

September 2023

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News and events



Big Swoop features in AusPost coin and stamp series

Canberra's giant magpie Big Swoop has been featured by Australia Post on its latest collection of $1 coins and stamps.

Big Swoop – funded by a City Renewal Authority placemaking grant – joins nine other larger-than-life sculptures from around Australia to make up the series.

Find out more about the 'Aussie Big Things' collection on the City Renewal Authority website

One step closer for Acton Waterfront park



The City Renewal Authority has reached the next milestone in delivering the Acton Waterfont public park, with the National Capital Authority seeking public feedback on the Works Approval application.

The park will feature play spaces, cafes, areas for events and activations and accessible public toilets when complete in about six years, making the City Centre an even better place to work, live or visit. In other news for Acton Waterfront, the project's boardwalk extension and lake reclamation has been recognised for construction excellence at the recent 2023 Master Builders and Asset Construction Hire Excellence Award.

Learn about what's next for Acton Waterfront on the City Renewal Authority website



Lonsdale St upgrades roll out

A new median and wider footpaths have made it safer and easier to move around the southern end of Lonsdale Street.

Further upgrades are underway on a mid-block crossing south of the rainbow roundabout, as well as the intersection with Girrawheen Street, near Haig Park.

The staged upgrades include pedestrian crossings, lighting, plantings and other features to improve this much-loved public space.

Visit the website for more on the upgrades on the City Renewal Authority website

City Walk wins national design award

The City Renewal Authority has been recognised in this year's Australian Good Design Awards, taking out first place in the Place Design category for its 2020 City Walk upgrades. The award comes as the team plans the next stages of City Walk upgrades – from Ainslie Place to Allara Street – to create more beautiful and accessible public spaces.

Learn more about what's next for City Walk on the City Renewal Authority website





Replace your fruit netting with ACT Wildlife

To protect species like the threatened Grey-headed Flying-Fox, ACT Wildlife are offering free fruit net replacements over September and October. To ensure the safety of native wildlife visiting Canberra gardens, netting should have a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or smaller. If you can easily poke your finger through the mesh of your netting, it's likely that animals could become tangled in it. To discover when and where net replacements are occurring, check out ACT Wildlife's Net Replacement Calendar. For more information on keeping our native wildlife safe, visit our wildlife friendly fruit netting webpage.

Tidbinbilla welcomes a new addition on Threatened Species Day

With no known wild koala populations currently in the ACT, these fluffy native icons have experienced significant decline over the years and were formally listed as endangered under the Native Conservation Act 2014 this year.



Introduced to the world on Threatened Species Day, some new koala joeys have recently been born in the captive breeding sanctuary within Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. Visitors can try and spot the joeys by heading to Tidbinbilla's Eucalypt Forest.

National Construction Code



In August 2022, State and Territory Building Ministers agreed to adopt the National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 with the bulk of the previsions coming into effect from 1 May 2023. The 2022 edition for the National Construction Code (NCC) makes sure the new construction work meets modern standards for safety, healthy, amenity, accessibility, and sustainability. The second round of provisions were expected to be adopted on 1 October 2023, these will now be adopted on 15 January 2024. The ACT Government has moved the implementation date because of delays to the development, and the Australia Government's accreditation of, software for the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS)

Discover the Sustainable Canberra Expo



Discover how ACT Businesses can cut costs and be more sustainable at the Sustainable Canberra Expo. It's free to attend and you can test drive an electric vehicle, talk to the Sustainable Business Team – get tailored advice with our experts,make connections with potential suppliers, customers and collaborators and so much more! Public transport to and from the Expo on Transport Canberra bus and light rail services is free.

Cost: Entry is free!
Where: Thoroughbred Park, Canberra
When: Friday 13 October, 10am to 5pm
Saturday 14 October, 10am to 4pm
To find out more visit www.climatechoices.act.gov.au

In the media

Securing fruitful change: new program to protect fruit bats with wildlife safe netting

ACT Wildlife have launched a new program, supported by the ACT Government, to replace fruit netting with wildlife safe options for free. (03 Sep 2023)

Electric movers joining the fleet for mowing season

The ACT Government is charging up Canberra's rapid response mowing team who are now equipped with new electric ride on mowers. (04 Sep 2023)

Work starting to improve the Tuggeranong foreshore

The ACT Government is delivering the infrastructure our growing city needs with construction kicking off on improvements along the Tuggeranong foreshore. (05 Sep 2023)

[A new suite of fast chargers open in Canberrra at the Royal Australian Mint]

Six new DC fast electric vehicle charging bays, installed by ENGIE, are now available at the Royal Australian Mint, as part of ACT Government's Public EV Charging Infrastructure Fund. (05 Sep 2023)

[An extinction crisis: threatened species day to shine a light on Canberra's endangered wildlife]

This National Threatened Species Day, the ACT Government is drawing attention to the unique plant and animal life at risk of extinction in Australia. (07 Sep 2023)

[ACT Government leadership acknowledged with Climate Innovation Award]

The ACT Government has won the Innovation Award at the Cities Power Partnership Climate Awards for our 'Make Your Next Choice Electric' web tool. (08 Sep 2023)

[More housing supply for Canberra]

Canberrans will have access to more housing choices following ACT Government reforms to the Territory planning system. (11 Sep 2023)

[A better building and construction system]

The ACT Government will introduce the Building and Construction Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 which aims to improve the effectiveness of the ACT's building regulatory system. (14 Sep 2023)

[2024 to bring energy efficiency and liveable housing requirements for new ACT buildings]

New requirements for the building and construction industry to improve the energy efficiency and accessibility of new ACT buildings will now come into effect on 15 January 2024. (15 Sep 2023)

[ACT Government to ban harmful wildlife fruit netting in move to protect native species]

The ACT Government will introduce legislation to ban the use of harmful wildlife fruit netting in gardens across Canberra. (19 Sep 2023)

[Canberra's first food strategy: strengthening local production and community wellbeing]

The ACT Government is releasing a Canberra first food strategy for community consultation. Minister for the Environment Rebecca Vassarotti said the strategy builds on the engagement with the ACT community last year, which showed strong support from Canberrans for a formal strategy to secure our local food production. (20 Sep 2023)

Community engagement

The following community consultations are currently active on the YourSay Conversations website.

Draft Canberra Region Local Food Strategy 2023-28 [NEW]

Building sustable rural and urban agriculture systems

Status: Engagement is open now and closes on 20 October 2023.

ACT Heritage Jurisdictional Review

Delivering strategic reforms and implementing improved heritage systems

Status: Engagement is open now and closes on 13 October 2023.

Territory Plan variations

Draft variations

As part of the consultation on the proposed Territory Plan, policy changes are included to facilitate the delivery of four demonstration housing projects, zoning changes to facilitate the expansion of Garran Primary School and changes to

the requirements for the Phillip Swimming and Ice-Skating Centre. You can read more detail about this at pages 8 and 77-86 in the Supporting Report to the draft new Territory plan on the YourSay Conversations website.

Recommended variations

There are currently no recommended variations.

Approved variations

There are no new variations to Territory Plan that have been recently approved by the Minister.

Legislative Assembly Committees

The ACT Legislative Assembly website has details of what's happening in both the standing and select committees. It also has the status of Assembly inquiries, including which are open for submissions and links to the submissions.

Inquiries relevant to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate are:

- Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements (Submissions closed 31 March 2023)
- Inquiry into Planning Bill 2022 (Final report released 22 December 2022)
- Inquiry into the waste management of absorbent hygiene products (Submissions closed 28 October. Reporting date TBA)
- Inquiry into EV Vehicle Adoption in the ACT (Submissions closed 26 August 2022. Reporting date TBA)

Statutory notifications

Development applications

Development applications are open for public notification for a minimum of 10–15 working days. We encourage you to keep an eye on the website or download the DA Finder App, which is currently being upgraded, to be notified of developments near you.

Development applications are an important part of our statutory planning process and we welcome representations from individuals, organisations, groups and industry.

Your role in promoting resources in your community is valued and we ask that you continue to encourage your membership to keep up to date on major developments in their area through the planning website or the DA Finder App. Download the DA Finder app on the Google Play store and the iTunes store for a quick and easy way to check out Development Applications on your mobile device.

Pre-DA notifications

Developers undertaking significant development proposals are required to undertake pre-DA consultation for a minimum of two weeks to involve the community in the early stages of a development. The ACT Government hosts the consultation information on the EPSDD website as a central location for information for the community in relation to these projects.

These consultations are undertaken prior to any formal application to Government. Many consultations involve your member groups, and we encourage you to engage with the proponents and their consultants during this stage of planning. Pre-DA community consultation does not replace the statutory planning requirement undertaken once an application is lodged with the planning and land authority.

You can see Pre-DA consultations on the ACT Government Planning website.

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and EIS exemptions

An EIS or an EIS exemption is an information gathering exercise undertaken to understand the environmental consequences of a proposed development. An EIS or EIS exemption then supports an impact track development application.

You can see how the ACT processes EIS at Environmental Impact Statement and current EIS exemptions at Exemption from requiring an EIS on the ACT Government Planning website. These website pages include details of current scoping documents (outlining matters to be addressed in an EIS), draft applications and completed applications. EPSDD also notify relevant community groups directly, via email, when EISs and EIS exemptions open for public comment.

Recently released scoping documents include:

- ACT FOGO Waste Facility, Block 5, Section 26 Hume (Scoping Document released on 2 September)

Current/recent draft EIS and EIS exemption applications and determinations:

The minimum notification period for an EIS is 20 working days and the minimum period to comment on an EIS exemption is 15 working days. However, if an EIS or EIS exemption is lodged with a concurrent application (i.e. development application) is lodged, the minimum period is 35 working days. The period can be extended for complex proposals.

We encourage you to keep an eye on the website for notifications of interest to you and your members.

Recently completed EIS:

Canberra Brickworks Redevelopment: On 13 June 2023 the Minister decided to take no action on the EIS.

The ACT Government acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.