



**ACT**  
Government

# GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE PLANNING REFRESH

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP OUTCOMES REPORT

JULY 2017



## **Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate**

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# INTRODUCTION

On Thursday 4 May 2017 from 6pm-8pm the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) ran a stakeholder workshop to inform the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. This stakeholder workshop outcomes report details:

- why the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh is being run and how it will effect change;
- the three key issues the Planning Refresh is addressing: building height and character; upgrading and enhancing public spaces; and walking, cycling and road transport;
- the objectives of the stakeholder workshop;
- who attended the workshop; and
- how the workshop was run, including details of the three activities and their findings.

## THE PLANNING REFRESH

The last planning study for the Gungahlin town centre was completed in November 2010 with the release of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Report. Following the 2010 planning report, the ACT Government's strategic policy agenda has been updated with the 2012 release of the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and Action Plan 2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT. The Gungahlin town centre is also attracting new residents, businesses and investment at a great rate and soon light rail will arrive. There have also been a number of high rise development proposals in the past 12 months that are testing the boundaries of the original 'urban village' identity that was planned for the centre.

The Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh aims to respond to all of the growth and change occurring and to reassess the community's needs and aspirations for the Gungahlin town centre. Community engagement, including the stakeholder workshop, has been a major focus of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. Feedback from the community is being analysed to determine if any changes need to be made to the development controls for the centre. If so, a variation to the Territory Plan will be prepared.

The Planning Refresh is focussing on three key issues:

### BUILDING HEIGHT AND CHARACTER

With strong demand for living in the town centre and major investment proposals emerging it is important to have a community conversation about the style and height of future development.

### UPGRADING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SPACES

As the town centre and surrounding suburbs evolve, public spaces and places that meet community needs and aspirations are needed. Identifying what are the most important aspects of public spaces is an important part of the planning refresh.

### WALKING, CYCLING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

The design of the town centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods influences how enjoyable, convenient and safe it is to incorporate active travel, that is walking and cycling, into everyday life. The planning refresh looks at how the town centre could be upgraded to encourage people to walk and cycle and what needs to be done to improve road transport.

# THE STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

## WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- inform key stakeholders about the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh;
- seek input from stakeholders;
- facilitate discussion between stakeholders; and
- develop a vision for the future of Gungahlin town centre.

## WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Forty-three invitations were sent to different stakeholders. Twenty stakeholders attended.

NAME	ORGANISATION
Raija Purse	Argyle
Jo Cochrane	Communities@Work
Ewan Brown	Council Of the Ageing (COTA) ACT
Ken Ip	Empire Global
Tomislav Simunic	Empire Global
Steve Collins	Gungahlin College
Peter Elford	Gungahlin Community Council
Prasad Tiperneni	Gungahlin Community Council
Scott Hooper	Gungahlin Community Council
Fiona Wilkinson	Gungahlin Community Council
Henley Samuel	Gungahlin Community Council
Jane-Marie Hooper	Gungahlin Community Council
Elisabeth Judd	JUDD Studio
David Jameson	KDN
David Pollard	My Gungahlin
Kerry Lee	OPSM
Robert Dalitz	Pedal Power
Paul O'Donnell	POD Projects
Richard Nash	Purdon Planning
Phillip Knackstedt	The Marketplace

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

1. Welcome to the workshop
2. **Activity 1:** Strengths and weaknesses
3. Presentation over view of the Planning Refresh and engagement findings
4. **Activity 2:** World Cafe
5. **Activity 3:** Vision
6. Workshop close

# WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

## ACTIVITY 1: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Workshop participants were asked to write one word on a post-it note that represented a major issue for the centre. They were also asked for one word in relation to something that was working well for the centre. The answers were collected and later in the evening were presented back to the stakeholders in the form of a word cloud. A word cloud is an image composed of words and the size of words indicates frequency of use. The word clouds then prompted further discussion from the attendees. Unfortunately the word clouds images will not work in this report due to the size of the font the program generates. Instead we have provided the full list of strengths and weaknesses and the number of times each word has been used.



Strengths of the Gungahlin town centre – Full list of words:

- Community x 5
- Light Rail x 4
- Growth x 2
- Opportunity
- Opportunity (to get right)
- Accessible
- Adaptable
- Affordable parking
- Amenities
- Apartments
- Bush area
- Canberra Connect
- Central
- Community facilities
- Connected
- Convenience
- Density
- Diversity
- Economic Activity
- Family-friendly
- Franchises
- Fresh
- Location - Ease of access to other parts of Canberra (after road works)
- Mixed-Use
- Open
- People
- People-friendly
- Pool/oval
- Potential
- Potential for growth
- Proximity to Yerrabi Pond
- Quiet
- School
- Tidy
- Varied
- Variety
- Vibrant community
- Walking
- Young population

## Weaknesses of the Gungahlin town centre – Full list of words

- Poor green open spaces
- Poor cycle & pedestrian connections
- Access to Yerrabi Pond
- Inward-facing
- Impermeable
- Limited density in town centre
- Limited play spaces
- Not a destination
- Traffic through town centre
- Parking
- Half-baked
- Bounded
- Public playing fields
- Green space
- Community Feel
- Local entertainment facilities
- Lack of diversity of retail
- No fine dining
- Road width
- Inadequate car parking
- Independent shops
- Recognition of Gungahlin suburb residents/suburbs vs district
- Pedestrian crossing locations
- No green spaces
- Poor pedestrian cover
- No planned roads and traffic
- No hospital
- Intersections (traffic flow)
- Poor planning
- Poor diversity
- Hopeless traffic planning
- Inadequate parking
- Too many apartments on sites where it was planned for something else
- No transport facility for new suburbs
- No jobs
- Lack of open spaces
- Single main street
- Low density
- Not enough schools
- Too crowded town centre
- Not many shops
- Not connected transport to other regions
- Too many people not enough dwellings
- Insufficient open public space for Gungahlin suburb residents
- Inadequate access to the town centre; narrow roads, too many cars and increasing
- Poor paving safety
- Lacking cohesion
- Activation
- Liner park
- Disjointed
- Cycling
- Blocks too small
- Green space / park
- More mixed-use required
- Traffic congestion
- Entertainment
- Community facilities
- Home hardware
- Commuter parking
- Employment
- Public transport – connection
- Access to town centre
- Poor aesthetics
- Lack of on-street parking
- Increasing congestion
- Cycling connections
- Whitegoods - retail
- Lack of planning
- Roads
- Intersections
- More community events
- Cohesion
- More pedestrian crossings for Valley Avenue
- Roads





# GROUP DISCUSSION OF GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

## STRENGTHS

- Lots of potential
- Becoming more of a destination
- Continuous growth
- Business doing well and growing
- Light rail
- Proximity to Yerrabi Pond, lake
- Cultural hub
- Sense of community, interaction
- Population

## WEAKNESSES

- Openness to wider Gungahlin area
- Barriers to getting in to Gungahlin
- Too much concrete, not enough greenery
- Vacant space is a concern
- Traffic congestion
- Lack of recognition of Gungahlin suburb
- Inadequate lighting and connections to surrounding suburbs
- Population growth causing infrastructure issues
- Reactive rather than proactive planning
- Lack of integrated planning
- Lack of cohesion and aesthetic value in buildings and design
- Lack of charm
- Buildings quickly and cheaply built, already decaying
- No facilities for cycling
- Legacy issues from past planning decisions, difficult to deal with now
- Not enough jobs in town centre
- Everyone commutes out of Gungahlin
- Missed opportunity with oval, should be open to public



## ACTIVITY 2: WORLD CAFE

Four tables were set up, with a facilitator at each table. Tables addressed the three themes of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. Two tables were used to discuss building height and character, one table discussed upgrading and enhancing public spaces and another discussed walking, cycling and road transport.

Attendees were allocated a number on arrival to ensure a mix of stakeholder interests on each table.

Participants were given 15 minutes for discussion on their table's topic. Facilitators provided a brief background on the table topic and had a number of questions aimed at encouraging discussion. The facilitator documented ideas on butchers paper. After 15 minutes, participants moved to another table.

### TOPIC 1: BUILDING HEIGHT AND CHARACTER

#### FACILITATOR'S BACKGROUND ON TOPIC

- Originally it was intended the Gungahlin town centre would be urban village scale (up to 6 storeys). The 2010 planning study introduced some heights up to 23 metres (approximately 7 storeys).
- In Precinct 2B in the north-west of the centre has recently had a number of Development Applications both lodged and approved. The maximum height approved is 22 storeys. There are also some pre-applications for high-rise buildings ranging in height from 7 to 26 storeys.
- Slides were presented on the evening with a summary of the Your Say survey results. The results presented were:
  - > 32% of respondents value good design over height;
  - > 25% of respondents do not support high rise; and
  - > 18% of respondents support current height limits.

#### QUESTIONS FOR TABLE DISCUSSION

- What building heights are appropriate for different areas of the Gungahlin town centre?
- What are the most important elements of good building design?

#### TABLE DISCUSSION NOTES

##### HEIGHTS

- Territory Plan currently allows higher than 7 storeys
- Approved buildings were exception and now sets new precedent
- Heights otherwise in centre (Territory Plan currently) OK
- Overshadowing
- Step down towards suburban areas
- 26 storeys ok closer to the town centre
- Precinct 2B too far away from centre
- Would want to live across the road from high rise
- Houses next to high rise is not ok
- Height is not as much of a concern if light and vistas retained
- Highest heights proposed for highest topographic areas



## DESIGN

- What are the most important elements of good building design?
- Permeability, fine grain
- Why not closer into centre?  
Precinct 2B is 900m from centre
- Cohesion is poor i.e. development next to Bunnings
- If I lived in the apartments I'd want to live right in the centre, not on the edge
- Focus on design, more than height
- More design and materials - construction quality important
- Proposed heights d estroy views and vistas for the rest of Gungahlin residents

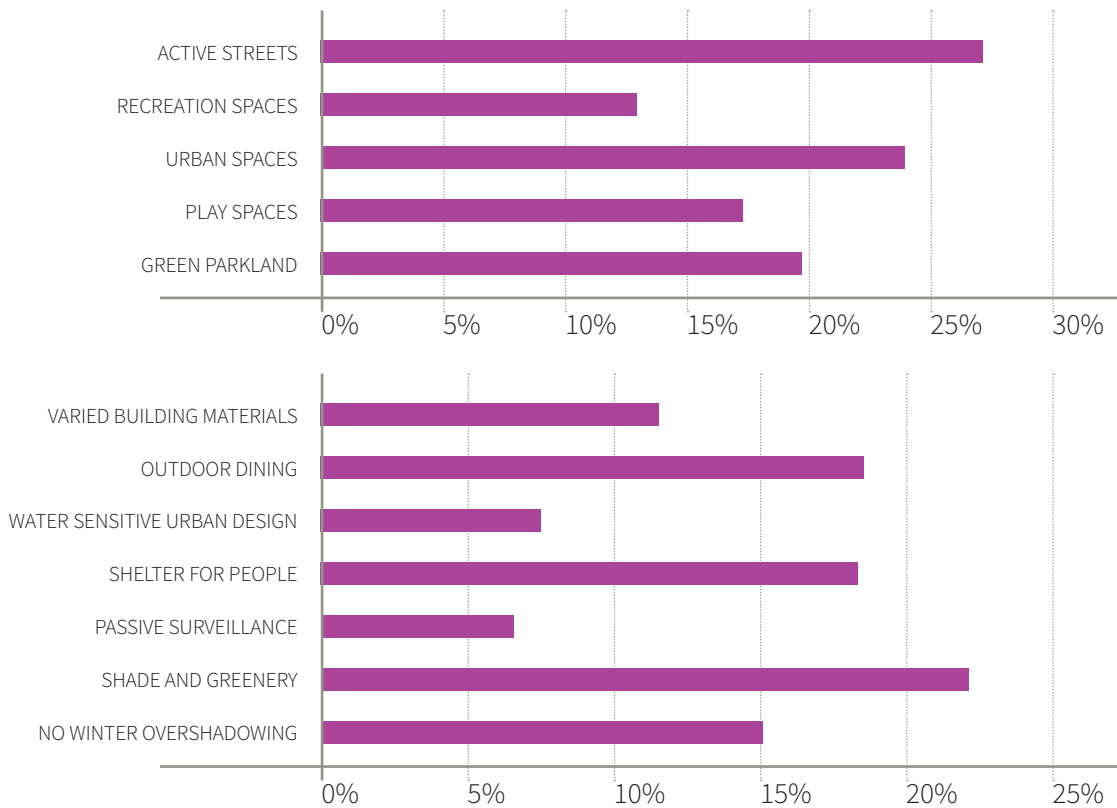
## SERVICE PROVISION

- Yerrabi Ponds is already too busy. New residential development has poor access around Gundaroo Drive
- What value are these higher dwellings to the community?
- New apartments creates the same population as a whole suburb (Precinct 2B)
- Are there sufficient community facilities for new residents in apartments?
- Where do kids go to school?
- Families are living in apartments
- Understand traffic impact of higher rise
- Roads currently not compatible with additional dwellings/ development
- Is there potential to extend light rail further to pick up new approved developments?
- Precinct 2B/Air development too far away from light rail
- More apartments along light rail corridor
- Traffic impacts of 2B development
- More mixed use and mixed designs.
- Lack of community facilities for proposed population from 2B development.
- Young families do live in apartments for affordability reasons.

## TOPIC 2: UPGRADING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SPACES

### FACILITATOR'S BACKGROUND ON TOPIC

Figure 1: Your Say online survey results presented by the facilitator on the day.



### QUESTIONS FOR TABLE DISCUSSION

- How can we improve public open spaces in Gungahlin?
- What are the most important elements for active urban streets and spaces?

### TABLE DISCUSSION NOTES

#### GUNGAHLIN PLACE

- Better connections
- Seating is limited, need some tables and chairs
- No active uses
- Should be comfortable, closed in
- Need more free activities in Gungahlin
- Chess tables
- Table tennis e.g. Franklin Park
- More landscaping, greenery
- Sculpture is not popular and makes access difficult
- Should be a green strip
- Want to see pop-ups, cafes, coffee carts
- Too much concrete

#### PLAYGROUNDS

- Design for kids to have fun
- Nature play e.g. Boundless
- More shade
- Cafes, coffee carts
- Seating for adults/carers
- No soft zone in Gungahlin Place playground
- Accessible to all
- Equipment is limited in Gungahlin Place playground
- Playgrounds for multiple ages

## GREEN OPEN SPACE

- Suitable for all age groups, including adults
- Need some seating
- Dog-friendly
- Allow for sports and free play
- Need flat space for kicking a ball
- New open space in office precinct should be green
- Would be good to see a community garden
- Needed in precinct 2b

## ACTIVATION

- Monthly markets
- Book box
- More outdoor dining
- Food trucks
- Lack of in Gungahlin Place

## WETLANDS

- Good cycle paths
- Need parking
- Not well used on weekends
- Lots of potential, horrible at the moment
- Seats, BBQ, gazebo (e.g. Franklin park)

## STREETSCAPE

- More landscaping, greenery
- Low garden beds
- More flowers, garden beds
- Trees have been removed and not replaced
- Poor quality paving, damaged in some areas
- More vibrant streets with less concrete, more landscaping

## GENERAL

- Limited connections to lake
- Need walking and cycling access
- Maintenance of public spaces
- More sports grounds e.g. basketball, futsal
- Balance of passive and active recreation
- Need more landscaping in public spaces
- Exercise stations
- Senior citizen facilities
- More bike parking on streets
- Town centre marker e.g. clock, sculpture

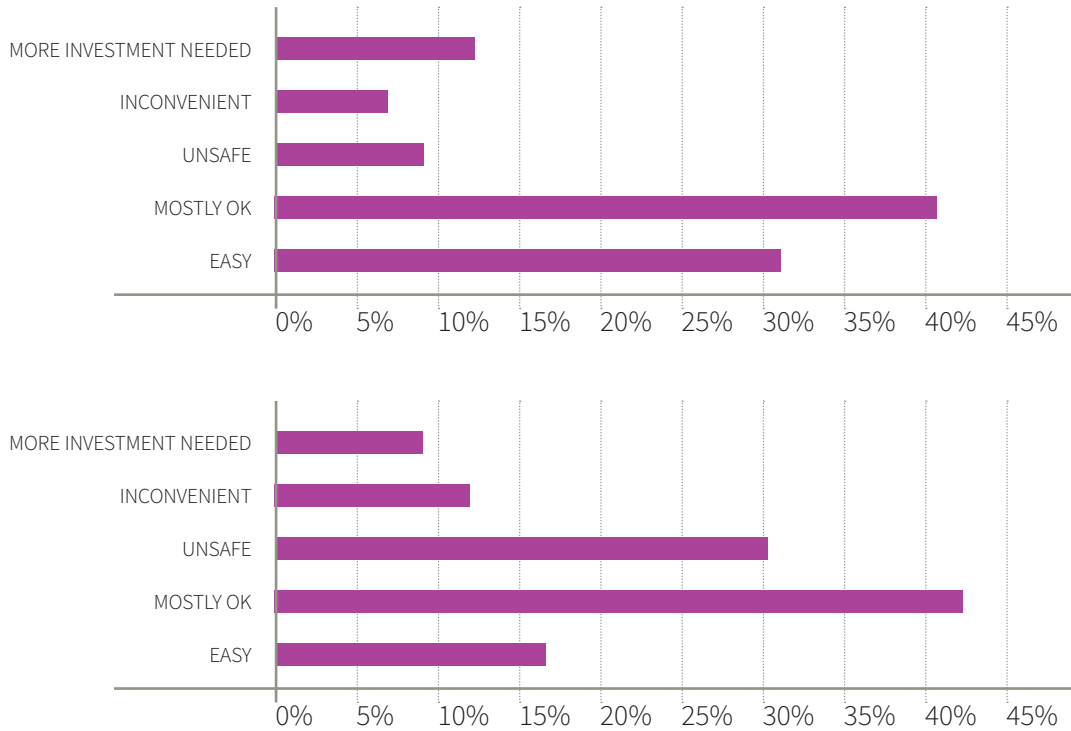


## TOPIC 3: WALKING, CYCLING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

### FACILITATOR'S BACKGROUND ON TOPIC

→ From engagement we have heard that traffic and parking within and around the town centre is an issue. We need to explore ways we can encourage people to walk, cycle and catch public transport into the centre.

Figure 2: Your Say online survey results presented by the facilitator on the day



### QUESTION FOR TABLE DISCUSSION

→ Where can improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure be made?

### TABLE DISCUSSION NOTES

#### CYCLING

- Bike riding does not flow - disjointed
- Underpass or overpass needed across Gundaroo Drive leading to lake
- Disjointed cycling and walking
- No cycling infrastructure
- Need more bike parking/storage
- Introduce bike hire scheme
- Safety concerns
- Cycling and walking paths should be separate

#### WALKING

- Danger of crossing Gundaroo Drive
- Need to improve quality/finish of infrastructure
- Need more pedestrian infrastructure
- Safety concerns crossing major roads
- Need more age-friendly infrastructure e.g. Seating
- Better permeability/legibility of town centre
- Footpaths should be widened on entry to town centre
- Footpaths on The Valley Avenue are inadequate
- Roundabouts on Gundaroo Drive are difficult to cross
- Lack of lighting



## TRAFFIC

- Traffic management an issue
- Support for an Integrated transport network
- Mix of short and long term parking needed in city centre
- Increasing traffic on narrow streets
- Need to better manage traffic flow
- Speed limits should be lowered x 2
- Traffic calming measures on streets in and around town centre
- Congestion along The Valley Avenue
- Suggestion that traffic is diverted around periphery of town centre to avoid Hibberson Street

## PARKING

- Balance of parking options
- Short and long term stay
- Lack of on-street parking

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Extend light rail another stop
- More buses connecting to light rail
- Improved bus services through suburbs

## GENERAL

- Integrated transport network is key to success

## ACTIVITY 3: VISION

Workshop participants were asked to write their response to the following question on post-it notes, and share these on butcher's paper on the walls of the workshop room.

### WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR GUNGAHLIN IN 2030?

- Community mingling
- Gungahlin hub
- Business district
- Mixed use precincts
- Vibrant light rail
- Population growth
- High density
- Tall towers
- Becomes a destination
- Gungahlin is a destination- not just a departing point
- Outdoor entertainment area
- Picture theatre
- Live theatre
- More community housing
- A great night-time destination for ALL of North Canberra
- Parks- BBQ Areas
- Medical centre- Hospital
- Cycleways + walking paths
- Well connected and designed
- Smart, friendly
- Community orientated
- "Destination" town centre
- Promoting flexible mix of uses
- Potential to grow
- Social
- Community
- Population
- Business
- Location
- A cap on expanding the town centre - we'll have a tram (light rail) to get us into the CBD to avail ourselves of cinemas etc
- Street cafes
- Senior citizens space
- Leafy avenues
- Fine dining pub
- Well connected to the rest of Gungahlin and Canberra
- Busy, active funky centre for locals
- More retail
- A hub for northern Canberra
- A centre with shopping, cafe restaurant, social and other activities widely used.
- Mature trees
- Active
- Modern
- Destination
- Affordable
- Markets every Saturday
- Light rail to be replaced with fast rail?
- Well established hospital
- An active, safe, accessible community
- Light rail needs to be connected/ extended till Moncrieff/Taylor
- Restaurants around lakes
- Eating/Cafe area at Yerrabi by dam wall
- Successful and efficient light rail terminus
- Efficient by-pass roads/streets
- A great place for families and teenagers
- New areas with attractive facades on all areas
- A vibrant and welcoming street character on Hibberson Street
- Friendly socialising areas
- Busy and diverse
- Manuka - Like in Bush setting
- Great place
- Entertaining
- Opportunities for exercise
- Active
- Sky walk across all Gungahlin town centre
- Thriving community living in an attractive, well maintained environment that is not polluted by insensitive buildings that are built in isolation without consideration of the community
- Gungahlin is rid of semi industrial businesses, relocated to Mitchell
- Gungahlin is a family friendly place to live- recreation and safe





# NEXT STEPS

A community engagement report is currently being prepared for the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. The community engagement report will describe all of the engagement activities, including the stakeholder workshop, undertaken as part of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. It will also document and analyse all of the feedback received from these activities and provide a summary of key messages heard. Upon completion of the community engagement report it will be made available on the 'Your Say' and EPSDD webpages. The analysis in the community engagement report will be used to determine if changes to the Territory Plan are necessary to support the community's vision for the Gungahlin town centre. If changes to the Territory Plan are required, a draft variation to the Territory Plan will be prepared.

A second phase of engagement will then occur through the Territory Plan variation process.





The background is a solid purple color. Overlaid on this are several thin white lines that intersect at a single point in the upper right quadrant. These lines radiate outwards, creating a starburst or web-like pattern that spans across the page.

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