What is a master plan?

A master plan is a non-statutory document that outlines a vision to guide growth and development of a centre over the next 20-30 years. It isn’t a detailed design, but is:

- a document that sets out how a particular area can (as opposed to will) develop and redevelop into the future
- a high level plan intended to set out objectives and strategies to manage development and change over time
- a process that defines what is important about a place and how its character and quality can be conserved, improved and enhanced.

Who prepares a master plan?

- In Canberra, the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate prepares master plans for all group centres, key transport corridors and areas adjacent to town centres.
- Master plans are periodically reviewed to ensure their currency.
- The community and industry are involved throughout the process, to ensure local issues and community values are considered.
- This does not mean all the community’s interests can be accommodated. Community views can sometimes be conflicting, may not account for broader policy outcomes, or may raise issues that cannot be dealt with by a master plan, such as ongoing maintenance issues.
- Other government directorates sometimes prepare master plans, but they are typically development plans for specific sites or confined locations.

What is the master plan process?

- Engage extensively with the community.
- Consult with other government directorates.
- Seek advice from specialist consultants on matters such traffic, parking, transport, economic viability, urban design, social planning and heritage.
- Prepare a draft vision, outcomes and design strategies.
- Present the draft master plan back to the community and stakeholders for comment.
- Present the master plan to government for endorsement.
- Release the master plan to the public.

How is a master plan implemented?

After a master plan is endorsed by government, implementation can commence. Implementation may involve:

- Territory Plan variation
- Sale of territory owned land
- Capital works
- Industry opportunities
- Ongoing community engagement