



FAQs – What does the Planning Bill mean for you?

(Draft Planning Bill)



➡ Why does the Bill matter?

Through the draft Planning Bill, we will create a planning system that delivers for the people of the ACT—a system that understands the needs of our residents, plans for those needs, and then makes sure those needs are met.

The Planning Bill sets out how we will plan for the future to meet your needs—where people will live, how they will move around, how the natural environment will be protected and how our city will be resilient to the impacts of climate change.

It sets up the planning framework and processes that will be needed, from planning new suburbs to managing change in established areas

to considering new buildings. For example, this framework allows us to consider important matters like:

- how environment and traditional knowledge and culture are considered when we plan for new communities
- how we inform people and get people involved in planning processes to inform our decisionmaking
- how we set out what is expected for different types of housing
- how we consider what schools and other services are needed for new areas and existing areas undergoing change.

At the moment, our planning system and development is dictated by strict rules. Under the new outcomes-focussed planning system, we will look to quality, results and performance.

Most people don't directly interact with the planning system very often, but this new legislation makes it easier for you to do so. Easier for you to influence planning and the outcomes of planning—what the built environment looks like and how it interacts with the natural environment.

➡ What does this mean for the area you live in?

- Urban planning affects the area you live in; for example where and what kind of housing, businesses and community facilities can be built.
- The Planning Bill will guide us in planning for future needs in your area.
- At the higher level, the Planning Bill sets out the need for the ACT **Planning Strategy** (for the whole Territory) and a **district strategy** (for your district, e.g. Belconnen).
- For example, a district strategy might help us identify and plan to improve the cycle path network in your district so you can easily and safely get from where you live to where you work or shop or play.





➡ What does this mean for your house and block of land?

The Planning Bill requires us to have a **Territory Plan** which contains the planning requirements for what you can do on your block of land.

The Territory Plan has all the detailed requirements for your block of land. This includes the zoning, which tells you what type of development you are allowed to have, as well as

the requirements for designing and building your house or buildings.

The Bill says what you need to get approval for, and what you don't need approval for (exempt development).

The Planning (Exempt Development) Regulation sets out the work you can do on your block without needing

approval. This includes things like garages, decks and solar panels. You may also be able to build a new single dwelling without planning, provided it meets requirements for height and setbacks from the boundaries.

➡ What does this mean for community facilities in your area?

- The Planning Bill requires us to prepare a Territory Plan that tells us how all land in the ACT is zoned. Our zoning system makes sure that we provide land for all different land uses—different types of housing, commercial and retail businesses, community facilities and nature conservation, amongst other types.
- We have land that is zoned for community facilities around the city to make sure you have important facilities such as schools, churches, community centres, health centres, libraries and aged care facilities. Some privately owned land might also be used for public facilities, such as swimming pools, shopping centres etc.
- Urban planning and district strategies will help us understand what community facilities you need in your area and how this might change as needs change so we can meet demand in the future.

➡ How might you interact with processes set out in the Planning Bill?

- **If you submit a development application to the authority for your block of land:** The Bill sets out the processes for what needs approval, how to apply, the application requirements and how your application will be assessed.
- **If you like to keep track of developments in your area:** If development approval is required and an application is lodged, the Bill outlines what information the developer needs to provide, and where and how you can see and comment on that information.
- **If you like to know about and be involved in planning decisions across the city:** The Bill sets out the framework for the types of developments that must have community consultation and how and when that consultation will occur. For example, when the Minister declares a Territory Priority Project and developing the Planning Strategy and District Strategies, public consultation must occur.
- **If you want to be involved in planning for the future:** The Bill includes processes for strategic and spatial planning. This means understanding how we live, work, shop, play and do business and plan for the future. The Planning Bill requires us to prepare a Planning Strategy and District Strategies that set out our long-term vision, our planning policies to achieve the vision and how we will manage change. The Bill also requires that we consult with the ACT community—you—when we prepare these strategic documents.

