



Increasing transparency in the planning system

(Draft Planning Bill)



Transparency is a necessary feature to build trust and confidence in the planning system and complements the increased flexibility and shift to an outcomes focus in the reformed system.

One of the key principles that has guided the development of the new Planning Bill is to increase transparency in the planning system.

The Planning Bill explores ways to make processes and decision-making more transparent. This includes making more use of the Territory Planning Authority's website to provide easier access to information.

Transparency is also reflected through improved engagement with the community at important stages of planning and by communicating in a clear way.



Public consultation

Public consultation is a central feature of the ACT's planning framework. An object of the new Planning Bill is to create a planning system that provides a scheme for community participation. The public will be consulted on and invited to provide comment on the following, amongst other planning processes:

- Developing the Planning Strategy and district strategies
- All draft major amendments and some minor amendments to the Territory Plan
- Draft review report of the Territory Plan
- Draft EIS applications
- Development applications
- A proposed declaration for a project to be a Territory Priority Project
- Draft revised offsets policy
- Draft Offsets Policy Guidelines
- Draft Land Management Plans



Principles of good consultation

Community participation is a fundamental element of a good planning system. The Planning Bill proposes to introduce Principles of Good Consultation that will guide the various consultation processes in the Act and make sure community views are central to decision making.

Information published on the planning website

The Planning Bill introduces several new requirements for advice, decisions and information to be published on the Territory Planning Authority's website. The website is proposed to become a central source of information on planning matters. This means that community and industry members can go to a single website to access all the information they need about planning in the Territory and current and past applications.

Examples of what must be published on the planning website under the Planning Bill include:

- **Strategic documents**
 - Ministerial directions
 - ACT Planning Strategy
 - District strategies
 - Statement of Planning Priorities
 - Territory Plan
- **Territory Plan amendments**
 - Proponent applications to amend the Territory Plan that have been accepted
 - Proposed major amendments to the Territory Plan
 - Public consultation comments
 - When proposed amendments are given to the Minister
 - The Minister's decision on proposed amendments
 - Proposed minor Territory Plan amendments
 - The Minister's decision to review the Territory Plan or to delay its review
- **Development assessment**
 - National Capital Design Review Panel Rules
 - Applications for an environment impact statement (EIS) scoping document
 - Draft EIS and representations on a draft EIS
 - EIS assessment reports
 - Finalised EISs
- Environmental significance opinions (ESO)
- Declarations for development encroaching on Territory land if development is prohibited
- Development Application (DA) documentation guidelines
- DA documents, plans and reports
- Further information requests for DAs and the applicants' responses
- Amendments to DAs
- Any pre-decision advice by the planning authority on DAs
- DA notices of decision
- Reconsideration applications
- Amendments to existing development approvals
- **Public consultation notices of projects being considered for declaration as Territory Priority Projects**
- **Offset Management Plans**
- **Statements of reasons of the granting by direct sale of community leases**
- **Land Management Plans**
 - Consultation notice of draft Land Management Plans
 - Submissions about draft Land Management Plans
 - Rejection notices of the Minister rejecting draft Land Management Plans
- **Public Register and associated documents.**

Exemption declarations on Public Register

Following feedback from the community during engagement on the Planning System Review and Reform Project, exemption declaration documentation will be added to the public register as an increased transparency measure. This will mean that plans submitted to the planning authority, and the authority's decisions, will be publicly available. These documents will be able to be provided to the public without the need for a request for documents under the [Freedom of Information Act 2016](#).