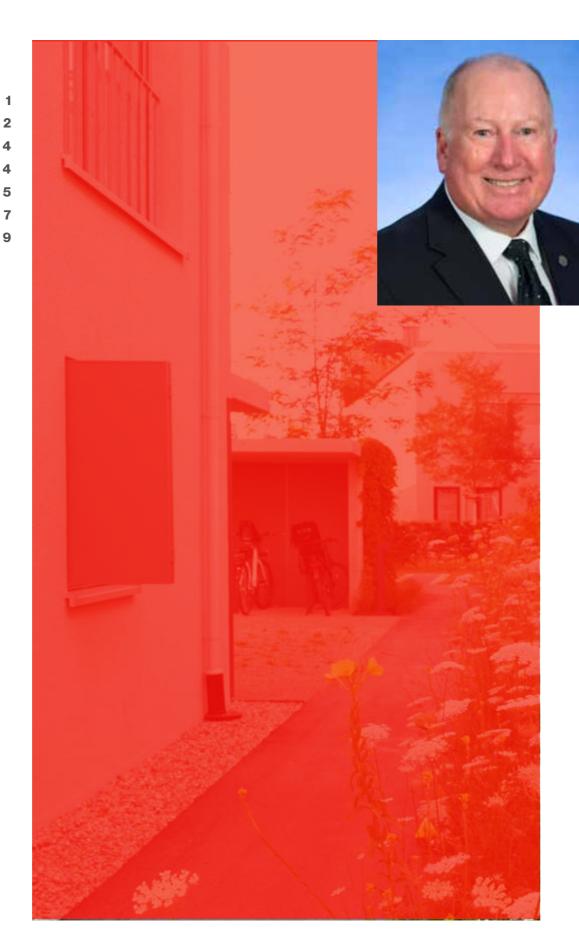


Contents

Introduction
Project History and Future Steps
Place Vision
Place Proposition
Place Themes
Design Principles for the site
Precedents



Foreword

The Watson suburb is loved by the existing and future residents for its unique character and natural beauty, with Mount Majura and other green spaces such as the Justice Robert Hope Park and its proximity to local amenities such as Majura Primary School and the Watson Shops. Like many other suburbs, Watson and in particular North Watson is undergoing a chapter of urban renewal, to support a growing population and the changing needs of our community.

It is my hope that this draft Place Plan and Development Concept captures the community's aspirations for North Watson from what we heard the community say during engagement undertaken in 2018. By working with the local community to shape these documents, they will guide the design of future development and public realm upgrades for Section 76 and the surrounds. This will allow development to be sensitive to the local character and the community's intentions for their suburb.

I would like to hear from the local Watson community to make sure that we get the place vision, the themes, and the design principles right so that we can make North Watson the best place we can make it. I would also like to know how you would like to get involved to implement the draft Place Plan and Development Concept. Further information on how the community can get involved will be documented in the final place plan.

The ACT Government has committed to providing new housing including best practice for good quality residential housing through Demonstration Housing on Section 76. A public park is also proposed for Section 76 to improve the liveability and encourage social activity in North Watson. We are also looking at protecting important trees and landscape areas for wildlife, including the vulnerable Superb Parrot, to reduce urban heat in a changing climate, and to provide a green sanctuary for residents and visitors. The document also shows how we can better connect to the wider walking and cycling network to get people to where they need to go actively and efficiently.

The draft Place Plan and Development Concept are the community's and their visions for a sustainable, inclusive, resilient, leafy and active suburb, that can shape the future of Watson.

Mick Gentleman

Minister for Planning and Land Management

Introduction

The Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) engaged Tait Network to develop a draft Place Plan and Development Concept for Watson Section 76, to be the basis for consultation with the local community. The documents respond to community engagement undertaken in 2018 and the Watson Community Association 2019 'Plan for Watson.' It addresses the changing character of the area as it relates to a more compact and sustainable city in line with the objectives of the ACT Planning Strategy (2018), and the Climate Change Strategy (2019).

The ACT Government has committed to deliver:

- Best practice housing design showcased through a Demonstration Housing project in response to community aspirations for better quality and sustainably designed housing;
- A 1-hectare local neighbourhood park to support access for North Watson residents to good quality public open space;
- Draft variation to the Territory Plan to permit residential, demonstration housing and community uses as the demand arises;
- Protect important trees and landscape areas for wildlife, particularly the vulnerable Superb Parrot;
- Reduce urban heat for greater comfort and general amenity.

Section 76 is located in what is known as North Watson, north of the Canberra CBD. The surrounding residential area, is distinguished by locals between the leafy 'Old' Watson and the newer North Watson. Old Watson consists of linear parks, local shops and a range of educational facilities. North Watson has a growing residential population and includes some community uses, temporary accommodation, two television stations, the Canberra Potters' society, woodlands and nature reserves. Watson's green spaces and linear parks play an important role in providing walking and cycling links to connect with public transport and recreational spaces where residents can socially connect.

Situated between the Federal Highway and the Mount Majura Nature Reserve, Section 76 is part of the gateway to Canberra. The surrounding suburb is characterised by leafy streets and green pockets and parks. The inner north location is serviced with a local and rapid bus route, and the Phillip Avenue light rail stop is located approximately 2kms south west of Section 76.

The site has been selected for development due to increasing demand for residential living in the inner north that are close to services, amenities and employment. More people are choosing to live in higher density settings close to existing amentities. This is driving a reshaping of the character of North Watson as a denser urban form. The built environment surrounding Section 76 is low to medium density, consisting of two, three and four storey buildings, with a six storey building proposed for the Norrebro development on Aspinall Street.

To strengthen the place experience for existing and emerging users, we are seeking local community feedback and involvement on the design elements of the draft Place Plan and Development Concept. We seek to deliver a valued neighbourhood character, encourage better linkages connecting to key destinations, including 'old' Watson, and provide pockets of recreation where local residents can gather and socialise.







Project History and Future Steps

Section 76 is proposed to provide 150 to 200 residential dwellings subject to a Territory Plan Variation (TPV) process to allow for residential use. To inform the preparation of the TPV, a community engagement process on a draft planning report was undertaken with the local community in 2018. This community consultation also included looking at residential use on Section 74 in Watson.

Previous Community Engagement

The 2018 engagement process, led by SGS Economics and Planning on behalf of the ACT Government, sought to gather and understand the aspirations of the Watson residents for the future development of North Watson. This process included public information sessions, electronic surveys and consultation with the local Watson Community Association (WCA). The use of these various engagement methods ensured a maximum number of residents were able to express their views and concerns about the future development of Watson.

The draft Place Plan and Development Concept has been informed by the information gathered through this community consultation process and from the Watson Community Association, '2019 Plan for Watson.'

Upcoming Community Engagement

Upcoming community engagement on the draft Place Plan and Development Concept (PPDC) including the public park, will be undertaken concurrently with consultation on Territory Plan draft variation 372. The draft variation proposes to rezone the site to meet government commitments and community aspirations.

Community engagement will include a range of activities for the community to participate in to have their say including:

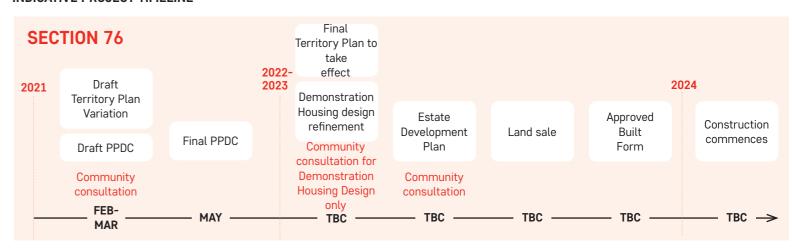
- An online presentation by the project team where the community can ask questions;
- An online survey; and
- · Onsite events for the community to get involved in.

To have your say on the draft variation, written submissions can be made. The project team will review all feedback on the draft PPDC and draft variation and make changes as appropriate. For more information on and to provide your feedback and comments on the draft PPDC and the draft variation please go to www.yoursay. act.gov.au/northwatson





INDICATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE*



* Dates may change as project progresses. The purpose of this timeline is to be clear about the key steps and where community can have their say.

How to read the draft Place Plan and Development Concept

The draft Place Plan provides a vision, themes, key principles and key actions, that aim to ensure Watson's renewal is in keeping with the aspirations of its community users and the character of the place. The proposed place vision and place proposition seek to establish a future place of community oriented, sustainable living.

The Draft Development Concept, to be read with the draft Place Plan, outlines how the vision, place proposition, themes and design principles could be implemented to achieve a mix of housing with some community uses along a network of public spaces with landscaped walking and cycling connections.

The Draft Development Concept also shows where the government has committed the site for demonstration housing, a 1-hectare neighbourhood public park, and the protection of important trees and landscape areas for wildlife, reducing urban heat.

The draft Place Plan and Development Concept will be consulted on with the community concurrently with the draft variation, which proposes future statutory planning changes for the site to meet the community's aspirations, provide housing and improve amenity for a growing population and changing climate. The draft variation can be found at https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/northwatson

What are we seeking your feedback on and what will it be used for?

We are seeking your thoughts, comments and ideas on the draft vision, place proposition, place themes and design principles and find out how you want to be involved in delivering the final Place Plan and Development Concept.

We want to hear about the design elements you would like to see for the proposed 1-hectare public park on Section 76.

Your thoughts, comments and ideas will inform a final Place Plan and Development Concept to guide how the site are developed. This could take the form of an Estate Development Plan, which will use the principles and guidelines established through the draft Place Plan and Development Concept process.

Community input on the public park will help guide its form, shape and the amenities which are provided there. A concept of one park will be provided within the final Place Plan and Development Concept.



Place Vision

Through innovative design the site will deliver housing, connecting family gardens and a network of playgrounds and social spaces along canopied, pedestrian friendly streets.

The retention and addition of trees and vegetation will ensure North Watson is an exemplar for sustainable residential living amongst a bush setting and retain its sanctuary for the vulnerable Superb Parrot.

Place Proposition



taitnetwork.com

Place Themes

Place themes have been developed in response to community consultation undertaken in 2018 and the Watson Community Association's 2019 Plan for Watson to reflect the aspiration of the existing Watson community and how they would like to see the suburb evolve over time. The place themes reflect best practice planning and design principles, responding to the unique character of the site. Place themes will be further refined through community engagement.

Strong sense of community

The theme of community is important to the residents of Watson. The Watson community prides itself on local facilities and amenities, with a vibrant shopping facility at the Watson shops, educational facilities at the Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Majura and Rosary Primary Schools, Watson Arts Centre, and the Australian Catholic University. The community is also connected through a range of small local businesses and unique landmarks such as the old 'Starlight Cinema sign', that speaks to how the suburb has evolved over the years, responding to changing demographics, and changing preferences. Creating a sense of community is about ensuring there are spaces and facilities for community groups to meet and socially connect. Community is also about providing a safe and inclusive suburb to ensure that every member of society feels valued and comfortable within their neighbourhood, supported by an urban form that can accommodate a diversity of ages, abilities and backgrounds. While the local Watson shops and linear parks are a focus of community activity. A suburb that provides people with an opportunity to be the best they can be.

Sustainable living

Sustainable living supports effective and efficient use of resources to benefit our health, our environment and our economy for current and future generations. The concept of sustainable living is important to the residents of Watson and includes all aspects of modern-day life, whether it is to do with how we move around, how we manage our waste, how we use water and energy, what we eat, or how and what we build with. A sustainable neighbourhood is adaptive to a changing climate, and which helps to maintain a liveable, prosperous and cool city. Sustainable neighbourhoods are ultimately about reducing the carbon footprint of individuals and a community.

Leafy suburb

The community expressed concern that the North Watson landscape character is not consistent with the leafy, green character of 'Old' Watson. Watson boasts a collection of parks and nearby nature reserves, such as Mount Majura and Justice Robert Hope Park, which are highly valued as extensions of living space, affording respite in nature and a hub for social interaction. Tree lined streets, linear parks and shared spaces provide shade and protect pedestrians from the weather, contributing to precinct cooling. Trees and vegetation across Watson consist of eucalyptus, oaks and Chinese elms, including at key sites within Section 76, providing critical habitats for local wildlife in particular the vulnerable Superb Parrot. The site is ideally located to allow ready community access to Mount Majura and Justice Robert Hope Park.

Active people

Watson promotes active lifestyles through its playgrounds, ovals and nearby walking trails. Currently, Watson residents desire more extensive cycling and walking paths, supported by shady trees and directional signage to encourage people to exercise through all seasons. Paths connected to residences, streets, parks and local shops can encourage people to ride or walk for short trips, reducing traffic on local roads. Parks and nature reserves, such as Mount Majura and the Watson Woodlands create opportunities for exercise through playgrounds and signposted trails. While the irrigated oval next to Majura Primary is well utilised for local sporting activities. These recreational activities provide local residents with the opportunity to lead active and healthy lifestyles. They also provide the opportunity to enjoy the environment and to meet and mix with other people.













Inclusivity

Inclusivity is about a neighbourhood that accommodates a diversity of ages, abilities and socio-demographics. Watson includes residents of all ages who have used the suburb since its inception. Watson prides itself on being an inclusive suburb, which is reflected in its various housing types, consisting of detached and attached houses, duplexes, townhouses and small scale apartments. Housing consists of public housing, housing for aged people through to large high valued contemporary and post war houses complemented by green pockets, parks and playgrounds.

Inclusive neighbourhoods provide a variety of housing types, transport options and opportunities for social interaction.

This is reflected in the accessibility of the urban form and the shared facilities across the precinct. Principles of universal design are embedded in the private homes and shared spaces ensuring they are supportive of children and enabling people to age in place. A suburb where people are able to live throughout their lives creates a strong and safe community.

Inclusivity is also about protecting and recognising the cultural heritage of the site. The Watson community recognise that the Ngunnawal people have inhabited the area for more than 25,000 years. As such, any objects identified to be of aboriginal cultural significance will be integrated into the community in consultation with Representative Aboriginal Organisations.

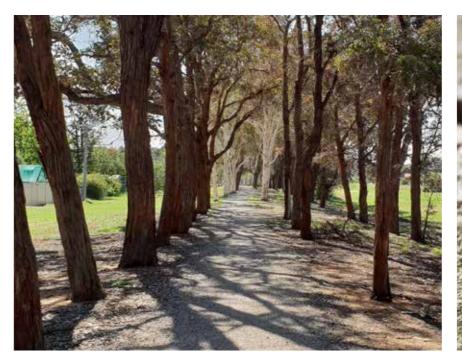
Resilient Neighbourhood

Resilience is about ensuring individuals, institutions, businesses and systems have the capacity to respond effectively to economic, environmental and social events. These events can be catastrophic or incremental changes which occur over time. Communities are increasingly under threat from a wide range of stresses and shocks. These can range from the rising effects of climate change including heatwaves, bushfires, floods and drought, to sudden economic recessions and incrementally rising inequalities. Watson, like most parts of the ACT, must grapple with an increasingly warmer climate and may come under threat from bushfires. A resilient community can effectively adapt and respond to environmental, economic and social challenges through better designed neighbourhoods, policies and programs which improve local services and promote the sustainable use of resources. This includes a community that looks after each other in these challenging periods.











Design Principles for the site

Design principles are guidelines that collectively direct the long-term strategy of a neighbourhood in order to achieve the place vision. The following design principles apply to Section 76 which reflect the place themes. This will ensure that the place vision is achieved to align with the community's vision for the future development of the site.

Safe and Inclusive

Inclusive is about creating diverse neighbourhoods where people can age in place through the provision of diverse housing types and provide mobility for all through transport options. The introduction of affordable housing should be considered to support a diverse and changing population. The site should be designed to preference pedestrians and cyclists. This can be safely and effectively achieved through the introduction of shared zones and adequate foot/ cycle paths, a permeable network and lighting within the streets and public spaces to the site. This could also include introducing formal and informal seating along key streets and public spaces approximately every 100 metres. Inclusive also relates to establishing a strong community through the design of shared and public spaces. This includes spaces that are able to support local wildlife through the provision and retention of trees and vegetation. In particular, the site should ensure there are habitats to support the Superb Parrot.

Cultural heritage objects discovered during assessments undertaken for future development applications should be integrated and protected as part of the detailed design and development process. Including heritage objects into future developments and public spaces pays respect to our Aboriginal and European history and can enrich the lives of the people who live there.

Accessible and Compact

Accessibility is about the connections between amenities and housing developments. An improved cycling and pedestrian network would make the area more inviting and vibrant. This would allow local and surrounding residents to access the walking and cycling paths along the Federal Highway, Aspinall Street, Zelling Street and Antill Street. Walking and cycling connections to surrounding infrastructure are important considerations when designing the site.

Housing on the site should be designed to interact with the surrounding environment. For example, small blocks designed with minimum setbacks and laneways provide for a more permeable, pedestrian friendly network. This allows pedestrians to move easily throughout the suburb. In addition, dwellings should be designed to entice residents into using public spaces. This includes orienting dwellings around open green spaces to provide a natural sense of security and community. Low-density, mixed with compact housing will retain and enhance the character of the area while providing a diverse range of housing types. This would also allow the site to integrate with the surrounding character of North Watson.







Green and Active

Green and active relates to recreational public spaces and tree lined leafy streets. The public realm should be designed for high quality pedestrian-oriented public spaces and streets. Emphasis should be made on blending the bush and nature reserves with the urban character. Landmarks or entry points could assist in wayfinding and establishing the identity of the area for future residents. Strong pedestrian links with canopied tree cover and public infrastructure should be incorporated with local amenities to encourage activity, so that all residents have the opportunity to lead active and healthy lifestyles. The retention of important trees and habitat should be a priority to ensure a landscape, which attracts and supports the Superb Parrot along with other natural fauna and flora.

In addition, public spaces which support a range of activities should be considered in the development of Section 76 in order to promote active lifestyles, inclusivity and establish community bonds.

Parks and play spaces should be considered with principles such as providing quality over quantity, being inclusive and connecting to the community physically and socially, enhancing physical and mental wellbeing, enhancing and preserving the natural environments and being equitable (number, variety, location).

Sustainable and Resilient

Sustainable and resilient is about embedding practices in communities that safeguard their longevity. Residents should be encouraged to reduce, reuse and recycle resources through the provision of common sharing facilities such as communal laundries and the provision of common spaces for food production and gardening. Private open spaces should be designed to support canopy trees and edible gardens connected to a network of centralised social spaces. The opportunities for permeable surfaces should be maximised to support landscapes and reduce the effects of urban heat island. In addition, measures to mitigate the effects of urban heat can be applied by the provision of trees and irrigated spaces, while incorporating passive irrigation infrastructure to reduce water needs.







Precedents

Precedents are projects that provide insight into what the future development outcomes of the site could look like. The following precedents have been selected as they resonate with the key themes and design principles attributable to Section 76. They do not represent what typologies will be constructed, but rather inspire what could be constructed in the future.

Precedents were selected based on the constraints of the site, design, context, scale and potential strategies for development of the site. The following precedents were selected due to their low to medium rise, medium density character, similar to the built form outcomes that are anticipated for the site. A summary of the three key themes and design outcomes relevant to Section 76 have been listed for each precedent.



















Donnybrook Quarter, London, United Kingdom

Donnybrook Quarter is a low rise, high density social housing project. Two tree lined streets were introduced to subdivide the large site, expanding at the intersection to create a quasi-plaza. Walkability through the site is improved due to the new connections with the neighbouring site and streets.

The internal edges provide active frontages for the residences, while the external edges are populated with commercial and retail uses fronting the main street. The residences are two to three storeys in height with balconies and terraces overlooking public space, providing a sense of community security. These balconies and terraces create a sense of individuality and the opportunity for ownership through personalisation with objects such as plants, chairs and hanging baskets.

Key Takeaways

Streets are designed compact and on short blocks to create a permeable pedestrian network

A balanced ratio between public space and built form

Residential buildings provide natural surveillance through windows and terraces facing the public realm

Retention of exisiting mature trees

Ecco Ripley

Ripley, Queensland

Ecco Ripley is the largest housing development in Queensland and Australia's largest master planned community. The site has been planned to ensure there is a diversity of housing for all of the community. A portion of which has been allocated as affordable first home buyer housing and for key workers, while 10% is accessible accommodation and 5% is for social housing. The areas are connected through strong pedestrian connections and local gardens where food is grown and purchased locally. The identity of the suburb is established and enhanced through a local arts and culture program.

The site also boasts 76ha of recreational parks and gardens which encourages residents to enjoy nature and lead active and healthy lifestyles. During the planning stages, large scale planting of native trees and vegetation was introduced while retaining the existing vegetation in order to enhance the parks and gardens.

Key Takeaways

A balanced allocation of first home buyer, accessible and social housing options

Pedestrian connections to local gardens and community hubs

Large scale planting of native trees and vegetation to provide a vast shaded canopy

Retention of exisiting mature trees

Kinley

Lilydale, Victoria

Kinley is located at the bottom of the Dandenong mountain ranges near the eastern suburb of Lilydale in Melbourne. The former quarry has been selected as the final site to accommodate Melbourne's eastern growth. The suburb will consist of a low density built form connected through leaf lined street corridors connected to wide lawn verges for a predominantly green context.

The dwellings will be connected through a local permeable network of walking and cycling trails linked to public open spaces. New amenities consist of a range of recreational parks and a proposed village centre with local shops, cafés and open space. The site will also be connected to wider Melbourne through the introduction of a new train station, reducing the need for car dependency.

Key Takeaways

Low density built form linked through tree lined streets

Walking and cycling trails connect to public open spaces and local amenities

Strong transport connections to the wider city

Retention of exisiting mature trees

SolvallsparkenUppsala, Sweden

Solvallsparken is an inclusive park that promotes physical activity for people of all ages. The park supports a range of physical, activities, sports, health and social gatherings. The park is uniquely identified and accessible through a common walking and cycling route which has a multifunctional use.

The primary path connects to the various activities found throughout the park which are separated according to their intensity. The quieter section of the park consists of a playground for toddlers, located next to an outdoor gym and boot camp trail suited for parents who wish to exercise while entertaining their kids. A more sophisticated playground is located in the central part of the park suited for children. For the teenagers and young adults, a range of activities and sports is catered for including basketball, bocce and climbing wall, surrounded by an array of bleacher seating and open grass fields for picnicking or sports.

Key Takeaways

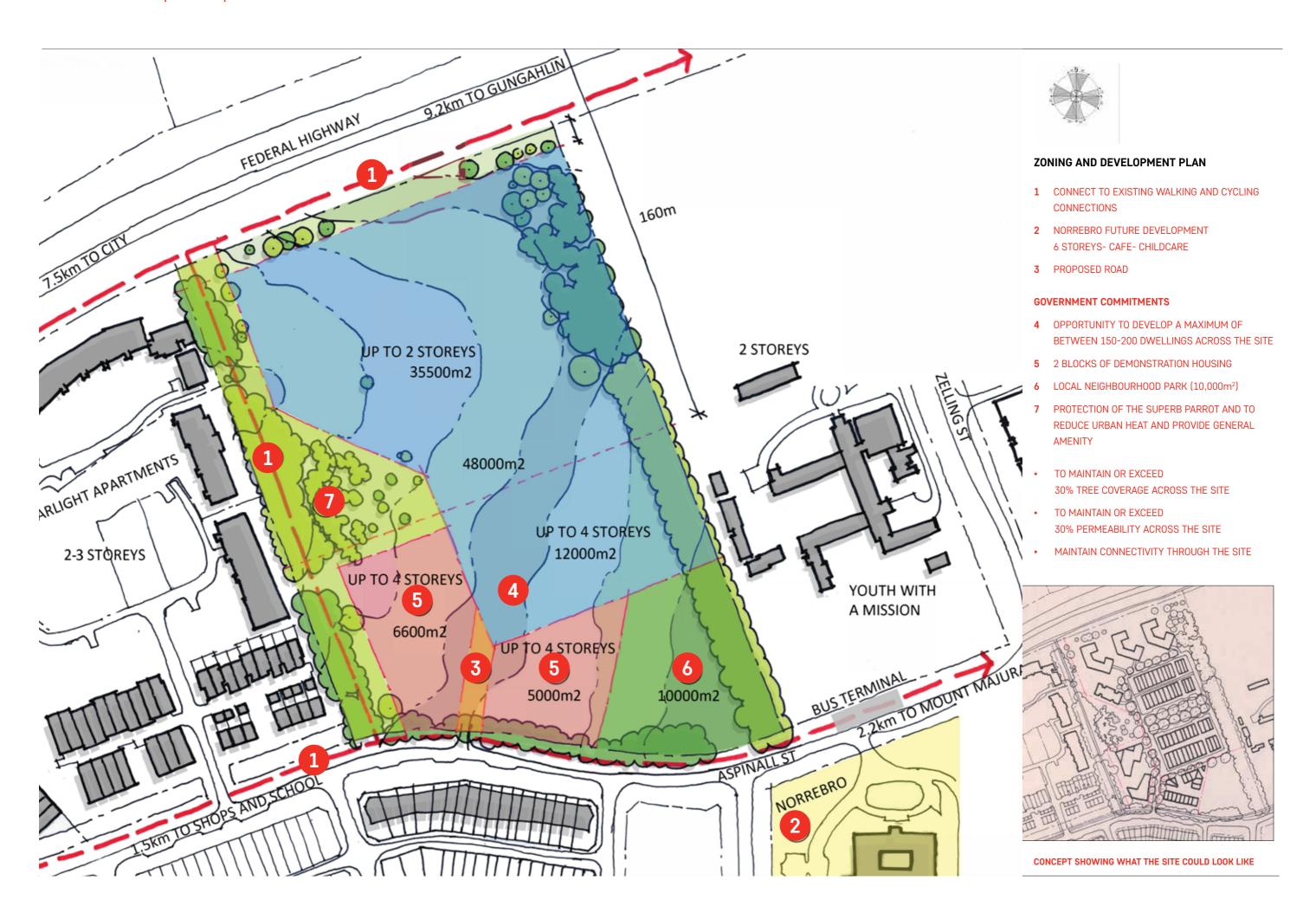
Parks with a range of activities and exercise equipment for people of all ages

A multifunctional walking and cycling route surrounds and connects the various activities

Adult exercise equipment is located next to children's playgrounds

Retention of exisiting mature trees.





Have we got the vision right?

Have we got the place values and design principles right?

To have your say and for more information please go to:

www.yoursay.act.gov.au/northwatson



Image References

Amelie & Niklas, 2018 'Bike, transportation', photograph. Bartlett, G, 2016, Mt Majura, photograph.

Bartlett, G, 2016, Starlight cinemas, photograph.

Bartlett, G. 2016, The Knox, photograph.

Bartlett, G, 2016, Watson Aerial, photograph.

Bartlett, G, 2016, Watson shops, photograph.

Bartlett, G. 2016, Watson Shops, photograph.

Barwick, T, 2018, 'Outdoor Lighting', photograph.

Brown, K, 2018, 'Elderly couple', photograph.

Chutternsap, 2018, 'Architecture buildings', photograph.

Mauratroung, 2014, 'Landscape Arci

Core, R, 2018, 'Services', photograph.

Day, Roberts, 2019, 'Kinley', photograph.

Dekorasyon, 2016, 'Canopied street', photograph.

Dipinto, S, 2017, 'Playground', photograph.

Faye, C, 2019, 'Ecco Ripley', photograph.

Fitzgerald, F, 2017, 'Solvallsparken', photograph.

Bomford, Mary, 'Superb Parrot', photograph

Hays, T, 2019, City Edge, photograph.

Hays, T, 2019, City Edge, photograph.

Investigo, 2018, 'Inclusive work practices', photograph.

Jewel Human Services, 2019, 'Community Habilitation'

photograph.

Jo, Ming, 2016, 'Leafy Street', photograph.

Knox, M, 2018, 'City of Austin', photograph.

Live apart, 2016, 'Silver Spring', photograph.

Mauratroung, 2014, 'Landscape Architect Cambridge' photograph.

Medium, 2019, 'Yoga Stretching', photograph.

News collection. Net, 2018, 'Car-lite, green, vibrant community spaces', photograph.

Power to change, 2017, 'Leeds Community Spaces', photograph.

Rendell, J, 2015, 'New Acton', photograph

SALD, 2019, Landscape Architecture award winners', photograph

SGS Economics, 2019, Watson site photos, image.

Shutterstock, 2019, 'Green Clean Eco Planet', photograph.

Smith, P, 1968, 'Historical photo of Watson', photograph.

Smith, R, 2016, 23 Albion Street', photograph.

Szczpanska, J, 2019, 'Management', photograph.

Thomas, B, 2017 'Playing chess', photograph.

Velez, A, 2016, 'Radio City music hall', photograph.

Velvez, R, 2017 'Health Archives', photograph. Winn, P, 2018, 'Burnside Park', photograph.

