



SUPPORTING REPORT

PROPOSED MAJOR TERRITORY PLAN
AMENDMENT

BLOCK 42 SECTION 65 BELCONNEN

JULY 2025



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Attachments

- **ATTACHMENT A:** Architectural Concept
- **ATTACHMENT B:** Landscape Concept
- **ATTACHMENT C:** Traffic Impact Assessment
- **ATTACHMENT D:** Social Impact Assessment
- **ATTACHMENT E:** Community Consultation Report
- **ATTACHMENT F:** Environmental Assessment Report

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1.0 Executive Summary

This Supporting Report, prepared by Purdon on behalf of the University of Canberra, accompanies an application for a Major Plan Amendment (MPA) to the Territory Plan for Block 42 Section 65 Belconnen. The site, formerly used for student accommodation, is now vacant and presents a valuable opportunity for redevelopment that supports the evolving needs of the Belconnen Town Centre and adjacent institutional precincts.

The amendment seeks to rezone the site from CFZ - Community Facility Zone to Commercial - CZ2 Business Zone, and to introduce corresponding updates to the Belconnen District Policy and the Territory Plan Map, in accordance with the *Planning Act 2023*. This proposal considers CZ2 the most appropriate zone for the site, enabling a mix of residential, commercial, and community-serving uses that are well suited to the site's location and context.

Located within the Belconnen Town Centre and adjacent to the University of Canberra and John Knight Memorial Park, the site sits at the intersection of education, health, employment, open spaces, and recreation facilities. The CZ2 zone promotes higher density mixed-use development in locations well connected to public transport, cycle networks, and walking distance to major services. The site is within 15 minutes' walk of Westfield Belconnen and multiple community, recreation, and health facilities. Key bus routes pass the site along College Street, with Rapid services accessible via the nearby Eastern Valley Way stop, and the location is flagged as adjacent a potential future light rail corridor (Belconnen District Strategy). The Belconnen Bikeway (along route C3) and other cycle routes further strengthen the site's connection to the active travel network, supporting sustainable transport and reduced car dependency.

The indicative development concept prepared by COX Architecture and landscape concept prepared by Arcadia are submitted as part of the MPA to demonstrate how future development might take form under the proposed planning framework. These concepts illustrate how built form, landscaping, setbacks, and public connections can be delivered to achieve high-quality outcomes that align with the strategic objectives of the Belconnen District Strategy 2023, the ACT Planning Strategy, and the Statement of Planning Priorities 2024–25.

A Social Impact Assessment (SIA), Transport Impact Assessment (TIA), and a Community Engagement Report each provide detailed assessment of potential impacts and community views. These documents confirm that the proposed amendment is appropriate for the site and will deliver significant public benefit, particularly through the delivery of housing diversity, improved connections to open space, and long-term opportunities for community-serving functions.

In summary, the proposed MPA represents a coordinated, policy-aligned, and forward-looking planning outcome. It supports urban intensification in a well-serviced location, facilitates better use of underutilised urban land, and promotes mixed-use development that can adapt to the future needs of Belconnen and the Territory more broadly. It is therefore recommended that the Territory Plan be amended as proposed.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Outline of the proposal

This Supporting Report has been prepared by Purdon for the University of Canberra in support of a proponent-initiated major plan amendment (MPA) to the *Territory Plan 2023* in accordance with Part 5.2 of the *Planning Act 2023*. The MPA is proposed to allow for a mixed-use development over the subject site. The amendments proposed are listed below:

- Changes to the Territory Plan Map to re-zone Block 42 Section 65 Belconnen from *CFZ – Community Facilities* to *Commercial - CZ2 – Business Zone*
- Additional Assessment Outcomes in the Belconnen District Policy to guide the nature of future development on the site.
- Changes to the Belconnen District Policy Assessment Requirements to limit building heights on site with opportunity provided for taller proposals to be considered, in line with current controls.

This report addresses information requirements set out at Section 55 of the *Planning Act 2023* and accordingly sets out the following:

- a) the need for the proposed amendment;
- b) the positive and negative impacts of the proposed amendment;
- c) a statement about how the proposed amendment would give effect to the planning strategy and—
 - i. any relevant district strategy; or
 - ii. for a supporting report prepared for a planning and response report—the proposed district strategy;
- d) a statement about how the proposed amendment would be consistent or inconsistent with relevant planning outcomes contained in other government strategies and policies;
- e) any consultation undertaken by the interested person who proposed the amendment, including with relevant entities who may have an interest in the proposed amendment.

This report seeks to identify and respond to potential impacts of the proposal and provide relevant stakeholders with an understanding of the proposed MPA.

This report is supported by the following information:

- Architectural concept drawings prepared by COX Architecture
- Landscape concept drawings prepared by Arcadia Landscape Architecture
- Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by Quantum Traffic
- Social Impact Assessment prepared by Purdon.
- Community Consultation report prepared by Purdon.
- Environmental Assessment report prepared by Agon.
- Please refer to these documents alongside this supporting report.

2.2 Project Objectives

The following overarching project objectives were developed to guide the project:

- Respond to the key strategic planning directions for the plan for Canberra’s future.
- Integrate proposed controls with the existing policies and documents of the Territory Plan.
- encourages development that prioritises active ground floor, providing increased public safety and ecological uplift through landscaped connections along Belconnen Boulevard between the adjacent John Knight Park, University of Canberra, and College.
- encourages future development to contribute to the long-term provision of community and social facilities in Belconnen, whilst also assisting the ACT target of 30,000 new homes by 2030.
- encourages buildings to provide a suitable height transition and setbacks to the college buildings and open spaces of heritage listed John Knight Park and are in keeping with the wider Belconnen Town Centre built environment.
- ensure development minimises overshadowing and overlooking to college buildings and associated open spaces.
- encourages built form, building heights and architecture that address the site's prominence as a gateway between the University of Canberra and the Town Centre

These objectives were developed throughout the course of the project, throughout community and stakeholder consultation; planning review, using the guidance of ACT Planning strategic and statutory documents; the University of Canberra masterplan; development of the concept design, provided by the proponent team (Cox Architecture, Arcadia Landscape Architecture); and pre-application advice received from the ACT Government specifically regarding this proposal.

These objectives have been considered in the design of the indicative development concept and integrated into the proposed amendments to the Territory Plan.

2.3 Description of Site

2.3.1 KEY SITE CHARACTERISTICS

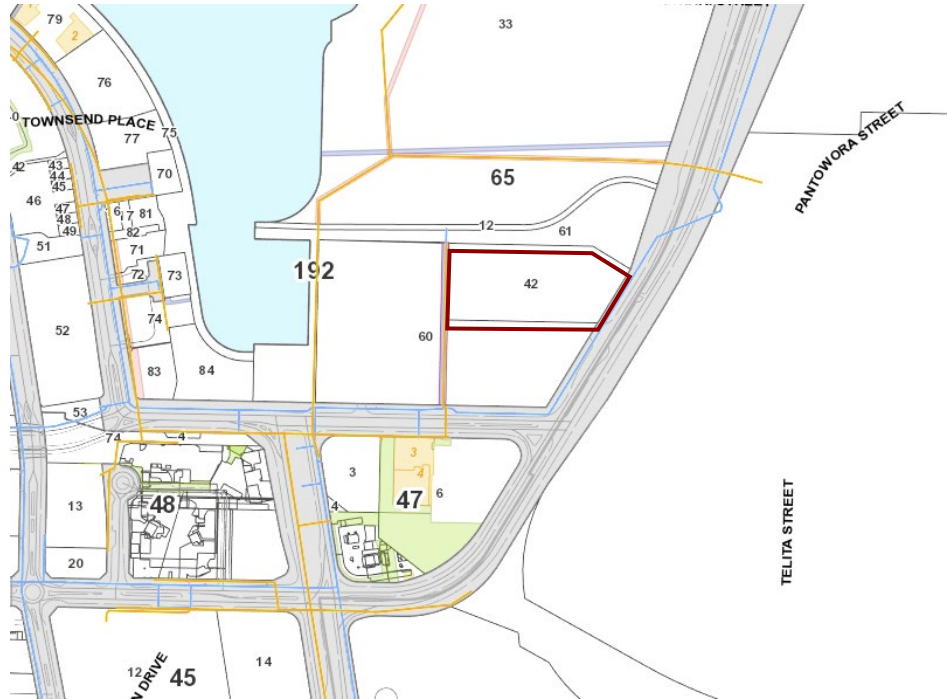
Table 1: Key Site Characteristics

Site Area (m²)	Block 42 Section 65 has an area of 10,378 m ² (1.0378 ha)
Current Use	The site is currently vacant. It was formerly used for student accommodation (Arscott House) until 2015. Buildings on site were demolished in early 2020 as part of DA201935285.
National Capital Plan	The site is not National Land nor designated land under the National Capital Plan (NCP). The land is not subject to any special provisions of the NCP.
Territory Plan Zoning	The site is zoned CFZ - Community Facility Zone under the Territory Plan 2023. Refer Figure 2: Territory Plan Land Use Zones
Access	<p>Current access to the site is via the internal (private) road provided by adjacent block Section 65, Block 60, which provides access from Aikman Drive. There is no easement to reflect this access arrangement.</p> <p>Pedestrian access to the site is available from Aikman Drive and John Knight Park. There is a signalised pedestrian crossing from the site over Aikman Drive to the University of Canberra campus.</p>
Registered trees	The site does not contain any registered trees (ACTmapi, 2023).
Regulated trees	<p>The site contains 26 trees, 15 of which are regulated trees. (DSBLA, 2019, from public records of DA201935285)</p> <p>Tree Damaging Activity applications will be required for each (if their removal does not form part of a DA), and replacement trees will be required to be provided as per the Urban Forest Act 2023.</p> <p>The site has frontage to the John Knight Memorial Park which is a heavily vegetated area.</p>
Topography & Drainage	The site slopes approximately two metres downwards from east to west, towards the adjacent block Section 65, Block 60 and ultimately Lake Ginninderra, located 130m away.
Biodiversity	The site is not listed as containing any biodiversity values; however, it is adjacent to John Knight Memorial Park and the University of Canberra which both have large swathes of planted native vegetation which may harbour some native and endangered species.
Heritage	The adjacent Block 33, Section 65 (John Knight Memorial Park) is registered under the <i>ACT Heritage Act 2004</i> . The park is registered because of its exemplary qualities as urban open space, and its association with Senator John Knight, responsible for advocating for the retention of the parkland around Lake Ginninderra, and its function as a district park for the residents of Belconnen.
Bushfire	The site is not listed as being subject to bushfire risk (ACTmapi, 2024)
Flooding	The site is not within a 1 in 100-year flood model event boundary (1% AEP) (ACTmapi, 2023).
Contamination & Hazardous materials	<p>The subject site is not listed on the ACT Register of Contaminated sites.</p> <p>A Hazardous Materials Survey and Management Plan was conducted on site prior to the demolition of the former buildings and structures on site, and</p>

found asbestos, lead paint, Synthetic Mineral Fibre (SMF) materials in the buildings and structures. However, these have since been removed as part of the demolition in a manner consistent with the Management Plan.

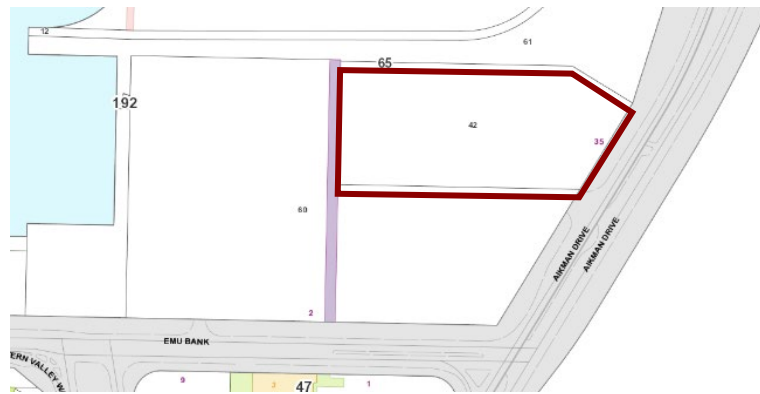
Site Servicing

The site can readily be connected to all services. The existing sewer (orange) and water supply (blue) map is provided below.



Easements

There are no easements on site, however, there is an easement for gas, sewer, stormwater, and water running alongside the western site boundary on the adjacent Block 60 (below image, purple colour).



2.3.2 CROWN LEASE

The Crown Lease for Block 42 Section 65 was granted to the University of Canberra on the 21st of December 2011 and terminates on the 21st of December 2110.

The key clauses of the Crown Lease are presented below in Table 1.

Table 2: Crown Lease provisions

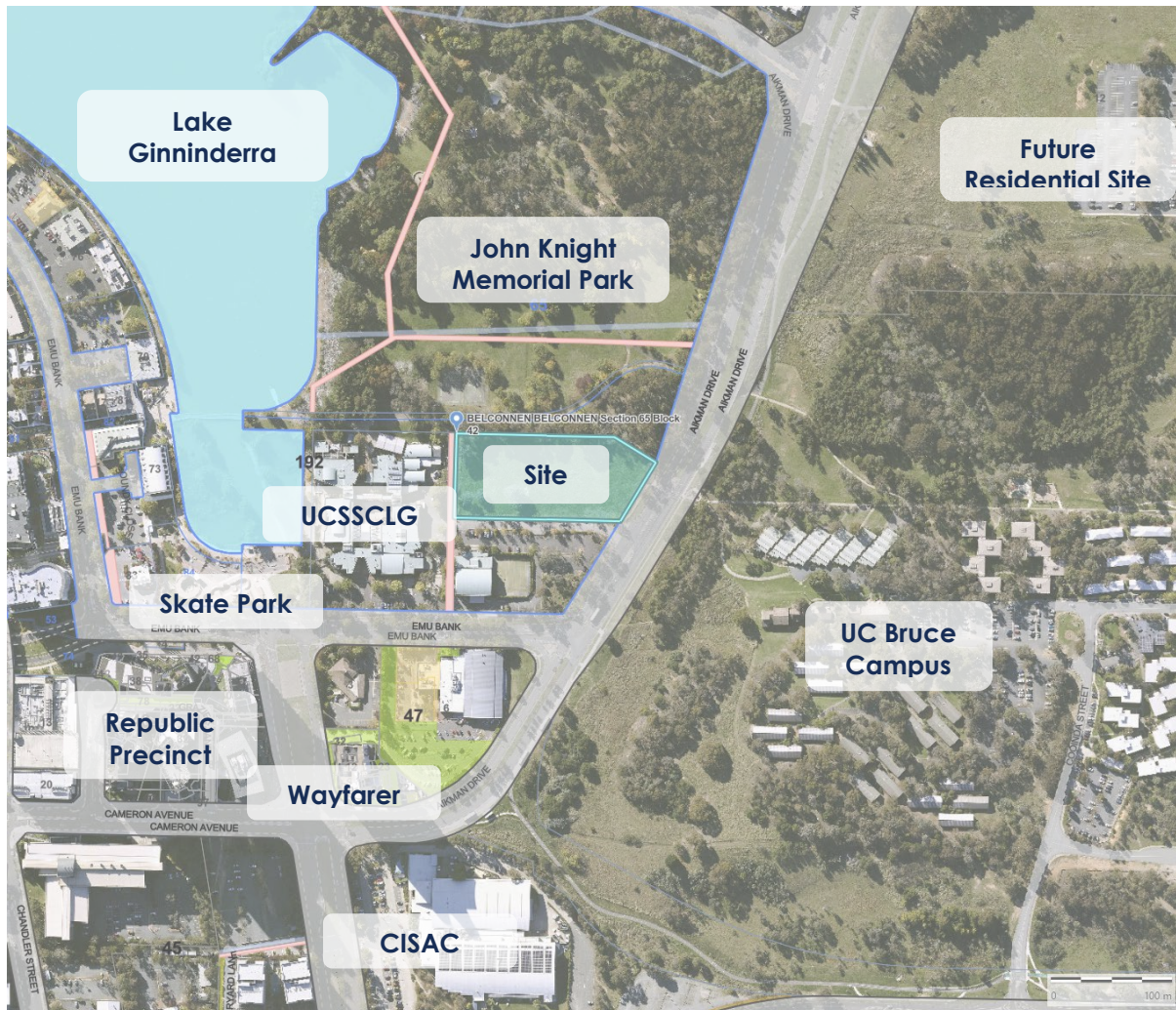
Clause	Key Contents
INTERPRETATION 1. (c)	1. IN THIS LEASE unless the contrary intention appears: ... (c) "educational establishment" means the use of land for the purpose tuition, training or research directed towards the discovery or application of knowledge, whether or not for the purposes of gain, and may include associated residential accommodation. ...
3. (a) PURPOSE	(a) To use the premises only for the purpose of educational establishment;

The crown lease does not permit any additional uses than those currently permitted in the Community Facilities zoning.

2.3.3 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The site is Block 42 Section 65 in the division (suburb) of Belconnen, in the District of Belconnen. The site is adjacent to the Belconnen Town Centre.¹

Figure 1: Site context.



Source: ACTmapi, 2024 (Imagery 2023)

The site is located along key rapid public transport corridors, with potential for the future light rail line to pass directly by. The site is bordered to the east by Aikman Drive, across which lies the University of Canberra (UC) campus in Bruce.

To the north, the site adjoins John Knight Memorial Park—zoned PRZ1 (Urban Open Space)—and additional parklands surrounding Lake Ginninderra. Beyond these green spaces are medium-rise residential developments and residential care facilities.

To the west, the site is adjacent to the UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra (UCSSCLG), which is zoned CFZ (Community Facilities), with its carpark situated immediately to the south.

¹ Note the definition/boundaries of the Belconnen Town Centre differs across documents under the Planning Act. It is not specifically defined in the Belconnen District Policy. For the purposes of this report, the Commercial Zones Policy definition is adopted.

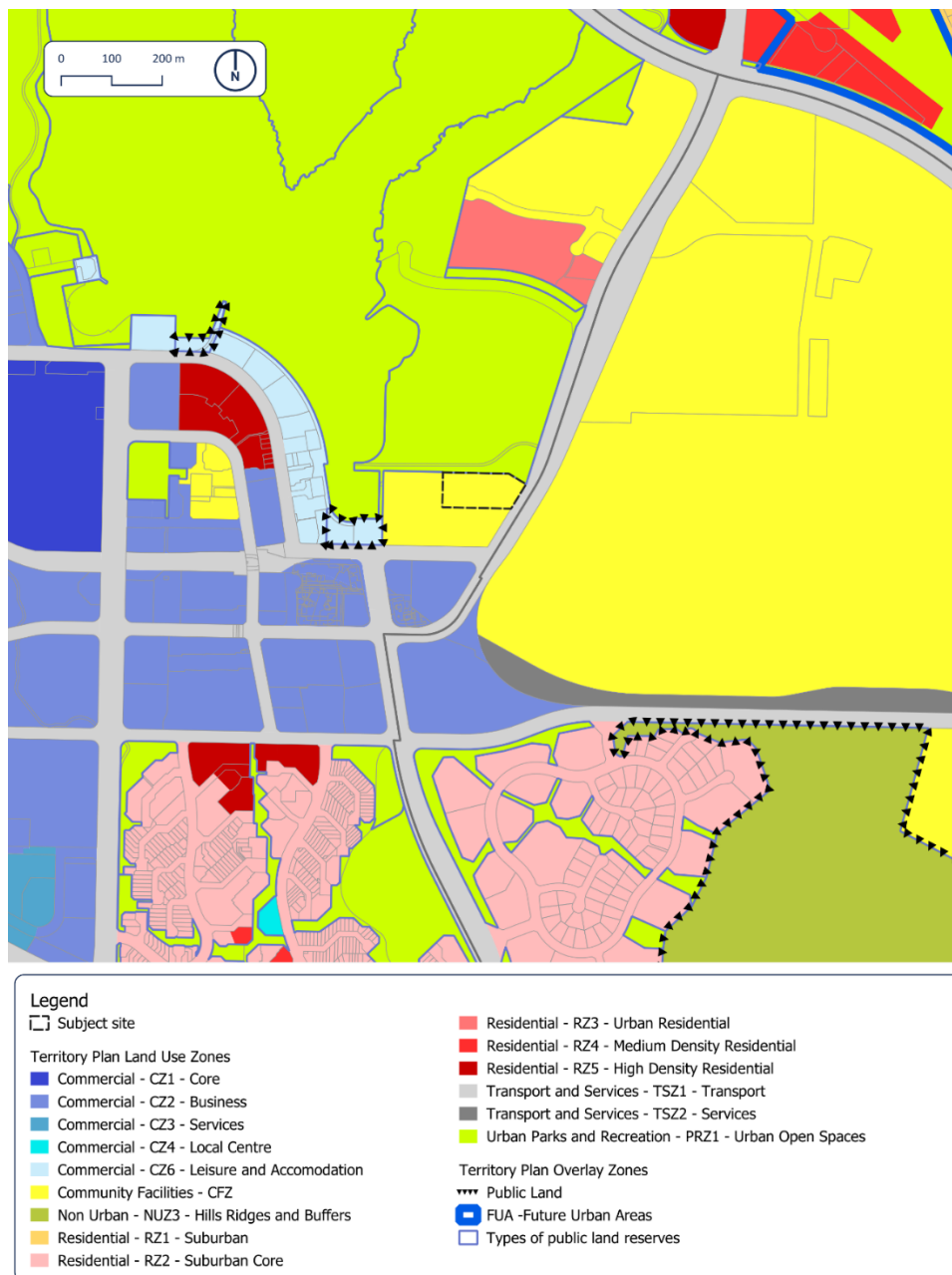
Further southwest are the Belconnen Skate Park, low-rise commercial buildings, and prominent mixed-use residential towers, including the 27-storey Wayfarer tower and the Republic precinct, which ranges from 12 to 27 storeys.

Approximately four hundred metres to the northeast, across Aikman Drive, lies the currently vacant residential development site of UC’s Campus Community project. Developer PEET Limited acquired the site from the UC in 2023 with plans to construct approximately 1,600 dwellings.

2.3.4 LAND ZONING CONTEXT

The site is currently zoned CFZ – Community Facilities Zone. Surrounding land zones include PRZ1 – Urban Open Spaces (John Knight Park), CFZ – Community Facility Zone (UCSSCLG) and TSZ1 – Transport (Aikman Drive). Further away, the Belconnen Town Centre contains a mix of commercial zones (CZ1 – Core, CZ2 – Business, CZ3 – Services and CZ6 – Leisure and Accommodation).

Figure 2: Territory Plan Land Use Zones



Source: Purdon, 2025 (ACT Government Geospatial Open Data, 2025)

The site's zoning, CFZ, promotes the following Policy Outcomes, contained in the Community Facility Zone Policy:

1. Facilitate social sustainability and inclusion through providing accessible sites for key government and non-government facilities and services for individuals, families, and communities.
2. Provide accessible sites for civic life and allow community organisations to meet the needs of the Territory's various forms of community.
3. Protect social and community uses from competition from other uses.
4. Enable the efficient use of land through facilitating the co-location and multi-use of community facilities, generally near public transport routes and convenience services appropriate to the use.
5. Encourage adaptable and affordable housing for persons in need of residential support or care.
6. Safeguard the amenity of surrounding residential areas against unacceptable adverse impacts including from traffic, parking, noise, or loss of privacy.
7. Promote active living and active travel.
8. Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to community facilities to promote active living.

The site, given its location and characteristics responds well to the above Outcomes 1,4,7, and 8, in terms of its accessibility from key public transport and cycling routes, its adjacency to population centres and its co-location next to other community facilities (UC, UCSSCLG).

Importantly, these features of the site also give it exciting potential for higher-density re-development that delivers on the outcomes of the Policy.

Table 3: CFZ Permitted Land Uses

Ancillary use	Educational establishment	Religious associated use
Business agency	Emergency services facility	Residential care accommodation
Community activity centre	Health facility	Retirement village
Community garden	Hospital	Sign
Community housing	Indoor recreation facility	Social enterprise
Community theatre	Minor road	Subdivision
Complementary use	Minor use	Supportive housing
Consolidation	Office	Temporary use
Cultural facility	Outdoor recreation facility	Varying a lease
Demolition	Place of worship	Veterinary clinic
Early childhood education and care	Public agency	Religious associated use

However, under the Zone Policy, uses are limited (refer above Table 3). Additionally, the Community Zones Technical Specifications recommend lower building heights. In this case, specification 11.1 recommends a 4-storey/15m height limit.

2.3.5 CENTRES

The site's location adjacent the Belconnen Town Centre accommodates many businesses, restaurants, take-aways, supermarkets and other shops within a 15-minute walk.

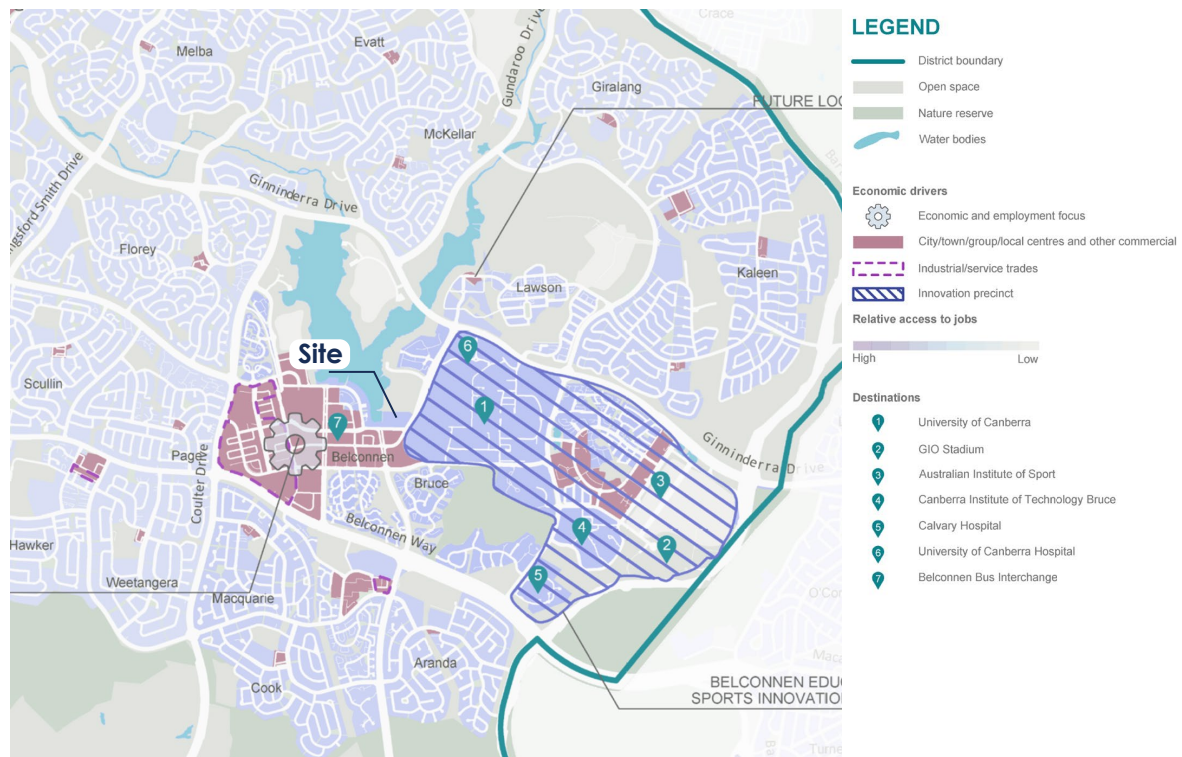
The town centre is the main centre for the district of Belconnen, and contains the district's core retail, entertainment, community facility and employment locations.

The site is surrounded by several key centres and activity nodes within the broad area including:

- University of Canberra,
- GIO Stadium,
- Australian Institute of Sport,
- Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) Bruce, and
- North Canberra Hospital.

As per the District Strategy, these facilities define the Belconnen Education and Sports Innovation Precinct (see below).

Figure 3: Map identifying the site's position relative to surrounding precincts and centres.



Source: ACT Government, 2024

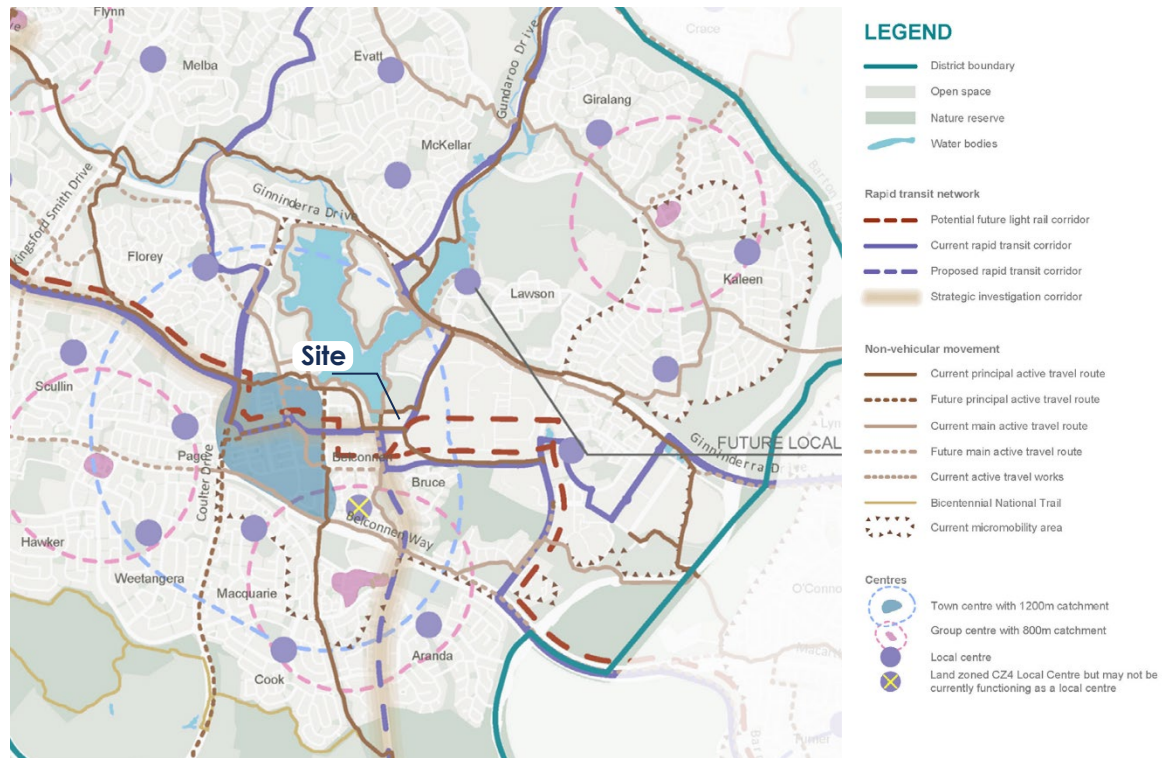
2.3.6 TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

In addition to being within walking distance of a broad array of shops, services, community facilities and amenities in connection with the site's proximity to the Belconnen Town Centre and other hubs as set out above, the site is also well-connected to transport and active travel routes.

It is well connected with Rapid bus routes easily accessible from site, connecting to major hubs such as Gungahlin (R8), Dickson (R9) and the city (R2, R3, R4). The potential future Light Rail stage may see a stop within a minute's walk from site further connecting Belconnen and the City, as indicated in the UC's Bruce Campus Masterplan (2021) (herein referred to as the UC Masterplan).

The district strategy also indicates both potential light rail alignments through the UC and along College Street. Noting this, the site is well-placed to take advantage of the heightened connectivity and frequency of future light rail.

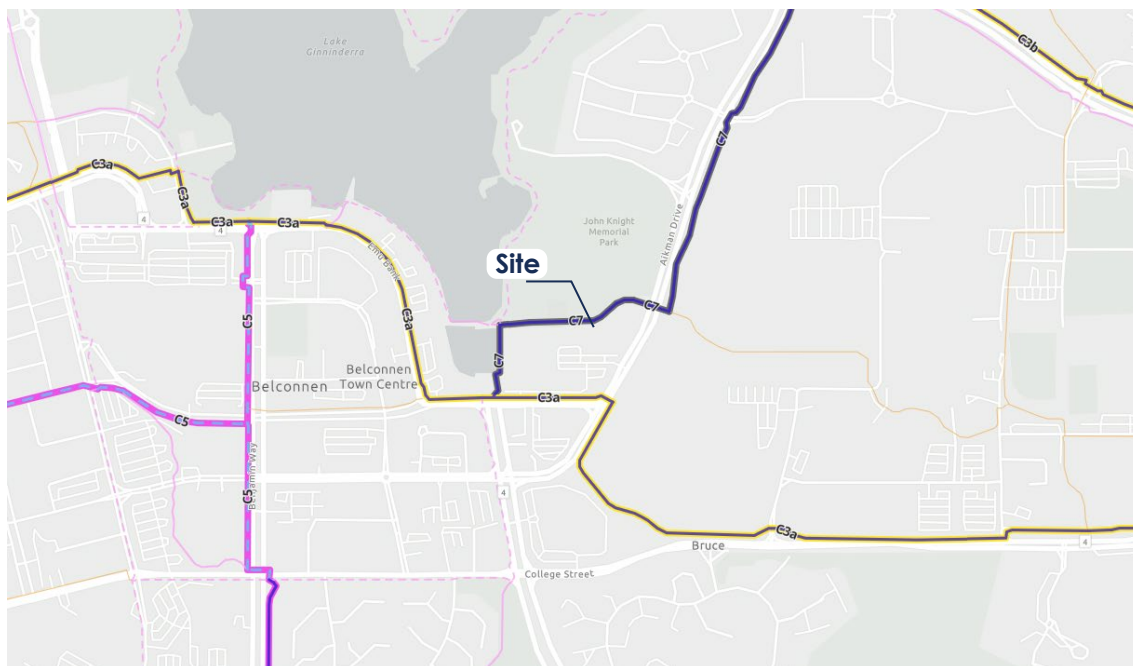
Figure 4: Map identifying current and future public transport and active travel networks.



Source: ACT Government, 2023

The site is well-connected to Canberra’s cycle routes, with the C7 Belconnen-Gungahlin and C3a Belconnen-City routes running directly adjacent the site, providing continuous shared/dedicated cycle path to key employment locations (Figure 5). The C3a route provides an approximate 30-minute commute to the City Centre from the site, via Bruce and the Inner North. Other cycle routes directly accessible from the site provide for recreation, like the Lake Ginninderra circuit and, further afield, the C5 Belconnen-Tuggeranong route connecting to Lake Burley Griffin Circuit and the Stromlo Forest Park.

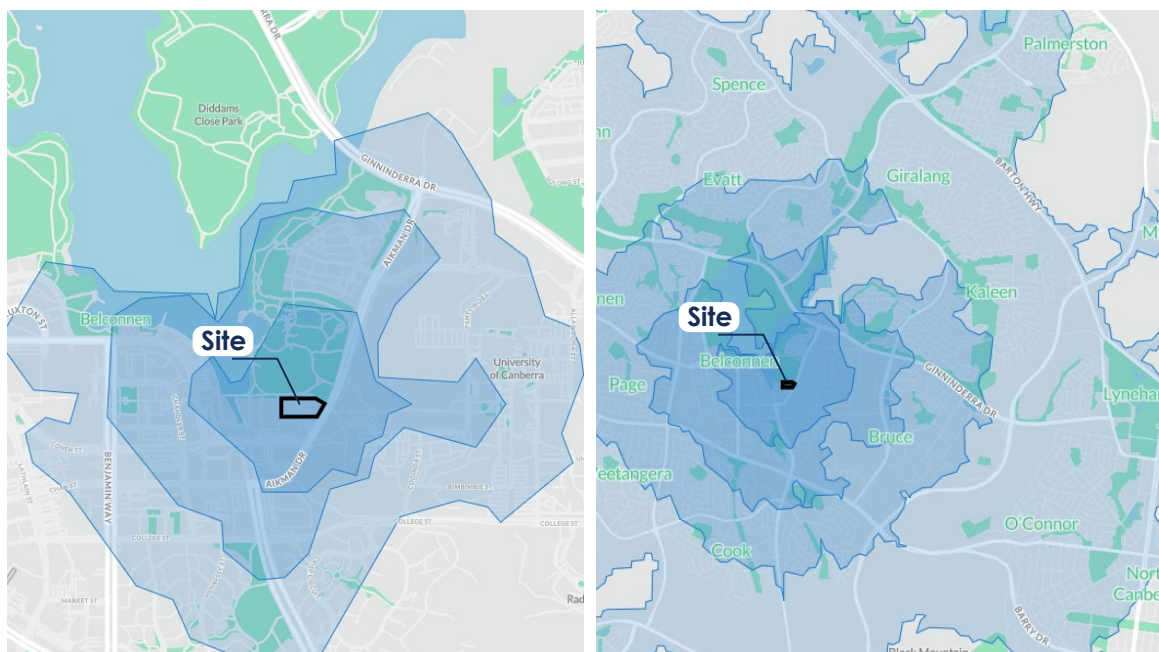
Figure 5: Cycle routes near the site C3a, C7 and C5.



Source: ACT Government Active Travel Planning Tool, 2025.

A vast network of pedestrian pathways and local routes further connect the site to the town centre and its commercial areas, including Westfield Belconnen; recreation areas like John Knight Memorial Park and lake foreshore; and community facilities, such as the University of Canberra, Belconnen Library, Health Centre, Community Centre, and religious institutions. These locations are within a 5-15 minutes' walk of the site.

Figure 6: Isochrone maps showing walking distance from site.



Source: Landchecker, 2025.

The above maps show areas accessible by walking at 5, 10 and 15-min intervals (left); and by cycling at 5, 10, 15 and 30-min intervals (right).

2.3.7 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The site is well positioned to take advantage of excellent access to open space and recreational opportunities within the immediate vicinity. As depicted in Figure 7, the site is situated adjacent to John Knight Memorial Park, a district park serving Belconnen, the future University Park in the heart of the UC Campus, the formal and informal foreshores of Lake Ginninderra, including the recently upgraded shared path systems, and smaller parks such as the Magaret Timpson town park, and the Belconnen Skate Park.

In Figure 7, below – Top left: Belconnen Skate Park. Top right: Lake Ginninderra foreshore parkland. Bottom left: UC Park Preliminary Design. Bottom right: a playground at John Knight Memorial Park

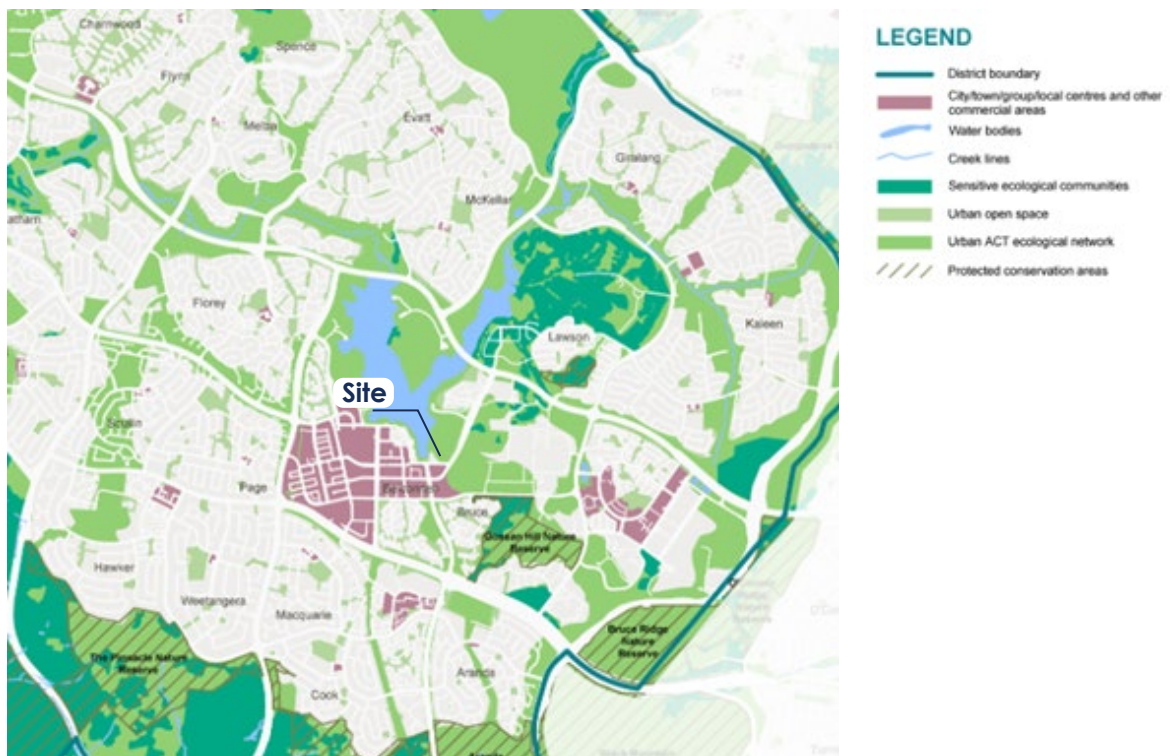
Figure 7: Open spaces in Belconnen.



Source: Top left: australian-architects.com (Oxigen). Top right: australianhiker.com.au. Bottom left: worldlandscapearchitect.com. Bottom right: ACT Government.

The Belconnen District Strategy identifies and highlights the importance of the blue-green network, that is, the waterways and natural open spaces, as habitats for flora, fauna and as amenity for residents of the ACT. Belconnen is defined by both the Ginninderra Creek corridor, and the hills located to the south and east of the district. The site directly sits on the intersection of the Ginninderra corridor and the corridor formed by Bruce Ridge and Gossan Hill. The site, therefore, has a great opportunity to provide a sensitive interface with the corridors and enhance biodiversity on site.

Figure 8: Map identifying the blue-green network spaces surrounding the site.



Source: ACT Government, 2023

Figure 9: Detailed map showing open spaces and amenity nearer the site.

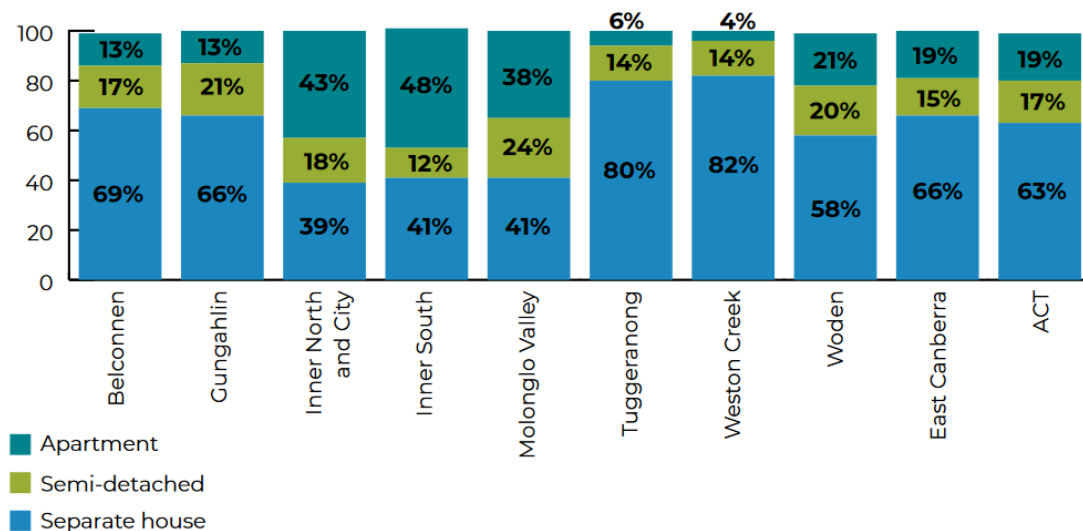


Source: OpenStreetMap, 2025

2.3.8 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

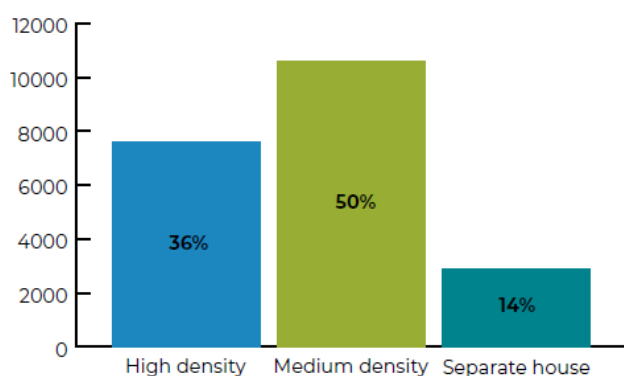
In 2023 ACT Treasury released population projections indicating a need for 100,000 new homes by 2050 in the ACT. As noted by the District Strategies (Volume 1 Metropolitan Context and Big Drivers), current trends indicate that density and urban infill is most likely and best to occur around centres, like the Belconnen Town Centre, Jamison and Kippax where there is a large proportion of residential amenity and open spaces, generally at a higher proportion than the Canberra average. The following figures illustrate the residential demographic of Belconnen as a low-density district, with the potential to accommodate significantly more medium and high-density for future population projections.

Figure 10: Housing types by district, 2021 – proportion of dwellings.



Source: District Strategies 2023, Volume 1 Metropolitan context and big drivers

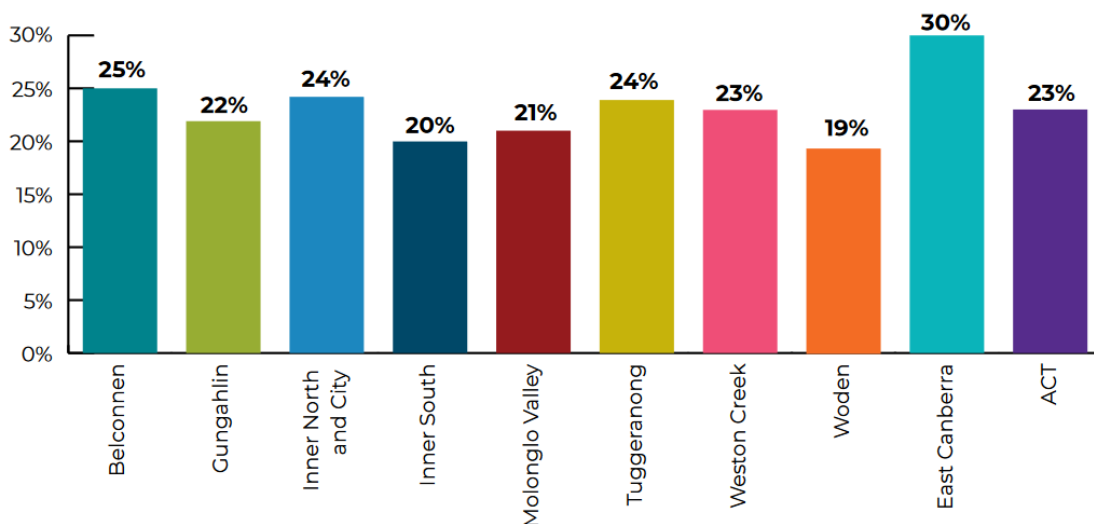
Figure 11 Potential future housing demand, additional dwellings, Belconnen 2050



Source: Belconnen District Strategy 2023

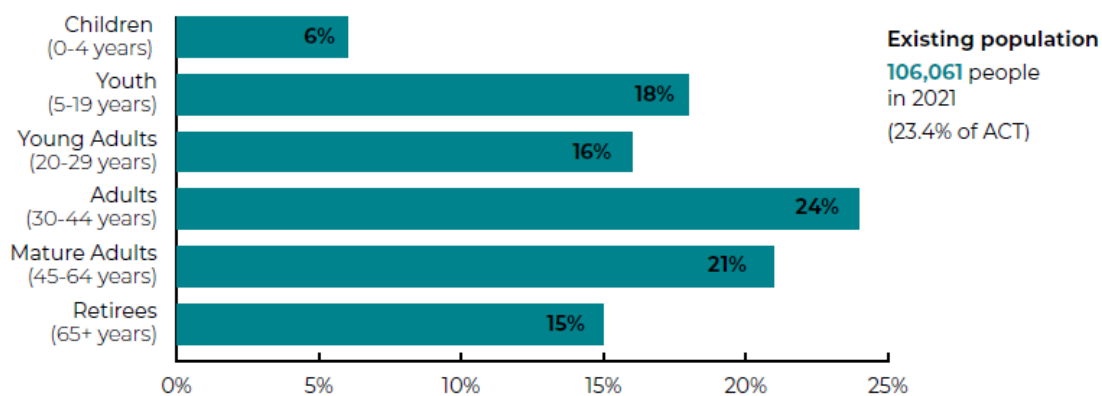
In 2021 approximately 31% of ACT households were renting. Rental households were in housing stress if they spent more than 30% of their income in housing. The below Figure 12 shows 25% of Belconnen rental households in rental stress, the second highest in the ACT.

Figure 12: Proportion of rental households in rental stress by district, 2021.



Source: District Strategies 2023, Volume 1 Metropolitan context and big drivers

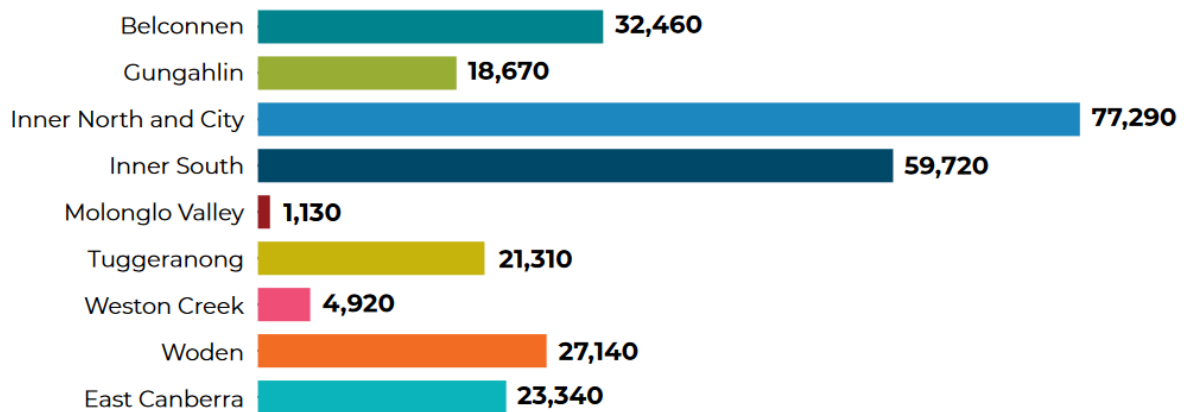
Figure 13: Belconnen District Population, Age profile 2021.



Source: Belconnen District Strategy 2023

These trends underscore the need for housing solutions that are not only diverse but also accessible across different demographics, aiming to alleviate rental burdens exacerbated by the ACT's high median rent of \$669 per week (Source: CoreLogic Quarterly Rental Review, 2023). The ACT is currently committed to providing 30,000 new homes by 2030, to help to alleviate rental and buying stress. If the site is rezoned to CZ2 as proposed, permitting residential uses, it could have a significant contribution to housing supply in Belconnen.

Figure 14: Number of jobs by district, 2021.

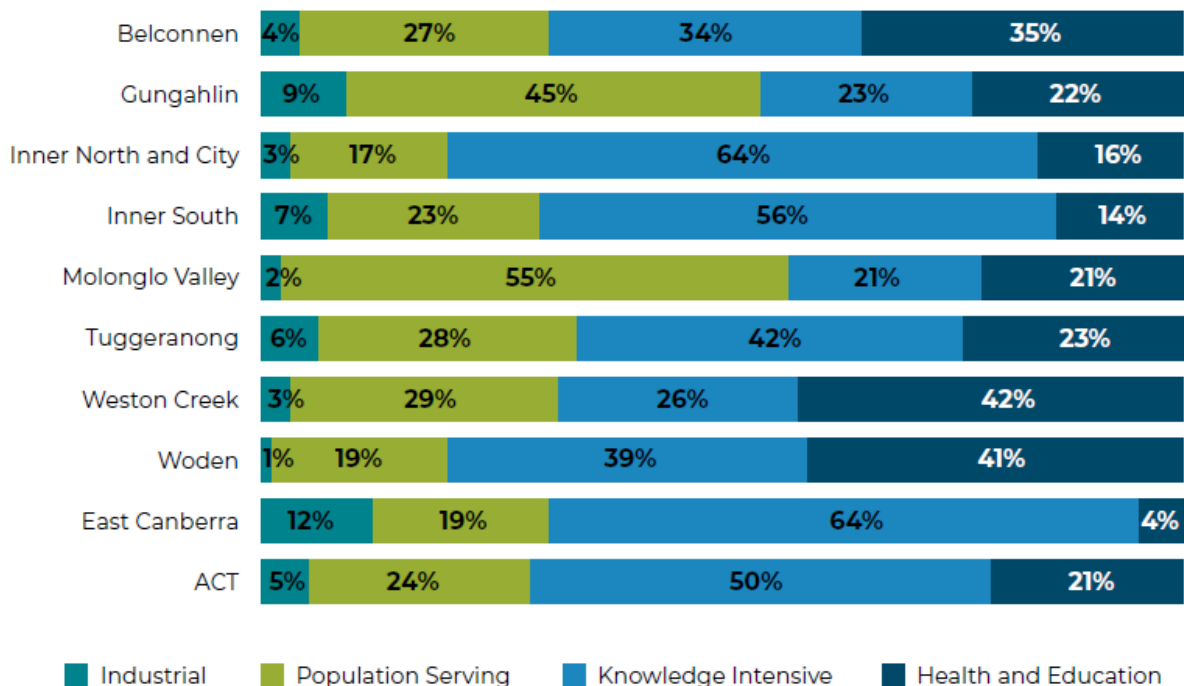


Source: District Strategies 2023, Volume 1 Metropolitan context and big drivers

Furthermore, as per District Strategies, of the 270,000 jobs across the ACT (2021), the two districts in inner Canberra, Inner North and City and Inner South had the greatest proportion of jobs, followed by Belconnen.

As per the Strategy, Belconnen has strong health and education industry, centred on institutions like the UC, CIT, UC Hospital and North Canberra Hospital. The town centre is also home to government agencies and other knowledge-intensive industries. These key job locations are near (<2km) the site (located Bruce and the Belconnen Town Centre), and easily accessible with a 15-minute walk or short ride or bus trip, dependent on location.

Figure 15: Proportion of jobs by industry type by district, 2021.



This further speaks to one of the key considerations of the District Strategy: economic access and opportunity across the city (Figure 16). The site has the potential to provide homes/accommodation close to jobs reinforcing the idea of Canberra being a '30-minute city' to reduce private vehicle dependence.

Figure 16: Economic access and opportunity across the city.

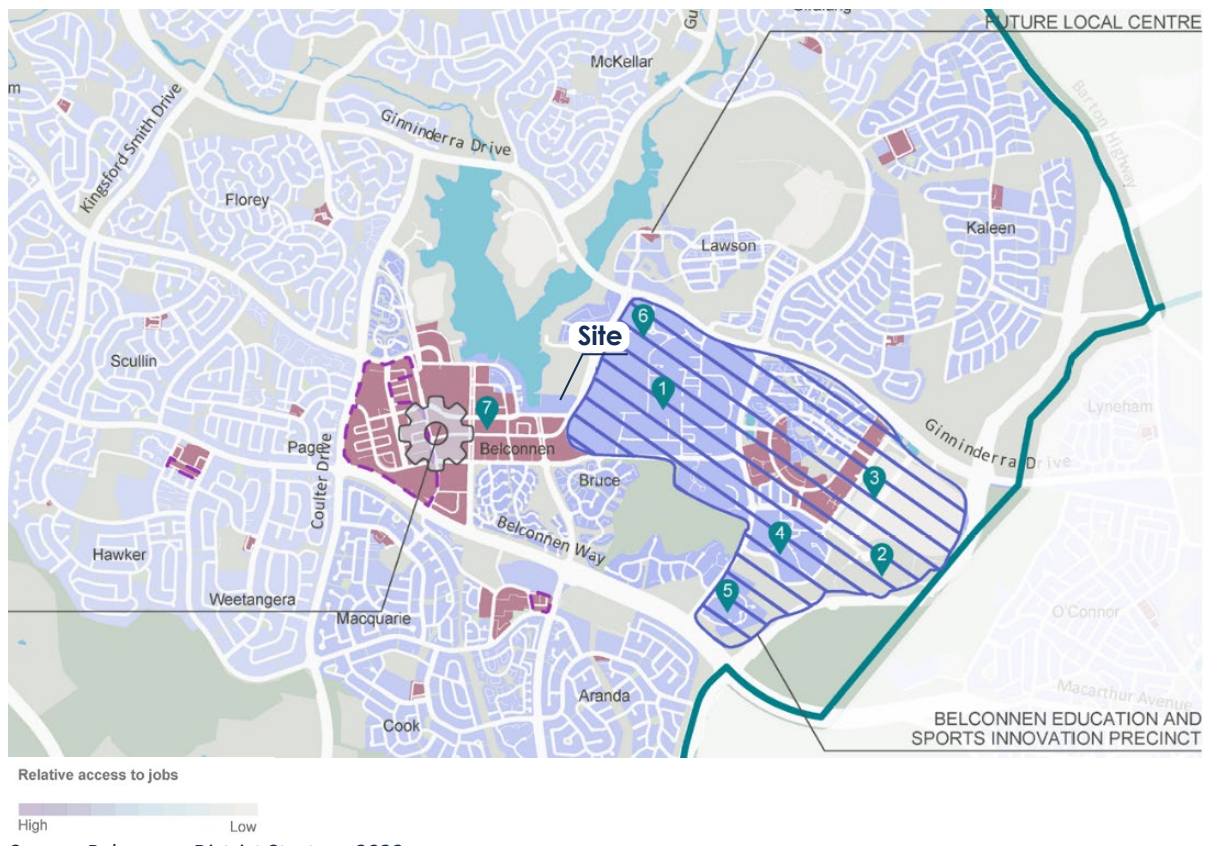


Figure 17: Effective job density (EJD), 2016

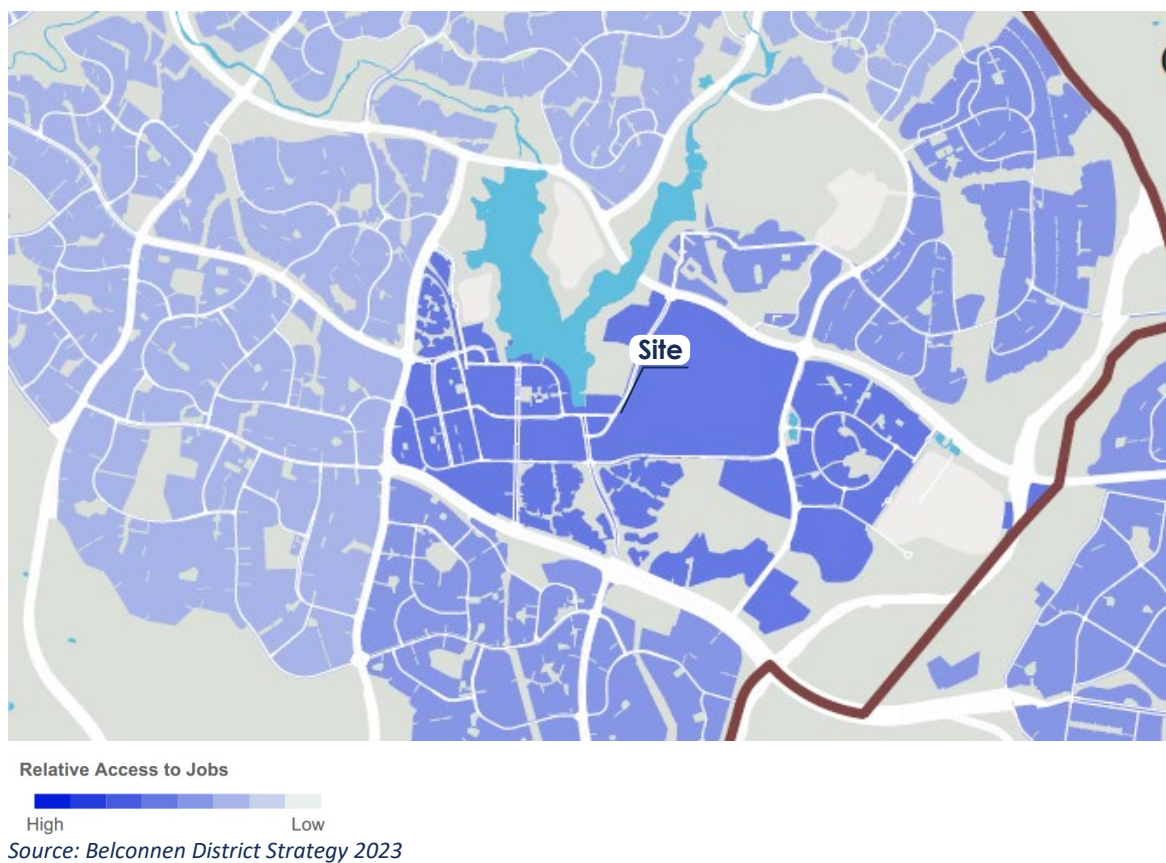
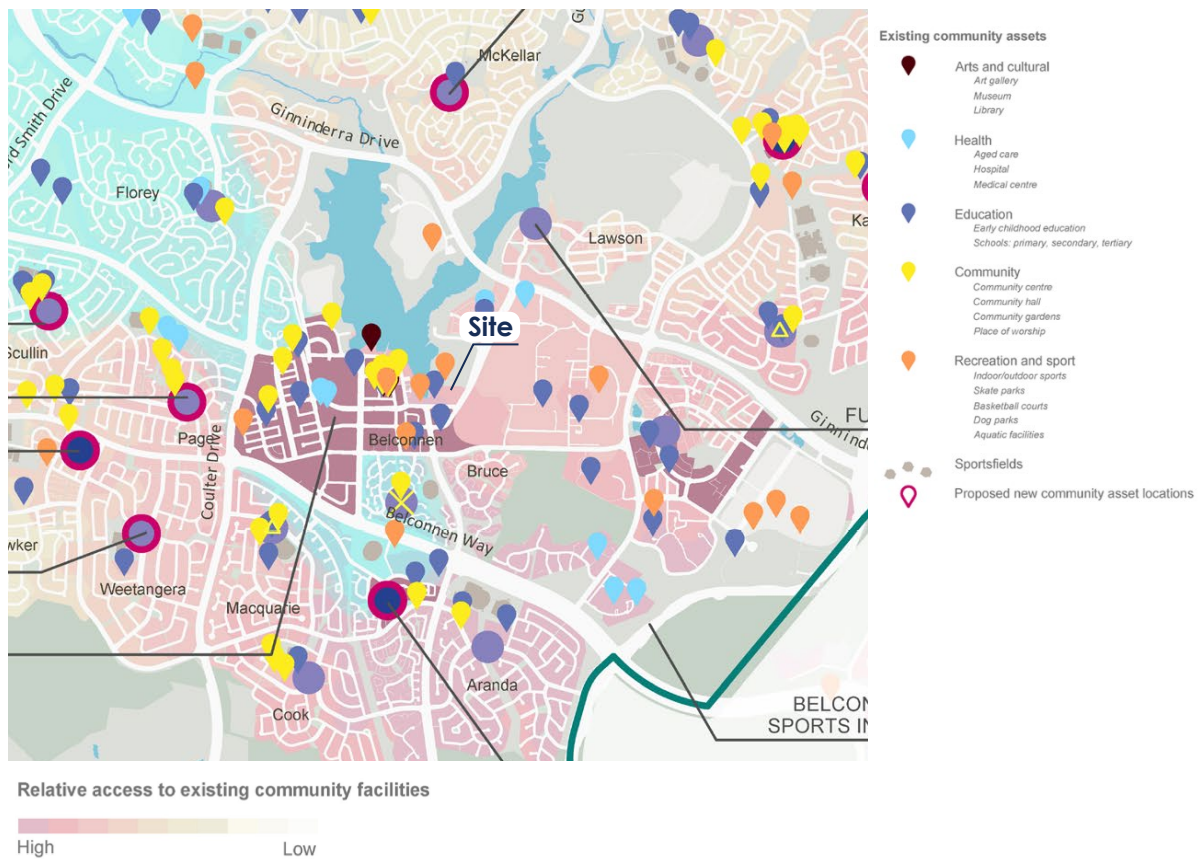


Figure 18: Belconnen – inclusive centres and communities.



Source: Belconnen District Strategy 2023

The maps above illustrate the significant concentration of existing employment centres, community facilities and economic drivers around the subject site.

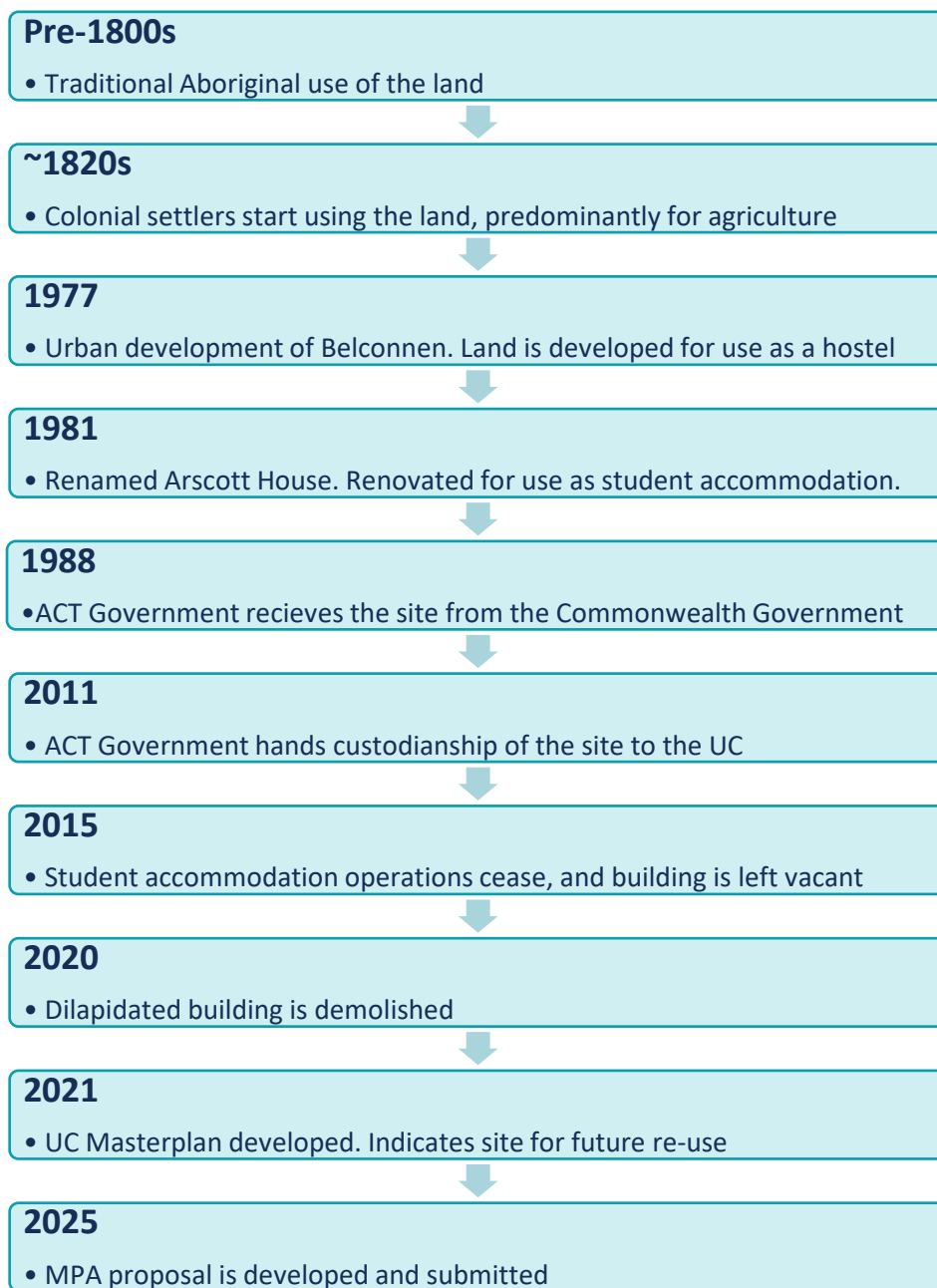
The site benefits from excellent access to employment opportunities due to the proximity and connectivity provided by established infrastructure, seen below. This includes the vast and established network of shared and dedicated active travel paths, high-frequency Rapid bus network (R2, R3, R4, R8, R9) and connection to major roads. This strategic advantage not only enhances convenience for workers but also fosters economic vitality and sustainability within the community.

3.0 Reasons for the Proposal

3.1 History of the Site

The site was developed as part of the Belconnen Town Centre under the National Capital Development Commission in the 1970s, intended for use as a hostel, and then student accommodation for the UC (then called Canberra College of Advanced Education) and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS). The site was used for student accommodation up until 2014 where functions ceased. Later, in 2020, the building was demolished. The site now lies vacant.

Figure 19: Timeline of the site.



3.2 Need for the Amendment

The site, as outlined in Section 2.3, has great potential to provide a new higher density development that leverages the site's great location close to the amenities of the Town Centre, transit connections, and open spaces. The site has potential to deliver innovative development to contribute to the Town Centre's continued redevelopment and transformation.

As outlined in the previous section, the site is vacant, previously providing student accommodation. Continued use of the site for student accommodation is no longer necessary, given current and future planning at the UC. Before the student accommodations operations ceased in 2015, the UC was developing strategies alongside the ACT Government to increase student accommodation capacity, with new accommodation predominantly inside the UC campus. The UC masterplan further cemented this goal, concentrating future student accommodation on-campus and close to services, potential future Light Rail, and campus open spaces.

The UC currently provides, in partnership with various providers and with ACT Government support, an array of modern student accommodation options that satisfy current demand. Notably, this includes the newer, high-density UC Lodge and Cooper Lodge on-campus, and the Weedon Lodge, an adaptive re-use of the Cameron Offices.

Overall, the university (and by extension, the ACT) is well provided with student accommodation, and currently the UC is planning to expand the portfolio inside the Bruce Campus. Importantly, the Arscott House site is not considered for future development of student accommodation.

Considering this, the UC has been investigating ways to re-use the site.

The UC Masterplan identified the site, in 2021, for potential hotel and event facilities for use by the UC. Following the development of the UC Masterplan, to further explore planning implications on site, Purdon were engaged by the UC to undertake a planning due diligence.

This due diligence had the following conclusions:

1. The vacant site is unused, makes little contribution to the local area and does not reflect the CFZ Policy outcomes or its Crown Lease use as "educational establishment."
2. The site has many opportunities to leverage its great current and potential future public transit connections, connections to open space, and potential to further connect the UC to the growing Town Centre with a high-density redevelopment.
3. The event facilities and hotel, as outlined in the UC Masterplan, are unlikely to be permissible in CFZ, given the permitted uses in the Zone Policy.
4. The zoning of the site limits development in terms of uses and built form. The small set of uses that may be feasible for the site in CFZ do not leverage the opportunities provided and make greater sense to provide on-campus (refer section 2.3.4).
5. A Major Plan Amendment is the best way forward to enable new uses, a holistic, innovative, redevelopment of the site, and to set planning parameters to guide good planning outcomes.

Therefore, the UC has decided to pursue a Major Plan Amendment to enable future redevelopment of the site, guided by the Belconnen District Strategy and the outcomes-focussed planning system.

The MPA is needed to transform the site. The proposed rezoning will enable the future redevelopment of the unused, vacant block. The proposed planning controls will guide future redevelopment, to provide a vibrant mixed-use outcome that is shaped by its excellent connections to transit, open spaces, recreation opportunities, employment, business, shops, community facilities, whilst limiting key impacts on surrounding land uses and site constraints.

3.3 Alternative Options Review

As supported by this report, the site is suitable for a wide range of redevelopments. In line with the Project Objectives, the MPA should support a range of future uses and redevelopment options including community, residential and commercial uses. As described in the Section 2.2, the main restriction on site is the range of uses available, due to its zoning, CFZ.

Therefore, the first consideration is the type of zone or amendment proposed to change the range of uses on site. Below are a range of redevelopment options, and their resulting requirements for an amendment on the site.

Table 4: Matrix comparing examples of potential redevelopment with zoning options.

		Potential redevelopment				
		Student accommodation	Extension of campus functions (e.g. teaching, admin)	UC Centre of Excellence – Hotel and Conference Facilities	High density residential	Mixed-use proposal (e.g. Section 3.4)
Zoning Options	Retain the CFZ zoning (no change)	Y	Y	N	N	N
	Retain the CFZ zoning, and add site-specific additional assessable development	Y	Y	Y	N	N
	Rezone the site to a Residential Zone	Y	N	N	Y	N
	Rezone the site to a Commercial Zone	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Y = Approvable/appropriate in the zoning option
 N = Not approvable/appropriate in the zoning option.

From the above Table 4, a commercial zoning permits the widest range of redevelopment options, **including** the site’s previous and existing uses (*educational establishment*). Table 5, below, examines the planning implications of the different MPA zoning options.

Table 5: Planning implications of MPA zoning options

MPA zoning option	Pros	Cons
1. Retain the CFZ zoning and add site-specific overlays to introduce desired uses on site not already permitted in the CFZ zone.	Provides for a high level of compatibility between adjacent sites	Policy outcomes and assessment outcomes would be inconsistent with the additional proposed uses and building scale. (i.e. the zone would not be used as intended) Heavily restricted other uses.
2. Rezone the site to a Residential Zone	Most permitted uses are compatible with CFZ land. Some community uses permitted.	Restrictive built form requirements. Restrictions on most other non-residential uses No commercial uses
3. Rezone the site to a Commercial Zone	Wide range of available uses No built form restrictions in zone	Some uses permitted are less compatible with CFZ land

Comparing the above two tables, **Option 3**, rezoning the site to a Commercial Zone is considered the best use of the site, and as per the Project Objectives, maintains planning simplicity and consistency with the Belconnen District Policy. A commercial zone would integrate with the existing zoning and policy framework applicable to the Belconnen Town Centre. The proposed change will need to be supported with changes to the Belconnen District Policy to limit and guide development on site (discussed in section 6.0 and 7.0).

Below is a comparison between all Commercial Zones with a summary of their Policy Outcomes to determine suitable zone(s):

Table 6: Comparison of commercial zones

Zone	Summary of Policy Outcome	Suitability to site
CZ1 – Core Zone	Focuses on creating diverse, vibrant, and commercially active spaces with high-quality public areas and pedestrian-friendly designs	Somewhat suitable, however CZ1 is used for the main commercial zone in Belconnen, and this site is not contiguous with the existing CZ1 zone and therefore would be contradicting the zone hierarchy.
CZ2 – Business Zone	Provides accessible sites with high-quality urban environments that support the workforce and accommodation needs of the Core Zone, encouraging active public spaces.	Highly suitable for the site, as it is positioned close to the existing CZ2 zone of the town centre. The site is easily accessible and can provide necessary uses to support the Core Zone.

CZ3 – Services Zone	Supports lower-cost commercial activities and services while maintaining environmental and design standards complementary to other zones.	Not suitable to the site, due to its prominence in the Town Centre, and its adjacency to sensitive uses and CFZ zoning.
CZ4 – Local Centre Zone	Delivers convenience retailing and community services for residents with a focus on adaptability and local identity.	Not suitable, the site cannot function as a local centre, when it is so close to the Town Centre
CZ5 – Mixed Use Zone	Promotes high-density living alongside integrated commercial and recreational spaces to encourage sustainable, walkable urban environments.	Highly suitable for the site, however, CZ5 does not exist as a precedent in the town centre, as it is usually used away from centres (e.g. corridors and large urban renewal areas). This, and the focus on delivering mainly housing may unnecessarily limit the range of future development on site.
CZ6 – Leisure and Accommodation	Develops leisure and accommodation facilities while balancing environmental compatibility and community amenity.	Somewhat suitable, CZ6 is currently used in adjacent areas to address the lakeshore and sensitive uses. However, the highly specific nature of the zone may unnecessarily limit the range of future development on site.

The above table suggests that CZ2 or CZ5 are more suitable for the proposed rezoning, where CZ2 is preferable, given its existing use in the Town Centre and its role as a supporting zone for the CZ1 Core zone.

The commercial zones vary in relation to the desired outcomes through different zone objectives and planning controls applying to development within each zone. Table 3, below, summarises the key planning controls applying to development in the various residential zones.

Table 7: Key Planning Controls – Commercial Zones

Zone	Commercial Zones Policy	Belconnen District Policy (additional controls)
CZ2 - Business Zone*	Office floor area in group centres is limited to 2000m ² per lease; retail uses near CZ1 must not exceed 300m ² ; ensure accessibility to public transport.	Shops are limited to 200m ² , except for specific areas (not including the subject site)
CZ5 - Mixed Use Zone	Retail tenancies are limited to a maximum of 1500m ² ; higher density residential developments must promote walkability and proximity to transport corridors.	[No limit as CZ5 does not currently exist in the division of Belconnen]

Permitting larger shop sizes that would be out-of-scale and may risk contradict the zone hierarchy within the Belconnen Town Centre. Considering the existing *assessment requirements* (in both the Belconnen District and Commercial Zone policies), there is a desire to ensure that the CZ1 zone is maintained as the pre-eminent retail destination within centres. This could be mitigated with additional assessment requirements in the Belconnen District Policy to limit shop GFA in CZ5. However, as stated in section 2.1, a key project objective is to utilise the existing planning structure as much as possible. Therefore, to best utilise the existing planning framework, it is simpler to opt for CZ2 for the rezoning.

It is considered that Commercial - CZ2 - Business Zone is the most appropriate zoning for the subject site.

3.4 Indicative Development Concept

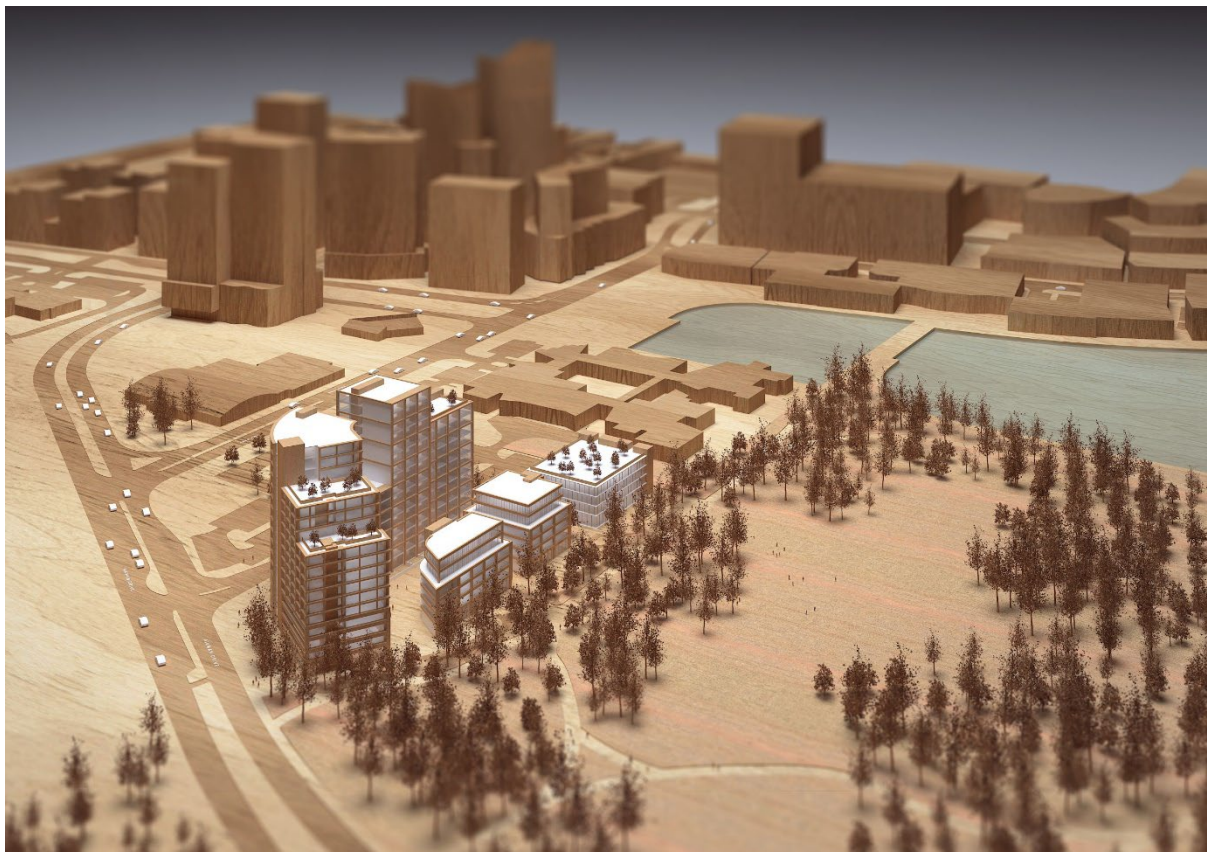
To demonstrate the potential future development potential of the site, refer to the indicative concept masterplan developed by Cox Architecture (Attachment A) and indicative landscape/urban design proposal developed by Arcadia Landscape Architecture (Attachment B) for this MPA proposal.

3.4.1 OVERVIEW

The indicative development concept contains:

- An area dedicated to community purposes, containing:
 - a four-storey mixed-use community facilities hub, containing 3000m² of GFA and
 - public surface car parking
- A residential use area containing approximately 330 dwellings across:
 - two six-storey mid-rise residential buildings with mixed-use on the ground floor, and
 - two high-rise residential buildings of varying heights (10-16 storeys) with a mixed-use ground floor
- Landscaping across the ground floor realm, connecting the site between to both the College and John Knight Memorial Park, and an extended public realm to build on the connection between the site and the University of Canberra.

Figure 20: Model showing the indicative development concept in context to the Town Centre



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

3.4.2 DESIGN RATIONALE

Cox Architecture and Arcadia designed the indicative development concept in tandem with the development of this MPA proposal. Through the design process, Cox evaluated a variety of schemes on the site, with a range of building heights, setbacks, separation, and different architectural forms. Arcadia investigated how the transformation of the site's landscape context would support the site's change into a safe and inviting precinct, and how this change could be achieved whilst maintaining biodiversity, enhancing nature and habitat connectivity.

The concept, as presented above, reflects an innovative and contextually sensitive design response, demonstrating a strong alignment with the site's opportunities, constraints, and the Territory's broad planning objectives.

This iterative process directly informed the proposed changes to the Territory Plan, so that the concept represents an exemplar of the desired outcomes for the site.

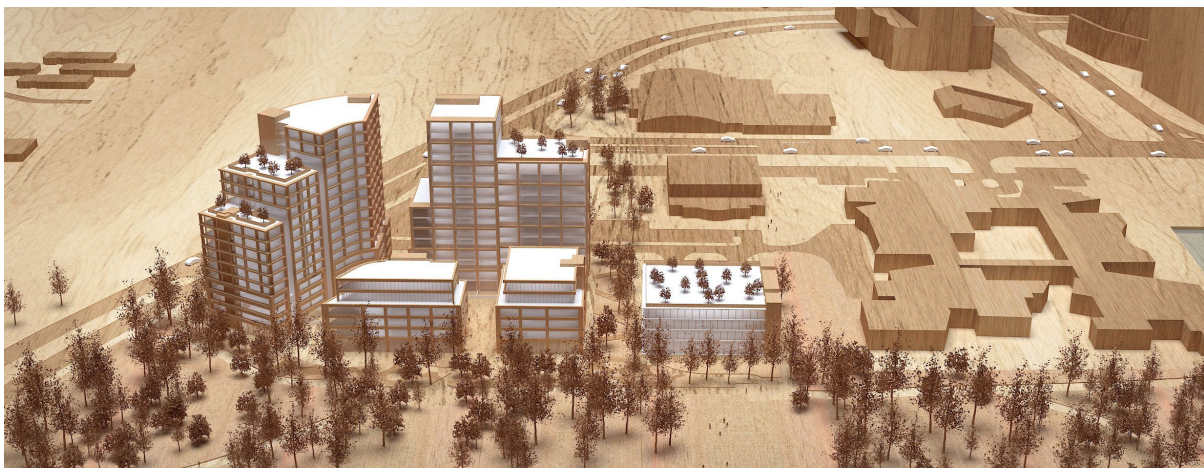
3.4.2.1 Architecture and building siting

The indicative built form strategically staggers building heights, with the lowest buildings located near the park and College, and taller buildings located addressing Aikman Drive. This decision

1. Limit overlooking and overshadowing of the college.
2. Limit visual bulk and provide appropriate setbacks to the park.
3. Provide solar access to units, private, communal, and public open spaces, particularly at the ground floor and lower levels.

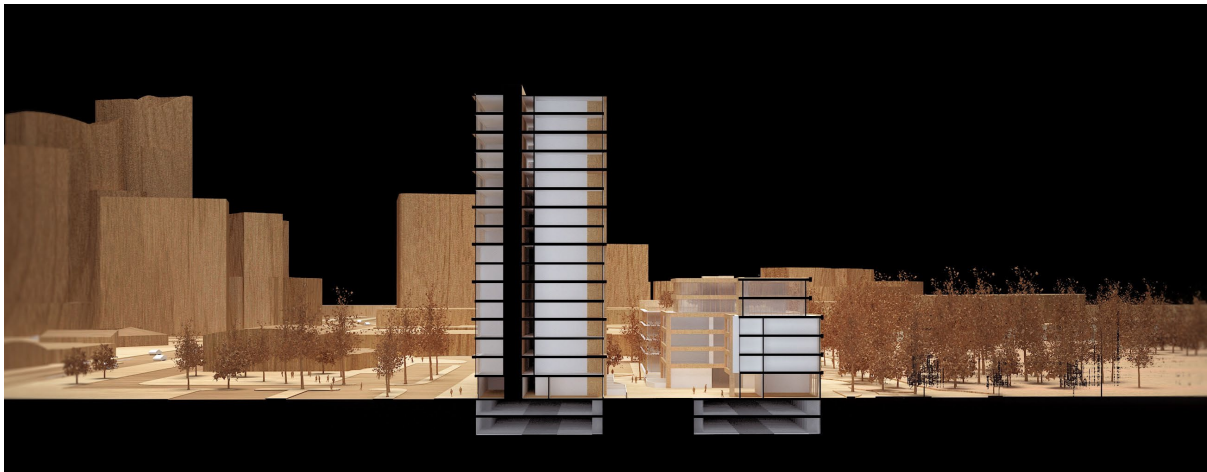
Figure 21 demonstrates the building height transition of low to high across the site from east to west and Figure 22 demonstrates how building heights and separation achieve solar access into lower levels and the centre of the site.

Figure 21: Northern perspective view of the indicative development concept.



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

Figure 22: Indicative development concept east west section



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

The programming of the site places the community use building closest to the college buildings, again creating a transition of use, buffering the existing educational buildings from any additional noise or other emissions from the mixed-use area. The community building is complemented with substantial at-grade car parking (40 spaces), providing easily accessible public parking for users of the community facilities.

The design features small building footprints and avoids longer buildings to maximise pedestrian and fauna permeability through the site. The smaller footprints and a minimised basement create a 42% building footprint, leaving much of the ground plane open for private, communal, and public open spaces.

Figure 23: Indicative development concept site plan.

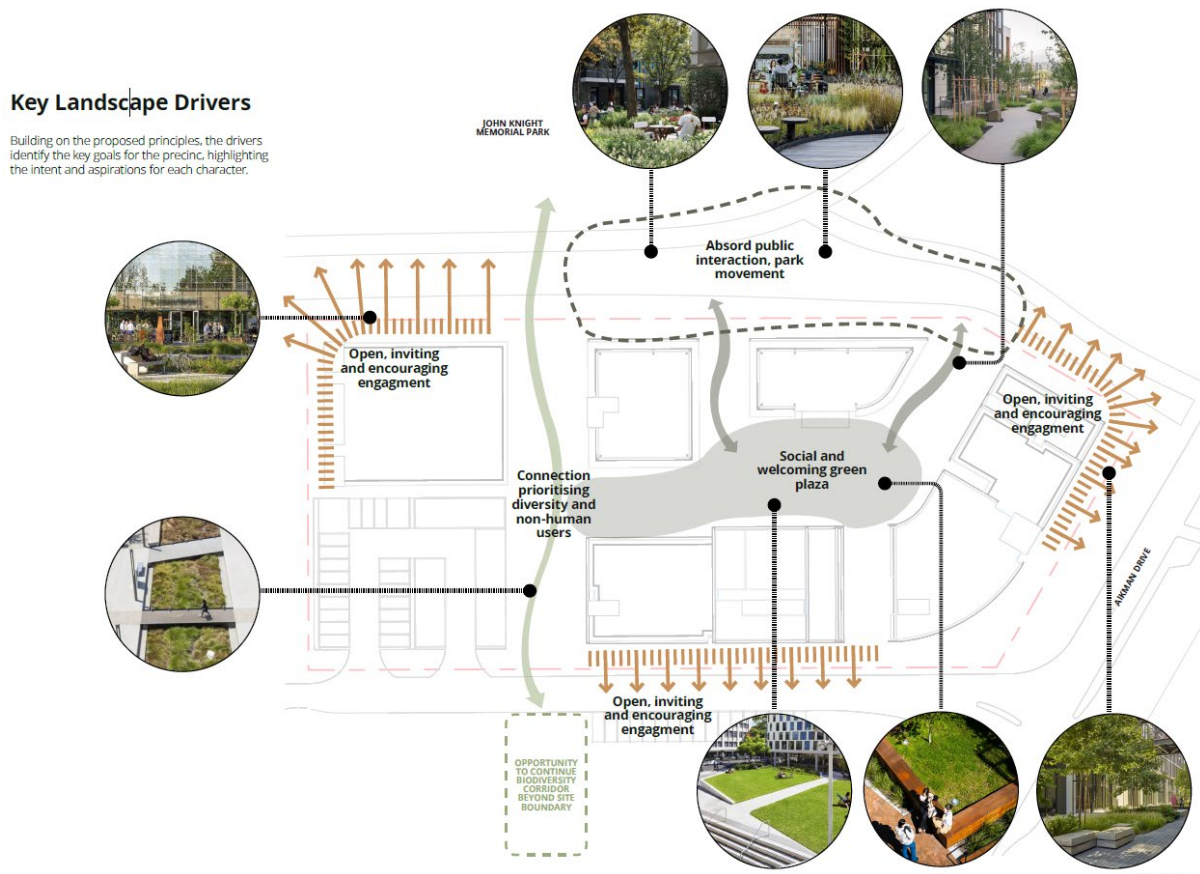


Source: COX Architecture (2025).

3.4.2.2 Landscape and Urban Design

The concept landscape design proposes a series of strategic moves to transform the site into a connected, climate-responsive, and community-focused precinct. Key design interventions include a central biodiversity corridor that extends existing ecological networks, generous green edges along Aikman Drive and Belconnen Boulevard to create active and welcoming frontages, and a civic plaza interface that links to the University of Canberra. The plan integrates flexible community spaces, rooftop gardens, and deep soil zones to support biodiversity and passive cooling. Materials and planting are locally sourced and selected for durability, accessibility, and ecological value, reinforcing the site's identity and its relationship to surrounding parklands.

Figure 24: Key Landscape Drivers



Source: Arcadia (2025)

3.4.2.3 Biodiversity Sustainability

Emphasising ecological integration and sustainability, the design includes rooftop gardens, deep soil planting zones, consideration of space for rooftop solar panels and considerations for water reuse strategies. Overall, the site achieves approximately 42% site coverage and 35% tree canopy at maturity. Buildings are sited to retain all trees that are currently on site, providing cooling microclimate effects for users of the space and retaining habitat connections for fauna.

Figure 25: Concept Landscape Character Plan



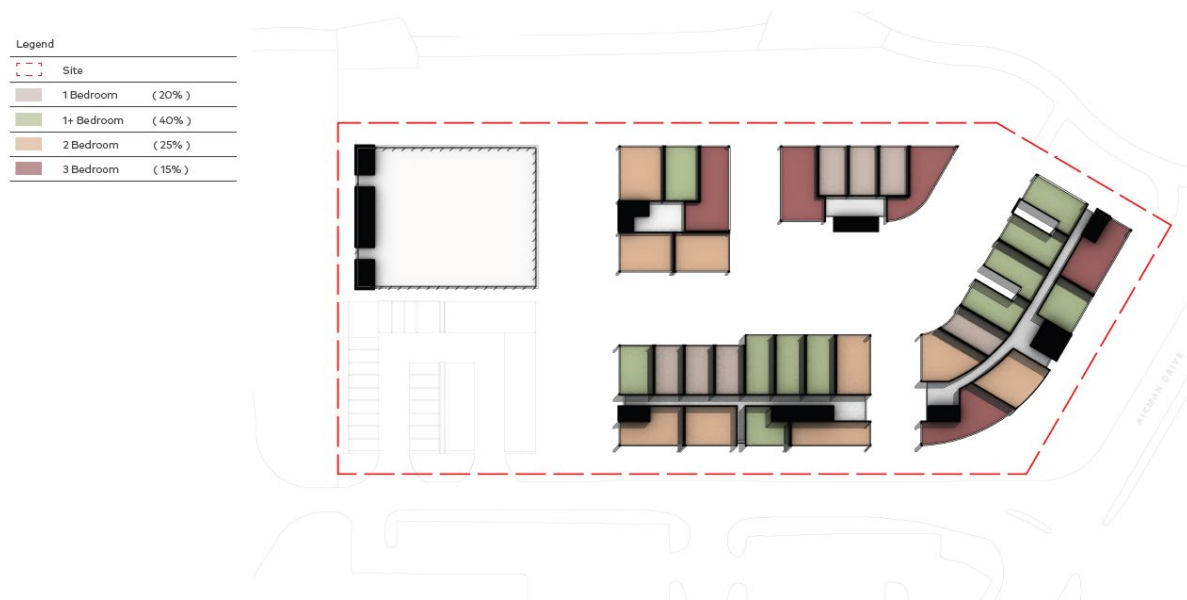
Source: Arcadia (2025)

Connections to public transport, major cycle routes, and adjacent green spaces are strengthened through upgraded path connections, improved public realm, and improved safety, with consideration of passive overlooking, lighting, and accessibility. Routes connecting through the site take advantage of significant deep soil zones to provide large and resilient tree canopies, protecting inhabitants and pedestrians from heat, and providing positive microclimate effects.

3.4.2.4 Building sustainability

The concept offers a diverse mix of apartments, and the concept floorplates are structured to achieve natural cross ventilation, adaptable layouts, and accessibility. Buildings are designed so over 70% of apartments can receive a minimum of 3hrs of sunlight on the winter solstice. These considerations have the effect of reducing reliance on heating and cooling devices, reducing energy consumption, in turn providing more financially sustainable dwellings.

Figure 26: Indicative concept floor plan



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

3.4.2.5 Social Sustainability

The provision of public car parking and the community building provide positive benefits to the community to strengthen social resilience and sustainability. The building provides over 3000sqm of space dedicated to community functions to build on and support Belconnen’s community institutions. These are detailed in Attachment D – Social Impact Assessment.

The space is envisioned to be used as a combination of uses including:

- Community activity centre – providing additional spaces for new and existing activities run by providers and organisations in the Belconnen area. An example of this is the Belconnen Community Centre. A similar centre in this location would provide for the additional future population density arising in the east of the town centre and UC residential projects and is made distinct with the unique connection to John Knight Park. A ground floor activity centre allows a spill-out of community activities and efficient use of the public space.
- Health facilities – providing suites for major or minor health providers and specialists. A variety and diversity of uses could be provided in one location, similar to the amenity found at mixed-use health centres across Canberra, such as the Molonglo Health Hub in Coombs, although the concept would provide this type of amenity in a people-oriented vertical format, stacking rather than sprawling.
- Offices – to serve administrative functions for community organisations and support continued operations in the surrounding town centre and at a wider district level. A successful example of this office typology is the Griffin Centre in the City.

The community building could also provide a strong UC presence on site and become key gateway building inside the Town Centre, linking the campus into the commercial and community core of the district.

The indicative development and landscape concepts honours cultural and heritage values (e.g. John Knight Memorial Park) by embedding landscape connections, enhancing community engagement, and fostering a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly urban environment that seamlessly integrates with the Belconnen Town Centre and serves Belconnen as a district-level destination.

Figure 27: Perspective view from John Knight Park showing the indicative development concept.



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

3.5 Benefits of the Proposal

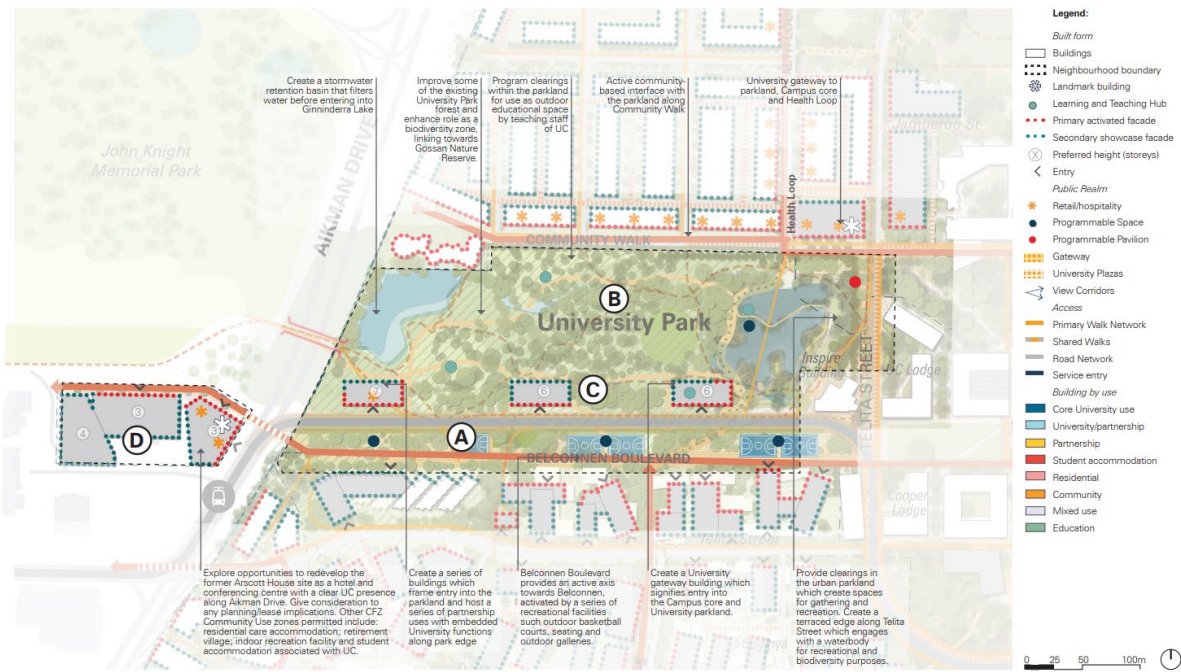
The potential benefits of the MPA proposal are wide-reaching and impactful to both the local community context (town centre) and the wider community (Belconnen District). The benefits span a range of categories. See below categorical analysis of the potential benefits of the proposed amendment and how the benefits can be encouraged through the details of the proposed planning changes.

3.5.1 LAND USES AND DIVERSITY

A change to CZ2 – Business Zone introduces a greater range of uses to the site, including those present in the current CFZ zoning, whilst integrating with the existing, vibrant, and successful CZ2 zoning of much of the Town Centre. Introducing a greater variety of uses to the area will have positive effects.

As envisioned in the UC Masterplan, the primary connector between the UC and the Town Centre, dubbed the “Belconnen Boulevard,” has the potential to provide a multitude of active frontages spanning along its length.

Figure 28: UC Masterplan - Design development controls – University Park Illustrative Plan



Source: MGS Architects, UC Bruce Campus Masterplan, pg168 (2021)

The Boulevard joins the Belconnen town centre East-West pedestrian spine that runs to the south of John Knight Memorial Park, across the Eastern Valley inlet bridge, through the Belconnen Library, Margret Timpson Park, through Westfield Belconnen and up into the soon-to-be established Lathlain Street Mixed Use Precinct. This is identified in the Belconnen Town Centre Masterplan (2016) as a future main pedestrian link and area, where active frontages should be maximised (see highlighted portion of Figure 24).

Figure 29: Future main pedestrian routes and active frontages.



Source: ACT Government, Belconnen Town Centre Masterplan (2018)

Figure 30: Typology of different uses (current and future) addressing the key pedestrian pathway.



Source: Landchecker (2025), various public image sources.

The current zoning limits potential for invigorating the park interface and leveraging foot and active travel traffic present on pathways adjacent the site, as CFZ zoning provides for a limited range of uses that could provide active frontages:

- Community activity centre
- Cultural facility
- Public agency
- Health facilities

CZ2 zoning, in contrast, would allow for and promote highly active uses such as:

- small-scale retail (200sqm GFA permitted in CZ2)
- take-away food shops (200sqm GFA permitted in CZ2)
- cafes
- restaurants

These uses also have the potential to provide a better spread of opening hours, complementing and re-invigorating the nighttime culture of the town centre, currently supported by the Emu Bank foreshore and newer mixed-use precincts.

These uses would increase the potential for an active ground floor characterised by:

- High pedestrian permeability (i.e. Movement in and out of the building)
- Visual interest and movement (i.e. Ability to see into activities happening inside buildings)

- Safety and surveillance (i.e. Views in and out)
- Variety of active frontage typologies including shopfronts, courtyards, showrooms, and outdoor dining

This would function best as a mixed-use development where a significant residential population would be co-located above the active ground floor, promoting night and day commercial and community activity. The residential component, when designed in accordance with the Housing Design Guide and Urban Design Guide, would encourage overlooking, passive surveillance and views into public spaces. These measures would increase the safety of other users and visitors to the new uses on the site, and would support the continued, safe activation of the site after hours.

With these additional uses, and the activity and safety provided by a residential component, and the potential for after-hours/extended hours uses, the site has exciting potential to form an activated pathway “node”. Future development should also utilise its adjacency to John Knight Park, as indicated in the landscape concept, allowing the spill-out of commercial and community activities into an upgraded public realm.

3.5.2 HOUSING

CZ2 zoning would permit a range of housing typologies that would not be permissible in the CFZ zoning. The site’s location in the Town Centre and its adjacency to the UC would promote a high-density, compact housing typology, such as apartments. CZ2 enables a wide variety of tenure and titling options allowing for commercial accommodation, boarding houses, private homes, private rentals, build-to-rent developments, social, supportive and community housing.

CZ2 zoning would overall enable the site to contribute to the ACT’s strategic housing objectives of 30,000 new homes by 2030, in a highly connected and desirable location.

3.5.3 TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Permitting the site a greater range of uses and higher-density development would leverage excellent existing transit connections and anticipates potential future Light Rail transit opportunities (refer section 1.3.6). Permitting higher-density development allows more people to rely on public transport, reducing reliance on private vehicles. This in turn allows more sustainable future development, reducing space allocated to parking, reducing greenhouse gas emissions through embodied carbon in the building and operation.

Importantly, the 2025 Transport Impact Assessment Guidelines specifically allow for the consideration of public transport infrastructure to reduce vehicle trip generation and parking rates. Effectively permitting the approval of transit-oriented development, the new TIA guidelines provide a framework to prove, at the DA stage, that vehicle trips will be converted to public transport trips.

A re-zoning of the site to CZ2 would leverage the great public transport connections the site has access to and through the application of the new TIA guidelines, contribute to an environmentally sensitive and forward-looking development that minimises redundant parking and contributes to the eminence and function of the public transit network.

3.5.4 INTERFACES & ACTIVATION

As described above, the site has an inherent connection to John Knight Memorial Park. Currently, there are few buildings that interface directly with the park, with the College providing the only built form facing and connecting to the park area. A continuous and well-considered interface with the park on the northern boundary of the site has the potential to benefit the safety, usage, and heritage character of the park.

Figure 31: Perspective of the indicative development concept showing interfaces to the park.



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

An improved public realm, provided with overlooking from a residential component has the potential to massively improve the physical and perceived safety of the park's pathways and open spaces in the immediate area.

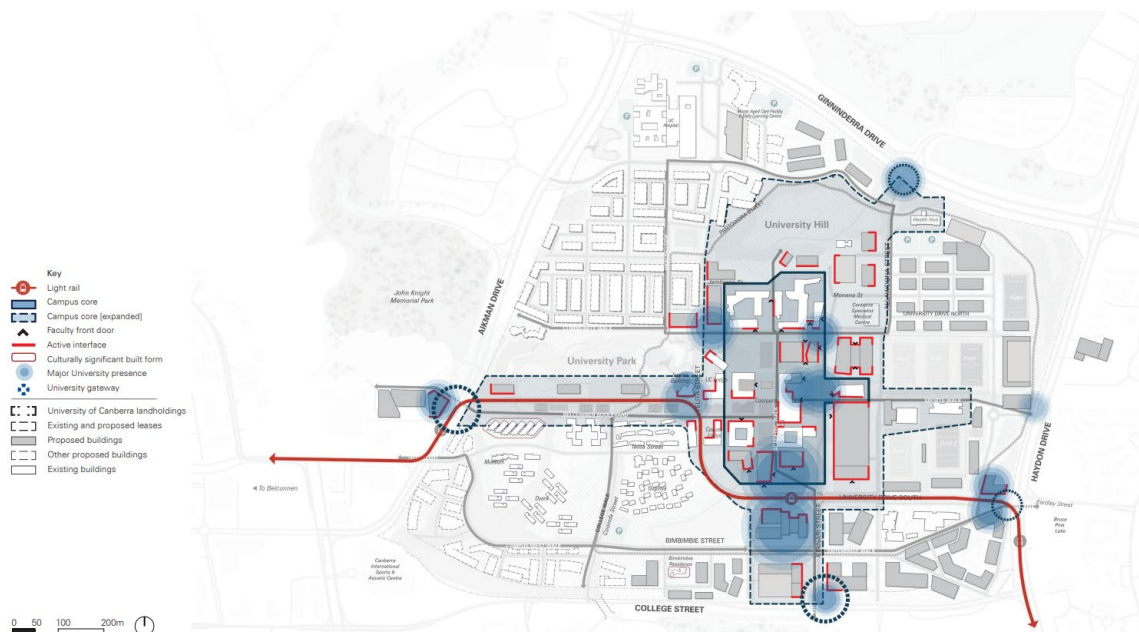
Figure 32: Perspective of the indicative development concept showing Aikman Drive interface.



Source: COX Architecture (2025).

The Aikman Drive interface also has a key opportunity to provide a “gateway” building for this approach to the Town Centre. This is also identified in the UC Masterplan (Figure 27) as the site having a “Major University presence”). A larger and architecturally significant built form to Aikman Drive would strengthen the character of the Belconnen Town Centre, providing an iconic landmark building; balance future taller (12 storey) developments master planned on the eastern side of Aikman Drive (i.e. UC Campus), and transition future building heights on Section 47 (27 current, 18 storeys permitted).

Figure 33: UC Masterplan - Identity, interfaces, and address.



Source: MGS Architects, UC Bruce Campus Masterplan, pg84 (2021)

3.5.5 SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY

Analysing the impacts and benefits of the transition from a CFZ to CZ2 zoning is a focus of this MPA proposal. There is potential to provide a meaningful contribution to the supply of community facilities in Belconnen, building on the strong offerings already provided in the town centre.

The Social Impact Assessment highlights that the site represents only 0.24% of Belconnen’s CFZ land—within a district that holds the largest share of CFZ land in the ACT—indicating that the rezoning will have negligible impact on the overall capacity for community infrastructure provision.

Transitioning to CZ2 enables a broader range of permissible uses, including residential, retail, and community-oriented developments, which can respond more flexibly to the needs of Belconnen’s young, diverse population. The zone supports mixed-use outcomes that promote economic vitality, housing diversity, and improved access to services, while leveraging existing infrastructure and reducing the need for additional land acquisition. Importantly, the rezoning facilitates the adaptive reuse of a long-vacant site, contributing to urban renewal and enhancing the public realm without compromising community benefit.

The existing community facilities and directions for the future of the site’s community use is analysed and discussed in detail in the **Social Impact Assessment (Attachment D)**.

3.5.6 WALKABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Permitting higher density through a re-zoning providing reciprocal benefits to commercial stakeholders in the Town Centre and future residents of the site. As demonstrated in Figure 6, everyday convenience stores and small-scale supermarkets are within a 5-10 minutes’ walk, with larger supermarkets, health facilities, places of worship and community centres within a 15 minutes’ walk. It is an exceptionally well-located site, exceeding the recommendations of the 15-minute hierarchy described in the ACT Urban Design Guide (Figure 28).

Figure 34: Transport and amenity within 15-minute city.



Source: ACT Urban Design Guide 2024, pg. 39.

The ACT Transport Strategy 2020 cites walking and cycling as an inherently efficient method of transportation, while also emitting zero air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and noise while

improving the vibrancy of places. The strategy focuses on Urban Intensification Areas as the best places to deliver walkable environments:

“...the future transport network will feature high quality walking environments in the city and urban intensification areas, including town, group and local centres and school zones.”

ACT Transport Strategy 2020, pg28

Therefore, the site location supports increased uptake of walking and cycling for local trips, with the infrastructure pipeline in the vicinity focused on providing new footpaths, intersections, road crossings and rest facilities. Allowing higher-density development on the site leverages this infrastructure investment, promoting and facilitating a healthier, more efficient, and sustainable way of moving.

3.5.7 ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

As outlined in section 1.3.7, open spaces surrounding the site contribute positively to biodiversity and the environment.

Rezoning the site to CZ2 would permit a large high-density development, that, due to the site’s size, would have to be designed in accordance with the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Guide (BSUD). Providing the zoning for a considered mixed-use development would permit a better BSUD outcome at each of the key steps:

Theme 1: Maintain and enhance nature.

As demonstrated in the landscape concept, though the compact and efficient siting of buildings, the mature native trees can be retained on site, and enhanced with understorey and groundcover plantings, potentially providing ecological benefits to a range of species.

Theme 2: Connect and extend nature.

The site can connect to significant vegetation corridors such as John Knight Park – Gossan Hill – Bruce Ridge – Black Mountain, and the Lake Ginninderra and Ginninderra Creek blue-green network. The concept landscape plan demonstrates how additional plantings on site would extend the network into the site and better connect to urban vegetation in the town centre.

Theme 3: Minimise threats to protect nature.

The concept site plan demonstrates that site design can minimise threats on nature by siting taller buildings away from existing vegetation and providing setbacks and deep soil zones for new and existing trees.

Theme 4: Connect people to nature.

The site has a great opportunity to connect more people to nature. Future high-density residential would provide views of and direct connection to natural features, such as the Lake Ginninderra parklands and UC parklands. The ground floor has opportunity to promote interaction with nature, with a public, landscaped, pedestrian-oriented zone that connects to key pathways and recreation areas.

4.0 ACT Planning Context

In line with section 58 (2) of the *Planning Act 2023*, in deciding whether to accept a proponent-initiated amendment application, the Territory Planning Authority (TPA) must have regard to:

- (a) the planning strategy;
- (b) any relevant district strategy;
- (c) any current or proposed amendments of, or of policies in, the territory plan;
- (d) the statement of planning priorities;
- (e) anything else the authority considers relevant to the amendment.

The table below outlines the strategies, policies, and documents of relevance to assessment of the proposal having regard to the above requirements.

Act, s58 document	Description
(a) the planning strategy;	ACT Planning Strategy 2018 Reflects and integrates the vision and directions of the community and other ACT Government strategies, particularly housing, government, and climate change. As per s37(1)(a)(i) of the <i>Planning Act</i> , the planning strategy must be considered in connection with a proponent-initiated amendment.
(b) any relevant district strategy;	Belconnen District Strategy 2023 This strategy captures the character of the Belconnen District and identifies areas which may be suitable for change to accommodate population growth sustainably.
(c) any current or proposed amendments of, or of policies in, the territory plan;	Belconnen District Policy Commercial Zones District Policy Community Facilities Zone Policy The Territory Plan forms the key planning policy framework in the ACT to govern land use decision making and contains the relevant district policy, being the Belconnen District Policy We are not aware of any other planned or proposed amendments to these policies in the Territory Plan; however, we note the significant reform proposed for the Residential Zones Policy (Missing Middle Housing Reform) that seeks to increase rights across all residential zones.
(d) the statement of planning priorities;	Statement of Planning Priorities 2024-25 Ministerial statement building on the strategic framework set out in the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and the ACT Government’s Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.
(e) anything else the authority considers relevant to the amendment.	Statement of Principles of Good Planning (Territory Plan 2023)

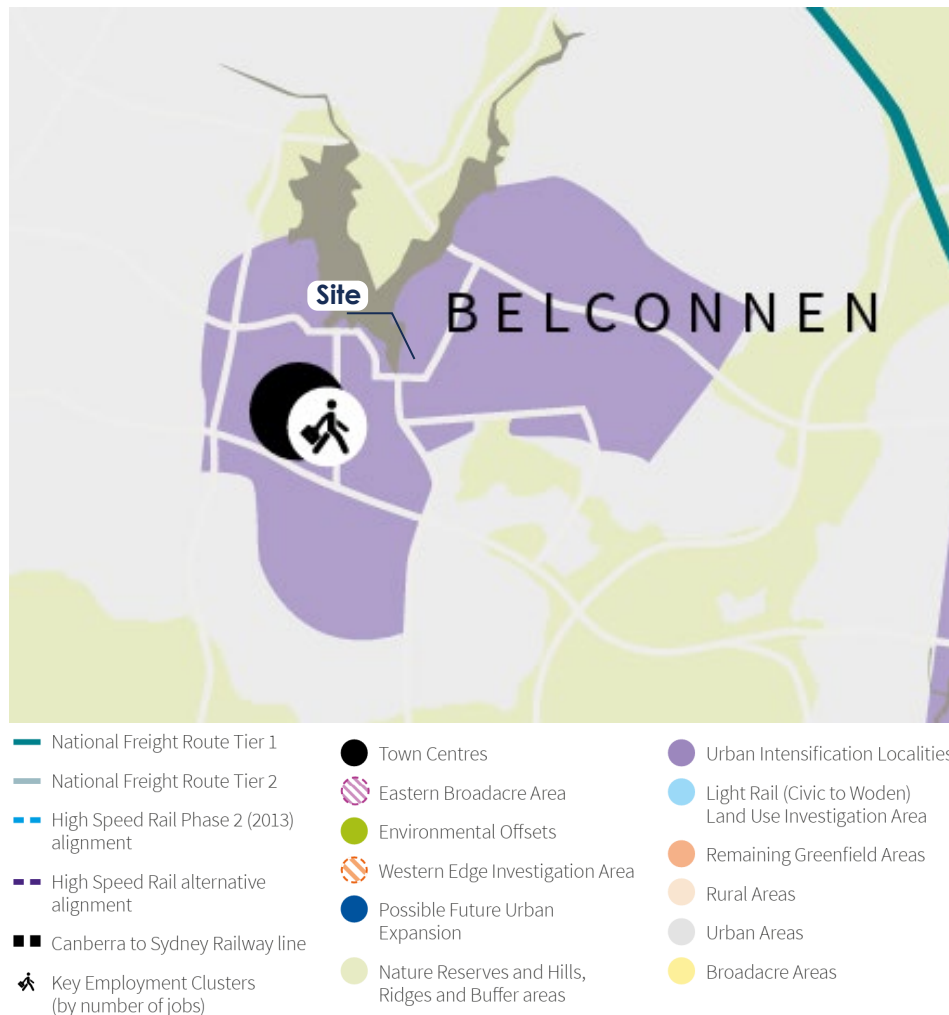
4.1 ACT Planning Strategy 2018

The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 was released on 5 December 2018 and is a refresh of the 2012 Strategy. The Strategy reflects and integrates the vision and directions of the community and other ACT Government strategies, particularly housing, transport, and climate change.

The vision of the 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 subject site is totally within an area identified in the Planning Strategy as ‘Urban Intensification Localities’ as it surrounds the Town Centre (refer Figure 29 below).

Figure 35: Excerpt from the Policy Plan showing Belconnen Town Centre.



Source: ACT Planning Strategy 2018, Policy Plan.

The proposed MPA site will allow for broader uses and higher density consistent with the intentions of the 2018 Planning Strategy.

The Strategy has five related themes:

- **Compact and efficient**
- **Diverse**
- **Sustainable and Resilient**
- **Liveable**
- **Accessible**

A response to each of these themes is provided below:

Action	Response
COMPACT AND EFFICIENT CITY	
<p>Action 1.1 Support sustainable urban growth by working towards delivering up to 70% of new housing within our existing urban footprint, and by concentrating development in areas located close to the city centre, town and group centres and along key transit corridors.</p>	<p>The proposed amendment supports sustainable urban growth by facilitating higher-density residential development within Canberra’s existing urban footprint, directly aligning with the ACT Planning Strategy’s target of 70% infill. Located adjacent to the Belconnen Town Centre, the site is within walking distance of shops, services, employment, and education hubs, and is well-served by Rapid bus routes and future light rail, making it highly suited for transit-oriented development. Rezoning to CZ2 enables a mix of residential and community uses that promote compact, walkable neighbourhoods and housing diversity in a strategic infill location.</p>
<p>Action 1.3 Use infrastructure efficiently to support our growing community.</p>	<p>The proposal supports inclusion and participation by enabling a mix of residential and community uses that cater to a diverse population, including students, workers, and families. Its location adjacent to the University of Canberra, public open space, and community facilities creates opportunities for social connection and cultural exchange.</p> <p>Future development can accommodate a range of housing types and tenures, support community-focused ground floor uses, and enhance accessibility to shared public spaces, contributing to a more inclusive and welcoming urban environment.</p>
DIVERSE CANBERRA	
<p>Action 2.1 Respect Canberra's culturally rich and diverse community to foster inclusion and participation in our community.</p>	<p>The proposal supports inclusion and participation by enabling a mix of residential and community uses that cater to a diverse population, including students, workers, and families. Its location adjacent to the University of Canberra, John Knight Memorial Park, Lake</p>

Ginninderra, Belconnen Skate Park, and community facilities creates opportunities for social connection and cultural exchange. Future development can accommodate a range of housing types and tenures, support community-focused ground floor uses, and enhance accessibility to shared public spaces, contributing to a more inclusive and welcoming urban environment.

Action 2.2

Enhance the diversity and resilience of our centres to meet the needs of the community, support economic viability and improved liveability.

The proposed rezoning enhances the diversity and resilience of the Belconnen Town Centre by introducing a mix of residential, commercial and community uses that support both day and night-time activity. By increasing the local population and enabling active ground floor uses, the proposal strengthens economic viability, supports local businesses, and contributes to a more vibrant and liveable precinct. Its integration with adjacent green space, educational institutions, and transport networks ensures a flexible urban environment that can adapt to evolving community needs.

SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT TERRITORY

Action 3.3

Integrate living infrastructure and sustainable design to make Canberra a resilient city within the landscape.

As the proposed amendment promotes density close to existing services and primary transit corridors that promote active travel and reduce reliance on motor vehicles, it strengthens Canberra’s push to be a resilient city.

Action 3.4

Plan for integrated water cycle management to support healthy waterways and a liveable city.

Not applicable - integrated water cycle management may be considered in connection with any future development application over the land. Notwithstanding this, the proposed amendment is not expected to adversely impact potential for achievement of suitable outcomes in the regard.

Action 3.5

Protect biodiversity and enhance habitat connectivity to improve landscape resilience.

The proposed amendment supports landscape resilience by retaining and enhancing green space connections to John Knight Memorial Park and the broader blue-green network. While some tree removal may be required, replanting and deep soil zones are incorporated into the indicative design to support canopy cover and biodiversity outcomes.

LIVEABLE CANBERRA

Action 4.2

Deliver recreation, open (green)space, and public spaces that support social interaction,

The proposal delivers enhanced public and green space outcomes by integrating landscaped connections between John Knight Memorial Park, the UC campus, and the

<p>physical and mental health, and engagement in public life.</p>	<p>Belconnen Town Centre. The indicative design includes accessible open space, active frontages, and public realm improvements that encourage social interaction and support wellbeing.</p> <p>These spaces create opportunities for recreation, informal gathering, and community use, reinforcing the role of the site as a key link within the local public domain network.</p>
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<p>Action 4.4 Deliver housing that is diverse and affordable to support a liveable city.</p>	<p>The proposed amendment enables delivery of diverse housing typologies through medium and high-density residential development by amending the site’s zoning to CZ2 Business Zone.</p> <p>This zoning allows for a range of tenancy options, including private rental, build-to-rent, and potential for community or affordable housing. By supporting permissible residential uses within a well-serviced, central location, the proposal contributes to increased housing supply and choice, reinforcing the objective of a more inclusive and liveable city.</p>
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<p>Action 4.5 Encourage high quality design, built form and places for a changing climate.</p>	<p>The proposal encourages high quality design and built form by enabling development that responds to its town centre context, public realm interfaces, and environmental conditions.</p> <p>The indicative concept incorporates all-electric buildings, rooftop solar, deep soil zones, demonstrating climate-responsive outcomes.</p> <p>The proposed CZ2 zoning allows flexibility for built form that integrates sustainability, urban design quality, and adaptability to changing climate conditions.</p>
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ACCESSIBLE CANBERRA

<p>Action 5.2 Deliver well designed, safe, and sustainable streets and public spaces to create walkable neighbourhoods that are inclusive and fair</p>	<p>The proposed amendment supports the delivery of safe, well-designed, and sustainable public spaces by mandating provisions for active frontages, improving pedestrian connections, and integrating landscaping that improves comfort and safety.</p> <p>The indicative layout prioritises walkability through strong connections to John Knight Memorial Park, the UC campus, and Belconnen Town Centre.</p> <p>The amendments includes provisions to the District Policy supporting passive surveillance and inclusivity, contributing to a more equitable and accessible neighbourhood.</p>
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Action 5.3

Refer to the response to Action 5.2 above.

Create a better experience for walking and cycling into and within the city centre and our town centres.

4.2 Belconnen District Strategy 2023

The introduction of planning reforms in the ACT in 2023 saw the development of district strategies for each of the nine districts across Canberra. The strategies seek to identify areas which may be suitable for change to accommodate population growth sustainably and in a manner which is in keeping with the character of each district.

Figure 36: Belconnen District Context

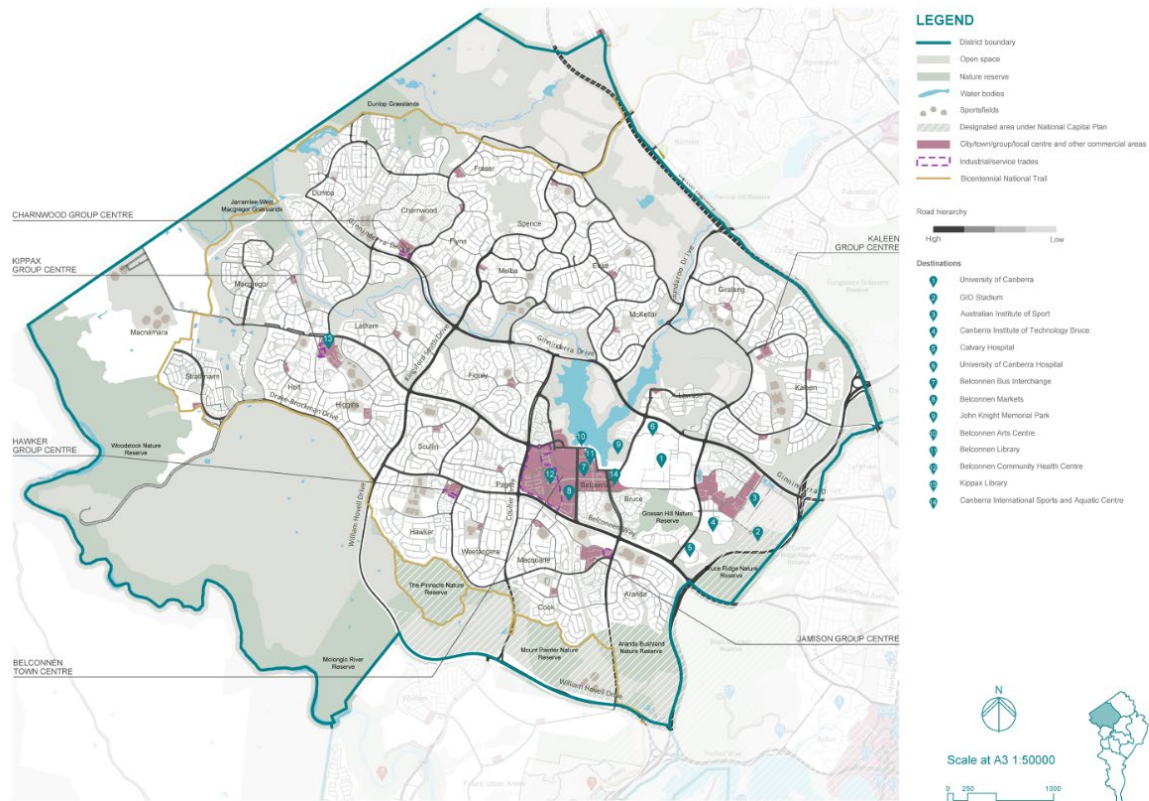


Figure 2: Belconnen District context

Source: Belconnen District Strategy 2023

The Belconnen District Strategy outlines a 2050 vision in which Belconnen evolves into a more vibrant, connected, and sustainable urban district that balances residential growth with enhanced access to open space, education, employment, and cultural life.

The proposed amendment aligns with this vision, as it aims to advance the long-term aspiration for Belconnen to be a thriving, diverse district centred around its lake, open spaces, and vibrant urban areas. By unlocking a broader range of permissible uses and enabling a built-form scale that supports medium to high-density outcomes, the proposed amendment facilitates the delivery of a mixed-use precinct that leverages its proximity to major institutions such as the University of Canberra, North Canberra Hospital, and CIT Bruce, as well as existing and future public transport infrastructure.

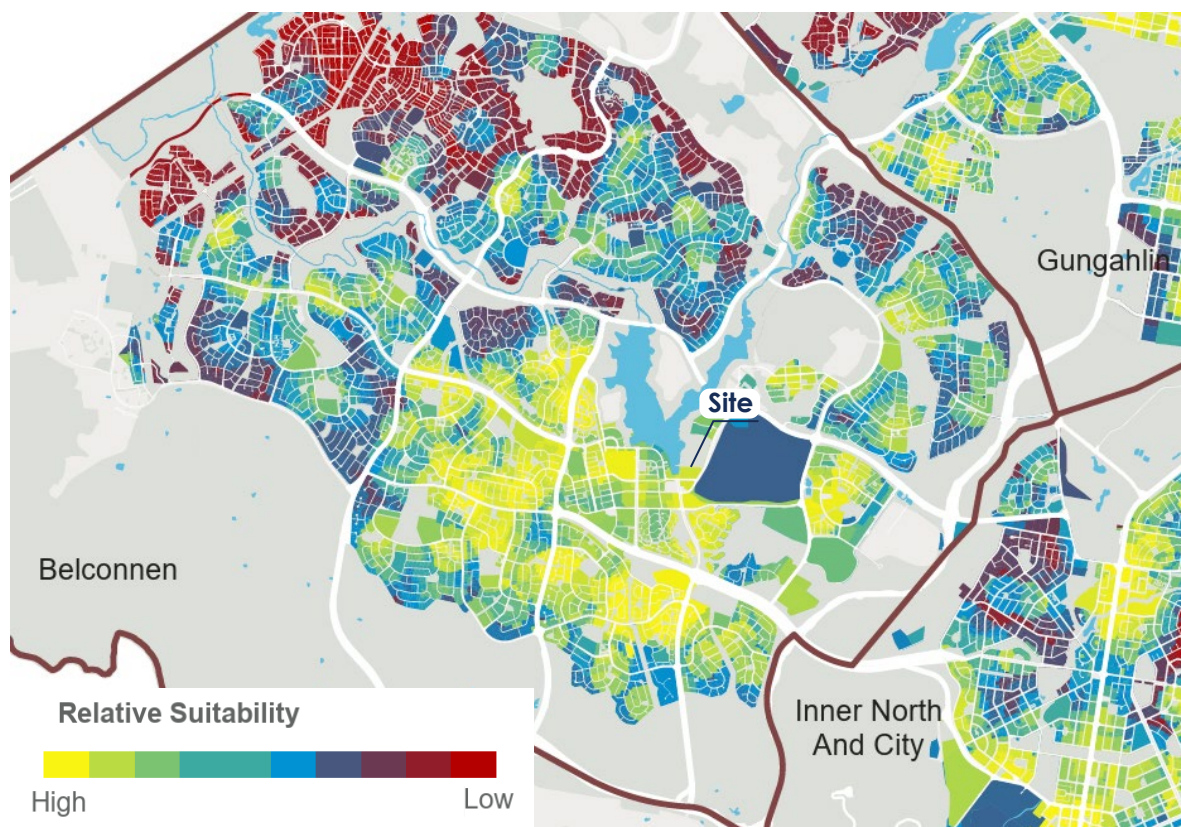
4.2.1 POTENTIAL URBAN REGENERATION AREAS

The strategic location of the site allows for efficient land use, where residential, commercial, and community functions can coexist and reinforce one another. The increased capacity for housing, supported by active ground floor uses and improved public domain, contributes to a more compact and integrated urban structure.

The district strategy identifies these types of areas that are suitable for increased housing diversity and density as **Potential Urban Regeneration Areas (PURAs)**. Distinct from the Key Change Areas in the strategy, which identify specific land for future change based on existing knowledge, these PURAs are strategically categorised by their spatial qualities.

As per the district strategies, this is primarily calculated based on their “proximity to retail centres, public amenities, and public transport nodes.” District Strategies, Volume 4: Background Material, Part Four: Technical Analysis, provides the result of the ACT Government’s desktop study on the “suitability of land for new housing”. See below Figure 31, showing an excerpt from the territory-wide analysis demonstrating that **the site has a high relative suitability for new housing**.

Figure 37: Potential suitability of areas for new housing.



Source: ACT Government, *District Strategies, Volume 4: Background Material, Part Four: Technical Analysis*, pg. 27.

4.2.2 5 BIG DRIVERS

The five big drivers—**Blue-Green Network, Economic Access and Opportunity, Strategic Movement, Inclusive Centres and Communities**, and **Sustainable Neighbourhoods**—form the foundation of the ACT District Strategies and were developed to translate the ACT Planning Strategy’s city-wide vision into practical, place-based planning objectives. Each driver responds to Canberra’s unique challenges and opportunities, such as climate resilience, housing affordability, equitable access to jobs and services, and the need for compact, sustainable urban growth. Together, they provide a holistic framework for guiding development that balances environmental protection, economic vitality, social inclusion, and infrastructure delivery. The following responses demonstrate how the proposed amendment aligns with each of these drivers in the context of the Belconnen District Strategy.

Blue-green network

The proposal supports the enhancement of Belconnen’s blue-green network by improving connectivity between Lake Ginninderra, John Knight Memorial Park, and the University of Canberra. These areas are identified in the strategy as key ecological and recreational corridors. The indicative layout aligns with initiatives to reimagine the lake’s frontage, increase canopy cover, and improve pedestrian access, contributing to the district’s living infrastructure goals. The proposal also supports water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) and biodiversity-sensitive urban design (BSUD), consistent with strategic directions to restore riparian corridors and improve stormwater quality, particularly around Ginninderra Creek.

Economic access and opportunity across the city

The proposal strengthens Belconnen’s economic role by enabling housing adjacent to the Belconnen Education and Sports Innovation Precinct, which includes the University of Canberra, North Canberra Hospital, UC Hospital, AIS, and Bruce CIT. This supports the strategy’s vision for an integrated innovation precinct that builds on the district’s strengths in health, education, and knowledge-intensive sectors. The amendment also contributes to revitalisation of the town centre, reinforcing its role as a commercial and employment hub. By facilitating mixed-use development and active street edges, the proposal aligns with initiatives to attract professional services and improve employment access for residents in north and west Belconnen.

Strategic movement to support city growth

The site’s location along existing Rapid bus routes and the future light rail corridor from the City Centre to Belconnen supports the strategy’s emphasis on transit-oriented development. The proposal contributes to compact urban growth and improved accessibility to jobs and services, particularly for residents in areas with lower socio-economic outcomes. It aligns with strategic initiatives to enhance active travel infrastructure and public open spaces. These improvements support the district’s goal of reducing car dependence and increasing uptake of public and active transport.

Inclusive centres and communities

The proposal contributes to the revitalisation of Belconnen’s town centre by enabling higher-density housing and improved public realm outcomes. This supports the strategy’s objective to activate centres and ensure they remain viable community hubs. The amendment aligns with initiatives to improve the role of group and local centres, particularly in areas with below-average socio-economic indicators. By integrating housing with community infrastructure and enhancing walkability, the proposal helps create inclusive, accessible neighbourhoods. It also supports the delivery of new community facilities in infill areas, consistent with the strategy’s emphasis on co-located and well-connected social infrastructure.

Sustainable neighbourhoods

The proposal directly supports the ACT-wide target of delivering 70% of new housing within the existing urban footprint, with Belconnen identified as a key district for accommodating future growth. It enables medium to high-density housing in a location well-served by transport and amenities, contributing to sustainable transformation. The indicative development concept demonstrates that any development on site would comply with the Urban Design Guide and statutory instruments to include sustainability measures such as: all-electric buildings, deep soil zones, and opportunities for WSUD. This aligns with the strategy’s goals for climate resilience and net zero emissions. The proposal also supports increased housing diversity and affordability, particularly in areas adjacent to centres and rapid transit stops, consistent with the district’s sustainable neighbourhood objectives.

4.3 Statement of Planning Priorities 2024-25

The ACT Government Minister for Planning released the Statement of Planning Priorities for 2024-25, which serves as a guiding document for the ACT Government's planning Directorate for the coming period. This Statement of Planning Priorities focuses on delivering diverse housing choices close to shopping centres and travel networks such as public transport and active travel infrastructure, to create a better-connected, accessible, and sustainable city.

- 1. Plan for more housing in and around key precincts, shops, and rapid transport connections.**
- 2. Enable diverse housing choices and the missing middle.**
3. Plan for the growth of Canberra's newest regions.
- 4. Outline Canberra's future jobs and innovation precincts.**
- 5. Support community needs across the ACT.**
6. Territory Priority Projects.
7. Environmental Protection.
- 8. Design focus and implementing the New Planning System.**

The proposed amendment demonstrates strong alignment with the above, particularly in relation to housing supply, location, diversity, and integration with transport and employment precincts (**1,2,4 and 5**).

The site lies adjacent to the Belconnen Town Centre and University of Canberra, within walking distance of rapid bus routes and the future light rail corridor, directly supporting **Priority 1** to plan for more housing around shops and rapid transport connections.

By amending the zoning to CZ2, the proposal supports a mix of housing typologies suited to different household types and tenures, addressing **Priority 2** to deliver diverse housing choices and the missing middle.

The site's proximity to the Belconnen Education and Sports Innovation Precinct contributes to **Priority 4** by reinforcing one of Canberra's key knowledge and employment clusters.

Additionally, the proposal supports **Priority 5** by enabling future ground-floor uses that can respond to community needs, including local services, open space activation and improved pedestrian access.

Through this approach, the proposal also contributes to design quality and the implementation of the new planning system (**Priority 8**), by encouraging compact, mixed-use development through new Planning Outcomes that integrate land use, movement, and public domain objectives.

4.4 Principles of Good Planning

Section 10 of the *Planning Act 2023* defines principles of good planning, which are also reproduced at Part C.2 of the Territory Plan. The proposal is consistent with the principles as set out in Table 2 below.

Table 9: Responses to the principles of good planning

Relevant Principle	Response
2.1 Activation and liveability principles means the following:	
(a) Planning and design should support diverse economic and social activities, including through promoting different but compatible uses for buildings and other areas.	(a) By rezoning the site to C22 Business Zone, the proposal allows for compatible land uses, including residential, retail, community, and small-scale commercial activities, contributing to a vibrant and adaptable urban precinct.
(b) Urban areas should include a range of high-quality housing options with an emphasis on living affordability.	(b) The zoning also enables delivery of a range of housing types, with potential for build-to-rent, affordable and student housing options, addressing living affordability and housing choice in a highly accessible location.
(c) Urban areas should be designed to promote active travel and convenient and efficient use of public transport.	(c) The site's proximity to Rapid bus routes, the future light rail corridor, and existing active travel infrastructure ensures strong alignment with principles of sustainable mobility and reduced car dependence.
(d) Districts should be planned, designed, and developed to support active and healthy lifestyles and to cater for a diverse range of cultural and social activities.	(d) Furthermore, the indicative layout integrates open space links and prioritises pedestrian connectivity between the UC campus, Belconnen Town Centre, and John Knight Memorial Park, supporting health, wellbeing, and inclusive community life.
(e) Policies should support and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of residents.	(e) Overall, the proposal advances policies that improve quality of life for future residents by creating walkable, diverse, and well-connected urban environments that respond to both housing and community needs.
2.2 Cultural heritage conservation principles means the following:	
(a) Planning and design should promote the unique cultural heritage of the ACT by acknowledging established heritage significance in design and placemaking.	The site is not listed as being of heritage significance, however, future development is capable of respecting heritage value in the adjoining John Knight Memorial Park.
(b) Development should:	
(i) respect local heritage; and	
(ii) avoid direct impacts on heritage or, if a direct impact is unavoidable, ensure the impact is justifiable and proportionate.	

2.3 High-quality design principles means the following:

(a) Development should be focussed on people and designed to:

- (i) reflect local setting and context; and
- (ii) have a distinctive identity that responds to the existing character of its locality; and
- (iii) effectively integrate built form, infrastructure, and public spaces; and
- (iv) provide appropriate solar access;

(b) Public spaces should be designed to be used, appropriately landscaped and vegetated, and should be designed to contribute to the urban forest.

(c) Built form and public spaces should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to people with differing needs and capabilities, including through the serious consideration of universal design practices.

(d) Developments should be planned and designed to be well connected and integrated with surrounding development in ways that facilitate the safe, secure, and effective movement of people within and through them.

(a) The proposed amendment supports a people-focused approach to development through zoning and built form outcomes that respond to local context and promote integration with surrounding uses. The site sits between the Belconnen Town Centre and the University of Canberra, and the proposed CZ2 zoning allows for a development that reflects this transitional setting by accommodating higher density residential and active ground floor uses, while maintaining connectivity to adjacent open space and community infrastructure. Future development will be guided by solar access requirements under the new planning system, supporting amenity and liveability outcomes.

(b) Public spaces within and adjacent to the site, including connections to John Knight Memorial Park, are intended to be well-landscaped and contribute to broader urban heat island objectives, supporting the Territory's urban forest targets.

(c) The indicative layout and land use flexibility promote inclusive and accessible public spaces, with the opportunity to embed universal design principles in both built form and public realm outcomes.

(d) Additionally, the site's location and proposed integration with pedestrian and cycle networks, as well as public transport infrastructure, ensure that future development will be well connected and designed to support safe and efficient movement throughout the precinct.

2.4 housing affordability principles means the following:

(a) planning strategies, plans and policies should support the delivery of reforms that improve housing access, affordability, and choice;

(b) planning strategies, plans and policies should support more housing options for people who have a low income;

(c) planning strategies, plans and policies should ensure affordable housing is close to essential

(a) The proposed amendment aligns with the intent of housing-related planning reforms by enabling a zoning change that supports increased housing supply, affordability, and choice through infill development in a strategically located urban area.

(b) Rezoning the site to CZ2, along with an increased built form scale, enables a mix of residential typologies and tenancies,

services, amenities, and affordable transport options, including public and active transport.

contributing to broader objectives of inclusive and accessible housing delivery.

(c) The site is within walking distance of the Belconnen Town Centre, University of Canberra, public open space, healthcare, education, and frequent public transport services, ensuring that future users have access to essential services and affordable transport options, including active and public transport.

2.5 Integrated delivery principles means the following:

(a) Policies relating to planning, including those arising outside the planning system, should be coordinated to efficiently and effectively achieve planning outcomes.

(b) Planning, design, and development should promote integrated transport connections and equitable access to services and amenities.

(c) Infrastructure, public spaces, and facilities should be planned to meet future needs and designed to be integrated with related development.

(d) Built form should be durable, designed to be adaptive (including in relation to the reuse of buildings or parts of buildings) and compatible with surrounding public spaces.

(a) The proposed amendment supports coordinated and integrated planning outcomes by aligning land use, transport, and infrastructure planning with strategic objectives for urban renewal and housing delivery.

(b) The site is located at the intersection of major public transport routes, future light rail, and active travel networks, enabling equitable access to education, employment, and services, and supporting integrated transport connections.

(c) The proposal anticipates future growth and enables development that can respond flexibly to community needs, with the CZ2 zoning allowing for a mix of uses that support co-location of housing, services, and community infrastructure. This contributes to efficient use of land and infrastructure over time.

(d) In terms of built form, the amendment supports development that is responsive to context and adaptable in use, with the potential for long-term flexibility, re-use, and compatibility with surrounding open spaces and public realm.

2.6 Investment facilitation principles means the following:

(a) Planning and design should be undertaken with a view to strengthening the economic prosperity of the Territory and contributing to diversification of the economy, economic security, and growth.

The proposed amendment supports the economic prosperity and diversification goals of the Territory by enabling higher density, mixed-use development within the Belconnen Town Centre, a key economic and employment node. By rezoning the site to CZ2, the proposal facilitates new housing supply, supports local

(b) Planning outcomes should be achieved by facilitating coordinated approaches that promote public and private investment towards common goals.

businesses through increased population density, and allows for a mix of uses that can respond to future economic needs.

The location of the site makes it well suited to attract public and private investment aligned with broader planning and urban renewal objectives. This reflects a coordinated planning approach that leverages existing assets to deliver shared social and economic outcomes.

2.7 Long-term focus principles means the following:

(a) Policy frameworks should be based around long-term priorities, be ecologically sound and seek to promote equity between present and future generations.

(b) Policy frameworks should be able to respond to emerging challenges and cumulative impacts identified by monitoring, benchmarking, and evaluation programs.

(a) The proposed amendment aligns with long-term planning priorities by promoting infill development within the existing urban footprint and supporting efficient use of existing infrastructure. By unlocking higher density, mixed-use outcomes on well-located land, the proposal reduces pressure on greenfield expansion and supports intergenerational equity by improving access to housing, transport, and services within established urban areas.

(b) The flexibility of the CZ2 zoning allows the site to adapt over time in response to changing community needs, policy directions, and development pressures. This adaptability ensures the planning framework remains responsive to emerging challenges, such as climate change, housing affordability, and urban resilience, consistent with the principles of monitoring, evaluation, and evidence-based decision-making.

2.8 Natural environmental conservation principles means the following:

(a) Planning and design should promote healthy and resilient ecosystems, by –

(i) avoiding or minimising loss of habitat and other key threatening processes for biodiversity; and

(ii) considering cumulative and incremental environmental impacts;

(b) Planning outcomes should support the operation of environmental laws applying in the ACT;

(c) Policies, planning and design should integrate and promote –

(i) nature-based solutions to climate change and water security; and

The proposed amendment supports ecological resilience by enabling infill development that avoids impacts to high-value habitat areas. Future development can incorporate landscaping, deep soil zones and water-sensitive design to mitigate cumulative impacts and promote urban biodiversity. The proposal aligns with ACT's environmental laws and allows for nature-based responses to climate and water challenges, while also supporting habitat connectivity through integration with nearby open space and active travel networks.

(ii) the valuation and maintenance of the ecosystem services and amenity provided by a healthy natural environment.

(d) Biodiversity connectivity and habitat values should be integrated across urban areas, including through appropriate planning for, and landscaping of, urban open space and travel corridors.

2.9 Sustainability and resilience principles means the following:

(a) Places should be planned, designed, and developed to be sustainable and resilient;

(b) Effort should be focussed on adapting to the effects of climate change, including through mitigating the effects of urban heat, managing water supplies, and achieving energy efficient urban environments;

(c) Policies and practices should promote the use, reuse, and renewal of sustainable resources, and minimise use of resources.

The proposed amendment supports sustainable and resilient urban development by enabling infill on well-serviced land, reducing the need for greenfield expansion and maximising existing infrastructure.

Future development can incorporate climate adaptation measures to reduce urban heat, improve energy efficiency, and adopt water-sensitive design, helping to manage resources. The zoning allows for flexible, long-term land use that supports efficient resource use and aligns with broader goals for climate-responsive and low-impact urban environments.

3.0 Urban regeneration principles means the following:

(a) Growth should be mostly within the existing urban footprint, or in areas close to the existing urban footprint, while maintaining environmental values;

(b) Urban regeneration should seek to make the best use (as appropriate) of underlying or latent potential associated with land, buildings, and infrastructure.

The proposed amendment aligns with the objective to focus growth within the existing urban footprint by facilitating redevelopment of a centrally located, underutilised site in the Belconnen Town Centre. It supports urban regeneration by unlocking the latent potential of previously developed land, enabling higher density, mixed-use outcomes that make efficient use of existing infrastructure while maintaining surrounding environmental values.

4.5 Territory Plan 2023

Key parameters under the Territory Plan are summarised in Table 3 below, along with sources of relevant development outcomes for assessment of the proposal.

Territory Plan	Current Zone	CFZ – Community Facility Zone
	District	Belconnen District
	Overlays:	Nil
Relevant Documents	District Policy	Belconnen District Policy
	Zone Policy	Commercial Zones Policy
	Other Policy	Lease Variation Policy
	Technical Specifications	Planning (Commercial Zones) Technical Specifications 2023 Planning (Belconnen District) Technical Specifications 2023
	Design Guides	Planning (Housing) Design Guide 2023 Planning (Urban) Design Guide 2023 Planning (Biodiversity Sensitive Urban) Design Guide 2023

While the lease variation policy, relevant technical specifications and design guides set out in Table 3 would be relevant to the assessment of a future development application for the use and development of the land, they are of limited relevance in exploring the suitability of the indicative development. These documents are used as reference documents but are not explicitly responded to in this report.

However, the indicative development concept presented in Section 2.4 demonstrates that key built form parameters can be met on site, in-line with the requirements of the Territory Plan Policy, Technical Specifications and the Urban Design Guide, Housing Design Guide and Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Guide. Refer to Section 2.4 and 2.5 for a high-level overview of how the concept responds to these key planning documents.

4.5.1 BELCONNEN DISTRICT POLICY

The Belconnen District Policy regulates development across Belconnen with additional, site-specific assessment outcomes and requirements. The policy does not specify any additional assessable or prohibited development at the site for CFZ or the desired CZ2 zone at the site.

1. *Protect and enhance grassland corridors between Dunlop Grasslands Nature Reserve and Kama, and around Lake Ginninderra and Lawson. Protect and enhance woodland values between Aranda Bushland and Woodstock nature reserves, Bruce Ridge, and Lake Ginninderra, and to the north-east of Evatt and McKellar.*
2. *Protect and restore aquatic-riparian corridors and their catchments through the application of water sensitive urban design, including along the Molonglo River,*

Ginninderra Creek, Halls Creek and Gooromon Ponds. Increase naturalised storm water infrastructure in Kippax and Kaleen.

3. Strengthen the economic and employment role of the Belconnen town centre and Kippax group centre.

4. Develop an integrated Belconnen Education and Sports Innovation Precinct, building on quality institutions such as North Canberra and UC hospitals and the AIS.

5. Connect Belconnen town centre into the light rail network.

6. Enhance accessibility and reduce travel times by public transport to jobs and services for residents in north and west Belconnen.

7. Consider the role and function of existing group and local centres, including in north and west Belconnen, with a focus on local business and community life. Depending on the results of this consideration and whether further action is required, investigate planning and non-planning initiatives to support centres' viability and role as a meeting place.

8. Develop Belconnen town centre as a commercial and mixed-use hub integrated with development in surrounding suburbs.

9. Create sustainable urban development around rapid public transport corridors and potential future light rail.

10. Develop Ginninderry as an exemplar 21st century community based on sustainable neighbourhood objectives.

The proposed amendment aligns most directly with policy outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 of the Belconnen District Strategy (highlighted above). By enabling mixed-use development within walking distance of the Belconnen Town Centre and University of Canberra, the proposal strengthens the employment and economic function of the town centre and could support the ongoing evolution of the surrounding area as part of the broader Belconnen Education and Sports Innovation Precinct.

The site's location near existing Rapid bus routes and the future light rail corridor reinforces its suitability for higher density, transit-oriented development, while contributing to improved access to jobs, services, and education for nearby residents.

While the subject site is not located within or adjacent to a group or local centre in north or west Belconnen, the proposal supports the broader intent of Outcome 7 by reinforcing the hierarchy and viability of the Belconnen Town Centre as the district's commercial and community hub. By concentrating residential and mixed-use development within walking distance of the town centre, the proposal promotes local business activity, enhances activation of public spaces, and increases the population base that supports surrounding retail and community infrastructure.

This aligns with the Strategy's emphasis on sustaining centres as places for community life and economic exchange. Although the site does not directly influence the planning or operational viability of group or local centres further afield, it contributes to the overall hierarchy of centres by supporting a compact, polycentric urban structure that reduces demand for dispersed suburban development and strengthens the role of existing centres as accessible and vibrant meeting places.

Therefore, the proposed amendment aligns strongly with the outcomes for Belconnen District Policy.

4.5.2 ZONE POLICY

As described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, the Community Facilities Zone Policy limits the development potential on site. Refer to these sections for a discussion on the implications of different zoning for the site.

4.5.3 OTHER PROPOSED TERRITORY PLAN AMENDMENTS

Another consideration for this Major Plan Amendment proposal is other concurrent proposed changes to the Territory Plan. At the time of this document's production, this includes the changes proposed as part of the Missing Middle Housing Reform. Changes to the Territory Plan are mostly limited to the Residential Zones Policy, increasing rights for all residential zones, to promote housing uplift. These reforms are overall increasing density and height across the residential zones.

In this context, the MPA proposal enables higher-density housing to complement the uplift outside of residential zones. Whilst changes to Residential Zones enable more affordable missing middle typologies, this site could cater to higher-density, high rise development, due to its location and proximity to services and transport.

5.0 Consultation

The community engagement process for the proposed Major Plan Amendment (MPA) was undertaken by Purdon on behalf of the University of Canberra between 28 April and 16 May 2025.

This engagement aimed to inform and gather feedback on the rezoning proposal to shift the site from Community Facility Zone (CFZ) to CZ2 Business Zone, enabling future mixed-use development. The consultation included a public survey, targeted stakeholder meetings, and written submissions, with outreach to residents, businesses, community organisations, and key institutions such as the Belconnen Community Council and UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra.

Survey responses and stakeholder feedback revealed strong community interest in preserving the site's green space character, enhancing pedestrian connectivity, and ensuring compatibility with adjacent educational uses. The lakefront and parklands were identified as the most valued destinations in the Belconnen Town Centre, with respondents expressing a desire for more open space, hospitality venues, and community facilities. Concerns were raised about building height, overshadowing, traffic impacts, infrastructure pressure, and the potential loss of community-serving land. The College community emphasised the need for sensitive site integration to protect school culture, safety, and amenity.

Stakeholders also sought clarity on the University's long-term intentions for the site, including ownership, land use, and public benefit outcomes. While the MPA does not propose a specific development, it introduces planning controls to guide future proposals, including height limits, design quality, and interface management. A Social Impact Assessment and other technical studies have been prepared to support the MPA and ensure that future development aligns with community needs and planning objectives.

Overall, the engagement process was guided by principles of transparency, inclusivity, and early dialogue, as outlined in the Planning Act 2023. The feedback gathered will inform the final MPA submission and future development considerations, helping to ensure that planning outcomes reflect the values and aspirations of those who live, learn, and work in the Belconnen Town Centre.

Refer to Attachment E for the Community Consultation Report, which outlines engagement activities, feedback received, and how community input has informed the proposal.

6.0 Impact Assessment

The below section of the report discusses both the suitability and capability of the land for the proposed zone. It includes discussion of potential impacts on the social, physical, and natural environment if the land is developed to its full capacity as permitted within the proposed zoning (CZ2).

6.1 Uses

The proposed rezoning from Community Facility Zone - CFZ to Commercial - CZ2 - Business Zone represents a strategic shift that better reflects the site's evolving role within the Belconnen Town Centre, while still retaining the potential for many of the existing CFZ-compatible uses.

The current CFZ zoning supports the provision of community, cultural, religious, and government facilities, reserved for institutional or not-for-profit uses. This zone is typically applied to land used for public education, places of worship, aged care, or health services, and places a strong emphasis on maintaining land for 'public good' uses. While it enables important community infrastructure, CFZ also places significant limitations on built form outcomes, private development potential, and the integration of more diverse housing and commercial uses.

In contrast, the CZ2 zoning allows for a broader and more flexible mix of uses that still encompasses most of the land uses permitted under CFZ, but within a more commercially adaptive framework. Specifically, CZ2 continues to permit land uses such as health facilities, public agency offices, cultural facilities, childcare centres, community activity centres, indoor recreation facilities, educational establishments, and religious-associated uses, all of which are allowed in CFZ. This ensures that the rezoning does not preclude the continuation or reintroduction of community-oriented land uses within future development.

Moreover, CZ2 zoning enables a wide variety of residential uses, which are not typically permissible in CFZ unless directly associated with the community purpose. This flexibility responds to housing diversity and affordability objectives outlined in the ACT Planning Strategy and the Belconnen District Strategy, allowing the site to accommodate a broader demographic, including students, essential workers, and ageing residents seeking proximity to services.

CZ2 also supports active ground floor uses, including local retail, cafés, community rooms, and civic functions, which improve public accessibility and safety while encouraging street-level activity. This aligns with the vision for the site to provide landscaped public connections between John Knight Memorial Park and the adjacent college, and to deliver a built form that supports walkability and public realm integration. The zoning also allows for greater built form scale, in line with the Belconnen Town Centre, which supports efficient land use and long-term adaptability of the site in a maturing urban centre.

Importantly, this amendment does not result in a loss of social infrastructure capacity. Instead, it allows for co-located and integrated delivery of community, residential, and commercial uses within a single, flexible planning framework. This is critical in supporting long-term land use efficiency, reducing fragmentation, and enabling investment in precinct-scale outcomes that better serve the broader Belconnen community.

These illustrate how the site can transition from its previous institutional role into a mixed-use precinct that continues to serve community needs while supporting local employment, access to services, and place vitality over time.

6.2 Interfaces

The proposed amendment has been considered in relation to its interface with adjoining sites, particularly the adjacent John Knight Memorial Park to the north, and the neighbouring college to the west and south. The future development enabled by the CZ2 zoning will incorporate built form transitions and spatial setbacks to ensure a respectful relationship with existing land uses. The indicative architectural scheme demonstrates a massing strategy that steps down towards the park and college boundaries, reducing visual bulk and minimising overshadowing on sensitive open space and educational areas. This approach provides a more graduated edge condition, avoiding abrupt changes in scale.

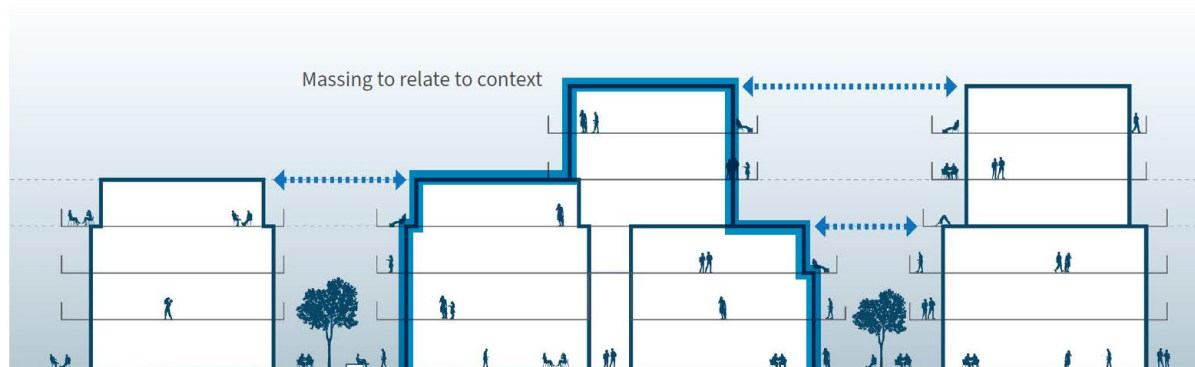
Publicly accessible landscaped corridors and active ground floor frontages form part of the proposed amendment outcomes, supporting visual and physical permeability, passive surveillance, and visual integration with the surrounding public realm.

The proposed planning outcomes seek to treat the park interface as a green edge that complements the natural character of John Knight Memorial Park, while the southern and western boundaries will maintain appropriate buffers to the college, preserving sightlines, daylight access and functional separation.

Because the proposed CZ2 zone allows for greater built form flexibility, the proposed Belconnen District Policy assessment outcomes guide development on the site to address amenity impacts, urban design, and compatibility with surrounding uses.

Development outcomes surrounding interfaces and built form will be further resolved through the Development Application process, with mandatory address of the Urban Design Guide and Housing Design Guide (example below) ensuring that the final built outcome supports a cohesive and context-sensitive relationship with adjoining sites.

Figure 38: Example ACT Housing Design Guide demonstrating appropriate, contextual heights.



Source: ACT Housing Design Guide 2023, pg. 30.

6.3 Social and Community Facilities

In response to pre-application advice, a Social Impact Assessment was prepared to analyse:

- The need for community facility zoned land in this location.
- Demographic trends and requirements
- The impacts of the loss of community zoned land
- The range of community facilities available in the area

- The range of educational facilities available
- The capacity and demographics of existing educational facilities
- Wellbeing impacts (using the ACT Wellbeing Framework)
- Ways to embed community, social and educational facilities in future development.

The Assessment concludes that the change will have minimal impact on the district’s capacity to deliver community infrastructure due to Belconnen’s substantial and underutilised CFZ-zoned land reserves. For instance, the site represents only 0.24% of Belconnen’s CFZ land, whilst the Belconnen Town Centre currently offers a comprehensive and well-integrated network of community facilities—including health, education, cultural, recreational, and social services—positioning it as one of the most well-served districts in the ACT.

The assessment highlights the suburb’s youthful, culturally diverse demographic, with a high proportion of lone-person and group households and lower-to-middle income levels. It finds that, through an analysis of enrolments, primary school education infrastructure is sufficient, while high school and college facilities are nearing capacity.

The proposed rezoning is seen as an opportunity to support mixed-use development that aligns with demographic needs, enhances social inclusion, and leverages existing infrastructure.

Recommendations include promoting housing diversity, improving accessibility, fostering social connection, and ensuring inclusive, safe public spaces through ongoing community engagement. These have shaped the Project Objectives and have informed the proposed planning framework.

Refer to the Social Impact Assessment document (Attachment D) for more information.

In response, the proposed amendment is expected to deliver a range of positive social and community outcomes by facilitating a mixed-use urban outcome on a strategically located site. Rezoning to CZ2 allows for a flexible range of land uses, including residential, commercial, and community-serving functions, which can directly respond to the growing and changing needs of the Belconnen population. As outlined in the Social Impact Assessment the site’s proximity to the University of Canberra, Belconnen Town Centre, public transport, and health and education infrastructure positions it well to accommodate a mix of residents, including students, essential workers, older people, and those seeking affordable housing close to services and employment.

The amendment supports the provision of future development that integrates open space connections, active frontages, and publicly accessible landscaped areas, particularly between John Knight Memorial Park and the adjoining college. This enables the creation of inclusive and legible public spaces that invite social interaction, improve safety through passive surveillance, and contribute to local identity. Ground floor uses such as community rooms, allied health, local retail, or civic spaces could further support social cohesion and ensure that the development meets a broader community function beyond housing.

In transitioning from a CFZ zone, which historically constrained land use to narrow institutional functions, the proposed CZ2 zoning provides greater flexibility to meet contemporary community needs. Importantly, it does not preclude the inclusion of community facilities but rather broadens the scope of what can be delivered to address gaps in local services or adapt to future demands. This aligns with the ACT Planning Strategy and District Strategy objectives of delivering socially inclusive, connected, and liveable communities.

To encourage this, a new assessment outcome is proposed in the Belconnen District Policy to ensure that the site, with its new broadened zoning, provides a suitable provision for the long-term requirements of community facilities in Belconnen.

On a broader scale, the proposal enables a more equitable distribution of housing and services, promotes access to amenity-rich environments, and allows for integration with the surrounding

social and cultural landscape contributing meaningfully to the long-term wellbeing and resilience of the Belconnen community.

6.4 Building Height

The proposed amendment includes a change to the permissible building height to reflect the site's strategic location within the Belconnen Town Centre and its alignment with the broader built form outcomes identified in the Belconnen District Policy. **A change is proposed to the Belconnen District Policy, assessment requirement 7, to limit the height of buildings on site to 42m (approximately 12 storeys), with an additional 12m permitted in line with existing criteria under requirement 7.**

These proposed height controls are intended to allow development that is consistent with the prevailing scale of the adjacent CZ2 and CZ1-zoned areas within the town centre, enabling a cohesive urban form and built edge condition. This change responds to the site's role as a key interface between the University of Canberra, the college, and John Knight Memorial Park, and recognises the need for a landmark treatment along this prominent corridor.

While allowing for increased height, the proposed assessment outcomes in the Belconnen District Policy will also require building massing and articulation to ensure appropriate scale transitions at the site's edges, particularly toward the parkland and education uses. Indicative built form studies demonstrate that taller elements can be appropriately located towards the site's edge facing the arterial road, with lower forms and setbacks are provided at sensitive interfaces to reduce visual impact and overshadowing. The proposed height outcomes support land use, improve development feasibility, and enable mixed-use development to deliver greater housing diversity and community benefit, while remaining consistent with the strategic intent for Belconnen's urban renewal.

6.5 Transport

The proposed amendment is supported by a Transport Impact Assessment (Attachment C), which confirms that the site is well-connected to existing and planned transport infrastructure. Located within walking distance of major bus routes and future light rail corridors, the site is well positioned to accommodate a higher intensity of use without placing undue pressure on the road network. The amendment aligns with transport policies that promote mode shift toward public and active travel, by encouraging development in areas already serviced by high-frequency public transport and a connected pedestrian and cycle network.

The future development of the site will support active travel through improved permeability, pedestrian linkages, and provision of end-of-trip facilities, particularly through connections between John Knight Memorial Park, the college, and nearby residential areas. Vehicle access and parking arrangements will be addressed at the Development Application stage. In line with the new 2025 Traffic Impact Assessment guidelines, an emphasis is put on managing car dependency and supporting sustainable transport outcomes, potentially leveraging the sites public transport and active travel connections. This is described more in detail in Section 2.5.6.

The amendment therefore supports a transport-efficient urban form, enabling increased density in a location that can support it, while contributing to reduced reliance on private vehicles and strengthening the site's integration with Belconnen's growing transit-oriented network.

6.6 Ecology

The proposed amendment does not impact the site's existing ecological values. While the site is located within an established urban setting and does not contain identified sensitive biodiversity, it

does include trees of ecological significance. The indicative proposal demonstrates opportunities to retain and enhance landscape connections with the adjoining open space network. Future development will be subject to the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Guide, ensuring that nature is protected, extended, enhanced, and socially connected.

As with all development in the ACT, any future DA will also demonstrate development's contributions to the Urban Forest Strategy, achieving key canopy cover and deep soil metrics, while complying with the protections and canopy contribution mechanisms for existing vegetation under the *Urban Forest Act 2024*.

6.7 Heritage

The subject site is not listed on the ACT Heritage Register 2023. It is, however, adjacent to John Knight Memorial Park, which is a recognised heritage site. **The proposed amendment seeks to respect and celebrate the existing green connection with the park, proposing a new assessment outcome in the Belconnen District policy to ensure development considers visual and physical integration through landscaping and open space links.** Future development on site may also need to comply with any requirements under the Heritage Act, including preparation of a Statement of Heritage Effects.

Otherwise, any unexpected heritage finds (e.g. archaeological) during future construction will be managed in accordance with the *Heritage Act 2004*.

6.8 Noise

While the site is near major roads and public transport routes, noise impacts are not anticipated because of the proposed amendment. Future development of buildings may be required to address noise mitigation and attenuation measures at the development application stage.

6.9 Infrastructure and Utilities

Further correspondence will be undertaken with Evoenergy, Icon Water and any other relevant provider prior to progressing design development. An application for preliminary network advice will also be lodged as part of the preparation of development application documentation.

6.10 Land Contamination

The site is not on the ACT Contaminated Site Register 2023. The environmental report prepared by Agon outlines the site history and concludes that contamination does not present a potential risk or impact for development of the site, and that the site is "suitable for the proposed C22 Business Zone". Refer Attachment F.

6.11 Bushfire and Emergency Services

The site is not mapped as being within a Bushfire Prone Area, therefore no mitigation measures are considered necessary. Noting the site abuts strategic fire management zones in John Knight Park, future public works (like those indicated on the concept landscape plans) may have to consider their suitability for a managed APZ environment.

7.0 Proposal for the Major Plan Amendment

This proposal for a Major Plan Amendment seeks to promote and guide the latent development potential of a well-located but underutilised site within the existing urban footprint. It directly supports the ACT Government’s policy objectives for sustainable infill, increased housing supply, and integration of land use with public transport, education, and employment infrastructure. The proposed C22 zoning will enable a broader range of uses, residential, commercial, community and civic, while still allowing for site-responsive design controls through future development applications.

The proposal is underpinned by a design vision that:

- Prioritises active ground floor uses, improving public interfaces and providing landscaped pedestrian connections between John Knight Memorial Park and adjacent college.
- Continues to support long-term community benefit by enabling provision of social and community facilities that serve the wider Belconnen population.
- Manages built form and interface conditions by providing a height transition and appropriate setbacks to protect the amenity of adjacent education facilities and park.
- Minimises overshadowing on adjacent college buildings and associated outdoor areas through considered orientation and massing; and
- Reinforces the site’s gateway function, ensuring that future built form responds to the prominence of its location with architectural quality, scale, and presentation appropriate to its urban context.

7.1 The Proposal

The MPA proposes three main changes to the Territory Plan.

6. Re-zone Block 42 Section 65 Belconnen, changing from **Community Facility Zone - CFZ** to **Commercial - C22 – Business Zone**. This enables more uses and increases the future redevelopment potential of the site. This leverages the site’s opportunities, described in Section 2.3, to provide an urban
7. Changes to the Belconnen District Policy Assessment Outcomes. Leveraging the outcomes-focussed planning system, the outcomes are intended to guide future development, in-line with the aspirations of the indicative development concept (Section 3.4) and key site opportunities and constraints (Section 2.3), to provide the benefits described in Section 3.5.
8. Changes to the Belconnen District Policy Assessment Requirements. In line with Section 6.0, the impacts of development on site are limited by applying height controls to the site, consistent with existing Assessment Requirements for Belconnen.

The amendment supports a land use and built form outcome that is strategically located between the University of Canberra, John Knight Memorial Park, and the Belconnen Town Centre, categorising the site as an urban regeneration area under the Belconnen District Strategy (2023). The proposed changes support a compact urban form and efficient use of infrastructure, while

contributing to the delivery of housing and community facilities in a location with strong access to public transport and established services.

Supporting studies, including the Social Impact Assessment and Community Engagement Report, demonstrate the proposal's responsiveness to community needs and values, while the Transport Impact Assessment confirms the site's suitability for intensified development with strong access to public transport and active travel networks. While the architectural and landscape drawings provide a clear illustration of how development under the proposed amendment could be realised in a way that responds to the site's context and intended outcomes.

This MPA ensures a coordinated approach to renewal that respects the site's landscape setting, civic function, and connectivity to major institutions. It aligns with strategic planning directions for a more compact, inclusive, and sustainable Belconnen and provides the framework for high-quality development outcomes that contribute to Canberra's long-term urban future.

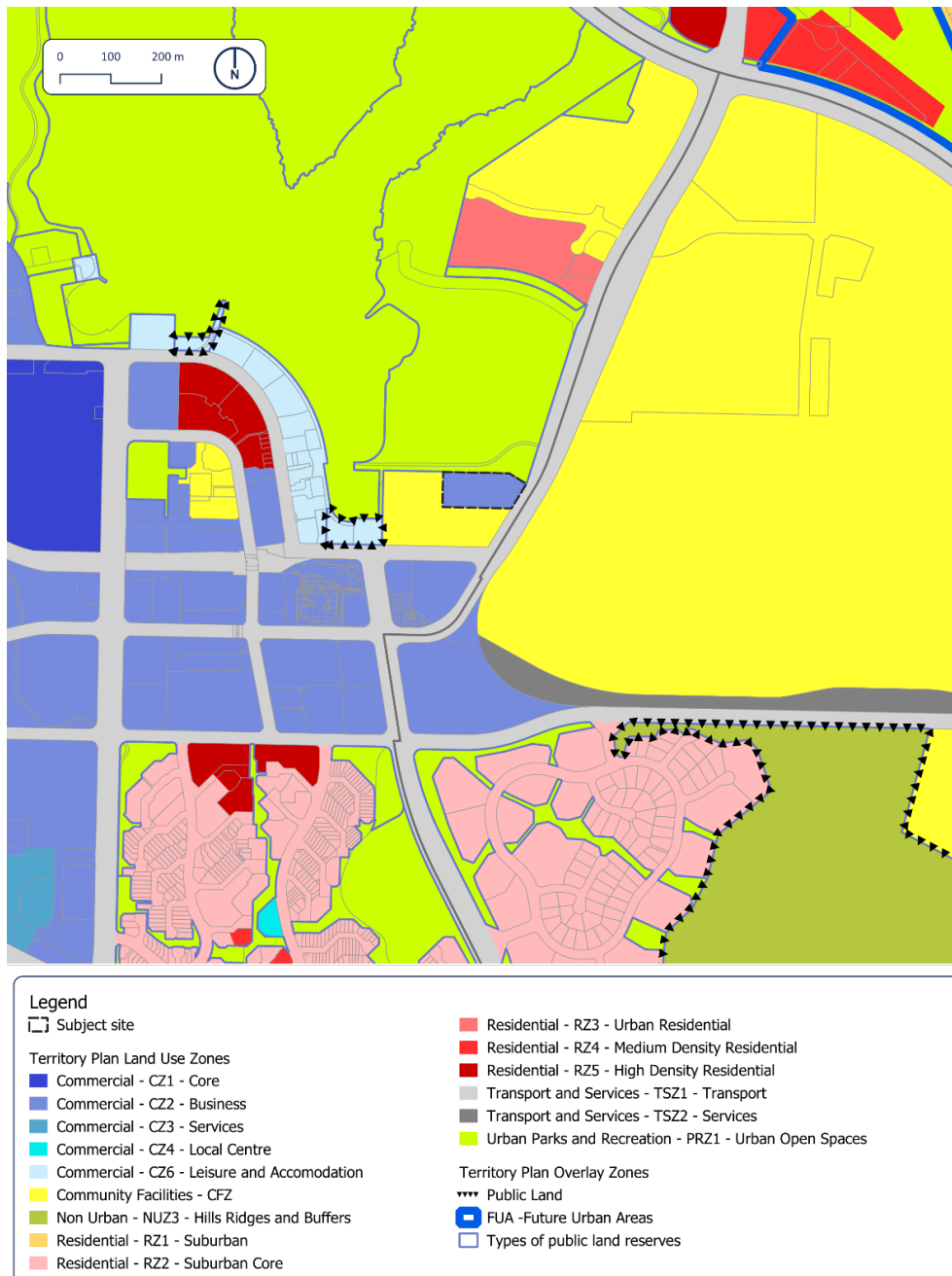
7.2 Proposed Amendments to the Territory Plan

The following amendments are proposed. Changes are indicated in red.

7.2.1 TERRITORY PLAN - PART B - MAPS

Amend the Territory Plan Map to rezone the subject site from Community Facility Zone - CFZ to Commercial - CZ2 – Business Zone.

Figure 39: Proposed amended Territory Plan Map



Source: Purdon, 2025 (ACT Government Geospatial Open Data, 2025)

7.2.2 TERRITORY PLAN - PART D02 – BELCONNEN DISTRICT POLICY

The policy in the sections below is proposed to be amended, with the specific portions that are changed identified in red.

Area-specific Assessment Outcomes

Insert:

Locality	Assessment outcome
Belconnen	<p>2. Development on Block 42, Section 65:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Prioritises an active ground floor, providing public landscaped connections between the adjacent John Knight Memorial Park and College. b) Makes a suitable contribution to the long-term provision of community and social facilities in the broader Belconnen area. c) Provides a suitable height transition and setbacks to adjacent College buildings, minimising overlooking and overshadowing. d) Addresses the site's prominence as a gateway between the University of Canberra and the Town Centre. This includes considerations of ground floor uses, building scale, frontages, and architectural merit.

Assessment Requirement

Omit *Assessment Requirement 7*. Insert:

Control	Assessment Requirement
Building Height	<p>7. In areas identified in Figure 2 and Figure 3, the maximum height of building is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Area 'a' – 96m (approx. 28 storeys). b) Area 'b' – 80m (approx. 25 storeys). c) Area 'c' – 76m (approx. 23 storeys). d) Area 'd' – 66m (approx. 20 storeys). e) Area 'e' – 60m (approx. 18 storeys). f) Area 'f', 'f1' and 'f2' – 42m (approx. 12 storeys). g) Area 'g' – 35m (approx. 10 storeys). h) Area 'h' – 29m (approx. 8 storeys). i) Area 'i' – 23m (approx. 6 storeys). j) Area 'j' – 16m (approx. 4 storeys). k) Area 'k' – 13m (approx. 3 storeys). l) Area 'l' – 10m (approx. 2 storeys). m) Area 'NCA' – RL 613.7m (approx. 6-9 storeys). <p>The maximum height of building in areas 'c, 'd' and 'f2' may be increased by the lesser of an additional 4 storeys or 12 m, where development achieves:</p>

- i) A clear height difference between taller elements where a block contains more than one taller building element
- ii) Is close to public transport stops and/or stations.

Taller tower buildings can be considered for area f1 to a maximum height of building of 28 storeys and 90 m, where development proposals above 42m:

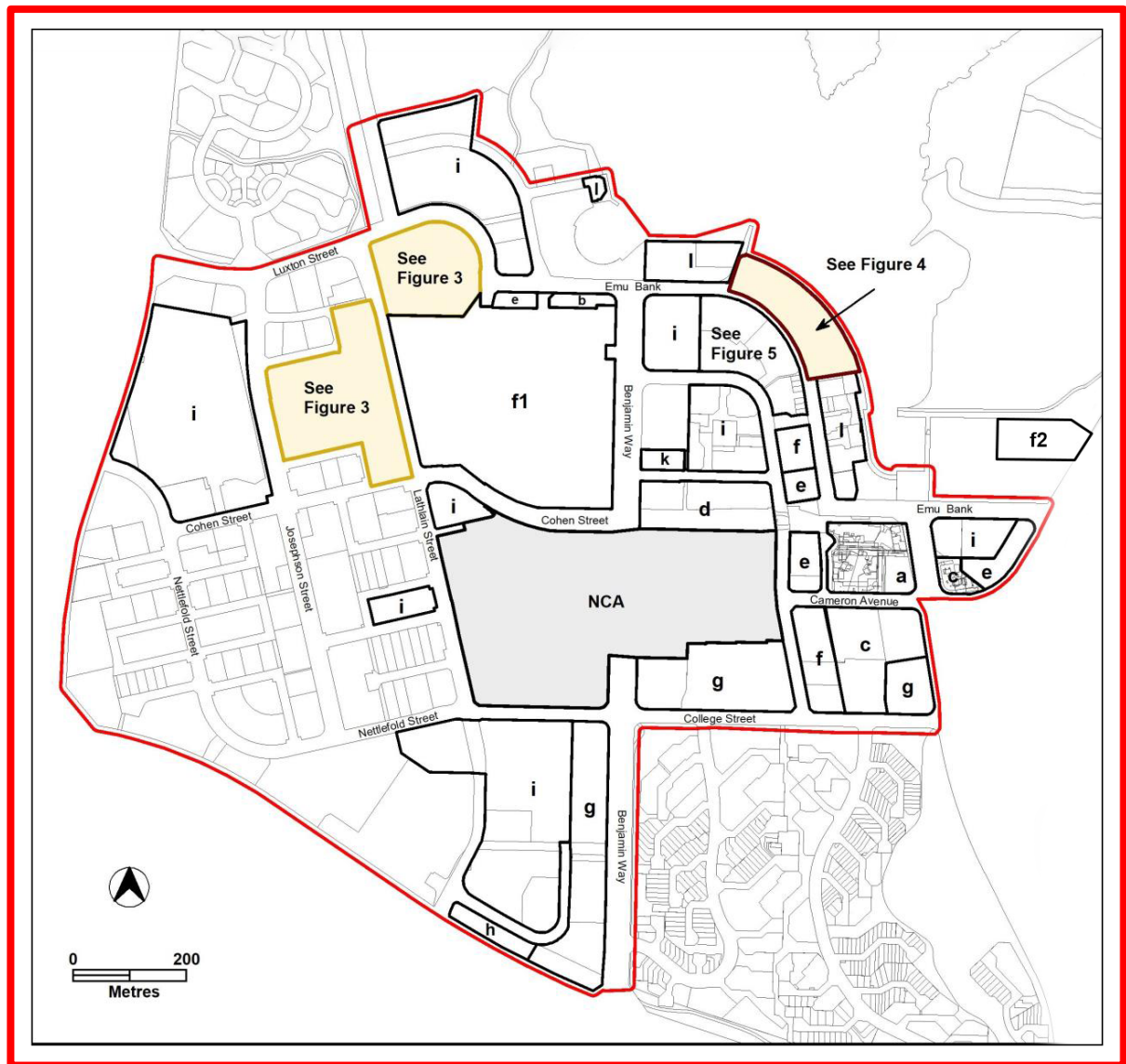
- i) Provide an assessment of the visual impact of the development, and how it responds to the town centre skyline and streetscape.
- ii) Minimises impacts including overshadowing of adjacent development and any existing and approved on-site taller tower buildings.
- iii) Creates architectural interest and is designed to minimise the visual bulk and scale of taller tower buildings when viewed from surrounding areas and neighbouring developments, including by utilising narrow building silhouettes and allowing appropriate separation distances between taller buildings.
- iv) Makes a positive contribution to the town centre and amenity of building occupants and visitors to the site by public realm improvements such as a landscaped public park.
- v) Enhances pedestrian linkages through the site and encourages active travel.

Taller buildings can be considered for area 'j' shown on Figure 3 to a maximum height of building of 12 storeys or 42m, measured from the Emu Bank frontage, where development achieves:

- i) A clear public pedestrian connection linking Lathlain Street to the lower end of Luxton Street or Emu Bank.
 - ii) Opportunities for lower levels of the development to be used for a structured carpark.
 - iii) Vehicle access is only provided from Joynton Smith Drive or Emu Bank
 - iv) Joynton Smith Drive, the bikeway and pedestrian path connections are to be maintained and included as a part of the site development and development may extend over Joynton Smith Drive.
 - v) Podium levels along Lathlain Street are limited to a maximum height of two storeys.
-

Omit Figure 2 Belconnen – Maximum building heights. Insert:

Figure 2 Belconnen – Maximum building heights



There are no other proposed amendments to the Territory Plan or other instruments under the Planning Act.

8.0 Conclusion

Purdon has prepared this supporting report on behalf of the University of Canberra to support a Major Plan Amendment application for Block 42 Section 65 Belconnen. The proposal presents a well-considered response to the strategic planning objectives of the ACT.

By rezoning the site from Community Facility Zone – CFZ to Commercial - CZ2 – Business Zone, the amendment unlocks a broader and more flexible range of land uses that remain compatible with the surrounding context while enabling future development to deliver meaningful social, housing, and economic outcomes.

Located within a key area that meets the criteria for urban renewal, the site is well positioned to support increased density and mixed-use activity given its proximity to public transport, the Belconnen Town Centre, the University of Canberra, and key community and open space assets. The amendment retains the capacity for community-serving functions, while allowing for new housing, employment opportunities and public realm improvements that respond to both current needs and future growth.

The architectural and landscape drawings provide a clear illustration of how development under the proposed amendment could be realised in a way that responds to the site's context and intended outcomes.

Supporting studies, including the Social Impact Assessment, Transport Impact Assessment, and Community Engagement Report, confirm that the proposal is appropriate for its location, can be delivered with minimal adverse impact, and is broadly aligned with community expectations and policy intent.

In summary, the amendment represents a positive and sustainable planning outcome that supports the long-term evolution of the Belconnen Town Centre. It responds directly to the ACT Government's planning priorities by encouraging urban consolidation, housing diversity, transport integration, and high-quality public interfaces contributing to a more liveable, connected, and resilient Canberra.

Purdon

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