



ACT
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Land Release Sites Belconnen Town Centre Co-Design Phase Report Summary

PLACE
LABORATORY



Acknowledgment of Country

The land on which we live and work is aboriginal land. Aboriginal people have lived on the Australian continent for at least 65,000 years. Non-aboriginal people have lived in Australia for just 230 years.

As a practice, we are working towards an understanding of that fact, and how it might inform our relationship to the land, its original people, and the work that we do. We acknowledge that we have a long way to go. Our studios are located on Ngunnawal and Whadjuk country in Canberra and Perth respectively.



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Phase Two Co-Design Engagement Methods and Purpose

Town Team Movement, Place Laboratory in collaboration with the Suburban Land Agency has undertaken the Phase Two 'Co-Design' Engagement between 6 March - 26 March 2021.

The engagement has included the following activities:

- Open Online Survey between 17 February - 26 March
- Online Community Co-Design Workshop on Tuesday, 9 March
- Stakeholder Co-Design Workshop on Thursday, 11 March
- After School Care Workshop on Thursday, 11 March
- Young People Open 'Co-Design' Workshop on Friday, 12 March
- Community 'Co-Design' Workshop on Saturday, 13 March
- Property Industry Workshop on 17 March

How does the Phase Two 'Co-Design' Engagement build on the results from the Stage One 'Discovery' Phase?

Stage One 'Discovery' Results

- 1.1** Understanding and building on previous strategies, including the 2016 Belconnen Masterplan
- 1.2** Engaging with the wider community for the purpose of developing a Belconnen Place Proposition and Place Themes

Stage Two 'Co-Design' Objectives

- 2.1** Using the Place Themes and design principles to understand the preferred User Experiences of the Belconnen Town Centre relevant to and connecting each identified land release site
- 2.2** Defining the Place Design Brief to inform the future land release sales of identified urban renewal precincts in the Belconnen Town Centre



Engagement Summary

The outcomes of phase 2 'Co-Design' engagement builds on the outcomes of Phase 1 and will be used to inform a Place Design Brief for the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre.

In total, 148 people directly participated in the Phase Two 'Co-Design' engagement. Stakeholder representatives included local businesses, residents, various community leaders, Belco Arts Centre, University of Canberra, Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts, Belconnen Community Council, Property Council, and local primary and high school students.

Participation in each engagement included the following:

91 people participated in the phase two 'Co-Design' online survey

10 Property Council members participated in the Industry workshop

3 Participants at the Online Community Workshop

13 Participants, from 7 organisations, at the Stakeholder Workshop

17 local high school students and young people participated in the Open 'Co-Design' workshop

Approximately 14 after school primary school students at the After School Care workshop

14 community members attended and participated in the In-person Community Workshop

In summary, participation included a wide variety of stakeholders representing the diverse users of the Belconnen Town Centre.

The feedback provided through the Co-Design Engagement Phase helps to shape the Place Proposition and Place Themes and impacts the priority placed on the Themes.

We feel confident that the level of engagement and participation in the activities has captured a diverse cross section of views and opinions from the community around the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre.

This information will be used to directly inform and assist in developing the design recommendations made for the land release sites.

The following parts of the Phase Two 'Co-Design' Engagement report focus on highlighting the summary outcomes from each individual workshop and online survey. An appendix is also provided with detailed notes from each engagement activity.

Promotion of Engagement Opportunities

A number of tools and channels were used to promote the Co-Design phase of engagement. The table below lists the tools and channels used.

Activity	Date	Reach
Direct email to community members that took part in the previous phase 1 engagement	18 – 25 February 2021	58 emails sent
Direct email to stakeholder groups impacted by future development in the subject area	6 - 20 February 2021	44 emails sent
YourSay web page published updates	17 February 2021	3,583 views 1,447 visitors
SLA Facebook and Twitter posts	25 February - 18 March 2021	2138 views
SLA presentation phase 1 update at the Belconnen Community Council online public meeting	16 February 2021	7 Individuals

Online Community Co-Design Workshop

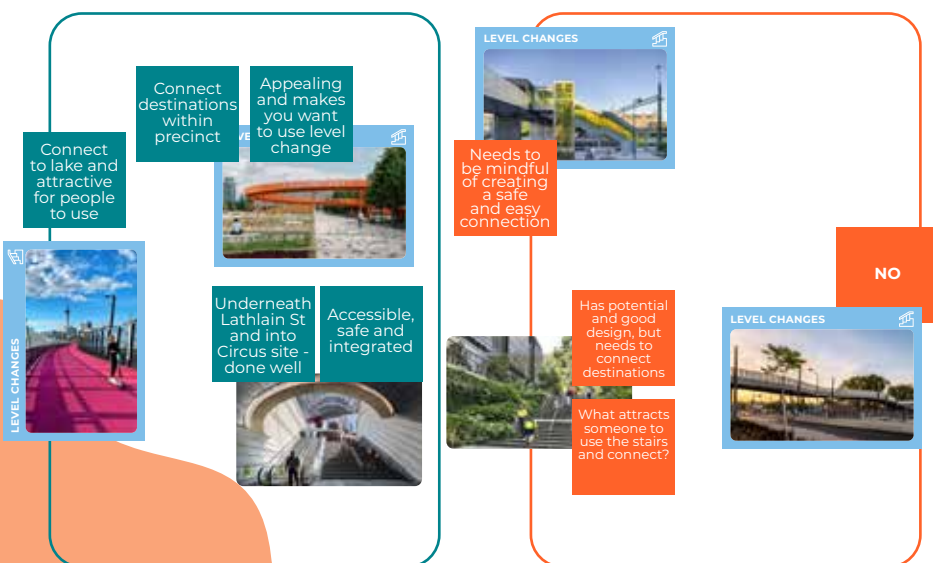
The workshop aim was to present and seek feedback from community members regarding inputs to the Place Design Brief for the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre. Specific details included:

- Inform and review outcomes from the Discovery Phase, including the draft Place Proposition and draft Place Themes;
- Engaging in discussion about what people love about the release sites in Belconnen Town Centre and what can be improved;
- Present place experience visual images relevant to development sites. Ask participants to review and consider how the experiences may be applied to the values of the development sites in the Belconnen Town Centre and each identified theme.

Level Change Connections

This is Future Belconnen

This is *not* Future Belconnen



3 online workshop participants provided their feedback to inform the future land release sites which included the following:

1. Enhance pedestrian connections within and throughout the land release sites
2. Be strategic about creating new destination and commercial tenancies
3. Enhance the opportunities for recreation along the waterfront
4. Increase greenery and shade to create more comfortable environments
5. Colour and creativity is needed on new buildings and laneway spaces
6. Development of the Circus Site and level change to Lathlain Street is critical to improving connectivity. The Circus site also has the opportunity to create a strong pedestrian connection to the waterfront
7. Mechanisms to slow vehicle traffic and reduce parking along the waterfront will be important
8. Creating new destinations has the opportunity to build on the existing community 'vibe' in Belconnen

Stakeholder Co-Design Workshop

The stakeholder co-design workshop aim was to present and seek feedback from community stakeholders regarding inputs to the Place Design Brief for the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre. Specific details included:

1. Inform and review outcomes from the Discovery Phase, including the Place Proposition and Place Themes.
2. Present place experience visual images relevant to development sites. Ask participants to review and consider how the experiences may be applied to the values of the release sites in Belconnen Town Centre and each identified theme.
3. Ask participants to map ideas for preferred experiences on each of the sites creating new user experiences, connections and destinations. Note this exercise is not about buildings, it is about the experiences of spaces between the buildings.

Workshop Summary Feedback - What we heard in this session

1. The building interface should include greenery and interesting building materials
2. The streetscape should be activated with multi-functional micro-parks, urban greenery spaces and a site-specific local street art trail
3. The former water police site should include a cafe and kayak hire. The area is well-landscaped and new amenities include BBQ's, a toilet, seating along the waterfront edge and a place space
4. Lathlain Street could have an urban park that is alive with multi-cultural entertainment and late-night uses. A play space is also included for day time activation and there is funky seating and areas to meet. The street would be a shared pedestrian area and people feel comfortable walking and crossing the road.
5. The level change between Lathlain St and Circus sites should be accessible and a destination within itself with greenery and interesting pieces of information.
6. The town centre should be accessible and welcoming for tourists and locals alike. The place has a unique, active and intimate feel.



Stakeholder Co-Design Workshop Outcomes

Discussions regarding each place theme:

Theme 1:

A fine-grained network of walkable connections throughout, around and between the land release sites.

1. Safer and more walkable areas
2. Speed cameras
3. Increase safety at night and improve lighting
4. Good shade trees
5. Focussing on what can be achieved on each land release site and always looking at and considering the bigger picture
6. Addressing development concerns
 - a. Not having adequate green spaces, narrow walkways and intrusive fencing
7. Foot bridges to beautify the area and increase walkability
8. More art needs to be included in this theme - site-specific
9. Streetscape
 - a. Trees, pedestrian flow, smooth access to Lathlain St
10. Pedestrian and green priority
 - a. Draw people out of the mall and into new local destinations
11. Define roles and responsibilities of developer and government
12. Consider the journey - best way to go and experience Belco
13. Integrated building materials
14. Connect Lathlain St to Emu Bank and level considerations

Theme 2:

A network of green and lively open spaces

1. Not using same species in every development
2. Considering indigenous planting - showcasing natives
3. Incorporate government initiatives occurring over the next 3-5 years and strategy for increase in tree canopy coverage
4. Centre the human-based initiatives within a broader holistic approach - connect to the natural environment
5. Support and build biodiversity - restore native plants at the lake
6. Better building setbacks to avoid wind tunnels and increase tree canopies
7. Nature play - less artificial
8. Sites to utilise stormwater on-site for greenery
9. Keep existing native trees
10. Slowing down traffic in distinct areas
11. Making places interesting to linger
12. Greater lighting
13. Social enterprise bike, kayak and canoe hire
14. Connecting recreational activity within the lake and Emu Inlet
15. Focus on activity and creating green space
16. Locally relevant and inspired public art
17. Simple custom play elements - not from a catalogue
18. Place manager - events, activity and community building

Theme 3:

Develop the land release sites in such a way that give people more reasons to visit and live in the Belconnen Town Centre

1. What about light rail in Belco?
2. Showcase contemporary architecture and development precincts
3. Make Belconnen different to other new development sites - i.e. look and feel
4. Kayak and fishing hire - highlight engagement with Lake

Theme 4:

Feel like a local

1. Water activities hire - will need to address need for more parking without reducing public space
2. Bring people in. Don't focus on bringing cars in
3. Should be attractive for everyone - not only locals, visitors too
4. Feel safer
5. Sense of belonging

After School Care Workshop

A workshop was organised for primary school students at the Charnwood – Dunlop School (Bettington Cct, Charnwood). Approximately 30-40 students were at the after-school program and 14 students participated in our workshop activity.

The purpose of this workshop was to creatively ask the primary school students to draw a vision of how they would like to see Emu Inlet activated for young people. Outcomes of the workshop ideas exercise and four of the drawings are highlighted below.

1. Sport and Recreation
 - a. water-activities such as a swimming area, kayaking and boat tours with friends and families
 - b. A colourful basketball court for older kids to play
2. Kids Events
 - a. A movie night on the waterfront with kids and family movies. The area also has beanbags, food trucks, bubbles and a play area.
3. Meeting Space
 - a. Barbeque areas with seating, a water fountain and playground for families. Also, shady trees throughout the park.



Young People Open 'Co-Design' Workshop

An open-style interactive workshop with young people was undertaken at 'The Corner' Belconnen Youth Centre. A summary from the workshop included the following ideas:

1. Providing affordable and free activities is very important to young people. This includes free activities and events in micro-parks, free board games, pop-up outdoor cinema, community facilities, affordable kayak hire and low-cost market stalls.
2. Young People also want to be involved in the development of community art, such as the design of future LGBTQI+ spaces and public art.
3. The former water police is preferred to be landscaped and designed as a public meeting space with kayak hire and a small-scale cafe setback from the water.
4. The level change from Lathlain St to Emu Bank is very aspirational, and the core components should include accessibility, colour and promote walkability throughout the sites.
5. Increasing shade and comfort along streetscapes is highly valued.
6. Additional amenity and play within Emu Inlet is also strongly desired.



Community Co-Design Workshop Outcomes

A facilitated community 'co-design' workshop was organised on Saturday, 13 March.

The workshop included a wide range of community demographics including long-term residents, new residents and workers in the area, Lake Ginninderra Sea Scout representatives, a young family and a student just leaving high school.

The workshop aims were to present feedback from the previous stage of consultation and work in groups (with diverse perspectives) to seek feedback, which informs the Place Design Brief for the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre. Specific details included:

1. Inform and review outcomes from the Discovery Phase, including the draft Place Proposition and draft Place Themes;
2. Present place experience visual images relevant to development sites. Ask participants to review and prioritise how the experiences may be applied to the values of the release sites in Belconnen Town Centre;
3. Ask participants to map ideas for preferred experiences on each of the site and relate back to place themes. Note this exercise is not about buildings, it is about the experiences of spaces between the buildings;
4. Work in groups to create new urban experiences, connections and destinations on each of the land release sites and surrounding public spaces;
5. Facilitate a general discussion about what success looks like.



Community Co-Design Workshop Summary Notes:

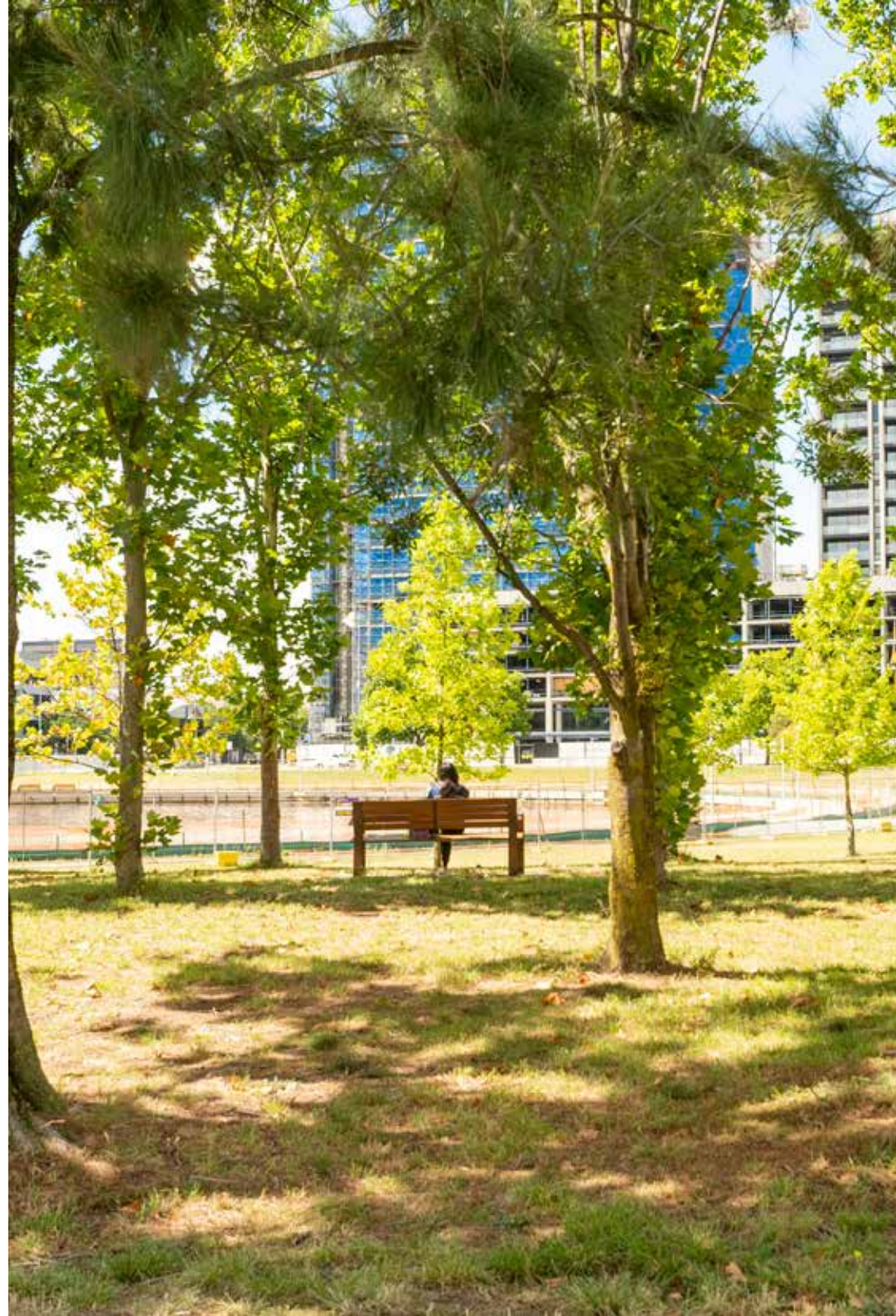
1. Connection between each land release site has been carefully considered with storylines telling the history, culture and destination presence of the town centre. The storylines are brought to life with street art, interactive play and green social spaces.
2. Walkability and wide footpaths are highly valued within and between each land release site
3. Lathlain Street is a walkable entertainment precinct with a lively urban park and community facility
4. The former water police site could be developed as a modest cafe with boat hire and managed and operated by the Lake Ginninderra Sea Scouts.
5. The building interface of ground level developments should have interesting materials, innovative shopfronts and green walls.
6. The level change is aspirational and a key destination of the town centre.



Online Property Industry Workshop

The workshops aim was to present and seek feedback from industry stakeholders regarding the Place Design Brief for the land release sites in the Belconnen Town Centre. Discussion with the participants highlighted a number of important considerations, which includes the following information;

- In a post-COVID office and commercial market, there is an identified need to explore alternative ground floor uses other than retail/commercial. Currently Belconnen Town Centre does not have a great demand for office and retail so there is a need to be strategic about locations and uses including;
- Hotel - although there are a few new hotels in the area - investigate occupancy rates and potential tenants
 - » Diversity of residential housing and commercial uses
 - » Is there an opportunity for low-rent creative spaces - build a precinct and energy and foot traffic
 - » A high need for recreational uses - dancing classes, sports facilities, etc - these are easy to provide ground floor uses
- How is valuation and setting reserve prices dealt with to allow delivery on non-financial objectives and ensure good design outcomes (rather than maximising revenue)
- How to create improved government-industry partnerships and policy to deliver community aspirations and community infrastructure outcomes



Open Online Survey Results

91 people participated in the Open Online Survey between 17 February - 26 March. 35-39 and 35-44 age demographics had the highest level of participation in the survey (14 respondents each), followed closely by 50-54 year old's (13 respondents), 30-34 year old's (12 respondents) and 25-29 year old's (11 respondents).

The survey sought responses that were ratings, written and image based regarding the 4 Themes;

1. Theme 1: A fine-grained network of walkable connections throughout, around and between the land release sites.

2. Theme 2: A network of green and lively open spaces

3. Theme 3: Develop the land release sites in such a way that they give people more reasons to visit and live in Belconnen

4. Theme 4: Feel like a local.

Green spaces, a variety of buildings and uses and improved connectivity and activation linked the highest responses to the images used to describe all four Themes.

Image 1 from Theme 1, described as 'Comfortable environment with good shade trees' was the most popular response (80) of all images.

Theme 2 was considered the most important theme by respondents, with 64 (68.8%) giving 5 stars.

Variety and activation linked many selected responses to describe all 4 Themes, with respondents also placing high importance on the following:

1. Having a choice of regular organised community activities and events
2. Amenity such as parks, streets, shops and restaurants should have a family friendly focus
3. Enhanced street character - built form should be characterised by interesting interfaces, shop fronts, entrances and increased opportunities for activity
4. Diversity on the street - types of people, mix of businesses, opening times (day and night), residential housing and activities.



Online Survey Results

The Online Survey included a section asking people to comment about their stories or memories of the sites and what their preferred uses are for each site in the future. A summary of the responses is highlighted below.

Water Police Site

Respondents encouraged increased water activities and access to the lake and offered that better amenity in the area in the form of gardens, parks and seating would be a reason for people to stay and play instead of seeing the area as a place to start or end a walk or cycle. Improved provision of and maintenance of boardwalk, walking and cycle paths and existing food and beverage offerings in the area would enhance visitation.

Circus Site

Several respondents noted the fun and excited memories of attending the circus with their families, with others commenting about the outdated and cruel realities of circus now and that the site provided an opportunity to enhance green space in the town centre through the use of open space, parks, trees and shade but also through incorporation of green roofs to any built form developed on the site.

Good connections was a popular response with laneways, alleyways, and a strong precinct identity able to be created on this site. Lower density, low rise / large format residential or green and public spaces with outdoor dining options was also a popular response for this site, with the interesting topography noted as an opportunity for some different and more thoughtful solutions.

Lathlain St Precinct

Respondents welcomed the inclusion of a public open space that would provide a green oasis to cater to all ages and uses. This area should complement and support expansion of the existing 'Eat Street' area, reduce car presence and increase connectivity to the mall and lake.

Emphasis was also placed on better use and maintenance of existing Belconnen Town Centre infrastructure, amenity and retail (food and beverage) offerings, better pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the town centre and land release sites as well as improving the aesthetics of the area through green spaces and native landscaping.