



## PLANNING REPORT – BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 WATSON

---



© SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd 2021

This report has been prepared for EPSDD. SGS Economics and Planning has taken all due care in the preparation of this report. However, SGS and its associated consultants are not liable to any person or entity for any damage or loss that has occurred, or may occur, in relation to that person or entity taking or not taking action in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to herein.

SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd  
ACN 007 437 729  
[www.sgsep.com.au](http://www.sgsep.com.au)  
Offices in Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose of this report	1
1.2 Structure of this report	2
<b>2. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Location	3
2.2 Site description – Block 2 Section 76	4
2.3 Site History	5
2.4 Zoning	5
2.5 Surrounding land and uses	6
2.6 Servicing	8
2.7 Transport and car parking	9
<b>3. THE PROPOSAL</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Proposed Territory Plan Variation	12
3.2 Impact of North Watson Structure Plan dwelling limit	13
3.3 Relation to Territory Plan codes and guidelines	14
<b>4. STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1 Territory Plan	17
4.2 National Capital Plan	21
4.3 City and Gateway Urban Design Framework (2018)	22
4.4 ACT Planning Strategy (2018)	24
4.5 Statement of Planning Intent (2015)	26
4.6 Draft Moving Canberra 2019-2045 Integrated Transport Strategy (2019)	26
4.7 ACT Government’s Toward Zero Growth: Healthy Weight Action Plan (2013)	26
4.8 Climate Change Policies	27
4.9 ACT Housing Strategy (2018)	27
<b>5. JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1 Need for the TPV	30
5.2 Advantages of allowing for residential use under the proposal	39
5.3 Other options for use of the land	40
<b>6. PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION</b>	<b>44</b>
6.1 Consultation context	44
6.2 Community consultation processes undertaken	44
6.3 Community Consultation Outcomes	45

<b>7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1 Environmental impacts	48
7.2 Heritage assessment	53
7.3 Traffic, transport and parking assessment	54
7.4 Leisure, community and recreation needs assessment and impacts	56
7.5 Economic impacts	71
7.6 Infrastructure, visual and noise impacts	73
<b>8. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS</b>	<b>75</b>
8.1 Alignment with strategic planning and policy	75
8.2 Technical capacity	76
8.3 Market conditions and community needs	76
8.4 Constraints	77
8.5 General Conclusion	79
8.6 Other approvals and processes required	80
<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	
FIGURE 1: WIDER NORTH CANBERRA CONTEXT	3
FIGURE 2: SUBJECT SITE	4
FIGURE 3: CURRENT ZONING OF SUBJECT SITE	6
FIGURE 4: SURROUNDING LAND USES	7
FIGURE 5: LOCATION OF EASEMENTS IN RELATION TO SUBJECT SITE	9
FIGURE 6: CURRENT BUS NETWORK AROUND THE SUBJECT SITE	10
FIGURE 7: WALKING AND CYCLING PATHS NEAR THE SUBJECT SITE	11
FIGURE 8: BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS	15
FIGURE 9: WATSON PRECINCT MAP	20
FIGURE 10: NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN APPLICATION TO SUBJECT SITE	22
FIGURE 11: GATEWAY PRECINCTS UNDER CITY AND GATEWAY URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK	23
FIGURE 12: 2018 PLANNING STRATEGY POLICY PLAN	25
FIGURE 13: DWELLING TYPES, 2016 CENSUS	30
FIGURE 14: DWELLING TYPES, NORTH AND SOUTH WATSON, 2016 CENSUS	31
FIGURE 15: HOUSEHOLD TYPES, 2016 CENSUS	32
FIGURE 16: HOUSEHOLD TYPES, SOUTH WATSON AND NORTH WATSON, 2016 CENSUS	32
FIGURE 17: NUMBER OF USUAL RESIDENTS IN DETACHED HOUSING, 2016 CENSUS	33
FIGURE 18: MEDIAN SALES PRICE FOR HOUSES IN WATSON, 12 MONTHS TO DECEMBER 2019	34
FIGURE 19: MEDIAN SALES PRICE FOR UNITS IN WATSON, 12 MONTHS TO DECEMBER 2019	34

FIGURE 20: TREE AND PARROT HABITAT ASSESSMENT – BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 WATSON (TPV SUBJECT SITE)	50
FIGURE 21: HERITAGE ITEMS IN PROXIMITY OF THE SUBJECT SITES	53
FIGURE 22: SCHOOLS IN WATSON AND SURROUNDS	61
FIGURE 23: ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL TYPES, 2016 CENSUS	64
FIGURE 24: PROXIMITY OF SITE TO PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS	67
FIGURE 25: GREEN SPACE WITHIN SOLSTICE DEVELOPMENT	68
FIGURE 26: THE FAIR PLAYGROUND AND TREES	68
FIGURE 27: OPEN SPACE AREAS IN AND NEAR NORTH WATSON	69
FIGURE 28: MARY KITSON PLAYGROUND	70
FIGURE 29: PROXIMITY OF SITES TO BUS STOPS	71

## LIST OF TABLES

---

TABLE 1: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZES IN WATSON, 2016 CENSUS	33
TABLE 2: MEDIAN WEEKLY RENTS, JANUARY 2020	35
TABLE 3: POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2022	36
TABLE 4: POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2022, BY SUBURB, NORTH CANBERRA	37
TABLE 5: ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION OF BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 AND BLOCKS 10, 11 AND 12 SECTION 74	38
TABLE 6: PERMITTED COMMUNITY USES IN CZ6 ZONE, AS DEFINED IN THE TERRITORY PLAN	41
TABLE 7: DESIRED STANDARDS OF SERVICE FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES	59
TABLE 8: PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, 2020	62
TABLE 9: HIGH SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, 2020	62
TABLE 10: COLLEGE ENROLMENTS, 2020	62
TABLE 11: CURRENT SCHOOL CAPACITIES	63
TABLE 12: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF POTENTIAL STUDENTS BY SCHOOL TYPE	64
TABLE 13: IDENTIFIED SITE SERVICING REQUIREMENTS AND WORKS	74

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

## Proposal and context

The purpose of this report is to inform the preparation of a Territory Plan Variation (TPV) for **Block 2 Section 76 Watson**. The proposed TPV includes:

- Rezoning part of the site to RZ4 – Medium Density Residential – to allow for future housing.
- Rezoning part of the site to PRZ1 Urban Open Space – to allow for a one-hectare neighbourhood park, the retention of important trees for wildlife habitat, and to reduce urban heat and provide for visual amenity.
- Additional provisions for demonstration housing, a social enterprise and a craft workshop. Demonstration housing will provide the community and industry with examples of how flexibility and innovation in planning can result in more liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities, while the social enterprise provisions aim to increase social benefits and may include employment and skills development on-site for residents.

A Concept Plan under the Territory Plan will be developed for Section 76. This will provide principles and provisions related to the future development of the sites, including the additional provisions noted above.

The Precinct Map and Code for Watson will be amended to reflect the proposal. This will include revised maximum building heights, with a maximum of two storeys in areas adjacent to the Federal Highway (as specified under the National Capital Plan) and a maximum of four storeys for the remainder of the site.

It is also proposed that the existing 1,300 dwelling limit under the North Watson Structure Plan be removed.

## Land release program

Section 76 North Watson is currently on the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program (ILRP), for 2021-22. However, the site is currently being considered for release on the ILRP for 2022-23 to allow for a variation to the Territory Plan which can take between 12 to 18 months to complete.

**This TPV applies only to Block 2 Section 76.** Planning for blocks on Section 74 is also underway. The potential for the Section 74 sites to be developed for housing has also been considered in the impact assessment of this report, to consider the development of Section 76 from a holistic perspective and the potential cumulative impacts of development in North Watson. Further planning will be needed before any land use changes are proposed for Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74.

Under the TPV, it is proposed that Block 2 Section 76 will accommodate between 150 and 200 dwellings. The release of the sites for residential development would be dependent on the implementation of the proposed TPV.

Previously the ILRP had identified the need for around 12,000 new dwellings to be provided (around 3,000 each year) from 2018-2022, to accommodate around 30,000 additional residents in the ACT.

## Justification for Change

The provision of additional housing in North Watson is consistent with the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy, which encourages urban intensification, building on Canberra's established structure to create a more compact and sustainable city, with a target for 70 percent of new housing to be built within the existing urban footprint. This approach is consistent with planning policies that are being adopted throughout Australia, where greater use of inner city and existing infrastructure is being observed.

Established suburbs in the Inner North are popular locations for people to live, with relatively good accessibility to the city centre, and other facilities and opportunities in the region, a key driver of this. Current housing in Watson, including North Watson, is generally more affordable than equivalent housing in other parts of the Inner North.

The need for more affordable and diverse housing options in Canberra has been documented in the ACT Government's recent report *Housing Choices Discussion Paper, Community Engagement Report, May 2018*, and in the 2018 ACT Housing Strategy. The Engagement Report noted the community's expressed desire for more housing choices and flexible housing forms in existing neighbourhoods and suburbs, including a desire for more housing in the 'missing middle' range – specifically, medium density housing types such as dual occupancies, villas, terrace houses and townhouses.

Additional housing built in North Watson would be closer to the city centre and to employment opportunities than new housing that is currently being built in Gungahlin, West Belconnen and Molonglo.

In addition to allowing for new housing, the proposal will provide urban open space, including a one-hectare public neighbourhood park for the community, delivering both social and environmental benefits.

## Preliminary consultation

*It is important to note that the preliminary consultation was undertaken in 2018 and considered an alternate TPV proposal, which proposed to add an overlay to the existing CZ6 zoning to allow for residential uses on both Block 2 Section 76 and Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74. It did not consider the current proposal to rezone the sites to accommodate RZ4 and PRZ1 zoning on Block 2 Section 76.*

**A public information session** was held at the Carotel Motel in Aspinall Street, North Watson, on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018 from 10am to 12 Noon.

This information session was advertised in a flyer explaining the proposed changes and consultation processes. Over 800 copies of the flyer were delivered to residents, businesses and community facilities in the North Watson area on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Multiple copies of the same flyer were also delivered to businesses at the Watson Shops, and to the Majura Primary School and preschool.

The information session was also advertised in the Public Notices section of *The Canberra Times*, in the print version and online on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The information session was attended by representatives from SGS, EPSDD and Indesco. Information presented included maps showing significant trees and preliminary results of traffic modelling.

**An online survey** for feedback on the proposal was prepared, including provision for open-ended responses. There was also an option for people to provide hard copy responses to the survey. Information on how to access the online survey was included in the flyer that was widely distributed.

At the invitation of the **Watson Community Association (WCA)**, representatives from SGS, EPSDD, Indesco and Traffix Group also attended a meeting on the evening of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, at the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson. Similar information to that

available at the Information Session on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, was made available again, and there was also a Q & A session.

### Participation in community engagement processes

Many residents of North Watson and surrounding areas contributed to the preliminary consultations:

- Around 25 residents attended the public information session on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.
- Around 80 residents attended the WCA meeting on the evening of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.
- There were 160 responses to the online survey, with 87 percent of these responses being from residents of Watson.

Separate community engagement processes were also undertaken by the WCA and Living Streets Association, including information gathering at the Watson Shops, and preparation of a petition to the Legislative Assembly opposing the proposed TPV.

### Watson Community Associations 2020 Plan for Watson

The WCA has since developed a neighbourhood plan in (<https://watson.org.au/a-neighbourhood-plan-for-watson/>) response to the recent urban renewal in north Watson. The community values an integrated approach to planning and development, the natural and treed landscapes, the local shops and facilities and the community minded egalitarian spirit. Key concerns of the WCA included the impacts of future development on:

- Environment and flora and fauna.
- Community, recreation, commercial facilities and local amenities.
- Walking and cycling connections.
- Traffic and Parking.

### Potential impacts

A number of additional reports and assessments have been commissioned or undertaken to assess the following:

- Environmental impacts
- Cultural heritage assessment
- Traffic, transport and parking assessments
- Leisure, community and recreation needs assessment and impacts
- Economic impacts, and
- Infrastructure, visual and noise impacts.

Details of these are included in Section 7, and a list of the reports commissioned is included in Appendix 2. These reports have informed the development of this report, and also consider the cumulative impact of potential residential development on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74. As noted above, this has been done to take a holistic approach to considering the potential impacts on North Watson overall.

### General suitability of the sites for the proposed TPV

**In general, the assessments undertaken indicated that Block 2 Section 76 Watson would be suitable for residential development, subject to the impacts and constraints identified below being addressed.**

The impacts and constraints that will need to be further addressed as part of estate planning and development approval processes are as follows:

- The need for mitigation and management of parts of Block 2 Section 76 regarding high concentrations of heavy metals in the soil which are concentrated in the north west of the site.



- An assessment by an accredited bushfire consultant will be required to show that appropriate protections will be in place in relation to bushfire hazards.
- Consistent with the recommendations from the Cultural Heritage Assessment undertaken on the subject sites, protocols to be put in place for the protection and recording of the unanticipated discovery of archaeological material and suspected human remains during construction activities. Impacts to identified cultural sites should be avoided.
- An assessment of traffic impacts that are likely to arise during the construction phase and post development should be included as part of the development application process and should take into account the impact that construction elsewhere in North Watson and development of the site may have.
- Provision should be made for additional on-site visitor parking if necessary, as additional off-site parking along Aspinall and Antill Streets is likely to be limited.

The proposed variation to rezone Block 2 Section 76 is consistent with the ACT Government's strategic planning and other priorities, including the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy. These policies and strategies are part of an overall approach to the development of city planning that is part of the planning orthodoxy of metropolitan Australia.

Establishing a more compact city requires the concentration of future housing development in existing, well-connected and accessible locations. This helps to reduce the need for extensions to service infrastructure, and the need to encroach further on existing natural and undeveloped land on the outskirts of the ACT. There are also other advantages including improved accessibility, opportunities to create and support social interaction an inclusion, increased socio-economic diversity, and improved environmental outcomes.

The proposed TPV to rezone the site allows for some types of community uses to be accommodated, including through the proposed provisions to support social enterprises, demonstration housing, and the inclusion of one hectare of public parkland on Section 76.

### Broader Issues Raised

As part of the preliminary engagement process undertaken for this project, residents of North Watson and surrounding areas raised a number of concerns, many of which related to broader planning issues in the area.

- There was a view expressed that before more development was approved, that the Government, in consultation with the local community, should prepare an overall plan for the development of North Watson, including better links between North Watson and the more-established areas of the suburb.
- There was also a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, playgrounds, recreation facilities, childcare centres and shops.

The WCA has also created a plan for Watson, which raises similar concerns around current levels of development and potential impacts on the local environment, community facilities, and suburb character.

Given other significant changes occurring in the Watson, Dickson and Inner North areas in general, there is merit in engaging with residents in these areas to ensure that community facilities, including schools, will be able to accommodate increased demand. There is also a need to monitor the use of roads such as Antill Street and Aspinall Street for "rat running", and to put in place measures to minimise this where possible.

EPSDD is intending to engage further with the community on the proposed TPV, including consideration of the WCA's Plan for Watson. EPSDD will also be developing a draft Place Plan and Development Concept (PPDC). The PPDC will identify how the site could look in the future, and key urban design principles, themes and actions to realise the vision for the site. The PPDC will also consider the local context of the sites and where future public place

upgrades can be provided to deliver better provision of green open space and walking and cycling paths.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

---

This section outlines the purpose and structure of this Planning Report.

## 1.1 Purpose of this report

### Context and previous work

In mid-2016, SGS was employed by the then Land Development Agency (LDA) to prepare a brief planning report to support a Territory Plan Variation (TPV) covering Blocks 10, 11 and 12, Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson. At the time these blocks were largely unused vacant land, zoned as CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation. The former ACT Government Land Development Agency was seeking to vary the Territory Plan to allow for residential uses, as well as CZ6 uses, on these sites.

After completion of a draft report, SGS was advised that planning, infrastructure and environmental issues would need to be further investigated before a Draft TPV could proceed.

A proposal to vary the use of Section 74 and Section 76 Watson to allow for residential use was also included as part of an earlier piece of planning work undertaken in 2014. This work considered a diverse range of sites across Canberra, with a focus on the provision of public and affordable housing. Community engagement was undertaken in 2014 to consider, among other issues, the importance of providing a range of housing options at Watson Sections 74 and 76. Key issues identified during the consultation on the sites in Watson are still relevant to the proposed Variation, including future residential impacts on:

- Traffic and parking infrastructure
- Future development and design
- Preferences for low to medium rise density of 2-3 storeys
- Impacts on community facilities
- Retention of trees and landscapes

A report on this community engagement was prepared.<sup>1</sup>

### This report

#### Proponent

This Planning Report has been prepared for the ACT Government's Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD).

#### Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to inform the preparation of a TPV for the Block 2 Section 76 only. The planning study addresses a wide range of matters, ultimately demonstrating that the subject site would be suitable for residential uses.

This report has been updated to reflect the current TPV proposal for the site, which is as follows:

---

<sup>1</sup> The Communication Link, *Omnibus Territory Plan Variation Community Engagement Outcomes, Watson and Dickson Sites, October 2014, Draft Version C.1.*

- Rezoning part of the site to RZ4 – Medium Density Residential – to allow for future housing.
  - Rezoning part of the site to PRZ1 Urban Open Space – to allow for a one-hectare neighbourhood park, the retention of important trees for wildlife habitat, and to reduce urban heat and provide for visual amenity.
- Additional provisions for demonstration housing, a social enterprise and a craft workshop. Demonstration housing will provide the community and industry with examples of how flexibility and innovation in planning can result in more liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities, while the social enterprise provisions aim to increase social benefits, and may include employment and skills development on-site for residents.

A Concept Plan under the Territory Plan will be developed for Section 76. This will provide principles and provisions related to the future development of the sites, including the additional provisions noted above.

The Precinct Map and Code for Watson will be amended to reflect the proposal. This will include revised maximum building heights, with a maximum of two storeys in areas adjacent to the Federal Highway (as specified under the National Capital Plan) and a maximum of four storeys for the remainder of the site. A Place Plan and Development Concept (PPDC) will also be developed with the community for the sites to facilitate desirable design outcomes.

It is also proposed that the existing 1,300 dwelling limit under the North Watson Structure Plan be removed.

The analysis in this report builds on the previous work undertaken by SGS. It includes new information, updated ABS Census data, feedback from community consultations and updated technical reports concerning the site.

## 1.2 Structure of this report

This Planning Report has been structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the location, history and current context of the subject site.
- Section 3 outlines the changes proposed under the TPV.
- Section 4 outlines the strategic planning and policy context surrounding the subject site.
- Section 5 provides justifications for the proposed changes.
- Section 6 summarises preliminary consultation undertaken.
- Section 7 assesses the overall potential impact of the proposed changes, while also considering the cumulative impact of potential future residential development on Section 74 Watson nearby.
- Section 8 provides conclusions on the suitability of the subject site for the proposed change.

Supporting documents and reports used in the preparation of this Planning Report are referenced in the Appendix.

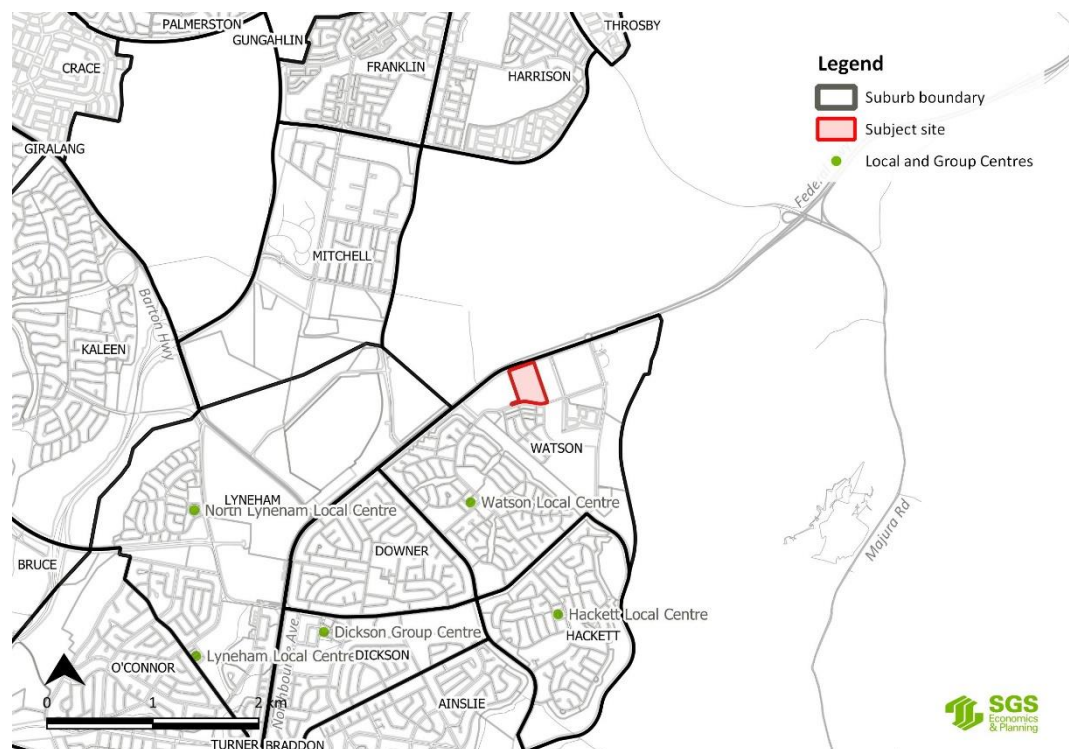
## 2. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This section outlines the context of the subject site, in terms of its location, history, and surrounding land uses and infrastructure.

### 2.1 Location

The subject site is located in the north of the suburb of Watson, within the North Canberra district of the ACT. The site is adjacent to the Federal Highway. Figure 1 below shows the subject site in the context of Canberra's Inner North suburbs and those to the north in the adjacent district of Gungahlin. The subject site is in reasonable proximity to the Watson shops, less than two kilometres as the crow flies.

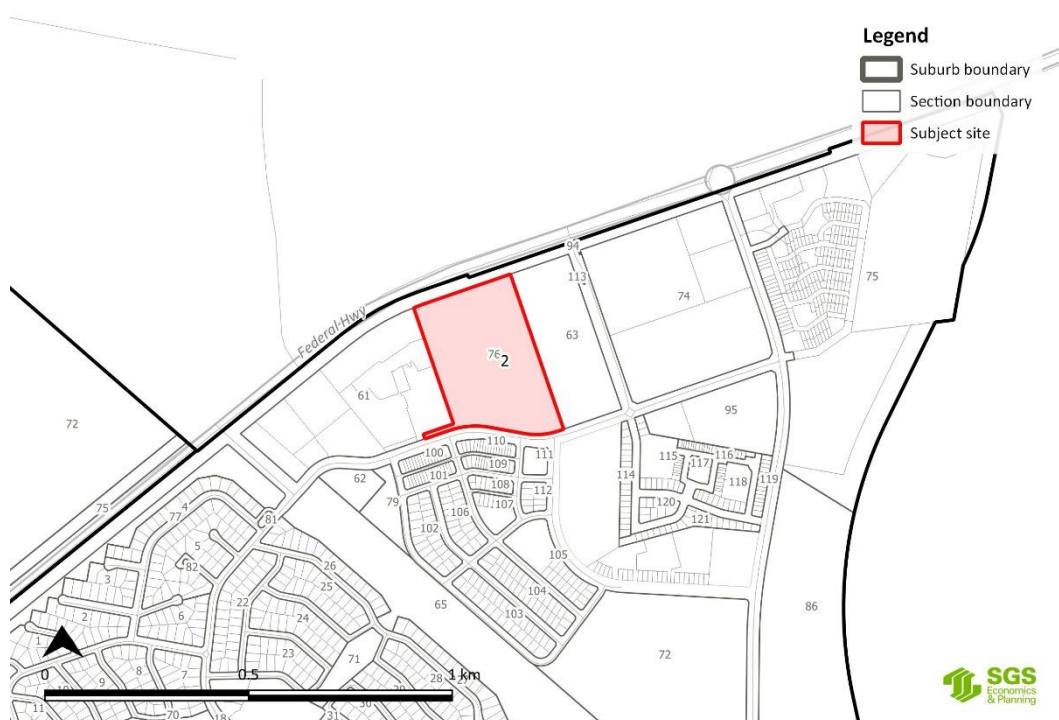
FIGURE 1: WIDER NORTH CANBERRA CONTEXT



Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2020.

Figure 2 below shows the immediate context of the site within North Watson.

FIGURE 2: SUBJECT SITE



Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2020.

## 2.2 Site description – Block 2 Section 76

Block 2 Section 76 is approximately 9.19 hectares in size. The site is currently unleased, underdeveloped land, under the custodianship of Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS). The site is bounded by Aspinall Street to the south, and the Federal Highway to the north. To the west of the block are a number of existing residential units, two-three storeys in height. To the east is the Youth With A Mission facility. There are a number of residential units south of Aspinall Street, also generally of two storeys in height, with a limited number of accompanying on-street parking spaces. The Norrebro development adjacent on Negus Crescent proposes a six storey apartment block, a green space, and a café and childcare facility.

Across the Federal Highway to the north is zoned non-urban NUZ1 broadacre land and a relatively new accommodation facility, Canberra Park, catering for school and other groups visiting Canberra. An informal unsurfaced walking/cycling path also runs along the northern border of the block, parallel with the Federal Highway. In addition, several informal tracks have developed travelling in a north-south direction through the site.

The site is serviced by buses included the Rapid Route 9 (Belconnen to Watson) and Bus Route 50 (Watson to City) with a bus terminus on Aspinall Street. The closest light rail stop is located approximately one and a half kilometres west of the site on the Federal Highway. The Watson local centre is approximately one kilometre from the site and includes a pharmacy, supermarket, café, restaurants, and a post office. Next door to the Watson local centre, a proposal is underway for the former Watson Service Station for a four storey mixed use development, including commercial uses on the ground floor. Mount Majura Primary public school and pre-school is located approximately one kilometre from the site.

The Block is relatively flat, with a gentle downward slope towards the north-west corner. Non-local native trees and a mix of native and exotic vegetation lines each side of the block, with the densest areas lining the eastern border. There is also a cluster of similar trees in the western half of the site. Tree species on the site include Tasmania Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Argyle Apple (*E. cinerea*), Ribbon Gum (*E. viminalis*), Brittle Gum (*E. mannifera*) as

well as Radiata Pine (*Pinus radiata*). Other vegetation includes the native Cherry Ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) and various wattles, and exotic species including Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster glaucophyllus*), Japanese Privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and Broad-level Privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*).

The trees on the western and northern edge of the site are considered important foraging habitat for birds, specifically, the Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*), which is listed vulnerable in the ACT and is on the National Register, with a limited number of breeding pairs known to be left in Australia.

After detailed site soil testing, contamination of naturally occurring heavy metals has been discovered in part of the north-east section of the site. Remediation of the site will be required prior to any future residential development of the site.

## 2.3 Site History

The site is undeveloped unleased territory land within the existing suburb of Watson.

Block 2 Section 76 is under the custodianship of Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS).<sup>2</sup> The site has been used, and continues to be, for grazing.

## 2.4 Zoning

The subject site is currently zoned CZ6 – Accommodation and Leisure in the Territory Plan, as shown below in Figure 3. The CZ6 Zone permits a number of uses including commercial accommodation, leisure and community uses.

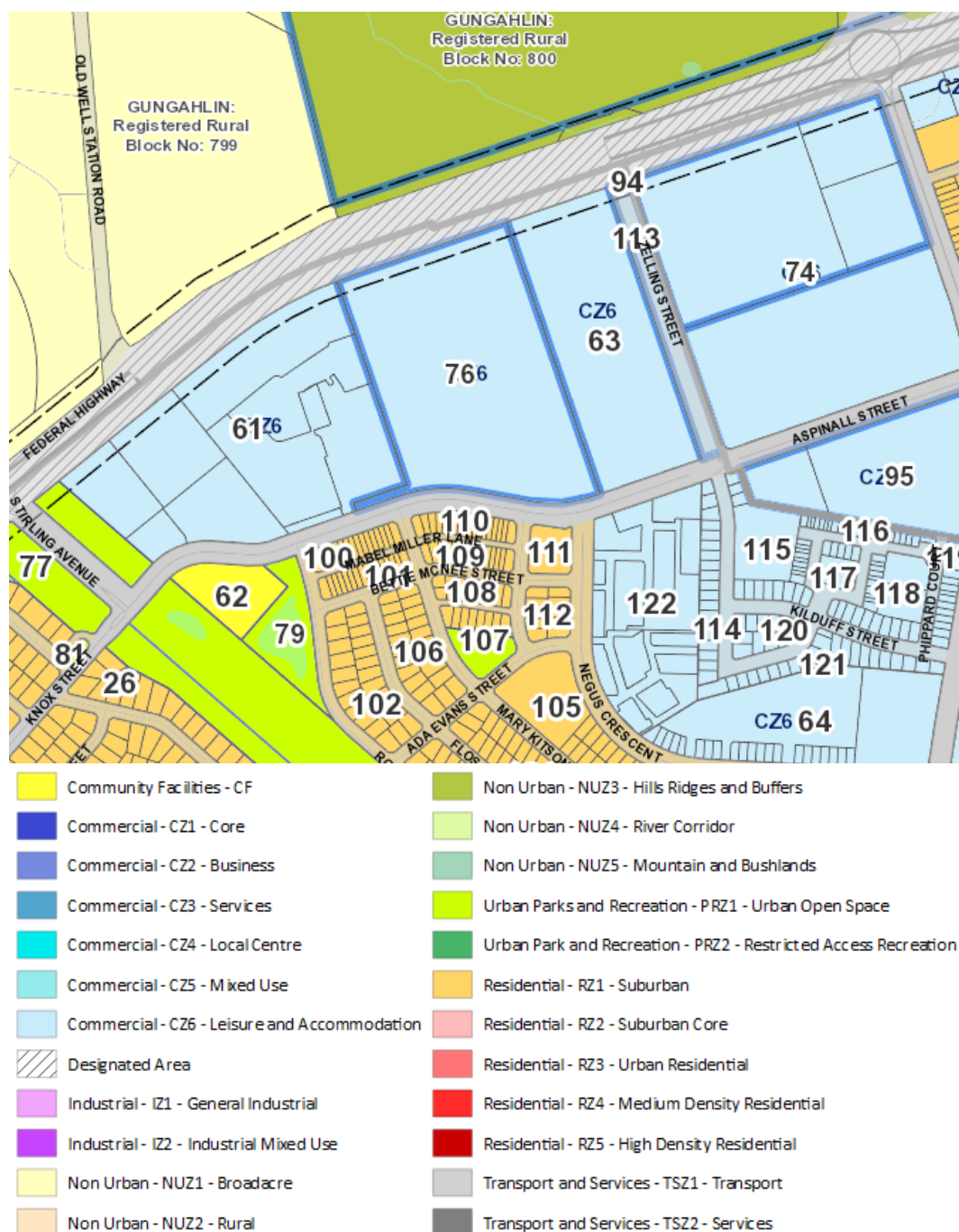
A FUA – Future Urban Area overlay also applies to the subject site. This means that the site has been identified for future urban development. The principles and policies for development of the identified FUA are contained within the North Watson Structure Plan (discussed further in Section 3.2).

---

<sup>2</sup> ACTmapi, 2018, 'Land Custodianship,' <http://app.actmapi.act.gov.au/actmapi/index.html?viewer=lc>



FIGURE 3: CURRENT ZONING OF SUBJECT SITE



Source: ACTmap, 2018.

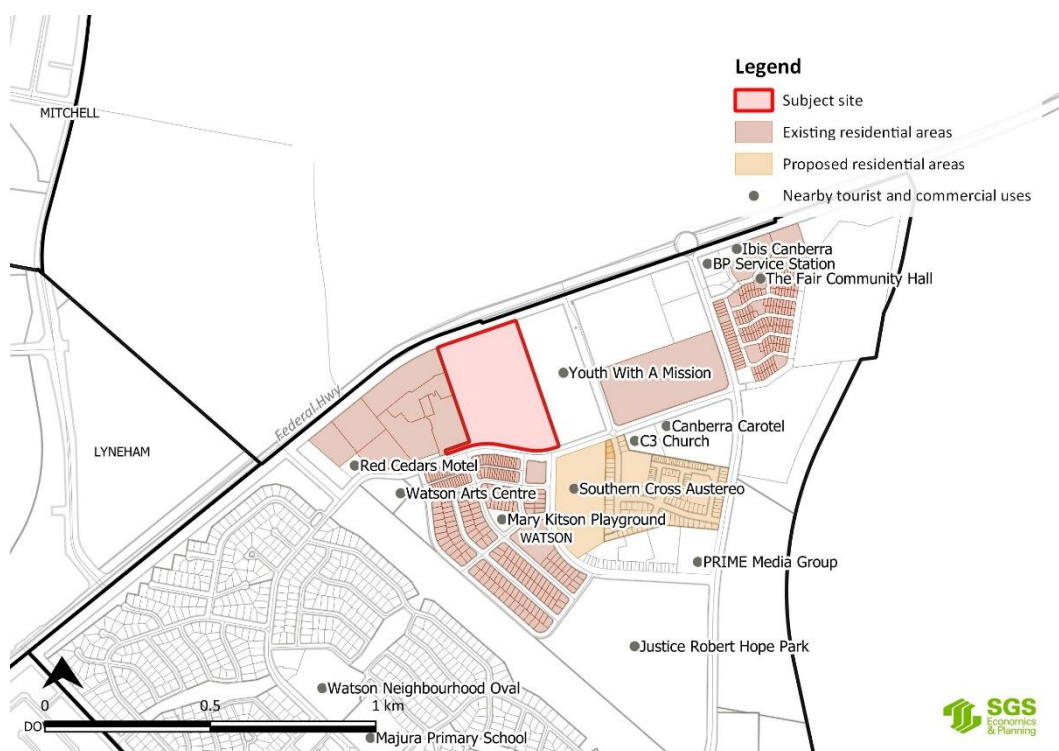
## 2.5 Surrounding land and uses

### North Watson context

Figure 4 below illustrates the location of the commercial and community uses close to the subject site. These include several existing tourism uses, such as motels and accommodation, and community facilities including a church, the Watson Arts Centre, and Justice Robert Hope Park. There are also current and former TV/radio station sites in North Watson.



FIGURE 4: SURROUNDING LAND USES



Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2019.

However, a number of sites shown in Figure 4 are currently in the process of being redeveloped for housing, including the Norrebro development on the former Southern Cross Austereo site, for a maximum of 320 dwellings, the 180 dwelling Mount Majura Estate, located between Antill Street and Aspinall Streets and adjacent to the Southern Cross Austereo site, and The Ridge, comprising of 89 dwellings.<sup>3</sup>

North Watson has also seen a substantial amount of new residential development in recent years, largely in the form of medium density townhouses and unit blocks of up to four storeys in some places. Current proposals for this part of the suburb are also largely of medium-density character.

### Wider North Canberra district context

The area around Watson and within the Inner North is currently undergoing significant change. This has included increased residential development in many Inner North suburbs, redevelopment of a number of large sites (including former public housing sites) along Northbourne Avenue, and the completion of Stage 1 of Canberra's light rail network between Gungahlin and Civic.

### Potential future projects in the district

There are a number of potential future projects within North Canberra currently under consideration. These include:

- Potential for future usage of the Canberra Technology Park site (Block 1, Section 13 Watson)
- Proposal for the redevelopment of former service station site in Watson local centre
- Redevelopment of Section 72 Dickson, including potential for residential uses, and

<sup>3</sup> Kelly, 2017, 'Watson motel to make way for houses as part of Mt Majura Estate development,' *Allhomes*, 8 February, <https://www.allhomes.com.au/news/watson-motel-to-make-way-for-houses-as-part-of-mt-majura-estate-development-20170208-gu79bq/>

- Renewal of public housing sites in Dickson and Braddon.

### **Canberra Technology Park (Block 1 Section 13 Watson)**

Canberra Technology Park in Watson will be revitalised and its green space protected and enhanced, under an agreement between the ACT Government and the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE).

This agreement sets terms and conditions for the direct sale of land to AIE. It will allow AIE to develop a new purpose-built campus in Canberra that will serve as its global headquarters. AIE plans to undertake a 20-year, \$200 million redevelopment of its existing campus on part of Block 1 Section 13 Watson, where the Canberra Technology Park buildings and carpark are located.

As part of the agreement:

- AIE is to prepare a Future Intentions Plan (FIP) in consultation with the community. The FIP will outline how the AIE intends to redevelop the Canberra Technology Park site over time and will need to be approved by the ACT Government.
- The ACT Government will demolish the existing buildings in a two stage process to allow AIE and its tenants to continue to operate at the site. The first stage will commence in 2021 to demolish a small car park at the south western corner of the site and potentially the existing Band Hall. The second stage of demolition is scheduled to commence in 2023, which will be for the remainder of the site.
- The ACT Government will retain, upgrade and maintain the area of public open space (approximately 22,152 square metres of land). This will include community engagement about the upgrades and level of facilities proposed for the open space.

The Government's decision for Canberra Technology Park was informed by the outcomes of community engagement undertaken in February and March 2018. Community engagement outcomes showed overall 85 per cent support for the proposed future use of the site as a higher education and community precinct, including student accommodation, and an upgraded public green space.

### **Former service station site at Block 1 Section 17 Watson**

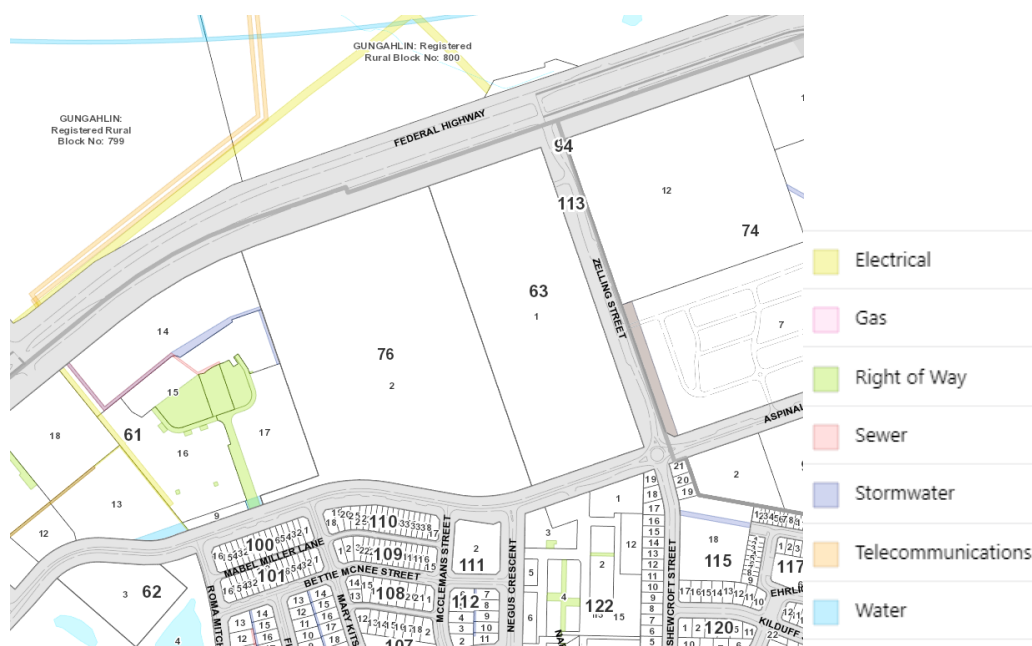
The proposed redevelopment of the former service station site at Block 1 Section 17 adjacent to the Watson shops includes a four storey mixed use development with:

- Commercial uses at ground level
- A mix of two and three bedroom units above ground level, with larger than standard units
- Basement car parking off Burton Street
- A central communal courtyard with high quality landscaping, and
- The retention of all street trees.

## **2.6 Servicing**

Figure 5 below illustrates the location of existing easements in relation to the subject site. There are currently no easements on Block 2 Section 76.

FIGURE 5: LOCATION OF EASEMENTS IN RELATION TO SUBJECT SITE



Source: ACTmapi, 2018.

Site investigations conducted in January 2021 indicated that connections to the existing utilities network for development on the site is possible through the infrastructure aligned with the Federal Highway, though some new infrastructure would be required (see Section 7.6 of this report).

## 2.7 Transport and car parking

### Bus Services

With the completion of Stage 1 of Canberra's light rail network, the ACT Government has recently revised the bus network across the city. The routes that now service Watson and North Watson are shown below in Figure 6.

Watson is serviced by one of the new 'rapid' routes, R9, travelling via the Dickson Interchange to Belconnen via Lyneham and Bruce. This R9 route travels along Aspinall Street stopping at similar stops to the previous Route 39. Services on the R9 route operate roughly every 15 minutes during before 7pm on weekdays, every 30 minutes after 7pm, and every 30 minutes on weekends.

North Watson is also serviced by the new Route 50, which travels through Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner before reaching the city interchange. This route includes stops close by to the subject site. Route 50 services operate every half hour on weekdays and every hour in the evening, and every hour on weekends. Both the R9 and Route 50 services allow residents to transfer to light rail through the Dickson Interchange.

FIGURE 6: CURRENT BUS NETWORK AROUND THE SUBJECT SITE



Source: Transport Canberra, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

### Walking and cycling infrastructure

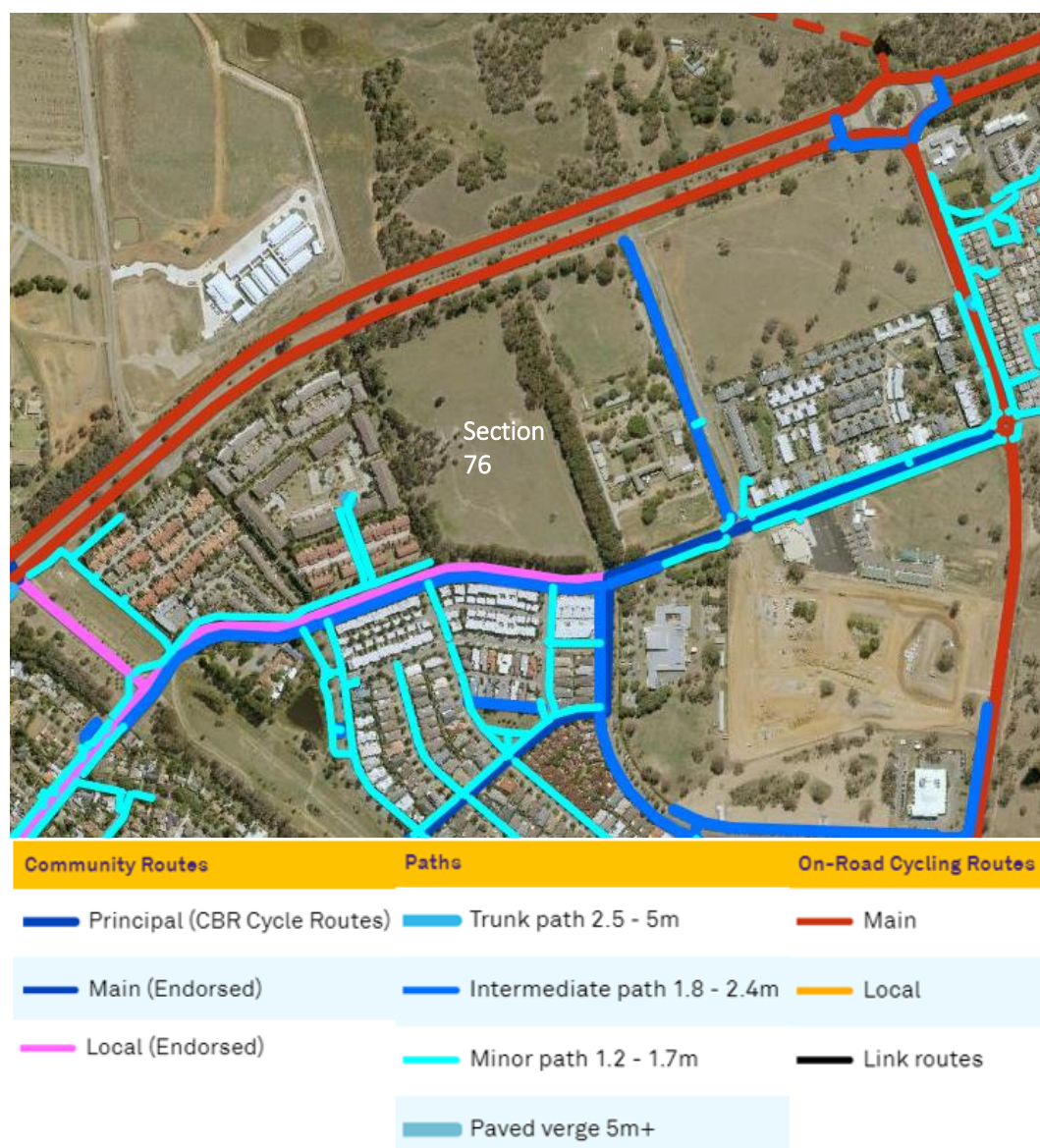
Figure 7 below shows the location of walking and cycling paths in relation to the subject site.

On-road cycling lanes are provided along the Federal Highway, linking up to the light rail service. However, there are few shared paths within the residential areas of Watson and North Watson compared to other parts of the Inner North. Issues with the connectivity of footpaths between North Watson and the Watson local centre in particular, have been raised by the community through the preliminary consultation process (see Section 6) and in previous communications with the ACT Government.

<sup>4</sup> Transport Canberra, 2021, 'Public transport improvements: start 18 July 2020,' [https://www.transport.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1603688/20051\\_TC\\_network\\_map\\_420x792.pdf](https://www.transport.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1603688/20051_TC_network_map_420x792.pdf)



FIGURE 7: WALKING AND CYCLING PATHS NEAR THE SUBJECT SITE



Source: Activeinfrastructure.net.au, 2019.<sup>5</sup>

### Parking

There is some on-street car parking along Aspinall and Zelling Streets, associated with surrounding residential developments near the subject site. In accordance with Territory Plan provisions, new parking spaces would be required to service any new development on the subject site. Community members have identified issues with parking in North Watson generally (see Section 6).

<sup>5</sup> <https://activeinfrastructure.net.au/>

## 3. THE PROPOSAL

---

This section outlines the proposed changes for the subject site, to be implemented through a Territory Plan Variation (TPV).

### 3.1 Proposed Territory Plan Variation

#### Rezoning of subject sites and additional provisions

As noted above, the planning study seeks to assess and justify a TPV which proposes the following for the subject site:

- Rezoning part of the site to RZ4 – Medium Density Residential – to allow for future housing.
- Rezoning part of the site to PRZ1 Urban Open Space – to allow for a one-hectare neighbourhood park, the retention of important trees for wildlife habitat, and to reduce urban heat and provide for visual amenity.
- Additional provisions for demonstration housing, a social enterprise and a craft workshop. Demonstration housing will provide the community and industry with examples of how flexibility and innovation in planning can result in more liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities, while the social enterprise provisions aim to increase social benefits, and may include employment and skills development on-site for residents.

A Concept Plan under the Territory Plan will be developed for Section 76. This will provide principles and provisions related to the future development of the sites, including the additional provisions noted above.

The Precinct Map and Code for Watson will be amended to reflect the proposal. This will include revised maximum building heights, with a maximum of two storeys in areas adjacent to the Federal Highway (as specified under the National Capital Plan) and a maximum of four storeys for the remainder of the site.

It is also proposed that the existing 1,300 dwelling limit under the North Watson Structure Plan be removed.

#### Indicative Land Release Program

Section 76 North Watson is currently on the ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program (ILRP), for 2021-22-. However, the site is currently being considered for release on the ILRP for 2022-23 to allow for a variation to the Territory Plan which can take between 12 to 18 months to complete.

It is proposed that Block 2 Section 76 will accommodate between 150 and 200 dwellings. The release of the sites for residential development would be dependent on the implementation of the proposed TPV.

#### Likely development of the site

The proposal will allow for residential development on the site under the RZ4 Medium Density Residential Zone, in addition to the other uses permitted under this zoning. The proposed additional provisions relating to demonstration housing, co-housing, and social enterprise will also allow for additional diversity in the land uses across the sites.

As noted above, it is expected that between 150-200 dwellings would be able to be delivered across the site. This translates to a gross dwelling density of around 23 dwellings per hectare, assuming that dwellings were distributed across the total land area. However, as described above, Section 76 will also have a smaller land area available for development to allow for a one hectare public park and the protection of a treed landscape on the western edge to protect wildlife habitat to be rezoned to PRZ1. Additional space for site servicing and access has also not been factored into this calculation, meaning that in different parts of the site the dwelling density might be slightly higher.

The NSW Government's Draft Medium Density Design Guide identifies low-rise medium density housing as typically having a net density of 25-45 dwellings per hectare, and generally being no more than two storeys in height.<sup>6</sup> As such, it is likely that most of the residential development on the sites would broadly fit this description, while allowing for up to four storeys on part of the site. Better design and built quality outcomes will also be sought through the demonstration housing.

Under the current zoning, buildings are generally restricted to a maximum of two storeys in height.<sup>7</sup> The 2008 Structure Plan for North Watson also generally limits building heights in the area to two storeys. Under the TPV, it is proposed that the land covered by National Capital Plan provisions on Block 2 Section 76 (further discussed in Section 4.2) will continue to have a maximum building height of two storeys, and the remainder of the site will have a maximum building height of four storeys.

Other planning controls, environmental and site servicing constraints, as well as market conditions and demand for different types of housing will ultimately determine the quantum and form of the dwellings delivered.

### 3.2 Impact of North Watson Structure Plan dwelling limit

#### North Watson Structure Plan

Under the Territory Plan, North Watson is subject to a Structure Plan, and applies includes Block 2 Section 76. The Structure Plan includes several principles and policies concerning the development of this area. These include:

- Building height restrictions, as "building heights shall be two storeys. Where existing approved development exceeds a building height of two storeys, development compatible with the authorised height may be approved," and
- The design of subdivisions, where "streets, off road movement systems, open spaces and utility services are to achieve a high level of design and amenity. Subdivision design shall seek to maximise housing diversity and energy efficiency."

The North Watson Structure Plan sets a dwelling limit of a maximum of 1,300 dwellings within an identified boundary (excluding tourist accommodation facilities and The Fair estate). The cap on dwellings was introduced to ensure community and servicing infrastructure, including for roads, school enrolments and capacities, could support growing and future populations.

The limit came into effect in 1994 under a TPV. This TPV included a map which identified the area to which the limit applied. A desktop analysis of dwelling yields from Development Applications in the time since indicates this dwelling cap has already been exceeded. A traffic impact assessment, undertaken by the Traffix Group (April 2020) shows that required capacity for roads if the subject site is developed will be met with existing roads and intersection infrastructure.

---

<sup>6</sup> Department of Planning and Environment, 2016, 'Draft Medium Density Design Guide,' NSW Government, <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/~media/Files/DPE/Manuals-and-guides/draft-medium-density-design-guide-2016-10.ashx>

<sup>7</sup> Commercial Zones Development Code, page 27.

The 2019 Community Needs Assessment (CNA) undertaken for Section 72 Dickson included North Watson in the study catchment. The CNA findings shows that the Inner North is generally well catered for in terms of community facilities. The findings indicate that one primary school and the expansion of existing high schools and colleges by 2029 may be required in the Inner North to meet expected demand. The RZ4 zone allows for some community uses to meet future needs.

As such, it is proposed as part of the TPV that the dwelling limit in the Structure Plan be removed.

### 3.3 Relation to Territory Plan codes and guidelines

#### Development Codes

The exact form that potential housing (or other development) on the subject sites will take is unknown at this time, and will be subject to a number of factors, including the method of land assembly used by the Government for the sale of the land, market conditions, and environmental constraints. It is assumed that any future residential development on the subject site will be required to be consistent with the criteria and rules set out in the relevant Territory Plan codes concerning residential uses. These include:

- **Estate Development Code,**
- **Residential Zones Development Code,** and
- **Multi Unit Housing Development Code.**

The Multi Unit Housing Development Code sets out a number of provisions relating to the built form of housing in the RZ4 zone, including a maximum height of three storeys.<sup>8</sup>

It is anticipated that if the proposed TPV is approved, that the current version of the **Watson Precinct Map and Code** (effective 7 April 2017) would be amended, and **Concept Plans** be developed for the site. This would include the additional provisions described previously, including maximum building heights. Other planning, design and environmental constraints, such as those identified through consultations and assessments in the context of estate planning and development approval processes, could also be included in the Watson Precinct Map and Code and Concept Plans as they are developed.

#### Access and Mobility General Code

The Territory Plan's Access and Mobility General Code acknowledges the importance of providing equitable access for people with disabilities in all facets of urban planning.<sup>9</sup> Under the Code, applicable development types must comply with rules and criteria around elements such as parking, building entrances and doorways, and other parts of the built form.

Any new development on the subject site will need to comply with this Code where it is applicable. Multi unit housing of more than nine dwellings is required to meet the Code, as are some other types of residential uses, including boarding houses, retirement villages, serviced apartments and supportive housing.

#### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design considerations

The Territory Plan's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code outlines requirements for crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) that apply to developments in the ACT, with specific direction given on rules and criteria to support community safety.

---

<sup>8</sup> Multi Unit Housing Development Code, effective 21 February 2020.

<sup>9</sup> ACT Government, 2013, 'Access and Mobility General Code,' effective 4 October 2013, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/94068/pdf/2008-27.pdf>



CPTED principles governing neighbourhood design include natural surveillance, access control and territorial reinforcement. These are to be achieved through ensuring:

- Streets and public paths are easily navigable and legible
- Public open spaces are clearly delineated from private spaces, and
- That there is convenient and safe access to activity centres.

The CPTED guidelines also require that:

- Building entrances are easily identified
- Entrapment spots are minimised
- Estate and neighbourhood design encourages walking, cycling and public transport usage, and
- Particular attention is given to the location of services such as public toilets, public telephones and ATMs to ensure user safety.

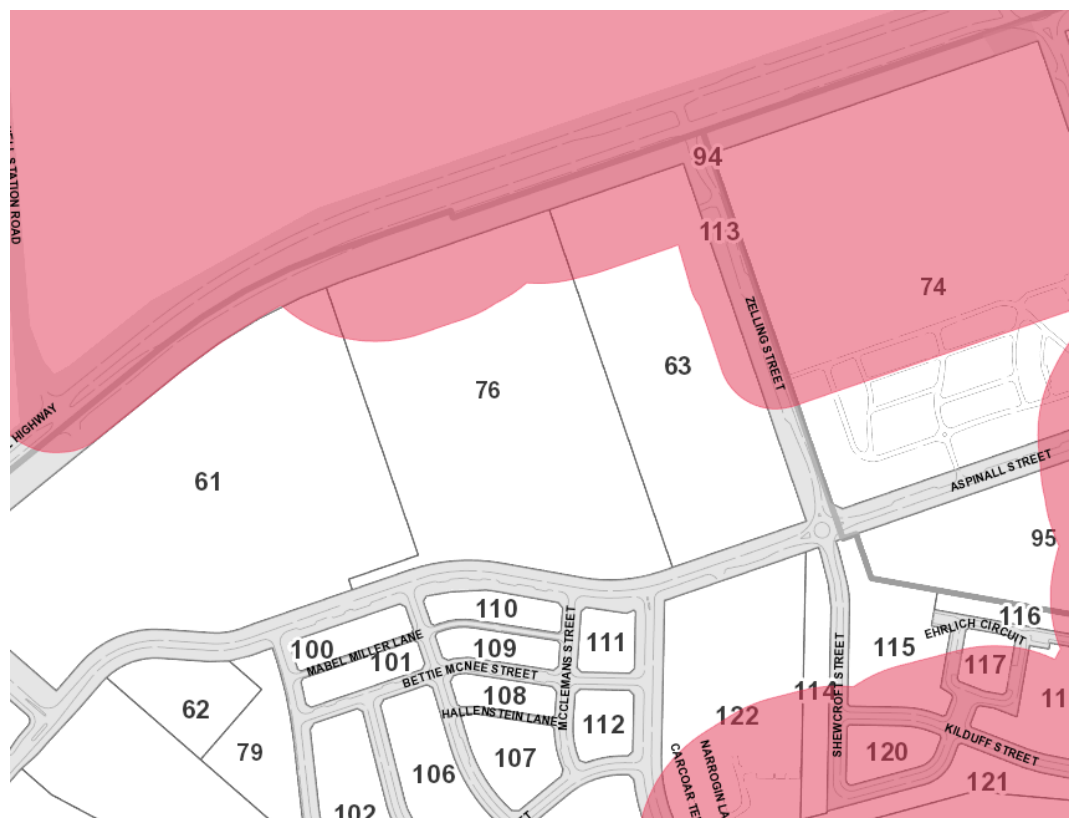
The guidelines also include information on lighting, signage and compatible uses.

Any future development on the subject site will be required to comply with the provisions set out in the Code.

### Provisions to address bushfire risk

Figure 8 below shows the bushfire prone areas across the subject site. The site is also currently subject to Bushfire Operations Plans concerning fuel management.

FIGURE 8: BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS



Source: ACTmap, 2018.

Being in a bushfire prone area does not preclude residential or other types of development. However, there are specific bushfire design requirements that a developer would be required to meet as part of development application processes.

These are identified throughout the various codes for residential zones under the Territory Plan, with further emphasis for design compliance outlined in the General Codes. This includes the Planning for Bushfire Risk Mitigation General Code, which identifies the required legislation and regulation components, application in relation to new development areas, requirement of a Bushfire Risk Assessment, approval processes, site specific requirements, and reference to the Building Code of Australia. Bushfire risk will also be addressed through the Concept Plans for the subject site.

Further discussion of General Codes under the Territory Plan that are relevant to the proposed TPV is included in Section 7.

## 4. STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

---

This section outlines the current strategic planning and policy context relevant to the subject site.

### 4.1 Territory Plan

#### Statement of Strategic Directions

The Territory Plan's Statement of Strategic Directions sets out the principles and strategic objectives for Canberra, including principles around environmental, social and economic sustainability, the city's spatial planning, and urban design. Relevant principles include that:

- Planning policies and processes focus on the combined achievement of economic vitality, community well-being and environmental quality
- Objectives are pursued in a balance and integrated way, regarding both short and long term factors
- Development patterns reflect land capability constraints, with attention given to biological diversity and protecting ecosystems and wildlife corridors, and
- Urban expansion is contained to minimise impacts on natural and rural areas.

Principles relating to economic sustainability include that:

- Planning policies reflect a range of commercial, retail, industrial, rural, tourism and other forms of activity to underpin a diversified economy and employment growth, and
- Tourism will be fostered through permitting a variety of entertainment, leisure and accommodation facilities in appropriate locations.

Concerning social sustainability, principles include:

- That provision be made for a range of readily accessible community, cultural, sporting and recreation facilities, distributed according to the need of different localities and populations, and
- Planning for community facilities and open space will encourage multiple use and flexible design.

Other principles in the Statement of Strategic Directions also highlight a need for future development to include a range of housing types close to centres and major transport nodes, commercial and retail activities to be concentrated in planned centres and nodes, and for development to encourage the use of active transport and public transport. The proposal is consistent with these themes, in allowing for different housing types and other uses close to transport, and minimising urban expansion and impacts on natural areas.

#### Current zoning – CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation Zone

The subject site is currently zoned as CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation Zone. As described in the Territory Plan, the objectives of this zone are to:

- Provide for the development of entertainment, accommodation and leisure facilities for residents and visitors to the ACT and the surrounding region

- Protect leisure and accommodation uses from competition from higher order commercial uses, and encourage activities that enhance the region's economic diversity and employment prospects
- Ensure leisure and accommodation facilities have convenient access to public transport
- Protect the amenity of nearby residential areas, with regard to noise, traffic, parking and privacy
- Ensure the location of facilities, and their design and landscaping are compatible with environmental values
- Ensure that the bulk, scale, size, design and landscaping is compatible with the surrounding landscape, and
- Encourage activity at street level and provide for appropriate surveillance of the public realm.<sup>10</sup>

Under the CZ6 zoning, residential uses are a prohibited development. Some non-retail commercial and community uses can be included in CZ6 areas. Shops are permitted, but are limited to those related to the sale of entertainment, accommodation, leisure goods and specialty items, consistent with the objectives of the zoning as catering to tourist and leisure uses. A small convenience shop as part of a caravan park or motel would generally be permitted. Community Use is also permissible under CZ6 zoning which would allow for the development of a range of uses including educational establishments (schools), child care centre or a health facility.

## Proposed zoning

### RZ4 Medium Density Residential Zone

The proposed TPV would see much of the site rezoned to RZ4 Medium Density Residential. The objectives of this zone are to:

- Provide for the establishment and maintenance of residential areas where the housing is medium rise and predominantly medium density in character and particularly in areas that have very good access to facilities and services and/ or frequent public transport services
- Provide opportunities for redevelopment by enabling changes to the original pattern of subdivision and the density of dwellings
- Provide for a wide range of affordable and sustainable housing choices that meet changing household and community needs
- Ensure development and redevelopment is carefully managed so that it achieves a high standard of residential amenity, makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood and landscape character of the area and does not have unreasonable negative impacts on neighbouring properties
- Provide opportunities for home based employment consistent with residential amenity
- Provide for a limited range of small-scale facilities to meet local needs consistent with residential amenity
- Promote good solar access
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation
- Promote sustainable water use
- Promote active living and active travel
- Encourage an attractive, safe, well-lit and connected pedestrian environment with convenient access to public transport.

The RZ4 zone permits a limited number of non-residential uses, such as child care centres, community activity centres, and health facilities. It does not allow for shops or restaurants.

<sup>10</sup> Territory Plan, 2016, 'CZ6 – Leisure and Accommodation Zone,' effective 19 August 2016, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/110363/pdf/2008-27.pdf>

The TPV proposes to include additional provisions that could facilitate a café as an ancillary use and part of a social enterprise on the site.

### **PRZ1 Urban Open Space Zone**

As detailed previously in this report, the TPV proposes to include one hectare of Block 2 Section 76 as parkland, rezoned to the PRZ1 Urban Open Space Zone. The objectives of the PRZ1 zone are to:

- Provide an appropriate quality, quantity and distribution of parks and open spaces that will contribute to the recreational and social needs of the community
- Establish a variety of settings that will support a range of recreational and leisure activities as well as protect flora and fauna habitats and corridors, natural and cultural features and landscape character
- Allow for stormwater drainage and the protection of water quality, stream flows and stream environs in a sustainable, environmentally responsible manner and which provides opportunities for the community to interact with and interpret the natural environment
- Allow for ancillary uses that support the care, management and enjoyment of these open spaces including park maintenance depots, small-scale community activity centres
- Ensure that development does not unacceptably affect the landscape or scenic quality of the area, adequacy of open space for other purposes, or users, access to open space, or amenity of adjoining residents
- Provide for integrated land and water planning and management
- Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to urban open space to promote active living.

There are a limited number of land uses permitted under the zone. As noted above, the retention of the one hectare space as parkland is proposed to be used to retain important trees and wildlife habitat (including for the vulnerable Superb Parrot) in addition to contributing to amenity and reducing urban heat island effects.

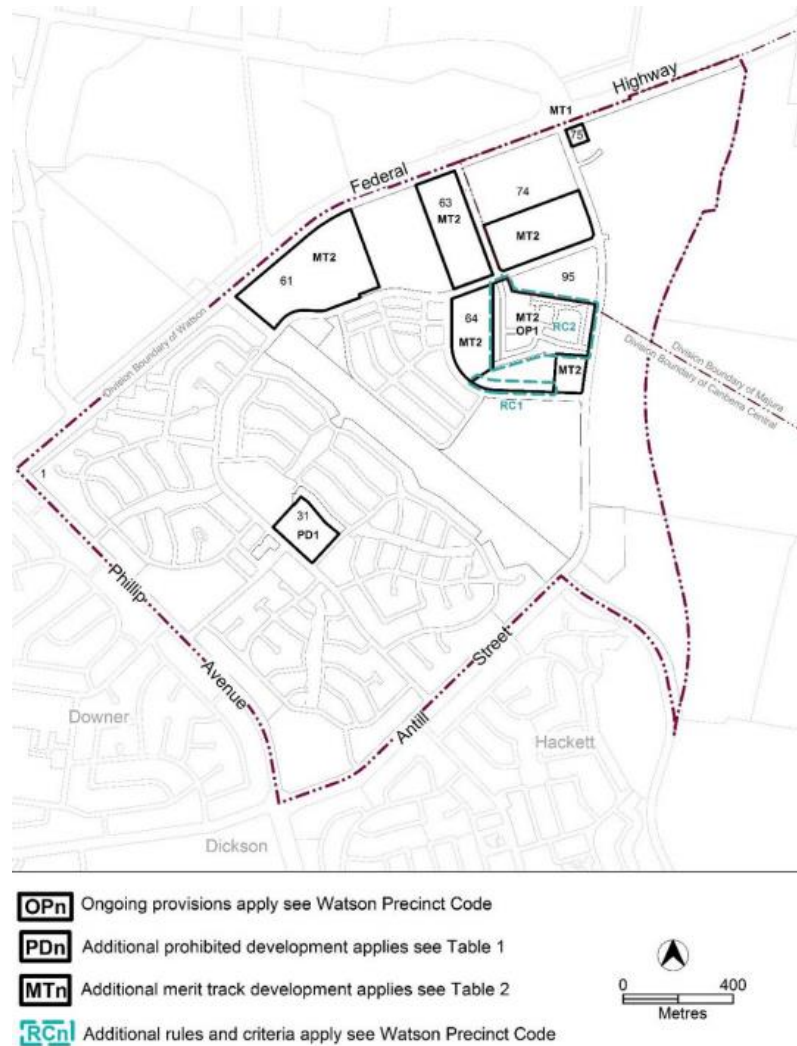
### **North Watson Structure Plan**

As detailed in the previous section, the Territory Plan includes the North Watson Structure Plan, with specific principles and policies for the area, including the dwelling limit. The relevance of the dwelling limit and broader issues associated with other proposed developments in the area may need to be addressed through other changes to the North Watson Structure Plan. These broader changes are generally outside the scope of this report, however, the potential cumulative effects of recent developments in the area on the existing dwelling limit have been noted (as detailed above).

### **Watson Precinct Code**

Precinct Maps and Codes under the Territory Plan apply to a range of geographic areas, and detail development constraints such as limits to building heights and other built form elements. Figure 9 shows the Watson Precinct Map. Some blocks immediately adjacent to the subject site include additional merit track development conditions. These conditions currently allow for residential uses on these sites, subject to assessment.

FIGURE 9: WATSON PRECINCT MAP



Source: Territory Plan, 2018.<sup>11</sup>

As noted previously, it is proposed that with the TPV the Precinct Code will be updated. This will include updates to:

- Change to residential use
- Establish new maximum building heights from two to four storeys in the southern area of the site, and
- Provisions relating to the location and inclusions for demonstration housing.

### Watson Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood plans prepared by the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) were developed to provide planning strategies at the local level for some suburbs, and considered the future of local shopping centres, open space, residential areas, community facilities and transport networks. The Watson Neighbourhood Plan was prepared in 2004, prior to most of the development of North Watson, and as such, it does not specifically refer to this part of the suburb.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Territory Plan, 2018, 'Watson Precinct Map and Code,' effective 6 March 2018, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/117932/pdf/2008-27.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> ACTPLA, 2004, 'Watson Neighbourhood Plan,' September 2004, [https://www.planning.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/890576/watson-anp.pdf](https://www.planning.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/890576/watson-anp.pdf)

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a need for residential development that is sympathetic to the suburb's existing character, suits the surrounding area, and maintains a high-quality landscape setting. The need for greater housing diversity to meet sustainability and population needs was also identified.

The proposal will be able to deliver housing forms that are consistent with Watson's existing character. It is intended that it will provide for medium-density housing forms that contribute to diversifying Canberra's housing stock and help to accommodate the area's expected future population growth. The exact form that development will take is not known at this stage, and details would be confirmed in specific development applications after the land is sold.

### Variation 348 – Incorporating Active Living Principles into the Territory Plan

In 2017, a TPV was approved which aims to incorporate active living (including active travel) principles into the Territory Plan.<sup>13</sup> The six principles are:

- Connected places – providing connections between major uses and activity centres
- Open space – valuing open spaces, parks and places
- Mixed land use and density – encouraging diversity in activities, land uses and development densities
- Safe and attractive places – ensuring places are safe and attractive to everyone using that place
- Supportive infrastructure – providing supportive infrastructure that encourages regular physical activity, and
- Environments for all – ensuring places are inclusive and have equitable access by all Canberrans.

The effect of the introduction of the TPV was to amend existing and introduce new strategic and zone objectives, and amend rules and criteria in relevant development codes, to reflect the above principles. The introduction of the TPV is intended to help achieve the vision for Canberra to be a healthy, active and vibrant city, which is compact and equitable, and a centre for innovation, creativity and economic growth. The principles are also in response to Canberra's existing car dependence and the contribution of this to levels of physical inactivity and overweight in the ACT.

## 4.2 National Capital Plan

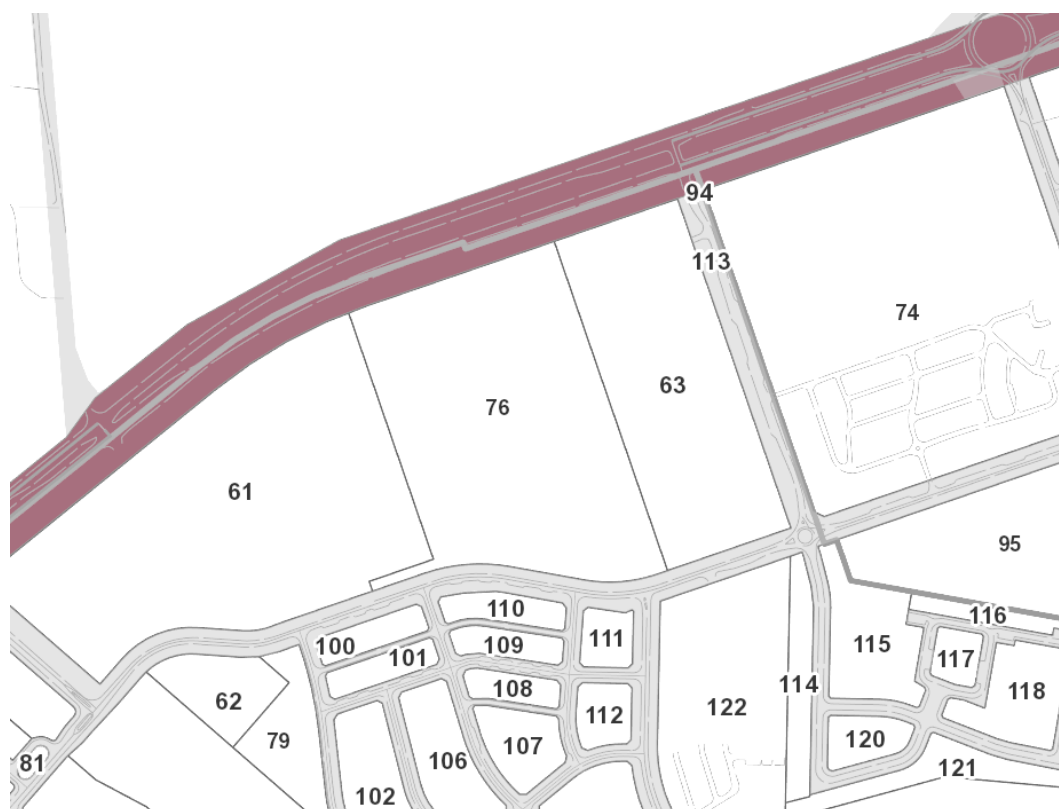
The National Capital Plan (NCP), administered by the National Capital Authority (NCA) contains overarching principles and policies for designated parts of Canberra. The NCP takes precedence over the Territory Plan where any inconsistencies arise.

Figure 10 below shows the application of the National Capital Plan to the subject site. The Federal Highway (shown in maroon) is a Designated Area under the NCP.

---

<sup>13</sup> Territory Plan, 2017, *Planning and Development (Plan Variation No 348) Approval 2017*, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2017-501/default.asp>

FIGURE 10: NATIONAL CAPITAL PLAN APPLICATION TO SUBJECT SITE



Source: ACTmap, 2018.

### Recent amendments to the National Capital Plan

On 1 April 2019, the Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories approved National Capital Plan Amendment 91. The amendment took effect on 4 April 2019.

Amendment 91 gives legal effect to key principles on the City and Gateway Urban Design Framework (the Framework, discussed further below). It implements the Commonwealth's interest in the Framework by establishing detailed planning and design criteria for development on either side of the approach to the National Capital.

The adoption of Amendment 91 also means that Development Control Plan No. 171/99/0003, which previously applied to parts of the subject site no longer applies. The former DCP included controls around building heights, standards of finish, setbacks, landscaping and vehicular access. Instead, Section 4.28 of Amendment 91 outlines Special Requirements for the City and Gateway Corridor, including part of the subject site, as land fronting directly onto the Federal Highway. This includes:

- Maximum dwelling height of 8.5 metres
- Setback of 15 metres from the Federal Highway Road Reservation
- Rear and side setbacks in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Territory Plan.

### 4.3 City and Gateway Urban Design Framework (2018)

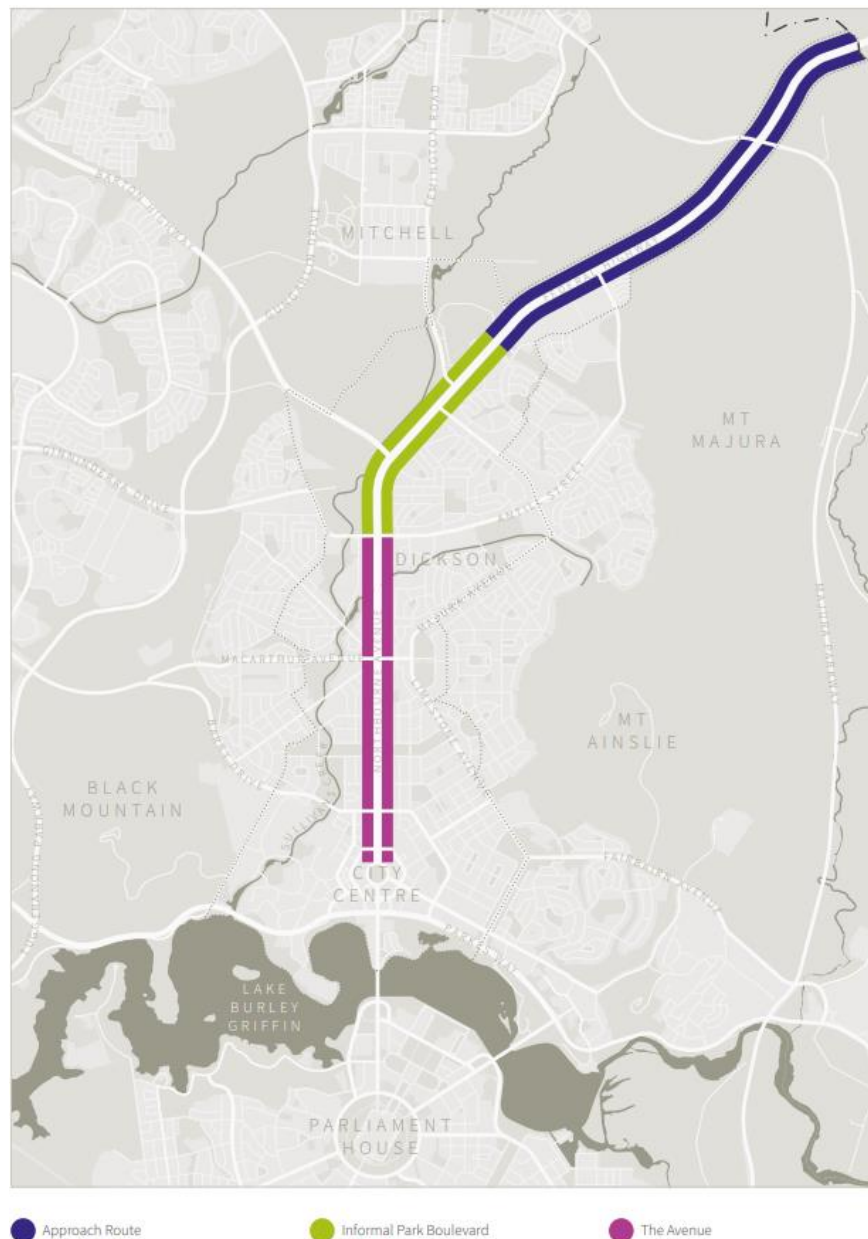
The City and Gateway Urban Design Framework outlines principles for the development and growth of the city centre, and the Northbourne Avenue and Federal Highway corridor.

Under the Framework, the subject site is adjacent to 'The Approach Route' precinct, shown in dark blue in Figure 11 below, extending from the ACT border to the intersection of the



Federal Highway with Flemington Road. This precinct is intended to have a landscape character, with a mix of natural bushland, endemic vegetation and grasslands.

FIGURE 11: GATEWAY PRECINCTS UNDER CITY AND GATEWAY URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



Source: National Capital Authority and ACT Government, 2018.<sup>14</sup>

The Framework proposes building heights of 8.5 metres in this part of the Gateway corridor, consistent with the National Capital Plan controls for the area. The Informal Park Boulevard and Avenue precincts are intended to increase building height and density progressively towards the city centre.

Any future development on the site resulting from the proposed TPV would be required to comply with the building heights identified in the Framework for this area, as these are consistent with the National Capital Plan. Residential development on the site is expected to be in the form of medium density housing, consistent with the existing character of North

<sup>14</sup> NCA and ACT Government, 2018, 'City and Gateway Draft Urban Design Framework,' March 2018, <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/application/files/5715/1978/9098/City-and-Gateway-Urban-Design-Framework-2018-Access.pdf>

Watson and the gradual progression of building density approaching the city centre identified in the Framework. The retention of existing trees and other vegetation on the site would also be in keeping with the Framework's principles.

#### 4.4 ACT Planning Strategy (2018)

The 2018 ACT Planning Strategy is the key guiding document for the growth and development of Canberra over the coming decades. The Strategy encourages urban intensification within particularly localities, including Town and Group Centres and along major transport corridors, as shown below in Figure 12.

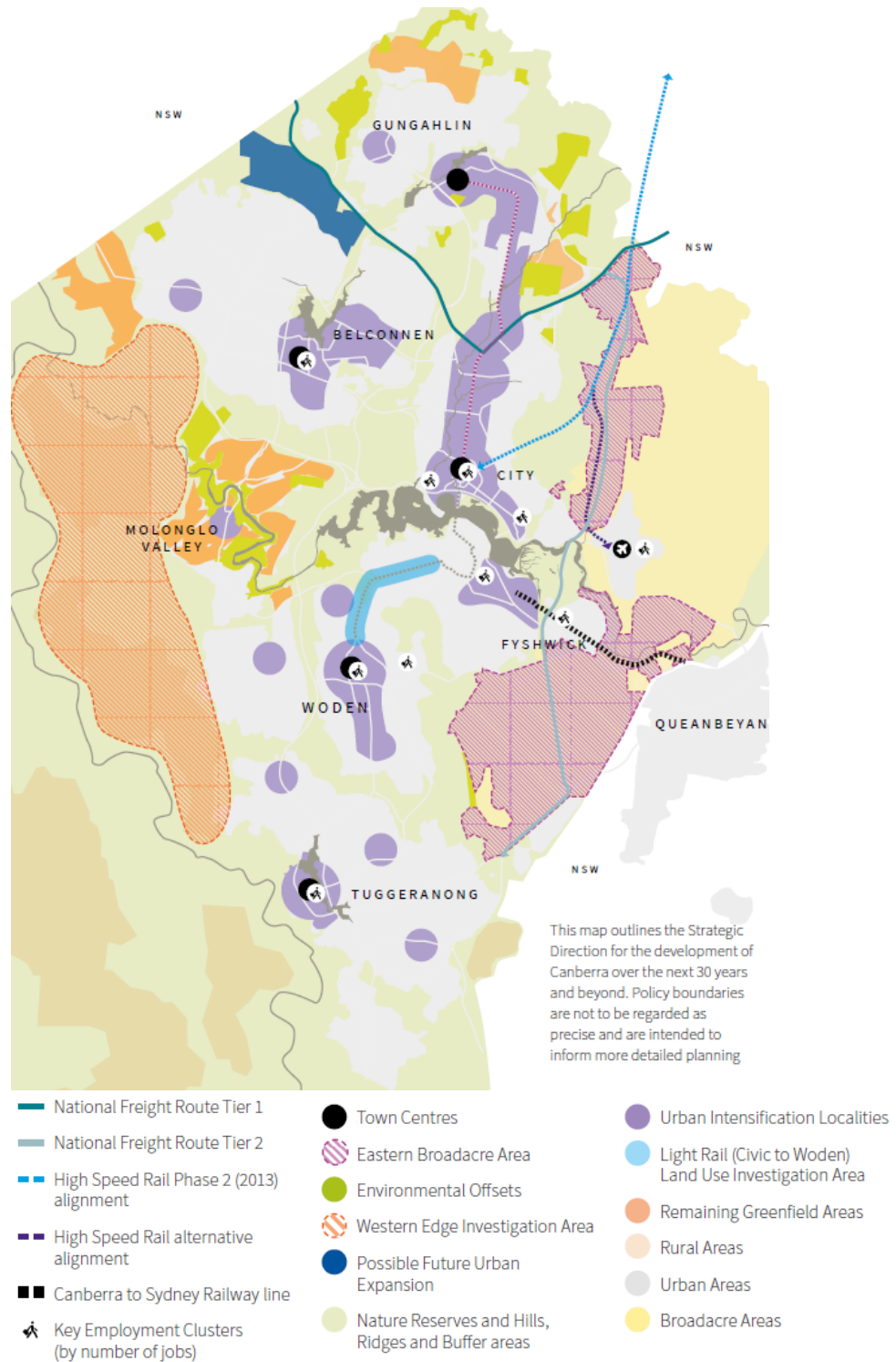
The Strategy builds on the previous 2012 Planning Strategy, and seeks to make Canberra a sustainable, competitive and equitable city, respectful of the landscape and status as the National Capital, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change. The five key related themes under the strategy are:

- Compact and efficient
- Diverse
- Sustainable and resilient
- Liveable
- Accessible.

Several of the strategic directions under the Strategy relate to the proposed TPV, including:

- 1.1 Support sustainable urban growth by working towards delivering up to 70 percent of new housing within our existing urban footprint, and by concentrating development in areas located close to the city centre, town and group centres and along key transit corridors.
- 4.2 Deliver recreation, open (green) space, and public spaces that support social interaction, physical and mental health and engagement in public life.
- 4.4 Deliver housing that is diverse and affordable to support a liveable city.
- 5.1 Enhance accessibility by better integrating transport and land use.

FIGURE 12: 2018 PLANNING STRATEGY POLICY PLAN



Source: ACT Government, 2018.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> ACT Government, 2018, 'ACT Planning Strategy 2018,' p. 7, [https://www.planning.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/1285972/2018-ACT-Planning-Strategy.pdf](https://www.planning.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1285972/2018-ACT-Planning-Strategy.pdf)

## 4.5 Statement of Planning Intent (2015)

The 2015 Minister's Statement of Planning Intent outlines planning priorities for Canberra over the immediate, short and medium term up to five years.<sup>16</sup>

One of four priorities under the Statement is for the creation of sustainable, compact and liveable neighbourhoods with better transport choices. The Statement highlighted a community desire for more inclusive neighbourhoods that deliver housing choice, community facilities, cater to all socio-demographic groups, and allow for ageing-in-place.

This included the planning intent to:

- Focus higher-density development with diverse housing types in the city centre, town and group centres, along major transport corridors and in other locations with good public transport and amenity.
- Foster medium-density housing options such as terrace houses, town houses and secondary dwellings as an appropriate form of development in suburbs.
- Locate infill development and affordable housing close to public transport routes and adjacent to parks, open space and other areas of high amenity.
- Encourage mixed-use developments at major centres and along public transport corridors to ensure active, vibrant community spaces and places.

Key actions identified in the Statement include to review residential zoning arrangements in order to encourage a wider range of housing choice, and to support medium density housing in neighbourhoods and suburbs, including terrace house and townhouse style developments. The proposed TPV to rezone for residential uses on Section 76 Watson supports these intentions, by enabling new housing to be provided and ensuring that infill development will be located close to public transport routes.

## 4.6 Draft Moving Canberra 2019-2045 Integrated Transport Strategy (2019)

The Draft Moving Canberra strategy, released in 2019, builds on the 2012 Transport for Canberra strategy, in setting out a vision for an integrated transport network across the city incorporating the new light rail network. The draft strategy responds to a number of identified challenges, including a growing and changing population, environmental constraints, emerging technologies, and the impact of urban renewal on how people choose to move around.

The draft strategy also focuses on a 'movement and place framework,' which sets out a way to balance the dual function of streets, for moving people and goods while also enhancing the places that they connect. In doing so, this is intended to create a more lively, functional and accessible city.

## 4.7 ACT Government's Toward Zero Growth: Healthy Weight Action Plan (2013)

The ACT Government developed the Healthy Weight Action Plan in response to increasing levels of overweight and obesity amongst both adults and children, attributed to a range of factors including diet and physical inactivity.

Actions under the plan are targeted at key themes, one of which is urban planning. This recognises the important role that planning and the built environment can have in reducing the disease burden associated with overweight and obesity, through its influence on how people move within the city.

---

<sup>16</sup> Minister for Planning, 2015, 'Statement of Planning Intent 2015,' [https://www.planning.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/898278/Statement\\_of\\_Planning\\_Intent\\_2016-web-Access.pdf](https://www.planning.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/898278/Statement_of_Planning_Intent_2016-web-Access.pdf)

The urban planning focused actions identified include the need to incentivise the use of active travel over private car transport, including through prioritising the provision of active travel infrastructure in planning for Canberra's suburbs and key centres.

Allowing for residential development would provide more housing in a location close to rapid transport stops and with existing walking and cycling infrastructure connecting to shops and other services (though these connections could also be improved), as well as recreational green space nearby. Providing housing in this area would make it possible for those living there to integrate walking and cycling into their routines more regularly, being within 1.2 to 1.8 kilometres of the nearest primary school and local shops, and thereby contribute to the aims of the Healthy Weight Action Plan.

#### 4.8 Climate Change Policies

The ACT Government has committed to a target of delivering net zero emissions by 2045, under the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010*. In line with this and the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 (discussed below), any future residential development on the subject site will need to comply with the initiatives outlined in these policies. How future development incorporates these features will need to be considered and detailed at the development application stage in future, with issues that will need to be addressed in planning for the site including:

- The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect
- Climate-wise design
- Living infrastructure
- Low-water use, and
- Low-carbon living.

#### ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 (2019)

The Climate Change Strategy sets out actions to reduce emissions and to build resilience to climate change impacts in the ACT. It outlines the steps the community, business and Government will take to reduce emissions by 50-60 per cent (below 1990 levels) by 2025, and establish a pathway for achieving net zero emissions by 2045. The 2019 Climate Change Strategy replaces the previous ACT Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2 and the ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

The Climate Change Strategy sets out the ACT Government's firm commitment to increase community resilience and adaptiveness to the effects of climate change by sustaining and enhancing living infrastructure on public and private land. This recognises that living infrastructure, which includes trees, wetlands and soil systems, can help keep Canberra cool and liveable in the changing climate. Living infrastructure also provides a range of additional benefits, including lower building energy demand, improved stormwater management, and improved health and amenity. The Climate Change Strategy includes targets to achieve 30 per cent tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30 per cent permeable surfaces by 2045 within the urban footprint of the city. To achieve this will require commitment and ongoing collective action from government, community and business. How we design, plan and build our city (i.e. both public and private land) is critical to achieving these targets. As such, any future development should incorporate appropriate living infrastructure measures into its design. The inclusion of one hectare of parkland and tree protection measures as part of the proposal is in line with the aims of the Climate Change Strategy.

#### 4.9 ACT Housing Strategy (2018)

A new ACT Housing Strategy was released in October 2018. The Strategy is intended to guide housing policy in the ACT over the next 10 years, in response to the diverse and changing housing needs of households and the need to provide a sustainable supply of housing for all household income levels.

The Strategy is focused on five goals:

- An equitable, diverse and sustainable supply of housing for the ACT community
- Reducing homelessness
- Strengthening social housing assistance
- Increasing affordable rental housing, and
- Increasing affordable home ownership.

A review of the Affordable Housing Action Plan and the conversation with the community and industry to inform the Housing Strategy took place over 18 months. The outcomes of the conversation and the 2017 Housing and Homelessness Summit appear in the consultation report, *What We Heard— Developing a New Housing Strategy for the ACT*.

### Actions under the Strategy

The Strategy outlines a number of objectives and actions for each goal, including in relation to land supply. These include:

- Setting a target for 15 per cent of all government land release dwelling sites to be public housing, community housing or affordable home purchases
- Providing land and housing development opportunities to meet demand
- Maintaining a healthy land and housing development pipeline
- Facilitate innovative design and delivery mechanisms
- Providing a diverse mix of housing types and choice, and
- Providing more affordable homes for purchase.

Future development on the site is likely to be consistent with the aims related to diversifying housing types, meeting housing demand needs, and opportunities for more affordable homes. The release of the site would also potentially need to contribute towards the 15 per cent social and affordable housing target for government land releases. The inclusion of demonstration housing (see below) on the site is also in line with the Housing Strategy's aims of providing a diverse mix and more affordable forms of housing.

### Housing Choices

As part of the preparation of the Strategy, the ACT Minister for Planning has also initiated a **Housing Choices project**, including consultation on how to better meet the housing needs of residents. The aim of this project is to improve the diversity of housing choices.

A report on the first stage of community consultation undertaken as part of this project was released in May 2018. Community views expressed, included a desire for more housing choices and flexible housing forms in existing neighbourhoods and suburbs, including a desire for more housing in the 'missing middle' range – specifically, medium density housing types such as dual occupancies, villas, terrace houses and townhouses. There was also support for the 'tiny house' movement, including provision for small houses on small blocks.<sup>17</sup>

### Demonstration housing

The Demonstration Housing Project is closely aligned with the Housing Choices project, concurrently being undertaken by EPSDD. It is testing and showcasing how we can best deliver a compact, sustainable, accessible and active city through innovative planning, design and delivery.

The Demonstration Housing Project responds to an ACT Legislative Assembly resolution passed in June 2017, which asked the ACT Government to engage with the community and industry stakeholders on how to deliver demonstration housing proposals that showcase best-practice in one or more of the following areas:

---

<sup>17</sup> ACT Government, 2018, 'Housing Choices Discussion Paper – Community Engagement Report,' May 2018, p.18, [https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/7615/2540/0051/Housing\\_Chchoices\\_Discussion\\_Paper\\_Community\\_Engagement\\_Report\\_-\\_May\\_2018.pdf](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/7615/2540/0051/Housing_Chchoices_Discussion_Paper_Community_Engagement_Report_-_May_2018.pdf).

- Best practice environmental performance
- Excellence in design and construction quality
- High quality medium density infill
- Innovative planning approaches
- Innovative housing products and typologies
- Close partnerships with industry bodies
- Options for public and affordable housing
- Support sustainable transport usage.

Recommendations from a deliberative democracy process, involving 37 individuals, helped to develop the evaluation criteria for Demonstration Housing Project proposals.

The lessons learnt from the Demonstration Housing projects will inform the Housing Choices policy. In 2019, letters were also sent to all Community Councils, including the North Canberra Community Council advising of the successful Demonstration Housing projects to date.



## 5. JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE

This section outlines evidence supporting the proposed changes to the subject site.

### 5.1 Need for the TPV

#### Demand for residential uses

The need for more affordable and diverse housing options in Canberra (and indeed around Australia) to both rent and buy is a well-publicised issue. As noted in the previous section, this need has been documented in the ACT Government's recent Housing Choices Project and related community engagement activities. Changing demographics are also changing the types of housing and other facilities that households need.

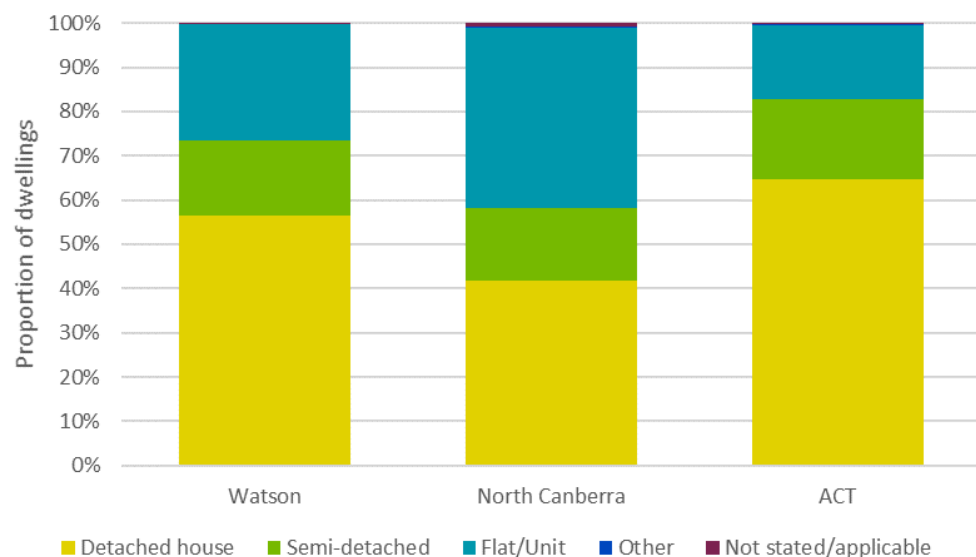
Established suburbs in the Inner North are popular locations for people to live in, with relatively good accessibility to the city centre and other facilities and opportunities in the region.

The Government's ILRP has previously identified the need for around 12,000 new dwellings (on average around 3,000 each year) over four years from 2018-2022, to accommodate around 30,000 additional residents in the ACT.<sup>18</sup>

#### Dwelling types

Figure 13 below shows that both Watson and the wider Inner North have higher proportions of medium and higher density housing than the ACT overall. In 2016, 17 percent of dwellings in Watson were semi-detached, and 26 percent were apartments. The wider Inner North has a similar proportion of semi-detached housing, but a larger proportion of apartments, at 41 percent.

FIGURE 13: DWELLING TYPES, 2016 CENSUS



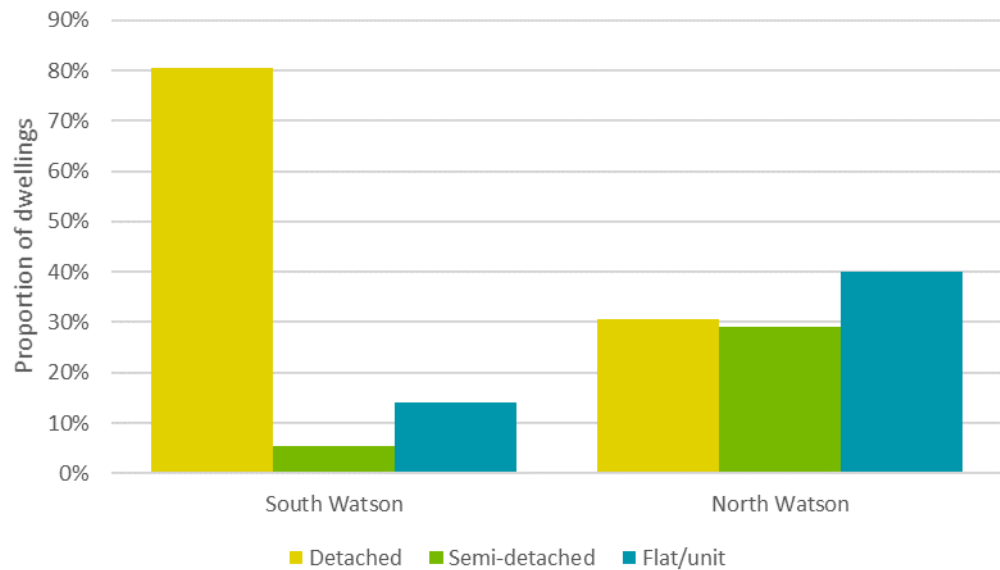
Source: ABS 2016 Census.

<sup>18</sup> ACT Indicative Land Release Program 2018-19 to 2021-22.



However, there is also a substantial difference between the types of existing dwellings in North Watson compared to the older southern part of the suburb. Figure 14 below illustrates this difference, where at the 2016 Census, only 31 percent of dwellings in North Watson were detached, compared to 80 percent in the rest of the suburb (shown as South Watson below).<sup>19</sup> Around 29 percent of dwellings in North Watson were semi-detached and 40 percent were in the form of units, compared to 18 percent and 17 percent respectively across the rest of the suburb.

FIGURE 14: DWELLING TYPES, NORTH AND SOUTH WATSON, 2016 CENSUS



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

\*Note: Distinction between South Watson and North Watson based on ABS Mesh Blocks. Data may have been adjusted for confidentiality and should be considered indicative only.

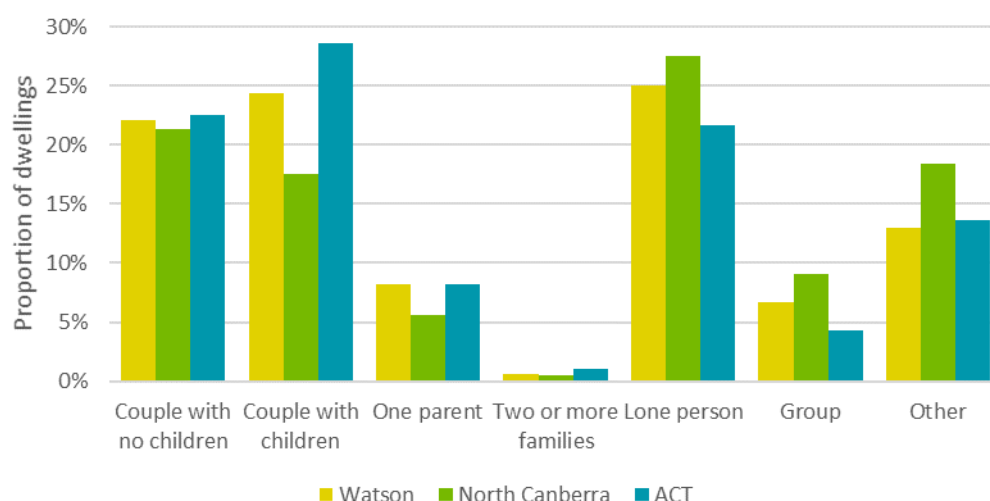
The type of residential development likely to be provided under the proposed TPV would be generally consistent with the existing character of Watson, particularly North Watson which includes more medium density development than the older part of the suburb. It would also contribute to increasing the ACT's housing diversity, which, as demonstrated above, remains predominantly detached housing.

### Household types

Figure 15 below shows the proportion of different household types in Watson compared to the Inner North and the ACT as a whole at the time of the 2016 Census. Watson has a larger proportion of couples with children compared to the Inner North, but this proportion is smaller than that across the ACT. Watson also has fewer lone person, group and 'other' households than the Inner North, but larger proportions than the ACT as a whole.

<sup>19</sup> The area identified as 'North Watson' for the Census data in this section is consistent with the Mesh Blocks located within the boundary of the North Watson Structure Plan plus the former Canberry Fair area i.e. the parts of Watson to the north-west of Stirling Avenue and the green corridor along Roma Mitchell Crescent.

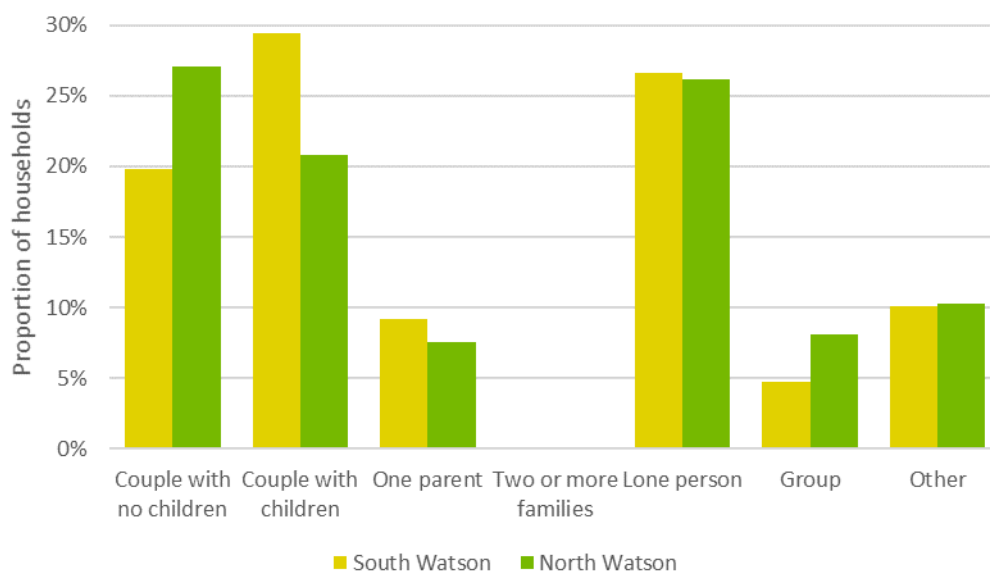
FIGURE 15: HOUSEHOLD TYPES, 2016 CENSUS



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

However, as is the case for the dwelling types, the predominant household types in North Watson compared to the south of the suburb also differ. This is illustrated below in Figure 16, where there are higher proportions of couples with no children (around 27 percent) and group households (around 8 percent) living in North Watson. Conversely, couples with children are the most common type of household in the south of the suburb, making up around 29 percent of households compared to 21 percent in North Watson.

FIGURE 16: HOUSEHOLD TYPES, SOUTH WATSON AND NORTH WATSON, 2016 CENSUS



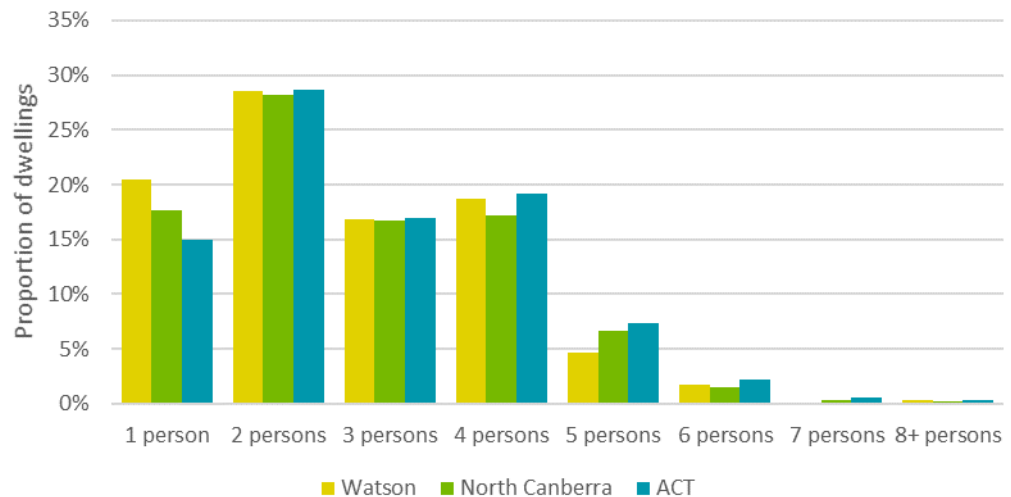
Source: ABS 2016 Census.

\*Note: Distinction between South Watson and North Watson based on ABS Mesh Blocks. Data may have been adjusted for confidentiality and should be considered indicative only. No data appears for 'Two or More Families' type due to rounding and ABS adjustments for confidentiality.

## Household size

As shown below in Figure 17, Watson has a relatively high proportion of lone person households living in detached dwellings compared to wider North Canberra and the ACT as a whole.

FIGURE 17: NUMBER OF USUAL RESIDENTS IN DETACHED HOUSING, 2016 CENSUS



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Within the suburb, average household sizes vary between dwelling types, as shown in Table 1 below. Detached houses in Watson have an average household size of 2.6 persons, compared to just 1.8 for households living in units or apartments.

TABLE 1: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZES IN WATSON, 2016 CENSUS

Dwelling type	Number of dwellings	Number of persons	Average household size
Detached	1,337	3,495	2.6
Semi-detached	376	877	2.3
Flat/unit	575	1,031	1.8
All occupied dwellings	2,296	5,407	2.4

Source: ABS 2016 Census.<sup>20</sup>

Further provision of medium to higher density housing types may allow for some of those lone person households to downsize from existing detached dwellings.

## Housing costs

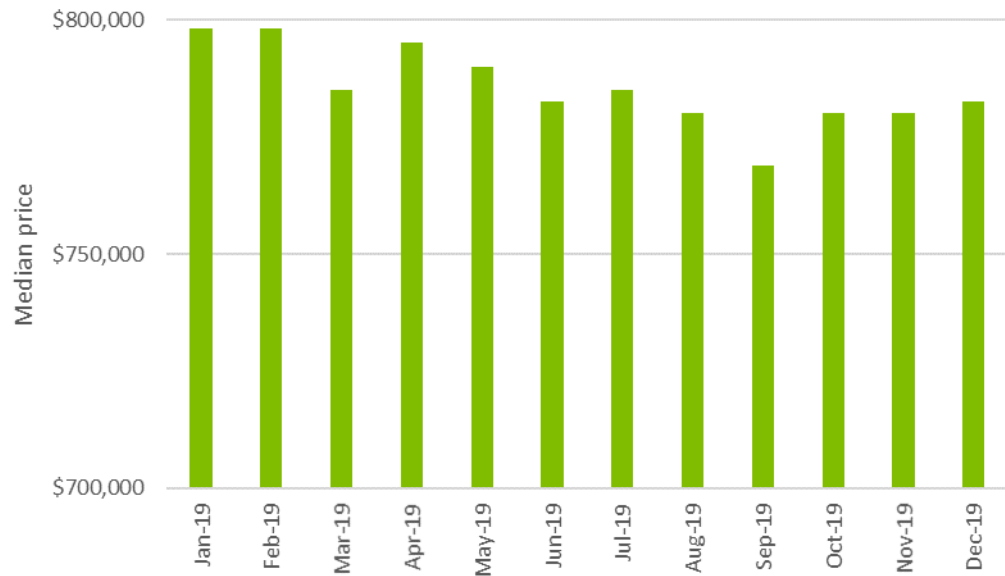
Inner North suburbs in the Watson area are increasingly popular locations for housing because of their relative accessibility to the city centre and other areas, but also because they can be more affordable than other suburbs in the Inner North.

In line with the rest of the ACT, growth in house prices has tailed off somewhat following the peak of the market, as shown in Figure 18 below. The median price for houses in Watson

<sup>20</sup> General Community Profile, 2016 Census, Watson (SA2), Catalogue No. 2001.0, released 23 October 2017, [http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/801051061?opendocument](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/communityprofile/801051061?opendocument)

declined from slightly between January and December 2019, from \$798,000 to \$782,500. However, these prices have grown from the previous year, with the median in January 2018 at \$730,000.

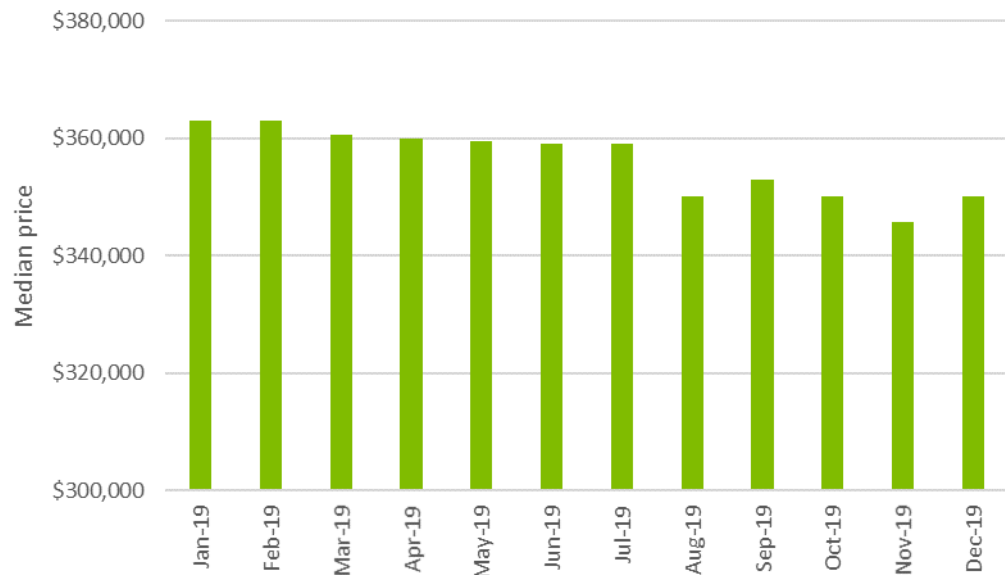
FIGURE 18: MEDIAN SALES PRICE FOR HOUSES IN WATSON, 12 MONTHS TO DECEMBER 2019



Source: Realestate.com.au, 2020.<sup>21</sup>

Sale prices for units in Watson have also decreased over the past year, with the median dropping from \$363,000 to \$350,000, as shown below in Figure 19.

FIGURE 19: MEDIAN SALES PRICE FOR UNITS IN WATSON, 12 MONTHS TO DECEMBER 2019



Source: Realestate.com.au, 2020.

<sup>21</sup> See <https://www.realestate.com.au/neighbourhoods/watson-2602-act>. Accessed January 2020.

The median price for a unit across North Canberra as of November 2019 was \$510,500, and for a house \$895,000.<sup>22</sup> This suggests that Watson remains a relatively affordable option for home buyers looking to purchase housing in the Inner North.

Similarly, recent rental prices in the Watson area are somewhat lower than other suburbs in the Inner North, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: MEDIAN WEEKLY RENTS, JANUARY 2020

	House	Unit
<b>Watson</b>	<b>\$550</b>	<b>\$430</b>
Acton	N/A	\$665
Ainslie	\$645	N/A
Braddon	\$650	\$500
Campbell	\$740	\$570
City	N/A	\$600
Dickson	\$600	\$500
Downer	\$570	\$370
Hackett	\$620	\$330
Lyneham	\$578	\$438
O'Connor	\$660	\$453
Reid	N/A	\$440
Turner	\$600	\$520

Source: Realestate.com.au, 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development, 2018, 'ACT Residential Property Market, November 2019,' Brief issued 23 December 2019, [https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/399985/RESPROP.pdf/\\_recache](https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/399985/RESPROP.pdf/_recache)

## Expected population growth

### Growth in Watson and North Canberra

At the time of writing this report, the most recent publicly available population projections by suburb in the ACT were released in January 2019, projected to 2022. Table 3 below shows the projected change in population for Watson, North Canberra, and the whole ACT over this period. Watson is expected to see an increase of around 750 people over this time. The suburb is also expected to have a higher rate of growth than both North Canberra and the ACT, at 12.5 percent compared to 9.6 percent and 9.9 percent respectively.

TABLE 3: POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2022

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change
Watson	6,023	5,883	5,984	6,287	6,539	6,776	753 (12.5%)
North Canberra	55,810	54,855	56,170	57,833	59,433	61,157	5,347 (9.6%)
ACT	411,667	420,321	428,509	436,635	444,651	452,590	40,923 (9.9%)

Source: ACT Treasury, 2019.<sup>23</sup>

Watson is also expected to accommodate one of the highest proportions of growth in the population of the North Canberra district, as shown in Table 4 below, at 14 percent, behind Civic and Campbell. The 17 percent growth rate in Watson between 2017 and 2022 is higher than most other suburbs in the district, behind Civic, Campbell and Dickson.

According to these projections, the population of North Canberra is expected to grow to 78,769 people by 2041, an increase of 25,408 (48 percent) from the population in 2015. This increase represents 14 percent of the projected growth across the ACT over this timeframe. New housing in accessible locations will be needed to accommodate this growth.

<sup>23</sup> ACT Treasury, 2019, 'Projections of the resident population 2019,' ACT Population Projections: 2018 to 2058, <https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/snapshot/demography/act>

TABLE 4: POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2022, BY SUBURB, NORTH CANBERRA

	2017	2022	% Change 2017-2022	% of North Canberra growth
Acton	2,198	2,229	1.4%	0.6%
Ainslie	5,317	5,153	-3.1%	-3.1%
Braddon	5,849	5,730	-2.0%	-2.2%
Campbell	3,451	4,467	29.5%	19.0%
Civic	4,790	7,732	61.4%	55.0%
Dickson	2,318	2,847	22.8%	9.9%
Downer	3,792	3,933	3.7%	2.6%
Duntroon	1,897	1,907	0.5%	0.2%
Hackett	3,032	3,050	0.6%	0.3%
Lyneham	5,448	5,884	8.0%	8.2%
O'Connor	5,753	5,640	-2.0%	-2.1%
Parkes - North	4	4	0.0%	0.0%
Reid	1,696	1,689	-0.4%	-0.1%
Russell	3	3	0.0%	0.0%
Turner	4,239	4,112	-3.0%	-2.4%
<b>Watson</b>	<b>6,023</b>	<b>6,776</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
<i>North Canberra</i>	<i>55,810</i>	<i>61,157</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Source: ACT Treasury, 2019, and SGS calculations.

### Potential population of Blocks 10, 11 and 12, Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson

To undertake the analysis in this report, an estimate of the potential future population has been developed. To account for the potential cumulative impact of development in the area, the potential population of future residential development on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 has also been considered. It has been assumed, as outlined in previous ILRPs, that the sites combined will be developed for a total of 400 dwellings.

Based on this, the existing average number of people per dwelling (2.2 people), and the age profile of residents from the 2016 census, the estimated future population across the two sites is around 880 people, illustrated below in Table 5.

Consistent with the current demographic makeup of North Watson, the demographics of this population are expected to be concentrated around younger households and families with children, with around 64 percent in the 20 to 49 years age bracket, and around 22 percent aged under 19.



TABLE 5: ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION OF BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 AND BLOCKS 10, 11 AND 12 SECTION 74

Age	Number	Proportion of population
0-4 years	76	8.6%
5-9 years	42	4.8%
10-14 years	35	4.0%
15-19 years	39	4.5%
20-24 years	84	9.6%
25-29 years	112	12.7%
30-34 years	140	15.9%
35-39 years	112	12.7%
40-44 years	65	7.3%
45-49 years	50	5.7%
50-54 years	35	4.0%
55-59 years	32	3.7%
60-64 years	28	3.1%
65-69 years	15	1.6%
70-74 years	7	0.8%
75-79 years	5	0.5%
80-84 years	1	0.2%
85-89 years	1	0.2%
90-94 years	1	0.1%
95-99 years	0	0.0%
100 years and over	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: SGS calculations based on ABS 2016 Census.

### Alignment with strategic planning and ACT Government priorities

The proposed variation, to rezone to allow for residential uses on the subject site, is consistent with the ACT Government's strategic planning and other priorities, including the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy.

Establishing a more compact city requires the concentration of future housing development in existing, well-connected and accessible locations. This helps to reduce the need for extensions to service infrastructure, and the need to encroach further on existing natural and undeveloped land on the outskirts of the ACT.

Providing the option for further housing development in relatively accessible locations such as North Watson is also consistent with the aims of the Planning Strategy and the draft Moving Canberra strategy, to increase the use of public transport and active transport, and reduce the number of private cars on the roads.

Allowing for the provision of housing in this area also aligns with the aims of the ACT Planning Strategy and ACT Housing Strategy. Development of low or medium density housing on the site, with the frontage onto the Federal Highway (although without direct road access), is also likely to be consistent with the desired character of the area under the City and Gateway Urban Design Framework, for a progressive increase in densities on approach to the centre of the city.

## 5.2 Advantages of allowing for residential use under the proposal

### Demand for well-located housing and greater housing choices

It is likely that residential development would generally be considered an attractive future development option on the site. This is due to current market realities, including the strong demand for housing generally and particularly in the Inner North.

Established suburbs in the Inner North are popular locations for people to live, with relative accessibility to the city centre and other facilities and opportunities in the region a key driver of this. As shown in Section 5.1, housing in Watson, including North Watson, has been generally more affordable than equivalent housing in other parts of the Inner North.

As is also noted in Section 5.1, the need for more affordable and diverse housing options in Canberra has been documented in the ACT Government's recent work around the Housing Choices Discussion Paper, the ACT Housing Strategy, and accompanying community consultation.<sup>24</sup> The Community Engagement report covered the first stage of community consultation as part of the Housing Choices project, and documented the community's expressed desire for more housing choices and flexible housing forms in existing neighbourhoods and suburbs. This included a desire for more housing in the 'missing middle' range – specifically, medium density housing types such as dual occupancies, villas, terrace houses and townhouses. There was also support for the 'tiny house' movement, including provision for small houses on small blocks.

While the proposed TPV would not rule out the construction of low-rise apartments or units, it is likely that most new housing that would be built on the subject site would be town houses, villas or detached housing. This would be consistent with the new housing at the Mount Majura Estate, Norrebro and The Ridge in North Watson. More diverse forms of housing will also be needed to meet the changing needs of residents as demographics change. As noted above, the proposed TPV includes provisions for demonstration housing as part of Section 76, which will contribute to greater housing diversity.

As noted previously, the introduction of the new bus network is intended to increase the use of public transport, with more people being close to Rapid routes. One of these Rapid routes travels along Aspinall Street, and provides convenient access to the city centre and Belconnen for current and future residents in this area.

The provision of additional housing in North Watson would also be consistent with the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy which encourages urban intensification around centres and transport corridors with a target for up to 70 per cent of new housing being within existing urban boundaries. Additional housing built in North Watson would contribute to this target, and also be beneficial due to its proximity to the city centre and employment opportunities compared to greenfield release areas such as in outer Gungahlin, West Belconnen and Molonglo.

### Potential for other uses

The proposed rezoning of Block 2 Section 76 to predominantly RZ4 would allow for some forms of community facilities. As noted above, additional provisions are proposed to allow for the development for demonstration housing, a craft workshop and social enterprise facilities as part of the TPV. If the sites were sold for private development the inclusion of community facilities on these sites would only be likely if the economic returns generated were favourable to the developer.

Under the proposed TPV, the sites could no longer be developed for leisure and tourism uses, and the potential for the inclusion of these types of uses alongside residential development would be removed. For example, there would not be an opportunity for the provision of a

---

<sup>24</sup> See ACT Government, 2018, [https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/7615/2540/0051/Housing\\_Choices\\_Discussion\\_Paper\\_Community\\_Engagement\\_Report\\_-\\_May\\_2018.pdf](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/7615/2540/0051/Housing_Choices_Discussion_Paper_Community_Engagement_Report_-_May_2018.pdf)

restaurant as part of a mixed use development that could also include accommodation for visitors or apartments for local residents.

The inclusion of community facilities would also be more restricted, as only some types of facilities are permitted in residential zones, such as small child care centres and small-scale health facilities (for example, GPs operating from their own residences).

While proposed changes limit the potential for some type of uses, rezoning the sites provides greater clarity around applicable planning controls, and has the potential to deliver more certainty to the market and community around what will be delivered.

### 5.3 Other options for use of the land

If a decision is made **not to proceed** with the proposed TPV, other options to be considered could include:

- Adding residential as a permitted land use to the existing zoning (as per previous TPV proposal)
- Sell the land for uses consistent with current CZ6 zoning
- Defer sale of the land, and retain for current uses at least in the short to medium term
- Government to retain ownership of the land and use for purposes consistent with CZ6 zoning, for example a school, health facility, tourist information facility or park, or
- Some combination of the above.

#### Adding residential as a permitted use to the CZ6 zone

The previous TPV proposal was to include residential as a permitted use in the existing CZ6 zoning on the subject site. This approach would have had the benefit of allowing for new housing to be developed while also retaining the potential for the inclusion of the range of community facilities identified below in Table 6 which are permitted in the CZ6 zone.

However, given the relatively strong demand for housing in this area, it is likely that without the ACT Government stipulating that community facilities would need to be provided (such as through an EDP process) the site would be primarily developed for residential uses, as this is likely to be the highest and best use from a financial standpoint for developers.

The current proposal to rezone Block 2 Section 76 to RZ4 has the advantage over the former approach in providing more certainty to the market and community about what will be provided on the sites, and simplifying the administration and application of planning controls under the Territory Plan.

TABLE 6: PERMITTED COMMUNITY USES IN CZ6 ZONE, AS DEFINED IN THE TERRITORY PLAN

Use	Definition
Child care centre	Means the use of land for the purpose of educating, supervising or caring for children of any age throughout a specified period of time in any one day, which is registered under the Children and Young People Act 2008 or authorised pursuant to the Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011 and which does not include residential care.
Community activity centre	Means the use of land by a public authority or a body of persons associated for the purpose of providing for the social well being of the community.
Community theatre	Means the use of land for a theatre, cinema, concert hall, auditorium or theatre run by non-profit organisations.
Cultural facility	Means the use of land for the purpose of cultural activities to which the public normally has access, but does not include a shop for art, craft or sculpture dealer.
Educational establishment	Means the use of land for the purpose of tuition, training or research directed towards the discovery or application of knowledge, whether or not for the purposes of gain, and may include associated residential accommodation.
Health facility	Means the use of land for providing health care services (including diagnosis, preventative care or counselling) or medical or surgical treatment to outpatients only.
Hospital	Means the use of land for the medical care (including diagnosis, preventative care and counselling) of inpatients, whether or not out-patients are also provided with care or treatment, and may include associated residential accommodation.
Place of worship	Means the use of land for the primary purposes of religious worship and associated activities by a congregation, religious group or members of the public whether or not the premises are also used for religious instruction, tuition, meetings, training and other community activities.
Religious associated use	Means the use of land for the activities conducted by religious organisations other than for worship or for offices and may include residential accommodation by ministers of religion.

Source: ACT Government, 2018.<sup>25</sup>

### Retaining CZ6 zoning for the site and sell for private development

Another alternative would be for the current zoning of the site as CZ6 Accommodation and Leisure to be retained, and the land sold for the current permitted uses only, where residential uses would not be permitted.

CZ6 zoning generally provides for indoor entertainment and recreation facilities, clubs, drink establishments, restaurants and commercial (tourist) accommodation. Limited retail facilities (generally associated with visitor accommodation, recreation or cultural facilities) and some community uses (as shown previously in Table 6) are also permitted.

While there may be some interest in the development of the subject site for tourist accommodation, there are already a number of tourist accommodation facilities in the area, targeting the more affordable end of the visitor market. Developers of more up-market tourist accommodation have recently focused on areas closer to the city and Lake Burley Griffin, where there are a number of newly-constructed and proposed hotels in the development pipeline.

New low-cost tourism accommodation suitable for school and sporting groups has recently been developed on the opposite side of the Federal Highway to North Watson. There are also camping and caravan sites available as part of EPIC. Some previous entertainment and leisure facilities in the Watson area have experienced financial difficulties and have subsequently closed. The site in North Watson that was previously occupied by the Canberry Fair theme

<sup>25</sup> ACT Government, 2018, 'Definitions,' effective 25 May 2018, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/119218/pdf/2008-27.pdf>

park, including an associated bar and restaurant, is now used for residential uses, as is the former Starlight Drive-in site. Not far away, in Section 72 Dickson, a pitch and putt golf course and a licensed club have also closed.

There are also already a number of leisure and recreation facilities in areas close to Watson including EPIC, Thoroughbred Park, Yowani Country Club and Golf Course, Dickson Pool, Southwell Park and the tennis and hockey centres in Lyneham. The site is also within walking distance of the Watson Arts Centre. There are also already a number of community use facilities in North Watson, including the Watson Arts/Pottery Centre, the Ted Noffs facility, Youth With a Mission and C3 Church. There is also a small community centre in Tay Street, North Watson

While the ACT Government currently provides land under concessional arrangements for many of the community uses identified above, the market may still be prepared to pay a competitive price for land that could be used for a child care centre or a private medical facility. However, it is unlikely that all of the land identified for sale would be required for these purposes. As noted above, changes in demographics and how community facilities are used will also affect the potential demand for different uses.

The proposed Norrebro Development, on the corner of Aspinall Street and Negus Crescent, has previously included plans for the provision of a child care centre, outdoor dining, a café, an adventure playground, event and exhibition space. However, it is understood that the development is being amended to reduce the density and number of dwellings, and may no longer include the proposed additional facilities. If the proposed child care centre goes ahead as part of this development, it would likely make the provision of an additional child care centre close by a less attractive proposition.

The sale of the subject site solely for CZ6 uses would also mean that some households seeking to purchase or rent medium density housing, such as townhouses or detached houses on compact blocks, would have to look elsewhere, which may be further away from the city centre.

### **Defer sale of land, and retain current uses**

As noted previously, the land is currently vacant and unused. There are ongoing maintenance costs associated with the site in its current form, including management for bushfire risk and weed control. Under this option, additional revenue that could be generated from the sale of the site and from land rates would be foregone.

Not allowing for residential uses would remove an opportunity to provide for more housing, and more affordable housing choices, in a relatively central part of the city with reasonable transport access and amenity. This in turn may limit the ACT Government's ability to achieve its strategic planning, affordable housing and climate change objectives and targets.

The sale and redevelopment of the sites, for residential or other uses, may also provide an impetus for the upgrading of associated community infrastructure in North Watson, such as active travel connections.

### **ACT Government to retain the sites for community and other uses**

There would likely be benefits from this option flowing to the local community and adjacent residents in particular. If the site retained its current CZ6 zoning, this would allow for some types of community uses, as defined in the Territory Plan, and shown in Table 6 above. This could include educational uses, such as a primary school.

As is discussed in more detail in Section 6, there has been strong community support for the sites to be used for community purposes, nature reserves or parkland in some form. It is now proposed to include one hectare of parkland as part of the proposal.

Preliminary consultation with the community identified concerns about the loss of the potential for community-based facilities and green space in this part of the suburb. There was

also a view expressed that before more development was approved that there is a need for an overall plan for the development of North Watson, and better links between North Watson and the longer-established areas of the suburb. Further consultation with the community concerning these issues will be undertaken as the TPV process progresses.

## 6. PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION

---

This section summarises preliminary consultation undertaken regarding the proposed changes.

*Please note: The consultation process described below was conducted based on a preliminary form of the proposed TPV in 2018, and the proposal has since been amended, including in response to a number of the concerns raised in the consultation process. The former proposal allowed for the introduction of residential uses to the current CZ6 zoning across both Block 2 Section 76 and Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74. It did not include the proposal to rezone to RZ4 or the inclusion of one hectare public park and the protection of green space at the western edge of the site of space to PRZ1, nor the additional provisions relating to demonstration housing and social enterprise which are part of the current proposal.*

### 6.1 Consultation context

#### Scoping Document requirements

The Scoping Document for this Planning Report required that preliminary consultation on the proposal be undertaken. The Scoping Document identified that at a minimum, consultation should include at least one public meeting or discussion session, widely advertised in print and electronic media.

A summary of the community engagement processes and outcomes for this project are included below. A separate and more comprehensive report on the preliminary consultation processes and outcomes has been provided with this Planning Report.

#### Wider consultation context

Initial consultation on the TPV is just one of a number of consultation activities underway in the Inner North area of Canberra. The Inner North and Watson have seen substantial change in recent years, driven by the introduction of Light Rail, the ACT Government's Asset Recycling Initiative, and the redevelopment of a number of privately owned sites for new housing.

Other recent public consultation activities in this area include those relating to:

- The ACT Planning Strategy (2018)
- Temporary improvements of the Dickson pool forecourt
- The future and proposed redevelopment of Canberra Technology Park
- Public housing renewal sites in Dickson and Turner
- Future use of Section 72 Dickson
- Proposed heritage registration of the Signadou and Blackfriars Precinct
- The City and Gateway Urban Renewal Framework
- The New Bus Network for Canberra, and
- City Services and a Better Suburbs Statement for Canberra.

### 6.2 Community consultation processes undertaken

#### Public information session

A public information session was held at the Carotel Motel in Aspinall Street, North Watson, on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018 from 10am to 12 Noon. This was attended by representatives



from SGS, EPSDD and Indesco. Information presented included maps showing significant trees and preliminary results of traffic modelling.

This information session was advertised in a flyer explaining the proposed changes and consultation processes. Over 800 copies of the flyer were delivered to residents, businesses and community facilities in the North Watson area on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Multiple copies of the same flyer were also delivered to businesses at the Watson Shops, and to the Majura Primary School and preschool.

The information session was also advertised in the Public Notices section of *The Canberra Times*, in the print version and online on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

### Online survey

An online survey for feedback on the proposal was prepared, including provision for open-ended responses. There was also an option for people to provide hard copy responses to the survey. Information on how to access the online survey was included in the flyer that was widely distributed.

### Watson Community Association meeting

At the invitation of the Watson Community Association (WCA), representatives from SGS, EPSDD, Indesco and Traffix Group also attended a meeting on the evening of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, at the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson. Similar information to that available at the Information Session on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, was made available again, and there was also a Q & A session.

Timing for responses to the online survey and other input, was extended to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August, to allow further feedback from the WCA meeting to be submitted and considered.

### WCA plan for Watson

The WCA has also created a plan for Watson.<sup>26</sup> The Plan was initiated in response to several community meetings in which residents raised concerns about their neighbourhood and suburb, which included the level of development happening in the suburb, and a perception of the planning for the area as being uncoordinated. Specific concerns raised in the Plan include the potential for developments to impact on the environment, trees and green space, community facilities and roads, active travel connections, and the overall character of the suburb.

A number of these themes are reflected in the preliminary consultation outcomes discussed below. EPSDD has indicated that the WCA's Plan will be considered as part of future community consultation processes relating to the subject site.

## 6.3 Community Consultation Outcomes

### Participation in engagement processes

Many residents of North Watson and surrounding areas contributed to the preliminary consultations:

- Around 25 residents attended the public information session on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.
- Around 80 residents attended the WCA meeting on the evening of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.
- There were 160 responses to the online survey, with 87 percent of these responses being from residents of Watson.

Separate community engagement processes were also undertaken by the WCA and Living Streets Association, including information gathering at the Watson Shops.

---

<sup>26</sup> See <https://watson.org.au/a-neighbourhood-plan-for-watson/>

- This additional community engagement led to a wide range of uses for the vacant sites being suggested, as well as the need for residents and Government representatives to work together to develop plans for any further development in the North Watson area.
- A copy of a petition prepared for presentation to the Legislative Assembly was also provided to SGS. This petition opposed the proposed TPV. It had a total of around 330 signatures, with around 65 percent of these signatories indicating that they lived in Watson.

### General comments and issues raised in preliminary consultations

There was general consistency across the community forums and the online survey in the issues and concerns raised about the proposed TPV. The concerns expressed also often extended beyond the scope of this project to include broader concerns including:

- The Government's Land Release Program
- Inadequate opportunity for community input to the overall planning for North Watson
- Adverse impacts of "developer-led" land use planning
- Inadequate feedback from a previous consultation process, and
- Poor quality of some recent developments in the area.

A summary of other issues raised is included below.

### Environment and Trees

Views were expressed about the need within North Watson to protect open space, trees, wildlife corridors and habitat for birds, such as galahs, as well as the endangered Superb Parrots. These views were linked to perceptions of Canberra as the 'bush capital'.

Concern was expressed that some existing trees on the sites, particularly Section 76, would be removed in the course of development. Some land owners/occupiers in nearby properties valued the existing pine trees and other trees that act as a visual and wind buffer.

There was support expressed for the retention of the important trees identified in the maps on both Section 74 and Section 76.

### Transport and Parking

Traffic modelling information prepared by the Traffix Group indicated that the additional traffic generated as a result of the proposed TPV would not have a significant adverse impact on current roads in the area, and would not generate the need for specific modifications to existing roads.

However, general concerns were expressed by residents that both Aspinall Street and Antill Streets in North Watson are currently used for "rat running" by people who don't live in this area, and that this needs to be addressed. Additional traffic on these streets would make the current situation worse.

The need for better active travel (walking and bicycle path) connections was also identified.

Concern was also expressed that some current residential developments in North Watson do not provide enough parking for residents and visitors, and that there are not enough parking spaces at the Watson shops to accommodate additional demand.

### Need for additional playgrounds, child care and schools, shops and general community facilities

There was a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, leisure, child care centres and shops.

The current facilities in the older parts of Watson were not seen as adequate to meet the needs of North Watson residents as well. Of particular concern was the potential impact of the proposal on local schools, particularly on Majura Primary, but also on high schools in the area.

A number of suggestions were made for potential alternative uses of the sites, or for elements that could be incorporated into future development. These included the potential for aged care facilities, recognising that this area is relatively flat and would be more suitable for such development than some other sites.

A popular sentiment was that the sites should have a role as a place for the community, potentially including restaurants or cafes which allow people to get together. The use of the sites for parks, playgrounds and nature reserves was also suggested. Since this consultation was undertaken, the ACT Government has also embarked on a separate process of engaging with the community through the Better Suburbs Statement, which included a specific focus on the need for these types of facilities and infrastructure as well.<sup>27</sup>

### **Implications of allowing for residential development on the sites**

Many of the responses to the online survey acknowledged that there would likely be demand for additional housing in this part of Canberra, but saw the need to balance this with community facilities and benefits for residents. There was also a perception that allowing residential uses would mean that the sites would ultimately be developed primarily for residential units and not include any of the CZ6 uses allowed under the current zoning.

Some responses identified a preference for lower density housing. There was a general view that there should be a maximum height limit of two storeys. A number of responses also mentioned the need for a different type of product that could appeal to downsizers and older people.

---

<sup>27</sup> See <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/BetterSuburbs>

# 7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

---

This section assesses the potential impacts of the proposed TPV.

The impact assessment considers the potential for future residential development on both the subject site (Block 2 Section 76), and the nearby undeveloped sites of Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 Watson. This approach has been taken in order to understand the potential cumulative impact of continued development in this part of the suburb in light of community concerns.

It is important to note that while this impact assessment takes a holistic approach and considered the potential impact of development across both sites, **the proposed TPV only applies to Block 2 Section 76**. Further work will be needed in planning for any land use changes to Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74.

## 7.1 Environmental impacts

### Biodiversity Ecological Values and Constraints Assessment

As at June 2020, the ACT Government's ACTmapi database did not identify any registered trees or significant vegetation or biodiversity areas on Block 2 Section 76.

An Ecological Values and Constraints Assessment (EVCA) was undertaken on the subject site by Capital Ecology.<sup>28</sup> This EVCA considered any listed significant biodiversity values that occurred, or had the potential to occur, on the sites.

The EVCA concluded that development on Section 76 was:

- Unlikely to significantly impact upon any Matter of National Environmental Significance (MNES), meaning that referral under the EPBC Act would not be warranted, and
- Unlikely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on any species or ecological communities listed under the ACT's Nature Conservation Act, meaning the requirement for preparation of an EIS would not be triggered.

The EVCA recommended that development on Section 76 should include:

- Planting of local native midstorey and overstorey vegetation, particularly Yellow Box and Blakely's Red gums, and local native shrubs, and
- Landscaping with native grasses and other groundcover where possible.

These measures were also identified as important to improving the value of the site as movement corridors for Superb Parrots and other native birds.

Copies of the full report prepared by Capital Ecology have been provided with this Planning Report.

### Tree Assessment

A Tree Assessment was also conducted for both sites in July 2018.<sup>29</sup> This assessment identified the key issue of concern relating to trees on the sites to be their role as foraging habitat for birds, specifically, the Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*). The Superb Parrot is

---

<sup>28</sup> Capital Ecology, 2018, *Ecological Values and Constraints Report, Block 2 Section 76 Watson*, April 2017;

<sup>29</sup> Indesco, 2020, 'Final Tree Assessment Report for Block 2 Section 76 Watson & Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 Watson,' Version 7, June 2020.

listed as vulnerable in the ACT, and is on the National Register, with a limited number of breeding pairs known to be left in Australia.

The Tree Assessment has also been prepared and updated to address further comments by the ACT Conservator of Flora and Fauna and the Tree Protection Unit within the ACT Government on the importance of retaining trees for the Superb Parrot.

The Watson area has been identified as important for this species' habitat, which is limited in the ACT, and requires a specific form of tree cover, including trees for movement, hollows, and seed-bearing vegetation. Superb Parrots have been seen on both Sections 74 and 76 Watson, and are known to nest on Throsby Ridge.

The Tree Assessment has recommended several principles and actions to be taken on the subject site in order to maintain and improve habitat known to be attractive to Superb Parrot, with the retention of trees on Section 76 to continue to provide:

- Shade and wind protection for any future development.
- Food sources for the Superb Parrot and other bird species. Furthermore, removal of *Pinus Radiata* amongst the established Blue Gums could adversely impact and potentially deteriorate the quality of the Blue Gums, as observed at other similar locations.
- Amenity to the fauna of the site and surrounding area by providing shelter and habitat, this includes retaining poor quality, rotting or trees that are in poor health.
- Opportunities for non-regulated trees to mature and replace senescing trees. These will provide further long-term amenity for any future development.

Any future development applications will be considered against these principles.

Figure 20 below illustrates the results of the tree assessment for Block 2 Section 76.

FIGURE 20: TREE AND PARROT HABITAT ASSESSMENT – BLOCK 2 SECTION 76 WATSON (TPV SUBJECT SITE)



Source: Indesco, 2020.

A copy of the report prepared by Indesco has been provided with this Planning Report.

### Environmental considerations identified by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna

Advice on environmental considerations for both sites was provided as an Attachment to the Scoping Document, prepared as a guide for this Planning Report (see Appendix). This advice identified:

- That there are no biodiversity constraints to prevent a draft variation from proceeding, however, the retention of hollow-baring trees on Section 74 and landscaping to include Superb Parrot food plants were recommended.
- Neither the Golden Sun Moth nor Striped Legless Lizards were present on the sites, based on appropriate site surveys.
- Vegetation on the sites is not considered to be of a sufficient quality to be regarded as native vegetation or to meet listing criteria for endangered grassland or woodland.
- Planted trees around Section 76 should be retained as a foraging resource for Superb Parrots.
- Consideration should also be given to the inclusion of favoured Superb Parrot food plants in future landscaping, including:
  - English Elm
  - Chinese Elm
  - Blakeley's Red Gum
  - Wattles bearing immature pods, such as Silver Wattle, White Wattle, Snowy River Wattle, and Black Wattle.

### Arrangements for Tree Protection

Trees that have been identified as significant for the vulnerable Superb Parrot will be required to be protected in public open spaces and local parks as part of any development on the two sites. The Tree Protection Act 2005 also has provisions preventing the removal of other Regulated Trees in declared Tree Management Precincts on leased Territory land. For this purpose, a Regulated Tree is generally either:

- 12 metres or more in height
- 1.5 metres or more in circumference at 1 metre above ground
- With two or more trunks and the total circumference of all the trunks, 1 metre above ground level, is 1.5 metres or more, or
- 12 metres or more in crown width.

Some local residents have expressed a strong preference to retain all the trees on the sites, and any proposal for tree removal will need to be carefully considered. Before a TPV can be approved there is also a requirement for further consultation with the Conservator of Flora and Fauna and the Environmental Protection Authority.

Detailed arrangements for the retention and protection of trees will also be subject to approval as part of estate development planning.

### Site Contamination

#### Preliminary Site Investigation

A Preliminary Site Investigation for the subject site was conducted in June 2018 by Douglas Partners.<sup>30</sup> This investigation assessed the potential for contamination of the sites based on their past and present uses and activities, contaminants of potential concern, potential areas of environmental concern, potential human and ecological receptors, and the likely suitability of the site for residential use.

---

<sup>30</sup> Douglas Partners, 2018, *Report on Preliminary Site Investigation Block 2 Section 76 Watson*, July 2018.



The Investigation identified the following potential sources of contamination for Section 76:

- Imported filling materials – from an unknown origin; historical photographs indicate disturbances across the site
- Potential impacts from past agricultural use – past use for agricultural purposes means there is potential for herbicides and pesticides to have been used, and
- Potential impacts from former underground storage tank on an adjacent site (removed c.1999) – potential impacts from migration of hydrocarbons to the site.

The following sources of potential contamination were identified for Section 74:

- Imported filling materials from an unknown origin - historical photographs indicate disturbances across the site
- Potential impacts from past agricultural use – past use for agricultural purposes means there is potential for herbicides and pesticides to have been used
- Potential impacts from former underground storage tank on an adjacent site (removed c.1999) – potential impacts from migration of hydrocarbons to the site, and
- Potential impacts from operational service station on the opposite side of Antill Street – while there is no current information to suggest that fuel storage has impacted the site, there is potential for hydrocarbons to migrate.

For both subject sites, the Preliminary Investigation identified that the likelihood of gross contamination on the sites was low to moderate.

## Phase 2 Site Investigation

A Phase 2 Assessment was completed in January 2021 for the subject site by Indesco, which included assessment of potential contaminants listed in the preliminary site investigation report.<sup>31</sup>

The Phase 2 investigation of Section 76 suggests that it does not appear to be impacted by gross contamination, however, there is an area along the northern border which contains soils with high concentrations of heavy metals. Though this concentration is attributed to natural geology (rather than human made factors), this area is not considered suitable for residential uses without further mitigation or management actions.

## Processes regarding site contamination

An environmental assessment into the site's suitability from a contamination perspective must be undertaken in accordance with the ACT Contaminated Sites Environment Protection Policy and be endorsed by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) prior to development or a change in use. This rule does not apply if the EPA has provided written advice that Section 76 Watson has been assessed for contamination to its satisfaction.

The EPA has provided comments indicating support for a variation to allow residential use on the sites, providing that the investigation above has been completed.

Copies of the reports prepared by Douglas Partners and Indesco respectively, have been provided with this Planning Report.

## Water Sensitive Urban Design

As outlined above, the ACT Government has made strong commitments regarding the environment, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and integrating living infrastructure into future development in Canberra. Accordingly, development of the site in the future will need to comply with the relevant water sensitive urban design (WSUD) provisions, to limit the impact housing development will have on the surrounding ecosystem. Measures to integrate

---

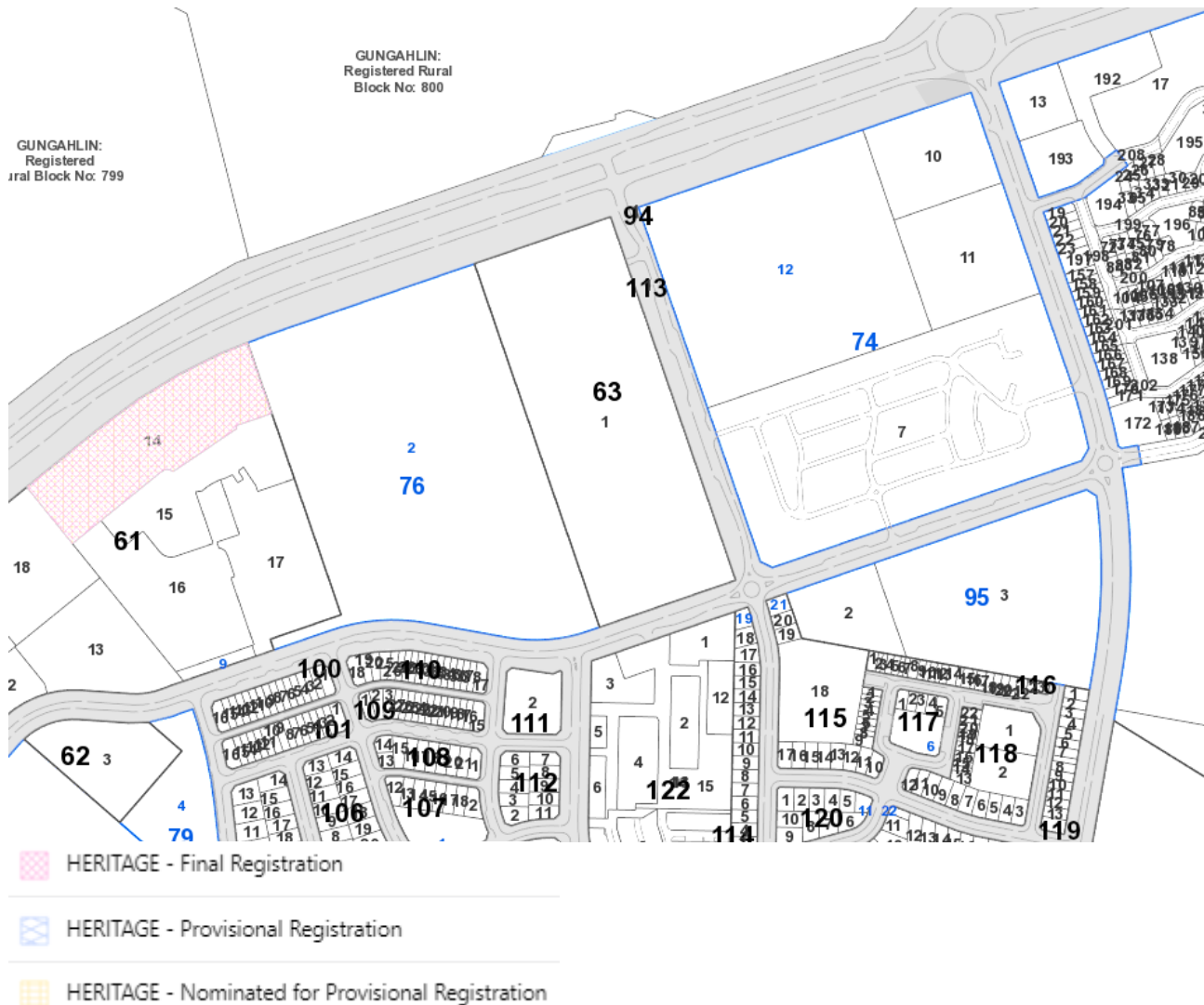
<sup>31</sup> Indesco, 2021, *Site Investigation Report for Watson Section 76 Block 2*, Version 9, January 2021.

WSUD would need to be considered at the detailed design and development application stages.

## 7.2 Heritage assessment

The ACT Government's ACTmapi database does not currently identify any heritage items located on either of the two sites, nor were any identified in a previous planning report concerning these sites.<sup>32</sup> The Starlight Drive-In Theatre Sign on Section 61 (adjacent Block 2 Section 76) is the only apparent heritage item in close proximity, as illustrated below in Figure 21.

FIGURE 21: HERITAGE ITEMS IN PROXIMITY OF THE SUBJECT SITES



Source: ACTmapi, 2020.<sup>33</sup>

## Cultural Heritage Assessment and Statement of Heritage Effects

A Cultural Heritage Assessment was prepared for the subject sites in June 2020 by Navin Officer Heritage Consultants.<sup>34</sup> The Assessment included a review of historical ACT Government data relating to the sites and surrounds, and two site visits undertaken in December 2019 and January 2020. The field assessors were accompanied by representatives

<sup>32</sup> The Expert Client, 2012, *Watson Planning Study Block 2 Section 74, Blocks 11 & 12 Section 76*, July 2012.

<sup>33</sup> ACTmapi, 2020, 'Heritage Map,' <http://app.actmapi.act.gov.au/actmapi/index.html?viewer=heritage>

from the Representative Aboriginal Organisation (RAO), Buru Ngunnawal Aboriginal Corporation (BNAC).

## Findings

The Assessment identified cultural sites within Sections 74 and 76.

The Assessment suggests that the study area as a whole is likely to have a low archaeological impact, based on the fact that it is more than 500 metres from relatively permanent water, that the landforms in the area are not indicative of cultural sites, and that the area has been heavily disturbed.

The Assessment provided the following recommendations:

- Impacts to cultural sites should be avoided.
- A Statement of Heritage Effects (SHE) will be required if any impacts are to occur to the cultural sites. The SHE would contain more detailed and specific mitigation strategies reflective of any proposed impacts. This should be undertaken in consultation with the RAOs and should include invitations to the RAOs for an additional field visit to discuss specific impacts.
- Consideration should be given to the preservation of the old growth trees existing on the site.
- The protocols for the unanticipated discovery of archaeological material and suspected human remains shall be adopted and complied with during construction activities involving ground surface disturbance and excavation.
- A copy of the Assessment report should be provided to the ACT Heritage
- One copy of the Assessment report should be provided to each of the ACT Registered Aboriginal Organisations (RAOs).

## 7.3 Traffic, transport and parking assessment

### Traffic impact

Any future development on the sites will increase the volume of traffic in the area, as these blocks have not been developed previously.

### Access requirements

The **Parking and Vehicular Access General Code** specifies that in residential zones, long-stay and operational parking must be provided on-site, with short stay/visitor parking within 100 metres. The number of spaces required is dependent on the type of housing. As such, the design of vehicular access to the sites will need to be carefully considered and managed.

Section 4.28 of the National Capital Plan Amendment 91 identifies, with regard to parking and access for the Federal Highway, that:

- The visual impact of large car parking areas must be minimised, with podium and multi-level parking structures not permitted
- Careful consideration should be given to the access, internal circulation and parking of service and heavy goods vehicles in the area, and
- A traffic and parking assessment should accompany development proposals for any site.

### Transport Impact Assessment

A Transport Impact Assessment has been carried out for both Section 76 and 74 to understand the cumulative effects of developments over time.<sup>35</sup> These assessments have been based on a maximum dwelling yield of 560 dwellings across the subject sites. This is

---

<sup>35</sup> Traffix Group, 2020, *Transport Impact Assessment – Final Issue, Indicative Residential Developments at Block 10-12, Section 74 & Block 2, Section 76, Watson*, prepared for Indesco, June 2020.

considered an upper limit of what could potentially be developed on the sites, although as noted above the total number of dwellings will be limited to 400 dwellings as per the previous ILRP figures for the two sites combined.

The transport modelling undertaken in these assessments factored in the cumulative potential traffic impact of development occurring across both Section 74 and Section 76, in addition to the potential traffic generated by a separate development in the surrounding area, including the Norrebro (Block 2 Section 64), Mount Majura Estate (Sections 114, 115 and 117), and The Ridge (Block 36 Section 64) developments. The assessment of the potential impact was based on statutory car parking requirements, and assumptions about the likely ratio of different dwelling types on the subject sites should they be used for residential (based on similar medium density developments in the ACT).<sup>36</sup>

The Territory Plan Estate Development Code was used to determine that each of the development sites will generate approximately 1,680 daily vehicle trips (and 168 trips in each peak hour). The nearby intersections were assessed to consider the traffic generated by the subject site combined as well as the potential traffic from the nearby developments mentioned above that are under construction. The intersection assessments showed that each of the nearby intersections operated well under capacity with appropriate delays and queueing. The assessment identified that the future daily volume along Antill Street and Aspinall Street was marginally above the capacity, but that the actual impact of the additional traffic on amenity would be minimal.

The assessment also suggested that the pedestrian and bicycle accessibility of the sites would be improved by the construction of footpaths/shared paths (such as extending the hard surface path along the Federal Highway from Stirling Avenue to Antill Street as is currently planned).

A copy of the report prepared by Traffix Group has been provided with this Planning Report.

Assessment of traffic impacts that are likely to arise during the construction phase should be included as part of the development application process, and should take into account the impact of construction that may be occurring elsewhere in North Watson.

### Requirements for parking space provision

Requirements around the design and provision of parking spaces to service residential developments are outlined in the Territory Plan under various codes. Codes such as the Multi Unit Housing Code identify rules around the form of parking structures, accessibility, driveways, and so on. As noted above, the **Parking and Vehicular Access General Code** details the provision rates for different types of development, based on zoning.

The provision of parking for the subject sites would need to comply with the rates identified for residential zones. Provision rates for residential uses under the code are identified based on the type of dwelling.<sup>37</sup>

The number of parking spaces that would be required to service residential development on the sites would therefore vary depending on the eventual development form and dwelling mix. If permitted commercial uses were to be incorporated with future residential development, the provision of parking would need to comply with the rates for the CZ6 zone as well. Residential codes generally require that long-stay and operational parking for residential uses is provided on-site, while short-stay and visitor parking can be provided on-site or within 100 metres. Residential development in CZ6 zones is subject to the parking requirements under the Multi Unit Housing Development Code, as per Part F of the Commercial Zones Development Code.

---

<sup>36</sup> This ratio assumed 50 percent one-bedroom dwellings, 40 percent two-bedroom dwellings, and 10 percent three-bedroom dwellings.

<sup>37</sup> ACT Government, 2018, 'Parking and Vehicular Access General Code,' effective 25 May 2018, Schedule 3.1.5, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/119216/pdf/2008-27.pdf>

A parking assessment has been undertaken for the subject sites, and determined that each site must provide 434 spaces (363 residents and 70 visitor spaces), including motorbike and disability parking.

As the capacity to provide for additional off-site parking along Aspinall and Antill Streets is likely to be limited, there may be a need to make additional on-site provision for visitor parking if necessary. This would need to be considered as part of estate planning and development approval processes.

### Issues raised by the community

In the preliminary community consultation process, existing traffic volumes and issues with parking in the North Watson area were raised as important concerns. Concerns were raised that the volume of traffic on Aspinall and Antill Streets did not just reflect use by local residents, but by residents from other areas using these roads for “rat running”.

There was also a concern that as Aspinall Street has only one lane in each direction, that traffic banks up when a bus stops to pick up or drop off passengers.

Given traffic volumes, concerns were raised about safety for children crossing these streets, including on the way to school, and about speeding, particularly along Antill Street.

There was also a suggestion that the number of parking spots provided as part of current residential developments in North Watson are inadequate to cater for the households accommodated, and that this should be addressed in any new residential development.

## 7.4 Leisure, community and recreation needs assessment and impacts

In undertaking this assessment, consideration has been given to the current provision of community and recreation facilities in the North Watson and Watson areas, as well as the likely needs of the increased population. While there is a focus on the potential impact of the additional population generated by the release of Block 2 Section 76, and potentially Blocks 10, 11 and 12 in future, the impact of additional residential development elsewhere in North Watson will also be important.

At the time of the 2016 ABS Census, the population of Watson was around 5,900. As noted in Table 4, this is expected to increase to around 6,700 by 2022.

If 400 dwellings are built on Sections 74 and 76 Watson, this would likely increase the population by around 880, which could increase the population of Watson to around 7,580. Watson is thus likely to have one of the largest populations of any suburb in the Inner North. By the early 2020s, the population of Watson is likely to be equal to or greater than the combined populations of the neighbouring suburbs of Hackett and Downer (see Table 4).

The potential impact on additional demand for community and recreation facilities based on 400 dwellings built on the subject sites is considered below.

### Best practice principles for community facilities provision in urban renewal areas

In the past, many community facilities and services have been housed and delivered in stand-alone buildings or facilities designed for one particular use. However, local and State governments are increasingly recognising that in cities, and particularly for urban renewal precincts, that this model is no longer possible, and perhaps no longer desirable, for a variety of reasons. This means that not all the needs of a suburb will necessarily be met by community facilities in that suburb. How people access and utilise community facilities is also evolving, with the provision of facilities also changing to meet community needs.

## Land availability

As urban renewal occurs in existing highly developed areas, the availability of land and space to dedicate to a single use is becoming more limited. This is particularly the case for facilities that require larger spaces, such as schools. Land costs are typically higher in established locations, adding to the overall costs and economic viability of delivering facilities. Population growth and changing demographics also mean that a wider range of facilities and services may be needed to cater to an area's needs than may have been the case in the past, with limited scope to have individual facilities for each.

To continue to deliver necessary community facilities and services to areas experiencing urban renewal, best practice in this area is for services to be clustered together, sharing existing and new spaces, and improving the quality of buildings and access to facilities. Clustering is often in established retail or commercial centres (such as the ACT's town or group centres), in designated community precincts, or as part of mixed use developments.

## Mixed use benefits

Community facilities are also increasingly being integrated into mixed use precincts which include housing. Though this may be limited to the types of facilities appropriate for integration within a residential complex, including community facilities that allow for people to live close to services, and at the same time increases the vibrancy and activity around housing precincts.

The clustering of facilities around key centres can be more cost effective for governments and providers, as they do not have to bear the costs of establishing and maintaining several buildings across a large geographic area. Co-location of multiple services and facilities is also beneficial for community members, as they are able to access a number of services in the one place. It can also encourage multi-purpose trips, where users can integrate visits to services with shopping and other trips without travelling as far. Co-location can also assist in facilitating referrals between different social services.

## Accessibility from co-location

As centres tend to be better served by public transport, having services clustered in one location also means can improve accessibility for those who may not have access to private transport.

The growth of higher density living environments in the ACT is already changing how some types of facilities can be provided, with more limited land availability and other constraining factors that need to be accounted for in planning for community facilities. As more people begin to live in apartments where private space is less expansive, the delivery and maintenance of open space and other community infrastructure becomes increasingly important.<sup>38</sup>

## Desired Standards of Service for Community Facilities

Benchmarks, guidelines and other standards can be used to assess the level of need for community facilities, often with reference to a certain level of population or catchment area. Benchmarks for facilities that have been used in the ACT previously have been used to broadly assess the capacity or otherwise of current community and recreation facilities to meet the likely increase in demand particularly at the local/suburban level.

It is important to note that these benchmarks have been based on current and historical provision levels, and on planning for greenfield locations rather than urban infill. The way that community facilities are planned for in urban infill areas is different due to constraints

---

<sup>38</sup> See Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development, 2010, 'A Guide to Delivering Community Precincts,' [https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0023/48623/Guide-to-Delivering-Community-Precincts.pdf](https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/48623/Guide-to-Delivering-Community-Precincts.pdf); SJB Urban, 2013, 'Fishermans Bend Community Infrastructure Plan, prepared for Places Victoria, July 2013, [https://www.fishermansbend.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0031/29776/03\\_Volume\\_2\\_Community\\_Infrastructure\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.fishermansbend.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/29776/03_Volume_2_Community_Infrastructure_Plan.pdf)

including land availability, and the benefits associated with the co-location of a mix of different uses in proximity to good transport connections.

With the delivery of community facilities and services also evolving with changing community needs, the benchmarks may not be entirely reflective of likely future needs, or of government policy concerning some type of facilities for an area like Watson and North Canberra. Nevertheless, these types of benchmarks are an important starting point for assessing the need for different facilities.



TABLE 7: DESIRED STANDARDS OF SERVICE FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES

FACILITY TYPE	RECOMMENDED HIERARCHY OF PROVISION	RECOMMENDED STANDARD OF SERVICE (PER POPULATION CATCHMENT)
<b>General community spaces</b>		
Meeting rooms	Local	1: 2,500
Licensed clubs	Sub-district	1: 5,000
Religious facility	Sub-district	1: 2,000
Neighbourhood hall	Sub-district	1: 10,000
Community Centre	Sub-district	1: 20,000
<b>Cultural facilities</b>		
Community arts centre/theatre	Sub-district	1: 30,000
Library	District	Libraries ACT utilises the State Library of NSW standard for provision – People Places tool, which takes account of population growth, floor space and other factors
<b>Educational/children's facilities</b>		
Government pre/primary school*	Local	1: 7,500
Non-government pre/primary school*	Local	1: 5,000
Government high school*	Sub-district	1: 20,000
Non-government high school*	Sub-district	1: 60,000
Government secondary college*	District	1: 30,000
Non-government secondary college*	District	1: 30,000
Early childhood school**	District	1: 60,000
Child care**	Sub-district	1: 4,000
Child and family centre	District	1: 60,000
Youth centre	District	1: 60,000
<b>Health and social service facilities</b>		
GP medical centre	Local, Sub-district	1: 4,000
Allied health services	Local, Sub-district	Varies
Community Health Centre	District	1: 60,000
Social Service Organisations	District, Region	1: 60,000
<b>Services for older people</b>		
Retirement village	Sub-district	Varies
Nursing home	Sub-district	Previously 86 places per 1,000 people aged 70+ *Target for 2022 for 78 places per 1,000 people aged 70+ <sup>39</sup>
Aged day care centre	District	1: 60,000
Senior Citizens Club	District	1: 60,000
<b>Emergency facilities</b>		
Police station	District	1: 60,000
Ambulance station	District	1: 60,000
Fire and rescue station	District	1: 60,000

<sup>39</sup> Aged Care Financing Authority, 'Funding and Financing of the Aged Care Sector,' Short form report, page 7, July 2017, [https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/10\\_2016/acfa\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_funding\\_and\\_financing\\_of\\_the\\_aged\\_care\\_industry\\_2016.pdf](https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/10_2016/acfa_annual_report_on_funding_and_financing_of_the_aged_care_industry_2016.pdf)

## Sports facilities and open spaces

District playing fields	District	Varies ACT Estate Development Code suggests a ratio of between 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 and min. size of 8 hectares.
Neighbourhood ovals	Local	1: 7,500
Neighbourhood parks/playgrounds	Local	Varies
Community Gardens	District	1: 60,000
Fitness centres	Local/District	Varies

Source: Buckley Vann Town Planning, 2013 (unpublished), and SGS, 2019.

\*Note: planning for schools by the Education Directorate uses different benchmarks and metrics. Children in North Canberra are also more likely to attend Government schools than the rest of the ACT. Planning for schools in urban renewal areas is different to planning for greenfield locations.

\*\*Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is provided for different age groups, on a full-time or part-time basis, and is provided under different management arrangements. Government is also investigating policies for provision. Planning for ECEC is therefore complex, and simplistic benchmarks should not be relied upon.

## General community meeting rooms, clubs, halls, religious and cultural facilities

North Watson currently includes a small community hall adjacent to the Fair Playground in Tay Street. There is also the C3 church in Aspinall Street, the Youth With a Mission facility, the Watson Arts Centre in Aspinall Street, and the ACT Potters Society.

The older part of Watson includes the Majura Scout/Guide Hall, Christian City Church, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, the Australian Catholic University campus as well as the Canberra Technology Park Site (currently proposed for redevelopment) and other school and pre-school facilities.<sup>40</sup>

When assessed against the guidelines in Table 7, there does not appear to be a strong case for the provision of additional facilities of this type in North Watson.

## Early childhood education and care services

While the guidelines in Table 7 give some indication of the likely need for education and child care facilities, local factors and longer term demands also need to be considered.

## Priority Enrolment Areas for Government Schools

The ACT's education system is based around Priority Enrolment Areas (PEAs), where students are guaranteed a place at a particular school based on where they live. Out of areas enrolments can be accommodated subject to capacity. For example, Majura Primary School provides around 16 per cent of out of area enrolments. However, Majura Primary and Lyneham High Schools do not have capacity to accept new students outside of PEAs, except for various reasons including legal orders, for student wellbeing, and siblings remaining together. The Education Directorate is also currently undertaking a review of demand for student places in Canberra's infill areas.<sup>41</sup>

The current PEAs for Watson are as follows:

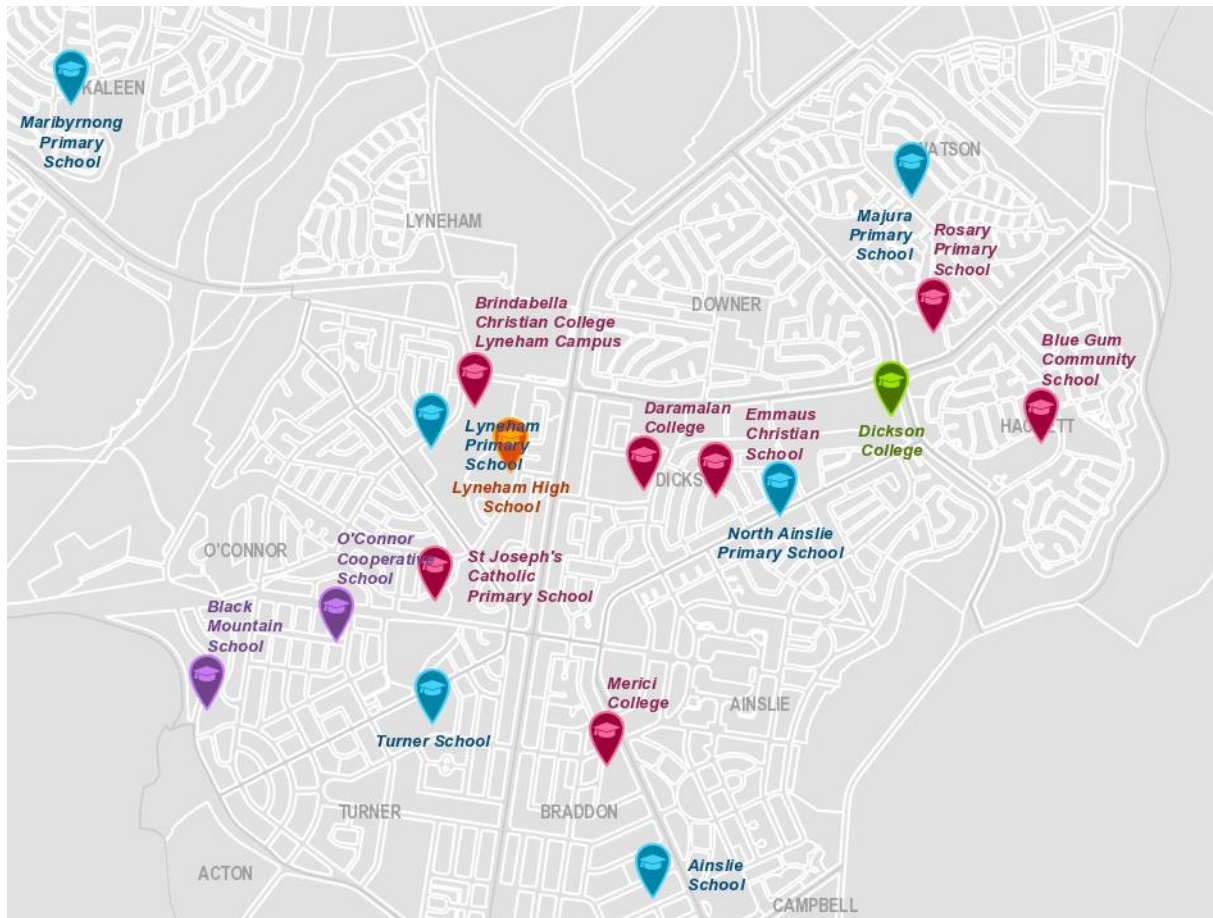
- **Primary School** – Majura Primary School
- **High School** – Campbell High School or Lyneham High School, and
- **College** – Dickson College.

There are also several non-government schools in Watson and surrounding suburbs, as illustrated below in Figure 22.

<sup>40</sup> Sourced from ACTMAPi, as of July 2018, <http://app.actmap.gov.au/actmap/index.html?viewer=comfis>

<sup>41</sup> Brown, 2019, 'Education directorate launches \$500k review into student demand,' *The Canberra Times*, 17 March 2019, <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/5992885/education-directorate-launches-500k-review-into-student-demand/>

FIGURE 22: SCHOOLS IN WATSON AND SURROUNDS



Source: ACTmapi, 2020.<sup>42</sup>

The most recently available data on enrolments in schools in the Watson area (from February 2020), including the PEA schools, are shown below in Table 8, Table 9 and Table 10 for primary schools, high schools and colleges respectively.

<sup>42</sup> ACTmapi, 2018, 'Education,' <http://app.actmapi.act.gov.au/actmapi2/index.html?viewer=Education>

TABLE 8: PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, 2020

School	P	K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
<b>Majura Primary School</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>759</b>
Lyneham Primary School	82	52	65	72	52	74	66	74	537
North Ainslie Primary School	84	90	84	100	84	91	73	84	690
Rosary Primary School	-	41	48	35	35	47	55	52	313
Blue Gum Community School	117	23	24	14	12	14	9	10	223
Emmaus Christian School	80	48	46	47	44	49	31	32	377
Brindabella Christian College**	56	65	62	68	79	75	75	63	543

Source: Education Directorate, 2020.<sup>43</sup>

\*Bold denotes PEA school for Watson.

\*\*Includes enrolments for both Lyneham and Charnwood campuses.

TABLE 9: HIGH SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, 2020

School	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Total
<b>Lyneham High School</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>1076</b>
<b>Campbell High School</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>704</b>
Daramalan College	256	256	253	248	1013
Emmaus Christian School	31	23	23	19	96
Brindabella Christian College**	75	82	65	50	272
Merici College	146	141	88	135	510

Source: Education Directorate, 2020.

\*Bold denotes PEA school for Watson.

\*\*Includes enrolments for both Lyneham and Charnwood campuses.

TABLE 10: COLLEGE ENROLMENTS, 2020

School	Year 11	Year 12	Total
<b>Dickson College</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>710</b>
Daramalan College	200	175	375
Brindabella Christian College	32	36	68
Merici College	75	85	160

Source: Education Directorate, 2020.

\*Bold denotes PEA school for Watson.

\*\*Includes enrolments for both Lyneham and Charnwood campuses.

The Education Directorate has also published data on the capacities of its public schools in 2020, shown in Table 11 below. This data suggests that some of Watson's PEA schools are currently close to reaching their capacity, noting that these numbers include out of area enrolments.

<sup>43</sup> Education Directorate, 2019, 'Census of ACT Schools – February 2020,' released 22 June 2020, [https://www.education.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1562682/February-2020-Census-.pdf](https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1562682/February-2020-Census-.pdf)

TABLE 11: CURRENT SCHOOL CAPACITIES

School	Current enrolment	Capacity	Current % of capacity*
Majura Primary School	673 (K-6)	806 (K-6)	83%
Lyneham High School	1,076	1,126	96%
Campbell High School	704	830	85%
Dickson College	710	1,125	63%

Source: Education Directorate, 2019.

\*Noting that 85% is considered to be at capacity.

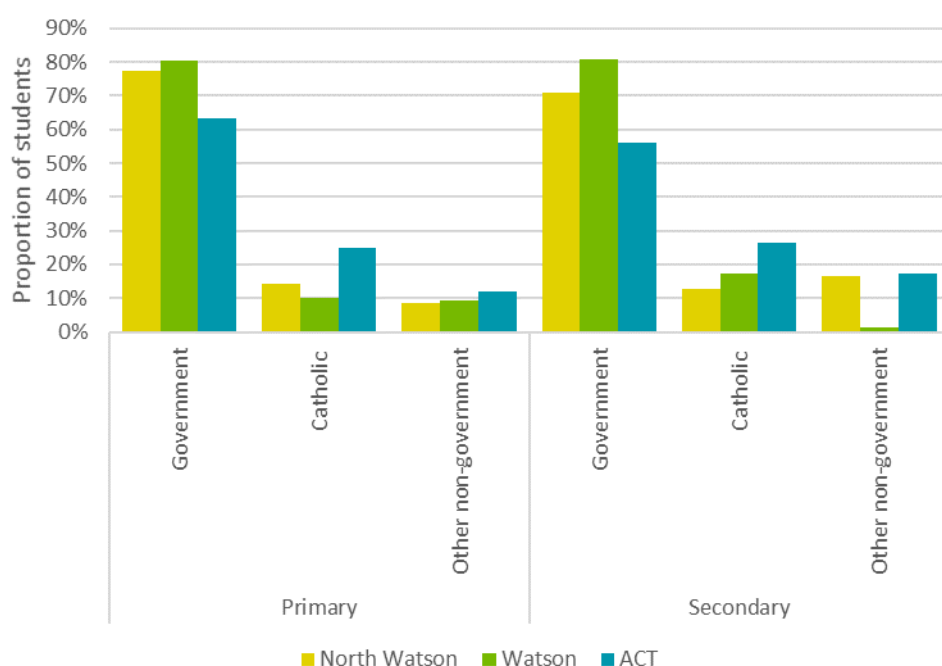
The ACT Government has expanded the existing capacity of Lyneham High School with flexible classrooms, to accommodate additional in-area demand and meet different educational needs.<sup>44</sup> However, this is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the significant demand for places being seen in the inner north. The Education Directorate has indicated that there are significant demand pressures in this area for both primary and high schools, and that this is likely to continue in coming years with the level of development and population growth being seen in this part of Canberra. Detailed planning of schools is being undertaken for the inner north to address this ongoing need.

### Potential demand and impact generated by proposal

Based on the 2016 ABS Census, a higher proportion of children in Watson attend government schools compared to the wider ACT. As of 2016, around 79 percent of primary and secondary students living in Watson attended government schools, compared to around 60 percent across the ACT. North Watson had a slightly lower proportion of students attending government schools than the rest of the suburb, but this was still higher than the rate across the ACT. The comparative breakdown for primary and secondary school students is shown in Figure 23 below.

<sup>44</sup> Education Directorate, 2019, 'Building Facilities and Better Schools for Our Kids,' <https://www.education.act.gov.au/our-priorities/building-facilities-and-better-schools-for-our-kids>

FIGURE 23: ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL TYPES, 2016 CENSUS



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

\*Note: Distinction between South Watson and North Watson based on ABS Mesh Blocks. Data may have been adjusted for confidentiality and should be considered indicative only.

As noted previously, community members have identified existing pressures on enrolments and capacities at Majura Primary School in particular, and concerns about how further residential development may exacerbate these issues. The Education Directorate has also noted existing enrolment pressures in this area.

Table 12 below shows the potential demand for school places generated at the different levels if the sites were developed for 400 dwellings (as stated in the previous ILRP). This assumes the same age profile by single age year as North Watson as of the 2016 Census, applied to the total estimated population of the development at its completion, of around 880 people. It also assumes that the proportion of students attending government schools (as in Figure 23) stays the same.

TABLE 12: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF POTENTIAL STUDENTS BY SCHOOL TYPE

School type	Total number of potential students from development	% in government schools (Watson 2016)	Potential demand for government school places
Primary school age (4-12 yrs)	58	79%	46
Secondary school age (13-16 yrs)	17	78%	13
College age (17-18 yrs)	7	78%	5

Source: ABS 2016 Census and SGS calculations.

It is important to note that these estimates may underestimate and not accurately reflect the level of demand generated by the future development of the sites. Changes in demographics and household choices, including more families living in apartments and higher density areas, could generate higher proportions of children living in Watson compared to the Census year. There are also likely to be peaks and troughs in demand for places as other developments in North Watson come on line. In the short-term developments such as Norrebro, Mount

Majura Estate, and the Ridge, will impact on enrolments in PEAs and surrounding schools, prior to the subject sites being developed.

The estimates suggest that residential development at the subject sites could generate demand for between 46 and 58 government primary school, 13 and 17 high school, and five and seven college places, depending on the nature of development and exact dwelling mix. Overall, there is not likely to be the need for additional school facilities to meet the demand from solely from future development on the subject sites, however, the cumulative impact of the proposal alongside a number of other new developments across the Inner North has the potential to put further pressures on existing schools that do not have sufficient capacity at present.

As Majura Primary is already reaching its capacity, there may be a particular need for facilities to accommodate primary school children in the area, and particularly in the short term. The recently completed CNA for Section 72 Dickson identified that the wider area of the Inner North is likely to need an additional government primary school to accommodate demand from the future population. Demand pressures have also been noted for the relevant high schools in the area. As noted above, school capacities and demand across Canberra are currently being reviewed by the Education Directorate in response to the growth of infill housing, based on detailed enrolment data and projections.

### **Early childhood education and care services**

The benchmarks in Table 7 suggest that one long day care (child care) centre be provided at the sub-district level for a population of 4,000. This would suggest a need for between one and two long day care centres to meet the needs of the Watson community by 2022.

Reference to ACTMAPi previously showed only one long day care centre in Watson, although there are other centres in Dickson and elsewhere in the Inner North. There are also out-of-hours child care services linked to schools in the area.

The information included in Table 5 suggests that the proposed new development on the subject sites could generate around 70—80 children aged 0-4 years at any point in time. This would not in itself be enough to justify a long day care centre, as not all families will seek long day care places for their children. However, it will generate demand for additional child care places. The previous CNA for Section 72 Dickson identified a need for an additional four to six child care centres across the wider Inner North in the longer term to 2029.

The Norrebro development proposed for the corner of Aspinall Street and Negus Crescent has previously included plans for a child care centre,<sup>45</sup> however, as noted above, the plans for this development are in the process of being revised. If the development of a child care centre was to proceed, it would likely meet the demand for child care places from surrounding areas including the subject site and potential future development on Section 74.

A child care centre is permitted in land zoned RZ4, and given recent prices paid for child care sites elsewhere in the ACT, could be a financially competitive alternative to the use of this land for residential.<sup>46</sup> The inclusion of a child care centre on the subject site would still be subject to other planning requirements being met, including traffic and parking requirements.

### **Health, Social Service and Aged Care Facilities**

The Section 72 Dickson CNA has identified a need for a medical centre in Watson, and a number of other medical and allied health services in nearby areas. The Dickson shops also includes a Community Health Centre.

---

<sup>45</sup> See [www.norrebrowatson.com.au](http://www.norrebrowatson.com.au), as at 30 July 2018.

<sup>46</sup> For example, a site for a child care centre in Charnwood recently sold for \$2 million. See Trask, 2018, 'ACT govt nets \$2m selling contaminated site for child care centre,' *Canberra Times*, 17 June, <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/act-govt-nets-2m-selling-contaminated-site-for-child-care-centre-20180615-p4zlrn.html>

Social services in Watson include the Ted Noffs Foundation rehabilitation facility and ADACAS, which provides advocacy support for people with disabilities, older people and their carers. These organisations provide services to areas much larger than just the local community. Residential aged care facilities in the Inner North of Canberra currently include:

- Goodwin Village in Ainslie
- Canberra Aged Care in Lyneham
- Sir Leslie Morsehead aged care facility in Lyneham, and
- Southern Cross Care in Campbell.

In addition, outreach support services are also provided by a number of organisations, including Northside Community Services, based in Dickson. There is also a Seniors Centre in Turner that provides activities and services for older people.

The guidelines in Table 7 suggest that there may be a need for an additional GP medical facility to cater for the anticipated population of Watson by 2020. This potential need was supported by advice from the Watson Medical Centre in Windeyer Street, that they are not currently accepting new clients.<sup>47</sup> While there are other GP medical centres in the Inner North, there may be an overall need for new facilities to cater for an increasing and ageing population in this area.

A medical centre would be permitted under the proposed RZ4 zoning for Block 2 Section 76, subject to meeting other planning criteria. As is the case for a child care centre, provision of land for a private medical centre could also be a financially competitive alternative to the use of this land for residential.<sup>48</sup>

There is no clear need to allocate part of the subject site or the blocks on Section 74 specifically for older persons accommodation, though this is a permissible use in the RZ4 zone.

## Sports facilities and open spaces

### Parks and playgrounds

In addition to the general guidance provided in Table 7, the ACT's Community and Recreation Facilities Location Guidelines General Code aims for all residential areas to be within 400 metres of local parks and playground facilities. Figure 24 illustrates a 400-metre radius from the centre of the site and from the blocks on Section 74, and the relative proximity of nearby parks and playgrounds in North Watson. This includes a public park which is proposed as part of the Mt Majura Estate development on Section 117 Watson.

---

<sup>47</sup> Advice provided in a telephone call 1 August 2018.

<sup>48</sup> For example, an 80 square metre medical facility in Deakin has recently been advertised for sale at \$430,000, and a 200 square metre medical facility in Charnwood on a 694 square metre block has been advertised for \$790,000. See [www.realcommercial.com.au](http://www.realcommercial.com.au), as of 1 August 2018.



FIGURE 24: PROXIMITY OF SITE TO PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS



Source: SGS, 2018.

This shows that there is one playground that is currently within walking distance from some parts of Section 76, but this would be further away from potential residences located closer to the Federal Highway. Access to other parks in North Watson, such as the Fair Playground and Valour Park are further away, and would require crossing streets to access from Section 76 or the blocks on Section 74. Rezoning part of Section 76 to PRZ1 to allow for a one hectare public park and the protection of trees and habitat would provide for this potential shortfall in parks and playgrounds.

The Solstice development on Block 7, Section 74 also includes large trees in green spaces within the complex, as well as seating and sporting equipment for the use of residents of that complex (see Figure 25 below). The Fair Playground, next to the community centre in Tay Street, North Watson also includes large trees, as shown below in Figure 26.

FIGURE 25: GREEN SPACE WITHIN SOLSTICE DEVELOPMENT



Source: SGS, 2018.

FIGURE 26: THE FAIR PLAYGROUND AND TREES



Source: SGS, 2018.

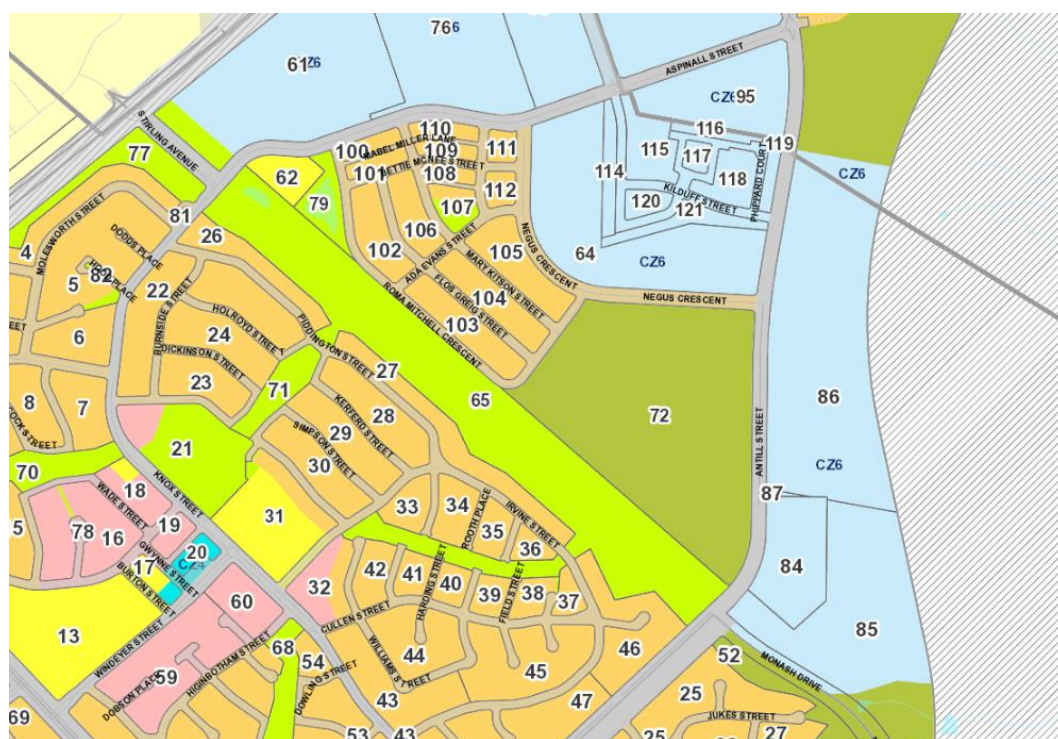
## Neighbourhood ovals, sporting fields and open space

The general guidance provided in Table 7 suggests a need for one neighbourhood oval for a population of 7,500. There is a neighbourhood oval adjacent to Majura Primary School, which could thus be assumed to meet the needs of the residents of Watson, including North Watson. Residents of North Watson will also have access to the district playing fields at Dickson.

As noted previously, the proposed TPV includes the provision of one hectare of PRZ1 zoned land for open space on Block 2 Section 76.

However, there could also be potential for additional use of some of the open space that currently separates North Watson from the older part of the suburb. This area (shown as Section 65 below in Figure 27) is currently used informally for activities such as dog walking and bike riding. Additional uses of this space would need to take into account the high voltage power lines on this site.

FIGURE 27: OPEN SPACE AREAS IN AND NEAR NORTH WATSON



Source: ACTmapi, 2018.

Section 72 Watson contains the Justice Robert Hope Nature Park. Section 79 Watson, adjacent to the Watson Arts Centre, includes a water park and seating. These sites, as well as the adjacent Mount Majura Nature Reserve, can be used for activities such as bird watching, picnics, nature-based activities and quiet reflection.

Mary Kitson playground (Section 107 above, and Figure 28 below) includes some playground equipment, but there is space to add additional playground and sporting equipment, as well as additional seating on this site. This could then accommodate some increased usage.



FIGURE 28: MARY KITSON PLAYGROUND



Source: SGS, 2018.

As noted in Section 5.3, there are also already a number of other leisure and recreation facilities in areas close to Watson including EPIC, Thoroughbred Park, Yowani Country Club and Golf Course, Dickson Pool, Southwell Park, and the tennis and hockey centres in Lyneham.

### Community and Recreational Facilities Location Guidelines

The Territory Plan's Community and Recreation Facilities Location Guidelines General Code provides guidance for where new community and recreational facilities should be located.<sup>49</sup> Facilities considered under the Code include those used for purposes such as health, education, community services, arts and sport and recreation.

The Code sets out how community facilities should be located in relation to other aspects of the built form, as well as design guidelines relating to elements such as lighting, surveillance, and the siting of facilities within residential areas.

The Code also outlines requirements around other aspects of the location of community facilities. These include maximising the co-location and clustering of compatible facilities, providing separation from facilities where appropriate (for example, to minimise adverse impacts of noise), and providing adequate lighting and surveillance. The Code includes that community facilities should generally be located near retail centres, related to their long-term user catchment, and in locations appropriate to their size and scale. The Code also requires consideration of pedestrian access and parking.

The Code includes detailed guidelines for each community facility type, for example appropriate site gradients for aged care facilities and retirement villages. The provisions in these guidelines will need to be considered if community facilities are to be included on Section 76 Watson.

<sup>49</sup> ACT Government, 2018, 'Community and Recreation Facilities Location Guidelines General Code,' effective 3 May 2018, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/copy/118784/pdf/2008-27.pdf>

## Public transport

The Community and Recreation Facilities Location Guidelines General Code also identifies that public facilities should be provided in locations within 500 metres of bus stops, and a minimum of 400 metres where facilities are likely to be used by small children, older people, or people with a disability.

Figure 29 below shows a 400-metre radius around the current bus stops along Aspinall Street, the closest to the subject site and the blocks on Section 74, which are serviced by the R9 and Route 50 services under the new bus network. This illustrates that most of the area contained within the subject site and the Section 74 blocks is within 400 metres of a stop, though actual walking distance may depend on future development and road layouts. The closest light rail stop to the sites is approximately 1.5 kilometres from Section 76. This suggests that the subject site and the Section 74 blocks may be appropriate locations for some types of community facilities.

FIGURE 29: PROXIMITY OF SITES TO BUS STOPS



Source: SGS, 2018.

## 7.5 Economic impacts

### Potential employment impacts

As noted in Section 5.3, there are already a number of tourist accommodation facilities in the Watson area, targeting the more affordable end of the visitor market. More up-market tourist accommodation has recently been developed closer to the city centre and Lake Burley Griffin. This is likely to reduce (but not rule out) the potential for employment associated with tourist accommodation on the subject sites.

While not ruling out the potential for a commercial developer to purchase part or all of the subject sites for entertainment or leisure facilities, it is likely that residential uses would be more profitable. Some previous entertainment and leisure facilities in the Watson area have experienced financial difficulties in recent years, and have subsequently closed.

To the extent that the market sees a need for an additional site for a commercial or community uses some of these would still be permitted in the RZ4 zone (such as a child care,

community activity centre, health facility), and could create on-going employment in this area.

### Potential need for a local supermarket and associated facilities

As noted earlier in this report, some community members have suggested the need for a supermarket and café in North Watson (possibly on Section 74 or Section 76), as the current Watson shops are not generally within easy walking distance, and parking at the Watson shops can also be difficult.

Shops are not permitted under the RZ4 zone, and thus would not be possible to include on Block 2 Section 76 under the proposal. As noted above, shops are permitted under the current CZ6 zone, but are limited to those related to the sale of entertainment, accommodation, leisure goods and specialty items, consistent with the objectives of the zoning as catering to tourist and leisure uses.

The adjacent Norrebro development has also proposed to include a café and a grocer, which could serve to meet some of the demand for such uses in the area.

### Potential impacts for current local businesses

Planning for a supermarket in North Watson would generally be achieved through a TPV that included land zoned as CZ4 Local Centre. Before this could occur the viability of a new supermarket in this area would need to be assessed, and any potential adverse impacts on other local centres.<sup>50</sup>

The current state of existing local centres in the ACT is mixed, with some seeming to perform quite well, and others struggling. It is difficult to isolate and identify all the factors which determine which local centres will thrive. The success or otherwise of a local centre is likely to be reliant on a combination of different elements, such as proximity to retail competition in other centres, the quality and appeal of the shops, proximity to other community and recreation facilities, accessibility to potential shoppers and characteristics of households in the catchment.

The population catchment for a local centre is generally between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and while this model of service and facilities provision had been successful in the past, changes to population, employment, spending, and transport patterns have impacted the viability of some local centres in Canberra. For all practical purposes, local shopping centres no longer operate in the suburbs of Latham (population 3,634) or Macgregor (population 6,796). In the suburbs of Aranda (population 2,393), McKellar (population 2,746), Macquarie (population 2,700), Weetangera (population 2,576), Higgins (population 3,073) and Page (population 3,025) the local shops no longer include a supermarket.<sup>51</sup> In the newly developed area of Coombs in Molonglo, completion of the local shopping centre has been delayed, as a tenant is still being sought for the 1,000 square metre supermarket.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, the suburb of Lyneham (population 5,112) includes two local centres, and the suburb of Kaleen (population 7,271) has a local shopping centre as well as a Group Centre (also both including supermarkets). It should be noted that the catchment population for the local shops in the older part of Lyneham includes part of O'Connor.

While the current local shopping centres at Watson and Hackett appear to be doing well, there would be some risks associated with specifically requiring a supermarket as part of a new local centre in North Watson. Risks would include uncertainty about the financial viability of another supermarket in this area, and the potential implications of a projected reduction in the population of Hackett (see Table 3). There would also be a need to consider the potential competition from the proposed inclusion in the Norrebro development of outdoor dining and

<sup>50</sup> Commercial Zones Development Code, Rule 15.1.

<sup>51</sup> *Canberra Times*, 13 January 2014 and ABS 2016 Census of Population and Dwellings.

<sup>52</sup> *Canberra Times*, 8 Feb 2018 and [www.the-riotact.com](http://www.the-riotact.com), 10 Feb 2018.

cafés, entertainment venues, galleries, markets and grocers.<sup>53</sup> As noted previously, there is also already a small convenience shop associated with the petrol station in North Watson.

The inclusion of residential uses on Block 2 Section 76, and potentially Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 subject to future planning, would be expected to add to the pool of potential customers for existing businesses located in North Watson, Watson and potentially also Hackett and Dickson more broadly. This would likely have economic benefits for these businesses, and the wider ACT economy.

## 7.6 Infrastructure, visual and noise impacts

### Demand for infrastructure and services

The introduction of residential development on the subject site would increase demands and pressures on existing infrastructure in and around the site.

#### Site Investigation Report

In January 2021, Indesco undertook a review of the services capacity across the subject site, to identify the service requirements needed to allow for the introduction of residential development. The findings of this review were compiled in a Site Investigation Report.<sup>54</sup> Existing service connections and easements are also shown and discussed in Figure 5 in Section 2.6.

The Site Investigation considered the following elements:

- Stormwater drainage
- Overland flow
- Sewer
- Water supply
- Electricity supply
- Telecommunications services
- Natural gas supply
- Verge works, and
- Easements.

The analysis was based on an assumed dwelling yield of 280 dwellings on Block 2 Section 76, and 280 dwellings on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74, for a total of 560 dwellings. This dwelling yield is higher than the 400 dwellings across the Sections indicated in the previous ILRP.

Table 13 below shows the recommended service requirements and site servicing work identified in the investigation for Section 76.

---

<sup>53</sup> Advertised but not approved as at July 2018, see [www.norrebrowatson.com.au](http://www.norrebrowatson.com.au).

<sup>54</sup> Indesco, 2021, *Site Investigation Report for Watson Section 76 Block 2*, Version 9, January 2021.

TABLE 13: IDENTIFIED SITE SERVICING REQUIREMENTS AND WORKS

Site	Recommended actions
Block 2 Section 76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deposited Plan to create required easements</li> <li>▪ Water tie/mains extension as part of future EDP</li> <li>▪ Sewer tie/mains extension as part of future EDP</li> <li>▪ On site retention of stormwater as part of future EDP</li> </ul>

Source: Indesco, 2021.

The investigation also identified that further and more detailed investigation and design will be needed for some aspects to allow for development. For Block 2 Section 76, this includes:

- Stormwater works based on the North Watson Stormwater Masterplan have been assumed to be completed. Further investigative work is required to confirm this.
- Stormwater analysis is required to confirm overland flow paths and onsite retention specific to any development proposal.
- Detailed survey and potholing is required to confirm location, condition and sizing of relevant services.
- Detailed design is required to confirm the location and sizing of proposed service ties/mains extensions as part of a future EDP and specific to any proposed development.
- Detailed design is required to create a vehicle access and provide a path on Aspinall Street.
- Detailed design is required to provide a path along the Federal Highway
- Further investigations are required to identify the most suitable strategy to address the heavy metals impacted soils.

Resolution of these issues would need to be undertaken prior to development and as part of estate development and DA processes.

### Physical and visual impacts

The exact form of future residential and other development on the site is not specified at this point in time, though as described previously it is expected that Section 76 will accommodate between 150 and 200 dwellings. Market conditions and development costs will to some extent determine the type of dwellings and/or other facilities to be included on these sites.

The scale and form of development will also be constrained by existing planning controls and strategic planning considerations, including the applicable rules set out in the Territory Plan and National Capital Plan which limit building heights and other aspects of development. As noted above, the proposed TPV would limit building heights to a maximum of four storeys in the southern portion of Section 76. Any future residential development is likely to be consistent with the housing types currently being built in the North Watson area, which have typically been medium density with some detached housing and some development up to four storeys in height.

Environmental and access constraints will also limit the overall size of the areas that can be developed. As noted above, the proposal includes the retention of trees and landscape areas, as well as the provision of one hectare of open space for a public park.



## 8. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

---

This section provides conclusions on the suitability of the subject site for the proposed change, and next steps.

### 8.1 Alignment with strategic planning and policy

#### Policy alignment

The introduction of residential uses on Block 2 Section 76 is consistent with existing ACT Government policies and strategies, including the ACT Planning Strategy and the City and Gateway Urban Renewal Framework, particularly in terms of promoting a more compact city and urban form.

The proposal also has the potential to contribute towards other policy themes around diversifying housing types across the ACT, including those in the 2018 ACT Housing Strategy, and would provide additional housing choices in a relatively accessible location close to transport and services.

#### Planning considerations

A key aspect of the current North Watson Structure Plan is the inclusion of a maximum dwelling limit of 1,300 within an identified boundary, intended to ensure adequate servicing for the area. As part of the TPV process, it is proposed that the Structure Plan be amended to remove this dwelling cap. The ACT Government will provide appropriate infrastructure to support increased residential development in the area.

The exact form that potential housing (or other development) on the subject site will take is unknown at this time, and will be subject to a number of factors including market demand. Any future residential development on the subject sites will be required to be consistent with the criteria and rules set out in the relevant Territory Plan Codes concerning residential uses. These include:

- **Estate Development Code,**
- **Residential Zones Development Code,** and
- **Multi Unit Housing Development Code.**

Proposed development on the subject site will also be required to comply with provisions in the following Codes:

- Access and Mobility General Code
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code
- Community and Recreational Facilities Location Guidelines General Code, and
- Parking and Vehicular Access General Code.

If the proposed TPV is approved, the current version of the **Watson Precinct Map and Code** (effective 13 December 2019) will be amended, and a **Concept Plan** will be developed for the site. Maximum building heights of four storeys will also be introduced for the areas within the sites that are not subject to provisions under the National Capital Plan. Amendments will also be made to reflect the rezoning of one hectare of Block 2 Section 76 for public open space and the identification of tree protection areas.

Amendments to the **Watson Precinct Map and Code** may also be required to include additional provisions to address bushfire risk, similar to those already included for residential development in the area identified as OP1 in the Watson Precinct Map and Code. It is anticipated that these additional provisions would be identified as part of the estate planning and development approval processes, as well as being considered in the Concept Plan.

A **Place Plan and Development Concept** will also be developed with the community for the site, which will consider more detailed design and environmental constraints.

## 8.2 Technical capacity

The technical studies undertaken for the subject site suggests that there is capacity to support residential development. However, this will require upgrades to site servicing infrastructure, and mitigation and management of contaminated soils on parts of Block 2 Section 76, as well as arrangements for the protection of important trees and vegetation.

Additional assessment and planning will be required in the context of estate development and development approval processes.

## 8.3 Market conditions and community needs

### Market for residential and other uses

The Government's previous ILRP<sup>55</sup> had identified the need for around 12,000 new dwellings (equivalent to 3,000 each year) over the four years from 2018-22, to accommodate around 30,000 additional residents in the ACT.

Established suburbs in the Inner North are popular locations for people to live in, with relative accessibility to the city centre and other facilities and opportunities in the region a key driver of this. Current housing in Watson, including North Watson, is generally more affordable than equivalent housing in other parts of the Inner North.

Additional housing built in North Watson would be closer to the city centre and to employment opportunities than new housing that is currently being built in Gungahlin, West Belconnen and Molonglo.

The need for more affordable and diverse housing options in Canberra has been documented in the ACT Government's Housing Strategy, Housing Choices Discussion Paper, and accompanying community consultation. The Housing Choices Community Engagement Report notes the community's expressed desire for more housing choices and flexible housing forms in existing neighbourhoods and suburbs, including a desire for more housing in the 'missing middle' range – specifically, medium density housing types such as dual occupancies, villas, terrace houses and townhouses. This type of product would be permitted under the proposal.

The current proposal to rezone to predominantly RZ4 on Section 76 allows for a limited number of community and other non-residential uses to be developed on the subject site as well. However, unless otherwise specified in land sale documents, the inclusion of community, recreation or other facilities on these sites would only be likely if the economic returns generated were favourable to a private developer. As such, additional provisions are proposed as part of the TPV to allow for demonstration housing and social enterprise facilities to be included as part of Section 76, as well as setting aside one hectare of the site for public open space.

While there may be some interest in the development of the subject sites for tourist accommodation under the current CZ6 zoning, there are already a number of tourist accommodation facilities in the area, targeting the more affordable end of the visitor market.

---

<sup>55</sup> ACT Indicative Land Release Program 2018-19 to 2021-22

To the extent that the market sees a need for an additional site for a child care centre or private medical centre, these uses are permissible under the proposed RZ4 zoning, and could create ongoing employment in the area.

## 8.4 Constraints

### Environmental

An Ecological Values and Constraints Assessment was undertaken on the subject site in April 2017. This Assessment recommended that development on Section 76 should include:

- Planting of local native midstorey and overstorey vegetation, particularly Yellow Box and Blakely's Red gums, and local native shrubs, and
- Landscaping with native grasses and other groundcover where possible.

A Tree Assessment was also conducted on the subject sites in June 2018 and was updated in 2019. This assessment identified the key issue of concern relating to trees on the sites to be their role as foraging habitat for birds, particularly the Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*).

The Tree Assessment recommended several principles and actions to be taken on the subject sites in order to maintain and improve habitat known to be attractive to Superb Parrots, with the retention of trees on Section 76 Watson to continue to provide:

- Shade and wind protection for any future development.
- Food sources for the Superb Parrot and other bird species. Furthermore, removal of *Pinus Radiata* amongst the established Blue Gums could adversely impact and potentially deteriorate the quality of the Blue Gums, as observed at other similar locations.
- Amenity to the fauna of the site and surrounding area by providing shelter and habitat, this includes retaining poor quality, rotting or trees that are in poor health.
- Opportunities for non-regulated trees to mature and replace senescing trees. These will provide further long-term amenity for any future development.

Any future development applications will be considered against these principles.

A Preliminary Site Investigation for the subject sites was also conducted in July 2018 to assess the potential for **contamination of the sites** based on their past and present uses and to identify any potential concerns if the sites were to be used for residential purposes.

For both subject sites, the Preliminary Investigation and subsequent Phase 2 assessment identified that the likelihood of gross contamination on the sites was low to moderate. However, it was recommended mitigation and management would be required for some parts of Block 2 Section 76, due to high natural concentrations of metals in the soil. More detailed testing will be required prior to future development, as part of the estate development and development assessment processes.

Before a TPV can be approved there is also a requirement for further consultation with the Conservator of Flora and Fauna and the Environmental Protection Authority.

### Cultural heritage

Though there have been no previously recorded cultural sites within the subject sites, the Cultural Heritage Assessment completed in July 2020 has identified two cultural sites.

In the future planning and development of Section 76, it is recommended that impacts to the cultural sites be avoided and actions taken to protect them. Further assessments and/or Statements of Heritage Effects may be required in subsequent stages of the development process if the TPV is approved. Protocols for protecting and recording unanticipated finds in the construction process should also be put in place.

## Community needs and expectations

The need for additional housing in convenient locations across the ACT, and better housing choices to address the needs of a growing population, is summarised above.

The preliminary community consultation processes undertaken (concerning the previous version of the proposed TPV) involved engagement with residents of Watson and surrounding areas. Many of the concerns expressed and issues raised in these consultations extended beyond the scope of this project to broader concerns including:

- The Government's Land Release Program
- Inadequate opportunity for community input to the overall planning for North Watson
- Adverse impacts of "developer-led" land use planning
- Inadequate feedback from a previous consultation process, and
- Poor quality of some recent developments in the area.

Many **local residents** expressed a preference for the ACT Government to retain ownership of the sites proposed for release so that they could be available for community and other uses, including nature reserves and parkland.

There was also a view expressed that before more development was approved, that the Government, in consultation with the local community, should prepare an overall plan for the development of North Watson, including better links between North Watson and the more-established areas of the suburb. The WCA has developed its own plan for the suburb, which will be considered in future consultation processes.

Specific issues raised in community consultations also included:

- The need to protect trees and vegetation on the sites not just as habitat for Superb Parrots and other native wildlife, but also as visual barriers and wind breaks and to enhance the "bush capital" ambience of the area.
- Concerns about traffic, and inadequate parking in North Watson and at the Watson shops.
- There was a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, playgrounds, child care centres and shops. There was also a particular concern about the capacity of local schools to accommodate the growing population in this area, not just the additional students likely to be generated if residential use was permitted on the subject sites.
- If housing is to be permitted on the sites, there was a general preference for a maximum height limit of two storeys.

Additional information from the community consultations is included in Section 6.

Since the consultation was undertaken, the proposal has been revised to include a one hectare public park and protection of the western treed landscape for wildlife including for the vulnerable Superb Parrot on Section 76, as well as additional provisions to allow for demonstration housing, a social enterprise and a craft workshop, in response to some of the concerns raised.

## Community facilities

In undertaking this assessment, consideration was given to the current provision of community and recreation facilities in the North Watson and Watson areas, as well as the likely needs of the increased population. There was a focus on the potential impact of the additional population generated by the release of the subject site and potential future development on Section 74, but the impact of additional residential development occurring elsewhere in North Watson is also important. Changes in the way that community services and facilities are delivered is also changing the demand for and provision of different facilities.

If a total of 400 dwellings are built on Sections 74 and 76 Watson, this would likely increase the population by around 880 people, which could increase the overall population of Watson in future years to around 7,580.

Community members have expressed concern about existing pressures on enrolments and capacities at Majura Primary School in particular, and have suggested that further residential development will exacerbate these issues.

Using information from the ABS Census, SGS has estimated that residential development on the subject sites could at a point in time generate demand for 46 to 58 government primary school places, 13 to 17 government high school places, and five to seven government college places. While the potential demand from the development of the subject sites in isolation will not generate the need for additional school facilities, the cumulative impact alongside other new developments is likely to increase significant existing pressures on enrolments in the inner north, particularly for primary schools. The Education Directorate is currently reviewing enrolments and capacities in the area and planning for future education facilities in response to these pressures and the growth of infill housing.

### Traffic and Parking

Any future development on the sites will increase the volume of traffic in the area, as these blocks have not been developed previously.

A Transport Impact Assessment has been carried out for both the subject site and Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74. The transport modelling undertaken in these assessments factored in the cumulative traffic impact of development occurring across both Section 74 and Section 76, in addition to the potential traffic generated by separate developments in the surrounding area. The analysis in the assessment estimated that residential development on the sites would generate approximately 168 vehicle trips from each Section in each peak hour. The assessment concluded that nearby intersections would likely operate well factoring in the development of the sites, with minimal changes to existing conditions.

The number of parking spaces that would be required to service future residential development on the site will vary depending on the eventual development form and dwelling mix. If any commercial or community uses are included, the provision of parking would also need to comply with the rates for the relevant land uses detailed in the Parking and Vehicular Access General Code.

As the capacity to provide for additional off-site parking along Aspinall and Antill Streets is likely to be limited, there may be a need to make additional on-site provision for visitor parking if necessary. This would need to be considered as part of estate planning and development approval processes.

SGS recommends that an assessment of traffic impacts that are likely to arise during the construction phase should be included as part of the development application process and should take into account the impact of construction that may be occurring elsewhere in North Watson.

Community consultation also identified the need for better active travel (walking and bicycle path) connections between residential developments in North Watson, the established areas of Watson and the Federal Highway/Northbourne Avenue corridor.

## 8.5 General Conclusion

The proposed variation is consistent with the ACT Government's strategic planning and other priorities, including the ACT Planning Strategy and ACT Housing Strategy.

Establishing a more compact city requires the concentration of future housing development in existing, well-connected and accessible locations. This helps to reduce the need for extensions to service infrastructure, and the need to encroach further on natural and undeveloped land on the outskirts of the ACT. A more compact urban form also has

advantages in terms of improved accessibility, opportunities to generate social interaction and inclusion, increase socio-economic diversity and improved environmental outcomes.

The proposed TPV and rezoning the site to predominantly RZ4 allows for the provision of some community and commercial facilities, however, residential development is likely to be financially profitable and an attractive type of development for potential buyers. Additional provisions proposed as part of the TPV will allow for demonstration housing a social enterprise and craft workshop in addition to residential uses on Section 76, as well as the creation of one hectare of public open green space.

In assessing the impact of allowing residential development on the subject site, and taking a holistic approach, the potential for development on Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74, a number of impacts and constraints have been identified that will need to be further addressed as part of the estate planning and development approval processes. These include:

- The need for mitigation and management of parts of Block 2 Section 76 regarding high concentrations of heavy metals in the soil.
- An assessment by an accredited bushfire consultant will be required to show that appropriate protections will be in place in relation to bushfire hazards.
- Consistent with the recommendations from the Cultural Heritage Assessment, protocols to be put in place for the protection and recording of the unanticipated discovery of archaeological material and suspected human remains during construction activities. Impacts to identified cultural sites should be avoided.
- An assessment of traffic impacts that are likely to arise during the construction phase should be included as part of the development application process and should take into account the impact of construction that may be occurring elsewhere in North Watson.
- Provision should be made for additional on-site visitor parking if necessary, as additional off-site parking along Aspinall and Antill Streets is likely to be limited.

**In general, however, the assessments undertaken indicated that Block 2 Section 76 Watson could be used for residential development, subject to the impacts and constraints identified above being addressed.**

As part of the preliminary engagement process undertaken for this project, residents of North Watson and surrounding areas also raised a number of concerns, many of which related to broader planning issues, including:

- There was a view expressed that before more development was approved, that the Government, in consultation with the local community, should prepare an overall plan for the development of North Watson, including better links between North Watson and the more-established areas of the suburb.
- There was also a general view that residential development in North Watson had not been accompanied by adequate provision of additional open space, playgrounds, recreation facilities, child care centres and shops.

As noted previously, the proposed TPV has been adjusted since this engagement was undertaken in response to the concerns raised. EPSDD has indicated that further consultation with the community will be undertaken regarding the sites and planning for Watson in general.

## 8.6 Other approvals and processes required

Before a TPV can be progressed, the findings and analysis in this Planning Report, including preliminary consultation findings, will need to be considered by the Planning Policy Division of EPSDD, which has responsibility for Planning and Land Authority functions in accordance with the provisions of Part 5.6 of the Planning and Development Act 2007. If the Planning and Policy Division of EPSDD then decides to proceed with the TPV, further assessment and consultation is required.

As part of this subsequent process, copies of the draft plan variation and background papers are to be made available for public inspection. For this purpose, background papers for a draft variation include:

- An explanatory statement
- Any comments made during consultation on the proposed draft variation, and
- Any relevant planning report or strategic environmental assessment.

If the TPV is approved, and the land is sold, there will still be a number of detailed planning issues to be addressed. These will largely be addressed as part of subsequent estate planning and development approval processes. As discussed elsewhere in this report, detailed planning will need to include:

- Consistency with requirements in General Codes
- Requirements in the Multi-unit Housing Development Code, Residential Zones Development Code, and the Estate Development Code
- Details of arrangements for environmental and tree protection measures
- Bushfire risk mitigation measures
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Measures
- Access mobility requirements
- Community and Recreation Facilities Location requirements
- Traffic and parking requirements
- Measures to support active travel
- Appropriate arrangements for identifying and protecting any cultural heritage artefacts found on the sites, and
- Appropriate arrangements for lighting and noise control to minimise adverse impacts for neighbours or visitors to surrounding areas.

The way in which these issues will be addressed will also partly depend upon the proposals put forward by proponents to develop the site in future, including the overall mix of dwellings and other uses permitted under the proposed zoning.



# APPENDIX 1

---

## Scope for Planning Report



### Scope for a Planning Report

To inform a proposed Territory Plan variation to add RESIDENTIAL USE as an assessable development in the CZ6 – Leisure and Accommodation zone for the following sites only:

Blocks 10, 11 & 12 Section 74 Watson and Block 2 Section 76 Watson.

**18 December 2017**

A planning report is prepared to provide the information necessary to inform consideration by the Planning and Land Authority, within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Directorate, on preparing a Territory Plan variation (refer to Part 5.6 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*).

The planning report is to respond to each of the following parts:

#### **A. Executive summary**

#### **B. Description of the proposed Territory Plan variation**

This section must provide a comprehensive description of the site and the full proposal, including:

- A map showing the location and exact extent of the blocks under consideration;  
*N.B. There is a licence granted over these blocks which, whilst it won't affect the progress of a draft variation, would need to be surrendered prior to any development on the blocks.*
- The current planning policies and provisions that apply to the site;
- The proposed future use and development of the site;
- Commentary and quantum (where applicable) on the indicative dwelling typologies and mix, yield and population expectations, and car parking generation;

*N.B. The North Watson Structure Plan includes a limit of 1,300 dwellings in this area. The planning report must address what impact the proposal has on the total number of dwellings in the relevant area and the balance available (if any) for remaining undeveloped blocks.*

- The changes necessary to the Territory Plan to realise this proposal including, but not limited to, planning provisions, zoning options, and any other proposed changes to the relevant zones and codes; and

*N.B.(i) Explore a mix of potential uses and a cost benefit analysis of each option to fully explore the maximum potential and best use of the site across social, economic and environmental outcomes. This might include a proposal which incorporates various uses including residential, community facility, open space, and leisure and accommodation within the site to ensure residential development is balanced with the required community, leisure and open space facilities.*



*N.B (ii) The planning report will need to address how the proposal will address the rules and criteria in the Multi Unit Housing Development Code and Part B of the Estate Development Code of the Territory Plan as they pertain to residential development. Subsequently, providing details of any proposed changes to the Watson Precinct Map and Code*

*N.B.(iii) These blocks are identified as bushfire prone under the 2014 Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. The planning report should identify appropriate bushfire protection measures for future developments. ACT Fire and Rescue notes that the development applications for all future development on these sites will require an assessment by an FPAA Accredited Bushfire Consultant to demonstrate an appropriate level of protection relative to hazard is provided.*

- Details on how the new development would consider the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Code, Access Mobility Code and the Community and Recreational Facilities Location Guidelines, General Codes.

#### **C. Justification for the planning policy changes**

This section must provide an assessment of the opportunity cost of the proposed change, and discussion of changes in the economic, social, natural and physical environment that necessitate the change. This should include, but is not limited to:

- Justification for the proposal to include residential uses for these blocks within the current zone and demonstration that it will not have an adverse impact on the mix of zoning and uses in the Watson and inner north Canberra area, including local employment opportunities; and
- Demonstration of how the inclusion of residential use within the current zone is necessary to allow alternative residential development that is not available within the wider Watson residential areas and the inner north, and how it will generate housing diversity and contribute to housing affordability in the area.

#### **D. Strategic planning policy context**

This section must provide a discussion of the proposed planning policy change and proposed use/development in the context of the ACT's planning framework and strategic planning policy including, but not limited to:

- Any associated changes that would result from the proposal, such as an amendment to the National Capital Plan or public land register.

*N.B. Whilst these blocks are within Urban Areas in the National Capital Plan, they are subject to Development Control Plan 171/99/0003 and any proposed variation should be considered in this context. Furthermore, the planning report should provide an assessment on how the proposal relates to, and impacts upon, the National Capital Plan's 'Main Avenues and Approach Routes'*

- Details of how the proposal is consistent with broader ACT Government policies, programs and actions, including:
  - the ACT Planning Strategy (2012), noting the following two strategies specifically:

*Please note: this scoping document is only valid for 12 months from the date of issue.*

- Strategy 3: Provide more cost effective and sustainable living options by improving the existing housing stock and establishing more choice in housing types in a variety of locations; and
- Strategy 4: Ensure everyone has convenient access to a range of facilities, services and opportunities for social interaction by reinforcing the role of group and local centres as community hubs.
- the ACT Government's Towards Zero Growth: Healthy Weight Action Plan (2013), and the importance of urban design and supportive infrastructure promoting active living, active ageing and active travel;
- Transport for Canberra (2012); and
- the ACT Government's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2016).

#### **E. Preliminary consultation**

Community consultation with affected communities and interested members of the public on the proposal is required to be conducted in accordance with the ACT Community Engagement Guideline at:

[https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/application/files/2614/6724/4263/communityengagement\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/application/files/2614/6724/4263/communityengagement_FINAL.pdf)

At a minimum, consultation should include holding at least one (1) public meeting/discussion session that is widely advertised in print and electronic media. This part is to include a report on consultation that:

- provide details of consultation undertaken e.g. notifications, formal presentations, sessions, number of attendees and copies of relevant correspondence;
- list of all issues raised in consultation, outcomes, etc; and
- responds to issues raised, including any changes to the proposal as a result of consultation

#### **F. Impact assessment**

This section must include a discussion of both the suitability and capability of the land for the proposed use/development with a clear conclusion, including assessment of the potential positive and negative impacts on the social, physical and natural environment if the land is developed to its full capacity as proposed.

This assessment must address, but is not limited to, the following:

- Biodiversity. A discussion on how any proposed development will incorporate the retention of remnant trees, particularly large hollow bearing trees.

*N.B. the Conservator of Flora and Fauna has raised the need to consider retaining and planting trees as foraging habitat for the national vulnerable Superb Parrot, details of which are provided in Attachment A.*

- A contamination study into the site's suitability for its proposed uses from a contamination perspective. This study must be reviewed and endorsed by the Environment Protection Authority prior to any variation to the Territory Plan;
- The scale and form of the proposed use/development on adjacent blocks and surrounding area;

***Please note: this scoping document is only valid for 12 months from the date of issue.***

- A traffic, transport and parking impact assessment that considers the impact during construction, partial completion and completion and occupation of the future development. This assessment must also take into account:
  - The assessment must also take into account the holistic effects of future residential development in this location to the broader road network, particularly the Federal Highway and other arterial roads;
  - Connections to the broader pedestrian and cycle network and active travel destinations; and
  - The proposed vehicular and service access and car parking.

*N.B. Transport Canberra and City Services advise that access to these blocks should only be provided from Antill and Zelling Streets. Access from Federal Highway will not be supported.*

- A heritage assessment. The Heritage Council notes that whilst no heritage places or objects are registered or recorded on these blocks, this area has the potential to contain Aboriginal places and objects, which if found would be protected under the provisions of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The heritage assessment is to be informed by an archaeological survey prepared in consultation with Representative Aboriginal Organisations.
- An assessment of demand changes to infrastructure and services within the area and what upgrades or augmentations may be necessary to support the proposed development. This is to particularly address the capacity of the infrastructure network to support additional and/or increased densities in this location.

*N.B. Before any development occurs on this block the proponent will be required to submit a request for "Preliminary Network Advice" to negotiate new and/or altered connections to the network as necessary. It would be prudent to consider what the likely changes to these connections would be if the sites were used for residential development.*

*N.B. ACT Fire and Rescue notes that water supply standards will need to be addressed, as detailed design for the site progresses. Advice is to be sought from ICON water to ensure adequacy of infrastructure to support demand.*

- An assessment of stormwater drainage and management of both sections, and particularly over Section 76 where the drainage line is not obvious or defined. Conduct an investigation of overland flow entering the sites from above and from where it will be discharged below the site; incorporation of Water Sensitive Urban Design provisions; and internal stormwater management.
- A leisure, community and recreation needs assessment for the Watson community and recreation catchment in order to justify the inclusion of residential use within the CZ6 - Leisure and Accommodation zone and what impact allowing residential use may have on the future provision of leisure and accommodation facilities;
- An assessment of the commercial, retail, and services required in the area to support a new residential population and ongoing employment; and
- An assessment that provides a comprehensive description of the interface between the surrounding uses and the proposed use to demonstrate compatibility including but not limited to social day- and night- activity and noise, lighting, and privacy.

*N.B. Population, dwelling and demographic information needs to incorporate 2016 census data.*

***Please note: this scoping document is only valid for 12 months from the date of issue.***

**ATTACHMENT A: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FLAGGED BY THE  
CONSERVATOR OF FLORA AND FAUNA**

There are no biodiversity constraints against the draft variation proceeding, though some redesign to retain more hollow bearing trees on Section 74 and to include favoured Superb Parrot food plants in the landscaping across both Sections is recommended.

Appropriate Golden Sun Moth and Striped Legless Lizard surveys have now been undertaken across both areas and it is agreed that the conclusion from this survey effort that neither of these species are present on the Sections is correct.

The vegetation of both Sections is also not of sufficient quality to be regarded as native vegetation or to meet listing criteria of endangered grassland and woodland.

The unusual plant previously referred to has been identified as Sage-leaf Rockrose (*Cistus salviiflorus*) an exotic shrub with quite high weed potential.

The one to three hundred year old hollow bearing trees on Section 74 are of local importance for maintaining biodiversity within the vicinity of Section 76. It appears (from the indicative residential development layout Figure 5 – Urban Renewal Discussion paper 2017) that only three of the ten such trees are planned to be retained. Retention of additional hollow bearing trees within the block is encouraged. (please see attached document)

The planned retention of the planted trees around block 76 is strongly supported as they are a relatively well utilised foraging resource of the national vulnerable Superb Parrot that breeds nearby at Throsby Ridge.

Consideration should be given to the inclusion of favoured Superb Parrot food plants in the landscaping of the two blocks. Favoured food plants include:

- English Elm (*Ulmus procera*)
- Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parviflora*)
- Blakely's Red Gum (*Eucalyptus blakleyi*)
- And wattles bearing immature pods during October – December including Silver wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) White wattle (*Acacia linifolia*) Snowy River Wattle (*Acacia boormanii*) and Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*)



Keeping Mature  
Trees-v-draft.pdf

***Please note: this scoping document is only valid for 12 months from the date of issue.***



# APPENDIX 2

---

## Supporting documents referenced in this Planning Report

*Ecological Values and Constraints Report, Block 2 Section 76 Watson* (Capital Ecology, April 2017).

*Tree and Parrot Habitat Assessment Report* (Indesco, June 2020).

*Report on Preliminary Site Investigation Block 2 Section 76 Watson* (Douglas Partners, July 2018).

*Transport Impact Assessment – Final Issue, Indicative Residential Developments at Block 10-12, Section 74 & Block 2, Section 76, Watson* (Traffix Group, April 2020).

*Site Investigation Report for Watson Section 76 Block 2, Version 9* (Indesco, January 2021).

*Preliminary Consultations for Planning Report – Blocks 10, 11 and 12 Section 74 and Block 2 Section 76 Watson* (SGS Economics and Planning, August 2018).

*Review of Contamination Risks, Blocks 10-12, Section 74 and Block 2, Section 76, Watson*, (Lanterra Consulting and Indesco, March 2019).

*Detailed Site Investigation Block 2, Section 76, Watson* (Lanterra Consulting and Indesco, August 2019).



## Contact us

### CANBERRA

Level 2, 28-36 Ainslie Place  
Canberra ACT 2601  
+61 2 6257 4525  
[sgsact@sgsep.com.au](mailto:sgsact@sgsep.com.au)

### HOBART

PO Box 123  
Franklin TAS 7113  
+61 421 372 940  
[sgstas@sgsep.com.au](mailto:sgstas@sgsep.com.au)

### MELBOURNE

Level 14, 222 Exhibition St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
+61 3 8616 0331  
[sgsvic@sgsep.com.au](mailto:sgsvic@sgsep.com.au)

### SYDNEY

209/50 Holt St  
Surry Hills NSW 2010  
+61 2 8307 0121  
[sgsnsw@sgsep.com.au](mailto:sgsnsw@sgsep.com.au)