



ACT
Government
Environment and Planning

Woden Town Centre

Master Plan



NOVEMBER 2015



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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 and cycling. Active travel can also include the walking and/or cycling involved when using public transport.

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.

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 that define what land uses can or cannot occur on a piece of land. Zone categories are residential (RZ), commercial (CZ), community facility (CFZ), industrial (IZ), parks and recreation (PRZ), transport and services (TSZ), and non urban (NUZ). Sub-categories provide more specific controls, for example RZ1 is a residential zone for low density housing in suburban areas while RZ5 is a residential zone for high density housing in urban centres and along major transport routes. See more about the zoning system at www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27

Mixed-use development includes a mix of complementary land uses such as restaurants and small shops at ground level and residences above. Mixed uses can be horizontal or vertical.

Podium or building base refers to the lower storeys of a tall building that passersby see and interact with. 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.

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/shared spaces is a road or place where the road space is shared safely by vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. A shared space 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.

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 onto streets and public spaces.

Transit-oriented development is the creation of compact, walkable development 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 streets, 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, buildings may gradually get taller as you travel closer to the town centre, providing an understanding that you are approaching a major centre.

Water sensitive urban design 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 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.







Executive summary

The ACT Government has prepared master plans for Woden town centre and Mawson group centre, including the Athllon Drive corridor between these centres. While both centres have been considered together throughout the master plan process, two master plans have been prepared as each area has its own community interests, characteristics, opportunities and challenges.

The master plan for Woden town centre (the centre), which includes a review of the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan, provides a new vision, planning principles, spatial framework, planning strategies and policies. The directions in the master plan respond to current development pressures and consider the strategic planning directions and policies, background analysis and community and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken as part of the master plan process.

The 2004 master plan identified a number of issues, some of which remain. For example, access into the centre, access to community facilities, lack of activity facing onto the streets and quality of the public domain were consistently raised as issues for the centre.

Community engagement in early 2015 consistently found general support for most of the proposed strategies in the draft master plan. There was a good level of support for improvements to public transport, cycle and pedestrian networks and improvements to the public domain. There were mixed views on the proposed building heights in the town centre, with slightly more people agreeing to the proposed building heights. However, lessees in the centre raised concerns that the introduction of building heights, particularly the 12 storey height limit, could potentially make some sites challenging to develop in the short term. Concerns regarding the declining workforce in the town centre and the potential impact on local businesses were consistently mentioned.

The centre is entering a new phase of development, with a number of ACT Government initiatives and private developments underway or being planned.

The bus interchange improvements, together with the possible expansion of Westfield Woden, offer new opportunities to better integrate public transport with the cycle and pedestrian networks.





Planning for the existing community centre and CIT campus could move the focus of community activities from the western side of the centre close to the new bus station. Additionally, residential development being planned by the private sector on the western and eastern edges of the centre will bring more people into the centre outside of the usual working week.

The centre is a major employment hub, with the Australian Government and retail sector being the largest employers. The recent loss of some government employees from the centre was continually raised as a concern by the community during the master plan community engagement. This master plan identifies the need to retain land for large employment providers for the long term and will provide opportunities for redevelopment to occur as circumstances change. Other strategies identify ways to bring people into the centre and encourage new businesses to support a night-time economy, such as restaurants, cafes and recreational uses.

Several opportunities are identified in this master plan for capitalising on the centre as a metropolitan hub for Canberra, enhancing the street and open space networks, improving the urban design and identity of the centre, making the centre more accessible for sustainable modes of travel, providing more housing choice for the Woden Valley and strengthening the centre's role as a place to work, shop, live and play.

The planning directions for the Phillip service trades precinct from the 2004 master plan are reinforced in this master plan with a mix of uses being encouraged. Residential development in the central areas will ensure the precinct can continue to provide important trade services in other areas of the precinct. The central courtyards and wide streets offer opportunities to improve the public spaces.

The master plan identifies longer-term opportunities for the Athllon Drive corridor to introduce medium and high-density residential development and new recreation opportunities that will be integrated with improvements to Yarralumla Creek. Residents living in this corridor will be able to take advantage of rapid public transport and a well-connected cycle and pedestrian networks to easily and safely access the centre.

The master plan builds on the centre's strengths, providing a long-term vision for the town centre. It seeks to improve the opportunities for social interaction, liveability for residents, accessibility and quality of the streets and public spaces.

The master plan provides a new vision for the centre:

Woden town centre is a major community and commercial hub for the Woden Valley and wider Canberra region. It will be a place that attracts people to live, work, socialise and enjoy throughout the day and evenings. The town square is the central focal point for social and community activity that will connect people to a network of safe and active streets and public parks.

Ten planning strategies are recommended with a focus on:

- sustainability
- future built form and character
- transport and movement
- parking
- activating the public domain
- future office and employment opportunities
- access to community facilities, sport and recreation
- town centre living
- redevelopment opportunities in the service trades area, and
- opportunities for new residential development in the centre and along Athllon Drive.







1. Introduction

In 2004, the ACT Government released a master plan for the Woden town centre (the centre) that analysed a series of planning considerations and made recommendations to guide the future growth of the centre.

A number of recommendations from the 2004 master plan have been realised such as the new police station, upgrades to the Phillip enclosed oval and sale of land for a structured car park on the western side of the centre. Changes to the bus interchange are now underway.

In 2012, key strategic planning documents for the ACT were introduced including the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT. The ACT Planning Strategy encourages a more compact city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along the major public transport routes. The ACT Planning Strategy identified Woden town centre and Mawson group centre for investigation for urban intensification in association with the Athllon Drive rapid transit corridor.

In February 2014, the ACT Government released a discussion paper outlining some of the key planning issues for both centres to help generate discussion and draw out the community's issues and ideas. The Woden town centre and Mawson group centre were considered together to allow comprehensive analysis of a diverse range of strategic planning issues and the relationships between the two centres. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the master plan study areas.

A separate master plan has been prepared for each centre as each centre has its own community interests, characteristics, opportunities and challenges. The plans were guided by the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra, the climate change strategy, extensive background analysis and, where appropriate, issues and ideas raised during community engagement. The ACT Government released the Woden Town Centre Draft Master Plan for community comment in January 2015, with the feedback received used to prepare this final plan.

This Woden Town Centre Master Plan provides a review of the 2004 master plan and recommends a new vision, spatial framework, planning strategies and recommendations that respond to the development pressures experienced in the centre.

1.1 Master plan study area

The study area for the review of the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan is illustrated by the dashed blue line in Figures 1 and 2. The master plan area is located in the suburb of Phillip and bound by Melrose, Athllon, Hindmarsh and Yamba Drives.

The master plan study area includes Woden town centre, Phillip service trades area, Athllon Drive corridor and the recreation precinct north of Launceston Street. It encompasses the eastern edge of the centre containing Eddison Park, Woden Cemetery, Phillip ovals, residential development and Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT). The Canberra Hospital is not included, but is an important consideration as it is a large employment hub at the eastern edge of the study area and provides important services for the Canberra community and region.

In 2013, the population of the Woden Valley was 34,657 and Phillip was 2188. Most Phillip residents reside in Swinger Hill. Compared to the ACT population, Woden Valley is under represented in the 15 to 44 year age groups and over represented in the 55 years and over age groups. However, in Phillip (including the Woden town centre) the population is skewed towards the 20 to 39 year age groups.

The centre is a significant employment base within the ACT, with Australian Government departments and retail being the largest employers. The centre has a number of important community, education and recreation uses including Woden Community Services, child care facilities, health-related facilities, Woden Library, Canberra College, CIT, Eddison Park, pocket parks and ovals.

Unlike other town centres in the ACT, Woden town centre does not have a large water feature such as a lake. However, the centre benefits from the parkland setting of Eddison Park, Woden Cemetery and the playing fields in the east of the town centre. Yarralumla Creek, which runs along Athllon Drive and Callam Street, also has the opportunity to provide an interesting focal point as the centre grows.

Lovett Tower at 24 storeys is the tallest building in the centre and can be seen from several vantage points in Canberra, including Red Hill Lookout and the National Arboretum.

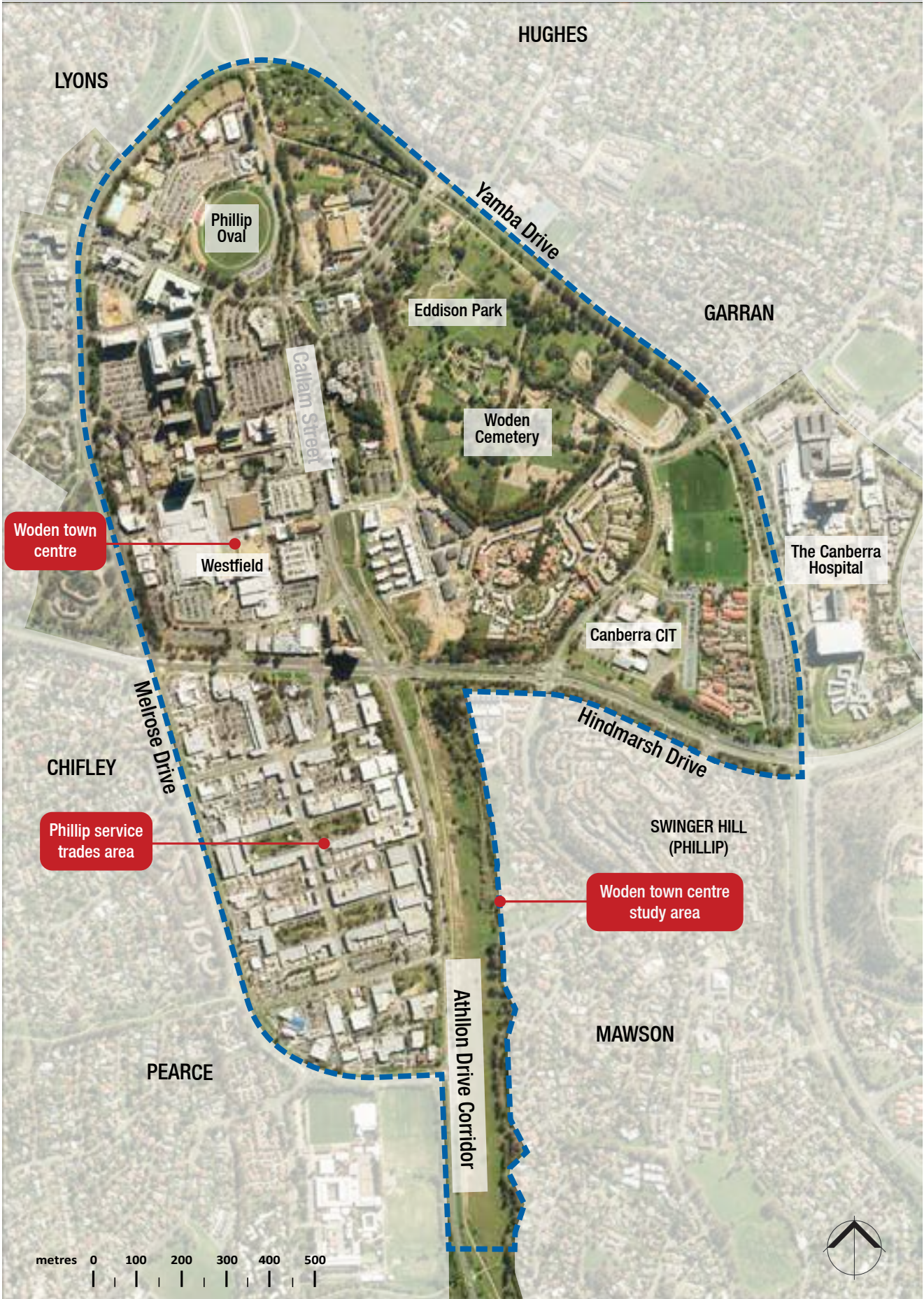


Figure 1: The Woden and Mawson master plan study areas





Figure 2: The Woden Town Centre Master Plan study area





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. Figure 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 town and group centres long-term planning frameworks for urban renewal and is guided by key actions and strategies identified in the ACT Planning Strategy for a more compact and efficient city by focussing urban intensification in these areas.

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

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

- **Planning policies**

Potential changes and inclusions in the Territory Plan take the form of a new precinct code. 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. 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 Woden town centre about appropriate land use, building heights, building setbacks and location of active frontages.

- **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.

- **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 that are 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.

- **Further studies**

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

The Woden 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 Woden Valley residents, local businesses, community groups, 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 4, with opportunities for stakeholders and the public to provide input in stages 1 and 2 of the master plan process.

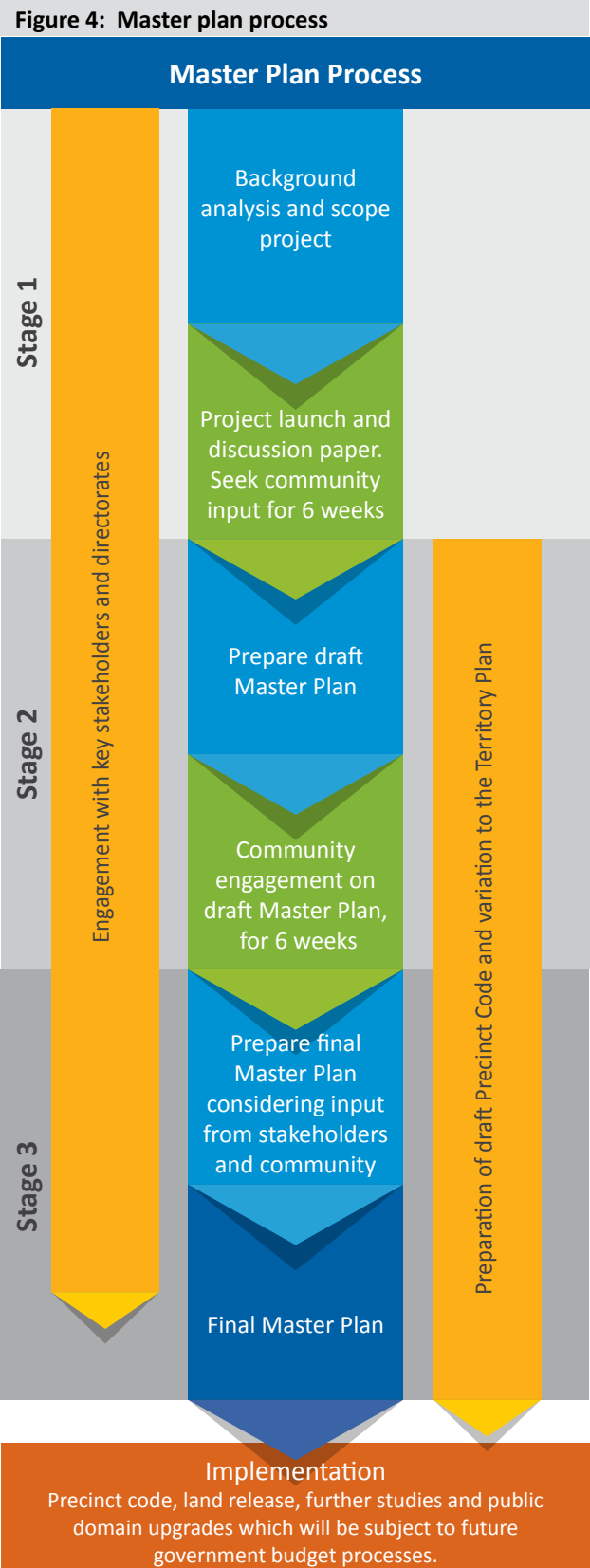
The process commenced with Stage 1, which involved the gathering and analysis of information, including community engagement, to help inform the preparation of the draft master plan.

The draft master plan represented Stage 2 of the process. Feedback received from stakeholders and community during the six week engagement period was used to inform 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 4 shows how the preparation of a precinct code runs concurrently with the master planning process.

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 recommendations in the draft master plan.

The background and analysis section of this master plan and the community engagement reports provide details of how community engagement was undertaken. The engagement reports, which include a summary of messages heard from each stage of community engagement, can be seen at: www.act.gov.au/wodenandmawson





ACT

Woden Town Centre Draft Master Plan

Challenges and opportunities

Character (draft)

ACT

Woden Town Centre Draft Master Plan

Character (draft)

Planning (draft)



Trees on Bowes Street





2. Planning context

2.1 Strategic planning

The Woden 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 Woden town centre.

2.1.1 ACT Planning Strategy

The ACT Planning Strategy (2012) responds to the changes in ACT's economic, demographic and environmental circumstances. The strategy outlines a series of directions that will create a more sustainable city:

- focusing urban intensification in town centres and group centres supported by public transport to improve the vibrancy 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 direction is of particular relevance to this process and promotes a more compact and efficient city by focussing urban growth in town centres, around group centres and along main transit corridors, as illustrated in Figure 5.

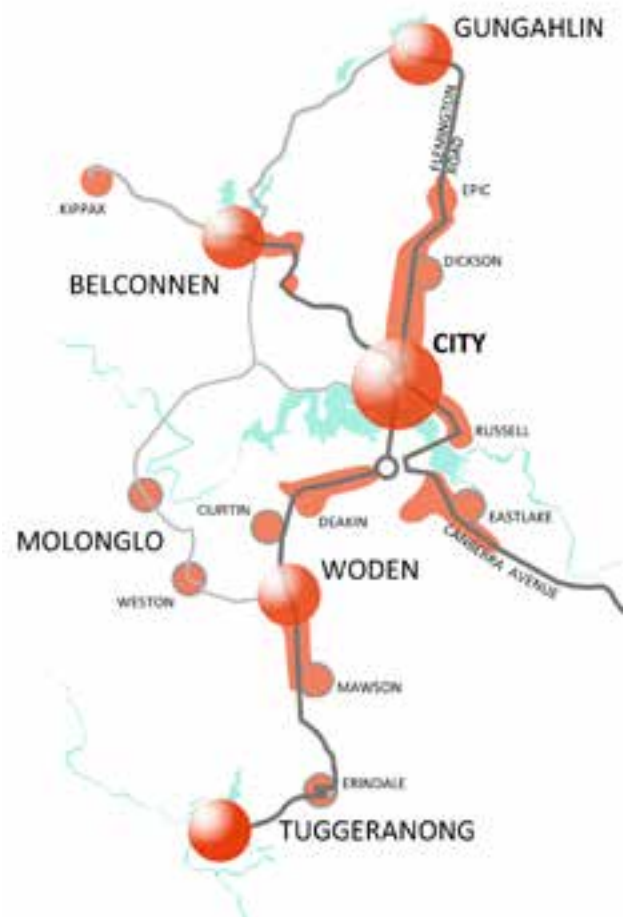
2.1.2 Transport for Canberra

Transport for Canberra (2012) is a companion policy to the ACT Planning Strategy. It seeks to integrate urban planning and transport to improve services in Canberra over the next 20 years. 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 vibrant and attractive urban environments.

Figure 5: ACT Planning Strategy focuses growth in town centres, around group centres and along transport corridors.





2.1.3 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 90% by 2020 (introduced in 2013)
- 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 Capital Metro light rail, and improving the cycle and pedestrian networks.

2.1.4 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 will also focus on improved water quality in lakes and streams and greater community participation in a number of key components, such as improving catchment health.

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. It ensures that 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. While there is no designated land within the master plan area, the Woden Valley has large areas of designated land, such as the hills, ridges and buffers that provide separation between the Woden Valley and other districts. There is also designated land within the suburb of O'Malley to the south-east of the study area.

2.2.2 Territory Plan

The Territory Plan is the key statutory planning document in the ACT, 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.

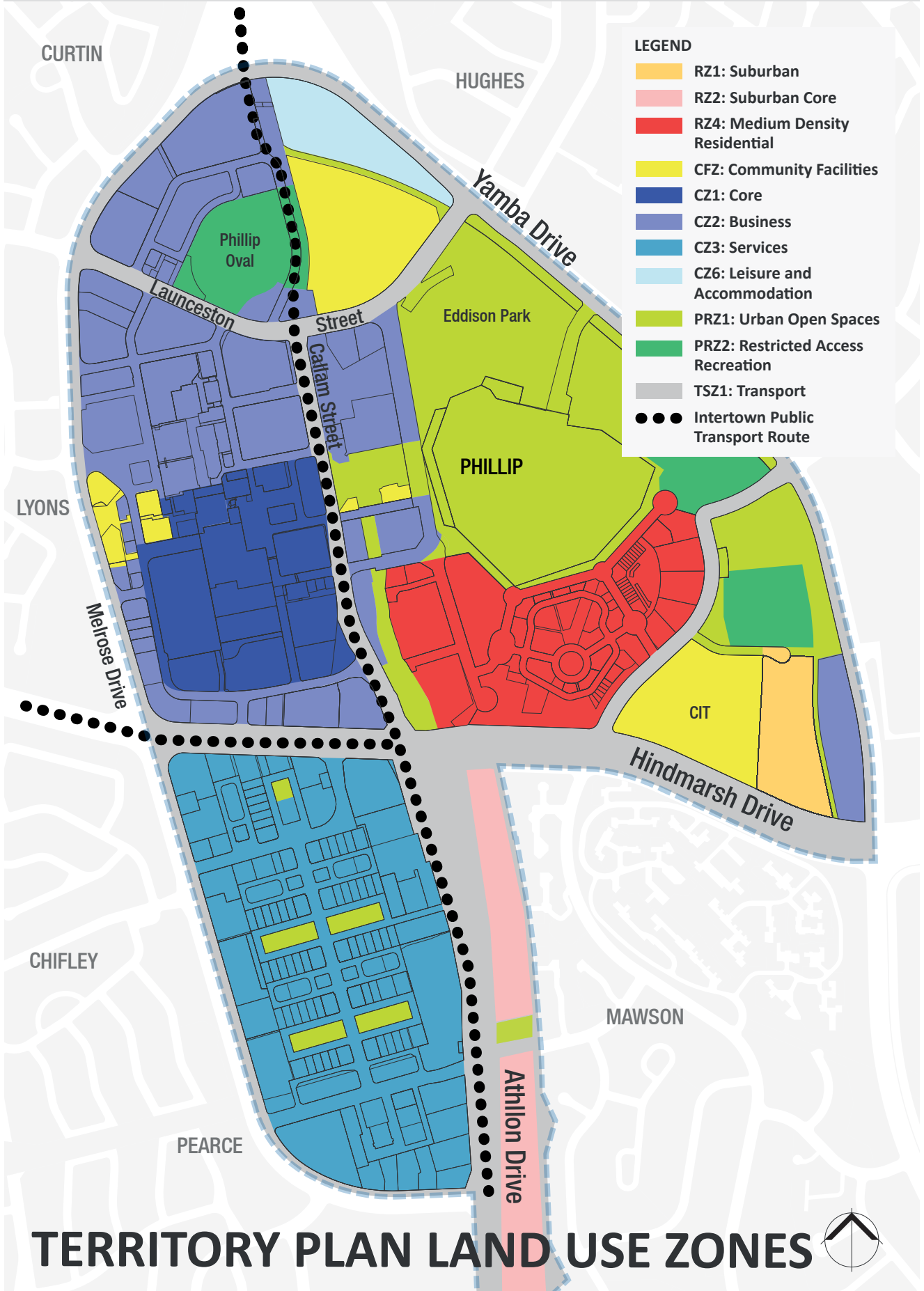
The centre is mostly zoned for commercial land uses, as shown in Figure 6. Land along Athllon Drive is mostly zoned as residential development (RZ2: Suburban Core), with open space (PRZ1: Urban Open Space) directly north of Mawson group centre. Key community uses have community facility zoning (CFZ: Community Facility).

A Territory Plan variation will be an outcome of this master plan. The variation will implement a new precinct code into the Territory Plan to update the current Phillip 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.

Development applications for development in the centre are submitted and assessed against the Phillip Precinct Code and other general codes of the Territory Plan.



Figure 6: Territory Plan land use zones





2.3 Spatial context

Canberra is a planned city. In the 1960s the National Capital Development Commission, through the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra, identified several districts outside of the central area for development. Woden was the first to be developed under this approach.

Each district was planned with a hierarchy of commercial centres, including town, group and local centres. This structure was intended to help develop strong communities that had good access to services and jobs, and to reinforce Canberra's relationship with its setting. Town centres generally serve their wider district as the main commercial focus. Group centres provide shops and services for a 'group' of suburbs and local centres typically cater for a single suburb or precinct. 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.

The centre is located centrally within its metropolitan context as shown in Figure 7. It is well serviced by main arterial roads and rapid public transport that link the centre to other group and town centres such as the city centre, Tuggeranong and Mawson.

The centre provides facilities and services to primarily serve the district of Woden Valley, which includes 11 surrounding suburbs (excluding Phillip). Services and facilities in the centre also support a wider district including the eight suburbs in Weston Creek. Other facilities, such as The Canberra Hospital and Woden Cemetery, provide services for the wider Canberra region.

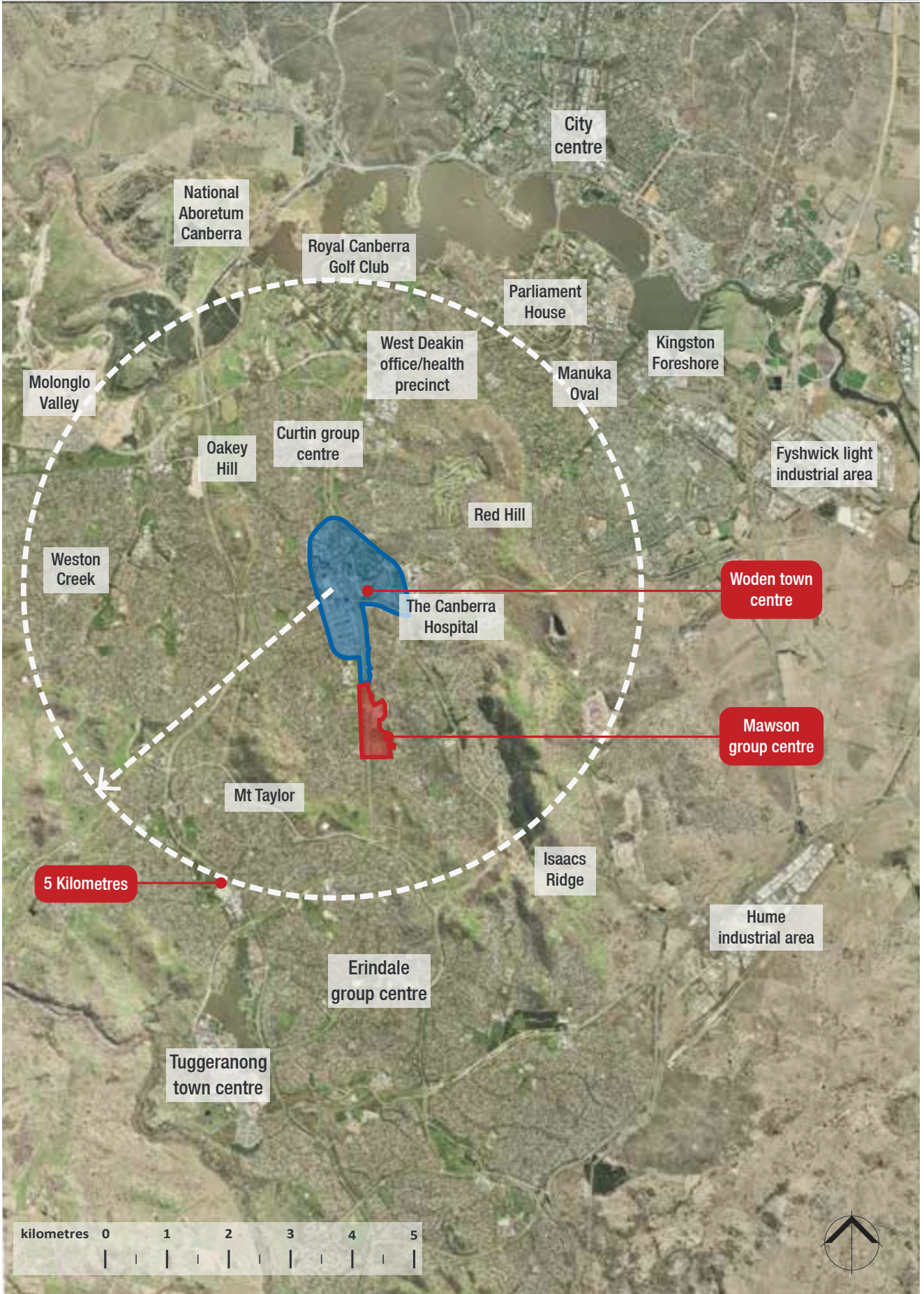
The centre serves as a significant commercial and community hub within the Woden Valley. In 2011, the centre employed an estimated 14,500 people with the main employers being Australian Government departments and retail. Other important facilities and services include:

- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Clubs
- Emergency services facilities
- Phillip enclosed oval
- Phillip Community Health Centre
- Phillip Swimming and Ice Skating Rink
- Woden Senior Citizens Club
- The Canberra College
- The Canberra Hospital
- Trade services
- Woden Cemetery
- Woden Community Centre
- Woden Community Services
- Woden District Youth Centre
- Childcare centres
- Woden Library (including the ACT Heritage Library)
- Woden Squash Centre.

The Woden–Weston Creek population peaked in the early 1970s at slightly above 60,000 and fell to about 57,100 in 2012, of which approximately 2200 currently live in Phillip. While most of the population in Phillip (which includes the centre) is located in Swinger Hill, recent residential developments in the centre core (Sky Plaza and Woden Green) are contributing to population growth.



Figure 7: Spatial context for the Woden town centre





2.4 Planning history

Woden Valley was Canberra's first new town, with construction of the town centre beginning in 1967. The first master plan for the centre was completed by the National Capital Development Commission in 1965 and envisaged a medium-rise centre in a cruciform layout, on a platform around a town square. The 1965 plan (Figure 8) established strong east–west and north–south pedestrian only connections that extended from the central town square. Taller development up to 20 storeys was proposed close to the town square. Building heights were planned to gradually become lower towards the edge of the centre.

Early planning proposed significantly large areas for surface car parking at the periphery of the centre to accommodate approximately 4000 vehicles. Large canopy trees were proposed in the car parks to provide shade and 'soften' the external appearance of the centre, contrasting with the hard landscaping of the internal pedestrian spaces.

Planning was further developed by the National Capital Development Commission in a 1968 master plan (Figure 9). The plan was designed to accommodate approximately 10,000 employees in government and private offices, shops, hotels, library, police station, post office and an adjoining area of service trades and motor vehicle sales. The 1968 plan defined a recreation and sporting precinct north of Launceston Street, which currently accommodates the Phillip Oval.

Several precincts established by the early planning are still evident today including the town square, retail centre, government office precinct, recreation precinct and Phillip service trades area.

Development through the 1980s and 1990s moved away from the structure established in the original planning. However the town square has remained a key focal point and public space that connects the land use precincts.

The 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan reinforced the general structure of the centre and introduced a number of new development proposals, some of which are now being realised. The following section outlines the 2004 master plan in more detail.

2.4.1 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan

The 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan provided a vision and a number of strategies for development in the centre. The vision was:

To foster growth of an innovative, safe and collaborative living and working environment that values the social and physical heritage of Woden town centre.

This review of the 2004 master plan is an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of that vision over the past ten years.

A number of strategies for development in the centre were considered: sustainability, built form, active frontages, public transport, open spaces, parking, walking and cycling. Figure 10 and 11 shows some of the key recommendations from the 2004 master plan.

Since the 2004 master plan was completed, a number of initiatives and development proposals have occurred including new residential development (such as Sky Plaza and Woden Green), redevelopment and refurbishment of office developments, upgrades to the enclosed oval and surrounds, the sale of a site for a structured car park on the western side of the centre and work on the new bus interchange. Several residential developments have been built by the private sector close to the retail core (Figure 12).

The 2004 master plan expressed the desire to 'break down' the segregated land use precincts by encouraging more active street frontages and residential development with a 'human scale' at ground floor level that incorporates awnings and colonnades. Other directions in the 2004 master plan included providing more compact car parking arrangements such as structured and basement car parks, and improvements to public transport.

Ten years after the master plan was prepared, a number of recommendations are still to be realised. However, given the extent of development that has occurred and the introduction of the ACT Planning Strategy and Transport for Canberra, it is appropriate to review the plan. Urban renewal of town and group centres is a core priority for the ACT Government and another driver for this master plan.

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

Figure 8: Woden Town Centre Master Plan (1965)

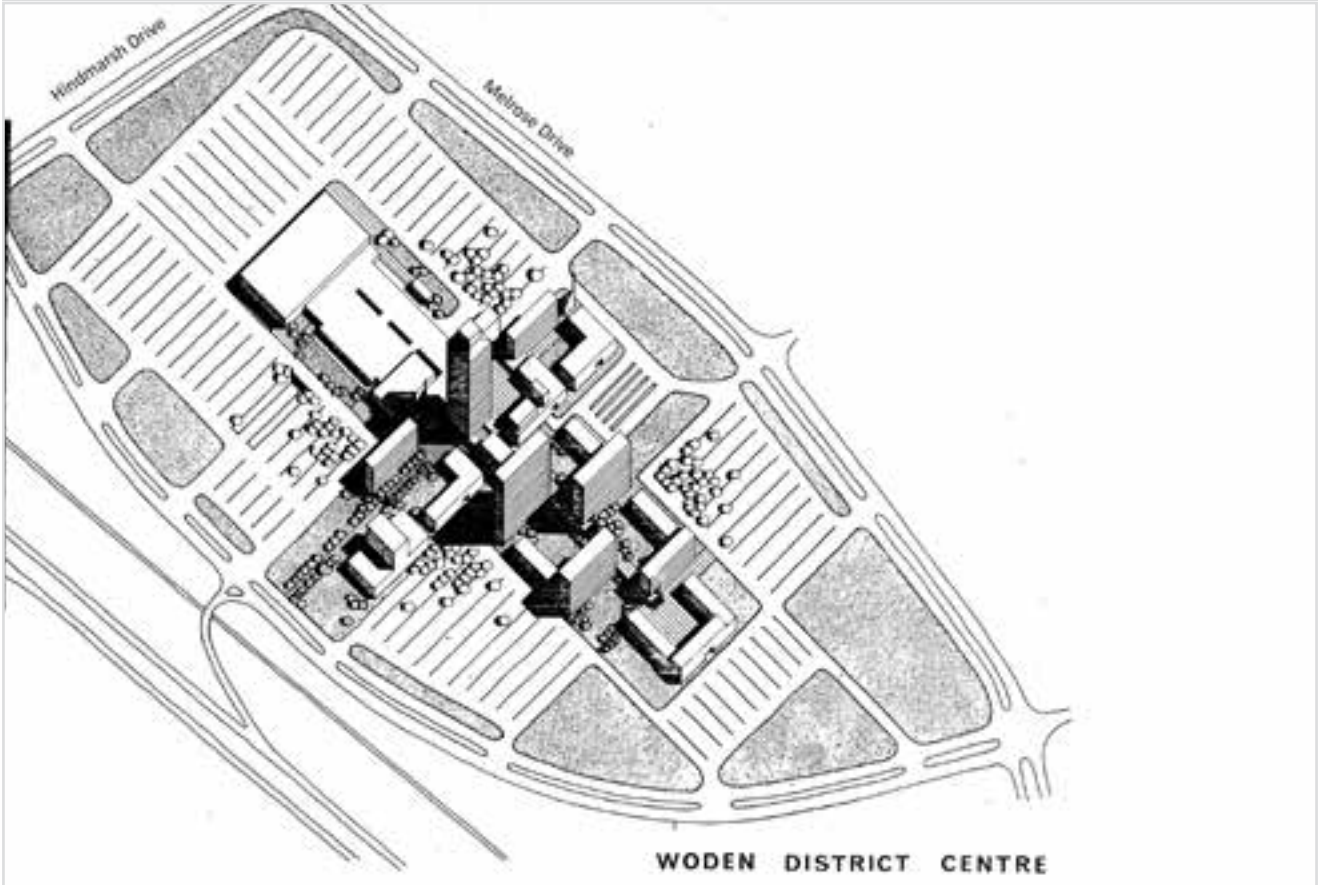


Figure 9: Woden Town Centre Master Plan (1968)

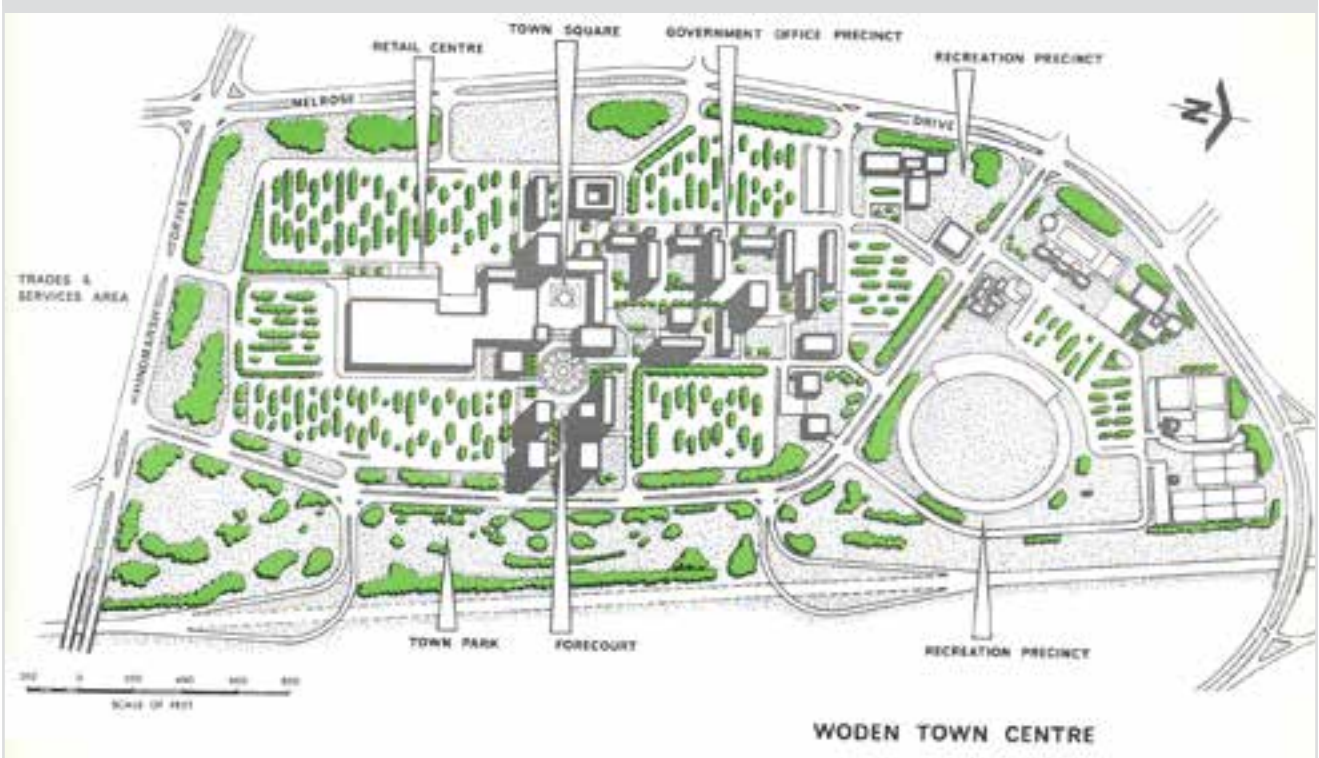




Figure 10: Woden Town Centre Master Plan, concept plan, 2004

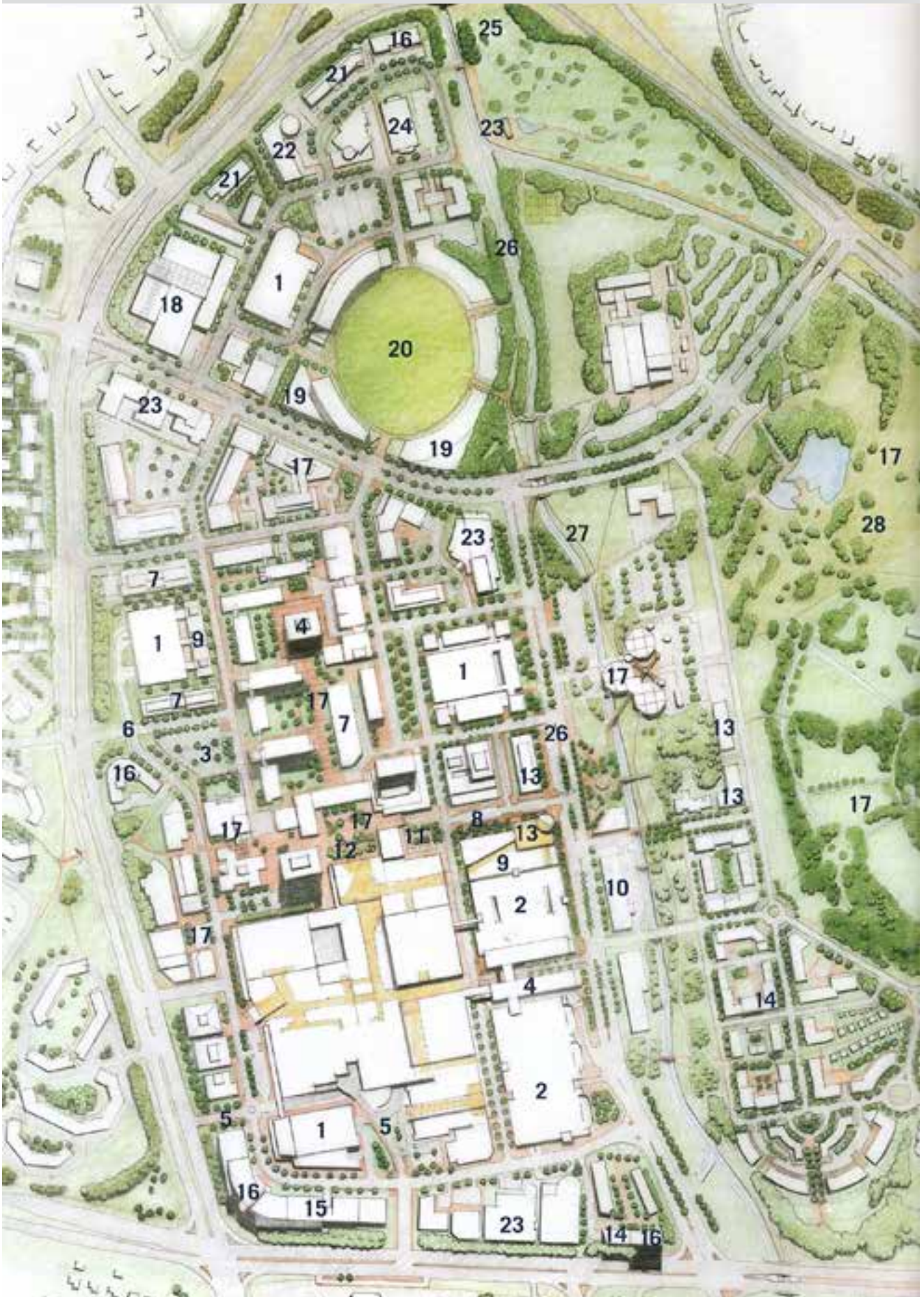




Figure 11: Woden Town Centre Master Plan, 2004

LEGEND

- 1 New car park structure
- 2 Expanded existing car park structure
- 3 Short stay / community facilities car park
- 4 Redeveloped existing commercial building
- 5 New road connection to ease traffic congestion
- 6 Realigned major entry road
- 7 New commercial / mixed use building
- 8 New bus station
- 9 New retail development
- 10 New police station
- 11 New pocket park
- 12 New entrance to Plaza and active edges to Town Square
- 13 Possible new community facility
- 14 New residential buildings
- 15 New residential / mixed use
- 16 New marker building to define entrance to Woden
- 17 Feature of local / regional heritage value
- 18 Upgraded and enclose swimming pool and ice rink
- 19 Commercial / motel / serviced apartments to complement the sporting precinct
- 20 Upgraded Phillip Oval with commercial frontages to surrounding streets
- 21 Aged persons / residential
- 22 Gymnasium and fitness club
- 23 Club
- 24 Indoor sports hall
- 25 Lawn bowls
- 26 Inter-town public transport route
- 27 Natural ecological features along Yarralumla Creek
- 28 District park

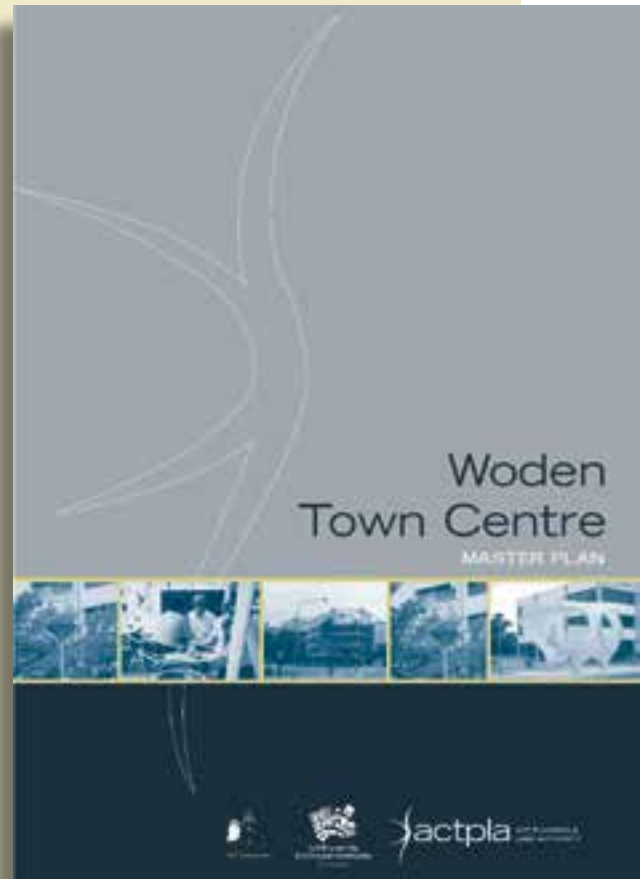
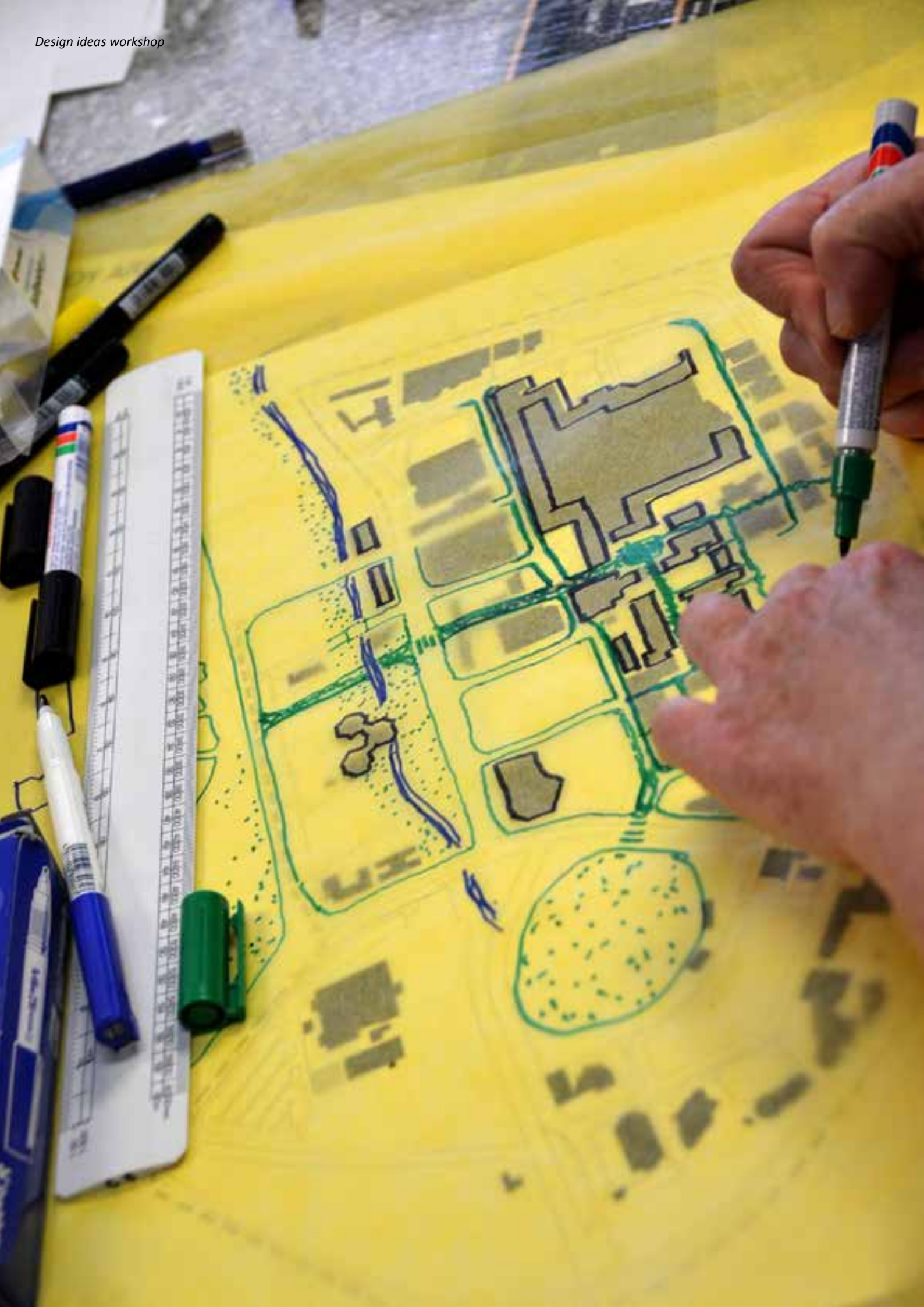




Figure 12: Development and initiatives that have been implemented since the 2004 master plan









3. Background and analysis

3.1 Community engagement

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

3.1.1 Stage 1 – February to April 2014

For the first stage of community engagement, Woden town centre and Mawson group centre were investigated concurrently. This allowed for comprehensive analysis and consideration of metropolitan transport and land use relationships, and infrastructure for the area. Stage 1 identified key issues from the community and stakeholders, and challenges and opportunities for each of the centres. Approximately 300 people participated.

Key messages from Stage 1 of community engagement included:

- general support for high-density, mixed-use residential development as a form of housing choice provided buildings are of high quality and contribute to the overall amenity of the public domain
- mixed views on building heights, with some supporting taller development in the retail core and others preferring buildings limited to the existing building heights
- mixed views about the Athllon Drive corridor, with some supporting transit-oriented development and others preferring retaining the corridor as an informal recreational/green space
- the need for better stormwater management in the Athllon Drive corridor
- mixed views towards residential development within the Phillip service trades area
- the need for improved traffic management, considering pedestrian and cycle connections across main arterial roads
- the need for improved cycle and pedestrian connections
- the need to consider supply and type of parking
- the need to consider the new bus station's location in relationship with other facilities
- agreement that current facilities are good, but are underutilised due to poor connections, lack of 'green' spaces and poor amenity of public spaces in general, and

- agreement that the centre requires more vibrancy and activation, particularly after-hours and on weekends.

Further information on community feedback from the engagement can be found in the Stage 1 community engagement report available at:

www.act.gov.au/wodenandmawson.

Where appropriate, these key messages and relevant background information informed the development of the draft master plan.

3.1.2 Stage 2 – January to March 2015

The second stage of community engagement sought community feedback on the draft master plan over a six week period. Analysis of the 24 formal submissions lodged and 99 feedback forms completed showed broad support for a number of the draft master plan's recommendations including better cycle connections and more residential development. New ideas and suggestions included introducing dog parks, planning for the aged and creating more green and recreation spaces.

Key messages included:

- support for the draft vision and principles
- mixed views on building heights, as there was concern regarding the quality of taller development
- strong support for the proposed cycle network and improved pedestrian connections
- strong support for residential development in the town centre core area and along the Athllon Drive corridor
- strong support for new community facilities to be located in the Town Park, and
- strong support for upgrades to the town square, streets and public spaces.

Further information on community feedback from the engagement can be found in the Community Engagement Report — Stage 2 available at:

www.act.gov.au/wodenandmawson.

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 through a separate consultation process.



3.2 Character and heritage

The suburb of Phillip is named after Captain Arthur Phillip, the first Governor of New South Wales and leader of the expedition to establish a settlement at Botany Bay. Six of the eleven ships from the first fleet were commemorated through the naming of buildings in Woden town centre, including Scarborough House, Alexander Building, Sirius Building, Penrhyn House, Borrowdale House and Fishburn House.

The buildings in the centre do not exhibit a high standard of architectural interest. However, there are four places registered on the ACT Heritage Register that are considered significant:

- Woden Library and Phillip Health Centre (1975–76)
- Woden Cemetery
- Callam Offices (1978) and
- Swinger Hill Cluster Housing (not in the master plan area).

Discovery House and Guardian House were assessed by the ACT Heritage Council in 2008 determined as not meeting the threshold for heritage significance. Guardian House has since been demolished.

3.2.1 Potential new heritage places or objects

A study of buildings, places and artwork was undertaken to assess the potential for new nominations of places or objects with any heritage value. Six items were determined to have merit and could potentially be new heritage places and objects including:

- Woden town square and pedestrian spine
- Sculptured Form artwork in the town square
- Woden Town Park and Arabanoo Park
- Eddison Park and
- Woden Youth Centre.

These places and objects have not been nominated to the ACT Heritage Register and require further assessment to determine if they are suitable for registration on the register.

3.3 Demographics

3.3.1 Population

Growth and change in Canberra's population generates demand for housing, offices, retailing, services, community facilities and associated infrastructure. At December 2014, the population of the ACT was an estimated 387,6001 with the population projected to reach 430,400 by 2021 and 493,500 by 2031.¹

In the Woden Valley, the population has increased from 32,832 in 2004 to 34,771 in 2014. This 5.9% growth rate over the past decade is a relatively modest increase when compared to other established centres including Canberra Central (23.2%) and Belconnen (11.4%).²

Compared to the ACT population, Woden-Weston Creek is under represented in the 15–44 year age groups and over represented in the 55 years and over age groups. However, the age structure of Phillip is dominated by the 20–39 year age groups and underrepresented in the 0–19 year age groups when compared to the ACT and Woden–Weston Creek. In 2014, the suburb of Phillip had an estimated population of 2320 (Figure 13). This compares to a population of 1747 in 2004 and 1991 in 2006.

Most of the population is located in Swinger Hill, with recent housing developments in the centre core contributing to population growth. Based on population projections, it is anticipated the population in the centre will more than double by 2031. Woden town centre has the opportunity to provide a different housing choice for a growing ACT population that is close to services, public transport, retail and employment.

3.3.2 Employment

In 2011 there were an estimated 14,500 workers in the centre, equating to approximately 6.6% of ACT employment. The main employers are Australian Government departments and retailing. Approximately 53% of employment in the centre is public administration.



Figure 13: Snapshot of Woden District and suburb of Phillip

POPULATION

Population in ACT

2004 328,940
2014 387,600
2031 493,500

Population in Phillip

2004 1,747
2014 2,320
2031 5,500+

Population in **Phillip** is anticipated to more than **double by 2031**

Median age

32.6 Median age in **Phillip**
40.2 Median age in **Woden Valley**
34.5 Median age in **ACT**

DWELLINGS

24,043 dwellings in **Woden-Weston Creek**

1300
Dwellings in **Phillip** (2011)

67%
Dwellings are detached
In the **Woden Valley**

Household types in Phillip

47% Single
25% Couples
12% Couples with children

EMPLOYMENT

14,500 Jobs in
Woden Town Centre (2011)

30%
Of **Woden workers** live
in the **Woden Valley**

53% of **jobs** in the **town centre**
are **public administration**
14% of **jobs** in the **town centre**
are in **retail**

TRANSPORT

Transport modes used by Woden workers

77% Car
13.4% Bus
4.7% Walk
2% Cycle

Where Woden workers travel by car from

35% Tuggeranong
28% Woden-Weston Creek
16% Central Canberra
13% Belconnen
7% Gungahlin



The establishment of major Australian Government offices in town centres has been one of the city's major planning achievements. At July 2014, the Woden town centre had the most office space of the town centres (189,300 m²). This compares to 162,200 m² at the Belconnen town centre, 150,200 m² at the Tuggeranong town centre and 4600 m² at the Gungahlin town centre.

The property market is cyclical and, in particular, influenced by the level of Australian Government activity. The level of vacancy in the centre was 10% in 1997 before falling to 0% in 2004 and increasing to 28% in 2010, when an additional 49,000 m² was added to the centre. The level of office vacancy at January 2015 was 15.7%.³

3.4 Land use

3.4.1 Land use zones

The centre is comprised of a number of land use zones. However the retail core, northern recreation precinct and the service trades areas are predominately made up of commercial land use zones, being CZ1: Core Zone, CZ2: Business Zone and CZ3: Services Zone. Each land use zone has its own Zone Objectives under the Territory Plan that outline the type of uses, mix of uses and the character.

Existing development in the CZ1:Core Zone land use zones mainly consists of the Woden Plaza (Westfield Shopping Centre), bus interchange, structured parking and other retail uses. The CZ1 land use zone provides the most flexibility in terms of allowable uses and restrictions on floor space.

Development in the CZ2 land use zone currently consists mostly of Australian Government offices and smaller commercial offices. Development in the CZ3 land use zone consists of a mix of services, retail, trades, offices and depots. The allowable floor space for shops and supermarkets in this zone is generally limited.

Residential use is permitted in all three of the above commercial land use zones.

Most sites in the centre are privately leased. There are only a few sites still owned by the ACT Government as illustrated in Figure 14. Most of the larger sites are surface car parks.

In November 2014 a draft variation to the Territory Plan was notified for the existing Strathgordon Court and adjoining land in Lyons. This site is located at the corner of Melrose Drive and Hindmarsh Drive. The draft variation proposed to change the existing land uses from Residential Zone (RZ) RZ4 Medium-density residential to RZ5 high density residential. The draft variation also provided for an increase in allowable building heights. This will potentially result in an increase in residential dwellings at the edge of the town centre when the site is redeveloped.

3.4.2 Community facilities

The centre plays an important district and regional role, providing essential facilities and services for the Woden Valley, Weston Creek and ACT. Servicing the combined Woden Valley–Weston Creek catchment includes The Canberra College, Woden Library, Phillip Community Health Centre, CIT and Woden Senior Citizens Club. There may also be demand on Woden facilities and services from the residents of the Molonglo Valley until facilities are provided in the Molonglo Valley.

While a number of larger sites close to the centre are specifically zoned as community facility land use (CFZ), a relatively limited amount of CFZ exists within the centre itself. However, a number of other land use zones allow for community facilities. All the sites zoned CFZ are occupied.

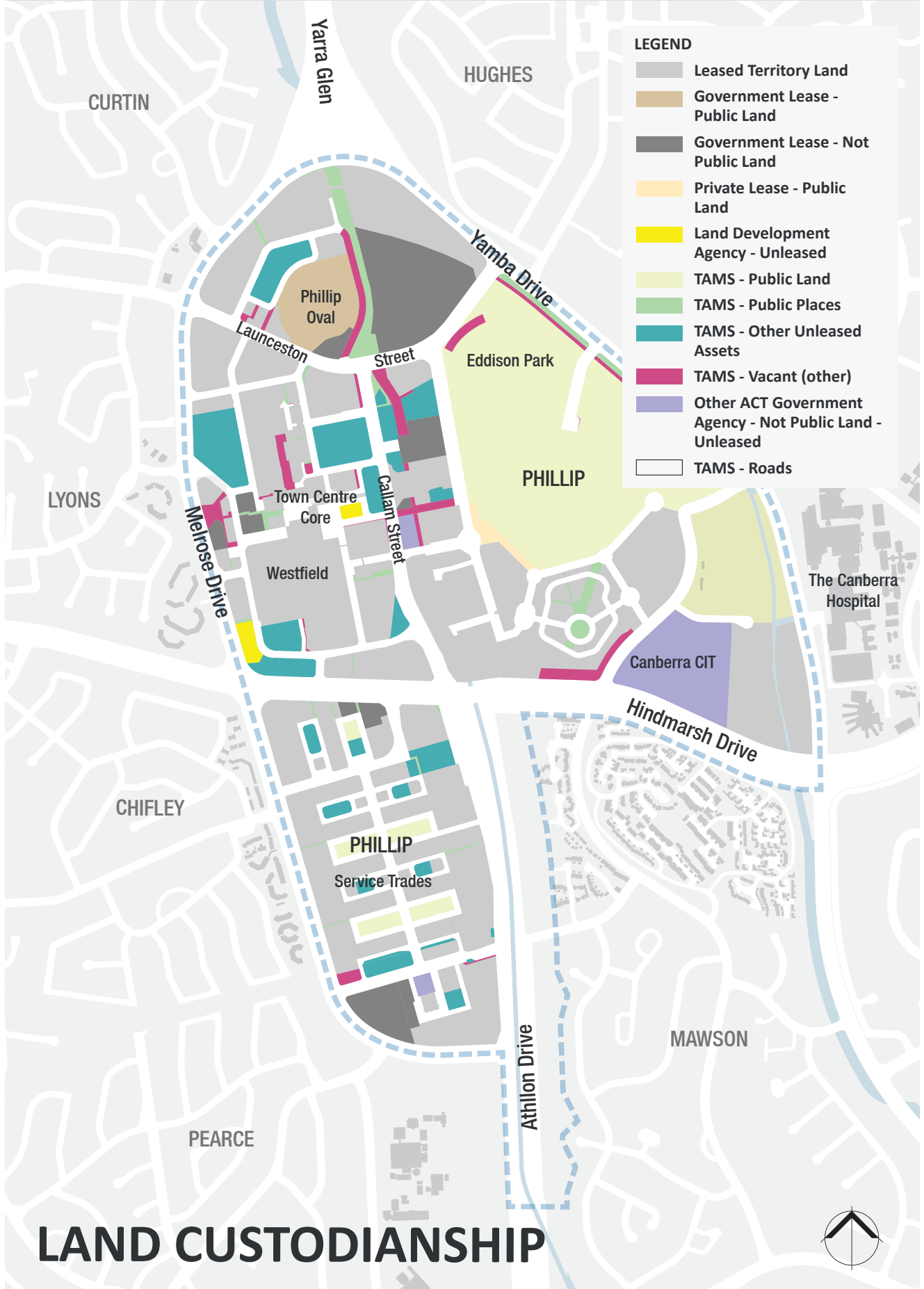
Community facilities located in CFZ land are listed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 15.

Table 1: Community facilities located in CFZ land use

Facility	Location
Woden CIT	Block 17 Section 1
Woden Early Childhood Centre	Block 21 Section 80
Woden District Youth Centre	Block 23 Section 80
The Canberra College	Block 7 Section 79
Woden Library (including the ACT Heritage Library)	Block 27 Section 8
Phillip Health Centre	Block 21 Section 8
Senior Citizens Club	Block 17 Section 12
Lollipop Children's Centre	Block 1 Section 12
Woden Community Services	Block 1 Section 12



Figure 14: Land custodianship in the Woden town centre





Betsy Gallagher Park is located on community facility zoned land associated with the adjoining community centre. Other important community facilities serving a regional catchment include the Woden Cemetery and The Canberra Hospital.

In the short to medium term it is likely that urban intensification through population growth and the increase in people working in the master plan area will create additional demand for community facilities and service provision. This may place pressure on existing facilities or create the demand for new or different types of facilities and service provision.

Given the current mix of residents and future population projections, it is expected young adults and families may move into the area. This could result in a high proportion of younger and older residents.

The community centre

The existing community centre in the western side of the centre includes Woden Community Services and the Lollipop Children's Centre. Woden Community Services is one of six regional community services within Canberra. A not-for-profit organisation, it has been providing a broad range of services to people in the Woden Valley since 1969.

The Lollipop Children's Centre is a 60 place centre with capacity for 15 babies (under 2 years old), 16 toddlers (2–3 years old) and 29 children (3 years to school age).

The community centre is close to the Woden Library, Phillip Community Health Centre and surrounding private health sector providers. Engagement with stakeholders found that community facilities in this area are difficult to access. The existing community centre buildings require upgrading to meet the functional requirements for each facility and to cater for predicted increase in community needs.

The ACT Government is currently investigating redevelopment or relocation opportunities within the town centre.

There may be opportunity to zone this site for mixed-use development after the community facilities are moved to a more accessible town centre location.

Emergency services

The existing emergency services sites in Phillip are located on Block 17 Section 5 and Block 2 Section 26 Phillip, on the corner of Botany Street and Hindmarsh Drive. The facilities include a fire and ambulance station, and are not considered to meet the future projected needs.

The Phillip fire and ambulance stations are identified for review in phase 4 of the ACT Government's emergency service station upgrade and relocation strategy. The strategy is currently in phase 2. Several options will be considered for the redevelopment of these facilities including a newly built station, co-located on a single site.

A land area of 6500 to 7000 m² would be required to co-locate these facilities in a location on, or very close to, an arterial road.

Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT)

CIT has seven locations in the ACT at Bruce, Fyshwick, Gungahlin, Reid, Tuggeranong, Woden and Majura. CIT employs over 1000 staff and offers more than 480 vocational education courses.

The Woden CIT campus is on the corner of Ainsworth Street and Hindmarsh Drive in Phillip. The existing facilities are ageing and the bulk of students reside outside the Woden area.

The ACT Government is currently assessing several options for the campus such as redeveloping on the existing site or relocating to an alternative site, possibly within the town centre. If a new development is realised, it is likely to reconsider the style of development, one example being a small community campus co-located with a community services hub in the town centre.

3.4.3 Sport and recreation facilities

The centre provides a range of sporting and recreation facilities as shown in Table 2 and Figure 15.

An assessment of sport and recreation facilities found there is demand in the longer term for additional recreation uses such as tennis courts, multi-indoor courts, upgrades to the existing parks, community gardens, an off-leash district dog walking area and active recreation/exercise spaces. Athllon Drive also has potential to provide a number of informal sport and recreation facilities and informal exercise spaces associated with residential development.



Figure 15: Community, sport and recreation facilities





Table 2: Sport and recreation facilities

Facility	Description
Park	Eddison Park, including skate park and picnic areas.
Park	Town Park/Arabanoo Park
Park	Betsy Gallagher Park
Sport	Phillip Oval
Sport	Woden Park Athletics Field
Sport	Phillip District Playing Field, including Phillip enclosed oval
Sport	Woden Basketball Centre
Sport	Phillip Swimming and Ice Skating Rink
Sport	Woden Squash Centre
Club	Woden Tradesmen's Union Club
Club	Woden Hellenic Club
Club	Canberra Southern Cross Club

3.4.4 Northern entertainment, accommodation and leisure precinct

The northern precinct of the centre (north of Launceston Street) is experiencing a change in the type of uses being proposed. The 2004 master plan recommended the precinct include provision for office and residential on the upper floors of buildings. The Territory Plan incorporated residential use into this precinct to implement the 2004 master plan, but also permitted residential use on the ground floor of development.

Recent redevelopment proposals in this precinct are seeking to deliver mostly residential development, which could begin to change the precinct character and provide more after-hours activity.

Entertainment and leisure facilities in this precinct include the Phillip Oval, squash courts, basketball centre, health club and the Phillip Swimming and Ice Skating Centre. Analysis of aquatic centres for the district found there is demand for a single aquatic centre in the medium to long term.

3.4.5 Town centre living

Housing demand in the ACT is likely to average around 2800 dwellings a year between 2011 and 2031. The city centre and town centres could attract 20 to 25% of this demand, which translates to an annual average demand of between 560 and 700 dwellings a year. The Woden town centre share is likely to be 100 to 150 dwellings a year.

In Woden–Weston Creek, approximately 73% of dwellings are detached single dwellings. In Woden Valley, approximately 67% of dwellings are detached. There is opportunity for the centre and surrounding areas to offer other housing types such as apartments and townhouses that provide more housing choice in locations that are close to services, shopping and employment.

While residential development is permitted in most areas of the centre, these have only been happening in recent years. Developments have included Sky Plaza, Woden Green and along Melrose Drive in Lyons. A recent Territory Plan variation for Strathgordon Court provides a redevelopment opportunity and increases residential densities from RZ4 medium-density residential to RZ5 high-density residential.

A number of recent development proposals have emerged through development applications and include a number of residential units as illustrated in Figure 16.

Land available for new residential development (unleased land) is limited, as shown in Figure 14, with most available sites being surface car parking.

3.4.6 Commercial and retail

The centre is a major employment centre that includes office, retail and service trades. Growth and change in Canberra's population will generate demand for housing, offices, retailing, health services, community facilities and associated infrastructure.

The first retail releases in the town centre were in 1972 when Woden Plaza opened. Retail is the second largest employment base in the centre, which benefits from the large number of Tuggeranong and South Canberra residents who shop there.

In May 2015, there was an estimated 200,300 m² gross floor area (GFA) of retail and commercial space in the centre, excluding major offices.



Figure 16: Recent development proposals in the Woden town centre





Located in the retail core (39%) and the Phillip service trades area (61%), it represents a provision of 3.57 m² per capita in Woden. This is relatively high when compared to the City centre (3.2 m²), Belconnen (3.05 m²), Tuggeranong (2.12 m²) and Gungahlin (1.58 m²).

This high rate of retail space per capita could be due to the substantial inflow of expenditure from Tuggeranong residents.

Expansion of Westfield Woden

The proposed expansion of Westfield Woden is associated with the proposed Woden bus interchange and bus network improvements. The shopping centre is planned to expand east, towards Callam Street, and is likely to include a large retail anchor with several speciality shops fronting the new bus station. The expansion will increase retail use in Woden Plaza by approximately 20,000 m². More parking is likely to be included as part of the proposal.

Phillip service trades area

The Phillip service trades area provides a mix of retail and services including:

- car sales
- community facilities
- emergency services
- medical facilities
- takeaways and cafes
- offices
- petrol stations
- retail and
- trade services.

These uses provide important services for residents living in the Woden Valley and surrounds. Other areas with similar uses in south Canberra are Fyshwick and Hume.

The 2004 master plan recommended changes to the area with the introduction of residential and an increase in allowable building heights. Currently, there has been no residential development along Townshend Street or adjacent to Colbee Court or Dundas Court.

While the proposed changes to include residential development in this area is an exciting prospect, it may be challenging to manage the transition. For example, potential conflict in land uses may arise, such as concerns with noise and odour from trade services.

3.5 Transport and movement

3.5.1 Public transport

The 2004 Woden 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 is beginning to be realised through a recently approved development application.

Bus travel to the centre is already an attractive way for people to travel to work. Changes to the existing bus interchange and network through the centre are expected to make bus travel even more attractive and increase patronage (Figure 17). The 2011 Census indicates the utilisation of public transport at 13.4%. This is already well above the Transport for Canberra target of 10.5% of workers travelling by public transport by 2016.

Light rail

The Light Rail Master Plan is investigating the potential for the expansion of a light rail network across Canberra. The outcomes of the plan will inform future decisions about extensions to Capital Metro Stage 1 (between the city centre and Gungahlin). The master plan builds on work already undertaken on light rail and integrated land use and transport planning, and delivers on government policies, including Transport for Canberra and the ACT Planning Strategy. Provision is being made for an alignment along Callam Street for light rail (Figure 17).

Phillip bus depot

Future locations for bus depots were investigated in 2014 in the ACT. Sites in Tuggeranong, Belconnen, Mitchell and Phillip were identified as strategically important locations to provide the best outcomes for public transport facilities in terms of network efficiency and reducing future costs. Block 9 Section 54 (Figure 17) was identified as the preferred site in Phillip due to its location on a major public transport corridor and its potential to service future bus services in Woden town centre and Molonglo Valley.



Figure 17: Public transport infrastructure

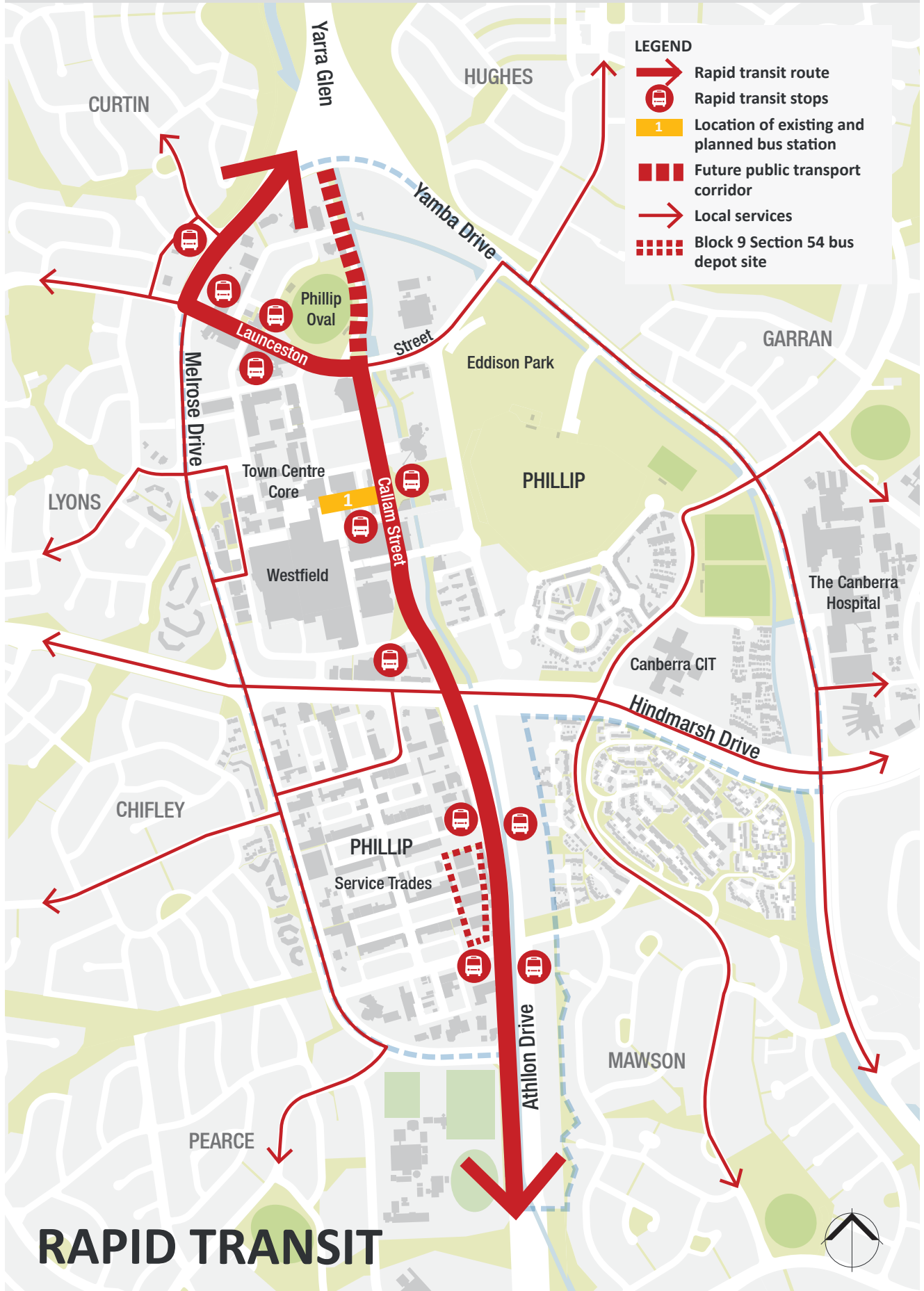




Figure 18: Existing cycle network

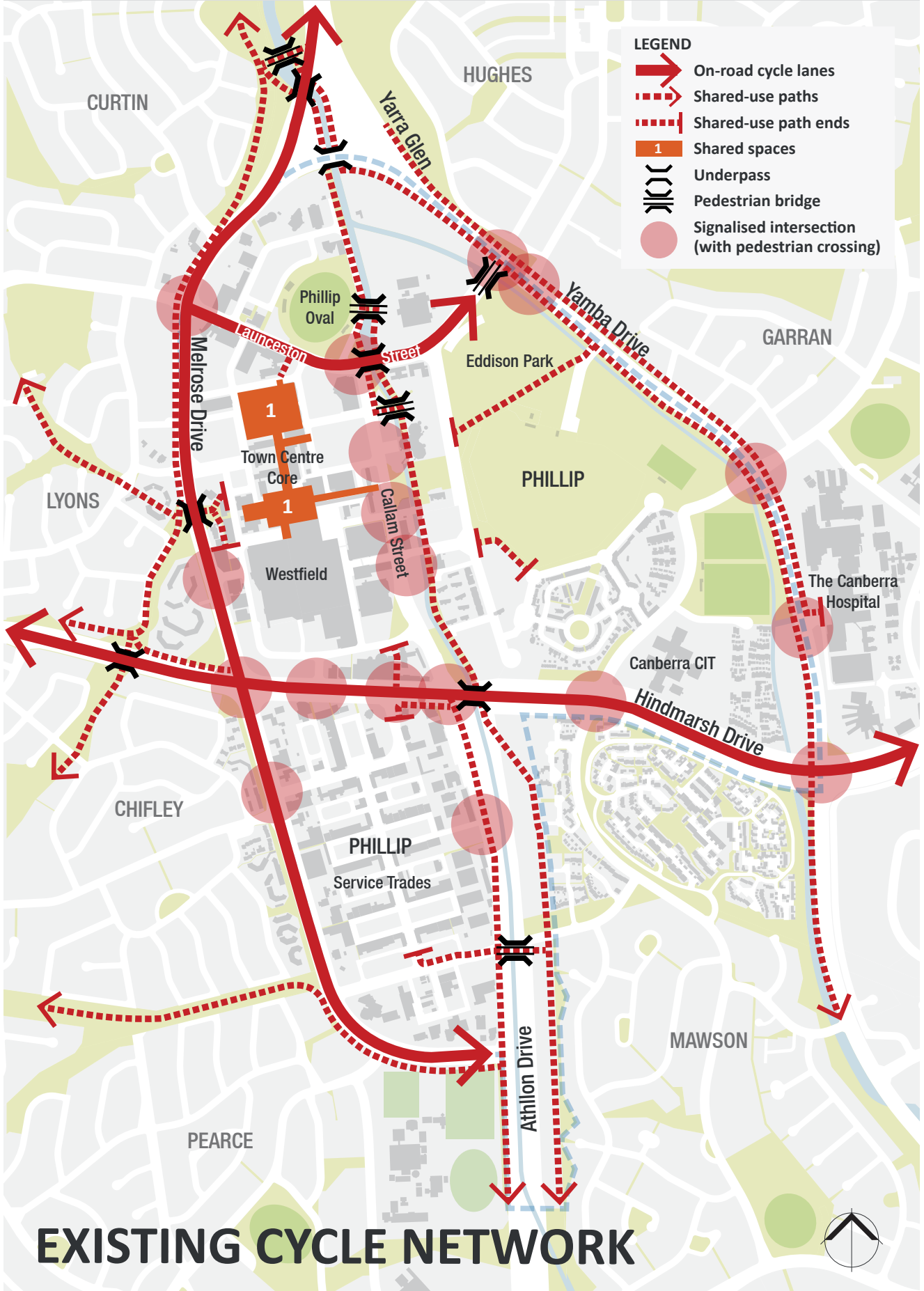
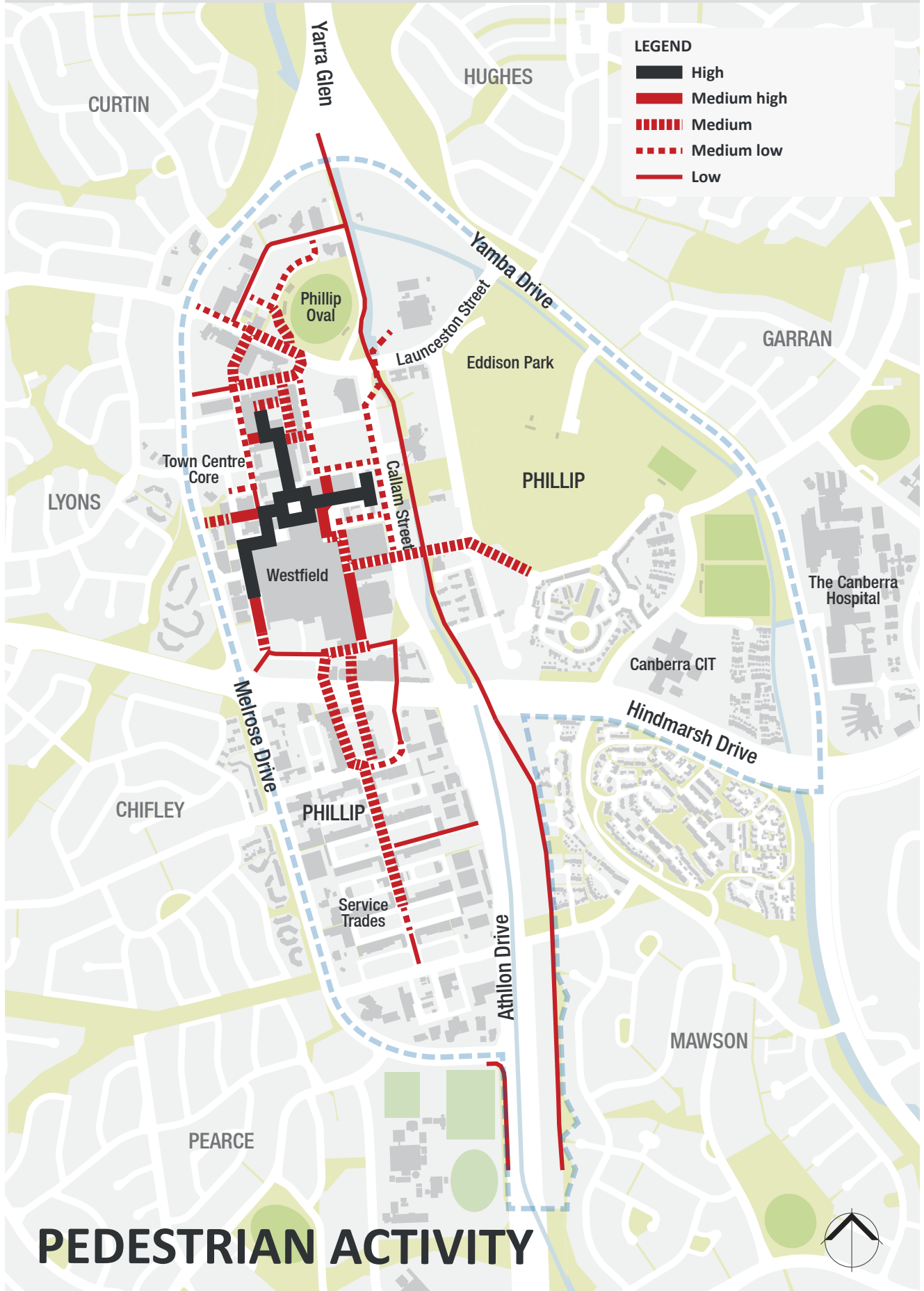




Figure 19: Main areas of pedestrian activity





Woden bus interchange improvements

The proposed changes to the bus network and interchange provide new opportunities to improve the pedestrian connections, physically and visually, between the town square and the Town Park (Figure 20). Improvements to the bus interchange were approved through an estate development plan in November 2013. This included upgrades to some street verges, which could make the centre a more attractive place to walk.

Upgrades to the bus interchange include the demolition of the existing bus interchange and building a new on-street bus station. Upgrades are proposed to the verges along parts of Callam, Bowes, Matilda and Launceston streets. The upgrades allow for the new retail development opportunities facing on to the new bus station and locating the rapid transport stops onto Callam Street.

3.5.2 Active travel

Active travel involves physical activity such as walking and cycling. Nationally, Canberra has the highest cycle usage rate and second highest walking rate. However, a low percentage of people walk or cycle to work in the Woden town centre.

This could be due to a number of factors, including:

- poor walking and cycling connections through the centre
- poor pedestrian amenity in the centre, with limited 'active' spaces
- level changes between the town square and bus interchange
- limited cycle facilities in the centre
- wide arterial roads surrounding the centre and
- large areas of surface car parking areas at the edges of the centre.

These issues were frequently raised during community engagement as barriers to walking and cycling in the centre. The existing cycle network is illustrated in Figure 18. The areas of main pedestrian activity are shown in Figure 19.

Provision for future cycle and pedestrian infrastructure must be consistent with the targets set out in Transport for Canberra and encourage a diverse range of the community to easily access the centre by walking or cycling.

Figure 20: Improved access between the town square and existing bus interchange. Courtesy of CMTEDD





3.5.3 Road network and traffic

The number of workers travelling by car to the centre during the working week has marginally decreased in the past 10 years. One of the key objectives of the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan was to reduce the reliance on car commuting. While this has declined for workers, it is still considered to be high, placing pressure on road infrastructure, creating congestion at peak times and bringing publicly available car parking close to capacity.

Most workers travelling by car reside in Tuggeranong (35%) and Woden–Weston Creek (28%). A smaller number of workers drive from central Canberra (16%), Belconnen (13%) and Gungahlin (7%).

Several opportunities to further decrease the reliance on car commuting include continuing to improve access to public transport and cycle and pedestrian connections. Increased cycle facilities and improvements to the public domain will also encourage people to access the centre in other ways, where practical.

3.5.4 Parking

The 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan recommended keeping surface parking in key locations to support business and community services. The master plan also provided strategies to maximise parking efficiency by incorporating parking spaces into new development and identifying appropriate sites for structured parking. The locations of structured parking from the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan are shown in Figure 21.

Currently, parking in the centre is near capacity as shown in tables 3 and 4. A survey of parking found that parking demand peaked at 1pm in the town centre core (north of Hindmarsh Drive) at 90% capacity on a typical weekday. Parking demand peaked at midday in the service trades area (south of Hindmarsh Drive) at 89% capacity.

There is generally high demand for short and medium-term parking in the town centre core and service trades area. There is also high demand for long stay parking on a typical weekday.

Long-term parking demand for the centre has been assessed against several possible land use scenarios. Analysis of peak parking demand times, typically the middle of the day, found that approximately 11,000 additional car spaces could be required across the centre in the longer term. However, the majority of these spaces are likely to be provided by individual developments as they are built. It is also expected that more people will access the centre through public transport, cycling and walking as infrastructure is improved. Consequently, only a small number of parking spaces (approximately 300–400) will need to be accommodated in structured parking or elsewhere in the centre.

Figure 21: Structured parking locations from the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan





Table 3: Current parking demand in the Woden town centre core area

Parking restriction	Typical weekday demand (%)*	Typical Saturday demand (%)*
Woden town centre core area (north of Hindmarsh Drive)		
Less than 1 hour (short term)	96%	94%
1–2 hours (short term)	100%	100%
3–6 hours (medium term)	72%	93%
Unrestricted	91%	61%
Private and permit parking	95%	38%
Other (bus stops, loading zones, accessible parking)	91%	88%
TOTAL	90%	61%

*NOTE: Typically, parking demand in publicly available parking areas greater than 85% for on-street areas and 90% for off-street areas represents a situation where drivers cannot easily find vacant parking spaces.

Table 4: Current parking demand in the Phillip service trades area

Parking restriction	Typical weekday demand (%)*	Typical Saturday demand (%)*
Phillip service trades area (south of Hindmarsh Drive)		
Less than 1 hour (short term)	79%	39%
1–2 hours (short term)	84%	28%
3–6 hours (medium term)	100%	-
Unrestricted	93%	66%
Private and permit parking	79%	121%
Other (bus stops, loading zones, accessible parking)	68%	17%
TOTAL	89%	69%

*NOTE: Typically, parking demand in publicly available parking areas greater than 85% for on-street areas and 90% for off-street areas represents a situation where drivers cannot easily find vacant parking spaces.

3.6 Public domain

3.6.1 Streets, parks and public spaces

The Woden Valley is surrounded by hills, ridges and buffers that form part of a much wider open space network known as the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS). Figures 22 and 24 illustrates some of the main landscape features within NCOSS that immediately surround the Woden Valley. Since 1988 NCOSS has formed a key part of the Australian Government’s National Capital Plan and the ACT Government’s Territory Plan. NCOSS forms an integral part of Canberra’s landscape setting and contributes to the city’s identity as the ‘Bush Capital’.

The centre’s open space system includes the town square, Eddison Park, Town Park, Woden Cemetery and Betsy Gallagher Park. It also includes the central open spaces in Colbee Court and Dundas Court in the service trades area. The open space network is illustrated in Figure 23.

Community engagement found that the town square, Eddison Park, the bus interchange, Phillip ovals and the pedestrian-only walkways were considered focal points for community and social activities. However, a number of these places were found to be underutilised due to poor pedestrian and cycle connections to other areas of the centre.

Callam Street

Callam Street has a number of functions, including providing for public transport, drop-off parking and access to car parks and the centre, and allowing for east–west pedestrian and cycle connections. The street is seen as a barrier for cyclists and pedestrians and has poor pedestrian amenity. Currently, no development along Callam Street provides activation to the street.

Callam Street offers the opportunity for development with active uses fronting on to the street, improved pedestrian and cycle amenity, safer crossing points and allowance for possible future rapid transit, including light rail.



The town square

The town square is considered a focal point for the community and connects the office, retail and community use precincts. The town square has several mature and semi-mature deciduous tree plantings. When mature, these trees will provide large canopy cover for the majority of the square providing shade and marginally reducing the wind tunnelling effect from surrounding development.

Realising the true potential of this space requires overcoming a number of challenges including a low level of retail activity facing onto the square, wind shear from surrounding development and the level change to the existing bus interchange.

Eddison Park

Eddison Park, located at the eastern side of the centre, has a picnic area, public toilets, seating, a skate park and car parking. The park is approximately 12 hectares and is the largest recreational park in the study area.

Work began on the park in 1972, but it was not until 1988 that it was named after the previous rural property owners, the Eddison family. The family's rural property, Yamba, was fully resumed in the 1960s as urbanisation increased in the Woden Valley. The current design of the park is focused around an ornamental pond, which is not currently functioning. The park and the Woden Cemetery are linked with a common axis which extends to the main park entrance on Launceston Street.

The park is well used by families visiting the play equipment and people using the skate park, but could be better used by people who live and work in the centre. Improved open spaces and connections and signage between the park and the residences and offices would encourage more use. A redesign of the pond may provide a higher level of amenity for people using the park and potentially improving the water quality that runs along Long Gully Creek.

As the centre grows and more residential development is introduced, Eddison Park will become even more important as a green space for local residents. The park is approximately 500 metres from the offices located in the middle of the centre, the equivalent of a five to seven minute walk. It will be important to make the connections between the centre and Eddison Park as attractive and safe as possible to fully realise the park's full potential.

Arabanoo Park (Woden Town Park)

Woden Town Park, commonly referred to as Arabanoo Park, is located on the eastern edge of the centre and provides a pedestrian link between the centre and Eddison Park. The park is divided into two spaces linked by a wooden bridge spanning Yarralumla Creek.

Currently, the Town Park is not well used and does not have direct pedestrian access from the centre across Callam Street. It lacks both a good physical and visual connection between the town square and the Town Park, which reduces the likelihood of visitors.





Figure 22: Woden Valley open space network





Figure 23: Town centre open space network





The proposed improvements to the bus interchange will provide better access into the Town Park and a better visual connection from the town square, particularly after some of the roofing and old structures in the existing bus interchange are removed. There is also an opportunity to provide more activity in this area and consider what other uses could help improve the public amenity and safety of this space.

Woden Cemetery

The Woden Cemetery opened in 1936 and features many large mature trees, lawn areas and monumental burial sites. In 1979 the cemetery closed for reservations of graves as the Gungahlin Cemetery opened in September 1979. Due to the growing population and need for a south side cemetery, Woden Cemetery re-opened in 1999.

It is anticipated the cemetery will be fully subscribed for burials by 2018. The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority is investigating a range of options to provide continued access to these services in south Canberra. Investigations include a new memorial park in Tuggeranong and extending the existing Woden Cemetery site into the adjacent area of Eddison Park (Figure 23).

The cemetery is accessible to the public all year and is a short walking distance from the centre. However, there are several barriers to accessing the cemetery grounds, including Callam Street and Yarralumla Creek.

Betsy Gallagher Park

Betsy Gallagher Park is located on the western side of the centre, immediately north of the existing community centre (Figure 23). The park has an important role providing access from the east–west connection to the town square and to the suburb of Lyons. It is also the only existing green space in the western side of the centre. However, a new park will be provided between Furzer and Corinna Streets as part of the new road and block alignment being undertaken by the ACT Government on Section 9 (Figure 23).

Betsy Gallagher Park is surrounded mostly by the back of developments and is graded down to the Melrose Drive underpass. This makes it a challenging space to use comfortably and feel safe. Due to its current layout, there is also limited opportunity for people to use this space for recreational uses.

Public art

Several well-located public artworks are readily identifiable as part of Woden town centre. Some larger or prominent artworks include:

- Sculptured Form (1970)
- Dinornis Maximus (2008)
- Culture Fragment (2012)
- Lollipop landmark (Corinna Street) and
- Droplet (2012)

Arts ACT provides an online data base that describes the relevant artworks and their history at www.arts.act.gov.au/arts-in-the-act/public-art

Figure 24: Significant landscape features as viewed from the National Arboretum





3.7 Building design and height

The original planning intent from early master plans in the 1960s recommended medium-rise development in the retail core. This included some high-rise development towards the town square and office precinct. The Phillip service trades area was intended to have a low built form to provide smaller offices and service trades.

In the retail core, early plans indicated development in a cruciform shape with taller buildings located on a raised platform. The taller buildings were envisaged to be 20, 15 and 12 storeys close to the town square, with lower buildings stepping down towards the edge of the centre.

Today, the tallest buildings include Lovett Tower (24 storeys), Sky Plaza (20 storeys) and Scarborough House (16 storeys) as shown in Figure 25.

Currently, the centre does not have a well-defined built form hierarchy and building height recommendations from the 2004 master plan were not implemented in the Territory Plan for the town centre core area.

The city form of the whole centre needs to be considered in terms of its visual impact on the wider landscape, hills and ridges. Figure 24 shows the town centre in context of significant landscape features including Mount Taylor, Oakey Hill, Isaacs Ridge and Mount Mugga Mugga Nature Reserve.

A visual analysis undertaken as part of this master plan considered the existing city form and its relationship with the surrounding landscape. Several views outside the centre were considered including Red Hill Lookout, the National Arboretum and approach routes to the centre along Yarra Glen and Athllon Drive. Analysis of the town centre considered the extent of intrusion of the existing built form on the natural landscape topography. Findings from the analysis determined that Lovett Tower, currently the most identifiable building in Woden, should remain a significant feature of the skyline. However, there is also opportunity to further develop the city form, particularly the commercial core area, to create a more unified and continuous skyline.

A conceptual shadow analysis determined appropriate building heights and their potential impact on the surrounding residential areas and public spaces. A key finding of the shadow analysis found that taller development on the western edge of the town centre had more impact on surrounding residential areas than any other areas of the town centre. Therefore development adjoining Melrose Drive should be capped at approximately a 12 storey height limit to reduce the potential overshadowing impacts of the residential development on the western side of the road. However, there should also be a level of flexibility in the recommended building heights to allow for more innovative and economically viable development to occur as markets change over time.

Building height is only one consideration for development in the centre. More importantly, the design of the lower floors of buildings in the centre needs to be carefully considered. Lower floors influence the character and amenity of the streets and public spaces. New development should provide shade and shelter for pedestrians, provide active uses at ground floor along main pedestrian routes, consider the relationship with surrounding development and landscape, and consider shadowing and wind impacts onto public spaces.

While the Territory Plan provides most areas in the centre with some guidance for the desired building bulk and scale, the Territory Plan's precinct code for Phillip could provide more clarity. This is particularly the case for the town centre core area.

The centre's building height and bulk will need to consider:

- consistency with the intended scale and character
- compatibility with the built form and context of adjoining buildings
- retaining an appropriate relationship with the established streetscape
- providing a transition to lower density areas and
- retaining significant views and vistas to surrounding landscapes.



Figure 25: Existing building heights





3.7.1 The Phillip Precinct Code

The 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan provided guidance and recommendations on a broad range of planning issues, including building height. However, the building height recommendations were not fully realised in the Territory Plan.

The Phillip Precinct Code within the Territory Plan provides place-specific planning and development controls for land use, limit on gross floor area (GFA), parking requirements, building heights, active frontages, setbacks and materials and finishes.

Recent development proposals have tested the existing planning controls in terms of building height and development interface with the streets and public spaces. A greater level of detail could be implemented into the Phillip Precinct Code for the core area, such as building heights in the town centre core and desirable design outcomes along main pedestrian routes, which would provide community, developers and decision makers with more certainty before a development is proposed.

Existing planning controls in the Phillip service trades area provide a good level of expectation for building owners and the community. The proposed changes to planning controls from the 2004 master plan were largely implemented into the Phillip Precinct Code for this area. The changes increased allowable building heights close to Townshend Street and introduced residential use.

3.8 Public safety

An assessment of public safety undertaken in 2013 to inform the master plan found a number of similar issues raised in the 2004 master plan remain in the centre, including:

- workers feel unsafe walking from the offices to parking areas and bus stops on Corinna Street
- the centre feels rundown and public and semi-public areas are poorly maintained
- the centre feels unsafe after dark, particularly when walking beyond the bus interchange and the interior of the Woden Plaza and the Corinna Street frontage
- single-use precincts in the centre reduce the level of activity during the day and after hours, and
- dark and isolated pedestrian routes and underpasses leading to nearby suburbs, residential areas and the hospital.

The open spaces to the east of the centre were generally found to discourage pedestrian and cyclist movement due to factors including:

- large expanses of land with little activity
- poor natural surveillance from adjoining uses
- limited lighting and signage
- fences and gates closed after dark and
- dense vegetation restricting visibility in some areas.

The safety assessment considered that a key concern for the retail core area is that several building entrances are located at the back of buildings and face parking areas rather than the street and footpaths bounding them.

As the residential and employment population in the centre increases there is likely to be a greater demand for a range of after-hours uses such as recreation, arts and cultural activities and late night venues. To improve public safety in the centre, new development should:

- provide for after-hours street level activity
- encourage night-time uses with differing closing times
- ensure main pedestrian routes are well lit and have surveillance from adjacent development, where possible, and
- ensure routes to and from clubs and entertainment facilities do not lead directly through suburban residential areas.

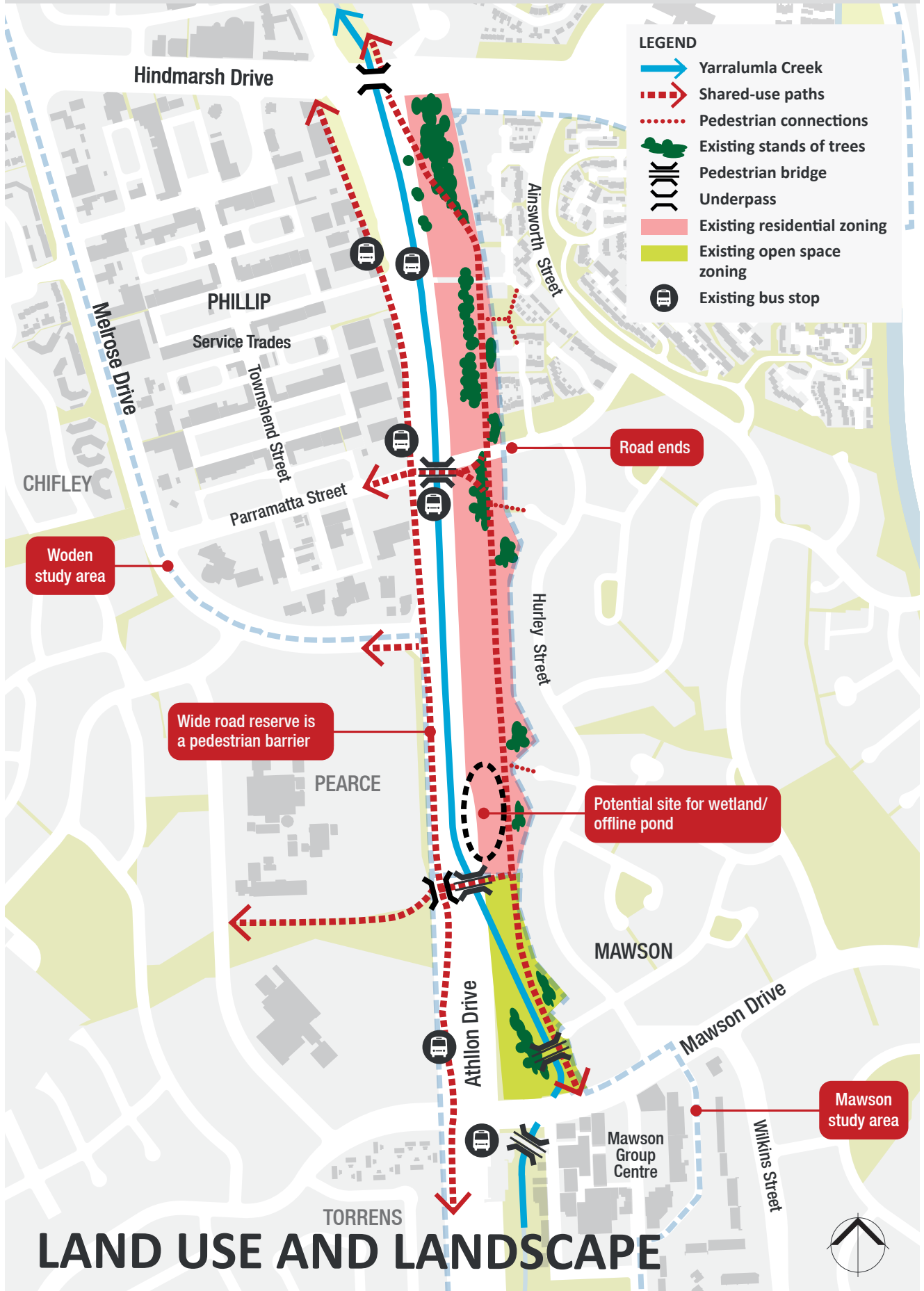
3.9 Athllon Drive

The Athllon Drive corridor is identified in the ACT Planning Strategy as an area to be investigated for residential urban intensification. Currently the corridor is a rapid transit route lined mostly with residential land use zoning (RZ2: Suburban Zone). Figure 26 illustrates the existing land use zones and key landscape elements along the corridor.

Some key elements in the Athllon Drive corridor include the trunk cycle route that runs north–south (shared-use path), Yarralumla Creek, existing large stands of trees and bus stops as shown in Figure 26. The rapid bus services use the bus stops along Athllon Drive.



Figure 26: Athllon Drive land use and landscape





The existing Residential Zone 2: Suburban Core land use along the corridor would not provide a housing density considered consistent to support rapid transit. This master plan considers opportunities for higher density residential development along the corridor and how it will be integrated with the existing informal recreation spaces, trunk cycle routes and public transport stops.

If the Athllon Drive corridor is developed, it is important that essential elements are retained and enhanced, including:

- the shared-use paths
- keeping high quality trees where possible
- providing a green buffer between the existing residential and any new development
- enhancing the open space and
- improving the Yarralumla Creek waterway.

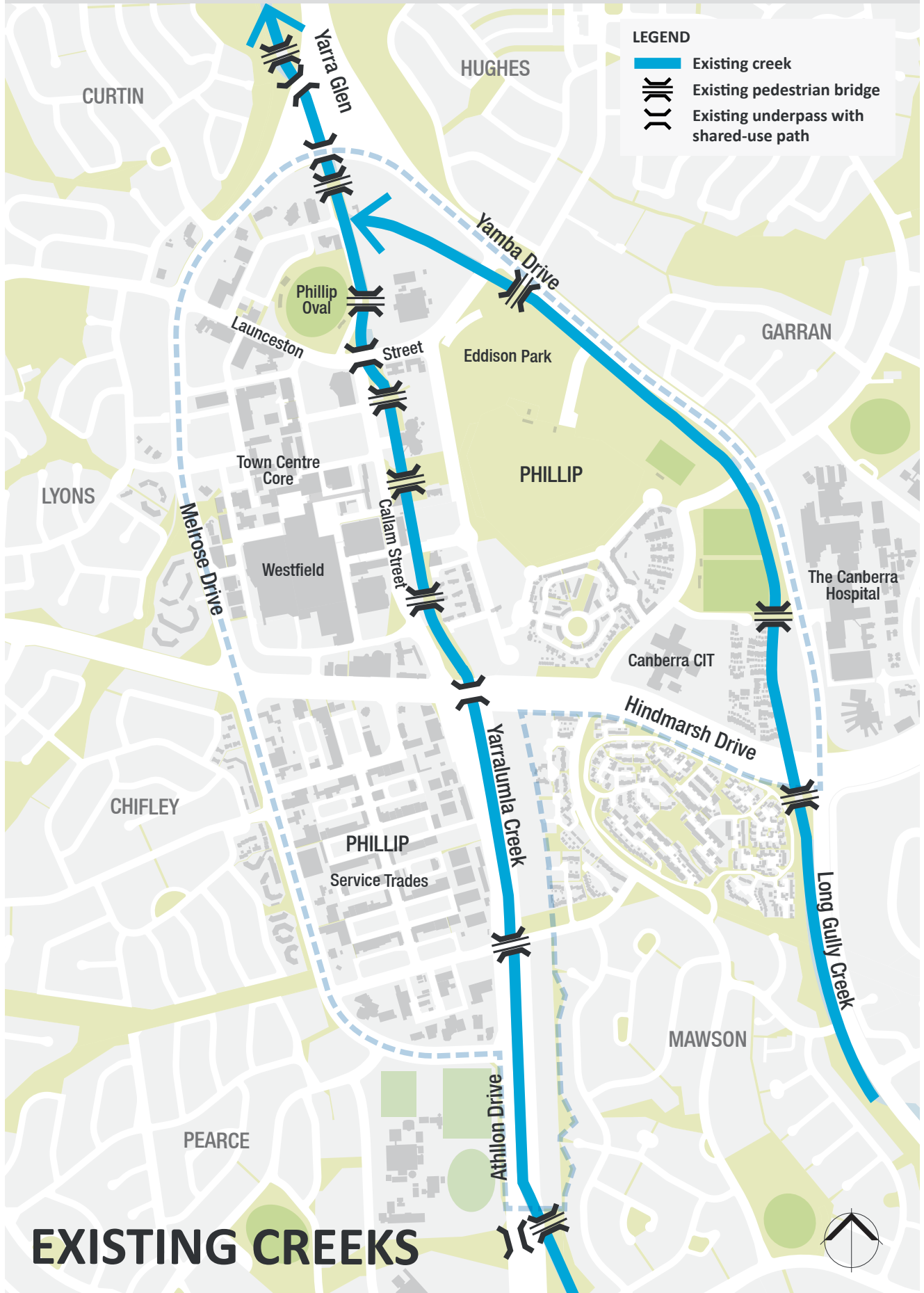
3.10 Yarralumla Creek

In February 2014, the Australian Government signed an agreement with the ACT Government for funding to improve the water quality in Canberra's lakes and waterways. As part of this agreement, Yarralumla Creek was identified as one of six priority sub-catchments that can provide the greatest improvements in water quality at a local, regional and national level. Currently the creek exists as a constructed channel. A comprehensive options study will identify recommended water quality improvement measures for design and implementation. A business plan outlining recommendations will be submitted to ACT and Commonwealth Governments in late 2015, seeking approval of substantial funding. Funding, if approved by the Commonwealth, would be available for design and construction from May 2016 until early 2019.





Figure 27: Yarralumla Creek





Flooding

Areas close to the Yarralumla Creek stormwater channel, including development, have the potential to be impacted by flooding. Planning for areas close to the creek line, including along Athllon Drive, will need to ensure no buildings are built below the 1 in 100 year flood line or 1% annual exceedance probability (1% AEP) flood. Because floods greater than 1% AEP can occur an additional 500 millimetres is recommended to be added to the 1% AEP level for residential development.

Predicted flood levels can change from time to time due to changes in development areas within catchments and as climate change data and modelling is improved. The ACT Government has recently completed a flood study for Yarralumla Creek. Options to reduce flooding impacts along the creek line are now being investigated including flood mitigation benefits of a wetland or pond within the Athllon Drive corridor (Figure 26) and use of the Mawson playing fields for detention of stormwater.

3.11 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 master plans and their 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 – is taking action to be resilient to the risk of a changing climate.

Resources consumption

- Reduce the amount of land used for the growing city through 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.

Options to address these risks may include:

1. Reduce city heat and increase amenity in outdoor spaces for healthy living

- Increase shade trees to roadways and car parks.
- 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.

3.11.1 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 could 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 are generated close to where it is used. Energy systems such as co-generation (electricity and heat) or trigeneration (electricity, heat and cooling) need the combination of commercial and residential uses to be efficient as the load for commercial is during the day and the 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 Woden 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 and how it could be delivered, and put in context of future budgets.

3.11.2 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.

3.11.3 Heat island effect

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

Thermal comfort can significantly change the way we use outdoor areas. Urban environments, such as the Woden 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 and permeable paving materials and by increasing shade for summer with shading structures and trees on main pedestrian routes and public places.







4. Challenges and opportunities

The main challenges and opportunities identified for the centre are outlined below. This list is not exhaustive, but provides a basis for the development of the master plan.

4.1 Challenges

4.1.1 Poor connections to surrounding suburbs and places

The centre has a number of community facilities, public spaces and services that serve the district and broader Canberra region. However, the pedestrian and cycle paths do not provide easy or continuous access from surrounding areas into the centre (Figure 28). There are also very few 'visual cues' that allow people to easily navigate between the public spaces. Cycle connections, in particular, are difficult with several stopping at the edge of the centre.

4.1.2 An incomplete pedestrian, cycle and open space network in the centre

Green spaces, parks and public places within the town centre are disconnected and do not have well defined and attractive pedestrian and cycle connections between them. Large areas of surface parking also contribute to an uninviting public domain (Figure 29). Green spaces like Eddison Park provide important public spaces for the community, but there are few visual and physical connections between Eddison Park and the centre.

There is no clear hierarchy of open spaces and limited opportunity for future green space in the centre.

Yarralumla Creek provides a challenge for the future development of the town centre. The concrete channel contributes negatively to the amenity of the open space and is a barrier for east–west access through the centre. Flooding along the creek line creates challenges for future development close to the creek.

4.1.3 Large-scale buildings and poor microclimate

Town centres are appropriate locations for medium to high-rise development that is well designed to integrate into the centre's character. However, taller development can create some challenges in respect to wind shear, bulk and scale onto the streets and public spaces, and shadowing of nearby places.

Wind shear from tall development was consistently raised as a concern during all stages of community engagement, particularly in the town square and office precinct (Figure 28).

The urban heat island effect in the centre is influenced by several areas that have large expanses of surface parking and concrete surfaces, including the town square.

4.1.4 A dispersed night-time economy

Most night-time activity in the centre is generated by clubs, cinemas and restaurants. While the town centre has some night-time activity, it is dispersed across the centre. The Phillip service trades area has even less night-time activity. The fact that employees tend to leave the centre after typical office hours contributes to a limited night-time economy. This can create streets and public spaces that are unsafe or perceived to be unsafe throughout the evenings (Figure 28).

4.1.5 Parking nearing capacity

The management and provision of parking is a significant challenge for the growth of the centre.

The ACT's climate change strategy (AP2) outlines that transport represents the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the ACT. The majority of people drive to work in the centre, with very few walking or cycling. This places pressure on existing traffic and parking infrastructure with almost all public car parks at or near capacity during the week.

The high level of people travelling to work by car has the potential to increase traffic congestion and, ultimately, more greenhouse gas emissions. Parking will need to be managed in a way that supports other more sustainable travel options.

4.1.6 Population anticipated to double

There has been little population growth in the Woden Valley over the past 10 years. The population was estimated to be 32,832 in 2004 in Woden Valley, increasing to 34,771 in 2014, equating to approximately a 5.9% increase. This compares to a 17.3% increase for the ACT over the same period. The population is projected to slightly increase to 35,650 in 2021 and 37,350 in 2031.⁴

However, based on population projections the population in the centre itself is expected to more than double by 2031.



The location and type of residential development that could occur in the centre and along the Athllon Drive corridor will need to provide housing choice for the community. As more residential development is introduced into the centre by the private sector, improvements to the level of community facilities and services will need to be considered. Amenity for residents will also need to be incrementally upgraded, such as improved walking and cycle paths, new plantings, seating and improved lighting.

4.1.7 Aging building stock and increasing vacancy rates

There is currently a diverse range of office building stock in the centre. While some buildings are less than 10 years old, others are much older and approaching the end of their useful life. Some older building stock is vacant or about to become vacant, with an estimated 15.7% vacancy rate in January 2015. Some is considered to no longer meet the required standards to attract an Australian Government tenant. This will result in several buildings needing to be significantly refurbished or converted to uses other than office to remain functional in the centre, such as the recently refurbished Abode Hotel.

4.1.8 Continuing to meet demand for community services and facilities.

As the ACT population increases, there will be additional demand for community, sport and recreation facilities and services will be needed. Only a small number of sites are primarily zoned for community facilities, and there is no vacant community facility zoned land. The need to continue to provide a variety of community facilities that service the diverse community may place further pressure on existing and at-capacity community facilities. Opportunities for community facilities will need to be identified, ideally within the centre and close to public transport. Additionally, opportunities for building re-use and integration of community facilities and services with new development will need to be investigated.



Figure 28: Challenges

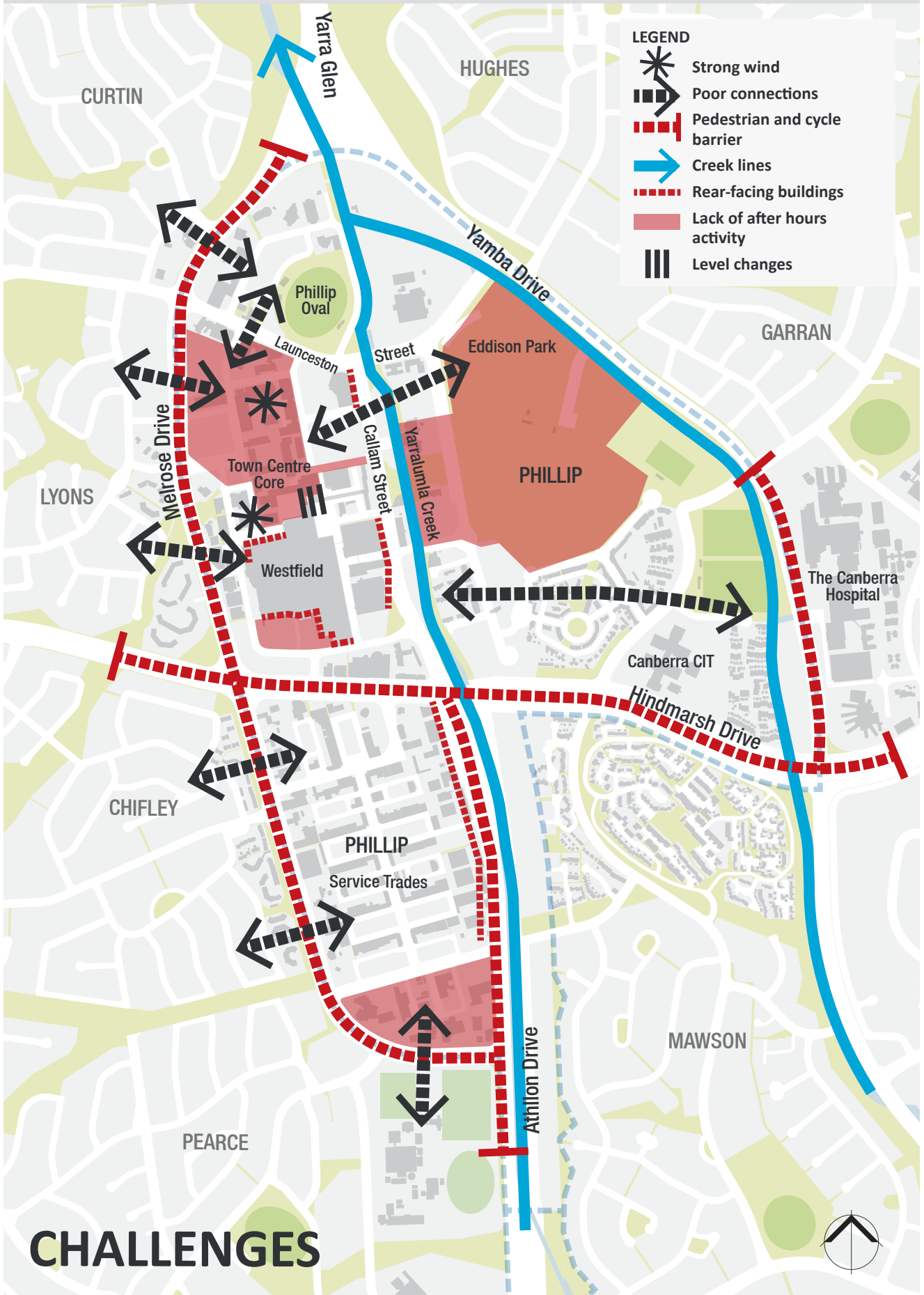
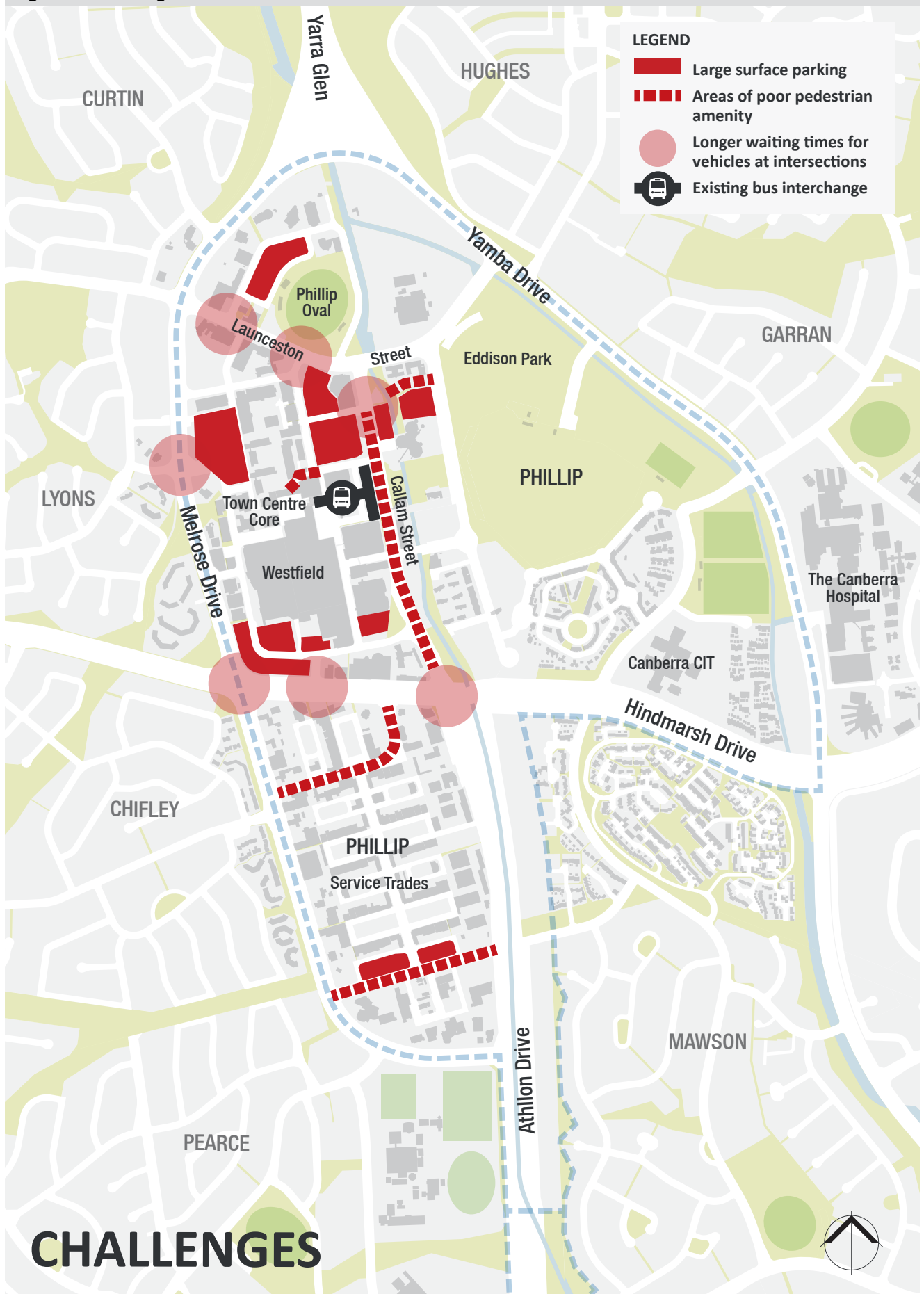




Figure 29: Challenges





4.2 Opportunities

4.2.1 Woden town centre as a metropolitan hub for Canberra

The Woden town centre is located centrally in Canberra and provides services and a large employment base for the district and wider region. Main roads adjoining the centre provide excellent links to the city centre, Tuggeranong, Weston Creek, Molonglo Valley, Queanbeyan and Fyshwick. The centre has direct connections for public transport between other major centres and a corridor that could allow for light rail into the future.

In 2011, it was estimated there were about 14,500 jobs in the centre. While the number of employees may change as the main employer (the Australian Government) makes changes, it is expected the centre will continue to be a major employment hub in the metropolitan context. To secure the centre as a major employment base, larger sites in the town centre core must be retained for new office development in the long term, such as Block 1 Section 7 which currently includes the Park and Ride and surface parking.

Due to its central location, good access and strong employment base, the centre is expected to continue to be an important hub for employment, regional services, urban living and shopping for people in Woden–Weston Creek and the wider Canberra community.

4.2.2 Enhanced streets, open spaces and connections

The landscape backdrop of the Brindabella Ranges and surrounding urban forest provides an exceptional landscape setting for the centre. As the centre develops over time and more residential development is introduced, there is opportunity to incrementally enhance the streetscapes and open spaces to further improve the landscape setting and urban forest in the centre. Improved landscaping using water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles can help reduce the heat island effect and make the centre a more attractive and welcoming environment for people to spend time. This could be achieved incrementally through off-site works as development occurs.

Defining the centre's street hierarchy and preferred character will focus where improvements to pedestrian amenity should be made and how development should interface with the streets. Better quality green spaces in the centre will provide attractive spaces for people to linger and enjoy. Large canopy trees will provide shade and improve pedestrian amenity.

The connections between public spaces can be improved through new pavement, better lighting and street furniture and, particularly, by strengthening the east–west link from Betsy Gallagher Park and the town square through the Town Park to Eddison Park as an interconnected series of open spaces (Figure 30).

4.2.3 Improved urban design and identity

There are a number of medium-rise developments in the centre that increase in height towards the town square. This is considered a strength of the centre's city form as the taller development close to the town square signals the centre of the town and helps people to navigate around the centre. Lovett Tower is a prominent feature of the centre's city form and can be seen from several locations within the centre and the broader Canberra region, including Red Hill Lookout and the National Arboretum.

The pedestrian walkways that extend from the town square play an important role as they allow people to easily and freely move between retail, office and community facility precincts. New development and redevelopment along main pedestrian routes can help improve these spaces, providing surveillance from balconies and more active uses at the ground floor. Allowing a mix of uses would generate activity during different times of the day, making spaces safer and more attractive to walk through.

Introducing residential development in the service trades area is complex due to the number of smaller tenants and potential for conflict with other non-compatible uses. However, it has the potential to activate the southern end of the centre. A successful example of a similar approach is the recent development in Braddon.



4.2.4 A highly accessible centre

Improvements to the public domain and pedestrian and cycle infrastructure offer the opportunity to further increase accessibility to public transport and encourage more people to walk and cycle through the centre. Additionally, improved connections to existing community services, such as The Canberra Hospital, are paramount to facilitate easy access for all sections of the community. Ensuring that new or upgraded community facilities and services are co-located in a convenient location in the town centre will also improve the centre's accessibility for the community.

The planned improvements to public transport and the prospect of light rail will provide people with genuine options for travel to and from the centre.

Good cycle and pedestrian connections to and from public transport stops and the bus station are vital to the success of achieving a highly accessible centre. Identifying main pedestrian and cycle routes within the centre will make it easier to prioritise future upgrades, which will be considered in the context of future budgets (Figure 30).

4.2.5 Providing housing choice

The ACT Planning Strategy provides clear guidance to introduce residential development into Canberra's commercial centres to encourage activity in the evenings, provide new commercial opportunities and housing choice, and improve the city's sustainability.

The centre is currently experiencing change with a number of residential developments underway or proposed. As more people live in the centre, a more active and diverse public domain will need to be developed to support them.

It is important that a range of housing choices be available for the community in Woden Valley and the centre to accommodate a younger demographic, older people and families. The opportunity exists to provide a range of different housing typologies in the centre, Phillip service trades area and along Athllon Drive.

4.2.6 A vibrant, safe and accessible place for working, shopping, living and recreation

The mix of uses and activities in the centre is highly valued by the community, as established in the first stage of community engagement. Everyday the centre is accessed by workers, shoppers, residents and people accessing community facilities and services. This provides an opportunity to further promote an active town centre and encourage more people to use the centre beyond the usual business hours.

There is an opportunity to build on the centre's strengths as a metropolitan hub for employment and retail and to encourage further uses, such as residential, that extend the operating hours of the centre. Improving the public spaces will support the greater mix of uses and encourage commercial enterprise to activate the streets.

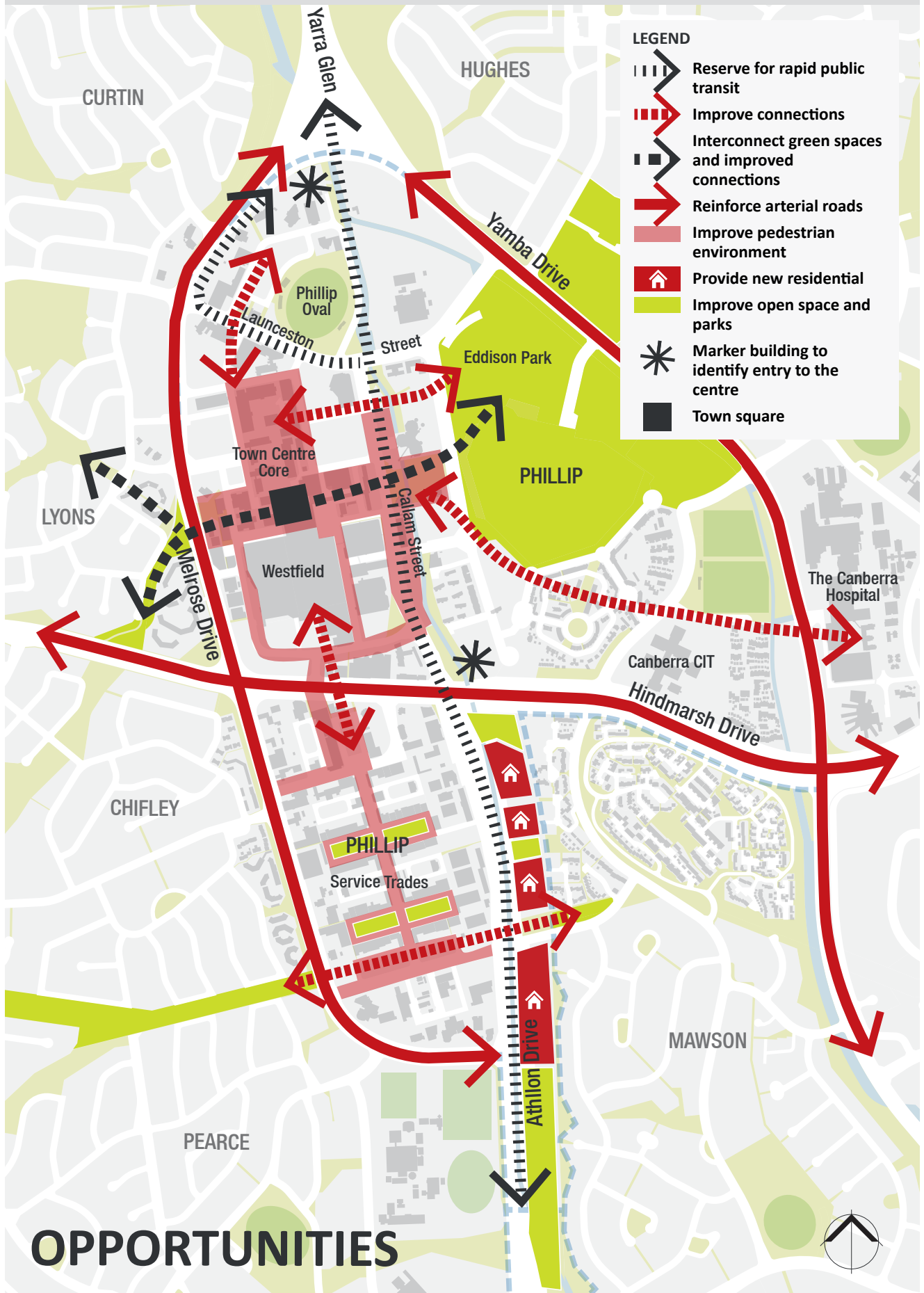
4.2.7 Sustainable development and design to reduce energy, water and car use

Features like Yarralumla Creek have the potential to provide new recreation spaces and better connections to the centre. Benefits include encouraging people to walk and cycle, improving water quality and reducing impacts of major flood events along the creek line. Opportunities for water sensitive urban design in the public spaces of the centre could help filter pollution out of stormwater and support new plantings. The built environment can be designed to reduce the urban heat island effect with the use of lighter building materials and permeable paving materials and by increasing shade for summer with shading structures and trees on main pedestrian routes and public places.

The proposed improvements to the bus interchange will make public transport more accessible to a wider range of the community to help provide genuine transport choice to the centre and the wider city. This could have flow-on effects to reduce private vehicle use, traffic congestion and pollution and to improve air quality.



Figure 30: Opportunities



Artist's impression for Callam Street





5. The master plan

5.1 Master plan structure

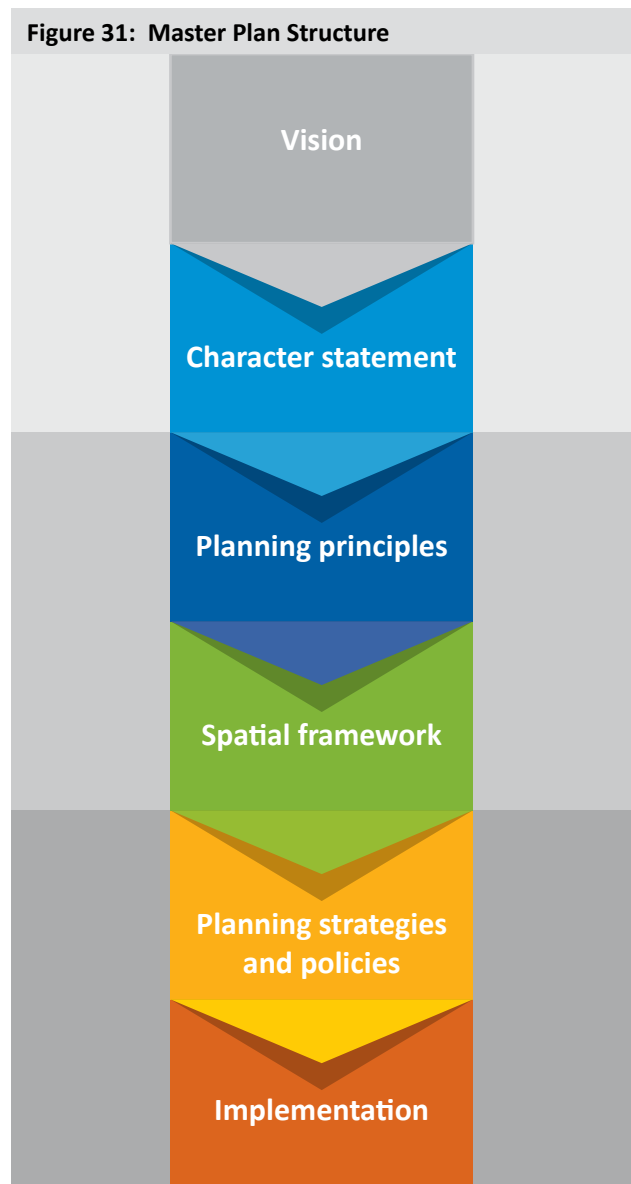
The master plan structure indicates how the planning strategies and policies support achievement of the vision and principles (Figure 31). Figure 32 indicates some of the key master plan assumptions that were used to develop the principles and planning strategies.

5.2 Vision

The vision has been developed to reflect the contribution from community and stakeholders. It captures what is valued about the centre and sets out what the centre could be in the future.

Woden town centre is a major community and commercial hub for the Woden Valley and wider Canberra region. It is a place that attracts people to live, work, socialise and enjoy throughout the day and evenings. The town square is the central focal point for social and community activity that will connect people to a network of safe and active streets and public parks.

Figure 31: Master Plan Structure





5.3 Character statement

The Woden town centre is set within a valley and is a major metropolitan hub in south Canberra.

The centre is well connected to other centres and is readily visible from main attractors such as Red Hill Lookout and the National Arboretum. The centre includes medium and high-rise buildings, and pedestrian-only spaces that contribute to its urban character. The shopping, community facilities and services in the centre are used by local residents and the wider region.

The centre is made up of several discrete precincts as shown in Figure 33, including:

- **The retail core precinct** will retain its primary function to provide major retail uses for the district. A mix of uses will be further encouraged with active uses fronting onto the streets, the bus station and town square.
- **The mixed-use, office and accommodation precinct** will primarily provide for government and commercial offices. A mix of residential development, community facilities, educational facilities and other employment opportunities will be provided. This precinct will provide a transition in the scale of development from the retail core to surrounding areas.
- **The recreation and living precinct** will offer a mixed-use residential environment. Several recreational uses will be retained and new uses encouraged in this precinct. Phillip Oval is integral to the precinct's function and character.
- **The community, recreation and parkland precinct** will continue to provide important open space, recreation and community uses that will be better connected to areas in the town centre and surrounding suburbs. The open spaces and recreation facilities will encourage an increasing town centre population to live an active and healthy lifestyle. The heritage significance and function of the Woden Cemetery is an important facility in this precinct and contributes to the precinct's landscape character.
- **The town centre living precinct** will predominantly provide medium and high-density residential development. This precinct will include some smaller-scale commercial uses to encourage daytime activity through the week.

- **The Phillip service trades precinct** will continue to provide important services in the town centre. Medium-density residential development will be encouraged along Townshend Street and fronting the pocket parks in Colbee Court and Dundas Court to bring more activity to the precinct outside of the typical working week.
- **The Athllon Drive precinct** will combine residential and recreation uses that support future public transport and provide an attractive place for people to live. This precinct will provide medium and high-density residential development that is supported by areas of open space and recreational uses. Yarralumla Creek provides opportunities to enhance the corridor through improvements to the creek and inclusion of a range of recreation activities for local residents. Opportunities to mitigate against flooding should also be provided along the Athllon Drive corridor.

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 5 shows how the planning principles are supported by the planning strategies.

5.4.1 Further diversify land use and character precincts

The centre has well-defined land use precincts, but this has created spaces with limited hours of activity in different parts of the centre.

The centre will retain precincts for distinct functions and character. However, each precinct will be encouraged to include mixed-use development within blocks and buildings. This will provide for greater use of these areas during the day and evenings (Figure 33).

Community and educational facilities should be located strategically to strengthen the pedestrian network and create more diverse and lively areas. Co-location of community facilities and services in a highly accessible town centre location will also contribute towards a more accessible centre and creation of more diverse and active precincts.



Figure 32: Table of assumptions

POPULATION

Population in Phillip
 2021 **3,400 - 4,100**
 2031 **5,500 - 7,100**

Population in Woden Valley
 2021 35,650
 2031 37,350

Population in ACT
 2021 **430,400**
 2031 **493,500**

DWELLINGS

ACT average **2,800 dwellings** per year between **2011** and **2031**

City and town centres could attract **20–25%** of Canberras housing demand

Approximately **100 - 150 dwellings** per year for **Woden town centre** to **2031**

EMPLOYMENT

Employment in the ACT/Queanbeyan
 232,400 2011
 260,000 2021
 280,000 2031

Operational office **floor space**
 154,000m² 2015
 172,000m² 2021
 194,000m² 2031

Retail floor space (GFA)
 124,000m² 2015
 180,000m² 2031

ENVIRONMENT

0.7% increase in **temperature** in the near future (**2020–2039**)

ACT Climate Change Snapshot (2014)

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions **40%** from 1990 levels, **by 2020**
 AP2 (2012)



Figure 33: Character precincts

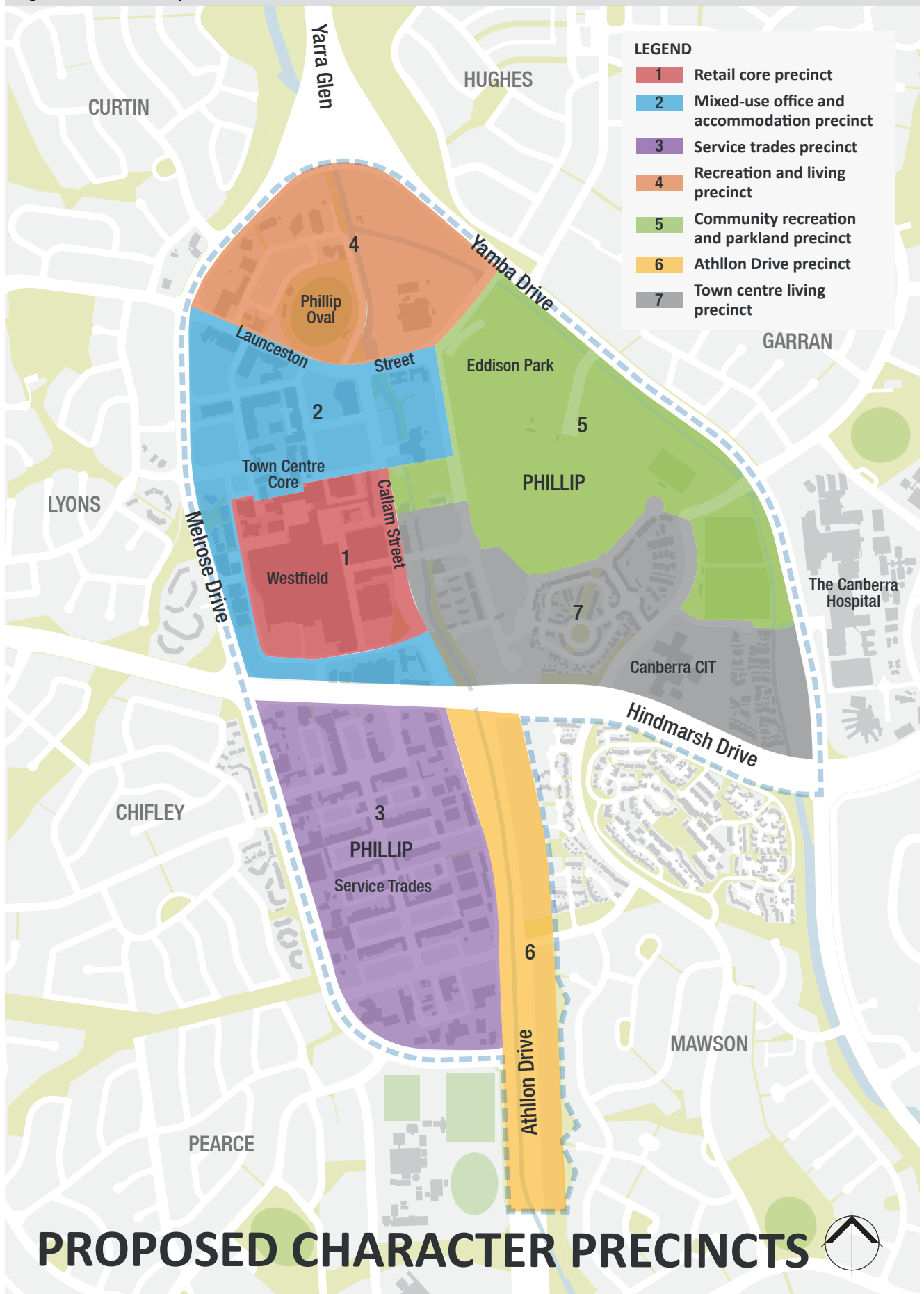




Figure 34: Urban grain, streets and public spaces

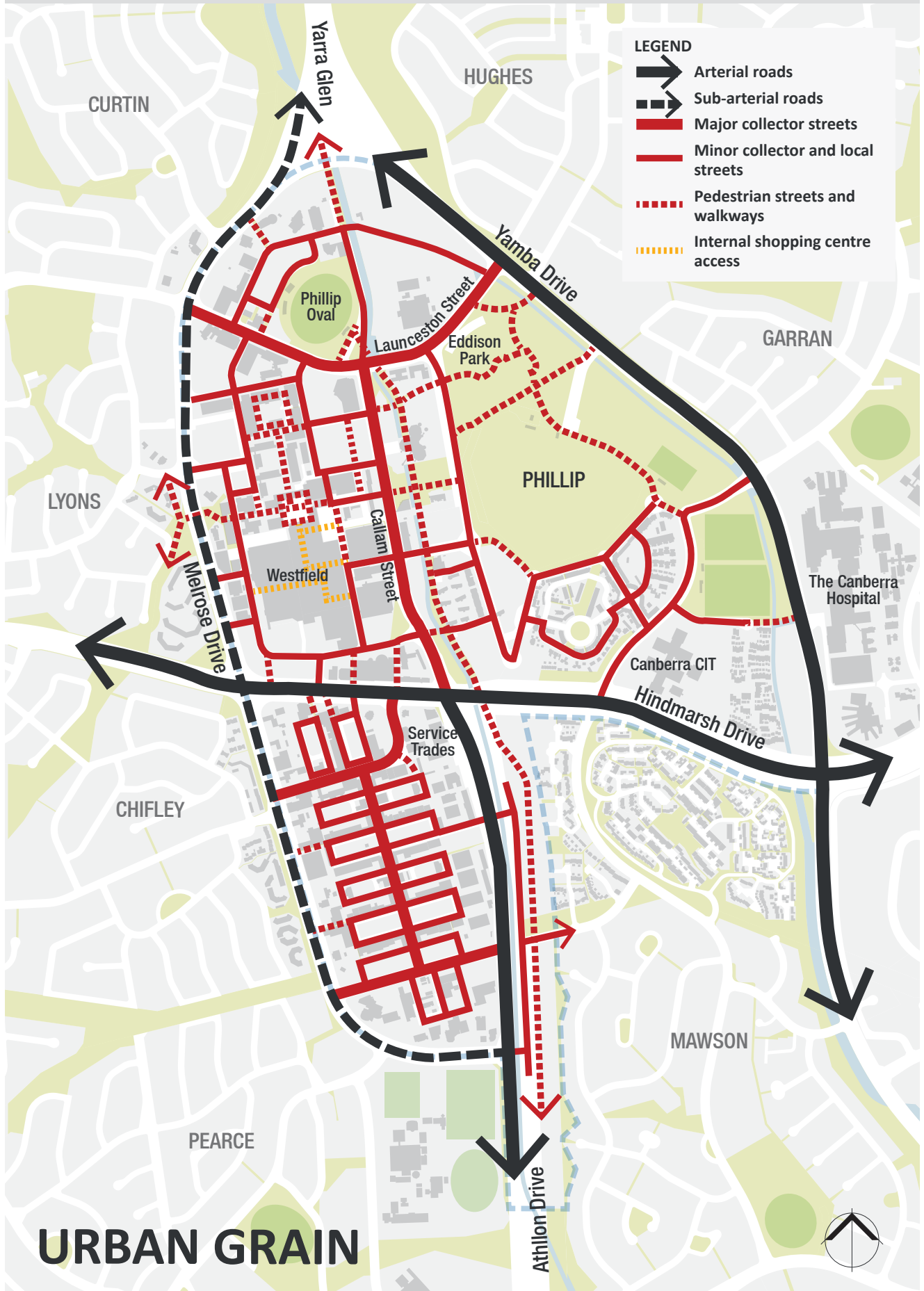
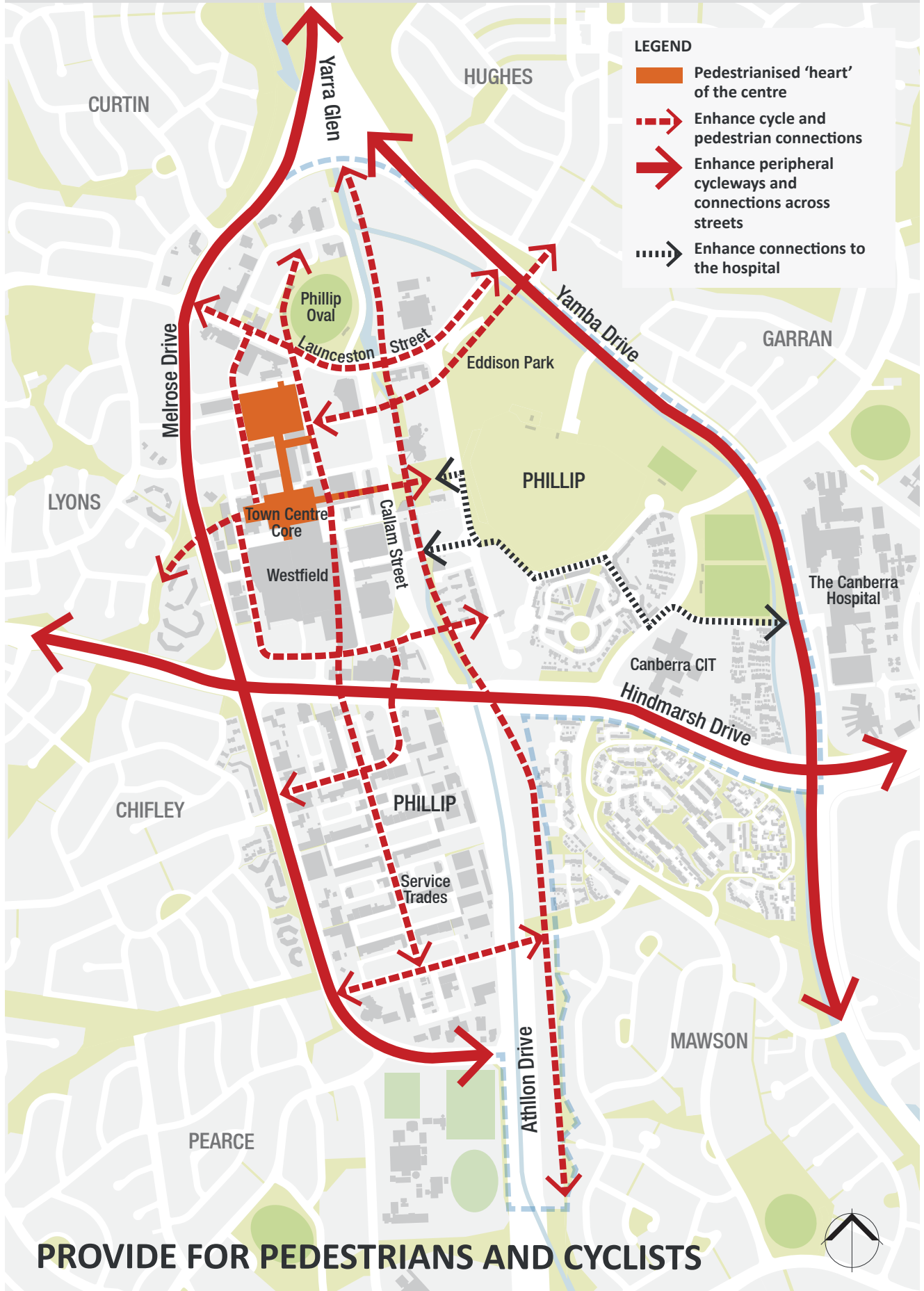




Figure 35: Pedestrians and cyclists





5.4.2 Improve the urban grain, streets and public spaces

The urban grain is the layout and structure of the blocks, buildings, streets and open spaces. A finer urban grain will allow people to move around more easily and find their way through the centre. A better defined street hierarchy and improved connections for pedestrians in the centre will create a finer grain of development (Figure 34). Rethinking the function and design of main arterial roads, such as Melrose Drive, will be critical to improving connections to the town centre.

Parks and public spaces will make the centre a more attractive place for people and provide opportunities for play, physical activities and passive recreation.

Opportunities for residential development will be encouraged along main pedestrian links to ensure the public spaces are active through the day and in the evenings. Main pedestrian routes include the town square, pedestrian spine, Bradley Street, Callam Street and Corinna Street.

5.4.3 Develop a strong community

Woden town centre will support a significant residential population which interacts, enjoys a healthy and active lifestyle, and enjoys a rich cultural life.

Facilities and activities for the community will be necessary to encourage community development among a diverse range of residents, including young singles, couples, families and retirees. This will include spaces to meet, and a public domain that encourages people to be active, walk and meet others, and cultural facilities and events that celebrate the past and present community.

5.4.4 Provide for pedestrians and cyclists

Establishing a clear pedestrian and cycle network into the centre and along main routes will provide connections between the precincts and to public transport (Figure 35).

The pedestrian and cycle network needs to provide easy access to the centre for people of all abilities. Improvements could include dedicated cycle lanes, shared zones, additional bicycle parking facilities and improved signage. Bicycle parking and facilities will be located in strategic locations that are safe, convenient and accessible. New cycle routes will connect to the cycle network beyond the boundaries of the centre and to surrounding residential areas.

The pedestrian environment could be improved by:

- providing directional signage
- retaining view corridors to help with way-finding around the centre
- encouraging development that provides a human scale along main pedestrian routes
- providing new street furniture and improved lighting
- reducing microclimatic impacts from new development, including overshadowing and wind effects
- providing shade and shelter with building awnings and canopy trees, and
- improving the visual quality of the public spaces as the centre develops.

The main east–west connections in the centre will be strengthened to connect the mixed-use precincts and open spaces such as Eddison Park, the cemetery and the public ovals to the east of the centre. The main north–south pedestrian and cycle connections will be strengthened, particularly between the service trades area and the retail core, and across Launceston Street.



5.4.5 Encourage a built form that positively contributes to the open spaces and streets

New development in the centre will positively contribute towards an interesting and lively streetscape and open space network. New development will be designed to ensure pedestrian movement and amenity is a priority by providing a mix of active uses on the ground floor, balconies and terraces overlooking pedestrian spaces and providing a human scale to the height and massing of the building (Figure 36).

The height, bulk and scale of development will recognise that the retail core and office and accommodation precincts are the primary areas for higher density and high rise development, stepping down at the edges of the centre. This will help visitors readily identify the major shopping and employment areas, and establish a clear built form hierarchy and character for the centre.

Opportunities for marker buildings in strategic locations are promoted to help people identify that they have entered the centre or to assist them to orient themselves as they move through the centre.

Figure 36: Built form along main pedestrian routes



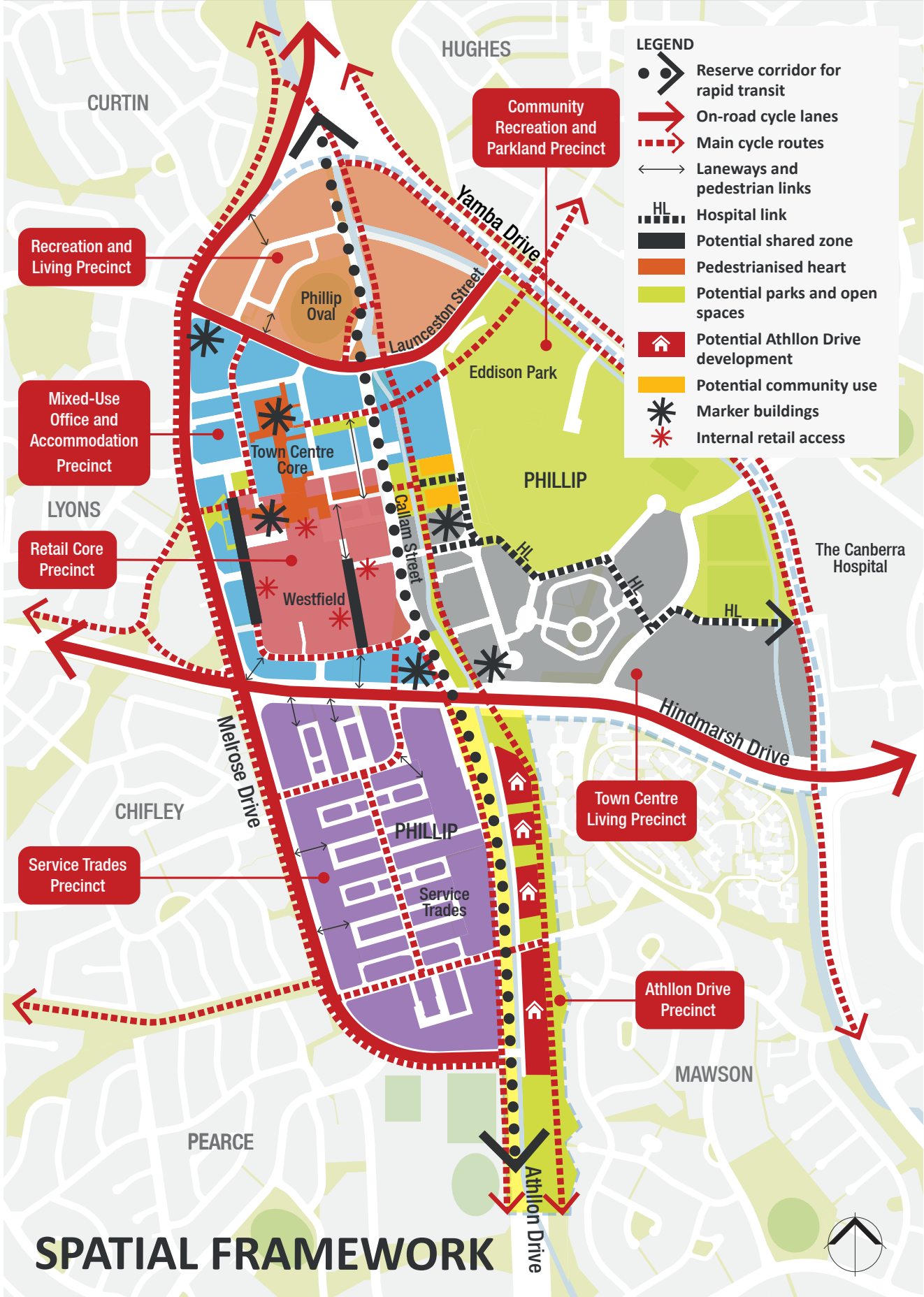


Table 5: Summary of planning principles and planning strategies

Planning Principles	Planning strategies that support the planning principles
Further diversify land use and character precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the centre’s sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain • Activate and enhance the public domain • Retain sites for future offices and employment • Improve access to community, sport and recreation facilities • Encourage town centre living • Improve connections and character of the Phillip service trades area • Provide a new vision for the Athllon Drive corridor that incorporates residential development and recreation uses
Improve the urban grain, streets and public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the centre’s sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain • Encourage buildings that provide a positive interface with the public domain • Provide a well-connected centre for transport and movement • Activate and enhance the public domain • Improve connections and character of the Phillip service trades area • Provide a new vision for the Athllon Drive corridor that incorporates residential development and recreation uses
Develop a strong community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the centre’s sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain • Provide a well-connected centre for transport and movement • Activate and enhance the public domain • Retain sites for future offices and employment • Improve access to community, sport and recreation facilities • Encourage town centre living
Provide for pedestrians and cyclists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the centre’s sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain • Provide a well-connected centre for transport and movement • Activate and enhance the public domain • Improve access to community, sport and recreation facilities • Improve connections and character of the Phillip service trades area
Encourage a built form that positively contributes to the open spaces and streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the centre’s sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain • Encourage buildings that provide a positive interface with the public domain • Provide a well-connected centre for transport and movement • Manage parking to ensure the centre is accessible • Activate and enhance the public domain • Encourage town centre living • Improve connections and character of the Phillip service trades area • Provide a new vision for the Athllon Drive corridor that incorporates residential development and recreation uses



Figure 37: Spatial Framework





5.5 Spatial framework

The spatial framework (Figure 37) 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, character precincts 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 Woden town centre could change over the lifetime of this master plan.

5.6 Planning strategies

These 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 the background and analysis.

The planning strategies identify opportunities for private sector investment and will be achieved through provisions to be included in the precinct code, 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 Improve the centre's sustainability through the design of buildings and the public domain

The sustainability of the centre requires an integrated approach to meet social, environmental and economic goals. The centre's sustainability will enhance the local economy, environment and community.

New development and redevelopment provides the opportunity to improve the overall sustainability of the centre. New buildings can be designed to provide good northerly orientation for solar access and to capture cooling breezes. The use of more sustainable building materials and water and energy saving innovations can be incorporated.

The centre should be well connected to the surrounding suburbs and provide a range of transport options and opportunities.

A level of flexibility in the design and sequencing of development will provide an enduring and resilient town centre, allowing several options and opportunities to be realised as circumstances change.

Recommendations and opportunities to improve the centre's sustainability are:

- Ensure that corridors of green space and tree plantings are linked to the wider open space network to provide for wildlife and people.
- Investigate opportunities for community gardens in or near the centre that allow people living in the area to produce food and be active and healthy in their community.
- Improve the cycle and pedestrian networks to make active travel easy and convenient in and around the centre, including integrating the pedestrian and cycle routes with the planned bus station and public transport stops.

Recommended planning policies

- Provide new planning controls to mitigate impacts on the centre's microclimate, such as shadowing of adjacent residential development and main public space. Development controls should include measures to reduce wind shear from taller development onto the streets and public spaces (Figure 38). Providing building setbacks to upper floors is one way to achieve this.
- Encourage residential development in the commercial core and office precincts to extend the centre's operating hours and support the local economy.
- Ensure development controls are flexible enough to allow for more sustainable and innovative building designs, new technologies to reduce energy and water consumption and the incorporation of living (green) infrastructure.
- Ensure buildings can be oriented to optimise energy efficiency, solar access, cross-ventilation and shading.

Opportunities for land release

- Reserve Block 1 Section 7 as a potential long-term land release for a large office/mixed-use employment base in the centre.



Recommended public domain upgrades

- Improve the design of the town square to incorporate structures that reduce wind impacts and the heat island effect, including canopies or arbours; any new structures should be multipurpose to allow for community events and contribute to a pleasant space.

Recommended further studies

- Continue investigations along Yarralumla Creek to reduce potential flooding along the corridor, improve stormwater quality and improve the landscape setting and amenity for the community.
- Continue to plan and improve the bus interchange and connections to make public transport a more attractive, safe and convenient mode of travel.
- Prepare a public domain design manual that specifies design standards, including water sensitive urban design measures, for the public spaces and new development. Materials selected in the public domain design manual should also be carefully considered to reduce the heat island effect.

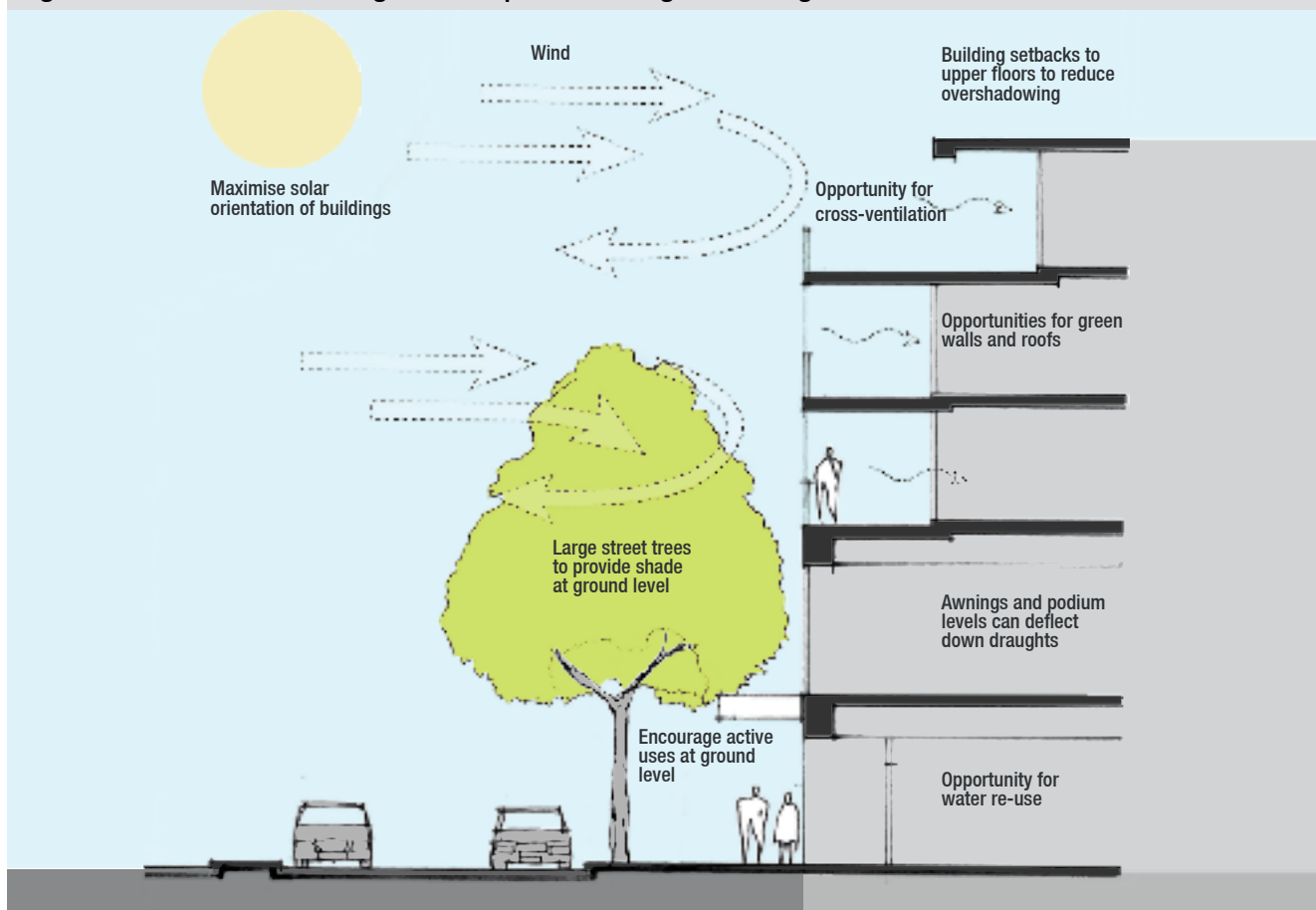
5.6.2 Encourage buildings that provide a positive interface with the public domain

The built form and character in the centre will provide a clear delineation between the retail core and other precincts of the centre. The core area will provide for a medium and high-density mixed-use environment.

Recommendations and opportunities to improve the centre's built form and character include:

- Limit building heights to respect the landscape setting of the Woden Valley and surrounding hills and ridges (Figure 39).
- Provide a building height transition from the surrounding areas, focussing taller buildings towards the town square and office precinct.
- Provide a human scale onto main pedestrian areas and routes; taller building elements are to be set back to reduce the visual bulk and scale and overshadowing impacts onto main pedestrian routes and nearby residential development.

Figure 38: Cross-section showing how to improve the design of buildings and streets.





- Encourage the design of towers to limit the floor plate size to reduce the bulk and scale of the development, allow for good solar access on to the public spaces and streets. This is particularly important for development on the northern side of the town square.
- Encourage development to build to the front property boundary along main pedestrian routes to frame the street, support active frontages and improve casual surveillance.
- Ensure that proposed development close to heritage listed buildings and objects are appropriately setback and designed.
- Reduce potential conflict between non-compatible uses through the design of buildings and permissible uses. This includes mitigation of conflict between residential uses and sporting fields. This is particularly important for the recreation and living precinct in the northern area of the town centre.

Recommended planning policies

- Allow for marker buildings in appropriate locations that indicate the entry to the town centre and help people to orient themselves as they walk through the centre. Marker building locations are shown in Figure 42 and include:
 - » Site A – Entry gateway at the intersection of Launceston Street and Melrose Drive. Taller development at this corner will identify the northern end of the commercial area and provide a strong urban entrance. The marker building is to be setback from the Launceston Street and Melrose Drive intersection, reducing potential overshadowing of the residential development in Lyons.
 - » Site B – A marker building to the east of the centre would strengthen the east–west visual connection in the centre. The building will not exceed the height of Lovett Tower and will provide a greater density of development close to the bus interchange and retail core area.

Figure 39: Artist's impression of Woden town centre





- » Site C – Entry gateway at the intersection of Callam Street and Hindmarsh Drive. The height is to be limited to balance the existing tower (Sky Plaza) on the opposite street corner and limit any potential for overshadowing of existing residential development in Swinger Hill.
- Introduce new development controls into the Territory Plan to mitigate adverse impacts from taller development, along main pedestrian routes and onto public places. For example, podium levels can create a sense of human scale and deflect down draughts.
- Provide a mix of development densities and building typologies that assist in retaining and enhancing the discrete character precincts in the centre (Figure 40). These include:
 - » **High-rise marker sites** at ‘gateway’ locations or areas where taller development will act as a ‘marker’ that helps people orient themselves as they move through the centre. Building heights of 16 to 24 storeys are supported. More than 24 storeys could be considered where the marker building does not dominate the centre’s building skyline.
 - » **High-rise areas** are the focus for higher order uses within the centre. Building heights of 16 to 24 storeys are supported. Buildings are to provide an appropriate scale onto the streets so not to dominate the streetscape and reduce overshadowing onto significant public spaces, such as the town square.
 - » **High-rise transitional areas** aim to provide a mix of uses and a high density of development at the edges of the retail core area. Buildings heights of 12 to 16 storeys are supported.
 - » **Medium rise areas** aim to provide a transition in building heights from the commercial centre to the lower-rise residential areas. Building heights of 4 to 6 storeys are supported to provide a mixed-use environment and a human scale to the street.
 - » **Low rise areas** are where the main development type is residential. Building heights to 3 storeys is supported. An additional storey may be considered where a street setback is provided to reduce the visual bulk and scale.
- Provide building heights in accordance with Figure 42. Where buildings are located in CZ1: Core Zone and CZ2: Business Zone land use zones, additional storeys can be considered when the development:
 - » is supported by a visual impact assessment that addresses landscape setting, town centre urban form and relationship to surrounding development
 - » maintains the building height hierarchy of the centre
 - » does not increase overshadowing on nearby residential development or key public spaces such as the town square
 - » provides an increase in the required number of adaptable units to provide for an aging population
 - » provides off-site works as part of the development; this could include verge works or upgrades to adjoining areas of open space, and
 - » provides a mix of residential units.
- Provide a minimum 4 metre building setback along Furzer and Bowes Streets to allow for large canopy street trees and to increase the available space for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Ensure buildings of 10 storeys or above consist of a clear base, middle and top:
 - » Building base, or podium, will provide an appropriate scale of development to the street, define entrances, and assist in the creation of an attractive and active public domain. The building base will be designed to reduce the impact of podium parking on to the public domain.
 - » The building middle will be designed and sited to minimise its impact on surrounding streets, parks, public and private open space and nearby residential development. The building middle will be setback from the building base and provide an attractive and interesting built form that fronts onto the streets.
 - » The building top will be designed to screen plant and building services, and create an integrated and appropriate conclusion to the building form.
- Reduce adverse impacts from development along main pedestrian routes through the application of building setbacks to upper storeys of development. Apply the following minimum building setbacks to the pedestrian spine (Figure 43) and Bowes, Callam, Corinna, Easty, Furzer, Irving and Matilda streets, Melrose Drive and Willow Street:



Number of storeys	Minimum setback
Up to 5 storeys*	No setback required
Above 5 storeys and up to 12 storeys	3 metres
Above 12 storeys	6 metres

* where the podium levels include parking, a maximum of 22 metres can be considered.

Apply the following minimum building setbacks to the town square:

Number of storeys	Minimum setback
up to 3 storeys	No setback required
Above 3 storeys and up to 12 storeys	6 metres
Above 12 storeys	9 metres

Figure 40: Building height areas for Woden town centre

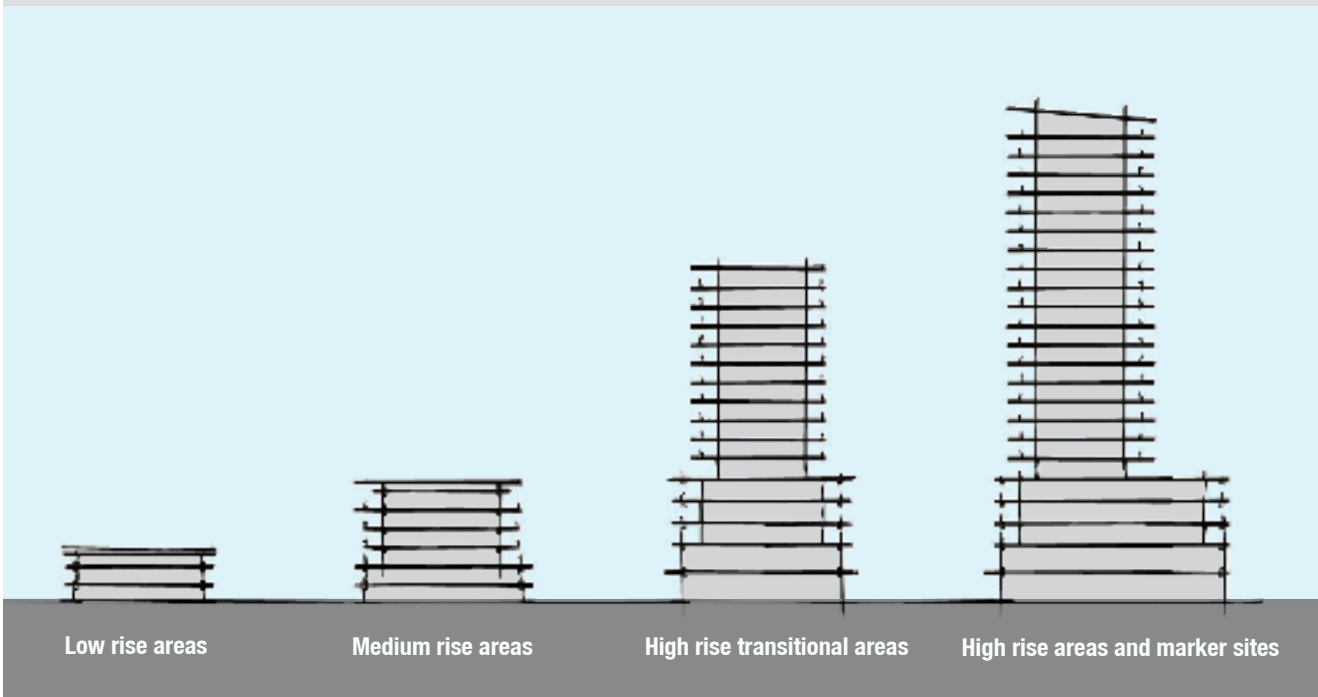


Figure 41: Typical cross-section through Colbee Court and Dundas Court

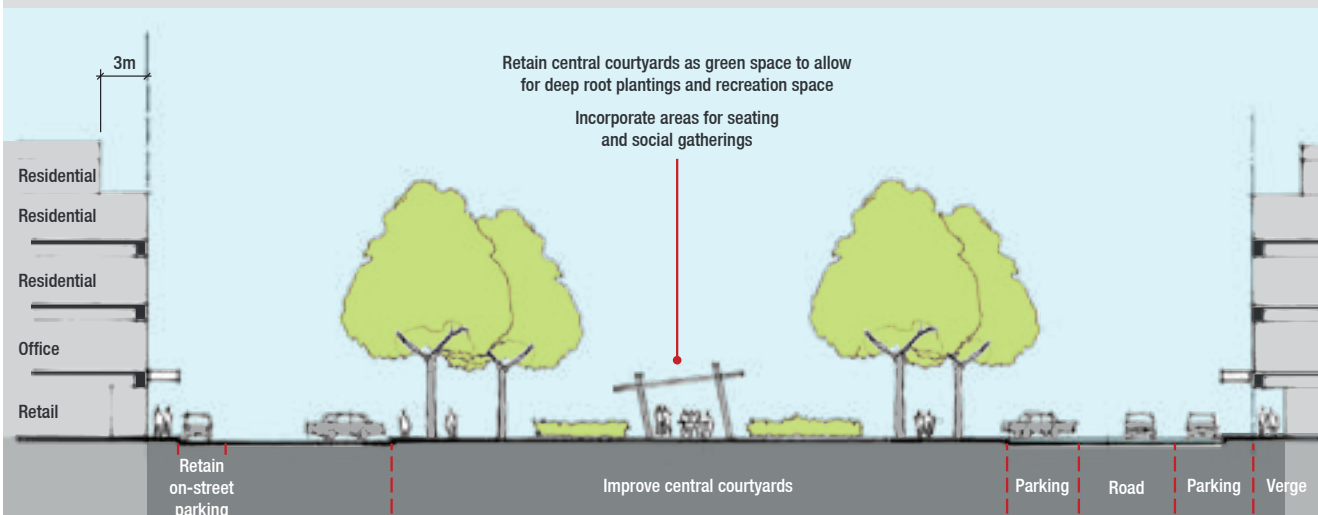
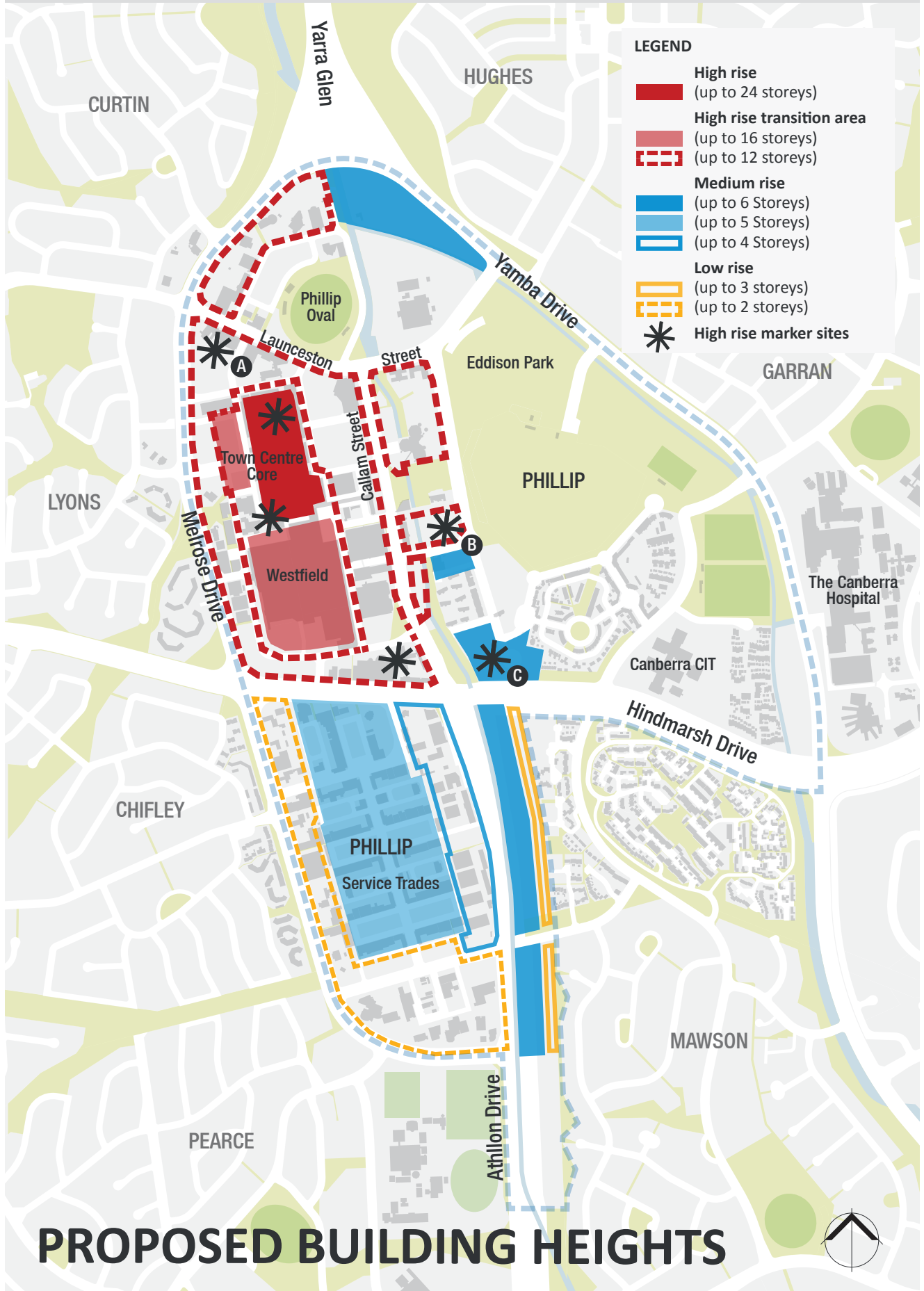




Figure 42: Proposed building heights





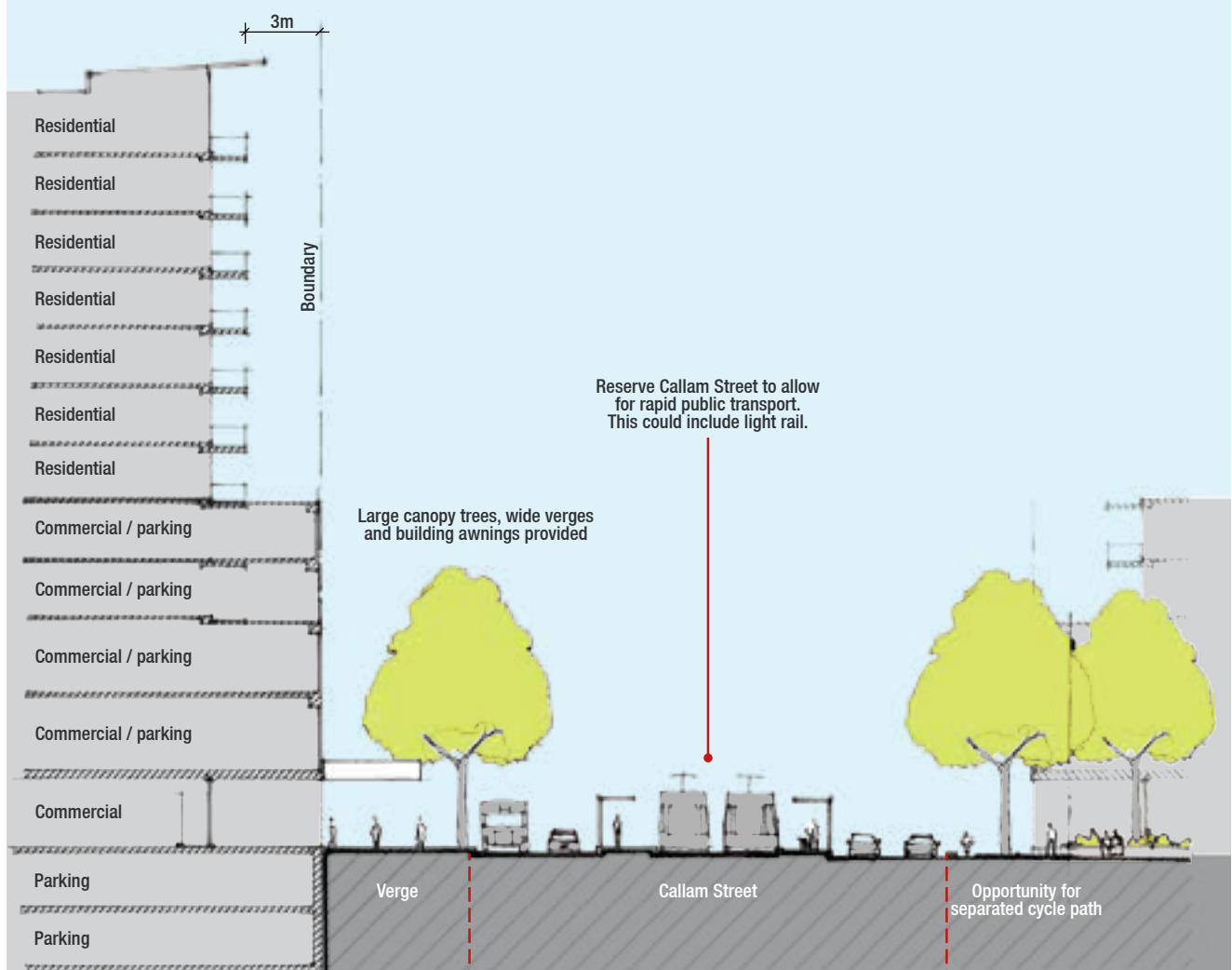
Apply the following minimum building setbacks to Bradley Street:

Number of storeys	Minimum setback
up to 3 storeys	No setback required
Above 3 storeys and up to 9 storeys	3 metres
Above 9 storeys	6 metres

- Where building base or podium levels are built to the front property boundary, setbacks are permitted where active uses, building entrances and landscape zones are provided.
- Zone Blocks 18, 19 and 20 Section 156 and Block 26 Section to RZ5: High Density Residential. This will provide opportunity for an appropriate transition in building density and scale from marker site C to adjoining developments.

- Simplify the planning controls for the Phillip service trades area, as illustrated in Figure 41:
 - » Allow a maximum building height of four storeys in the central area of Phillip.
 - » Permit a fifth storey, with a minimum 3 metre setback, for buildings fronting onto Townshend Street, Colbee Court and Dundas Court. Six storeys may be considered for development fronting on to Atree Court.
 - » Restrict residential use on the edges of the service trades area.
- Provide a 6 metre setback for development above two storeys that fronts on to Grenville, Prospect, Bellona Court and Devine Court.
- Allow for development up to four storeys along the eastern edge of the Phillip service trades area that encourages a more diverse range of businesses close to the rapid public transport on Athllon Drive.

Figure 43: Future cross section of Callam Street





- Provide colonnades and cantilevered awnings onto main pedestrian routes for shade and shelter. Cantilevered building awnings are mandatory for Callam, Corinna, Bradley, Brewer, Ball and Townshend streets, Colbee and Dundas courts and development fronting onto the planned bus station (Figures 38, 41 and 43).
- Restrict driveway access on Melrose Drive and Launceston, Callam and Townshend streets.

5.6.3 Provide a well-connected centre for transport and movement

All modes of transport are accommodated in the centre, including private vehicle, public transport, walking and cycling.

Establishment of a legible and direct east–west and north–south cycle and pedestrian network is critical to the success of the centre. This will need to be established over the long term to fully realise some of the strategies.

Transport, traffic and active travel will be managed through:

- Reinforce Hindmarsh Drive and Yamba Drive as arterial roads that can divert traffic around the edges of the centre and adequately perform their role and function within the wider road network. Safe pedestrian crossings at traffic lights will need to be retained and improved with any road upgrades.
- Establish Melrose Drive as a reduced-speed environment that reinforces its role as a primary cycle corridor. Melrose Drive will serve all road user groups and include improved pedestrian and cycle crossings, large street trees and, where appropriate, removal of slip lanes. On-street parking will be provided to encourage development to face onto Melrose Drive.
- Establish Launceston and Callam streets as low-speed vehicle environments that provide for public transport and private vehicles accessing the centre.

Figure 44: Artist's impression for Callam Street



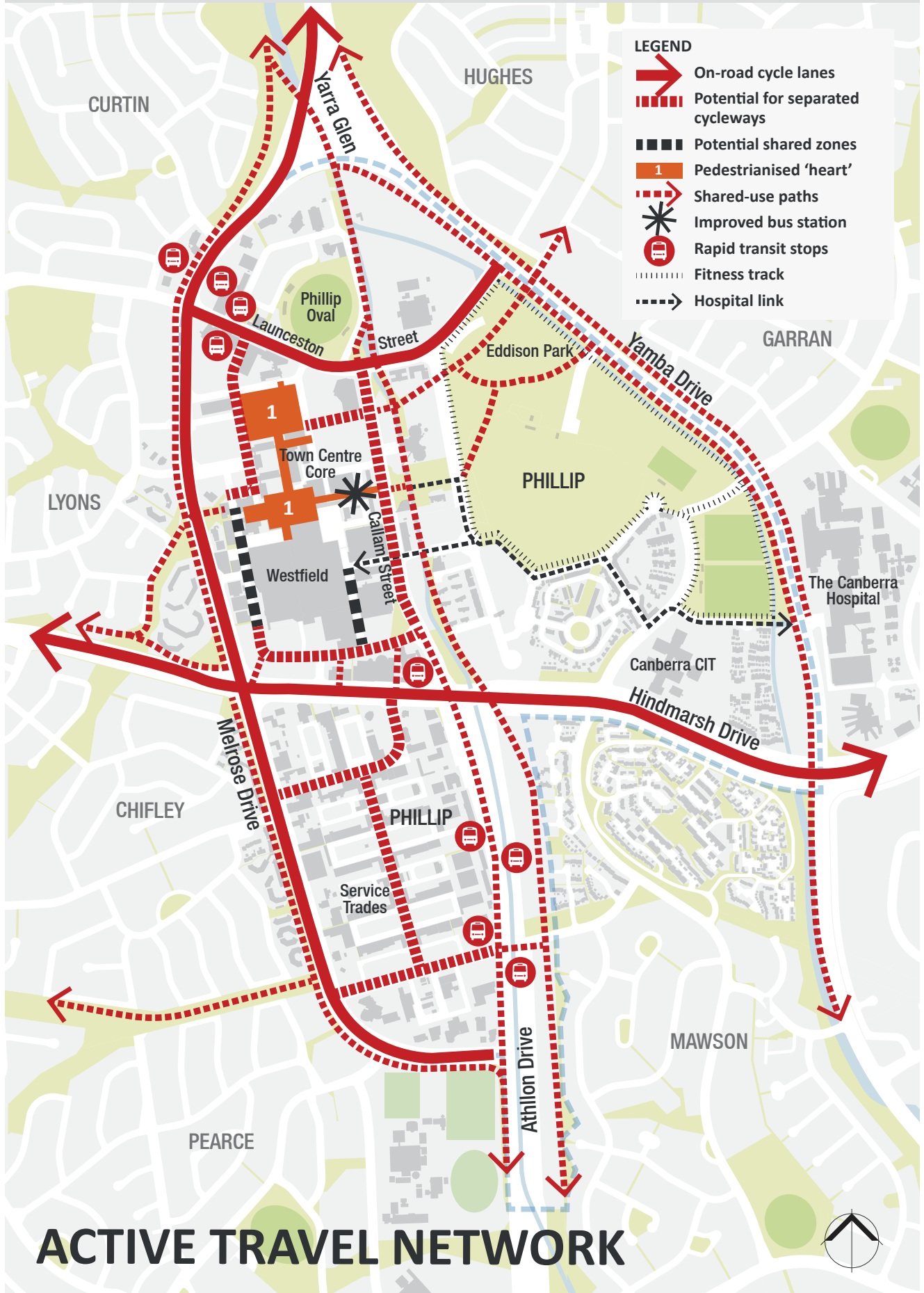


Figure 45: Potential roads and improved pedestrian connections





Figure 46: Active travel network





- Reserve Callam Street and the Athllon Drive corridor for future rapid transit, including light rail (Figure 44). This includes reserving the corridor in the Recreation and Living Precinct between Launceston Street and Yarra Glen.
- Investigate opportunities to improve the potential of the land north of the centre through improved local traffic circulation. This could include a new extension to Irving Street across Yarralumla Creek to better connect the Recreation and Living Precinct (Figure 45). Retain opportunities for future public transit parallel to the creek. Additional uses for the old pitch and putt site, such as residential development, could be considered once access is improved. Increased development density and building heights should also be investigated when improved access to this precinct is provided.
- Provide locations for bicycle parking that are close to the retail and office uses.
- Where feasible, remove slip lanes and provide pedestrian refuges at intersections along main pedestrian routes to make it easier for people to cross at intersections.

Recommended public domain upgrades

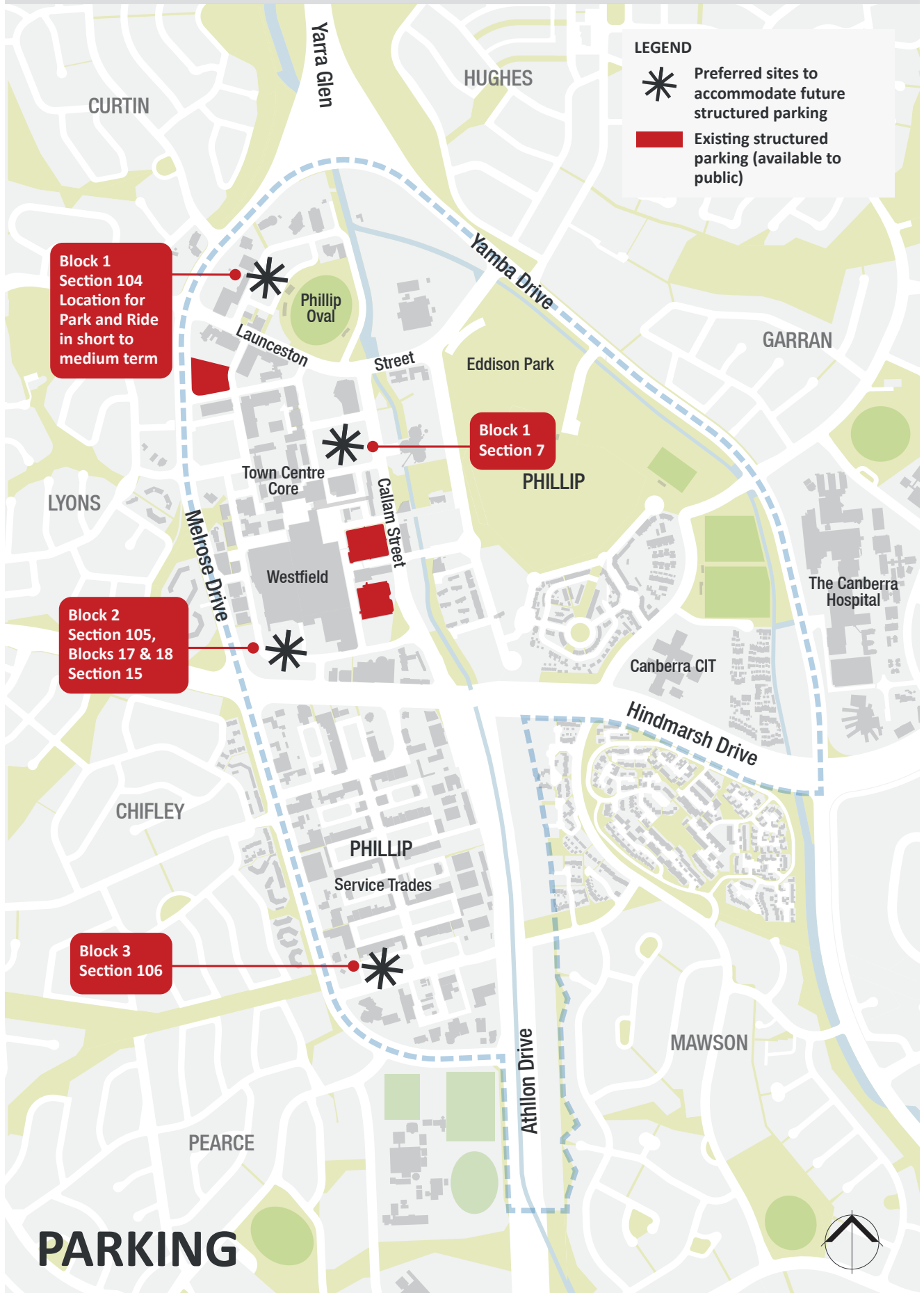
- Introduce traffic calming measure along Easty Street to discourage through traffic and improve pedestrian and cycle connections between the centre and Eddison Park. This could include reducing the width of the street road reserve.
- Provide a new connection between Corrina Street and Melrose Drive to relieve pressure on nearby intersections and Corinna Street (Figure 45).
- Investigate the opportunity for an eastern extension of Irving Street, across Yarralumla Creek, to and through the Recreation and Living Precinct and improve access to the old pitch and putt site at Block 4 Section 79 Phillip (Figure 45).
- Improve cycle and pedestrian connections and intersections across arterial roads to better connect to nearby suburbs (Figure 45).
- Upgrade infrastructure in the centre to be more bicycle friendly. For example, incorporate a bike channel where steep steps exist that allows cyclists to wheel their bike up the stairs. This is particularly important for the steps between the town square and bus station.

Figure 47: Artist's impression for a shareway on Corinna Street





Figure 48: Possible sites for structured parking





- Incrementally upgrade the public domain and street verges to provide attractive and usable pedestrian spaces. This includes investigating opportunities to widen the street verges and reducing street clutter to make the streets more comfortable for people to walk through the centre. Where feasible, services should be relocated underground to further reduce street clutter in all parts of the centre core and service trades areas.
- Redesign the Botany Street and Townshend Street intersection to provide safer and more convenient pedestrian crossings.
- Continue to investigate and plan for improvements to the bus interchange and bus network through the centre, with a focus on improving connections to pedestrian and cycle routes (Figure 46).
- Investigate the opportunity for separated cycle ways and shared zones that connect to the wider cycle network and make walking and cycling a more convenient way to travel to the centre for a wider segment of the community (Figure 46).
- Investigate the opportunity for a shared zone for Bradley Street to reduce traffic speeds and improve east–west pedestrian movement and complete the cycle network. Any upgrades to the public domain can be achieved through off-site works from private development or redevelopment.
- Investigate the opportunity for a slow speed shareway along a section of Corinna Street (Figures 46 and 47). The design of the street should provide for safe pedestrian crossings, slow vehicular speeds and cycle access.

5.6.4 Manage parking to ensure the centre is accessible

Parking in the town centre is currently near capacity. While significant parking demands are expected to be generated in the long term, a majority of the parking spaces are likely to be accommodated within individual development sites. However, given the nature of the mixed-use environment, it can be difficult to accurately estimate the extent of future development and parking generated by those developments.

There are several ways to manage parking in the centre. This includes managing existing spaces, providing new parking, locating future structured car parks and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport by making it easier for people to access the centre in other ways.

Parking within the town centre could be managed through:

- Integrate public parking structures into development with a mix of uses and preferably not stand-alone single-use structures.
- Provide convenient short stay on-street parking throughout the centre, where possible.
- Investigate the management of parking spaces in the service trades area to support local businesses and discourage town centre workers from parking in this area during the day; this could include areas of pay parking.

Recommended planning policies

- Design buildings and structures that reduce the impact onto the streets and public spaces, considering:
 - » pedestrian and cycle access to and from parking areas that are clearly visible and well-lit, and
 - » the use of high-quality architectural elements and landscaping to screen the structures from public spaces and streets.
- Ensure planning controls allow development to accommodate the required parking on-site, such as podiums.

Opportunities for land release

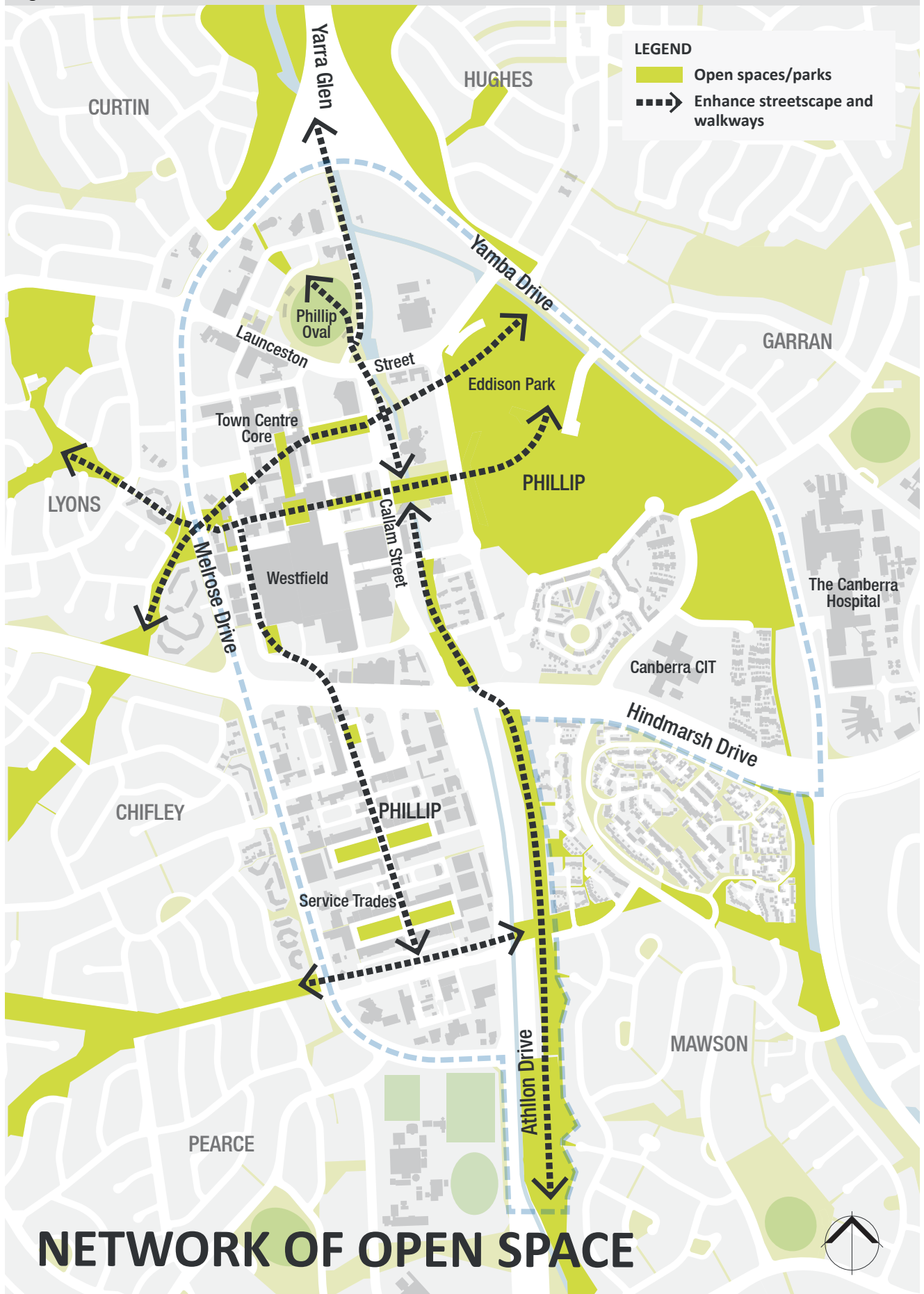
- Reserve sites that could provide publicly available parking structures in the centre, as shown in Figure 48. Publicly available parking structures are to be provided as part of a mixed-use development and preferably not be stand-alone structures. The identified sites have been assessed against criteria that consider proximity to surrounding development, potential parking yield, walkability to nearby employment, vehicular accessibility, time implications and potential for good urban design outcomes.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Transition the Park and Ride facility to a more appropriate location out of the centre. This will help reduce parking pressures in the centre, reduce the need for users of the Park and Ride facility to drive through the centre, and allow for the future development of Block 1 Section 7 Phillip. The transition to relocate the Park and Ride could include:



Figure 49: Public domain network





- » relocating the majority of Park and Ride spaces to the currently underutilised surface car park close to Phillip Oval (Block 1 Section 104)
- » expanding the Athllon Drive Park and Ride near Mawson to provide for people using the service from Tuggeranong, and
- » investigating a new site for Park and Ride north of the centre.

5.6.5 Activate and enhance the public domain

The centre currently provides little activity along streets and in public spaces. There are several opportunities to enliven the public domain by ensuring active uses front onto the streets and public spaces, upgrading the public domain, providing opportunity for new development in quiet areas of the centre, introducing residential development to extend the opening hours of the centre, encouraging a mix of uses, and building on the centre's strengths, such as Eddison Park (Figure 49).

The public domain in Woden town centre could be activated by:

- Encouraging a greater mix of uses through the town centre to reduce single-use precincts and extend the opening hours in the centre.
- Designing the public spaces to encourage temporary uses that activate the town square and pedestrian spine, such as pop-up stores and markets (Figure 50). Uses such as outdoor gyms and community gardens should be considered to encourage a more active and healthy community.
- Investigating the potential for Phillip Oval as a premier sporting venue and encourage a mix of uses such as gyms and other recreation facilities.
- Strengthening the east–west pedestrian link between Betsy Gallagher Park, the town square and the Town Park to become an inter-connected series of green spaces that is attractive and comfortable for people to move through. The east–west connection could be a focus for improved stormwater management through water sensitive urban design measures.

Recommended planning policies

- Encouraging development to incorporate green roofs and green walls to assist in the 'greening' of the centre. This will provide benefits to reduce the centre's heat island effects and improve the outlook for residents where roof tops or blank walls can be viewed.

- Introducing community uses into the Town Park to bring people into this space and improve pedestrian connections across Callam Street. This will provide activities during the week and weekends that are close to public transport, main cycle routes and parking.
- Encouraging active uses at ground floor level for new development along main pedestrian routes including the town square, pedestrian spine, Callam Street, Bowes Street, Bradley Street, Corinna Street and Townshend Street. Require development to include building elements, such as building awnings, to improve pedestrian amenity.
- Providing development controls that encourage new developments to front onto the streets and provide some flexibility for building setbacks for building entries, active uses and urban plazas.
- Zone Blocks 16 and 17 Section 156 to CZ2: Business Zone to provide an active commercial streetscape to both sides of the street.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Enhancing the public domain along main pedestrian routes to encourage development to front the streets.
- Investigating new opportunities for public art in and close to the centre that enlivens the public domain and reinforces or creates local character.
- introducing pocket parks over time that are close to new residential development to ensure users of the centre benefit from the physical and visual amenity of the green spaces (Figures 49 and 51). This could be achieved through off-site works when new development occurs or as part of the new development or redevelopment.

Recommended further studies

- Develop a public domain and lighting design standard for the centre that provides a consistent, functional and attractive public domain, considering lighting, street furniture, street trees and pavement types. This will also provide an opportunity to encourage and mandate water sensitive urban design measures and living (green) infrastructure into the design of streets and public spaces.



Figure 50: Cross-section through the pedestrian spine

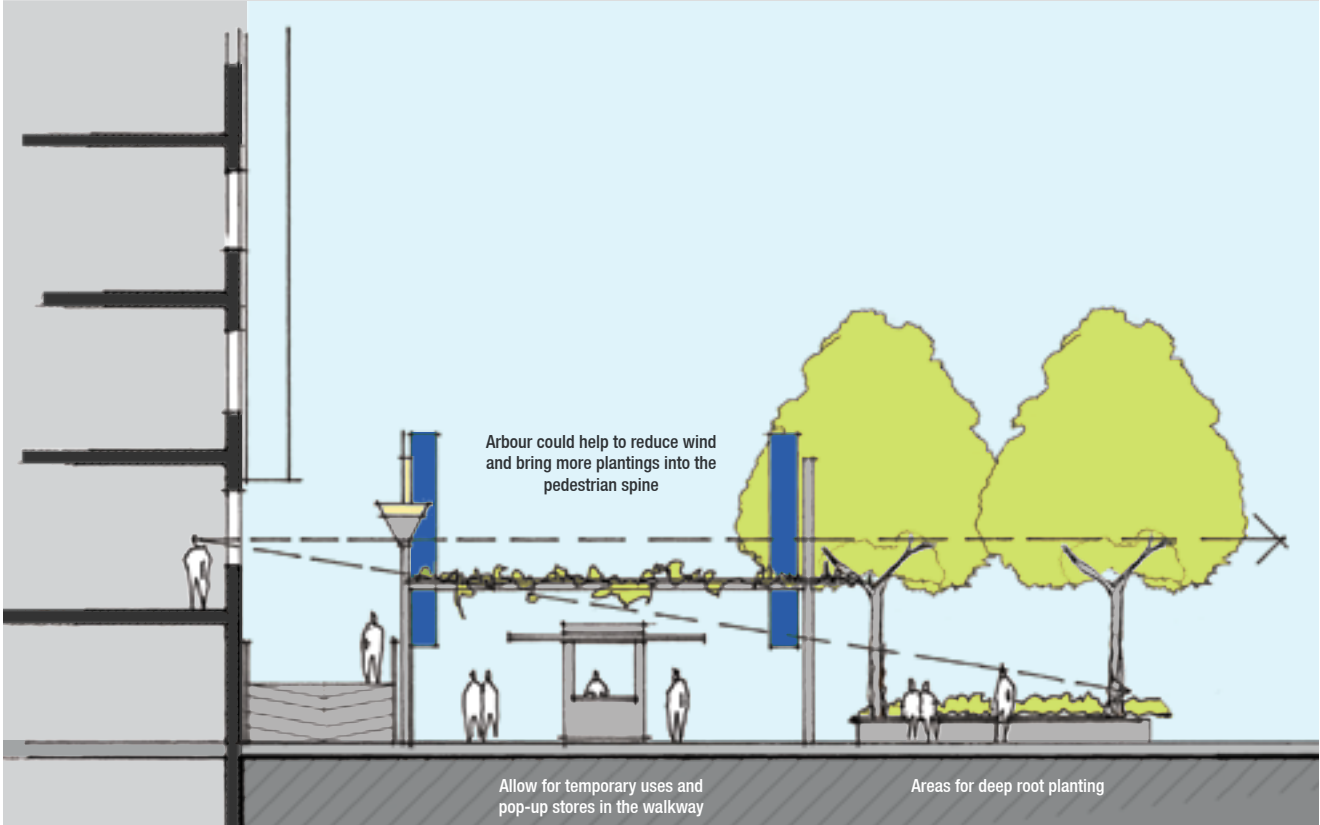
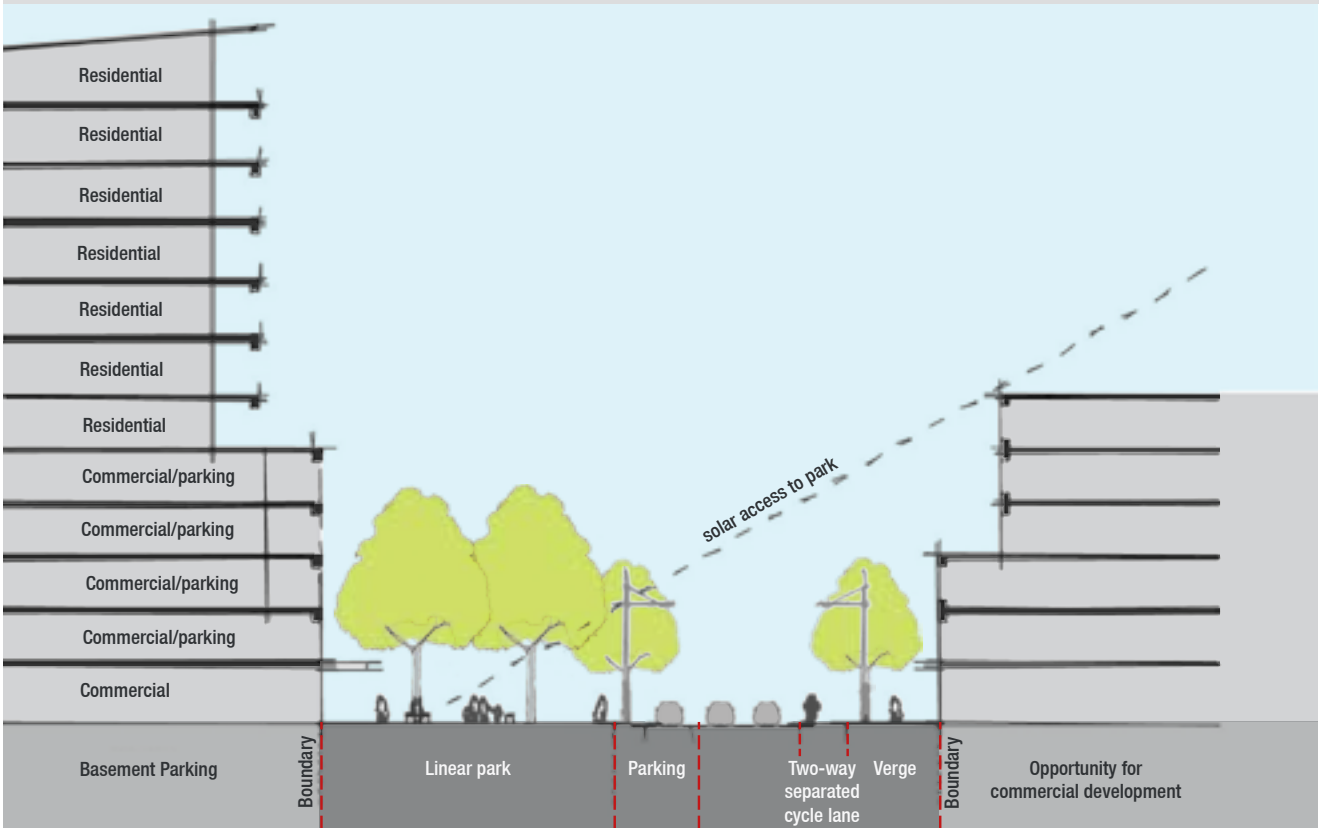


Figure 51: Cross-section through Matilda Street linear park





5.6.6 Retain sites for future offices and employment

Since 1991, the centre has been a location of significant employment within the ACT. The main employers are Australian Government offices and retailing. It is important the centre continues to provide this level of employment and has the ability to grow as the wider city grows.

The Woden town centre will continue to be a major employment base through:

- Retain the commercial land use zones in the town centre core to focus office and retail development close to public transport. Development in these areas should be built to allow for re-use of development as the community's needs change and as changes in the market occur.

Opportunities for land release

- Retain Block 1 Section 7 for future mixed-use office development.

5.6.7 Improve access to community, sport and recreation facilities

The characteristics of current and possible future residents of the Woden Valley have been considered in determining the need for community, sport and recreation facilities. The role Woden plays in the wider Woden Valley–Weston Creek catchment is also recognised.

The Woden Valley District currently has an older population compared to the wider ACT. In the future, and as development occurs, it is expected that young adults and families may move into the area, leading to a high proportion of younger and older residents.

In the short to medium term, it is likely urban intensification in the centre will create additional demand for community, sport and recreation facilities through an increase in people living and working in the area. Additional demand may support investment in new or upgraded facilities and may help contribute to the sustainability and efficiency of existing facilities, such as the Woden Library.

The Woden town centre's community, sport and recreation facilities will be improved through:

- Continue to investigate the redevelopment/ relocation of the new community hub to a town centre location close to public transport, cycle connections, short-stay parking and other shops and services. Co-location of facilities is preferred. A new community hub in a town centre location will provide a new focal point for community. Further investigations are required for an appropriate site for the community hub. Re-use of an existing building, such as Callam Offices, or a new facility in the Town Park could be investigated as both sites are close to existing and planned public transport stops, the main north–south shared path and residential areas. There is also opportunity for visitor parking from Easty Street. After the community facilities have been moved, the current site can be zoned to a commercial land use zone to allow for mixed use development.
- Continue to investigate the possible redevelopment or relocation of the Phillip Community Health Centre. Co-location with the proposed community hub should be considered.
- Enhance pathway networks, access to public space and strategic development of commercially operated sport, recreation and fitness facilities, including Phillip Oval.

Recommended planning policies

- Simplify the existing planning controls in the Phillip Precinct Code for the swimming and ice skating site to allow for redevelopment of the pool anywhere on the site. Ensure the site has the potential to accommodate other uses, such as offices, that support the existing facilities and allow for future upgrades and long-term viability.
- Change land use zoning for the Town Park from PRZ1 Urban Open Space to CFZ Community Facility Zone to allow for community facilities to be developed in a highly accessible location in the town centre and to provide more activity in the park.



Recommended public domain upgrades

- Upgrade the connections between The Canberra Hospital and the town centre through an improved pedestrian and cycle way. The upgrades should cater for all levels of mobility and incorporate as few level changes and street crossings as possible. The new hospital link could be achieved through new directional signage, improved lighting, wide paths (2.5 metres), shade trees and seating. The new hospital link will connect the hospital through the residential areas (past the current CIT campus) and Arabanoo Park/ Town Park into the proposed location for the new bus station. A second connection to the retail core will need to be considered across Callam Street and along Neptune Street (Figure 46).
- Enhance linear public open space along Yarralumla Creek linking the centre, via Athllon Drive, to Mawson group centre. A new wetland and improved public domain could create a better quality landscaped setting that will support new residential areas on Athllon Drive.
- Investigate opportunities for a 2 to 3 kilometre running track/fitness track around Eddison Park and the Woden Cemetery to give local residents the opportunity to safely exercise within a town centre location. This could be modelled on the well used Tan Track in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens.

Recommended further studies

- Continue investigations for the possible redevelopment or relocation of CIT facilities. If the facilities are relocated, the existing site should be considered for community and health-related facilities, which could include housing for older people and new models of accommodation for the aged.
- Co-locate the emergency services facilities in a highly accessible location within the southern area of the town centre. Further investigations will determine the facilities that are required and size of future sites.

5.6.8 Encourage town centre living

While the Woden Valley population is not projected to greatly increase over the next 20 years, the Woden town centre population is anticipated to more than double by 2032. Opportunities for new residential development in the centre will be critical to achieving a sustainable and resilient centre.

There is also an opportunity to provide a range of housing types in the centre and along the Athllon Drive corridor. Currently, Woden Valley consists mostly of single detached dwellings in a suburban setting. New housing choice within or close to the centre will take advantage of convenient living that is close to public transport, public amenities, shopping and employment.

The centre will provide housing for the community including families, retirees and young people through:

- Ensure residential use is part of a mixed-use development to make living in the centre an attractive lifestyle choice.
- Provide opportunity for residential development in most areas of the town centre, so it contributes to activity outside of normal office daytime working hours.
- Encourage a range of housing types appropriate for younger and older people, including provision for affordable housing and rental accommodation.
- Allow for medium-rise housing typology to be incrementally introduced into the Phillip service trades area along Townshend Street, while retaining valuable service trades at the edges.

Recommended planning policies

- Ensure a range of housing types and sizes are provided. For the centre, this means providing a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments.
- Ensure residential development provides balconies and terraces that look onto the streets and public spaces, particularly to the town square, Furzer Street, Corinna Street and Callam Street.

Opportunities for land release

- Provide opportunities for residential development within close walking distance to public transport along Callam Street and Athllon Drive.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Improve the public spaces and provide more green space close to new development or as part of new development to allow for recreation and exercise opportunities. Figure 51 illustrates how a new linear park could be incorporated as part of new development on Section 7.



5.6.9 Improve connections and character of the Phillip service trades area

The Phillip service trades area provides valuable services for the Woden Valley and surrounds. It is important these services are retained where possible.

The 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan provided a new vision for this precinct, allowing for taller buildings and introducing residential use in some areas. To date, no sites within the precinct have been developed for residential use. This could be due to a number of factors including individual smaller tenancies across the whole precinct, economic challenges, and potential noise and odour concerns from nearby uses. While there are challenges with introducing residential into this precinct, it does offer a longer-term opportunity for building owners and lessees.

Recommendations and opportunities to improve the service trades area are:

- Retain the important role of providing service trades in the Woden Valley by limiting the areas where residential development can occur, focussing on Townshend Street, Colbee Court and Dundas Court.
- Reinforce the long-term vision for the precinct established in the 2004 master plan that allows for an incremental transformation along the central area of the precinct (Figures 52 and 53). The built form in this precinct will provide a cohesive character that is distinct from the town centre core.

Recommended planning policies

- Improve built form planning controls to ensure they deliver a scale of development consistent with the surrounding precinct and uses that are appropriate for the precinct. This will include simplifying the planning controls in the Phillip Precinct Code that allows for development up to five storeys in the central area.

Figure 52: Artist's impression for Townshend Street





- Provide active frontages on to Townshend Street, Colbee Court and Dundas Court with a consistent floor to ceiling height for the ground floor. A minimum floor to ceiling height of 3.6 metres is required where active frontages are mandated.
- Restrict residential development at the edges of the precinct to allow for service trades to be maintained.
- Encourage new development along the eastern edge of the precinct to provide a frontage on to Athllon Drive and improve connections to rapid transit stops.

Recommended public domain upgrades

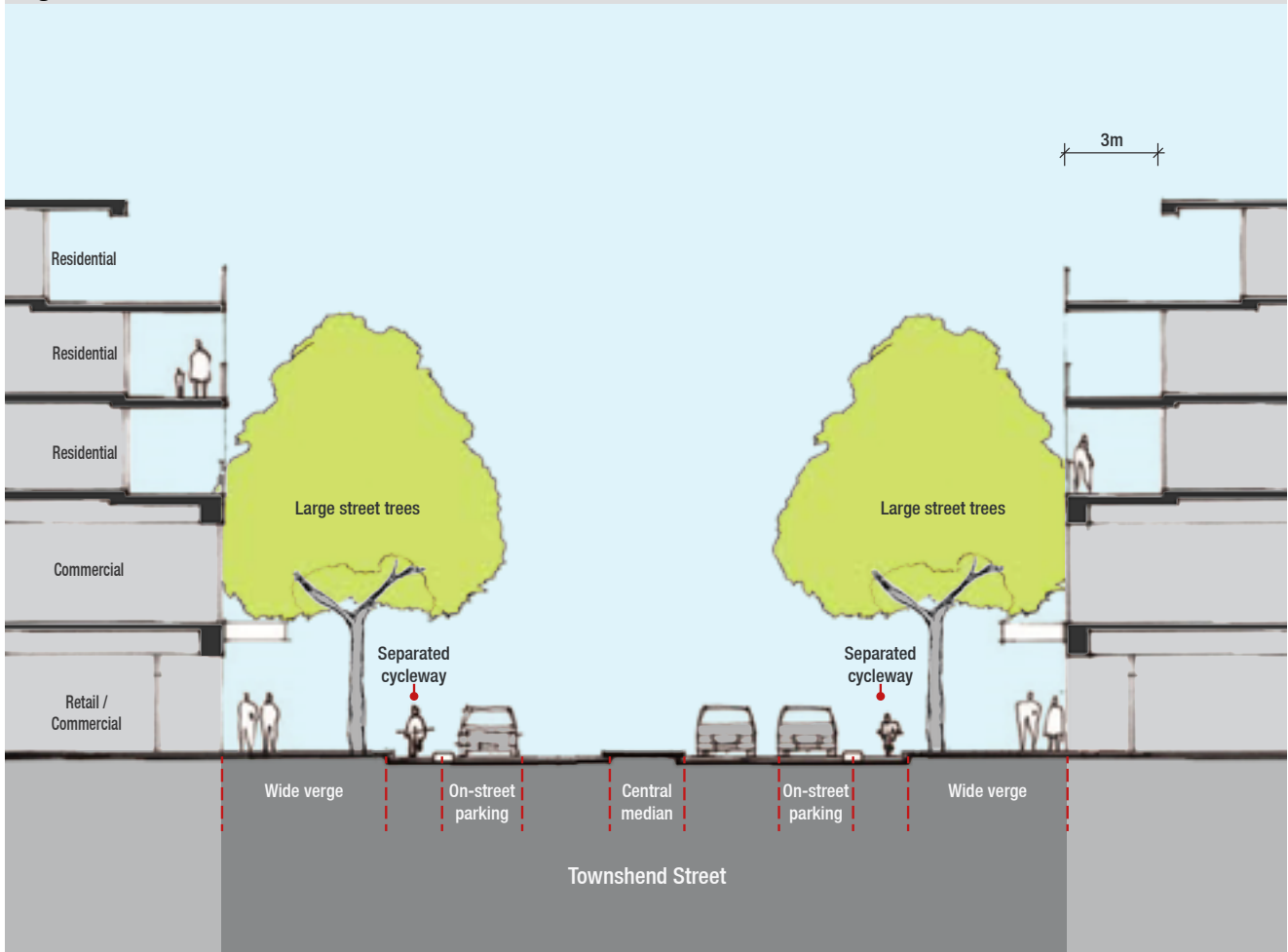
- Improve cycle and pedestrian connections that better connect to the wider shared path networks, particularly along Parramatta Street, Townshend Street and Botany Street.

- Improve the public domain to support local business and the future potential for residential, particularly along Townshend Street, Colbee Court, Dundas Court and Atree Court.
- Extend Atree Court to Hindmarsh Drive with a left-in/left-out arrangement to improve vehicular and pedestrian connections (Figure 45).

Recommended further studies

- Investigate new sites in the southern area of the town centre to accommodate a co-located fire and ambulance facility. This will also provide new opportunities for redevelopment of the existing sites.
- Review the bus depot facilities on Block 9 Section 54 to determine new opportunities for the site that could incorporate an upgraded bus depot and complementary uses.

Figure 53: Cross-section of Townshend Street





5.6.10 Provide a new vision for the Athllon Drive corridor that incorporates residential development and recreation uses

Athllon Drive provides a longer-term opportunity to provide medium and high-density residential development that is located along a major transit route, close to existing bus stops, well connected to the existing cycle network, and with opportunities for recreational uses.

It is anticipated the corridor would provide a lower density than that proposed for the centre and that the open space network would form a critical component of the design of new development.

Yarralumla Creek offers opportunities for improvements to the open spaces through water sensitive urban design principles, flood mitigation measures and a better quality of landscaping for local residents.

Athllon Drive will be incrementally managed by:

- Provide a transition in building heights with low rise development closer to the existing residential in Swinger Hill and Mawson.
- Provide a built form that considers good solar orientation for residents and reduces overshadowing impacts on nearby residential development and high-use public spaces.

Figure 54: Artist's impression for the shared-path and residential development along Athllon Drive



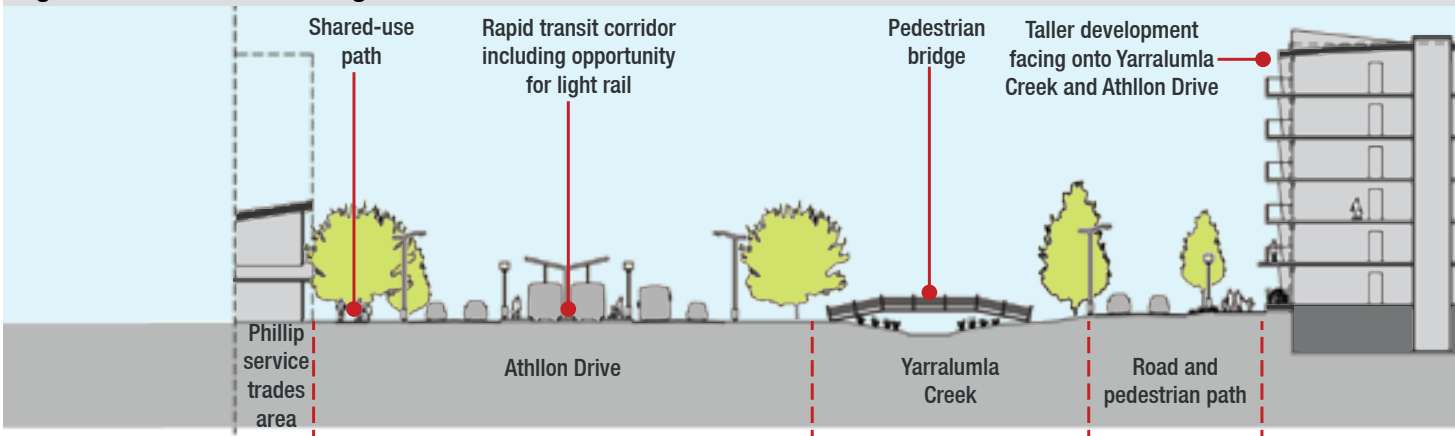


- Allow for a generous area of open space that provides a buffer to the existing suburbs to the east, and incorporates the trunk cycle route and high quality trees. The open spaces should allow for off-line ponds and associated landscaping in the middle of the corridor between Woden town centre and Mawson group centre (Figures 54, 55, 56 and 57).
- In the subdivision and development layout along Athllon Drive, provide road connections to Athllon Drive and into Mawson. There should be a focus on well-designed areas of open space that become an extension of the existing open spaces in the adjoining suburbs of Mawson and Swinger Hill.
- Retain and enhance the pedestrian routes through the corridor and into the existing suburbs as new development is introduced along Athllon drive.
- Provide open spaces that can be used for a diverse range of activities including opportunities for off-leash dog walking, exercise and recreation facilities as development is introduced into the corridor.

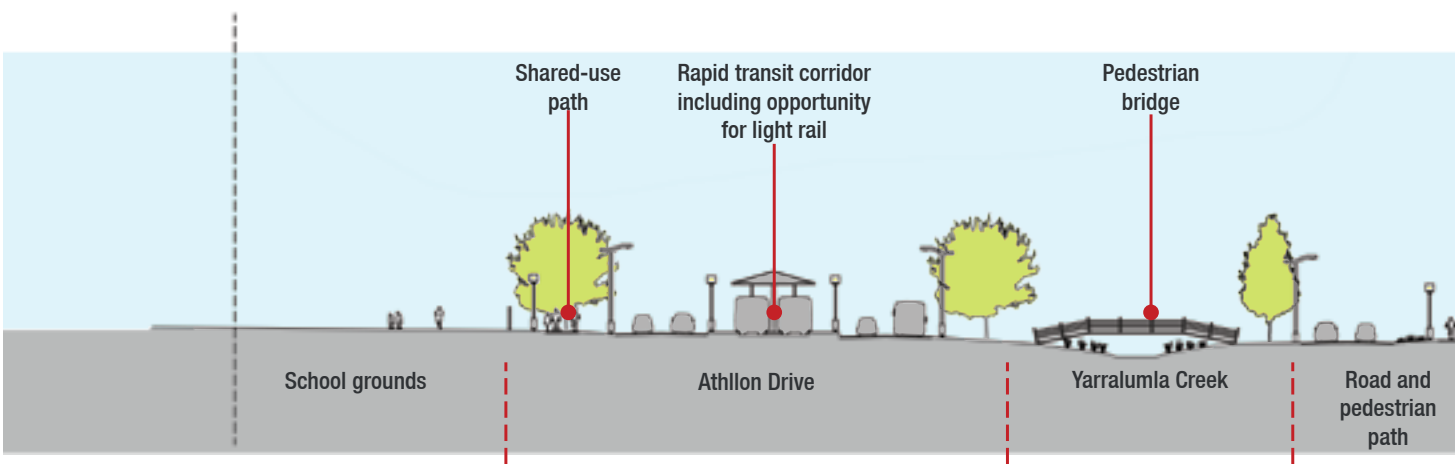
Recommended planning policies

- Provide building heights up to six storeys that front Athllon Drive, stepping down to two and three storeys to provide an appropriate interface with the existing suburbs (Figures 55 and 56).

Figure 55: Cross-section through Athllon Drive



SECTION A





- Rezone the central area of the corridor from residential to PRZ1 urban open space to allow for recreation space and flood mitigation measures, such as a pond (Figure 56).
- Rezone the existing RZ2 land use to RZ5 high density residential to allow for development that is consistent with a rapid transit route (Figure 56). The land use zone boundaries shown in Figure 56 are indicative only and may be subject to change to ensure a landscape buffer and shared-use path are provided between the new development and existing residential development in Swinger Hill and Mawson.

Opportunities for land release

- Provide the opportunity for medium and high-density residential development that is located close to the existing rapid transit stops. This will include apartments and townhouse or terrace style of housing, adding to the choice of housing types in the Woden Valley.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Enhance the north–south and east–west shared-use paths as part of any new development along the corridor, through improved directional signage, lighting and street furniture.

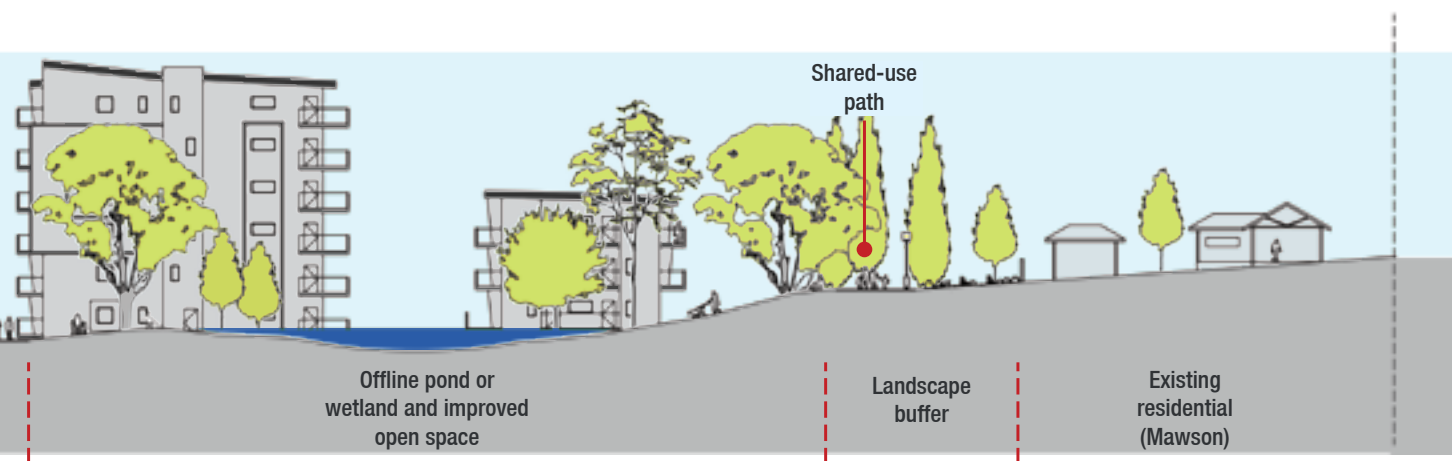
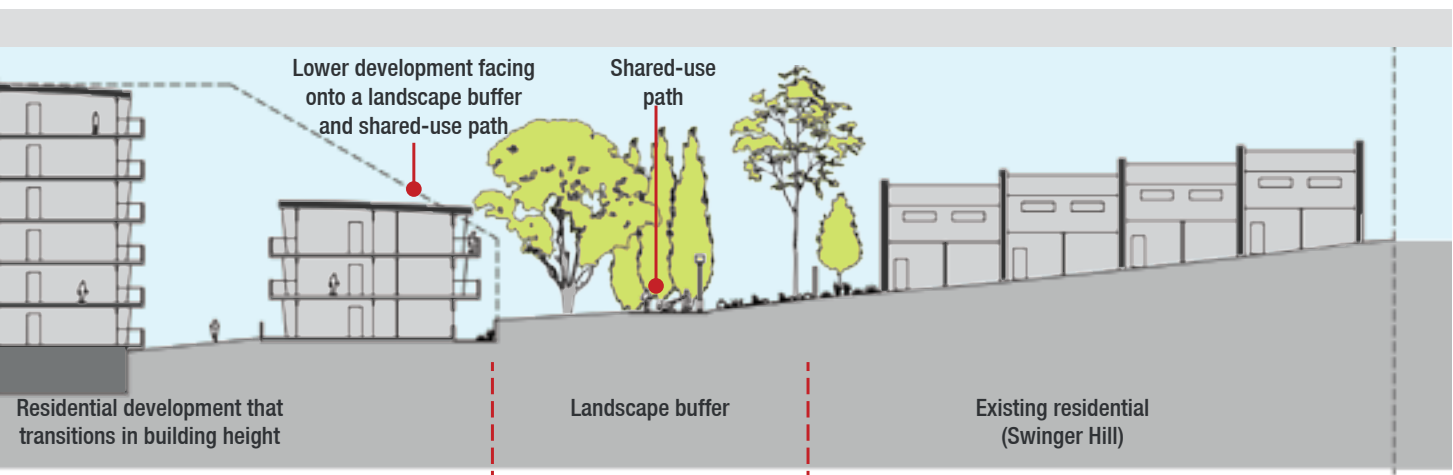




Figure 56: Athllon Drive proposed land use

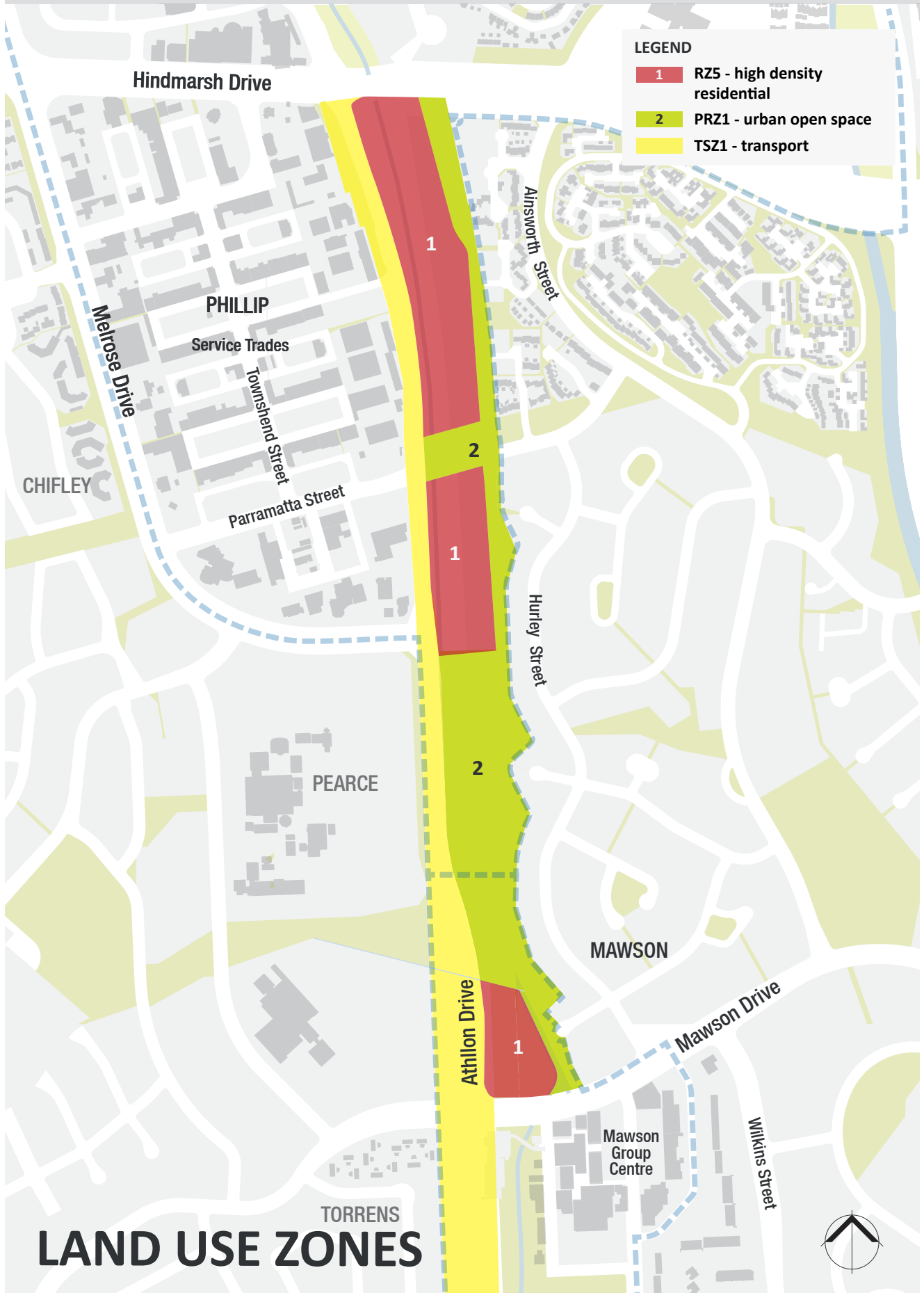
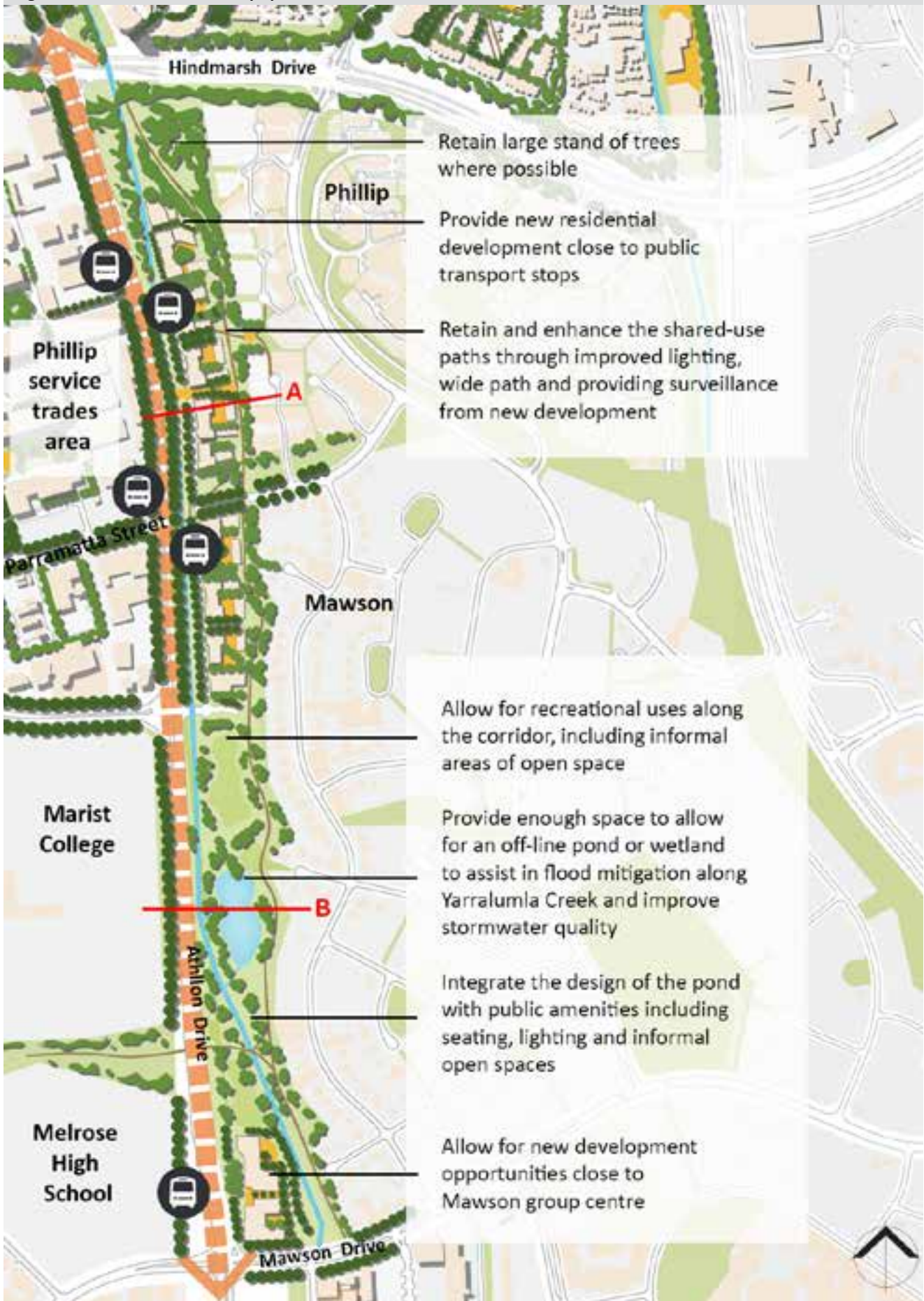


Figure 57: Athllon Drive concept plan



Artist's impression of Woden town centre





6. Recommendations for implementation

6.1 The process of change

This master plan is a non-statutory planning document. It can be implemented through:

- a Territory Plan variation, including a new precinct code for the centre
- sale of Territory-owned land, otherwise known as land release
- public domain upgrades
- further studies, and
- commercial opportunities.

Implementation of the master plan will be progressive over the longer term as implementation is dependent on investment decisions by private business, land availability and capital works funding for public domain upgrades from the ACT Government. Each of the ways the master plan can be implemented are described in more detail below.

6.2 Territory Plan Variation

A variation to the Territory Plan to revise the existing Phillip Precinct Code will realise some of the planning policy recommendations. The precinct code will provide the opportunity for the building heights, setbacks and land uses outlined in the master plan to be realised 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.

6.3 Land release

There are several sites nominated for land release on the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program. Figure 58 illustrates an indicative development sequence beyond that outlined in the Indicative Land Release Program. The land release sequence could vary as circumstances and needs change for the centre.

6.4 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 bids. Public domain upgrades that are 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.

6.5 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 the longer term as investment opportunities are realised.

6.6 Further studies

Potential further studies include:

6.6.1 Woden town centre design manual

A design manual will outline a consistent design palette for the public domain in the town centre. It will specify public domain elements such as street furniture, lighting standards, light poles, signage, pavement types and locations, and street trees. Opportunities to incorporate living (green) infrastructure should be incorporated.

6.6.2 Heritage assessments

Further heritage assessments are required for the objects and places identified in this document.

6.6.3 Pedestrian and cycle improvements

Investigations into the pedestrian and cycle improvements recommended in the plan will help the government understand the design challenges and potential costs. This will assist in prioritising the works over several years in a coordinated way and in parallel to other ACT Government capital works projects and private developments. The cost of any upgrades will need to be considered in the context of future budgets.



Figure 58: Indicative development sequence





7. Endnotes

1. ABS Population by Age and Sex, Regions of the ACT (cat. 3235) 28 August 2014
2. ACT Projection of resident population 2013-62
ACT Government, January 2014
3. ABS Regional Population Growth of the ACT (cat. 3218) April 2014
4. Commercial Centres, Industrial and community Areas Floor Space Survey, EPD,, ACT Government
January 2015
5. ACT Projection of Residential population 2013–62,
ACT Government, January 2014

