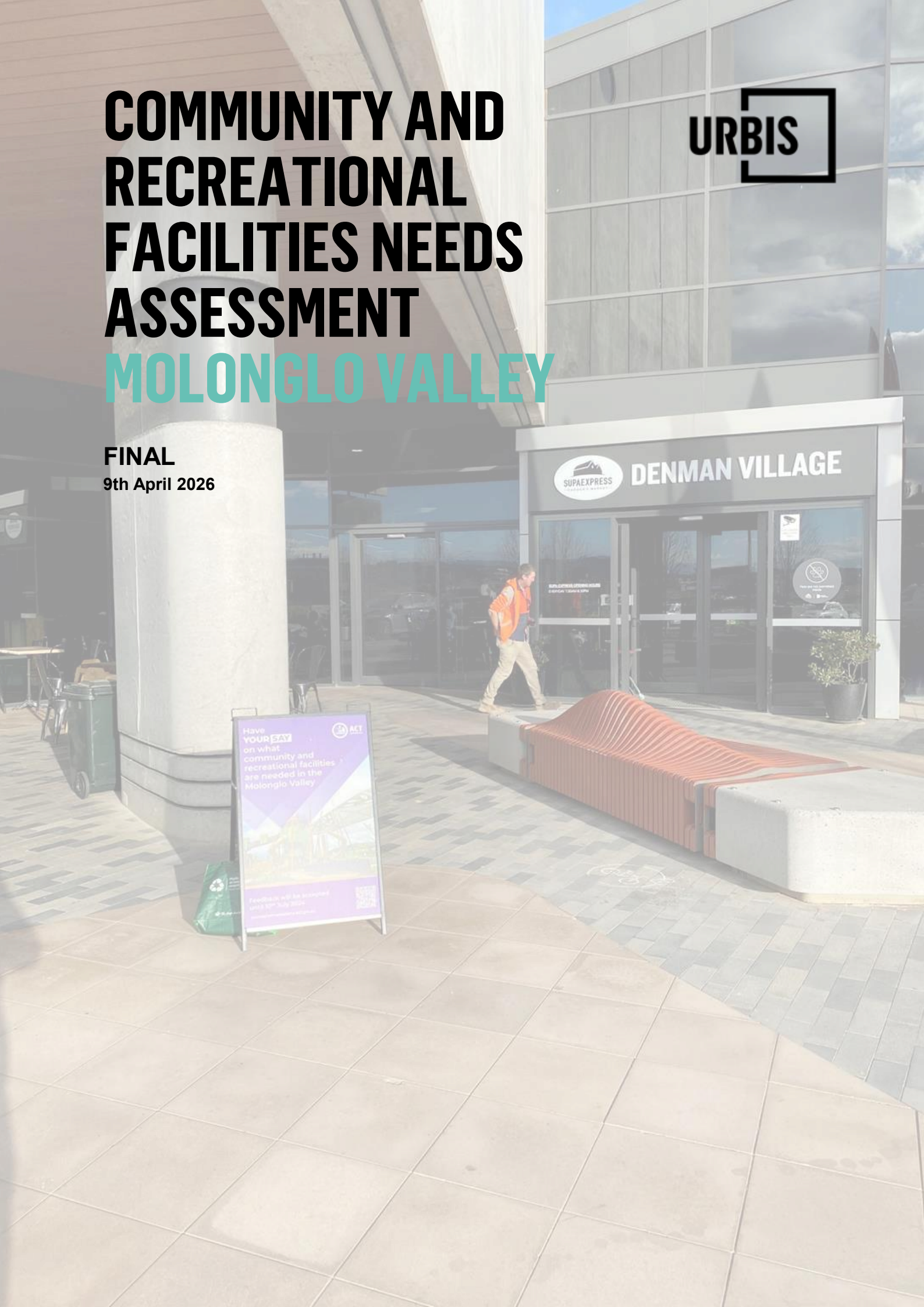


COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT MOLONGLO VALLEY



FINAL

9th April 2026



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We acknowledge the Traditional owners and Custodians of the Molonglo Valley area, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands. We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land through culture and community and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

1.0 INTRODUCTION



1.1 PROJECT AND REPORT OVERVIEW

Project background and purpose

Urbis was engaged by the ACT Government's City and Environment Directorate (CED) to undertake a Community and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment for the Molonglo Valley District (the 'Molonglo Valley').

The Molonglo Valley is one of the newest greenfield development front in the ACT. It includes the suburbs of Coombs, Wright, Denman Prospect and Whitlam, which are at varying stages of development. There are also plans for additional suburbs, including the suburb of Molonglo, Bandler and Sulman and one further un-named suburb north of the Molonglo River. A new Town Centre is also proposed in the suburb of Molonglo.

The project is being undertaken in close collaboration with the Suburban Land Agency (SLA).

The population growth and development across the Molonglo Valley, approximately 70,000 people at completion, will see a significant increase in demand for community and recreational facilities. With the future Molonglo Valley accommodating a district-sized population, the new Molonglo Town Centre presents a key opportunity for a modern, urban, appropriately-designed facilities.

Report purpose and overview

This report provides an assessment of future needs for community and recreational facilities in the Molonglo Valley based on various quantitative and qualitative inputs.

This report documents the background research, the needs assessment process undertaken and options and recommendations for future facility provision. This report includes the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Strategic context
3. Existing and future community
4. Existing and planned provision
5. Stakeholder and community engagement
6. Provision trends
7. Framework for future provision
8. Community needs assessment
9. Summary of options and recommendations

Case studies of community and recreational facilities are also included in Appendix A.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Community and recreational facilities

Community and recreational facilities considered in this assessment include health facilities, arts and cultural facilities, community facilities and sport and recreational facilities. Needs and demand for religious facilities / places of worship are also considered.

Relationships between, and opportunities to co-locate these facilities with other forms of community and recreational facilities and spaces, such as education facilities and open space, is also considered.

Figure 1 illustrates the primary facilities included within the scope of this assessment and the other facilities also considered for coordination purposes.

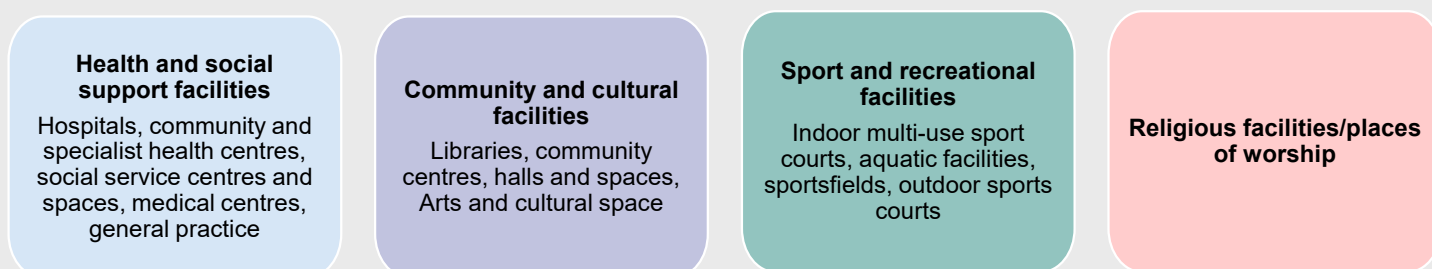
The role of community and recreational facilities

Community and recreational facilities play an important role in sustaining the health and wellbeing of any community. In addition to providing vital health and education services, community and recreational facilities provide places for the community to meet, gather, exercise, play, relax, learn, celebrate, and to access information and important support services.

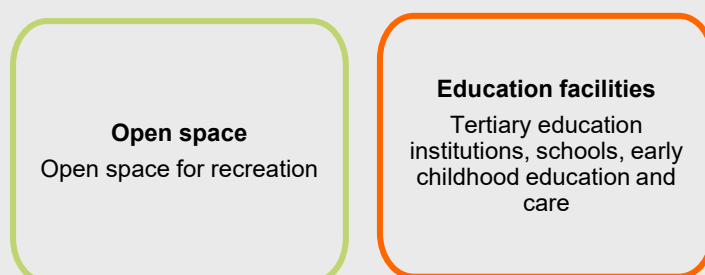
Community and recreational facilities can play a role in developing and strengthening social connections and can contribute to combatting social isolation and loneliness. This is particularly important in growth areas such as the Molonglo Valley, where future residents may not have established local connections or support when they move into the area.

Figure 1: Community and recreational facilities within the scope of this study

Key facilities



Other facilities



1.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Methodology

Planning for community and recreational facilities, whether in new or established communities, is a complex task. This assessment has taken a best practice approach to identifying the facilities required to meet the needs of the future Molonglo Valley population by:

1. Understanding the strategic policies and plans that guide planning in the Molonglo Valley and the provision of community and recreational facilities.
2. Considering the size, distribution, and anticipated characteristics of the current and future population in the Molonglo Valley is essential to understanding the potential future demand and types of community and recreational facilities needed
3. Assessing the existing and planned provision of community and recreational facilities to understand capacity or key gaps
4. Engaging with the community and key stakeholders to identify needs, priorities, challenges and opportunities
5. Identifying key trends in community and recreational facility provision, including through an examination of case studies
6. Developing a framework to guide the provision of community and recreational facilities, including a hierarchy, guiding principles and appropriate and relevant standards and benchmarks
7. Determining needs and demands for community and recreational facilities based on qualitative and quantitative inputs (demand assessment)*
8. Developing options and recommendations for community and recreational facility provision across the Molonglo Valley to meet projected needs.

This approach is summarised in Figure 2. This report has been structured around the assessment methodology.

*Community needs assessment approach

This assessment takes a best practice approach to identifying needs for community and recreational facilities, informed by Bradshaw’s Taxonomy of Social Need model. This has included consideration of the following four dimensions of need, utilising the information gathered through the above identified tasks:

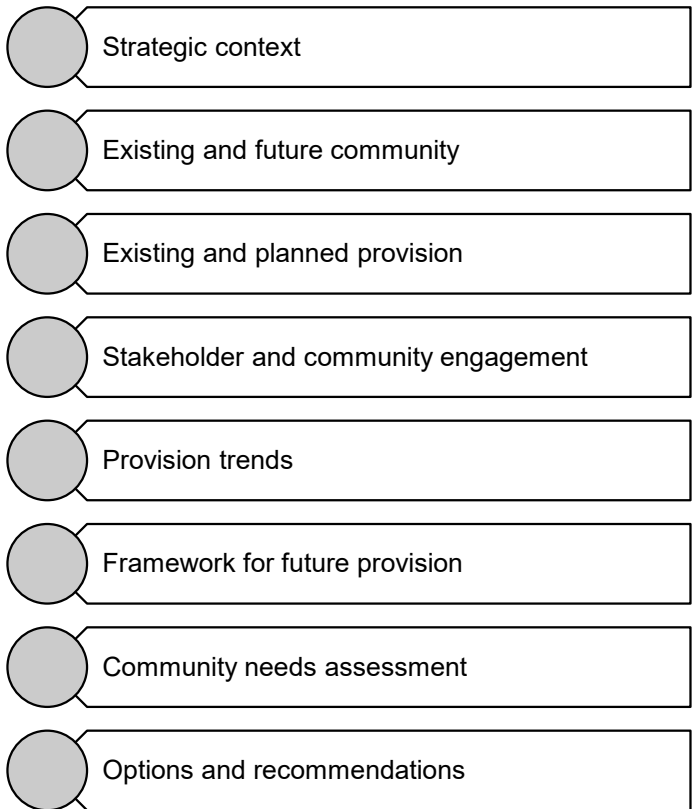
- Normative need – needs suggested through analysis of research or data. (Includes consideration of demographic characteristics and social trends)
- Comparative need – a comparison of levels of

provision in one area compared to another. (Includes consideration of standards, benchmarks and case studies of provision in other areas)

- Expressed need – needs suggested by levels or patterns of participation and usage. (Includes consideration of existing facility or service utilisation, waiting lists or capacity data. This information was primarily gained through stakeholder consultations)
- Felt need – needs identified by stakeholders and community. (Includes feedback and input received through the engagement process).

Consideration of the above four dimensions of need has provided a solid evidence base for the assessment. It has determined the quantity and types and high-level requirements for facilities to meet the needs of the future Molongolo Valley community.

Figure 2: Assessment methodology



1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE MOLONGLO VALLEY

Overview of the Molonglo Valley

The Molonglo Valley is one of the ACT's newest greenfield development districts. It comprises four existing suburbs (Coombs, Wright, Denman Prospect and Whitlam) at varying stages of development and four future suburbs; Molonglo, Bandler and Sulman and one unnamed suburb, north of the Molonglo River.

The district is located approximately 9km to the south-west of Canberra's city centre and is located between the established districts of Belconnen and Weston Creek.

Located on the upper slopes of the Molonglo River Corridor, the Molonglo Valley is surrounded by the National Arboretum, Lake Burley Griffin, Black Mountain, the National Zoo and Aquarium, and the western ranges of the Bullen and Brindabella. The Molonglo Valley is defined by a distinct topography, in which major ridgelines separate it from surrounding existing development.

The Molonglo Valley is characterised by undulating, and in some places, very challenging natural topography for development.

Vision and plans for the Molonglo Valley

The Molonglo Valley is a key greenfield development front in the ACT and comprises three stages of development:

- Stage 1 – Suburbs of Coombs and Wright, and the region of North Weston;
- Stage 2 – Suburbs of Denman Prospect and Molonglo
- Stage 3 – Suburbs of Whitlam, Bandler, Sulman and one additional unnamed future suburb.

The Molonglo Valley suburb and neighbourhood plan is shown in Figure 4 on the following page.

The suburb of Molonglo will also contain a new Molonglo Town Centre. Once fully developed in the coming years, it will be the primary commercial centre and employment hub for the district and its community.

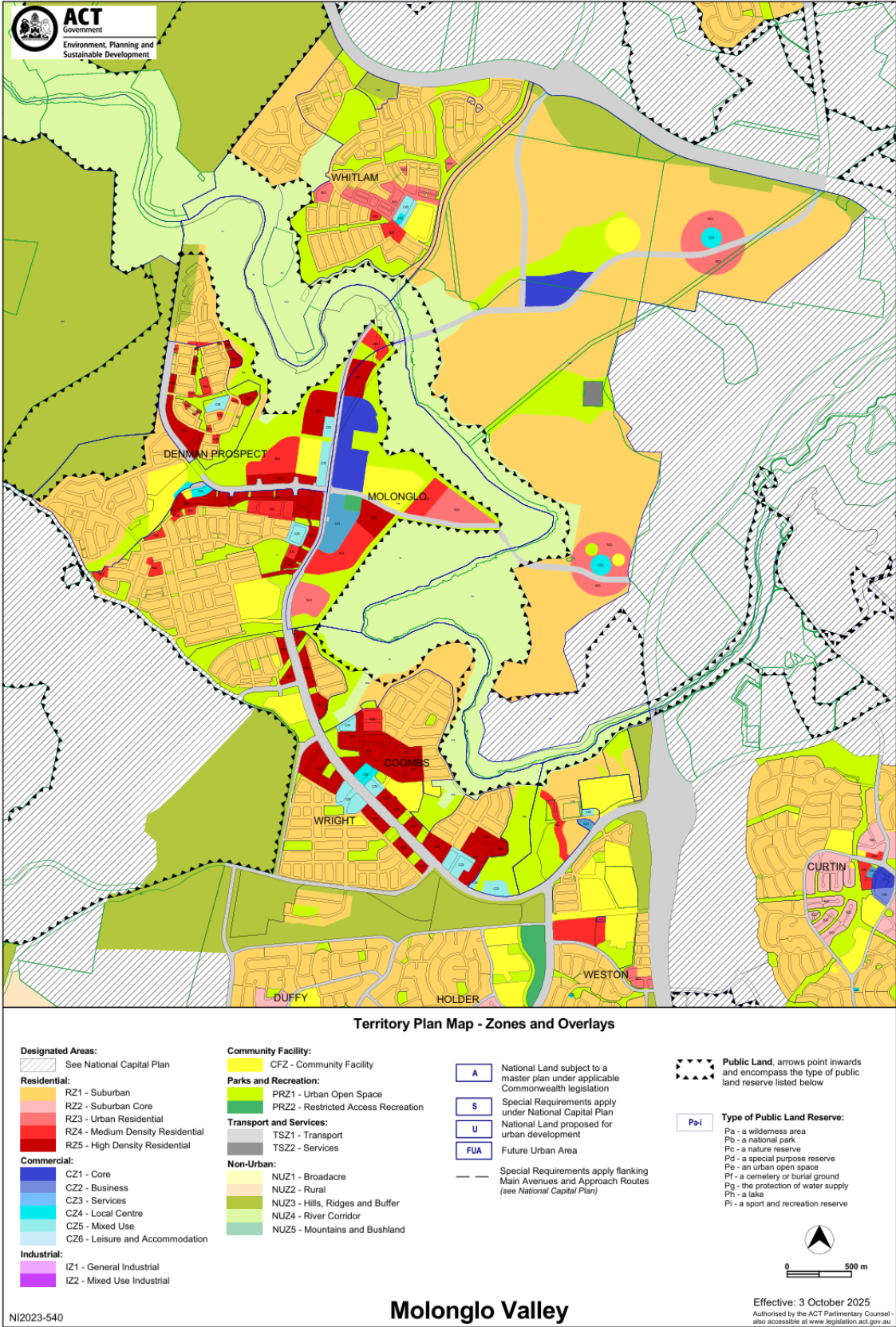
Figure 3: Map of the Molonglo Valley in context



Source: *Molonglo Valley District Strategy* (ACT Government 2023)

1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE MOLONGLO VALLEY [CONT'D]

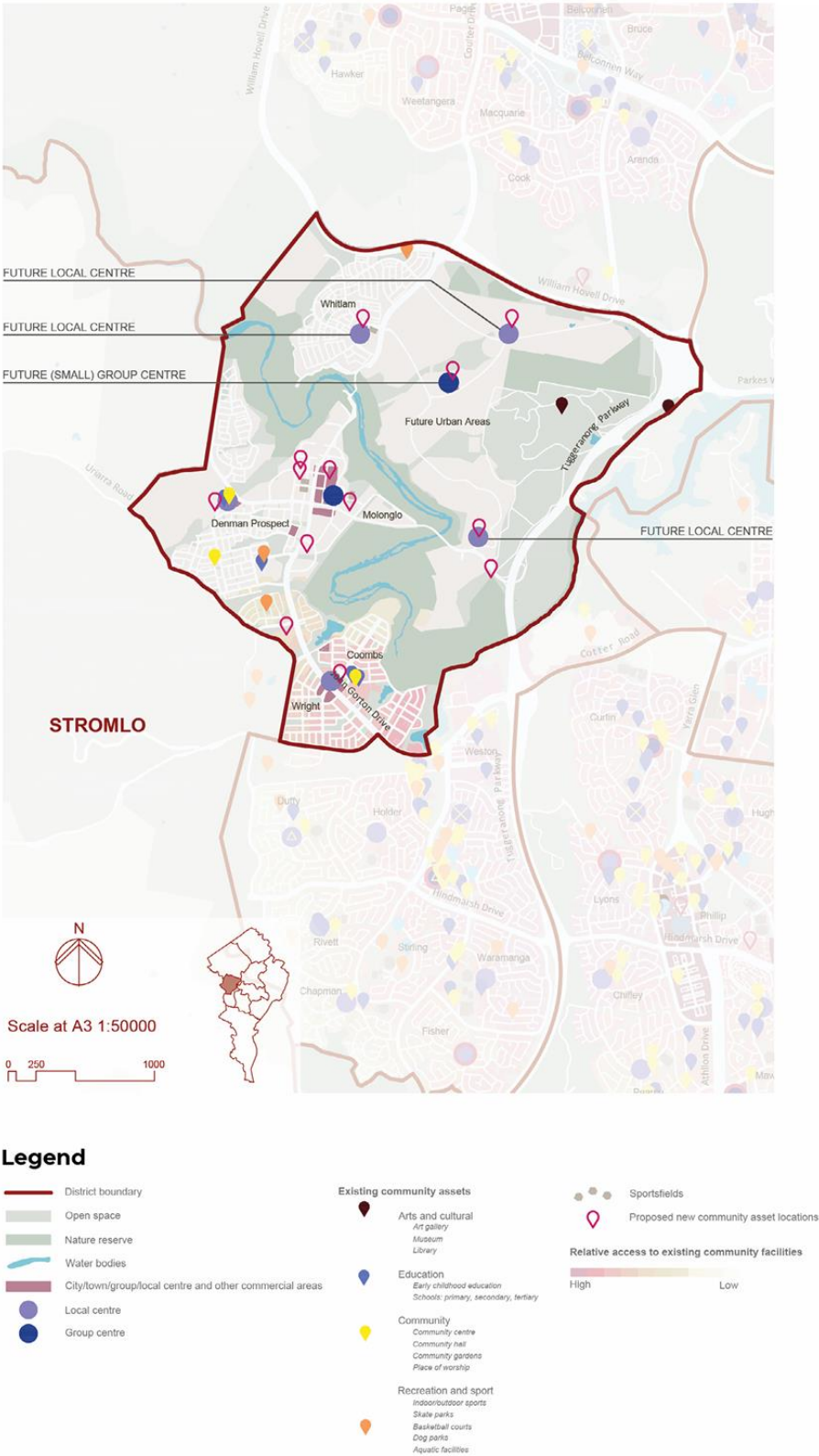
Figure 4: Territory Plan Map*



*Note: the future suburbs of Bandler, Sulman and “unnamed” suburb are located to the east of the suburb of Whitlam.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE MOLONGLO VALLEY [CONT'D]

Figure 5: Molonglo Town Centre Indicative Development Plan*



*Note: the commercial centre in the suburb of Molonglo has been elevated from a group centre to a town centre.

Source: District Strategies 2023, Volume Two District Strategies

2.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT



2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Overview

This section contains a summary of the key Territory and District strategic planning documents as they relate to Molonglo Valley and community and recreational facility provision.

These documents outline desired land use objectives, committed facility priorities and community aspirations for the future of the area. They also outline key community needs and guiding principles around the provision and delivery of community and recreational facilities.

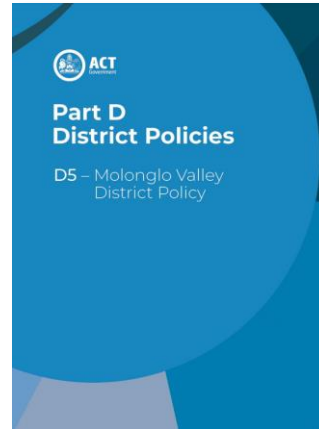
The directions contained in these documents provide a basis for the provision of community and recreational facilities across the Molonglo Valley and have informed the needs analysis contained in Section 8.

Key findings from the document review are summarised on the following pages.

2.2 TERRITORY-WIDE STRATEGIES

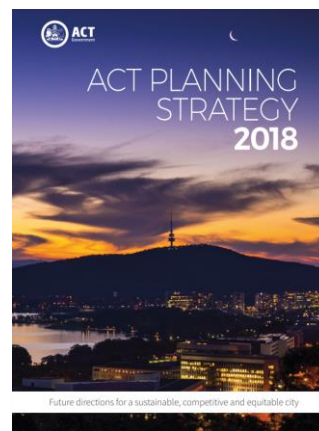
Implications of Territory-wide strategic directions for the planning and provision of community and recreational facilities

- Part D of the ACT Territory Plan, the Molonglo Valley District Policy, sets the planning controls for Molonglo Valley. This includes land use zones, building heights and locations of some schools and open space.
- The vision for Canberra under the ACT Planning Strategy is: “to be a sustainable, competitive and equitable city that respects Canberra as a city in the landscape and the National Capital, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change”.
- The ACT Planning Strategy outlines five themes which guide planning and development in the ACT: compact and efficient; diverse; sustainable and resilient; liveable and accessible.
- The ACT Planning Strategy highlights a range of demographic trends which are shaping the Territory’s population. This includes smaller family and household sizes (and associated higher demand for medium density housing such as townhouses), preferences for older people to age in place, and lower levels of housing affordability.
- The ACT Planning Strategy notes the importance of community and recreational facilities in meeting community needs and supporting strong communities and outlines key principles for planning and designing community and recreational facilities. This includes providing co-located and clustered, inclusive, accessible, flexible and multi-purpose facilities, and supporting a network of facilities at a variety of scales including at local, district and regional levels.
- The ACT Infrastructure Plan provides a framework for how the Government will renew established infrastructure and create new infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population. The Plan is divided into seven sectors, which include community facilities, education, entertainment, arts, sports and health. Proposed community and recreational facilities identified in the Plan and relevant to this study is outlined in City Services, Recreation and Community Facilities sector plan.
- The Future Provision of ACT Sportsgrounds in Gungahlin and Molonglo outlines several sportsground planning and design trends. This includes the need for larger, centralised sportsground spaces and the co-location of sportsgrounds and schools.



ACT Territory Plan 2023

The Territory Plan guides planning and development in the ACT. The Molonglo Valley District Policy contains key assessment requirements and expected outcomes relevant to the district.



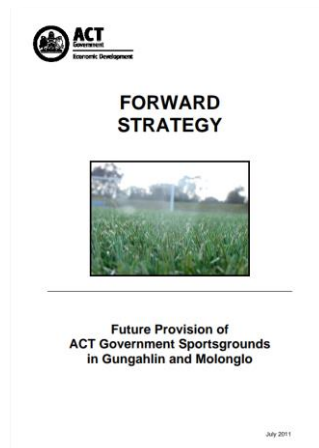
ACT Planning Strategy 2018

The ACT Planning Strategy is the Government’s key strategic planning document. It outlines a vision and five key themes to guide planning and development in the ACT.



ACT Infrastructure Plan 2023

The Plan outlines the Government’s infrastructure priorities for the next 5-10 years and beyond, and the funded projects and investments to meet future needs.



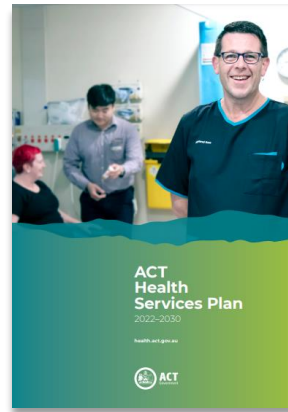
Future Provision of ACT Sportsgrounds in Gungahlin and Molonglo

The Strategy provides a framework to guide the planning and design of new sportsfields in Gungahlin and Molonglo.

2.2 TERRITORY-WIDE STRATEGIES [CONT'D]

Implications of district strategic directions for the planning and provision of community and recreational facilities

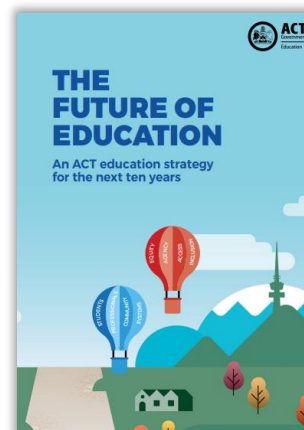
- The Health Services Plan focuses on three key components of the health continuum: preventive health; care in the hospital; and care in the community. Chronic and complex conditions; population ageing and population growth are identified as the key demographic and health forces affecting demand for health services across the ACT.
- The Health Services Plan aims to broaden community-based health services and implement a framework for equitable geographic distribution to support priority populations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, LGBTQIA+ and families with complex needs.
- Health infrastructure is identified as an essential enabler for the successful implementation of the plan. The Health Services Plan and ACT Infrastructure Plan Update – Health recognises the need to invest in health infrastructure to provide high quality care close to home and to support and manage the increasing demands on ACT specialist and tertiary hospital services.
- The Arts, Culture and Creative Policy recognises the importance of developing emerging arts precincts and vibrant night-time entertainment areas to help attract and retain artists and providing these groups with spaces to create and showcase their work. These precincts and areas help to enhance the city's cultural landscape.
- The ACT Government Future of Education Strategy is underpinned by four foundations: placing students at the centre of their learning; empowering teachers to meet the learning needs of all students; building strong communities for learning and strengthening systems to focus on equity with quality. The Strategy advocates for schools to be 'community hubs' for people beyond current students, (such as their families) by enhancing partnerships between schools, government and community service providers.
- The ACT Libraries: What We Heard Report summarises community feedback to inform the ACT Libraries Imagine 2030 Strategy. Key feedback included greater accessibility to services, programs, and collections; increasing collaboration by engaging with the community to prioritise services; integrating online, onsite and outreach services and experiences and increasing the awareness of the library's value and offerings.



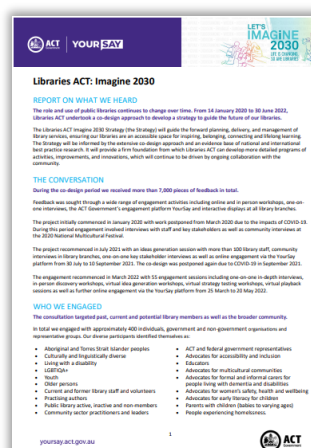
ACT Health Services Plan 2022-2030
The ACT Health Services Plan sets a roadmap for the redesign and investment of health services in the ACT over an eight-year period.



Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022-2026
The ACT Arts, Culture and Creative Policy is a roadmap for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's arts capital through the strategies of Create, Develop and Promote.



ACT Government Future of Education Strategy
The ACT Education Strategy outlines the key priorities to enhance Canberra's education facilities, teaching methodologies and education services over a 10-year period.

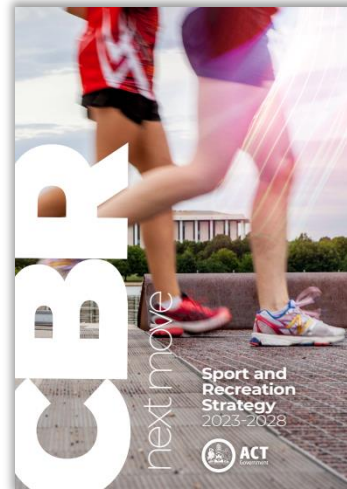


ACT Libraries: What We Heard Report
The report provides an overview of community sentiment regarding libraries in the ACT will inform the ACT Libraries Imagine 2030 Strategy (yet to be released).

2.2 TERRITORY-WIDE STRATEGIES [CONT'D]

Implications of district strategic directions for the planning and provision of community and recreational facilities

- CBR Next Move - The Sport and Recreation Strategy outlines a vision for all Canberrans moving more through sport and active recreation. This Strategy notes there are significant demands on space and competing demands for existing places and spaces from sports and active recreation organisations, community groups and residents.
- The Sport and Recreation Strategy also aims to ensure sport and active recreation participation experiences recognise and address diversity of needs in the community and to increase participation in sport and active recreation for community members who are currently under-represented.
- The ACT Infrastructure Plan Sport and Recreation Implementation Plan 2024 which accompanies the CBR Next Move - Sport and Recreation Strategy commits to delivering new infrastructure and infrastructure upgrades within and surrounding the Molonglo Valley. This is outlined in detail in Section 4 and includes the delivery of Stromlo District Playing Fields, a double court gymnasium at the future primary school in Whitlam and the now complete upgrades to the Arawang District Netball Courts in Stirling.
- The Managing Urban Spaces: What We Heard Report highlights shared stewardship as a critical area for improvement in sport and recreation. Enhancing shared stewardship practices is essential to align with specific community values. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents, encouraging them to actively contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of urban spaces.
- The Urban Land Management Plan outlines a hierarchy of open space provision, including town parks, district parks, local parks, and natural open space (grassland or woodland sites). The Plan outlines the importance of activating urban open spaces and providing facilities and amenities which enable the space to be an attractive destination for people.
- The Urban Land Management Plan also outlines the importance of obtaining knowledge from the Ngannawal to embed their culture and promote Indigenous values in open spaces.



CBR Next Move - Sport and Recreation Strategy 2023-2028

The Sport and Recreation Strategy outlines the ACT Government's priorities for sport and recreation and identifies strategic pillars and priorities to strengthen sport and recreation in the Territory.



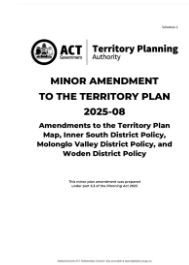
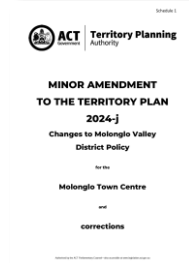
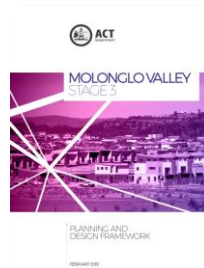
Urban Open Land Management Plan 2024

The Urban Open Land Management Plan outlines the principles and vision for sustainable urban open spaces and provides a framework to guide the planning for open spaces.

2.3 DISTRICT STRATEGIES

Implications of district strategic directions for the planning and provision of community and recreational facilities

- The Molonglo Valley District Strategy aims for new group and local centres in the district to be community hubs, with strong retail anchors alongside community facilities where appropriate. The Strategy also outlines the need for detailed community needs assessments to be undertaken to inform and confirm the need for facilities in the Molonglo Valley in the long term.
- The Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework and the Molonglo Town Centre and Surrounds Concept Plan identify future facilities to be included into the detailed design and subdivision planning of the Molonglo Stage 3 and the wider Molonglo Valley district based on a preliminary community needs assessment. These facilities are outlined in Section 4 of this assessment.
- The Introduction of the Molonglo Group Centre and Surrounds Concept Plan (formally introduced into the Territory Plan through the Technical Amendment), outlines a vision for the Molonglo Town Centre to be the “primary commercial centre in the Molonglo Valley” and to be “a focus for community life with safe and inviting public spaces and streets for people to linger and easily move around”.
- The Community and Recreation Needs Assessment for Coombs and Wright evaluates the current and future community and recreational facility needs in these areas which are located within the Molonglo District. The assessment identifies gaps in provision for community meeting room / neighbourhood halls, religious facilities, arts / culture facilities, child care centres, youth facilities and senior citizens facilities.



Molonglo Valley District Strategy 2023

The Strategy is one of nine district strategies for the ACT and guides the strategic planning vision for the Molonglo Valley District towards 2038 and beyond 2050.

Molonglo Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework 2019

The Framework provides the planning process for the Molonglo Valley. The requirements outline the planning needs of the district and the provision of facilities.

Technical Amendment to the Territory plan No.2022-01 (Introduction of Molonglo Group Centre and Surrounds Concept Plan)

The purpose of the Concept Plan is to provide a planning and design framework to facilitate development and implement the vision for the Molonglo Town Centre and surrounds.

Minor Amendment to the Territory Plan (2024)

This Amendment made a number of changes to the Molonglo Valley District Policy relating to town centre requirements

Minor Amendment to the Territory Plan (2025)

This Amendment made changes to the Molonglo Valley District Policy relating to town centre requirements including to the town oval and the multi-purpose indoor recreation facility and public access.

Community and Recreation Needs Assessment for Coombs and Wright 2020

The needs assessment identifies the future community and recreational facilities for Wright and Coombs, and provide recommended uses for potential sites

3.0 EXISTING AND FUTURE COMMUNITY



3.1 THE EXISTING MOLONGLO VALLEY COMMUNITY

Snapshot of the existing Molonglo Valley community

A review of demographic data has been undertaken to identify the social characteristics of the community. This is an important start to developing an understanding of how a community lives and their potential needs, including for community and recreational facilities and services.

A demographic profile has been developed for the Molonglo Valley community using demographic data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 2021 for the Molonglo Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3), which is the most up to date census data as the next census is held in 2026. The Molonglo SA3 ('Molonglo Valley') encompasses the existing suburbs of Wright, Coombs and Denham Prospect and aligns with the Molonglo Valley boundary. Demographic data for the ACT has also been included, where relevant, to provide a comparison.

The demographic profile for the Molonglo Valley community is outlined in Table 1 below and continues on the following page.

Table 1: Key demographic characteristics of the Molonglo Valley community in 2021 (ABS 2021)

	Population	In 2021, the Molonglo Valley had a population of 11,394 permanent residents, accounting for 3% of the ACT's total population. The population of the Molonglo Valley as of June 2024 was 16,026 people (ABS actual data). This represents 3.4% of total ACT population.
	Age	The median age in the Molonglo Valley was 31 years, which is low compared to the ACT (35 years). The Molonglo Valley had very high proportions of children in age groups 0-9 years, and young adults in age groups 25-44 years compared to the ACT.
	Household type	Molonglo Valley had a similar proportion of family households (72%) compared to the ACT (70%), and a higher proportion of couple families with children (51% and 45% respectively). The average number of people per household is 2.7, which is similar to the ACT average (2.5).
	Cultural diversity	Molonglo Valley had a lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (1%) compared to the ACT (2%). Molonglo Valley had a high proportion of households where a non-English language is spoken (43%) compared to the ACT (27%). The top non-English languages spoken included: ▪ Mandarin (5%) ▪ Nepali (3%) ▪ Punjabi (3%) Molonglo Valley had a higher proportion of people with a religious affiliation (58%) compared to the ACT (51%). The three most common religious affiliations of residents included Catholicism (17%), Hinduism (12%) and Islam (7%).
	Education	A high proportion of Molonglo Valley residents have a bachelor's degree (55%) compared to the ACT (43%). 15% of the Molonglo Valley population was attaining a secondary education (compared to 19% in the ACT). The population had a similar proportion of residents undertaking tertiary education (32%) compared to the ACT (33%).

3.1 THE EXISTING MOLONGLO VALLEY COMMUNITY [CONT'D]

Table 1: Key demographic characteristics of the Molonglo Valley community [cont'd]

	Employment and income	There were high employment levels within the Molonglo Valley, with 82% of the population in the labour force, compared to 70% in the ACT. Of those in the labour force, 70% identified as being employed full time, 22% identified as being employed part-time, 5% identified as being away from work and 3% identified as being unemployed. 'Professionals' was the top occupation for employed residents in Molonglo Valley (39%). The top three industries of employment included: ▪ Central Government Administration (18%) ▪ Hospitals - except psychiatric (7%) ▪ Computer systems and design (6%). Molonglo Valley residents had a lower median weekly household income (\$1,937) compared to the ACT (\$2,289).
	Housing typology and tenure	There is a mix of dwelling densities in the Molonglo Valley, with detached dwellings accounting for 41% of all dwellings, flats or apartments accounting for 35% and semi-detached dwellings accounting for 24%. The Molonglo Valley has a higher proportion of flats and apartments and semi-detached dwellings compared to the ACT (19% and 17% respectively). Only 8% of dwellings were owned outright, which was low compared to the ACT (27%). A very high proportion of dwellings (65%) were owned with a mortgage compared to the ACT (40%).
	Mortgage and rental stress	A high proportion of dwellings in the Molonglo Valley were owned with a mortgage (65%) compared to the ACT. with only 40% of dwellings owned with a mortgage. Around 21% of rental households in the Molonglo Valley were in rental stress (where rental payments greater than 30% of household income) and 10% of owners were in mortgage stress This is consistent with ACT figures.
	Health	Molonglo Valley had a low proportion of residents who had long term health conditions (18%) compared to the ACT (27%). The most common long term health conditions in the area were: ▪ Mental health conditions (8%) ▪ Asthma (7%) ▪ Arthritis (3%).
	Private vehicle reliance	Molonglo Valley had a high proportion of residents who travelled to work by car (73%) compared to the ACT (66%) and a high proportion of residents who own two motor vehicles (46%) compared to the ACT (38%).

Source: ABS Data, 2021

3.2 THE MOLONGLO VALLEY COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE

Future Molonglo Valley population

To assess the extent of need for community and recreational facilities in Molonglo Valley in the future, it is important to understand the number of people who will be living in the area.

The ACT Government's City and Environment Directorate (CED) has assessed the projected dwellings and population for the Molonglo Valley. An additional 20,000 to 24,000 additional dwellings are now proposed with a total population of the district projected to be approximately 70,000 people.

The total projected population for the Molonglo Valley and a breakdown by suburb is provided in Table 2. The table also indicates the notional staging of development overtime.

Broader population growth

It is also important to acknowledge and consider the context of the site in relation to broader population growth and change. The neighbouring district of Belconnen (to the north) will also experience significant population growth over coming decades. ACT Treasury population projections 2025-2065 indicate the Belconnen District population will increase from 105,872 in 2021 to 157,031 in 2051. This places additional importance on ensuring additional pressure is not placed on surrounding infrastructure by ensuring an adequate level of provision of community and recreational facilities within the Molonglo Valley to service the immediate district population.

Table 2: 2025 ACT Treasury Population Projections (2021 actuals from the ABS)

	2021 population	2026 population	2031 population	2041 population	2051 population
COOMBS	4,841	6,226	7,396	8,049	8,579
DENMAN PROSPECT	2,740	6,698	8,492	11,163	14,020
MOLONGLO	0	0	2,133	7,131	11,792
MOLONGLO - EAST	3	3	3,044	11,918	21,017
WHITLAM	8	1,788	3,790	5,804	6,509
WRIGHT	3,802	4,593	5,269	5,739	6,221
TOTAL	11,394	19,308	30,124	49,804	68,138

3.2 THE MOLONGLO VALLEY COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE [CONT'D]

Future Molonglo Valley population characteristics

As existing suburbs of Coombs, Wright and Denman Prospect establish, the population will change and there will likely be increased proportions of older children and adults. The communities moving into the new suburbs are anticipated to reassemble the current existing suburbs in their infancy, with high proportions of young children and young families.

The new Molonglo Town Centre is being planned to introduce new housing options in the district. The Town Centre will predominately include apartment dwellings to enable the district to cater to a broader range of housing needs. This will potentially increase the demographic diversity of the district as a whole.

To understand the potential demographic make-up of the future Town Centre population, a high level analysis of the Belconnen Town Centre community was undertaken. Similarly to the future Molonglo Town Centre, Belconnen includes a developing Town Centre comprising higher density dwellings. A snapshot of the suburb of the Belconnen community is provided in Figure 6. The snapshot is based data from Belconnen suburb from the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census. These characteristics can provide insight into potential needs for community and recreational facilities. This is further explored in Section 3.4 – Implications of population growth and change for community and recreational facilities.

Figure 6: Key characteristics of Belconnen; a comparison Town Centre community

Young communities	Low median age, with very high proportion of young adults (20-34 years), but low proportions of children and young people.
Smaller households	Low average number of people per households and high proportions of people living alone and group households.
Culturally diverse	High proportion of people born overseas. Key countries of birth include China, India, Nepal and Philippines. High proportion of people speaking a language other than English. Key languages spoken include Mandarin, Nepali, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Korean. High proportion of people with non-Christian religious affiliation (including Hinduism and Islam).
Tertiary students and workers	High proportion of people in tertiary education or with tertiary qualifications. Top occupations include professionals, community and personal service workers, clerical and administrative workers, managers and sales workers.
Rental households	High proportion of people renting their homes.
Lower household incomes and some levels of housing stress	Low median household incomes and high proportion of rental households with rent payments greater than 30% of income.
Low levels of vehicle reliance	High proportions of dwellings with no registered vehicles and low average number of vehicles per dwelling.

3.3 POPULATION TRENDS

Sport and recreation trends in the ACT

Data relating to participation in sport and recreational activities can provide insight into potential needs for facilities within the Molonglo Valley. In 2024, the ACT Government conducted a Sport Survey to better understand the sporting and physical activity trends in the Territory and to inform the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2023-2028. The survey indicated:

- Interest in sport and physical activity was higher for respondents aged 18-44 years compared to other age groups, especially for competitions and for health/exercise.
- In the ACT, the most popular place where activates took place for adult sport were public places at 73% in the ACT while free community facilities was 21%, suggesting the importance of providing a sufficient quantity and quality open spaces for sport and recreational uses.
- In the ACT 92% of respondents were involved in some form of physical sport or activity in the last 12 months, either as a player, volunteer or parent/guardian, highlighting the integral role sport and physical activity play in everyday life.
- AusPlay survey results released on 30 April 2025, provides a detailed analysis of sports and activities. The report provides information on national sport and physical activity trends for a range of demographic groups, and a snapshot of the current state of participation for January 2024 to December 2024. Data summarising key trends relevant to this assessment include Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of participation in sport and recreation in the ACT (AusPlay, 30 April 2025)

Levels of adult participation	The ACT had similar participation rates in sports clubs or associations, private or commercial business, and gym/fitness clubs/sports/leisure centres (14%, 13% and 13% respectively) compared to national rates (13%, 10%, and 11%, respectively).
Participation of adults	Adults in the ACT had higher participation rates compared to national averages. In the ACT, 24% participated seven or more times per week, 58% participated three or more times per week, 77% participated at least once a week, 89% participated at least once a month, and 92% participated at least once a year. This was compared to 19%, 48%, 67%, 80% and 85% respectively for levels nationally.
Participation of children	Children in the ACT exhibited slightly higher participation rates compared to the national average. Specifically, 2% estimated to participate seven or more times per week, 16% participated three or more times per week, 41% participated at least once a week, 65% participated at least once a month, and 73% participated at least once a year. This was compared to 3%, 14%, 40%, 61% and 71% respectively for levels nationally.
Motivations	Physical health and fitness, fun and enjoyment and to lose/keep weight off were primary drivers for adult participation in activities in the ACT. The top motives for adult participation in the ACT were 70% for physical health or fitness, 63% for fun and enjoyment, and 58% to lose weight / keep weight off / tone. Nationally, it was similar with 65%, 58% and 53%, respectively.
Activities	Recreational walking, fitness/gym, bush walking and running/jogging were the most popular activities among adults in the ACT , with a participation rates of 58%, 39%, 22% and 21% respectively. Nationally, the most popular activities were the same but with lower participation rates at 50%, 30%, 17% and 16% respectively. This data highlights a strong preference for informal, outdoor fitness activities.

3.4 IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION GROWTH AND CHANGE

Implications of population growth and change for community and recreational facilities

Supporting population growth and change

- Significant population growth will increase demand for all forms of community and recreational facilities and services across the Molonglo Valley.
- The future community will need access to places to meet and form social connections. Community and recreational facilities play a particularly important role in facilitating social connections and cohesion in greenfield development areas, where people are new to the area and may not have established social networks.
- Areas with high proportions of people renting are also typically associated with high rates of transience in communities. Community and recreational facilities (in addition to schools and early childhood education and care) can assist people to meet and form connections when they move into a neighbourhood.

Supporting families with children and a culturally diverse community

- A broad range of facilities and services will be required to meet the significant needs of the high proportions of families with children who are likely to move into the Molonglo Valley. These include schools, early childhood education and care centres with a focus on not-for-profit centres, health services, parks, playgrounds, and facilities providing sport, recreation, arts and cultural programs and activities for babies, children and young people.
- The likelihood of a culturally diverse community suggests the need for places for cultural celebrations and family and community gatherings. Facilities for people to meet and form new social connections and networks, and to access support and language services and programs, will also be particularly important for people who may have recently moved from overseas.
- The higher proportions of people affiliating with a religion suggests potential need for religious facilities/places of worship and spaces for small faith-based group meetings.

Providing a range of infrastructure types to meet community needs

- Access to places such as libraries, community centres and parks, for people to meet and spend time with others and in the community, will also be particularly important for the likely notable number of living alone in higher density settings.
- Access to public spaces (indoor and outdoor) will be particularly important for all people living in apartments with limited indoor and outdoor space in their homes.
- The likely young population will potentially generate high demand for sport and recreational opportunities and facilities, as well as creative programs and activities.
- Having sufficient land set aside that is appropriately zoned will be critical to support the future delivery of indoor and outdoor community facilities.
- The potentially notable number of people in tertiary education living in the Town Centre, as well as high school students, will also need access to places to study.
- Free spaces, such as libraries, community centres and open spaces, are important infrastructure for people with lower household incomes or limited disposable income. Rising costs of living also contribute to demand for these free spaces and activities.
- Sport and recreation participation data highlights the growing popularity, largely among adults, of informal and non-organised activities such as gym, fitness classes, cycling, jogging and walking. This highlights the need for sport and recreational facilities to cater to these activities, in addition to organised sports.
- While it is important to consider the demographic profile and needs of the community when they move to the area, planning for community and recreational facilities should also consider how the community will grow and change over time, so that facilities remains relevant, can adapt and continue to meet a broad range of needs.



4.0 **EXISTING AND PLANNED** **FACILITY PROVISION**

4.1 THE EXISTING AND PLANNED FACILITY NETWORK

Overview

This section provides a summary of the existing and planned facilities network within and surrounding the Molonglo Valley. The section is structured by the facility types outlined in Section 1.2 and has informed the needs assessment in Section 8. The summary is accurate as of February 2026.

This summary has been informed by a range of sources, including:

- Molonglo Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework (2019)
- Molonglo Town Centre and Surrounds Concept Plan (2021) (introduced into the Territory Plan through the Technical Amendment)
- ACT Infrastructure Plan (2023)
- Additional information and resources provided by the CED and other ACT Government Directorates.
- The Territory Plan

A map showing the existing facility network within the Molonglo Valley District is provided in Section 4.7.

4.2 HEALTH FACILITIES

Hospitals

Existing provision

The closest public hospitals to the Molonglo Valley is North Canberra Hospital in Bruce (approximately 5km from Molonglo Valley and Canberra Hospital in Garran (10km).

The closest private hospital to the Molonglo Valley is Calvary John James Hospital, which is located in Deakin (approximately 6km from the Valley).

Planned provision

The Northside Hospital is a future \$1 billion public hospital which will be built on the existing North Canberra Hospital campus in Bruce. Construction of the hospital will commence mid-decade and is expected to be completed in 2030.

Community and specialist health centres

Existing provision

The Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre (EDRTC) - Canberra Health Services opened in 2024 in Coombs and was funded by the ACT Government. It provides specialised health care for people with eating disorders, including residential care.

Canberra Health Services at Molonglo located in Coombs opened in 2022 and accommodates consultation rooms and provides services for pregnancy care and support, maternal and child health, women's health counselling and children's asthma. The centre is co-located with the Molonglo Valley Medical Centre, which is a private medical centre.

Planned provision

The Canberra Health Services website indicates more services are expected to be provide at the Molonglo community health facility in the future.

The ACT Government is investigating a Child and Family Centre for the Molonglo town centre.

Figure 7: Artist's impression of the planned new Northside Hospital



Source: ACT Government

Figure 8: Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre (EDRTC) - Canberra Health Services



Source: ACT Government

4.2 HEALTH FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Social service centres and spaces

Existing provision

The Denman Village Community Centre in Denman Prospect has two rooms dedicated to community support services which are delivered by the facility operator, Communities at Work. This includes services where Communities at Work partners with communities, governments, individuals, and businesses to help develop and implement initiatives that build and strengthen community connections.

Planned provision

There may be opportunities to utilise multipurpose spaces or include dedicated spaces for social support services within planned community centres in the Molonglo Valley. This is further explored in Section 8.0.

Medical centres and general practitioners

Existing provision

There are two medical centres that provide general practitioner (GP) services in the Molonglo Valley District:

- YourGP@Denman in Denman Prospect.
- The Molonglo Valley Medical Centre in Coombs. The medical centre shares space with Canberra Health Services at Molonglo.

These private medical centres offer a range of services, including children's health, men's and women's health, immunisations and chronic disease management.

Planned provision

A 103sqm commercial health centre is proposed to be located within a proposed mixed use building in Wright. This centre is co-located with a community facility space and childcare centre.

Additional medical centre and GP provision across the Molonglo Valley is expected to be driven by market demand as development progresses and in response to future community needs.

Figure 9: Molonglo Health Hub in Coombs, containing Canberra Health Services at Molonglo and Molonglo Valley Medical, and other ancillary health facilities



Source: Molonglo Valley Medical Centre

Figure 10: YourGP@Denman



Source: Your GP@Denman

4.3 COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Libraries

Existing

The closest public library to the Molonglo Valley is Woden Library, which is approximately 7km away. The library accommodates two community rooms, a community studio suitable for food and craft, quiet rooms, large multifunctional spaces, and recording and rehearsal studios for music and podcasts.

The library was upgraded between May and November 2024 to provide a new heating and air-conditioning system, renovated bathroom facilities, a new study area, roof repairs and additional upgrades to make the building more environmentally friendly.

Planned

The ACT Government is exploring options for a future co-located library and community centre in the Molonglo Town Centre.

Figure 11: Woden Library



4.3 COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Community centres, halls and spaces

Existing

There are three community centres within the Molonglo Valley District. This includes:

- The ACT Government in 2022 entered into a lease to operate the private Coombs community centre (300sqm), which is located in the Molonglo Valley Health Hub on Woodberry Avenue, Coombs. The hiring is managed by the YMCA on behalf of the ACT Government. The facility is temporary until a suitable location is determined by the ACT Government. The multi-purpose spaces is available for hire, with the facility comprising of a flexible-use hall, two meeting rooms and three offices. It accommodate up to 150 people and includes AV, tables and chairs, kitchenette and bathroom. According to media reports at the time of opening, the ACT Government entered into an initial 5-year tenancy agreement (until 2027) to operate the facility. In the future, the Government is proposing a new purpose-built government community facility at the corner of Fred Daly Avenue and Beecroft Street – approximately 200m away. The timing of this new facility has yet to be confirmed. Following the opening of the new community facility, the future of the Woodberry Avenue centre is unclear due to it being in close proximity to the government centre.
- Denman Village Community Centre (850sqm) – the centre opened in 2022 and comprises six rooms which can accommodate between 10 and 150 people. The facility was provided by a developer and remains privately owned. It is operated by Communities at Work, an ACT based not-for-profit community organisation. The facility also includes dedicated spaces where operators offers community services and programs.
- Stromlo Cottage (160sqm) – the cottage appears to be available for small functions and gatherings utilising the existing cottage building, its rooms and the landscaped gardens. Given the room sizes and configuration of the existing building, it is expected that these uses will continue into the future, though the cottage will not have the capacity to host larger activities or events.

Planned

A community facility has been planned for the suburb of Wright. The Wright Community Centre (200sqm) will be located within a mix-use building which will also accommodate a private childcare centre and commercial health facility. The facility is expected to accommodate a hall and potentially two meeting rooms.

The ACT Government is investigating opportunities for a community facilities in Coombs and the Molonglo Town Centre. This includes investigating a co-located library and community centre.

The Molonglo Valley Planning and Design Framework Stage 3 indicates the potential inclusion of additional community facilities to be located within Suburbs 2 and 3 - these suburbs are now referred to as Bandler and Sulman.

Figure 12: Coombs Community Centre



Source: YWCA

Figure 13: Denman Village Community Centre



Source: Capital Airport Group

4.3 COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Arts and cultural space

Existing

Canberra Repertory Society Theatre (formerly Theatre 3) in Acton is the closest performing arts centre and is approximately 5km from the Molonglo Valley. The Theatre accommodates well-equipped stages with a seating capacity of 188. The venue stages six productions each year of varying sizes and is available for external hire.

Gorman Arts Centre is a significant heritage complex that has been adapted for arts use. The Centre is located 6km from Molonglo Valley. It is occupied by ACT based arts organisations, smaller arts groups and individual artists. The Centre offers performance spaces, dance studios and workshops, a gallery, artists' studios, small offices for arts organisations and meeting rooms. The Centre supports a range of innovative and accessible ACT Arts activities.

Additional arts and culture facilities include the Street Theatre, located in City West, Belconnen Arts Centre, and Strathnairn Arts, a not-for-profit arts association supported by the ACT Government providing working spaces and facilities for a range of artists, crafts people and community groups.

Under investigation

The ACT Government is investigating opportunities for an arts and cultural space in the Molonglo Town Centre.

Figure 14: Canberra Canberra Repertory Society Theatre



Source: Canberra Repertory Society

4.4 SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Aquatic facilities

Existing

Stromlo Leisure Centre is Molonglo Valley's aquatic centre. The centre is open year-round and accommodates three indoor pools (50m, program pool and leisure pool), a health club and a café. The centre offers a learn to swim program, aqua aerobics, swim squads and fitness classes, including targeted classes for younger and older people. The centre is managed by a private provider, Belgravia Leisure, on behalf of the ACT Government.

Planned

The ACT Government has committed to undertaking a specific ACT aquatic strategy in 2026.

Indoor multi-use sport courts

Existing

Weston indoor Sports Centre is the closest indoor multi-use sport courts and is approximately 6km from the Molonglo Valley. The centre is privately operated and accommodates a multipurpose indoor court which is available to hire. The centre also hosts football, netball, volleyball and cricket competitions.

Additional indoor multi-use sport courts include the:

- Australian Institute of Sport Basketball and Netball Hall in Bruce
- Multipurpose Netball ACT facility in Lyneham
- Basketball ACT facility in Belconnen.

Planned

The ACT Government is investigating opportunities for the provision of indoor multi-use sport courts in the Molonglo Valley to be co-located with the schools and college, this includes:

Whitlam Primary School

- A school gymnasium / hall is planned with two indoor multi-purpose courts that will be available for community use outside school hours upon arrangement with the school.

Molonglo Valley Campus (College)

- The future college auditorium / hall will operate as a district indoor multi-use sport courts for the Molonglo Valley community. The Territory Plan requires the centre to be at least 5,300sqm (GFA) in size, including four multi-purpose courts, spectator seating and stage facilities.
- During school hours the four-courts will be partitioned to enable community use of the two-court space adjoining the general / street entrance (in addition to the café, meeting rooms, gym, change rooms etc). The remaining two court space will be dedicated for college use with a separate campus entrance and associated facilities.
- All indoor court space will be available to the community outside school hours, either for sport, performance or civic purposes.

Molonglo Valley Campus (High School)

- The high school auditorium / gym will be of a two-court size

with meeting spaces and facilities.

- The indoor courts and meeting rooms will be available for community use outside school hours upon arrangement with the school.

Figure 15: Stromlo Leisure Centre



Source: Belgravia Leisure

Figure 16: Weston indoor Sports Centre



Source: Weston indoor Sports

Figure 17: Multipurpose Netball ACT facility in Lyneham



Source: Netball ACT

4.4 SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Sportsfields

Existing

There are two rectangular neighbourhood ovals in the Molonglo Valley. These are provided on school grounds at Charles Weston School and at Evelyn Scott School. Charles Weston School is a shared use facilities for the school and for the community outside of school hours. A mid-height fence had been erected several years ago in response to community members entering the fields during school hours with pets. The Evelyn Scott School sportsfield is available for hire by sporting organisations.

Planned

The Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework (2019) indicates two to three district playing fields will be required to service Molonglo Stage 3 and the wider Molonglo Valley. The purpose of the Framework is to guide future detailed planning and development. The Framework Plan in this document provides indicative locations for these district playing fields, which include:

- Two district playing fields north of the Molonglo Valley boundary (one at the intersection of William Hovell Drive and Coulter Drive and one at the intersection of William Hovell Drive and Bindubi Street)
- One district playing field south-east of the Molonglo Valley boundary.

While the number of sportsfields is not identified in the Framework, based on the ACT Government Sportsground provision guidelines, the proposed three district playing fields may collectively accommodate 18 basic sport units. A basic sporting unit comprises two co-located rectangular sportsfields which can be used separately or together as one neighbourhood oval.

It is important to note that whilst the Framework identifies these sport fields, there has been no formal agreement to these locations. Further assessment will be required to confirm the sites together with the approval from the National Capital Authority. It is recommended that these locations are confirmed as soon as practical to ensure their provision is brought online to support a growing population and new suburbs.

The ACT Government is investigating opportunities for a 'town oval'; a single neighbourhood oval within the Town Centre. The Territory Plan requires a town oval of at least 1.9 hectares in area. This field would be co-located with the future high school, college, outdoor courts and the indoor multi-use sport courts located within the high school and college. The oval and associated outdoor and indoor court facilities will be available for community use outside of school hours as per the Community Use of School Facilities Policy.

Additional sportsfields in the south east corner of Stromlo Forest Park have been planned and funded by the ACT Government. These are located just outside of the Molonglo Valley boundary and are expected to contribute to the needs of the growing Molonglo Valley population. The Stromlo District Playing Fields will be delivered in two stages with construction not expected to commence until at least the start of 2026, pending additional budget appropriation:

- Stage 1 – An enclosed oval consisting of synthetic grass

sportsground consisting of two full-sized rectangular fields and one modified AFL oval (using the same space), a pavilion and match play LED floodlighting.

- Stage 2 – one turf neighbourhood AFL/cricket oval, one turf neighbourhood rectangular oval and match play LED floodlighting.

Outdoor sports courts

Existing

There are two outdoor half-courts which are each located within local parks in Whitlam and Wright. These half-courts support informal recreation activities and games. The closest outdoor district netball courts to the Molonglo Valley are:

- South Canberra Netball Association courts in Deakin: 8 courts (approximately 6km)
- Arawang Netball Association courts in Stirling: 6 courts (approximately 8km)
- Canberra Netball Association courts in Lyneham (co-located with the multipurpose indoor Netball ACT facility: 12 courts (approximately 11km).

The ACT Government recently invested \$7.5 million into upgrades to netball court surfaces across Canberra's district netball facilities. Arawang Netball Association and Canberra Netball Association courts were completed in early 2024. Further upgrades to district netball courts in South Canberra, Belconnen and Tuggeranong will occur in early 2025.

The closest tennis courts are the Weston Creek Tennis Club courts in Weston, approximately 5km from the Molonglo Valley. The facility comprises of twelve synthetic courts, with bookings managed by the Weston Creek Tennis Club.

Planned

A written memo provided by the ACT Education Directorate to the SLA and CED indicates the ACT Government is investigating the provision of at least three outdoor sport courts to be co-located with the high school, college and town oval in the Molonglo Town Centre.

Whitlam Primary School

- Outdoor courts are planned at Whitlam Primary School, however, the specific number is not yet known. Recently built public schools within the ACT included one or more outdoor multipurpose courts as an indication. Where outdoor courts are not freely accessible to the resident community outside school hours, arrangements can be made with the school.

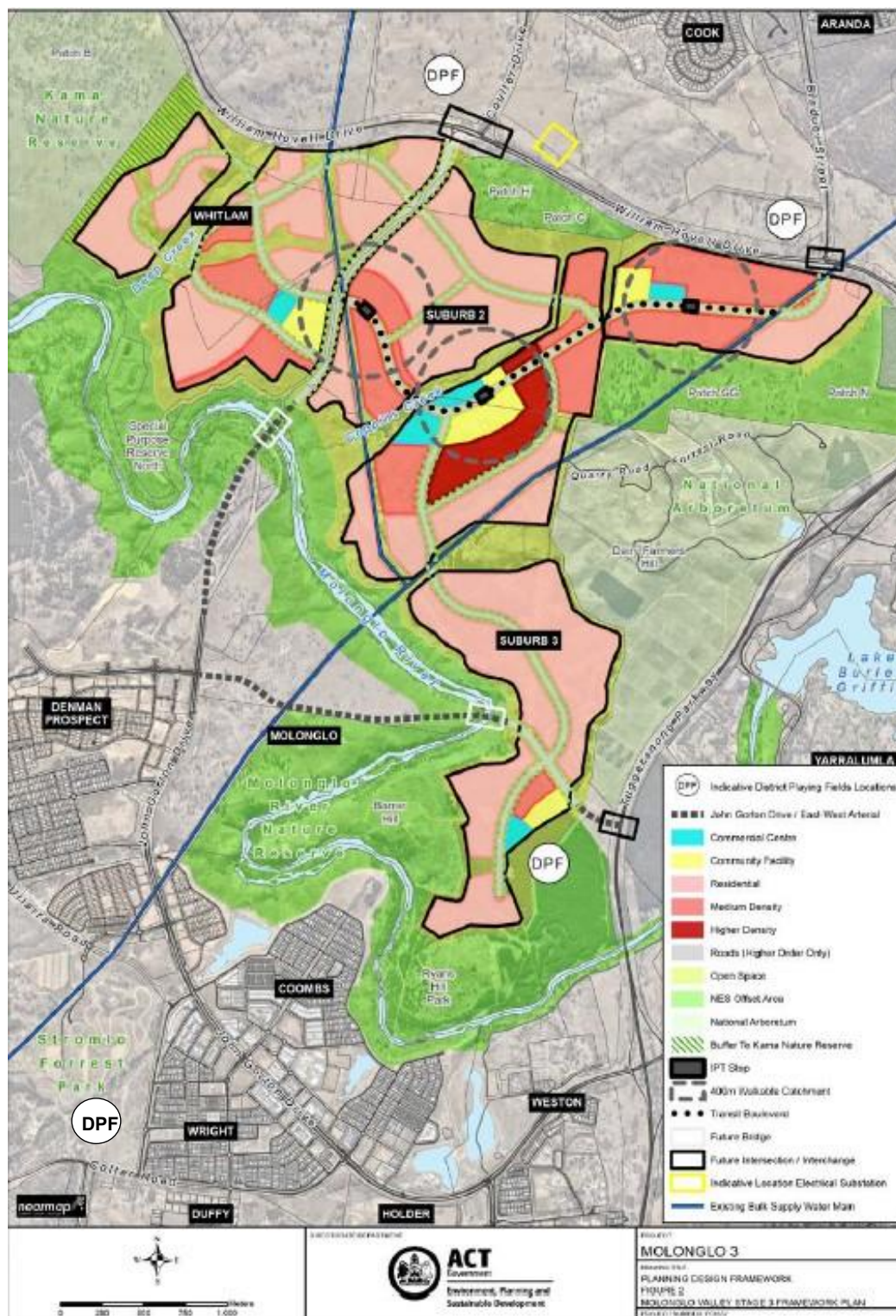
Molonglo Valley Campus (High School)

- Two outdoor courts are planned for the high school and will be located adjoining the town oval and freely accessible to the resident community outside of school hours.

The South Canberra Netball Association is currently planning to expand the number of hard courts from 8 to 12 (additional four courts) following the provision of an Australian Government grant.

4.4 SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Figure 18: Molonglo Framework Plan showing indicative locations for district playing fields



Source: Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework, p. 13 (ACT Government 2019)

Note:

- District playing fields shown as white circles and abbreviated as DPF.
- The proposed suburb boundaries shown in this map are superseded.
- There has been no formal agreement to these DPF or to their locations. Further assessment will be required to confirm each site and approval received from the National Capital Authority.

4.5 RELIGIOUS FACILITIES/PLACES OF WORSHIP

Religious facilities/places of worship

Existing

There are no purpose-built religious facilities/places of worship in the Molonglo Valley, however there are three religious groups which hold services at existing community centres and schools. This includes:

- Molonglo Valley Gospel Community, which conducts religious services and activities at the Denman Village Community Centre in Denman Prospect
- Stromlo Christian Church which holds services at Charles Weston School in Coombs and Weston Creek Uniting Church in Weston
- United Molonglo Muslim Association Inc which operates from Charles Weston School, Coombs Community Centre, and Denman Village Community Centre.

Under investigation

Minor Amendment to the Territory Plan No.2024-j (Changes to the Molonglo Valley District Policy for the Molonglo Town Centre) approved on 26 November 2024 under Notifiable Instrument NI2024-684 requires one place of worship to be provided in the Molonglo town centre and at least one additional facility to be located in the future suburbs north of the Molonglo River. Both facilities are to be provided on land zoned for Community Facility, either as a standalone site or co-located with other community facilities to the satisfaction of the relevant government agency.

Figure 19: Molonglo Valley Gospel Community at Denman Village Community Centre



Source: Molonglo Valley Gospel Community

Figure 20: Stromlo Christian Church



Source: Stromlo Christian Church

4.6 OTHER FACILITIES

Education infrastructure

Tertiary education institutions

Existing

Key existing tertiary education facilities in Canberra include:

- Australian National University in Acton
- University of Canberra in Bruce
- UNSW Canberra at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Campbell
- Canberra Institute of Technology in Reid

Planned

UNSW Canberra is planning to establish a city campus on the current CIT campus which spans across Reid and Parkes. CIT will move to a new campus in Woden, which is expected to be delivered by 2025. Stage 1 of the future UNSW Canberra City campus is expected to be completed in 2026.

Schools

Existing

There are two existing schools in the Molonglo Valley, which are operated by the ACT Government, including:

- Evelyn Scott School in Denman Prospect (primary and high school) – two outdoor cricket nets, one outdoor sports field, two outdoor sporting courts, a music studio, dance studio, teaching/learning kitchens and a community room are available for community hire.
- Charles Weston School in Coombs (primary school) – the school's hall/gymnasium and a multipurpose room with kitchen facilities are available for community hire.

The closest government college to the Molonglo Valley (grades 11-12) is Canberra College in Phillip (approximately 8km).

The closest non-government schools include Orana Steiner School and Islamic School of Canberra in Weston, and Canberra Montessori School in Holder. These three schools are located outside the southern boundary of the District and are approximately 5km from the Molonglo Town Centre.

Planned

A government high school and college are proposed in the town centre. These schools have received initial funding to progress works. As part of this, provision of indoor multi-use sport courts within each school is being investigated. The ACT Government has planned for these indoor sports centres to be available for wider community use.

A government primary school adjacent to the Whitlam local centre has been funded and is currently under construction. The school is will accommodate up to 780 students and is expected to open in 2027. The Whitlam school is expected to have spaces that are available for community use after hours.

Stromlo Forest Anglican College in Wright will open in 2026 and will ultimately accommodate approximately 1,858 students, across early learning centre, kindergarten, primary school, high school and college cohorts. The Anglican Diocese proposes to allow several school facilities to be available for community hire. This may include a gymnasium, library, oval, music rooms, arts rooms, cricket nets, hard courts and meeting rooms.

A further five government schools including a high school are proposed within the remaining suburbs of the Molonglo Valley. The type of government school (primary and high) will influence the type of facilities that may be made available to the community, consistent with Education Directorate Infrastructure Specifications. While new schools are designed with community access as a key element, the operation of the school once opened will determine the level of community access of both indoor and external facilities consistent with 'Community Use of School Facilities Policy.

These five government schools include a proposed primary school in Denman Prospect close to John Gorton Drive. The Territory Plan specifies that this school will be approximately 4.3 hectares and include a playing field of at least 1 hectare that will be available for public use outside school hours.

The ACT Government will provide two further sites for non-government schools in the Molonglo Valley in the coming years at Denman Prospect and within a future unnamed suburb, close to the National Arboretum Canberra.

Early childhood education and care

Existing

There are two existing early childhood education and care centres within the Molonglo Valley. This includes:

- Coombs Early Learning in Coombs
- Denman Village Early Learning Centre in Denman Prospect.

Planned

There are two early childhood education and care centres planned in the Molonglo Valley. This includes a:

- Centre co-located with a new primary school in. The centre is expected to accommodate up to 130 early childhood education and care places.
- Centre co-located with a planned community centre and commercial health facility in Wright. The centre is expected to accommodate up to 112 places.

Open space for recreation

Existing

There are a range of local parks located within the suburbs of Coombs, Wright, Whitlam and Denman Prospect. While the parks vary in size and embellishments, most parks accommodate children's playground, open grass areas for informal recreation, seating areas and public toilets.

The land which sits adjacent to the future suburbs north of the Molonglo River accommodates a range of walking trails which can be accessed from surrounding roads.

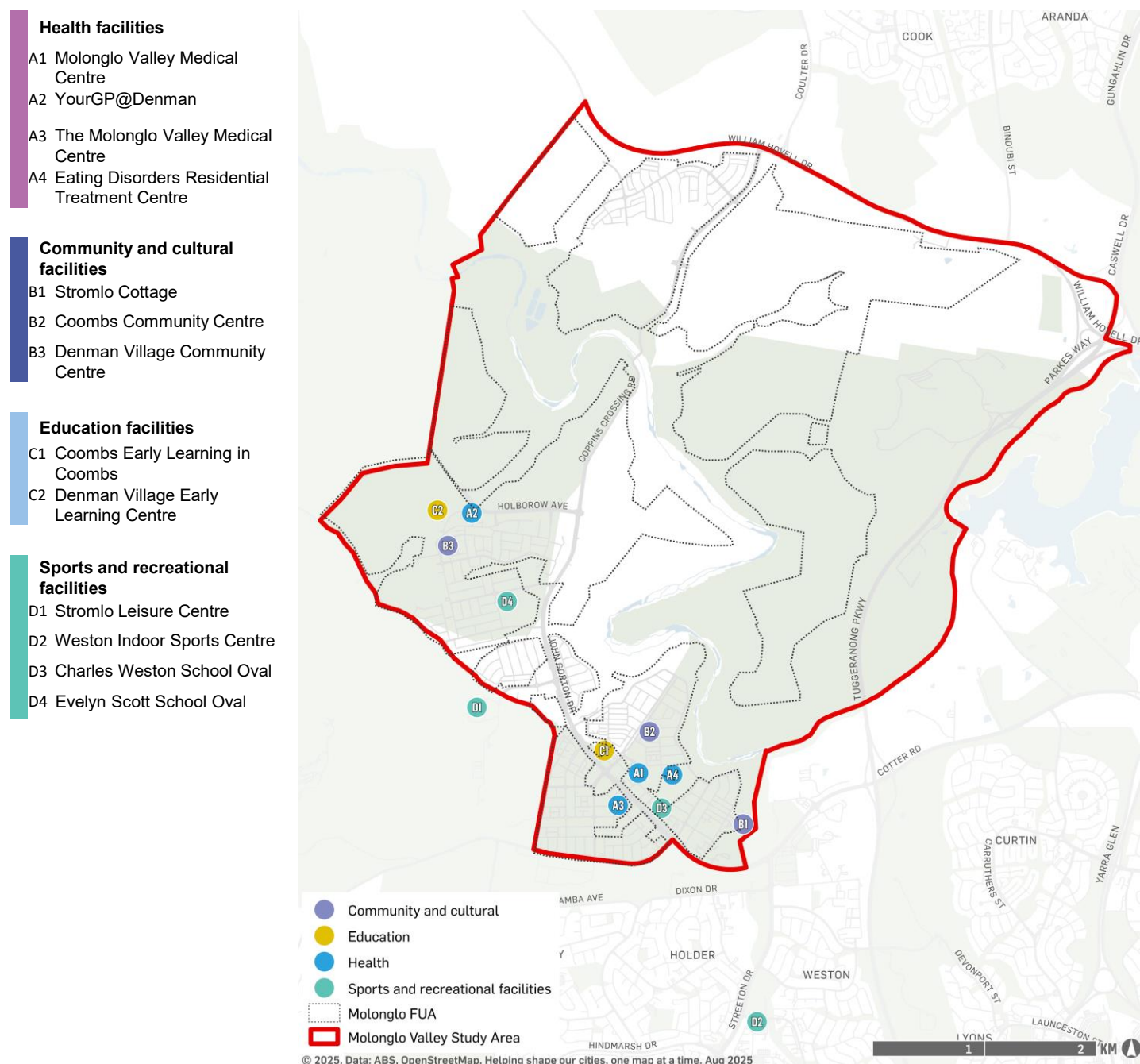
The Molonglo River Reserve is a major conservation and natural recreation area which was created in 2018 following the consolidation of three former nature reserves. The 1,280 hectare reserve is located south of Whitlam and is managed by the ACT Government. The Reserve is intended to become a central landscape feature and passive recreation area at selected locations for the new suburbs of the Molonglo Valley.

Planned

The future development will provide an integrated network of public realm spaces, open spaces, parks and playgrounds as development progresses.

4.7 MAP OF EXISTING KEY FACILITIES WITHIN MOLONGLO VALLEY

Figure 21: Map of existing facilities within Molonglo Valley



5.0 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



5.1 ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Overview

This section provides an overview of the community and stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the needs assessment. The engagement process was conducted over the course of the needs assessment process (2023-2024) and involved:

- ACT Government Directorates and agencies involved in the planning, provision, operation and/or management of facilities
- Community organisations providing services to the community and utilising facilities
- Community groups
- The broader community.

The community and stakeholder engagement activities provided valuable insights in relation to community needs and priorities, the existing and planned facility network and aspirations for the future. The findings from this consultation has been used to inform the needs assessment undertaken in Section 8. An overview of the engagement activities undertaken is provided below, with a summary of the key outcomes from these activities provided on the following pages.

Stakeholder interviews

In-depth interviews with key ACT Government Directorates and agencies involved in the provision of community and recreational facilities in the Molonglo Valley were undertaken throughout 2023 and 2024. Interviews were held with staff from the following Directorates and agencies:

- ACT Arts
- ACT Libraries
- ACT Health
- ACT Sport and Recreation
- ACT Education
- ACT Events
- ACT Property Group
- National Arboretum Canberra and Stromlo Forest Park
- Suburban Land Agency (SLA).

In-depth interviews were also undertaken with Molonglo Valley Community Forum (a community group) and Communities at Work (a community service provider and facility operator). The purpose of these interviews was to understand existing and future community needs, the existing and planned facility network and key directions and performance standards for facility provision.

Community survey and community pop-ups

A community survey was developed and hosted on the ACT Government's YourSay website. The survey was focused on understanding the community's existing use of facilities, satisfaction with existing infrastructure and priorities for the future. The survey included questions on four key facility types:

- Community and cultural facilities
- Health facilities
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Religious facilities/places of worship.

The survey was open during the community consultation period of 29 May to 10 July 2024.

A listening report was prepared to summarise the feedback received and was shared on the ACT Government's YourSay website.

The online survey received 289 responses. A summary of the key demographic characteristics of these respondents is provided below:

- A significant proportion of respondents (41%) were aged between 35-50 years. Only 6% of respondents were under the age of 25 years.
- Most respondents lived in the Molonglo Valley (77%), followed by Woden Valley (8%) and Tuggeranong (5%).
- More than half of respondents were female (57%), 39% were male, and 4% preferred not to say.

Three long form submissions were also provided by three religious groups. Insights from these submissions have been captured within the community survey summary.

Four pop-ups were also held on separate days throughout June 2024. The pop-up locations included Denman Prospect shops (two pop-ups), Denman Village Park and Wright Woolworths Metro. The purpose of the pop-ups were to draw the community's attention to the engagement and to hand out flyers with a QR Code to the online survey.

A Listening Report of what was heard through the community engagement is available on CED website.

5.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY THEME

A summary of the community and stakeholder engagement findings by theme is provided below. Detailed breakdowns of insights by stakeholder and for the community survey are provided on the following pages.

Community characteristics, needs and priorities

- **Future open space** should be provided in accordance with the Government's multipurpose facilities model. This model is currently under development but is intended to facilitate adaptable spaces which can accommodate multiple user groups and changing community needs.
- There are nine key principles for open space planning. These are: equity of access, public transport connections, visibility, flexibility, safety, future adaptability, sustainability, sense of place and avoiding land use conflict.
- **Urban tree canopies** should be protected, retained and increased in growth areas to combat urban heat island effects and diversify tree species.
- **Local health services, programs and facilities** should be developed early in the planning process and focus on preventative health measures.
- **The urban environment** should encourage and support people to live healthy lives. Principles around accessibility, equity and social cohesion should therefore be imbedded in any new facilities and places.

Facility gaps identified

- indoor sport and recreation
- Library
- Arts, creative and cultural spaces
- Multipurpose performance space catering to local needs
- Multipurpose activity and program space
- Spaces to hire for private functions and gatherings (indoor and outdoor)
- Multifaith community facility or space
- Parks and gathering spaces
- Large outdoor event space
- Sports fields and courts (to support sporting clubs to establish in the area)
- Facilities and spaces for structured and unstructured activities for young people

Key directions proposed for facility provision

- Accessible by public and active transport.
- Facilities and spaces should be inclusive, including catering to the needs of people with disability.
- Co-located to facilitate ease of access, referrals and efficiencies in terms of space, amenities and resourcing.
- Facilities and offerings should cater to the specific needs of the local, multicultural community.
- Co-designed with the community to encourage a sense of ownership and cater to local needs.
- People experiencing vulnerabilities and disadvantage, and people experiencing cultural barriers do not always engage with community support services. Community services should be co-located with schools and community facilities to facilitate and encourage seamless access.
- Provide adequate storage to support shared-use by multiple groups.

5.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE

Libraries

- Molonglo is currently serviced by a book service at The Hive, with Woden and Belconnen being the closest libraries.
- Most book borrowing has moved online, and the community are seeking more spaces for meeting, gathering and activities.
- The future population of Molonglo will generate demand for new a library.
- Key design principles for the new Molonglo library include:
 - Co-designed with the community
 - Co-located with child and family health services
 - Designed to support people with disabilities, including more dog friendly areas and access to transport and parking
 - Integrated with arts and culture, including exhibition space
 - More flexible meeting and activity spaces.

The nature of borrowing is changing but people are still accessing the library and having a different experience.

Library ACT representative

Arts and cultural space

- The Molonglo district is currently serviced by high end Arts and cultural space in the Canberra City Centre.
- There is a gap in Arts and cultural space the broader district - Molonglo, Woden and Weston.
- A local or district multipurpose facilities would be more suited within the Molonglo Valley, rather than a standalone arts centre or specialised facility.
- Facilities and spaces should be multi-purpose, but not “too multi-purpose” so they are unable to successfully function for creative arts.
- School facilities can contribute to the network of cultural facilities, such as school halls or s as performing spaces.
- There is particularly high demand across Canberra for dance spaces and affordable spaces for creative businesses and artists.

Going back to multi-use, I think it's also about ensuring it's not too multi-use so that it can't be used for anything.

ACT Arts representative

Community centres, halls and spaces

- Denman Prospect Village Community Centre is the only functioning large community facility in Molonglo Valley and is well utilised by the community.
- Most existing facilities are not fit-for-purpose and not meeting contemporary needs, particularly related to disability accessibility requirements.
- There is a high demand for spaces for faith-based groups, private functions and celebrations, as well as for office space, consulting rooms and activity spaces.
- This need has generated large waitlists for access to facilities and placing significant pressure on community facilities.
- To ensure equitable access to facilities, community facilities are moving away from dated tenant arrangements, to peppercorn rents or selection of next on the waitlist, rather than assessment of benefit.
- The community will need access to central community gathering and event spaces (outdoor and indoor) that can be activated by satellite major events, as well as community-grown events.
- ACT Property Group is considering the preferencing of owning and managing assets in the future (as opposed to privately provided and/or organisation operated facilities.
- Key design principles for a new community facility include:
 - Provision of multipurpose facilities and space
 - Incorporation of retail and commercial spaces to generate cost recovery
 - Co-located with other community facilities
 - Co-designed with the community.

It's important to involve the community in the co-design phases to enhance the community's sense of place and ownership.

Community organisation representative

5.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE [CONT'D]

Education facilities

- Shared-use of education facilities has been successful, and all types of facilities are suitable for shared-use, with consideration of security. indoor recreation courts in high schools show real potential for community access.
- It is important for communities, particularly in high density areas, to have adequate access to public community facilities, parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities to ensure school spaces aren't over-used.
- Co-located schools with other public community facilities will enable schools to lean on these facilities and recreation spaces, especially for higher education students.
- Given the topography constraints of Molonglo Valley, there will likely be an expectation for schools to deliver formalised recreation spaces that can be shared with the community.
- There is a significant need for early childhood education and care in the Molonglo Valley area and there is a heavy reliance on private providers for these types of facilities in Canberra more broadly.
- Ensuring there are spaces for community not-for-profits in the early childhood education and care centres sector is a priority.
- There is a planned high school and college in the Molonglo Town Centre. The high school and college precinct will accommodate an indoor sporting centre which may be available for wider community use.

Almost all the urban fabric of public schools should be available to the public, whilst ensuring security.

ACT Education representative

Health facilities

- There is a focus on delivering local health services provided in communities and close to home, rather than at Hospital precincts.
- The ACT has a particular shortage in the availability of bulk-billing medical facilities.
- It is expected the private sector will likely move into Molonglo to provide GPs and allied health services.
- There will be future demand to provide a mental health facility and Molonglo will likely be a good location as it's central to other districts.
- There is a need for more walk-in health centres that are close to home. These aim to treat minor health needs and prevent escalation to hospital visits.

We don't know what the future community will need now, but there is demonstrated demand for small to medium public health facilities that are integrated in the community.

ACT Health representative

Religious facilities/places of worship

- There are plans for two places of worship in the Molonglo Valley: one in the Molonglo town centre and one in a future suburb, north of the Molonglo River.

5.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE [CONT'D]

Open space, sport and recreational facilities

- Sports fields in surrounding areas are highly utilised and the incoming population of Molonglo will put additional pressure on these fields.
- There is currently an undersupply of indoor multi-use sport courts in Canberra.
- The population of Molonglo will generate a need for an indoor sport and recreation facility with a minimum of four courts.
- Molonglo's topography presents challenges in finding suitable sites for sports fields, clustered courts and large facilities.
- Education facilities play an important role in the provision of sport fields/courts.
- Flexibility needs to be maintained in planning for sport and recreation to ensure the facilities can meet future needs and trends in types of sport and activities.
- The preferred model of provision are district playing fields as neighbourhood fields and ovals are inefficient and are often left unmaintained and underutilised.
- Stromlo Forest Park is a highly utilised regional facility catering to medium and large community events, primarily sport and recreation. In terms of project visualisation, Sport and Recreation have initiated early mock-ups for the Stromlo development. These mock-ups will be informed by a comprehensive demand analysis, which will also guide the project staging.
- Molonglo Valley is in close proximity to the Stromlo Forest Park and will be a local asset for the future community.
- Adequate provision of local parks and recreation spaces will be needed in Molonglo to ensure there is not an over-reliance on Stromlo Forest Park.
- Two or three district playing fields are proposed to service the needs of Molonglo Valley community. The indicative locations for these sportsfields are outside of the Molonglo Valley boundary. Topography is a key issue for sportsfield siting within the Valley. Further site due diligence assessments will be required for each of the sites to confirm they will be suitable for the proposed use.

The new delivery model with education is double court gymnasiums at high schools and colleges and at least a full sized court at primary schools, ideally a double court if space and funding allows.

ACT Sport and Recreation representative

5.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE

Health facilities

Existing use of facilities

- Half of respondents (50%) used existing health facilities in the Molonglo Valley, including YourGP@Denman and the Molonglo Health Hub (which comprises a community health centre, private medical centre and allied health facilities).
- Most respondents (81%) used health services occasionally (a few times a year) and 18% of respondents use health services every month.

Satisfaction with existing facilities

- Around two thirds of respondents (63%) believed these existing health facilities meet their individual or family needs 'very well' or 'well'.
- Just under half of respondents (46%) were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the current provision of health facilities in the Molonglo Valley. A quarter (25%) were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and fifth (21%) were 'very dissatisfied' or 'dissatisfied'.

Priorities for future provision

- There was high levels of support for walk-in clinic in the Molonglo Valley. Respondents also noted the desire for greater access to bulk billing facilities.
- Many respondents outlined the need for mental health services either as pop-ups or in a specialist community counselling centre format.
- Several respondents outlined the need for allied health services in the Molonglo Valley, specifically physiotherapy provision chemist, dentists and dieticians/nutritionists.

More pathology. Allied health spaces for hire so physios, massage therapists and dieticians and the like could offer services part time. Eventually our own walk in centre would be great, once the population increases to justify it, in the town centre.

Community survey respondent

A space where larger gatherings could be catered for with a large hall and multiple other smaller meeting rooms. The location of Denman Prospect Community centre is helpful; near the shops; but larger facilities would help.

Community survey respondent

Community and cultural facilities

Existing use of facilities

- Around one third of survey respondents (36%) use community and cultural facilities in Molonglo Valley, including Denman Village Community Centre and Coombs Community Centre. Over half of respondents (55%) also use community and cultural facilities outside of the Molonglo Valley.
- Of the respondents that used the Denman Village Community Centre and Coombs Community Centre, 22% used them occasionally (a few times a year), 8% used them frequently (every month), and 7% used them very frequently (every week).
- The five most common uses for the Denman Village Community Centre and Coombs Community Centre include attending events (47%), social activities (26%), participating in recreational activities (23%), participating in art, craft or creative programs or activities (14%) and participating in a lifestyle activity or program (14%).

Satisfaction with existing facilities

- Over a third of respondents (36%) indicated the Denman Village Community Centre and Coombs Community Centre met their individual or family's needs 'very well' or 'well' and 28% indicated they meet needs 'somewhat well'. 36% of respondents believed facilities met needs 'not well at all'.
- Around a quarter of respondents (23%) were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the provision of community and cultural facilities in Molonglo Valley, and about a third (31%) are 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.
- Some respondents noted a lack of services and programs offered at facilities, while others noted that more events and programs could be held on weekends. Challenges around contacting the facility operator and booking facilities were also raised.

Priorities for future provision

- Many respondents outlined the need for more and larger facilities as the Molonglo Valley population increases. Respondents also noted the importance of providing spaces that can be hired for individual functions and celebrations.
- There was strong support for a library, outdoor amphi, co-working spaces, arts and cultural spaces within the Molonglo Valley. Respondents also identified the need for low-cost activities, programs and spaces, particularly for younger and older age cohorts.

5.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE [CONT'D]

Sport and recreational facilities

Existing use of facilities

- Over two thirds of respondents (69%) indicated they used indoor or outdoor recreation facilities in the Molonglo Valley. Almost three quarters of respondents (72%) also indicated they use recreation facilities outside of the Molonglo Valley, with many respondents indicating they use facilities in Stromlo.
- Almost half of respondents (47%) used indoor or outdoor recreation facilities 'very frequently (every week)', 30% used facilities occasionally (a few times a year) and 23% used facilities frequently (every month).
- Outdoor walking and cycling trails/tracks (including Stromlo Forest Park), aquatic facilities (including Stromlo Leisure Centre), Stromlo mountain bike track, local children's playgrounds and local basketball courts were identified by respondents as the key sport and recreation facilities they currently use.

Satisfaction with existing facilities

- Just under two thirds of respondents (61%) stated sport and recreation facilities met their individual or family needs 'very well' or 'well', 26% indicated they met needs 'somewhat well' and 13% indicated they met needs 'not well at all'.
- Less than half of respondents (41%) indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the current provision of sport and recreation facilities in the Molonglo Valley, 28% were 'very dissatisfied' or 'dissatisfied', and 26% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

- There was consensus among respondents that there is good provision of outdoor recreation facilities, but a lack of indoor facilities in the Molonglo Valley.
- Stromlo Leisure Centre and Stromlo Forest Park were identified as high quality facilities in the Molonglo Valley region, with respondents noting their diverse and multi-use offerings.
- Poor lighting and kangaroo fencing at the Stephen Hodge Criterium Cycling Circuit in Stromlo Forest Park was identified as a barrier to accessing this facility, particularly during winter evenings.
- Additional barriers impacting respondent satisfaction included limited access for wheelchair users and those with young children, poor public transport access, a lack of public toilets at parks and children's playgrounds, and affordability of entry fees at Stromlo Leisure Centre.

Priorities for future provision

- Respondents expressed support for indoor multi-use sport courts which could accommodate a range of sports and activities (including basketball, futsal, indoor cricket and badminton).
- Additional outdoor sportsfields was also identified as a priority. Respondents noted that they needed to leave the Molonglo Valley to access these facilities.
- Skateboarding facilities, tennis courts dog parks and other off-leash dog areas were also identified for consideration during future planning.

There are lots of great outdoor spaces and areas, such as Stromlo Forest Park. As the population grows there will be a need for large scale indoor sports facilities for sports like basketball, netball, volleyball and pickleball.

Community survey respondent

5.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY BY FACILITY TYPE [CONT'D]

Religious facilities/places of worship

Existing use of facilities

- Around a fifth of respondents (20%) indicated they attended a religious facility or place of worship in the Molonglo Valley. Other responses included Weston Creek (10%), Belconnen (3%) and elsewhere in the ACT (19%). Around a half of respondents (48%) did not attend a places of worship.
- Of the respondents who use religious facilities, most (80%) attend very frequently (every week), 13% attend occasionally (a few times a year) and 7% attend frequently (every month).
- Of the respondents who use religious facilities, 86% use them for faith activities, 6% use them for social activities, 1% use them for events and 6% use them for other activities.

Satisfaction with existing facilities

- Almost half of respondents (48%) who use religious facilities indicated these facilities met their individual and family needs 'very well' or 'well'. A quarter of respondents (24%) indicated their needs were met 'somewhat well' while 28% of respondents indicated they met needs 'not well at all'.
- Respondents indicated while current facilities provided a place for holding services and gatherings, purpose-built facilities are preferred.
- Several respondents stated the services provided by places of worship such as mothers support groups and social activities had a positive impact on the community.

Priorities for future provision

- Around two thirds of respondents (61%) indicated

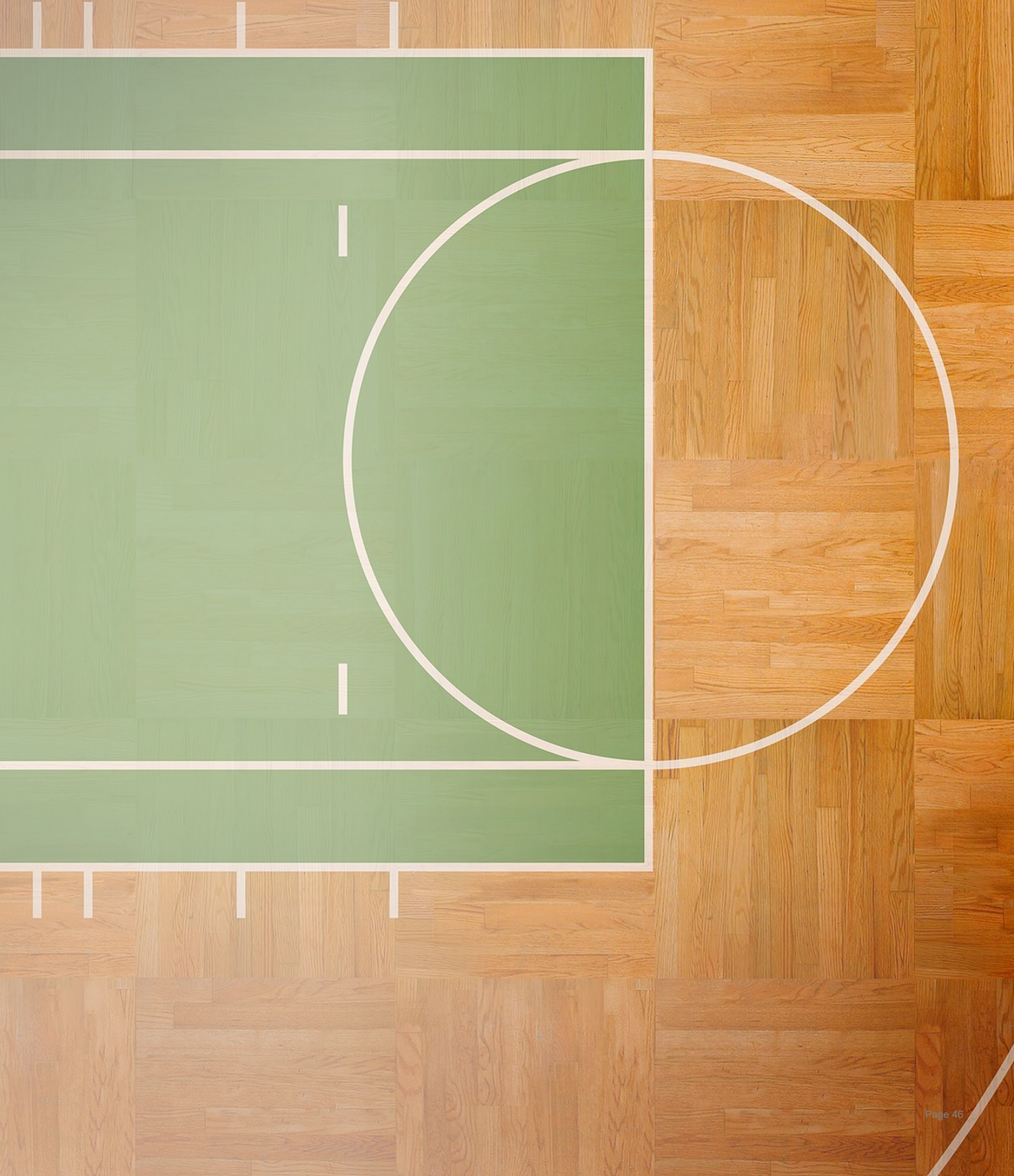
they would like to see a religious facility in the Molonglo Valley. Many respondents noted that existing facilities are not able to support current and future demand.

- Just under half of respondents (49%) indicated the religious facility could be part of a multi-purpose facility that caters to multiple uses at other times (e.g. a community space for events, activities and programs). Around one fifth of respondents (22%) were opposed to this, while 29% indicated a response of 'other'.
- Many respondents noted the challenges associated with holding services and activities from schools and community centres, particularly limitations around booking facilities throughout the week in addition to Sundays. Respondents also noted that having a purpose-built facility would help to build a greater sense of community, as the building could host a range of activities.
- Two thirds of respondents (65%) preferred that a potential future religious facility would not share facilities with other faiths, while a third of respondents (35%) were open to this. Respondents open to sharing facilities with other faiths indicated that it could help to create a more diverse community. Respondents that preferred separate facilities noted there could be potential conflicts with scheduling services and other activities across multiple faiths in shared facilities. Some respondents indicated that certain sub-groups from a religious faith (i.e. Catholic and Anglican groups) could share a facility.
- Car parking (27%), meeting rooms (17%) and proximity to public transport (15%) were identified as the key success factors for planning and designing religious facilities.

We love our current church, but we are growing out of the building we have and would love more space to welcome more people and host activities for the community.

Community survey respondent

6.0
FACILITY PROVISION TRENDS



6.1 FACILITY PROVISION TRENDS

The planning and delivery of community and recreational facilities over various jurisdictions is adapting to changes in the social, economic and environmental context. To meet the challenges associated with delivery of facilities, including rapid and significant population growth, increasing urban density, rising construction and operational costs and resourcing challenges, governments around the world are reviewing the way they provide community and recreational facilities. Some key current and emerging trends in the planning, design and operation of facilities are included in the Table X.

Many of these trends can be evidenced in the case studies of facilities examined for this needs assessment. These case studies are included in Appendix A and referenced in the needs assessment included in Section 8.

Table 4: Facility provision trends

Co-design of facilities with the end users to encourage community ownership and a fit for purpose design	Flexible spaces and fittings that can respond to changing preferences over time and avoid redundancy of facilities and equipment
Partnerships which provide alternative approaches to funding, delivery and operation of facilities, including shared use arrangements and public-private partnerships	Multipurpose facilities and open space that are designed to support a range of user groups, including different ages, abilities and activities in one location to support increased utilisation by creating spaces that serve multiple functions
Integrated delivery of community services, programs and activities in a single facility to improve service delivery for and create efficiencies through common areas and amenities	Compact designs that enable the delivery of critical facilities in areas that are constrained by spaces or land values, including in urban centres
Accessibility of facilities by public, private and active transport is maximised to support a reduction in car use and convenience for different users	Technology enabled facilities, including free wi-fi for users, online booking systems and high-tech maker spaces that may provide 3D printing, computer programming and music and movie production
Co-location of facilities to provide user convenience and encourage cross utilisation of clustered facilities	Smart buildings and spaces to minimise long term operation and maintenance costs
Increased importance of public, non-programmed spaces as the size of homes and backyards are reducing, and people need free indoor and outdoor public spaces to connect and gather informally with others	Affordable and free to ensure activities and spaces cater to diverse community members and groups from a range of socio-demographic backgrounds

The background of the page is an abstract architectural photograph. It features a series of white, three-dimensional geometric beams and plates that intersect at various angles, creating a complex, layered structure. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the clean lines and surfaces of the materials. In the upper portion of the image, a section of a ceiling with a light-colored wood grain pattern is visible, featuring several small, dark, circular recessed lights.

7.0 FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE PROVISION

7.1 FACILITY HIERARCHY

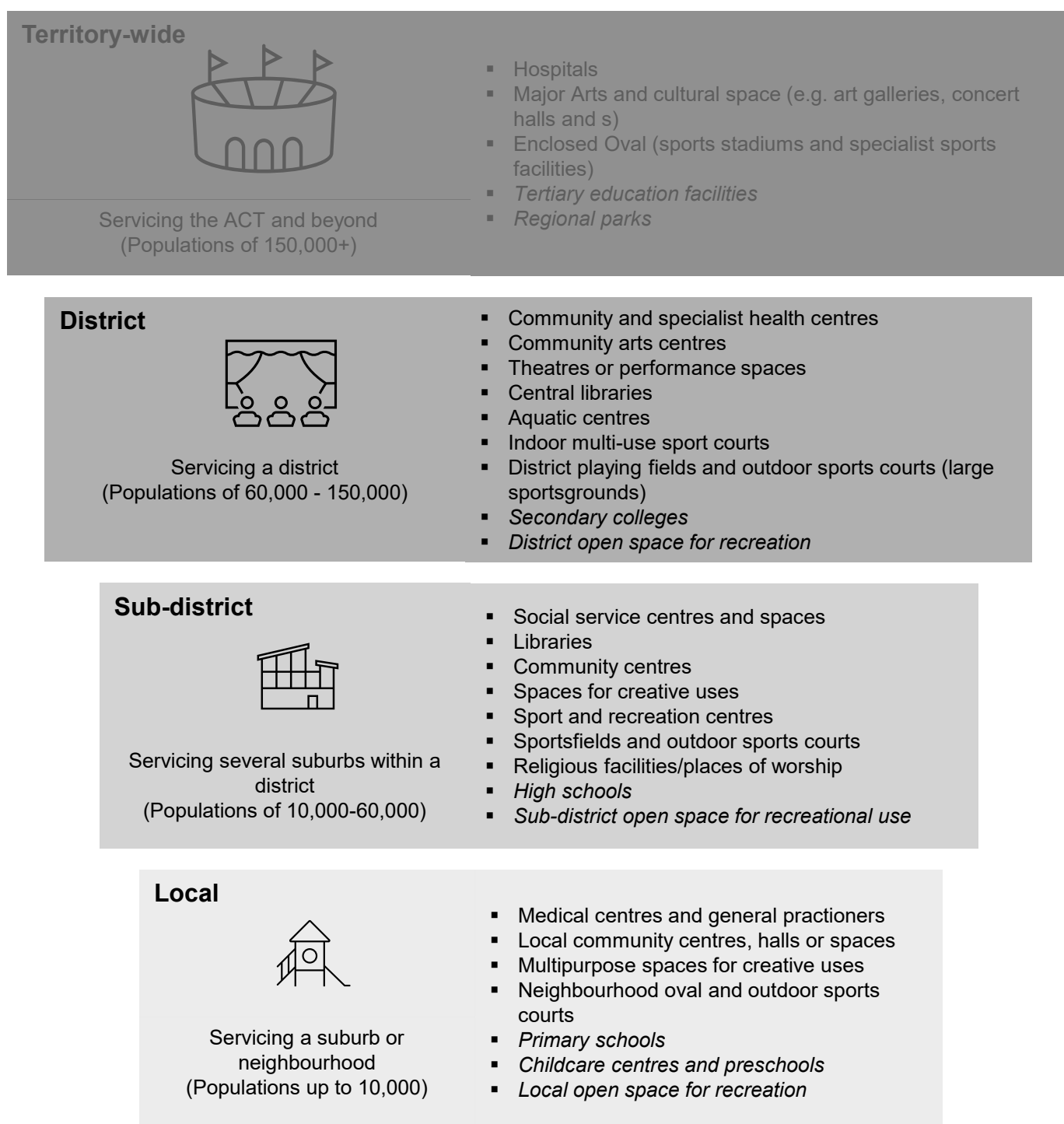
Facility network hierarchy

To determine the facilities required by the future Molonglo Valley population, this assessment considers the hierarchy and associated population catchments shown in Figure 22. The hierarchy shown is adapted from hierarchies utilised in previous needs assessments undertaken for the ACT Government for other localities.

As the Molonglo Valley is identified as a district (in terms of scale and population size), the key hierarchy levels of most relevance to this needs assessment include district, sub-district and local.

Both primary facilities and other facilities (*italicised*) are shown in the hierarchy.

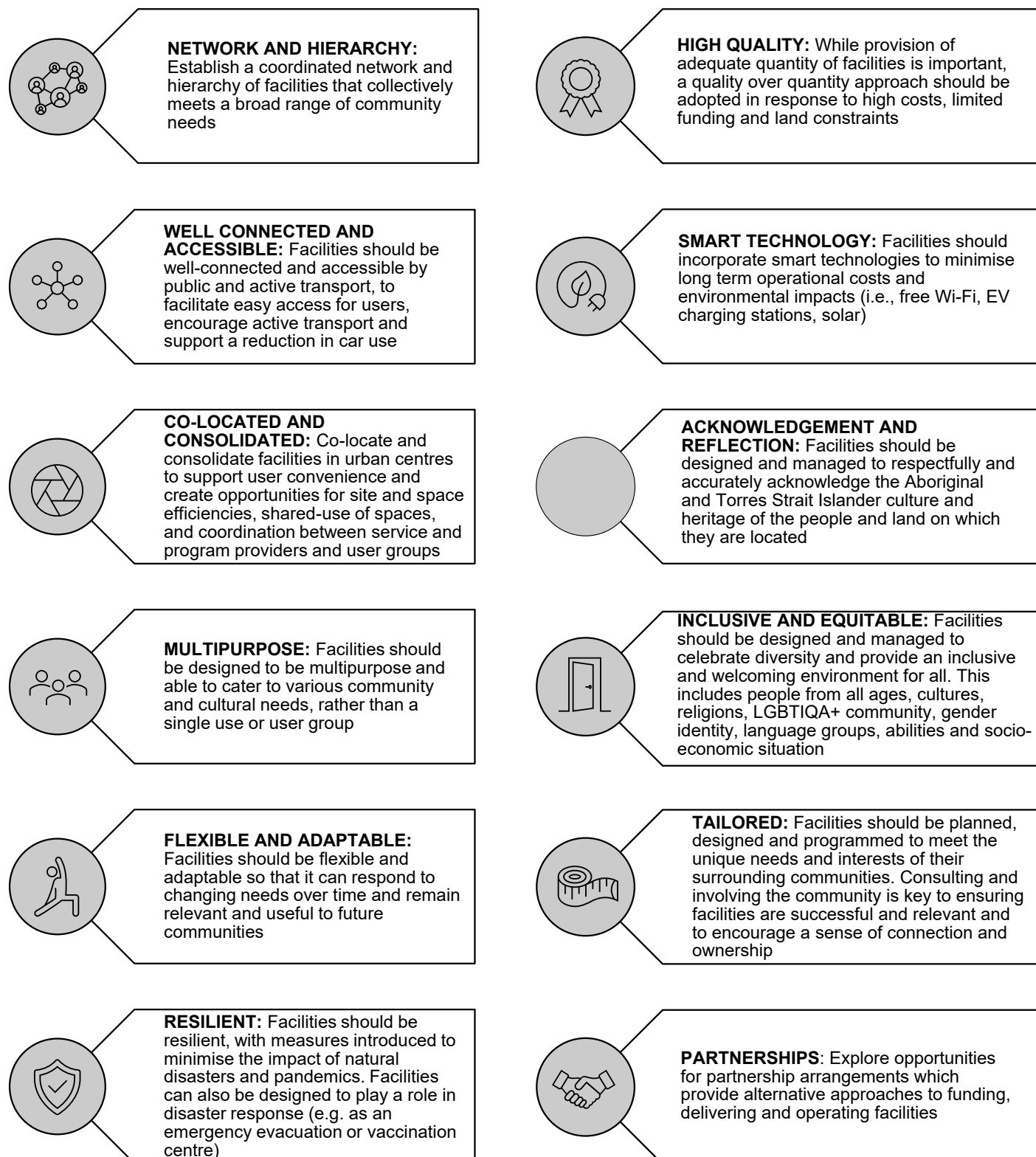
Figure 22: Community and recreational facility hierarchy (considered to be best practice approach)



7.2 PRINCIPLES

The following figure includes principles to guide the planning, design and operation of community and recreational facilities. These principles have been derived from trends in community and recreational facility provision and case studies, including those presented in Appendix A.

Figure 23: Guiding principles (considered to be best practice approach)



8.0 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



8.1 NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACH

Approach

This section documents an assessment of needs for community and recreational facilities in the future Molonglo Valley at completion. As the Molonglo Valley is identified as a district (in terms of scale and population size), the assessment focuses on district, sub-district and local level facilities.

As outlined in Section 1, the needs assessment involved a multidimensional approach. One of these dimensions involved the assessment of 'comparative need' through the application of standards and benchmarks. These were applied to the projected future population of the Molonglo Valley (approximately 70,000 people in 2051), to determine the quantity of facilities required.

The benchmarks applied were sourced from other ACT Government needs assessments and supplemented with industry recognised benchmarks. Sources for benchmarks are noted. Those referenced as 'ACT Government' have been sourced from the most recent needs assessment undertaken (Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment – Gungahlin District (SGS, 2022) or from directive given by ACT Government representatives. These benchmark relate to greenfield development and maybe subject to change. They are a point in time reflection.

Benchmarking is a tool that can be useful in assessing the quantity of facilities required by a population. While benchmarking provides a good starting point, it should not be solely relied upon in determining needs and requirements and the exact quantity of facilities or spaces required.

Benchmarking does not take into account the quality, suitability and distribution of facilities, or the individual needs of a community. Benchmarking instead is viewed as one input in determining needs and developing recommendations for community and recreational facilities.

The needs assessment in this section does not therefore solely rely on benchmarking. As noted in Section 1, other dimensions of need (normative, expressed and felt) and related data, information and inputs have also informed the needs assessment and shaped the recommendations provided.

This includes extensive stakeholder and community engagement to ensure community needs are understood from a range of perspectives, including direct research.

8.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – HEALTH FACILITIES

Infrastructure	Benchmark	Existing and planned provision (quantity)
Hospitals (Territory-wide)	One hospital for every 100,000-200,000 people. <i>Source: ACT Government</i>	District serviced by major public and private hospitals in the ACT (including in Bruce, Deakin and Garran)
Community and specialist health centres (District)	- One community health centre for every 60,000 people. 2,500sqm site, 800sqm floorspace - One child and family centre for every 60,000 people. 4,000sqm site <i>Source: ACT Government</i>	1 specialist health centre 1 community health centre (1 Child & Family Centre under investigation)
Social service centres and spaces (sub-district and local)	No benchmark proposed. May be co-located with or incorporated within a community centre or community health centre. However, some support services for vulnerable groups may require separate facilities (e.g. domestic and family violence, sexual assault and services supporting vulnerable children).	1 community centre accommodating social services
Medical centres and GPs	Future facilities will be driven by the market. Guide: 1 large private medical centre (6 or more GPs and allied health specialists) for every 15,000-18,000 people or 1 small medical centre (5 or less GPs) per 4,000-5,000 people <i>Source: Integrated Primary and Community Care Development Plans for the South West Growth Centre, South Western Sydney Local Health District (2012)</i>	1 large medical centres (1 additional planned) 1 small medical centre

8.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – HEALTH FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach

Hospitals

The future Molonglo Valley population will not alone generate demand for a hospital, however it will contribute to broader growing need across the wider ACT. It is expected the Molonglo Valley population has been factored in strategic planning for hospitals across the Territory, including the planned Northside Hospital in Bruce.

Community and specialist health centres

The future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for one community health centre and one child and family centre.

Respondents to the community survey noted the need for more counselling and mental health support services in the Molonglo Valley that are typically provided from community health centres.

As noted in Section 4, community health services are currently provided by Canberra Health Services at Molonglo (in Coombs). The growing population however will generate demand for additional services and an expanded centre. A district level community health centre would be best located in the Molonglo Town Centre due to its central location. Opportunities to co-locate or integrate the centre within a community hub should be explored. Refer Section 8.3 for further discussion in relation to this approach. A Child & Family Centre is being investigated for provision within the Town Centre.

Social service centres and spaces

The future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for additional facilities and/or spaces for social support services.

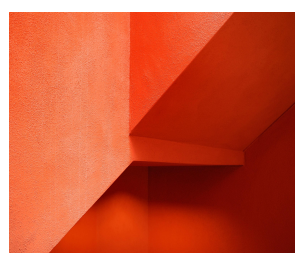
A range of community support services are currently provided from Denman Village Community Centre. Future sub-district and local community centres should be designed to accommodate provision of in-house and outreach support services. Refer Section 8.3 for further discussion in relation to this option.

Medical centres and GPs

The growing Molonglo Valley population will generate need for additional large and small medical centres.

Respondents to the community survey noted the specific need for bulk billing facilities, allied health services (e.g. physiotherapists, dentists and nutritionists) and pharmacies.

Medical centres and allied health services can be accommodated in commercial and retail developments in the Town Centre and neighbourhood centres. A potential arrangement could involve facilitation of a large medical centre in the Town Centre and smaller medical centres in each of the planned future neighbourhood centres. Opportunities to prioritise and facilitate the provision of a walk-in bulk-billing service/s, in particular in the Town Centre, should also be explored.



See Appendix A case studies for an overview of the Glenroy Community Hub, an example of a community facility incorporating community health and maternal and child health centre with other community uses. Cases studies of community facilities incorporating spaces for social support services are also provided, including Carnes Hill Community and Recreational Precinct, Warrawong District Hub, Thirroul District Community Centre and Library, Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, and The Granville Centre.

8.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Infrastructure	Benchmark	Existing and planned provision (quantity)
Community centres (sub-district) Community centres, halls and spaces (local)	- One community centre per 20,000 people - One community hall per 10,000 people. 200-300sqm floorspace - One community meeting room per 2,500 people. 200-300sqm floorspace <i>Source: ACT Government</i> - A total of 80-100sqm of community facility floor space per 1,000 people (across all publicly accessible community facilities) <i>Source: Industry benchmark</i>	0 sub-district community centres (1 additional under investigation) 1 local community centres (1 additional planned) 2 local community halls (1 additional planned) A minimum of 1,510sqm* community centres and halls (existing and planned)
Libraries (district)	As determined by State Library of NSW population based calculator (approximately 31sqm per 1,000 people for populations of 65,001-100,000 people + 20% circulation space) <i>Source: State Library People Places Population Based Area Calculator, State Library of NSW</i> <i>Note: This source is endorsed by the Australian Library and Information Association as the national standard. As guided by the standard, floorspace calculation is intended to be used in conjunction with service planning etc., not in isolation. E.g. services relate to space requirements for different collection formats and space allocation required, and configuration and density of shelving can make a difference.</i>	0 libraries (1 planned)
Major Arts and cultural space e.g. art galleries, concert halls, museums and s (Territory-wide) Community arts centres (district) Community /performing arts venue (district) Spaces for creative uses (sub-district and local)	- Major facilities planned at a Territory-wide level. Guide: One facility for every 250,000 people (applies to all major facility types) <i>Source: Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020)</i> - One community arts centre per 60,000 people. Min. 2,800sqm site, 600sqm floorspace - One community /performing arts venue per 60,000 people <i>Source: ACT Government</i> - Spaces for creative uses (incorporated within community centres) <i>Source: Urbis advice</i>	District serviced by major (National and Territory-wide) Arts and cultural space across Canberra 0 community arts centres 0 community / performing arts venue (1 arts and cultural space under investigation)

*Existing and planned community facility floor areas: Based on the following GFA for the following facilities.

- Denman Village Community Centre – 850sqm (not including childcare centre)
- Coombs Community Centre – 300sqm
- Stromlo Cottage – 160sqm
- Planned community hub in Wright – 200sqm (for community uses only, including community space and terrace)
- Planned community hub in Coombs – area subject to confirmation

8.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach

Community centres, halls and spaces

ACT Government benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for one sub-district community facility and several community centres, halls and spaces, consisting of a total of approximately 5,600 to 7,000sqm of community facility floor area.

Provision

As outlined in Section 4, there are currently three community centres and halls in the Molonglo Valley, including two in Coombs (Coombs Community Centre and Stromlo Cottage) and one in Denman Prospect (Denman Village Community Centre). There are plans for one new community centre in Coombs. A community hall is also planned as part of a community hub with other uses (health and childcare) in Wright. The approximate total floor area across all existing and currently planned facilities is 1,510sqm, indicating an additional 4,090sqm to 5,490sqm is required across the Molonglo Valley to meet future community needs.

Stakeholder and community feedback also indicated more fit-for-purpose community facilities are required to meet already growing demand for community centres and spaces, the programs and services provided from these facilities, as well as the spaces they provide for community hire. Community survey respondents specifically referenced needs for spaces for private functions and celebrations. However, stakeholders noted the high demand for spaces for faith-based groups, private functions and celebrations has generated large waitlists for access to facilities and placed significant pressure on existing community centres.

Trends in community facility planning have seen a move away from small standalone halls and spaces to larger consolidated facilities. This move has been driven by increased costs associated with maintaining and managing facilities, as well as the greater benefits that a larger facility can provide. These benefits include the ability to provide a wider range of offerings and amenities, convenience for users in accessing multiple services, and opportunities for collaboration and referrals between program and service providers.

Consideration should be given to the provision of a large, sub-district community centre in the Molonglo Town Centre (of approximately 2,000sqm), with provision of additional local community centres in each future suburbs of minimum 900sqm each. The provision of small, stand-alone meeting rooms and halls is not recommended. The proposed sub-district community centre and local community centres should each, at a minimum, incorporate: a foyer/community lounge area for community gathering with lounge areas, reception desk and community display/exhibition space; large and small multipurpose activity, meeting and training spaces; and spaces for social support service provision (identified as a specific need by stakeholders and the community).

Programming

All future community centres should be staffed and actively programmed. Opportunities for ACT Government ownership and operational involvement in new facilities, in particular for the sub-district community centre, should be explored. This arrangement would enable the ACT Government to play a role in maximising community benefit through facility design, management and programming. The above proposed facilities could be supplemented with the shared-use of existing and future school facilities, which could alleviate some of the pressures on community facilities associated with a high demand for spaces for hire.

As noted in Section 4, The ACT Government is exploring options for a future co-located library and community centre in the Molonglo Town Centre. It is understood that community engagement will be undertaken sometime in the future.

A key component that is not currently available is a multipurpose hall to accommodate a broader range of community events, gatherings, performances and meetings. A complete list of key sub-district community centre components is included in Figure 24, and additional considerations are included in Figure 25. Expansion of the proposed library to accommodate the recommended sub-district community centre components presents a potential and preferred solution. Alternatively, a separate sub-district community centre would need to be provided in the Molonglo Town Centre.

8.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Figure 24: Sub-district community centre – key components and optional co-located facilities (considered to be best practice approach)

Foyer and community lounge area

- Large entrance foyer containing lounge and seating areas that facilitate community meeting and gathering and can support informal and formal uses.
- Reception/concierge/information desk servicing the greater centre, with staff providing assistance to users and passive surveillance of the centre entrance and foyer.
- Information display boards and screens.
- The foyer could act as a waiting area or a function space. It could also serve as a bookable space capable of hosting events and exhibitions.
- Entrance and foyer located on the ground floor with a prominent public domain presence. The centre's public domain interface should include large sections of glazing to enable passers-by to see in, promoting its presence and inviting and encouraging new users.
- A café within the foyer to support meeting and gathering. Ideally the café would have both a public domain and internal centre interface.

Community health and support services (optional co-located facility)

A community health and social support centre could be co-located within or adjoining the community centre. Alternatively, shared-use outreach consultation spaces for visiting health and support services could be included within the centre. These spaces could be shared by various community health and support services, visiting the facility on scheduled days.

Early childhood education and care (optional co-located facility)

A childcare centre could be co-located/integrated in a sub-district community centre in the Molonglo Town Centre. There are numerous examples of childcare centres co-located with community centres, including at the Denman Village Community Centre and case studies presented in Appendix A.

A childcare centre would require a separate drop-off and entry. It would also require a designated outdoor space/s, ideally at grade. Outdoor spaces could alternatively be provided on a rooftop or large terrace.

Community, cultural and creative spaces

Provision of a range of spaces of different sizes and offerings. It is recommended these spaces be designed to be multipurpose to cater to a wide range of uses, catering to diverse community interests and needs. These spaces could include:

- A large multipurpose hall of approximately 450-500sqm, that can be divided into separate spaces through moveable partition walls. A large commercial kitchen that can be directly accessed from the hall as well as from a common area, to enable the kitchen to service the hall as well as other uses within the centre and cooking classes or programs.
- Multipurpose program and activity spaces of various sizes to accommodate small and large group meetings, activities, classes, training programs and workshops.
- Outdoor areas or terraces accessed from the hall and select program and activity spaces to enable spaces to cater to a broad range of events.
- Designing some of the program and activity spaces to accommodate creative and messy uses, through use of suitable flooring and surfaces and provision of amenities (e.g. sinks).
- Retractable tiered seating in the hall to enable this space to function as a community performance venue. A fixed or removeable stage should also be provided. Removeable stages provide greater flexibility, but they are less durable and not suitable for some uses.
- Two-way access to some of the activity spaces so that they can be accessed from the back of the hall as well as from common areas. This would enable these to serve as backstage spaces (e.g. greenroom and dressing rooms) for performances and events in the hall, as well as serve as separate bookable program and activity spaces at other times.
- Specialist spaces for creative uses based on community needs and interests, identified through community consultation (e.g. dance studios, music or sound production and recording spaces, ceramic studios etc.).
- A gallery space accessed from the foyer. Alternatively, the foyer could also provide display space for community-based exhibitions.
- Shared-use outreach consultation spaces (if the centre is not co-located with a health and support centre).

8.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Figure 25: Sub-district community centre – key considerations and directions (considered to be best practice approach)

Key considerations and directions

- As core community infrastructure, a focal point within the community and the ability for a community centre to play a key role in activating a Town Centre, consideration should be given to designing a prominent, iconic building to contribute to building a sense of community, establishing community pride and to act as a catalyst and attractor for commercial development in the Town Centre.
- The community centre should have a prominent street and/or public domain interface to visually promote the facility and encourage community connection, participation and use.
- A community centre with multiple components can be successfully accommodated in a multiple storey building. However it is important that the entry, foyer and some other uses are located on the ground floor.
- The successful functioning of a multipurpose facility that caters to a broad range of uses and users relies on:
 - Application of high quality, durable materials, fixtures and fittings to support high utilisation and furniture and equipment that is easy to set-up and packed away.
 - Adequate storage options to support a wide range of regular program and service providers. This could include in-room storage cupboards in bookable spaces, as well as a centralised facility storage room for regular hirers.
 - A well-considered layout to avoid creating conflicts between neighbouring uses. Separate entries into centre components may be required. High-quality acoustic treatments may also be required to support the simultaneous use of adjacent spaces, including when the hall or larger activity spaces are divided with partition walls.
 - Well-appointed spaces that include supporting amenities (e.g. kitchenettes, IT and audio-visual equipment) to ensure all spaces can cater to different uses. Amenities should be easy to operate to reduce the need for support and assistance by facility staff.
 - Efficient booking and room access system to minimise resourcing requirements.
- As noted in the principles (refer Section 7.2), The centre should be designed and managed to promote accessibility and inclusion for people of all ages, cultures, religions, gender identity, language groups, abilities and socio-economic situation. This includes implementation of universal design principles, provision of adequate amenities (e.g. hearing loops, non-visual markers and signage), culturally appropriate spaces and amenities (e.g. prayer or reflection rooms) and free and affordable activity and program options.
- As a key focal point providing important community infrastructure, programs and services, a community centre should be delivered early in a new development area to enable needs to be met as new residents move into an area. Consideration could be given to staging the delivery of a facility. This would involve designing the facility to enable expansion over time in alignment with population growth.
- Explore opportunities for centre spaces to generate income to support operational costs (e.g. the hall could be bookable for private events and functions), while maintaining a balance between community and private uses.
- Opportunities to locate and connect the community centre to a prominent open space, such as a civic plaza, village green or town park, should also be explored. The adjacent outdoor space should be designed to accommodate organised community events, markets, pop-up activities and unstructured recreational uses. The centre and adjacent open space could function as a key community gathering place and focal point within the Molonglo Valley.

8.3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach

Libraries

ACT Government benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for a branch library.

As noted in Section 4, a new co-located library and community centre is under investigation by the ACT Government in the Molonglo Town Centre.

The library will be an important focal point for the community. This could be further strengthened by co-locating a community centre. Several of the case studies presented in Appendix A demonstrate the successful co-location of community centres and libraries. There are synergies between these two facility types and opportunities for shared spaces such as a foyer/community lounge area, exhibition or gallery spaces, meeting, training and workshop spaces, public and staff amenities and carparking.

Arts and cultural space

ACT Government benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for one community arts centre, one /performing arts venue, and additional multipurpose and specialist spaces for creative activities incorporated within community centres.

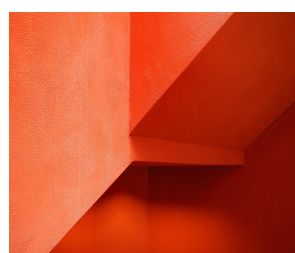
Respondents to the community survey also noted the need for arts and cultural spaces.

Community arts centres can be provided as stand-alone facilities, such as the Belconnen and Tuggeranong Arts Centres. Alternatively, community arts spaces can be integrated within community centres, as demonstrated in some of the case studies included in Appendix A. ACT Arts representatives also suggested consideration be given to this approach. This could include multipurpose studio or workshop spaces suitable for creative activities as well as other uses, a multipurpose hall that can accommodate community performances and a foyer accommodating space for exhibitions.

As highlighted by ACT Arts representatives, multipurpose spaces can also present limitations. These spaces may not be suitable for some creative activities that require specific amenities, materials, layouts or equipment (e.g. music or sound recording studios, dance studios, ceramic studios etc.). Specialist arts and cultural spaces may be required for the Molonglo Valley.

Stakeholder and community consultation indicated a high demand in the area for function space for large cultural and private gatherings and celebrations. Existing community facilities are not able to cater entirely to this need while also maintaining access for other community uses. A commercial entertainment and function centre could assist to address the growing demand and reduce demand on community centres. In relation to a specialist performance space (e.g. raked), this could be provided as a co-located, shared-use facility with a secondary college, or provided as part of a venue with other performance and function spaces and offerings.

The provision of an arts and cultural space in the Molonglo Town Centre, currently under investigation by the ACT Government, could present an option to addressing some of these identified stakeholder needs.



See Appendix A case studies for examples of facilities co-locating libraries, community centres and other uses, including Salisbury Community Hub, Carnes Hill Community and Recreational Precinct, Warrawong District Hub, Thirroul District Community Centre and Library, Hume Global Learning Centre Craigieburn, and Glenroy Community Hub.

Appendix A also includes an overview of The Granville Centre, a community hub co-locating an art gallery, music studio, as well as multipurpose spaces for creative uses with a library, community centre and aquatic facility.

8.4 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Infrastructure	Benchmark	Existing and planned provision (quantity)
Sports stadiums and specialist sports facilities	Major facilities planned at a Territory-wide level.	District serviced by major (National and Territory-wide) stadiums and specialist facilities across the ACT. There is 1 major facility in close proximity to the district (Stromlo Forest)
Aquatic facilities (district)	One district aquatic facility for every 75,000 people (with 25-50m recreation pool) <i>Source: Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020) and ACT Government benchmark</i>	1 aquatic facility* (Major aquatic facility nearby) <i>*While not in Molonglo Valley Stromlo Leisure Centre was delivered to service the wider area and Molonglo.</i>
Indoor multi-use sport courts	- Approximately one indoor court for every 12,000 people - Courts should include runoffs for safety with the minimum footprint for netball courts 781sqm and 608sqm for a basketball courts. <i>Source: ACT Government, VIC Government Facilities Manual and WA Government Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport</i> Additional benchmarks: - One sport and recreation centre for every 50,000-100,000 people - Four multipurpose courts per district facility (1.5ha) for single floor facility + parking and landscaping <i>Source: Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020) and NSW Office of Sport advice</i>	0 Indoor multi-use sport courts (8 indoor multi-use courts planned within school sites)
Sportsfields	- Approximately one neighbourhood oval per 4,000-5,000 people <i>Source: Adapted from Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020)</i> - District playing fields (for training and competition for organised sport at all levels) to be ideally 15ha (minimum 10ha), accommodating six 'basic units' which is equivalent to three multipurpose fields (1 x multipurpose sportsfield or 2 x co-located rectangular fields with playing surface area of 2.3ha) - Enclosed ovals for competition to be 4ha (excluding on-site carparking) - Community recreation irrigated park to be provided where there is no district sportsfield, district park or government school oval. Minimum 1.5ha <i>Future Provision of ACT Government Sportsgrounds in Gungahlin and Molonglo (ACT Government, 2011)</i>	2 existing neighbourhood ovals available for shared community and school use (2-3 district playing fields, 1 enclosed oval, 2 neighbourhood ovals, 1 shared-used neighbourhood oval planned)
Outdoor sports courts (sub-district)	- Approximately one multipurpose court for every 5,000 people - One tennis court for every 2,000 people. - Tennis courts should include runoff areas for safety with the minimum footprint for tennis courts of 593sqm <i>Source: Adapted from Guidelines for Community Infrastructure, Parks and Leisure Western Australia (2020), Draft ACT Tennis Facility and Participation Plan, Tennis ACT (2020) and Tennis Australia</i>	0 outdoor sports courts (2 existing half-courts and at least 3 multipurpose outdoor courts planned)

8.4 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach

Aquatic facilities

Proposed benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley population will generate a significant portion of demand for one aquatic facility.

As noted in Section 4, the Molonglo Valley is in close proximity to Stromlo Leisure Centre. The centre was designed and delivered to service the wider area and Molonglo. The ACT Government has committed to undertake an ACT specific aquatic strategy in 2026.

Community consultation indicated Stromlo Leisure Centre currently caters to existing community needs, with the exception of learn to swim programs that are difficult to access as they are in high demand. There will be further pressures on learn to swim programs from population growth in the Molonglo Valley and surrounds in the future. This demand could be met through private sector provision of learn to swim facilities in the Molonglo Valley (potentially in the future north-eastern suburbs) or surrounding area. This would be subject to private sector market and feasibility testing and subject to land release.

Indoor multi-use sport courts

Benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for one indoor sport and recreational centre of approximately four multipurpose courts.

Need for a multifunctional indoor facility that can accommodate various activities (including basketball, volleyball, badminton, futsal and indoor cricket.) was raised by community survey respondents. The need for an indoor sport and recreation centre in the Molonglo Valley was also identified by ACT Sport and Recreation representatives.

Trends in indoor sport and recreation facility provision have seen a preference for large centres with multiple multipurpose courts catering to a wide range of ball sports, a gym/fitness centre, and spaces that cater to other sports depending on district community interests and needs (e.g. gymnastics, climbing centre etc.). Larger centres can cater to a range of indoor sports and can accommodate organised sports training and competitions, as well as more informal uses. These facilities are typically high noise generating, therefore require significant consideration in relation to their siting, design and acoustic treatments.

Indoor multi-use sport courts can be accommodated in multistorey buildings and function well co-located with aquatic facilities. They can also be suitable facilities for shared community and school use. There is a 1.5 ha block of land set aside in the Molonglo Town Centre for a future sport and recreation use. As noted in Section 4, ACT Education is exploring opportunities to a two indoor multi-purpose courts at the Primary School; four indoor multi-use sports courts at the College and; a two-court gym at the High School, all available for community use upon arrangement. These facilities present important opportunities for shared school and community use, in particular the four court centre. While this facility could successfully meet both school and future community needs, its success would rely on several key requirements. These include:

- The design of the facility would need to consider any school requirements and restrictions relating to security. This may result in the need for separate access and separate amenities (including changerooms, toilets and storage) for school and community use. This will also assist to avoid conflicts between the two user groups.
- The facility should accommodate all components that meet community, in addition to school, needs. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of a gym/fitness centre, a creche and a cafeteria.
- The facility should have a strong public interface, street presence and connection.
- The facility should be actively managed and programmed. This would likely require a facility manager, to oversee the use and programming of the facility. There should be a focus on maximising utilisation and establishing the right balance between school and community use.
- The centre should be designed to facilitate connection between components but also allow for separation. This would enable different sections of the centre to be utilised by the school and community simultaneously.
- Clear facility use arrangements and agreements should be developed collaboratively and early to ensure the facility can meet the needs of all stakeholders and to avoid conflicts during operation.

8.4 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach [cont'd]

Sportsfields

Benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley community will generate demand for up to 18 neighbourhood ovals ('basic units') or nine multipurpose (double) sportsfields.

Respondents to the community survey indicated the current supply of sport and recreation facilities in the Molonglo Valley is not adequate, specifically outdoor sport and recreation facilities. Respondents identified the provision of sportsfields as a key priority. Stakeholders noted that the growing Molonglo Valley population will increase demand for sportsfields and that sportsfields in surrounding areas are already highly utilised. The provision of additional sportsfields will therefore be required. Stakeholders also noted a preference for larger, district level sportsgrounds (co-locating multiple fields) as opposed to local level facilities; an ACT Government preference and trend seen across many jurisdictions. Stakeholders however acknowledged the challenges presented by the topography in Molonglo Valley to providing clustered sportsfields.

As noted in Section 4, there are several existing facilities, plans and proposals for sportsfields within or potentially servicing the Molonglo Valley's future population including:

- The two existing rectangular neighbourhood ovals at each Charles Weston and Evelyn Scott Schools (and potentially additional sportsfields at future schools)
- Two to three district playing fields (equivalent to four to six multipurpose sportsfields) identified in the Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework (2019)
- A potential 'town oval'/shared community and school use neighbourhood oval in the Molonglo Town Centre
- One synthetic enclosed oval (consisting of two rectangular fields and a modified AFL oval) and two neighbourhood ovals planned for Stromlo Forest Park, known as Stromlo District Playing Fields.

There are limitations in relation to existing sportsfields within the Molonglo Valley, associated with Charles Weston and Evelyn Scott Schools. Both neighbourhood ovals are single, stand-alone fields therefore have limited ability to host larger club training and competitions and to accommodate multiple sports. The success of any future shared-use sportsfields will rely on achieving many of the same key requirements outlined in relation to indoor multi-use sport courts on the previous page.

The potential town oval/shared-use sportsfield in the Molonglo Town Centre will be an important asset for both the school and the broader community. As evidenced by demographic trends and community feedback, spaces for informal recreation and fitness are in growing demand. The town oval would be an ideal multipurpose, outdoor meeting, gathering and recreational space for school use and informal recreation, fitness and sports and other community uses (e.g. markets, festivals and events). This space should have a high level of embellishment (including high grade surfacing, irrigation and lighting) to enable high levels of utilisation during the day and evening, while maintaining condition and a high-quality appearance.

While these school and community shared-use neighbourhood ovals will meet some recreational and sporting needs, larger publicly accessible sportsgrounds, containing multiple, clustered fields, will be required to meet the needs of the future Molonglo Valley community. Benchmarking indicates the three district sportsgrounds identified in the Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework will be sufficient to meet these future needs. The extent of the catchment of the confirmed planned Stromlo District Playing Fields is not clear. Should these sportsfields be able to accommodate some of the needs of the Molonglo Valley community then only two (as opposed to three) of the district sportsgrounds identified in the Framework would be required. Further due diligence work is still required to assess if the proposed District Playing fields (DPF) sites will be suitable to support the proposed sportsgrounds.

The above recommended district sportsgrounds should be planned and designed in alignment with ACT Government guidelines (Future Provision of ACT Government Sportsgrounds in Gungahlin and Molonglo, 2011). Each sportsground should be approximately 15ha, accommodate training and competitions and including carparking, flood lighting, a pavilion and amenities. Additional recommendations include:

- Adopting a coordinated approach to planning, design and programming that considers the sportsgrounds as part of the broader network across the ACT to accommodate a diverse range of community needs and preferences for sport and recreation.
- Accommodating a range of activities and offerings at sportsgrounds to cater to other non-organised sport and recreational uses (e.g. walking/jogging/cycling circuits, playgrounds, picnic settings and outdoor fitness stations).
- Undertake detailed site investigations of the district sports grounds identified in the Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework are undertaken as a priority to confirm or otherwise each site.

8.4 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES [CONT'D]

Assessment of need and recommended approach [cont'd]

Outdoor sports courts

Benchmarks indicate the future Molonglo Valley community will generate demand for approximately 14 outdoor multipurpose sports courts.

It is expected that some of the Molonglo Valley community needs will be met through existing and upgraded major and district facilities in surrounding areas serving a broad catchment. However, some of these needs should be addressed through new facilities within or near the Molonglo Valley.

The 3 outdoor sports courts earmarked for provision within the Whitlam Primary School, Molonglo Valley Campus and town oval in the Molonglo Town Centre, described in Section 4, could meet some of this need. Consideration could also be given to the provision of additional, clustered sports courts, for example at the future DPF sites, subject to further demand analysis and design. There are benefits in clustering courts with sportsfields in a sporting hub, including efficiencies in relation to shared amenities and focusing maintenance attention and resources.

As noted, demographic trends and community feedback highlighted the need for spaces for informal recreation and fitness. The two existing half courts in the Molonglo Valley contribute to meeting needs. Additional standalone multipurpose courts and half courts could be provided in the future Molonglo Valley neighbourhoods to meet future population needs for informal sport and recreation. These could be located in parks and/or co-located with potential future schools in shared-used arrangements.

Other recreational facilities and spaces

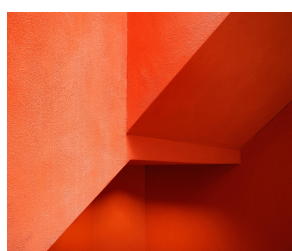
Respondents to the community survey also identified additional recreational facilities and spaces needed in the Molonglo Valley, including skate parks and playgrounds. Dog parks were also identified as a need. These spaces are important in supporting pet-ownership in high-density developments. They provide places for community members to meet and form new social connections and contribute to social cohesion.

With sport and recreation participation trends indicating growing interests in informal fitness activities and non-organised sport, the provision of spaces and amenities to support walking, running, cycling and outdoor fitness programs will also be important to cater to future community needs.

The above spaces and amenities should be accommodated in open spaces across the Molonglo Valley. In particular, skateparks are best co-located with BMX tracks and are typically supported within embellished community parks, as well as within sport and active recreation space. Similarly, playgrounds and dog parks are often most effective when integrated into parks and passive open space.

Providing fewer, larger BMX and skatepark facilities of a high standard is generally a more efficient and economical approach for councils. These facilities can also be co-located with linear or unembellished open space areas to increase usage and activation. These linear open spaces also provide opportunities for outdoor fitness stations, as well as walking and cycling paths, which can further support regular use and activation

It is recommended a standalone assessment is required at the appropriate time for the provision of skateparks, BMX playgrounds, fitness station and other informal fitness activities.



See Appendix A case studies for:

- *Ron Mullock Oval – a multipurpose town park / multipurpose sportsfield in a town centre*
- *Blacktown Leisure Centre Stanhope – a facility co-locating an aquatic centre, sport and sport and recreation centre (in addition to other community and recreational uses)*
- *Ripley Valley State Secondary College – an example of successful shared-use of facilities within a high school/college, including a sports centre, sportsfields and other facilities.*

8.5 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – RELIGIOUS FACILITIES / PLACES OF WORSHIP

Infrastructure	Benchmark	Existing and planned provision (quantity)
Religious facilities	One religious facility for every 2,000 people* Source: ACT Government <i>*This is a historical benchmark, which is well out of date and does not reflect current trends or circumstances. Best practise in relation to places of worship should be on a case-by-case basis.</i>	0 religious facilities (4 potential places of worship are proposed with community facility zoning) 2 other facilities utilised by religious / faith-based groups for services and activities

Assessment of need and recommended approach

While ACT Government needs assessments have traditionally referenced the above historic benchmark for religious facilities, this assessment has preference a more comprehensive approach that considers demographic and qualitative data, in particular community feedback obtained through the engagement process.

As noted in Section 3, the Molonglo Valley has a higher proportion of people with a religious affiliation compared to the ACT. A high proportion of respondents to the community survey also reported to attend places of worship frequently, suggesting a potential higher level of need for religious facilities/places of worship. The three most common religious affiliations in Molonglo are Catholicism (17%), Hinduism (12%) and Islam (7%). The latter are significantly higher than the ACT (Hinduism 5% and Islam 3%), suggesting a particular need for facilities catering to these religions. There are currently no dedicated religious facilities/places of worship in the Molonglo Valley and existing groups and congregations currently utilise community centres and schools. As noted in Section 5, many community survey respondents reported challenges associated with holding services and religious activities from schools and community centres due to limited availability of facilities throughout the week. Respondents reported a need for dedicated, purpose-built, larger worship facilities in the Molonglo Valley.

Four potential sites have been identified by the ACT Government for further investigation. The provision of spaces for places of worship will require ongoing review by the ACT Government, as well as consideration in relation to land release arrangements. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Molonglo town centre and each of the three remaining undeveloped suburbs, north of the Molonglo River (Bandler, Sulman and "unnamed" suburb) will contain either a place of worship or religious associated use, with the place of worship taking a priority. These sites are to be provided either as stand-alone sites or co-located with other community facilities with a community facility zoning, to the satisfaction of the relevant Government agency.

Notwithstanding, other community spaces, community centres and schools will continue to provide space for religious activities. According to the City and Environment Directorate's website - The ACT Government seeks to continue supporting strong communities by making land available for community organisations to develop. With many competing needs for the limited supply of land, an equitable and transparent sales process is required. The government's preference is to sell these sites through a two-stage sales process commencing with a request for an expression of interest (REOI) that community organisations can respond to. The REOI is aimed to improve transparency in the sales process, allow the government to hear from all potential community organisations who may be interested in developing the land and to identify an organisation whose development proposal can meet a range of criteria including benefit to the community and financial viability.

As noted in Section 4, the Molonglo Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework (2019) indicates opportunities for one community facility zoned site with a site area of at least 4,000sqm for a community facility such as a place of worship or not-for-profit community service provider. The Minor Plan Amendment to the Territory Plan NI2024-684, Molonglo Valley District Policy requires "at least one place of worship " in the future suburbs north of the Molonglo River, in addition to the site in the town centre. Notwithstanding, it is recommended that a total of 4 sites are provided.

As noted in Section 5, community survey respondents had mixed views in relation to a multifaith facility:

- Approximately two-thirds of respondents preferred a future religious facility not to involve shared-use between different faiths, while approximately one-third of respondents were open to this
- Respondents open to sharing facilities with other faiths indicated shared-use could assist in to creating a more diverse but connected community
- Respondents that preferred separate facilities noted potential conflicts with scheduling services and other activities across multiple faith/user groups. Some respondents indicated that different denominations of a broader connected faith could possibly share a facility.

Appendix A includes examples of multifaith facilities and demonstrate facilities of this type can successfully be provided, including across multiple different faiths, not only more closely associated denominations. While a higher proportion of respondents to the community survey reported a preference for separate facilities, there was a notable level of support for a multifaith facility, supporting further investigations and planning of a new multifaith facility in the Molonglo Town Centre. While this facility will address some level of demand, it will unlikely address all future needs of the Molonglo Valley population for purpose-built facilities. A specific, purpose built multifaith facility would relieve existing and growing pressures on community centres for space for faith-based activities. However, it is envisaged that schools, and to some extent community facilities, could continue to meet some of the demand for places of worship and faith-based activities in the future.



See Appendix A case studies of multifaith facilities including Griffith University Multifaith Centre and The House of Religions.

8.6 NEEDS ASSESSMENT – OTHER FACILITIES (EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE)

The assessment of needs for other facilities, including education facilities, is not within the scope of this study. Other facilities have been acknowledged and included in sections of this report for coordination purposes. The below provides a high level assessment of needs for early childhood education and care as these facilities are commonly co-located with other types of community facilities.

Infrastructure	Benchmark	Existing and planned provision (quantity)
Early childhood education and care	One early childhood education and care for every 4,000 people. 2,500sqm site, 800sqm floorspace <i>Source: ACT Government</i>	2 early childhood education and care (1 additional planned)

Assessment of need and recommended approach

The Molonglo Valley population will generate demand for approximately 17-18 early childhood education and care.

ACT Education representatives reported a gap in early childhood education and care centres in the Molonglo Valley, in particular not-for-profit centres.

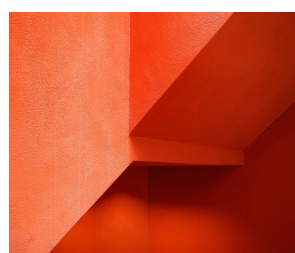
As identified in Section 4, there are currently two childcare centres in the Molonglo Valley (one in Coombs and one in Denman Prospect) and one centre planned for Wright.

Up to 15 additional early childhood education and care centres will be required in Molonglo Valley to meet the needs of the future population. Childcare centres should be sited in convenient locations close to transport, schools, workplaces, services and community facilities.

ACT Education representatives also advised new guidelines will require existing and new schools to provide early childhood education and care services. These services provided at existing and future new schools will meet some of the needs of the future Molonglo Valley population.

Many of the community facilities recommend in previous sections also present opportunities for co-located early childhood education and care, including centres operated by not-for-profit and private providers. Recommended local community centres in Neighbourhoods 4, 5 or 6 and the sub-district community centre recommended in the Molonglo Town Centre present ideal opportunities.

Additional private early childhood education and care provision across the Molonglo Valley is expected to be driven by market demand as development progresses and in response to future community needs. These facilities can be provided within a range a different zonings including commercial.



See Appendix A case studies for examples of community and recreational facilities with co-located childcare centres, including Glenroy Community Hub and Thirroul District Community Centre and Library.

9.0 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



9.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Options and recommendations by facility and location

It is recommended that the Community Needs Assessment be reviewed and updated in five years to consider changes in population and community needs, and to account for community infrastructure and open space that has been delivered or is planned.

This section provides a summary of the recommendations for community and recreational facilities provided in the community needs assessment in Section 8. Recommendations are provided by facility (or facility type) and location. Additional recommendations for existing and planned facilities are also provided for consideration.

High level timeframes are also provided for each recommendation in relation to recommended investigations as well as delivery (with delivery dependent on the outcomes of investigations). Timeframes consider notional development staging and expected and projected population growth across the Molonglo Valley. Timings are explained below:

- Immediate term – by end 2026
- Short term – by 2031
- Medium term – by 2041
- Long term – beyond 2041.

It is noted that timeframes and population growth are influenced by a range of factors, as are the timing for land release, subdivision, development and delivery. As such, the above timeframes are a notional guide and will ultimately be up or to the ACT Government and other factors, which are all beyond the scope of this project.

Table 5: Summary of facility recommendations – Coombs

Coombs			
Facility/type	Facility status	Recommendations	Timing
Coombs Community Hub	Planned	Investigate opportunities for ACT Government to operate the centre. Undertake an Expression of Interest (EOI) process for regular hirers that involved demonstrating alignment with local community need, and maximising community benefit.	Investigate – immediate term Deliver – short term

Table 6: Summary of facility recommendations – Wright

Wright			
Facility/type	Facility status	Recommendations	Timing
Wright Community Centre	Planned	Investigate opportunities for ACT Government to be involved in inputting into the management and programming of the community component to ensure use of the facility aligns with community need and maximises community benefit.	Investigate – immediate term Deliver – short term

9.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS [CONT'D]

Table 8: Summary of facility recommendations – Molonglo East neighbourhoods

Molonglo East (Bandler, Sulman and unnamed suburb)			
Facility/type	Facility status	Recommendations	Timing
Medical centres	Recommended	Privately provided. Incorporate within neighbourhood centres, co-located with retail uses and other services.	Aligned with planning and development of neighbourhood centres
Community centres	Recommended	Two local community centres of around 900sqm each to be provided in Bandler, Sulman and unnamed suburb. Each centre should incorporate: a foyer/community lounge area for community gathering with lounge areas, reception desk and community display/exhibition space; large and small multipurpose activity, meeting and training spaces; and spaces for social support service provision. Investigate opportunities for ACT Government to develop and operate the centres.	Investigate – short term Deliver – 1 x centre medium term. 1 x centre long term associated with the timing of the development.
Sportscourts	Recommended	Single or double multipurpose courts to be provided in each new neighbourhood to support informal recreation. These could be provided as shared use facilities within schools, provided they are publicly accessible outside of school use and have a good public interface/connection.	Aligned with planning and development of neighbourhoods and schools

9.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS [CONT'D]

Table 9: Summary of facility recommendations – Molonglo Town Centre

Molonglo Town Centre			
Facility/type	Facility status	Recommendations	Timing
Community health centre	Recommended for further investigation	Investigate opportunities to provide a district level community health centre in the Molonglo Town Centre. Opportunities to co-locate or integrate the centre with a district community centre (in a community hub) should be explored.	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC
Child and family centre	Recommended for further investigation	Investigate opportunities to provide a district level community health centre in the Molonglo Town Centre. Opportunities to co-locate or integrate the centre with a district community centre (in a community hub) should be explored.	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC
Medical centres	Recommended	Typically, privately provided. ACT Government to investigate opportunities to facilitate the future development of a large bulk-bill, walk-in medical centre.	Aligned with planning and development of the town centre
Social support services	Recommended for further investigation	Investigate opportunities for the recommended sub-district and local community centres to be designed to accommodate spaces for in-house and outreach support services (see following page).	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC
Library	Planned (concept phase) with further recommendations proposed	Continue planning for the Town Centre library. Investigate opportunities to co-locate a community centre.	investigate – short term Deliver – medium term
Sub-district community centre	Recommended for further investigation	Investigate opportunities for the provision of a large, sub-district community centre of approximately 2,000sqm. The proposed sub-district community centre should incorporate a foyer/community lounge area for community gathering with lounge areas, reception desk and community display/exhibition space; large and small multipurpose activity, meeting and training spaces (including a large hall of 450-500sqm); and spaces for social support service provision. Co-location of a childcare centre with a sub-district facility should also be investigated, for operation by a not-for-profit provider.	Investigate – short term Deliver – medium term
Community arts space/ centre	Recommended for further investigation	Provide community arts and creative spaces as part of the sub-district community centre. These should include multipurpose spaces for a range of activities, as well as specialised creative arts spaces (e.g. creative studios, dance studios, music/sound recording studios/pods).	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC

9.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS [CONT'D]

Table 9: Summary of facility recommendations – Molonglo Town Centre [cont'd]

Molonglo Town Centre			
Facility or facility type	Facility status	Recommendations / options	Timing
Performing arts venue	Under investigation and recommended	Continue to investigate opportunities to provide community /performing arts spaces and venues in the Town Centre. A specialist performance space (e.g. raked theatre) could also be provided as a co-located, shared-use facility with a college.	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC
Indoor sport and recreation centre	Under investigation and recommended	Continue to investigate opportunities for the provision of a multi-purpose indoor centre with a gross floor area of at least 5,300m ² in accordance with the Territory Plan (2025). Recommendations around the detailed planning and design of these facilities to facilitate successful shared school and community use arrangement have been provided in Section 8.	Investigate – short term Deliver – medium term
Sportsfields	Previously earmarked and recommended	Progress plans for the earmarked town oval/shared-use oval in the Molonglo Town Centre as a shared school and community asset. The oval/shared-use sportsfield should provide opportunities for informal recreation and community uses and have a high level of embellishment to enable utilisation during the day and evening.	Investigate – short term Deliver – medium term
Outdoor sports courts	Under investigation and recommended	Continue to investigate the 3 outdoor sports courts earmarked for provision with the high school, college and town oval in the Molonglo Town Centre. Investigate the provision of additional, clustered sports courts suitable for training and competitions, for example, at the future DPF sites, subject to further demand analysis and design.	Investigate – short term Deliver – medium term

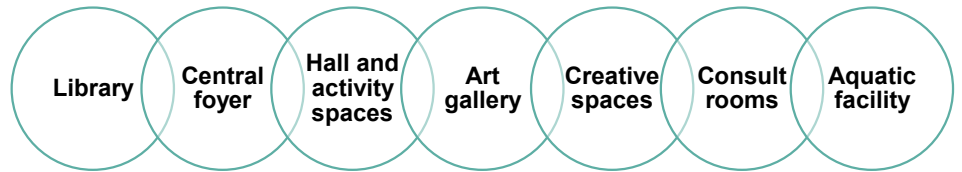
9.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 10: Summary of facility recommendations – Outside the Molonglo Valley or to be determined areas

Outside the Molonglo Valley or areas to be determined			
Facility/type	Facility status	Recommendations	Timing
Sportsfields	Previously earmarked and recommended	Continue to investigate option to provide district sportsgrounds identified in the Molonglo Valley Stage 3 Planning and Design Framework (2019). This investigation should involve confirming catchment for planned Stromlo Forest Park sportsfields and determining the portion that could meet Molonglo Valley population needs (at build-out/completion). This will inform whether one or two district sportsgrounds are required. Site due diligence to be completed to confirm the proposed parcel of land will be suitable for the proposed sportsgrounds. Sites could also support the delivery of other sporting infrastructure (i.e. outdoor courts). District sportsgrounds should be planned and designed in alignment with ACT Government guidelines (Future Provision of ACT Government Sportsgrounds in Gungahlin and Molonglo, 2011). Each sportsground should be approximately 15ha, accommodate training and competitions and including carparking, flood lighting, a pavilion and amenities.	Investigate – short-medium term Deliver – medium-long term
Aquatic facility	Recommended for further investigation	The ACT Government to continue to monitor learn to swim capacity at Stromlo Leisure Centre as the Molonglo Valley develops. Should there be a need, the ACT Government could consider releasing land for a private provider to address needs through development of a private facility in future Molonglo Valley development stages in the north-east, or in the surrounding area.	Investigate –medium term Deliver – TBC
Religious facility/place of worship	Previously earmarked and recommended	Four sites are recommended for further investigation, at Molonglo town centre and each of the three remaining undeveloped suburbs. In addition, it is recommended that investigations are undertaken into the potential provision of a purpose-built multi-faith facility. While this facility will address some need, it will unlikely address all demand. Single faith, purpose-built facilities will likely be in demand. School facilities, and to some extent community facilities, could also meet some demand for places of worship and faith-based activities.	Investigate – short term Deliver – TBC
Other recreational spaces and facilities		Investigate opportunities to incorporate skate parks, BMX tracks and dog parks within planned open space in Molonglo Valley. There is an opportunity to explore co-located skateparks, BMX facilities, playgrounds, dog parks and fitness stations within Molonglo Valley's passive and active open space network to meet community demand and support changing recreation trends.	Investigate – short term Deliver – ongoing in alignment with development across the Molonglo Valley

APPENDIX A: CASE STUDIES

THE GRANVILLE CENTRE



Overview:

The Granville Centre is a community and cultural hub that offers a range of community spaces and programs for the local and wider community. The Centre co-locates several facilities including a library, art gallery, creative spaces, community hall and activity spaces, and the Granville Swim Centre.

The centre offers spaces that can accommodate a wide range of uses including private functions, weddings, celebrations, business meetings, formal presentations, recreation programs, meetings, consultations, creative uses, and other activities. It is a flexible and adaptable facility that was used as an emergency vaccination clinic during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Location: Granville, Cumberland LGA, NSW.

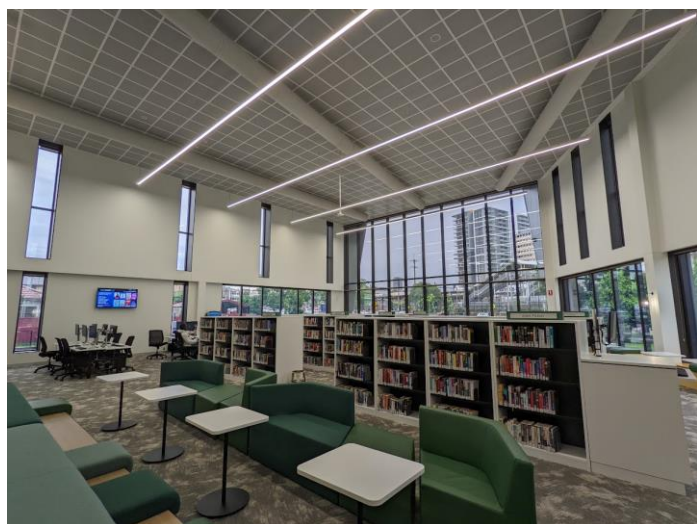
Site area: 2.3ha (inclusive of aquatic centre).

Key inclusions:

- Large entrance foyer with seating, reception desk and café.
- Purpose built art gallery.
- Granville Swim Centre (including outdoor 50m pool).
- Large hall (453sqm) with capacity of 320 people. The hall includes moveable walls enabling division of the hall into two multipurpose spaces.
- Medium hall with a capacity of 200 people.
- Two multipurpose rooms which can be combined to achieve a total capacity of 50 people.
- Creative sound studios with recording equipment, digital software and other producing equipment.
- Three multipurpose creative workshop spaces which can be combined. These spaces can also be used for other activities.
- Three consultation rooms.

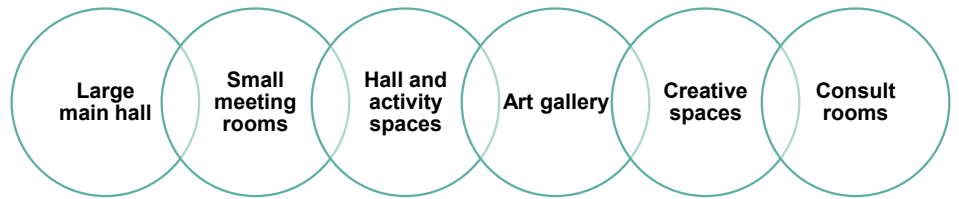
Cost: \$25m.

Delivery funding: Jointly funded by Council and NSW Government’s Stronger Communities Fund.



Source: Urbis

BERALA COMMUNITY CENTRE



Overview:

Berala Community Centre offers opportunities for networking, engaging in activities, and acquiring new skills. The Centre features a hall, kitchen, and meeting rooms, and is conveniently located within walking distance of Berala Town Centre and public transport.

Berala Community Centre also offers a nonprogrammed space that members of the community can access without a booking. These spaces are equipped with powerpoints and bench space for working and free tea and coffee. Such spaces provide opportunities for building rapport between staff and the users, and connections between community members and to other Council services.

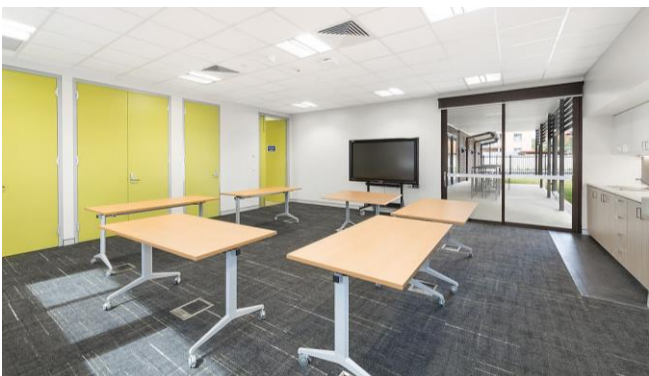
Location: Cumberland LGA, NSW

Key inclusions:

- Large main hall with full kitchen, tables, chairs and PA system with a capacity of 144 people.
- Half hall with kitchenette, PA System, chairs and tables. With a capacity of 70
- Bookable meeting room with a capacity of 25 people
- Medium multipurpose room, with option to be spit into two separate half rooms, each with a capacity of 10 people
- BBQ facility
- 12 onsite car parking spaces

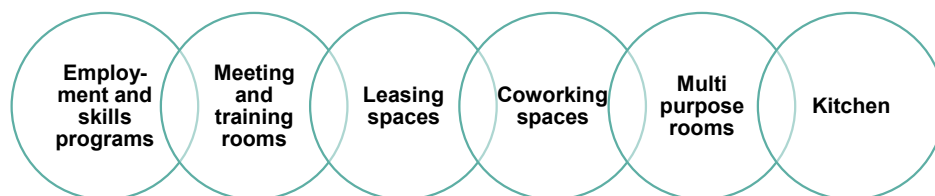
Cost: \$2.1m

Delivery funding: Council



Source: DTA Architects

THE BUZZ AT YARRABILBA



Overview:

Yarrabilba is a new development area and required a range of new facilities to support the incoming population. The facility was delivered ahead of benchmark demand projections, due to the opportunity to secure and pool resources across state and local government, and private partners.

The facility will work alongside the primary and secondary schools and existing community hubs to provide targeted services and support for the fast-growing Yarrabilba community. As such, The Buzz will be host to activities focused on supporting connection, learning, employment, an innovation. The goal of these activities is to help people feel they are a part of the community, to encourage lifelong learning, to enable to community to be work ready, and to support new ideas and solutions.

Council owns the facility and the land (in Trust). Council went to tender for an operator of the facility. The operator is responsible for the centre administration (supported by operational funds via state government), building management, service delivery and building hire. The operator agreement was developed by partner agencies prior to tender, with a facility agreement also developed by the project steering committee.

The funding behind this model include partner contributions as well as the State Government neighbourhood and community centres funding. By providing operational funding, The Buzz will be able to focus more on delivering outcomes for the community, rather than ways to remain operational.

The Buzz at Yarrabilba seeks to address the 'atomisation' of infrastructure by combining the resources of multiple agencies to provide a much larger and multi-functional community facility than they could have provided individually.

Location: Tarrabilba, QLD

Site area: 6000sqm

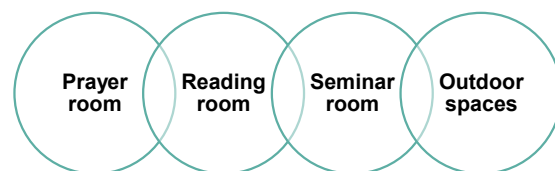
Key inclusions:

- Three buildings (Pods) on a 6,000sqm site
- Pod 1 and Pod 2 are currently leased by the Y (part of the YMCA organization) and Pod 3 is leased by TAFE Queensland
- Hireable spaces include meeting rooms, training rooms, multipurpose activity spaces and co-working spaces.



Source: The Buzz, YMCA

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY MULTIFAITH CENTRE



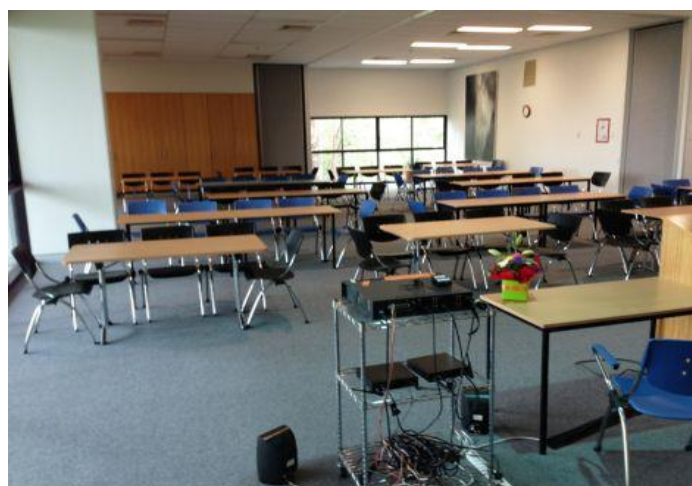
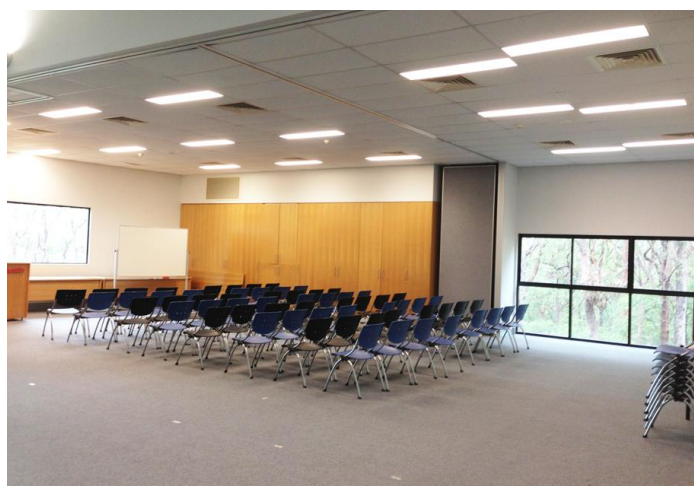
Overview:

The multifaith centre at Griffith University's Nathan campus is a community space for Griffith students and people from diverse faith, religious and spirituality traditions to gather, share ideas and develop a deeper sense of belonging.

The Centre's prayer room is available for student and staff use. Other spaces, including the reading room, seminar room and open spaces, may be booked for student-run activities and faith-based events. The Centre comprises a reading room, seminar room and open spaces, and can accommodate groups of up to 350 people. The prayer room is divided by a heavy curtain and contains a small library of Islamic literature, with a capacity to accommodate up to 25 people.

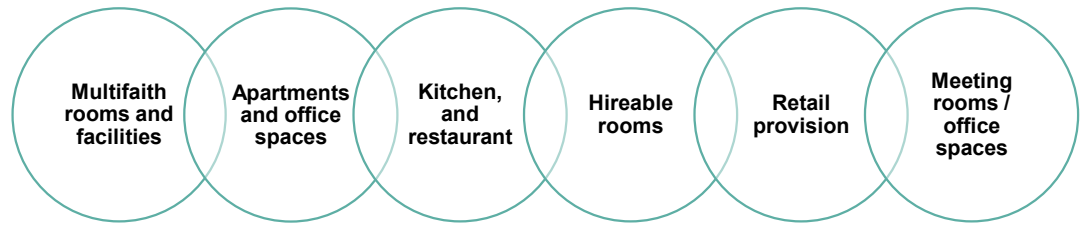
Location: Nathan, QLD

Site: Griffith University Nathan Campus



Source: Griffith University

THE HOUSE OF RELIGIONS



Overview:

The House of Religions is a community-led project to establish a place for religious dialogue, immigrant services, and community activities, all while providing sanctuaries for immigrant religious communities who do not have their own worship facilities. The building was initially designed with five empty sanctuaries that individual communities lease and fit-out to encourage self-sufficiency. Because of this, the sanctuaries are hyper-specific to their respective communities.

Currently, the sanctuaries are home to a Sri Lankan Hindu temple, an Ethiopian Coptic church, an Albanian mosque, a Thai Buddhist temple, and an Alevi Dargah. Each sanctuary has a private entrance and a second alternative entrance that opens to the public areas, allowing each faith to maintain its own autonomy within the building. The public areas feature classrooms, community facilities, a daycare center, and a cafeteria that is both kosher and ayurvedic. This unique financial model of renting out sanctuaries to each faith group is an interesting solution to the challenges of building bespoke sanctuaries within the Multifaith Complex model. These sanctuaries are likely to change as the immigrant groups establish themselves enough to build their own, more permanent religious facilities elsewhere, subsequently opening up the sanctuary space for a new immigrant group to join.

Location: Bern, Switzerland

Cost: ~\$26m

Key inclusions:

- 88 Apartments
- Shops
- Catering services
- Restaurant
- Educational spaces
- Hireable rooms
- Office floor space (30,000 sqm)

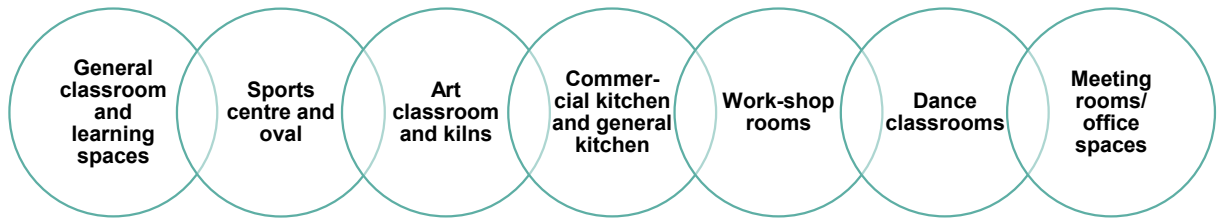


Source: Architects Newspaper



Source: ArcDog

RIPLEY VALLEY STATE SECONDARY COLLEGE



Overview:

Ripley Valley State Secondary College has a number of specialist and general spaces that are available for community and individual hire. The school runs from 9am to 3pm and outside of these hours the facilities are used by up to seven different community groups, including Ipswich football club, Providence Athletics Club, dance programs, and church groups.

The performing arts centre accommodates approximately 400 people seating capacity, purpose built performing arts stage, lighting sound audio, dressing rooms and change rooms. The centre seating is retractable, allowing it to be used as a mini hall. During the week it can be split up and used as four small classrooms. The community hub seats around 80 people and has an operable wall which allows split into separate areas. It also has flip tables, its own toilet facilities, a kitchen and amenities.

Location: South Ripley, QLD

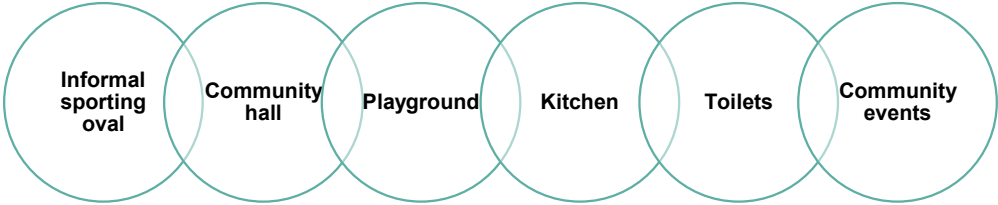
Key inclusions:

- General classroom and learning spaces.
- Sports centre
- Sportsfields
- Art classroom spaces, including kilns
- Commercial kitchen
- General kitchen classrooms
- Workshops
- Dance classroom
- Meeting rooms/office spaces.



Source: Ripley Valley State Secondary College

RON MULOCK OVAL



Overview:

The Ron Mulock Oval is located with a new medium and high density residential area in Penrith. The oval serves as a central hub for various sports and recreational activities, contributing significantly to the local community's health, well-being, and social cohesion. The oval includes well-maintained grass fields suitable for informal sporting uses. The oval is highly accessible for surrounding residents and visitors alike, and it conveniently located a short walk from Penrith train station. The oval sits within a newly developed mixed use and residential part of Penrith, providing younger families with an important space for recreation and activities.

It is co-located with the Thorton Community centre, a hireable community hall able to accommodate up to 70 people. The hall is equipped with a kitchen, tables and chairs, and opens out to an external enclosed courtyard. The Thorton Oval Playground is also co-located next to the oval, maximizing the use of surrounding space. The oval also hosts various community events, including local fairs, charity runs, and cultural festivals

Location: Thornton, NSW

Key inclusions:

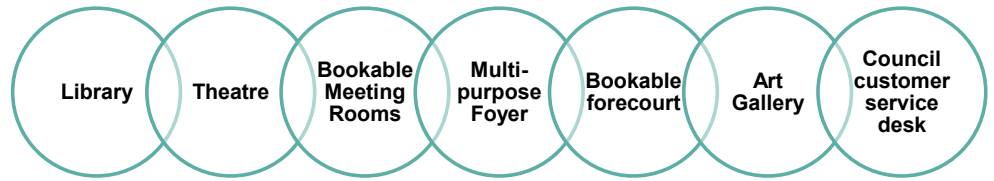
- Co-located bookable community hall
- Playground
- Oval
- Toilet and kitchen amenities



Source: Morton



BLUE MOUNTAINS AND COMMUNITY HUB



Overview:

Co-located with the Springwood Library and Braemar Gallery, the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub is a multipurpose facility providing a diverse range of performing and creative arts uses, including comedy, music, film, classical music, and musical, and commercial.

Location: Springwood, Blue Mountains LGA, NSW

Site area: 0.3 – 0.4ha

Facility size: 5,400sqm (over two levels)

Key inclusions:

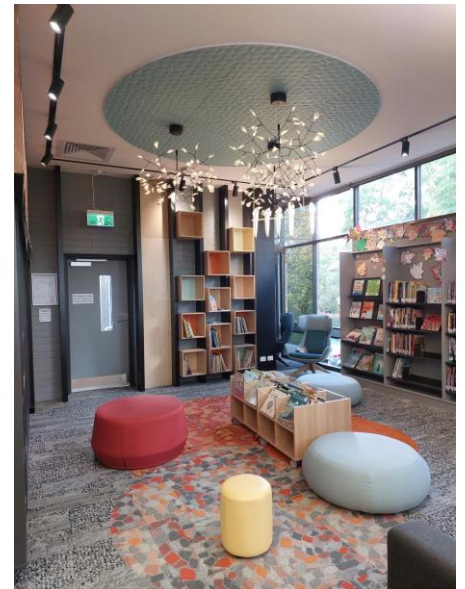
- 418 seat with retractable seating, to support performances or for markets and expositions when retracted.
- Six hireable meeting rooms for conferences, seminars, training sessions and other uses.
- Foyer suitable as a performance and gallery space.
- Community service tenant offices and customer service desk for Blue Mountains City Council.
- Landscaped forecourt area that can host outdoor events, including markets and expositions.

Cost: \$15m.

Delivery funding: Funded by Blue Mountains City Council with a \$9.5m contribution from the federal government.

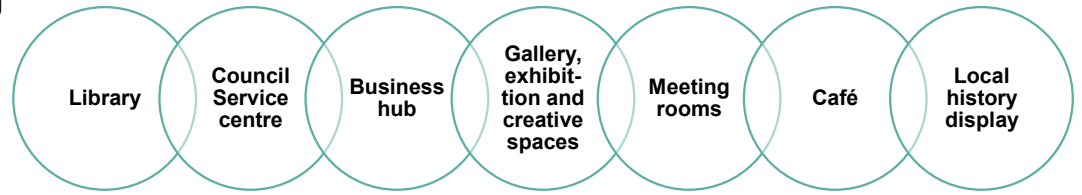


Source: Blue Mountains Theatre



Source: Urbis

THE REALM RINGWOOD



Overview:

The Realm is a library, learning and cultural centre that was provided as part of the redevelopment of the Eastwood Shopping Centre and town square in the Ringwood Town Centre, adjacent to the Ringwood railway station. The Realm includes a contemporary library, a Bizhub (co-working business and innovation space) and an ArtSpace which provides exhibition, performance and creative arts spaces and programs.

Location: Ringwood, Maroondah LGA, VIC

Facility size: 6,000 sqm (over three levels)

Key inclusions:

- Maroondah City Council Customer Service Centre
- Library
- BizHub which includes a business resource centre and collaborative/co-working spaces, and provides training and development programs.
- ArtSpace which includes contemporary gallery space with exhibition spaces throughout the centre.
- Bookable meeting rooms
- Café and lounge areas
- Interactive local history display
- Study areas.

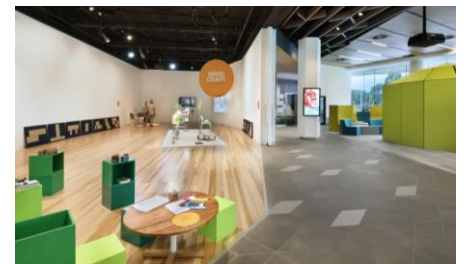
Cost: ~\$25m.

Funding delivery: Maroondah City Council

Floor plans: <https://acme.ac/blogs/projects/ringwood-library>



Source: ACME

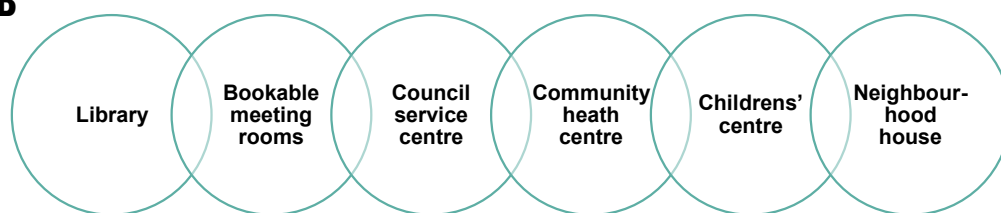


Source: Public Galleries Association Victoria



Source: Maroondah City Council

GLENROY COMMUNITY HUB



Overview:

Glenroy Community Hub is described as 'an integrated health and lifelong learning hub' by Merri-bek Council. The hub provides the local community with access to community spaces and services. The hub's key components and offerings include a contemporary library, community and family health services, and an early education centre.

Location: Glenroy, Merri-bek LGA, VIC

Facility size: 4,432sqm

Key inclusions:

- Four bookable multipurpose meeting rooms, fully equipped with high-end audio-visual equipment. The rooms cater to a range of community, private, and commercial uses.
- Glenroy Library, which offers traditional library services, creative spaces, and a youth zone.
- Council customer service centre.
- Maternal and child health centre providing private consultations and group programs.
- Childrens' centre providing early childhood education and long day care services, as well as creative learning programs.
- Community health centre operated by CoHealth (a not-for-profit community health organisation).
- Neighbourhood house. Neighbourhood houses are a Victorian community facility model that provide places and programs that aim to bring communities together, strengthen connections and combat social isolation.
- Café.

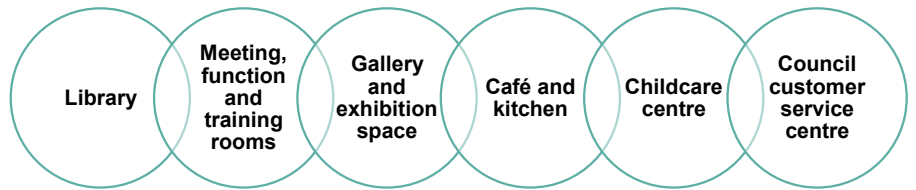
Cost: \$30m.

Funding delivery: Majority funded by Council with support from the Victorian Government through a low interest loan, \$1.6m grant towards the Children's Centre and \$750,000 contribution towards the library.



Source: Merri-bek City Council

HUME GLOBAL LEARNING CENTRE CRAIGIEBURN



Overview:

Opened in 2012, Hume Global Learning Centre Craigieburn includes a library, child care, local history museum, exhibition/gallery spaces, learning spaces, Council offices, customer service centre, and meeting and function spaces. The centre is complimented by outdoor learning areas and landscaping.

Location: Craigieburn, Hume LGA, VIC

Site area: 4,640sqm (2 storeys)

Key inclusions:

- Ground floor library
- Conference/function room with a maximum of 400 people (ability to be split into two separate rooms)
- Two meeting rooms with a maximum capacity of 20 people per room
- IT training room (13 people)
- 'The pod'; a small meeting space (6 people)
- Integrated local art gallery and exhibition space
- Occasional childcare centre
- Commercial kitchen.
- Café.

Cost: ~\$17m.

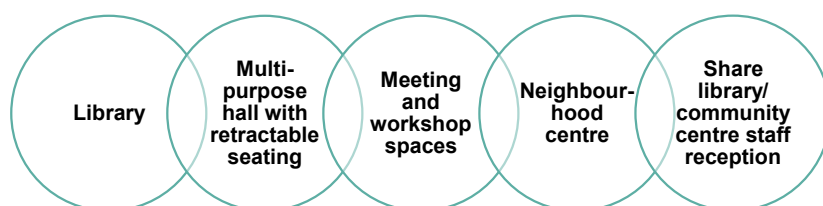
Floor plans: <https://www.archdaily.com/539349/craigieburn-library-francis-jones-morehen-thorp/53f41ca8c07a80096200053c-craigieburn-library-francis-jones-morehen-thorp-ground-floor-plan>



Source: Hume City Council



THIRROUL DISTRICT COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIBRARY



Overview:

In three of the Wollongong LGA's four districts, Wollongong City Council has developed district level community hubs: Dapto Ribbonwood Centre, Thirroul District Community Centre and Library and Corrimal District Library and Community Centre. Planning is also underway for a new district hub in a multistorey building in the Warrawong Town Centre (refer following case study).

Each hub includes a branch library, large hall/performance space, multipurpose program and activity spaces, meeting rooms and spaces for community support and health services. Dapto Ribbonwood Centre is also co-located with a childcare centre.

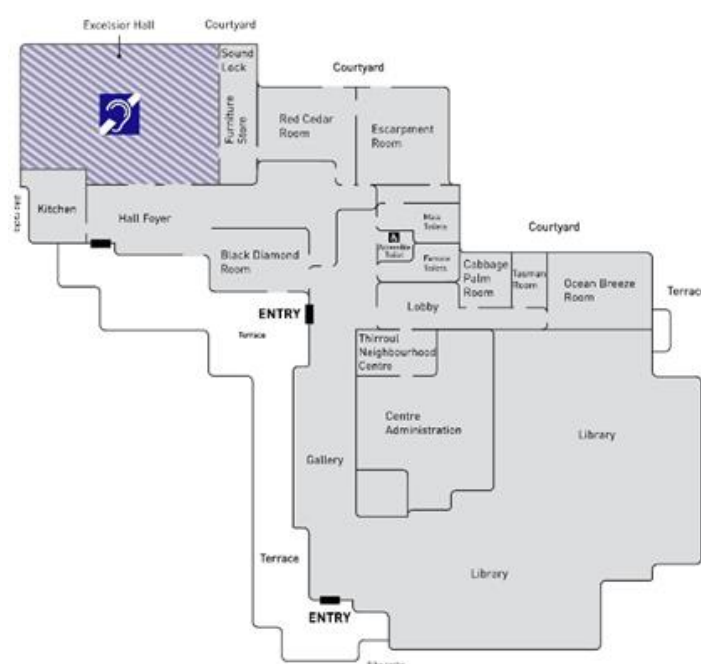
Built in 2009, the Thirroul District Community Centre and Library is the newest of Council's existing hubs. The Centre offers regular activities throughout the week, including children's activities, health and support classes and exercise classes.

Location: Thirroul, Wollongong LGA, NSW

Site area: 0.5 ha

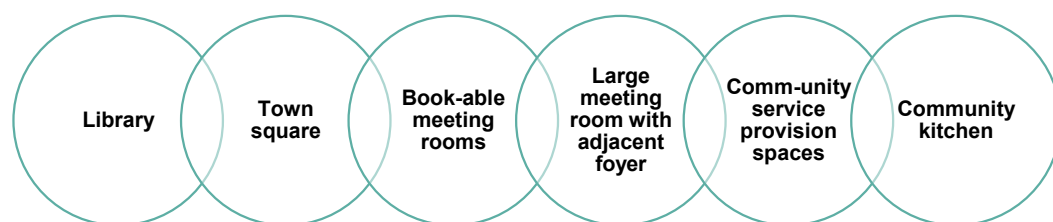
Key inclusions:

- Library.
- Multipurpose hall with retractable seating. The hall has capacity to seat 150 style or 208 with seating retracted.
- A foyer adjoining the hall.
- A range of meeting rooms and workspaces available to hire, accommodating 6 to 40 people.
- Thirroul Neighbourhood Centre operated by CareWays Community (a not-for-profit organisation providing community development services).
- Staff area/reception with two interfaces (library and community centre).
- **Cost:** \$10.5 million
- **Delivery funding:** Wollongong City Council



Source: Wollongong City Council

WARRAWONG DISTRICT HUB (PLANNED)



Overview:

Wollongong City Council is planning the development of a fourth district community hub to service the needs of the LGA's southern suburbs. The hub will be located in Warrawong and, similarly to Council's other district hubs, it will include a co-located library, community centre and other services to cater to the needs of the community.

The hub will be located on a main street, adjacent to a new planned town square with a large, grassed area, trees, gardens, seating spaces and play opportunities. The hub, town square and streetscape improvements are proposed to activate and enliven the Warrawong Town Centre.

Construction of the district hub is due to commence this year.

Location: Warrawong, Wollongong LGA, NSW

Key inclusions:

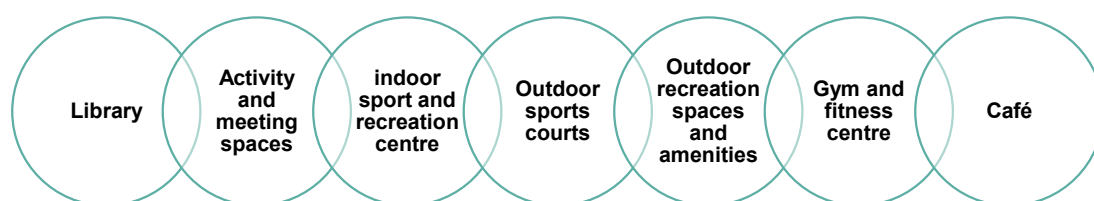
- Library
- A new co-located town square catering to passive and active recreation
- Bookable meeting rooms, community kitchen, community storage areas and amenities (ground floor)
- Offices for community service providers (ground floor)
- A large foyer with bookable large community meeting room adjacent, additional meeting rooms and common kitchen (upper floor).

Cost: \$30 million



Source: Wollongong City Council

CARNES HILL COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL PRECINCT



Overview:

The Carnes Hill Community and Recreational Precinct is Liverpool's flagship recreation and community hub. Opened in 2016, the precinct has been designed as community hub to support a future population of more than 100,000 people. The precinct offers a co-located library, community centre, café and recreation centre, as well as a range of facilities and services.

Location: Carnes Hill, Liverpool, NSW

Site area: 7ha

Facility size: Two buildings of approximately 2,500sqm each

Key inclusions:

- Library.
- Multipurpose rooms of different sizes, accommodating large groups (up to 200) as well as smaller community groups (30 to 40).
- Consultation and office spaces for health and community services.
- A commercial kitchen, café, licensed area and outdoor terraces to support a range of events.
- indoor recreation centre which includes multipurpose courts, a gym, child minding and fitness/health rooms.
- Two external tennis/multipurpose courts. The co-location of indoor and outdoor spaces enables the centre to be used for large community events and concerts.
- The precinct also includes a skatepark, half basketball courts, picnic areas, playground, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, children cycleways and large parking areas.

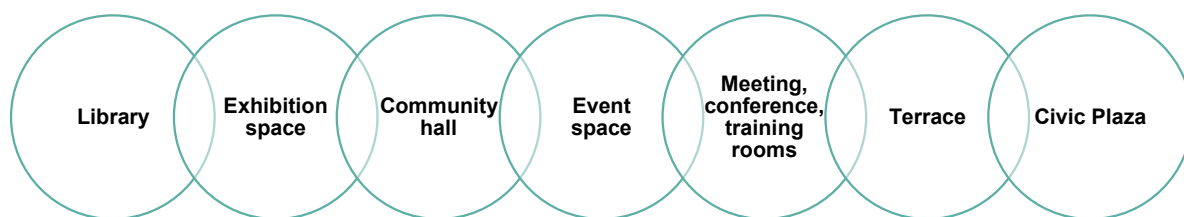
Cost: \$35.4m



Source: Kane Construction



SALISBURY COMMUNITY HUB



Overview:

Built in 2019, the Salisbury Community Hub was identified by the City of Salisbury Council as the 'centerpiece' for the revitalisation of the Salisbury City Centre and an inspiring place for the community to connect, learn and celebrate.

The hub co-locates a library, bookable spaces for community and commercial use, exhibition spaces, kitchen and catering spaces and a civic plaza.

Location: Salisbury, City of Salisbury LGA, SA

Facility size: 4 storeys

Key inclusions:

- Library
- Ground floor exhibition space
- A total of 16 bookable spaces of different sizes and offerings including:
 - Small meeting rooms
 - Conference rooms of various scales, configurations and capacities
 - A community hall with a total capacity of up to 170 seated
 - An event space with capacity of up to 300 people (style), suitable for conferences and other formal events
 - A terrace
 - Technology training room.

Cost: \$43.8 million

Funding delivery: Council (Long Term Financial Plan)

Floor plans:

https://www.salisbury.sa.gov.au/assets/files/assets/public/general_documents/council/contact_us/salisbury_community_hub_guide_to_facilities.pdf



Source: City of Salisbury



