor area commercial office development. These sites are identified in **Map 16** Opportunities.

If the Australian Government relocates employment out of the centre, it may be difficult to attract other large employers into existing office buildings.

The lessees of these sites may seek to provide residential uses to retain profitability. Although these sites are under control of the National Capital Authority, it is vital that an area is reserved to provide substantial employment for the future.

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- The use of land currently considered ‘National Land’ on sections 43, 44, 49 and 50 is the responsibility of the NCA. However, any consideration of permitting residential uses on these sites as an alternative use to ‘employment’ should not be supported.
- Development on National Land is encouraged to consider the objectives and intent of the development requirements indicated in this master plan.

## 5.6.8 IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

The centre has a unique advantage given its proximity to important health, educational and sport facilities. This relationship offers significant future employment and lifestyle opportunities and should be utilised to increase the diversity and resilience of Belconnen’s employment base.

Integrating the town centre with the University of Canberra will help facilitate employment growth, increase opportunities for local business and increase the amenity and diversity of the whole area. Integration of the university with the town centre’s facilities and amenity will provide a major marketing advantage for the university in an increasingly competitive environment for attracting interstate and overseas students.

Future revisions of the University of Canberra Urban Plan (2015) should focus on providing this integration, particularly through the location and uses of new development, the provision of new roads and improved pedestrian connections. Significant road entry gates are provided to College Street, Haydon Drive and Ginninderra Drive; however no road connection or even identifying signage is provided between the university and town centre. As indicated on **Map 24**, establishing clear road connections that link existing road networks, such as extending Emu Bank to Telita Street and Cameron Avenue through to Bimbimie Street may enable better access to development sites and access between the centre and the university. Additionally, providing generous pedestrian and cycle paths and installing University of Canberra signage will assist with the integration.

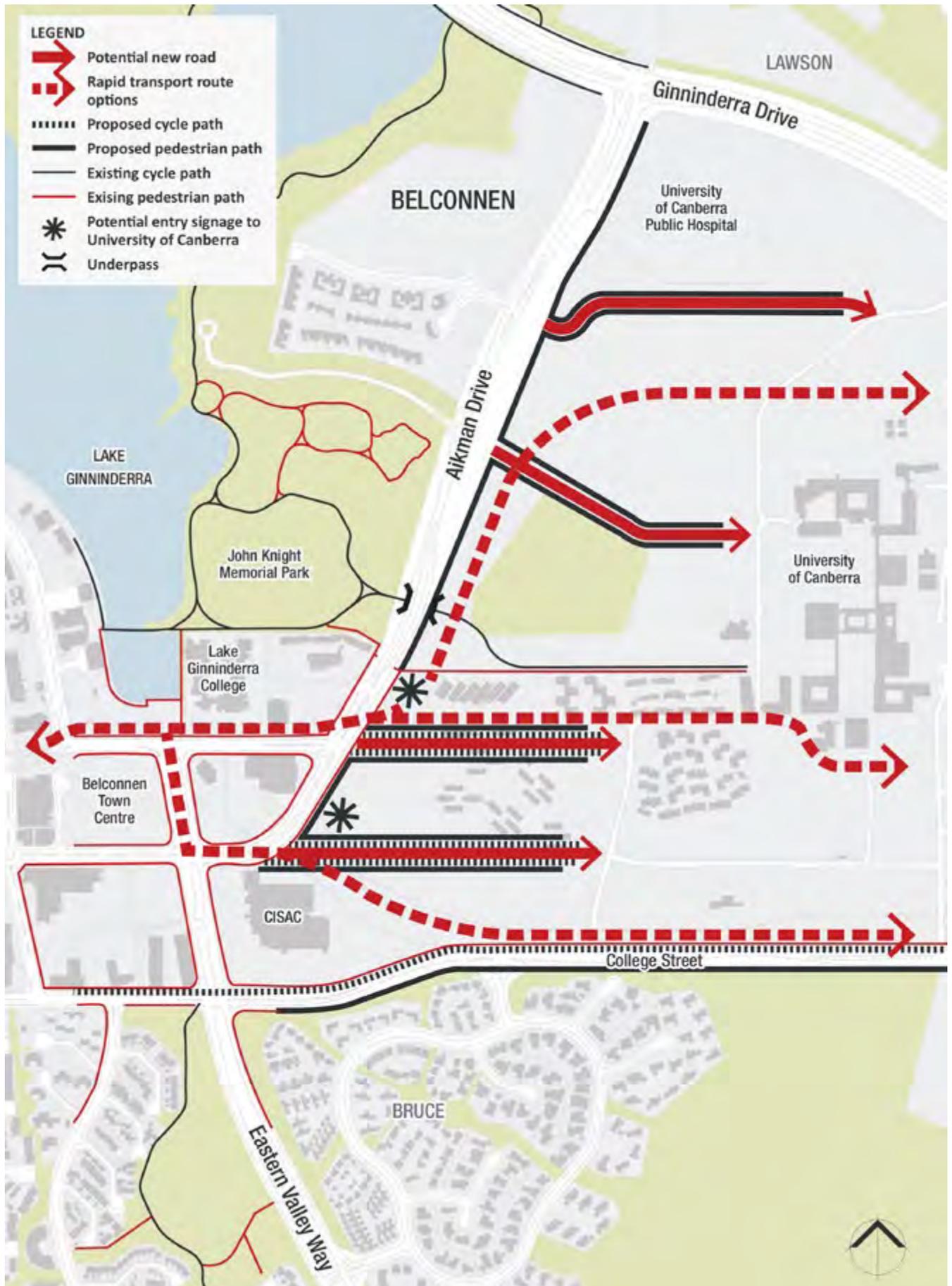
The new University of Canberra Public Hospital at the corner of Aikman and Ginninderra Drives will provide a significant facility for the Canberra community and increase employment opportunities. However the hospital’s location is distant from the centre’s amenities, including trunk public transport routes and retail outlets.

Recent changes will enable the University of Canberra to develop a wider range of uses, including private residential dwellings and larger areas of retail and commercial office space. It is important to ensure these uses complement rather than compete with the centre. The benefits offered by close proximity need to be maximised and inefficient duplication of uses in the town centre and the university avoided. It is vital that future revisions of the University of Canberra Urban Plan encourage integration with the town centre. For example the ‘business and enterprise’ precinct of the university could be better located on the west side of the campus where it may have a stronger relationship with uses in the centre.

### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections through the university and on College Street to ensure they are legible and safe (refer section 5.6.11).

Map 24: Integrate the University of Canberra with the Town Centre



## RECOMMEND PLANNING POLICIES

- Encourage development of additional student accommodation within the centre.
- Encourage use of the town centre by the University of Canberra and its affiliates for research, exhibitions, demonstration projects, etc.
- Work with the University of Canberra to ensure future revisions to its Urban Plan maximise the opportunities for integration of the two centres.

### 5.6.9 IMPROVE THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

As apartment living and active travel have become more important to the centre, the importance of a high quality public domain has similarly increased. People moving about or spending time within the centre should be able to enjoy an inviting and accommodating public domain. Clear requirements for improvements to the public domain will enhance each precinct's character and ensure improvements are provided effectively.

The Chandler Street verge of the *Altitude* apartments provides a good example of urban design outcomes that should be provided in conjunction with future developments.

There is currently little direction to ensure consistent character or design for the public domain, including elements such as paving and street furniture. The centre would benefit by adopting a modified version of the Canberra Central Design Manual, which was developed by the ACT Government following extensive work. The manual describes how public domain improvements should be undertaken in the city centre, and provides a consistent suite of materials. While there could be some adjustments, it is recommended the manual should form the basis for future works in the Belconnen town centre. It will be important to focus on 'placemaking' to ensure areas within the centre are active and attractive.

A consolidated streetscape master plan for the centre is required to implement the proposed public domain improvements. This will include a street tree planting program, location of street furniture and paving improvements, adjustments to on-street parking, improvements to park areas and where water sensitive urban design measures could be implemented. It should also outline programing to ensure improvements are focused on priority areas.

## GENERAL

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Establish development controls that provide incentives to contribute to the improvement of the centre's public domain (refer section 5.6.3).

### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Develop a streetscape master plan and tree planting program to provide green streetscapes throughout the centre.
- Review and adopt the Canberra Central Design Manual to guide public domain improvements in the centre. This could be done in conjunction with the streetscape master plan to provide one co-ordinated document.

## FORESHORE PRECINCT

This precinct has potential to become a key destination for entertainment and dining. The quality of the public domain will be central to the success of the area. A high quality public domain should also reflect the character of the location. There are opportunities to improve the area's paving, lighting and landscaping as part of future redevelopment of sites.

As Emu Bank attracts more outdoor dining, public domain upgrades will be required to support the precinct's success. These upgrades should emphasise a uniform character along the promenade and strong links between Emu Bank and Westfield shopping centre. Integrating landscaping and outdoor dining areas will provide a 'point of difference' for the area, making it attractive and successful.

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- See section 5.6.1 for planning policies and public domain upgrades relating to the Foreshore precinct.

## RETAIL AND OFFICE PRECINCT

Frontages to Lathlain Street and Benjamin Way have value as pedestrian connections, but suffer from narrow footpaths and a lack of weather protection.

The Belconnen Fresh Food Markets has approved plans for additional development. When constructed, the area will have a high standard of environmental sustainability and a diverse range of uses.

The verges in this precinct are narrow, particularly along Lathlain Street, where they are less than 2 metres in places. The verge to the emergency services group at Lathlain Street is approximately 4.4 metres, which is considered too narrow for a potentially busy area.

### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Provide public seating at well-considered locations to break up long walking distances.
- Identify ways to achieve consistent public domain outcomes from potential future development on National Land.
- Provide facilities such as planting, seating, litter bins, and other amenities consistent with activity levels.

## CAMERON AVENUE PRECINCT

This precinct contains most of the existing taller residential buildings, sites where taller buildings have been approved for construction but have not yet been built, and a mix of other uses including the Labor Club and commercial offices.

As this area undergoes significant change and population growth, the public domain must be of a high standard.

### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Ensure public domain improvements in this area are co-ordinated to enable the area to become a recognisable precinct and cater for increased residential population. Redevelopment provides a good opportunity to improve the public domain.

## 5.6.10 IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND USE OF OPEN SPACE AREAS

### LAKE GINNINDERRA

Urban open space around Lake Ginninderra provides an important recreational resource, holds ecological and possibly archaeological value, and has potential for vegetative restoration. Because the developed area of the centre has capacity to accommodate projected residential growth, there is currently no requirement to rezone open space adjacent to the lake to enable additional development.

There is currently no requirement for additional formal recreational areas around the lake; however, there is scope to improve parking, areas of the shared path and vegetation.

The central open space of Lake Ginninderra's northern peninsula has potential for a range of uses, including parkland and possibly low-scale development. Without a clear current demand for alternative use of this land, it is considered better to focus development in the town centre core. Any development will require rezoning of this land, so maintaining the current open space provisions will provide flexibility for the future. This will also help retain and emphasise the contrast between the lake's open space and the centre's built form.

Suitable space to meet the long-term requirements of groups that want to use the lake, such as the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts and future possible users, needs to be identified. The western side of the lake has potential for a range of uses that are compatible with the urban open space zoning, including community gardens and temporary uses such as circuses. While additional formal recreation space is not currently required, this area provides capacity for its future provision.

There is scope to continue improving the water quality of stormwater entering the lake, particularly runoff from the service trades area and possibly from the Cook / Aranda area.

### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Establish a budget bid to design and construct additional parking spaces at John Knight Memorial Park. There is potential for additional perpendicular parking spaces on the north side of Townsend Place.
- Develop a program of habitat rehabilitation for the northern and western areas of the lake. This work could be undertaken by local community groups, possibly through Australian Government funding.

- Stormwater from the service trades area currently flows directly into the lake. Construction of a small water quality control pond would improve the quality of water and provide a facility to contain spills from the service trade area.
- Support TCCS in completing stage 2 of the Emu Inlet public space upgrade to enable full use of its recreational and community event potential. Design work for this has been completed, with the design providing for community performances and events.
- Support the artsACT funding bid to complete the Belconnen Arts Centre foreshore path to connect Emu Inlet parkland to the west with the Emu Bank commercial area to the east.

### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Investigate measures to further improve stormwater quality, including the need for replacement of the Eastern Valley Way gross pollutant trap and construction of a new water quality control pond, and introduce measures such as rain gardens and ponds.
- Determine the demand from community groups, such as Rowing ACT and the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts, for space adjacent to the lake and how this space could be used most effectively. It is suggested areas adjacent to the former water police station would be most suitable for these uses.
- Investigate the development of a community garden on the western side of the lake, including assessing the level of community interest, the land required, access and management of the facility.

### MARGARET TIMPSON PARK

Margaret Timpson Park is Belconnen's key 'municipal' space and currently the only park area within the town centre core. As outlined in section 4.1.4, the park has been considered underused for some time.

Rather than trying to attract activity through additional commercial uses, the focus should be on its function as a formal space and as a park for the surrounding residents, improved connections to nearby areas of high activity and a better relationship with the park from surrounding development. Revising the park design should incorporate additional facilities, such as barbecue facilities and tables, public toilets and a children's play space, possibly incorporating water play. Any changes should retain the existing palm trees and formal

layout of the park, which help emphasise its municipal role; however the layout will need to be flexible to accommodate large community events.

The suggestion to demolish the former community health building and expand Margaret Timpson Park over the site and the adjacent vacant block has been considered; however, this is difficult to justify given the existing park's low usage and loss of income to the community from the possible sale of these blocks. While the ACT Health Directorate currently requires this building, a better outcome may be to encourage future redevelopment that overlooks and opens onto the park. To ensure a better relationship with the park and adjacent buildings, it is recommended to limit development on this site to four storeys.

While the adjacent office buildings provide daytime activity, they offer little after-hours activity or passive surveillance of the park. Enabling redevelopment of these buildings up to six storeys, with mandatory commercial uses at ground floor and first floor, may encourage residential uses. This would provide better after-hours use and passive surveillance of the park.

The possible relocation of the Belconnen Library and Belconnen Community Centre from this area to Lathlain Street will improve aspects including accessibility; however there is concern this will concentrate the diversity of uses at Lathlain Street, leading to less activity in the Margaret Timpson Park area. Despite this, the park will remain the town centre core's primary area of open space.

### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Allow maximum building heights for blocks 40 and 41 of Section 54 up to four storeys to ensure a viable redevelopment and better surveillance opportunities of the park and maintain existing views from the adjacent apartments.
- Consolidate blocks 40 and 41 Section 54 and rezone from Community Facilities Zone (CFZ) to Business Zone (CZ2).
- Increase the allowable building heights of blocks 37 and 39 of Section 54 to six storeys to enable upper-level residential development and surveillance of the park.
- Establish planning controls for the blocks fronting Margaret Timpson Park that encourage high quality buildings that contribute to a sense of liveliness and activity and enable contribution to the upgrade of the park.

“RATHER THAN TRYING TO ATTRACT ACTIVITY THROUGH ADDITIONAL COMMERCIAL USES, THE FOCUS SHOULD BE ON ITS FUNCTION AS A FORMAL SPACE AND AS A PARK FOR THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTS...”

#### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

Establish a budget bid for the design and construction of a children’s play area at Margaret Timpson Park, in conjunction with Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) Directorate. This could incorporate water play areas, barbecue facilities and public toilets.

#### WALDER STREET LOCAL PARK

The renewal of the Lathlain Street precinct (see Section 5.6.1) proposes to relocate most of the open space in this location to front on to Lathlain Street. This is intended to result in a more intensively used and accessible urban open space due to its close location to Westfield and the bus station. The proposed configuration includes around 3800 m<sup>2</sup> of open space to the east of Rae Street adjacent to the proposed extension of Walder Street, and 1000 m<sup>2</sup> to the west of Rae Street. Rezoning this land to PRZ1 will secure its use as public open space.

#### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- See section 5.6.1, the Lathlain Street precinct for recommended planning policies.

#### OATLEY COURT LOCAL PARKS

The carparks and open space areas at Oatley Court are currently zoned Service Zone (CZ3). Rezoning the areas of open space to urban open space (PRZ1) will provide valuable areas for both current users and the possible long-term redevelopment of the service trades area.

#### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Rezone the areas of open space to Urban Open Space (PRZ1).

#### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- As a key part of the proposed streetscape master plan, redesign these areas of open space to ensure they are more usable. This could include a footpath from the carpark to the basketball centre, additional lighting, seating and vandal proof basketball hoops. Improvements to the southern area could include a barbecue and public seating. This would inform future bids for construction funding.

#### SHORT CLOSE LOCAL PARK

A section of open space located on the eastern side of Benjamin Way near Short Place has the potential to be a well-used local park; however, this area currently has no park furniture or improvements. The space has good visibility from Benjamin Way, is activated by several pedestrian walkways and the Benjamin Way shared path, has several established trees, and offers a potential location for residents of the Condell Street area. The land is about 1400 m<sup>2</sup> (20x70 metres) in size.

#### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Support preparation of a feasibility study and potential subsequent budget consideration to assess the merit of providing upgrades to the proposed Short Close Park. Potential upgrades could include landscaping, play equipment, seating, barbecue facilities and picnic tables, and half-height fencing along Benjamin Way to allow children to play freely.

#### OTHER AREAS OF OPEN SPACE

Open space is well provided in the Emu Ridge and Totterdell Street areas; however, the safety of some areas could be improved, including an area of open space behind residential areas on Totterdell Street.

Map 25: Proposed pedestrian network



The draft master plan suggested rezoning Block 2, Section 184 from RZ2 (Suburban Core Zone) to PRZ1 (Urban Open Space) due to the number of trees on the block.

It is now recommended to retain the RZ2 zoning to enable medium density residential development on this large block. This would be reliant on a full tree assessment of the site to ensure all valuable trees are retained.

Block 16, Section 14 fronts onto Coulter Drive and Nettlefold Street. The site is zoned CZ3 and has high visibility; however, vehicular access is very difficult. It is recommended that any change of use or development only occur in conjunction with future redevelopment of the bus depot site.

Although vegetated areas beside Belconnen Way have some visual and ecological value, the current Transport Zone (TSZ1) zoning provides flexibility for road widening while restricting other development. It is recommended the current zoning of this area be retained.

## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Investigate methods of rectifying the entrapment hazard in the open space on Section 184, behind Totterdell Street.

### 5.6.11 IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR WALKING AND CYCLING

Providing significantly improved cycle and pedestrian connections from surrounding suburbs and within the centre is a central initiative of the master plan. Increased walking and cycling rates are supported by key policy objectives in areas of health, environment, transport and economic development, and are a clear desire of the community. Achieving these policy outcomes requires significant upgrades to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

A high quality pedestrian environment within the centre will encourage walking for short trips within the centre and will relieve pressure on car parking (**Map 25**). Cycle lanes should be safe, easy to use and well-connected in order to have universal appeal to cyclists, particularly children and those with less confidence.

While cycle connections to the centre are relatively good, connections within the centre are poor. Proposed cycle improvements within the centre will provide a finer grain network of cycle lanes to offer access throughout the centre, as indicated in **Map 26**.

The network should provide adequate separation from cars and appropriate lane widths in order to provide safety and accommodate anticipated volumes. Separation of cyclists from traffic and pedestrians is required to provide safety and ease of use. To ensure a basic network is able to be constructed, physical separation may be needed to be staged over time. Allocating dedicated space for bicycle lanes and providing appropriate infrastructure is required to gain the full benefits of cycling in the centre.

There is a significant need for legible and safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists into and across the centre. Safe routes to the centre are required along College Street and Belconnen Way between Kingsford Smith and Coulter drives, as well as the conversion of the former busway near Joynton Smith Drive into a cycle path. These have the potential to encourage many more cyclists into the centre.

The community strongly support the use of the former Joynton Smith busway as a shared path. This area has also been considered for additional residential development; however, this option faces several constraints, particularly the limited vehicle access, the narrow site width and height restrictions to respect adjacent development. While the busway culvert could be utilised for basement parking, it is considered most of the area would not currently be economically viable to develop. The use of the busway as a shared path for cyclists and pedestrians will require additional infrastructure, including pedestrian signals on Coulter Drive and a cycle connection to the Florey Shops.

The Canberra Centenary Trail provides a significant recreational resource for the community, with 145 kilometres of walking and cycling paths around the ACT. While signage indicates the trail's route through the centre, additional signage providing information about the trail may encourage greater awareness and use of it.

## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Support cyclist- and pedestrian-oriented design of buildings, public places and the traffic system.
- Ensure the development of large sites provides a fine grain and permeable movement network that supports filtering of pedestrians through the centre, and supports the main pedestrian areas shown in **Map 25**.

Map 26: Future cycle connections



## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Work closely with TCCS to establish a program of pedestrian infrastructure improvements. These improvements should focus on areas of greatest potential future activity, and where an increased level of safety is required. This could include:
  - > Provide footpaths to areas of the centre where they are missing and where dirt tracks have formed, for example beside the Oracle apartments on College Street.
  - > Ensure public pedestrian routes are compliant with design standards to provide disability access. This may require a study be undertaken as part of the work supporting the proposed streetscape master plan work.
  - > Provide lighting improvements to areas perceived as having safety issues, in particular to the Keene Place underpass and on the Emu Bank promenade.
  - > Make key pedestrian routes from surrounding suburbs obvious and easy to use. For example, the route from the Keene Place underpass to Cohen Street is not clear, with a range of surfaces and obstacles. Provide a consistent, wide pavement with shade and good lighting to key routes into the surrounding suburbs.
  - > Consider improvements to the pedestrian links between the university and the centre, such as a pedestrian bridge to replace the current signalised pedestrian crossing on Aikman Drive.
  - > Provide shared paths to both sides of College Street, linking Haydon Drive to Lathlain Street. This will complete the link from the AIS, CIT, Calvary Hospital and the University of Canberra to the centre.
  - > Ensure pedestrian improvements or traffic calming works consider impacts on cyclists, particularly works that reduce traffic lane widths without providing separated alternatives for cyclists.
  - > Consider pedestrian route improvements, including removing slip lanes, removing obstacles, providing paths and improving crossing signals at specific areas including:
    - > the link from Chandler Street to the community bus station
    - > a high quality pedestrian path between Edmonston Place and Emu Bank
    - > mid-block connections on large sites, including Sections 44 and 45, and
    - > Benjamin Way, Emu Bank, Lathlain Street and Cameron Avenue.
- Work closely with TCCS to establish a program of cycle infrastructure improvements to establish a clear and safe cycle network across the centre, as indicated in **Map 26**. In particular:
  - > Improve cycle links to Benjamin Way, initially north of College Street and subsequently to include south of College Street and connections across Belconnen Way. A future recreational path using the median of Benjamin Way may be a possibility.
  - > Progress a clear north–south trunk cycle route based on the former Joynton Smith busway and Lathlain Street. This will provide a direct link between Florey Shops, Westfield Belconnen, Lathlain Street bus station, the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets and the Jamison Centre.
  - > Improve cycle links on Eastern Valley Way, initially using the existing shared path south of College Street.
  - > Improve the connections between the University of Canberra and Westfield Belconnen, initially by improving visibility and missing links on the underpass-footbridge connection, subsequently using Emu Bank and College Street.
  - > Improve the legibility of the cycle connection from the centre through the University of Canberra to connect with Bruce Ridge shared paths.
  - > Provide cycle lanes on Luxton Street and Emu Bank.
  - > Support the TCCS proposal to provide a 3 metre wide shared path on the east side of Aikman Drive, as part of the duplication work for the road. This will provide a clear connection from the new University of Canberra Public Hospital to the centre.
  - > Improve cycle connections on Emu Bank and Cohen Street, including the Nettlefold Street connection to Coulter Drive.
  - > Improve cycle connections on College Street to Nettlefold Street.
  - > Provide separated cycle lanes along Belconnen Way, extending from Kingsford Smith Drive to Coulter Drive.
  - > Improve the issue on Ginninderra Drive Bridge, where the location of street lights obstructs pedestrians, with people often using the road to avoid on-coming cyclists. Consideration could be given to utilising the existing on-road cycle lane to overcome this issue.
  - > Widen the lake shared path in places where there is clear conflict between users or dirt tracks have developed. The suggested physical separation of cyclists and pedestrians is considered excessive at this time.

Map 27: Potential structured car parking locations



- > Support the provision of a lake-side shared path around the Belconnen Arts Centre, proposed by artsACT.
- > Consider the location of additional bike storage at specific locations.
- Undertake an investigation for a ‘cycle hub’, which would be close to employment and public transport, and include bike storage, repair and change facilities.
- Investigate the provision of additional signage to inform people about the Canberra Centenary Trail, which runs beside the lake.

### 5.6.12 ENCOURAGE GREATER USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The reconfiguration of bus routes and demolition of the former Belconnen Bus Interchange have improved access to buses and the safety of waiting areas. The rapid route between the Belconnen town centre and the city centre provides links to the University of Canberra, Radford College and Calvary Hospital. This is a convenient and cost-effective way of getting to the city, and is well used. The future possible provision of a light rail link between the City, Belconnen and Kippax offers further opportunity to encourage the use of public transport.

Several people have raised the need for a local loop bus service connecting the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets, the service trades area, Westfield Belconnen, Emu Bank and the university. This could be considered by ACTION as a new local route, or provided by local traders to encourage business.

The Westfield Belconnen bus station is nearing capacity and may require additional platforms to accommodate future growth. This should be addressed through a study of future public transport requirements in the centre, which could also consider the preferred route for any future light rail and the benefits of allowing private vehicles to travel from Emu Bank to Cohen Street through the community bus station.

### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Promote the use of the bike cage at the community bus station as part of an alternative transport solution for people both travelling to the Belconnen town centre and the city centre. This bike cage is currently underutilised and may encourage more people to cycle if promoted.

### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Undertake a study of future public transport requirements in the centre. This could include:
  - > the requirement and location of additional bus platforms at the Westfield bus station
  - > the impact of allowing private vehicles to use the community bus station to link Cohen Street and Emu Bank
  - > the consideration of additional local services in the centre, including a possible loop service, and
  - > the requirement for the ‘Intertown Public Transport’ route, which is indicated on the Territory Plan map. For example, reservations at College Street and the Joynton Smith Busway are indicated despite not currently being required.
- The preferred route of a future light rail system is to be determined. Reconfiguration of streets to accommodate on-road cycle lanes and street trees will need to take a future possible light rail route into account, and current public transport reservations may be required.

### 5.6.13 MANAGE PARKING

Many people consider parking to be a significant issue in the centre. Meeting future parking requirements will most effectively be addressed by commercially operated structured carparks. This will ensure a competitive, cost-effective and fair way of meeting parking needs. It may also enable commercial and residential buildings to be constructed without the added cost of providing parking spaces. The potential for such structured carparks is addressed in the ACT Parking Plan (2015). It is also assumed that increased rates of active travel will help reduce parking demand.

The design of several large private carparks is partly contributing to the congestion of access roads due to vehicles banking up within the carpark and spilling onto roads. Reconsidering the design of these carparks may assist to reduce congestion.

Suitable locations for additional structured carparks have been identified in this master plan and require reservation. These sites are considered convenient to areas of demand and large enough to be commercially viable. Other uses, including residential, should be incorporated into the buildings.



## RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

- Review the parking rate requirements specified in the Parking and Vehicular Access Code, to align with recommendations of the ACT Parking Action Plan.
- Investigate the feasibility of sites identified as suitable for structured carparks as indicated in **Map 27**. While several of these could be developed for parking in the short term, others will require relocation of existing uses, or may prove unsuitable.

## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- If the current trial of smart parking is successful, implement the smart parking system to enable more efficient use of parking in the centre.
- To ensure the viability of parking structures, apply and enforce parking restrictions in the centre and surrounding suburbs.
- Encourage opportunities to establish commercially operated car sharing facilities or car hire in the centre. This may include identifying dedicated parking spaces close to apartment developments.
- Where possible, maintain or increase the provision of short-stay on-street parking.

## RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Prepare a centre-wide parking management plan with the objectives to maximise efficiency of car parks.
- Determine the best location to provide short-stay parking for tourist buses and towed caravans, preferably in a location within walking distance to key attractions and local businesses.
- Encourage Bunnings and Westfield to undertake a design study of their carparks to identify ways of reducing the impact of queuing on the congestion of surrounding roads, particularly Lathlain Street.
- Investigate a ‘Smart Travel Belconnen’ or similar initiative to facilitate public awareness and bring forward mode shift towards active travel and public transport options.

### 5.6.14 ENCOURAGE SAFER ROADS

The adoption of a 40 km/h speed limit in the central area of the centre has been generally accepted as a positive outcome. An issue with the existing zone is that people do not appear to have a clear idea of its extent.

Numerous studies have shown that 40 km/h is the threshold speed below which the fatality rate for collisions involving pedestrians drops away significantly. Slower speeds in areas with higher pedestrian activity also enables pedestrian crossings and on-street parking to operate safely and provides a less car-focused character to the central area. With the possible introduction of additional on-road cycle lanes, it is important that roads and parking areas are safe for cyclists.

Although the provision of some traffic calming devices, including speed humps is sometimes unpopular, they send a clear signal that speeds need to be reduced.

The draft master plan suggested a larger 40 km/h zone to cover areas such as Emu Bank. Expanding the zone further to cover most of the centre will send a clear signal of the expected speed limit.

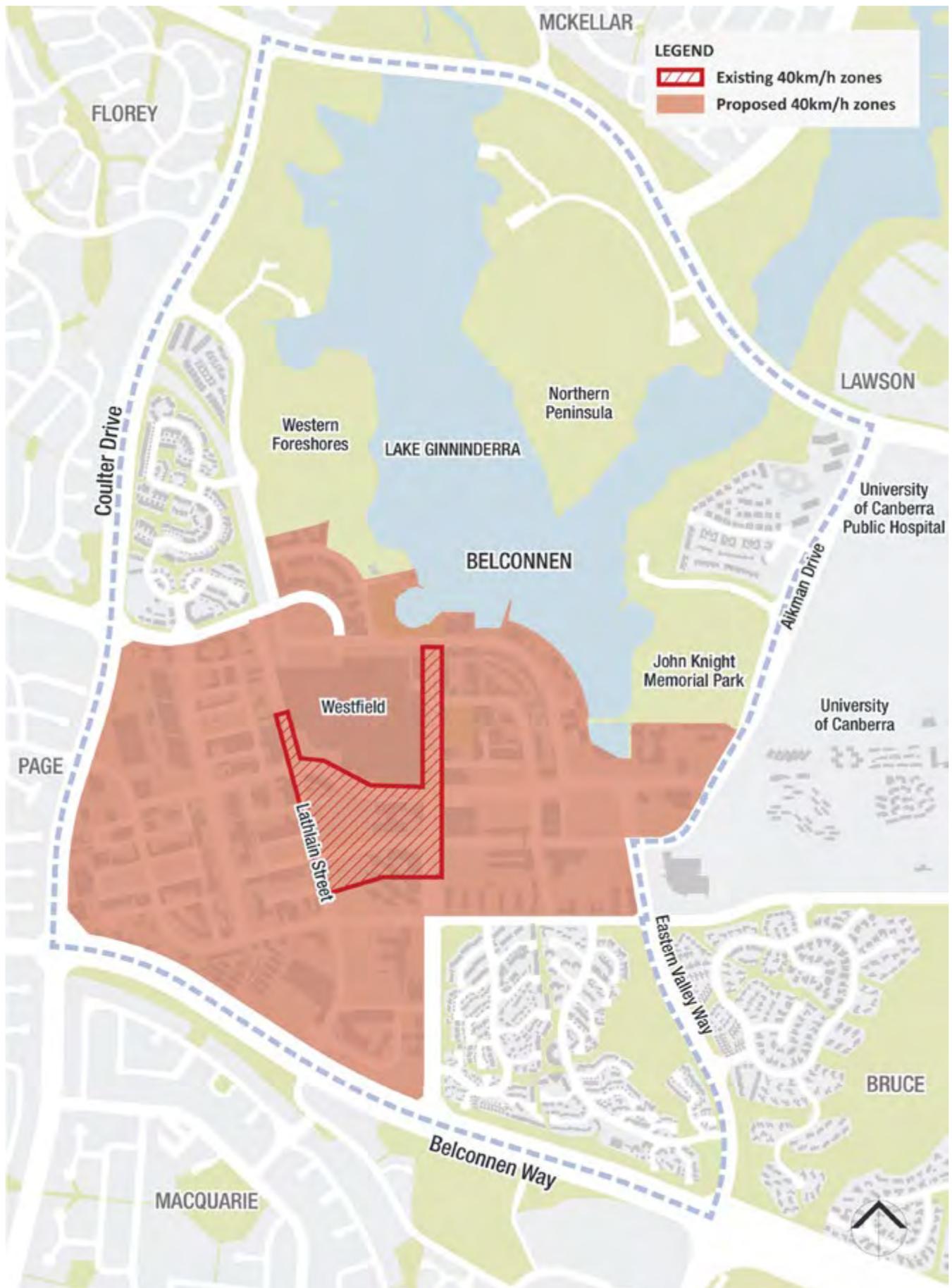
## RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Investigate the expansion of the 40 km/h zone over time to cover areas of the centre with higher pedestrian activity and traffic complexity, as indicated in **Map 28**. This includes areas of Josephson Street, Beissel Street, Emu Bank, Benjamin Way, Lathlain Street and Nettlefold Street.
- Consider providing measures such as kerb build-outs and raised pedestrian crossings to demarcate the 40 km/h zone, rather than the current plastic speed humps. Ensure any traffic calming measures employ cyclist-oriented design and are consistent with the proposed cycling network. Most importantly avoid traffic calming that reduces lane width without providing cycling lanes, unless as part of a specially designed ‘shared traffic zone’ area.

### 5.6.15 ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF GREEN SPACES AND LIVING INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2010, Canberra’s per capita greenhouse gas emissions were 18% above the national average while water usage was 17% above the national average. This contributed to an ecological footprint of 9.2 hectares per person compared to the Australian average of 6.4 hectares, the fourth highest in the world.<sup>11</sup> While the 2015 ACT State of the Environment Report<sup>12</sup> indicates a slight improvement, our ecological footprint remains at 14 times larger than the Territory’s land area. Combined with the predicted effects of climate change, where Canberra will become hotter and drier, our

Map 28: Proposed future 40 km/h zones



buildings and public spaces must become more efficient and responsive to the changing environment

As outlined at section 3.6.4, the street trees throughout the centre have failed on many streets and have not been replaced, or are on blocks that may be subject to future development. To help mitigate the impacts of climate change, as well as making the centre a far more attractive place to visit or live, a comprehensive street tree planting program is required. This will ensure new large canopied trees are provided to achieve a minimum 50% shade coverage of the streets. This would initially require a planting plan be developed, which should form part of the proposed streetscape study.

Remaining native street trees are for the most part stunted and in poor health. They offer limited canopy cover and failed trees have typically not been replaced by TCCS. Part of the reason these plantings have failed are because existing site conditions are unsuitable for large to medium street trees, often planted in a restricted space and surrounded by impermeable pavement. To achieve successful street trees and increase canopy cover within the centre, tree planting will be in accordance with current TCCS standards, including tree pits, structural soil cells, adequate soil volumes, reduced conflict with infrastructure and better access to water.

Narrow verges provide an additional challenge to providing large street trees, which can be assisted by providing car park blister areas between on-street carparks.

#### RECOMMENDED PLANNING POLICIES

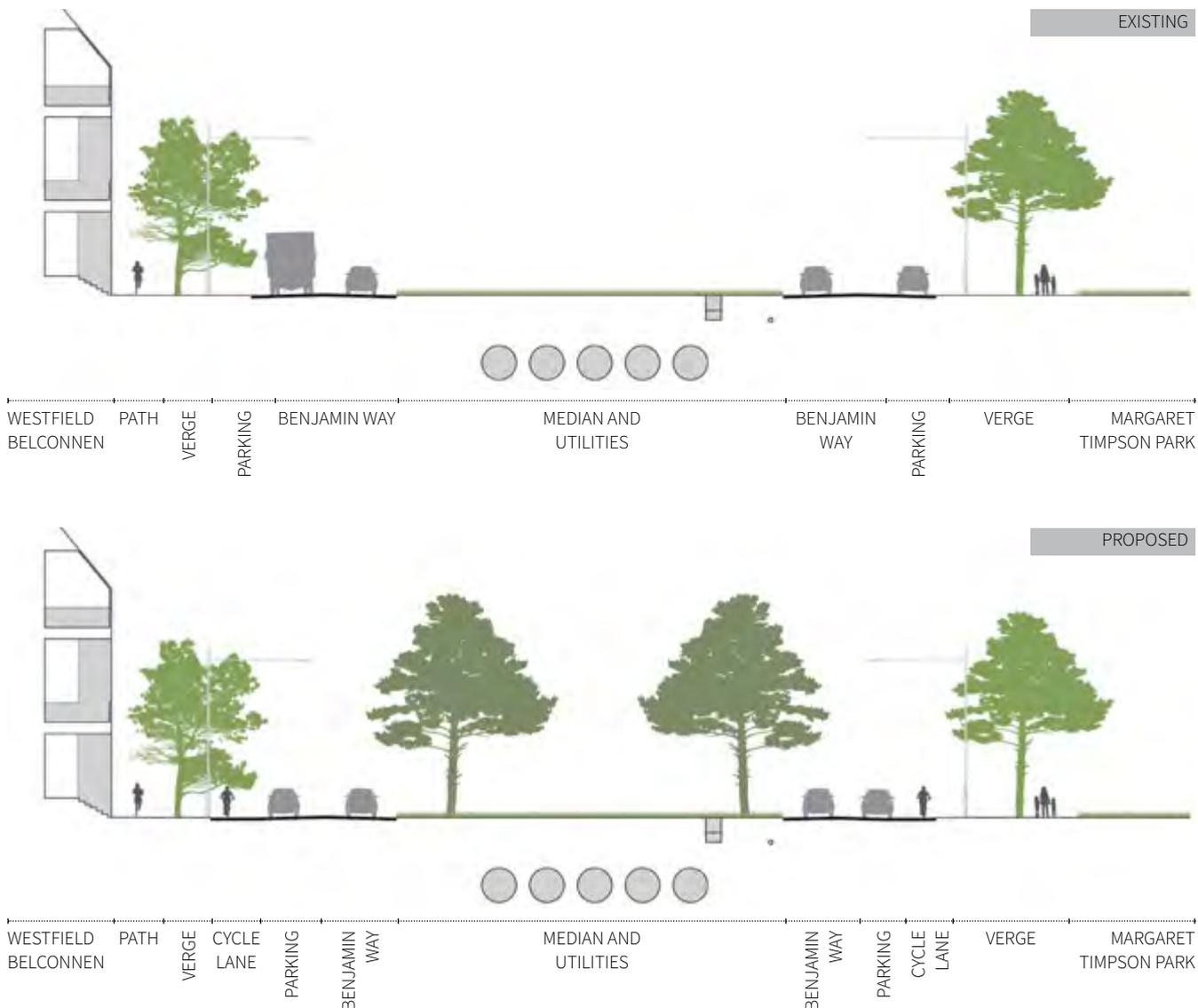
- Establish development controls that provide incentives to increase environmentally sustainable building outcomes. These should encourage best practice rather than a minimum acceptable result (refer 5.6.3).
- The elm tree outside the Belconnen Library has heritage value as the remaining link to the original Emu Bank homestead. Consideration should be given for its inclusion on the ACT Tree Register and how it should be sensitively incorporated into any future redevelopment of the precinct.

#### RECOMMENDED PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

- Develop a street tree planting plan for the town centre core that keeps existing eucalypts where possible and ensures new large-canopied street trees are provided throughout the centre to achieve a minimum 50% shade coverage of the streets.
- This planting plan should form part of the proposed streetscape master plan work, and identify preferred species for each street as well as planting locations including where narrow verges would require on-street planting. Above ground clearances will also need to be examined in terms of TCCS minimum requirements.
- New street trees will require correct preparation to TCCS requirements, including structural soil cells and adequate soil and root barriers to reduce conflict with paving areas. Trees will be preferably irrigated by stormwater, ensuring a water source and helping reduce stormwater volume.
- New trees should be species that are tolerant of urban spaces and are drought and disease resistant. This would require TCCS approval, but could include species such as the Oriental Plane (*Platanus orientalis*).
- Complete the avenue of street trees at the north end of Benjamin Way. Planting of these trees has been constrained by the five 1.8 metre diameter stormwater pipes in the northern median of Benjamin Way, as indicated on **Figure 22**. TCCS now consider the depth of these will result in minimal future conflict with tree roots. Subject to Roads ACT agreement, the median will support the planting of trees to form a continuous avenue of trees from Belconnen Way to Emu Bank. However, due to ongoing problems with damage from Elm Leaf Beetle, TCCS require an alternative tree species to elms be used.

“TREES WILL BE  
PREFERABLY IRRIGATED  
BY STORMWATER,  
ENSURING A WATER  
SOURCE AND HELPING  
REDUCE STORMWATER  
VOLUME.”

**Figure 22:** Benjamin Way cross section



### EMU RIDGE AREA

The 2001 master plan suggestion for a water quality control pond and gross pollutant trap (GPT) on the former Eastern Valley Way oval is dependent on the success of the new wetlands adjacent to the Belconnen Skate Park, as well as the costs of cleaning the current GPT. Establishing ponds in Canberra’s inner north has provided a strong basis for community involvement, attractive public space and increased wildlife habitat. Establishing a new pond at Eastern Valley Way could provide a significant public domain improvement for this area.

### RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDIES

- Prepare a feasibility study to determine the technical requirements for a water quality control pond and gross pollutant trap on the former Eastern Valley Way oval.

# 6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

## 6.1 THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

Implementation of development set out in the master plan will be progressive over the longer term as it is dependent on capital works funding from the ACT Government, investment decisions by private business and land availability.

It can be implemented through:

- a Territory Plan variation, including a revised Belconnen Precinct Code and changes to the Territory Plan land use map as indicated on **Map 29**
- the sale of Territory-owned land, otherwise known as land release
- capital works, including public domain upgrades, to be considered in context of future budgets
- further studies, and
- uptake of opportunities by private developers and the community.

These are described in more detail below.

### 6.1.1 TERRITORY PLAN VARIATION

A master plan is a non-statutory planning document. However, the relevant provisions can become statutory through a variation to the Territory Plan to revise the existing Belconnen Precinct Code. The precinct code will realise some of the planning policy recommendations and provide the opportunity for the building heights, setbacks and land uses outlined in the master plan to be implemented as development and redevelopment occurs.

There will be opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the precinct code through a separate community engagement process.

### 6.1.2 PUBLIC DOMAIN UPGRADES

Infrastructure and public space improvements are required to realise the vision and some of the strategies of this master plan. This will involve further investigations by various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budget bids.

## 6.1.3 COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Business, commercial developers and the wider community are responsible for taking advantage of opportunities identified within the master plan. A number of changes indicated in the master plan are on existing developed sites or require substantial investment. Therefore, implementation of the master plan will be progressive over time.

## 6.1.4 FURTHER STUDIES

Potential further studies could include:

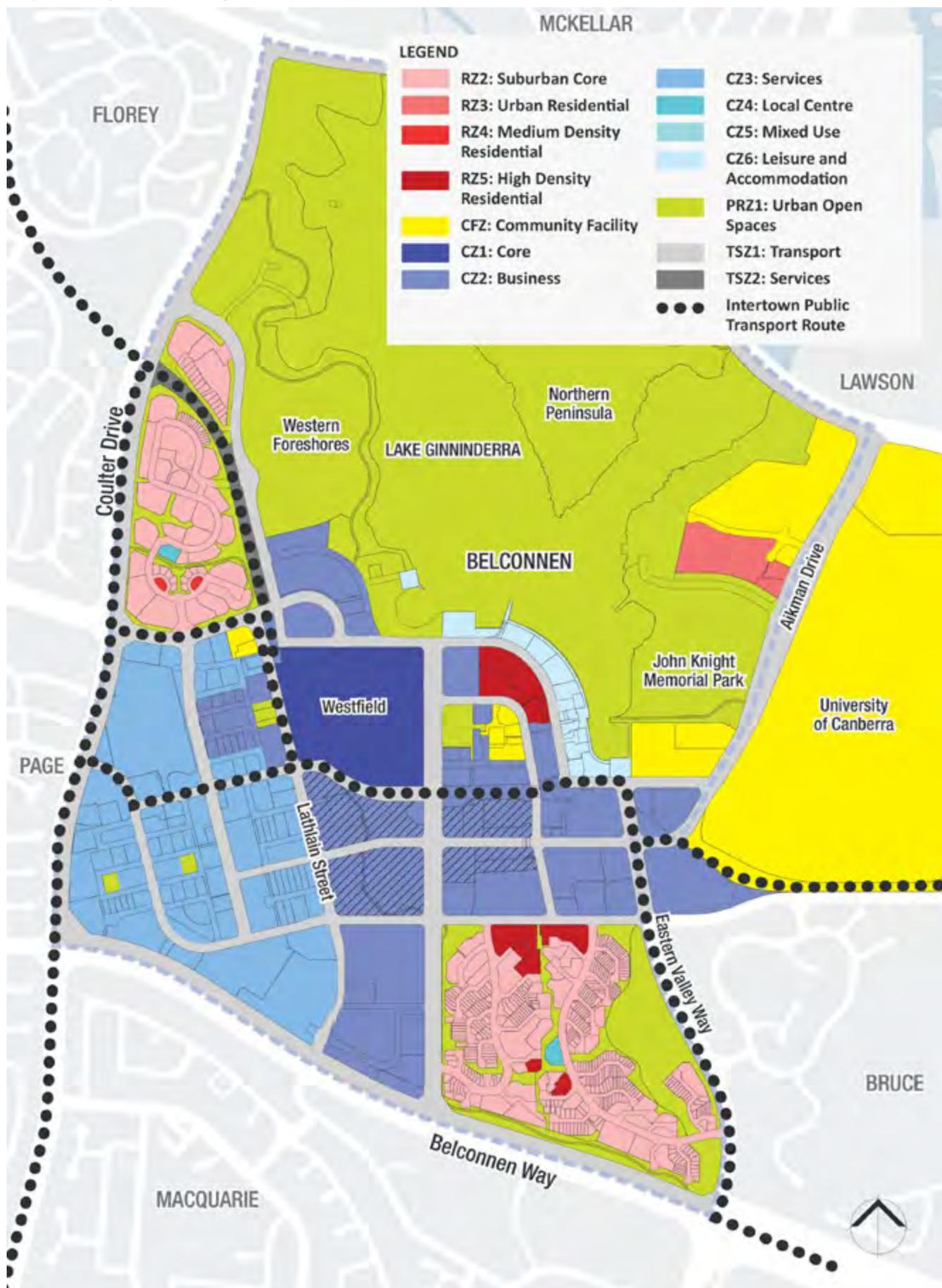
### BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN

A consolidated streetscape master plan is required to provide clear and coordinated direction on public domain improvements. This would include aspects such as a street tree planting plan, verge and paving improvements, street furniture requirements and locations, lighting improvements, and improvements to pedestrian links, including consideration of signalised crossings and possible removal of slip lanes to improve pedestrian safety. This work could be undertaken with the development of a 'Belconnen Design Manual' as outlined below.

### BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE DESIGN MANUAL

Public domain improvements in the city centre are guided by the 'Canberra Central Design Manual', which provides a consistent approach to elements such as paving, seating and lighting. The development of a similar manual for Belconnen town centre requires consideration; however, it may be more cost effective to adopt the Canberra Central manual.

Map 29: Proposed Territory Plan zones



### A ROAD TRAFFIC STUDY

A traffic study is required to determine the future requirements of road corridors. It would potentially include Ginninderra Drive between William Slim and Aikman drives; Lathlain Street between Belconnen Way and College Street; Luxton Street between Coulter Drive and Josephson / Totterdell St; and Nettlefold Street between Coulter Drive and Egan Court.

### A PUBLIC TRANSPORT STUDY

A study of future public transport requirements in the town centre is required, including consideration of the need or suitability of the Cohen Street bus station and how to accommodate additional platforms, if required, at the Westfield bus station. Other considerations could include the impact of gazetting the community bus station as a road to allow private vehicles. This could also include a review of the current Intertown public transport reservations indicated on various sites in the town centre, including the reservation between CISAC and the University of Canberra.

### CARPARK DESIGN STUDIES

A study of the Bunnings and Westfield carparks is encouraged to investigate how a redesign could improve the congestion on Lathlain Street resulting from queuing within the carparks. These studies and any resultant redesign would be undertaken by the lessees of these carparks and would assist in creating more efficient carparking for their customers.

### AN ACCESSIBILITY STUDY

An accessibility study of the core area of the town centre is required to ensure key pedestrian routes are compliant with disability codes. This could be undertaken as part of general consideration of improvements to pedestrian routes through the centre.

### DEVELOPMENT OF A MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE BELCONNEN SKATE PARK

Together with TCCS, Sport and Recreation Services and users, develop a management strategy for the Belconnen Skate Park to ensure its ongoing improvement and maintenance.

### COMMUNITY FACILITY NEEDS STUDY

The relocation of the library and community centre from the current Chandler Street sites to a more visible and accessible location on Lathlain Street is strongly supported by the management and many users of these facilities. These two buildings provide facilities for the whole Belconnen district, including meeting rooms, the library, a child care centre, indoor sports courts, the youth centre, administration offices and a community theatre. As part of any relocation a detailed needs assessment is required to ensure any replacement facility provides sufficient space to accommodate the future needs of the growing Belconnen District, not just the town centre.

Rezoning the community centre and library sites from community facility zone (CFZ) to enable redevelopment is considered premature at this stage, given the area and type of replacement facilities is unclear, the possible heritage value of the Belconnen Library building and the possible delay to the release of the sites at Lathlain Street.

### PROGRESS HERITAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

As detailed under section 3.2.1, the Belconnen Town Centre Library and Tumbling Cubes at Margaret Timpson Park were considered to have sufficient qualities to meet the assessment requirements of the ACT Heritage Act, however they require further assessment to determine if they are able to be nominated to the ACT Heritage Register.

It is recommended further investigation of these items is undertaken to determine heritage significance.

It is recommended that the remaining English Elm, marking the site of the Emu Bank Homestead is considered for listing on the ACT Tree Register.

## 7. ENDNOTES

1. 'Belconnen's Aboriginal Past', Peter Kabaila, 1997
2. Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan Report, NCDC 1968
3. Environment and Planning Directorate estimates, derived from ABS 2011 census data
4. Australia Bureau of Statistics 2011 census data
5. APS Statistical Bulletin 2013-14
6. Property Council of Australia, February 2015
7. Colliers International retail research and forecast report first half 2014
8. Heart Foundation 'good for business', 2011
9. Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, NCDC 1968
10. Belconnen Town Centre Public Transport Improvements and Transport Orientated Development, ACTPLA 2008
11. Australian Conservation Foundation Consumption Atlas.
12. ACT State of the Environment Report 2015, EPD 2016.
13. [Canberra Times](#) article: "Austerity drive wipes out one in 11 federal government jobs in Canberra" November 14 2014 Markus Mannheim.
14. Andrew Barr MLA media release 2 September 2015: '[ACT's economic growth leads the nation](#)'.
15. Andrew Barr MLA media release 4 June 2015 '[Strengthening CBR's higher education sector](#)'.



The background is a solid blue color with a gradient from a darker blue at the top to a lighter blue at the bottom. Overlaid on this are several thin white lines that intersect at various points, creating a complex geometric pattern of triangles and polygons. The lines are of varying lengths and orientations, some extending from the edges towards the center, others forming smaller shapes.

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**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

*Planning and Development Act 2007*

# **REPORT ON CONSULTATION**

Draft Variation to the  
Territory Plan  
No. 342

Belconnen town centre:  
Zone changes and amendments to  
the Belconnen precinct map and  
code

October 2018

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This consultation report was prepared in accordance with s 69 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the P&D Act).

The report describes the consultation undertaken on the draft variation with the public, the National Capital Authority (NCA), the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), ACT Heritage Council and Land Custodians, and responds to the issues raised.

## 2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

### 2.1 Details

Draft variation No 342 (DV342) Belconnen Town Centre was released for public comment on 4 May 2018. The closing date for comments was 22 June 2018. The version of DV342 released for public comments is at **Appendix 1**.

A total of 16 written submissions were received within the consultation period, with another four submissions received with an extension of time request shortly after the close of consultation. One further submission was received after the close of consultation, which has been included as the issues raised are similar to other submissions received within time. Of the 21 submissions, 9 submissions were from Belconnen residents, 8 submissions from commercial interests, or groups representing commercial interests, within the centre, 3 submissions from community organisations and one submission from a cycling advocate.

The comments from the NCA are dealt with separately under section 3.2 of this report. Comments from the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, EPA, ACT Heritage Council, Transport Canberra and City Services and the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate received and assessed prior to release of the DV342 are addressed in sections 3.3 - 3.7 respectively of this report.

Copies of submissions received from the public are provided in **Appendix 2**.

## 2.3 Issues and responses

The key issues raised are summarised below, and responses provided.

### Building Heights

#### **2.3.1 Eight submissions (3, 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21) sought an increase in permitted building heights over individual blocks or areas.**

##### Response

A number of commercial lessees and developers requested consideration of increased heights over specific blocks or sites, including consideration of flexible heights as described in the Belconnen master plan. It should be noted that the height increases nominated in the master plan have already been incorporated into the draft variation, except for selected sites where a range of criteria need to be met to permit consideration of a four storey increase in building heights. Any further increases in building heights above what the master plan recommended would need to be considered through a separate Territory Plan variation.

#### **2.3.2 Four submissions (1, 2, 6, 15) raised concerns with the proposed 16 storey maximum permitted height for development on the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way, particularly impacts on views and isolation of the development from other taller buildings within the town centre.**

##### Response

The proposed maximum permitted building height of 16 storeys is consistent with the recommendations of the approved Belconnen Town Centre master plan, and reflects the height of a previously approved development on the site. The master plan identifies the site on the corner of Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way as suitable for a marker building to identify the southern entrance to the town centre. In regards to impacts on views, loss of views is not a planning matter to justify the reduction of a building height.

#### **2.3.3 Three submissions (3, 18, 20) noted a concern that the two storey restriction in the CZ3 services area would be too restrictive and impact on the ability for sites within the zone to be redeveloped.**

##### Response

The two storey height restriction was included to control inappropriate types of development within the service trades area, based on the master plan recommendations. On further review it is considered that the restriction on residential uses within the CZ3 area will be sufficient to protect the existing uses from inappropriate adjoining development, and imposing a mandatory two storey height limit is not necessary. The code has been amended to remove the reference to two storey height controls. This means that the existing height controls within the Commercial Zones Development Code will continue to apply.

**2.3.4 One submission (4) raised a concern with the potential overshadowing impacts of six storey development along College Street to existing dwellings to the south.**

Response

The six storey height provision has been included in DV342 as one of the recommendations of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan. A review of the provision confirmed that the site can generally accommodate development up to six storeys without significantly impacting on surrounding residences. However to ensure the surrounding area is not impacted, an additional provision has been included in the precinct code to ensure solar access to main daytime living areas and areas of principal private open space of surrounding dwellings are not significantly impacted by development. In addition, the maximum building height has been amended to be described in both metres as well as storeys to provide better control over the expected building height.

**2.3.5 One submission (9) was concerned with the permitted height for development on block 37 section 52, with allowance for further increase by an additional four storeys.**

Response

The proposed maximum height allowance over block 37 section 52 Belconnen reflects an existing approved development height. The additional four storey allowance does not apply to this site.

**2.3.6 One submission (18) noted that the master plan recommended heights for block 23 section 55 had not been incorporated into the draft variation.**

Response

This departure from the master plan was an unintentional omission and has been corrected. The draft variation has been amended to show the correct maximum building heights of six storeys over block 23 section 55 as recommended by the Belconnen Town Centre master plan.

**2.3.7 One submission (21) requested amendments to the location of the marker building at the corner of Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way, allowing it to extend into an adjoining block.**

Response

The marker building location reflects a previously approved development and is intended to provide a narrow form that marks the entrance to the centre without resulting in an excessively bulky or imposing development. Departures from the approved master plan, including increasing the scale of the development would need to be considered through a separate Territory Plan variation, which would enable the community to provide input into the planning process. It should be noted that the marker building was the only site which received multiple submissions concerned with building heights being too high, indicating that the community has a particular interest in development on the site.

It should also be noted that the area identified in the master plan for the marker building was intended to be indicative only, and did not represent the total extent of the building.

### **Zone Changes**

**2.3.8 Three submissions (5, 7, 9) referred to the proposed rezoning of block 41 section 54 from CFZ community facility land to CZ2 commercial business zone, with one submission (5) requesting that any development of the site be of high quality and of benefit to the community, one submission (7) requesting that the site be rezoned to PRZ1 and incorporated into Margaret Timpson Park, and one submission (9) seeking for it to remain community facility land.**

#### **Response**

The zone change is in accordance with the recommendations of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan to accommodate future redevelopment of the site. The CZ2 zoning permits a range of uses over the site, including residential, community and commercial development. The new provisions proposed by DV342 include requirements for active frontages for the site to Margaret Timpson Park as well as a general requirement for all development to contribute to the amenity of adjacent public spaces and to the streetscape.

**2.3.9 Two submissions (8, 13) raised concern with rezoning of CZ3 service trades area west of Lathlain Street to CZ2 commercial business zone, particularly loss of land for future large scale employment areas and the impact on surrounding areas through increased traffic, parking, noise, and isolating a portion of CZ3 land south of Luxton Street.**

#### **Response**

The rezoning is in accordance with the recommendations of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan. The sites being rezoned include sections where residential use will generally not be permitted, encouraging development for commercial uses. The potential impacts of development would need to be assessed at the time of lodgement of a development application to ensure there are no significant impacts on the surrounding area, and that the development will not be impacted by existing uses on adjoining sites.

## Changes to Permitted Uses

**2.3.10 Four submissions (14, 17, 18, 20) referred to the new provision permitting a supermarket in selected sites adjoining Eastern Valley Way outside of the core commercial area, with one submission (14) opposed to the allowance, one submission (18) supporting the provision, while two submissions (17, 20) argued that the restriction on supermarket will restrict opportunities for the use in other sites within the CZ2 area.**

### Response

The provision permitting a supermarket up to 1,500m<sup>2</sup> along the northern end of Eastern Valley Way is a recommendation of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan, and was developed to provide the ability for a local small scale service for the existing and future residents of the immediate area, located approximately 1km walking distance from the supermarkets within the main Belconnen shopping centre.

The recent Woden Town Centre Territory Plan variation included a provision permitting an 800m<sup>2</sup> supermarket to provide a local service for the anticipated 2,500 residents of the area. The anticipated future population of around 9,000 residents located around the northern end of Eastern Valley Way would be readily serviced by a local small scale supermarket for day to day needs, while still relying on the main shopping centre for more substantial shopping needs.

It should be noted that under the existing Belconnen precinct code in the Territory Plan, shops (including supermarket) are limited to 200m<sup>2</sup> in the CZ2 zone, with the associated criterion providing for limited departures from the rule. There are no changes to this part of the provision and therefore development in the CZ2 zone outside of the sites identified for the larger provision will not be affected.

**2.3.11 Two submissions (18, 20) stated that the prohibition on residential use in CZ3 is overly restrictive and not an appropriate response to manage impacts of development in the area.**

### Response

The restriction on residential use within the CZ3 services area was a recommendation of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan, and is intended to ensure the area remains suitable for service trades uses into the future. Consideration of new commercial or industrial zones to provide a finer level of control over development is outside the scope of this variation, while including restrictions at the Crown lease stage are not considered an efficient mechanism for managing uses within a large, established area.

## Other issues

### **2.3.12 One submission (14) raised concern with the extent of active frontage required along Benjamin Way for their block.**

#### Response

The active frontage provisions were developed in accordance with the recommendations of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan, and would only come in force as part of any redevelopment of the affected land. The requirement is intended to improve the public realm character and enhance amenity for pedestrians in the area.

### **2.3.13 One submission (14) raised concern that DV342 would lead Belconnen Town Centre into a downturn spiral similar to Woden.**

#### Response

DV342 has been developed from the recommendations of the approved Belconnen Town Centre master plan. The master plan was developed to manage the built form within the town centre over the next 10-20 years, particularly in regards to height controls, which are currently absent from the commercial centre.

### **2.3.14 One submission (16) raised concerns with impacts of development on the lake foreshore, particularly the effects of increased patronage, impacts on parking around the lake and impacts on existing community facilities along the lake.**

#### Response

Ongoing management and maintenance of public land is not a matter for the Territory Plan. Public land is managed by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS). Concerns with the provision of public facilities or maintenance should be directed to Access Canberra in the first instance for referral to the relevant area within TCCS for a response.

### **2.3.15 One submission (19) requested that blocks 42 and 60 section 65 be included in the draft variation, with an allowance for commercial uses and increased heights to permit redevelopment.**

#### Response

The community facility zoned blocks located at the corner of Aikman Drive and Emu Bank lies outside of the extent of the proposed changes to the Belconnen precinct code. The Belconnen Town Centre master plan recommended limiting heights over the site to three storeys and did not nominate any increase in permissible uses for the site. The existing Territory Plan requirements limit development to between two and four storeys, with no limitation on uses permitted by the community facility zoning. Any proposal to amend the Territory Plan provisions to increase the permitted building height or amend the permitted uses over the sites will be required to undergo a separate Territory Plan variation process to enable a considered assessment of the proposal, and provide the community the opportunity to understand and comment on the proposed changes.

**2.3.16 One submission (5) suggested alternate locations for the Belconnen library to a more prominent location.**

Response

The Belconnen Town Centre master plan identified an area along Lathlain Street, opposite the bus interchange as being suitable for the library, if it were to be relocated. This location would provide direct and easy access to public transport as well as the main retail area.

**2.3.17 One submission (13) raised concern that future light rail routes were not being protected as part of the variation, while one submission (14) raised concerns that not including light rail to Belconnen would negatively affect the town centre.**

Response

The potential future light rail routes were considered during the development of the Belconnen Town Centre master plan. It was not considered practical or effective to set aside land within the town centre at this stage while the potential preferred route is yet to be determined.

**2.3.18 One submission (14) noted that economic interests are a valid and important planning concern, and that the proximity of Gungahlin is impacting on Belconnen Town Centre.**

Response

Population counts from June 2017 estimate that the Belconnen Town Centre services a population of almost 99,000 residents. In comparison, Gungahlin Town Centre services a population of around 75,500, while Canberra City services 83,600 and Woden Town Centre services 35,600. The separation by road between Belconnen Town Centre and Gungahlin Town Centre (9.7km) is comparable to Canberra City (7.4km), with Woden Town Centre 15km distant. This shows that each town centre is servicing a comparable population, with the exception of Woden with a much lower population catchment.

**2.3.19 One submission (11) suggested changes to Benjamin Way to improve cycling infrastructure.**

Response

The comments do not impact on DV342, though the comments and associated diagram were provided to Transport Canberra and City Services for their information.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2007**

#### **3.1 Release for Public Comment (section 63)**

DV342 was made available for public comment from 4 May 2018 to 22 June 2018 and a consultation notice under s 63 of the P&D Act was published in the ACT Legislation Register on 4 May 2018.

#### **3.2 National Capital Authority (section 61 (b) (i))**

The NCA provided the following comments:

*“The NCA has no objection to DV342 proceeding to public consultation.*

*We’ll continue discussions with the lessees of National Land sites, which as noted in the DV documentation do not fall within the scope of Territory Plan controls.”*

#### Response

The comments are noted.

#### **3.3 Conservator of Flora and Fauna (section 61 (b) (ii))**

The Conservator made the following comments:

*“In accordance with Section 61(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2007 I advise that I have examined Draft Variation No 342 and I have no comments to provide other than to note my support for the proposed retention of three additional areas of urban open space within the Town Centre.”*

#### Response

The comments are noted.

#### **3.4 Environment Protection Authority (section 61 (b) (iii))**

The EPA made the following comments:

##### ***“Environment Protection:***

*Foreshore precinct - The EPA has received a number of complaints from residents adjoin the Foreshore Precinct. The complaints concerned noise from the current music venues. While the master plan has recognised the need for careful consideration of planning controls, the controls should be robust to minimise the potential for further harm through the generation of noise to residential properties.*

***Service Trade Precinct - The EPA supports the proposed restriction of residential development within the precinct.***

**Lathlain Street precinct** - planning controls should be considered for this precinct to protect the bus interchange and surrounding light industries. Where residential development occurred in close proximity to the Tuggeranong bus interchange, the EPA received a number of complaints concerning impact from noise and odour from the buses using the interchange. Through considered planning controls trades and residential may co-exists without conflict.

The recommended planning policies detailed in Section 5.6.1 are a positive step in addressing concerns identified by the EPA.

#### **Contaminated Sites:**

With respect to site contamination please note the following:

**Blocks 1 and 24 Section 21 Belconnen** - is currently subject to assessment and independent audit commissioned by the LDA - proposed uses for these sites should not be varied until the audit into site suitability is complete and the findings endorsed by the EPA.

**Blocks 2 and 3 Section 23 Belconnen** - assessments already commissioned by the LDA. The EPA has endorsed the findings of the assessments that the Site is suitable for redevelopment into medium to high density residential land use.

**Blocks 2, 3 and 4 Section 22 Belconnen** - assessments already commissioned by the LDA. The EPA has endorsed the findings of the assessments that the Site is suitable for the proposed commercial and medium to high density residential land uses.

**Block 41 Section 54** - assessment required - due to potential for contamination from site being used as a dental surgery

- Rezoning block 41 section 54 from CFZ community facility zone to CZ2 business zone

**Block 2 section 198 including adjoining road reserves** - assessment required due to potential for contamination from past and current activities.

- Rezoning from CZ3 to CZ2

**Block 4 section 22, block 8 section 185 and block 7 section 186** - no assessment required

- Rezone from Services Zone (CZ3) to TSZ1 Transport zone.

**Block 30 Section 52 and adjoining road reserve** - no assessment required

- Rezone from TSZ2 services zone to CZ2 business zone.

**Block 16 Section** - no assessment required

- Rezoning from CZ3 to CZ2.

**Block 1 section 88** - no assessment required

- Rezoning from RZ2 suburban core zone to RZS high density residential zone."

## Response

The comments are noted. In response to EPA concerns regarding existing light industrial in the CZ3 services zone uses impacting on future residential uses, residential use has been prohibited for sections 185 and 186. The master plan recommended rezoning these sections from CZ3 services zone to CZ2 business zone, which permits residential use. As the adjoining sections contain industries likely to cause impact to any future residential use, it was considered necessary to prohibit this use in sections 185 and 186 for the foreseeable future. The existing uses provide a valuable and conveniently located service for the Belconnen community, and if they were forced to relocate to accommodate adjoining residential uses, it would most likely be to Fyshwick or Hume, reducing the opportunities for these services in the Belconnen area.

In addition, a restriction on residential use on section 21 within 100m of block 23 section 21 has been included to reduce the potential for incompatible uses adjoining existing industrial uses. Additional provisions have been included restricting residential use on the first floor in the Lathlain Street precinct to further reduce potential conflicts with the operation of the bus interchange and nearby commercial uses.

The prohibition on residential use in sections 185 and 186 may be reconsidered in the future if and when circumstances change on adjoining sites.

Contamination studies will be undertaken on affected sites and endorsement obtained by EPA prior to the completion of the Territory Plan variation process.

### **3.5 ACT Heritage Council (section 61 (b) (iv))**

The ACT Heritage Council made the following comments:

*“No heritage places or objects subject to Heritage Act 2004 provisions occur within the Belconnen town centre, and the zone changes and amendments proposed by DV342 will not diminish the heritage significance of the place.”*

## Response

The comments are noted.

### **3.6 Land Custodian (section 61 (b) (v))**

The Land Custodian Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate provided the following comments:

- *It is anticipated that with the increase of building heights across the Belconnen Town Centre from three storeys up to twenty-three storeys at selected locations, there will be an increase in traffic on the surrounding road network. Traffic Impact Assessment must consider holistic effects of the proposed development on roads surrounding Town centre and parking demand.*
- *Belconnen to City has been identified as Public Transport (PT) corridor. Light Rail (LR) is one mode of PT identified through community consultation. However if LR is not to proceed, then bus PT is the other option to consider.*

- *Provision for parking demand of car spaces should be provided within the proposed buildings.*
- *Provide all the facilities required for interchange to facilitate the commuters using mixed mode of transport or to drop off people at these places.*
- *Provide sites for the parking demand at suitable locations and if there is reduction in car traffic, then these sites can be developed later.*
- *The disabled parking spaces should be provided in the areas of attraction, serving health facilities, and other facilities which provide services for aged persons or people with disabilities.*
- *The effect of traffic noise on residential dwellings on upper storeys and also the impact from commercial activities on the Ground floor such as outdoor dining should be considered and mitigated during the design stage.*

#### Response

The comments are noted. The matters raised are normally addressed through development application processes and do not require changes to the draft variation. The Multi Unit Housing development code contains requirements to ensure residential dwellings in commercial areas and adjacent to busy roads comply with Australian standards for noise mitigation.

Residential use has been prohibited at the ground and first floor along Lathlain Street to reduce the potential impacts of the operation of the bus interchange on nearby residents.

### 3.7 Land Custodian (section 61 (b) (v))

The Land Custodian Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate provided the following comments:

*"In addition to the comments set out in the attachment to this letter, the Economic Development portfolio is keen to see the inclusion of affordable housing as an additional criterion to satisfy when a development proposal in the town centre seeks a building height increase of an additional four storeys.*

*As you would be aware, improving housing affordability for all Canberrans is an important commitment for the current Government. I anticipate the draft new ACT Affordable Housing Strategy will be presented to Government in the coming months.*

*The draft strategy reflects learnings from previous affordable housing action plans and proposes a suite of actions to increase housing options for sale to eligible purchasers, including trialling planning and building code changes.*

*While the timing of the public consultation on the draft variation and the Government's consideration of the new Affordable Housing Strategy may not align, I feel it is appropriate to include (in the public consultation version of the draft variation) affordable housing as part of the relevant criteria (C9) so that a coordinated and considered outcome is achieved.*

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
1	A	2		Under the definition for Active Frontage -was does 'facadraction' mean?
2	B	9	C9	amend 'achieves all of the following' to 'achieves a

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
				majority of the following'
3	B	9	C9(b)	amend from 'provides community benefit through provision of publicly accessible pocket parks directly accessible from the street front boundary' to 'provides community benefit through either provision of, or providing convenient access to, publicly accessible pocket parks directly accessible from the street front boundary'. Blocks within the Lathlain Street Precinct or Section 151 might be released individually and this reads as though each site would then have to provide a little pocket park to obtain extra height. Emphasis should be on quality open spaces in the town centre (especially if they are to be maintained by the Territory) rather than quantity. Does the definition of pocket parks here include roof-top or podium gardens/recreation spaces/viewing platforms etc that could be publicly accessible?
4	B	10	C9(c)	Is that 7 green star rating for residential units?
5	B	10	C9	Include additional criteria to achieve increased building height: f} incorporates a component of dwelling units that are sold or rented in accordance with the requirements under the ACT Affordable Housing Strategy.
6	B	10	R10(a)	amend 'a clear public pedestrian easement through the site, providing a pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank' to 'provides a clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank'. An easement, with both a vertical and horizontal extent, spanning potentially across several buildings, as well as accommodating able and disabled access, may compromise the design and development potential of that Section 151 precinct.
7	B	15	R15	Re: the provision that development of more than 2 storeys in each section is not permitted until all of the blocks in each section are consolidated into one block. How does this work with Section 185 Belconnen which currently has a vacant block (4/185) owned by the Territory? Can the three existing sites in 185 Belconnen be consolidated and redeveloped to six storeys and if so what happens to 4/185 (ie does it become urban open space?). Or does 4/185 have to be purchased by the future developer of Section 185 to facilitate the redevelopment of the site? If this cannot occur by direct sale (due to its zoning and location) and goes to open market and is bought by someone else, is the redevelopment potential of Section 185 compromised?
8	B	15	R16	Suggest R16 could be redrafted consistent with R15 (with reference to relevant block/section) and avoid the need to refer to and include another 'figure' (figure 5) in the precinct code.
9	B	16	R18	amend R18 to read 'This rule applies to blocks 1 and 24 section 21 and block 3 and block 2 section 23. 6m verge width then applies right down to Cohen Street.
10	B	17	R24	No area 'J' in Figure 4. Should mean area 'b'?
11	B	17	R25(a)	amend 'Buildings, including basement' to 'Buildings, <b>excluding</b> basement'. A better outcome for the site could be achieved by allowing basement parking for the full extent of the site (reducing the need for surface or podium parking)

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
				and encouraging the future developer of the site to maintain maintenance responsibility for the open space and integrate it with ground-floor commercial and/ or residential.
12	B	19	R30(d)	Section 22 has primary active frontage on southern and eastern side, and secondary active frontage on the northern side. Service / loading zones and car-park entry will most likely be off the northern (ie Walder Street) side, bathed in sunlight, while southern 'primary active' frontage will be in shade most of the time. Would a better design outcome be achieved by having the southern and eastern boundary amended to secondary active frontage, thereby allowing loading/ service zones and entry points to be better located around the development?
13	B	20	C35	need to include a provision that overrides 6m setback on Section 149 that applies to the site under R58 Commercial Zones Code.
14	B	20	C35(b)	include 'a right of way easement is provided on the ground floor of the eastern and southern side of the block to facilitate pedestrian access along the lake foreshore'.

### Response

The matters raised have been addressed through amendments to the draft variation document where necessary, including corrections to formatting errors and amending provisions as required to address the concerns raised. It is noted that the criterion C9 provisions referred to in the advice have been removed from the draft variation for further consideration and refinement.

### **3.8 Notice of Submission to the Minister (section 70)**

In accordance with s 70 of the P&D Act, a public availability notice will be placed in the ACT Legislation Register stating that DV342 has been submitted to the Minister and that the documents are available for public inspection.

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## 4. APPENDICES

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**APPENDIX 1**  
**Draft variation 342 public release version**

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**APPENDIX 2**  
**Copies of public comments received on draft variation 342**

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**ACT**  
Government

Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development

*Planning and Development Act 2007*

**Draft**  
**Variation to the**  
**Territory Plan**  
**No 342**

Belconnen town centre:  
Zone changes and amendments to the  
Belconnen precinct map and code

May 2018

Draft variation for public consultation prepared  
under s60 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Summary of the Proposal

Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 342 (DV342) Belconnen town centre incorporates the key recommendations of the approved 2016 Belconnen town centre master plan, which provides guidance on the desired future built form and character of the town centre as it develops over the next 10 to 20 years.

The Belconnen master plans vision for the centre identifies that the town centre's features, including the lake, open spaces, layout and nearby institutions provide unique economic and environmental advantages. The master plan aims to improve and strengthen these aspects to ensure the town centre is an attractive, accessible and desirable place for people to live, work and enjoy.

DV342 rezones a number of areas within the town centre and surrounding areas, including:

- two blocks within the service trades area from service trades commercial to urban open space to retain access to existing open space areas for workers and visitors
- an area along Lathlain Street from trades and services to commercial business zone and urban open space, to promote activity west of the mall and revitalise the area; and
- a residential area on College Street from suburban core to high density residential to expand the existing area of high density residential development close to the town centre, and provide a more appropriate interface between the centre and surrounding residential land.

DV342 also amends the permitted uses in selected areas within the town centre, including prohibiting residential use in the service trades area and permitting a supermarket within the commercial business zone near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection. The variation also introduces building heights to the centre up to 27 storeys in selected locations, and accommodates the height of approved development within the town centre. Building setbacks and active frontage requirements in accordance with the approved master plan are incorporated to ensure interesting and safe public spaces for pedestrians. Awning requirements are also included to ensure all weather protection along the main pedestrian areas.

## 1.2 Outline of the process

The Commonwealth's *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* allows for the Legislative Assembly to make laws to establish a Territory Planning Authority and for that Authority to prepare and administer a Territory Plan. The *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act) establishes the planning and land authority as the Authority which prepares and administers the Territory Plan, including continually reviewing and proposing amendments as necessary. The functions of the planning and land authority are administered by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD).

The Territory Plan is comprised of a written statement and a map. The written statement contains a number of parts, namely governance; strategic directions; zones (including objectives and development tables and zone or centre development codes); precinct codes; general codes; overlays; definitions; structure plans, concept plans and development codes for future urban areas.

The Territory Plan Map graphically represents the applicable land use zones (under the categories of residential, commercial, industrial, community facility, urban parks and recreation, transport and services and non urban), precincts and overlays. The zone, precinct and overlay requirements are detailed in the volumes of the Territory Plan.

Draft variations to the Territory Plan are prepared in accordance with the Act. Following the release of the draft variation under section 63 of the Act, submissions from the public are invited. At the conclusion of the consultation period the EPSDD submits a report on consultation and a recommended final variation to the Minister responsible for planning for approval. The Minister has the discretion to determine if referral to the Legislative Assembly standing committee responsible for planning is warranted prior to approval, depending on the nature and significance of the proposal. If the draft variation is referred to the committee by the Minister or otherwise, the Minister must consider the findings of the committee before deciding whether to approve the draft variation. If the Minister approves the variation, the variation and associated documents will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Unless disallowed by the Legislative Assembly within five sitting days, the variation commences on a day nominated by the Minister.

### 1.3 Public Consultation

Written comments about the draft variation are invited from the public by **22 June 2018**.

Comments should include reference to the draft variation and be addressed to the Territory Plan Section of EPSDD. Please also provide your name and contact details to assist in the assessment of the comments provided, and to enable EPSDD to contact you in relation to your comments, if required. Your personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2014* and the EPSDD Information Privacy Policy, which is available for viewing on EPSDD's website.

Comments can be:

- emailed to [terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:terrplan@act.gov.au)
- mailed to Territory Plan Section, GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601
- delivered to the EPSDD Access Canberra Customer Service Centre at 16 Challis Street, Dickson
- made on the 'Have Your Say' website: <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/>

Copies of written comments will be made available for public inspection for no less than 15 working days starting 10 working days after the closing date for comment. The comments will be available at the EPSDD Access Canberra customer service centre in Dickson and may be published on EPSDD's website. Comments made available will include name and personal contact details unless you request otherwise.

A request may be made for parts of a submission to be excluded under section 411 or 412 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*. A request for exclusion under these sections must be in writing, clearly identifying what parts of your submission you are seeking to exclude and how the request satisfies the exclusion criteria.

#### *Further Information*

The draft variation and background documents are available online at **[www.act.gov.au/draftvariations](http://www.act.gov.au/draftvariations)** until the closing date for written comments.

Printed copies of the draft variation (this document) and background documents are available for inspection and purchase at the EPSDD Access Canberra Customer Service Centre, 16 Challis Street, Dickson, Monday to Friday (except public holidays) between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Please call 6207 1923 to arrange a copy for purchase.

## **2. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

### **2.1 Background**

DV342 incorporates the key planning policy recommendations contained within the Belconnen town centre master plan approved in 2016.

While a number of recommendations from the previous 2001 Belconnen masterplan have been realised, there have been a number of strategic planning documents released since then, such as the ACT Planning Strategy 2012, which encourage the consideration of urban intensification measures for the centre.

In addition to the zone changes for a number of specific sites, the review of the provisions applying across the town centre has also involved the identification of the need for additional measures in the Belconnen precinct code. This includes stipulation of maximum building heights for the town centre, identifying new development opportunities and improving pedestrian activity through the centre.

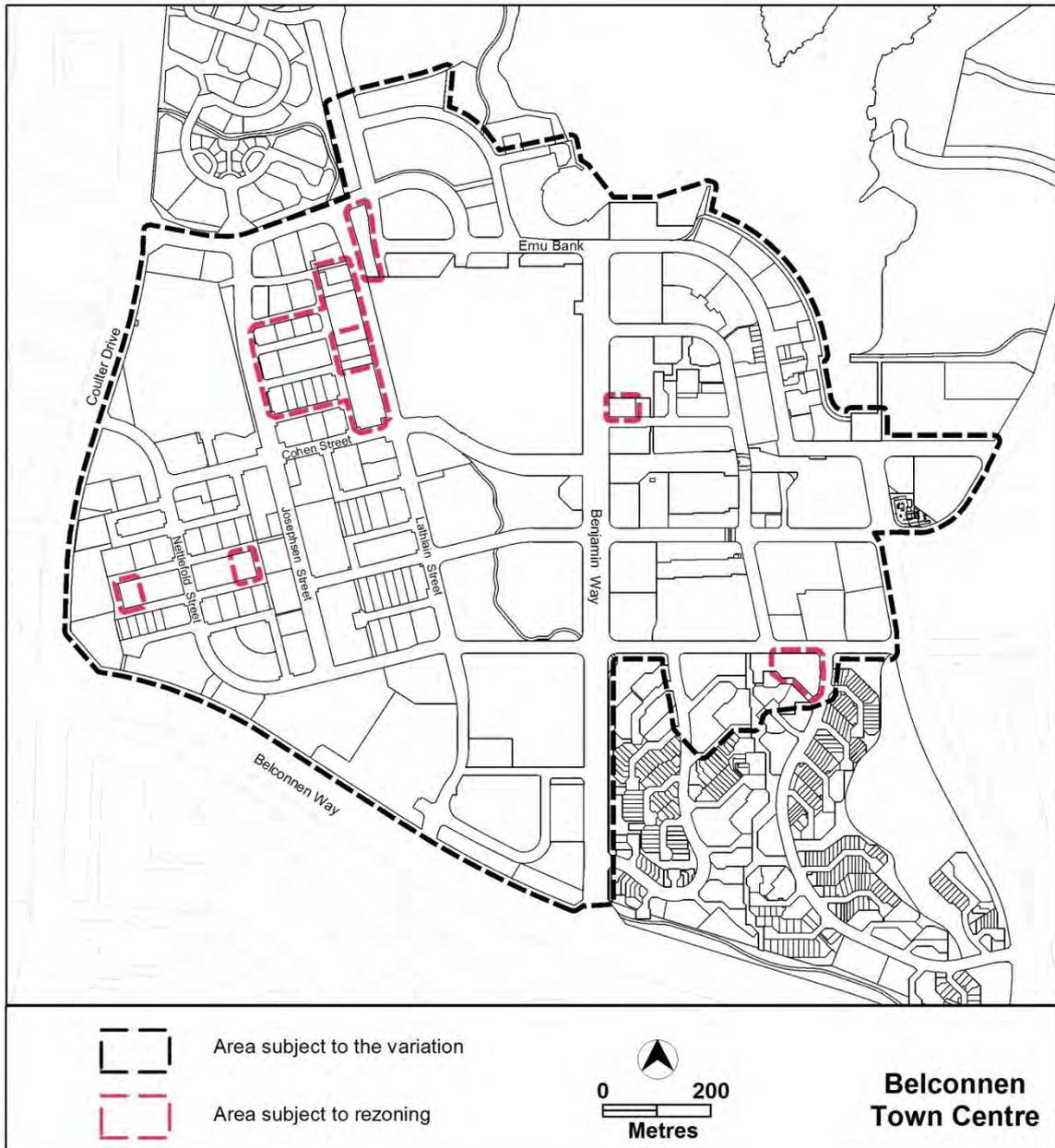
### **2.2 Site Description**

The subject area is the Belconnen town centre and a section of the residential area to the south, as identified in Figure 1. This figure also identifies the sites proposed to be rezoned under DV342. The town centre lies to the south of Lake Ginninderra, an artificial lake providing stormwater management and recreation opportunities for the town centre.

The town centre is a significant employment base within the ACT, with Commonwealth departments and retail businesses being the biggest employers. The centre also contains a number of important community, education and recreation uses including Belconnen library, Lake Ginninderra College and the Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, from the single and two storey service trades area to the central business area with development ranging from four storeys up to 27 storeys.

Surrounding areas are predominately low density residential suburban to the south, west and north of the centre, and the University of Canberra within walking distance of the town centre to the east.



**Figure 1 Location plan**

### **2.3 Current Territory Plan Provisions**

The Territory Plan map zones for the area subject to this variation are shown in **Figure 2**.

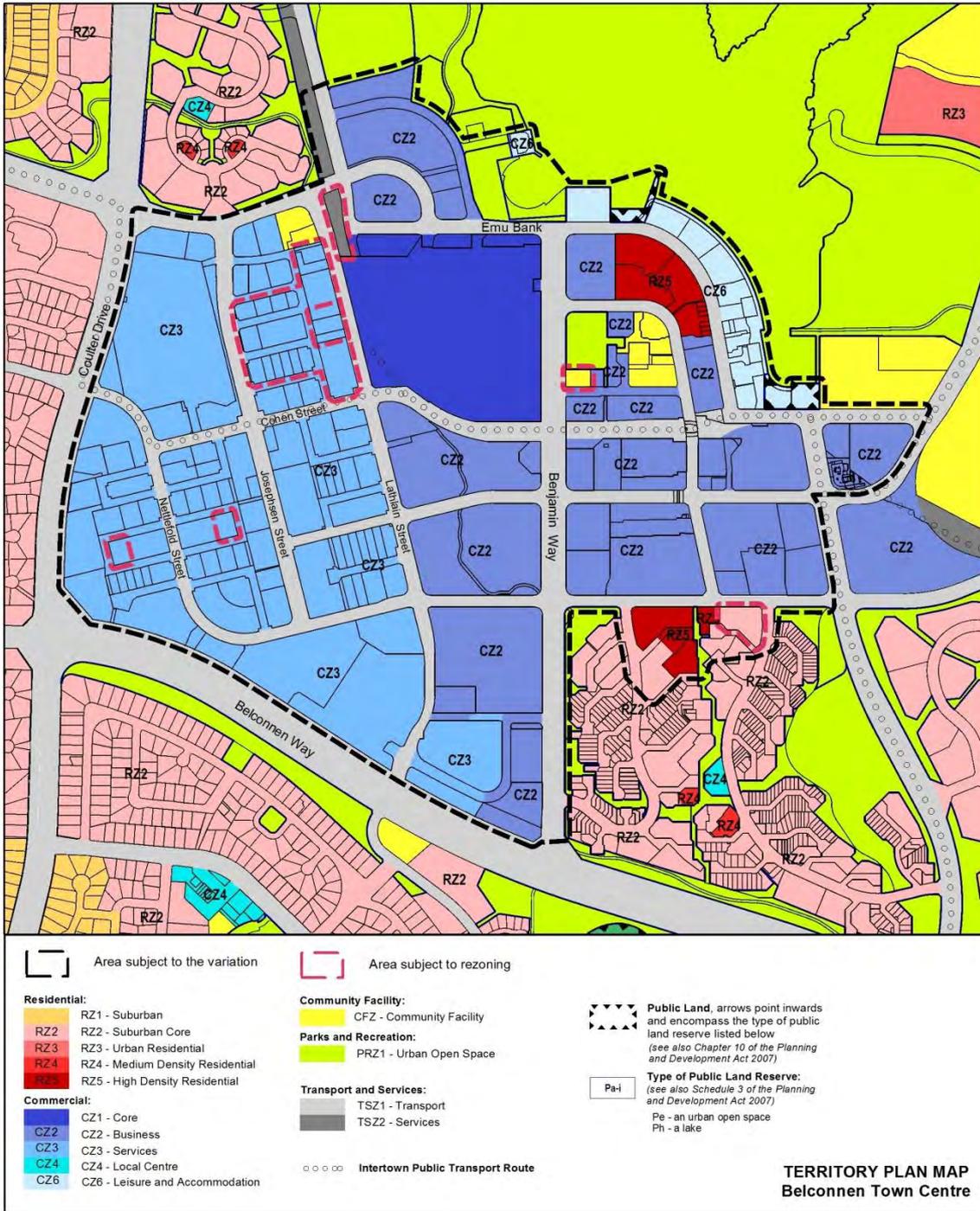
The town centre is predominately zoned CZ2 commercial business zone, with a central CZ1 core zone containing the Westfield Belconnen shopping centre adjoining the lake. The town centre also contains a substantial CZ3 service trades area forming the western portion of the town centre, containing the predominant service trades uses.

The town centre contains a wide range of building heights, with the CZ3 zoned area predominately single and two storeys, while the CZ1 core area and CZ2 business zone ranging between six to 12 storeys, along with an approved 28 storey tower development.

Development along Lake Ginninderra within the subject area is zoned CZ6 leisure and accommodation zone, with single and two storey buildings, with RZ5 High Density Residential zoned land behind containing a number of multi storey unit complexes around four storeys tall.

The town centre is subject to the Commercial Zone development code and the Belconnen precinct map and code. The adjoining residential areas are subject to the Residential Zones Development code, Single Dwelling Housing development code and the Multi Unit Housing development code. The community facility land is subject to the Community Facility Zones development code, with the public open space subject to the Parks and Recreation Zone development code. The general codes may also apply.

It should be noted that Belconnen sections 43, 44, 45(part), 49 and 50, while being identified as being subject to the Territory Plan provisions, are 'National Land', and are subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan and associated Development Control Plans. In this regard, the Territory Plan provisions do not apply to these sites.



**Figure 2 Territory Plan Zones Map**

## 2.4 Proposed Changes

### 2.4.1 Proposed Changes to the Territory Plan Map

The proposed changes to the Territory Plan map are indicated in Figure 3 at Part 3 of this document and are detailed as follows:

- rezoning portions of sections 5 and 11 from CZ3 services zone to PRZ1 urban open space zone
- rezoning block 1 and part block 24 section 21, and block 3 section 23 from CZ3 services zone area to PRZ1 urban open space zone
- rezoning block 4 section 22, block 8 section 185 and block 7 section 186 from CZ3 services zone to TSZ1 transport zone
- rezoning blocks 2, 3, 4 and 7 section 185 and blocks 1-6 section 186 from CZ3 services zone to CZ2 business zone
- rezoning blocks 21-23 and part block 24 of section 21, blocks 2 and 3 of section 22 and block 2 section 23 from CZ3 services zone to CZ2 business zone
- rezoning block 30 section 52 and adjoining Joynton Smith Drive road reserve from TSZ2 services zone to CZ2 business zone
- rezoning block 41 section 54 from CFZ community facility zone to CZ2 business zone; and
- rezoning block 1 section 88 from RZ2 suburban core zone to RZ5 high density residential zone.

The draft variation map indicates the proposed zone boundaries as accurately as possible but may be subject to adjustments following detailed surveys.

### 2.4.2 Proposed Changes to Territory Plan

It is proposed to amend the Belconnen precinct map in accordance with the master plan recommendations by including *residential use* as a prohibited use in the CZ3 services area as well as in sections 185 and 186, which are proposed to be rezoned to CZ2 business zone.

It is proposed to amend the Belconnen precinct code in accordance with the master plan recommendations by:

- specifying a range of building heights across the town centre from three storeys up to 23 storeys in selected locations, including the approved 28 storey development on the corner of Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way. The provisions will also permit a moderate increase in maximum building heights by an additional four storeys in selected locations where development maintains the building height hierarchy of the centre by retaining the higher buildings towards the core area
- introducing built form provisions including building setbacks for development above 12 storeys, and identifying areas through the centre where buildings will be required to provide active frontages and awnings for improved pedestrian activity and amenity
- increasing the maximum building heights for development in the high density residential zone adjacent to College Street from five storeys to six storeys where development addresses College Street
- permitting a supermarket up to 1,500m<sup>2</sup> within the CZ2 commercial business zone near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection
- requiring structured car parks located along main pedestrian areas to provide active uses at the ground floor
- restricting residential use on the ground and first floor in selected areas and requiring commercial adaptable lower floors in selected areas
- provisions for consolidation, subdivision, boundary realignments, and easements to improve urban form and development outcomes; and
- nominating a road connection between Walder Street and Lathlain Street to improve connectivity in the area west of Lathlain Street.

### **Departures from the approved master plan**

There are a number of proposed changes which depart from the master plan recommendations, including:

- prohibiting residential use in sections 185 and 186
- prohibiting residential development on the ground and first floor within section 21 and 23 along Lathlain Street
- permitting blocks 22 and 23 section 21 to be developed up to 4 storeys; and

- prohibiting residential development on block 24 section 21 within 100m of block 23 section 21 without written endorsement from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

These changes have been included in response to concerns raised by the EPA. The EPA advised that existing industrial uses such as vehicle smash repairers and the Lathlain Street bus interchange could impact on the amenity of future residential uses in the precinct. Including these provisions will reduce the potential for existing uses to impact on future residential uses, and encourage the redevelopment of the industrial trades use occurring on Lathlain Street.

In addition, the prohibition on residential use in sections 185 and 186 will ensure that the sites are not developed for residential use in the future and impacted by existing adjoining industrial trades uses. This prohibition may be reviewed should circumstances change with the industrial trades uses in the future.

## **2.5 Reasons for the Proposed Draft Variation**

The reasons for the draft variation are to amend the Territory Plan map and the Belconnen precinct map and code in accordance with the approved Belconnen master plan to:

- formalise existing open space areas within the CZ3 commercial service trades area through rezoning selected parcels of land to PRZ1 urban open space
- expand and consolidate the CZ2 commercial business zone west of the core commercial area to provide additional development opportunities along Lathlain Street while improving vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian movement through the area
- increase residential density in an area adjoining the town centre along College Street with easy access to the town centre
- ensure development in the CZ3 commercial service trades area is not incompatible with the predominant use of the land by prohibiting residential use in the zone
- ensure building heights and design within the centre are of an appropriate scale and relate to the existing centre layout and provide a measure of certainty to developers and the community as to the intended built form
- improve the built form interface with the public domain by ensuring new development provides interesting and functional facade treatments, encouraging pedestrian activity through the centre; and

- provide additional flexibility for supermarket location and size in selected areas within the CZ2 commercial business zone connecting the core commercial area to the community land use areas east of the town centre.

## **2.6 Planning Context**

### **2.6.1 National Capital Plan**

The *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* established the National Capital Authority (NCA) with two of its functions being to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan (NCP) and to keep the NCP under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary.

The NCP, which was published in the Commonwealth Gazette on 21 January 1990 is required to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance. The *Planning and Land Management Act 1988* also required that the Territory Plan is not inconsistent with the NCP.

### **2.6.2 Territory Plan**

Statement of Strategic Directions

The proposal is consistent with the Territory Plan's statement of strategic directions in terms of environmental, economic and social sustainability and spatial planning and urban design principles. In particular, the proposed changes to the Territory Plan will encourage mixed use development within the Belconnen town centre, providing opportunities for people to live and work close to services, public transport and active travel routes.

## **2.7 Interim Effect**

Section 65 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* applies to the draft variation. This means that the provisions of Draft Variation No 342 have interim effect, and apply to development applications lodged on or after **4 May 2018**.

During the period of interim effect, the Territory, the Executive, a Minister or a territory authority must not do or approve the doing of anything that would be inconsistent with the Territory Plan if it were varied in accordance with the draft plan variation. Where there is an inconsistency between provisions in the current Territory Plan and provisions in the draft variation, then the draft variation takes precedence for the extent of the inconsistency.

Interim effect will end on the day the earliest of the following happens:

- i. the day the public availability notice under section 70 for the draft variation being recommended to the Minister is notified in accordance with the Legislation Act
- ii. the day the draft variation, or the corresponding variation, is withdrawn under section 68 (1)(b) or section 76 (3)(b)(v)
- iii. 1 year after the date of the consultation notice.

## **2.8 Consultation with Government Agencies**

The EPSDD is required to, in preparing a draft variation under section 61(b) consult with each of the following in relation to the proposed draft variation:

- the National Capital Authority
- the Conservator of Flora and Fauna
- the Environment Protection Authority
- the Heritage Council; and
- the Land Custodian, if the draft variation would, if made, be likely to affect unleased land or leased public land – each custodian for the land likely to be affected.

### **National Capital Authority**

The National Capital Authority provided the following comments on 10 May 2017:

*“The NCA has no objection to DV342 proceeding to public consultation.*

*We’ll continue discussions with the lessees of National Land sites, which as noted in the DV documentation do not fall within the scope of Territory Plan controls.”*

Response

The comments are noted.

## **Conservator of Flora and Fauna**

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna made the following comments on 30 January 2017:

*“In accordance with Section 61(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2007 I advise that I have examined Draft Variation No 342 and I have no comments to provide other than to note my support for the proposed retention of three additional areas of urban open space within the Town Centre.”*

Response

The comments are noted.

## **Environment Protection Authority**

The Environment Protection Authority provided the following comments on 18 May 2017:

### ***“Environment Protection:***

*Foreshore precinct - The EPA has received a number of complaints from residents adjoin the Foreshore Precinct. The complaints concerned noise from the current music venues. While the master plan has recognised the need for careful consideration of planning controls, the controls should be robust to minimise the potential for further harm through the generation of noise to residential properties.*

***Service Trade Precinct** - The EPA supports the proposed restriction of residential development within the precinct.*

***Lathlain Street precinct** - planning controls should be considered for this precinct to protect the bus interchange and surrounding light industries. Where residential development occurred in close proximity to the Tuggeranong bus interchange, the EPA received a number of complaints concerning impact from noise and odour from the buses using the interchange. Through considered planning controls trades and residential may co-exists without conflict.*

*The recommended planning policies detailed in Section 5.6.1 are a positive step in addressing concerns identified by the EPA.*

### ***Contaminated Sites:***

*With respect to site contamination please note the following:*

***Blocks 1 and 24 Section 21 Belconnen** - is currently subject to assessment and independent audit commissioned by the LDA - proposed uses for these sites should not be varied until the audit into site suitability is complete and the findings endorsed by the EPA.*

**Blocks 2 and 3 Section 23 Belconnen** - assessments already commissioned by the LDA. The EPA has endorsed the findings of the assessments that the Site is suitable for redevelopment into medium to high density residential land use.

**Blocks 2, 3 and 4 Section 22 Belconnen** - assessments already commissioned by the LDA. The EPA has endorsed the findings of the assessments that the Site is suitable for the proposed commercial and medium to high density residential land uses.

**Block 41 Section 54** - assessment required - due to potential for contamination from site being used as a dental surgery

- Rezoning block 41 section 54 from CFZ community facility zone to CZ2 business zone

**Block 2 section 198 including adjoining road reserves** - assessment required due to potential for contamination from past and current activities.

- Rezoning from CZ3 to CZ2

**Block 4 section 22, block 8 section 185 and block 7 section 186** - no assessment required

- Rezone from Services Zone (CZ3) to TSZ1 Transport zone.

**Block 30 Section 52 and adjoining road reserve** - no assessment required

- Rezone from TSZ2 services zone to CZ2 business zone.

**Block 16 Section** - no assessment required

- Rezoning from CZ3 to CZ2.

**Block 1 section 88** - no assessment required

- Rezoning from RZ2 suburban core zone to RZS high density residential zone.”

Response

The comments are noted. In response to EPA concerns regarding existing light industrial in the CZ3 services zone uses impacting on future residential uses, residential use has been prohibited for sections 185 and 186. The master plan recommended rezoning these sections from CZ3 services zone to CZ2 business zone, which permits residential use. As the adjoining sections contain industries likely to cause impact to any future residential use, it was considered necessary to prohibit this use in sections 185 and 186 for the foreseeable future. The existing uses provide a valuable and conveniently located service for the Belconnen community, and if they were forced to relocate to accommodate adjoining residential uses, it would most likely be to Fyshwick or Hume, reducing the opportunities for these services in the Belconnen area.

In addition, a restriction on residential use on section 21 within 100m of block 23 section 21 has been included to reduce the potential for incompatible uses adjoining existing industrial uses. Additional provisions have been included restricting residential use on the first floor in the Lathlain Street precinct to further reduce potential conflicts with the operation of the bus interchange and nearby commercial uses.

The prohibition on residential use in sections 185 and 186 may be reconsidered in the future if and when circumstances change on adjoining sites.

Contamination studies will be undertaken on affected sites and endorsement obtained by EPA prior to the completion of the Territory Plan variation process.

### **Heritage Council**

The Heritage Council provided the following comments on 24 January 2017:

*“No heritage places or objects subject to Heritage Act 2004 provisions occur within the Belconnen town centre, and the zone changes and amendments proposed by DV342 will not diminish the heritage significance of the place.”*

Response

The comments are noted.

### **Land Custodian Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate**

The land custodian provided the following comments on 30 January 2017

- *It is anticipated that with the increase of building heights across the Belconnen Town Centre from three storeys up to twenty-three storeys at selected locations, there will be an increase in traffic on the surrounding road network. Traffic Impact Assessment must consider holistic effects of the proposed development on roads surrounding Town centre and parking demand.*
- *Belconnen to City has been identified as Public Transport (PT) corridor. Light Rail (LR) is one mode of PT identified through community consultation. However if LR is not to proceed, then bus PT is the other option to consider.*
- *Provision for parking demand of car spaces should be provided within the proposed buildings.*
- *Provide all the facilities required for interchange to facilitate the commuters using mixed mode of transport or to drop off people at these places.*
- *Provide sites for the parking demand at suitable locations and if there is reduction in car traffic, then these sites can be developed later.*
- *The disabled parking spaces should be provided in the areas of attraction, serving health facilities, and other facilities which provide services for aged persons or people with disabilities.*

- *The effect of traffic noise on residential dwellings on upper storeys and also the impact from commercial activities on the Ground floor such as outdoor dining should be considered and mitigated during the design stage.*

Response

The comments are noted. The matters raised are normally addressed through development application processes and do not require changes to the draft variation. The Multi Unit Housing development code contains requirements to ensure residential dwellings in commercial areas and adjacent to busy roads comply with Australian standards for noise mitigation.

Residential use has been prohibited at the ground and first floor along Lathlain Street to reduce the potential impacts of the operation of the bus interchange on nearby residents.

**Land Custodian Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate**

The land custodian provided the following comments on 31 January 2017

*“In addition to the comments set out in the attachment to this letter, the Economic Development portfolio is keen to see the inclusion of affordable housing as an additional criterion to satisfy when a development proposal in the town centre seeks a building height increase of an additional four storeys.*

*As you would be aware, improving housing affordability for all Canberrans is an important commitment for the current Government. I anticipate the draft new ACT Affordable Housing Strategy will be presented to Government in the coming months.*

*The draft strategy reflects learnings from previous affordable housing action plans and proposes a suite of actions to increase housing options for sale to eligible purchasers, including trialling planning and building code changes.*

*While the timing of the public consultation on the draft variation and the Government's consideration of the new Affordable Housing Strategy may not align, I feel it is appropriate to include (in the public consultation version of the draft variation) affordable housing as part of the relevant criteria (C9) so that a coordinated and considered outcome is achieved.*

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
1	A	2		Under the definition for Active Frontage -was does 'facadraction' mean?
2	B	9	C9	amend 'achieves all of the following' to 'achieves a majority of the following'
3	B	9	C9(b)	amend from 'provides community benefit through provision of publicly accessible pocket parks directly accessible from the street front boundary' to 'provides

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
				community benefit through either provision of, or providing convenient access to, publicly accessible pocket parks directly accessible from the street front boundary'. Blocks within the Lathlain Street Precinct or Section 151 might be released individually and this reads as though each site would then have to provide a little pocket park to obtain extra height. Emphasis should be on quality open spaces in the town centre (especially if they are to be maintained by the Territory) rather than quantity. Does the definition of pocket parks here include roof-top or podium gardens/recreation spaces/viewing platforms etc that could be publicly accessible?
4	B	10	C9(c)	Is that 7 green star rating for residential units?
5	B	10	C9	Include additional criteria to achieve increased building height: f) incorporates a component of dwelling units that are sold or rented in accordance with the requirements under the ACT Affordable Housing Strategy.
6	B	10	R10(a)	amend 'a clear public pedestrian easement through the site, providing a pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank' to 'provides a clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank'. An easement, with both a vertical and horizontal extent, spanning potentially across several buildings, as well as accommodating able and disabled access, may compromise the design and development potential of that Section 151 precinct.
7	B	15	R15	Re: the provision that development of more than 2 storeys in each section is not permitted until all of the blocks in each section are consolidated into one block. How does this work with Section 185 Belconnen which currently has a vacant block (4/185) owned by the Territory? Can the three existing sites in 185 Belconnen be consolidated and redeveloped to six storeys and if so what happens to 4/185 (ie does it become urban open space?). Or does 4/185 have to be purchased by the future developer of Section 185 to facilitate the redevelopment of the site? If this cannot occur by direct sale (due to its zoning and location) and goes to open market and is bought by someone else, is the redevelopment potential of Section 185 compromised?
8	B	15	R16	Suggest R16 could be redrafted consistent with R15 (with reference to relevant block/section) and avoid the need to refer to and include another 'figure' (figure 5) in the precinct code.
9	B	16	R18	amend R18 to read 'This rule applies to blocks 1 and 24 section 21 and block 3 and block 2 section 23. 6m verge width then applies right down to Cohen Street.
10	B	17	R24	No area 'J' in Figure 4. Should mean area 'b'?
11	B	17	R25(a)	amend 'Buildings, including basement' to 'Buildings, <b>excluding</b> basement'. A better outcome for the site could be achieved by allowing basement parking for the full extent of the site (reducing the need for surface or podium parking) and encouraging the future developer of the site to maintain maintenance responsibility for the open space and integrate it with ground-floor commercial and/ or residential.

Item	Attachment	Page	Rule/Criteria	Notes
12	B	19	R30(d)	Section 22 has primary active frontage on southern and eastern side, and secondary active frontage on the northern side. Service / loading zones and car-park entry will most likely be off the northern (ie Walder Street) side, bathed in sunlight, while southern 'primary active' frontage will be in shade most of the time. Would a better design outcome be achieved by having the southern and eastern boundary amended to secondary active frontage, thereby allowing loading/ service zones and entry points to be better located around the development?
13	B	20	C35	need to include a provision that overrides 6m setback on Section 149 that applies to the site under R58 Commercial Zones Code.
14	B	20	C35(b)	include 'a right of way easement is provided on the ground floor of the eastern and southern side of the block to facilitate pedestrian access along the lake foreshore'.

## Response

The matters raised have been addressed through amendments to the draft variation document where necessary, including corrections to formatting errors and amending provisions as required to address the concerns raised. It is noted that the criterion C9 provisions referred to in the advice have been removed from the draft variation for further consideration and refinement.

### 3. DRAFT VARIATION

#### 3.1 Variation to the Territory Plan

The Territory Plan map is varied as indicated in Figure 3.

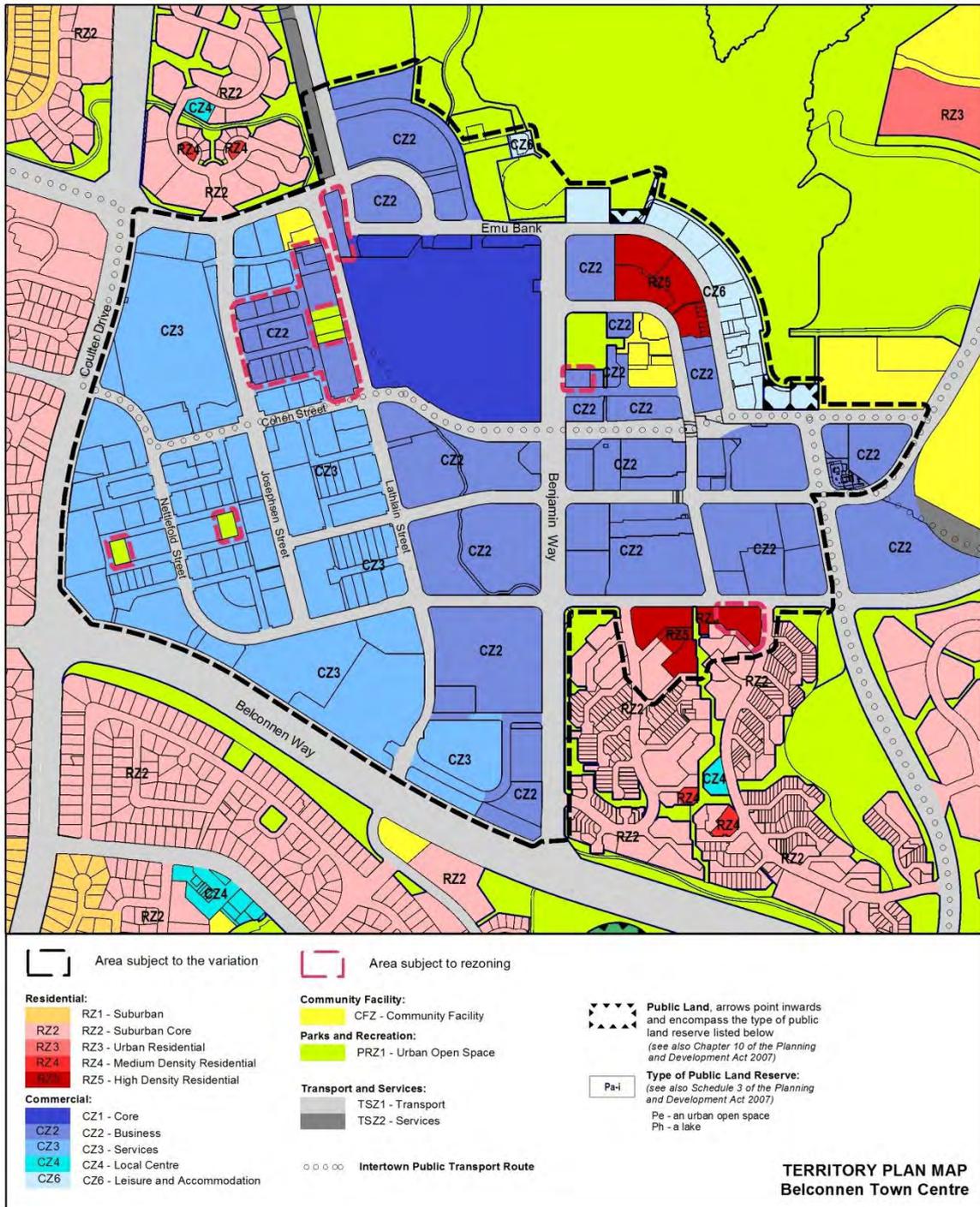


Figure 3: Areas subject to rezoning

### 3.2 Variation to the Territory Plan written statement

The Territory Plan written statement is varied as follows:

#### Variation to the Belconnen precinct map and code

<b>10</b> <b>Precinct maps and codes, Belconnen precinct map and code</b>
---

*substitute the following with the nominated attachment:*

Belconnen precinct map and development tables with **Attachment A**

RC1 – Residential area 1, RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre and RC3 – Residential area 2 with **Attachment B**

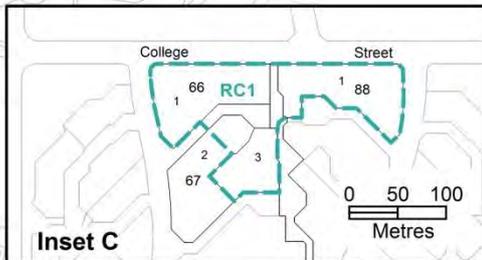
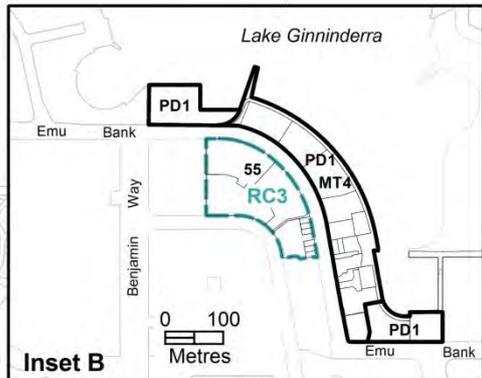
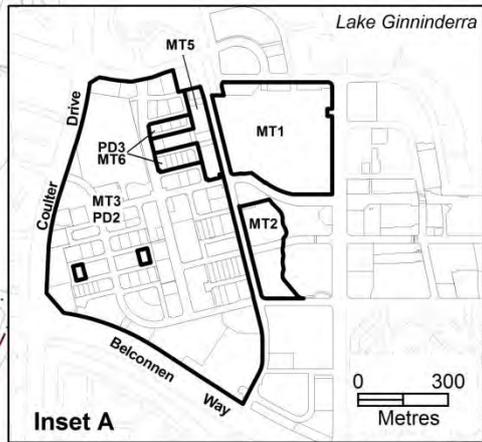
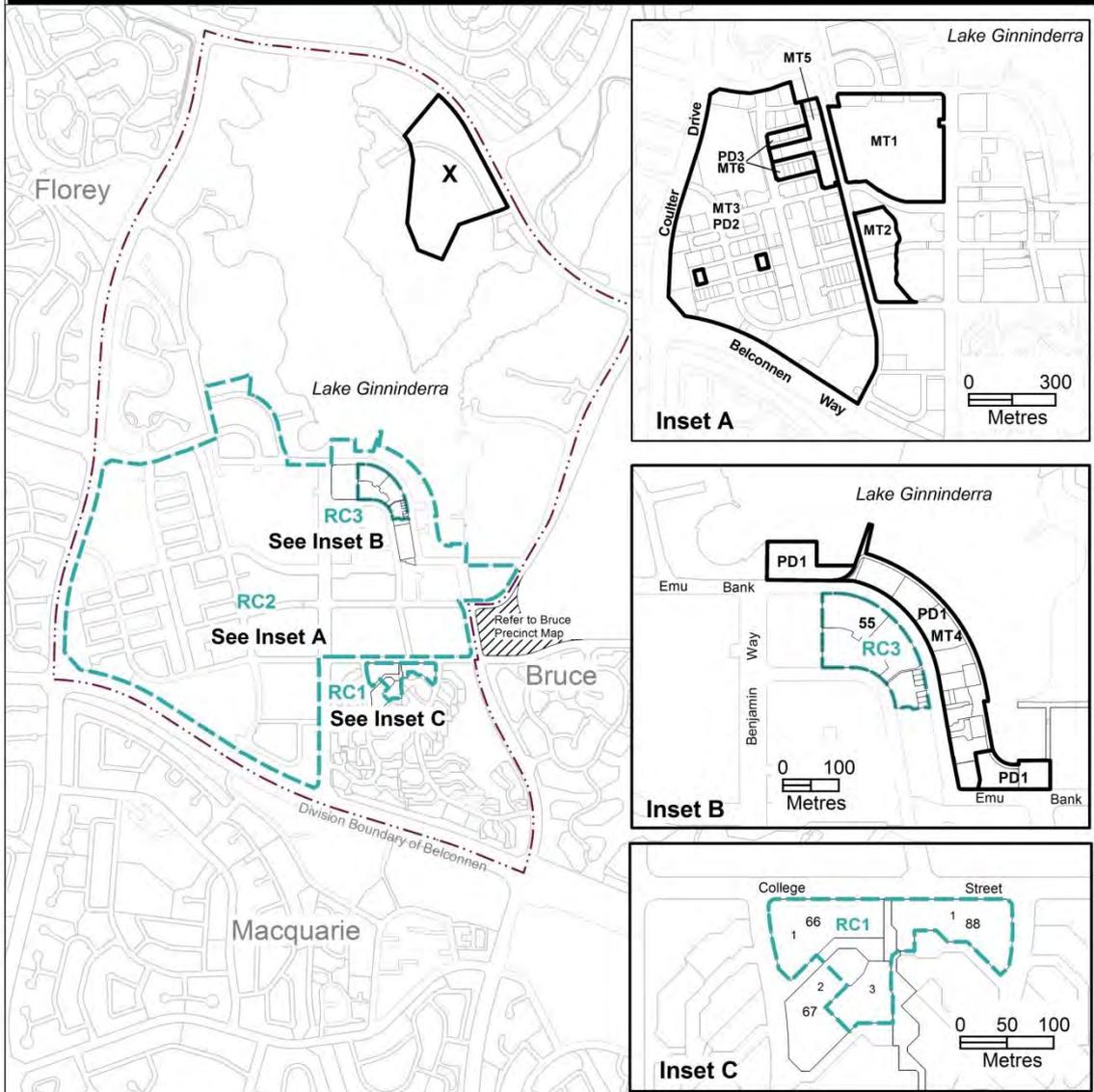
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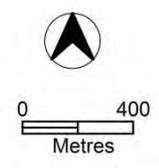
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# Belconnen Precinct Map



- PD<sub>n</sub>** Additional prohibited development applies see Table 1
- MT<sub>n</sub>** Additional merit track development applies see Table 2
- RC<sub>n</sub>** Additional rules and criteria apply see Belconnen Precinct Code
- X** Urban open space - not public land
- Refer to Bruce Precinct Map



# Assessment Tracks

The following tables identify the additional prohibited development and additional merit track development for blocks and parcels shown in the Belconnen Precinct Map (identified as PDn or MTn). Development that is exempt from requiring development approval, other prohibited development and the minimum assessment track applicable to each development proposal is set out in the relevant zone development table.

The following tables constitute part of the relevant zone development table.

**Table 1 – Additional prohibited development**

Additional prohibited development		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
PD1	CZ6	caravan park / camping ground drive in cinema group or organised camp overnight camping area
PD2	CZ3	RESIDENTIAL USE
PD3	CZ2	RESIDENTIAL USE

**Table 2 – Additional merit track development**

Additional merit track development that may be approved subject to assessment		
Suburb precinct map label	Zone	Development
MT1	CZ1	produce market
MT2	CZ2	service station
MT3	CZ3	corrections facility
MT4	CZ6	office RESIDENTIAL USE
MT5	CZ2	Industrial trades light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse
MT6	CZ2	light industry plant and equipment hire establishment store veterinary hospital warehouse

add definitions to Belconnen precinct code:

**Active Frontage:** ground level building facades adjoining public spaces that encourage pedestrian interaction through display windows, public entrances, shop fronts and the like.

**Podium:** refers to the lower storeys of a building addressing public space, designed to present a human scale to the public space. Upper floor levels are set back to reduce apparent bulk and scale.

**RC1 – Residential area 1**

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC1 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

**Element 1: Buildings**

Rules	Criteria
<b>1.1 Number of storeys</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	C1 Buildings are predominately three <i>storeys</i> , with a maximum of six <i>storeys</i> where development addresses College Street.

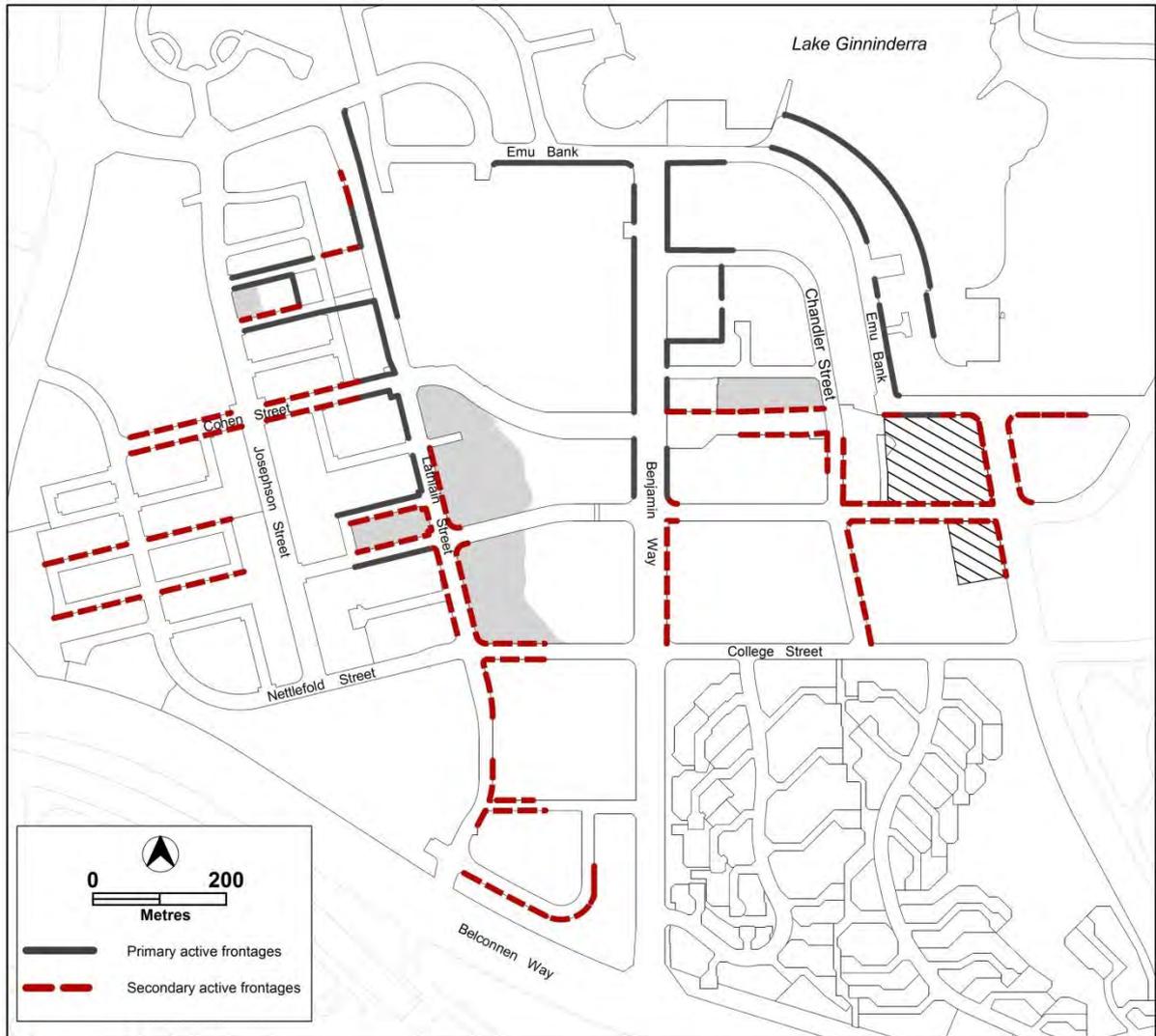
## RC2 – Belconnen Town Centre

This part applies to area RC2 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map. RC2 includes the larger part of the Belconnen Town Centre. See also the Bruce Precinct Code which contains part of the Belconnen Town Centre.

### Element 2: Use

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.1 Ground floor uses</b>	
<p>R2</p> <p>This rule applies to sites in CZ1 with boundaries to primary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Only the following uses are permitted along the primary active frontage at the ground floor level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>business agency</i></li> <li>b) <i>club</i></li> <li>c) <i>community activity centre</i></li> <li>d) <i>drink establishment</i></li> <li>e) <i>financial establishment</i></li> <li>f) <i>hotel</i></li> <li>g) <i>indoor entertainment facility</i></li> <li>h) <i>indoor recreation facility</i></li> <li>i) <i>public agency</i></li> <li>j) <i>restaurant</i></li> <li>k) <i>SHOP.</i></li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C3</p> <p>This criterion applies to sites in CZ2 and CZ6 with boundaries to primary active frontage shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Buildings incorporate uses on the ground floor that generate activity in the public space.</p>
<b>2.2 SHOP – floor area limit</b>	
<p>R4</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2.</p> <p>The maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of any <i>SHOP</i> is 200m<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>In the hatched area shown in figure 1, the maximum <i>gross floor area</i> of supermarket is 1,500m<sup>2</sup> per section.</p>	<p>C4</p> <p><i>SHOPS</i> are limited to a scale appropriate to providing convenient shopping and personal services for the local workforce and residents.</p> <p>This criterion does not apply to supermarket in the hatched area in figure 1.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>2.3 Office and residential use</b>	
<p>R5</p> <p>This rule applies to section 65 in CZ6.</p> <p>The following uses are not permitted on the ground floor level:</p> <p>a) <i>office</i></p> <p>b) <i>RESIDENTIAL USE.</i></p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>



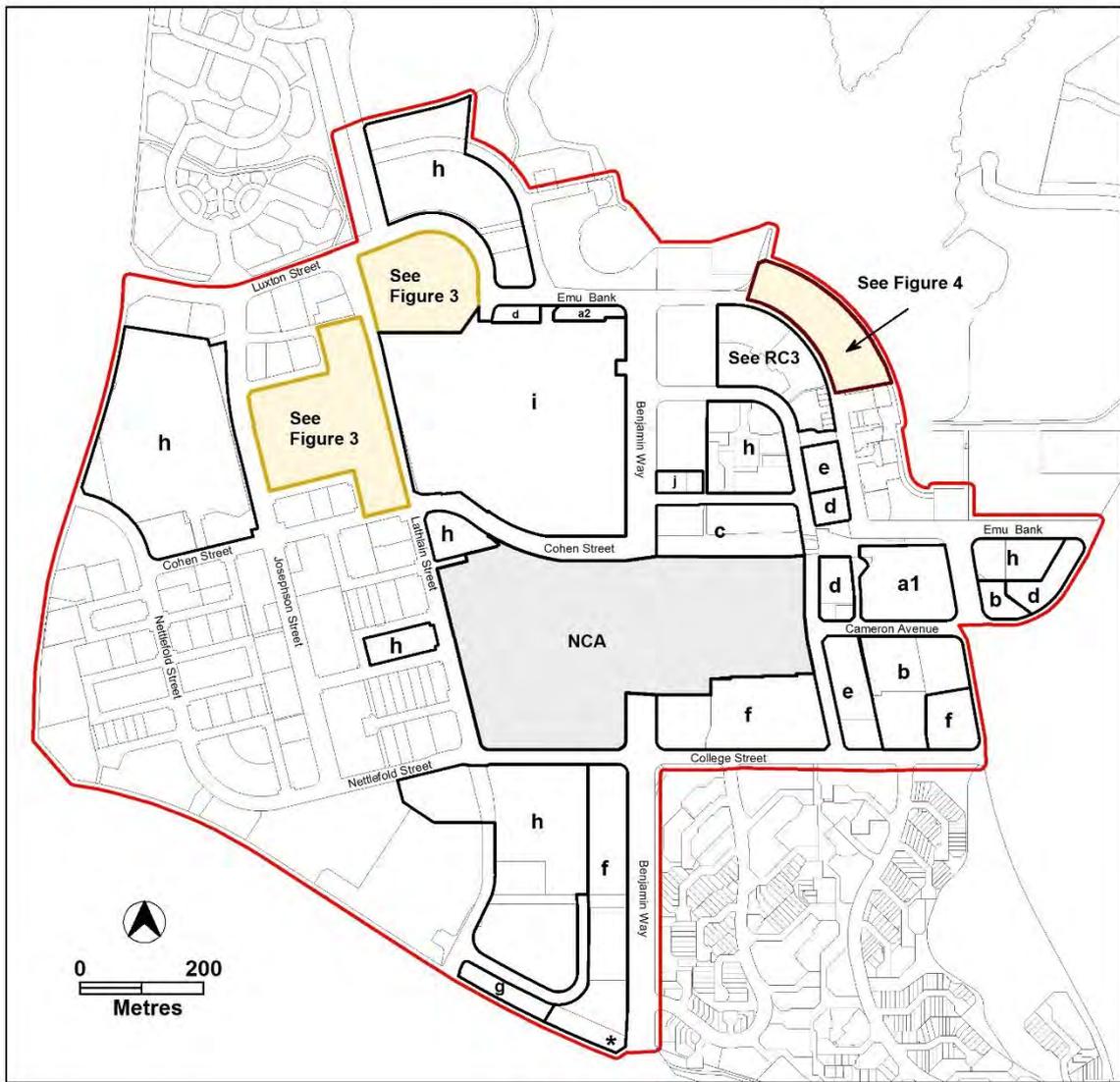
**Figure 1 Active frontages, car parking areas and permitted supermarket area in CZ2**

Rules	Criteria
<p>R6</p> <p>This rule applies to section 23 and 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted on the ground and/or first level along Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>R7</p> <p>This rule applies to section 21.</p> <p><i>RESIDENTIAL USE</i> is not permitted within 100m of block 23 section 21.</p>	<p>C7</p> <p>Development applications for development that includes residential use are submitted with written endorsement from the Environment Protection Authority.</p>
<p><b>2.4 Service station</b></p>	
<p>R8</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development of a service station, where permitted by the Belconnen precinct map, is only permitted in association with a structured <i>car park</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p><b>2.5 Development on nominated car parking areas</b></p>	
<p>R9</p> <p>This rule applies to the areas shaded grey shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the existing number of car parking spaces is retained on the site and made available for public use at all times; and</li> <li>b) provides car parking that is generated by the development on site in accordance with the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i> in addition to the spaces required by item a).</li> </ul>	<p>C9</p> <p>Development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) any additional parking provision requirements (under the <i>Parking and Vehicular Access General Code</i>) for the development; and</li> <li>b) makes a substantial contribution to the long term publicly accessible parking supply at the town centre as endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul>

### Element 3: Buildings

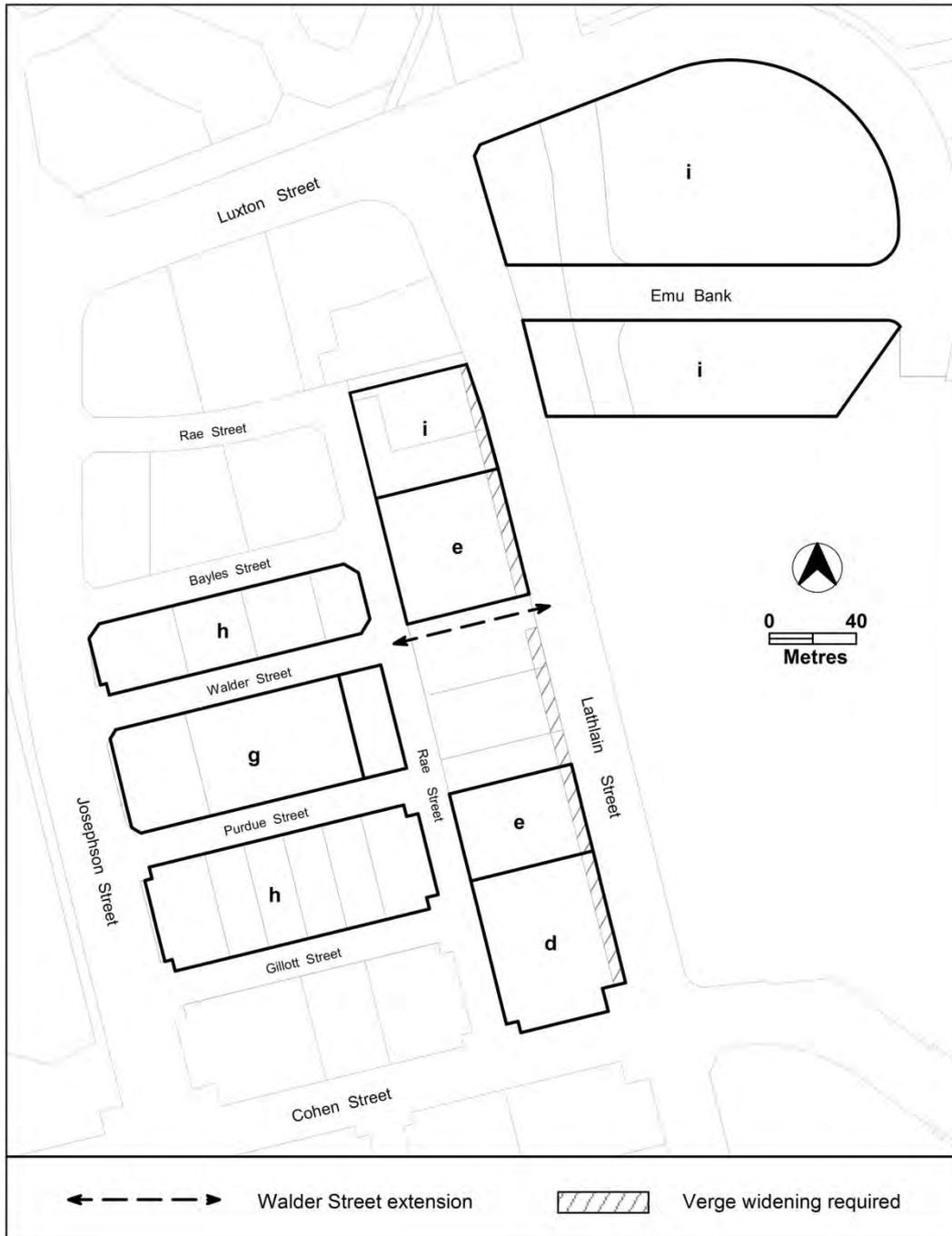
Rules	Criteria
<b>3.1 Building heights</b>	
<p>R10</p> <p>This rule applies to areas shown in figure 2 and figure 3.</p> <p>Maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) for area 'a1': the lesser of 28 storeys and 96m</li> <li>b) for area 'a2': the lesser of 25 storeys and 80m</li> <li>c) for area 'b': the lesser of 23 storeys and 76m</li> <li>d) for area 'c': the lesser of 20 storeys and 66m</li> <li>e) for area 'd': the lesser of 18 storeys and 60m</li> <li>f) for area 'e': the lesser of 12 storeys and 42m</li> <li>g) for area 'f': the lesser of 10 storeys and 35m</li> <li>h) for area 'g': the lesser of 8 storeys and 29m</li> <li>i) for area 'h': the lesser of 6 storeys and 23m</li> <li>j) for area 'i': the lesser of 4 storeys and 16m</li> <li>k) for area 'j': the lesser of 3 storeys and 12m</li> <li>l) for area 'NCA': RL613.7</li> <li>m) for all other areas: 2 storeys.</li> </ul> <p>Plant room set back a minimum of 3m from the building facade of the floor immediately below is not included in the number of storeys.</p> <p>Plant room screening and other non gross floor area rooftop architectural features are not included in building height.</p>	<p>C10</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> in areas 'b' and 'c' may be increased by an additional four storeys or twelve metres, whichever is the lesser, where development achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) where a block contains more than one taller building element, there is clear difference in height between elements</li> <li>b) the development achieves a high quality design outcome; and</li> <li>c) development is close to public transport stops and/or stations.</li> </ul>



**Figure 2 Building heights**

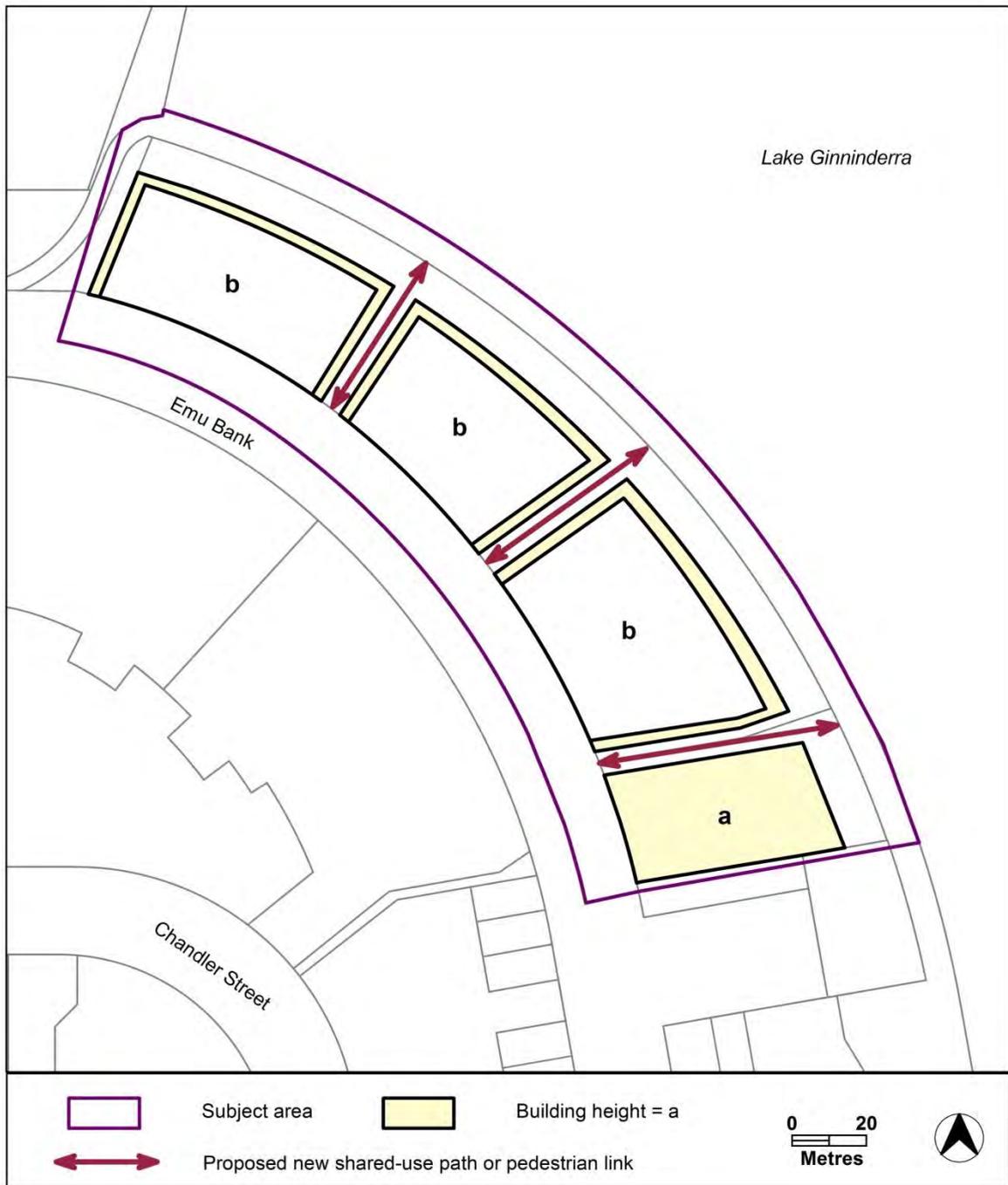
Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C11</p> <p>This criterion applies to development in the area indicated by an asterisk shown in figure 2, at the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way.</p> <p>One higher building element up to the lesser of 16 <i>storeys</i> and 55m may be permitted where development suitably addresses the adjoining Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way intersection.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C12</p> <p>This criterion applies to area 'i' in section 52 and section 151, shown in figure 3.</p> <p>Development up to the lesser of 12 <i>storeys</i> or 42m, measured from the Emu Bank frontage, is permitted subject to the preparation of a master plan for the site that achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank.</li> <li>b) Opportunities for the lower levels of the block to be used for a structured carpark.</li> <li>c) vehicle access to be provided from Joynton Smith Drive or Emu Bank only</li> <li>d) Enable the existing road (Joynton Smith Drive) and proposed cycle / pedestrian path to continue under the development.</li> <li>e) Any podium levels along Lathlain Street are limited to a maximum two storey height limit to Lathlain Street.</li> </ul>
<p>R13</p> <p>This rule applies to the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The maximum <i>height of building</i> is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) in area 'a' – two <i>storeys</i></li> <li>ii) in area 'b' – four <i>storeys</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>b) The minimum building setback to Ginninderra Lake boundary, including basements, is 10m</li> <li>c) The four storey elements located between Emu Bank and Lake Ginninderra comply with all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) the total combined area of all of the four storey elements within a block does not exceed 40% of the block area</li> <li>ii) each four storey element is separated from the pedestrian connections shown in figure 4 and each side boundary by a minimum of 4m</li> <li>iii) each four storey element has a maximum width of 16m when viewed from Emu Bank front boundary, and</li> <li>iv) each four storey element has a minimum separation from all other four storey elements of 10m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>



**Figure 3 Lathlain Street precinct**

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.2 Built form</b>	
<p>R14</p> <p>This rule applies to development of 12 <i>storeys</i> or more.</p> <p>Buildings are built to the <i>front boundary</i> at the ground floor level.</p> <p>The minimum front boundary setbacks above ground floor level are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 0m for the portion of development up to 6 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>b) 3m for the portion of development above 6 <i>storeys</i> up to 12 <i>storeys</i></li> <li>c) 6m for the portion of development above 12 <i>storeys</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>C14</p> <p>Minor departures from the building setbacks are permitted at the ground level up to 6 <i>storeys</i> where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) contributes to the pedestrian orientated environment</li> <li>b) reflects the existing street character; and</li> <li>c) accommodates active uses, building entrances and/or landscaped areas.</li> </ul> <p>Departures from the building setbacks above 6 <i>storeys</i> are permitted where development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) demonstrates exceptional design quality</li> <li>b) provides a strong relationship with the public domain; and</li> <li>c) avoids towers that continue to the ground.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C15</p> <p>This criterion applies to development of 8 <i>storeys</i> or more in height.</p> <p>Development applications include a visual impact assessment that addresses landscape setting of the town centre and analysis of the town centre urban form to demonstrate how the development positively contributes to the future desired character. The assessment will include a site context plan that illustrates the developments relationship to primary pedestrian routes, streetscape and nearby development.</p>



**Figure 4 Emu Bank development**

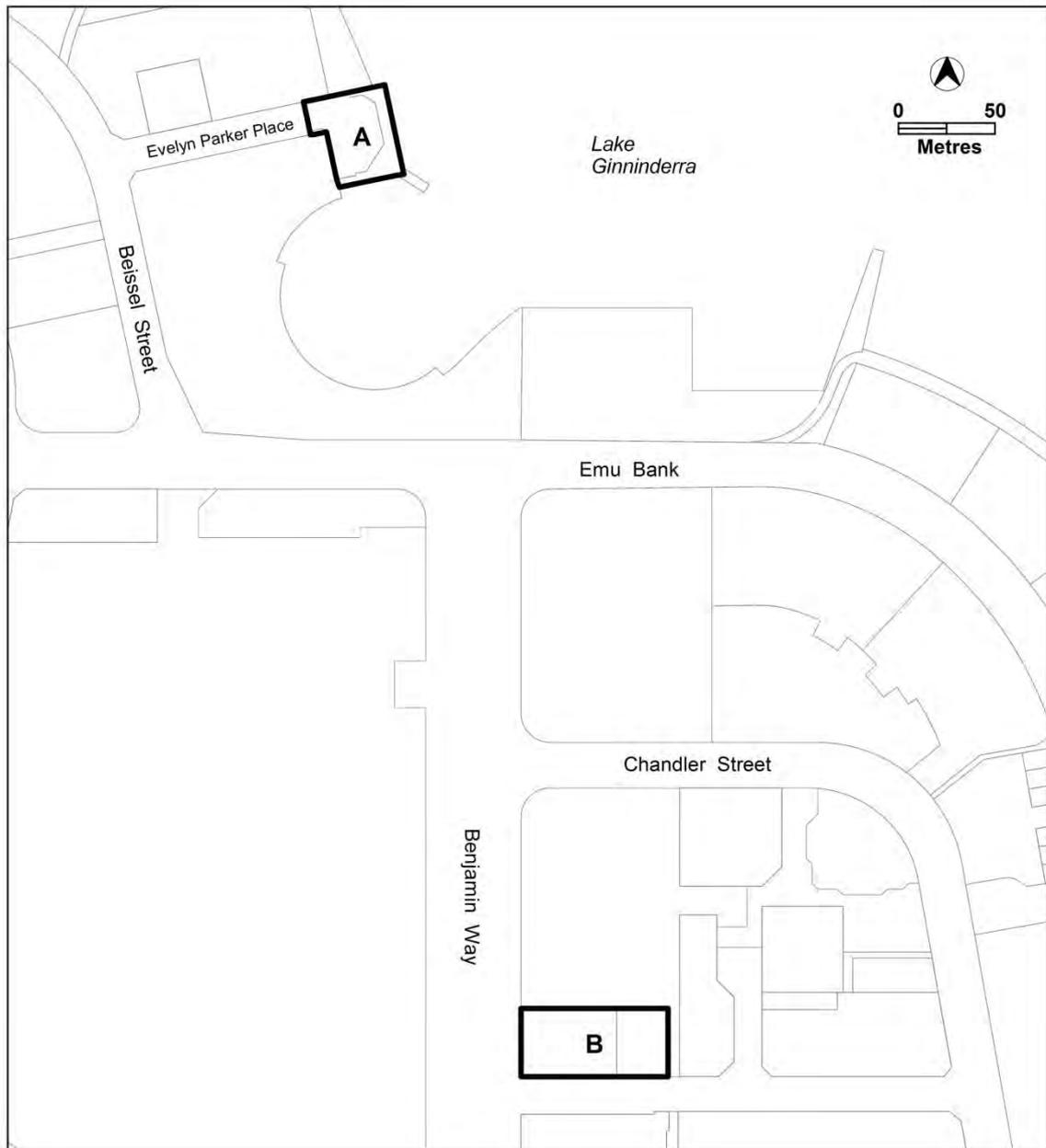
Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C16            Large blocks supporting more than one building above 12 storeys are required to provide a clear variety in building heights, and avoid having several buildings all at or near the maximum height limit.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.3 Consolidation</b>	
<p>R17</p> <p>This rule applies to CZ2 zoned blocks in section 22, 185 and section 186.</p> <p>Development of more than 2 <i>storeys</i> in each section is not permitted until all of the <i>blocks</i> in each section are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>C17</p> <p>Development above 2 <i>storeys</i> in sections 185 and 186 demonstrates that adjoining blocks within the section are capable of developing up to the maximum building height.</p>
<p>R18</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area B shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development of 2 <i>storeys</i> or more is not permitted until all of the blocks are consolidated into one <i>block</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<b>3.4 Subdivision</b>	
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C19</p> <p>Development of section 5 and/or section 11 includes subdivision of the section to retain the PRZ1 zoned land as a separate block.</p>
<b>3.5 Boundary re-alignment</b>	
<p>R20</p> <p>This rule applies to the hatched area in figure 3.</p> <p>Development incorporates a re-alignment of the Lathlain Street boundary to ensure a minimum 6m verge width to Lathlain Street.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<b>3.6 Structured car parks</b>	
<p>R21</p> <p>This rule applies to structured car parks or podium car parks located along active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Structured car parks, or the podium car park component of a building, comply with all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have a maximum <i>height of building</i> of six <i>storeys</i></li> <li>b) have commercial development along the street frontage at ground level</li> <li>c) do not permit vehicle access along the frontage to main pedestrian areas</li> <li>d) provides an unimpeded, permanently open pedestrian path of travel from the front boundary to public car parking spaces within the development.</li> </ol>	<p>C21</p> <p>Structured car parks and podium car parks provide active frontages at street level, minimise potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and where public parking is provided, ensure public access is provided at all times.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.7 Building design</b>	
<p>R22</p> <p>The minimum ground floor level floor to ceiling height is:</p> <p>a) in CZ1 and CZ2 – 3.6m</p> <p>b) in CZ3 – 4m.</p>	<p>C22</p> <p>The ground floor level of buildings is adaptable for commercial uses.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C23</p> <p>Buildings achieve all of the following:</p> <p>a) contribution to the character and amenity of adjacent public spaces</p> <p>b) interesting, functional and attractive facades that contribute positively to the <i>streetscape</i> and pedestrian experience; and</p> <p>c) articulated building forms.</p>
<p>R24</p> <p>Residential development along primary or secondary active frontages shown in figure 1 or public open space areas includes balconies and/or windows to main living areas addressing each street frontage and public spaces.</p>	<p>C24</p> <p>Residential development provides opportunities for passive surveillance of public spaces and pedestrian areas.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C25</p> <p>Ground floor public entrances, including residential lobby and lift areas are clearly visible from external public spaces.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C26</p> <p>Ground floor dwellings addressing unleased territory land retain privacy and safety for the residents without obstructing opportunities for passive surveillance.</p> <p>This may be achieved through:</p> <p>a) elevation of private open space areas above the territory land level</p> <p>b) providing sill heights that minimise sight lines into dwellings, and/or</p> <p>c) integrating constructed or vegetative screens into the external design.</p>
<b>3.8 Setbacks to Lake Ginninderra</b>	
<p>R27</p> <p>This rule applies to development in area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>The minimum setback to each boundary is 0m.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.9 Section 22 setback</b>	
<p>R28</p> <p>This rule applies to section 22.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Buildings, including basement, are setback a minimum of 20m from the Rae Street front boundary.</li> <li>b) Development within the setback area is limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) landscaping</li> <li>ii) pedestrian paths</li> <li>iii) awnings</li> <li>iv) street furniture</li> <li>v) utilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>and remains publicly accessible at all times.</p>	<p>C28</p> <p>Development provides a substantial area of landscaped publicly accessible open space along the Rae Street front boundary.</p>
<b>3.10 Pedestrian access</b>	
<p>R29</p> <p>This rule applies to development in the subject area shown in figure 4.</p> <p>A pedestrian easement is provided in each of the areas identified as containing a proposed new shared-use path or pedestrian link that complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) has a minimum internal unobstructed width of 6m</li> <li>b) provides direct pedestrian access between Emu Bank street frontage and Lake Ginninderra frontage</li> <li>c) remains permanently open and publicly accessible.</li> </ul>	<p>C29</p> <p>Development provides permanently accessible unobstructed pedestrian access between Emu Bank front boundary and the lake.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C30</p> <p>Development of large sites provides a fine grain and permeable movement network that supports filtering of pedestrians through the centre, and supports the main pedestrian areas.</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C31</p> <p>Commercial and or residential units located on the ground floor have individual entries directly accessible from public space.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.11 Solar access</b>	
<p>R32</p> <p>Development retains a minimum 3 hours solar access to the main daytime living areas and <i>private open space</i> of dwellings on adjoining blocks between the hours of 9am and 3pm on the winter solstice (21 June).</p>	<p>C32</p> <p>Development retains reasonable solar access to <i>dwellings</i> on adjoining <i>blocks</i> and their associated area of <i>principal private open space</i>.</p>



**Figure 5**

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.12 Active frontages</b>	
<p>R33</p> <p>For buildings located along primary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and/or shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities</li> <li>c) any small areas of walls without windows contain displays, showcases and/or public art, with a maximum of 30% blank frontage per tenancy</li> <li>d) blank facades, open structured car parks and/or loading docks are not located along the frontage.</li> </ul>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>
<p>R34</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontage areas identified in figure 1, frontages and building design complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) buildings incorporate clear display windows and shop fronts at the ground floor level</li> <li>b) buildings incorporate direct pedestrian access at grade with the verge level for access and egress for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p>C34</p> <p>Development at ground floor level achieves all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is adaptable for shops</li> <li>b) where building access is provided, direct pedestrian access at street level, and</li> <li>c) provide opportunities for views into and out of the building.</li> </ul>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C35</p> <p>For buildings located along secondary active frontages, building facades are not dominated by extensive lengths of blank facades, open structured carparks, loading docks, substations or other service infrastructure</p>
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C36</p> <p>Utility infrastructure such as electricity substations and water boosters located along primary active frontages shown in figure 1 are minimised and/or screened where possible.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<p>There is no applicable rule.</p>	<p>C37</p> <p>This criterion applies to development along primary and secondary active frontages shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Commercial uses with both internal public access and external public access are designed to ensure the external frontage provides the primary public access point.</p>
<p><b>3.13 Awnings</b></p>	
<p>R38</p> <p>This rule applies to buildings fronting primary active frontage areas shown in figure 1.</p> <p>Awnings are provided that comply with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) extend the full length of the building frontage</li> <li>b) are a minimum height of 3m above finished pavement or ground level of the verge</li> <li>c) are integrated into the building design at the first floor level, and</li> <li>d) have a minimum 3m cantilever depth, except where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) opposing primary active frontages are 6m apart or less, awning depth may be reduced to ensure awnings are separated by at least 0.5m, and/or</li> <li>ii) a reduction in awning depth is required to accommodate existing infrastructure and/or street trees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>C38</p> <p>Awnings provide continuous all weather pedestrian shelter and activity in a form compatible with existing awnings.</p>
<p><b>3.14 New roads</b></p>	
<p>R39</p> <p>This rule applies to development in section 21.</p> <p>Redevelopment incorporates the proposed road shown in figure 2.</p>	<p>C39</p> <p>Development does not preclude the future provision of an access road connecting Walder Street to Lathlain Street.</p>

Rules	Criteria
<b>3.15 Easements</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C40</p> <p>This criterion applies to area A shown in figure 5.</p> <p>Development complies with all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A right of way easement is provided along the entire eastern and southern boundaries to facilitate pedestrian access along the lake foreshore</li> <li>b) Any and all encroachments over utility easements are endorsed by the relevant utility provider; and</li> <li>c) any and all encroachments over right of way easements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) do not obstruct access to the right of way, and</li> <li>ii) are endorsed by the Territory.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3.16 Parking rate – CZ6</b>	
There is no applicable rule.	<p>C41</p> <p>This criterion applies to development in CZ6. Short and/or long stay parking is located on site or within 500m of the subject site.</p>

## RC3 – Residential area 2

This part applies to blocks and parcels identified in area RC3 shown on the Belconnen Precinct Map.

### Element 4: Buildings

Rules	Criteria
<b>4.1 Number of storeys</b>	
<p>R42</p> <p>This rule applies to the area shown in figure 6.</p> <p>The maximum <i>height of building</i> is:</p> <p>a) in area 'a' – four <i>storeys</i></p> <p>b) in area 'b' – six <i>storeys</i>.</p>	<p>This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.</p>



**Figure 6** building heights

**From:** Michael Vast  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** Submission to DV342 of the Belconnen Town Centre  
**Date:** Wednesday, 23 May 2018 2:44:18 PM

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Attention: Territory Plan Section of EPSDD

I wish to lodge formal opposition to the intended maximum height of 16 storeys (or 55m) of any future development on section 32 within the Belconnen Market precinct.

I understand that DV342, at draft criterion C11, allows for one building element that addresses both Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way up to 16 storeys or 55m.

My opposition to this proposal is based on two factors:

1. A 16 storey building in section 32 of the Belconnen town centre is not in keeping with the location of high rise developments within the town centre both existing and planned for the future. The town centre has a corridor of high rise running east to west from Wayfarer through Dusk/Republic/High Society, Altitude, Sentinel, and the soon to be constructed Cirrus building. A high rise development on the southern outskirts of the town centre would look out of place and ugly, and there is very limited scope for advantageous water views from a high rise that will be built out from high rise properties I have listed above that exist to the north.

2. A 16 storey development on the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way will obstruct the views of existing residents in every south facing apartment in the Wayfarer, Sentinel, Altitude and as yet constructed developments at Cirrus and High Society. Currently, residents of these building enjoy expansive views over the Brindabella Ranges, including Mount Painter. It would be a great shame for owners and residents of properties in these developments for views of both Mount Painter and the Brindabella Ranges beyond to be fully or partially blocked by an ugly outlier building constructed on the town centres southern fringe.

Whilst I appreciate that the Belconnen Town Plan was ratified in September 2016 following community consultation, I do not believe it is too late to make changes to the Plan that would improve future aesthetics of the Belconnen town centre, and would also placate a great number of residents and owners of property within the town centre that have a vested interest in protecting the existing vistas which were a major reason for purchasing the property. A construction height of a maximum of 6-10 storeys would seem far more appropriate for this section of land.

I can be contacted at [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss my

claims further.

Regards

**Michael Vast**

Sentinel

 Benjamin Way

Belconnen

ACT 2617

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** objection DV342  
**Date:** Tuesday, 29 May 2018 1:05:26 PM

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I wish to oppose the plan to develop up to 16 stories in section 32 corner of Belconnen and Benjamin Way.

This is in an inappropriate location and will degrade the value and quality of life for existing residents.

Thank you  
Scott Street  
[REDACTED] Benjamin Way Belconnen 2617



14<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Territory Plan Section  
ACT Government EPSDD  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra, ACT 2601

By email: [terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:terrplan@act.gov.au)

**Draft Variation 342 – Belconnen Town Centre**  
Objection to untested policy changes

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Draft Variation 342 (DV342) to the Territory Plan. Capital Holdings Group are the lessee for Block 12 Section 2 Belconnen (the site).

The Proposed Variation follows the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan which was prepared in consultation with the community and other key stakeholders. We note, however, that the draft variation diverges from some policy positions that were identified in the Master Plan. Any divergence will not have been subject to broad community and stakeholder discussion and will need to be considered carefully. We are also concerned that some of the proposed policies may not lead to the intended outcomes.

The Masterplan identified that the Service trades precinct will improve and should be promoted as the key location for small business, service trades and live music venues. Our site is currently the location of the Ginninderra Medical Centre which is a key service for the Town Centre, providing a range of medical and specialist services. It is also located at one of the main entry points to the Belconnen Town Centre.

We are particularly concerned with the proposed mandatory height limits which have been implemented on this site – we have been in discussions with the Authority about this matter for some time and it is disappointing that the matter appears not being given due consideration.

The Commercial Zones Development Code currently allows for heights in CZ3 to reach 2 storeys with criteria to increase these height limits for better design outcomes. DV342 does not provide criteria for increase in heights on this block and two storeys is now the mandatory height limit, we do not believe that the removal of criteria around the heights proposed was clearly articulated in the Masterplan and believe that, should the Plan Variation be progressed in its current form then the built outcomes on the site vs. the opposite side of Nettlefold Street will result in a perverse built form outcome. The deletion of criteria for height limits, will significantly reduce the development potential and value of our lease, as well as making significant re-investment or development of this particularly this site, as well as other sites in the CZ3 area uneconomic.

It is also considered that development and design outcomes may well be improved if additional heights are permitted on a merit basis at key entry points to the town centre.

As stated above; the subject site is on a prominent entrance into the town centre, and is identified in the Masterplan as providing a key route for public transport, as well as

“secondary” linkages for pedestrians, cyclists located at the corner of Nettlefold Street and Coulter Drive where larger buildings are characteristic of the commercial zoning. Increased height to four (4) or five (5) storeys would mark this corner block as an entrance into the commercial zone and tie into the anticipated development outcome on the land situated on the opposite side of Nettlefold Street.

This land (currently used as the Belconnen Bus storage and maintenance facility), is identified as area ‘h’ in Figure 2 of the DV and will be post variation, provided with a maximum height of 6 storeys or 23 metres. This will preferentially allow increased building heights over this section that is to the north of the site and situated on the low side of the entry road – an outcome that would have adverse impacts on the subject site amenity and opportunity while creating a sub-optimal urban design outcome and form. It is also strange that this site is allowed to be up to 6-storeys in height while other areas in the Services area are not provided with the opportunity for any additional height – even on merit.

Large tracts of the services trades area are subject to build forms of one and two storeys and although many buildings are nearing their use-by date and could benefit from capital investment (renewal) or redevelopment it is unlikely that the 2 storey height limit will facilitate this investment – a hard limit such as this does not leave adequate scope for the consideration of feasible re-development opportunities on these sites.

We suggest that a Criteria based approach to support the 2-storey rule may be well worth considering. For the subject site, such a criteria would allow an opportunity to create a graduation of heights into the lower height services trades area south of the site and create a balanced ‘gateway’ entry with well designed and proportioned gateway/entry buildings across Nettlefold Street and at this important entry to the Town Centre. We further suggest that the CZ3 area be afforded a similar opportunity to allow merit based development beyond a mandatory 2 storey height limit to facilitate feasible redevelopment of sites within this area and/or the development uplift to support capital investment in the building stock that is in need of such investment.

We trust that these comments will be of interest and in consideration of the proposed variation to the Territory Plan.

Yours sincerely



Ian Oliver

Managing Director

**From:** Rachel Slatyer  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on the Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 342  
**Date:** Saturday, 16 June 2018 9:06:08 AM

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To the Territory Plan Section,

I am writing to express my concern about one of the proposed changes to the Belconnen Town Centre plan. My concern is about the expansion of the RC1 area at the corner of Hennessy St and College St, with rezoning of block 1 section 88 from RZ2 suburban core zone to RZ5 high density residential zone (p8, section 2.4.1).

In particular, I believe that six-storey buildings in the newly expanded area are likely to significantly reduce the liveability of units on the southern side of Osborne Pl by blocking a considerable amount of sunlight reaching these properties (which face north). I would ask that these impacts be taken into consideration. Although the criterion states that the allowable six storeys is only for dwellings that address College St, it is unclear how close to Osborne Pl these dwellings could extend.

Please do not include my personal contact details in the comments made available for public inspection.

Kind regards,

Rachel Slatyer

■ Osborne Place,  
Belconnen, ACT, 2617  
■



**From:** Jonathon Hancock  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** submission regarding previous community health building site - What ever happens, this site should be used in a way which significantly enhances the site and surrounding area  
**Date:** Saturday, 16 June 2018 4:57:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screen Shot 2018-06-16 at 4.48.14 PM.png](#)

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To Whom it May Concern,

**RE: Use of community health site**

I note that the 2016 Belco Master Plan states that the previous site of community health, adjacent to Margaret Timpson Park has been previously considered for use to extend the existing park, however this option was dismissed given that it would forgo possible revenue to expand an already underutilised park. I see that the current draft documents suggest this site being used for “commercial purposes”.

I think that Belconnen Town Centre, like other post-war modernist town centres Canberra, has never really worked all that well. It is impersonal, isolated and dead. The 2016 master plan correctly identifies this, and has many positive suggestions to remedy this situation. A number of building projects occurring in the centre positively move towards bringing residents into the centre and activating streets.

I think the civic centre, with the park, library etc... similarly haven't worked. I think Margaret Timpson Park is not a particularly nice park, and the pedestrian only block is not particularly accessible or vibrant. Perhaps if this area really worked as a public space, more people will make use of it. Bringing active shop fronts, possible residential uses, and landscaping all areas into parkland (e.g. making lots of green 'pockets' in the otherwise paved areas of the centre of that block), room for undercover farmers markets, cafes and restaurants or other uses might help bring in the people.

What ever is done with the community health building site, it should involve **high quality design for use by the people**- to help transform the civic centre of Belconnen, and to make the city begin to function more like a proper town centre. More office space, extension of the current uses of buildings in the area (e.g. medical officers/other things only used during the day) or other projects which are generic and suited to the expedient needs of developers will not do. **I implore ACT government planners to plan and realise something visionary and idealistic for this site- Belconnen should be excellent.** I think about the first time I visited the arts precinct in Brisbane and saw the brilliant architecture there (both brutalist, and areas build/renovated since). Belconnen might not have the funding available to a state government, but it shouldn't settle for expediency.

**RE: Belconnen library**

I know that consideration of the library isn't part of the current discussion, however I suggest that whilst the library is not very open or accessible where it is, siting it on the other side of the monolithic Westfield is a bad idea. The Library is a core civic building, and should have a prominent connection to the Benjamin Way boulevard and lake. Putting it facing Benjamin Way (possibly where the community health site is), or on the lake (as pictured) would give public knowledge one of the most prominent positions in the town, connecting it to Benjamin way and the lake. Such a project could be part of revitalising the civic area of Belconnen. Putting the library on one of these sites would also free up the current library site for sale or revitalisation.

Thank you for consideration of my feedback,

Kind regards,

Jonathon Hancock  
Moulden Court  
Belconnen ACT 2617



**From:** Kate Thompson  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** feedback to DV342  
**Date:** Monday, 18 June 2018 4:04:00 PM

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Good afternoon,

In reviewing the proposed Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 342, it has been brought to my attention that there is an approved development for up to 16 storeys at Section 32. As a resident of Belconnen, I am writing to express my concerns for this and the proposed changes that would allow building heights to be increased in commercial zones. I do not feel that these changes are keeping with the location of other high-rises in the area, with the cluster of Sentinel, Altitude, LINQ, and the enormous GeoCon development underway at Section 200.

As more and more units are going up in this area, many people's views are being interrupted by other towers, but at least the south facing units in those buildings get the benefit of an unobstructed view of the Brindabellas and Mt Painter. Obstructing this with an out of place building in a commercial area seems to go against the step-down design of the town centre, with the cluster located in the heart of the business district.

I see little benefit in building to that level (16 storeys) on the outskirts of the town centre: water views will be limited, the overshadowing of the markets will make that a less pleasant experience, and it will interrupt a uniquely-Canberra outlook for so many people who chose to live in those apartments because of that vista. It seems of little value (other than to the developers) to the area, the neighbourhood, and the housing market. Why not use this land to address the 'missing middle' and build townhouses? There is much evidence to show that Canberrans want townhouses in established suburbs.

Whilst I am supportive of change and renewal and providing new housing options for Canberrans, I am strongly opposed to building to 16 storeys at Section 32 and in other outlying areas of the suburb, and feel it would be a great shame to the town centre, its residents and a missed opportunity to provide a different housing model than what already exists in abundance in the town centre.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Thompson

Belconnen resident



20 June 2018

Territory Plan Section

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

## **RESPONSE TO DRAFT PLAN VARIATION 342 – Belconnen Town Centre**

OPPOSITION TO DV342 - Item 7 of Clause 2.4.1:

REZONING OF BLOCK 41 of SECTION 54 – Swanson Court, Belconnen.

### **Planning intention:**

A notice from the Director, Urban Projects, Land Development Agency as far back as 1 May 2017 says: *“As detailed in the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, released in September 2016, Block 41 **will be rezoned** from Community Facility Zone (CFZ) to Business Zone (CZ2), which allows for a range of uses including residential, commercial accommodation, non-retail commercial use, restaurants and shops.”*

Since then there have been a range of notices to neighbouring residents, including one about soil testing on the adjacent vacant Block 40. Nearby roads and footpaths have been spray marked for the location of services etc. Most recently protective fencing has been erected around the entrances to the former Belconnen Health Centre which is derelict and due to be demolished shortly by Development Application 201833725.

All this activity, plus the intended rezoning, would suggest that the ACT Government has already made up its mind to sell Blocks 40 and 41 to a developer for private construction of commercial and residential premises. However such intention flies in the face of much local community objection to the rezoning to CZ2 and a one-off monetary gain. Submissions opposing this intention have been made as far back as 2015 when the master plan was first floated.

A great many local residents would like to see this community facility CFZ-zoned parcel of land, and the adjacent Block 40 - which is already rezoned CZ2 - returned to the parkland that it originally was, and turned into an extension of the adjoining Margaret Timpson Park. I wish to submit that there is a viable rezoning alternative of great value to the local community and to the citizens of the wider Belconnen region...which would last in perpetuity. My plea is simply that we need more green space to enrich people's lives.

## **ALTERNATIVE OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY:**

In strongly opposing this future for community Block 41 I propose the following:

### **Rezone Blocks 40 & 41 to PRZ1, for Park and Recreation Urban Open Space.**

Such rezoning (which incidentally is proposed for other small parcels of land in the Belconnen Town Centre) would enable both blocks to be added to Block 42 of Section 54 – the Margaret Timpson Park. It could then be developed as a more substantial Town Centre parkland – stretching right across from Chandler Street on the north side to Swanson Court on the south side. It would mean that this central green space would be available for everyone to use and enjoy forever. Surely this is a more appropriate use of community land than allowing a developer to profit with exclusive park frontage apartments.

#### **Public amenity opportunities**

I have been fortunate to travel around Australia and overseas to cities in Asia, the UK and Europe, where I found that green space in the centre of towns is highly valued, protected and used by young and old. [i.e. Brisbane's Roma Street Parkland]

Yes there must be a balance between giving people an opportunity to relax in parkland to enjoy the benefits of nature, and providing space for commercial and residential developments – especially for compact highrise apartment living. So I do not oppose highrise zoning per se.

My original submission in 2016 in response to the Belconnen Master Plan outlined in detail a number of great opportunities. However those future alternatives are for debate at another time. Suffice to say the following could be considered quality community uses of these two blocks of land, were they to be added to the adjacent park:

- a greater area and better quality parkland for central Belconnen;
- greenery to attract birdlife;
- a much needed children's playground (that is not inside a commercial shopping mall);
- a sheltered rest area for older folk;
- public toilets.

I would recommend that the Design Faculty at the University of Canberra be asked to design the area for the best community benefit in the future.



MARGARET TIMPSON PARK showing BLOCK 41 the former community health centre (on left), the vacant BLOCK 40 in foreground, and Swanson Plaza on right.

### **ARGUMENT FOR MORE GREEN SPACE:** (extract from my 2016 submission)

Quote from the 2015 Master Plan Executive Summary;

*“With its lake and recreation, employment, health and retail facilities, the centre provides significant amenity for the 97,000 residents of Belconnen. The centre’s setting, nearby institutions and size offer advantages unmatched by many other urban areas in Australia.*

*“These advantages should be strengthened and capitalised on to ensure the centre improves and grows, that small business can thrive, natural areas be enhanced and the centre becomes an even better place for the Belconnen community to visit, work and live.”*

1. The existing Margaret Timpson Park has always been the centre of Belconnen (see earlier town plans). Its use is increasing as more nearby residents and those from neighbouring suburbs, business and government employees, visitors, and those passing through to other destinations, find the park a quiet restful solace from the busy world around them.

Every day parents and grandparents with children of all ages, gather in the park to play, young folk stop to sit and eat their lunch, fitness groups gather for exercises, and artists mount their easels.

This is truly the evidence that this community facility is a meeting place and used for recreation – exactly what the zonings CFZ and PRZ are intended for.

The park’s use is clear evidence of need and aligns with the ACT Government’s *‘commitment to supporting communities and encouraging use of open space’* (quote from Jane Carder, Manager, Place Management, TAMS).

***Belconnen has precious little green space.*** We should be expanding what we have rather than hemming it in with ever-more impersonal concrete structures.

2. This submission acknowledges the ACT Government's need to raise finances from the sale of land. **But must you sell land that is already in the community's hands.** The Master Plan indicates quite clearly that these two blocks are destined to become multi-storied apartments over commercial premises.

But surely, with the Master Plan's clear intent to allow additional high-rise in adjacent sites, there is sufficient opportunity to increase high-rise accommodation in central Belconnen. Already publicised sites such as:

- a) the available Swanson Court park and ride carpark opposite the BCC;
- b) the progressing Cirius site on the lake side of the Westfield shopping centre;
- c) the massive now progressing Republic site behind the Labor Club; and
- d) the eventual demolition and future sale of the Belconnen Community Centre, the Swanson Plaza offices and the Northpoint Plaza building (both the latter overlooking Margaret Timpson Park) to make way for more high-rise.

Note: the total area combined of blocks 40 and 41 is approx 2700m<sup>2</sup>.

3. There are immense problems that will arise from construction on Blocks 40 & 41:
  - a. **overloaded vehicle traffic** on the narrow Swanson Court as such a building will inevitably have access from its rear (southern) boundary;
  - b. **a limited 40kph speed restriction** is currently signposted only from Benjamin Way as far as the Swanson Plaza pedestrian crossing. It must be extended to include all of Swanson Court as well as all of Chandler Street;
  - c. **impedance of pedestrian traffic** accessing Benjamin Way and Westfield down from Chandler Street apartments and offices;
  - d. **increased public pressure** on Benjamin Way on the building's western boundary;
  - e. **privileged direct access** to a public park that few other citizens in Canberra can have;
  - f. approximately 100 apartments and/or up to a dozen commercial premises requiring **services** such as garbage, sullage and recycling with removal vehicles coming on to Swanson Court weekly...adding to the already busy equivalent from Sentinel Apartments. This will be compounded when the other high-rise complexes facing Swanson Court are built.

## CONCLUSION

The Executive Summary of the Belconnen Master Plan says **advantages should be strengthened.** That's a statement that has been repeated over many years of plans for the area – ever since the Timpson Park site was cut in half to provide land for the government of the day in the 1970s to build what is now the Westfield shopping centre. And then Blocks 40 and 41 were cut from the park site to build a health centre.

Surely this Executive Summary statement means community advantages **AND GREEN SPACES** as a priority, not the object of a one-off sale.

The idea of adding these two sites to the Margaret Timpson Park would ensure a recreation area for the future. After all the park IS the Town Centre now.

The fantastic Australian Ms Margaret Timpson AM, herself such a concerned community-minded citizen, would be the first to applaud a decision to add to this park.

Once new walkways and cycle-ways are created from the University of Canberra and from other parts of Belconnen, access to and use of the Park will grow. It will become a link from the residential areas of Belconnen to the beautiful Lake Ginninderra. Access has already been firmly established with the making of a walkway and pedestrian crossing from the Action Bus Belconnen Community interchange past the Sentinel Apartments, across Swanson Court to the park. It would be justified to add further seating in such a park extension, protected suitably from the sun. The current Wisteria walks are delightful and could be extended to Benjamin Way.

The addition of more trees to surround the sites would add welcome green cover. Garden beds and shrubbery to attract wildlife and add peaceful value to people's lives; space for families to meet, play and to share nature and so to enhance their wellbeing.

The very busy Access Canberra Belconnen shopfront office faces this area. Visitors and clients would welcome such a valuable addition to the nearby parkland.

I earnestly submit that there are better uses of the two sites I identify above. A call for ideas from the public may well bring forward better uses than those I nominate. But in my mind, and in the minds of a great many Canberra citizens, allowing development would be a grave error of judgment on a parcel of land already zoned for community facility.

I urge the ACT Planning Committee to come out to see the site first-hand then to recommend change to the Master Plan for Blocks 40 and 41 to both be rezoned PRZ1.

Yours sincerely,

Alastair Wilson.

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Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
Territory Plan Section  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra ACT 2601

21st June 2018

To Whom it may Concern,

**RE: Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 342: Belconnen Town Centre**

C3 Church Belconnen is a lessee of part of Block 15 Section 21 and would be affected by the proposed Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 342. The church provides a range of services to both church members and the local Belconnen community and would like to be part of ongoing discussions surrounding developments in the Belconnen town centre.

We welcome and support the Territory's initiative and goal to improve the Belconnen Town Centre to make it a more attractive, accessible and desirable place and support the intention to improve the Town Centre. We understand the necessity of increasing building heights and introducing residential dwellings into the town centre to achieve these goals.

We support the initiative to activate Lathlain Street to improve amenity in this area of the Town Centre.

Regarding the proposed change to zoning and land use including residential and proposed building heights for Sections 22, 23, 185 and 186 we express the following concerns:

- **Traffic.** We note that the proposed development to the west of Lathlain Street will significantly increase traffic on Rae Street in particular with no vehicle access permitted from Lathlain Street. Rae Street is about 8.5m wide with on-street parking which will make this road congested and difficult to navigate for vehicles, and make this area unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. We are concerned that the needs of current tenants/lessee in this area will be compromised by the scale and location of the proposed redevelopment. Due to parking issues in this area customers (and church members) park on-street with concern around safety to families parking on the surrounding streets.
- **Parking.** We note that the parking on existing streets is already inadequate making it difficult for current retail operations to occur efficiently. We are concerned about the impact on parking in local streets from the proposed developments making it even more challenging for remaining businesses in the area, particularly the area between Section 185 and Luxton Street. The road reserve of the existing roads including narrow street and verges will make it difficult to improve parking while meeting active travel needs and capacity for vehicle traffic. Parking in the area should be provided in the new developments and preserved on-street to facilitate businesses during weekday operations, as well as those that operate on weekends.
- **Active travel in surrounding streets.** Currently the path network in the area to west of Lathlain Street is either non-existent in verges, incomplete with sections of paths never completed, or is of sub-standard width and location for current pedestrian and cyclist traffic. Existing verges are 3.5m wide which are narrow and would make it difficult to install necessary active travel measures. If the proposed rezoning is to

occur, the existing active travel facilities in the surrounding areas need to be upgraded by the ACT Government for current and significantly increased pedestrian and cyclist traffic that would be expected from the proposed development. Safe pedestrian crossings of the existing roads should also be provided in this area.

- Noise. We note that EPA have expressed concern over noise from existing sources such as the bus interchange. Nations Heart church on Block 13 and 14 Section 21 and our church facility on Block 15 Section 21, both currently generate noise from operations at various times of the day. However this is not an issue as they are located in a commercial area. Rule 7 preventing residential development in the area of Block 23 Section 21 would provide appropriate separation and protection to proposed residential development in relation to current uses such as the churches and child care in this area. Criteria 7 however could permit residential development adjacent to the churches and child care.
- Isolating of small existing CZ3 zone between Section 185 and Luxton St. This remaining CZ3 area is predominately retail, restaurant, and offices generally aligned with the proposed CZ2 uses proposed, compared to typical trades uses found elsewhere in the CZ3 town centre area. Given the actual uses in this remaining pocket of Town Centre, it would seem to make sense for it to be rezoned CZ2 for consistency of existing uses in this area with the proposed CZ2 area. This area is also a key active travel pathway from adjacent residential area through to the mall and as such is more in line with the objectives being proposed by the Territory Plan amendment to make an attractive, accessible and desirable activated place. The residential area on the northern side of Luxton St is high density of three storey height while the CZ3 on southern side of Luxton St is single storey commercial. A CZ2 zoning permitting higher building height which could include residential, would create an improved and modern gateway to this key entrance to the Town Centre and permit a gradual increase in building scale from the residential 3 storey on Northern side of Luxton St to the proposed 27 storey buildings.

We thank you for the opportunity to express our opinion about the proposed Territory Plan variation No 342 and are happy to discuss this further with the ACT Government.

Yours Sincerely,  
Nicholas Hind



Senior Minister, C3 Church Belconnen  
(02) 6253 5111



**From:** Dean Hoatson and Robyn Elphinstone  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Cc:** ["Robyn Elphinstone"](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Draft Variation 342 Belconnen Town Centre: Zone changes and amendments to the Belconnen precinct map and code  
**Date:** Thursday, 21 June 2018 11:35:03 PM

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**Attention:** Territory Plan Section of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

I would like to provide comments and raise some serious concerns regarding ***Draft Variation 342 Belconnen Town Centre: Zone changes and amendments to the Belconnen precinct map and code.***

My first concern relates to the proposed land rezoning change of **block 41 section 54** from CFZ community facility zone to CZ2 business zone (the site of the now closed ACT Health Clinic). This block of land in conjunction with Timpson Park and the Belconnen Community Centre forms a valuable area of irreplaceable community facilities-zoned land. It is important to retain such community facilities given the proposed 'high density' zoning of the adjacent areas (up to 27 storey) and the proposed increased commercial development in the town centre. As has been well-documented, the population growth in the Belconnen Town Centre is much higher than in the wider Belconnen district and is an important employment hub for Canberra. As indicated in the *Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan September 2016* (p21-22) 'neither the apartment complexes nor the centre core provide play spaces or facilities for children'. With increasing population, these community facilities are used and will be used by a much wider community than just the residents of the Belconnen Town Centre and provide a valuable community resource. Hence, it is extremely important to retain such rare community facility zoned land and should not be rezoned.

My second concern relates to the proposed lifting of height restrictions on **Block 37 section 52** on Emu Bank to 25 storeys. On p9 of the Draft variation (section 2.4.2) it states 'It is proposed to .... increase in maximum building heights by an additional four storeys in selected locations where development maintains the building height hierarchy of the centre by retaining the higher buildings towards the core area'. This building height hierarchy is clearly not the case for Blocks 34 and 37 of section 52 as they are not towards the core area of the Belconnen Town Centre precinct. These buildings are already inappropriately located dwarfing the surrounding buildings (e.g. Westfield – 4 storeys). Any proposal to increase their heights will cast long shadows over much of the Belconnen Town Centre, including the valuable resource of Timpson Park. In addition, these tall buildings will have impacts on the wind dynamics at ground level. These buildings are inappropriately located and any increase to their height will significantly impact on the amenity of the town centre. These lifting of height restrictions will obviously have a negative impact on the visibility from adjacent buildings.

I hope careful consideration is given to my concerns and find these comments useful.

Regards

Robyn Elphinstone





22 June 2018

Territory Plan Section  
Environmental Planning and  
Sustainable Development Division  
GPO BOX 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: Submission to draft Variation 342 Belconnen Town Centre (DV342)**

## 1 Introduction

This submission has been prepared by SMEC Australia Pty Ltd (SMEC) on behalf of Roundhouse Hotels, the owner and operator of the Belconnen Premier Inn at 110 Benjamin Way, Belconnen (Block 12, Section 32).

Our submission primarily raises concern with the mandatory nature of the planning controls applying to the Premier Inn site and the translation of the intent of the draft Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan (the Master Plan) into the Territory Plan controls.

It is our view that flexible application of height controls would achieve improved urban development outcomes and incentivise private investment into improving the public domain. The Premier Inn site is a large site, prime for urban renewal, that can accommodate multiple building forms. Should a flexible height limit be permitted, this site would be able to include a diversity of building heights and typologies to clearly define the gateway to the Belconnen Town Centre.

## 2 Site Location

The site is located at 110 Benjamin Way, Belconnen and has an approximate area of 6,763m<sup>2</sup>. The site is located north of an open hard stand car park used in conjunction with the Belconnen Markets. The site is zoned C22: Business Zone pursuant to the Territory Plan. The zoning of the site is not proposed to change in the Master Plan.

An aerial of the site and surrounding land zonings is provided below. Note, the block to the north of the site (block 5) fronting Market Street is TAMS owned land and contains a Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT). The site has a frontage to Benjamin Way, an important pedestrian and cycle connection. As noted within the Master Plan the elm trees and wide median on Benjamin Way form a 'ceremonial boulevard' leading to Westfield.



The Premier Inn neighbours the Belconnen Markets and is located at the gateway into the Belconnen Town Centre. The location of the site within the Belconnen urban hierarchy calls for a high quality urban form that clearly delineates the change in density and building typology.

### 3 Previous Approvals

Figure 3 provides an indication of previous approvals on nearby sites. Note that these approvals have now lapsed, aside from the approval over Block 16 (southern side of Ibbott Lane) where construction has commenced. We note that the Master Plan incorrectly referenes these lapsed approvals as being current (page 47).



Figure 1: Analysis of previous approvals on adjoining sites.

## 4 Previous Discussion with EPSDD

A meeting with EPSDD representative's DA Manager George Cilliers, Territory Plan Senior Manager Alix Kaucz and Strategic Manager George Gell was attended by Hugh Cooke (Roundhouse Hotels), project Architect Eamon O'Donoghue (COX Architecture) and Sophie Olsen (SMEC) on 23 November 2017.

EPSDD staff confirmed that the revised Belconnen Precinct Code will be shortly released for consultation (likely early 2018). This will have immediate interim affect and will be consistent with the heights adopted in the Master Plan. For this site, the ten storey height will be a mandatory control.

During the meeting, the option of including Urban Design incentives associated with the flexible application of building heights was discussed. We are pleased to see that such provisions have been included in Section 5.6.2 of the Master Plan, which notes that *"to achieve a high design quality, along with other aspects such as public domain improvements, it is recommended to offer developers incentives, in the form of height increases, through a revision to the precinct code."* However, we raise concern with how these provisions have been translated into the draft variation to the territory plan, and particularly their application to the Premier Inn site.

## 5 Suggested Revisions

The inclusion of incentive based controls is the correct direction to achieve the overarching objectives of the Master Plan, which seek to *"ensure the town centre is an attractive, accessible and desirable place for people to live, work and enjoy."*

The Master Plan recommends that a range of maximum heights be adopted (our emphasis):

*"revise the Belconnen Precinct Code to specify a range of maximum height limits for all areas of the centre."* (p 85).

However, the building heights in Table 4 and map referenced (Map 22) do not apply height of building ranges to *"all areas of the centre"*. For example, the Premier Inn site is provided with a maximum building height (only) of 10 storeys.

It is our view that this is an underdevelopment for the site and overly restricts a high quality architectural outcome. The site is large and can accommodate several buildings, which ideally would incorporate a variety of building heights, rather than multiple buildings at a height of 10 storeys. The site is also ideally located to provide a strong contribution to improvements to the public domain both along Benjamin Way and Ibbott Lane.

**We recommend that the Master Plan Map 22 and Table 4 be revised to accommodate a flexible building height of up to 12 storeys for the Premier Inn site.**

Section 5.6.2 and 5.6.3 seek to encourage innovation in building design by allowing height controls to be flexibly applied where exceptional design is achieved. The Master Plan recommends that the following criteria be adopted to assess whether the incentive height controls are available to a development:

- *The developer provides a clear demonstration of how the development exceeds the minimum statutory requirements for environmentally sustainable development (e.g., energy rating, Water Sensitive Urban Design, solar access). Residential buildings should be designed to optimise solar access, energy efficiency and cross ventilation.*
- *The development contributes to the public domain through providing a suitable amount of street trees, street furniture and/or paving either on adjoining verge areas or elsewhere in the centre.*

- *The design contributes to the character of the centre, through consideration of building form, materials, the relationship to main pedestrian routes, the streetscape and nearby development.*
- *The number of required adaptable units is increased.*
- *The development contributes towards active travel or active living infrastructure.*
- *The development provides a good mix of apartments with 1, 2 and 3 or more bedrooms.*
- *The development provides an innovative and a diverse choice of apartment design/layout such as dual key, double height spaces, dual aspect and winter garden balconies to support the diverse lifestyles of residents.*
- *The development minimises its impact on the centre's micro climate, including minimising overshadowing of main public spaces and residential buildings, providing clear measures to reduce wind shear, and introducing measures to reduce heat gain, such as living (green) infrastructure.*

**These measures go some way to contributing to high quality, high amenity design. In addition to these criteria, we recommend a design review/peer review process for high density buildings to achieve an improved urban design outcome.**

Notwithstanding the above, we note that these criteria have not been adopted in their entirety into the Territory Plan Variation – which permits height variations in the following circumstances (C12):

- Where a block contains more than one taller building element, there is clear difference in height between elements;*
- The development achieves a high quality design outcome; and*
- Development is close to public transport stops and/or stations.*

**We highlight the loss of many of the qualitative and amenity based criteria included in the master plan. Whilst we understand that Territory Plan controls must be based on numeric controls, we would encourage further consideration as to how the qualitative controls could be transferred into numeric benchmarks to achieve the desired outcome (e.g. percentage unit mix, percentage adaptable or silver level units, diversity of unit layout, green star energy rating).**

## 6 Closure

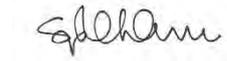
Given the scale of development permitted to the corner of Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way (16 storeys on block 21), it is clear that the Premier Inn site is capable of accommodating additional density. The Premier Inn site is of a considerable size that would allow multiple building forms and a stepping of building heights away from the prominent corner with Belconnen Way.

Modifying the controls to permit the flexible application of a building height up to 12 storeys would produce a far superior development outcome on the site as it would introduce diversity into the height plane. In our view, the current blanket control of 10 storeys is an underdevelopment of the site and stifles good design, which would be better achieved with a variety of building heights.

We would recommend Section 5.6.2 and 5.6.3, Map 22 and Table 4 of the Master Plan be reviewed to accommodate our recommended changes. We would also recommend that the translation of these controls into the Territory Plan be reviewed to ensure the intent is clearly retained and high quality outcome achieved.

Should you have any questions regarding this submission, please contact the undersigned on [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Sophie Olsen**  
Senior Planner  
SMEC Australia Pty Ltd



**From:** Kip Tanner  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** Submission on DV342  
**Date:** Friday, 22 June 2018 3:41:36 PM

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Dear Territory Plan Team,

Please see attached sketch plan showing a proposal to modify Benjamin Way in the Belconnen Town Centre.

I understand that there is a concept design that has previously been prepared for one-way pair cycle facilities on Benjamin Way.

This plan shows an alternative solution that:

- Continues the existing two-way shared path from the south, all the way along the eastern side of Benjamin Way, noting that in the northern area it is probably best as a cycle only path.
- Consolidates the traffic on Benjamin Way into the eastern carriageway. This responds to the fact that there is actually not that much through traffic in this area. This would also simplify the intersection at Emu Bank.
- Allows the removal of the western carriageway of Benjamin Way, opening up this area and the huge median as a potential public plaza. We understand that this could also facilitate the planting of large trees in the old carriageway space that cannot be planted in the centre of the median due to stormwater infrastructure.
- This would also help to encourage the opening up of Westfield to activate this frontage.

From a cycling perspective it would:

- Create really strong and intuitive connectivity between Belconnen Way and Emu Bank, facilitating access to Westfield, the Town Centre and the Bus Interchange.
- Remove the conflict between cycling and the Westfield car park entry.

From a wider community perspective it has the potential to:

- Convert a large area, that is currently roadway, into a space that can be used by people
- Provide green and public space connectivity between the lake and the town centre
- Improve the connectivity between existing focal points such as the Arts Centre, Westfield and Margret Timpson Park.

We understand that there are some challenges with the one-way pair proposal in terms of narrow verges down the western side and traffic conflicts that this proposal would resolve.

Obviously there remains considerable detail to be resolved, but it may be worthwhile considering this scheme within the context of DV342.

Thanks

CTP Logo



**Kip Tanner**  
Director • Environmental Engineer

Mobile [REDACTED]

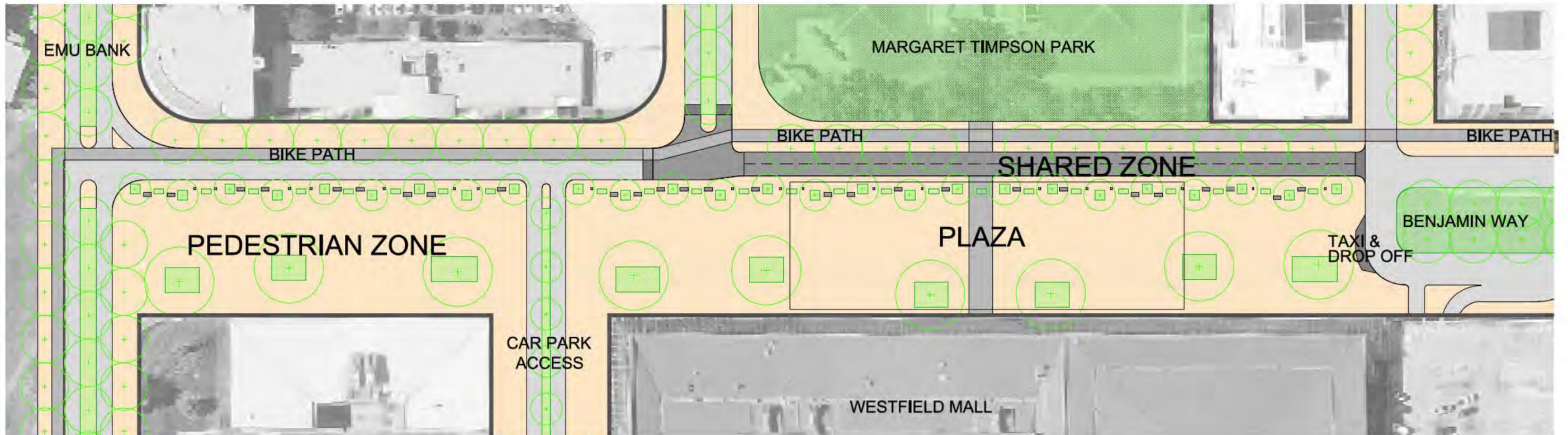


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BENJAMIN WAY - College Street to Emu Bank



BENJAMIN WAY - Swanson Ct to Emu Bank

# SKETCH





22 June 2018

Territory Plan Section  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra ACT 2601

By E-mail: [terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:terrplan@act.gov.au)

**RE: SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE DRAFT VARIATION 342**

Dear Territory Plan Section,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide commentary in relation to Draft Variation 342 (**DV342**) to the Territory Plan. We note that the Draft Variation follows on from the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, which was endorsed by the ACT Government in September 2016.

HTI Group are in Due Diligence and have a significant interest in land within the Belconnen Town Centre, namely within the Cameron Avenue Precinct. We have been anticipating the release of the Draft Variation and wish to take this opportunity to provide comments in relation to specific matters of interest.

Based on our review, our main concern relating to DV342 is:

- The allocation of building heights (subject to criteria), we believe this will create unintended site and development constraints and reduce the ability for design-based outcomes

We note that the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan allows for additional building height on specific sites within the Cameron Avenue Precinct and that the realisation of this additional height is subject to demonstrated compliance with relevant design-based criteria. Whilst we acknowledge that DV342 captures the Master Plan intent, we are concerned that it will be difficult to achieve the desired outcomes on certain sites given the immediate impacts created by current buildings and developments under construction at present.

The creation of height limits by specific area takes away from the opportunity to master plan sites in order to achieve maximum solar access to future buildings within the Cameron Avenue Precinct, whilst having regard to existing buildings and approved developments.

We propose that the height limits be subject to a whole of section Planning Report to allow a viable, and in terms of amenity, more favourable outcome for the wider Cameron Avenue Precinct. This could be achieved by revising Criteria 10 to include:

‘The maximum height of building in areas ‘b’ and ‘c’ and ‘d’ and ‘e’ may be increased where forming part of a comprehensive design for the whole section identified in a Planning Report under Section 97 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*.’

This would encourage world-class design-based outcomes and allow for the re-allocation of height within the Cameron Avenue Precinct. This would enhance the overall viability of future development and the amenity for residents of the Precinct.



Separately, we support the Planning Authority's initiative in creating the Design Review Panel (**DRP**) process. Whilst this process is not (yet) encapsulated in the relevant legislation as a statutory procedure, we would encourage the Planning Authority to request proposed developments within the Belconnen Town Centre that are seeking to utilise available development criteria to increase the maximum building height, to undertake the DRP process prior to the lodgement of any Development Application. This could be included in DV342.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss site specific constraints and are available at any time to progress discussion on the matters raised above.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in this regard as may be required.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Howarth'.

**Adam Howarth**

Director

**About HTI Group:**

HTI Group is a property development company with a social conscience. We harness the imagination to find ways to enhance communities, create opportunities and inspire creativity. We use our expertise to transform vacant and underused spaces into vibrant precincts for living.

Born from the merging of two longstanding family businesses, our team has a proven record of successful projects that achieve just this, and we look forward to working with investors, agents and property owners to create even more spaces for communities of the world to enjoy.

HTI's current portfolio includes:

- Mantra Macarthur, Turner
- Edgeworth, Turner
- Norrebro, Watson

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** Draft Variation 342 Belconnen Town Centre  
**Date:** Friday, 22 June 2018 4:41:31 PM

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To Whom It may Concern

I wish to object to rezoning of the Section 23 precinct along Lathlain Street from CZ3 Services to CZ2 Business. I believe this area should be kept for large scale future employment developments. These will be needed by all the new residents in the Belconnen Town Centre's high rise developments, the Ginninderry development and the CSIRO Field Station development.

#### EMPLOYMENT PRESSURE

As an example of employment pressure, at least 11,500 new jobs (one per dwelling) will be needed for residents by Ginninderry's completion in 2050, and possibly many more. According to the Urbis report published in the "West Belconnen Project community news" issue 5 May 2015, only 4,030 jobs will be located at Ginninderry by 2054. So at least 7,000 Ginninderry residents will have to travel away from west Belconnen for work.

Two thirds of BTC employees live in the Belconnen district and public transport from Kippax to BTC takes 15 minutes at present. I would expect the travel time from Ginninderry's most distant suburbs to take twice that long. Employees will take still longer to reach Civic, possibly three quarters of an hour, and perhaps an hour to reach Russell and Barton. Too long.

I agree wholeheartedly with the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan statements "Providing employment within the town centres was a key feature of their creation" and "This growth [population] will require additional retailing, housing and employment locations" and "The retention of these sites [Australian Government]'s for employment is fundamental to keeping the diversity of uses in the centre."

I strongly believe that all the BTC Services Area should be reserved for future employment.

#### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SERVICE TRADES AREA

The area including Section 23 along Lathlain Street will have many parts which will be oriented NNW-SSE so the apartments will face east-west, a poor solar orientation. The high-rise towers which could be built there, if DV342 is approved, will overlook the services area to the west and Westfield's roof and rooftop car parks to the east. Their views of Lake Ginninderra will largely be obscured by the Cirrus towers. In my opinion they will be an unattractive places in which to live.

If all the flagged BTC residential developments come to fruition, then the Centre could be as densely settled as New Acton but without the employment, cultural, service and recreation opportunities of Civic.

#### LIGHT RAIL

The route of light rail through BTC to Kippax should be thoroughly researched and corridors set

aside before land in the services area is released for any development, in my opinion, so as not to compromise that transport option.

Christine Coghlan

■ Westhoven Street Higgins ACT 2615

■

■

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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commercial + international

22 June 2018

Territory Plan Section  
Environment, Planning and  
Sustainable Development Directorate  
EPSDD Access Canberra Customer Service Centre  
16 Challis Street, Dickson  
Canberra  
Australian Capital Territory 2601

By email

Dear Sir or Madam

## **Scentre Management Limited Representations concerning Territory Plan Draft Variation No 342**

We are the solicitors for Scentre Management Limited and RE1 Limited ("Scentre").

In the Australian Capital Territory, Scentre owns the shopping centres known as Westfield Woden and Westfield Belconnen.

This letter comments on Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 342 ("DV342"). DV342 is of critical concern to Scentre. The proposed changes to Belconnen Town Centre zone and amendments to the Belconnen precinct map and code are not acceptable to Scentre.

Scentre, as the owner of Westfield Belconnen, is a major stakeholder in and around the Belconnen Town Centre. Westfield Belconnen itself represents the central commercial and retail core of the Belconnen Town Centre. Accordingly, Scentre has an interest in ensuring that the guiding frameworks for development within the Belconnen precinct and surrounds are carefully considered in the interests of residents, business and users of the area.

Scentre wishes to ensure that the role of Belconnen Town Centre and Belconnen's identity as the commercial and retail hub is maintained, consistent with the Territory Plan and the National Capital Plan. For this reason, the hierarchy of planning uses in Belconnen and indeed in the whole of Canberra is of great importance to Scentre.

Any amendments to the Territory Plan in relation to areas in and around the Belconnen Town Centre should not detract from the Town Centre or the hierarchy of uses to which we have referred. Rather, any amendments should seek to enhance the hierarchy of those uses.

Scentre objects to DV342 in its current form. This letter articulates our client's objections.

## **A Proposed large supermarket would critically disrupt the primacy of the Belconnen Town Centre**

DV342 intends to permit *"a supermarket within the commercial business zone near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection."*<sup>1</sup>

This would represent a re-zoning which would encourage and create significant commercial and retail expansion away from Belconnen Town Centre's core. Scentre and its owners are implacably opposed to such a change to the existing Territory Plan.

Under the National Capital Plan, Canberra is separated into separate and distinct townships.<sup>2</sup> The National Capital Plan recognises the importance of having one town centre as the focal point for each township, along with the importance of maintaining the integrity of the hierarchy. The National Capital Plan clearly stipulates that a *"hierarchy of centres"* will be maintained and in this hierarchy of centres each town will have a centre as the *"focal point for higher order retail functions, commercial services, offices and community facilities"*.<sup>3</sup> Each of these zones have objectives that reflect their intended use. The National Capital Plan together with the Territory Plan clearly indicate that it is not desirable for there to be increased retail intensification in areas which would detract from the primacy of the Town Centres.

The Territory Plan's retail hierarchy encompasses lower order centres in the form of local and group centres. These are intended to cater for the daily shopping needs of the local population, typically within a walking catchment. Importantly, where a group centre exists within a suburb, it performs the role of both group and local centre. Where a town centre is present, it performs the role of both town and group centre.

DV342's proposal to allow a supermarket near the Emu Bank and Eastern Valley Way intersection would cause a very significant change to the established retail hierarchy in and around the Belconnen Town Centre. It is understood that this is intended to service the mixed uses in the area and/or to function as a local centre for convenience-like shopping and by doing so respect the true intent of the National Capital and Territory Plans.

However, there already are large established supermarkets within the heart of Belconnen Town Centre. They are located, purposefully and conveniently, at the transport hub by which buses access Westfield Belconnen at least every 15 minutes. Siting another large supermarket within walking distance of Westfield Belconnen and on the self-same "Blue Rapid" bus route - which can and does stop at the intersection where the proposed larger supermarkets are intended to be zoned - would be contrary to the stated hierarchy of uses. The effect of such a development would attract shoppers and commercial activity away from the core of Belconnen Town Centre thereby degrading the viability and sustainability of the owners of the existing supermarkets and other local businesses, facilities and services. This investment has been made in legitimate reliance on the observance of that hierarchy. More importantly, the wider community has also made social and economic investment decisions relying on the ongoing viability of these supermarkets and supporting businesses.

The impact of this proposed large supermarket in such close proximity to Belconnen Town Centre's core is a matter of great concern for the existing occupiers and local business owners of Belconnen Town Centre. Experience shows that local centres adjacent to group centres typically create destination uncertainty and competitive confusion. The government's infrastructure choices become more difficult to make. One or other of the destinations does worse than the other. This confusion and

<sup>1</sup> DV343 part 2.4.2.

<sup>2</sup> National Capital Plan, pages 18, 56 and 57.

<sup>3</sup> National Capital Plan, page 58.

fragmentation of the market creates displacement and commercial losses for both centres, even the more successful one, who finds its market lessened in terms of foot traffic and vibrancy.

Typically, within a Town Centre but outside its Retail Core Zone supermarkets are limited to 200m<sup>2</sup>, and shops are limited in scale to providing convenience shopping for the local workforce and residents. Opening up opportunities for significant additional retail space within the Belconnen Town Centre as proposed by DV342 risks excess retail floor space, resulting in dead and empty spaces. This is already evident in the Belconnen Town Centre, where floor space in the “Altitude Apartments” at 41 Chandler Street, the “Wayfarer Apartments” at 120 Eastern Valley Way and the “Sentinel Apartments” at 39 Benjamin Way remains empty. This failure in retail activation can be put down to over-optimistic assessments of what the market can absorb.

We would also mention the well-established “sequential test”<sup>4</sup>. This is a fundamental planning principle that provides that town centre-type uses (eg supermarkets and retail space) should only be considered outside of the town centre concerned if it can be demonstrated that there are no viable locations for the use within the town centre. Relating this to the existing town centres in Canberra, the sequential test holds that uses intended to be primary uses within the CZ1 retail core should be focused in this zone, and that proposals for retail core functions elsewhere in the Town Centre should only be considered if it can be demonstrated that there are no viable sites within the retail core area. In our client’s experienced opinion, the application of this test in Canberra rules out large supermarkets of the type contemplated by DV342 outside the CZ1 zone.

## **B DV342 height restriction will stunt the growth of the Belconnen Town Centre for no good reason**

The Belconnen Master Plan (“BMP”) provides for a four storey height limit plus an additional two storeys subject to specific criteria being met. The passage of DV342 would remove the option for the two additional storeys and would impose a mandatory height restriction of 16 meters at Westfield Belconnen<sup>5</sup>.

These new limitations would be in conflict with the objective of the BMP. The BMP encourages high buildings in the town centre. CZ1 is the commercial core zone and four storeys surrounded by much larger building heights does not meet this objective. On a site as large as Block 35, the Block that presently houses Westfield Belconnen a four storey height limit would represent a major reversal of existing development rights and cause future lost opportunities for creating and enhancing upon a vibrant Town Centre. Significant development could occur within the Westfield Belconnen site with negligible impact on any of the surrounding lands.

The deletion of criteria to allow higher buildings where Westfield Belconnen is located will make significant re-investment in the structure on the site uneconomic for the foreseeable future. Scentre would find it difficult to justify capital expenditure projects that could help turn the currently inwardly facing mall into a modern and outwardly looking centre. Without merit based opportunities to build well beyond four storeys, Westfield Belconnen is likely to remain a low-rise shopping mall surrounded by modern high-rise apartment buildings.

Not only is this stricter height limit in conflict with the objectives of the BMP, but it also creates an inconsistency between Westfield Belconnen and Westfield Woden. Draft Variation 344 for Woden as it applies to Westfield Woden requires CZ1 and CZ2 areas to range in height from 12 to 24 storeys<sup>6</sup>, with the option for an additional four storeys provided that the specific criteria is met.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ensuring-the-vitality-of-town-centres>

<sup>5</sup> Rule 10 DV342.

<sup>6</sup> Woden Draft Variation 344, Rule 9.

Scentre supports the Belconnen Master Plan and therefore objects to DV342's attempted reversal of the BMP height limits. DV342 should be amended by inserting criteria which at the very least would allow merit-based development beyond a four storey height limit to assist in creating a vibrant and activated Town Centre with opportunities to provide enhanced community and customer experiences and amenity.

### **C Proposed frontage activation requirement along Benjamin Way is too difficult**

Another strong concern of Scentre's about DV342 is the change it proposes to the approval of ground level development proposals. The proposed amendments under DV342 would present great difficulties with respect to the frontage activations it would require in and around the Westfield Belconnen.

Currently, Rule 2 in the precinct code requires active frontages to main pedestrian areas around Westfield Belconnen. The active frontages are limited to particular uses, with criteria in place that allows for any use that generates activity. Rule 2 in the proposed DV342 is similar, but not the same, in that "active frontage" has no criteria attached. This would make it mandatory for frontage to Benjamin Way to be limited to:

- Business Agency
- Club
- Community Activity Centre
- Drink Establishment
- Financial Establishment
- Hotel
- Indoor Entertainment Facility
- Indoor Recreation Facility
- Public Agency
- Restaurant
- SHOP

This is a reasonable mix of uses. Nonetheless the Benjamin Way frontage is very long. Activating the whole length would be difficult and is not strictly necessary. Scentre submits that the criteria associated with Rule 2 needs to be maintained to provide flexibility for development approvals relating to long frontages such as those on Benjamin Way. Our client has no objection to complying with frontage activation where required and appropriate as it has in the past. However the change proposed by DV342 would interfere with the current tenancies and future planned tenancies and should not proceed in its current form.

### **D DV342 would add to and compound other negative effects on the Belconnen Town Centre**

The large supermarket and low-rise proposals in DV342 come at a time in which the Belconnen Town Centre is suffering adverse effects from other circumstances, being circumstances that uniquely

affect it amongst Canberra's town centres. DV342 risks creating a spiral of the type that has so badly affected the Woden Town Centre, an outcome that must be avoided.

## 1 Canberra Light Rail

Belconnen as a Town Centre has been a central hub for both commercial and retail developments and public transport infrastructure, making it an important "destination" for north-side living Canberrans.<sup>7</sup> Belconnen now faces an uphill battle in asserting itself as a "destination" for the north side of Canberra as the current proposed light rail corridors do not include it in either stage 1 or stage 2 of the light rail development.<sup>8</sup>

This means that Belconnen has seen a reduction in "identity" as a central hub for the north side of Canberra. In contrast areas that the light rail proposes to develop (Gungahlin included) have already seen significant retail expansion and proposed development. These include not only the rapid expansion of Gungahlin but also the proposed "*new Braddon*"<sup>9</sup> and "*new life in Dickson as an urban transport hub*".<sup>10</sup>

Scentre is concerned about the ability of the Belconnen Town Centre to be improved and to maintain its identity in light of an already intensely competitive situation in Canberra in which many critical factors are stacked against it. Westfield Belconnen is "beset on all sides". DV342's proposals for additional supermarkets with large GFA, re-zoning and building height limits will further sideline and restrain the development of the Belconnen Town Centre hub.

The light rail development will have significant effects on Belconnen Town Centre. DV342 fails to consider how best to preserve and enhance the identity of the Town Centre and instead, in its critical recommendations, would significantly degrade it.

## 2 Gungahlin Town Centre

Competition has been exacerbated by the increasing development and importance of Gungahlin, a Town Centre that already competes for commercial and retail supremacy, and as a transport hub, of the north side of Canberra.

Gungahlin's proximity to Belconnen already subverts elements of Belconnen's identity. Gungahlin continues to be the fastest growing area in the Australia.<sup>11</sup> As the recipient of the first stage of light rail, Gungahlin has seen significant commercial, retail and residential expansion including the development of the Gungahlin Market Place,<sup>12</sup> the Casey Market Town,<sup>13</sup> and the government-funded expansion of the Gungahlin Bus Interchange.<sup>14</sup> Large-scale commercial retail zoning is the major selling point that Belconnen Town Centre can use in the contest with its northern neighbour. The DV342 re-zoning and height restriction would degrade that selling point to the great disadvantage of

7 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-09-27/height-restrictions-40kph-zone-proposed-in-belconnen-master-plan/6807838>

8 <http://www.actlightrail.info/p/routes-for-light-rail.html>

9 <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/canberra-intersection-could-become-the-new-braddon-under-act-government-plans-20180301-h0wuyt.html>

10 <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/kingston-developers-get-tick-for-dickson-motor-registry-apartments-20180618-p4zm5d.html>

11 <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/census-2016-act-has-nations-largest-population-growth-gungahlin-the-driver-20170626-gwz5bq.html>

12 <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/canberra-life/inside-marketplace-gungahlins-60-million-redevelopment-and-new-kmart-20161122-gsvfe4.html>

13 <http://www.caseymarkettown.com.au/>

14 <https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2017/september/new-gungahlin-bus-station-in-2018>

the people of Belconnen and the investors in the Town Centre, from “mums and dads” tenants all the way through to national retail chains and Scentre itself.

Scentre submits that rather than attempting to strip further development potential from the Belconnen Town Centre, consideration should be given to ways of augmenting the Belconnen Town Centre. As it stands, the DV342 re-zoning proposes to do more damage and impose serious constraints to an area that is already facing a number of challenges.

## **E Economic interests are a relevant and important planning consideration**

DV342 in its current form would adversely affect the intensity of retail uses in the core zone of the Belconnen Town Centre by causing a shift in the position of that core, contrary to the vision that has to date been planned for the ACT. Belconnen’s transport hub will be less frequently patronised (as we have already seen), and the use of the Town Centre for community purposes will suffer.<sup>15</sup> From an economic viewpoint, town centres like Belconnen will suffer if retail over-expansion is permitted in areas that are not meant to be retail-intensive and that are within walking proximity of the retail core that is Westfield Belconnen. Where retail is intensified in areas outside of shopping centres, customers reduce their visits to those centres. As a result, services and business within shopping centres falter, and can be expected to provide lower levels in service. The proposed re-zoning in DV342 will detract from business viability due to the resulting reduced customer base that each business would have.

Westfield Belconnen is not “just” nor is it “only” Scentre, but it is all of the shop owners, working families, student employees, senior citizens and Canberra north side residents who “live, work and play” in Westfield Belconnen.

These are important economic interests, and are recognised by the High Court as being matters for genuine legal consideration in the making of planning decisions:

*It may well be right to say...that the Planning Act does not have as an object or purpose the “protection of the commercial interests of [individual] owners of shopping centres or supermarkets, or the protection of existing supermarkets from competition”. But it by no means follows that an individual owner or operator is not adversely affected by a planning decision that will have direct commercial consequences for that owner or operator. As the Planning Act makes plain in its statement of objects, it is concerned with the general commercial health of the Territory. So much appears from the use of the expressions “the orderly and sustainable development of the ACT”, “the social, environmental and economic aspirations of the people of the ACT”, and “sound financial principles”. Claims of individual adverse effect are not irrelevant to the pursuit of those general objectives.<sup>16</sup> [underlining supplied]*

EPSDD must reconsider the elements of DV342 to which Scentre objects. Serious commercial implications would arise from “shifting” the “core” of Belconnen Town Centre. Nor is it a case of these being minor changes. They are not “minor”. With respect, we contend that they send all the wrong messages about the future of the core and local heart of Belconnen Town Centre.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/big-change-to-canberra-bus-routes-prepares-us-for-even-bigger-change-light-rail-20171006-gyvwlw.html>

<sup>16</sup> *Argos Pty Ltd v Corbell, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development* [2014] HCA 50 (10 December 2014) at [73].

## **F Conclusion**

DV342 strongly threatens the primacy of the Belconnen Town Centre. It clearly departs from the national and Territory planning principles established for the ACT. It would detrimentally affect retail intensification within the Belconnen Town Centre core zone.

Scentre submits that the supermarket re-zoning and height limitations of DV342 must not be pursued. Instead:

- the provision of supermarkets to serve the daily needs of residents in mixed use developments in the Belconnen Town Centre outside the core zone must be stringently limited to avoid breaking down the well-established and successful retail hierarchy;
- criteria should be developed to allow merit based development at Westfield Belconnen beyond a four storey height limit which is in complete conflict to surrounding development and activation potential; and
- the criteria for frontage activation under the current Rule 2 should not be disrupted.

Yours sincerely



**Daniel Moulis**  
Partner Director



**From:** Mehdi Amini  
**To:** [Terrplan](#)  
**Subject:** DV342-Belconnen Market Precinct Construction  
**Date:** Friday, 22 June 2018 11:30:00 PM

---

Hi,

I am writing to you regarding a development plan of up to 16 stories high on Belconnen Market site (Section 32 - corner of Belconnen and Benjamin ways-DV342)

I am an owner of a unit in Sentinel apartments in Benjamin Way.

A 16-storey building in section 32 of the Belconnen town centre is not keeping with the location of high-rise developments within the town centre both existing and planned. The town centre has a corridor of high-rise running east to west from Wayfarer through Dusk/Republic/High Society, Altitude, Sentinel and the soon to be constructed Cirrus building. A high-rise development on the southern outskirts of the town centre would look out of place and ugly, and there is very limited scope for advantageous water views from a high-rise that will be built out by high-rise properties that exist to the north.

This 16-storey development on the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way will obstruct the views that I have to the mountains. Currently we enjoy expansive views over the Brindabella ranges including Mount Painter. This is the main reason I bought this apartment. It would be a great shame and also loss of property value for us as property owners.

As a result, I want to lodge my objection to this plan as it has adverse effects on my financial situation as well as blocking our views to the beautiful mountains ranges.

Kind Regards,  
Mehdi,  
--  
Mehdi,



# Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts



**1 Evelyn Parker Place**  
**PO Box 1379**  
**BELCONNEN ACT 2616**

ABN 59010048690  
<http://www.lakeginninderrascouts.com>

20 June 2018

## **Submission on behalf of the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts Group, Beissel St Belconnen** **Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan Variation**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the planning process.

Attached is the original submission to the (then) new Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan dated 21 January 2015. Only the membership numbers have been updated to reflect the current status.

### **New Issues**

Since the development of the 2015 Master Plan, a number of additional issues have emerged that should be considered alongside the original submission. These are:

1. The population density is going to increase considerably with new, high-density residential developments. This is likely to result in:
  - a. increased demand for scouting services;
  - b. an increase in recreational foot-traffic in the open-space area near Lake Ginninderra (and the Scout Hall); and
  - c. and increased demand for basic services (eg public toilets, rubbish collection).
2. The repurposing of the old water police site (and effective enlargement of available space as part of the draft variation) is highly likely to increase vehicle traffic and demands for parking along Evelyn Parker Place and Beissel Street.

### **Impact and Requirements**

Pressure on basic facilities such as rubbish collection and public toilet facilities already exists. The removal of the only rubbish bin (along Beissel St) over 12 months ago has resulted in rubbish being dumped at the Scout Hall and, since the nearest public toilets are in the Westfield Shopping Centre and John Knight Park, the recreational utility of this part of the foreshore is severely limited. This has clear health and safety implications for users of the recreational space as sharp objects (including broken glass) and other waste products endanger members of the community.

Traffic is currently manageable but any increase along the very narrow Evelyn Parker Place and the pressure for parking will create serious traffic issues around the Scout Hall. This has serious safety implications for users of the scout hall (and surrounding recreational spaces).

## Recommendations

If the draft variation is approved, work would need to be done to ensure the safety of Scout Hall users and surrounding recreational space.

Public rubbish bins should be provided even if the draft variation does not proceed to reflect the increased population density and demand for access to the recreational spaces.

The lack of public toilets in the area will need to be urgently addressed to support higher population densities. The toilets should include accessible facilities.



Klaus Felsche

Secretary

Lake Ginninderra Sea Scout Group

Tel [REDACTED] Email: [secretary.lgss@scoutsact.com.au](mailto:secretary.lgss@scoutsact.com.au)

22 June 2018

## **Submission on behalf of the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts Group, Beissel St Belconnen (2015)**

**Prepared by Klaus Felsche (President) and Justin Billing (Vice President)**

### Background

Lake Ginninderra is a highly valued resource, regularly used not only by local residents but by several hundreds of youth and adult members of Scouting in the north ACT Region. In fact, it is the primary focus of all Scouting water activities north of Lake Burley Griffin. Its consistent use is made possible by the facilities constructed by the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scout Group (LGSS) at their Evelyn Parker Place address (off Beissel Street, Belconnen). Safe, unhindered access to these facilities is essential in order for the safe, continued use by our members and the local community.

The LGSS Group aims to achieve more than just casual use of the lake. As part of the world wide Scouting Organisation, it has a mission for the development of young people.

*The Mission for Scouting, at the local, national and international level, is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.*

*This is achieved by:*

- *Involving them throughout their formative years in a non-formal educational process;*
- *Using a specific method that makes each individual the principle agent in his or her development as a self-reliant, supportive, responsible and committed person; and*
- *Assisting them to establish a value system based upon spiritual, social and personal principles as expressed in the Promise and Law.*

Built on guidance from the ACT Branch and with input from Scout Leaders, Support Committee Members, Parents and Carers, the Group is keen to provide input into any future plans and planning activities for Lake Ginninderra.

The current LGSS team is very fortunate that many past members have had foresight and energy to provide us with a sound base: we have outstanding facilities, including our new boat shed; good equipment; exceptional scout leaders and a great group of youth members including our seniors Venturers and associated Rovers. Collectively, we provide the best possible environment for our youth members. Furthermore, north of Lake Burley Griffin, we are the only 'sea scouts' and thus the only venue for providing extensive water-based scouting activities to over 1,200 scouts in the northern ACT.

Further explanation is probably not necessary, but it is worth reiterating that the scouting community, like most community groups, relies on volunteer support. The rewards are not financial; they are life experiences for us as individuals and the group members as a community. The fundraising levy is not a way for the group to raise money. It is an incentive for people to give their time and effort to avoid payment, so that the Group might gain their help to provide the necessary support structures for a worthwhile program for our children. Our program allows them to grow and develop as active members of society who understand and respect the needs of a supportive family, be that the family at home, at school, in the scout group, or in the town, country or world community.

LGSS recognises the value of such contributions by providing discounts of some fee elements to those offering their time and effort in a variety of roles. LGSS also offers discounts as financial assistance to ensure all members of the community share a similar opportunity to be involved in scouting.

LGSS is a voluntary, not-for-profit, community group running active programmes for young people in Canberra under the auspices of Scouts Australia. LGSS receives no government funding, instead relying entirely on funds provided by its members, fundraising and some donations and grants for its operations. All equipment, facilities and consumables are funded from the LGSS budget.

### Submission comments

As described above, LGSS provides structured, development and leadership programmes for local youth. As a Sea Scout group, our activities centre on water-focussed events, although a full programme of outdoor adventures are incorporated throughout the year. As such, our concerns for the Master Plan relate to potential impacts on the ability to provide these activities in the future.

The key interests for us in the development of the 2015 Belconnen Master Plan are:

- Continued direct access to the lake is critical for water-focussed activities of our Group. Youth members aged 7-18 years regularly access water-focussed activities via the 'beach' onsite beside the hall. If this access was to be lost or degraded, it would impact on the effectiveness of the water-focussed activities we provide to local youth, particularly during the sailing season between spring and autumn.
- This is also relevant to broader Sea Scout operations across the ACT. 'Tri-Lakes' is a regular, thrice-yearly competition between the Sea Scout groups at Lake Burley Griffin, Lake Tuggeranong and Lake Ginninderra. Retaining access to the 'beach' onsite beside the hall is essential to enable safe and easy access for these activities, and the associated community involvement in them.
- Clean and safe foreshore environments are an ongoing issue, given our frequent activities on or near the water's edge. We conduct annual Clean-up Australia events to improve the condition of the western foreshore by reducing the rubbish build up. Needles and syringes, shopping trolleys, glass bottles and aluminium cans are the most common rubbish collected. Any new developments need to target the cleanliness and safety of the foreshore, and the ability to effectively maintain that level of cleanliness. The stormwater system is the principle avenue for much of this refuse entering the lake. We see management of the stormwater system and a clean and safe foreshore environment as critical to providing a safe and clean location for all lake users.
- Car parking will be a particular issue. During peak times immediately before and after scouting section meetings, as parents arrive to drop off or pick up their children, there is an intense period of car parking pressure and an increased associated risk of injury to youth members and adults. Developments adjoining Beissel St will add to this pressure and risk. To minimise this, parking areas will need to be well designed to enable clean and smooth traffic flow, and dedicated drop off zones.
- Our Group is constrained by the current size of the leased property and, noting the strong pressure for growth and interest from youth members in the community, we would want to have the ability to extend our operations (boat/canoe storage, meeting venue, etc.) over the next several years.

- LGSS conducts weekly activities for around 109 youth members<sup>1</sup> and is a base for the Lake Ginninderra Rover Scouts (14 older youth members). Sixteen scout leaders, 33 adult helpers and a support committee conduct over 400 hours of sessions at the scout hall every year. The hall provides the base for sailing and canoeing activities conducted on Lake Ginninderra over the Spring, Summer and Autumn months, including evenings and weekends. Additionally, over 30 camping activities and ACT competitive sea-scout sailing events (on Lake Burley Griffin, Lake Tuggeranong and on Sydney Harbour) utilise the hall and its storage facilities as a base of operations.
- LGSS is the home of active youth programmes run by the local community. The programmes are local, regional, national and international, with local youth members participating in Cuborees, inter-state activities, Jamborees in Australia and New Zealand, community service programmes in Indonesia and competitive water activities in the ACT and NSW.
- LGSS is funded entirely through member fees and fundraising activities. These funds provide for the hall maintenance, the cost of utilities, the cost of equipment (including boats and camp equipment, and associated trailers), insurance, association costs and the costs associated with scouting activities.
- The scout hall is also extensively used by community groups and social organisations throughout the week. Typically, such groups utilise the scout hall for some 20 hours per week when not needed for scouting, providing a base for social and cultural activities.
- Participation in scouting in the Belconnen area is growing with most scout groups regularly reporting full capacity, particularly in the cub and scout sections (7 ½ - 15 years of age). There are three Sea Scout groups in the ACT. LGSS offers a challenging mix of land-based and water-based activities centred on Lake Ginninderra, the only such group in North Canberra and surrounding NSW districts.
- It is expected that there will be continuing pressure for growth. Accordingly, LGSS recently constructed a new boat shed to better support water activities on Lake Ginninderra in response to the growing popularity of scouting.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to be part of the discussion about the future of the Belconnen Master Plan and we hope a strong community focus drives its implementation.

Regards

Klaus Felsche and Justin Billing  
 President/Vice President  
 Lake Ginninderra Sea Scout Group

Wednesday, 21 January 2015

---

<sup>1</sup> 22 Joeyes, 41 Cubs, 36 Scouts and 10 Venturers. Total youth membership of 109 as at June 2018



6 July 2018

Territory Plan Section  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra ACT 2601

By e-mail: [terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:terrplan@act.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: Submission on Belconnen Precinct Code Draft Variation 342  
Block 6 Section 47 Belconnen**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Draft Variation 342 (DV342) to the Territory Plan proposing additional controls within the Belconnen Precinct Code. Canberra Town Planning provide this submission on behalf of the Lessee for Block 6 Section 47 Belconnen.

Block 6 Section 47 Belconnen is currently developed as the Zone Bowling Centre and a McDonalds restaurant with associated car parking. The site occupies a prominent position and has urban design significance being the eastern gateway into the Town Centre, and it is one of the first sites encountered by persons visiting the Town Centre, whether by vehicle, public transport or as a pedestrian or cyclist.

The Lessee is currently considering the future development opportunities for the site, and has expressed concern at the recent introduction of DV342 (subject to interim effect as of 4 May 2018) and what this instrument means for the realisation of future development opportunities.

The Lessees' main concern in relation to DV342 is the introduction of restrictions on height controls over Section 47, which significantly reduces the development potential of the site compared to what was previously permitted prior to DV342.

**Summary of planning controls under the Belconnen Precinct Code**

Under the Belconnen Precinct Map and Code in force prior to the introduction of DV342, the subject site was located within area b under Figure 1 of the Code, as depicted below.

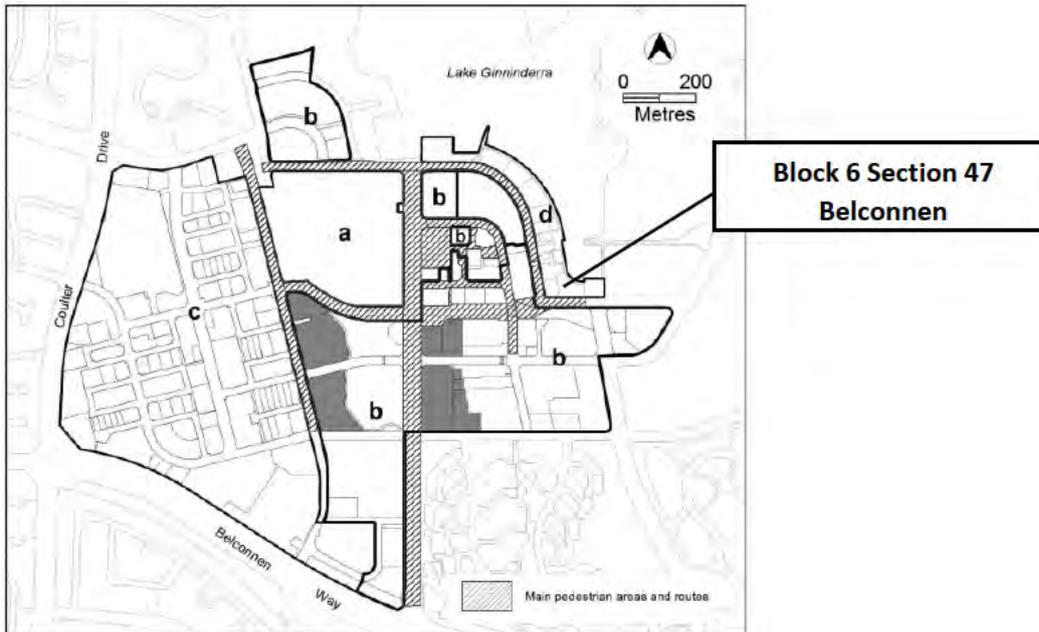


FIGURE 1 OF THE BELCONNEN PRECINCT CODE (PRIOR TO 4 MAY 2018)

Block 6 is zoned 'CZ2 - Business' under the Territory Plan, and we note that there is no building height limit within the CZ2 zone in the Belconnen Town Centre location. Recent development approvals such as the Republic development located at Section 200 Belconnen (zoned CZ2) suggest that there is opportunity for development of up to 27 storeys within the Town Centre.

The Belconnen Precinct Map and Code provided at criterion 8 that buildings within area b:

*Buildings achieve all of the following:*

- a) consistency with the desired character*
- b) scale appropriate to the function of the use*
- c) minimal detrimental impacts including overshadowing and excessive scale*

We consider that the wording of this rule provided design guidance on the intended form of development for area b, and that the wording of the criterion promoted flexible design outcomes to be progressed on their relative merits subject to performance against these amenity criteria.

#### **Proposed planning controls under DV342**

##### **Buildings heights**

With the introduction of DV342, mandatory heights limits proposed for Section 47 Belconnen under rule 10 are as follows (areas as depicted below):

- *Area 'd': the lesser of 18 storeys and 60m*
- *Area 'h': the lesser of 6 storeys and 23m*

Criteria 10 does not provide opportunity for additional building height on the subject site for proposals with planning and design merit, as is afforded other sites within the Town Centre.

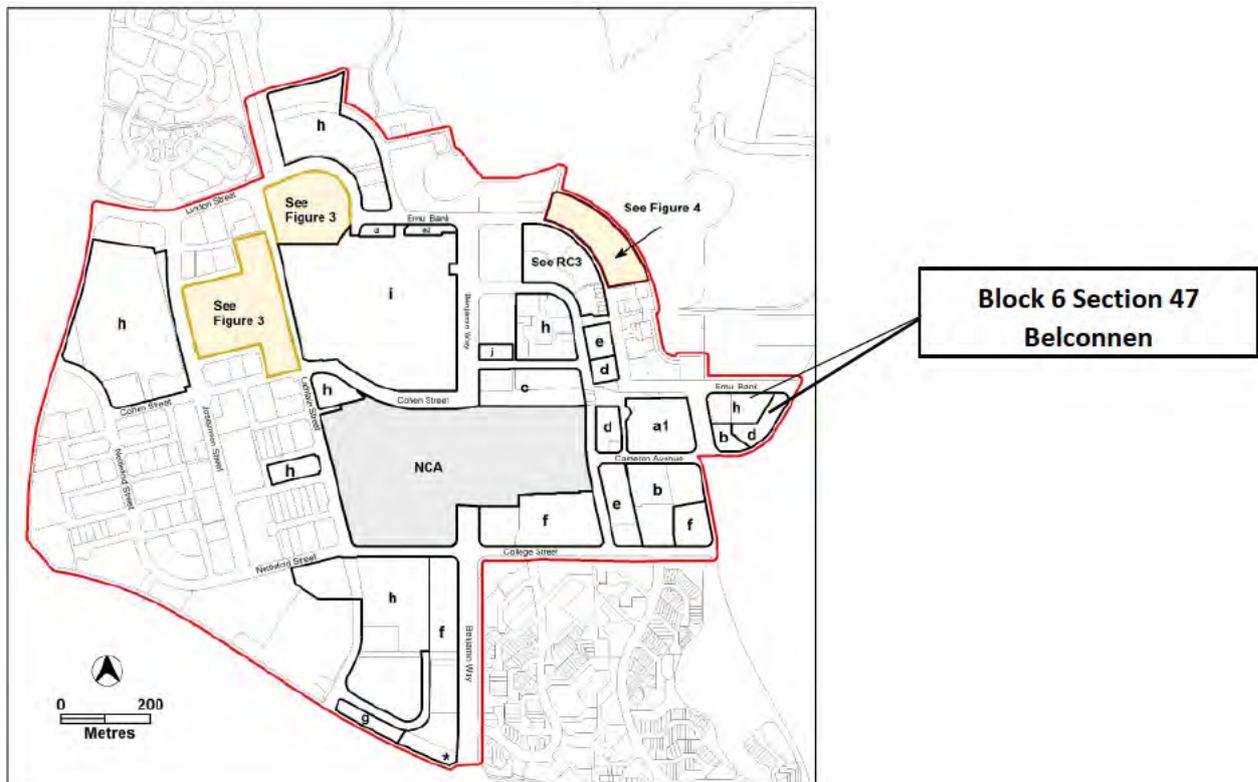


FIGURE 2 OF DV342 (SUBJECT TO INTERIM EFFECT FROM 4 MAY 2018)

Based on analysis of site area and the permissible height limits within areas 'd' and 'h' applicable to the subject site, the theoretical maximum development potential on the subject site would be in the order of 400,000 square metres of gross floor area under the previous Belconnen Precinct Code, where the current controls under DV342 would limit the development potential to circa 200,000 square metres of gross floor area- representing a loss of development potential of around 50 per cent.

Recognising that a proposal based on the maximum development potential would be unfavourable for the site, the mandatory height restrictions now imposed under DV342 limit the flexibility in delivery of development outcomes for the subject site: flexibility that may result in improved development outcomes for the Town Centre given the prominent location of the block.

We note that Section 47 is surrounded by blocks that are afforded opportunity to achieve greater building heights, which we consider conflicts with the objectives of the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan that apply to the subject site, being included as part of the Cameron Avenue Precinct.

Noting that the Master Plan recommended planning policies suggest that 'Large blocks that can support several taller buildings are required to provide a clear

*variety in building heights, rather than several buildings all at or near the maximum height limit', we suggest that there is a significant differentiation in building height on the subject site of 12 storeys between areas 'd' and 'h', and 15 storeys between area 'b' and 'd'. It is considered that the height differentiation could be narrowed by permitting additional height on Block 6 whilst still achieving the objective of height differentiation in this part of the Town Centre.*

The Lessees' preferred planning outcome for the site would be an amendment to proposed rule/criteria 10 to increase the maximum building height permitted on the site, and provide flexibility in the division between areas 'd' and 'h', which impose a rigid building form on the site that our initial modelling suggests may not represent an optimum design outcome for this Section with respect to solar amenity and urban design, given the site occupies the previously mentioned eastern gateway to the Town Centre.

It is considered that a larger scale of development could be permitted on the subject site than DV342 would permit, without imposing unreasonable adverse impacts on surrounding or future development (noting that the Section 200 development, identified as area 'a1' in Figure 2 of DV342, permits development of up to 96m).

Furthermore, the subject site is well positioned to strengthen valuable linkages between the Town Centre and the rapidly growing University of Canberra campus, and is well positioned for the establishment of a Transport Oriented Development given the location of the Inter-town Public Transport overlay proposed to extend along Emu Bank or Cameron Avenue adjoining the subject block.

#### Opportunities for supermarket use on the site

We note that DV342 Rule 4 provides a limitation on shop (supermarket) use in remainder of Town Centre, with the exception of Section 200 Belconnen. This change restricts opportunities for a number of sites that could previously explore this use under the former Belconnen Precinct Code.

It is envisaged that additional supermarket facilities within the Belconnen Precinct could service the walking catchment of the growing number of mixed use developments in the area, to function as a local centre for convenience-type shopping, rather than additional large-scale centres as would be expected in a CZ1 area. The permissibility of this type of retail use could operate more like a local centre and provide for the daily shopping needs rather than a destination supermarket for a weekly or larger car-based shopping. In addition, we suggest that a limit on car parking associated with these supermarkets could be imposed to encourage the intended outcome.

## **Conclusion**

Whilst the ongoing review of the Territory Plan is supported to reflect ongoing change within the Belconnen Town Centre, it is important that any changes made are carefully considered to preserve development opportunities previously available to Lessees.

Further, to ensure the viability of future redevelopment it is critical that the ACT government ensure that the proposed changes do not bring about unintended consequences and unfairly restrict development opportunities to existing Lessees. As outlined in this submission, DV342 imposes limitations for future development opportunities at Block 6 Section 47 Belconnen.

On this basis, we recommend a broader and more consistent approach to the application of height controls within the Belconnen Town Centre that permits flexibility to achieve improved development outcomes subject to fulfilling design objectives.

Yours sincerely



**Nichelle Jackson**

Associate Director  
Canberra Town Planning  
(02) 6262 5091





**5 July 2018**

**Territory Plan Section**

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
16 Challis Street  
Dickson ACT 2601

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: Submission on Territory Plan Draft Variation 342- Belconnen Town Centre**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Draft Variation 342 (DV342) to the Territory Plan, proposing changes to the Belconnen Precinct Code.

The Draft Variation follows the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan which was prepared in consultation with the community and other key stakeholders.

NDH and their related entities represented also through KDN Group and Evri Group are Canberra based developers with more than 50 years of industry experience. The NDH group hold development interests in the Belconnen Town Centre, and we wish to highlight potential concerns with some of the controls proposed under the Draft Variation that we consider will prevent the achievement of good development outcomes for the Town Centre.

We note that the draft variation diverges from some policy positions that were identified in the Master Plan. Any divergence will not have been subject to broad community and stakeholder discussion and will need to be considered carefully. We are also concerned that some of the proposed policies may not lead to the intended outcomes.

Of particular concern, are the restrictions on height and the inclusion of additional prohibited development, namely residential use.

NDH and their related entities are the lessees for several sites in Belconnen, to which DV342 relates, including the following sites:

- Block 23 Section 55 Belconnen
- Block 1 Section 4 Belconnen
- Block 11 Section 6 Belconnen
- Block 1 Section 10 Belconnen
- Block 4 Section 20 Belconnen
- Block 2 Section 25 Belconnen
- Blocks 14 & 16 Section 45 Belconnen
- Block 39 Section 54 Belconnen

The implications for development opportunities on these sites are discussed below.

**Block 23 Section 55 Belconnen**

Of significant concern in relation to DV342, is the diversion from the Belconnen Master Plan which allowed 6 storeys in height for this block.

DV342 has identified this block as "for all other areas: 2 storeys".



This divergence severely impacts the potential for this block.

To the west of this block is Block 37 Section 52 which identified a height limit of 24 storeys in the Belconnen Master Plan, and 25 storeys in DV342.

We consider that an improved design outcome would be achieved if taller buildings were permitted on this block, with height differentiation provided along the block frontage. For instance, allowing for development of up to 9 storeys to the southern end and 18 storeys to the northern end would mirror development on the opposite side of Benjamin Way. This would allow an opportunity to consider the commercial viability of redevelopment of this block.

Please refer to attached information provided by Stewart Architecture (Attachments A to D), with supporting drawings, showing an example of how this proposal can be better achieved, without the restrictions of DV342.

### **Services Area (CZ3)**

DV342 restricts height limits and uses for blocks in this zone. In many instances it can make development unviable.

It seems appropriate to allow for consideration for developments which can be accommodated on these blocks, such as "shop top living". This allows for services at ground floor level and residential above. By restricting residential use, the future uses for these sites is severely restricted.

### **Block 1 Section 4 Belconnen**

These blocks have a height restriction to 2 storeys, and residential use is now prohibited. However, residential use is an allowable use on the purpose clause for this block.

### **Block 11 Section 6 and Block 1 Section 10 Belconnen**

These blocks have a two storey height limit and residential use is prohibited.

### **Belconnen Block 4 Section 20 Belconnen**

This block is restricted to two storey height limit and residential use is prohibited.

It should be noted that residential use is an allowable use on the purpose clause for this block.

The neighbouring sites to this block are permitted building heights of between 4 and 6 storeys (Section 21 and Section 185) and the variation will rezone these blocks from 'CZ3 – Services' to 'CZ2 – Business', thereby allowing for residential use.

This variation allows for some blocks to benefit from additional height limits and uses allowed, whilst restricting other blocks in this services area.



### **Block 2 Section 25 Belconnen**

Residential use is prohibited and there is a height restriction to 2 storeys.

This seems highly restrictive for this block where neighbouring Section 23 to the north of this block, is allowed building heights up to 18 storeys, and Section 50, to the east of this block, is allowed building heights up to 8 storeys.

### **Blocks 14 & 16 Section 45 Belconnen**

We note the allowable shop GFA to 1,500m<sup>2</sup> to Block 14, and consider this a good outcome to function the residential areas in the vicinity of this block.

Although building heights are limited to 23 storeys (plus an additional 4 storeys with criteria) on both Blocks 14 and 16, residential development would not be possible, particularly on Block 14, due the 28 storeys permitted on Section 48 to the north. This will result in a lack of solar amenity for potential residents on the southern block (14).

### **Block 39 Section 54 Belconnen**

Imposing a height limit of 6 storeys, when 20 storeys is permissible on the southern block on Sections 152 and 199, significantly restricts the development opportunities for this block.

We note the nominated car parking area to the south of this block. We would expect that this is to be retained/replaced and that no other uses are to be allowed as a replacement for public car parking. There is a shortage of public parking in the Belconnen Town Centre, and as such the retention or addition of public car parking areas should be favoured.

### **Summary**

In summary, the mandatory height limits are considered to affect the viability of future development/redevelopment of the blocks.

Whilst addressing the error to height allowances in DV342 for Section 55 Block 23, it would be prudent to consider more successful redevelopment outcomes for this site where taller buildings could be accommodated.

In addition, we strongly oppose the removal of residential uses in the CZ3 area.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned in this regard.

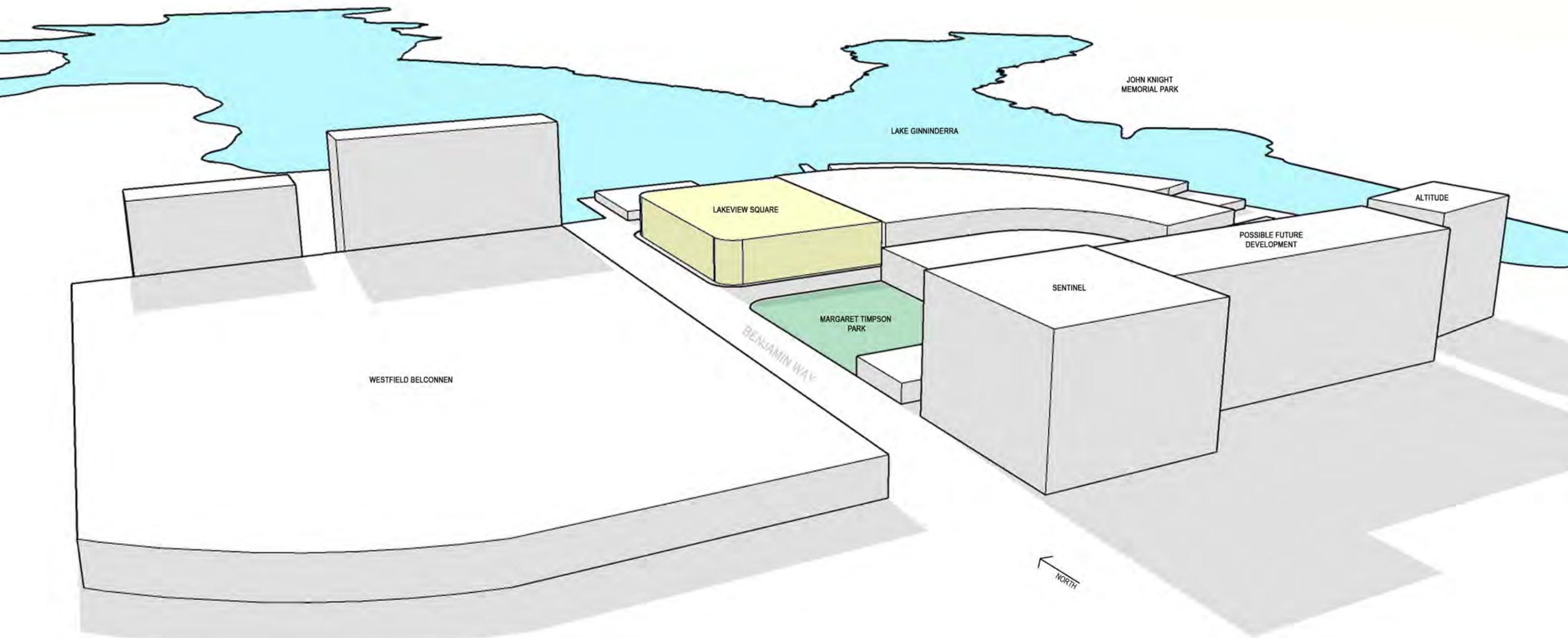
Yours sincerely

**Jim Sarris**



**Attachments:**

- A. Lakeview Square - Base Case development (as permitted under DV342)
- B. Lakeview Square – Option 1
- C. Lakeview Square – Option 2
- D. Supporting information from Stewart Architecture



WESTFIELD BELCONNEN

LAKEVIEW SQUARE

SENTINEL

POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

ALTITUDE

LAKE GINNINDERRA

JOHN KNIGHT MEMORIAL PARK

MARGARET TIMPSON PARK

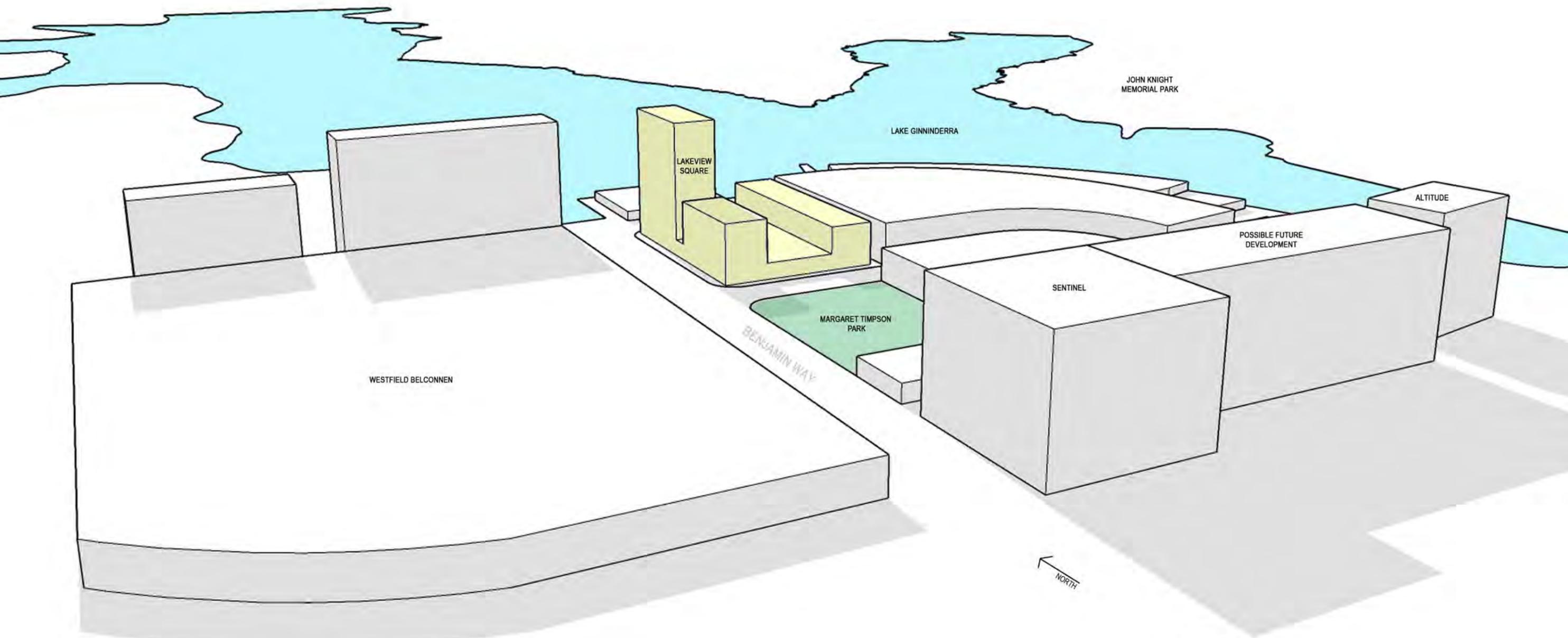
BENJAMIN WAY



LAKEVIEW SQUARE  
Base Case  
General height 8 storeys / 26 metres  
Matching top RL of adjacent residences

**STEWART  
ARCHITECTURE**

**LAKEVIEW SQUARE**  
8 STOREY PROPOSAL  
03.07.18



JOHN KNIGHT  
MEMORIAL PARK

LAKE GINNINDERRA

LAKEVIEW  
SQUARE

ALTITUDE

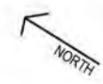
POSSIBLE FUTURE  
DEVELOPMENT

SENTINEL

MARGARET TIMPSON  
PARK

WESTFIELD BELCONNEN

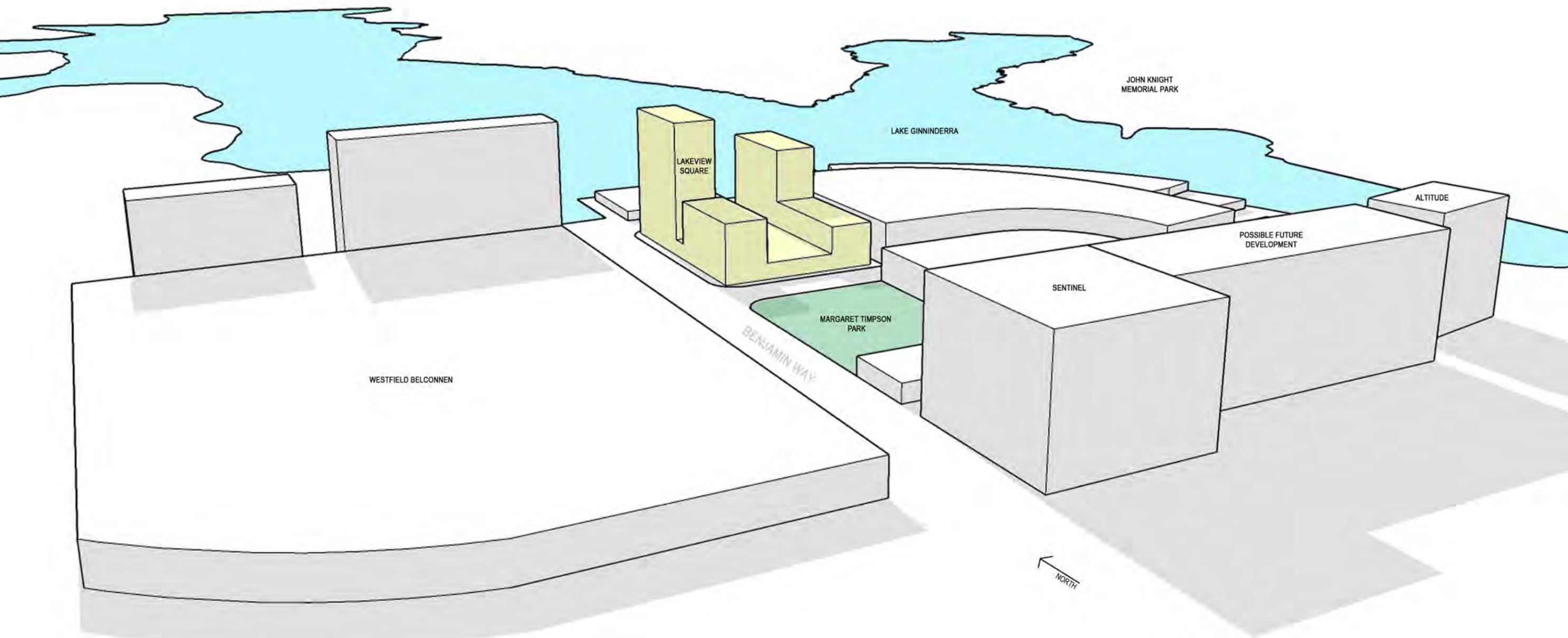
BENJAMIN WAY



LAKEVIEW SQUARE  
Option 1  
Corner tower matching height of building opposite  
Buildings stepped across site in order to minimise overshadowing of  
Margaret Timpson Park

STEWART  
ARCHITECTURE

LAKEVIEW SQUARE  
25 STOREY PROPOSAL  
03.07.18



LAKEVIEW SQUARE  
Option 2  
Corner tower matching height of building opposite  
Buildings stepped across site in order to minimise overshadowing of  
Margaret Timpson Park



Block 23 Section 55 Belconnen

Submission for amendment to DV342

Block 23 Section 55 Belconnen stands as a gateway site to Lake Ginninderra, the Belconnen Town Centre and the surrounding community facilities. The urban design and planning intentions are as follows:

1. The site offers an opportunity to celebrate the corner of Benjamin Way and Emu Bank that is in keeping with the public interest.
2. The intention for the site is to avoid creating a wall of buildings that block access and views, rather to use the orientation of the site to achieve a high quality residential mixed-use development.
3. The development will be designed to minimise over-shadowing of Margaret Timpson Park.

A Base Case option has been developed which matches the height of the adjacent residential development. Two other options have also been developed for further discussion and consideration.

We would welcome to opportunity to discuss this submission with ACTPLA and present additional information.

Regards,

Colin Stewart | Director

**STEWART  
ARCHITECTURE**



Mr Ben Ponton  
Chief Planner and Director General  
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
16 Challis St  
DICKSON ACT 2602  
Email: [terrplan@act.gov.au](mailto:terrplan@act.gov.au)

6 July 2018

Dear Mr Ponton,

**RE: Draft Variation 342 Belconnen Town Centre**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and feedback on Draft Variation 342, Belconnen Town Centre. The University would like to take the opportunity to discuss with the ACT Government the potential to include with the Territory Plan Variation or consider the existing strategic framework in relation to Part Section 65 Belconnen that appears to outside of both the University and Belconnen Town Centre extents.

#### Background

The University of Canberra is developing its campus to become an integral part of the Belconnen Town Centre community. We have approximately 17,000 students studying at our Bruce campus and approximately 1000 FTE staff. Our 2018 -2022 Strategic Plan, *Distinctive by Design*, sets our aspirations across five strategic initiatives: Our People, Exceptional Student Experience and World-Ready Graduates, Excellence and Innovation through Integrated Teaching, Research and Entrepreneurship, Locally-Anchored Global Hub of Knowledge Partnerships and *The Educated Life*.

Importantly, *The Educated Life* initiative, sets our ambition to fundamentally transform the physical and functional environment of our Bruce Campus. Through this, the University aims to deliver our mission – locally, regionally and around the globe. Statement One of this strategic initiative states that our Canberra Campus will: “Open up and integrate with the surrounding district of Belconnen and strengthen our partnerships with local education and professional institutions”.

#### Discussion

The University is currently undertaking a review of its Master Plan and working on measures that will seek to integrate with the Belconnen Town Centre, particularly long Aikman Drive which outcome is supported by the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan.

In review of the University Master Plan and proposed TPV 342, it has been identified that Part Section 65 (Block 60 & 42) of the Belconnen District, whilst located adjacent to the Town Centre, falls neither within the Town Centre nor the Bruce Precinct meaning that strategic consideration of these sites is not being undertaken in a holistic manner. Part Section 65 includes UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra and the University’s Arcscott House.

Whilst the sites form a prominent entry to the Belconnen Town Centre from Aikman Drive, they are zoned CFZ – Community Facility and without a Precinct overlay, are restricted in building scale and land use that would be expected in the Town Centre.



#### Limitations of the Community Facilities Zone

The CFZ – Community Facility zones is restrictive in building scale and use and in the context of its Town Centre location, appears overly limited compared to adjacent existing and future uses, including the University campus. These limitations largely arise from the built form, scale and land uses provisions. Without an overlay, the land uses are overly narrow and do not permit mixed use or commercial uses which could better support proposed community uses on site if integrated. Built form limitations in building heights and setback requirements are of a low density and generally not consistent with Town Centre provisions.

Whilst the current uses of Arscott House and UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra are consistent with low scale community uses, these sites will be subject to medium to longer term revitalisation. Incorporation of Part Section 65 within Belconnen Town Centre Precinct and ensuring compatible built form controls will ensure that the revitalisation occurs at an appropriate scale and integrates with the Emu Bank precinct and the University campus future development.

### Connectivity

The University is currently reviewing its connection and interface to Belconnen Town Centre with the intent to strengthen the connection between Belconnen Town Centre by addressing Aikman Drive and improved connection to the Emu Bank Precinct. The subject area is located at the corner of Aikman Drive and Emu Bank which is a key gateway to the University and Town Centre precinct. This connection, physically, represents the main western pedestrian link and future vehicular network link to the University. Additionally, the University is considering its integration with potential future light rail which would support greater strengthening of this area within the Town Centre.

Potential incorporation of the Arscott House site and potential longer term growth of the UC Senior College Lake Ginninderra provides opportunity to significantly improve active connectivity and supports future development that enhances the way our community connects in a contemporary urban environment.

The University will soon begin developing a new Master Plan for our Bruce Campus, and the redesign of Arscott House to consider the possibility of extension of the University Campus across Aikman Drive as a key outcome to improve connectivity. Inclusion of Part Section 65 within the Belconnen Town Centre and review of appropriate overlays, land use and built form controls will provide opportunity for stronger integration.

On behalf of the University, I thank you for considering our response and welcome any further discussions that will enhance the Belconnen community and the connection between the University of Canberra and the Belconnen Town Centre.

Yours sincerely,



Vicki Williams

Vice-President, Finance & Infrastructure

[vpfi@canberra.edu.au](mailto:vpfi@canberra.edu.au)





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## **Belconnen Territory Plan 342**

*Response provided by the ACT Division of the Property Council of Australia*

Mr Ben Ponton  
Chief Planner and Director General  
Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
16 Challis Street  
DICKSON ACT 2601  
by email: [EPDCustomerServices@act.gov.au](mailto:EPDCustomerServices@act.gov.au)

## **Belconnen Territory Plan 342**

*Response provided by the ACT Division of the Property Council of Australia*

Dear Mr Ponton

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the Draft Variation 342 – Belconnen Town Centre

The ACT Property sector is the second biggest industry in Canberra – behind the public and health services – employing 1 in 7 Canberrans – driving economic growth and renewal across our city. Our sector is critical to the diversity of the economy and contribute 57.5% of all government revenue which funds our schools, hospitals, municipal, community and government services. Our contribution to renewing our city at a time of transformation and growth is immense.

Many of our members work on a daily basis with members and officials within the government to drive development and renewal across the city – from townhouses to mixed use

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developments, multi-residential sites and commercial and retail projects – to whole estates and suburbs and precincts from the local shops to the high-rise developments in our town centres.

Our members include developers, financiers, architects, property law specialists, town planners, heritage consultants, universities, government agencies at both the Federal and Territory level and local utilities.

Our advocacy priorities include:

- **Encouraging urban renewal** that is vital to the future of Canberra's economic and social wellbeing.
- **Planning and Sustainable Development polices** which are outcomes focused.
- **Transport Orientated Development** that delivers density and liveability in the major transport corridors and in our town centres.
- **Housing choice for all Canberrans** including retirement living and affordable housing.
- **Taxes and charges which are fair**, administered efficiently and encourage development where it is needed.
- **Long term infrastructure planning** which will help transform our city.

It is with these priorities in mind that we provide the following response to DV 342.

## Background

The Property Council appreciates the ongoing and consultative way in which the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) engages on planning changes across the Territory. We also note the current refresh of the ACT Planning Strategy and whilst engagement on the strategy will extend beyond the period in which DV 342 is potentially given effect – we urge EPSDD to review the outcomes of that for Belconnen Town Centre and emphasis the need for ongoing and collaborative reviews to ensure currency of our planning regime.

We note that consultation around the masterplanning processes for the Belconnen Town Centre has been extensive, with the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan released in September 2016. As it stands, it is close to two years since this document was made available to the public in its final form, and we now urge the government to get on and

implement the changes necessary to truly enable renewal and redevelopment of the Belconnen Town Centre.

We also note with significant development of the University of Canberra campus, combined with a number of large residential developments having been approved since the masterplan was released, further review might be necessary to ensure that planning framework keeps pace with the revitalisation of the town centre, and that the Territory Plan doesn't unnecessarily restrict realisation of greater strategic objectives.

As part of the planning strategy refresh and 2019 Territory Plan review we would welcome an opportunity to discuss with the government how a more streamlined process could be implemented in order to ensure that planning and development outcomes are better aligned.

### Residential uses in Service Trades Area

The DV proposes to remove residential use from the Service Trades area as a measure for reducing the impact of *'existing industrial uses such as vehicle smash repairs'*. Whilst this is one approach to reducing future potential impacts on operating businesses or residents, it does not align with contemporary planning principles which support mixed use precincts.

We suggest that EPA reconsider their position on mechanisms to reduce impacts. There would be potential for building design to ameliorate impacts from businesses, as well as clear messaging the future residents reinforcing the nature of the area they are living in.

Mechanisms in the Territory Plan and Crown Leases (and sub Leases) could address this, in order to deliver mixed use outcomes in this highly strategic location.

As was pointed out in a different context in our August 2017 response to DV352 – *Changes to various development tables, codes and definitions including prohibition of child care centres in industrial zones*; and again in our response in June 2018 on *Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Proposed Development of a Materials Recovery Facility, Lithgow/Ipswich Street Fyshwick (EIS Application 201700053)* the Property Council believes that the current application of Industrial zones and the spatial distribution of these areas within the Territory needs to be more carefully considered.

Due to the social and economic outcomes within the many of these zones and the need to ensure provision of essential services within these areas, it may be more beneficial to review the following:

- The current size and distribution of IZ1 and IZ2 to ensure that current and future land for these uses are met; and
- Consideration of additional zones for heavier industrial to provide adequate separation from other light industrial and mixed uses; and
- The area size and location of more noxious industries and Industrial areas away from mixed-use Industrial zones.

### Implementation

Reviewing this as a whole, being the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan and the proposed DV, it is apparent that the implementation of the Master Plan (partly addressed through the application of the DV) requires monitoring in order to deliver the desired outcomes. To make implementation effective, we support an approach that sees clear division of responsibilities between Government agencies, monitoring of projects, and accountability clearly defined.

### Building heights

The Property Council generally supports development in areas of higher density that respond to design principles and deliver on defined objectives. We also recognise the need for TPV is to ensure building heights and design within the centre are of an appropriate scale and relate to the existing centre layout and provide a measure of certainty to developers and the community as to the intended built form.

However, the application of restrictive heights therefore presents a different discourse. We have a preference to address development from a design-lead perspective that allows a robust discussion and ability for innovation to be explored.

As a general approach, our preference is for less focus on height itself, and more focus on balancing overall objectives with benefits delivered through the development itself.

## Development feasibility

It is of our opinion that master planning processes undertaken by Government are a bold statement that shapes the subject areas for a considerable amount of time.

It sets a guideline for both private and public sector in terms of the nature of development, and the form required to positively contribute to spaces in and around developments. All this occurs within a framework that ultimately delivers the articulated vision.

Given the mix of ownership (public and private entities) it is essential that in preparing a master plan, development feasibility is considered strongly.

There has to be a conscious thought on this when preparing a master plan. If it is not, the consequences will include lack of delivery against vision, because commercially, a site will not deliver the returns required to invest in development opportunities.

It therefore sits with the ACT Government to ensure that any master plans prepared include consideration for development feasibility as part of the early phase. For example, when assessing Emu Bank, the question arises as to whether this has been considered. With the potential delivery of just two and four stories along the waterside frontage of Emu Bank, plus a likely replacement car parking impost, the development site renders itself unviable.

Another example that compounds this position is the recently attempted sale of the redundant Water Police site fronting Lake Ginninderra. The planning parameters around this site make it largely unviable for sale.

The size of the site, the complexity for delivery given its location, and the planning restrictions means that sales interest would be minimal, if at all. In this case, the site was pulled from sale before auction.

Closer review of the feasibility of the site at an earlier stage would have revealed this, and the current DV process could have sought to provide an objectives-based response to the site, and remove quantitative restrictions.

As such we support the approach recommended in Element 3 (page 5 of the Precinct Code).

We do however note C10 the maximum *height of building* in areas 'b' and 'c' may be increased by an additional four that there is an allowance under four *storeys* or twelve metres, whichever is the lesser, where development achieves all of the following:

- a) where a block contains more than one taller building element, there is clear difference in height between elements
- b) the development achieves a high quality design outcome; and
- c) development is close to public transport stops and/or stations.

Our response in relation to this is to note that:

- In relation to C10, opportunities for an additional 4 storeys subject to design are limited to blocks located in areas b & c only- which limits the opportunity to achieve these outcomes.
- Limitation on shop (supermarket) use in remainder of Town Centre except for Section 200 restricts opportunities to for a number of sites that could previously explore this use under the former Belconnen Precinct Code.
- R13: Built form imposed on Emu Bank Promenade sites (the 16x16m 4 storey element requirement) is mandatory- suggest providing a criteria to provide opportunities to explore design outcomes for these sites that achieve the same design intent.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to DV 342. Don't hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Yours sincerely



Adina Cirson  
**ACT Executive Director**





3 August 2018

██████████  
Territory Plan  
Environment Planning and Sustainable Development  
Directorate (EPSDD)  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear ██████████

### **Belconnen Markets**

I write on behalf of my clients, Elanor Investors Group (Elanor) who have recently acquired the Belconnen Markets. The Belconnen Markets land holdings include Block 2 Section 198 and Blocks 16 and 20 Section 32 Belconnen.

Delivering a high-quality precinct is the shared desire for both the Territory and Elanor and we envisage a strong, productive and collaborative relationship moving forward. The Belconnen Markets is an important part of the Belconnen Community and is well overdue for renewal. The requested amendments will support a higher quality development within the context of the new direction and assist to create a feasible and deliverable development.

I seek further consideration in relation to Draft Variation to the Territory Plan no 342 of the provisions relevant to the Belconnen Markets site. The recent acquisition of the Belconnen Markets has meant that Elanor has only recently been in a position to meaningfully respond to the draft variation. We are aware that public consultation has now closed and the process is now well advanced.

We understand the proposed controls in the precinct code are based on previous proposals for the Belconnen Markets put forward by previous owners. This proposal was tabled a considerable time in 2008-10. Since then Belconnen Town Centre has undergone significant urban renewal. The precinct is now being re-evaluated and redesigned by Elanor to reflect contemporary thinking and urban design.

A Development Application (DA) is currently lodged with EPSDD regarding the development of Block 16 Section 32 Belconnen. Given early conversations with EPSDD, Elanor now intend to lodge a subsequent DA with an associated Development Intentions Plan (DIP) in the near future.

Generally, the DIP will propose a rebalance of the massing of the Belconnen Markets site. The DIP seeks to pull higher development away from Belconnen Way and Lathlain Street into the core of the site and toward the corner. This allows the market and commercial spaces to act as a buffer and appropriate transition use to mixed use and residential. Density will be focused around a central high quality public open space. There will also be clear separation between the residential component and the commercial operation of the markets to ensure minimal conflict between the uses.

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The overall massing of the Belconnen Markets precinct is proposed to have a low rise market buildings along Lathlain Street of around 2-3 storey (subject to further design) within the western half of Block 2 Section 198 Belconnen and along block 16 Section 32 Belconnen. Development would scale up through varied heights of six and eight storeys to a maximum of ten storeys for the residential components in the eastern half of Block 2 Section 198. Development along Benjamin way would scale up from 10 to an element of 16 storey on the corner for Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way.

This proposed development is expected to have minimal privacy or overshadowing impact given the location and articulation of the proposed heights and surrounding uses. Those uses being Bunnings, arterial roads and Belconnen Police facilities. The DIP will allow the creation of a high-quality and high-density environment which mitigates the impacts of surrounding uses while integrating the Belconnen Markets and commercial activities.

We would strongly request the consideration of the following feedback in the finalisation of the draft variation:

**Amending Element 3: Buildings, 3.1 Building heights R10 i) which currently is proposed as:**

*"for area 'h': the lesser of 6 storeys and 23m'*

We would seek the lesser of 10 storeys and 35m for area h. We note this would enable the northern blocks within 'h' to reach 10 which may not be appropriate. This may require mitigation, with heights further restricted north of Market Street to remain as proposed.

**Amending Element 3: Buildings, 3.1 Building heights C13 which is currently proposed as:**

*This criterion applies to development in the area indicated by an asterisk shown in figure 2, at the corner of Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way. One higher building element up to the lesser of 16 storeys and 55m may be permitted where development suitably addresses the adjoining Benjamin Way and Belconnen Way intersection.*

**Amending C13 would also require an amendment to Figure 2 to expand the asterisk to cross the boundary of Blocks 21 and 20 Section 32 Belconnen.**

We note through discussion with EPSDD that there is a concern that development would result in 16 story development along the majority of Block 20 rather than the current proposal for a subtle element of height on the corner. We support proposed heights for the balance of Block 20 to the current height indicated for area 'f'. We request that should both blocks be developed by one proponent that the Code permits flexibility to deliver a 16-storey element, currently confined to the 'corner', which can extend to the adjacent block (Block 20). This will allow Elanor the opportunity to explore the highest quality outcome for the site. This provides greater flexibility for a highly constrained site given issues associated with easements and access to the site.

Thank you for your ongoing consideration of these matters. We look forward to hearing from you regarding the aforementioned matters and working together in future.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Burns  
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