



**ACT**  
Government

# Canberra City Centre Urban Design Framework

November 2022

DRAFT



# A city within the landscape





## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Yuma  
Dhawura Nguna Dhawura Ngunnawal  
Yanggu ngalawiri dhunimanyin  
Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari  
Nginggada Dindi yindumaralidjinyin  
Dhawura Ngunnawal yindumaralidjinyin

Hello,  
This is Ngunnawal Country  
Today we are meeting on Ngunnawal country  
We always respect Elders, male and female  
We always respect Ngunnawal Country

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as Canberra's first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians. We recognise the special relationship and connection that Ngunnawal people have with this Country. Prior to the dislocation of Ngunnawal people from their land, they were a thriving people whose life and culture was connected unequivocally to this land in a way that only they understand and know, and is core to their physical and spiritual being. The disconnection of the Ngunnawal people from Culture and Country has had long-lasting, profound and ongoing health and well-being effects on their life, cultural practices, families and continuation of their law/lore. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the historic dispossession of the Ngunnawal people of Canberra and their surrounding regions. We recognise the significant contribution the Ngunnawal people have played in caring for Country as for time immemorial they have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual and economic connection to these lands and waters.

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MELBOURNE BUILDING







# INTRODUCTION

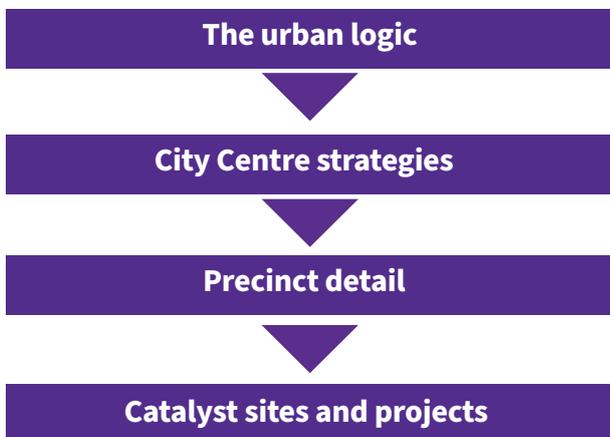
# PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The Canberra City Centre Urban Design Framework (UDF) is a strategic planning document prepared to support the objectives of the City Plan. It sets out a design vision and strategic directions for the future development of the Canberra City Centre. The framework establishes desired character, key principles for development and a supporting framework for achieving good design outcomes and promoting design excellence. It addresses contemporary issues and challenges affecting the design of built form and the public realm, and positively contributing to the future development of Canberra's City Centre.

The City Centre's competitiveness and economic success, like that of other cities, is now more than ever dependent on its attractiveness and liveability.

Continued growth for the City Centre gives important potential to improve the City Centre's liveability, economic performance and long-term growth. Recognising the distinct characteristics of the City Centre as it is today is critical to setting the baseline for how the City Centre and its planning authorities move forward in planning for success in the future.

The UDF outlines a strategic focus for the City Centre's future and provides key directions and recommendations for achieving high-quality urban design outcomes to reinvigorate and rejuvenate the City Centre and reinforce its position as the heart of Canberra. The UDF has been prepared in four key parts, which will be further explained on the following page:



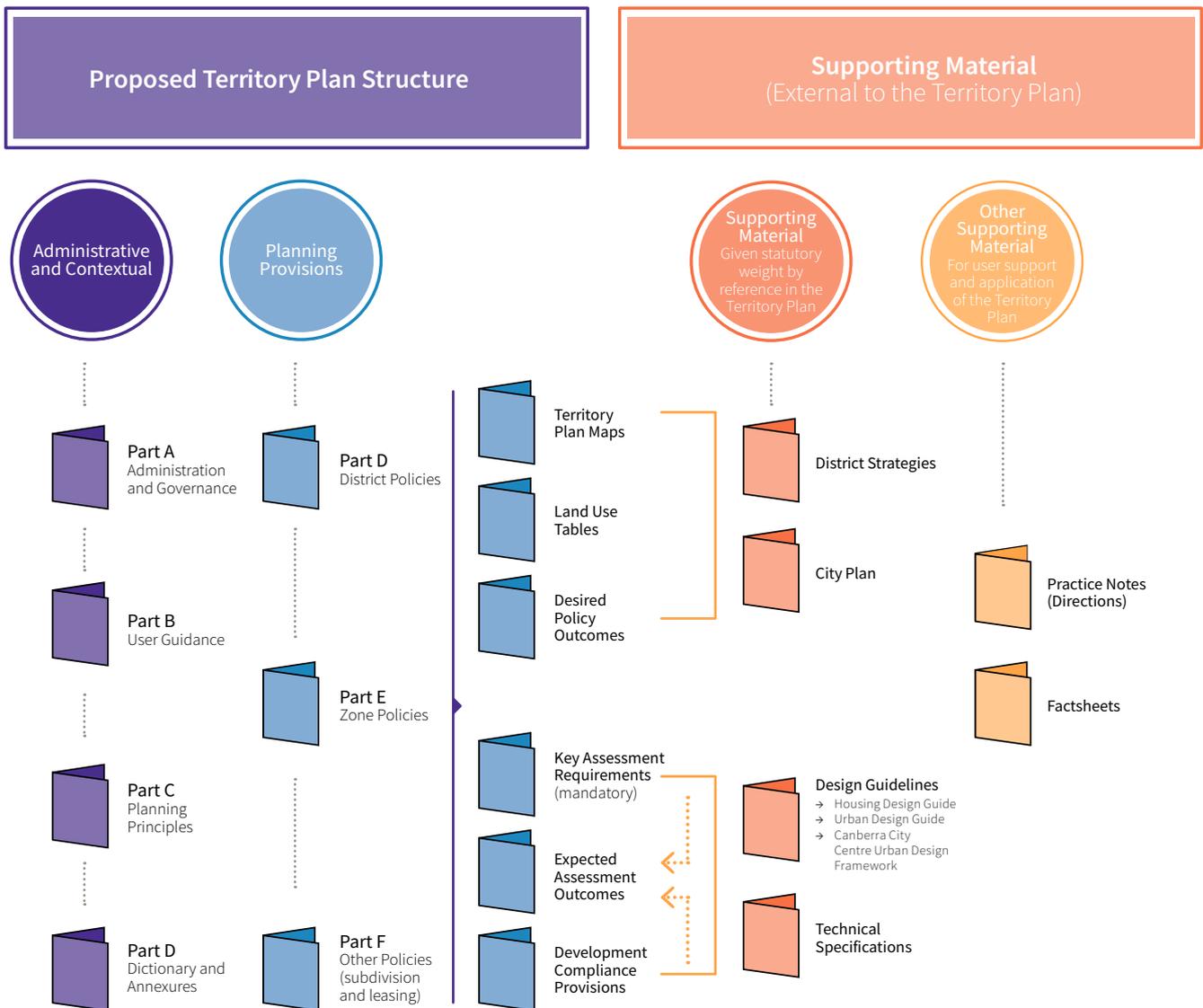
## WHY THE CITY CENTRE NEEDS AN URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Urban design frameworks are an integral part of the new outcomes focussed planning system for the ACT as illustrated on the opposite page. They will complement and interface with a suite of new proposed design guides, and are an important tool to assist planning authorities in determining appropriate place-based design outcomes within a specific context to provide detail and clarity for developers and authorities.

The approach of the UDF is to:

- identify a place-based approach to the City Centre's overall design and development process
- acknowledge the importance of the City Centre as a network of connected places; it is not just about one building, precinct or place
- provide an integrated approach to considering public and private needs, desires and aspirations align around a shared ambition of achieving high-quality design outcomes and increasing the liveability of the City Centre
- provide a City Centre, precinct and place spatial and urban logic to guide decision making and better coordinate development opportunities to leverage their potential
- identify projects and clusters of projects that have a potential catalytic effect on the future of the City Centre
- inform and facilitate the renewal and revitalisation of the City Centre.

### Draft Proposed ACT Planning System Structure



# HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The Urban Design Framework is organised through a series of parts as identified on the following page. Two overarching City Centre strategies provide high-level and consistent guidance for development across the City Centre. The City Centre is then organised into five key precincts, with more detailed guidance where specific elements unique to context are evident and cannot be covered by the overarching strategies.

Key to developing the Urban Design Framework was considering future guidance at a range of scales to understand the relationships at different levels. The framework focusses on three key scales including:



**Urban Design Framework Scales**

## CITY CENTRE

The City Centre scale focusses on bringing together the key precincts that make up the City Centre collectively as a whole. City Centre strategies relate to built form and public realm outcomes, with a key focus on the interface between these elements, to encourage a holistic approach to development for the City Centre.

## PRECINCT

Individual precincts focus on identifying unique characteristics and outcomes for a specific part of the City Centre. Precinct plans begin to outline design responses in relation to character and context. Potential catalyst sites are identified with design responses. Future investigations support the desired characteristics and outcomes for each precinct.

## PLACE

At the place scale, specific catalyst projects are identified ranging from streetscape upgrades, specific sites and place-based projects that are key to the precinct.

For each new development proposal, consideration must be given to each of the City Centre strategies, as well as any specific precinct intent and guidance relevant to the proposal.

When planning for development in the City Centre, the following process is recommended (as outlined in the adjacent diagram):

- Locate the appropriate precinct for the development proposal or site.
- Specific guidance highlighted in each precinct will be addressed.
- Where specific guidance is not identified within the precinct, the proposal must be reviewed against the City Centre strategies to achieving the overall intent.

The UDF provides an overall framework and broad urban design guidance for future development in the City Centre.

The UDF is intended to be used by a range of users from designers, developers, governments and the community to facilitate development applications.

The UDF will assist the ACT in the determination of development applications and works approvals and for the undertaking of public realm and infrastructure improvements. It will also assist local businesses and residents to understand the overall vision and to champion implementation of high-quality design outcomes and experiences that activate and improve the City Centre.

### Urban logic

The planning and historical context of the City Centre, alignment with the City Plan, as well as an understanding of City Centre character, key opportunities and challenges to ensure a place-based approach moving forward.



### City Centre strategies

A series of overarching strategies that provide general development outcomes and design guidance for the whole of the City Centre.



### Precinct detail

More specific guidance for each of the City Centre precincts – City Hill, City North-East, City South-East, City North-West, and West Basin / Acton Waterfront.



### Catalyst sites and projects

Where required, specific guidance around key streets and catalyst projects are identified within each of the precincts.



## LOOKING FORWARD

In a global economy increasingly characterised by competition between cities, an innovative and increasingly diverse City Centre such as Canberra is well-positioned to boost its competitiveness to generate, attract and retain investment and talent and further develop its knowledge-based sectors. The UDF provides a vision and framework for urban design in the City Centre that builds on Canberra's history of planning and design achievements, starting with the Griffin Plan's gazetting in 1924.

It identifies values, directions and opportunities for improving built form, public realm and place outcomes for the City Centre and its precincts. It also provides principles and key directions to assist in providing a focus for public and private sector groups and individuals to identify desirable directions to be undertaken, with potential opportunities to address them.

Good urban design and land-use planning can significantly build the prosperity and appeal of the City Centre as a place to live, work, learn and play. Using the UDF to directly support the continued diversification of the City Centre's economic base will help grow commercial services and knowledge-based industries that support the clustering of several activities whose economic value together is greater than the sum of its parts.

The UDF sets a new standard for development in the City Centre based on a critical set of planning and design principles and objectives capable of delivering a new urban design paradigm for the City Centre. Development and redevelopment that focusses on strengthening City Centre image and the relationship between people and place is of high priority.

It is important to note, in the context of the UDF, the difference between good design and design excellence. Good design is the base expectation for all future development within the City Centre, while design excellence refers to 'world class' architecture and design. This document provides guidance to support good design, while striving for design excellence.

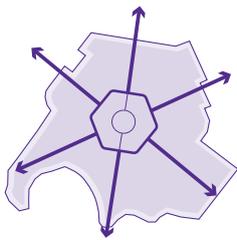
### CITY PLAN

Informed by the draft Inner North and City district strategy, the City Plan sets out the vision for the City Centre and proposes high-level implementation actions that could deliver that vision and create and maintain momentum for change and renewal. The City Plan outlines strategic goals for the City Centre (shown right).

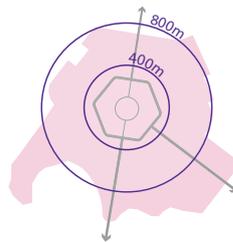
The Urban Design Framework is prepared to support the City Plan, providing more detailed guidance and precinct specific directions that help deliver on the City Plan vision and themes.



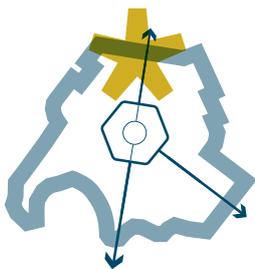
SPATIAL FRAMEWORK STRATEGIC GOALS ALIGNED WITH CITY PLAN



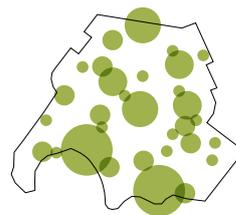
A City Centre that is our gateway to the world and the cosmopolitan heart of Canberra with a clear sense of arrival and more destinations for people to visit, linger and interact.



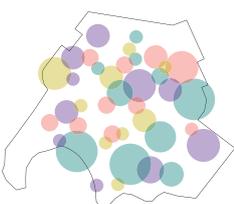
A public transport supportive urban environment that balances movement and place with significant provisions and priorities for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users.



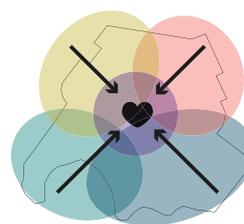
An identifiable approach, which increases in formality on approach to the City Centre and which clearly signifies the symbolic and functional roles of the National Capital.



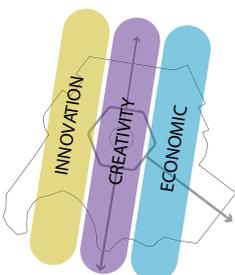
A biodiverse urban environment with generous planting on buildings, the public realm, streets and open spaces that create memorable places to support public life.



An easy-to-access, people-first destination that offers unique business opportunities and a wide range of lifestyle options for diverse communities and a distinct urban culture.



A unified City Centre, comprised of 5 precincts each with their own unique character, united as the heart of Canberra.



A place-based approach to development and urban renewal with a strong focus on design excellence, providing a diversity of housing choice, sustainability and innovation.



A City Centre that is a contemporary expression of the Griffin Plan structure by strengthening the geometry and form of main avenues, vistas and public spaces.

# WHAT IS GOOD URBAN DESIGN?

Good urban design is about much more than just what a place looks like; it is about how a place functions, and how it makes people feel when they are within that place. Good urban design also supports economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits. These qualities are often more straightforward to identify when considering a building or built outcome. However, when it comes to evaluating places and urban environments, this can be much more complex, and requires an understanding of much broader principles and ideas. These are outlined below.

## CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

Places and buildings should respond to and contribute to the unique local characteristics, qualities and contextual inputs to create good design outcomes. An area's key natural and built features, as well as its social, economic, health and environmental conditions, should all be considered as part of this context. The ability to make well-informed decisions that will positively shape the development's future and its area of influence is made possible by having an understanding of all of these aspects at varying scales and their relationships with one another.

## ACCESS, MOVEMENT AND PLACE

The routes, patterns and blocks of development and how they create streets, open spaces and buildings affects urban character and the lived experience of how we move around. It defines the structure and settlement pattern, development grain and block pattern, legibility and movement, and distribution of different uses. With successful cities placing a high focus on movement and place qualities, the need for balancing varying movement demands with high-quality design outcomes will create pedestrian focussed streets rather than car focussed. This also encourages the use of more active modes of transport, which promotes better health and activity. Well-designed streets are crucial to a vibrant city, as this is where people come together.

## BUILT FORM AND SCALE

Buildings have a significant impact on the overall quality and character of our City Centre, and how people perceive them. The general functionality and prosperity of the City Centre depends heavily on how buildings are designed and how they interact with the public realm.

Good design delivers buildings and places of a scale and dimension that carefully respond to their local context and climate, to sensitively integrate into the existing built fabric. Buildings should provide attractive and engaging edges that enhance amenity, useability, safety and diversity of the urban fabric.

## MATERIALS AND BUILDING QUALITY

The quality of materials used for a building or within the public realm, not only effects how well it functions, but also how long it will last over time. Materials should be practical, durable, serviceable, attractive and sustainable. Material sustainability should be considered from the perspective of embedded carbon emissions, sustainable sources and complete life-cycle to support a healthy environment in our buildings and where we get our materials from. Choosing suitable and appropriate materials can significantly help new developments fit harmoniously within their surroundings and contribute to better environments.

## PUBLIC REALM AMENITY

The public realm should be designed with the needs and values of its users in mind, focusing on building spaces that are people-centric, walkable, well-connected and inviting. Well-designed public spaces and streets will encourage people to walk further, to stop, linger and interact, and create improved social connections and community benefit. The quality and functionality of spaces should be considered to provide a diverse hierarchy of publicly accessible spaces with a variety of uses and activities. High quality and consistent detailing of the City Centre's public space will establish a strong and memorable urban quality commensurate with its status.

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Good urban design can play a significant role in generating social, environmental and economic benefits to the community, government and private business. Social benefits include supporting people's quality of life and overall health and wellbeing. Environmental benefits encompass the protection and enhancement of environmental assets and the inclusion of sustainable design features and travel. Economic benefits also comprise reduced infrastructure and delivery costs as a result of efficient land use patterns through greater density close to activity centres, employment areas and active transport.

## SAFETY

Good design addresses the need to offer safety and security both within the development and the adjacent public realm, providing a positive, clearly defined relationship between public and private places. Buildings, open spaces and the public realm must be safe and secure for all users to enjoy throughout the day and night. Buildings provide improved safety and perception of safety through passive surveillance and overlooking of the public realm. Public spaces should be well-lit and legible to support ongoing use throughout the day and night and maximise spatial utilisation and safety for vulnerable groups. Safety can be embedded through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) design principles and Gender Sensitive Urban Design Principles throughout the City Centre's streets and spaces.

## SUSTAINABILITY

An essential role of any urban ecosystem is to provide conditions that are healthy and sustainable for both communities and natural systems. Both new and existing developments should incorporate sustainable building techniques, with consideration of how to update and repurpose existing assets to improve environmental, social and economic outcomes. Open spaces and the public realm should integrate Water Sensitive Urban Design principles and consider urban cooling and landscaping for better optimisation of assets and energy.







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# URBAN LOGIC

# CITY CENTRE CONTEXT

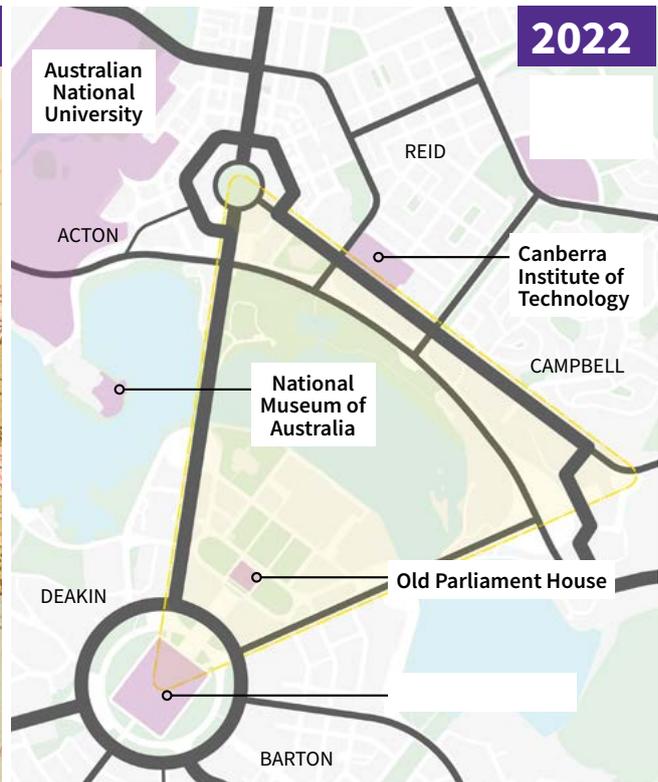
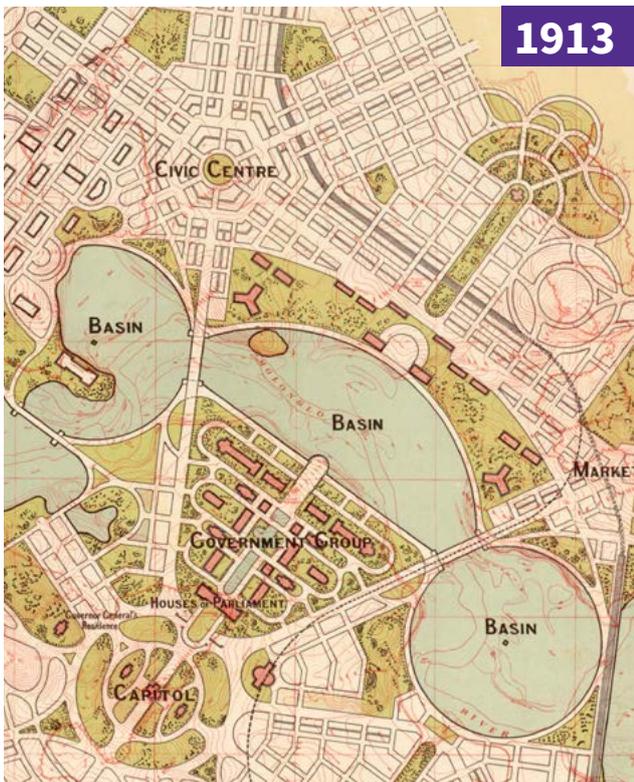
The city of Canberra is emerging from Ngunnawal Country, and has a relatively young but rich history as a planned capital city for Australia. In 1912, the Commonwealth Government announced an international design competition where the new city would be designed and developed as ‘the finest capital city in the world’. The winning design, by Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin, envisaged a place where its city and landscape setting were one in harmony – a capital city nestled into the hills and valleys that surround it.

Many elements of the original plan are evident in the current design of Canberra. The intent was to provide a high quality of life for all its residents and include generous public open space, recreation and sports facilities, cultural institutions and grand vistas and landmarks.

Planning should respect and build on the heritage of its visionary design while laying the foundations for a 21st century capital city. Rich in character and experience, contemporary Canberra will be one that embeds this landscape approach into the everyday urban fabric, preserving its history through a complementary urbanisation strategy.

The core defining features for the City Centre:

- Bold geometric axial arrangements
- Undulating topography, hills and dramatic backdrops
- Extensive open space
- Lake Burley Griffin
- Grand boulevards and street avenues
- Strong visual lines often terminating with key landmarks
- The National Triangle
- Key gateways and approach routes
- Traditional grid style blocks
- Built form integrated as part of the landscape



The National Triangle as planned in 1913 and current layout as of 2022 shows strong resemblance.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The past century has seen Canberra evolve from being a design competition through to the City Centre it is today. While careful planning and considerable intent has been there since the beginning, there are numerous physical issues and challenges contributing to the way the City Centre currently operates. The UDF outlines opportunities for the City Centre to future-proof further challenges at the City Centre scale.

### City Centre Scale

One of the most critical and important issues for Canberra is the existing scale of the City Centre, and the issues and challenges it creates in terms of walking journeys and activating the City Centre. There is a perceived spatial misrepresentation across the City Centre, making it seem un-walkable and lacking in pedestrian connectivity.

A comparison of the City Centre with other major capital cities in Australia highlights the expansive scale of the City Centre compared to total population. With less than 10% of the population catchment than comparably size CBD environments in Sydney and

Melbourne (see below), this highlights and explains the key challenges the city currently has in realising a consistent level of activation for the City Centre.

At the opposite end, looking at the city of Newcastle, which is comparable in terms of population, the scale and area of the City Centre is around 10% to that of Canberra, highlighting a more appropriate size city centre for its current population.

Over time, ongoing population growth will sustain the expansion of activity areas to expand the density of the wider core zone. Initially priority will need to be given to focussed areas of density and high-quality walking connections between key areas of activity.

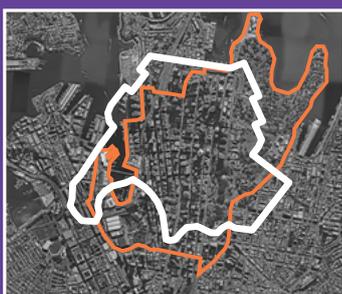
## CITY CENTRE COMPARISON



**Canberra**  
**454,000**  
*(2021 Census)*  
**234ha**



**Newcastle**  
**390,519**  
*(2021 Census)*  
**28ha**



**Sydney**  
**5,231,147**  
*(2021 census)*  
**280ha**



**Melbourne**  
**4,900,000**  
*(2021 census)*  
**252ha**

# PLANNING CONTEXT

The Australian Government, through the National Capital Authority, and the ACT Government share planning responsibility in the ACT. This includes a joint interest in and responsibility for development of the City Centre.

A map illustrating the areas of responsibility for each government is shown to the right.

The lands under the purview of the NCA are ‘designated areas’ of the National Capital Plan (NCP). The NCP provides planning and design guidelines, both strategic and detailed, for the most historically or culturally significant areas within the Territory. The key matters of national significance include:

- the role of Canberra as the National Capital
- preserving and enhancing the character that comes from the natural landscape that Canberra is planned within
- respecting the key elements of Griffin’s formally adopted plan for Canberra
- creating and enhancing opportunities for national institutions, ceremonies and national capital uses
- respect for environmental values and national concerns with urban sustainability.

## **The National Capital Plan**

The NCP is the strategic plan and statutory document for the ACT managed by the NCA on behalf of the Australian Government. The NCP ensures Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

## **The Territory Plan**

The Territory Plan is the key statutory planning document in the ACT that provides the planning framework for the administration of land use and planning in the ACT. The purpose of the Territory Plan is to manage land use change in a manner consistent with strategic directions set by the ACT Government, Legislative Assembly and the community. The provision and administration of the Territory Plan must be “in a manner not inconsistent with the National Capital Plan”.

The Planning System Review and Reform Project is intended to deliver a more ‘spatially-led’ and

‘outcomes focussed’ planning system. This means a greater emphasis on strategic planning and spatial direction for the Territory at different scales, from the metropolitan to the district and site scale, as well as improved planning and built form outcomes. It also means a clearer connection between strategic planning and statutory planning (individual development proposals). The proposed structure of the planning system is shown on page 11.

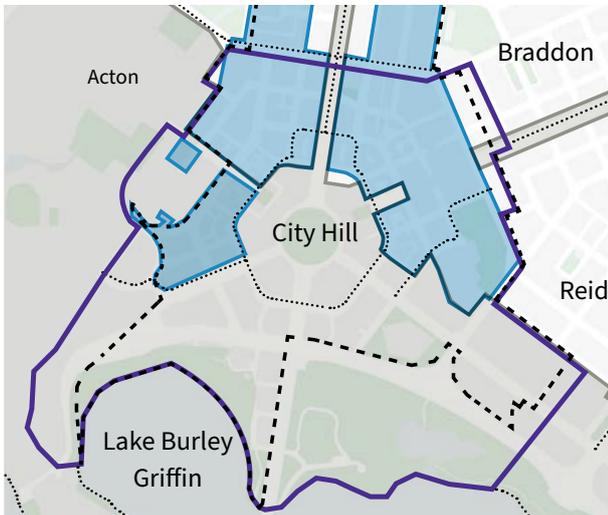
## **The City Renewal Authority**

The City Renewal Authority (CRA) was established in 2017 as an implementation agency to guide the city’s urban renewal. The CRA helps to shape the growth and renewal of the central parts of Canberra through their “City Renewal Precinct”, which covers the Northbourne Corridor in Lyneham through to the City Centre.

## **City Entertainment Precinct**

The ACT Government is establishing designated entertainment precincts in key centres through new provisions in the Territory Plan, starting with a City Entertainment Precinct for the City Centre. As an action of the Entertainment Action Plan 2019, the establishment of the City Entertainment Precinct will require changes to planning and noise controls, as well as to building, trading and licensing requirements.

Technical studies are currently underway to identify the required changes to policy, planning, legislation and regulation to support the introduction of the precinct into the Territory Plan.



**LEGEND**

- NCA Special Requirement area

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- National Capital Authority Designated Area

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- CRA Boundary

---

- The City Centre

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*Planning Authority Boundaries*



# CITY CENTRE CHARACTER

Character is what makes a place distinctive. It influences the look and feel of an area and contributes to a place's identity through a combination of both physical and built elements. The City Centre is heavily influenced by the Griffin Plan, leveraging the natural topography, the rise of City Hill, long views and vistas to hills including Mt Ainslie, and elevating the key organising features of the National Triangle.

By examining and defining the existing urban character of the City Centre, it becomes more evident which qualities are important and what should be strengthened to better contribute and enhance the City Centre's character. This will help to support a place-based approach providing an enhanced sense of community attractive to new residents, workers, visitors, innovation and investors.

The following elements have been identified to describe the current overall character of the City Centre.



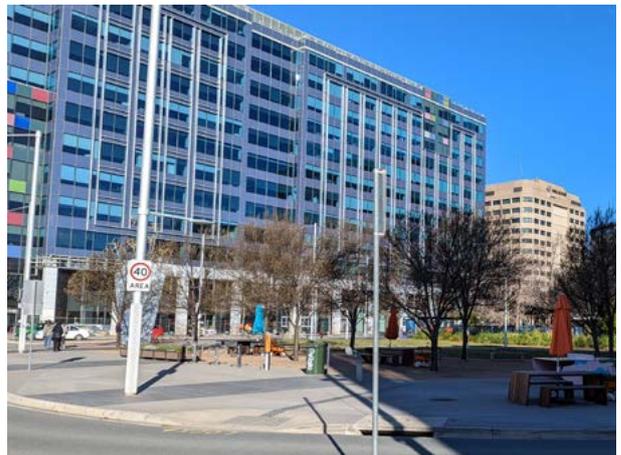
## LAND USE

Land uses in all areas of the City Centre are generally mixed and characterised by the large scale of City Centre blocks, extensive surface parking areas and mono-functional uses. These factors tend to create an atmosphere of vastness characterised by dispersed and disconnected activity.



## STRUCTURAL FEATURES

The axial avenues and radial layout of the city highlight key features of the City Centre and are the basis for creating more distinctive precincts, each with their own character. This is evident by their relationship with surrounding landscape features such as views to water, hills, mountains and natural topography.



## BUILDING FORM

The built form that has developed through the Griffin Plan and existing building controls has two distinct forms; very wide buildings at 25-metre-height and single towers determined by RL 617 (varies around 50m high). This pattern of low and high buildings now form part of the City Centre's character that does not contribute to the city skyline in terms of visual interest and experience.



### PUBLIC REALM

The City Centre currently supports a large amount of open space of varying quality, condition and utilisation, with much of the City Centre's public realm corridors dominated by wide streetscapes with poor amenity. This acts as an impediment to safe active travel and reduces the sense of place for the City Centre. An enhanced application of movement and place outcomes should be considered.



### SOCIAL CHARACTER

The City Centre is the centre of economic activity and employment for Canberra and the region, primarily comprised of a young and diverse cultural, student and residential cohort, as well as workers in public and health services. Better diversity of uses and housing options is required to create a more diverse and socially connected community, along with appropriate public realm outcomes to support this.



### CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

The City Centre supports various natural, built, and cultural features that can inform future design responses to strengthen its unique character qualities through considerate building and public realm design. Some recent developments have responded thoughtfully to their context. Improved guidelines around integration would help to achieve enhanced design outcomes for the City Centre.



### CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The Griffin Plan holds national significance for its representation of the development of Australia. The City Centre supports numerous heritage sites of local and national significance that contribute to a rich and diverse character. Within an urban landscape, items of cultural heritage tell a story of a City Centre's evolution and are fundamental in creating a sense of place for a local community.

## FOSTERING A PLACE-BASED APPROACH

The City Centre and its precincts each have a unique combination of people, heritage, arts and culture, built form and natural features that create places with distinctive identities and functions.

A place-based approach will build on these characteristics to create a sense of place that reflects their context, attracts new residents, workers, visitors, innovation and investment.

The UDF is guided by two overarching place-based strategies intended to guide the future development of the City Centre and make sure that the places we plan for today become the much-loved places of tomorrow. The two strategies are:

- Building Canberra City Centre
- Activating Canberra City Centre.

A well-planned and designed City Centre translates into more economic opportunity, prosperity and sustainability. A stronger sense of place will speak authentically to all of the ACT and emanate outward to the rest of Australia and the world.

## PLACE IDENTITY

In the past ten years, Canberra has seen tremendous growth, as seen by the arrival of new municipal, residential and mixed-use developments, as well as transport infrastructure. The redevelopment of a number of the City Centre precincts has given the city a new identity and residents more desirable places to live, such as new laneway inspired residential development at New Acton. It is expected that more than 20,000 people will be living in the City Centre by 2040, an increase of 13,000 people.

The light rail network has increased the City Centre's liveability and connectivity, providing a reliable and modern transport system connecting into and through the City Centre. This has, in turn, promoted better integration between public transport options as well as active modes of transport. As the City Centre continues to grow, and the light rail network expands, this will increase accessibility for both local residents and visitors.

The City Centre supports a young and diverse demographic, with 56% of its residents being between the ages of 20 and 34 years. There is a strong sense of community. The City Centre supports its diverse demographic through an eclectic community program, offering activities for all to enjoy. Streets are sprinkled with local art pieces and stimulated by socio-cultural attractions, however it is more than Canberra's socio-cultural status that makes it one of the world's most liveable cities.

The City Centre is accessible, contemporary, innovative and progressive; and its community is active, collaborative and colourful. There is however, still so much room to grow and continue to diversify, which will be supported by increasing population.

Canberra, more broadly, is a sustainable city that celebrates seasonal charm and the harmonisation of natural and urban environments. It is the first mainland city to achieve one hundred per cent renewable energy. This approach will support the continued growth of the City Centre in a sustainable way, supporting social, environmental and economic benefits to the community.



## CITY CENTRE STRATEGIES

Two overarching city-wide strategies have been developed for the City Centre. These strategies provide general development outcomes for the City Centre, and outline overall intent of development to be considered where specific requirements are not outlined within the more detailed precinct guidance.

The City Centre strategies have been organised around 'Building Canberra City Centre' and 'Activating Canberra City Centre'. It will focus on the built aspects of the City Centre as well as their relation to public realm and built form integration to create an active and vibrant City Centre.

These are outlined in the following chapters.



# NO

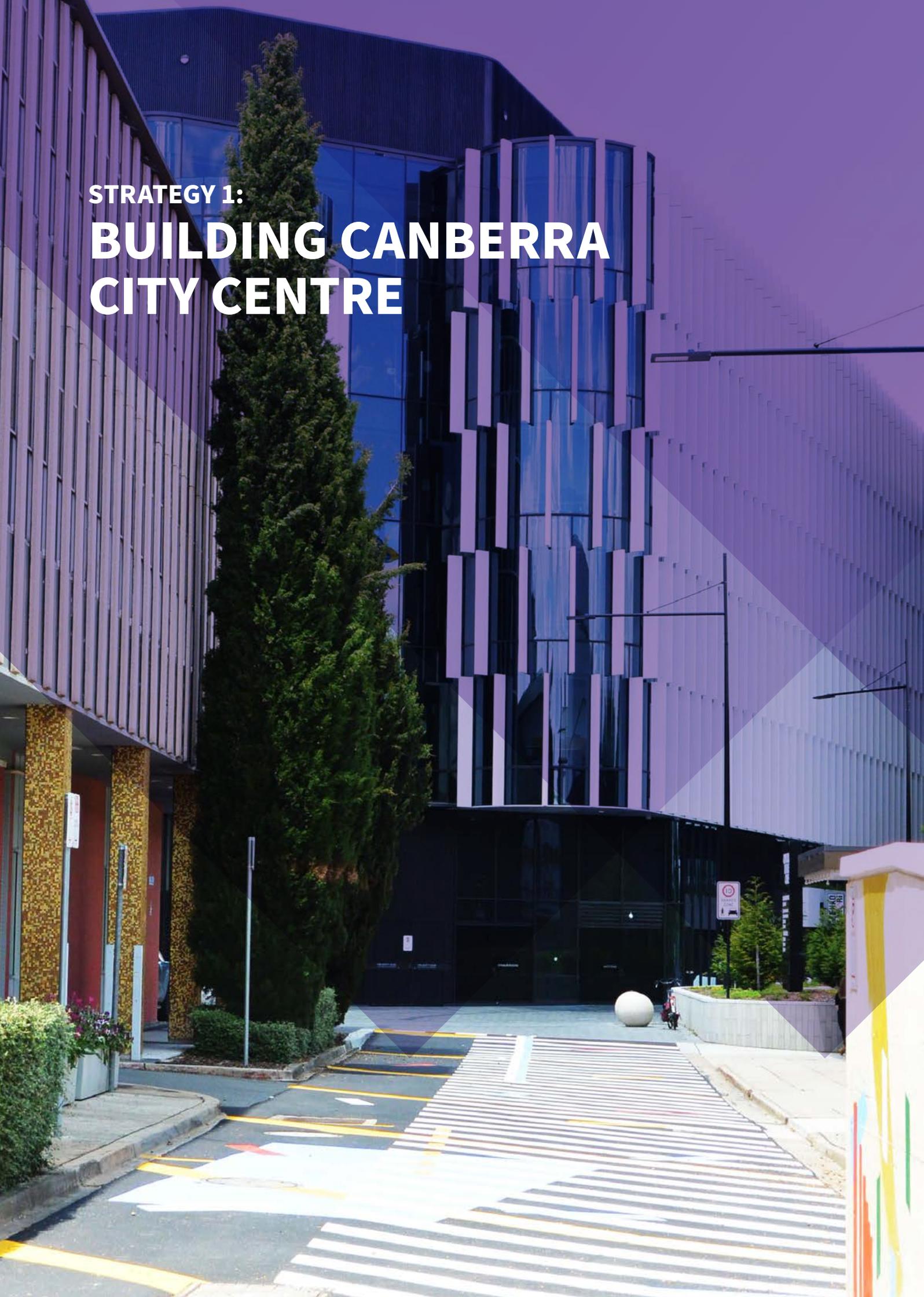


## CITY CENTRE STRATEGIES



**STRATEGY 1:**

# **BUILDING CANBERRA CITY CENTRE**



Griffin envisioned the City Centre to be the cosmopolitan core of Canberra and the northern apex of the National Triangle. It has also been intentionally planned to accommodate significant urban population growth without the loss of amenity, which makes the City Centre a great place to live, work and visit. From the Griffin Plan to the 2014 City Plan, the City Centre and its fringes have seen significant revitalisation, including new world-class architecture and placemaking at New Acton and along City Walk, combined with renewal in Braddon, which have redefined the offer and character of the City Centre and its precincts. The continued investment in the ANU campus along with the delivery of several new buildings within the City Centre has resulted in pockets of exceptional quality and vitality.

Despite this, several gaps in the City Centre's urban fabric remain with a fair amount of total land area yet to be developed. In addition, several sites are slated for future redevelopment. Surface car parking and excessive road infrastructure dominate the central core, particularly evident within the City Hill precinct and the barrier created by Parkes Way, which bisects the City Centre from Lake Burley Griffin. These issues highlight a challenge many planned cities face where the City Centre is perceived as disconnected, lacking identity and soul.

To address some of these issues, the following section provides a broad range of design elements to encourage built form across the City Centre that better responds to local context, current and future character directions, public realm amenity drivers, sustainability and best practice urban design principles while facilitating design flexibility and site responsiveness. This document will provide guidance for all new buildings to reinforce a coherent, harmonious and appealing urban environment and enhance the City Centre's public realm.

All new buildings and public realm projects will be required to demonstrate commitment to good design and sustainability and make a positive contribution to the desire to create a City Centre of international standing. The UDF will further guide new development and redevelopment in the City Centre, through built form guidelines that support sustainability outcomes and promote high-quality interfaces between buildings, streets and open spaces. Buildings form a critical interface with the public realm, playing a key role in how people experience and remember the City Centre.

Buildings form a critical interface with the public realm playing a key role in how people experience and remember the quality of the City Centre.

## DENSITY DONE WELL

Canberra is likely to double its population within the next 50 years. There are significant opportunities to accommodate much of this growth within the City Centre. City wide growth should be directed to the City Centre to accelerate and fill existing vacant and underutilised sites and car parks. Through an increase in density and a focus on expanding the residential population into the City Centre, a critical mass of people will allow for a diversity of uses and activities.



### Density x diversity = proximity

Density of diverse activities increases the possibility of having useful or desirable things, places and people, closer to you (proximity). With proximity comes the convenience of being able to do a wide variety of activities in the same day, or same hour, with less time spent in traffic or public transport. Proximity to where decisions are made grows knowledge and enhances culture.



### Mix of uses and activities

Including a diversity of recreational, employment, cultural and learning opportunities centred around a dynamic mix of entertainment, retail and residential uses. This creates a City Centre that meets the needs of all of the people who live, visit and work there. Activities and uses should be provided to ensure activity at all times of the day and night to support amenity, safety and a lively evening economy.

### Streets for all people

Streets are one of the most important parts of the City Centre, where people comes together and people of all ages, genders and abilities can interact. Streets must focus on people, not cars, and those of all abilities to encourage activity within the streets. Streets should include safe and well maintained pathways, and include public space amenities such as seating and shade, with large trees, to encourage people to stop, sit and dwell, and enjoy the City Centre.



## Good public transport

The City Centre must be accessible in terms of abilities, their location and walkable distance between dwellings and other key places and services. Public transport must be frequent, reliable, safe, clean and affordable, and provide opportunities for integration with other transport modes.



## Good public environment

The public environment must include safe, adaptable multi functional and green space in proportion with density, technology and environmentally sustainably built infrastructure. This will create a diverse community, inclusive of all ages, cultures and abilities which reflects the cultural elements of that neighbourhood.



## Housing choice and affordability

The City Centre should provide a wide range of living options to cater for diversity in people's living arrangements, stages of life and budgets. This will enable social resilience within communities, integrating services and supporting the diverse needs of the city.



## Community safety and accessibility

The City Centre must be designed to be accessible for all, with comprehensive transport connections, and where community amenities are reachable within a short walk. Promoting ownership of spaces encourages people to take care of them and have pride in their surrounding environment. Sufficient lighting and other measures allow for the safe use of spaces after hours.

## IEWS AND VISTAS

To celebrate the City Centre’s unique urban plan, vistas, inherent landscape topography and key views along strong geometries should be maintained and enhanced as part of defining the City Centre’s character. The proximity of Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie have produced a building skyline dominated by bushland. A ‘nature in the city’ context reflects Griffin’s original plan and is highly valued by the community.

The City Centre structure provides a good basis for characteristic view corridors. However many are only evident when viewed from outside the City Centre inwards, or from above the City Centre through elevated areas. The most important views of City Hill are from Northbourne Avenue, and of the axis of the national triangle, Commonwealth Avenue and Constitution Avenue, from Vernon Circle.

A key objective is to broaden the perception of these symbolic processional routes. Successful public places and spaces along these routes will offer opportunities for everyday life to unfold. Realising height where possible in places like City Hill will allow the formalistic character of the Griffin Plan to become a positive everyday experience when moving around the City Centre.

## BUILDING HEIGHTS

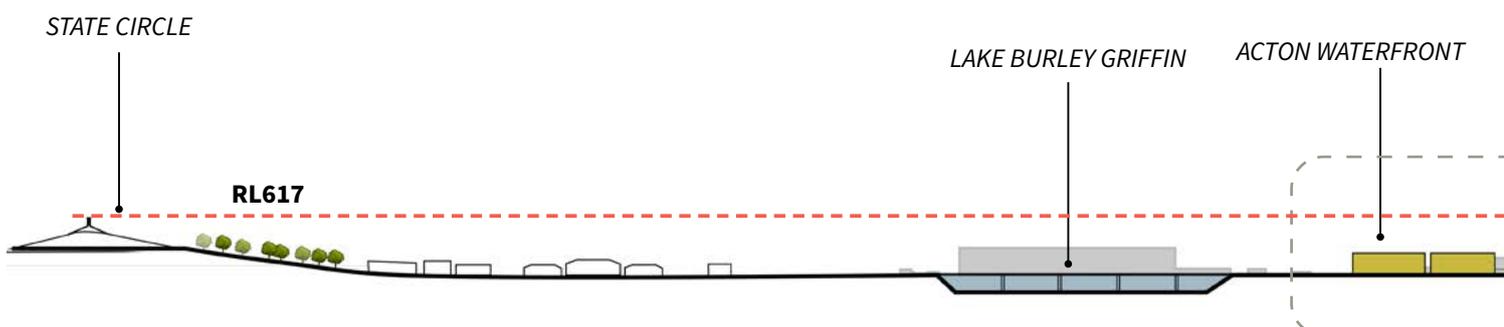
The current City Centre form is compact with mid-rise development generally in response to the hills beyond. The density and scale of the City Centre reflects a European tradition of urbanism where building heights are kept at 6-8 storeys with the intention of defining the public realm. Current building height controls in the City Centre seek to give a unity to the built form, protecting the visual primacy of Parliament House. The strong relationship with the landscape and inner hills should be preserved.

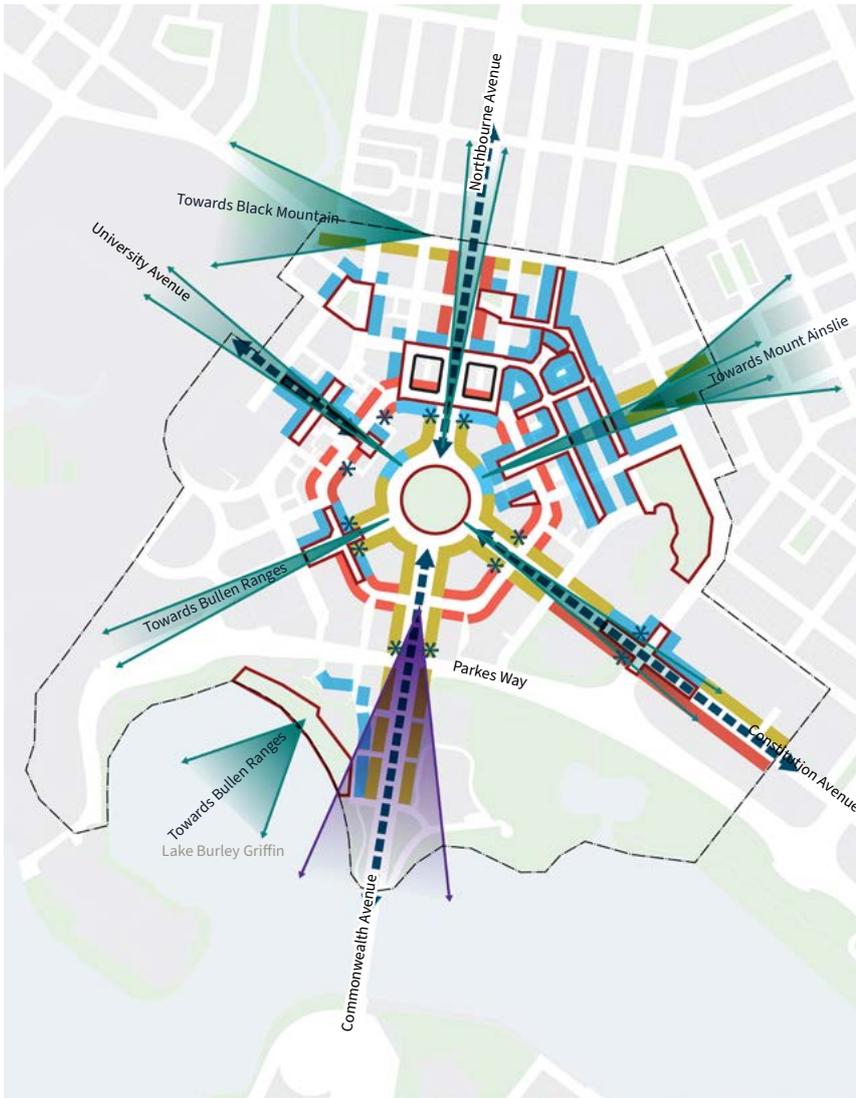
Clear objectives of how the built form can support urban life and experiences in the City Centre is key to guiding the future success of the City Centre.

Multiple planning layers and controls define built form and height within the City Centre in various ways. The following diagram seeks to establish qualitative measures to guide future built form outcomes in supporting the integrity of the Griffin Plan while enhancing the human scale of the City Centre.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key	Description
①	Ensure new development and public realm outcomes respect the geometry and intent of the Griffin Plan and emphasise the national significance of the main approach routes and avenues.
②	Make sure buildings are of high design quality and contribute positively to the city skyline and public realm.
③	Recognise the hierarchy between buildings and landscape and define key gateway site positions for special significance and consideration of architectural and built form outcomes.
④	Consider built form response to surrounding open spaces and streets to foster safe, pleasant and useable public realm and avoid adverse impacts to sun and micro climatic conditions.
⑤	Maintain and enhance views to the Brindabella Ranges, Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie where possible.
⑥	Establish a defined street wall with human scale building articulation of maximum 25 m height or 1:1 relationship between building height and street width.
⑦	Transition built form height when interfacing with adjacent lower scale built form.





**Legend**

- Site Boundary

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- Provide and maintain sun access to key urban spaces and pedestrian streets

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- Maintain quality of views and vistas grounding the City Centre into the surrounding natural landscape

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- Reinforce the geometry of Griffin Plan, radiating main avenues, street definition and building heights

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- \* Gateway site with special articulation of built form and architecture

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- ↔ Key boulevard sight lines

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- ▲ Towards Parliament House

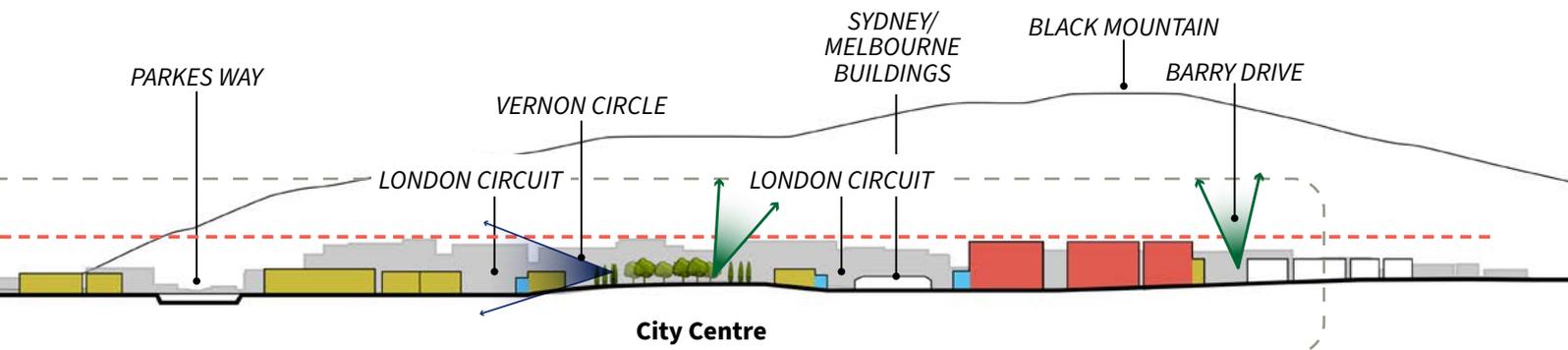
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- ▲ Towards Canberra's Peaks

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- Key urban spaces

Suggested relationship between street hierarchy and building height considerations



# BUILT FORM GUIDELINES

The design of buildings and spaces within the City Centre is critical to the overall function, uniqueness and identity of the city and how Canberrans use it. But beyond the design of the buildings themselves, it is the arrangement of the broader network of City Centre blocks and buildings that set the city up for success. Understanding how best to arrange the site is key to shaping the quality of the built form, public realm and human experiences. The following highlights key outcomes for consideration when arranging a block or section, while more detail is provided on the following pages around how these outcomes should be achieved.

## HOW TO ARRANGE A SITE

### 1 BREAKING UP LARGE BLOCKS

Many sites in the City Centre are still undeveloped, creating opportunities for these sites to be developed in a successful and permeable way. Large buildings should be broken down to smaller volumes to support a human scale in building width and height. These blocks should also consider new laneways and cross block links or arcade-type layouts that create permeability at the ground level. These blocks should align with other pedestrian links to adjacent blocks, providing opportunities for active lively streets and internal courtyard spaces.

### 2 WORKING WITH LOCAL CLIMATE

All new buildings should be designed with consideration of the local climate. Create openings to catch the eastern summer breeze and enclosures to protect open spaces on the ground level and within buildings during the winter months. There is a need to make sure that buildings are designed successfully for the varied Canberra climate in summer and winter.

### 3 MAXIMISING VIEWS

Buildings should consider orientation, privacy and climatic conditions to leverage the best outcomes for public space and urban life while taking in the beauty of Canberra's visual amenity. Key views of the mountains, lakes and references to the Griffin Plan should be considered to maximise opportunities that form the key internal and external spaces of the buildings.

### 4 SOLAR ACCESS

Building heights should not overshadow adjacent key public spaces, common areas and streets. The spaces between the buildings should be fit-for-purpose and useable for more time of the day and year.

### 5 DEFINING THE STREET AND GROUND LEVEL

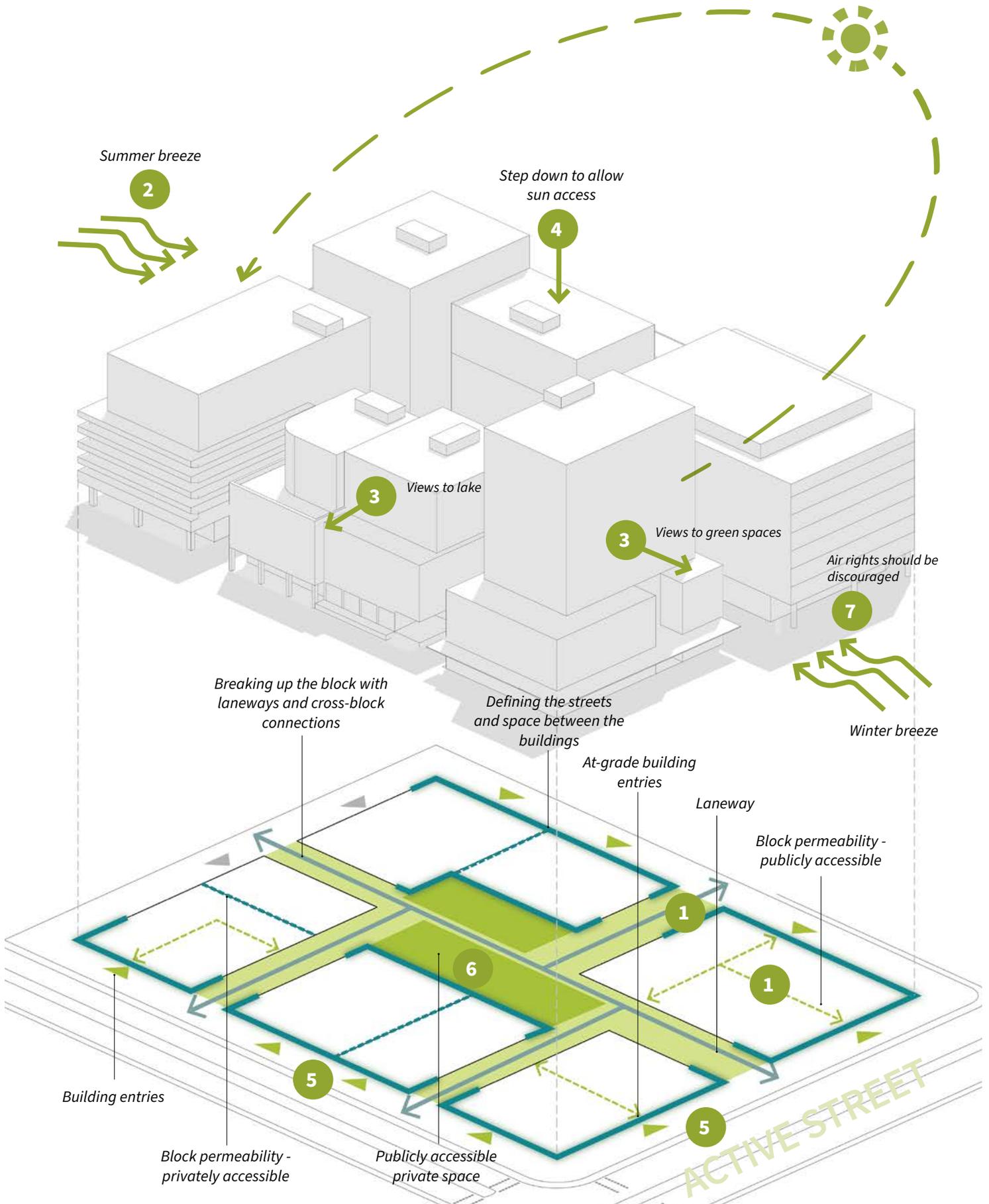
The street edges are critical arenas for City Centre life. Recognise the street function, role and public life invitations adjacent to any new building and respond accordingly. Clear guidance is provided for how best to achieve high-quality street level outcomes, through diversity of uses, active ground uses, appropriate length of buildings and facade treatments.

### 6 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC/ PRIVATE REALM

Encourage diverse new spaces to be provided at the ground level with clear definition of access and ownership between public, private and common spaces.

### 7 AIR RIGHTS

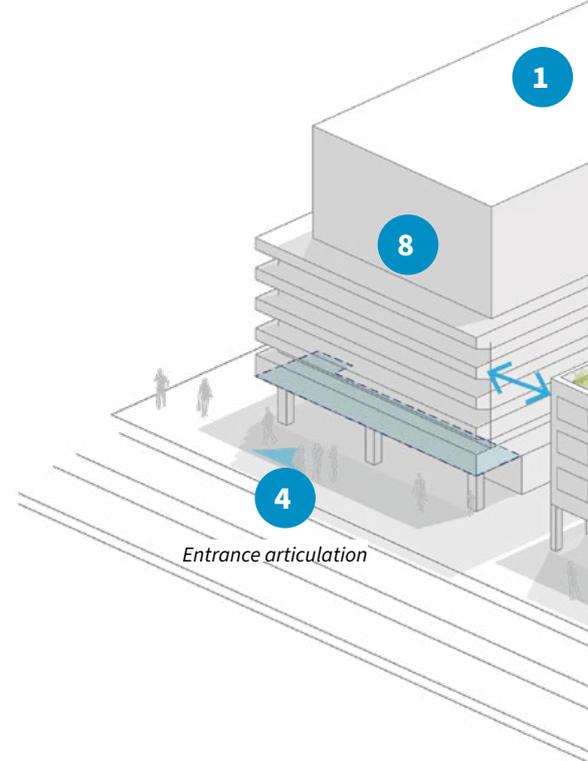
Previous development within the City Centre has provided built outcomes that take advantage of useable air rights space. This outcome is not supported and should only be considered when offering significant useable public amenity in return.



Generic block for illustration purposes

# BUILDING DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

Buildings play a key role in shaping the quality of our cities and the way that people experience the City Centre. When this is done well, it is where the interface between buildings and the public realm seamlessly intersect to create places that are functionally appropriate. Well designed buildings make a positive contribution to the City Centre, not just at the ground level, but to the city skyline and overall image and identity of the city. The built form should be considered in line with the following elements.



## Exemplar:

Urban mixed-use building that responds to its context in architectural expression and building uses location. Features include: Active ground floor, landscape amenity on podium, emphasised entries, discreet car entry, architectural detail articulation and human scale.

## 1 CHARACTER

A new building should reflect the local context and intended character of the precinct in which it falls. Development must consider orientation, heritage, surrounding land uses and buildings, streetscape character, movement and public transport networks. It is important to consider visual diversity in building form and height.

## 2 DETAILED GROUND FLOOR

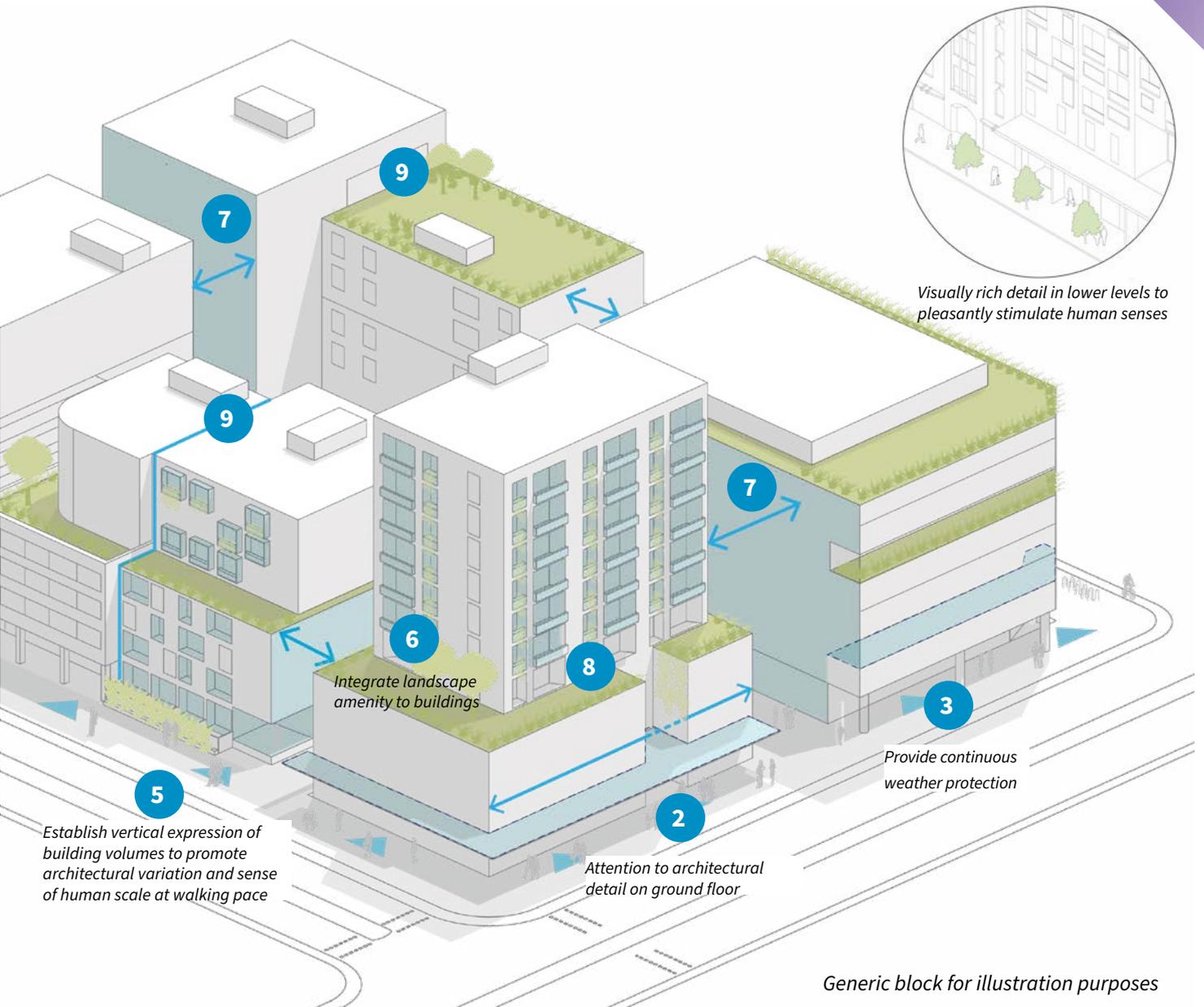
Materials should be tactile, natural and visually interesting to support attractiveness of public realm. Ground level facades should provide thickness, depth and articulation to avoid long expanses of floor to ceiling glazing.

## 3 AWNINGS

Provide continuous awnings and weather protection along inner City Centre streets to provide a comfortable walking environment and pleasant micro-climate. Allow for winter sun and summer shade whenever possible. Building awnings and colonnades must be designed to promote a human scale at the ground level.

## 4 BUILDING ENTRIES

Maximise building entrances and openings to the street. Building entrances should be emphasised as a focal point in a building's facade and be placed in highly visible and obvious locations where they can activate a longer stretch of street frontage. For existing building stock, give incentives for building owners to upgrade current building interfaces to make entries easier and clearer for people with different abilities. Visible, well-lit and legible entries will create the best built form to public realm outcome for the City Centre streets. Incorporate planting and informal seating near entrances where possible.



Visually rich detail in lower levels to pleasantly stimulate human senses

Integrate landscape amenity to buildings

Provide continuous weather protection

Establish vertical expression of building volumes to promote architectural variation and sense of human scale at walking pace

Attention to architectural detail on ground floor

Generic block for illustration purposes

## 5 BUILDING LENGTH

Buildings should be designed to respond to the streetscape's intended scale, use and public life. Long buildings that limit cross-site permeability, block view corridors and disrupt a pedestrian scale neighbourhood system should be avoided. Breaks in facade articulation should correspond to building uses and relate to buildings' entrances and circulation logic. In the case of long plots and building floor plates, a clear break in building volume should occur to support a general vertical articulation of volumes.

## 6 DESIGNING FOR LANDSCAPE AMENITY

Integrate planting into building edges and facades in visible areas to improve visual landscape amenity, support urban wildlife and reinforce the distinctive landscape character of the City Centre. Activate open space through active building edges, surveillance and climate-smart landscape design.

## 8 TOWER SETBACKS

Setback towers and building mass above 5-6 storeys to improve open space micro-climate and avoid down wash of wind and turbulence.

## 7 BUILDING AND TOWER SEPARATION

Buildings should generally be joined at the ground level to provide a continuous streetscape edge. Where buildings are separated, this should occur against facades with habitable rooms to protect reasonable levels of visual privacy. Building separation must also consider adequate solar and daylight access to private open spaces.

## 9 ATTACHED BUILDING ABOVE GROUND

Neighbouring buildings can be attached above ground on smaller plots and on levels below 5-6 storeys on larger plots to maintain character of street wall.

## VARIETY OF USE AND FUNCTION

The City Centre is the heart of Canberra, and will be home to an increasing population of Canberrans. In order to attract a new residential market, the City Centre must provide a lifestyle that brings together the best of living, entertaining, working and lifestyle all in one place. The City Centre must provide diverse uses and create a City Centre fabric that allows for pedestrians to move around and walk between key destinations and activities. Land use and streetscape activation should be considered in line with the following elements.

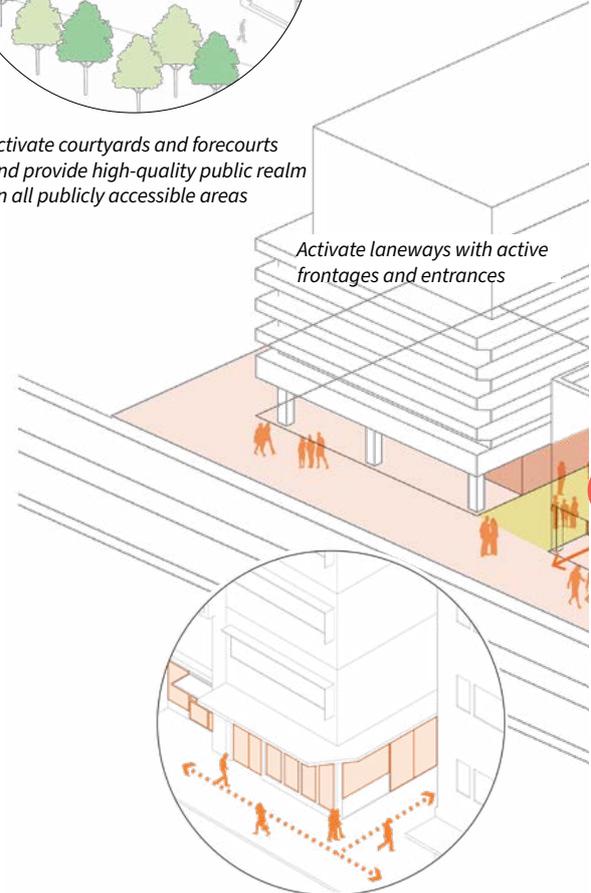


### Exemplar:

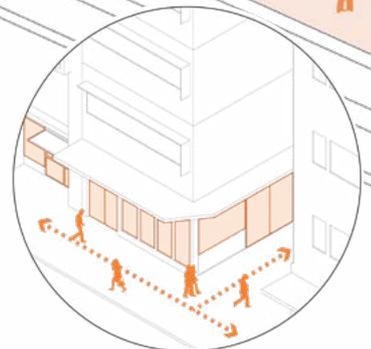
Mixed uses should define the City Centre to provide a diversity of activities and experiences. A connected and legible ground level that utilises design outcomes such as laneways, cross-block connections and activated building corners provides for an enhanced pedestrian experience.



**7** Activate courtyards and forecourts and provide high-quality public realm on all publicly accessible areas



Activate laneways with active frontages and entrances



**2** Provide continuity of ground floor activity along streets and laneways

### 1 MIXED USE CITY

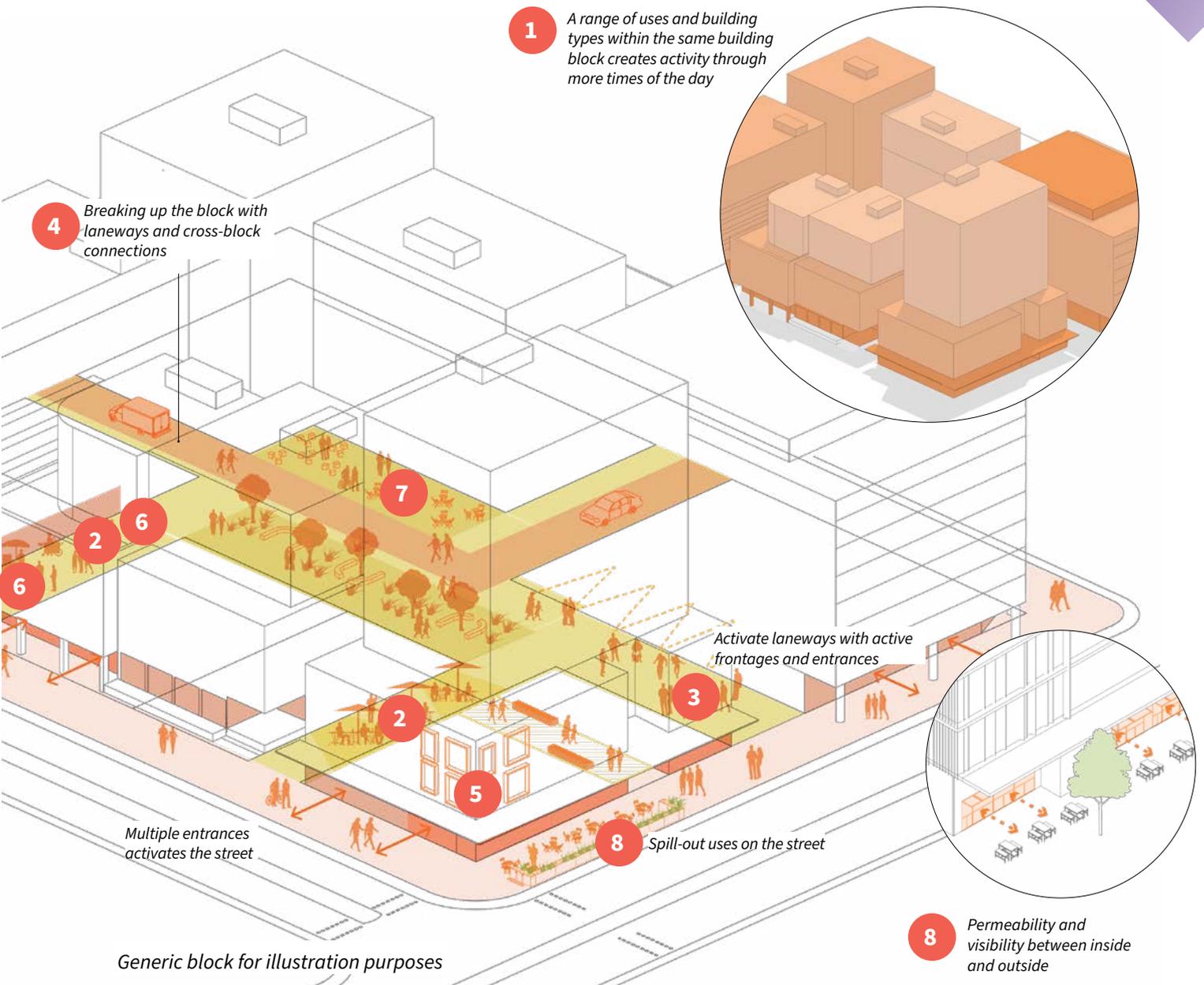
Promote a mix of uses and building types in the City Centre, including commercial, residential, retail and entertainment uses providing more reasons for people to spend more time in the City Centre throughout the day. Respond to appropriate market conditions and context while providing the residential critical mass to support other local uses.

### 2 ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR

Create an active ground level where a variety of uses come together and spill out onto the street to create energy and life on the street. While not all streets can be activated the same, it is important to consider variety through different uses, tenants and design, and consider if the uses are appropriate to their location. Where buildings can't be fully active at the ground level, at least 80% of the length of the building interface should have visual links through windows or translucent building materials such as clear glazing. In areas where there are no active uses at grade the articulation of the facade must provide a visually interesting frontage by the use of architectural elements and artworks.

### 3 LANEWAYS

Utilise and enhance existing laneways to increase permeability, pedestrian priority and activation of the City Centre. These spaces increase opportunities for pedestrian movement, business activity and urban activation at the street level and should be prompted by a variety of active land uses where possible. Minimise the impact of vehicles in these spaces by careful consideration of vehicular entries/exits and should be located services with minimal impact and conflict to the pedestrian experience and laneway activities.



Generic block for illustration purposes

**4 CROSS-BLOCK CONNECTIONS**

Cross block links should be provided along city blocks to break up long building facades and create opportunities for fine-grain pedestrian flow and movement to support walking.

**5 BUILDING CORNERS**

Accentuate street corners at key significant places, by providing highly visible and active spaces for cafes, retail use, commercial and other business. Building block corners that are chamfered are critical in defining character, legibility and wayfinding within the public realm. Chamfered building corners along London Circuit enhance pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding legibility.

**6 HABITABLE SPACES**

Create new spaces and places to stop and dwell along key routes and activity nodes, with comfortable seating and shade, to encourage pedestrians to stop and linger, and enjoy City Centre life. Services access should be located away from habitable spaces and vehicular access can be restricted at certain hours of the day to accommodate for active uses.

**7 ACTIVATE COURTYARDS**

Publicly accessible open space should be located adjacent to other open spaces or pedestrian connections to activate the public realm and create greater chance for overlapping synergies of activity. Invitations to active uses and staying activities in public realm design should be located in areas with beneficial micro-climate and sun access.

**8 ENHANCE INSIDE/OUTSIDE CONNECTIONS**

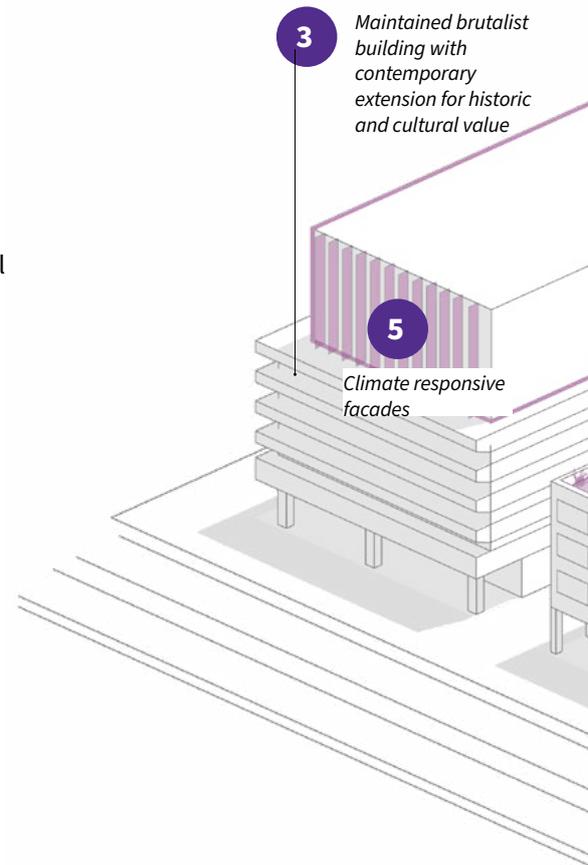
The ground level should contribute to a high degree of permeability and visibility between inside and outside. This can be done through permeable visual openings, as well as incorporating seating into window openings and facades when appropriate

# BUILDING PERFORMANCE

Building performance is a critical component for enhancing the built outcomes of the City Centre, and supporting measures around environmental performance and sustainability. Building performance criteria are critical in denser areas of the City Centre. Sustainable building technologies, climate responsiveness, heritage integration and climate responsive design are key design outcomes for successful building performance in dense city centres. Considering ways to modernise and repurpose existing assets to achieve better environmental outcomes should be a priority. New and existing developments should be designed to respond to the Canberra climate, and integrate sustainable building technologies, in line with the following elements.



**Exemplar**  
Excellence in building sustainability with adaptable facades as passive shading to minimise negative environmental impact and energy use through building design elements.



## 1 INCENTIVISE HIGH PERFORMANCE

Achieving high building performance in terms of energy use, sustainability and design excellence is encouraged through end-user demand and contributions to community health in the wider City Centre context.

## 2 GENERATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy infrastructure, such as solar and wind, should be positioned on roof tops and building facades on new and repurposed buildings. Carbon positive outcomes can be achieved by generating new energy resources locally through the remediation of energy consumption at the building block scale.

## 3 RE-ADAPTING AGEING BUILDING STOCK

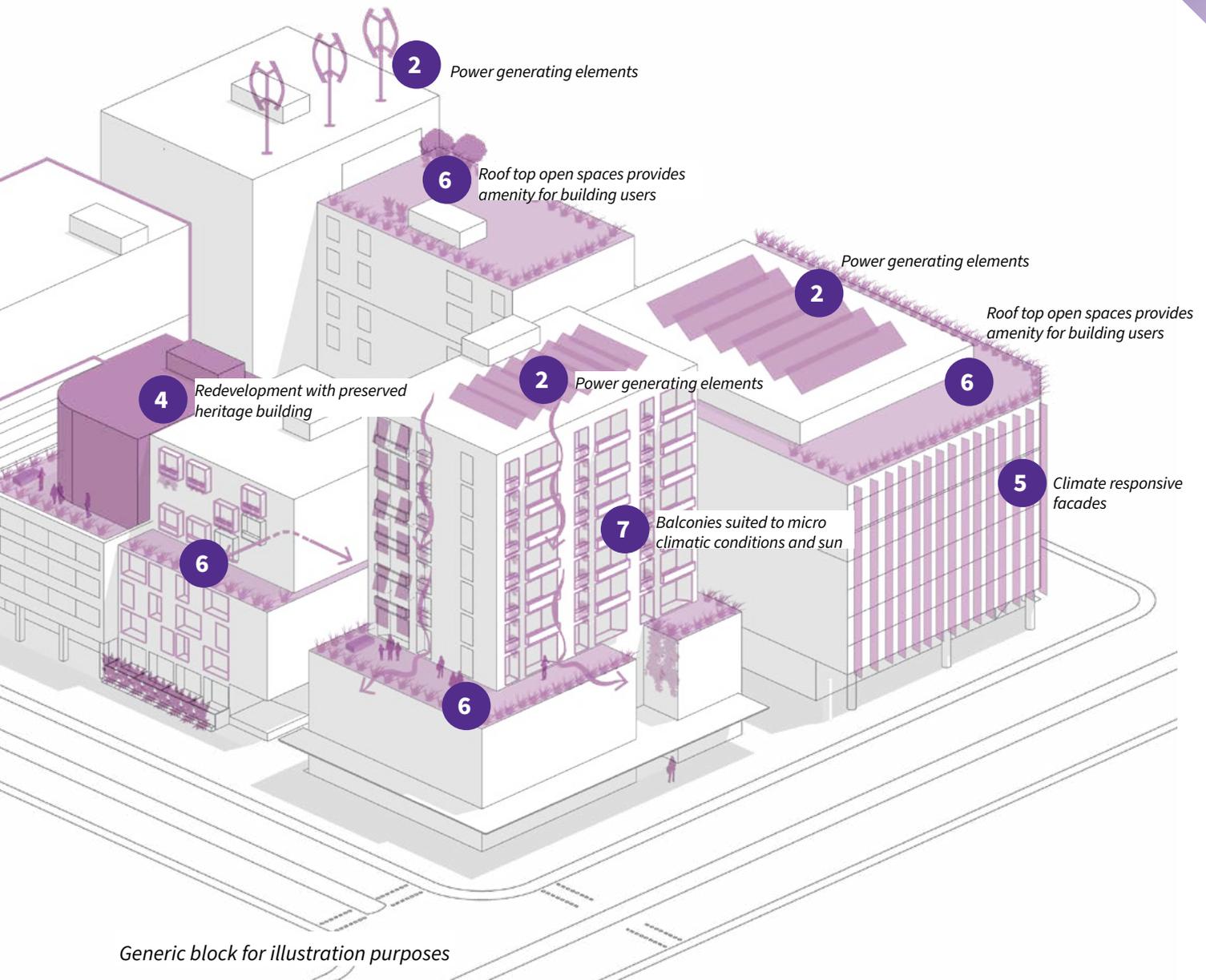
The re-adaption of existing ageing or under-performing building stock should be promoted to enhance environmental performance, accommodate other uses, reduce building waste and recycling and up-cycling of materials.

## 4 HERITAGE INTEGRATION

Integrate or adapt existing heritage and characteristic buildings into new building designs to maintain the historical layers of the City Centre and provide continuity to the City Centre's identity.

## 5 CLIMATE RESPONSIVE FAÇADES

Buildings should provide self shading, adaptable and operable facades that respond to the different climatic conditions of the seasons and the time of day to minimise mechanical and energy intensive solutions.



Generic block for illustration purposes

**6 ROOF TOPS / OPEN SPACES**

Common open spaces on podium levels and roof tops should be considered to provide valuable amenity to residents and users of the City Centre. They provide opportunities for gathering in and utilising outdoor spaces which ultimately promotes activity and animation within the public realm.

**7 BALCONIES**

Varying types of balconies and open spaces should be considered. Recessed and semi-recessed balconies offer weather protected spaces as extensions to living spaces. Wind protection is achieved through recessed and semi-recessed balconies while allowing for sun in the winter and shade protection in the summer.

**8 SUSTAINABLE BUILDING MATERIALS**

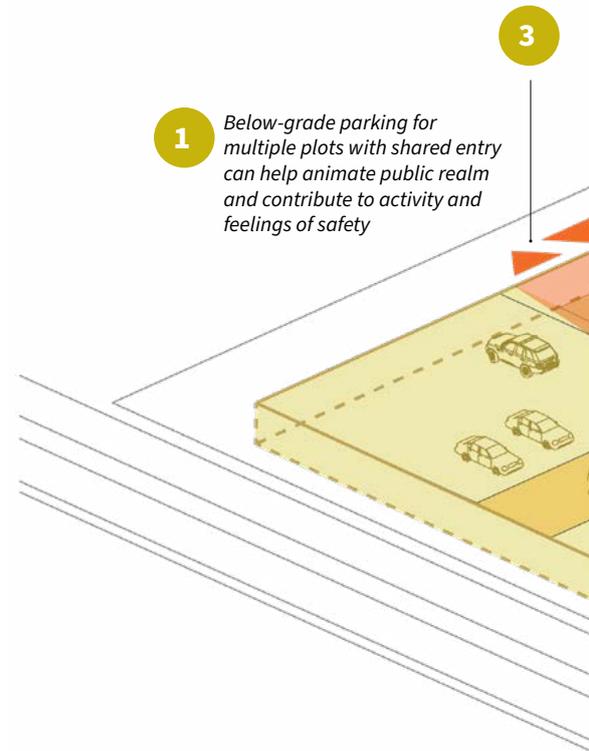
Material should be sustainably sourced and aimed to minimise negative impacts on the environment. New buildings should consider material whole of life-cycle and design for disassembly.

# PARKING, LOADING AND SERVICES

Considerate and functional access, parking and services are critical parts in creating a successful and pleasant urban environment. Abundant surface car parking has shaped the face and experience of the City Centre and will need to change with the future urban densification, changes to car ownership models and technologies.

Future car parking should be integrated into basements of new developments or flexible structures that can adapt over time and help shape the urban environment to enhance the human scale experience and promote the use of public and active transport modes.

Loading, servicing, waste management and building maintenance are necessary components for all building sites and should be integrated into the built form conveniently and efficiently yet as discreetly as possible.



**1** Below-grade parking for multiple plots with shared entry can help animate public realm and contribute to activity and feelings of safety

## **1** BELOW-GRADE PARKING

Below grade parking should be encouraged in all new developments where possible, to allow for maximisation of building footprint, public realm and landscaping.

## **2** INTEGRATED PARKING

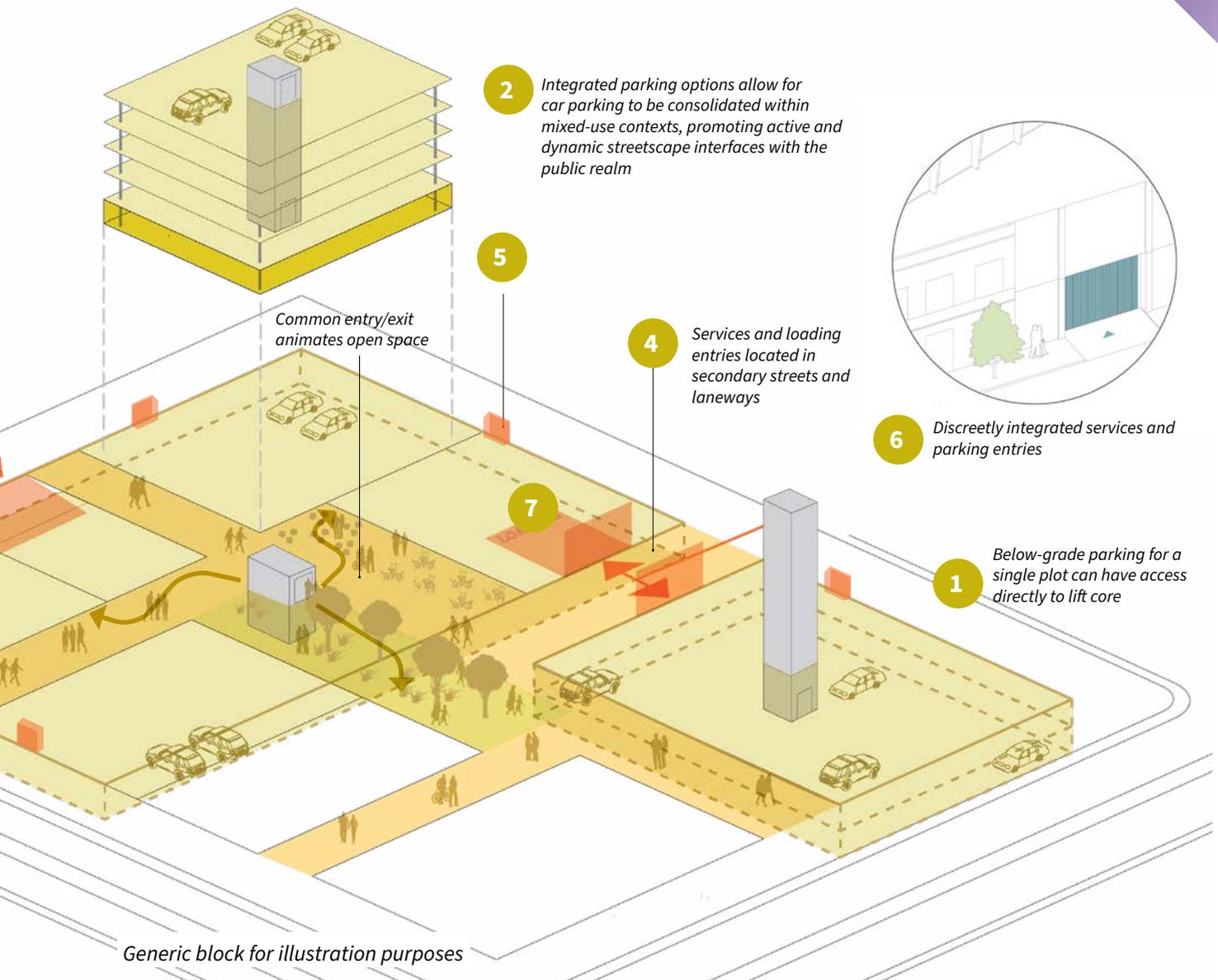
In mixed-use contexts, parking structures should be wrapped with active, at-grade uses facing public footpaths, parks and open spaces to provide attractive, animated facades which contribute to the streetscape and enhance pedestrian safety. Car parking floors can be sleeved with residential/commercial uses when appropriate and passive surveillance is desired.

Where there is no at grade active use, the ground floor should be treated with architectural/landscaped screens to hide vehicles from view. Screens will use materials that are sensitive to the context.

Above grade parking structures that are integrated within mixed-use contexts can provide efficient and convenient access to parking in denser urban environments. Above-grade structures should include sufficient ceiling height to future-proof structures for adapting to planned forthcoming projects. Parking structures that front public footpaths will be designed to integrate into the surrounding streetscape.

## **3** PARKING ACCESS AND ENTRANCES

Pedestrian entrances to car parking should be located adjacent to main building entrances, public streets and other highly visible locations. Vehicle access to parking structures should be located at the rear or side of the buildings, away from building frontages and major streets to avoid regular basement driveway entrances. Parking garage entrances should include design treatments for safe access by cyclists to secure long-term bike parking and storage units, including pavement markings and signage.



**4 UTILITIES ACCESS AND ENTRANCES**

Access to servicing and loading areas should be provided from secondary streets or rear laneways. It should include design treatments to minimise impact and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists crossing these areas.

**5 SERVICES**

Ground floor services such as fire hydrant boosters should be sensitively integrated into the building facade and dispersed to reduce the impact on street amenity.

**6 LOADING**

Loading docks, storage areas and service areas should be coordinated, consolidated and located together to minimise impact and disruptions to the surrounding public realm.

**7 WASTE**

Consider space provision for waste collection vehicles to the site planning stage to prevent these functions from spilling over into either the public right-of-way or public spaces.



**Exemplar**

Preference is for developments with basement car parking facilities in place of multistorey car parks with integration into mixed used developments. Integrated car parking options provide opportunities for an enhanced, dynamic streetscape frontage.

**STRATEGY 2:**

# **ACTIVATING CANBERRA CITY CENTRE**

*Christmas in the City, Photographer: Buda, Structure by CPS, Graphics by Julia Slawsoki*

Canberra is full of great places, particularly within the City Centre. Great places bring people together, are welcoming and provide spaces for social interaction and spontaneous moments that are enjoyable for City Centre users. This can occur through all elements of the public realm, in key open spaces and plazas, but predominantly within the everyday streets where the public realm interfaces with the built form. The seamless integration of these elements is critical in creating high-quality places. People use streets for a broad range of functions, including movement, work and leisure. Highly active streets are fundamental to the success of the City Centre.

The City Centre can deliver a high-quality public realm with active streets and dynamic places. These streets and places, together with high-quality building controls, will support the urban renewal of the City Centre and provide memorable experiences for people living in, working in, or visiting the City Centre.

Great places don't happen by accident, they are shaped and nurtured by deliberate actions and engaged communities. Thinking about how a space can be used, who will use it and how they will interact can fundamentally affect the kind of place that develops.

Canberra is globally recognised for its lifestyle offer, and regularly features on the top of the lists of most liveable cities on the planet. The City Centre is especially praised for its dynamic cultural and entertainment scene, employment and economic opportunities as well as good approaches to environmental sustainability and climate change. These attributes are crucial in strengthening the City Centre's liveability and competitive advantage going forward into the future.

Placemaking is about creating places for people. More than buildings, design or architecture it is about the often intangible elements that people identify with and relate to, resulting in a sense of connection to place and community that can significantly contribute to wellbeing and economic growth. Great places encourage diversity, build social cohesion, connect people with civic values, heritage and nature, and attract investment and innovation.

Placemaking should focus on the following principles:

- People-focussed places and streets.
- Providing for a diversity of uses and users.
- Places that are connected and legible.
- Places that are safe, appealing and inclusive.
- Supporting and encouraging sustainability and innovation.
- Empowering the community to initiate change and build place leadership.
- Acknowledging and celebrating heritage places and civic life.

# WHO ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

When thinking about the future for the City Centre, it is important to consider a wide range of different user groups. The City Centre must be inclusive for all parts of the community, including families, elderly, youth, people with limited mobility, students, rough sleepers, workers, tourists and different socio-economic groups. It is the combination of all of these users together that will make for successful public spaces and ultimately a successful City Centre.



## 3 Children

- Playgrounds
- open space
- Learning opportunities
- Classes and events
- Safety
- Spaces for all ages

## 1 Families



- Safety
- Weekend activities and events
- Community engagement
- Food and beverage options
- Services and shopping

## 2 Young people



- Place to meet people
- Entertainment and recreation
- Close public transport
- Job opportunities
- Night life

## 4 Retiree or empty nester



- Good accessibility
- Transport options
- Seating, amenities, shade
- Access to cafes, shopping and services
- Social connection and community engagement
- Urban gardening

# 5

## Workers



- Access to open space and sun at lunch
- Team sports and personal training
- Drinks and dinner after hours
- Access to services and shopping

# 6

## Visitors

- Visiting something unique
- Clear identity and function
- Overnight accommodation
- Public amenity
- Food and beverage
- A diverse landscape
- Unique to Canberra



# 7

## Mobility limited



- Clear and legible wayfinding
- Wide footpaths that are accessible
- Drop off zones to key services
- Close parking options or public transport
- Clear signage



# 8

## Cyclists and pedestrians



- Safe paths for cycling and pedestrians
- End-of-trip facilities like bathrooms, change rooms and bike storage
- A connected network
- Bike lockable areas
- Safe travel and good lighting

# 9

## Socially vulnerable

- Safe spaces to stay
- Access to care and support
- Appropriate and safe spaces for community and socialising
- Access to public amenity
- Access to flexible storage

# MOVEMENT AND PLACE

Typically, streets comprise up to 80% of a City Centre's public open space and are critical to a City Centre's vibrancy and prosperity. Successful places require a high demand for connectivity and activation, coupled with the need to balance varying demands within the available road space and public realm. The City Centre's growth requires the need to: enhance and add services, provide multi-modal transport options and provide choices for people's work, living and transport requirements. On this basis, significant changes are taking place to accommodate growth and alterations in travel behaviours and preferences, and towards greener, lower emission travel choices.

## TRANSFORMING OUR CITY CENTRE

The City Centre has been transforming through new transport modes including the delivery of the first stage of the light rail project. This was delivered as an urban transformation project rather than an isolated transport solution, and a key benefit realised was accelerated urban renewal along the alignment, particularly along Northbourne Avenue.

While Northbourne Avenue is becoming a more liveable and vibrant place to live, play and do business, it has also become more efficient. It can carry more people than ever before. While light rail takes around 30% of people along the corridor during the AM peak, these people are moved by less than 20 light rail vehicles in a highly space-efficient way.

## LIGHT RAIL STAGE 2

The ACT Government is now progressing with the second stage of building light rail to Woden. Connecting light rail to Woden occurs in two stages – from the City to Commonwealth Park (Stage 2A) and then Commonwealth Park to Woden (Stage 2B).

Alinga Street in the centre of the City Centre will be connected to Commonwealth Park by Stage 2A, improving the connection between the City Centre and the lake. Edinburgh Avenue, City South, and Commonwealth Park are the three additional stops that will add 1.7 kilometres to the light rail network. London Circuit will be raised to increase amenities and connectivity to deliver Stage 2A. Strong place connections between key spaces and light rail stops will be key to its success, and result in improved places for the City Centre.

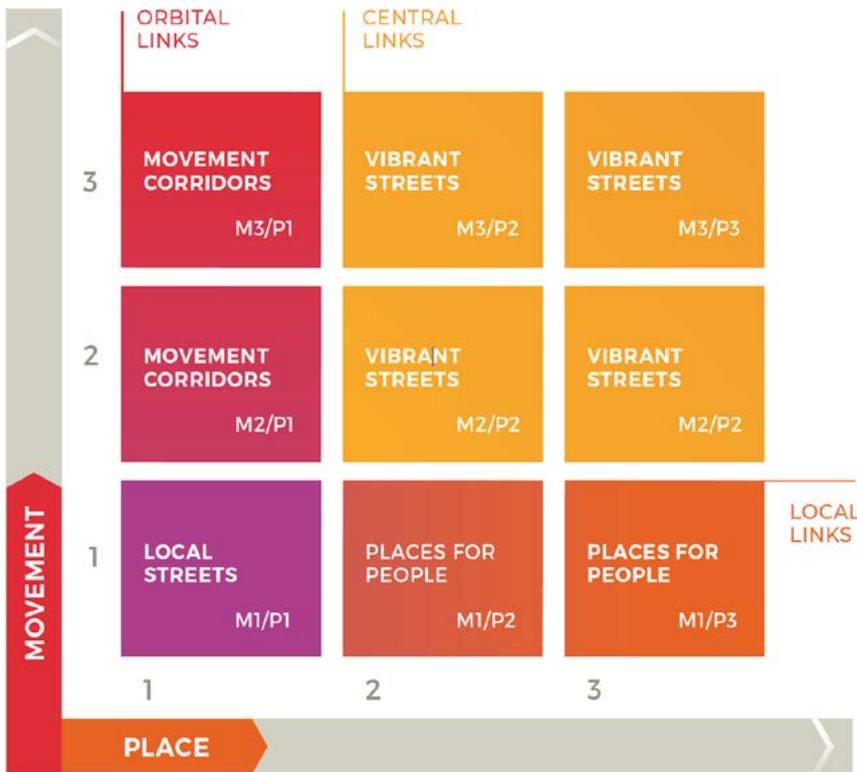
## STREETS

A 'Movement and Place' framework for Canberra will provide an enhanced understanding for balancing the dual functional requirements of streets. Defining streets as movement corridors and as places for people requires balancing these varying requirements.

Enhanced integration of land uses, placemaking opportunities and multi-modal transport planning is required to realise the framework. The integration of these components will support the safe, efficient and reliable movement of all modes of travel, while enhancing the liveability and amenity of the public realm.

Movement and Place street typologies documented in the ACT Transport Strategy 2020 are highlighted on the adjacent plan and table.

The streetscape network in the City Centre should promote activation, integrate green infrastructure and strengthen the public realm network. The future sustainable growth of the City Centre will be dependent upon the place value activated within the streetscape network. The place value activation should encourage places for people that are safe, resilient and comfortable. Similarly, streets should become dynamic and promote active transport and recreational amenities. The streetscape network should promote links and provide connections to adjacent spaces to support the City Centre's sustainable growth.



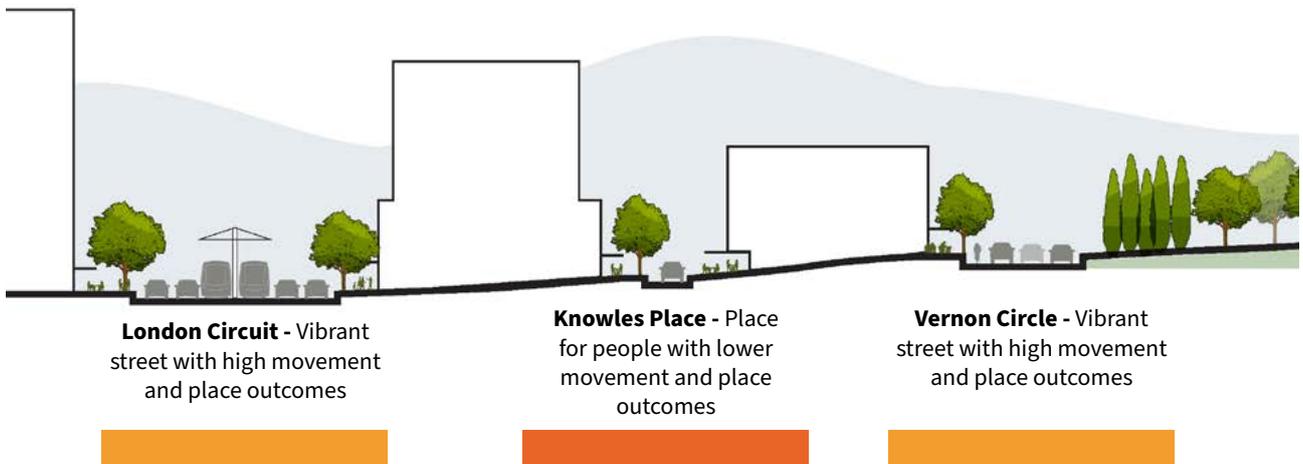
Source: ACT Transport Strategy 2020

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Renew the streetscape network to encourage activation, integrate green infrastructure and strengthen the public realm network:

Key	Description
①	Identify and strengthen 'places for people', in the City Centre streets and corridors creating resilient and comfortable environments.
②	Identify and strengthen 'vibrant streets' in the City Centre that encourage active mobility and emphasise a recreational network of places.
③	Strengthen connections between parks, urban spaces and destinations, and precincts by defining, upgrading and linking streets.
④	Review signal phasing to support reduced pedestrian wait times at crossings and increase precinct permeability.

Both London Circuit and Vernon Circle are vibrant streets with London Circuit having a stronger focus on movement, as highlighted below.



# STREETS

## WHY GREAT STREETS MATTER

Streets make up a very high proportion of public space in urban areas, foster business activity and provide safe places for people to move around. The vitality of urban life demands a design approach that is sensitive to the multi-faceted role that streets play. Street improvements are more than a simple aesthetic gesture to improve how streets appear. When done well, they will achieve the following:

### **We are asking our streets to perform more functions than ever before**

Shifts in technology, mobility, emerging research data and macroeconomic issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, require streets to constantly reinvent their role in our City Centre. How we design streets must be driven by a rationale that reflects this important role.

### **Streets define our city's visual identity**

Streets define the visual character and brand identity of the City Centre as the primary lens through which it is perceived by users and visitors. How we design these spaces reflects who we are as a City Centre.

### **Streets are where targeted investment can have the greatest impact**

Streets are the single most important venue for fundamentally improving the way urban life is lived in Canberra.

### **Better streets means better business**

A safe, dynamic, efficient street network is essential to the economic health of a town or region. Street design also plays a major role in facilitating access to formal and informal commerce, jobs and the movement of goods and services.

### **Green streets are smart and sustainable**

Streets can help mitigate the effects of climate change by encouraging sustainable modes of travel, as cars and trucks account for approximately 40% of carbon emissions globally. Designing streets that respond to their environment can have numerous benefits that improve the liveability and sustainability of the city.

### **Balanced streets keep the city moving**

The most effective tool in mitigating city scale impacts of heavy car reliance is to provide balanced streets which will accommodate multi-mode transport options.

### **Balanced streets create healthy communities**

Balanced streets encourage people to make healthy choices by supporting walking and cycling. Increasing the mode share of active travel and introducing street trees has the potential to unlock improvements in public health outcomes at the City Centre scale.

### **Safe streets save lives**

Improvements in streetscapes can have a measurable impact on user safety through activation, crime prevention and implementation of traffic calming measures.



## REQUIREMENTS OF A STREET

Streets are typically made up of a series of different zones whereby different uses can and should happen. These zones include:

- carriageway - the space between the two kerbs that is used to accommodate different modes of vehicles, active transport infrastructure and parking
- traffic lanes - dedicated zone for motorised vehicles
- active transport lanes - dedicated zone for cyclists and micro-mobility (e-scooters and e-bikes) use
- verge - the space between the property boundary and the kerb
- pedestrian clearway - the primary pedestrian movement and clearway
- building edges - where the building edges interact with the public realm
- privately owned public spaces (POPS) - Spaces that are privately owned, but open to the public such as arcades, plazas and atriums.

Making great streets in the City Centre is dependent on key principles that promote an enhanced quality of life in the public realm. The following pages provide further guidance on key activities and outcomes that can be included within the varying zones, and provide ideas and exemplars for:

- outdoor dining
- temporary Activation
- privately owned public space
- built form interface and edge
- active transport infrastructure
- public transport infrastructure
- inclusive design elements
- green infrastructure.

*As part of their draft Active Travel Plan, TCCS is finalising a draft Design Guide which sets out best practice guidance on the design of safe and people-friendly streets that will support walking and cycling in key parts of our city and this will be incorporated into the final version of the UDF.*

**Streets are the lifeblood of our cities and are the primary urban element through which people experience the City Centre**



# MAKING GREAT STREETS IN THE CITY CENTRE

## OUTDOOR DINING

Outdoor dining is an important part of Canberra culture. It provides the opportunity to enjoy the outdoor environment while providing a critical role in activating the City Centre. Dining outdoors is one of the easiest ways to promote activity on the street.

Footpaths should be of sufficient width to enable and encourage dining on the streets. Guidelines should allow for large numbers of pedestrian movements while maximising the value of outdoor dining for local businesses.



## FOOTPATH DINING

Footpath dining through flexible zones on the street creates an active and dynamic public realm, while ensuring pedestrian clearways are maintained. This activity drives economic performance for local businesses.



## LANEWAY DINING

Activated laneways provide safe, inviting, legible pedestrian connections throughout the City Centre. Laneways can be activated through smaller dining opportunities that spill out and create more intimate spaces of activity.



## SET BACK DINING

Where possible along major streets, dining along street frontages should be encouraged to face the public realm. This gives the feeling of additional open space to the street and creates a sense of activity and dynamism.



## SMALL FRONTAGE DINING

Small dining opportunities should be encouraged to create variety in the street. These can be through smaller tenancies or hole in the wall opportunities. Any furniture outside these dining options must not impact on the pedestrian clearway and movement network.



## TEMPORARY ON-STREET DINING

Opportunities should be taken for temporary activation strategies including the closure of streets or parking bays for new dining opportunities. This may be during major or key events, or through the temporary consideration and trial of future opportunities.

## TEMPORARY ACTIVATION

Tactical urbanism is all about action, a DIY approach to improving streets and public spaces through low-cost, short-term and temporary activation activities to demonstrate the potential for long-term catalysing change.

Activation can be achieved through the reorganisation of streets or public spaces, through temporary closures to create new places for people, or by utilising on-street car parking or laneways and giving them back to the public. These can be used for pop up events, markets and new public spaces. Temporary artworks are also considered as tactical urbanism activities.

Low risk and low cost activities provide opportunities to experiment with new ideas, to see how the public perceive them, as well as how the broader city might function without that space, in order to consider bigger moves for the future. When successful, these projects can be a catalysing step towards formalising more permanent transformations within the City Centre.

When considering whether or not to close down a street for pedestrian use only, doing this as a temporary activity is a good opportunity to see the effect it may have, and how private and public sectors manage change in regards to operations or traffic.

Tactical urbanism also provides opportunities to create colour and activity in the City Centre, through new artworks and street furniture.



### RECLAIMED SPACES

There are many examples of where roads or other key spaces have been reclaimed and used as new parkland or plazas. The above offers opportunities to reconsider traffic movement patterns as well. Planting, public artworks, barriers and bollards should be installed to make the space safe and pedestrianised.



### UTILISING EXISTING ROADS AND CAR PARKING

Existing roads and car parking can be used as demonstration projects for outdoor dining or parklets through the temporary installation of furniture and planting. Kerb extensions allow for wider pedestrian movement corridors. New active travel lanes can be created by delineating lanes through coloured paint and barriers.



### EVENTS AND POP UP ACTIVATIONS

The programming and activation of events throughout the City Centre bring to life. This can be through live performances, outdoor exercise classes, giant games and community activities. These activities give the community a sense of ownership and belonging and bring activity to the City Centre.



### TEMPORARY ART

Public art and murals are a positive way to activate the City Centre, particularly along blank walls and roadways. Private sector partners should be encouraged to incorporate public art projections and murals around key development sites and on temporary hoardings during construction.

# MAKING GREAT STREETS IN THE CITY CENTRE

## PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACES

As the City Centre continues to grow, there is an increasing need to create new publicly accessible, active urban open spaces. Privately owned public spaces (POPS), are spaces dedicated to public use and enjoyment but owned and maintained by private property owners.

Many cities worldwide utilise these spaces to enhance and extend their public realm and provide additional open space that complements existing and planned publicly owned parks, open spaces and natural areas. Through proper design and management, POPS can positively contribute to creating a strong sense of place, character and activity in the City Centre.

POPS can take many forms, and an appropriate configuration for each will be determined on a site by site basis. The design of any POPS will follow an iterative design and planning process to ensure they contribute to and complement the existing and planned open space network of the City Centre.

Several typologies have been developed and classified as per below. The summary below provides a brief outline of the intent of these classifications. Each site and location condition will create a unique outcome each time. However in all instances, POPS should complement and enhance the existing network of parks and open spaces.

Other design and programming elements will need to be considered for each typology. These include the pedestrian scale, lighting, wayfinding and signage, hardscape and landscape, seating and public art. Where POPS directly connect to the City Centre's street and sidewalk network, the treatment of the setback must be consistent with the existing or planned streetscape design.



## PLAZAS, FORECOURTS AND COURTYARDS

These spaces are often hardscaped spaces bordered by building edges. They may include trees and planting, especially with internalised courtyards. These spaces can be activated by a broad range of functions and temporary events, or used as quiet spaces to relax.



## LANEWAYS, CROSS BLOCK LINKS AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

These connections are publicly accessible and improve permeability of large blocks and developments. These should be pedestrian focussed and activated where possible, while offering the flexibility for events and activations.



## LANDSCAPE SETBACKS AND PARKS

Utilising building setbacks and enhancing the spaces between the building interface and public footpaths can provide important public realm outcomes to the City Centre through new vegetation zones. Larger parks should include further amenities to suit the broader community and context.

Buildings should orientate towards the street to promote life in the public realm, passive surveillance, and the City Centre’s continued activation. Active frontage occurs where there is active visual engagement between the public realm or street and the ground floors of buildings. It is achieved when the façade of a building opens towards the street and includes active uses at grade (retail, common areas, etc.).



**RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL USE**

Retail, service commercial and public uses at grade must be designed to relate to the street and include large amounts of clear glazing, multiple entrances, generous ground floor heights, and be generally flush with the footpath.



**BUILDING FRONTAGE**

In areas where there are no active uses at grade, the articulation of the facade must provide a visually interesting frontage by use of architectural elements or integration of artworks.



**BUILDING ENTRANCES**

Building entrances shall be emphasised as a focal point in a building’s facade. Entrances should be positioned in highly visible locations for the increased animation of large street frontage sections.



**AWNINGS AND COLONNADES**

Building awnings and colonnades must be designed to provide shade and weather protection along key pedestrian routes while promoting human scale and architectural articulation at the ground level.



**RESIDENTIAL USE**

Residential and mixed use developments generally shall locate common areas and amenities at grade.



**RESPONSIVE ARCHITECTURE**

Buildings should respond positively to the streetscape and public realm. Through the inclusion of legible interfaces, connectivity and climatic responses to the public realm should make reference to the human scale of the streetscape.

# MAKING GREAT STREETS IN THE CITY CENTRE

## ACTIVE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Active transport is based on the need for physical activity to be undertaken as a means of transport and includes travel by foot, bicycle, and other non-motorised vehicles such as e-scooters and e-bikes.

Active travel should be supported by high-quality public realm and streetscape amenities to make moving around on foot and bike an attractive, pleasant and safe choice of transport that is integrated with public transport.

The City Centre will ensure high quality, safe connections for cycling and e-mobility as well as broader infrastructure and end-of-trip facilities.

Due to the low traffic volumes within the City Centre, cycling and e-mobility are safe modes of transport and conflicts with pedestrians will be avoided by providing dedicated infrastructure and safe on-road facilities.

In the City Centre, key streets will include dedicated spaces for cyclists, e-scooters and e-bikes, with separation from vehicles by way of laneway markings or raised elements such as planting or buffers.

Pedestrian active travel by foot and walking is critical in establishing successful streets and a high-quality public realm. The separation of pedestrians and vehicles will promote the safe use of the public realm and enhance the pedestrian experience of the street. Encouraging active transport for pedestrians will promote a balanced public realm and allow for the sustainable growth of the City Centre's streetscape and pedestrian connectivity.

Integrating pedestrian active transport with non-motorised vehicles such as e-scooters and e-bikes provides sustainable multi-modal opportunities.

Active transport infrastructure comes in numerous forms, whether as dedicated on-road pathways, shared pathways or off-road. Different typologies should be considered appropriate depending on their location.



### DEDICATED SINGLE DIRECTIONAL ON-STREET CYCLE PATH

Dedicated single directional on-street cycle path toward the outer lane of the street, sometimes separated by small medians or delineated by linemarking or colour of paint. When no median separation is provided, this can create some safety concerns due to having no separation from moving vehicles.



### BIDIRECTIONAL LANES

Bidirectional lanes include two adjacent lanes of bicycle traffic going in each direction as a dedicated lane. These are generally separated from vehicles by either a raised median, buffer, vegetation, fencing or parking bays. They are completely separate from vehicular traffic.



### SHARED ON STREET

Shared infrastructure on the streets is located in areas where there are lower traffic levels, and bicycle sharing with vehicular traffic is considered appropriate.



### PARKING / SET DOWN

Within the streetscapes themselves, dedicated parking and set down areas should be provided to allow for cycle and e-mobility parking in convenient places. These should be located within the flexible street zones.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Canberra has been undertaking a significant renewal of the public transport system for the city, including the integration of current and future proposed light rail systems. This is in support of the city working towards a zero emissions travel policy. Through the integration of the first stage of the light rail system, 30% of city commuters chose more sustainable travel options.

The City Centre will be easily accessible through a variety of safe, frequent and legible public transport options, supported by a series of interchange hubs. The existing bus networks will be enhanced. The raising of London Circuit will allow for the future delivery of the extended light rail network and will increase choice for the city's passengers.

Key transit streets in the City Centre will balance the pedestrian and public transport needs through generous public spaces, clear signage and wayfinding and accessible bus stops. Kerbside allocation for public transport use is focussed in key areas, balancing pedestrian and public transport needs along city streets.

Density within the City Centre will increase the demand for public transport infrastructure. The City Centre's appeal, as a commercial and employment destination, will be enhanced by a strengthened public transport system.



### DEDICATED BUS LANES

Similar to on-street cycleways, dedicated bus lanes are depicted by a change in paving or paint colour. They improve the efficiency of the public transport network by allowing for more direct travel and a reduced dependency on private vehicles.



### SHARED TRAFFIC LANES

Most transit lanes incorporate shared traffic lanes for the use of buses and private vehicles. Shared traffic lanes can have reduced efficiencies when compared with dedicated lanes, however can allow for broader transport opportunities.



### LIGHT RAIL

The integration of light rail stations into high-quality public realm outcomes can promote activity nodes. Subsequently, adjacent attractors can promote high-usage and activity. Accessible and integrated stations elevate the public transport experience and increase attractiveness.



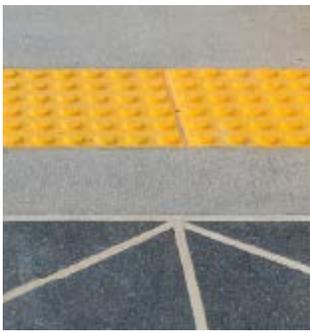
### MODAL INTERCHANGE

Co-locating multiple public transport modes to allow for enhanced connections between alternative transport modes should be promoted. Increased flexibility and ease of use can be achieved with integration to bikes and micro-mobility.

# MAKING GREAT STREETS IN THE CITY CENTRE

The City Centre should be safe and comfortable for all of its daily users, irrespective of age, background, or ability. Inclusive design elements should be integrated into new and existing streetscape outcomes to support the needs of and create an enjoyable and safe experience for all who come to the City Centre. Sensory cues and tactile elements help those who

are vision impaired. Improved footpaths, crossings and wayfinding will make it easier for all people to navigate.



## TACTILE GROUND SURFACE INDICATORS (TGSIs)

TGSIs provide outcomes to assist vision impaired pedestrians by providing a physical element within the pavement that can be felt underfoot.



## RAISED CROSSINGS

Raising the surface of the road to be flush with the kerb at key pedestrian crossings creates a safe and seamless transition to the street.



## SAFE FOOTPATHS

Safe and clearly defined pedestrian movement pathways and zones, free from obstruction and clutter such as furniture and signage.



## SHOULDER BUFFER ZONES

Creating a landscaped buffer between the road and the pedestrian clearway improves safety and the quality of pedestrian experience.



## ACCESSIBLE PATH GRADIENTS

The City Centre must include well designed ramps, escalators or elevators where possible to allow access for all users.



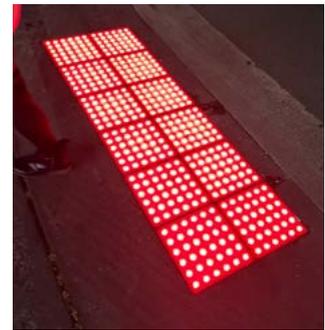
## EFFECTIVE NAVIGATION

Wayfinding is provided for people of all abilities and is clear, legible, multilingual and provided in logical places.



## UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Comply with universal access standards in key places such as transport hubs, public spaces and key destinations and precincts.



## INTELLIGENT CROSSINGS

Using technology and design in tandem can enhance safety of street crossings through intelligent crossing systems.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The influence of the Garden City and City Beautiful movements in Canberra’s urban planning has delivered a ‘City in the Landscape’.

A ‘City in the Landscape’ also reflects the ACT Government’s climate and sustainability commitments through the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025 and the Living Infrastructure Plan 2018.

Contrary to many other cities around the world, the City Centre still has the space available to embrace urban greening, improve liveability and provide a means to proactively address future climate and public health challenges before they become significant issues. A greener City Centre will help improve people’s health and wellbeing, reduce urban heat impacts, and redefine the City Centre as a ‘Garden City’. Canberra’s unique context and Griffin’s original vision of the City Centre as a ‘Garden City’ will be further reinforced through the application of these principles. Similarly, these principles will be further enhanced through the ACT Government’s climate change and sustainability guidelines.

Potential opportunities to enhance and reconnect blue and green infrastructure exist at all scales, from large public open spaces to small privately-owned spaces.



## CLIMATE ADAPTATION THROUGH GREENING

Enhance the City Centre’s environmental performance through the retention of valued natural features that contribute positively to the local context. Similarly coordinating water and soil management, reducing the urban heat island effect and maximising solar access, micro-climate enhancement, tree canopy maximisation and habitat values will promote the preservation of important green networks.



## BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The City Centre should embody the principles of water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) in all aspects of the public realm. This will facilitate living infrastructure in all projects, and at all scales. Consideration of storm-water solutions including local collection, storage and diversions, permeable pavements and the greening of hard surfaces to include roadways and rooftops through the appropriate selection of plants.

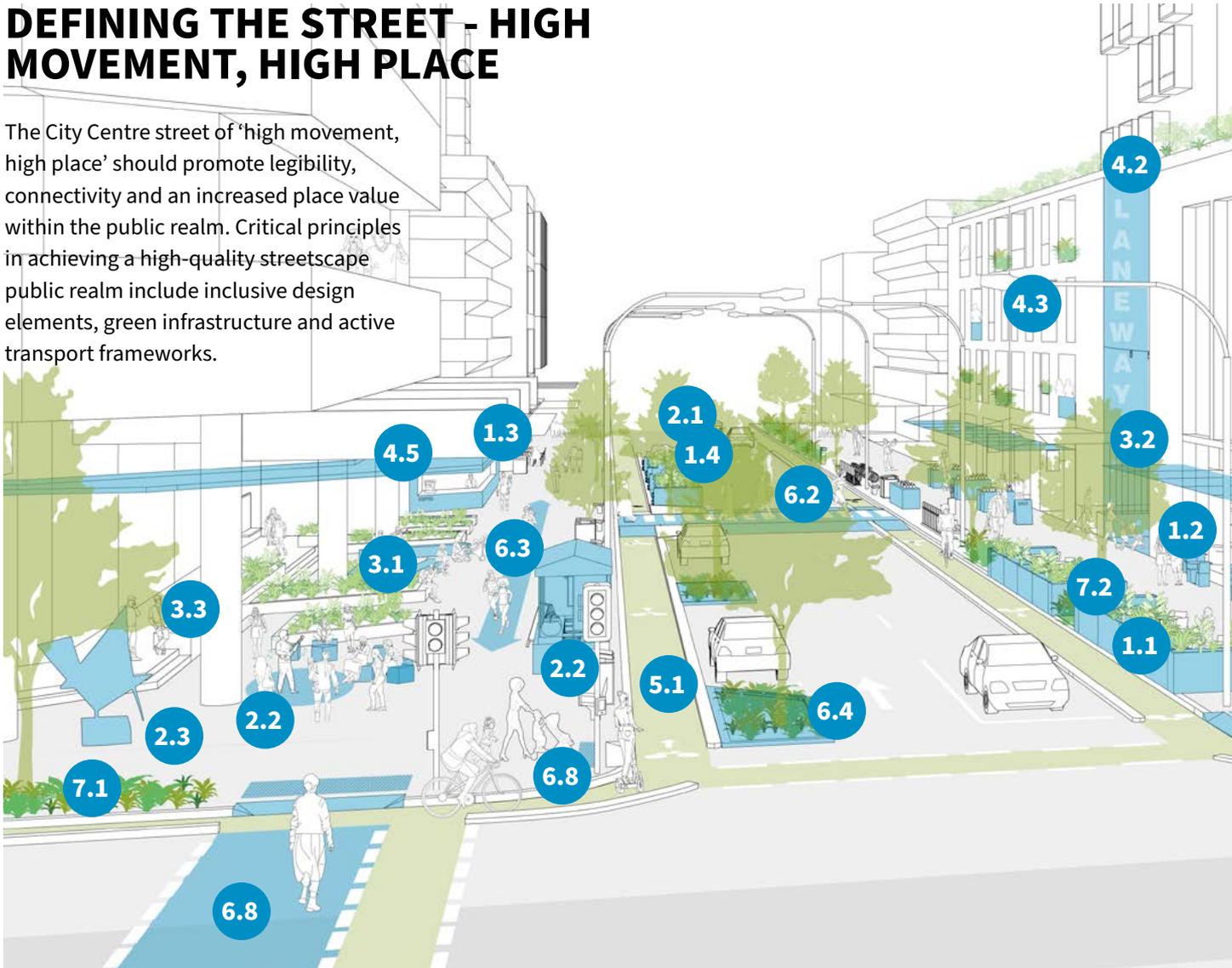


## PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES

Access to fruit and vegetables is critical for mental and physical health. Food insecurity is also increasing. For many people, growing food restores a connection to nature and the ability to nurture themselves, their friends and family through food. The City Centre should integrate plants for food into the public realm, through the integration of productive tree species and landscapes within the public streets as well as private developments, with consideration for Indigenous and native plant food sources.

# DEFINING THE STREET - HIGH MOVEMENT, HIGH PLACE

The City Centre street of 'high movement, high place' should promote legibility, connectivity and an increased place value within the public realm. Critical principles in achieving a high-quality streetscape public realm include inclusive design elements, green infrastructure and active transport frameworks.



- 1.1** Footpath dining

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- 1.2** Set back dining

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- 1.3** Small frontage dining

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- 1.4** On-street tactical dining

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- 2.1** Utilising existing roads and carparks

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- 2.2** Event and pop up activations

---

- 2.3** Temporary and permanent art

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- 3.1** Plazas, forecourts and courtyards

- 3.2** Laneways, cross block links and pedestrian connections

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- 3.3** Landscape setbacks and parks

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- 4.1** Retail and commercial use

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- 4.2** Building frontage

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- 4.3** Residential use

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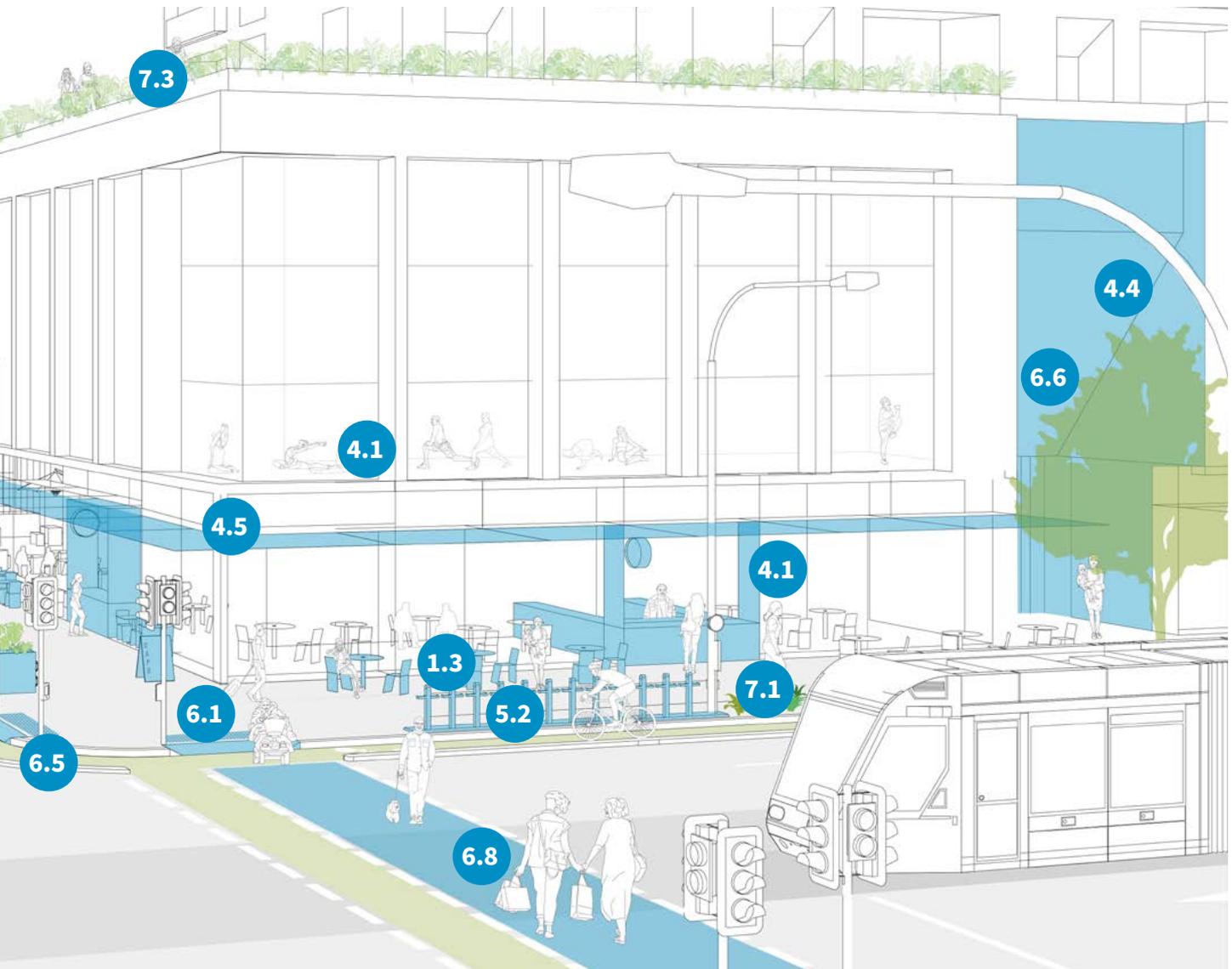
- 4.4** Building entrances

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- 4.5** Awnings and colonnades

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- 5.1** Bidirectional lanes

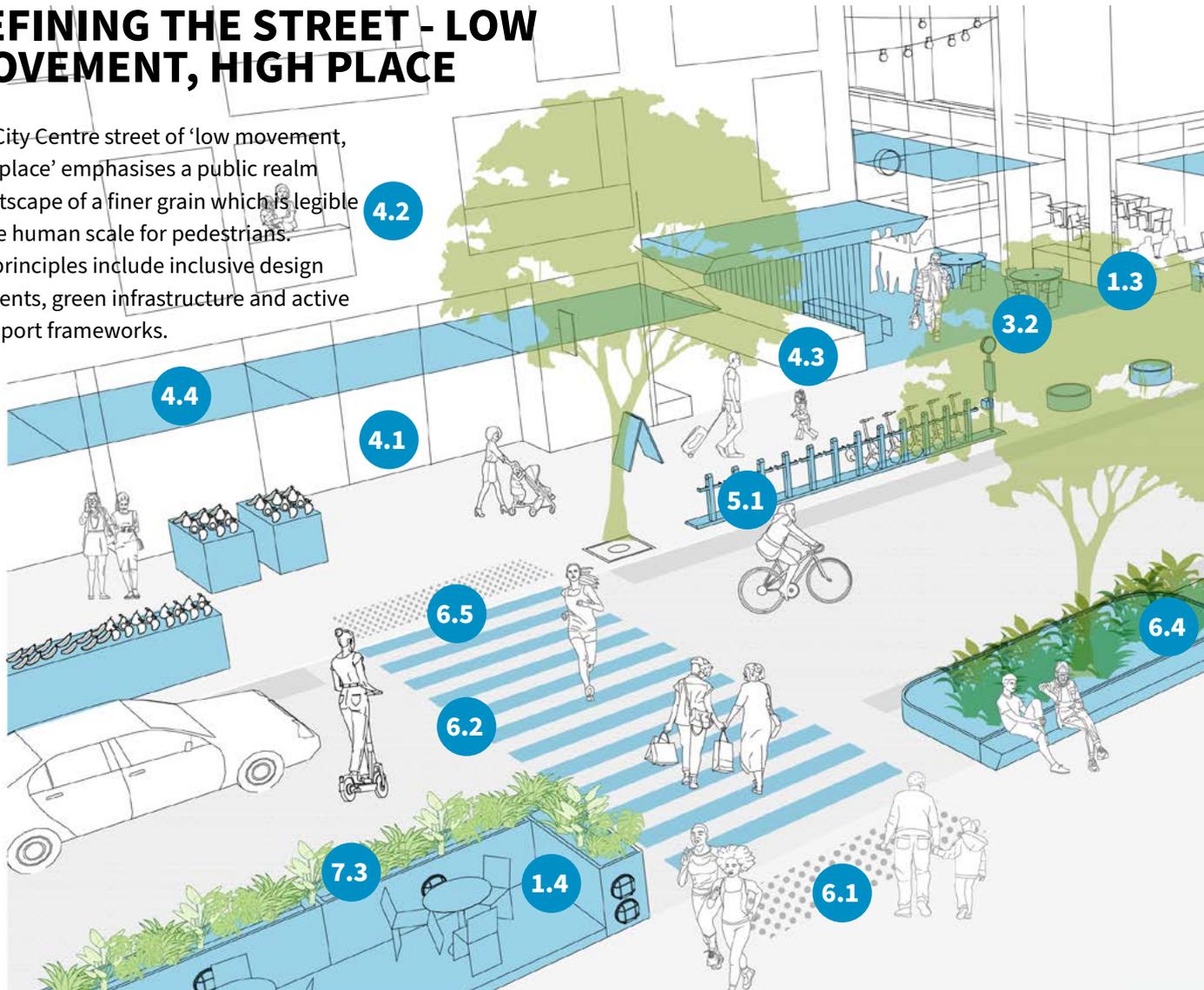


- **5.2** Parking/set down
- **6.1** Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)
- **6.2** Raised crossings
- **6.3** Safe footpaths
- **6.4** Shoulder buffer zones
- **6.5** Accessible path gradients
- **6.6** Effective wayfinding
- **6.7** Universal access

- **6.8** Intelligent crossings
- **7.1** Water sensitive urban design
- **7.2** Climate adaptation through greening
- **7.3** Productive landscapes

# DEFINING THE STREET - LOW MOVEMENT, HIGH PLACE

The City Centre street of 'low movement, high place' emphasises a public realm streetscape of a finer grain which is legible at the human scale for pedestrians. Key principles include inclusive design elements, green infrastructure and active transport frameworks.



1.1 Footpath dining

1.2 Set back dining

1.3 Small frontage dining

1.4 On-street tactical dining

2.1 Utilising existing roads and carparks

2.2 Event and pop up activations

2.3 Temporary and permanent art

3.1 Plazas, forecourts and courtyards

3.2 Laneways, cross block links and pedestrian connections

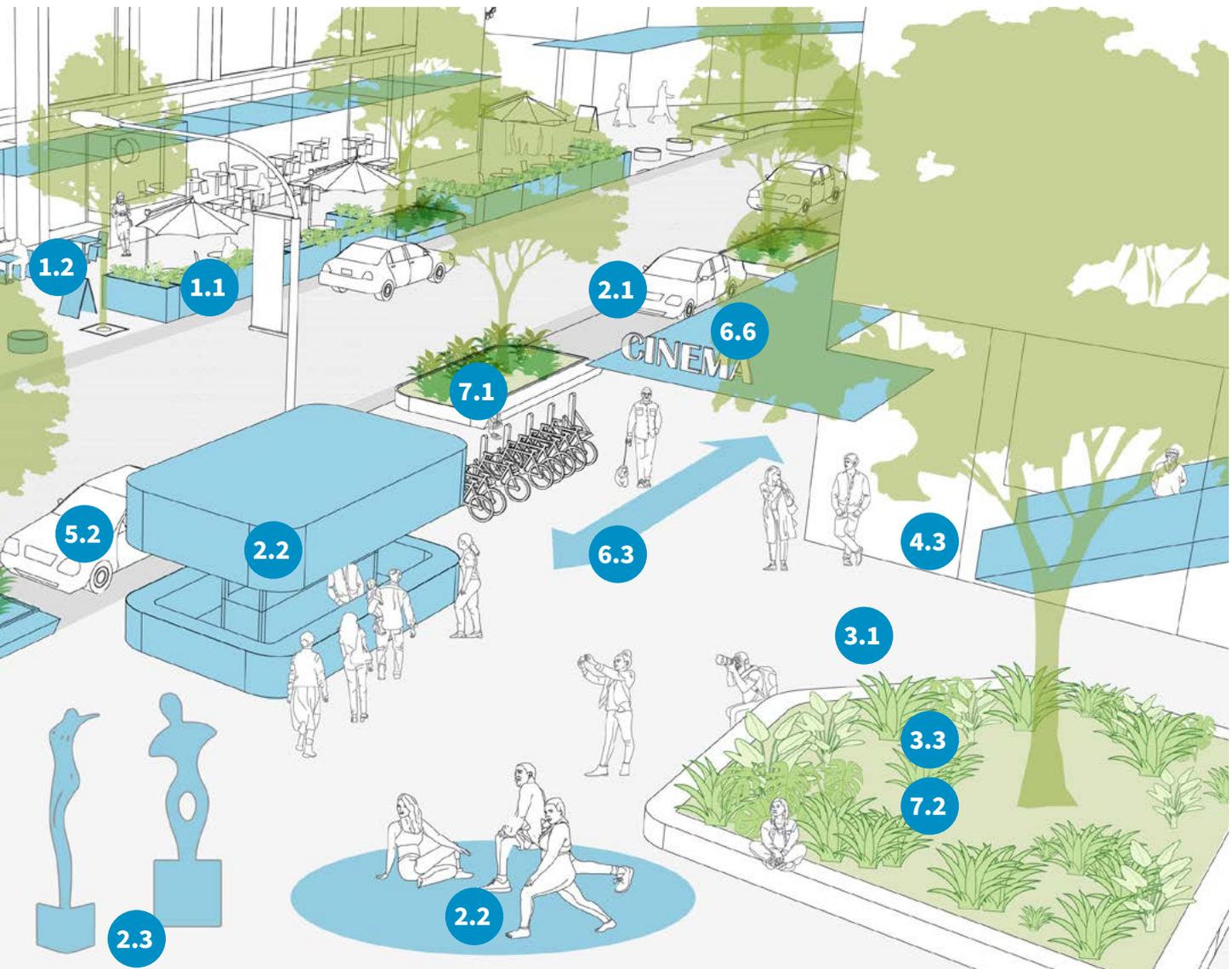
3.3 Landscape setbacks and parks

4.1 Retail and commercial use

4.2 Residential use

4.3 Building entrances

4.4 Awnings and colonnades



5.1 Parking/set down

5.2 On-street parallel car parking

6.1 Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs)

6.2 Raised crossings

6.3 Safe footpaths

6.4 Shoulder buffer zones

6.5 Accessible path gradients

6.6 Effective navigation

6.7 Universal access

7.1 Water sensitive urban design

7.2 Climate adaptation through greening

7.3 Productive landscapes

# PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

The City Centre contains large areas of open space within and around the City Centre – three times the national average and ten times the current ACT Government provision for new residential communities. However, many areas are underutilised and lack programming, activity and connection. As the City Centre’s population and demographic mix grow, so will the importance of, and pressure on, the existing open space network. Convenient access to high quality, well-maintained open space is critical to supporting the physical, psychological and social wellbeing of current and future residents.

## **Improve links within the open space network**

Opportunities exist to elevate the prominence of parks and natural amenities through the integration and emphasis on quality open space. Enhanced links between parks and green corridors can provide memorable user experiences that support biodiversity and reinforce the City Centre’s landscape character. Green spaces should be designed in a way that promotes high levels of accessibility. These opportunities will help to revitalise the urban ecosystem and transform undervalued open space and green options.

## **Destination park themes**

To cater for the various recreational needs of a diverse, active and healthy community, there are opportunities to consider multiple themes in the design of parks in the City Centre.

## **Spaces for play**

Creating spaces for children often results in increased social interaction between adults. For this reason, formalised playground facilities and nature-based play areas are required to support physical activity and creative exploration for all ages. Where possible, play spaces should include sheltered seating, toilets and barbecue areas.

## **Naturalised areas**

Naturalised areas can have a profound effect on our physical and emotional wellbeing. In an increasingly busy urban world, parks and open spaces can act as sanctuaries that allow people to take time out and connect with nature. Naturalised open space should incorporate seating areas, providing opportunities for calm and quiet reflection in the natural environment.

## **Spaces for events**

Community events develop civic pride, cultural awareness and a sense of place. Many spaces in the City Centre offer opportunities for large and small-scale events, which increase open space utilisation and social capital. Locations such as City Hill and Glebe Park could have a key role in facilitating major civic events while promoting their symbolic and historical contributions to shaping the city.

## **Community gardens**

Community gardens allow people to grow their own food, learn and engage in activities that promote physical fitness. Community gardens also enable people to come together with a common purpose, strengthening social networks and encouraging healthy lifestyles.

## **Social spaces for gathering**

Parks and plaza areas can provide active social spaces to meet, linger and engage with others. These should be designed to include a diverse range of offerings that reflect the community’s priorities, needs and expectations and include dog parks, high-quality lawn areas, exercise equipment, formal and informal play spaces and picnic / barbecue facilities.

## **Urban places and streets**

In addition to open spaces, urban places such as plazas, squares, laneways and streets are essential parts of the public realm. Opportunities exist to establish a network of attractive urban places and destination streets that are connected and layered to create intimacy and activity, providing for a diverse range of activities and uses.



Key Public Open Spaces

**Key recommendations**

- ① Renew existing open spaces to create a distinct network of places, spaces and experiences that are tied to their context.
- ② Improve linkages from activity centres to open space to promote connectivity and encourage public realm activation.
- ③ Create a grand pedestrian loop that surrounds the City Centre and connects to the lake
- ④ Improve, extend, curate and program identified pedestrian friendly spaces to create people focussed places.
- ⑤ Support innovative approaches for the incorporation of landscape and greenery into urban public spaces.
- ⑤ Identify and prioritise open spaces with high potential for activation in each precinct.

**Legend**

- Site boundary
- Semi natural open spaces
- Recreation spaces
- Amenity green space
- Existing hard-surfaced open space
- ← Key pedestrian routes
- - - Proposed future light rail

**THE PUBLIC REALM MAKES UP 40% OF THE CITY CENTRE**

AND INCLUDES THREE KEY AREAS:

**Open spaces**

Parks, waterfront and green corridors



**Urban Places**

Plazas, squares, laneways and pedestrian areas



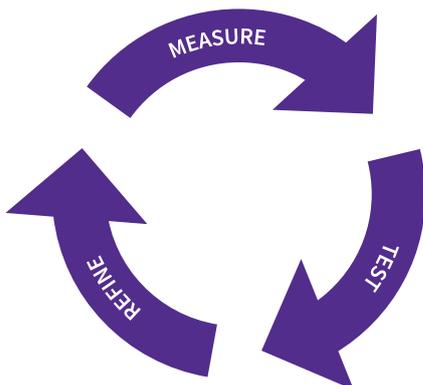
# PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is about more than just buildings and open spaces. It is about the often intangible elements that people identify with and relate to that create a connection to place. Significant benefits are achieved in terms of health, happiness and wellbeing through participatory placemaking outcomes.

Placemaking initiatives also provide opportunities to quickly test new ideas for how public spaces can be used and occupied in order to inform longer term change. This offers flexibility of form, scale and purpose. Temporary activations can assist in bringing ideas to life and communities together. This typology of project is a tool that the City Centre can utilise to explore place-based experiences, catalyse community development and create a diversity of lively places.

Place based experiences may include reclaiming-the-streets events, temporary urban forests, popup playgrounds, colourful street-marking for outdoor games, and sensory installations that play with sound, sight and smell. These can also be achieved through the utilisation of existing laneways and pedestrian malls and may include the utilisation of existing vacant land and car parks.

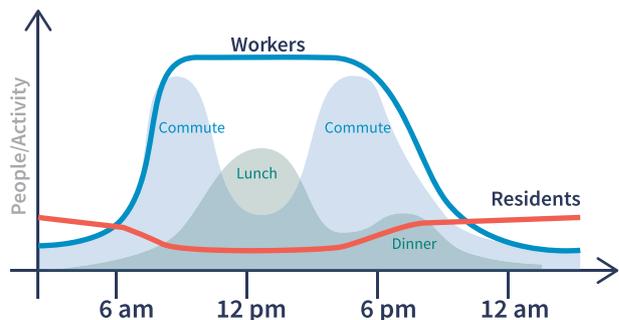
The City Centre can help support and initiate these types of projects by creating streamlined approval processes and policies for activation projects and events in public spaces. An iterative process of testing, measurement and refinement of pilot activation initiatives should be considered to track the outcomes and benefits of public space intervention projects from early activation through to finished public space upgrades.



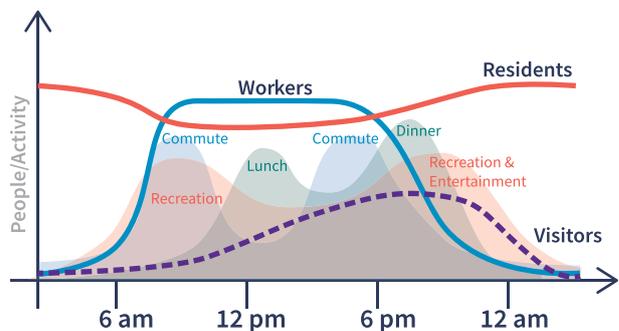
## BOOST DAY AND NIGHT TIME ACTIVITY

There is a need to promote a new critical mass of people through the densification of the City Centre in support of diverse and dynamic spaces and places. Encouraging sustainable growth to promote a new critical mass of people will ensure a diversity of activities, functions and services within the City Centre. It is critical to ensure the successful activation of urban spaces both during the day and night.

The densification of urban areas will promote the sustainable growth of a diverse demographic. A diverse demographic will facilitate multi-functional uses and activities in the City Centre enabling dynamic spaces and places to be developed for both during the day and the night.



Mono-functional uses in City Centre



Enhanced public life by diversity of users

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC LIFE IN THE CITY CENTRE

Capture the life of people already going to the City Centre and invite them to stay a bit longer. Understand who are going to the City Centre now and who else we want to attract. Promote new uses that cater to the people who are already here and provide more reasons to stay for those users we want to attract.



### STREETS

Opportunities to utilise key parts of the street, such as verges and medians, to create temporary public spaces for activity. This can increase footfall, attract new visitors and create new places of recreation for all age groups and demographics.

### UNDERUTILISED SPACES

Key spaces that are not always used, such as car parks and empty lots, can be transformed into pop up public spaces for events and other key activities. By allowing food trucks and other temporary and movable furniture, these spaces can be transformed into new city destinations.

### DEVELOPMENT SITES

Work with public and private sector partners to incorporate public art, projections and murals around key development sites and on temporary hoardings during construction to create a more attractive environment for the public.

### PARKS / OPEN SPACES

Parks and open spaces create the perfect platform for new creative interventions. Movable furniture and lighting allows users to create their own urban spaces through informal meetings, areas for relaxation and recreation and allow areas to evolve on a daily basis.

# ARTS AND CULTURE

The City Centre is the focus of Canberra’s arts and cultural institutions, including museums and galleries, the Civic Library, Canberra Theatre Centre, Canberra Museum and Gallery, Arts ACT, and Craft ACT, as well as numerous independent venues. There are also numerous longstanding and extremely popular festivals, including the Design Canberra Festival and the National Multicultural Festival and, more recently, the street art festival.

## ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE CITY

Arts and cultural institutions and organisations play a key role in defining the character and identity of the places we live, work, play and visit. They bring people together and provide new ways to enjoy our City Centre and flourish personally. They also foster creativity and innovation, provide jobs and celebrate heritage. Arts and culture also play a key role in economic growth.

The arts and culture sector for the ACT leads the nation in creating employment and has the highest arts and creative attendance and participation rates across Australia. In 2021, there were 1,500 active creative businesses in the ACT an 8.5% increase from 2016 (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

## ARTS AND CULTURE AS AN ECONOMIC CATALYST IN THE CITY CENTRE

Beyond the direct economic contributions, the arts, culture and creative industries play an important role in creating an attractive and active City Centre in which to live and induce tourism visitations. Canberrans have an appetite to pay for cultural activities, spending approximately \$211 million per year, a higher per capita average than any other capital city. According to Visit Canberra and Tourism Research Australia, Arts and Culture is the biggest driver of visitation to the ACT.

## INNOVATION AND GROWTH

One of the key drivers of job creation and economic growth is a City Centre’s ability to innovate. While there are many factors that influence and enable innovation, art is increasingly recognised for the role it plays in fostering creative thinking. The availability of arts and culture has a direct impact on a City Centre’s ability to attract, retain and grow talent and therefore impact on the prosperity, vitality and success of the City Centre.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Key	Description
①	Conceptualise urban art together with any public space revitalisation projects and consider the role of art relating to the five key themes proposed by the Canberra Urban Art Strategy.
②	Integrate art into multiple public realm projects that create wonder, joy and identity to engage in public places. Explore the role of art in relation to the five themes defined in Canberra Urban Art Strategy should also be explored.
③	Integrate Urban Art into everyday community functions and services as central nodes for public life (kindergarten, local grocery store, bike repair, community centre, local library, local supermarket).
④	Integrate art projects into long-term construction site hoardings reducing the need for “out of order”, especially around infrastructure projects.
⑤	Canberra: Australia’s Arts Capital a statement of ambition for the Arts 2021-2026 recognises Canberra as Australia’s arts capital through three strategies. The ambition and the strategies defined in the statement will support ACT’s arts policy that promotes arts and culture in the City Centre.

**Urban art makes use of the entire spectrum of the arts, including visual, performing and applied arts, to improve and connect with the urban experience.**



Urban art and sculptures integrated into public spaces



Temporary art interventions in public spaces

Festivals and gatherings on the waterfront

### Urban Art Strategy 2022-2025

The City Renewal Precinct Urban Arts Strategy 2020 - 2025, has been developed to assist ACT Government agencies, developers, artists, arts workers, curators and producers with the implementation of urban art in the city. The strategy outlines five overarching themes; Being Canberran, Urban Morphology, Legibility, Hidden Narratives and Playfulness. This document and its themes should be used as a guide when developing the aims and curatorial intent for any urban art projects and initiatives.

<p><b>Being Canberran -</b> Art should celebrate and build upon the many layers of Canberra's unique character.</p>	<p><b>Urban Morphology -</b> Art has the opportunity to explore the spatial structure of Canberra's urban patterns and processes.</p>	<p><b>Legibility -</b> Art should celebrate the unique markings and character of the physical landscape and perceived character.</p>	<p><b>Hidden Narratives -</b> Art has the opportunity to uncover the subtle, hidden and unexplored stories and narratives of Canberra's history.</p>	<p><b>Playfulness -</b> Art has the opportunity to create engagement, connections and learning opportunities with one's surroundings.</p>
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Urban Art Strategy 2022-2025 - Overarching Themes





**ACT**  
Government

# CITY CENTRE PRECINCTS

# CITY CENTRE PRECINCTS

The City Centre is a place of great importance as the capital city and centre for national business and administration. The natural topography of drainage ways, the rise of City Hill and long views to key mountains are key to the structure and layout of the city. The axes of avenues and radial layout of the Griffin Plan are key features of the City Centre and are the basis for the identification of its five character areas.

## PRECINCT CHARACTER

Each of the five precincts has its own unique character and key active public spaces that function as the precinct ‘heart’. The precinct heart signifies the most active and characteristic place that grounds each of the individual precincts with a unique identity and function. Together, the precinct heart offers a variety of experiences that collectively form the overarching character of the entire City Centre.

The five precinct areas and their future desired character are shown below:

- City Hill Precinct - continue to be an area of civic and cultural importance, highly active with a mix of residential, retail, commercial and community uses.
- City North-East - dominated by finer grain retail and commercial uses, is the primary entertainment area of Canberra with high levels of activity. City Walk, Garema Place and Petrie Plaza form an extensive area of pedestrianised streets that characterise the areas as the focus of City Centre retail and entertainment uses.
- City South-East - tourism, business and education quarter defined by tourism and recreational uses, access to high-quality parks and open spaces. Constitution Avenue is one of the most prominent connections between City Hill and the National Triangle, with a high-quality streetscape.
- City North-West - Mix of education, research and commercial uses, with a diverse character underpinned by students, arts and theatre communities.
- West Basin and Acton Waterfront - a lively waterfront community with mixed activities and services that will truly make the most of Lake Burley Griffin.

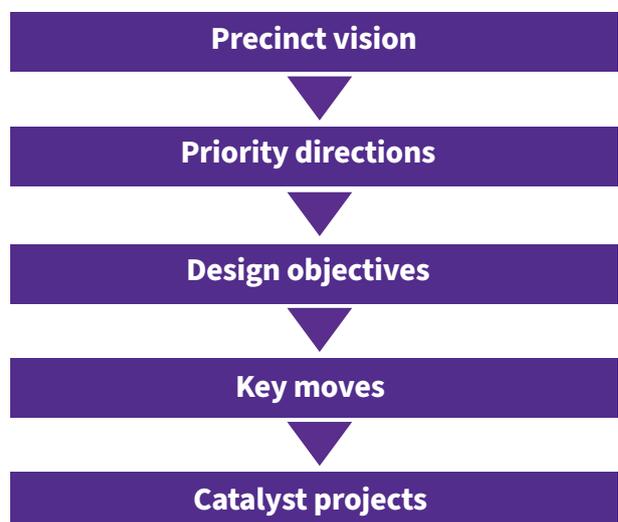
## PRECINCT PLAN STRUCTURE

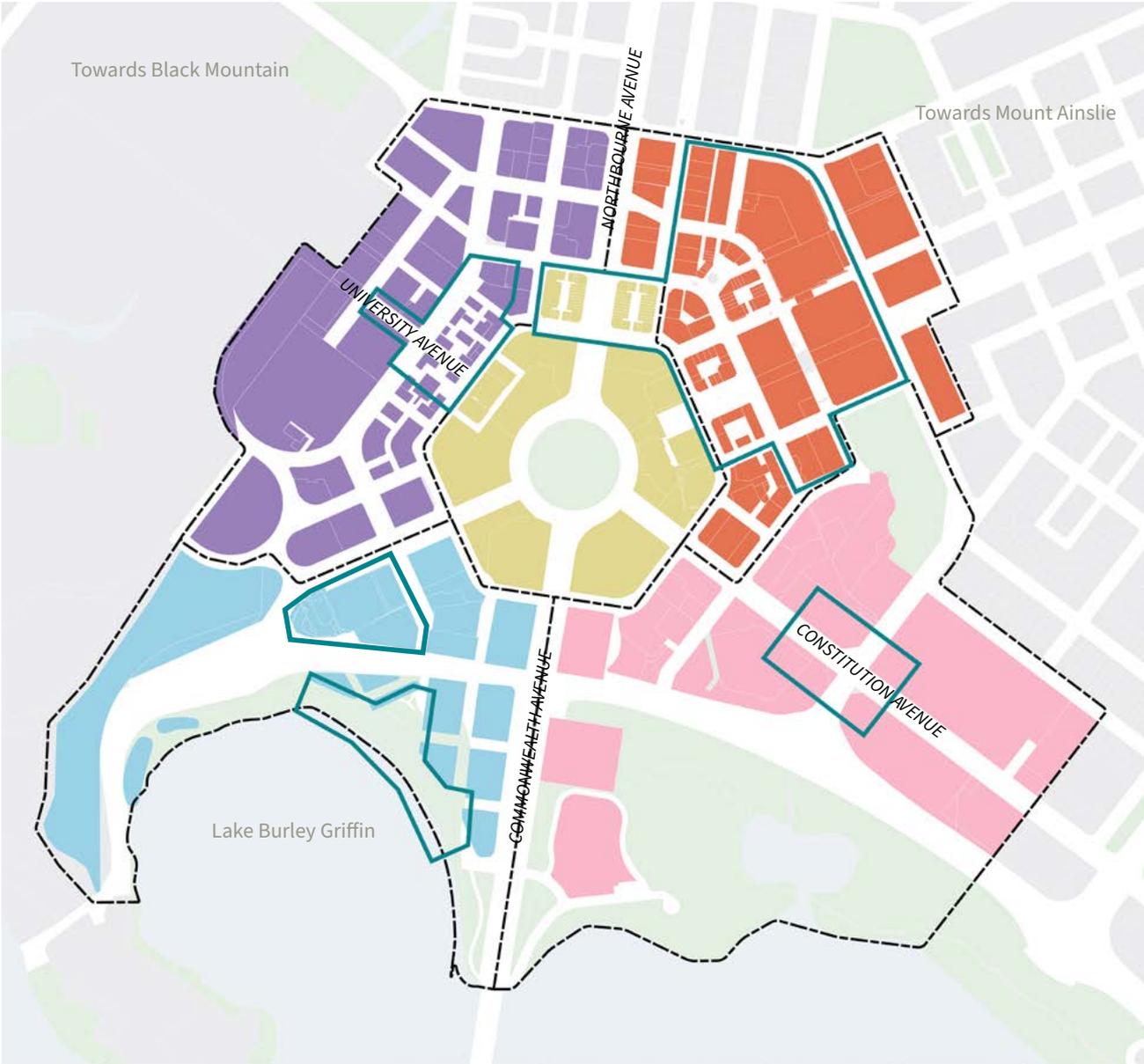
Further detail about each of the precincts will be explored over the coming chapters. Each precinct chapter will identify a more refined precinct vision and character, as well as key opportunities and challenges for future development.

A series of precinct priority directions that align with the Draft City Plan has been identified that will guide the future development of each precinct at the highest level. Development priority must be carefully considered to ensure that strategically important opportunities are realised.

A series of design objectives have been formulated to provide further guidance on how the priority directions may be considered and how more specific key moves and catalyst projects will be identified.

A series of key streets and places are then identified for each precinct to show better guidance on activation, supporting the movement and place strategy.





**Legend**

<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple;"></span>	City North-West
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange;"></span>	City North-East
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue;"></span>	West Basin and Acton Waterfront
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellowgreen;"></span>	City Hill
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:pink;"></span>	City South-East
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid green;"></span>	Precinct hearts

**‘A high-quality public environment can have a significant impact on the economic life of urban centres big or small, and is therefore an essential part of any successful regeneration strategy’**

*“The value of public life.” - CABE*



# LO



## CITY HILL

## PRECINCT VISION AND CHARACTER

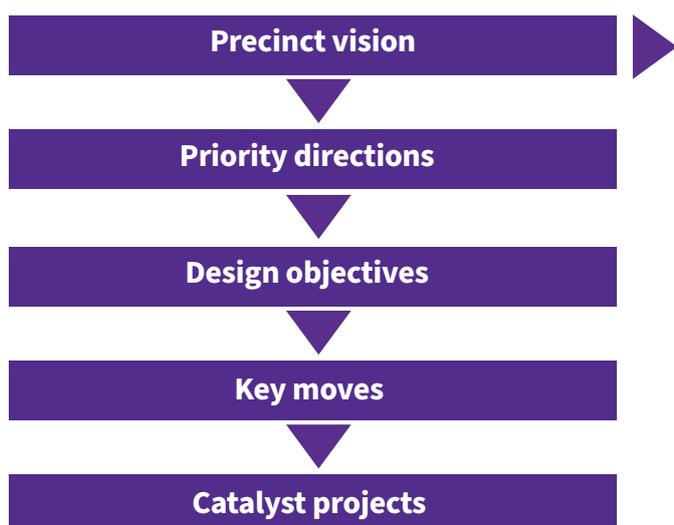
The City Hill Precinct is the most central part of the wider City Centre, symbolically forming the hub of the six main avenues that radiate from it. The area is of both historic and civic importance, representing one of the three points of the National Triangle.

The City Hill Precinct is currently the most central part of the wider Canberra City Centre. It is the focus of ACT Government administration, as well as cultural and civic life, centred around City Hill park. The intention is to be a highly active precinct with a mix of residential, retail, commercial and community uses.

The City Hill Precinct will be a nationally significant and engaging central core and heart of the City Centre. Significant and vacant land holdings surround the large central parkland, promoting the most significant opportunities for urban renewal.



*City Hill precinct*



**The City Hill precinct will be Canberra’s iconic cultural and civic core and the apex of the National Triangle. The precinct’s future release and development potential make it one of the most significant renewal sites in the City Centre.**



*Ephemeral in Civic Square by Alter Sisu for Enlighten Festival, Photographer: Events ACT*

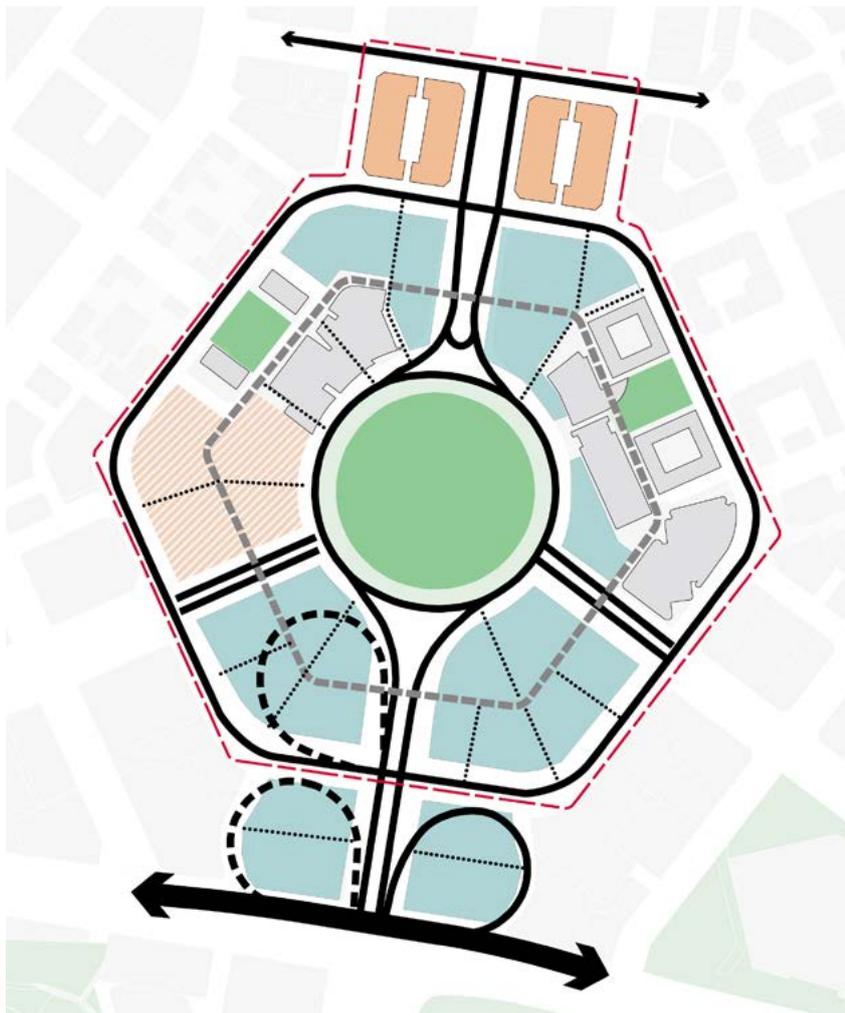
# PRECINCT CONTEXT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City Hill Precinct has the most potential and opportunity for future redevelopment. With a large amount of at-grade parking and open space, the precinct is mostly undeveloped. The table below highlights a series of opportunities for consideration to allow the precinct to evolve into the city landmark that it was envisioned as.

The expansive circular park central to the precinct was originally envisioned as a point of gathering for the city. Currently, City Hill is surrounded by road infrastructure and undeveloped land. With future growth anticipated in the precinct, there is an opportunity for the City Hill park to become a lively and loved recreational space for all Canberrans to enjoy.

The size of the parkland is significant, amounting to five hectares. There is a series of heritage-protected formal tree plantings that were a key feature of the original design. Previous concepts and designs have been proposed for the parkland, but the functional role of City Hill is yet to be defined. Current precinct outcomes and key opportunities are identified below.

Opportunities	Challenges
Reconsider the park as a unifying heart to the precinct and city; a place for activities and events, that will be much loved and utilised by city users.	City Hill park is rendered virtually inaccessible by Vernon Circle. It is essentially an island cut off by major roads with poor pedestrian connectivity.
Revise the road layout to create a more pedestrian-friendly street environment that will be safe and encourage pedestrians to cross over to the parkland at key crossing areas. Future road layouts should align with the movement and place definitions as outlined.	City Hill park is currently surrounded by heavy road infrastructure, whose capacity is superfluous for the precinct. Three lanes of traffic surround the roundabout and create a huge barrier for pedestrians.
Redesign the parkland into something more meaningful and useable to the city while reconnecting to its context and original design intent.	Existing open space on City Hill park is poorly maintained. The planting geometry is only visible from above.
Provide equitable access and use in its redesign to encourage more visitors by providing all users better connections across existing roadways.	The parkland is inaccessible. There is only one pedestrian crossing linking to the park, and minimal infrastructure to navigate around it.
Consider using more height on the hill, enabling users to experience the geometry and key views of the city more broadly, including its connection to the National Triangle.	The parkland currently does not engage people to use it. This is a missed opportunity, given its significance to planning history in Canberra.
Better uses surrounding the park that are active and engaging will promote more precinct activity and usage of the parkland.	The edges surrounding the parkland are inactive, and buildings mostly turn their back to the parkland.
Ensure land uses allow for activation facing Vernon Circle and reinforcing City Hill as the heart of the City Centre.	The precinct currently consists predominantly of at-grade car parking.
Consider the approach to activate and enhance the heritage buildings as a prime location within the City Centre, alongside the Conservation Management Plan.	Two significant heritage buildings are located to the north of the precinct (Sydney and Melbourne buildings), which are currently struggling to be activated.
Reconsider the road profile of Commonwealth Avenue and the traffic movement onto Parkes Way to encourage a more pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment on Commonwealth Avenue and Parkes Way.	South of City Hill, pedestrian connectivity remains challenged by the wide road infrastructure of Commonwealth Avenue. A particular impact of this is poor connectivity to Acton and Commonwealth Park south of Parkes Way.
Improvements to landscaping of City Hill park will promote the visualisation of the heritage tree planting and control the rabbit population.	The hill is currently infested with feral rabbits.
Retain access to the Canberra Theatre Centre from Vernon Circle, supporting the aspiration for Vernon Circle to be activated.	Separation from pedestrian areas in the Civic Square, Canberra Theatre Centre and vehicle movements will be a key ambition for activation of the Canberra Civic and Cultural District including pedestrian safety.



**Legend**

- Site boundary
- Road layout
- Proposed removal of road
- Proposed new laneway
- Indicative public access
- Existing buildings
- Existing heritage buildings
- Key development opportunity sites
- Existing development approvals
- Existing open and civic spaces

**Cloverleaf interchange removal:**

Two cloverleaf interchanges west of Commonwealth Avenue are planned to be removed with the raising of London Circuit and Light Rail Stage 2A. The cloverleaf east of Commonwealth Avenue is identified as being a future gateway site for the City Centre (City Plan 2014), but there are no plans to develop it in the near future.

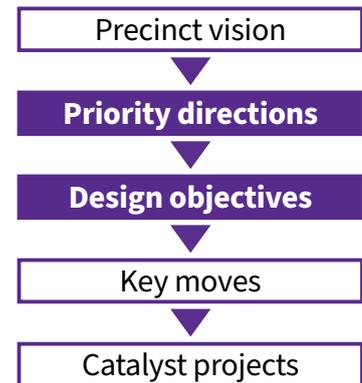
*City Hill Precinct Development Capacity*



*City Hill Precinct*

# PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Priority directions and design objectives have been identified for the City Hill Precinct. The priority directions align with the City Plan, while the design objectives provide precinct directions that will help to deliver the precinct vision.



## Priority Directions

Aligning with the City Plan, the City Hill priority directions include the following:

- Reinforce the precinct’s role as the civic and cultural heart of the City Centre
- Provide clear and legible pedestrian links to facilitate greater pedestrian connectivity within and between City Hill park and the wider precinct
- Enhance and activate City Hill park to realise its potential as the heart of the City Centre, reinforcing its cultural prominence as a point in the National Triangle
- Encourage a fine-grain density around City Hill with activity focussed on the cultural economy
- The legacy of the Griffin Plan should guide the planning and design approach to the City Hill Precinct while accepting contemporary realities.

## Design Objectives

The design objectives for City Hill will achieve the following:

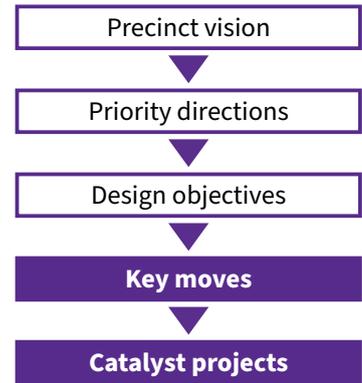
- Be the cultural and civic core where development
- Be the place for celebration, attracting a diverse range of people and activity.
- Establish London Circuit as a premier address for business with a pedestrian and public transport focus
- Manage traffic on Vernon Circle to make the precinct more connected, accessible and pedestrian focussed
- Have a mix of uses integrated with varied cultural and civic uses to reinforce the area’s economic and civic specialisations while encouraging variety and activity around City Hill
- Enhance its historic and geographic importance through high-quality buildings and public realm
- Reinforce important entry/exit points on Northbourne and Commonwealth avenues through landmark buildings that enhance historic views
- Build upon the emerging fine grain and human scale character in targeted sections of the precinct to establish a unique character and drive economic activity.



Melbourne Buildings. Photographer: Lightbox Studio

# KEY MOVES AND CATALYST PROJECTS

The City Hill Precinct will be a nationally significant and engaging central core and heart to the City Centre. Significant and vacant land holdings surrounding the large central parkland promote the most significant opportunities for urban renewal.



## Key moves

Key moves and potential projects have been identified in the City Hill Precinct as:

Key	Description
①	Civic Square connection - A new connection from Ainslie Place, through Civic Square, and onto the parkland will be a key part of the broader city connectivity and improved accessibility. Similarly, the Canberra Theatre Redevelopment and the Canberra Civic and Cultural District will also enhance accessibility to the City Hill park.
②	Vernon Circle – Building frontages to address and support Vernon Circle as an active street. Reduction of speed limit (40km/h) will create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and promote connectivity to the parkland.
③	Northbourne Avenue – Consider public realm improvements to Northbourne Avenue between London Circuit and Vernon Circle and encourage active transport usage.
④	Focus on active uses and new buildings to address London Circuit as the primary active street spine through City Hill precinct with excellent public realm, active and public transport opportunities.

## Catalyst projects

Potential projects for demonstration purposes are identified below:

Key	Description
⑤	City Hill park - The parkland may be improved to take advantage of its key location and be celebrated as the central heart of the city and as an apex of the National Triangle. Improved access and park connections are an important component in connecting City Hill park to the rest of the City Centre.
⑥	Remove cloverleaf road and raise London Circuit to complete built form opportunities around City Hill precinct and improve public realm and prioritise pedestrian connectivity.
⑦	Activate the Sydney and Melbourne buildings, adjacent buildings and open space to create the City Hill precinct heart of activity.
⑧	Canberra Theatre Redevelopment - Revitalising the Canberra Theatre Centre to support vibrant arts and cultural scene in the City Centre.

## LEGEND

	Site boundary		Open space		Light rail network
	Existing buildings		Road layout		Key pedestrian links
	Potential new development site		Vehicle laneway		Pedestrian focussed road treatment
	Existing development approvals		Pedestrian laneway		Activation opportunities
	Heritage overlay		Active frontage		Proposed private open space
	Precinct heart		Adaptable frontage		Gateway site
	Park and civic spaces		Future theatre development site		Landmark building
			High-quality streetscape		Park connection
			City cycle loop		



Proposed precinct arrangement

## CITY HILL PARK

The City Hill parkland has the opportunity when redeveloped to maximise its key location and celebrate its position as the central heart of the City Centre. Enhanced, strong connections to the adjacent precincts will benefit the wider, surrounding localities. Opportunities to enhance the area's site conditions and promote better connectivity to its surroundings offer enhanced benefits to the precinct. Opportunities for the activation of the parkland through built outcomes and specific landscape approaches will provide unique benefits to the precinct and its surroundings. Its symbolic location, key geometric views and heritage values will provide opportunities for the precinct to be activated for a variety of events throughout the day.

### Key moves include:

Key	Description
①	Elevate and flatten the parkland to provide an exaggerated 'hill' that can take advantage of key citywide views while being flexible for key events and activities. There is an opportunity for the height of the hill to be set in relation to and response to Capital Hill and the fall of Commonwealth Avenue.
②	Create key pedestrian connections into the parkland that align with sight lines and streets and provide a formal connection through City Hill park that does not currently exist. These may be done so through varying typologies such as ramps or stairs.
③	Frame the edges of the parkland at the ground level with a new active built form to create a more pedestrian-friendly and vibrant street for Vernon Circle.
④	Develop a new potential landmark sculpture or viewing platform as part of the parkland that would reinforce its place on the apex of the National Triangle.



City Hill Precinct - indicative streetscape as viewed along Vernon Circle

## RAISING LONDON CIRCUIT

The introduction of light rail will see the raising of London Circuit to a level crossing with Commonwealth Avenue to allow for the further integration of light rail and better connectivity across the City Centre and towards the Acton Waterfront. The existing cloverleaf and slip lanes will be removed and several new development sites will become available. This will strengthen London Circuit as an active street as well as improve the connection between City Hill and the lake. The following outcomes should be considered:

Key	Description
①	Remove the North-west and south-west cloverleaf interchanges as part of existing approved works.
②	Remove slip lanes as part of existing approved works.
③	Provide a new signalised intersection between Commonwealth Avenue and London Circuit.
④	Provide entrances and street activity on the ground level of any new buildings adjacent to London Circuit regardless of topography challenges.
⑤	Provide active frontages and activity to the streets.
⑥	Provide generously planted verges with separated on-verge cycleways, wide footpaths and seating.



### LEGEND

<span style="color: red;">- - -</span> City Hill boundary	<span style="color: green;">- - -</span> Footpath
<span style="color: orange;">—</span> Area of change	<span style="color: black;">- - -</span> Retaining wall



City Hill Precinct - raising of London Circuit

## Catalyst projects

# SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE BUILDINGS

A targeted effort to activate the historic Melbourne and Sydney buildings is to amalgamate tenancies and provide a fit-for-purpose and a thriving retail precinct. To support this, the precinct can create a living laneway with public entrances and active frontages that offer an intimate and lively space in the City Centre.

Revitalising the Sydney and Melbourne buildings directly contributes to the ACT Government's Statement of Ambition and Planning Strategy.

As such, the aim is to work with the lessees, their tenants operating within the buildings and the community to identify appropriate ways to achieve revitalisation.

Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Celebrate the heritage values in a contemporary manner that also retains their character.
②	Create a highly curated and vibrant destination.
③	Contribute to City Centre's social economy.
④	Improve the quality and utilisation of the public realm, particularly the internal laneways.
⑤	Break down physical barriers created by Northbourne Avenue traffic.
⑥	Improve linkages to the future Canberra Civic and Cultural District.



### Exemplar: Neals Yard, London

A small square between derelict warehouses was regenerated in the 1970s. A number of independent food providers and alternative lifestyle stores occupy the small tenancies adjoining the yard. The independent group of traders and colourful shop fronts have created a village-like sense of community and a quirky destination to the Covent Garden area.



### Exemplar: Bakery Lane, Brisbane

Over several years, the local council actively worked with the building owners to unlock the potential for reusing the space to create a new urban destination. Following a series of temporary occupation events, the privately funded public space opened as an intimate people space surrounded by independent food, beverage and retail shop fronts.

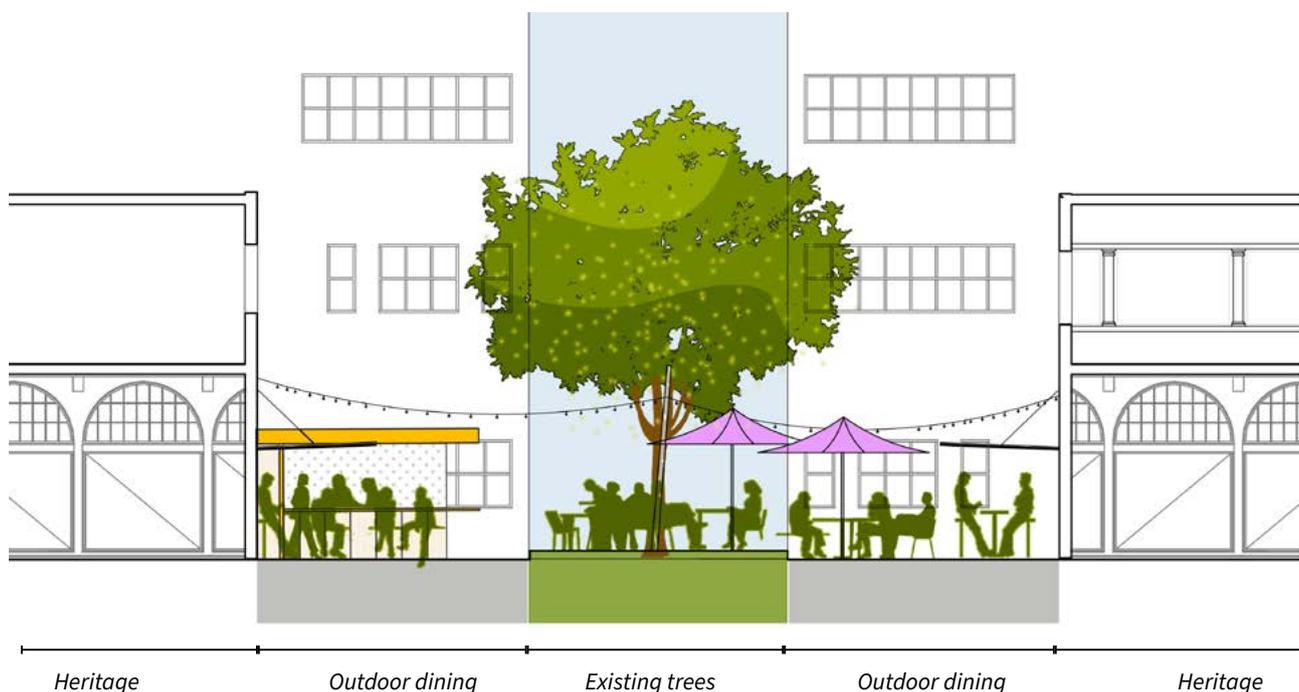
The heritage precinct will continue to evolve the internal courtyards and laneways, by providing active uses and nightlife offerings, as an extension on what has already been happening. Transforming these laneways aids in creating a bustling active precinct, moving away from the ‘back of house’ function it currently occupies. The laneway upgrades will:

- help create attractive, small-scale spaces
- improve safety, accessibility and connectivity
- improve both day and night-time activities
- help preserve the buildings
- reinforce the buildings’ role as a distinctive gateway to the City Centre
- provide new, unique places for the community to enjoy within the City Centre.

Public realm upgrades of new landscape verge along Northbourne Avenue have recently been completed. Surrounding public realm upgrades should further provide a high-quality pedestrian experience around the edges of the heritage buildings by:

- providing new opportunities for local businesses in the area to make use of the additional spaces through outdoor trading
- creating attractive public spaces that are safer and easier to get around
- ensuring the facilities are a more enjoyable experience for the community visiting the area and enjoy what City Centre has to offer.

Any new development surrounding the heritage building should complement similar uses and activities, ensuring that massing does not overshadow these spaces and preserves the unique character of the heritage buildings as a landmark of the City Hill Precinct.



## Catalyst projects

# CANBERRA THEATRE REDEVELOPMENT

The Canberra Theatre Redevelopment will recognise the ACT Government’s ambition for our city to become Australia’s arts capital and position the City Centre as a premier destination for artists and audiences. The arts sector is a developing area and growing it is a good thing for our collective wellbeing. The redevelopment of the Canberra Theatre Centre is a new direction for the performing arts and creative industries in the ACT.

The revitalisation of the areas around Civic Square and the Canberra Theatre Centre will create dynamic arts and cultural scene. There is a common goal in the arts sector for the city to become Australia’s arts capital, creating a future where we attract and retain arts-based tourism, events and creative industries, positioning them as a key economic driver for the city’s future.

A redeveloped Canberra Theatre Centre including a new major theatre is a centrepiece in the city’s performing arts future and a key driver for the tourism, economy, hospitality and accommodation sectors.

The benefits of increasing support and development of the arts and creative industries will:

Key	Description
①	Provide the ability to host more shows and much bigger shows.
②	Reinforce access and connectivity to open space and public realms with improved community amenities. This will enhance the liveability of the precinct and improve participation in the arts.
③	Provide greater integration in the Local and National Arts and Culture Sector.
④	Allow for the retention of creative sector workers.
⑤	Increase economic activity in the ACT, including visitors and revenue.
⑥	Increase tourism activity in the ACT
⑦	Increase health and wellbeing benefits for participants and the community, supporting pedestrian movement, improving physical health, mental health and wellbeing.
⑧	Increase educational outcomes through skills development and career paths.
⑨	Improve social outcomes and increase social connections.
⑩	Provide new economic benefits by creating more jobs and employment in the sector.



Artist impression



# STREETS AND PLACE

Key to the success of the City Hill Precinct is reconsideration of some of the key road profiles. Large road widths and capacity has resulted in some poor streetscape outcomes and pedestrian connectivity along major corridors; however these streets have the ability to undergo positive transformation.

The three most critical streets for consideration as part of the City Hill Precinct include:

- Vernon Circle - the main circular road surrounding City Hill park acting as major north-south traffic corridor through the City Centre. Consideration of traffic management and diversions should be implemented to create a more positive streetscape environment
- London Circuit - the core vehicle route transversing the City Centre, with major upgrades currently under development through the integration of the new light rail system
- New Laneway - a partially constructed laneway in some areas, with the intent of extending this to create a secondary layer of vehicle movement that will break up large parcel blocks of land and provide better development outcomes in the future.

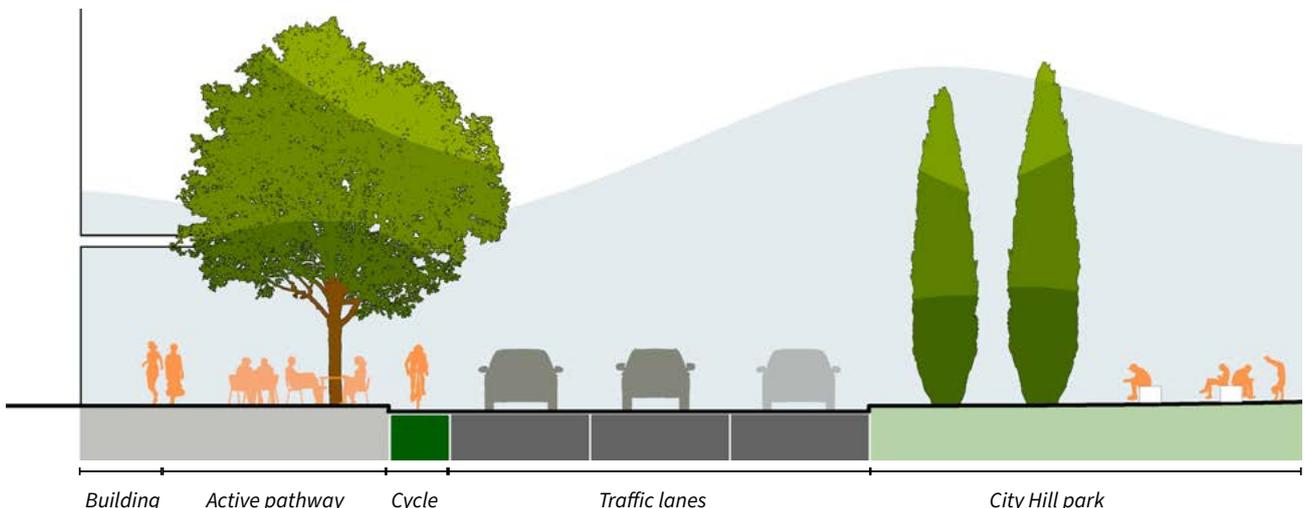
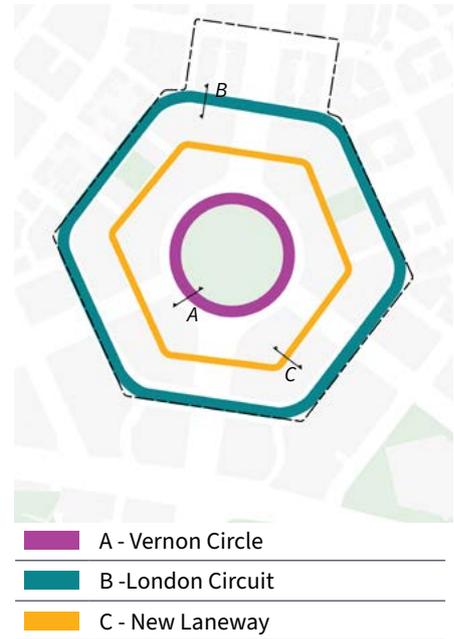
The following pages provide street sections that indicate typical outcomes and aspirational design intent for these streets.

## A - VERNON CIRCLE

While Vernon Circle has geometry significant to the City Centre’s identity, its surplus of capacity and little surrounding development are misaligned with its position as the core of the precinct and the City Centre. Points of interest around the City Centre are visually and physically disconnected for pedestrians, who are virtually unable to cross Vernon Circle’s three lanes of traffic and navigate across the 220m-wide City Hill park. There is a great opportunity for the edges to be activated by providing new development on the

outside, and for traffic to be reduced to encourage a slower traffic flow, more suitable for pedestrian activity.

The new Canberra Theatre Centre will have a front to Vernon Circle, supporting the aspiration for Vernon Circle to be activated. Multiple ‘drop off’ access areas will be created for Canberra Theatre Centre via Vernon Circle, Northbourne Avenue and London Circuit.



## B - LONDON CIRCUIT

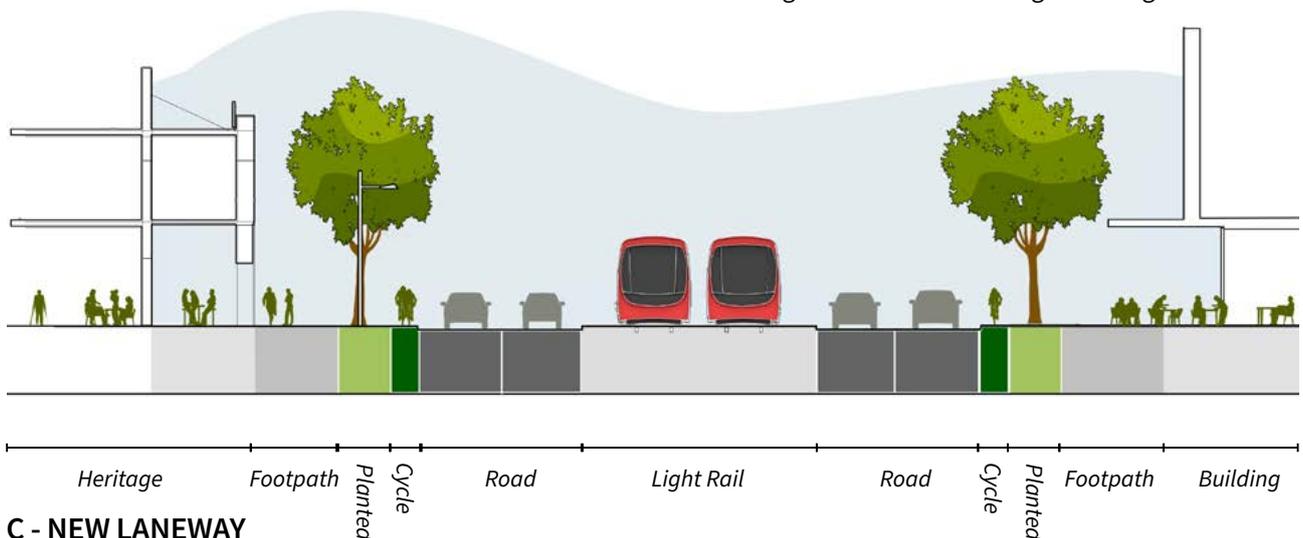
London Circuit's geometry sets it apart from any other high street in the world and should be treated and considered with this unique quality in mind. The part of London Circuit that runs along the edge of City North-West precinct, will undergo major upgrades and transformation, as the profile changes to integrate the Stage 2 of Light Rail.

A revised road profile has been identified to capture the integration of light rail into a more pedestrian-focussed street alignment while providing better public realm outcomes that allow for more pedestrian activity. In connection to the movement and place framework, London Circuit exemplifies principles of high movement with high places qualities.

Future design drivers for street upgrades include:

- a street tree master plan to be considered for the whole of London Circuit informed by the street tree master plan prepared for raising London Circuit and Light Rail Stage 2A projects
- allowance for continuous tree canopy through the street profiles
- reinforcing the geometry through consistency and rhythm
- aligning street lighting and other vertical elements with trees to ensure a clear and unobstructed pedestrian pathway.

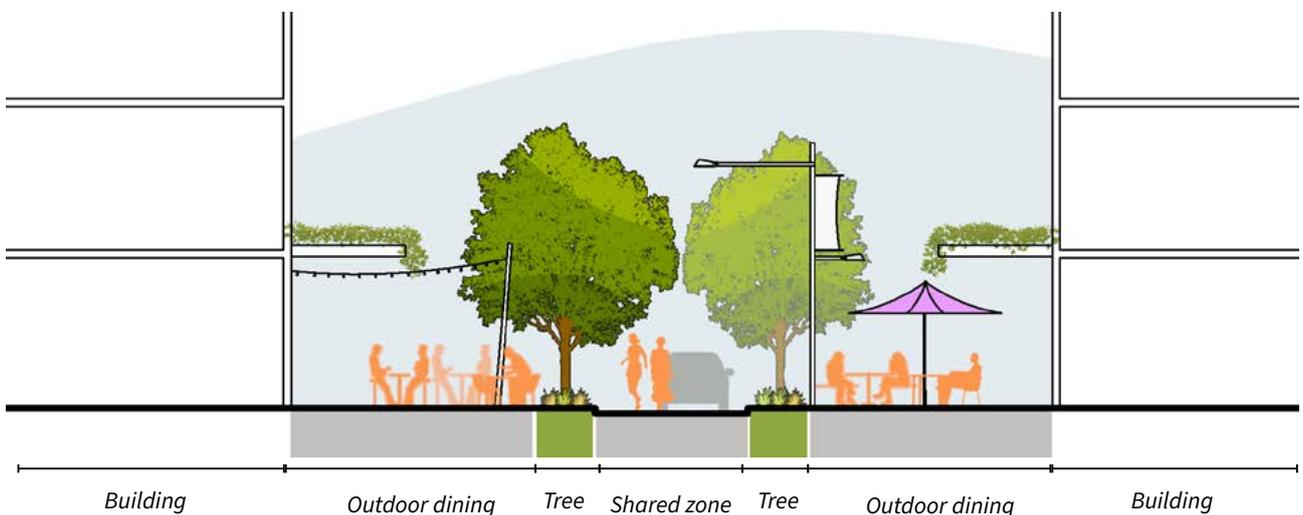
The section below highlights a portion of London Circuit, to the north as you enter from Northbourne Avenue, highlighting improved streetscape outcomes and integration with the heritage buildings.



## C - NEW LANEWAY

The laneway will connect into Knowles Place and Theatre Lane, to provide a laneway extension around City Hill as a secondary connection to Vernon Circle. This laneway is indicated in early Griffin plans and is seen as a step closer to realising Griffin's vision.

It is intended that the laneway will remain active where possible, with minor service or vehicle connections to access key developments.







# CITY NORTH-EAST



## PRECINCT VISION AND CHARACTER

City North-East precinct is the retail core for the City Centre, dominated by a mix of uses, public spaces and places. A number of streets provide active uses and frontages with future development to expand and cement this as a core retail and entertainment precinct.

A greater mix of uses is required to increase vitality through people living, working and recreating. City Walk, Garema Place and Petrie Plaza form an extensive area of pedestrianised streets that characterise the areas as the focus of City Centre retail and entertainment uses. The precinct is the most mixed and fine grain of all City Centre precincts.

The City North-East Precinct will be the key activity centre for the City Centre. The precinct will have the predominant amount of shopping, retail, dining and entertainment uses and focus on creating 24/7 activity by incorporating a diverse range of uses and tenancy types.



*City North-East precinct*

**Precinct vision**

**Priority directions**

**Design objectives**

**Key moves**

**Catalyst projects**

**City North-East will be the City Centre's retail and entertainment heart with various cultural and entertainment uses.**



City Walk. Photographer: Patrick Rose

# PRECINCT CONTEXT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City North-East precinct has the most potential and opportunity to create a place of activity and dynamism with the ability to build on the existing entertainment and retail outcomes while leveraging the pedestrianised streets and human scale character.

The precinct is currently made up of a good mix of uses characterised by lower scale buildings and a finer grain built form and street-based outcomes, providing a human scale feel for City Centre users and dwellers. The precinct also includes the Canberra Centre, a large shopping centre and a retail mall. The shopping centre is a major attractor to the area, although has unfortunately taken much of the retail and life out of the streets.

Just north along Lonsdale Street is the precinct of Braddon, which has established and evolved as an important nightlife centre, however it is currently

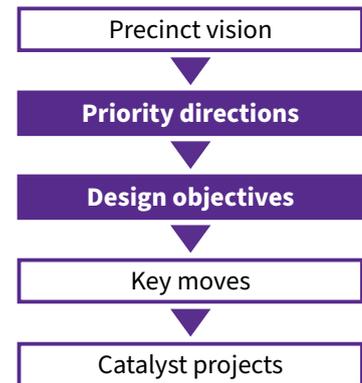
somewhat disconnected due to poor pedestrian connectivity along Genge Street and segregation from Cooyong Street. London Circuit provides a distinct separation between the retail core and the Canberra Civic and Cultural District, which is another established precinct and drawcard to the area. With a focus on streets and pedestrianisation, there is a great opportunity to tie together and strengthen the activity and vitality that the precinct already has to offer.

Current precinct outcomes and key opportunities are identified below.

Opportunities	Challenges
Some street frontages surrounding the Canberra Centre contribute towards the public realm. However, this is quite limited. Any future development or revitalisation of the centre should focus on turning the inside out and establishing a more active street frontage.	The Canberra Centre retail mall is largely inward looking with limited external street activity or providing contributions to the public realm. This has taken much of the retail out of the streets, particularly along City Walk.
Future development or any redevelopment of tenancies along City Walk should focus on creating better interfaces with the street and public realm, with more opening, entries and on-street activity.	There is a limited activity through City Walk, as existing tenancies have poor interaction and interface with the street and public realm. Long blank walls of large tenancies line the street and do not encourage users to stop and linger.
Reconsidering public realm and streetscape outcomes along large arterial roads will create a more pedestrian focussed environment and encourage connectivity.	Connections to surrounding neighbourhoods are constrained by large arterial roads such as Cooyong Street.
Continue to build upon night-time activities in the City Centre and provide better connections to Braddon. This will support live entertainment as an important contributor to social and economic performance.	There is an established nightlife in Braddon just north along Lonsdale street, which has taken much of the night life entertainment and energy away from the City Centre.
Provide better pedestrian connectivity along Genge Street to connect with Lonsdale Street and provide more direct connections to Braddon.	Existing quality of Genge Street is not great and Cooyong Street acts as a pedestrian barrier between the City Centre and Braddon entertainment precinct.
Provide a more direct pedestrian connection from Ainslie Place to City Hill to encourage pedestrian movement and connectivity across the city precincts.	Existing connection from Ainslie Place through the Canberra Civic and Cultural District and over to City Hill is not direct or easily achieved by pedestrians.
Further integration of laneways and smaller spaces should be considered to add vitality, vibrancy and walkability to the precinct.	While the introduction of finer grain streets has evolved throughout the precinct, there are still large development parcels
Provide a coherent and continuous network of public spaces and streetscape design with a consolidated approach to street trees and verge planting.	Limited to no verge or street planting throughout creates a very harsh public realm outcome. Some temporary planting has been included on street corners; however this does not allow for vegetation to establish and grow.

## PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Priority directions and design objectives have been identified for the City North-East Precinct. The priority directions align with the City Plan, while the design objectives provide precinct directions that will help to deliver the precinct vision.



### Priority Directions

Aligning with the City Plan, the City North-East priority directions include the following:

- Protect and expand retail and commercial floorspace opportunities and diversify the retail economy.
- Consolidate nightlife character in the City Centre to enable the continued growth of the night-time and visitor economy.
- Improve the ground-level experience between existing retail uses with public spaces and facilitate more activity in the main pedestrian areas.
- Better connect to the south-east and west with the neighbouring suburbs of Braddon and Reid.
- Encourage new development to generate activity, support business and attract investment.

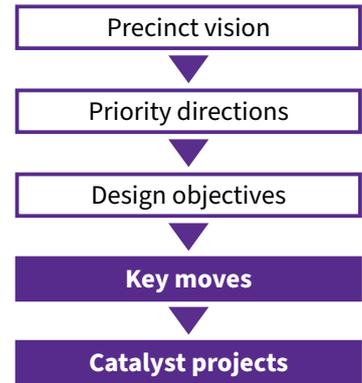
### Design Objectives

The design objectives for City North-East will achieve the following:

- Build upon the high levels of pedestrians and walkability of the precinct to establish an urban street environment.
- Have active uses along key pedestrian routes that connect with the public realm.
- Better connect to the south, east and west and with Braddon to the North.
- Be economically resilient through diverse and unique offerings and activities.
- Offer an increased mix of uses that appeal to a diverse demographic and encourage 24/7 activity, entertainment and life.
- Have a public realm that is safe and comfortable.

# KEY MOVES AND CATALYST PROJECTS

The City North-East Precinct will be the City Centre’s destination for retail and entertainment, boasting a vibrant urban environment with a mix of uses, activities and quality public spaces that celebrate the City Centre’s creativity and hospitality.



## Key moves

Investment in new buildings and the public realm will create economic, development and lifestyle opportunities that will support urban renewal and growth for the City Centre. Key moves and potential projects have been identified in the City North-East Precinct as:

Key	Description
①	Canberra Centre - Activate the edges of the Canberra Centre by encouraging redevelopment of the edges to create a more pedestrian-friendly and active street frontage.
②	City Hill Precinct connection - A new connection from Ainslie Place, through Civic Square, and onto the parkland will be a key part of the broader city connectivity and improved accessibility.
③	Cooyong Street – Reduced traffic capacity to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and promote connectivity.
④	Ainslie Place - Connected to Canberra Civic and Cultural District with a focus on people-centred public realm design to support an inviting and attractive precinct offering a variety of activities and services.
⑤	Improve connection to Lonsdale Street and Braddon via Genge Street and Cooyong Street by providing good public realm, active building frontages and pedestrian crossings.

## Catalyst projects

In addition to the key moves and potential projects identified, a number of catalyst projects have been identified. These projects provide some high-level guidance as to how several projects could be considered that would support the priority directions and design objectives in delivering the overall vision. These projects are for demonstration purposes only and do not provide detailed design outcomes.

Key	Description
⑥	City Walk and Garema Place - Improve building to street interface with active uses by opening up existing buildings to create a more active and vibrant pedestrian precinct with more diverse uses.
⑦	Laneways and Courtyards - Enforcing laneway network between new and adapted buildings to provide fine grain pedestrian-first public realm.
⑧	City Entertainment Precinct - to protect and support live entertainment including music and promote a vibrant night-time economy.

### LEGEND

Site boundary	Road layout	Indicative Garden City Cycle Route
Existing buildings	Vehicle laneway	Pedestrian plaza
Potential new development site	Pedestrian laneway	Pedestrian focussed road treatment
Heritage overlay	Active frontage	Activation opportunities
City entertainment precinct	Adaptable frontage	Proposed private open space
Precinct heart	High-quality streetscape	Gateway site
Park and civic spaces	City cycle loop	Proposed high speed rail alignment
Open space	Light rail network	
	Key pedestrian links	



Proposed precinct arrangement

## Catalyst projects

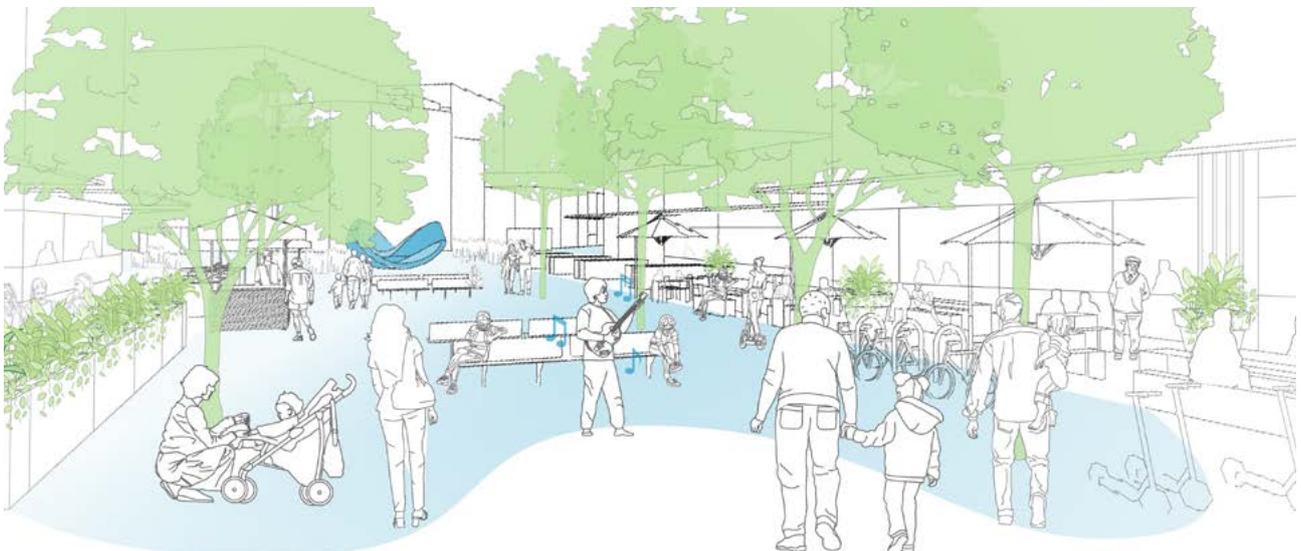
# CITY WALK AND GAREMA PLACE

City Walk and Garema Place have connected pedestrian malls and open plaza space running through the City North-East Precinct. It offers a much-needed place of rest and comfort in the busy shopping streets as well as connecting through Alinga Street to the light rail transport Hub and City Centre bus interchange. Future development needs to consider uses that support the activation of Garema Place and City Walk while making sure to support good micro-climatic conditions with sun access, and minimising winter winds to maintain the function as an attractive public city plaza. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Ensure edges of the built form open up to smaller retail and food and beverage tenancies to create visibility and activity towards the street mall/plaza.
②	Provide more softscape planting and non-commercial seating throughout the mall/plaza.
③	Provide spaces for medium-sized events, concerts and city activities.
④	Retain relatively low built form and enhance the fine grain activities, and ensure sun access throughout the day.
⑤	Provide opportunities for moveable furniture and other placemaking activities to encourage passive and relaxed activation.



City North-East - City Walk and Garema Place Plan

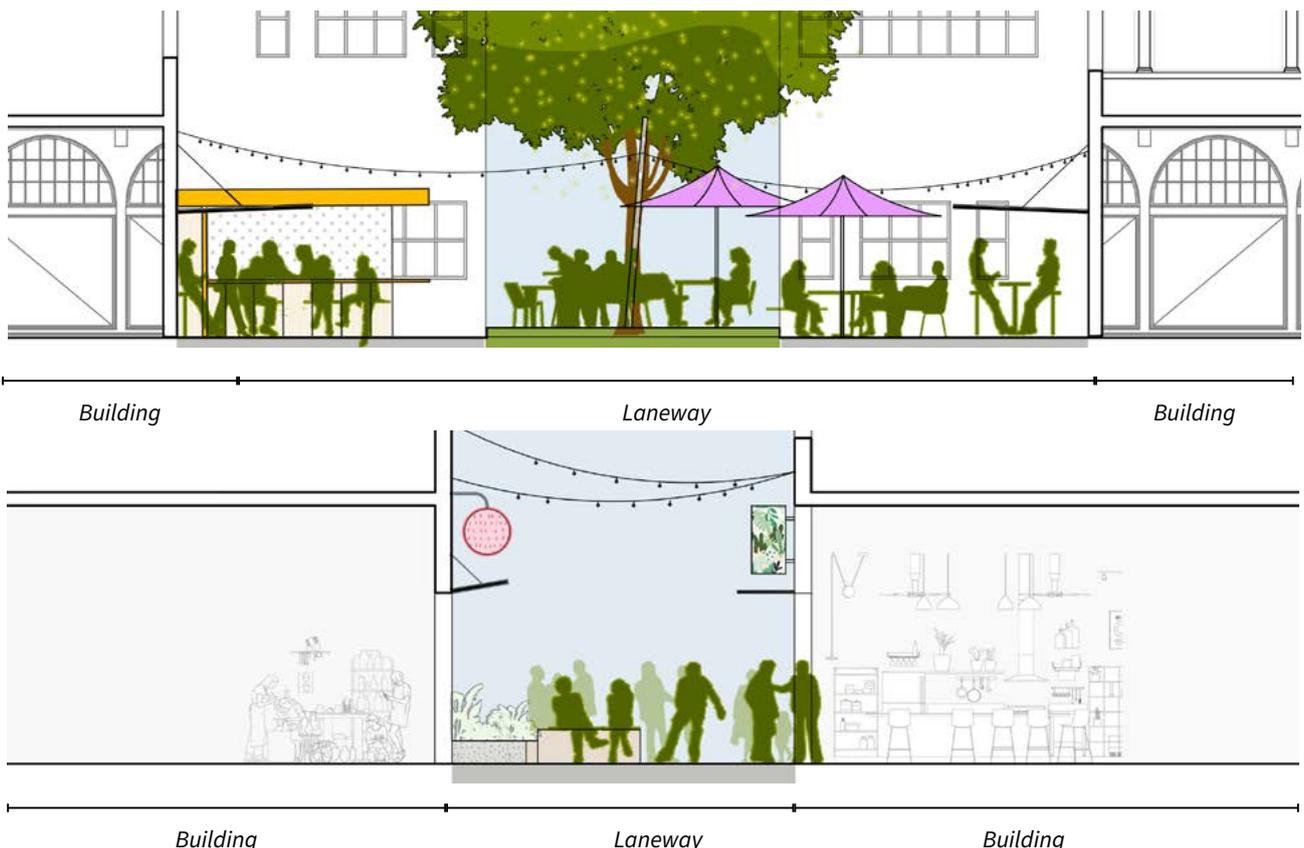


Indicative City North-East Precinct - looking along City Walk

## LANEWAYS AND COURTYARDS

While the city currently does not have a lot of existing laneways and courtyards, it is recommended that more opportunities for laneways, cross-block connections and courtyards be implemented by breaking up larger building blocks and development sites with pedestrian-first public realm networks. This will create a more dynamic sense of activity through the City Centre and its laneways that are currently seen as 'back of house'. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Create pedestrianised laneways with permanent activation through retail and dining opportunities spilling out in the laneway.
②	Create temporary activation of laneways through strategies that focus on short-term place activation during key events and activities.
③	Allow for temporary or permanent activation along one side while still maintaining service access.
④	Consider the potential use of courtyards as 'places for people' by restricting vehicular access in a time controlled way, allowing servicing to happen at convenient times of the day.



## CITY ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT

The ACT is aiming to build a reputation as an event-friendly city, including major events which attract regional, national and international patronage. Events are key to growing the value of the visitor economy, as well as promoting the City Centre as an active, dynamic, creative and inclusive city for people to work, live, visit, study and invest. It includes the creation and broadcast of music, performance and sport, ultimately contributing to Canberra City Centre’s diverse economy. New entertainment provides employment opportunities for artists, performers, front- and back-of-house staff, and associated complementary businesses.

A supportive framework for entertainment venues such as bars, theatres, clubs, cinemas, restaurants and evening events contributes to the City Centre’s nighttime economic growth, urban regeneration and activity throughout all hours of the day. The purpose of an entertainment precinct is to protect and support live entertainment including music and arts, and promote a vibrant night-time economy.

Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Facilitate major events and entertainment in the City Centre. This will help to attract new visitors and activity, bringing new economic benefits.
②	Develop a well-planned night-time economy that will play a critical role in contributing to urban activity and economic growth by supporting entertainment areas, as well as influencing employment options and social opportunities.
③	Strength festivals and events play a major role in attracting overnight visitors to the ACT and are essential to the growth of the visitor economy. They also allow international and interstate visitors to familiarise themselves with the ACT and Canberra region, and other tourism experiences.
④	Carefully consider the balance of elements to support a successful night-time economy and diverse entertainment offerings in the context of urban centres where a range of other uses occur.
⑤	Consider noise elements when planning for entertainment areas, including identifying areas where higher noise is acceptable, how noise can be measured and where it is being attenuated by the built form.



Proposed City Entertainment Precinct

Proposed City Entertainment Precinct

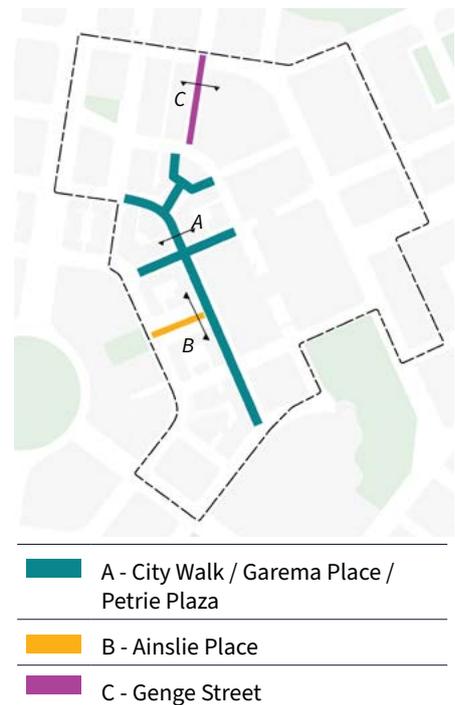


# STREETS AND PLACE

The City North-East Precinct has some of the more pedestrian focussed streets; however these are currently not activated or utilised to their best potential. There is an opportunity to provide better guidance on these street profiles to ensure a more active and vibrant precinct.

The three most critical streets for consideration as part of the City North-East Precinct include:

- City Walk - the main pedestrianised part of the City Centre, with existing retail and opportunity for further activation and streetscape enhancements
- Ainslie Place - a key connection and drop off to the precinct, with connections from Civic Plaza, through to City Walk and the Canberra Centre shopping centre
- Genge Street - a key link from the City North-East Precinct to the active and vibrant Londsdale Street, a critical link for pedestrian movement between active precincts
- Petrie Plaza - a key link from City Walk to Canberra Civic and Cultural Precinct.



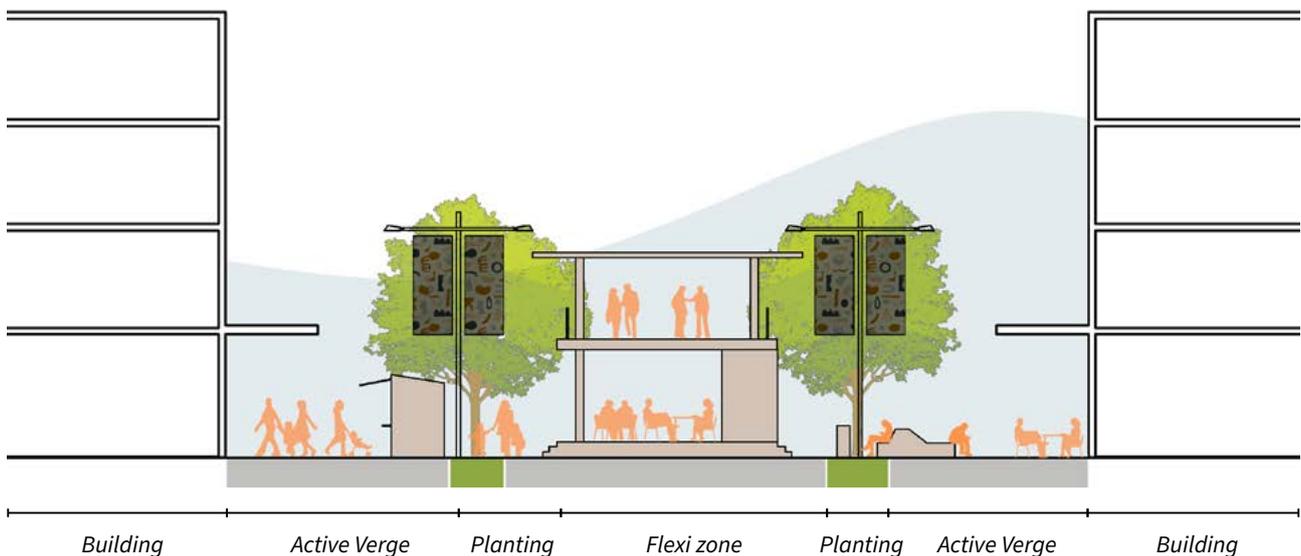
The following pages provide street sections that indicate typical outcomes and aspirational design intent for each street.

## A - CITY WALK

City Walk is a key pedestrian spine that connects major hotspots in the City North-East such as Garema Place, Canberra Centre, the Casino Canberra and National Convention Centre. It is approximately 27m wide and currently has substantial space for landscaping, public seating, seasonal festivals and public art. The street has a wide profile and pedestrian

focus, allowing opportunities to further activate through stronger indoor/outdoor permeability with the surrounding built context.

A revised profile below identifies multiple methods in which the street could be further activated through pavilions, spill-out dining, kiosks, active retail frontages, improved landscaping and street furniture.



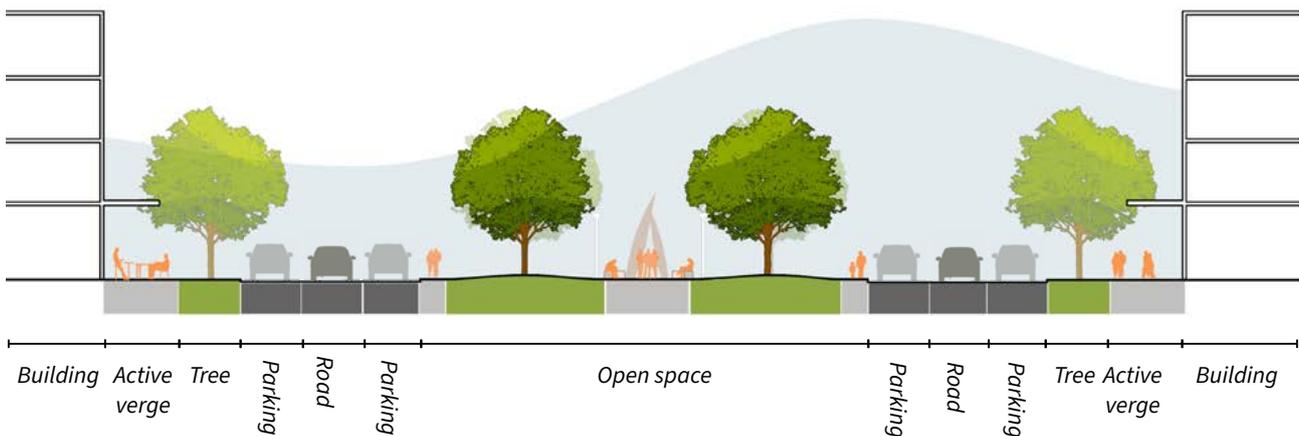
### B - AINSLIE PLACE

Ainslie Place is a short extension that connects City Walk and London Circuit/Civic Square. It currently provides central public open space with lawn, canopy trees and the ACT Honour Walk with integrated seating. The landscape is bounded by a one-way road loop with parallel parking on both sides of the road.

Given its large width, location and matured landscape, it has the inherent potential of a dynamic pedestrianised street and could benefit from further

activation to encourage movement between Civic Square and City Walk.

Ainslie place offers future potential for creating more activity in the street. Keeping the central part as a passive recreational space utilising the existing landscaping and memorial walk, with new retail and dining along the street edges and improved pedestrian connections between the central open space and street frontages.

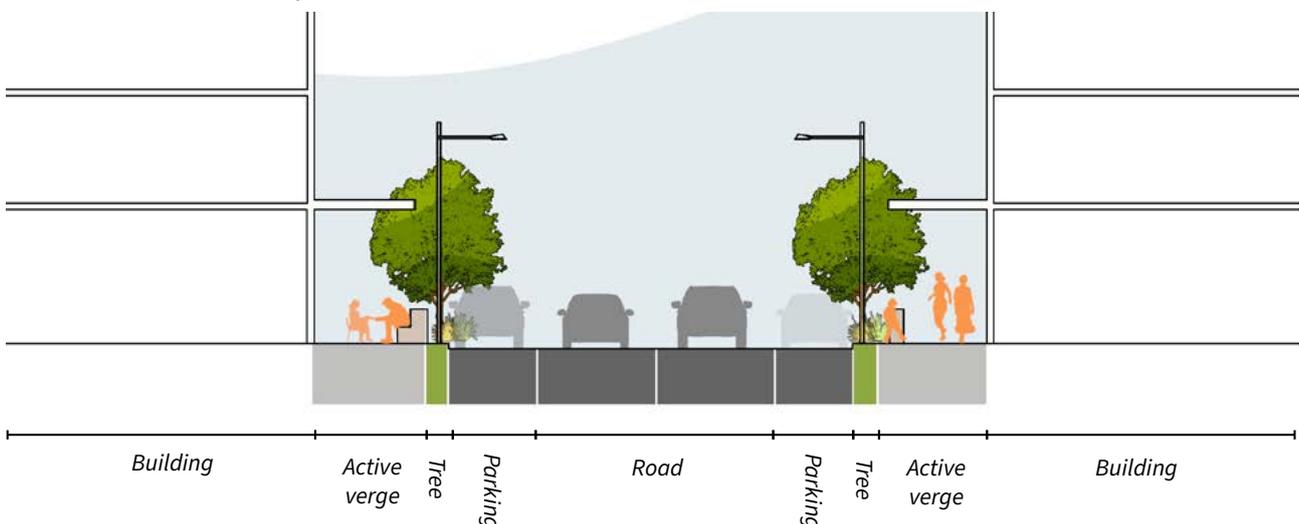


### C - GENGE STREET

Genge Street runs north/south between Bunda Street and Cooyong St. It is a significant connecting street between the City North-East and the popular dining/retail area of Lonsdale Street, Braddon. Currently, there are numerous dining establishments on the western side with the eastern side remaining largely unactivated and undeveloped.

Given its strategic importance as a connection between Braddon and Bunda St, it should be reconsidered through new activation opportunities.

The section below identifies a revised street profile with further emphasis on street activation.







CANBERRA CITY PLAN



**ACT**  
Government

# CITY NORTH-WEST

## PRECINCT VISION AND CHARACTER

The City North-West Precinct is characterised as a knowledge and innovation hub that consists of residential, higher education, research and commercial facilities. The precinct consists of a growing population made up of a high demographic of students and a diverse working population. It has developed as a dense business, knowledge and innovation hub.

The precinct is focussed on a mix of business, commercial and residential uses mostly linked with students and Australian National University.

The precinct has a diverse character underpinned by students, arts and theatre communities. The proximity to the university and legal/commercial employment areas contributes to its diverse character. New areas of the public realm are required to better serve both students and the business and local residents' needs.



*City North-West precinct*

**Precinct vision**

**Priority directions**

**Design objectives**

**Key moves**

**Catalyst projects**

**City North-West will be City Centre's knowledge and innovation hub characterised by its mix of residential, higher education, research and commercial facilities.**



# PRECINCT CONTEXT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City North-West Precinct has a large student and business population, providing a diverse mix of people who will be out at different times of the day and night. Leveraging this diverse population, and with the right mix of uses and activity, will create a dynamic place with high-quality social outcomes.

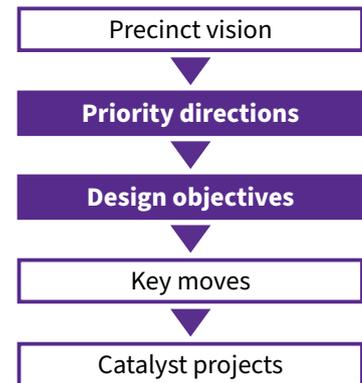
ANU takes up a large proportion west of the precinct, with a high amount of student accommodation surrounding this. The growth of the student population in this area has seen an increase in food and beverage opportunities. The commercial area to the north and east of the precinct is made up of a high proportion of civic uses and some cultural and theatre-based uses.

Built form within the precinct is typically old and unarticulated, with limited street-level activity or public realm interface. Reconsidering the streets and public realm will change the physical environment of the precinct. Future development should continue to harness the student culture while embedding new mixed-use outcomes for the City Centre and an improved public realm experience for the diverse and growing working population.

Opportunities	Challenges
Any revitalisation should encourage a pedestrian link through to City Hill or consider opening up the visual sight lines to respect the Griffin Plan.	There is limited connectivity to City Hill and beyond due to the existing built form arrangement at the Courts precinct, blocking the important axis identified in the Griffin Plan.
Consolidate uses and activity around University Avenue and the Street Theatre to create a distinct heart to the precinct.	There is currently no central activity node or 'heart' to the precinct.
Built form edges to open up the ground level of Childers Street, to provide a diverse mix of land use activities that spill out to the street and activate.	Childers Street has some good streetscape elements but the existing buildings are large in footprint, include long stretches of inactive tenancies and do not allow for activity on the street.
There is a need to break up development blocks to provide a finer-grain pattern of streets, laneways and cross-block links. This is most prominent in the north around the student accommodation.	There are numerous examples of new development precincts occupying a full section of the development block, such as ANU student accommodation and commercial development in the south.
There is a need to improve the interface between the built form and the streets to encourage more life within the main pedestrian area and the precinct heart.	Public realm, built form interface and streetscape outcomes are generally very poor within this precinct.
Through the establishment of a new heart at University Avenue, this area has the opportunity to create a new gateway to the university and better integration into the precinct.	The interface between ANU and the rest of the precinct is not good, due to low-quality landscaping, set back buildings and limited activity.
New developments should incorporate basement or sleeved podium car parking that is not visible from the street.	Surface parking throughout the precinct detracts from the character and walkability of the area. There are also a number of structured parking areas that are aged and of poor built form quality.
Create a more diverse mix of land uses throughout the precinct to create a hub of business, innovation and knowledge-sharing opportunities. This will also provide a better balance of day, night and weekend activity.	Currently, there is the university to the west, residential to the north, commercial to the east and with little integration to enhance public life. The current land use is not mixed sufficiently, resulting in reduced facilitation of community uses in the most recent development.
Relocate the child care centre from Latin American Plaza and reinvigorate the plaza as an activated public space for adjacent uses such as students, workers and future residents.	Location of the child care centre on Latin American Plaza prevents building edges to support public life in Plaza recreational uses.

## PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Priority directions and design objectives have been identified for the City North-West Precinct. The priority directions align with the City Plan, while the design objectives provide precinct directions that will help to deliver the precinct vision.



### Priority Directions

Aligning with the City Plan, the City North-West priority directions include the following:

- Reinforce the connection between the City Centre and the ANU education precinct.
- Provide a range of residential typologies responding to the adjacent education and research precinct to accommodate future growth.
- Protects and reinforces fine-grain public realm character that provides an amenity to the professional and residential communities.
- Ensure future development and land use respond to opportunities for existing and emerging innovation and knowledge-related employment.
- Enhance the heart of the precinct identity and the 'front door' between the ANU and the City Centre.

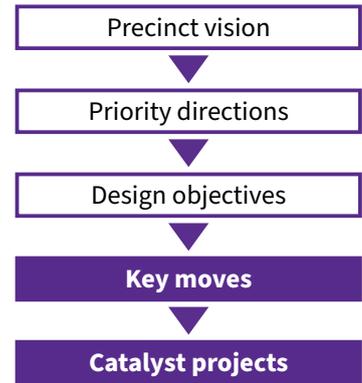
### Design Objectives

The design objectives for City North-West will achieve the following:

- have commercial and employment uses with residential and mixed uses to support these and the neighbouring education and research precinct.
- improve pedestrian connections to the city and leverage its proximity to light rail.
- provide a range of residential typologies responding to the adjacent education and research precinct to accommodate future growth.
- offer a range of supporting uses to service the diverse student, professional and residential demographics.
- have a finer-grain public realm that will provide amenities to professional and residential communities and create an enjoyable pedestrian experience.
- accommodate traffic restructure to the west and south-west and out of the City Centre core area.
- retain and establish supporting community

# KEY MOVES AND CATALYST PROJECTS

City North-West precinct will leverage the strength in education and student population and encourage strategic links between ANU and the industry and innovation sector. The introduction of the light rail stage 2A will be a catalyst for development and activity, providing the opportunity to improve ground-level activation, public realm design and connection with the street.



## Key moves

Investment in new buildings and the public realm will create economic, development and lifestyle opportunities that will support urban renewal and growth for the City Centre. Key moves and potential projects have been identified in the City North-West Precinct as:

Key	Description
1	Marcus Clarke Street - Improve pedestrian connection to City Walk (via Alinga Street) and the main cycle loop for the CBD.
2	Strengthen Childers Street as an active “Place for People” linking key university functions, with student accommodation and providing active uses and new building opportunities.
3	Edinburgh Avenue - Consider wide streetscape verges and the quality of building frontage along Edinburgh Avenue to provide better and more active streetscape outcomes.
4	Hutton Street - Consider opportunities to activate long residential block edges with adjacent commercial, which are inactive due to poor building outcomes.

## Catalyst Projects

In addition to the key moves and potential projects identified, a number of catalyst projects have been identified. These projects provide some high-level guidance as to how several projects could be considered that would support the priority directions and design objectives in delivering the overall vision. These projects are for demonstration purposes only and do not provide detailed design outcomes.

Key	Description
5	University Avenue - Precinct heart, support activation by encouraging new buildings addressing the avenue and pedestrian-friendly street by high-quality public realm.
6	Light rail stop - Edinburgh Avenue will create significant uplift in pedestrian footfall around London Circuit, with improved high-quality public realm and building interface.
7	Latin American Plaza - Create a vibrant park and plaza by engaging with the existing student population and public realm initiatives to support activation.

## Legend

Site boundary	Open space	Key pedestrian links
Existing buildings	Road layout	Pedestrian focussed road treatment
Potential new development site	Vehicle laneway	Activation opportunities
Heritage overlay	Pedestrian laneway	Proposed private open space
Precinct heart	Active frontage	Gateway site
Park and civic spaces	Adaptable frontage	ANU Master plan site
	High-quality streetscape	
	City cycle loop	
	Light rail network	



Proposed precinct arrangement

## PRECINCT HEART - UNIVERSITY AVENUE

University Avenue is a major connection that extends from London Circuit to Childers street before becoming a pedestrianised avenue within the Australian National University Campus. It is approximately 25m wide with four traffic lanes and a hard median strip in the centre. Currently, it has little vegetation and is largely unactivated making it feel undesirable for pedestrians.

A revised street profile below identifies opportunities for additional vegetation and street furniture as well as the potential for new university buildings which address the street and help create an active street network for the wider precinct.

Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Provide a new built form right up to and engaging with the street along the northern side of University Avenue.
②	Ensure a new built form is highly active to create a cluster of activity and vibrancy for the precinct heart adjacent to the university.
③	Revive existing open space along the university edge and provide a strong presence and engagement to the street.
④	Protect micro-climate conditions through a stepped massing approach in built form.
⑤	Provide better pedestrian and cycle connections and ensure a pedestrian-friendly street.
⑥	Ensure built form considers overshadowing key open space at the university, to maximise sun access at key times of the day.
⑦	Improve the quality of the connectivity from the light rail and City Walk along Alinga Street. This offers the opportunity to catalyse development and support the Latin America Plaza aspirations.



*Precinct Heart - Indicative Streetscape viewed along University Avenue*

## LIGHT RAIL STOP - EDINBURGH AVE

The new light rail station being delivered as part of Light Rail Stage 2A will significantly increase pedestrian footfall around London Circuit, which will require high-quality public realm and building interface. Providing safe and legible crossings as well as the building uses benefitting from public transport infrastructure are key to the success of the light rail integration. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Provide high-quality public realm and pedestrian crossings.
②	Improve light rail station use and ease of getting to and from the light rail station by foot through a fine-grain network of cross-block links and laneways
③	Integrate multi-modal interchange facilities near station areas such as bike parking, scooter hire, bus stops and taxi pick-up to support the use of light rail getting to and from the City Centre.
④	Upgrade the public realm on London Circuit including new trees and garden beds as part of Light Rail Stage 2A.

## LATIN AMERICAN PLAZA

There is an opportunity to create a new ‘knowledge square’ and vibrant park and plaza through the re-adaptation of Latin America Plaza, by incorporating activities and uses that will provide high engagement with the existing student population. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Remove perpendicular car parking along the plaza edge to increase the size of the plaza and create more flexible spaces.
②	Provide active land uses adjacent to all sides of the park to provide passive surveillance and activity.
③	Provide traffic calming devices and safe areas for pedestrian movement and crossing.
④	Create an attractive open space and plaza precinct for students to occupy and engage in both social and learning-based activities.
⑤	Consider better integration with, or removal of the existing childcare centre to allow for the reinstatement of public space with recreational uses.



Indicative Streetscape viewed towards Latin American Plaza

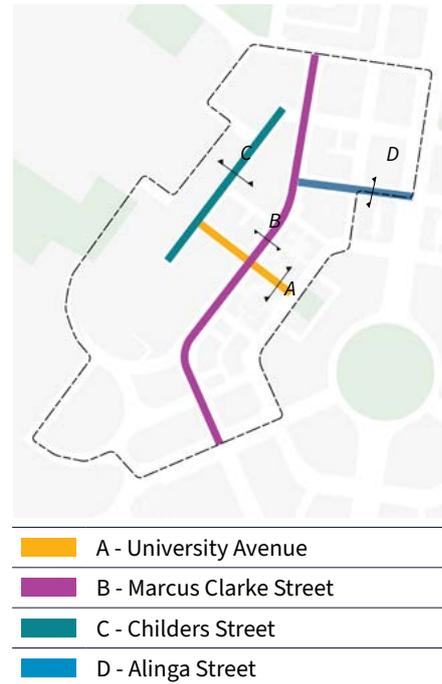
# STREETS AND PLACE

Streets within the City North-West Precinct require better integration with the built form and targeted consideration of ground floor uses to activate the precinct and create more life on the street.

The four important streets for consideration as part of the City North-West Precinct include:

- University Avenue - has been highlighted as having the potential to act as the heart to the precinct and this will require a refined streetscape profile to act as a key entry and gateway
- Marcus Clarke Street - a key movement connector for the precinct, with key bus routes and cycleways
- Childers Street - a major link between student accommodation and the university, is currently poorly activated; however, there are some existing good streetscape elements in the street
- Alinga Street - A key pedestrian spine that connects City Walk and Marcus Clarke Street.

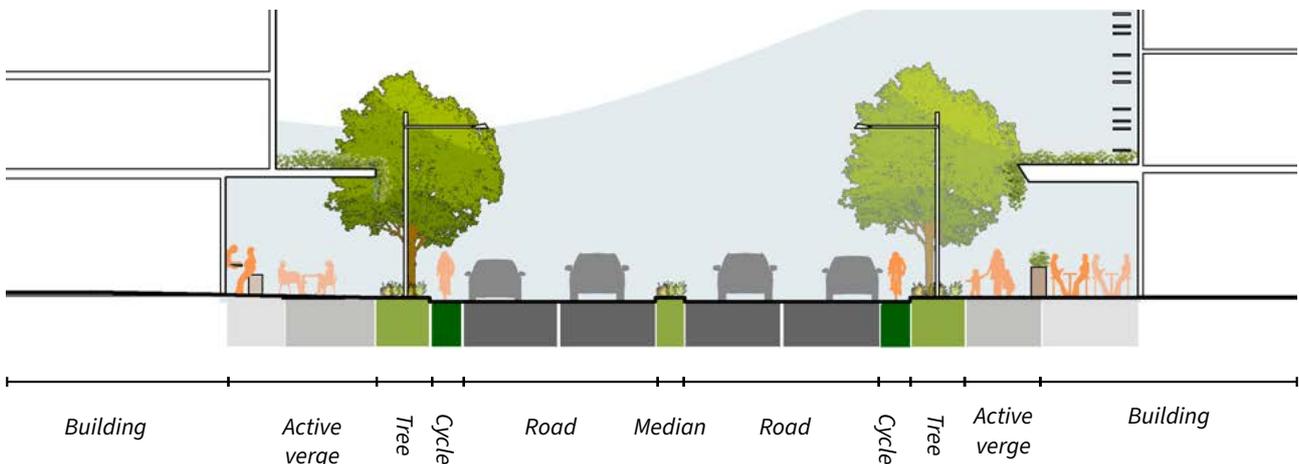
The following pages provide street sections that indicate typical outcomes and aspirational design intent for each street.



## A - UNIVERSITY AVENUE

University Avenue is a major connection that extends from London Circuit to Childers Street before becoming a pedestrianised avenue connecting with the Australian National University Campus. It is approximately 25m wide with four traffic lanes and a hard median strip in the centre. Currently, it has little vegetation and largely unactivated frontages making it feel long, hard and undesirable for pedestrians.

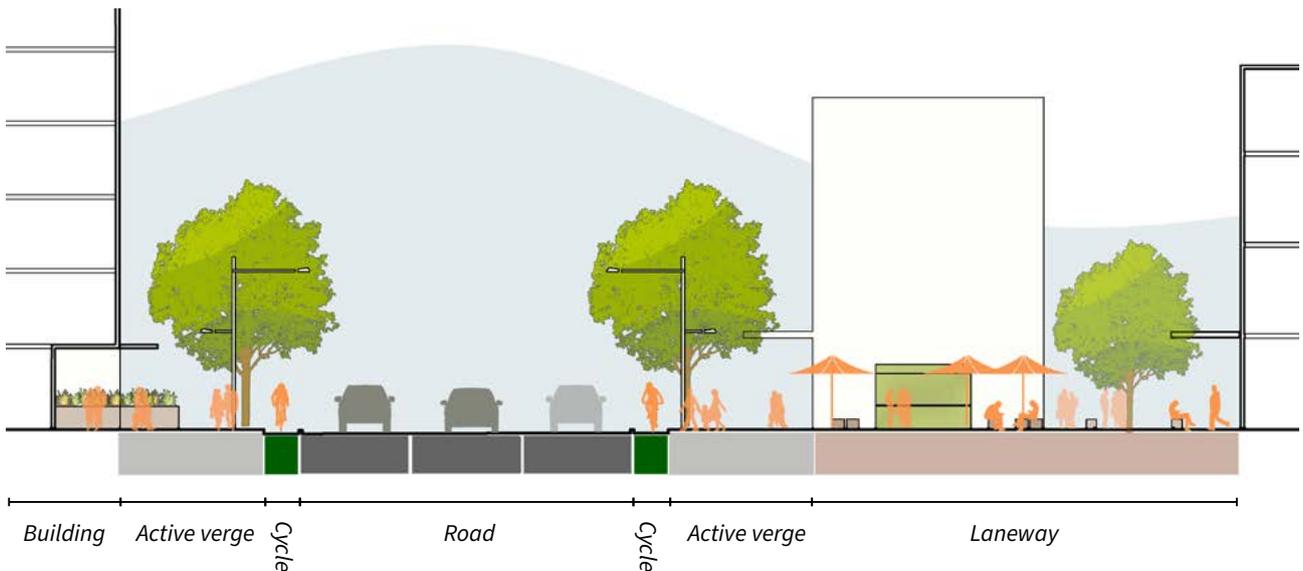
A revised street profile below identifies opportunities for additional vegetation and street furniture as well as the potential for a new university building that addresses the street and helps to create an active street network towards the wider campus.



### B - MARCUS CLARKE STREET

Marcus Clarke Street functions as a key road in the City North-West, allowing for connection between Edinburgh Avenue, New Acton, Australian National University and Barry Drive. It predominately has two traffic lanes and is characterised by kerbed bidirectional bike lanes with a median separating the traffic.

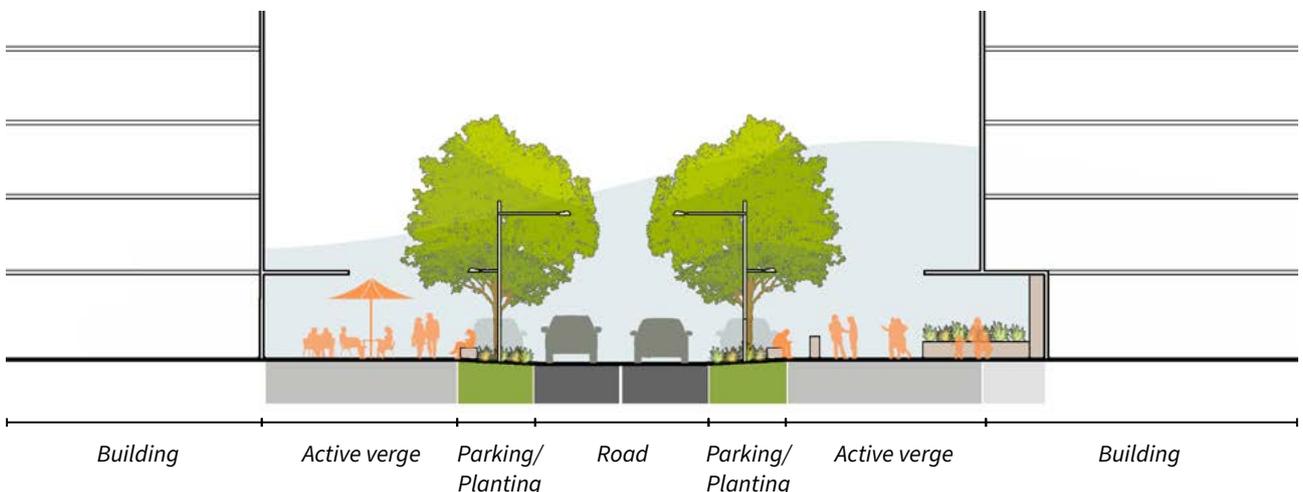
The road is largely traffic-focussed, with potential for further pedestrian activity in key areas. The section below highlights the opportunity for establishing a finer grain of street-level activity, by connecting a potential new development with the existing perpendicular pedestrian laneways.



### C - CHILDERS STREET

Childers Street is located perpendicular to University Avenue on the eastern side of the ANU campus. It is a slow two-lane street with parking bays, vegetation and a pedestrian crossing. There is some existing street furniture and dining spill out towards the north of the road. The Latin America Plaza is located at

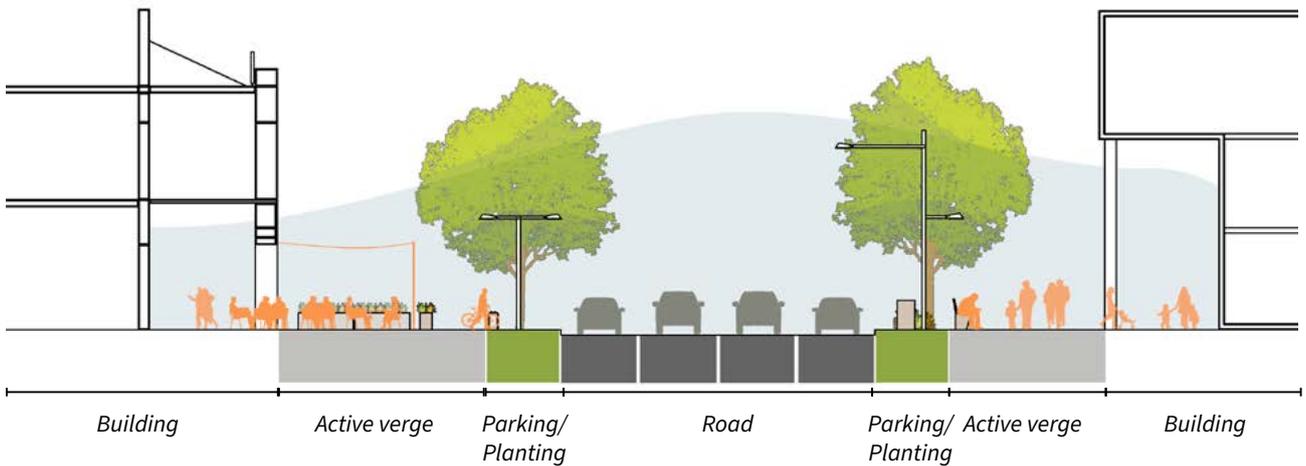
the intersection with Rimmer St which services the existing childcare care. The section below illustrates the condition between the open park space and the adjacent student housing development/ground floor dining tenancies.



## D - ALINGA STREET

Alinga Street is identified as a key pedestrian spine connecting City Walk and Marcus Clarke Street and people using the Alinga Street Light Rail Stop. In and around the Sydney and Melbourne buildings, Alinga Street already provides generous areas for planting, pedestrians as well as shops and cafes spilling out to

al fresco dining areas on the sunny north-facing edges. Future upgrades to Alinga Street should support the continuation of pedestrian-friendly public realm and activation.







*Kids Day Glebe Park, Source: City Renewal Authority*



# CITY SOUTH-EAST



## PRECINCT VISION AND CHARACTER

The City South-East precinct focusses predominantly on leisure, recreation and education activities, with existing uses such as the pool, casino, convention centre and a new UNSW university campus to be developed.

City South-East is defined by its recreational and community amenity value. The precinct is characterised by its diversity of open spaces, recreation areas and community and tourism amenities. A defining element of the City South-East Precinct is its proximity to Constitution and Commonwealth avenues which encompasses the northern extent of Canberra's National Triangle.

The City South-East precinct has significant potential for intensification and character improvement. The precinct is characterised by an abundance of open and recreational spaces and tourist attractions with a new campus for UNSW to be developed at the eastern edge of the precinct.



*City South-East precinct*

**Precinct vision**

**Priority directions**

**Design objectives**

**Key moves**

**Catalyst projects**

**City South-East will be the tourism, business and education precinct defined by community, tourism and recreation uses and benefitting from convenient access to high-quality parks and open space.**



# PRECINCT CONTEXT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The City South-East precinct has significant potential for intensification and character improvement. The precinct is characterised by an abundance of open and recreational spaces and tourist attractions with a new campus for UNSW to be developed at the eastern edge of the precinct.

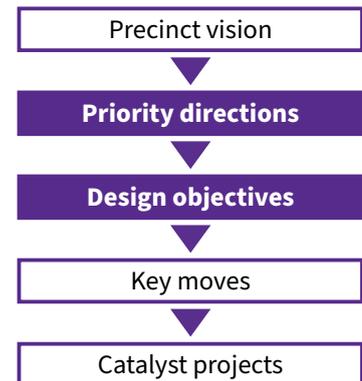
Commonwealth and Glebe parks are large open space features for the City Centre; however the benefits to the character and public realm are only partially realised and are not welcoming to City Centre users. Better integration into the City Centre and streets is necessary to ensure they can be successfully used. Furthermore, Parkes Way is a major barrier to connectivity for the activity side of the precinct, over to Commonwealth Park.

There are a number of key tourist attractions in the precinct, including the Casino, the Convention Centre and the pool, however, these buildings are very large in scale and are internally focused in terms of use, meaning little contribution is provided to street life and vitality or the public realm. This is a major opportunity for change. Recent upgrades to Constitution Avenue provide good quality public realm and active travel options.

Opportunities	Challenges
There is a need to provide additional pedestrian and cycle bridges or pathways to provide better connectivity across Parkes Way including upgrades to the pedestrian paths flanking Parkes Way bridge.	Parkes Way is a major barrier for the precinct, separating Commonwealth Park and the waterfront from the rest of the precinct.
Redefine the intersection of Constitution Avenue and Coranderrk Street to create a central focus and heart to the precinct.	There are no central activity nodes or heart to the precinct.
Through any redevelopment opportunities, refocus activity on the street and provide good public realm outcomes to encourage activity on the street. There is the potential to add new developments around the edges of existing large buildings to assist with this.	The casino, Convention Centre and Canberra Olympic Pool are large internally focussed developments with long stretches of external and non-active walls and provide little engagement with the street.
The streetscape quality of Constitution Avenue through recent upgrades is of high quality, however existing land uses do not address the street or allow for activity on the street. Built form to be built up to the street edge to create a more vibrant pedestrian environment.	Poor activation of Constitution Avenue and built form is typically set back from the street.
New developments to incorporate basement or sleeved podium car parking that is not visible from the street.	There is a significant amount of surface parking throughout the precinct which detracts from the character and walkability of the area.
Provide more direct and visible pedestrian connections from City North-East into the precinct.	Poor pedestrian connectivity and sight lines.
Opportunity to reconsider the future development of the Canberra Olympic Pool site.	Significant amount of underutilised land surrounding the pool, with the pool so far set back, does not contribute to the street activity or public life.

## PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Priority directions and design objectives have been identified for the City South-East Precinct. The priority directions align with the City Plan, while the design objectives provide precinct directions that will help to deliver the precinct vision.



### Priority Directions

Aligning with the City Plan, the City South-East priority directions include the following:

- Provide opportunities for tourism, recreation, education and mixed uses.
- UNSW City Campus will be an anchor site for a revitalised precinct of social diversity.
- Ensure future development that reinforces connectivity to the National Triangle.
- Strengthen connections with the innovation and knowledge sector in City North-West.
- Provide a strong link connecting the City Centre to the lake.

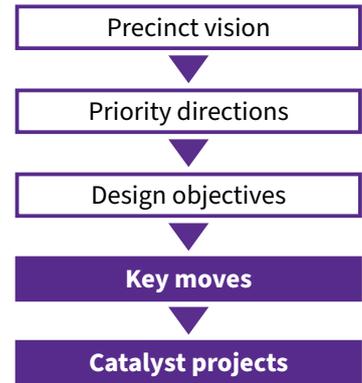
### Design Objectives

The design objectives for City South-East will achieve the following:

- UNSW will be an anchor site for a revitalised precinct of social diversity, supported by uses that encourage street activity.
- Reinforce the grand boulevards of Commonwealth and Constitution avenues (already occurring with light rail, and initial Constitution Avenue upgrades are complete), building on their character through creating a strong landscape character.
- Provide good connectivity to light rail.
- Have established new residential opportunities.
- Support the growing residential population through the provision of services and a transition of mixed uses to City North-East, while strengthening connections with the innovation and knowledge sector in City North-West.
- Provide a strong link connecting the City Centre to Commonwealth Park by expanding its landscape character back into the City Centre.
- Promote and recognise the heritage value of Lake Burley Griffin and the vistas across the lake.

# KEY MOVES AND CATALYST PROJECTS

A new precinct heart in City South-East will provide a central point of activity, utilising the surrounding key attractions and student population, as well as an activity relevant to the university (UNSW), the Canberra Olympic Pool site, the casino and the National Convention Centre Canberra.



## Key moves

Investment in new buildings and the public realm will create economic, development and lifestyle opportunities that will support urban renewal and growth for the City Centre. Key moves and potential projects have been identified in the City South-East Precinct as:

Key	Description
①	National Convention Centre Canberra - A redefined convention centre with enhanced connections to the casino and interface with Commonwealth Avenue.
②	Glebe Park - Opportunity to provide enhanced connectivity and links to the casino and convention areas. Strengthen the role as an Urban Park to support the surrounding densification and increase in residential population.
③	UNSW - Existing master plan to be implemented for UNSW but ensure streetscapes are integrated into the broader precinct.
④	Create a new heart to the precinct at the intersection of Constitution Avenue and Coranderrk Street with built form and activity addressing the street corners.
⑤	Improve pedestrian connectivity from City Walk down to the precinct and UNSW.

## Catalyst projects

In addition to the key moves and potential projects identified, a number of catalyst projects have also been identified. These projects provide some high-level guidance to how a number of key projects could be considered that would support the priority directions and design objectives in delivering the overall vision. These projects are for demonstration purposes only and do not provide detailed design outcomes.

Key	Description
⑥	City Gateway - Develop a significant new piece of City South-East to support the precinct vision of embodying its culturally significant place at the base of the National Triangle.
⑦	Heritage Railway corridor - Celebrate heritage site as recreational park space and green connection between City North-East and UNSW.
⑧	Light rail stops - Connecting City South-East and Commonwealth Park with the public transport infrastructure network.
⑨	Upgrade of Parkes Way bridge - Enhance and strengthen the existing pedestrian / cycle connection across Parkes Way, and consider additional connection further east to encourage more use from UNSW.

## LEGEND

Site boundary	Open space	Light rail network
Existing buildings	Road layout	Key pedestrian links
Potential new development site	Vehicle laneway	Blue-green corridor
Heritage overlay	Pedestrian laneway	Pedestrian focussed road treatment
Precinct heart	Active frontage	Activation opportunities
Park and civic spaces	Adaptable frontage	Proposed private open space
	Green Link bridge	Gateway site
	High-quality streetscape	
	City cycle loop	



## CITY GATEWAY

The current Canberra Olympic Pool site presents an opportunity to develop a significant new piece of City South-East with a mix of uses and buildings to support the precinct vision of embodying its culturally significant place at the base of the National Triangle.

The site is highly visible and will have to carefully consider the role as a gateway site from multiple entry points into the City Centre. Providing a focal point and strong urban presence in the intersection of Constitution Avenue and Coranderrk Street will help support the activation and legibility of the new City South-East precinct heart.

Being a significant gateway site located near Parkes Way offers an opportunity to locate building uses that attract large numbers of people, such as sporting events, concerts and conferences, mixed with other uses in an urban built fabric integrated into the surrounding context and adjacent streets.

The site has the opportunity to create multiple connections across the site to contribute to a fine-grain pedestrian network and the opportunity to provide smaller public garden spaces that can offer intimate and quiet urban green spaces to contribute to a diversity of public realm places. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Improve pedestrian experience with active frontages and public uses with special consideration on activating the newly established precinct heart at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Coranderrk Street.
②	Provide legible building entrances and connections across the site to promote a fine-grain pedestrian network.
③	Ensure the built form responds to being a gateway site from multiple points while the new built form wraps around it to put life back into the street.
④	Protect micro-climatic conditions in primary public spaces and open space through stepped massing as part of future development.



Indicative Streetscape - City gateway

## HERITAGE RAILWAY CORRIDOR

The Heritage Railway Easement, located on the Reid site along Amaroo Street, is identified under Section 40 of the Heritage Act 2004 as a heritage-listed place. This landscaped strip, measuring approximately 290 metres in length and 48 metres in width, is evidence of the implementation of the planning for the main railway that was a significant part of Griffin's design for the city of Canberra and is an important part of the area's character, history and identity.

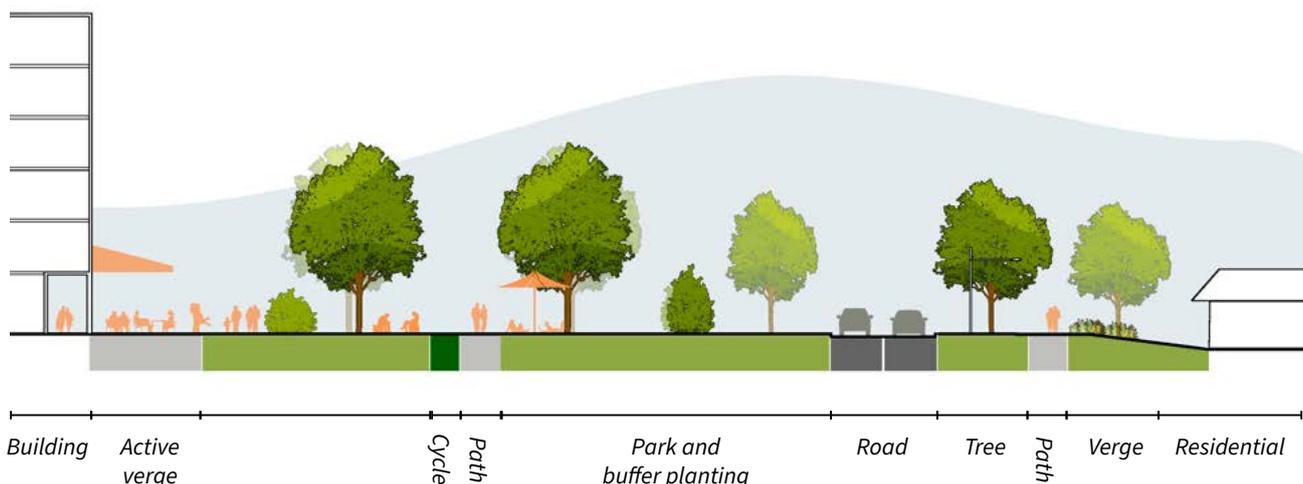
It will interface both the UNSW campus and established single dwelling residential blocks and function as a green connection between the new UNSW campus to connect students to City North-East and tie into larger green networks via Glebe Park and City Walk.

The Corridor is currently characterised by a grand avenue of mature eucalyptus trees and marks the location of a historical railway track. There is a dense vegetation buffer that visually separates the existing CIT buildings from the residential blocks. This green space is unactivated with no access between the campus and Amaroo Street.

A reimagined street profile has been identified below incorporating a linear park that promotes increased permeability, active mobility and street activity while providing a vegetated buffer between residential

and campus interfaces with a gravel pathway running between the mature eucalyptus trees. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Provide active mobility and slow-moving vehicular access along the park to improve activation and perceived safety.
②	Activate park space by providing facilities for students to play and enjoy nature during daytime hours.
③	Increase opportunities to cross the open space in the north/south direction to improve permeability and perceived safety along the reserve.
④	Ensure future design preserves the reference to the history of the place while making it more accessible to UNSW students and the wider community as well as functioning as an important green connection between the City Centre, UNSW and Lake Burley Griffin.
⑤	Consider Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles as an integrated and 'invisible' part of the park design mitigated especially by passive surveillance, activation and a clear sense of attachment to the park.



## LIGHT RAIL STOPS

The construction of the Light Rail Stage 2A will enhance the connectivity and emphasise some key routes through the City South-East Precinct between new stations and larger attractors, such as Commonwealth Park and UNSW.

Key considerations include:

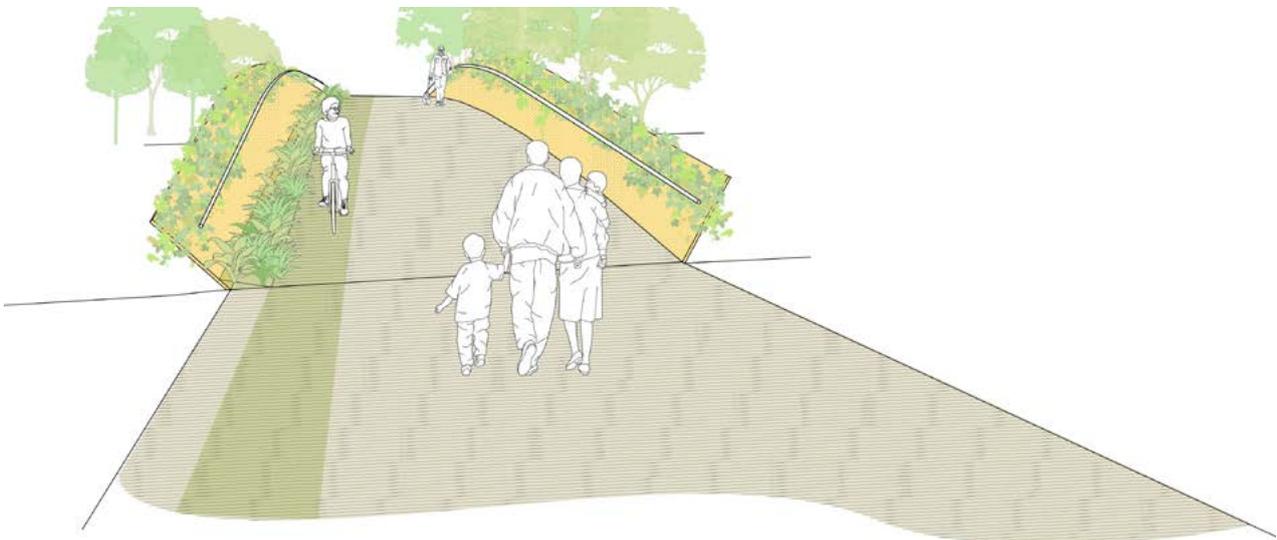
Key	Description
①	Provide access to the City South-East precinct.
②	Provide access to Commonwealth Park and the lake foreshore. The stop is designed with an extended platform/canopy to accommodate increased patronage during event mode.

## UPGRADE OF PARKES WAY BRIDGE

Improving connections between Commonwealth Park, UNSW and the new precinct heart across Parkes Way will benefit not only the City South-East but the whole City Centre by making the recreational value of the lakefront more accessible. Upgrade of Parkes Way bridge pedestrian path and improved legibility along Allara Street is required to enable safe and comfortable crossing to Commonwealth Park in all weather and during larger events such as Floriade, concerts at Stage 88 and other key events.

Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Provide active mobility and slow-moving vehicular access along the park to improve activation and perceived safety.
②	Activate park space by increasing accessible entrances and providing facilities for students to play and enjoy nature during daytime hours.
③	Increase opportunities to cross the park in the north/south direction to improve permeability and perceived safety along the reserve.
④	Investigate the opportunity to include another pedestrian connection east of Parkes Way Roundabout to improve access for UNSW and the wider open space network in the City Centre.



Indicative - New bridges across Parkes Way



# STREETS AND PLACE

Two key streets within the City South-East Precinct have been identified below for reconsideration of their road profile and character. Key corridors build upon the strength of the Griffin Plan while surrounding UNSW and providing better connectivity throughout.

The two most critical streets for consideration as part of the City South-East Precinct include:

- Constitution Avenue - a major structural element and corridor as outlined in the Griffin Plan
- Coranderrk Street - key connection from Parkes Way back into the City Centre.

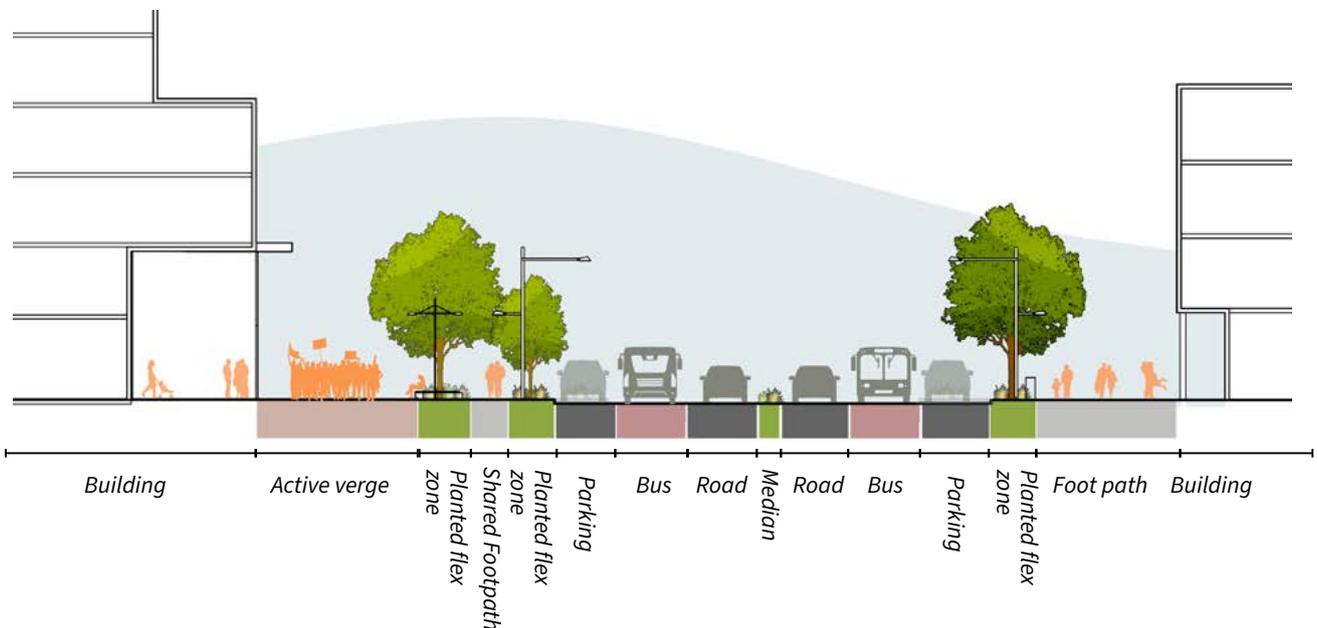
The following pages provide street sections that indicate typical outcomes and aspirational design intent for each street.



## A - CONSTITUTION AVENUE

Constitution Avenue is a major corridor that connects Vernon Circle to Coranderrk Street and beyond. It runs perpendicular to major sites of the Convention Centre and Canberra Olympic Pool and contains a dedicated bus lane along with parallel parking bays. The northern interface is largely unactivated, particularly towards the Convention Centre. With a significant amount of vegetation and street furniture on the southern side, as well as pedestrian

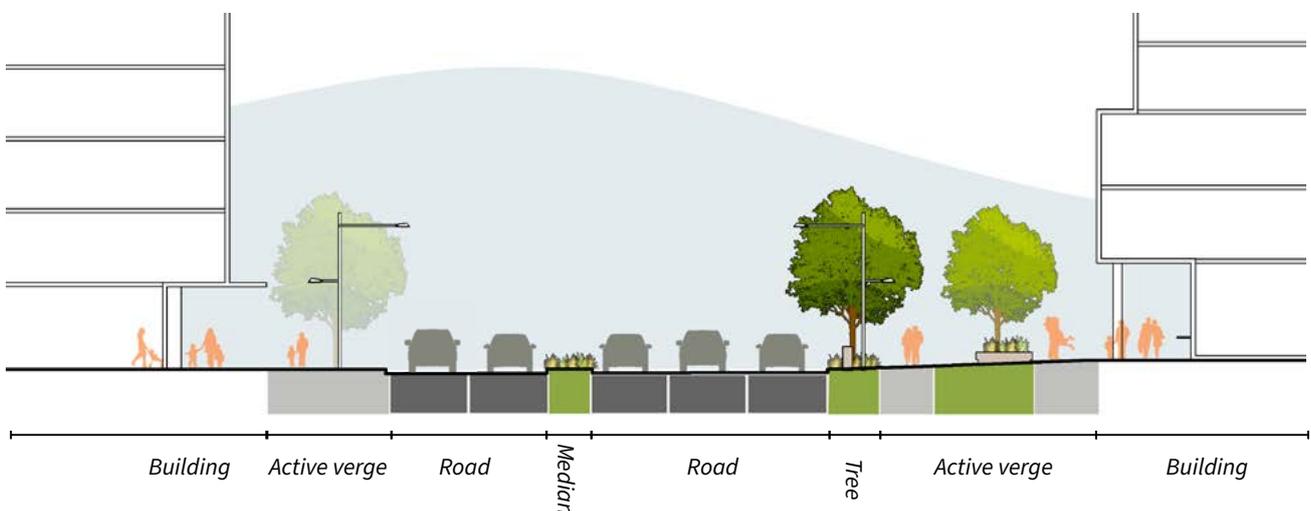
crossings along the street, has the characteristics to be further established by pedestrian activity. Future development should seek to address the street through active edges and entries to Constitution Avenue. The section below illustrates a redeveloped street profile that lines the street, promotes more pedestrian activity and defines the street as an active pedestrian thoroughfare.



## B - CORANDERRK ST

Coranderrk St is a major vehicular road connecting Parkes way to Cooyong St and the City North-East. It is a key gateway traffic corridor with four to five lanes throughout and a median strip. Currently, the road is quite a harsh environment with little protection between the pathway and the road. The eastern interface has a retaining wall that blocks access between the street and adjacent plots.

A revised street section has been illustrated which encourages a considered address to Coranderrk Street that provides at-grade crossings and building entries. A new bike lane and increased vegetation also promote active mobility and provide a perceived safety buffer between the pedestrian pathway and the road.





Henry Rolland Park. Photographer: Martin Ollman



# WEST BASIN AND ACTON WATERFRONT

## PRECINCT VISION AND CHARACTER

West Basin and Acton Waterfront precinct is currently characterised through its shoreline frontage to Lake Burley Griffin and is grounded in its connection to the formal lake area of the Central National Area with connections to the Commonwealth Avenue and Parkes Way major transportation corridors.

The precinct will focus predominantly on new residential uses integrated with the lake and mixed activities and services and provides a precinct that will truly make the most of Lake Burley Griffin.

Fronting the lake foreshore, Acton Waterfront connects the peninsular with the more formal central basin of Lake Burley Griffin. The current utilisation of the foreshore is poor due to the separation of the foreshore from the City Centre due to Parkes Way, which is a major barrier to movement. Currently, there is a single pedestrian bridge over Parkes Way; however the opportunity to create more crossings will provide invaluable for the future success of the precinct.



*West Basin and Acton Waterfront precinct*

### Precinct vision

### Priority directions

### Design objectives

### Key moves

### Catalyst projects

The West Basin and Acton Waterfront precinct will be a lively urban precinct that brings the everyday life of the City Centre to the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.



# PRECINCT CONTEXT AND OPPORTUNITIES

Fronting the lake foreshore, the new Acton Waterfront connects the peninsular with the more formal central basin of Lake Burley Griffin. Currently sporting a new waterfront promenade, the new Acton Waterfront offers the opportunity to truly connect the City Centre with the waterfront and unlock the potential and recreational value of the waterfront that was previously dominated by car parking.

There is a key opportunity to transform the existing dominating surface car parking into a new mixed-use development that will continue the urban fabric between the City Hill and the waterfront while improving the overall character and identity of the precinct.

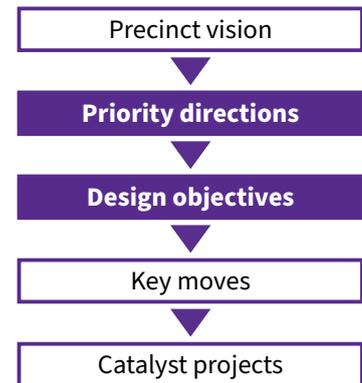
Some new development has occurred in New Acton recently which is of high design quality, along with a new parkland along the waterfront called Henry Rolland Park. The new parkland includes a new boardwalk which contributes to a network of attractive recreational spaces along the waterfront.

The current utilisation of the foreshore is limited due to the separation of the foreshore from the City Centre (due to Parkes Way). Future development on Acton Waterfront will require additional pedestrian connections for the waterfront to truly become part of the City Centre urban fabric and create walkable, high-quality public spaces. This will include new amenities and opportunities for City Centre’s first mixed-use waterfront neighbourhood. This is further supported by the planned removal of the cloverleaf roads connecting Commonwealth Avenue with Parkes Way and London Circuit, presenting new opportunities for developable land.

Opportunities	Challenges
There is a need to upgrade the existing Parkes Way bridge to ensure strong pedestrian and cycle connections across Parkes Way to provide better connectivity and integration.	Parkes Way is a major barrier for the precinct, separating the waterfront from the rest of the precinct, including new high-quality development at Acton on the city side.
Acton Waterfront Park will become the heart of the precinct.	There have been connectivity issues between the City Centre and the lake.
New development will supersede existing car parking and provide more land use and activity to activate the precinct and foreshore.	There is currently a high portion of temporary surface parking along the waterfront.
New development opportunities should focus on bringing new land uses and activities to engage people with the waterfront and the newly constructed Waterfront Park.	The waterfront is currently not highly utilised due to limited uses and poor connectivity.
Connecting the new Acton Waterfront neighbourhood and park with Light Rail Stage 2A City South stop in the north and Commonwealth Park stop in the south.	Currently not very well connected on existing public transport networks.
The new parkland and estate will acknowledge and recognise Ngunnawal history through landscape intervention, truth-telling and artwork, contributing meaning, identity and character.	Acton Park is currently lacking character and is characterised by large areas of surface parking.

## PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Priority directions and design objectives have been identified for the West Basin and Acton Waterfront Precinct. The priority directions align with the City Plan, while the design objectives provide precinct directions that will help to deliver the precinct vision.



### Priority Directions

Aligning with the City Plan, the West Basin and Acton Waterfront priority directions include the following:

- Create a more accessible and people-focussed lakefront destination for visitors and residents.
- Prioritise pedestrian and cycling connectivity from the waterfront and to the wider City Centre precinct.
- Invest in public realm, setting the groundwork for future mixed-use development.
- Accommodate a mix of uses including a high-quality community / recreational facility that serves the regional as well as City Centre community
- Ensure the provision of social infrastructure and facilities to meet projected population needs.

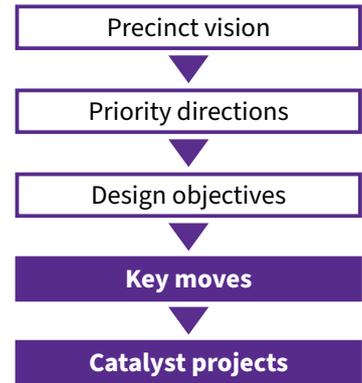
### Design Objectives

The design objectives for the West Basin and Acton Waterfront will achieve the following:

- Create a vibrant place to live and visit, with an accessible and active waterfront.
- Provide a mix of uses in addition to residential uses.
- Connect other parts of the City Centre to and around the waterfront.
- Establish a neighbourhood with local amenities and services as an activity node within the City Centre.
- Establish a community/recreational facility that serves both the regional and City Centre community, including connection with the ANU.

# KEY MOVES AND CATALYST PROJECTS

The West Basin and Acton Waterfront Precinct will be a lively, sustainable and mixed-use community extending the City Centre Urban core to the waterfront of Lake Burley Griffin by acknowledging and respecting the city structure of the Griffin Plan.



## Key moves

Investment in new buildings and the public realm will create economic, development and lifestyle opportunities that will support urban renewal and growth for the City Centre. Key moves and potential projects have been identified in the West Basin and Acton Waterfront Precinct as:

Key	Description
1	Create economic diversity with commercial, retail, cultural and residential uses delivered through the precinct.
2	Provide a mix of housing typologies to cater for a mixed social demographic.
3	Establish a precedent for exemplary sustainable development.
4	Increase biodiversity, WSUD, canopy cover and permeable surfaces within the precinct.
5	Acknowledge Ngunnawal culture and stories throughout the precinct and foreshore.
6	Increase services to provide events for the City Centre.
7	Increase wellness and liveability through open space provisions, play spaces and access to the lake.

## Catalyst projects

In addition to the key moves and potential projects identified, a number of catalyst projects have also been identified. These projects provide some high-level guidance to how a number of key projects could be considered that would support the priority directions and design objectives in delivering the overall vision. These projects are for demonstration purposes only and do not provide detailed design outcomes.

Key	Description
8	Waterfront promenade - A new promenade and activated public plaza will be the heart of the precinct and a new destination for the wider City Centre community.
9	Bridge connections - Providing new pedestrian- and cycle priority bridges over Parkes Way, connecting the City Hill, New Acton and ANU with the waterfront.
10	Light rail stops - Connecting West Basin and Acton Waterfront precinct and the lake with the public transport infrastructure network.

## LEGEND

Site boundary	ANU Master plan site	City cycle loop
Existing buildings	Road layout	Light rail network
Potential new development site	Vehicle laneway	Key pedestrian links
Heritage overlay	Pedestrian laneway	Blue-green corridor
Precinct heart	Proposed road alignment in ANU masterplan	Pedestrian focussed road treatment
Park and civic spaces	Active frontage	Activation opportunities
Open space	Adaptable frontage	Proposed private open space
	Green Link bridge	Gateway site
	High-quality streetscape	



## Catalyst projects

# WATERFRONT PARK

The continuous foreshore promenade stretches around Lake Burley Griffin and forms a large recreational blue-green public space with long views to some of Canberra's main sights and the Brindabellas in the distance. The Waterfront Park will support a healthy and liveable precinct that prioritises active mobility networks, activation of the waterfront, and social infrastructure for the local community and be the heart of the precinct. Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Provide soft scape planting of appropriate species and provide non-commercial seating and places to stay for everyone to enjoy the waterfront.
②	Integrate Waterfront Park design and interface with built form and building uses to support a vibrant and lively precinct for all.
③	Ensure Waterfront Park landscape and planting consider and enhance established view lines from built form grids.
④	Provide a landscape foreground to the built form when viewed across the water from Acton Peninsula and will be a significant meeting between the lake and the City Centre.
⑤	Acknowledge and include Nggunawal culture and narratives in the waterfront promenade park.



Acton Waterfront Park and precinct heart



Indicative - Acton Waterfront Park

## BRIDGE CONNECTIONS

Connecting Acton Waterfront development with the City Centre urban core is a critical component to the future success of the area. Provide natural and convenient linkages for pedestrians and cyclists between New Acton and the City Hill Precinct via upgrading the existing bridge from New Acton and providing new connections from Philip Law Street and London Circuit.

Key considerations include:

Key	Description
①	Incorporate greenery and planted landscapes into bridges and connections to increase landscape amenities and identity of bridges when moving through the City Centre.
②	Ensure easy access for pedestrians and cyclists with compliant accessibility grading to make it easy and comfortable to cross Parkes Way.
③	Connect Acton Waterfront to the City Centre with a new green bridge and road.
④	Provide new pedestrian linkage from Philip Law Street to the waterfront
⑤	Upgrade the existing bridge connection from Marcus Clarke Street to the new waterfront public space.



Bridge Connections to Acton Waterfront

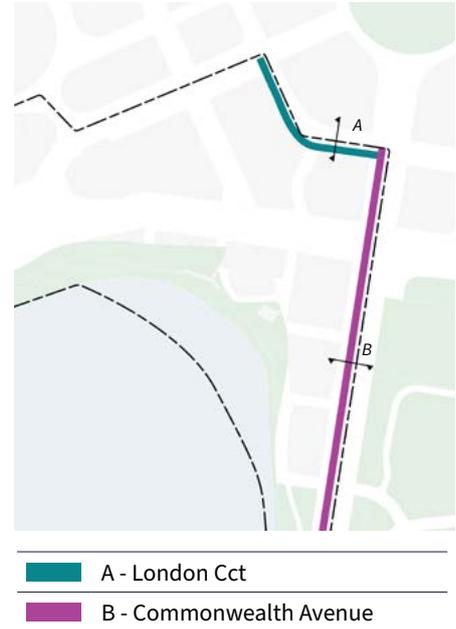
# STREETS AND PLACE

The West Basin and Acton Waterfront Precinct is largely separated from the rest of the City Centre due to Parkes Way, a major east-west road. Through removal of the current cloverleaf roads and upgrades to London Circuit and Commonwealth Avenue to allow for new light rail extensions, this will require some further consideration of these streets.

The two most critical streets for consideration as part of the West Basin and Acton Waterfront Precinct include:

- London Circuit - this portion of London Circuit will be raised to allow for future light rail stages and better connectivity to Northbourne Avenue
- Commonwealth Avenue - will require further enhancements and upgrades to allow for future light rail stages. An opportunity to improve the place character of Commonwealth Avenue with new buildings in Acton Waterfront.

The following pages provide street sections that indicate typical outcomes and aspirational design intent for each street.

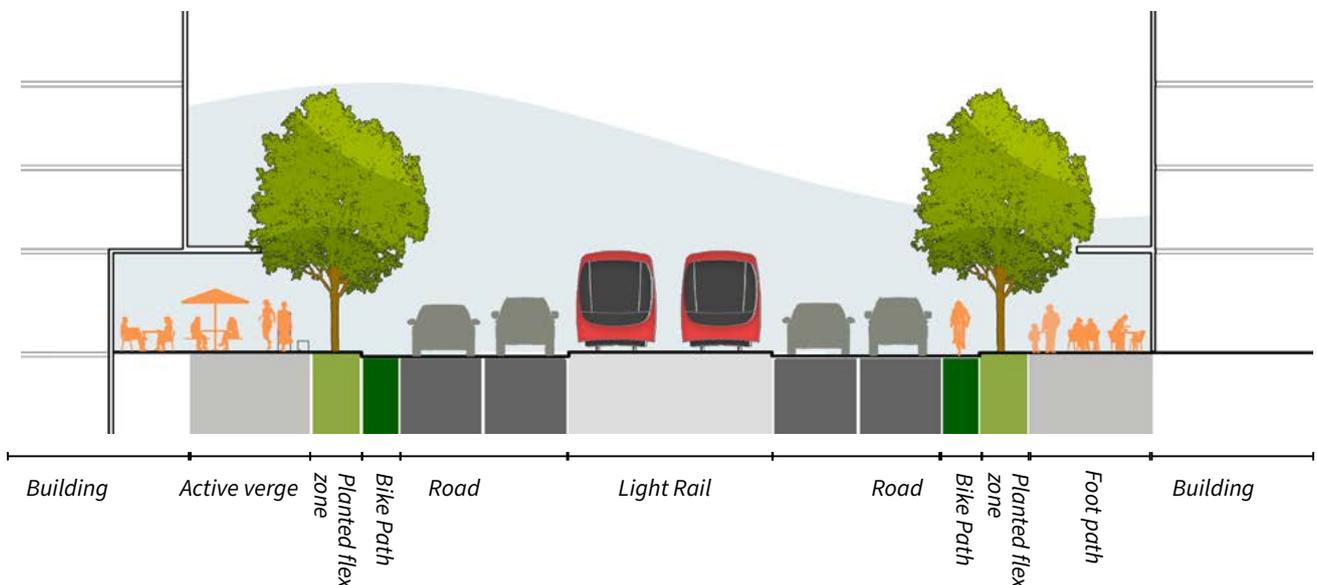


## A - LONDON CCT

London Circuit is a major ring road connecting all the precincts of the City Centre. The southwest corner is planned to be raised to create a new intersection with Commonwealth Avenue and allow for new development in the previous slip lane areas. Its profile will allow for active edges along previous and existing

built form and will accommodate the future light rail extension.

A revised street section below illustrates the incorporated light rail, green vegetation and new development, defining the street as a location focussed on pedestrian street-level activity.

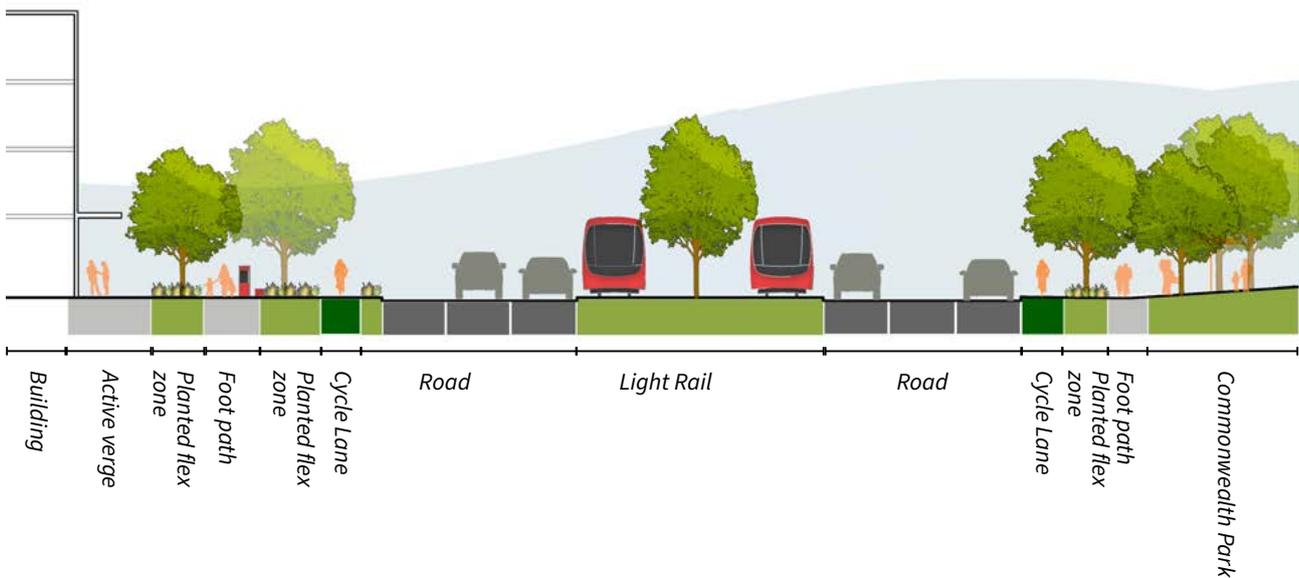


## B - COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

Commonwealth Avenue is the southern gateway road into the City Centre. It is a major traffic corridor containing six traffic lanes, bus stops and cycling lanes. It is lined with mature street trees and green verges.

A revised street profile integrates future stages of light rail and new Acton Waterfront developments along

Commonwealth Avenue. With access to these blocks happening at the rear, Commonwealth Avenue can be leveraged on providing access for active mobility and public transport users. Its wide profile allows for significant vegetation throughout providing a buffer to the traffic while also allowing for significant commercial street visibility.







# NEXT STEPS



# NEXT STEPS

The Canberra City Centre Urban Design Framework is a key step towards translating the City Plan’s strategic vision and key themes, into a suite of supporting strategies and initiatives that will help to guide investment and change in the future.

The UDF will play a key role in guiding strategic planning and decision-making, building on previous work, plans and strategies undertaken for the City Centre. The City Centre needs investment and injection to create a place where more people want to live, work, visit and invest, and the UDF supports this outcome by emphasising attractive, high-quality, and interconnected precincts and places.

The spatial framework outlined on the adjacent page lays the foundation for the spatial delivery of place-based outcomes for the City Centre. Combining each of the five precincts to provide a consolidated framework that supports the vision and priority directions outlined in the City Plan. The framework highlights a series of key elements, including access and movement, open spaces, key plazas, pedestrian focussed streets, precinct hearts, heritage, key nodes and character.

The UDF and supporting spatial framework will be a living document that provides a strategic framework for the development of the City Centre. They will continue to evolve and expand as further studies and investigations take place and will have the ability to be regularly updated to reflect any changes. The UDF is not a detailed delivery or implementation plan.

	Site boundary
	Existing buildings
	Potential new development site
	Heritage overlay
	Precinct heart
	Park and civic spaces
	Open space
	Road layout
	Proposed road alignment in ANU Master plan
	Vehicle laneway
	Pedestrian laneway
	Active frontage

	Visual/temporary activation frontage
	Adaptable frontage
	Future theatre development site
	UNSW project area
	CRA development site
	High-quality streetscape
	City cycle loop
	Green link bridge
	Light rail network
	Key pedestrian links
	Pedestrian focussed road treatment

	Activation opportunities
	Publicly accessible open space
	Gateway site
	Landmark building
	ANU Master plan site
	Pedestrian plaza
	Draft city entertainment precinct boundary
	Blue-green corridor
	Proposed high speed rail alignment
	Indicative Garden City Cycle Route



Proposed City Centre Spatial Framework

# GLOSSARY

This glossary identifies the words and acronyms that appear frequently throughout the Canberra City Centre Urban Design Framework, to help the reader identify unfamiliar words and terminologies.

**ACT** - Australian Capital Territory.

**Accessibility** - The ease of reaching destinations. In a highly accessible location, a person, regardless of age, ability or income, can reach many activities or destinations quickly, whereas people in places with low accessibility can reach fewer places in the same amount of time.

**Activations** - A place with the appropriate facilities that invite people to spend time in that space and thereby activating it.

**Active frontages** - Occurs where there is active visual or tactile engagement between the ground and upper floor of buildings and the adjacent street/public realm.

**Active transport** - Any form of transport involving physical activity, e.g. cycling and walking.

**Active use** - Active uses are uses that generate many visits, in particular pedestrian visits, over an extended period of the day.

**Adaptable building edge** - A building frontage uses for urban areas where there could be a transition in use from residential to commercial or retail.

**Amenity** - The features of an area, street or building, that provides facilities and services that contribute to physical or material comfort and benefit, and are valued by users.

**ANU** - Australian National University.

**Catalyst project** - A proposed project that is providing outcomes that support the priority directions and design objectives in delivering the overall vision.

**City Centre** - The area broadly defined by Canberra's City Centre and bordered by the outer hexagonal road (Cooyong Street and extensions) radiating from City Hill, ANU and Lake Burley Griffin.

**City Plan/CP** - ACT Government document establishing a long-term vision for Canberra City Centre.

**Connectivity** - The number of connecting routes and intersections within a particular area. An area with high connectivity provides multiple routes to and from destinations.

**CRA** - City Renewal Authority.

**CPTED** - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

**Density** - Average number of residents, households, dwellings, or habitable space in a given area, usually expressed as dwellings/ people per hectare or floor area ratio.

**Design excellence** - When architectural and urban design outcomes exceed expectations of built quality, sustainability and process.

**Design objective** - Provide objectives on how the priority directions may be considered and provide further direction to establish specific key moves and catalyst projects to support and deliver the precinct vision.

**Enclosure** - Where building height and open space width create a feeling of contained space.

**EPSDD** - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

**Gateway site** - A predominant site that requires special consideration and articulation of built form and architecture.

**Good design** - Architectural and urban design outcomes are expected to comply with good practice design principles as a minimum ambition.

**Habitable spaces** - Comfortable spaces and places for people to spend time.

**Heritage place** - Any place from a building to a monument, natural area, landmark or viewpoint that has special cultural, Indigenous culture or natural heritage significance. Can be identified at a local, state, federal or global level.

**Heritage overlay** - An area subject to a planning overlay to preserve heritage values.

**Infrastructure** - The basic systems, facilities or framework that support a community's population, e.g. roads, transport, utilities, water, and sewage.

**Key moves** - Specific focus area to inform potential projects and catalyst projects while supporting design objectives and priority direction.

**Key pedestrian link** - An easy and legible pedestrian connection between points of interest.

**Key public space** - May be located in parks, plazas or streets. They are public places of significance, with high levels of amenities.

**Landmark building** - A significant building for historical/cultural value, prominence in location, building form and height or example of design excellence.

**Legibility** - The ease with which a person is able to see, understand and find their way around an area, building or development.

**Light Rail 2A / LR2A** - Refers to future Light Rail stage 2A extending the light rail from Northbourne Avenue to Commonwealth Park.

**Master plan** - A flexible framework for future growth and change through formulating long-term vision and development concepts.

**Mixed use** - Mixing residential, commercial, retail, entertainment and community uses in the same building, site or precinct.

**Modal interchange** - Co-locating multiple public transport modes to allow for enhanced connections between alternative transport modes.

**Mode share** - The percentage of travellers using a particular type of transport, or the total number of trips for that transport type.

**NCA** - National Capital Authority.

**NCP** - National Capital Plan.

**Parks and civic spaces** - Open spaces with recreational value publicly accessible and maintained.

**Passive surveillance** - Observation from the street or adjacent buildings provided by ordinary people as

they go about their daily activities.

**Permeability** - The extent to which the urban structure allows or restricts the movement of people or vehicles through an area.

**Pedestrian plaza** - An outdoor vehicular-free pedestrian space, such as City Walk, Civic square, larger building forecourts and open space network on campus.

**Precinct heart** - The precinct heart signifies the most active and characteristic place that grounds each precinct with a unique identity and function.

**Public realm** - General term for an open area or place for public use, e.g. streets, parks, plazas, squares.

**Scale** - The apparent size of a building in relation to its surroundings and to the scale of a person.

**Sustainability** - An approach that considers the environmental, social and economic aspects (such as of a building) so it can meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**UDF** - Urban Design Framework is a strategic planning document prepared to support the objectives of the City Plan and sets out design intentions, principles and actions to guide the future development of the Canberra City Centre.

**Tactical urbanism** - Temporary changes to the urban environment to promote public life and invite people to spend time.

**TCCS** - Transport Canberra and City Services.

**TGSI** - Tactile ground surface indicators to support people with visual disabilities to navigate streets and the public realm.

**TP / Territory Plan** - Providing statutory planning guidance for future development in the ACT.

**Visual/Temporary activation frontage** - Engaging activation of otherwise blank frontages on buildings, fences or hoarding during construction periods.

**Water sensitive urban design (WSUD)** - A set of design elements and on-ground solutions that aim to minimise impacts on the water cycle from our built environment and enhance our city's liveability.



**ACT**  
Government