



**ACT**  
Government

# DESIGN & VALUES SURVEY SNAPSHOT

## CIT CAMPUS – WODEN

JULY 2020



# CIT CAMPUS - WODEN

The ACT Government is progressing plans to build a modern mixed-use Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) campus alongside a new public transport interchange in the heart of Woden.

The innovative and sustainable campus will feature smart learning environments, activated common areas and green space alongside a new and enhanced public transport interchange, providing long-term benefits to CIT students, staff and the local community.

It is expected that 6,500 students will study at the new campus each year. It will offer students a contemporary educational environment, course offerings suited to jobs of the future and enhanced connections with local industry.

The new bus interchange will integrate with a future light rail terminus. This will encourage active travel in the area and support Woden's ongoing development as a business, transport and education centre.

This significant investment in Woden's renewal will also support job creation, with 520 jobs created during construction and additional opportunities once the facility is operational to support long-term economic growth in the area.

## THE CONVERSATION

In May 2020, the Major Projects Canberra Communications and Engagement team undertook consultation with community members, local business, future users of the site (such as bus drivers, CIT trainers, assessors and students) plus other key stakeholders to

capture their values, attitudes and priorities for the design of new facilities at the proposed CIT Campus – Woden.

An online survey (hard copies made available to some stakeholders) was completed by more than 400 people.



**60.07%**

GENERAL COMMUNITY



**39.93%**

FUTURE USERS OF THE SITE  
(including Transport Canberra workers, and CIT staff and students)

The objective of the survey was to raise awareness of the project and seek feedback on:

- project sentiment, and the values, attitudes and priorities for design
- design elements such as building height and layout, green space ratios, connectivity to local facilities, public transport integration and sustainability features
- what the local community foresee as the key benefits and opportunities that will arise out of this project, plus things to consider for the future.

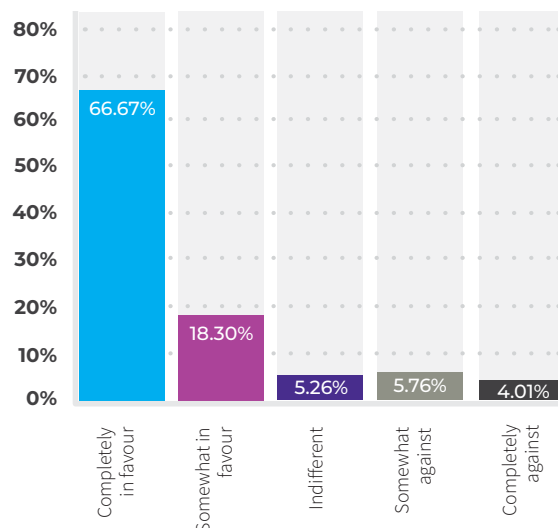
In addition to the online and hard copy surveys that were undertaken, Major Projects Canberra met with a number of key stakeholders to seek their feedback. This report provides a record of the feedback collected from the survey and stakeholder briefings which includes concerns, opportunities and suggestions for the project team.

# KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

402 surveys were completed from a mix of community, CIT staff and students, and Transport Canberra workers.

## PROJECT SUPPORT

Of the 402 responders an overwhelming 85% of participants were either completely in favour (66.67%) or somewhat in favour (18.30%) of the project, with 5.26% indifferent.



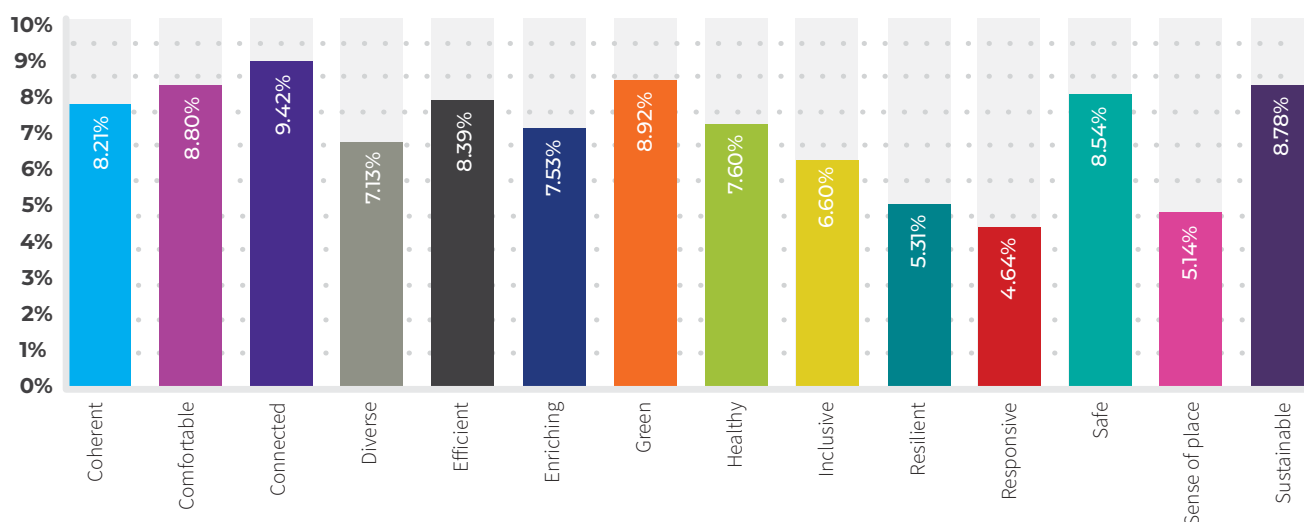
## DESIGN VALUES

The built environment is a long-term asset for the community. Buildings, streets and public spaces last decades, if not generations. It is important that all changes to the built environment are sustainable and make a positive contribution to the way a place looks, how it functions and how long it lasts.

Design values provide the foundation to create great places and spaces. The design, delivery and maintenance

of all new development and projects, no matter how big or small, should seek to achieve these values.

Participants considered fourteen values and ranked them in order of their importance. The table below shows which descriptors rated highest more frequently. It shows that a design which is 'connected' is the most important, with the other important selections being:



## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The majority of participants felt that the primary objective of the CIT Campus - Woden project **should be creating a centre of vocational teaching and learning excellence.**

The remaining objectives received similar levels of support.

- It should focus on grouping students, experts and commercial entities in certain industries in order to maximise economic output
- It should focus on attracting students as well as industry experts to the Canberra area over other Australian cities and towns
- It should integrate seamlessly with the Woden Town Centre
- It should be a showcase for sustainable and environmentally friendly design and operation
- It should be a location for those who live and visit Canberra

### Comments included:

- “Woden is in desperate need of a face lift and development. Look towards new action for inspiration. Tall, interesting buildings and maximised open space. Safe areas at all times is important.”
- “The Reid campus is an uninspiring building for building design students to learn in. It’s run down and dysfunctional, but at least it is central. Let’s make the new CIT an inspiring place for 21st century learning.”
- “The design needs to be functional not just aesthetic. The Woden town centre is already a concrete jungle with open, windy spaces and virtually no trees. A significant and accessible green space as part of the CIT campus would be wonderful!”
- “CIT should remain in Reid and UNSW should move to NSW - Queanbeyan would be an option.”
- “Densification and urban renewal of Woden are critical for keeping talent and growing Canberra. This should be ambitious.”
- “I would like to see something that not only inspires but also captures your attention and curiosity.... architects like Kengo Kuma don’t build lifeless glass buildings/skyscrapers or boxes; rather they let the space influence the design and from there innovate.”
- “Don’t use bright, horrible, garish colours on the external facade. They’ll date and look disgusting. Use of plants like Acton is better.”

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS

Participants equally weighted the following sustainable development elements as the top two:

- The precinct is primarily powered by renewables, thus reducing its carbon footprint and aiming for carbon neutrality
- The precinct utilises clever building design to minimise its reliance on energy and utilities (e.g. selection of materials so that the building can self-regulate its own heating and cooling)



## DESIGN PREFERENCES – MASSING & STACKING

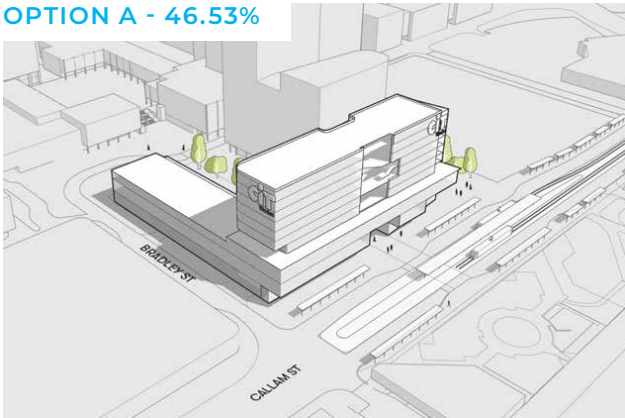
Participants were asked to consider their preference on massing and stacking design.

**Massing** refers to utilising the available ground space (i.e. spreading out the facility and reducing its height as well as available green space) in order to provide the required amenity, space and facilities – going out instead of up.

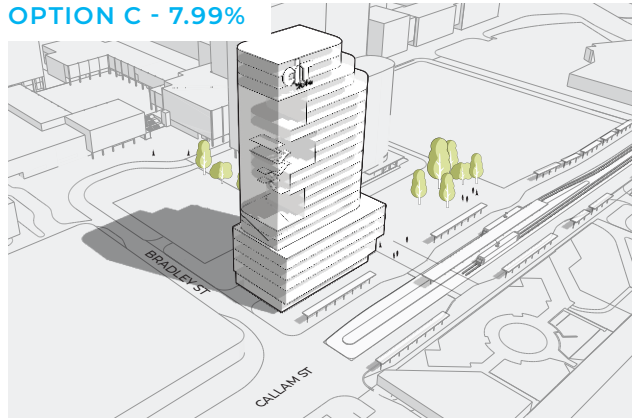
**Stacking** refers to utilising the available air space (i.e. adding more levels) in order to provide the required amenity, space and facilities – going up instead of out.

The largest group of respondents **preferred a massed design** using the majority of the project footprint (Option A) at 46.53%, with the following images showing the percentage of participants who listed that option as their first choice:

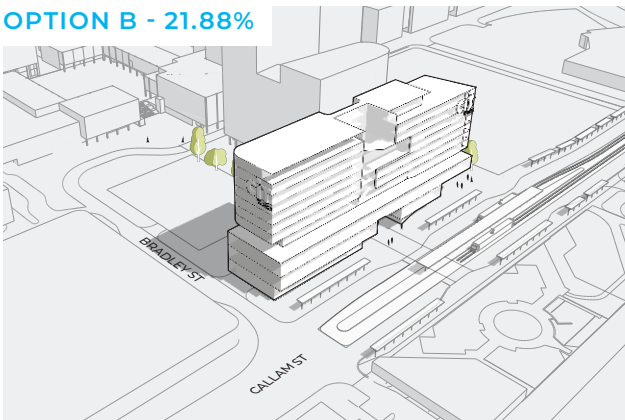
OPTION A - 46.53%



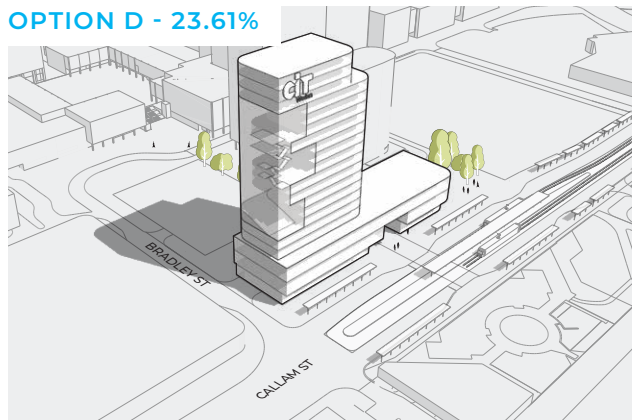
OPTION C - 7.99%



OPTION B - 21.88%



OPTION D - 23.61%



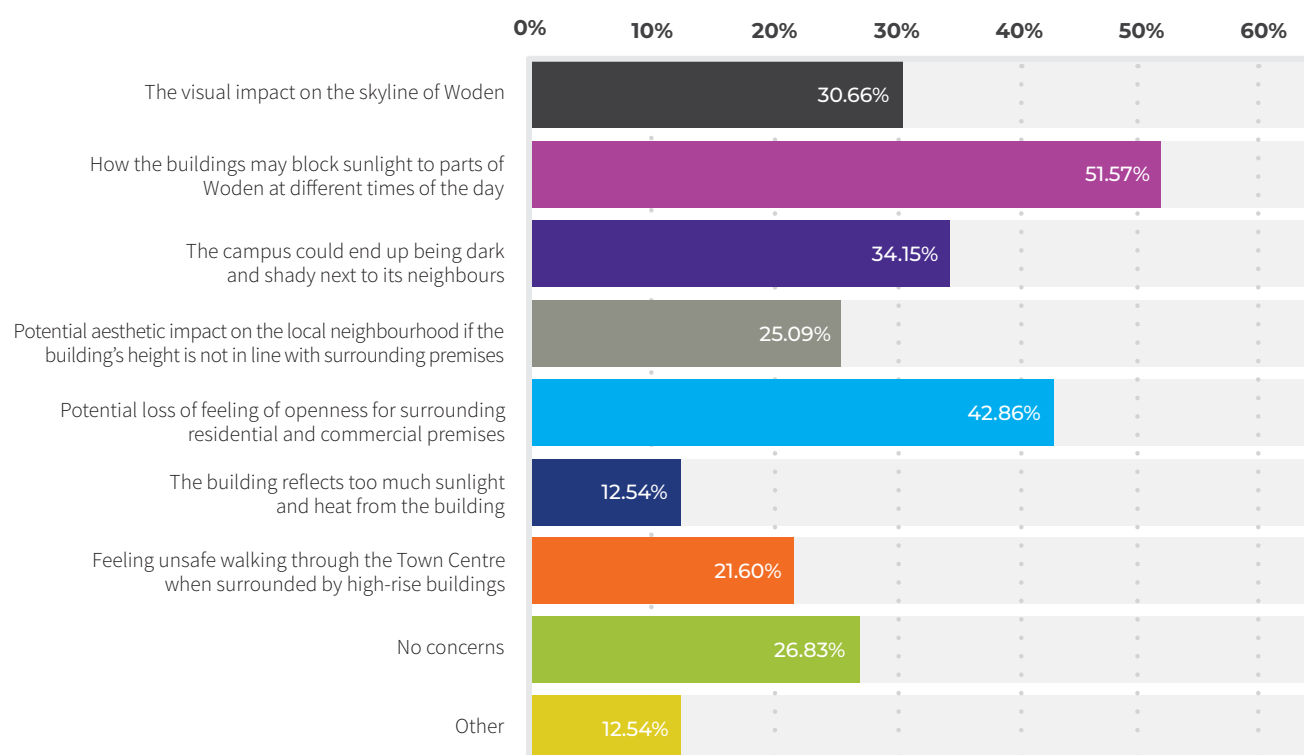
## BUILDING HEIGHT

When asked their preference on the height of the building height (stacking) – participants preferred a 6-12 storey building, followed closely by 1-6 storeys.

The preference over the land space (massing) seen in the final layout was 50-75% of the available site, followed by 25-50%.

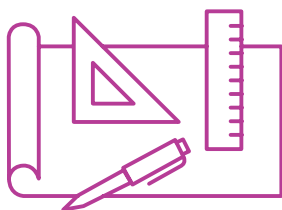
Concerns regarding **building height** (stacking) were:

- the building height blocking sunlight to parts of Woden,
- loss of openness in surrounding residential and commercial premises,
- the campus could end up being dark and shady next to its neighbours, and
- visual impact on the Woden skyline



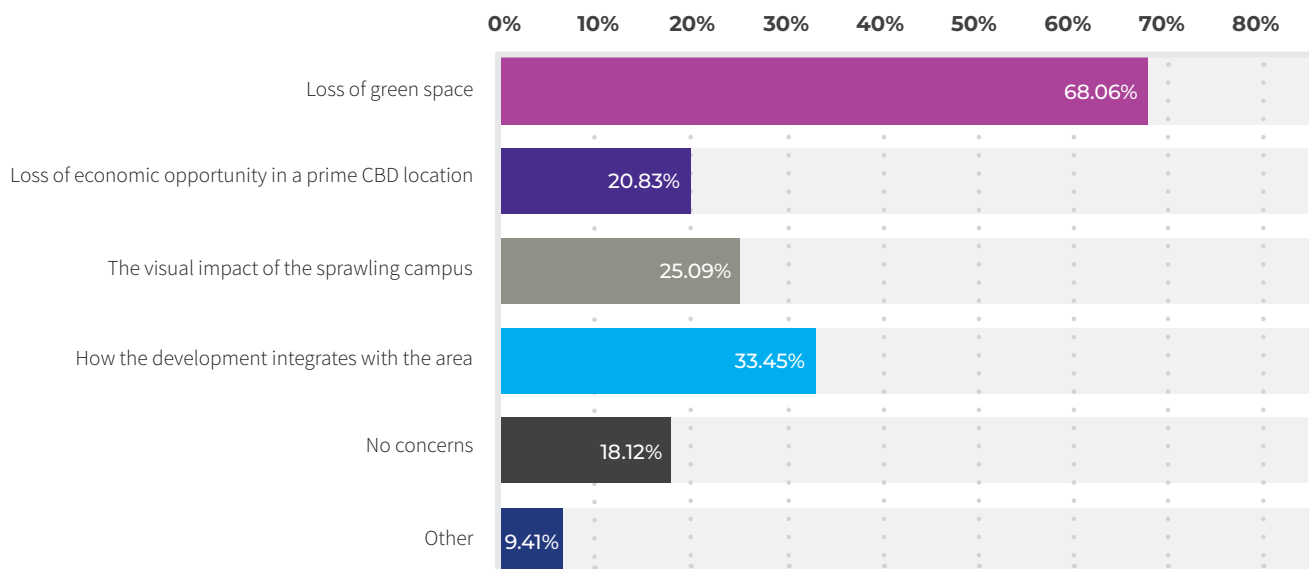
Comments included:

- “Many new buildings in Canberra focus too much on the broad appearance of the design while overlooking the human elements of architecture - i.e. how the building interacts with those on the ground.”
- “Consider the wind tunnel affect.”
- “Would hope it would reflect the growth of Woden and be a noticeable, contemporary yet warm and welcoming addition to the town centre.”
- “A human-scaled and oriented ground floor design can help alleviate or even cancel out any ‘dark and shady’ effects it may have on surrounding streets.”



## PROJECT FOOTPRINT

The loss of green space was the biggest (68.06%) concern for participants regarding the size of the footprint of the building/s, however, integration with the local area was also important.



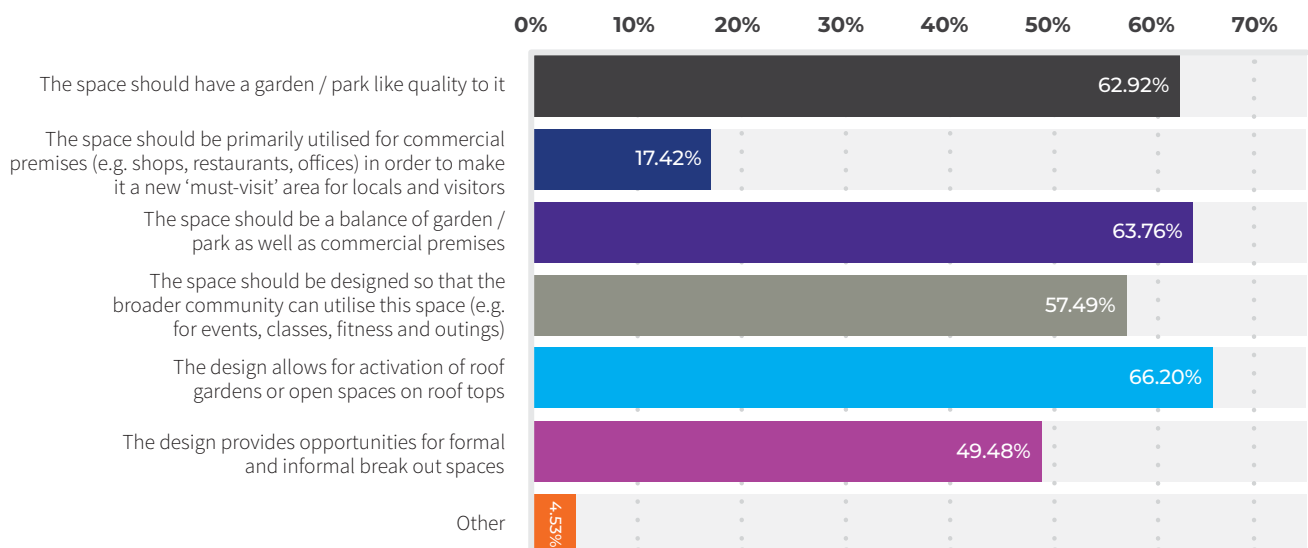
Comments included:

- “Roofs should be used as green spaces so that shorter buildings/wider footprint can have as much or more green space than using high buildings.”
- “The design must incorporate sufficient green space to encourage people to linger and enjoy sunny spots and provide for adjacent active frontages for cafes and other retail.”
- “The design must incorporate sufficient green space to encourage people to linger and enjoy sunny spots and provide for adjacent active frontages for cafes and other retail.”



## OPEN SPACE USE

When considering how the open space was utilised, participants strongly supported gardens, parks and activated green spaces rather than the space primarily being utilised for commercial activities.



Comments included:

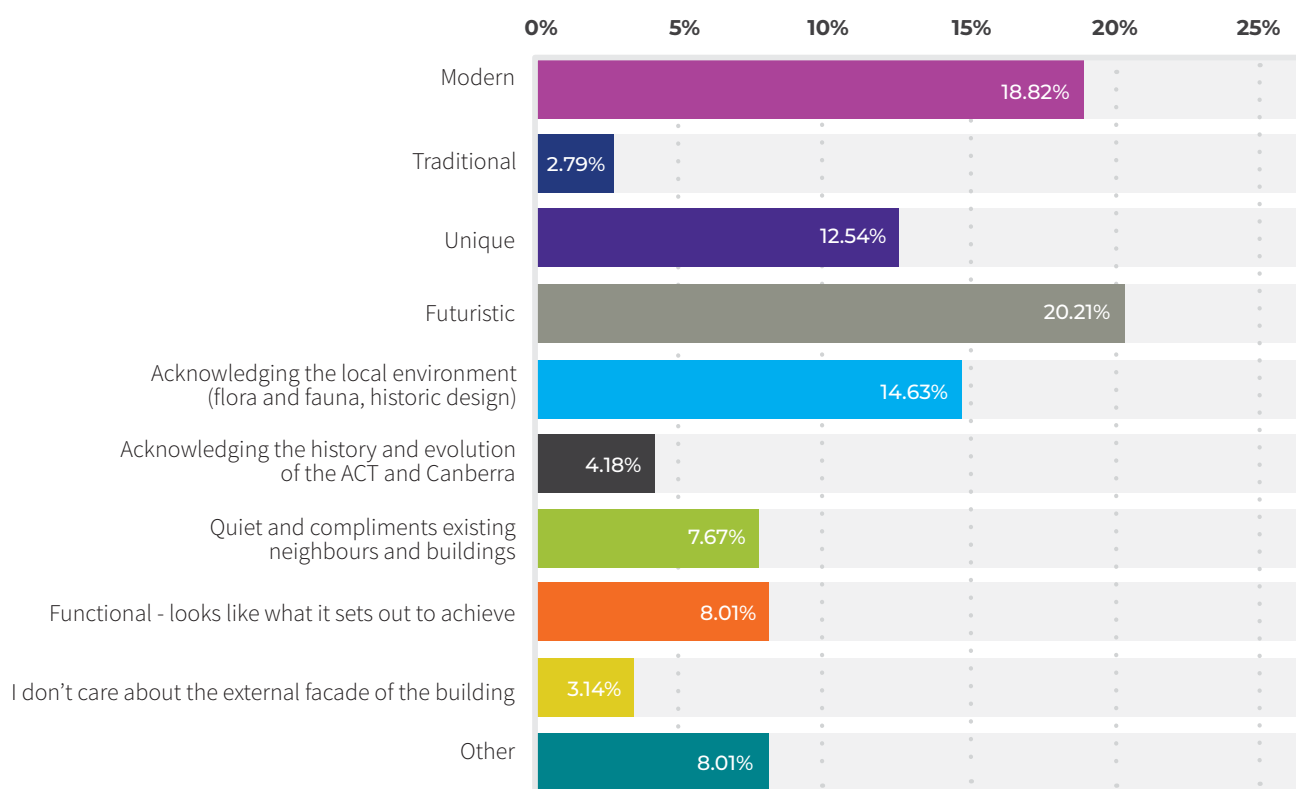
- “Important to use urban greening options with the buildings themselves, surely there is an opportunity not to just make it a landmark project but to utilise such spaces for horticultural/environmental studies for cafes and other retail.”
- “Only student -run businesses that employ students should be on campus. The rest should be learning spaces and green spaces.”
- “It is really important to recognise learning happens in the conversations and reflections outside of the classroom as much as in the classroom itself.”
- “Respond to needs - The public need access through the campus. If students need secure access, provide this in an appropriate location (from a car park, or less public aspect of the site).”
- “I wish Canberra would get over its fear of skyscrapers. We’re not a sleepy country town anymore, and urban sprawl is worse than skyscrapers.”





## DESIGN PREFERENCES

A futuristic or modern look were the preferred options, however this may have been somewhat influenced by the architectural renders. A design which acknowledges the local environment (flora, fauna and history) was also seen as being important.



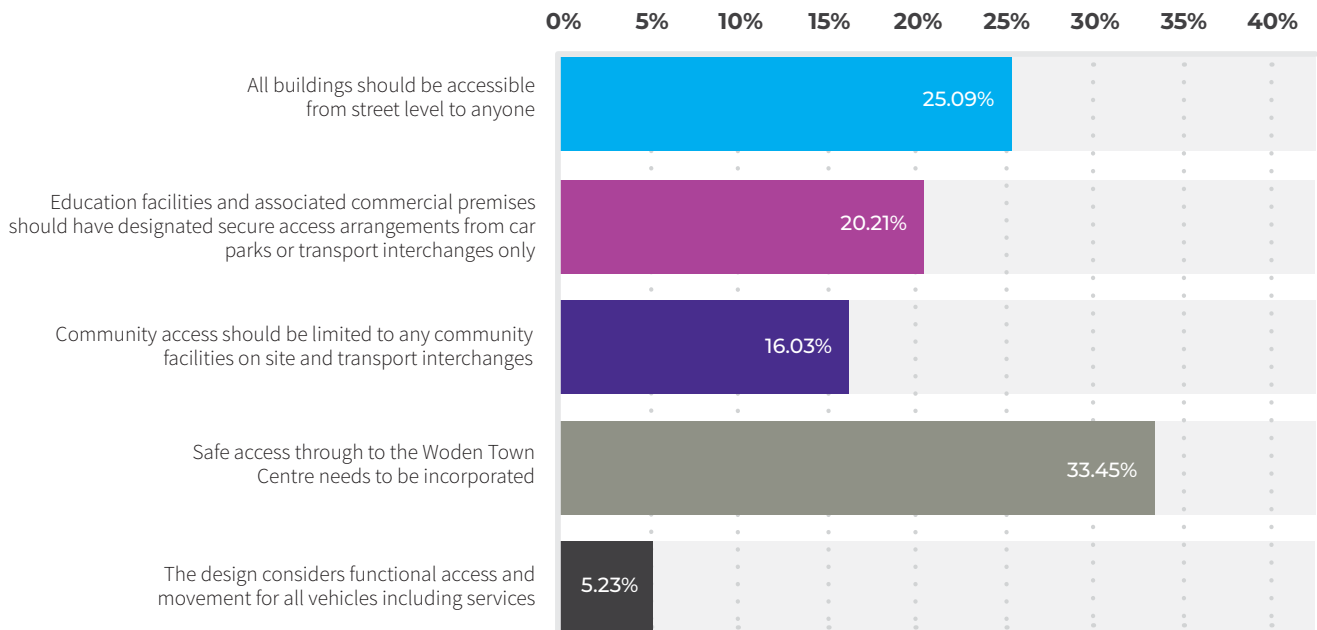
Comments included:

- “Ideally it should stand the test of time both visually and physically e.g. built quality to last for many, many years.”
- “Showcases local Aboriginal design.”
- “Should represent CIT and it’s values.”
- “It should incorporate as many ‘biophilic’ elements as possible. Should not contribute to the heat island effect as much as possible.”



## SAFETY & ACCESS

Safe access through the campus to the Woden Town Centre was the most important statement for participants at 33.45%, with secure access and street level accessibility following in importance.



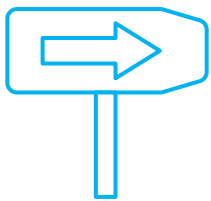
Comments included:

- “Safe thoroughway for the community is important, but students and staff need safety from people with potential/desire for harm/disruption.”
- “The interchange has generally been a place to be avoided. I can’t imagine vulnerable students i.e. women, seniors, the disabled, would feel safe with access to the CIT being in close proximity to the interchange, especially after dark.”
- “This is a community facility and should be accessible to the community at all times.”

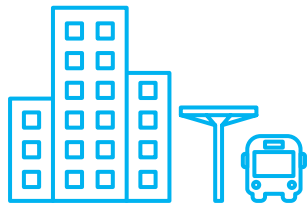


## PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE USAGE

Participants felt that feeling safe and secure was the highest priority which would be supported by **good lighting at the interchange** followed by:



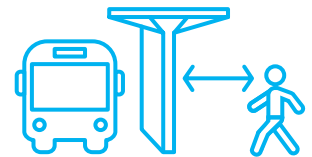
Signage and wayfinding is clear and legible



My bus stop is always in the same location

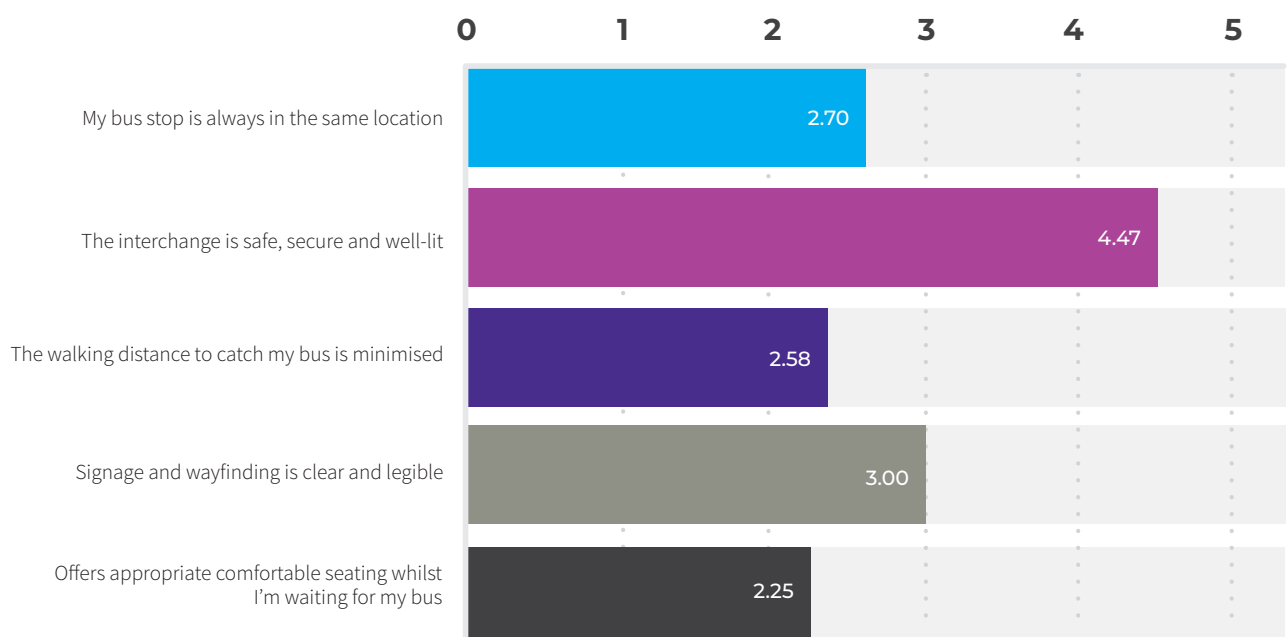


Offers appropriate comfortable seating whilst I'm waiting for my bus



The walking distance to catch my bus is minimised

## BUS INTERCHANGE USER IMPORTANCE\*



\* Participants rated options from 1 to 5 with 5 being the most important.



## TRANSPORT CANBERRA STAFF INPUT

Transport Canberra staff, and in particular bus drivers, were invited to answer an additional four questions that specifically related to their requirements.

### DESIGN ASPECTS

The following design aspects are listed in order of importance to Transport Canberra staff:

**1** Accessibility of facilities and commercial services (such as eateries)

**2** Functionality - ease of entering and exiting buses

**3** Availability of appropriate facilities for TCCS Staff

### NEW PRECINCT DESIGN

The following are listed in in order of importance to TCCS staff:

**1** The campus design should focus on providing streamlined access between the mode of public transport and the target destination

**2** The campus should house commercial and community spaces in order to maximise the user experience

**3** The campus design should focus on ensuring that bus, light rail and private transport infrastructure are in close proximity to allow commuter flexibility

### CONSIDERATIONS

Transport Canberra staff had some concern about sufficient designated layover spaces for transport vehicles and not enough internal space for staff to rest.

A priority was for the campus design to focus on providing streamlined access between the mode of public transport and the target destination.



# CIT STAFF & STUDENT INPUT

CIT staff and students were invited to answer an additional four questions that specifically related to their requirements.

## DESIGN ASPECTS

The following design aspects are listed in order of importance to CIT staff and students:

- 1 The internal design facilitates a range of different learning styles
- 2 The internal design clearly separates quiet spaces (e.g. teaching/learning, studying) from public spaces
- 3 The design facilitates excellence in teaching and learning outcomes
- 4 The new CIT campus feels modern and at the forefront of VET teaching and learning
- 5 Design incorporates access to appropriate technology
- 6 Outdoor and indoor spaces are complementary and integral to design (e.g. internal spaces that open onto or view green spaces)

## WORKING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The working and learning experiences most important to CIT staff and students are:

- 1 Work, study and learning areas are designed so that these spaces are multi-purpose and flexible
- 2 Learning areas are clearly separated from other work and study areas
- 3 The building and space create a safe, multifunctional learning space
- 4 The design inspires me to be innovative and creative in my teaching, learning and research

## OTHER DESIGN ASPECTS

Outdoor areas and parking were other design aspects that were important to CIT staff and students.

## INTERFACING WITH INDUSTRIES

CIT students would prefer to have more learning and green space rather than have commercial premises related to industry on site.

Comments included:

- “Whilst I recognise the importance of flexible, multifunctional spaces, many teaching areas also have specific requirements for layout, equipment and industry relevant functionality.”
- “I ask that you make these spaces dedicated to design students bright and bold, inspiring and enticing to go forward! With break out spaces and a connection to the hub of the campus - these students need energy and inspiration. Also, consider their path of travel into the campus as they often have considerable tools and equipment to transport i.e. close to bus and car park.”
- “Must include space for a library. The Reid library is fabulous, and this facility should not be lost in the move.”

## GENERAL COMMENTS

Outside of the qualitative and quantitative information collected, the survey provided the opportunity for the participants to provide additional feedback on the project, which included comments such as those listed below:



The design needs to be functional not just aesthetic. The Woden town centre is already a concrete jungle with open, windy spaces and virtually no trees. A significant and accessible green space as part of the CIT campus would be wonderful!



It is important to ensure we have secure bike parking, end of trip facilities as well as car parking at this campus.



This development is much needed to help reactivate and connect the Woden town centre and is also attractive to myself as a potential investor to the Woden area.



I would like to see the commitment to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the design.



Getting rid of that eyesore of a bus interchange at Woden can't come soon enough.



Make sure that the facilities are very disability accessible both within buildings and access to buildings.



Woden is in desperate need of a face lift and development. Look towards New Acton for inspiration. Tall, interesting buildings and maximised open space. **Safe areas at all times is important.**



There should be minimal to no parking at the CIT to encourage use of active and public transport instead of private motor vehicles.



The CIT Woden campus buildings should be architecturally coherent and create a connecting open space that together is on a human scale, with plenty of trees and other plants used to beautify the location as much as possible.



The building should be the next iconic building in Woden, but shouldn't look like another office tower.



The campus should provide a conduit for community members to ongoing education and learning especially for those who may be otherwise intimidated or inexperienced with higher education.



The current interchange is horrible to use, feels unsafe at night, and it's freezing in winter waiting for a bus.



The buildings should reflect the much treasured "bush capital" character of Canberra.

## KEY THEMES IN QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

Respondents were asked throughout the survey to provide comments on particular questions, and finally general comments. These comments have been ‘themed’, counted and are listed in the table below in order of frequency.

THEME	EXPLANATION
PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE	Comments talked to the timing and imperative of including public transport options, but also the functionality and connectivity to the campus and Woden Town Centre.
ACTIVE TRANSPORT & PARKING	Consideration for active transport facilitates, such as adequate parking for cars and bikes was a key theme.
GREEN SPACE	Green space in the design came out as a key area of interest, and integral to the stacking and massing discussion. Suggestions such as green rooftops and walls were made.
SAFETY	Safety of the community and future users of the campus and public transport interchange is of utmost important. Comments included consideration for good lighting, weather protection, and accessibility.
BUILDING HEIGHT (INCLUDING SHADING)	The stacking and massing questions considered the competing priorities of green space, shading, functionality, urban densification and skylines. Responses were somewhat divided in regards to stacked versus massed buildings for the site.
FACILITIES INCLUDING SPORTING	Consideration for commercial and community facilities was found to be important to both the community and future staff/students. Whilst the site location has some size constraints, how it incorporates facilities, how they are run, and what they constitute are of keen interest.
ACCESSIBILITY/ DISABILITY & CONNECTIVITY	Accessibility for all users, and good connectivity to the Woden Town Centre is a key priority for the community. This was apparent when responding to the functionality of the new public transport interchange and considered wayfinding signage, walkways and distance.
DESIGN OPTIONS	A number of suggestions were made in regards to design inspiration including colour, material, architectural influence, sustainability and functionality in regards to learning outcomes.
FUNCTIONALITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE PROOFING	A key theme was whether the precinct is built sustainably and considers the future needs of users and the community. This also refers to how Woden is developing as an area.
WODEN REVITALISATION	How the campus and precinct considers the Woden Town Centre Masterplan and cumulative projects is important to community members, especially in how it contributes to revitalisation.

## WHAT'S NEXT

Major Projects Canberra would like to thank all respondents who took the time to answer questions, and provide valuable comments and feedback in regards to the design of the CIT Campus - Woden building, facilities and space.

We are at an early stage of design process and your feedback will assist our project team, including our planners, architects and engineers, to prioritise what is important to community members, local business, future users of the site (such as bus drivers, CIT trainers, assessors and students) and other key stakeholders.

The survey also seeks to ensure that the benefits and opportunities that you have identified are considered as the design evolves and is finalised. We will continue to engage with the community as project planning and design progress, seeking assistance at critical stages to inform the design process.

To register for project updates, please email [CITcampuswoden@act.gov.au](mailto:CITcampuswoden@act.gov.au).

To find out more about CIT Campus – Woden and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit [www.yoursay.act.gov.au/cit-campus-woden](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/cit-campus-woden).



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