



LAWSON MIXED-USE SITE: PLACE DESIGN BRIEF

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

During October to December 2023, Suburban Land Agency (SLA) invited Canberrans to express what they would value in this mixed-use site that is coming to Lawson Stage 2. The 19,648m² Lawson Mixed-Use site (CZ5) sits close by Lake Ginninderra, Ginninderra Drive, the old naval base and the first stage of Lawson. Development on the site will provide retail and non-retail commercial uses along with residential development.

THE CONVERSATION

Stakeholder Interviews

Ten longform stakeholder interviews were conducted between Wednesday 8 November and Wednesday 13 December 2023. These were by telephone or Zoom and typically lasted one hour. Fifteen organisations were approached from community, higher education, development and commercial sectors. Interviewees were selected based on their professional and/or personal connection to the site, with the intent that this information would help shape, be tested through and/or added to preliminary community engagement.

Workshops

Eight people attended the two in-person workshops offered, one weekday lunchtime Thursday 23 November and one weekday evening Monday 27 November 2023 at University of Canberra, Ann Harding Conference Centre.

Site walkshop

Fifteen people attended a one hour in-person site walkshop at lunchtime on Friday 24 November 2023.

Pop-up session

Members of the public attending a local community market were encouraged to provide their views on the morning of Sunday 26 November 2023. We heard from approximately twenty participants.

Digital methods

An online YourSay survey was open during the consultation period from Tuesday 31 October to Tuesday 12 December 2023. A total of 66 online surveys were completed. In addition, a visual media tool 'Show us your ideas'



was provided. Five ideas were submitted through this channel. Participants were also able to submit ideas on the site workshop page with one idea provided here.

Youth incursion sessions

The voices of approximately 190 young people at a total of three high school short incursion sessions at Canberra High School (two on Tuesday 28 November) and University of Canberra High School, Kaleen (Friday 1 December 2023) were also captured.

WHO WE ENGAGED

Interviewees were from the following organisations:

- Belconnen Community Council (community)
- Capital Region Community Services (community)
- Ginninderra Catchment Group (community – environment)
- Leibke & Co (developer)
- Peet Limited (developer)
- Per Se Developments (developer)
- Property Council of Australia ACT (development industry peak body)
- SV Coffee and Bakery (community - local business)
- University of Canberra (education)

A further organisation – Keggins*¹ responded to the initial interview approach after the engagement activities were held and information captured from that interview is also included.

Workshop attendees included two women and six men of various ages and ethnicities. They included a Lawson business owner, Lawson residents and residents of surrounding areas who visit regularly. A resident of another suburb who had a positive experience with another SLA placemaking project attended part of a workshop session.

Site workshop participants included ten men and five women who were residents from Lawson and surrounding areas, representatives of Belconnen Community Council and Ginninderra Catchment Group, individuals with specific interests, and several dog owners. One of the attendees identified as an Aboriginal person.

Pop-up session attendees were local Kaleen, Lawson and Giralang residents aged upwards of ten years old with strong community ties to Lawson and a fairly even split of male and female visitors.

¹ Keggins was the successful proponent on the other development sites in Lawson Stage 2.



Survey participants were primarily aged between 25-54 years. 45% of respondents fell within the age range of 25-34 years, followed by 22% aged 45-54 years, and 18% aged 35-44 years. The survey responses showed that one participant identified as an Aboriginal person. 70% of respondents spoke English as their language at home, with Mandarin (6%) and Spanish (4%) being the second and third most commonly spoken languages.

62% identified as female, 37% identified as male, and the remaining 1% identified as non-binary. While 60% lived in Lawson, another 28% lived in neighbouring suburbs.

Youth engagement included the whole Year 8 Canberra High School cohort, which took part in an incursion over two sessions. At UC High School Kaleen a session was held with students from years 7 - 9 including those in the school leadership group and others who self-elected to take part in the lunchtime session.



Key insights from the community

Community

- People are seeking a sense of warmth and connection. Workshop participants gave examples of shared garden spaces and public art (murals, sculptures, art created with community input) as ways of realising this connection.
- An interviewee expressed that there were a high proportion of creatives (people) within the Belconnen community who can bring more life to the development.
- There are strong existing local activity and networks in Lawson resulting from shared community spaces and community-led opportunities to connect.
- Survey participants expressed a strong desire for attractive and comfortable outdoor areas to sit, eat and relax.
- Inclusivity for different age groups, cultures and abilities is important.
- Locals are experiencing changing, diverse and varied ways of living, whether working from home, looking after young children, being retired, or spending time indoors and outdoors at different times of day.

Retail

- Commercial activity that provides opportunities to interact and connect meaningfully is more desirable than simply transactional goods and services provision.
- Space providing for daily shopping needs would encourage people to be in and around the development, keeping it lively and easy to live and work in.
- Young people would appreciate the employment opportunities that local commercial activity can provide.
- People are seeking local venues for social interaction - a cafe or evening venue would provide a great opportunity to unwind or connect for people of all ages.

Nature

- Proximity to Lake Ginninderra provides a rare suburban opportunity for people to regularly connect to nature.
- Views of the lake at all times of year are treasured, and access to these views for a good proportion of people at this development is a priority.
- This area is special to many and people are eager to interact more with the natural lakeside, creek and grasslands environments in ways that respect and support the health of local ecosystems.
- People support natural and sustainable design elements being included such as materials, orientation, landscaping, green spaces, growing food, supporting local biodiversity and energy supply.
- Green spaces with protection from the elements was cited by survey respondents as the most common factor in increasing people's enjoyment of the Lawson Mixed Use site.

Transport

- Local people are seeking access for everyone, whether on foot, wheels or paws, through the development and to the surrounding lakeside area, connecting with the wider Lawson neighbourhood and surrounding suburbs.
- There is demand for convenient access for all modes of transport, noting that this would also support the businesses in the development.
- Establishing strong, safe and easy connections between the development and the highly valued lakeside area is important to maximise access for everyone.



Unique

- An engaging environment to move through, with a range of experiences that feels distinctly local, would make a significant improvement to the local quality of life.
- Inviting, welcoming and encouraging people to be out and about through thoughtful provision and location of shade, water, lighting and seating is important.
- There is desire for flexibility and activation in spaces within the development. Spaces that support multiple uses, small businesses, community gathering and creative uses without the need for renovation or great expense.

WHAT'S NEXT?

1. We will be testing and refining some findings and themes that have emerged from what we have heard so far. A short online activity will be available at yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/LawsonMixedUseSite during January and February 2024.
2. Find out more and register to receive project updates at: yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/LawsonMixedUseSite

Key Timings

October - December 2023: Engagement activity

January 2024: Listening Report

January – February 2024: Testing emerging themes (**we are here**)

March 2024: Draft Place Design Brief

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

775

We reached 775 people over
1,159 visits via YourSay

243

We spoke to 243
individuals

3

We delivered 3
presentations to
more than 12 people

3,150

We distributed over 3,150 letters
to households in the area

39

We sent emails to over 39
organisations and
individuals

3,580+

We reached a social media
audience of more than
3,580.

3

We received 2 items of
written feedback and 1
telephone call.