



Gungahlin Town Centre East

An urban village in a sustainable landscape

Shaping a place that cares for Country, connects the community, creates new ways of living and working, and curates partnerships to achieve outstanding outcomes.

Place Ambition document

June 2023

Prepared by Studio THI and Communication Link on behalf of the Suburban Land Agency

THI

Bolder thinking
for urban life


Communication Link

Acknowledgement of Country

The Suburban Land Agency, Studio THI and Communication Link acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

GTC-East Place Ambition overview

A Place Ambition captures a community's desired look, feel and experience of a proposed development, defining the key outcomes that must be delivered to create a great place for current and future generations. Studio THI and Communication Link, on behalf of the Suburban Land Agency (SLA), designed and delivered a community engagement program to develop a Place Ambition for the Gungahlin Town Centre East (GTC-East) project, a largely undeveloped 32-hectare area of land abutting the established Gungahlin Town Centre in Canberra ACT. Insights gained from over 300 community voices captured through a series of activities, including pop-up events, a young person workshop, self-paced online surveys, face-to-face and online workshops and a Future Thinking Panel event, have been translated into the following Place Ambition for GTC-East.



*Top left - Future Thinking Panel event, Top right - Community pop-up events
Bottom left - Online surveys, Bottom right - Community workshops*

Summary of Place Ambition

GTC-East is an urban village in a sustainable landscape

Shaping a place that cares for Country, connects the community, creates new ways of living and working, and curates partnerships to achieve outstanding outcomes.

Place Pillar 1

Cares

An urban experience in a natural landscape, embedding Country into place

A place that intersects Ngunnawal culture and leading environmental design to create a unique urban experience and connection with Country



Celebrate Ngunnawal culture in all aspects of the project



Create textural, sensory and memorable places



Strengthen biodiversity and natural systems



Deliver a network of green and social streets, laneways and walkways

Place Pillar 2

Connects

A destination for public life & community connection

A place that fosters social cohesion and enables people of all ages, cultures, backgrounds and abilities to come together to connect and play



Create a network of community nodes



Curate an ongoing program of events and activities



Deliver community amenities - such as a contemporary library, indoor sports facilities, intergenerational playground and art centre

Place Pillar 3

Creates

A vibrant 18hr neighbourhood with a next-generation agenda

A compact and walkable place that enables healthy and sustainable lifestyles, showcases new ways of living and working and supports local production and enterprise



Enable a sustainable living culture - providing infrastructure and programs for walking and cycling and a reduce, reuse, recycle culture



Foster diverse employment and enterprise opportunities - such as startups, incubators, maker spaces and commercial offering



Deliver housing choice and diversity - such as new models of apartment living, social and affordable housing, aged care and build-to-rent



Curate a retail offer that complements and extends the current town centre offering

Place Pillar 4

Curates

A showcase of sustainable city-making excellence for public life & community connection

A demonstration of government, community and private sector collaboration to deliver an enduring legacy for the Gungahlin community



Demonstrate SLA place stewardship



Curate inter-government, community and private sector collaborations to deliver place ambition



Embed ongoing community and stakeholder reviews

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Taking a place-based approach

GTC-East is a largely undeveloped area of land abutting the established Gungahlin Town Centre. The 32-hectare precinct will be released by SLA over the coming years and presents a significant opportunity to extend the current town centre offer and enhance the local experience of the Gungahlin District more broadly.

SLA has committed to taking a place-based approach to this significant project, engaging with the community to explore ideas for how the site can become a global demonstration of suburban town centre development and a valued part of the local community.

SLA engaged studio THI and Communication Link to design and deliver an engagement program to explore the community's desires, priorities and vision for the precinct. The community vision was then translated into a Place Ambition statement, a document that defines the key outcomes the community wants to see delivered to create an enduring legacy for the people of Gungahlin.

The Place Ambition will be applied to the future development and sales process to ensure the community's aspirations are integrated and prioritised.



Developing the community's ambition

A community engagement program was designed to reach a diverse and often under-represented cross-section of the Gungahlin community and heard from over 300 community voices. The program sought input through the established Gungahlin Community Panel (a demographically representative group of 100 Gungahlin residents) along with high school students, key stakeholders and the general Gungahlin community. The engagement program included pop-up events, a young persons workshop, self-paced online surveys, face-to-face and online workshops and a Future Thinking Panel event. An overview of the engagement outcomes is presented in the next section of this report. A detailed summary of the engagement approach and outcomes can be found here:

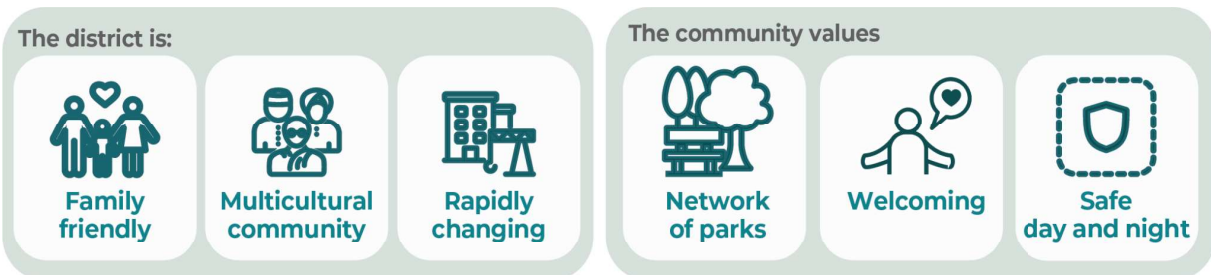
<https://yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/gungahlin-town-centre-east>



Summary of community insight

Gungahlin District today

The Gungahlin community described the district as family-friendly, multicultural and rapidly changing. The community values its great network of parks, walking and cycling trails and feels that it welcomes people from all walks of life. Participants indicate that the district lacks vibrancy and points of interest (specifically at night time). They feel that the area needs additional community amenities (such as indoor sports facilities and a contemporary library), along with additional education opportunities.



GTC-East desired look, feel & experience in 2040

Through the engagement program, we heard that the community would like GTC-East to:



Key considerations the community would like the project team to consider include:

- Getting the balance of live, work, shop and play right - ensuring the mix of use is not unevenly weighted to residential
- Seamless integration with the existing town centre
- The translation of the vision and ambition into reality, ensuring quality outcomes.

Place Ambition

The following section of this document presents an overview of the Place Ambition. This Ambition was developed in response to the community's desired look, feel and experience of the precinct and was presented to and endorsed by the Community Panel.

Vision statement

An urban village in a sustainable landscape

Shaping a place that cares for Country, connects the community, creates new ways of living and working, and curates partnerships to achieve outstanding outcomes.

Place Pillars

<p>Place Pillar 1</p> <h3>Cares</h3> <p>An urban experience in a natural landscape, embedding Country into place</p>	<p>Place Pillar 2</p> <h3>Connects</h3> <p>A destination for public life & community connection</p>	<p>Place Pillar 3</p> <h3>Creates</h3> <p>A vibrant 18hr neighbourhood with a next-generation agenda</p>	<p>Place Pillar 4</p> <h3>Curates</h3> <p>A showcase of sustainable city-making excellence for public life & community connection</p>
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The following section of this document provides a detailed summary of each Place Pillar - presenting an overview of key objectives, supporting enablers and examples of the desired look, feel and experience.

Place Pillar 1

Cares

An urban experience in a natural landscape, embedding Country into place

A place that intersects Ngunnawal culture and leading environmental design to create a unique urban experience and connection with Country



Celebrate Ngunnawal culture in all aspects of the project



Create textural, sensory and memorable places



Strengthen biodiversity and natural systems



Deliver a network of green and social streets, laneways and walkways



The look, feel and experience the community selected during the engagement program

Why is this important?

Throughout the engagement program, we heard the community's strong desire to:

- More deeply understand and celebrate Ngunnawal culture
- Extend the district's valued networks of walking and cycling trails
- Strengthen biodiversity and maintain the natural system by protecting and connecting with the district's existing natural assets, such as its mature trees, Mulanggari Grasslands Nature Reserve and Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary
- Create a green and lush urban experience, incorporating new plantings and landscape into the development as a feature of the precinct's laneways, streets and network of parks.

Place inspiration



Hassett Park, Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture, Image: Dianna Snape



Water-sensitive urban and native planting are included to strengthen the biodiversity and natural systems. The integration of a network of green and walkways could also provide a pleasant experience to move around the Town Centre.



Bendigo Kangan Tafe Redevelopment, Image: Pier Carthew ¹



The integration of First Nations knowledge in native planting provides street trees and shrubs with resilience to strong wind and cold weather.

Following the six seasons of the native planting calendar also provides public spaces with diverse sensory experiences to be welcoming and comfortable for all seasons.

¹ This image was not part of the initial materials presented during the community consultation. It has been added to the report to reflect the additional ideas and components shared by community members.

Place Pillar 2

Connects

A destination for public life & community connection

A place that fosters social cohesion and enables people of all ages, cultures, backgrounds, and abilities to come together to connect and play



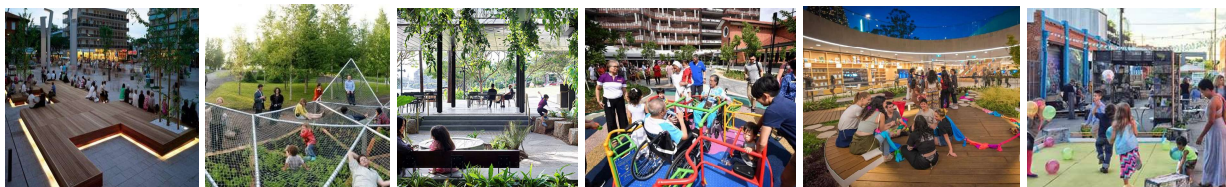
Create a network of community places



Curate an ongoing and diverse program of events and activities



Deliver community amenities - such as a contemporary library, recreational facilities, intergenerational playground and art centre



The look, feel and experience the community selected during the engagement program

Why is this important?

Throughout the engagement program, we heard the following:

- Gungahlin is a multicultural and family-friendly community, but it lacks spaces and places for the community to gather, socialise and relax
- The community expressed their desire for GTC-East to include a series of community amenities and public sports and recreational spaces to encourage social interactions, intergenerational play and community programs or events.

Place inspiration



Riverside Green South Bank Parklands, Image: Scott Burrows



Incorporating a network of community places provides an opportunity for the community to gather and socialise with one another. Places like this could also be used to facilitate community programs and events such as community festivals and markets.



Green Square Library, City of Sydney, Image: Jessica Lindsay



Contemporary libraries provide spaces for community programs and educational resources for all ages.



Auburn University recreation and wellness centre, Image: Brad Feinknopf.²



Sport and recreational facilities encourage physical activities and well-being. Places like this could also be utilised to facilitate community events and programs to strengthen community connections.

² This image was not part of the initial materials presented during the community consultation. It has been added to the report to reflect the additional ideas and components shared by community members.

Place Pillar 3

Creates

A vibrant 18hr neighbourhood with a next-generation agenda

A compact and walkable place that enables healthy and sustainable lifestyles, showcases new ways of living and working and supports local production and enterprise



Enable a sustainable living culture - providing infrastructure and programs for walking and cycling and a reduce, reuse, recycle culture



Foster diverse employment and enterprise opportunities such as startups, incubators, maker spaces and commercial offers



Deliver housing choice and diversity - including new models of apartment living, social and affordable housing, aged care and build-to-rent



Curate a retail offer that complements and extends the current town centre offering



The look, feel and experience the community selected during the engagement program

Why is this important?

Throughout the engagement program, the community expressed a desire for the precinct to:

- Enable a more sustainable lifestyle and active transport culture
- Achieve the right balance between live, work, shop and play opportunities, stating the desired mix of use would not be disproportionately weighted to residential and enable a vibrant place, active for 18hrs a day
- Deliver housing choice and diversity to address the district's limited housing options and specifically sought the inclusion of next-generation ideas such as build-to-rent, co-living options and aged care
- Support the delivery of a greater depth of employment opportunities
- Include a retail offer that complements and extends the current town centre offering

Place inspiration



Housing Choice Australia Dandenong, Kennedy Nolan Architects, Image: Derek Swalwell³



Housing design incorporates passive cooling and solar access to ensure the indoor climate is comfortable all seasons and maximise energy efficiency. Provide bike parking to encourage active transport.



Marrickville Village, build-to-rent, UKO, Image: UKO⁴



Alternative housing models such as co-living and build-to-rent are designed to provide quality shared amenities and ensure the affordability and durability of the building.



Bakery Lane, Queensland, Image: Queensland.com



Diverse and scalable commercial spaces provide an opportunity for local economic activation. Local business and small enterprises would have affordable spaces to work or produce locally. Places like this could also bring vibrancy and jobs to the neighbourhood.

^{3 & 4}

These images were not part of the initial materials presented during the community consultation. They have been added to the report to reflect the additional ideas and components shared by community members.

Place Pillar 4

Curate

A showcase of sustainable city-making excellence for public life & community connection

A demonstration of government, community and private sector collaboration to deliver an enduring legacy for the Gungahlin community



Demonstrate SLA's place stewardship



Curate inter-government, community and private sector collaborations to deliver place ambition



The need for embed community and stakeholder reviews.

Why is this important?

Throughout the engagement program, we heard:

- The community expressed some concerns about the process of translating the Place Ambition into reality
- The community articulated a desire for a clear understanding of how SLA would drive the delivery of great place outcomes through the ACT Government land release program and its approach to forming partnerships with public and private sectors to deliver desired community and recreational amenities
- The need for SLA to collaborate across government, community and the private sector to deliver an enduring legacy for the Gungahlin community.

Next Steps

The Place Ambition will be spatially expressed in a detailed precinct design and captured in a Design and Place Framework. The Place Ambition and the Design and Place Framework will guide the future development of the precinct.