



## TERRITORY PLAN OVERVIEW

This fact sheet provides a quick guide to the Territory Plan. For more detail you should refer to the Territory Plan, or contact the ACT planning and land authority within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

### What is the Territory Plan?

The Territory Plan is a statutory document that guides planning and development in the ACT to provide the people of the ACT with an attractive, safe and efficient environment in which to live, work and play.

The Territory plan is used to:

- Manage development in the ACT, particularly how land is used and what can be built
- Assess development applications
- Guide the development of new estates and the management of public land

### What informs the policies of the Territory Plan?

A number of ACT policies and strategies inform the Territory Plan. For example, the Territory Plan cannot be inconsistent with the National Capital Plan. In addition, the ACT Planning Strategy sets out broad objectives for the future planning of the ACT and is approved by the Legislative Assembly.

The *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act) outlines the object, format, content and review processes of the Territory Plan. In accordance with the Act, the Territory Plan must contain, among other things, a statement of strategic directions which:

- contains broad strategic principles to guide long term planning for the ACT
- guides the preparation and making of variations to the Territory Plan; and

- guides environmental impact statements, planning reports and strategic environmental assessments.

This statement is derived from the ACT Planning Strategy. They then inform the development of rules and criteria for the Territory Plan's development codes.

### What can't the Territory Plan do?

The Territory Plan is used to inform the assessment and approval of development applications. The Territory Plan cannot generally control ongoing management of a development (e.g. hours of operation). This is a matter for other ACT government agencies.

The Territory Plan rarely prescribes style, colours or other artistic choices of developments. This is a matter for the lessee and market to decide.

### Can the policies of the Territory Plan be varied?

The Act sets out the process to review and vary the Territory Plan. The Territory Plan is regularly reviewed to reflect contemporary planning practices, ongoing development and the changing needs of the community.

## What does the Territory Plan contain?

Under the Act the Territory Plan is required to contain the following:

- a statement of strategic directions
- a map, including Zones and Overlays
- objectives and development tables for each zone
- Codes

This fact sheet explains each of these requirements separately.

## Zones and Overlays

The Territory Plan uses zones to specify the planning controls for a particular area or block of land. Zoning determines how the land can be used and what can be built. These differences are shown by a different colour in the Territory Plan Map.

There are 23 different zones which are divided into 7 main groups: Residential; Commercial; Industrial; Community Facility; Parks and Recreation; Transport and Services; and Non Urban Zones.

The Territory Plan has overlays. Overlays apply to areas that have special controls in place; for example, Public Land Reserves, Future Urban Areas, or areas with special requirements under the National Capital Plan. They inform the user that additional provisions apply (for instance plans of management for public land areas, National Capital Plan requirements).

## Objectives and development tables for each zone

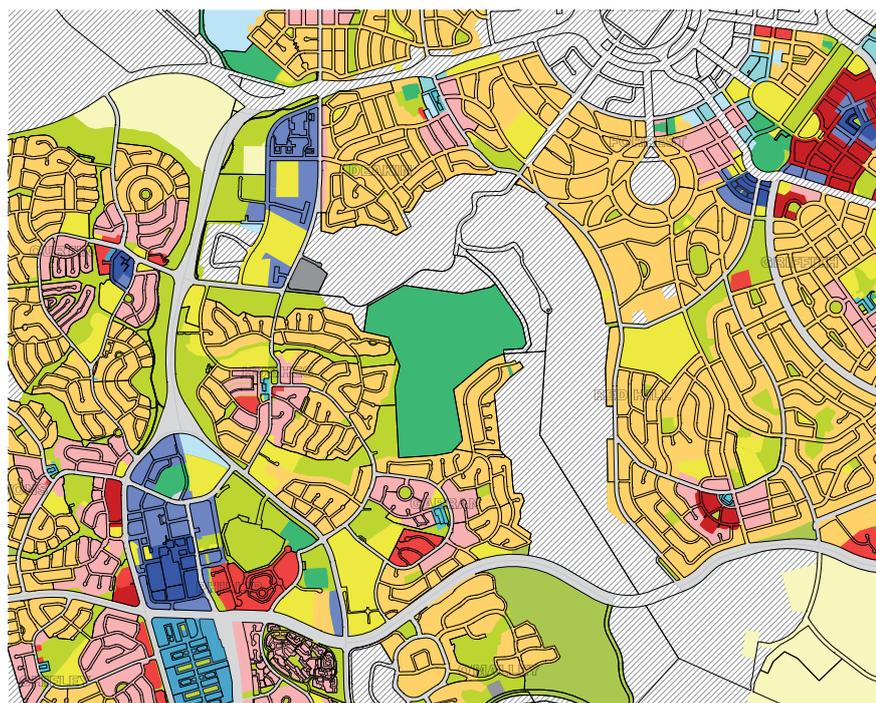
Each zone of the Territory Plan has a development table which contains the zone objectives and, among other things, a list of permissible (subject to a development application) and prohibited development within that zone.

The objectives of each zone are derived from the Territory Plan's statement of strategic directions. They set out the purpose for the zone and broadly determine which uses are suitable or prohibited and provisions that regulate development.

The development table outlines:

- whether a development is exempt – which means development can occur without needing to lodge a development application
- whether a development is prohibited – you cannot apply for approval of a prohibited development
- which assessment track the development application will be assessed in; Code track, Merit track or Impact track

Assessment tracks are discussed in the 'assessment track' section below.



Example of the territory plan map showing different zones and overlays

- See National Capital Plan
- Residential:**
- RZ1 - Suburban
  - RZ2 - Suburban Core
  - RZ4 - Medium Density Residential
  - RZ5 - High Density Residential
- Commercial:**
- CZ1 - Core
  - CZ2 - Business
  - CZ3 - Services
  - CZ4 - Local Centre
  - CZ5 - Mixed Use
  - CZ6 - Leisure and Accommodation
- Community Facility:**
- CFZ - Community Facility
- Parks and Recreation:**
- PRZ1 - Urban Open Space
  - PRZ2 - Restricted Access Recreation
- Transport and Services**
- TSZ1 - Transport
  - TSZ2 - Services
- Non-Urban**
- NUZ1 - Broadacre
  - NUZ3 - Hills, Ridges and Buffer

For detailed maps visit our website.

## Codes

There are three types of codes in the Territory Plan:

### Precinct Codes (including Concept Plans)

Precinct Codes contain special provisions that apply to individual suburbs or geographical areas (for instance setbacks, active frontages, building height limits etc). Precinct Codes can also list additional land uses that may be permitted or prohibited in a particular location. Each Precinct Code has a Precinct Map showing the areas where the Precinct Code applies.

### Development Codes

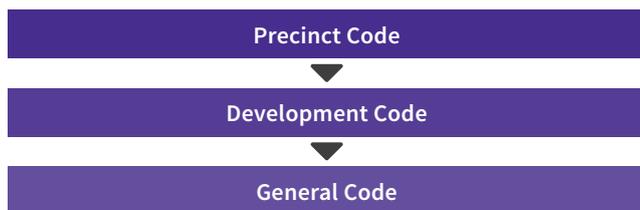
Development Codes contain the majority of the planning controls applying to a specific zone or type of development (e.g. Single Dwelling Housing Development Code; Commercial Zones Development Code). They contain the provisions that apply to all development of that type.

### General Codes

General Codes contain provisions that address particular planning and design issues and may relate to any kind of development across any of the zones (e.g. Access and Mobility General Code or Parking and Vehicular Access General Code).

If there is any inconsistency between applicable codes, then the Precinct Code will always take precedence over the Development Code which in turn will take precedence over the General Code.

### Hierarchy of codes



## Rules and Criteria

The Territory Plan codes are divided into rules and criteria.

- Rules provide definitive controls for development. If a provision contains only a rule without any applicable criteria, then the rule is mandatory.
- Criteria provide the qualitative controls for development. Development may be considered against criteria if the corresponding rule has not been met, or if there is no applicable rule.

If developments meet all the relevant rules of the Territory Plan, it may be exempt from requiring a development approval. This applies to developments listed as exempt under the relevant development table (e.g. Single Dwelling development). Developments that are unable to meet all the relevant rules, but are able to meet the criteria will be required to lodge a development application and be assessed against the rules and criteria of the Territory Plan. An example of a rule and criterion can be seen below:

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### 1.4 HEIGHT OF BUILDING

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R5	C5
Maximum height of building is:	Buildings are consistent with the <i>desired character</i>
a. in RZ1, RZ2 and RZ3 – 8.5m	
b. in RZ4 – 12m	

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**Example:** Single Dwelling Housing Development Code – Rule for Height of a building in metres on the left, the criteria on the right.

Above is an example of one of the many rules in the Territory Plan. The rule (R5) states that a single dwelling (i.e. detached house) can be up to 8.5m high in the RZ1 Suburban zone. If the single dwelling meets R5 and all other relevant rules of the Territory Plan, it can be exempt from requiring a development approval.

A single dwelling within the RZ1 can be higher than 8.5m if it meets the criterion of being consistent with the desired character (a term defined in the Territory Plan). If a development, in this case, exceeds R5 and meets C5 a development application will be required and the development will be assessed for suitability.

## Assessment Tracks

Development applications are assessed in different tracks depending on the zone and the type of development.

**Code track** — Development applications in the Code track must comply with all the rules that are relevant to the development. Many developments that were previously considered in the code track may now be exempt.

**Note:** Some forms of development may be exempt from requiring a development application. If a development is exempt, none of the above assessment tracks apply, but certain Territory Plan rules may still apply.

To find out whether your development may be exempt, and what Territory Plan rules may apply, visit [www.planning.act.gov.au](http://www.planning.act.gov.au), DA or exempt factsheets or call EPD's Customer Service Centre on (02) 6207 1923.

**Merit track** — Developments in the merit track are proposals which do not meet all of the rules of the code, sometimes because of site constraints, innovative design or simply because a criteria has no associated rule to meet. Merit Track applications take around 30-45 days to assess, have a period of public consultation and can be approved, approved with conditions or refused. Most minor applications, such as residential developments are in the merit track.

**Impact track** — Developments are placed in the impact track either because: the Act states they are 'major' in scope or impact under schedule 4 of the Act; the development table specifies them as impact track; or they are not mentioned as a merit track use or prohibited use within the relevant zone development table. Impact Track applications require an Environmental Impact Statement to accompany them which outlines their impacts to the natural and urban environment. These applications often take longer to assess due to their complexity and can include things like the construction of a major road or airport.

More information regarding development applications can be found at [www.planning.gov.au](http://www.planning.gov.au)