
Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment - Gungahlin District

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development
Directorate (EPSDD)

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Executive Summary

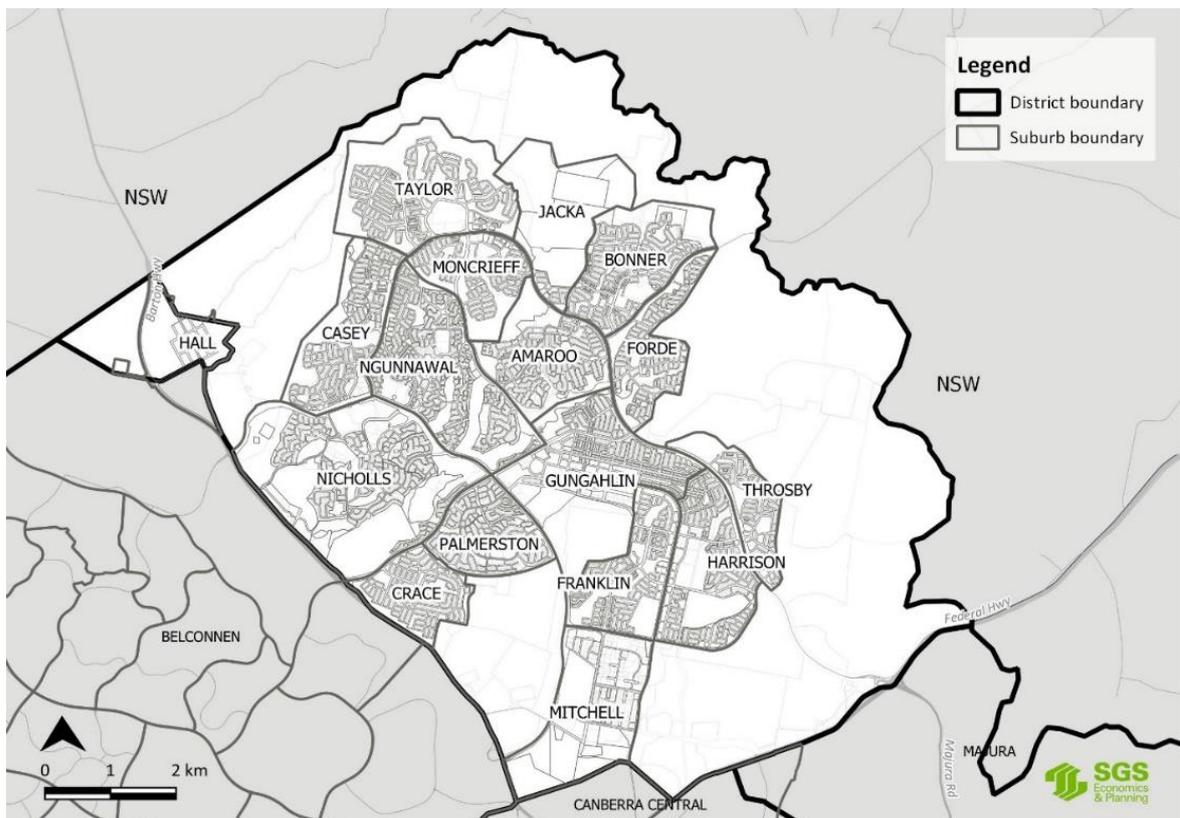
This Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment for the Gungahlin district has been prepared for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD).

Context

This study has been prepared to inform a strategic approach to planning for community and recreational facilities in Gungahlin now and into the future. This report is intended to inform further consultation, identification of priorities, and decision making by the ACT Government in relation to the provision of a range of community and recreational facilities.

Further investigations and planning will be required to confirm the need and feasibility of any future facilities in the Gungahlin district, and this report does not commit this or any future government to provide the additional facilities identified.

GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT – STUDY AREA



Source: SGS, 2021.

The study has involved and drawn from desktop analysis, consultation with ACT Government and external stakeholders, and the use of a benchmarking tool for community facilities developed for EPSDD to understand the potential future need for facilities in the district. This report includes analysis of the strategic planning context, broader trends and drivers affecting community facilities, Gungahlin's demographics and potential future population, existing facilities in the district, projected future demand for facilities and likely gaps in provision, and sites which could potentially accommodate new community facilities.

Future demand for facilities and potential gaps

The table below provides a summary of the facilities that may be needed and require further investigation by the ACT Government for the Gungahlin district, with facilities shown in red where there is a gap or need for further investigation, green where provision is likely to be sufficient, and yellow where provision is likely to be sufficient subject to particular considerations (such as the delivery of planned facilities). This has been based on assessment of:

- Future increase in the Gungahlin population
- Established benchmarks for different types of facilities
- The number of existing facilities and planned future facilities in the district
- Qualitative research and consultation with ACT Government agencies, and
- Feedback received from the community.

The use of the benchmarks in this study (see Appendix B) have been used as a first step in the assessment, recognising that the application of population-based benchmarks does not necessarily account for important considerations such as the quality of facilities and existing usage patterns. These benchmarks have been derived from different sources, but are primarily based on population ratios previously established for the ACT and used in a number of community needs assessments. Demand for some types of sports facilities has been calculated using a method based on estimated participation rates for different activities in metropolitan areas. It is important to note that benchmarks for the provision of different facilities can change over time, and there may be need to review the existing benchmarks to reflect standards as they evolve.

Draft population projections for the ACT have been used in the analysis for the purposes of this assessment, noting that these will need to be revised in light of more up to date data that will be available with the release of 2021 Census data by the ABS later in 2022. The population of Gungahlin is likely to continue to grow in the short to medium term with planned land releases within the district.

The results from the benchmarking process have been used in conjunction with the outcomes of the consultation and other qualifying considerations to identify the potential gaps in the provision of facilities and areas for further investigation. Additional community and recreational facilities that may require further investigation for provision in Gungahlin include:

- Public primary schools and public colleges
- Community centres and neighbourhood halls – which could be delivered as part of the proposed community centre in the Gungahlin Town Centre

- Flexible meeting rooms/spaces – which ideally would be co-located with the proposed community centre or co-located with other facilities
- Residential aged care facilities and places and aged day care centre (respite)
- Dedicated arts space – potentially part of the proposed community centre
- Dedicated space for youth activities and programs – potentially part of the proposed community centre
- An indoor sports court centre
- Outdoor sports courts facilities – additional courts that can be used for netball/basketball (noting that these have different size requirements).

The table below provides a summary of the facilities that may be needed and require further investigation by the ACT Government for the Gungahlin district. The table shows facility types in red where there is a gap or need for further investigation, green where provision is likely to be sufficient, and yellow where provision is likely to be sufficient subject to particular considerations (such as the delivery of planned facilities).

Other considerations

There are a number of other important elements relating to the provision of community and recreational facilities that will need to be considered in delivering new facilities for the district, including:

- The ongoing operation and maintenance of new facilities is a key consideration for how new facilities will be delivered, managed and maintained over the long term to best meet the needs of the community that are in locations that the community can access, while also keeping facilities affordable.
- There is a need to work with sports and community organisations to deliver and continue to operate facilities over time and identify ways that compatible uses can be co-located to increase affordability for clubs and other organisations – recognising there are financial realities that accompany any new facilities, and that stand-alone facilities for individual activities or sports may not necessarily be possible due to costs and the availability of land.
- While there are potential challenges with delivering community facilities in mixed use environments, there are many benefits that can come from including facilities in mixed use precincts, from the perspective of co-locating with compatible resources, making facilities accessible in central locations, making use of limited land supply, and allowing government to deliver more facilities without the need to fund their development. There is a need to develop a clear policy and arrangements for lease back of private facilities to ensure that these facilities accessible to the community.

POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR FACILITIES BY 2045

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Libraries	No (subject to considerations)	Likely to be sufficient, however, long term the management of access to spaces that are being used by Gungahlin College will need to be resolved to allow for the Library to deliver full capacity of programs and services.
Schools		
Public primary	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Some public primary schools experiencing enrolment pressure. Under further investigation by Education Directorate.
Non-government primary	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Public secondary	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient with delivery of new high schools in district.
Non-government secondary	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Public college	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Gungahlin College experiencing enrolment pressure. The ACT Government has committed to new northside college capacity, which is under further investigation by Education Directorate.
Non-government college	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Early childhood	No (subject to considerations)	ACT Government model shifting to co-location of early childhood facilities as part of primary school campuses. Affordability remains an issue to be addressed.
General community spaces		

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Neighbourhood hall	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be provided as part of proposed community centre in Town Centre, but smaller neighbourhood halls may also be needed in newer suburbs.
Community centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	As well as the proposed community centre in Town Centre there may be a need for an additional community centre for the future population, potentially to service north of the district.
Community health facilities		
Hospitals	No (provision likely sufficient)	Hospitals are not provided in every district. ACT Health has committed to the construction of a new Northside Hospital with careful planning and consideration currently occurring.
Community health centre	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. A new Walk-in centre for the northern suburbs of Gungahlin is also planned.
Child and Family Centre	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. Child and Family Centres are targeted to be provided to areas based on specific needs.
Aged care		
Nursing homes/places	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be growing need in Gungahlin as the population ages. Likely to be a need for multiple facilities as there is only one planned residential aged care facility for the district (part of Gold Creek Homestead Precinct). Higher density housing forms (e.g. units) and/or co-location with retirement communities could be considered.
Aged day care (respite) centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be growing need as the population ages. Could be co-located with aged care or other community facilities.
Targeted facilities		
Religious facilities	No (subject to considerations)	Practice is moving away from stand-alone religious facilities. However, as a consequence will be important that general meeting spaces are made available for use for religious purposes.

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Youth centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Need for permanent spaces for youth activities but not necessarily as a stand-alone facility, and could be co-located with the proposed Town Centre community centre.
Senior citizens club	No (subject to considerations)	Practice is moving away from stand-alone facilities, however, will be important for general meeting spaces to be made available for use for seniors activities. Demand may increase as population ages.
Aquatic facilities	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. Additional swim schools may be delivered by private market.
Indoor sports		
Multi-purpose courts (e.g. basketball, volleyball, netball, futsal, badminton, etc.)	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely need for indoor facility with 3-4 courts able to be used for multiple sports and flexible to respond to changes in participation. Some sports may be best suited to utilise school facilities.
Gymnastics	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient with facilities in Mitchell.
Outdoor sports and recreation		
Skate park/BMX facility	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision may be sufficient, but small facilities could be considered for integration with new parks in northern suburbs for spatial distribution across the district.
Outdoor courts (e.g. netball, basketball)	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be a need for some additional outdoor courts. May be opportunities for these to be co-located with future schools.
Lawn bowls and croquet	No (provision likely sufficient)	Not likely to be sufficient demand to justify provision of a facility.
Tennis	No (subject to considerations)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient for short-medium term with delivery of the new Amaroo facility.

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Sportsfields	No (subject to considerations)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient, subject to continued management of access at peak times. Future sportsfield facilities are likely to be co-located with new schools.
Open space (ha)	No (subject to considerations)	Likely to be sufficient provision of open space in total, however the quality of spaces and their accompanying facilities and features is also an important consideration.
Community gardens	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient, including new planned facility for Throsby.

Source: SGS, 2021.

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Introduction



1. Introduction

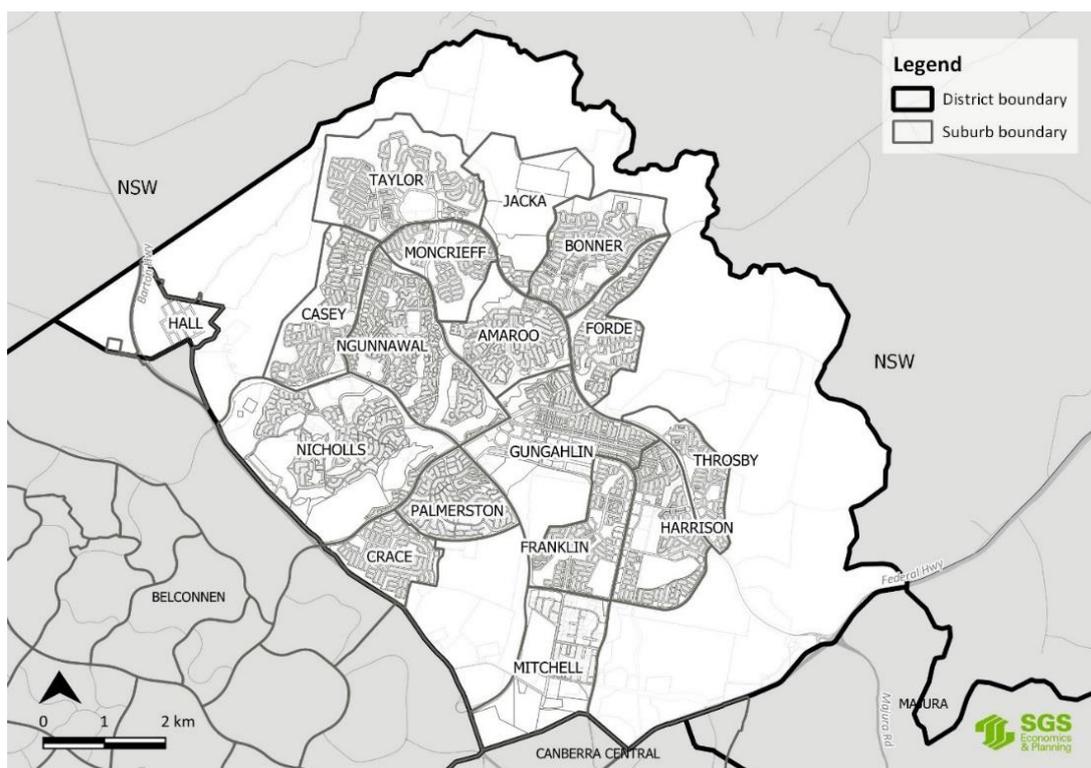
This report has been prepared as part of a Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment for the Gungahlin district for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD).

1.1 District context

The Gungahlin district, shown in Figure 1, has been one of the fastest growing areas of the ACT, and at times one of the fastest in Australia. Between 2001 and 2020, the population is estimated to have increased by over 200 per cent.¹

The population of the Gungahlin district is likely to continue to grow in the short to medium term, with planned new housing in land release areas such as Moncrieff, Jacka, Kenny, Taylor, Throsby, and the Gungahlin Town Centre.

FIGURE 1: GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT – STUDY AREA



Source: SGS, 2021.

¹ ABS, 2021, 'Regional Population Growth,' 2019-20 financial year, released 30 March 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/2019-20#data-download>.

1.2 Purpose of report

A district-wide Community and Recreational Facilities Assessment (the study) is required to inform a strategic approach to planning for community and recreational facilities in Gungahlin now and into the future. The study is important to inform the implementation of a range of government policies, strategies and legislation which support strong, liveable, resilient and socially inclusive communities including: the ACT Planning Strategy 2018, ACT Infrastructure Plan 2019, the Planning and Development (Community Concessional Leases) Amendment Act 2019 (the Amendment Act) and the ACT Government Indicative Land Release Program (ILRP).

This report considers future demand for community facilities in the context of diminishing land supply, but acknowledges that there is not a simple numerical formula that defines future investment in community facilities. In addition to investment in new facilities, future needs in the Gungahlin district may be met by improved management of existing assets and the integration of community facilities in new mixed-use developments. The findings from this report are intended to inform further consultation, identification of priorities, and decision making by the ACT Government in relation to the provision of a range of community and recreational facilities. Further investigations and planning will be required to confirm the need and feasibility of any future facilities in the Gungahlin district.

Study structure

The study has involved and drawn from desktop analysis of existing and planned facilities in the Gungahlin district, and consultation with ACT Government and external stakeholders. The remainder of the study has been structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the planning and strategic context for the study, relating to the Gungahlin district and community and recreational facilities.
- Section 3 explores broader trends and drivers that may affect the demand for and use of facilities in future, including the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Section 4 considers the existing demographics of the Gungahlin district.
- Section 5 documents the existing facilities in the Gungahlin district.
- Section 6 outlines the potential gaps in the provision of facilities for the district and areas for further investigation.

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Planning and strategic context



2. Planning and strategic context

This section outlines the planning and strategic context for the assessment. Key plans, documents and studies relating to Gungahlin and community and recreational facilities are outlined below.

2.1 Strategic plans

ACT Planning Strategy

The 2018 Planning Strategy is the primary strategic planning document for the ACT. Building on the 2012 strategy, it sets out a vision for a ‘sustainable, competitive and equitable city that respects Canberra as a city in the landscape and the national capital, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change.’ The key themes of the Strategy are:

- Compact and efficient
- Diverse
- Sustainable and resilient
- Liveable, and
- Accessible.

Under the theme of ‘Liveable,’ the Strategy includes Direction 4.1, to *deliver social infrastructure that meets community needs and supports strong communities*. This Direction includes a number of actions, including the need to investigate the provision of social infrastructure with consideration of the following:

- Capacity of, and potential to optimise, existing social infrastructure
- Co-location or clustering to create activity nodes where viable
- Inclusive and accessible—appropriate supporting infrastructure that facilitates use and participation by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, building social networks
- Flexible and multi-use in nature
- Central to the catchment it serves and accessible by public transport and active travel
- Supports a network of facilities at a variety of scales including local, district or regional to avoid duplication and develop complementary opportunities
- Complementary to adjoining land uses, and
- Investigate planning mechanisms to facilitate timely delivery of key social infrastructure.

Other Directions in the Strategy that may be relevant to community and recreational facilities include Direction 4.2 to *deliver recreation, open (green) space and public spaces that support social interaction, physical and mental health and engagement in public life*. This direction includes actions that aim to

deliver sport and recreation opportunities at both city-wide level and district level. For delivering new opportunities at the city-wide level, the following should be considered:

- Supporting existing and new or emerging sport and recreation sectors
- Supporting innovative and emerging sport and recreation facility delivery models
- The allocation of land to support future sport and recreation facilities (both in existing suburbs and in the planning of new suburban areas)
- The provision and siting of outdoor and indoor sport and recreation facilities that recognises co-location opportunities (i.e. indoor sporting facilities co-located with outdoor sporting facilities), and
- Mix and scale of uses appropriate in response to sectors experiencing transition and external pressures, for example, golfing and equestrian sectors.

For the enhancement of a network of accessible, high quality local urban open space at the district planning level, the following are to be considered:

- Distribution, role and quality of the open space network
- Neighbourhood connectivity, including access to nature reserves within the urban environment, and
- Strategic alignment of urban growth and further investment with the open space network.

Territory Plan

The Territory Plan is the ACT's primary statutory planning instrument, which sets out the system of land use zoning, establishes the hierarchy of centres, and details permitted and prohibited uses. Community and recreational facilities are governed under the Community Facility and Parks and Recreation Zones. Some community and recreational uses are also permitted in Commercial Zones, which can include mixed use developments.

The objectives of the **CFZ – Community Facility Zone** are to:

- Facilitate social sustainability and inclusion through providing accessible sites for key government and non-government facilities and services for individuals, families, and communities.
- Provide accessible sites for civic life and allow community organisations to meet the needs of the Territory's various forms of community.
- Protect these social and community uses from competition from other uses.
- Enable the efficient use of land through facilitating the co-location, and multi-use of community facilities, generally near public transport routes and convenience services appropriate to the use.
- Encourage adaptable and affordable housing for persons in need of residential support or care.
- Safeguard the amenity of surrounding residential areas against unacceptable adverse impacts including from traffic, parking, noise or loss of privacy.
- Promote active living and active travel, and
- Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to community facilities to promote active living.

CFZ zoning restricts the uses to which the sites can be put, which are summarised in the table below.

TABLE 1: PERMITTED USES IN CFZ COMMUNITY FACILITIES ZONE

Ancillary uses	Educational establishments	Parklands
Business agencies (commercial services direct to the public)	Emergency services facilities	Places of worship and religious associated uses
Child care centres	Health facilities and hospitals	Public agencies (e.g. government shopfronts)
Community activity centres	Indoor recreation facilities	Residential care accommodation
Community theatres	Offices	Retirement villages
Cultural facilities	Outdoor recreation facilities	Supportive housing

Source: CFZ Community Facility Zone development table.²

The objectives of the **PRZ1 – Urban Open Space Zone** are to:

- Provide an appropriate quality, quantity and distribution of parks and open spaces that will contribute to the recreational and social needs of the community
- Establish a variety of settings that will support a range of recreational and leisure activities as well as protect flora and fauna habitats and corridors, natural and cultural features and landscape character
- Allow for stormwater drainage and the protection of water quality, stream flows and stream environs in a sustainable, environmentally responsible manner and which provides opportunities for the community to interact with and interpret the natural environment
- Allow for ancillary uses that support the care, management and enjoyment of these open spaces including park maintenance depots, small-scale community activity centres
- Ensure that development does not unacceptably affect the landscape or scenic quality of the area, adequacy of open space for other purposes, or users, access to open space, or amenity of adjoining residents
- Provide for integrated land and water planning and management, and
- Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to urban open space to promote active living.

The PRZ1 zone permits a small number of community related uses, such as aquatic recreation facilities, community activity centres, outdoor recreation facilities, parklands, and playing fields.

The Territory Plan also includes **Precinct Maps and Codes, Structure Plans and Concept Plans** for many of the suburbs in the Gungahlin district. These have informed the development of the district over time, and identify principles and development controls for particular areas. In some case these specify where particular community or recreational uses are or are not permitted.

² Effective 3 May 2018.

Gungahlin Town Centre planning

At the time of preparing this report, a planning refresh for the Gungahlin Town Centre is underway, which includes the implementation of **Draft Territory Plan Variation 364** (DV364). This proposes changes including to building heights, transport infrastructure, and upgrades to open spaces. EPSDD is currently considering the recommendations for DV364 that were made by the ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services.

Some of the most relevant key messages for community and recreational facilities heard from the community through the refresh process included:

- A desire for additional public and open spaces, such as passive recreation and pocket parks
- That public spaces need to be well-designed (e.g. with regard to landscaping, seating, shading, opportunities for activities and accessibility), and
- The need for Gungahlin Place to be improved.

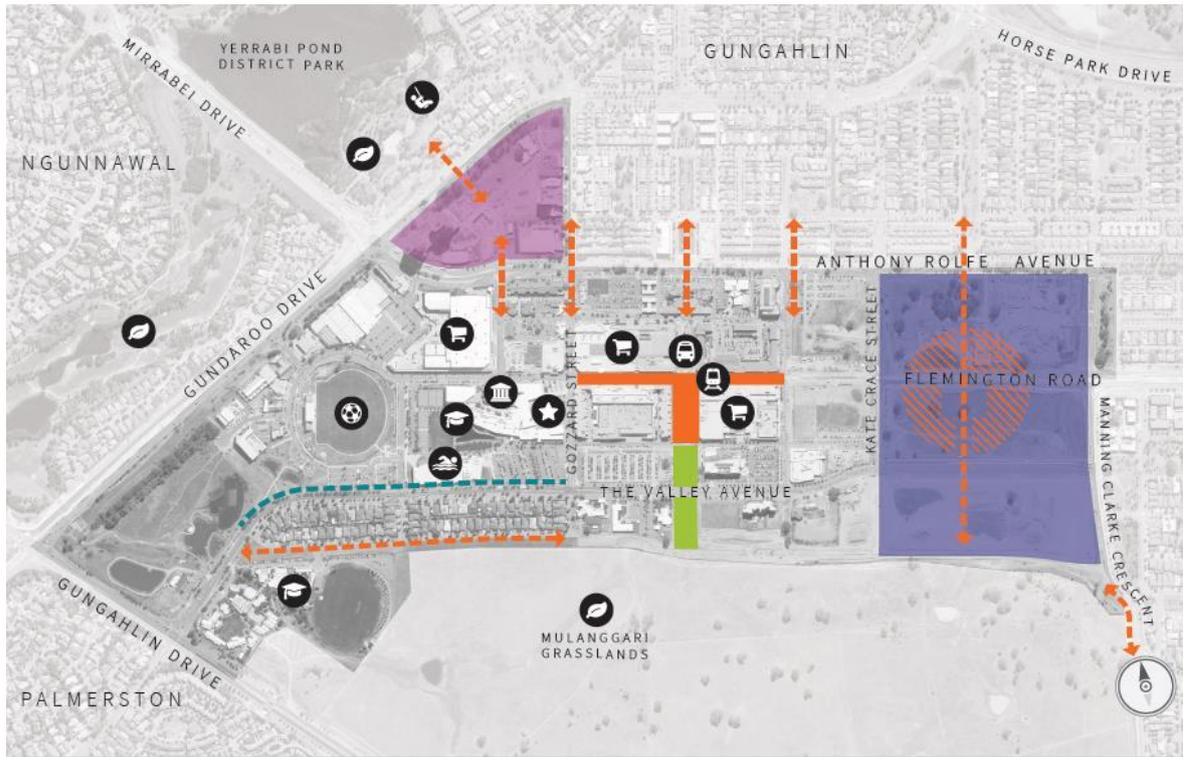
Relating to community facilities there were also suggestions that there was a need to increase provision, with concerns that rapid development in the district would limit the options for land and suitable sites for community facilities in future.³

Among the recommendations made in the Refresh was to review the location of community facilities sites in the eastern side of the Town Centre. It was noted that the Gungahlin Precinct Map and Code currently requires at least six hectares of land in the Town Centre to be zoned for community facilities. DV364 proposes to allow for more flexibility in the location of community facilities, with 3.8 hectares to be zoned for community facilities, with a needs assessment to inform the location of other community uses in the town centre either as community facility zoned land or specified minimum floor areas within mixed use buildings.

Figure 2 below shows the recommendations that were made as part of the Refresh process.

³ See 'Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh Community Engagement Report – Stage 1,' May 2018, https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/9415/4213/8874/Gungahlin_Town_Centre_Refresh_-_Comunity_Engagement_Report.pdf

FIGURE 2: GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE PLANNING REFRESH – KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



- LEGEND**
- Proposed building height changes for new development
 - Proposed building height changes and introduce residential uses
 - Improvements to pedestrian amenities
 - Active travel network connections proposed
 - Future public space improvements
 - Committed public space improvements
 - Review the location of community facility sites
 - ★ Undertake place audit
 - 🛒 Shopping centre / mall
 - 🌳 Open space
 - 🎓 School / college
 - 📖 Gungahlin library
 - 🏊 Sports facility
 - 🏊 Aquatic centre
 - 🌳 Yerrabi pond district park
 - 🚊 Gungahlin light rail station
 - 🚌 Gungahlin bus station

Source: ACT Government, 2018.⁴

2.2 Land release program

The Indicative Land Release Program (ILRP) aims to accommodate Canberra’s growth and change by releasing land to the market, for residential, community, commercial and industrial uses. The ILRP evolves in line with government priorities, market condition and Canberra’s changing population.

The ILRP for 2021-22 to 2025-26 was released with the ACT Government’s 2021-22 Budget in October 2021. It identifies several sites for release in the Gungahlin district, and includes a total of 8,995 square

⁴ See https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.act-yoursay.files/7915/4205/6764/Gungahlin_refresh_-_Snapshot_-_V27_-_ACCESS_WEB_READY.pdf

metres for community uses, identified for the Town Centre. The previous ILRP from 2020 included 72,000 square metres in Kenny for a new high school, and 6,837 square metres in Taylor.

TABLE 2: 2021-22 TO 2025-26 ILRP – GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT

	Total 2021-22 to 2025-26
Dwellings	3,937 dwellings
Mixed use (m2)	-
Commercial land (m2)	34,171 sqm
Industrial land (m2)	-
Community and non-urban land (m2)	8,995 sqm

Source: ACT Government, 2021.⁵

2.3 Parliamentary Agreement

The Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly of the ACT sets out a number of commitments that have been made around the delivery of community and recreational facilities across the city. For Gungahlin specifically, this includes:

- A new walk-in health centre in North Gungahlin between 2021-22 and the middle of the decade
- To commence construction on new high schools in Taylor and Kenny, and a new primary school in North Gungahlin.
- To build a Gungahlin tennis centre
- To deliver new community facilities at EPIC, potentially including a large multi-purpose indoor facility, and
- To build a new community centre in Gungahlin.⁶

2.4 Previous studies

Gungahlin Community Centre Feasibility and Options Draft (CCJ Architects, 2020)

This analysis, completed in early 2020, considered different options for the potential location of community facilities in the Gungahlin Town Centre. The analysis identifies the types of facilities that

⁵ See https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1870422/2021-22-TO-2025-26-Indicative-Land-Release-Program_FA2_access.pdf

⁶ Parliamentary & Governing Agreement, 10th Legislative Assembly Australian Capital Territory, https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1654077/Parliamentary-Agreement-for-the-10th-Legislative-Assembly.pdf

could be introduced into the Town Centre or relocated/expanded from their current locations, across a number of sites:

- Gungahlin College
- CIT Gungahlin Campus
- Gungahlin Library
- Indoor multi-purpose courts
- Swimming and family recreation centre
- Community space for not-for-profit organisations
- Accessible drop-in workspace with internet access
- Community meeting and social spaces
- Senior's club
- Regional health related facilities
- Enclosed oval, and
- Childcare facilities for not-for-profit providers.

Some of the existing issues with community facilities in the Gungahlin area include:

- That Gungahlin College is over its original capacity for enrolments
- Difficulties with the shared use of CIT and Gungahlin Library facilities with Gungahlin College
- Uncertainty around future plans for the expansion of the CIT over time
- That the original Gungahlin youth centre space is now used for expanded Communities at Work services, and
- That creative art spaces and not-for-profit venues for community health and well-being activities have not been provided.

The analysis in this report identified a long list of typical floor area requirements for different elements of the above facilities. This identified that **a space including two halls, drop-in computer space, multi-purpose rooms, a café, kitchen and appropriate storage and circulation would need around 1,020 square metres in total.**

The report also noted **the importance of having facilities co-located together to support each other.** Past experience suggests that facilities which are poorly located generally have less active community participation.

ACT Social Infrastructure Study Final Report (Urbis, 2019)

A Social Infrastructure Study was prepared for the ACT Government in 2019, which included analysis of the existing and potential future need for facilities in 2022 in the Gungahlin district including the Town Centre and immediate surrounding suburbs of Harrison, Franklin, Palmerston, Amaroo and Ngunnawal.

The study identified a total of 65 examples of social infrastructure in this catchment area at the time of the study, including one aged care facility, six community facilities, 32 educational facilities, one emergency services facility, four health facilities, 12 open space facilities, and nine places of worship.

The key findings from the study for the Gungahlin area included:

- **Demand for more arts and indoor recreation facilities, and**
- **Limited walkable access to facilities in some areas of Gungahlin due to spatial distributions.**

The study included recommendations to:

- Review the use of the Gungahlin Library
- Prioritise the provision of a community arts centre in East Gungahlin
- Review the existing provision of child care to determine the adequacy of the supply of places
- Improve the quality and connectivity of local open space
- Investigate opportunities for an indoor recreation facility in, or near an existing cluster of recreation facilities in the west of the Town Centre (around Gungahlin College, Gungahlin Leisure Centre and Gungahlin Oval), and
- Encourage and enable the provision of aged care and retirement living in the area to support ageing in place.

Planning for Indoor Facilities and Other Sport and Recreation Infrastructure (Otium Planning Group, 2018)

This study, prepared for ACT Sport and Recreation in 2018, considered the potential need for indoor sports facilities in Gungahlin, Belconnen and Woden respectively. In particular, the study considered the need for indoor basketball, futsal and gymnastics facilities.

For Gungahlin specifically, the study identified that it has a younger population (as measured by median age) compared to the rest of the ACT, which typically means higher demand for sport and recreation infrastructure.

Broader trends and factors in the provision of indoor sports facilities historically in Canberra were also noted, including that they are typically provided as larger, centralised venues rather than having numerous smaller facilities, with sports typically taking a strategic approach to where facilities are located, to best suit their key catchments and to service more than one district. This is also an important consideration in whether venues can be commercially sustainable. Consultation with relevant groups as part of the study identified a need for an easily accessible multi-purpose indoor sport and recreation facility for Gungahlin.

The study acknowledged this need in Gungahlin, but noted the financial challenges with providing this type of facility. **It was suggested that developing the shared use of indoor facilities in schools could be a more effective solution, such as partnering with a school or college to deliver a new venue for a minimum of two sports with complementary facilities**, such as a gymnastic training area, programming space, health and fitness, plus administrative and food and beverage space.

Desktop Review of Community & Recreation Facilities in Gungahlin (Land Development Agency, 2016)

In 2016, the Land Development Agency (now the Suburban Land Agency (SLA)) undertook a desktop analysis of the community and recreational facilities in the Gungahlin district, to identify the existing provision of facilities, gaps in provision, and facilities that would be needed in the future. The review considered input from ACT Government Directorates, planned future facilities, population projections,

and benchmarks based on desired standards of service in other jurisdictions (namely South East Queensland and growth areas in Sydney and Melbourne) to identify potential locations for future facilities (*noting that the benchmarks used in this review differ for some facilities from those that will be applied in the district-level assessment for Gungahlin*).

Many of the facilities identified were suggested for the newer suburbs (Jacka, Taylor, Moncrieff, Throsby, Kenny). Facilities that were noted as being needed for the district but were not allocated a specific suburb included:

- An indoor recreation facility
- A community theatre
- A government or non-government college
- A place of worship, and
- The opportunity to use school halls across the district for indoor sports and other community uses.

It is important to note this analysis was completed in 2016 – planning for many of these facilities across the district will have evolved and changed since then.

Planning for Community Facilities – East Gungahlin (SGS Economics and Planning, 2014)

A study prepared for the East Gungahlin precinct in 2014 considered the need for facilities in the suburbs of Harrison, Kenny and Throsby, including the need for child care centres, community activity centres, health facilities, places of worship, residential care accommodation and retirement villages, supportive housing, and community gardens and Men’s Sheds. This study was prepared in the context of the release of the Structure Plan and Strategic Assessment for East Gungahlin.

Noting that the context and planning for community facilities in the district will have evolved since the preparation of this study, the key findings included the potential need for:

- An additional long day care centre
- Meeting rooms, community halls or community activity centres in each of Throsby, Kenny and Harrison
- A medical centre with GP services and possibly allied services in Kenny, ideally co-located with shops
- Access to general community meeting places for religious uses, with further consideration of an additional site for a place of worship, noting trends in religious observance
- At least one residential aged care facility, and more over the longer term, and
- Other district-level facilities that would be needed for a population of over 60,000, best located in the Town Centre.

ACT Community Facility Needs Assessment – Central Canberra, Belconnen and Gungahlin (Leigh Cupitt and Associates, 2003)

A Community Facility Needs Assessment for the districts of Central Canberra, Belconnen and Gungahlin was prepared in 2003, with the intention to assist ACT Government agencies in planning for the provision of social infrastructure. This study included analysis of population and demographic changes,

trends in facilities provision, government policies, and consultation with facility users, to identify adequacy of land subject to a Community Facility Land Use Policy (CFLUP). The study noted that there is no single, definitive method to assess the need for all types of facilities, given the changeable and complex nature of community needs.

The key findings from this study included that:

- There was adequate CFLUP land for community purposes, given the range of facility types on the land use policy sites
- Despite this there was a need for land for residential aged care to be identified to meet the future needs of the population
- There was a need to review the CFLUP land allocation and leasing procedure to allow for flexibility in meeting community needs as they change, and
- A need for a whole of government approach to planning for social infrastructure.

Noting that this study was undertaken some time ago and before much of the district was developed, for the Gungahlin district it was identified that as the population grew, there would be a need for land to be set aside for aged care and arts facilities, and that co-location of uses should be encouraged alongside flexibility and adaptability. It was also noted that in addition to the Town Centre, smaller facilities in Local Centres would also be needed. Multi-purpose facilities were to be encouraged, with flexible designs and adequate storage space to cater to a range of users and outreach services. Other facilities noted as being needed for Gungahlin (many of which have since been delivered) included a health centre, religious uses, and child care centres.

Gungahlin Community Facilities Strategy Background Paper (Purdon Associates and Brian Elton & Associates, 1998)

A study prepared in September 1998 was undertaken to develop a community facilities strategy to inform the allocation and release of sites for community uses. The study noted that approaches to the provision of facilities were changing at the time, including increased focus on services as opposed to facilities, home-based service delivery, moves towards more professional management of facilities, and recognition of the financial constraints associated with operating facilities. Demographic changes, such as shifts in religious observance, increased cultural diversity, and smaller household sizes were also noted, with resulting opportunities and constraints for Gungahlin including that:

- To maximise accessibility, facilities should be located in the Town Centre
- Co-location of facilities requires sensitive design in relation to residential environments
- Some residents may have to travel further to facilities than in other districts, and
- The primary school may no longer be the main organising element within a suburb or neighbourhood.

The study recommended the following objectives for the community facilities strategy:

- To facilitate the effective and appropriate provision of services and facilities.
- To facilitate the efficient provision and use of community facility resources.
- To use the siting of community facilities to reinforce the role of the Town Centre in the life of Gungahlin residents.

- To use the siting of community facilities as a focus for local/neighbourhood activities in Gungahlin.
- To ensure that sufficient community facilities sites are identified as part of the planning process and reserved as various stages in the development process to meet anticipated and possible future requirements.
- To develop a transparent approach to the reservation of sites for community facilities.

Implications for Gungahlin

Strategic planning for Gungahlin (and the ACT overall) has recognised the importance of the need for community and recreational spaces. The previous studies concerning community and recreational facilities in the Gungahlin district have identified demand for some types of facilities to service the growth in the population – particularly in arts and cultural venues, indoor sports facilities, and multi-purpose community spaces.

Recent commitments made by Government recognise the need for some types of facilities, including a community centre for the Town Centre.

03

Trends and drivers in community and recreational facilities



3. Trends and drivers in community and recreational facilities

This section explores broader trends and drivers that may affect the demand for and use of facilities in future, including the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following sections summarise key trends, opportunities and challenges in the area of community and recreational facilities provision.

3.1 Community facilities

Challenge of limited land availability

As urban renewal occurs in existing highly developed areas, the availability of land and space to dedicate to single uses is becoming more limited. This includes community facilities. This is particularly an issue for facilities that require larger spaces and land areas, such as schools which typically require several hectares of space. Land costs are also typically higher in established locations, adding to the overall costs and economic viability of delivering facilities. Population growth and changing demographics also mean that a wider range of facilities and services may be needed to cater to an area's needs than may have been the case in the past, with limited scope to have individual facilities for each.

Best practice in this area is for a range of services to be clustered together, sharing existing and new spaces, and improving the quality of buildings and access to facilities.⁷ Clustering often occurs in established retail or commercial centres (such as the ACT's Town or Group Centres), in designated community precincts, or as part of mixed use developments. However, it is important to recognise that some groups will prefer not to be co-located with other community groups due to specific client groups needs or requirements. There are still many costs associated with the provision of new facilities, which mean that stand-alone facilities are less viable.

Co-location and integration

Community facilities are increasingly being integrated into mixed use precincts, including those which include housing.⁸ Co-location of complementary services and facilities is beneficial for community

⁷ See for example <https://www.landcom.com.au/assets/Publications/Statement-of-Corporate-Intent/95cff2c1fe/community-centre-guidelines.pdf>

⁸ See for example Green Square community and cultural precinct, Sydney, <https://news.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/articles/green-squares-new-cultural-centre-comes-to-life>; The Connection at Rhodes <https://www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/the-connection>; Community Hub and Library at the Dock, Melbourne's Docklands, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/hubs-bookable-spaces/the-dock/community-hub-the-dock/Pages/community-hub-the-dock.aspx>

members, as they are able to access a number of services in the one place. It can also encourage multi-purpose trips, where users can integrate visits to services with shopping and other trips without travelling as far. Co-location can also assist in facilitating referrals between different social services, and in delivering programs to the community (such as community services and programs that are run using rooms in public libraries).

The clustering of facilities around key centres can also be more cost effective for governments and providers, as they do not have to bear the costs of establishing and maintaining several buildings across a large geographic area. Issues to be considered include retention of space for community use, public access to the facilities and ongoing availability for community use if privately owned or managed. The Education Directorate in the ACT undertakes the design and operation of new school on the principle that the schools, where possible, will co-share their built and recreational facilities with their local community – in some suburbs, the public school may provide the only local community facilities.

Physical accessibility

As centres tend to be better served by public transport, having services clustered in one location can also improve accessibility for those who may not have access to private transport (including younger and older people who may not be able to drive), as frequent public transport routes tend to travel through major centres.

The growth of higher density living environments in the ACT is already changing how some types of facilities are provided. In addition to constraints on land availability (noted above), as more people begin to live in apartments where private space is less expansive and green space is more limited, the delivery and maintenance of open space and other community infrastructure becomes increasingly important – including in areas like the Gungahlin Town Centre with a population of apartment dwellers.

Intergenerational accessibility

As well as physical accessibility, recent times have as seen an increased focus on the importance of providing community facilities which can act as ‘intergenerational’ spaces – that is, they can accommodate and service activities for a variety of different groups and age groups. As well as efficiencies in the reduced need for additional and stand-alone facilities for different groups, intergenerational spaces are important in developing social capital in communities. Facilities such as community centres can be designed to include flexible meeting and other spaces that can then be utilised for a range of activities, and support both formal and informal interactions between different groups in the community.⁹

Consideration of needs of specific groups

At the same time as there is a focus on the provision of facilities that can be flexible, it is still necessary to understand that particular groups may have specific needs when planning for new facilities – such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, senior citizens, younger people, and multi-cultural

⁹ See for example, Hatton-Yeo & Melville, 2020, ‘Community Centres as Intergenerational Contact Zones,’ Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education, Penn State, <https://aese.psu.edu/extension/intergenerational/articles/intergenerational-contact-zones/recreation-centers>

communities. The demographics of a particular area will influence the need for such facilities in different areas, and more detailed engagement with individual communities may be required to understand and plan for needs at a local level. In the case of the Gungahlin district, these groups are likely to evolve over time, as the population shifts from a predominantly younger age cohort with young families to an ageing population with more people aged over 65.

Management of facilities

Another important aspect of community facilities is their management. Management of community facilities, in particular multi-user facilities ideally will have booking systems that are easily visible and accessible to community users, with on-site management allowing a more visible presence and direct management of facilities. Centralised, clear and consistent systems for accessing community facilities can assist in ensuring the community is aware of the spaces available and support their regular use.

Currently the availability of meeting spaces and halls in the ACT can be difficult to identify, as management responsibilities are spread across several different organisations¹⁰ who each have their own system for bookings and in some cases manage facilities located in disparate geographical locations.¹¹

Other important aspects of the management of facilities include the funding needed for ongoing management (whether undertaken by ACT Government or a non-government operator), maintenance and upgrades costs over the life cycle of a facility, and costs that can be associated with insurance requirements for both the facility operator and users.

3.2 Sport and recreational facilities

Changing patterns of use

The way that people engage in sports, recreation, and the use of open space is also changing. Research conducted in 2016 identified that more Australians have been engaged in social and less organised forms of exercise, such as walking, jogging, cycling, going to gyms and practicing yoga over the past 15 years than previously. The number of people playing competitive sports such as golf, tennis and cricket has declined. While only a third of all competitive sports have increased in regular participation since 2001, there are some competitive sports that are still popular. Soccer for example is the most-played competitive sport in Australia, with regular participants growing by 46 per cent in the 2001 to 2016 period.¹² This research also identified that the proportion of people aged over 14 who played one or more competitive sports regularly, dropped from 34 per cent to 26 per cent for men, and 20 to 14 per cent for women between 2011 and 2016.

“Overall, one in two Australians aged 14-plus regularly do some form of sport, fitness or heart-pumping leisure activity, which is unchanged since 2001 ... walking for exercise has also increased

¹¹ See for example Weston Creek Community Centre manages halls located in Weston, Flynn, Chifley and Holt <https://www.westoncccentre.org.au/room-hire/>

¹² Roy Morgan, 2017, ‘Aussies are losing their competitive spirit for sport,’ <http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7182-decline-in-competitive-sports-participation-australia-december-2016-201703200905>

over the period, to now being something almost half of us do regularly. Today almost 20 per cent of Australians don't participate in any other sport or fitness activity except walking."— Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research.

Similarly, a report published by Sport Australia as part of its regular AusPlay survey, also found that:

- Walking is the most common activity, followed by Gym/Fitness and swimming,
- National, State and local trends indicate a higher demand for open space that supports informal, unstructured recreational activities above competitive organised sport.¹³

While there is reduced participation in formal sport, overall population growth means there is still increasing demand for sport and recreation facilities which can cater to informal forms of participation or need to be flexible to cater to different sports. These can still require particular attributes, such as size, slope and shape of playing areas, limiting where they are able to be provided.

Barriers to participation

Participating in sport and recreation, and visiting open space, can provide a range of benefits which are well-documented. However, there remain a number of challenges that people face in accessing these opportunities and continuing to engage in sports and recreation in all stages of life. These include:

- That adults and children are increasingly time poor and are being inundated by new forms of entertainment.
- That people have new preferences for greater flexibility and informal sport and activities that can work around busy lifestyles and other priorities.
- That some people are discouraged by sports delivery that focuses on competition rather than fun or enjoyment, and there are perceived to be limited opportunities for people with less ability to join sports clubs, and
- That there is a level of self-consciousness among adolescents relating to their sporting ability.¹⁴

Other factors that can also inhibit participation include costs (such as club memberships or access fees) and the location and relative convenience of accessing facilities.

Land procurement

As is the case with community facilities, high land prices and demand for other land uses restrict opportunities to acquire new sites for sport and recreation facilities. In the ACT context, land for facilities is not generally purchased on the market, but rather sold at concessional rates. The provision of new sporting facilities, particularly in established environments, has the potential to create local land

¹³ SportAus, 2019, 'Australia's top 20 sports and physical activities revealed', September 2019, https://www.sportaus.gov.au/media_centre/news/australias_top_20_sports_and_physical_activities_revealed

¹⁴ Australian Sports Commission, 2013, 'Market segmentation for Sport Participation,' April 2013, https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/553766/14066_ASC_Market_Segmentation_Adults_FA_WEB.pdf

use conflicts. Because of their size, providing for sports facilities will often require forward planning to ensure that suitable sites are available in newly established areas.

Despite the challenge of land availability, urban renewal also provides an important opportunity to realise new sporting facilities to service the needs of both current and future residents. There can also be opportunities to repurpose existing or surplus infrastructure and land to deliver new facilities located on repurposed car parks, road reserves, and rooftops.

Financing open space infrastructure

Funding new infrastructure is also a challenge. Costs associated with the ongoing maintenance and operation of facilities is also a key issue in planning for new facilities – in some cases developers maintain responsibility for a period of time after a new development, though responsibility ultimately falls back on the ACT Government to maintain facilities over the long term.

3.3 Impacts of COVID-19

There have been a number of impacts on community and recreational facilities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The full and long-term effects from COVID-19 are yet to be seen and the situation continues to evolve. Some of the observed trends/impacts include:

- **Impacts on sports participation and physical activity.** How people engaged with sport and recreation while restrictions were in place changed significantly for both professional and local sports. Australian Sports Commission (ASC) research¹⁵ identified that children’s activities were more impacted than adults, and that purposeful engagement with physical activity generally increased with the onset of the pandemic
- **Increase in visiting parks and recreation areas.** Restrictions on indoor spaces saw more people using public open and green spaces.¹⁶ Given the proportion of medium and high density housing in central Gungahlin in particular, it is essential that access to green space is available across the community.
- **Changes to health facilities.** Impacts on health facilities have included the need for space to appropriately distance and implement infection control measures, and the need for other facilities (such as sports and entertainment venues) to be repurposed in times of emergency (as was done at

¹⁵ ASC, 2020, ‘Early impact of COVID-19 on sport and physical activity participation,’ October 2020, https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/975530/AusPlay-Focus-Early-Impact-of-COVID-19.pdf

¹⁶ ABS News, 2020, ‘Massive boost to outdoor exercise in Sydney’s green spaces during coronavirus, survey finds,’ 28 June 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-28/sydneys-green-space-use-booms-during-covid-19/12400104>

Garran).¹⁷ Many people have used telehealth services as replacements for physical appointments,¹⁸ though whether the use of telehealth remains popular over the long term is not certain.

- **Impacts on facility operations.** During lockdown periods, many community facilities have not been able to operate at all. Some types of activities moved online, though this was not possible for activities not as easily transferrable to an online medium. Social service providers and the libraries have been able to offer online methods to maintain some of their activities, such as parents groups meeting online, and streaming story-time and other programs online as an alternative to having in-person sessions. At times where there have been relaxed restrictions impacts have still included density limits, which can make it more difficult for some type of facilities (such as meeting rooms) to operate, as it is not necessarily viable or suitable without a certain number of people, plus additional administrative requirements (monitoring check-ins and so on).

3.4 The post-COVID environment

The positive shift in community attitudes towards green spaces is likely to drive usage, reinforcing the importance of neighbourhood parks.

As Australia and the rest of the world slowly emerge from lockdown, people may want to spend more time in public and green spaces,¹⁹ increasing demand for outdoor recreational facilities. The benefits of green spaces on people's mental and physical health are well-known.²⁰ The effects of COVID-related lockdowns have shown the importance of locating recreation and green spaces close to homes, particularly in higher density environments where private space for households is more limited.

People will likely want to return to activities from before the pandemic

People are also likely to want to get back to activities that they did before. Feedback from the consultation undertaken in early 2021 indicated strong demand for in-person activities and the use of community spaces. As noted above, there are many challenges for some activities to be done remotely/online, so there is always likely to be a need for spaces to accommodate community gatherings, particularly for those activities where in person contact is important – including health services and arts activities.

Increased use of online formats

Many forms of activity have pivoted to online formats to keep engaging with their communities and provide services through the lockdown, including health via telehealth services, religious gatherings,

¹⁷ HoK, 2020, 'What's Next for Sports and Entertainment Venues After the COVID19 Shutdown?', 1 April 2020, <https://www.hok.com/news/2020-04/whats-next-for-sports-and-entertainment-venues-after-the-covid-19-shutdown/>

¹⁸ ABS, 2020, 'Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey,' November 2020, released 12 December 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/latest-release#telehealth-service-use>

¹⁹ ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, 2020, 'Australians more positive about public green spaces', 14 December 2020, <https://www.icleioceania.org/icleioceanianews/2020/8/12/covid-19-green-space>

²⁰ Barton, J., & Rogerson, M. 2017, 'The importance of greenspace for mental health'. *BJPsych international*, 14(4), 79–81. <https://doi.org/10.1192/s205647400002051>

gym and fitness classes. Libraries ACT have also adapted to the new situation, with a significant increase in demand for digital resources through its online platforms, running programs online through Vimeo, and offering services for people who can't physically visit libraries.²¹ Consultation with Libraries ACT has also indicated that the library of the future will also be focusing more on providing access to digital technologies rather than just books and the traditional functions of a library service.

Investment in social infrastructure is key to post-COVID recovery

The pandemic has reinforced the importance of having access to social infrastructure in communities – in health facilities, but also in volunteer, cultural, local community and social organisations which have been crucial to supporting people through the lockdowns and times when connection to others was not physically possible.²² Providing adequate facilities and services to support this, including equitable access to community and recreational infrastructure which suits community needs, is likely to become even more important going forward.

Potential longer-term, wider scale implications and influences

Flow-on effects from COVID could also change how facilities need to be planned for. There is the potential reduced migration from border restrictions to affect the growth in the overall population and the distribution of populations between cities and regional areas. The sharp reduction in migration generally is likely to see the growth of the population slow substantially as well.²³

There will also be implications arising from fewer people emigrating overseas than would have been the case before COVID. Families that may have chosen to relocate will instead be staying in their local area, which has the potential to impact on the demand for local facilities and services. Similarly, the economic impacts of the pandemic may affect household spending habits, the services they access and how they participate in activities which have costs associated with them.

Feedback from the consultation suggested that there probably won't be wholesale changes to the way that community and recreational facilities are designed as a result of COVID – for example, doubling space requirements to allow for greater distancing between people is not going to be cost effective in most cases. Rather, going forward it will mean that there needs to be more attention given to how spaces such as entrances and exits are designed (such as allowing sufficient space for people to queue, including outdoors), and on having sufficient procedures in place for visitors to check-in. Small scale practical things will also need to be considered, such as having spaces for hand washing/sanitising and designing spaces that might typically be small (such as kitchenettes, reception desks, etc.) so that there is room for distancing without creating bottlenecks of people.

²¹ See <https://www.library.act.gov.au/functions/whats-new/whats-new-items/advice-relating-to-novel-coronavirus/questions-and-answers-about-libraries-act-and-covid-19>

²² Heather Nesbitt, 2020, 'The Increasing Value of Social Infrastructure in the New World of Post COVID-19 Renewal.'

²³ See Wright, 2021, 'Fewer migrants, babies: Population shrinks in year of COVID,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 March 2021, <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fewer-migrants-babies-population-shrinks-in-year-of-covid-20210318-p57bzm.html>

Overall, if there are future pandemics and the need for lockdowns, community facilities and organisations are also likely to be better prepared to transition to online formats and respond to changing restrictions.

3.5 Existing issues in Gungahlin

The consultation undertaken with stakeholders for this study identified areas where there are particular issues for Gungahlin in terms of the provision and demand for different types of facilities. The information gleaned through this process has been used to inform subsequent sections of this report, however, key themes that have emerged include:

- There is strong demand for general community spaces that can be used for regular smaller meetings for groups, such as playgroups and parenting groups which support young families, but also potentially for larger events and activities. Access to existing facilities is challenging, and there can be issues for groups with meeting the costs of hiring spaces.
- There is a community desire for more indoor sports facilities for the district.
- There is a need for youth-based spaces and activities, particularly given the demographics of the area and some existing issues with youth crime. Schools are also under pressure, particularly at the primary school level, because of the population growth, enrolment preferences and the timely identification of infrastructure needs to enable delivery.
- The provision of aged care may become more of an issue in future, as there are currently no aged care facilities in the district (with one planned facility announced as part of the Gold Creek Homestead Precinct),²⁴ and the population is expected to age over time. Providing for aged care is also important for maintaining family connections and supporting older people remain in their existing communities.
- Finding available suitable sites in the district for some types of facilities may be challenging, as some uses need large land areas (such as schools and sportsgrounds).

Implications for Gungahlin

There are a range of trends and drivers that may impact on the need for, and usage of community and recreational facilities in the Gungahlin district. The consultation has identified a range of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, the full effect of which is yet to be fully understood. However, it may mean that the design of new facilities, and use of old spaces, will need to consider new trends and requirements going forward.

Other trends, such as the casualisation of sports participation, and shift towards the provision of shared and multi-purpose venues, is already influencing the thinking and provision of many types of facilities.

²⁴ See <https://suburbanland.act.gov.au/en/gold-creek-homestead-precinct-development>

Key issues raised for Gungahlin include an existing deficit in the provision of some types of facilities, difficulties with accessing spaces due to demand, and limited land availability for new facilities in the district.

04

Demographics



4. Demographics

This section outlines the existing demographics of the Gungahlin district and considers the potential future population.

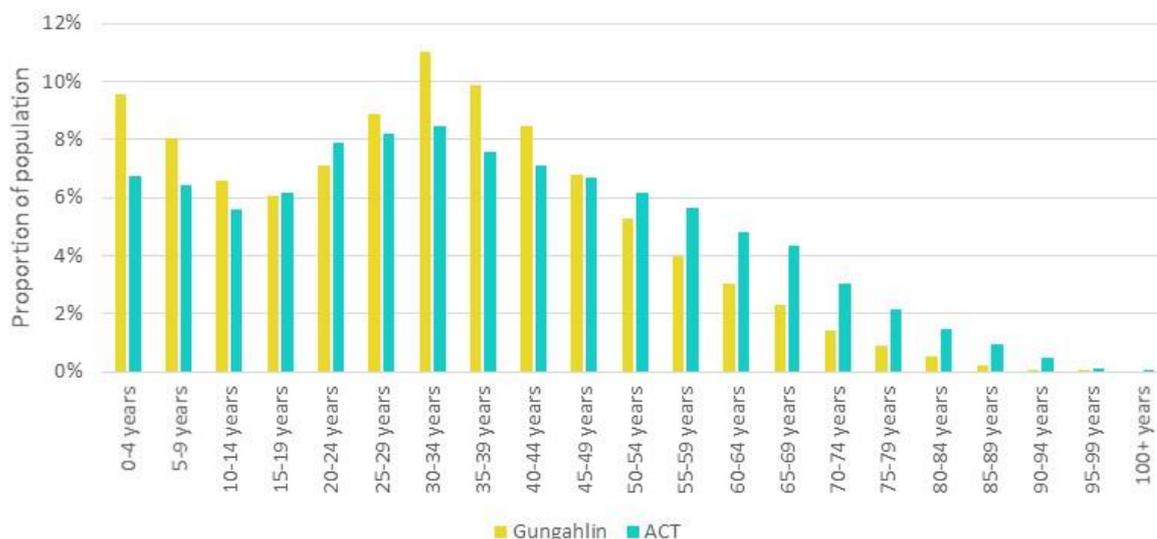
4.1 Existing population

The analysis below has been drawn from data from the 2016 ABS Census for the Gungahlin district.²⁵ More up to date data from the 2021 Census is expected to be released in June and October 2022. As of 2020, the ABS estimate of the population of Gungahlin was around 84,700 people.²⁶

Age profile

Figure 3 below shows the five-year age group profiles of the Gungahlin district and ACT. The two regions have somewhat different age group profiles, with the Gungahlin district on average being younger. This is consistent with the fact that the district has been a growth area for the past two decades, which tends to attract younger families and households. As such, the age profile is dominated by population in the 0-4, 5-9, 25-29, and 30-34 age groups. In comparison, the ACT has relatively lower shares of younger age groups and higher shares of elderly age groups (aged 50+) with a more established population.

FIGURE 3: AGE PROFILE – GUNGAHLIN AND ACT, 2016



Source: ABS 2016 Census

²⁵ Gungahlin Statistical Area 3 (SA3) as defined by ABS geographies.

²⁶ ABS, 2021, 'Regional Population Growth,' 2019-20 financial year, released 30 March 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/2019-20#data-download>

Country of birth

As of 2016, around 62 per cent of the population in the Gungahlin district was born in Australia and 33 per cent overseas. The proportion of population born overseas is notably higher than for the ACT overall, of which 28 per cent of the population were born overseas. Table 3 compares the top five regions for residents born overseas between the Gungahlin district and the ACT. The predominant countries and regions appear to be somewhat similar, but Gungahlin has relatively higher shares of residents born in Southern Asia and Chinese Asia.

TABLE 3: TOP 5 REGIONS OF BIRTH (2-DIGIT LEVEL) – GUNGAHLIN AND ACT, 2016

Gungahlin	
Region of birth	Proportion of population
Southern Asia	8.6%
Chinese Asia (includes Mongolia)	5.8%
United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man	2.8%
Maritime South-East Asia	2.3%
Mainland South-East Asia	2.3%
ACT	
Region of birth	Proportion of population
Southern Asia	4.5%
United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man	3.9%
Chinese Asia (includes Mongolia)	3.4%
Maritime South-East Asia	2.2%
Mainland South-East Asia	1.6%

Source: ABS 2016 Census

Indigenous status

As of 2016, around 1.3 per cent of the Gungahlin district population identified as Aboriginal (Table 4). The proportion was lower than ACT, where 1.5 per cent of the population identified as Aboriginal.

TABLE 4: INDIGENOUS STATUS – GUNGALHIN AND ACT, 2016

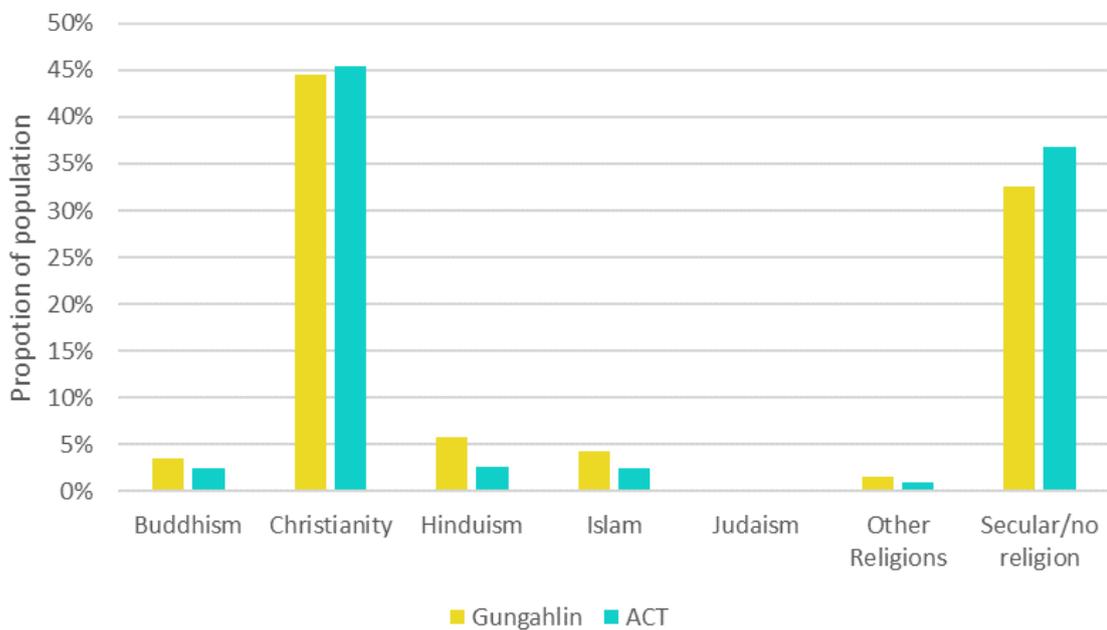
Indigenous status	Gungahlin	ACT
Non-Indigenous	94.4%	93.3%
Aboriginal	1.3%	1.5%
Torres Strait Islander	0.0%	0.0%
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ABS 2016 Census

Religious affiliation

Figure 4 below illustrates that the Gungahlin district has a slightly lower concentration of affiliation with Christianity than the ACT, although Christianity remains the most common form of religious affiliation in the district. The Gungahlin district also has higher shares of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and other religions, compared to the ACT, driven by the larger proportions of South Asian and Chinese Asian born residents. Although the proportion of residents in the district with no religious affiliation is also high (around 33 per cent), it is lower than for the whole ACT (around 37 per cent).

FIGURE 4: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION – GUNGALHIN AND ACT, 2016



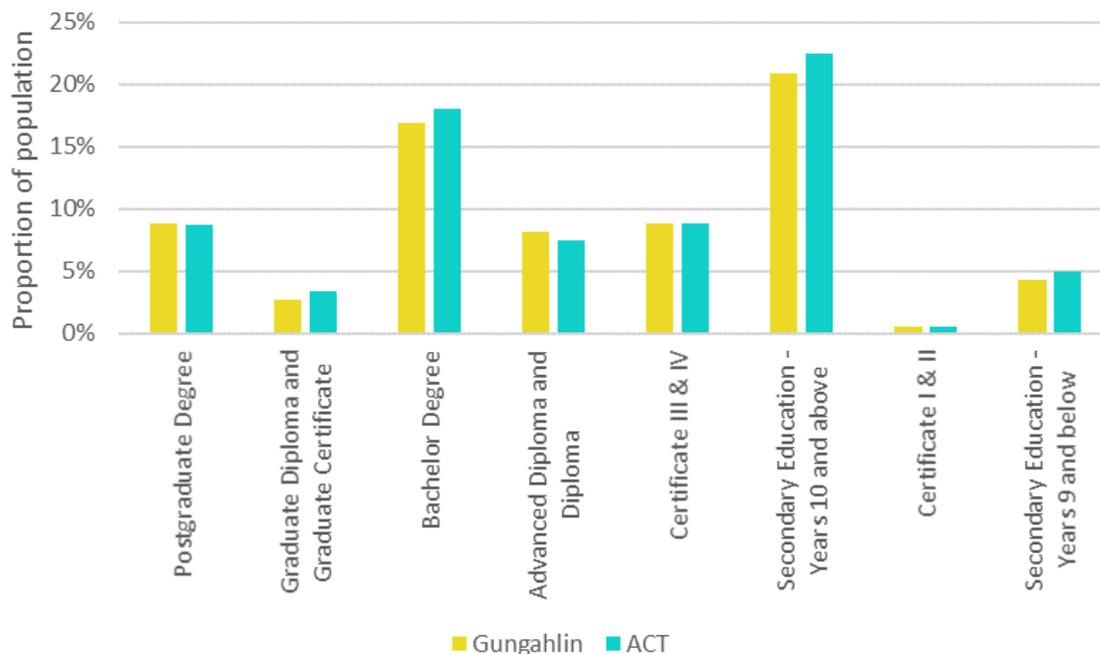
Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Highest level of educational attainment

Figure 5 below shows the educational attainment profiles for the Gungahlin district and the ACT, which are fairly similar. Overall, the most common form of educational attainment for both the district and the

ACT is full secondary education (Year 10 and above), followed by Bachelor Degrees. Gungahlin has a slightly higher proportion of people with Postgraduate, Advanced Diploma and Certificate III and IV qualifications compared to the rest of the ACT.

FIGURE 5: HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Need for assistance

As of 2016, around 2.5 per cent of Gungahlin district residents indicated that they needed assistance with daily core activities, which was much lower than the ACT (4.2 per cent). As the Gungahlin district has a higher concentration of young families and a younger population, there is less demand for assistance in core activities.

TABLE 5: NEED FOR ASSISTANCE – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016

Core Activity Need for Assistance	Gungahlin	ACT
Has need for assistance with core activities	2.5%	4.2%
Does not have need for assistance with core activities	92.7%	90.1%

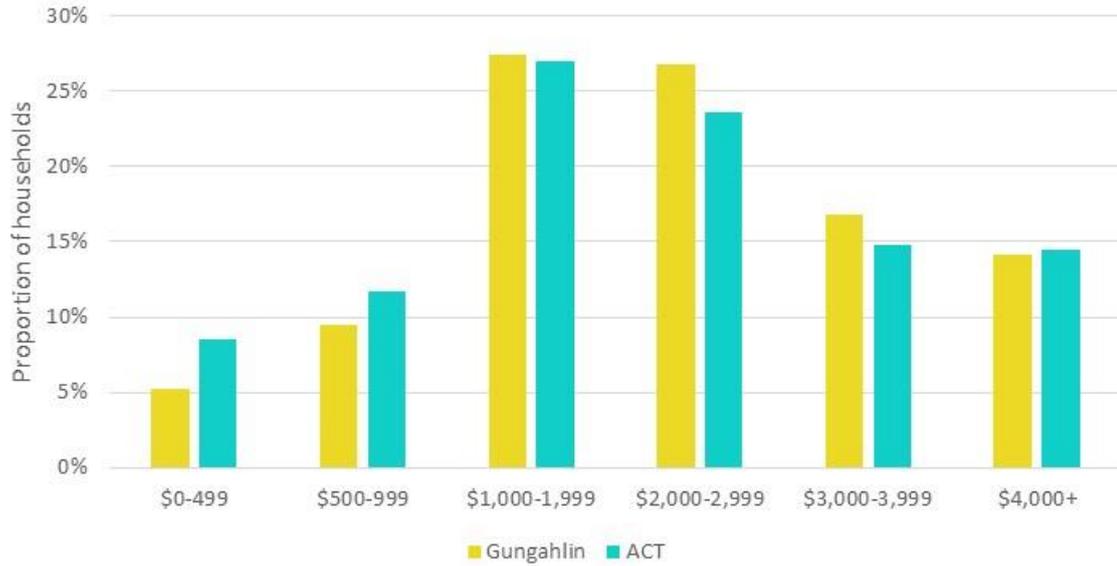
Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Weekly household income

Household income profiles are largely associated with educational attainment profiles. Higher qualifications are often linked to higher income and vice versa. Figure 6 shows the distribution of weekly household income ranges for the Gungahlin district and the ACT. By comparison, the district has higher

proportions of households earning medium (\$1,000-\$2,999) to higher incomes (\$3,000+ per week) and lower proportions of households earning low income (\$0-\$999).

FIGURE 6: WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME – GUNGALIN AND ACT, 2016

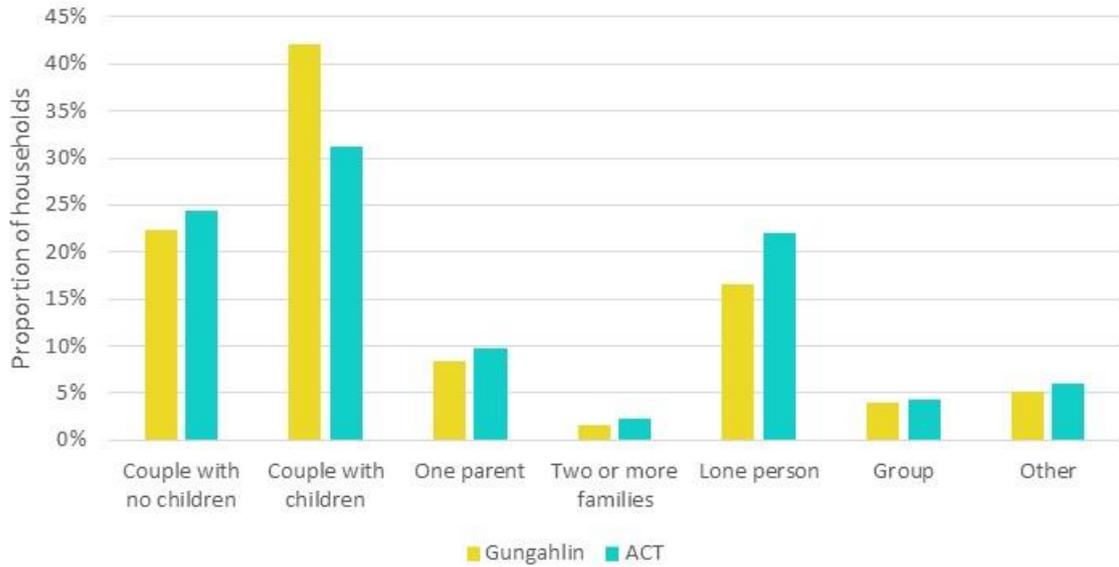


Source: ABS 2016 Census

Household types

Figure 7 below compares the household compositions for the Gungahlin district and ACT. The Gungahlin district has a notably higher share of couples with children compared to the ACT, and a lower share of lone person households. The trends align with the district’s age profile noted earlier, with the predominance of younger families and comparatively fewer older people and retirees who often live in single person households.

FIGURE 7: HOUSEHOLD TYPES – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016

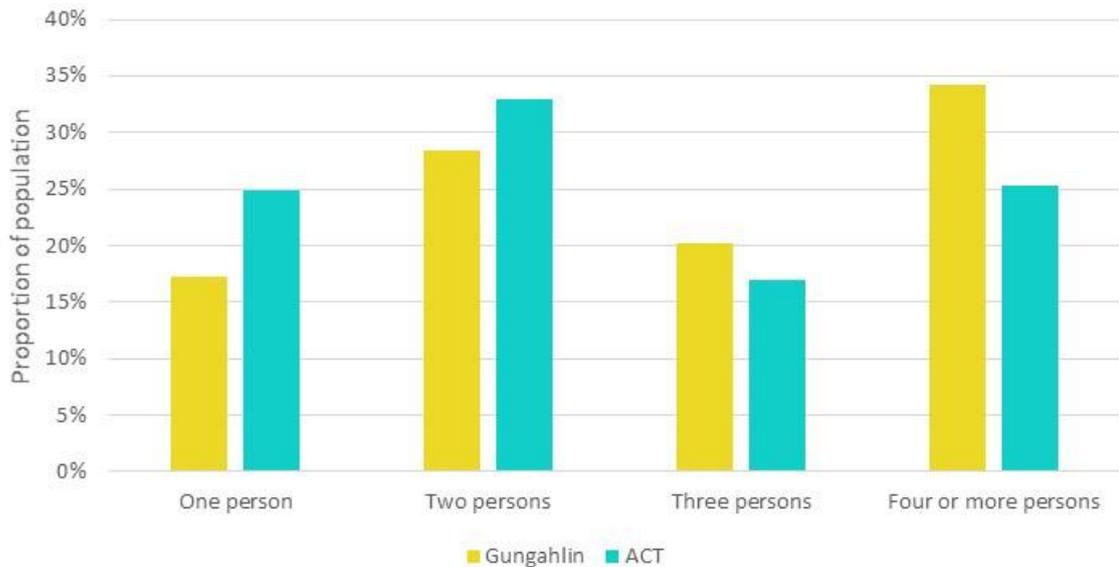


Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Household size

The average household size in 2016 for the Gungahlin district was 2.7, which is higher than the ACT average of 2.4. Higher average household sizes often indicate higher concentration of families with children. Figure 8 below shows the household size profiles for Gungahlin and ACT. The shares of three persons and four persons households are particularly high in the Gungahlin district, compared to the ACT, where the dominant household size is less than two persons.

FIGURE 8: HOUSEHOLD SIZES – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016

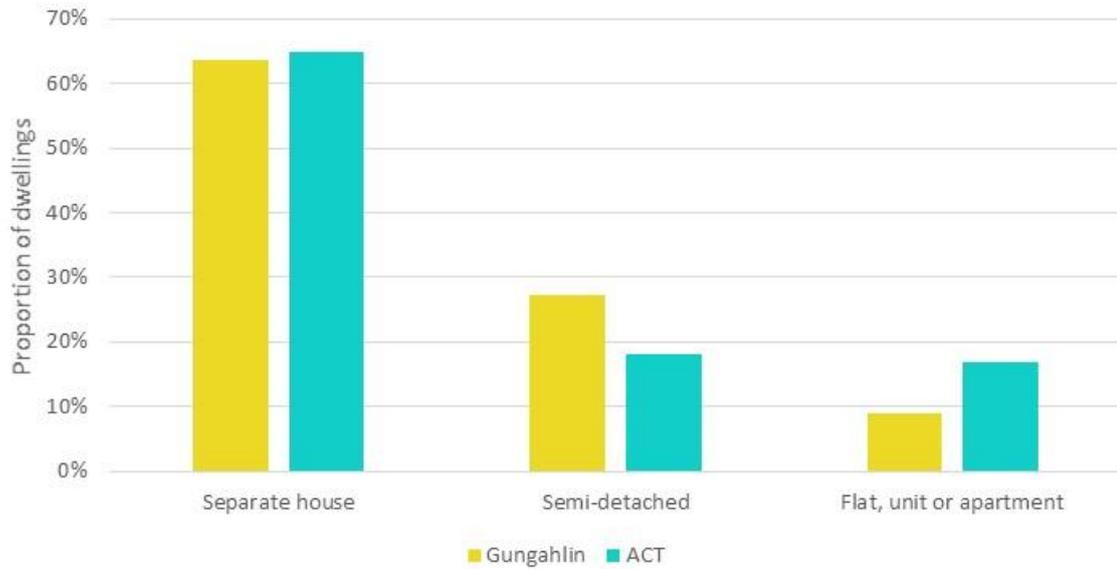


Source: ABS 2016 Census

Dwelling types

The vast majority of dwellings in the Gungahlin district as of 2016 were separate houses, as shown below in Figure 9. However, Gungahlin has a higher proportion of semi-detached dwellings compared to the ACT, but a lower proportion of flats/units – though this will potentially have increased since 2016 with the recent increase in apartment buildings being developed around the Town Centre.

FIGURE 9: DWELLING TYPES – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016



Source: ABS 2016 Census

Tenure

Figure 10 below shows that the Gungahlin district has a higher proportion of households with a mortgage compared to the ACT, likely reflective of the new residential development seen over the past decade. Newly established areas tend to have higher proportions of home ownership and lower proportions of renters. The prevalence of lower density housing also generates a different ownership profile to more central areas with apartment dwellings, which are generally targeted to investor/renter markets.

FIGURE 10: TENURE TYPE – GUNG AHLIN AND ACT, 2016

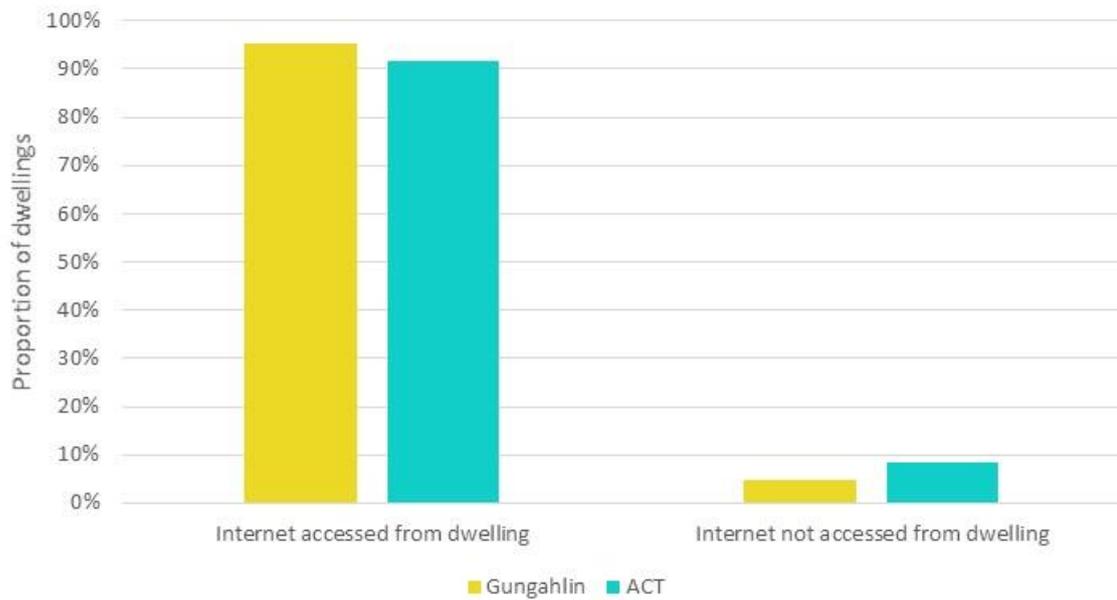


Source: ABS 2016 Census.

Internet access

Figure 11 below illustrates the proportion of dwellings in the Gungahlin district with access to the internet as of 2016. The proportion for the district overall (95 per cent) is slightly higher than the ACT (92 per cent), potentially because Gungahlin has a high proportion of recently completed dwellings that are often equipped with internet connections. It is important to note however, that there are varying levels of access to internet across different parts of the Gungahlin district. While around 95 per cent of the dwellings in most parts of the district have access to internet, there are areas such as Hall (88 per cent) and Palmerston (92 per cent) that have slightly lower level of access by comparison.

FIGURE 11: INTERNET ACCESS – GUNGAHLIN AND ACT, 2016



Source: ABS 2016 Census.

4.2 Future population

There have been a number of impacts on population growth as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the full and long-term effects on Canberra’s future population unclear. The 2021-2022 ACT Budget Outlook noted that:

“Population growth, one of the key drivers of economic and employment growth, and demand in the housing market, has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated public health restrictions. The drivers of population growth include natural increase (births less deaths), international migration and interstate migration. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted each of these drivers of population growth differently. Importantly, national border restrictions have significantly lowered international migration estimates for the ACT. The ACT’s population is expected to grow by ¼ per cent over 2020-21 and 2021-22, primarily due to a forecast decline in net overseas migration. ... ACT Economic Outlook Population growth is expected to increase to one per cent in 2022-23 and stabilise at this rate in 2023-24 and 2024-25. This is below the ACT’s long run historical average population growth rate of 1¾ per cent.”²⁷

Notwithstanding the current uncertainties, the population of the Gungahlin district will likely increase in the short to medium term with planned housing development in land release areas.

For the purposes of this assessment to understand the potential need for future facilities, draft population projections developed for the ACT have been used which take into account potential COVID-

²⁷ ACT Government, 2021, ‘Budget 2021-22 Budget Outlook,’ p.30, https://www.treasury.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1870136/2021-22-ACT-Budget-Outlook.pdf

19 impact on population growth. These projections will need to be reviewed with the release of more detailed and up to date data from the 2021 Census.

Implications for Gungahlin

As it has been a growth area for the last two decades, the demographic profile of the Gungahlin district has generally been younger than the rest of the ACT, with a large proportion of younger families and a higher proportion of people who have moved from overseas. The population of the district is likely to continue growing in the short term, with the development of the final suburbs in the north and Kenny, before the rate of growth may slow.

While the rate of growth will slow over the long term, like the rest of Australia, Gungahlin's age profile will likely shift to an older population. This will have implications for the types of facilities that will be needed to meet Gungahlin's needs – in the short term the district will need facilities for younger people, but over time facilities for older people will need to be provided.

05

Existing facilities in the district



5. Existing facilities in the district

This section summarises the existing community and recreational facilities in the Gungahlin district.

5.1 Method and data sources

The existing facilities in the Gungahlin district have been identified through:

- A desktop review of information available online
- Use of ACT Government spatial data and other data (where available)
- Consultation with relevant stakeholders, including ACT Government Directorates.

The audit has sought to identify relevant information where possible for each facility, including its location, key features and uses, floorspace areas, age and fit for purpose status, key user groups, and usage patterns and existing demand pressures. This information has been used as an input into the demand assessment in Section 6.

Facilities included in study

What counts as community and recreational facilities can mean different things to different people. In consultation with EPSDD and for the purposes of this study the following types of facilities have been included in the analysis:

- Libraries
- Schools – public and non-government (independent/Catholic Education)
- Childcare centres
- General community facilities – hubs, centres, halls, meeting rooms and so on
- Community health facilities (i.e. not private GPs – see below)
- Aged care
- Arts and cultural facilities
- Targeted facilities – youth and senior centres, religious facilities
- Aquatic facilities
- Indoor sports facilities
- Outdoor sports and recreation facilities
- Open space, and

- Community gardens.²⁸

Some types of facilities were excluded as follows:

- **Emergency services** – planning for emergency services is undertaken at the ACT level by the Emergency Services Agency (ESA), with facilities often servicing catchments larger than the district level.
- **Licensed clubs** – these have previously been considered as community facilities, however, because they operate as commercial entities, and planning and regulation around clubs now largely rests with the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, they have not been considered within this assessment.
- **GP medical centres** – private medical centres are sometimes included in community needs assessments, however, in this case the focus has been on community/ACT Government facilities. Private medical clinics generally operate as commercial enterprises, and can be located within commercial zones, so do not require specific sites to be set aside for them.
- **Fitness centres** – similarly, fitness centres and gyms are typically provided by private sector, with their provision influenced by a range of market factors. These types of facilities can also be located within commercial zones.
- **Retirement villages** – retirement villages have not been included in the assessment as these types of facilities are typically private residential developments targeted at older people, as opposed to residential aged care facilities (i.e. nursing homes, assisted living) which provide additional care services for residents. Their provision is also permissible in a range of zones and not exclusively within Community Facilities zoned land.

5.2 Existing and planned facilities

The following sections summarise the current and planned future facilities in the Gungahlin district. A list of the facilities identified below is provided at Appendix A.

Libraries

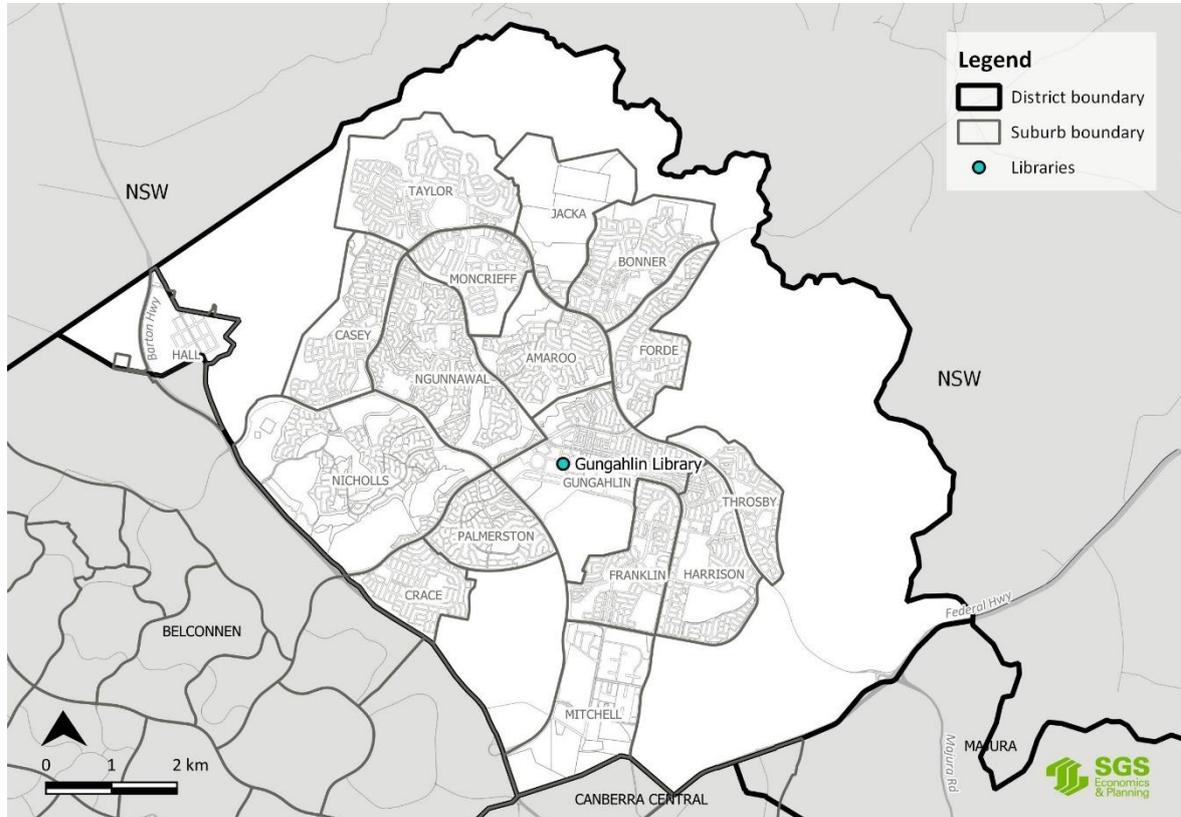
There is one existing ACT Government library in Gungahlin – the Gungahlin Library located in the Town Centre on the western end of Hibberson Street (shown below in Figure 12). The library has around 3,100 square metres of floorspace in total, with two 20 square metre meeting rooms, two training rooms of approximately 50 square metres, and two conference rooms of over 100 square metres each. The Library also provides internet access through 15 computer stations, and is co-located with the Gungahlin College and CIT campuses. The Library was opened in 2011 and compared to the older library facilities in the ACT, has been designed to allow for more programming and activities.

Gungahlin Library is the ACT's second most-used library (behind Woden). Peak times for demand include mornings on weekdays (popular with older age cohorts) and Saturday when there are often programs run for families. As noted above, when COVID restrictions were in place the Library's programs were not been able to run. The Gungahlin Library also has strong relationships with a number

²⁸ This is consistent with the types of facilities considered for Community and Recreational Facility Assessments undertaken for EPSDD for the Belconnen and Woden districts in 2020.

of social service providers in delivering programs. Libraries are also important locations for vulnerable community members, including those who don't have access to the internet at home – a key disparity emphasised by the pandemic.²⁹

FIGURE 12: EXISTING LIBRARIES, GUNGALHIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

The co-location of the Library has presented some practical challenges for operations. Due to the growth in enrolments of the College, the Library's two downstairs conference rooms are currently being used by the school. This has affected the number and range of activities that the Library can offer and reduces available community space and meeting areas by around 200 square metres.

There are no plans for additional library facilities in the Gungahlin district, as the current Library has been designed to function as a regional library and accommodate a population of 100,000 people. However, the library is not currently able to deliver a full range of public programs and services due to pressure on available public meeting space resulting from Gungahlin College.

²⁹ Harris, Marshall & Weiner, 2020, 'Design Ideas for the Post-Pandemic Public Library,' <https://www.gensler.com/research-insight/blog/design-ideas-for-the-post-pandemic-public-library>

Arts facilities

The Gungahlin district does not currently have any dedicated arts facilities. As noted above, this lack of facilities has been raised as an issue previously.³⁰

The closest large arts facility is the Belconnen Arts Centre (aka Belco Arts), which runs the Gungahlin Arts program. This is a three-year program for pop-up arts programs and events in the district.³¹ A community survey was undertaken in 2019 by Belco Arts for Gungahlin residents, and identified that people are most interested in opportunities to view art, improve artistic skills through workshops/classes, and for young people to engage with the arts.³² Comments in the survey noted the lack of spaces for art classes, and exhibition performance spaces. Performance spaces in the area are currently limited to the theatre at Gungahlin College.

Consultation with ArtsACT and the convenor of the Gungahlin Arts program has confirmed that there is a need for some forms of arts space in the district particularly for making/creating and rehearsals of performing arts, but that this wouldn't necessarily need to be a stand-alone or dedicated facility. Given the type of demand in the district, any new arts facilities should target community-based arts practice, rather than professional artists or trying to duplicate the types of specialist facilities that are available in other parts of the ACT.

There are no specific plans for a dedicated arts facility for Gungahlin, however there have been discussions previously around the inclusion of arts spaces as part of the potential Gungahlin Community Centre.³³

General community facilities

The Gungahlin district has a range of different community spaces, including community centres and halls which can accommodate a variety of groups and events, including Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Centre, Palmerston Community Centre, Gungahlin Homestead, Forde Community Centre, Nicholls Community Hall, and the Hall Pavilion. Some of the sites are owned by the ACT Government and leased out and operated by community and not-for-profit groups.³⁴ Other sites are owned and managed by groups such as the Scouts (Birralee Scout Hall). Within the Gungahlin town centre Communities@Work also have hireable rooms.³⁵ This means that there is currently no centralised booking system for accessing community spaces or meeting rooms in Gungahlin. Some of the licensed clubs in the district also have meeting room spaces that are available for hire, though these can be less affordable for community groups.

Government schools within the district also provide access to some community meeting spaces such as halls and meeting rooms (see Table 10 below).

³⁰ Consultation with stakeholders including Gungahlin Community Council, Belco Arts; see also previous studies considered in Section 2.4.

³¹ See <https://www.belcoarts.com.au/gungahlin-arts/>

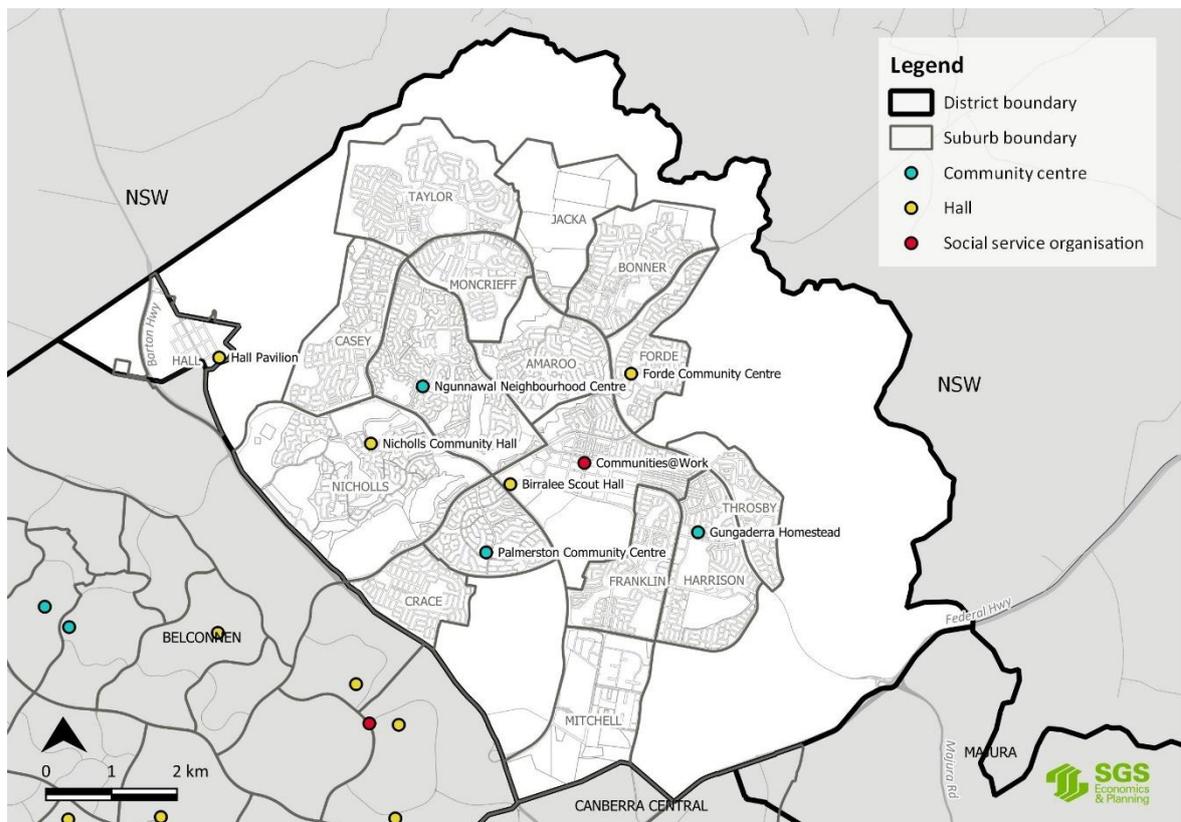
³² Gungahlin Arts Community Survey, results provided to SGS by Belco Arts.

³³ Consultation with ArtsACT and Belco Arts.

³⁴ Currently Forde Community Hall is at full capacity and will not take casual/private bookings due to recurrent community group hirers <https://mulligansflat.org.au/forde-community-centre-venue-hire/>

³⁵ See <https://www.commsatwork.org/services/community/room-hire-service/>

FIGURE 13: EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES, GUNGAGHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

The building which currently houses Communities@Work was originally the Gungahlin Community Centre. The expansion of service providers into spaces that were initially intended for general community use has been noted as an issue in other parts of the ACT as well. As noted above, the consultation has identified that there are currently demand pressures for community spaces in Gungahlin³⁶, and the costs of hiring spaces is also an issue for some groups.

Groups which have lodged applications for spaces with ACT Property Group are typically smaller organisations who are not looking for very large spaces – generally up to 200 square metres. However, many organisations also require access to storage space and kitchenettes.³⁷

The only new planned facility with general community spaces identified for the district is the future Gungahlin Community Centre.

Schools

Planning for schools in the ACT is undertaken by the Education Directorate and is based on a range of factors, including projected demographic changes and enrolment forecasting developed in collaboration with the ANU School of Demography. Development of new suburbs and corresponding

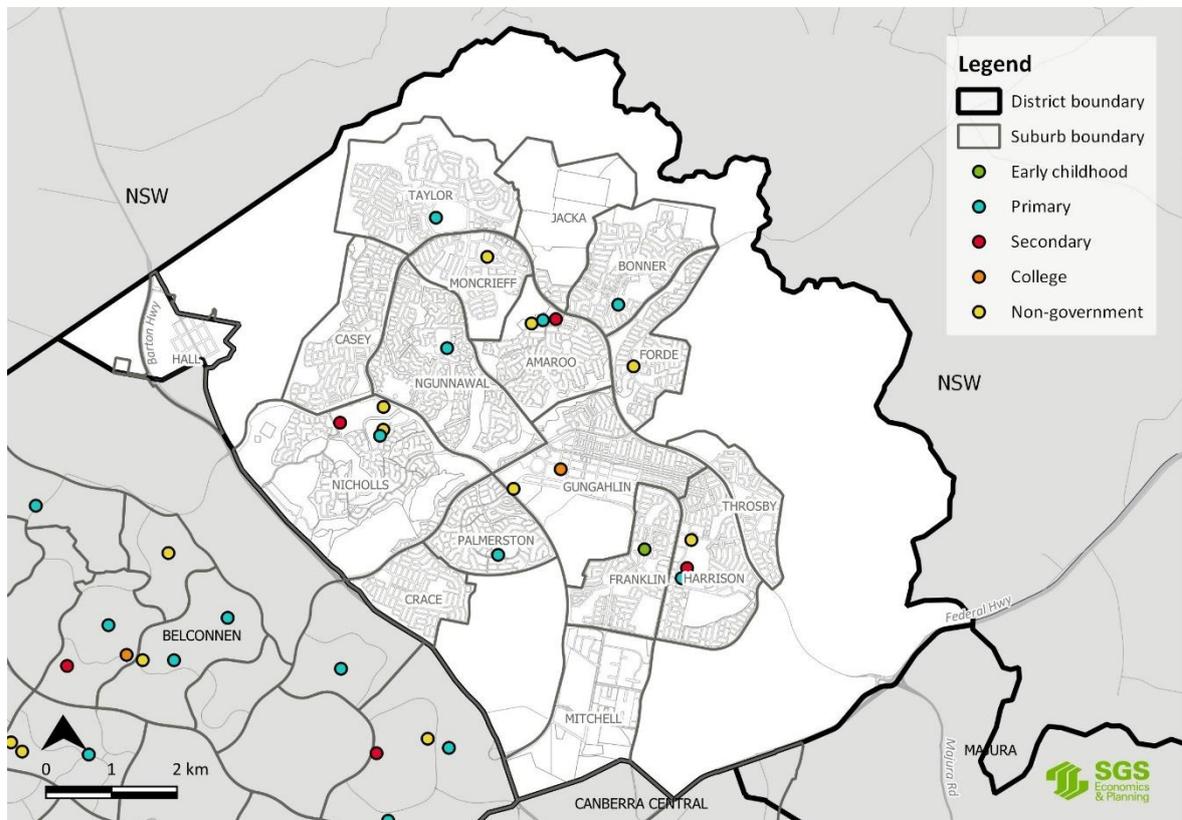
³⁶ See previous footnote on Forde Community Hall being at capacity and not capable of receiving new bookings

³⁷ Extract of Application Register, provided by ACT Property Group.

population growth within the Gungahlin district, as well as an increase in affiliation towards public education, has significantly increased the residential population and created enrolment pressure for schools.

Enrolment policy, including Priority Enrolment Areas (PEAs), are used to guarantee students places at their local school, minimising unnecessary out of area enrolment to preserve capacity for in-area demand. In the last few years changes have also been made to policies for enrolments for NSW students which direct enrolments of NSW residents to ACT schools with available capacity to accept them. Many of the 12 public schools in the Gungahlin district are operating at high levels of utilisation, and a number of schools have additional, planned or temporary infrastructure and classrooms to respond to growth in enrolment demand.³⁸

FIGURE 14: EXISTING SCHOOLS, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021, based on ACT Government spatial data.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have implications for school enrolments, as more people may choose to stay in Canberra for longer while international travel is restricted. The Education Directorate is continuing to monitor the potential impacts of COVID-19 on public school enrolments.

³⁸ Data provided by the Education Directorate.

Public primary schools

There are currently eight public primary schools in the Gungahlin district. Given the number of public schools within the district, there are some Priority Enrolment Areas (PEA) shared between suburbs.

Table 6 shows the existing enrolments (as of February 2021). Consultation with the Education Directorate has highlighted that some of the primary schools are seeing more enrolment pressures than others. In particular, the Palmerston District Primary School, Ngunnawal Primary, Amaroo School and Margaret Hendry School are experiencing substantial pressures, with demand expected to grow as the northern part of the district is built out. Enrolment policy is in place to support demand management across the region as well as infrastructure responses (planned or underway) to respond to enrolment growth and capacity pressure (see Planned Facilities section below).

TABLE 6: PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, FEBRUARY 2021

	P	K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Amaroo School P-6	126	105	98	144	156	154	155	156	1,094
Franklin School EC - 6	123	96	74	65	49	46	33	-	486
Gold Creek School P-6	119	94	91	88	83	82	72	72	701
Harrison School P-6	128	150	162	163	165	150	171	188	1,277
Margaret Hendry School P - 6	129	118	112	79	48	37	47	32	602
Neville Bonner Primary School P-6	151	103	125	122	115	102	89	88	895
Ngunnawal Primary School* P-6	148	121	91	98	82	80	87	67	774
Palmerston District Primary School** P-6	127	121	128	123	100	90	92	82	863

Source: ACT Education Directorate, 2021.³⁹ *includes Ngunnawal Koori Preschool enrolments. **includes Palmerston IEC enrolments.

³⁹ ACT Education Directorate, 2020, 'Census of ACT Schools February 2021,' https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1780848/ACT-Schools-Census-February-2021.pdf

Public high schools

There are currently three public high schools catering for years 7 to 10 in the Gungahlin district, these are located in Amaroo, Nicholls and Harrison. Gungahlin College mainly provides for years 11 and 12 students, however it also includes a small cohort of year 10 students.

Table 7 below shows the existing enrolments for secondary school years within the district as of February 2021. Amaroo and Harrison schools are experiencing the greatest enrolment pressures among the secondary schools currently. New and expanded high schools are planned and underway to provide relief for areas with capacity pressure (see Planned Facilities section below).

TABLE 7: PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, FEBRUARY 2021

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Total
Amaroo School 7-10	239	212	233	180	864
Gold Creek School 7-10	130	146	144	138	558
Gungahlin College	-	-	-	23	23
Harrison School 7-10	169	147	164	156	636

Source: ACT Education Directorate, 2021.

Public colleges

Gungahlin College is the only public college within the Gungahlin district, and consequently is experiencing significant demand pressure. A PEA Share Zone enables Gungahlin-based students to seek enrolment at Dickson College should they wish to. The Government has also committed to delivering additional northside college capacity, with planning work underway.

TABLE 8: PUBLIC COLLEGE ENROLMENTS, FEBRUARY 2021

	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Gungahlin College	556	580	1,136

Source: ACT Education Directorate, 2021. *Note: Gungahlin College also caters to Year 10 students – see Table 7 above.

Non-government schools

There are currently six non-government schools in the district, located in Gungahlin, Forde, Amaroo, Nicholls and Harrison. Most of these are primary schools, with Burgmann Anglican School and St John Paul II College catering to both secondary and college students. Table 9 below shows the current (February 2021) enrolments for each of these school.

TABLE 9: NON-GOVERNMENT ENROLMENTS, FEBRUARY 2021

Primary school	P	K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Burgmann Anglican School (Forde and Valley campuses)	42	98	103	111	112	111	111	112	800
Good Shepherd Primary School	-	111	107	113	104	105	103	101	744
Holy Spirit Primary School	105	111	111	109	105	104	94	104	843
Mother Teresa School	106	97	102	100	113	100	87	109	814
High school and college	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total		
Burgmann Anglican School (Forde and Valley campuses)	112	112	138	139	127	114	742		
St John Paul II College	199	201	200	194	98	63	955		

Source: ACT Education Directorate, 2021.

Planned public schools

The ACT Government has committed investment to provide additional public educational infrastructure within the Gungahlin district to accommodate current and future school enrolment demand.⁴⁰ This includes opening of new schools and increasing the capacity of existing public schools in response to enrolment growth and capacity pressure. Planned new schools within the district include:

- The Throsby School – capacity of 450 students and 132 pre-school students, which opened in 2022. The school also offers out of school hours care.
- New High School in East Gungahlin (Kenny) – capacity of 800 students, planned to open in 2023.⁴¹
- A new high school in Taylor is planned to open in 2024 – capacity of up to 800 students.

The following schools will also see expansions to their capacity:

- Amaroo senior campus – increasing capacity by 200 students.⁴²
- Gold Creek senior campus – increasing capacity by 200 students.

⁴⁰ See <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7108954/act-government-pledges-274-million-to-gungahlin-education-infrastructure/?cs=14225>

⁴¹ See <https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2019/july/two-new-schools-for-gungahlin>

⁴² See <https://the-riotact.com/more-details-for-extra-schools-in-gungahlin-released/398905>

- Franklin School expanded for students from pre-school to year six in 2022.⁴³
- Margaret Hendry School will be expanded by up to places in 2023.

Planned non-government schools

The K-6 Islamic Taqwa School that was formerly in Spence recently relocated to a site in Moncrieff.⁴⁴ There are no current proposals for additional non-government schools in the Gungahlin district as at February 2022.

School facilities available for community uses

Table 10 shows the school facilities in the Gungahlin district that are also available for community use outside school hours. These spaces provide for a variety of community activities across the district, including outdoor sports and recreation, religious and general meeting uses and arts and performance spaces. Facilities which will be delivered as part of new schools in the district are also shown.

TABLE 10: SCHOOL FACILITIES IN GUNGAHLIN AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY USE

School	Facilities available for hire
Amaroo School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unakite room - Multi-purpose area next to hall - Hall - Gymnasium (2 indoor courts) - Outdoor recreation – 2 x tennis courts, 3 x basketball courts, 2 x netball courts
Franklin School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hall - Community coordinator room - <i>Additional facilities expected in 2022 as part of expansion:</i> - <i>Gymnasium (single court)</i> - <i>Outdoor recreation – 2 courts</i> - <i>Synthetic playing field</i>
Gold Creek School (Primary Site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-Purpose Environment Centre – classrooms and science laboratory - Outdoor recreation – 2 courts
Gold Creek School (Senior Site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classrooms (includes canteen/ kitchen, craft room and laboratory) - Library - Music/ theatre - Gymnasium (2 indoor courts) - Outdoor recreation – 4 x tennis courts, 2 x basketball and 2 x netball courts

⁴³ See <https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2019/july/two-new-schools-for-gungahlin>

⁴⁴ Information provided by Education Directorate.

Harrison School P-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dance studio - Gymnasium (2 indoor courts) - Canteen Area (includes luncheon area, food preparation area & servery) - Hall - Performing Arts building – band room, drama stage & three large performing areas (senior campus) - Outdoor recreation – 2 x basketball/netball courts, 2 x tennis courts
Margaret Hendry School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basketball and netball courts - Multi-purpose area - Gym
Neville Bonner Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hall - Library - Multi-purpose area - Learning areas - Outdoor recreation – sports field, basketball/ netball court
Ngunnawal Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study rooms & audio-visual room - Hall (include canteen) - Outdoor recreation – basketball court
Palmerston District Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hall - Library - Classrooms - Multi-purpose building (includes kitchenette and x2 classrooms) - Outdoor recreation – covered basketball court
Gungahlin College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performing Arts Building (dance studios, practice rooms, large theatre and lecture theatre) - Gymnasium/ Hall (2 indoor courts) - Library (also open to the general public) - Outdoor recreation – 5x synthetic surface courts combination basketball/ netball/ futsal/ tennis & open grassed playing surface
Facilities at planned new schools	
The Throsby School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Double gyms and external courts - Multi-purpose area
New High School in East Gungahlin (Kenny)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Double gyms - External courts - Multi-purpose area - Playing field - Hall

New High School in Taylor

- Double gyms
- External courts
- Multi-purpose area
- Performing Arts space

Source: Education Directorate, 2021.⁴⁵

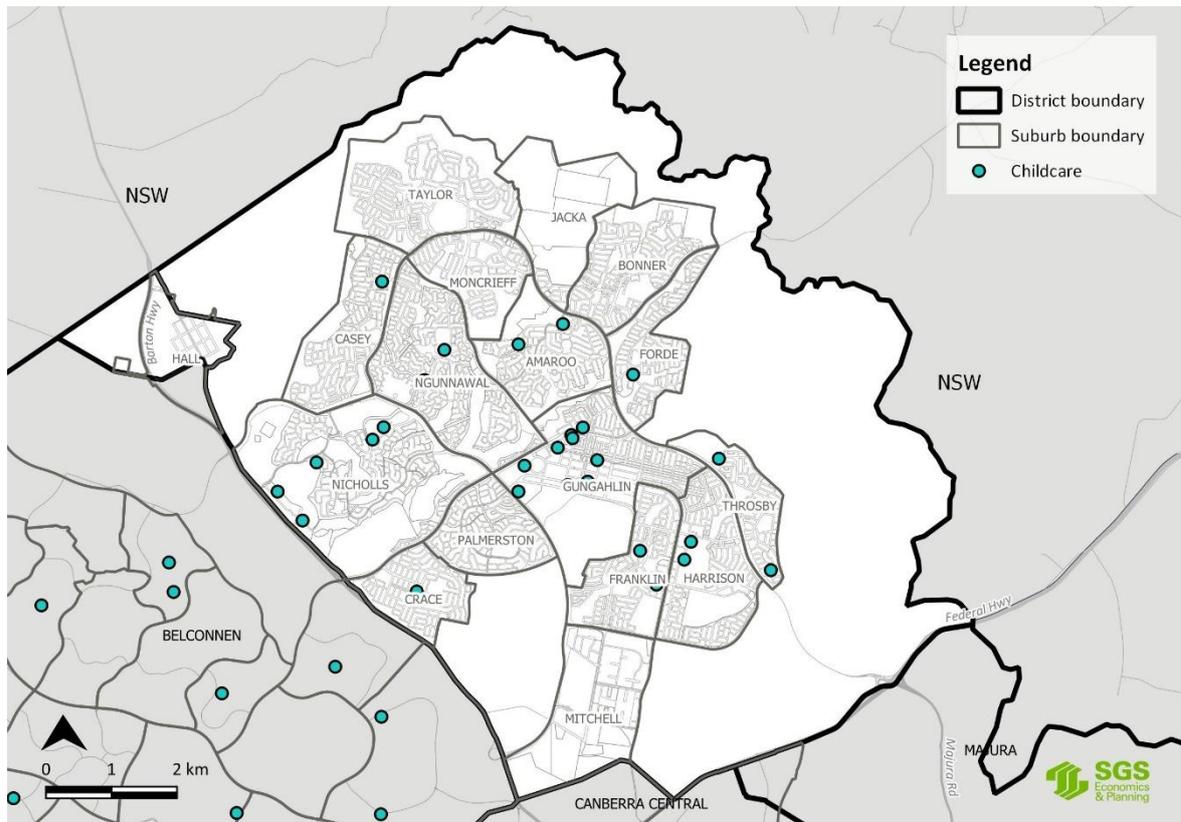
There is significant demand for access to school facilities, particularly in the Gungahlin area with demand exceeding availability of assets. While community use is managed at the individual school level there is limited ability to make strategic decisions about use of facilities and prioritise groups. The Education Directorate is planning to trial an expression of interest (EOI) process for the allocation of space to community groups wishing to access facilities at the new Throsby School. Space will be allocated to community groups that are able to demonstrate that they meet a need in the immediate community and/or are a community group most in need of space. The Education Directorate is also currently reviewing the related community use policy, procedures and fee structure.

Education and care

There are currently around 27 long day care centres operating in the Gungahlin district, some of which are operated by ACT Government (noting that other forms of education and care are also offered at preschools in the district). A large proportion of the long day care centres are operated by private providers. There are a further 10 education and care centres under construction or with development approval. The centres are dispersed quite widely across the district, though there are no facilities in the most northerly suburbs as yet. The existing centres are fairly large, accommodating an average of 105 approved places, likely reflecting a high level of demand due to the younger population in the district.

⁴⁵ See <https://www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/school-facilities-for-community-use>; additional information provided by Education Directorate

FIGURE 15: EXISTING EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRES, GUNGAGHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

Education and care centres are somewhat driven by market factors, and can be located in areas other than community facilities zoned land. As such, they don't necessarily require land to be set aside specifically for them, however they do have size requirements including around the provision of associated outdoor play spaces. Stakeholder consultation suggested that the current provision of facilities is meeting demand.

Community health facilities

The community health facilities in the Gungahlin district are concentrated within the Gungahlin Town Centre, excluding the Ngunnawal Child Health Clinic (see Figure 16 below). At present, the Town Centre facilities include the Gungahlin Community Health Centre, Walk-in Centre, and the Child and Family Centre. Consideration of a new Walk-in Centre for North Gungahlin by the ACT Government has also been announced,⁴⁶ and site investigations are underway.⁴⁷

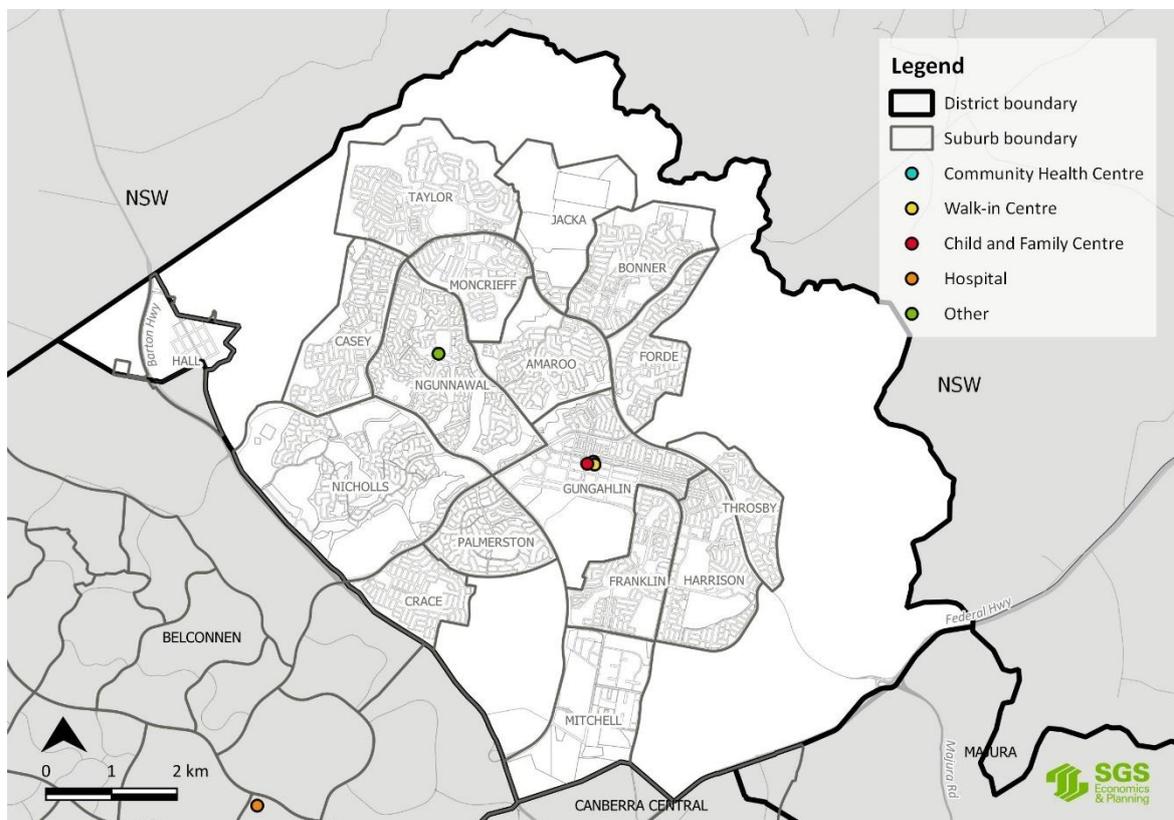
Calvary Public Hospital Bruce, and the University of Canberra Hospital are the closest public hospitals to the Gungahlin District. Canberra Hospital provides trauma services and most major medical and surgical sub-specialty services for the ACT and region. The ACT Government has committed to the construction

⁴⁶ See <https://canberraweekly.com.au/five-new-walk-in-health-centres-to-ease-pressure-on-overrun-emergency-departments/>

⁴⁷ Information provided by ACT Health.

of a new Northside Hospital, with careful planning and consideration currently occurring, including consultation with Calvary Public Hospital and the Little Company of Mary.⁴⁸

FIGURE 16: EXISTING PUBLIC COMMUNITY HEALTH FACILITIES, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

Aged care

There are currently no identified residential aged care facilities in the Gungahlin district. There is one retirement village – the Grove at Ngunnawal – however like other retirement villages which take the form of private housing targeted to older people, this does not provide residential aged care services. The closest nearby facilities are in suburbs such as Kaleen and Lyneham. The 2019-20 ILRP identified two sites for release as aged care, located in Ngunnawal and the Town Centre respectively.⁴⁹ There is also proposed to be a facility as part of the Gold Creek Homestead Precinct, which is expected to deliver around 100 aged care beds.

Consultation with stakeholders noted that there will likely be significant demand for housing for older people going forward in the medium to longer-term, as the existing population begins to age.

⁴⁸ See <https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/planning-future/northside-hospital-services-scoping-study>

⁴⁹ See p.10 https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1370652/2019-Indicative-Land-Release-Program.pdf

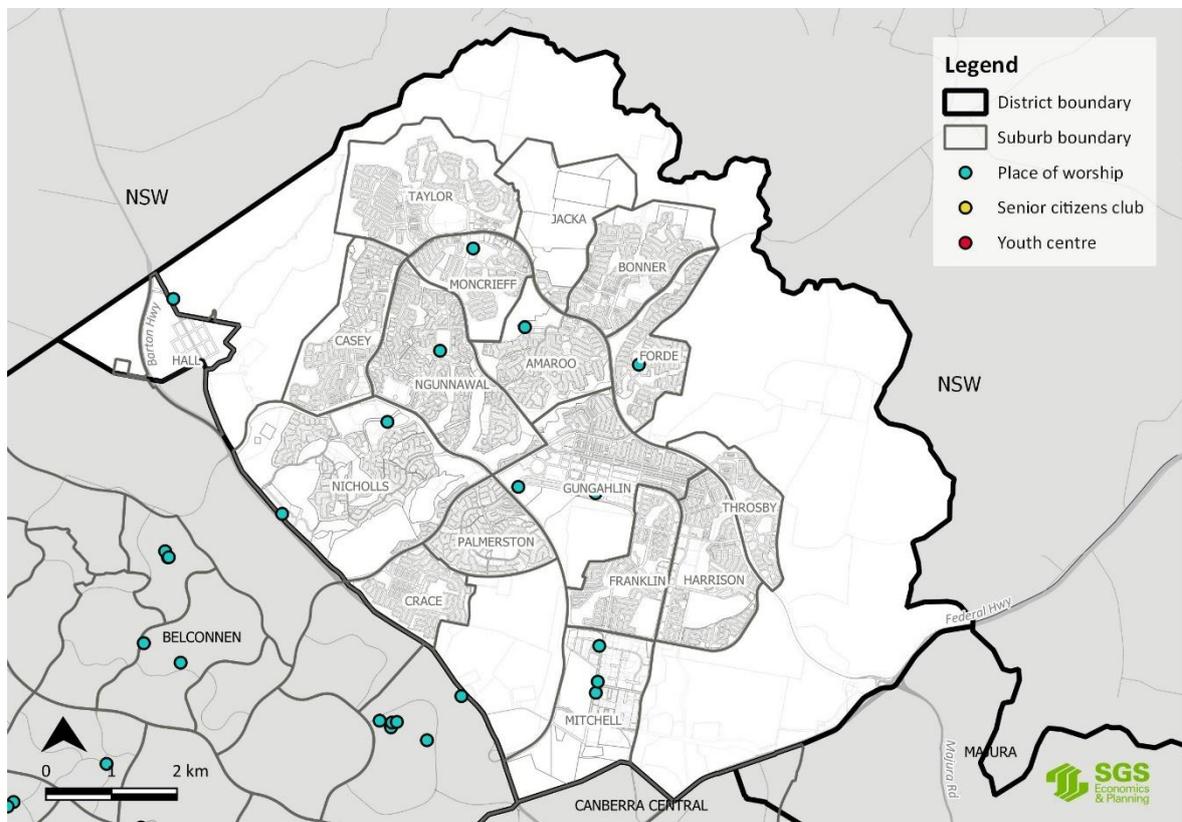
Anecdotally, older people are wanting to stay in the district to be close to family, but options for retirement living are relatively limited.

Targeted facilities

There are no facilities targeted specifically for seniors or young people within the Gungahlin district. Programs for youth are run through other facilities in the district, though, as noted above, accessing general community meeting spaces is difficult. Space originally intended for a youth centre in the Gungahlin Town Centre is currently being utilised by expanded Communities@Work services.⁵⁰

Within the district there are several facilities that support religious activities, that are generally dispersed throughout the district. In addition, two new Hindu temples are planned in Gungahlin and Moncrieff respectively.⁵¹

FIGURE 17: EXISTING TARGETED FACILITIES, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

⁵⁰ See CCJ Architects report for ACT Government, 2020 'Gungahlin Community Centre Feasibility and Options Draft Report'

⁵¹ See <https://mygungahlin.com.au/traditional-hindu-temple-planned-for-booming-gungahlin/6174/>, and <https://gcc.asn.au/our-future-gungahlin-hindu-temple/>

No other specific targeted facilities are planned. There have been discussions previously between providers and the ACT Government around the potential for a youth-based centre but no firm plans have been made to date. The consultation identified a particular need for facilities to support youth-based activities in the district.⁵² Barnardos, Northside Community Services and Multicultural Hub Canberra, have recently established a youth drop-in space (“Gunners Place”) in one of the office spaces at the Gungahlin Marketplace, which has been offered to them temporarily while the shopping centre expansion gets underway.⁵³

Aquatic facilities

There are three existing swimming facilities in the district. Two of these are private learn to swim schools located in Nicholls and Forde respectively, these 20-metre pools are also open for public swimming at certain times. The third is the Gungahlin Leisure Centre in the Town Centre, adjacent to Gungahlin College. The Leisure Centre has a 50-metre indoor heated pool, a smaller program pool, and is co-located with gym and other facilities. The 50-metre pool is currently undergoing rectification works and is not available for use.⁵⁴

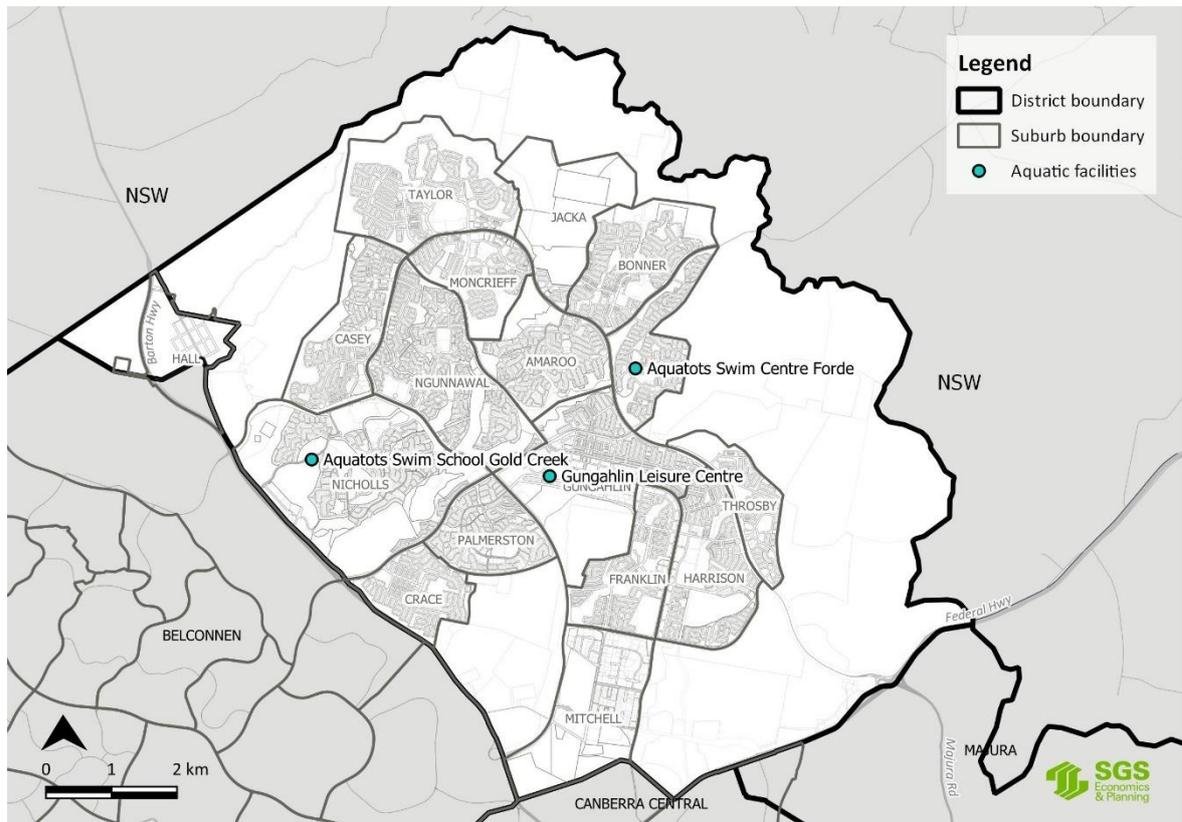
The next closest district-level facilities are located in the Belconnen district, with the AIS pool and Canberra International Sports and Aquatic Centre (CISAC). The Dickson pool is also relatively close for some parts of Gungahlin (though as an outdoor pool it is only open for part of the year), as is the private pool as part of the Next Gen Health Club in Lyneham.

⁵² Information from consultation with stakeholders.

⁵³ See <https://gcc.asn.au/gunners-place/>

⁵⁴ The ACT Government was expected to engage a contractor to rectify the issue in March 2021, see Fuller, 2021, ‘Open by summer? Gungahlin Pool no longer snookered,’ 2 March 2021, <https://canberraweekly.com.au/open-by-summer-gungahlin-pool-no-longer-snookered/>

FIGURE 18: EXISTING AQUATIC FACILITIES, GUNGALHIN DISTRICT



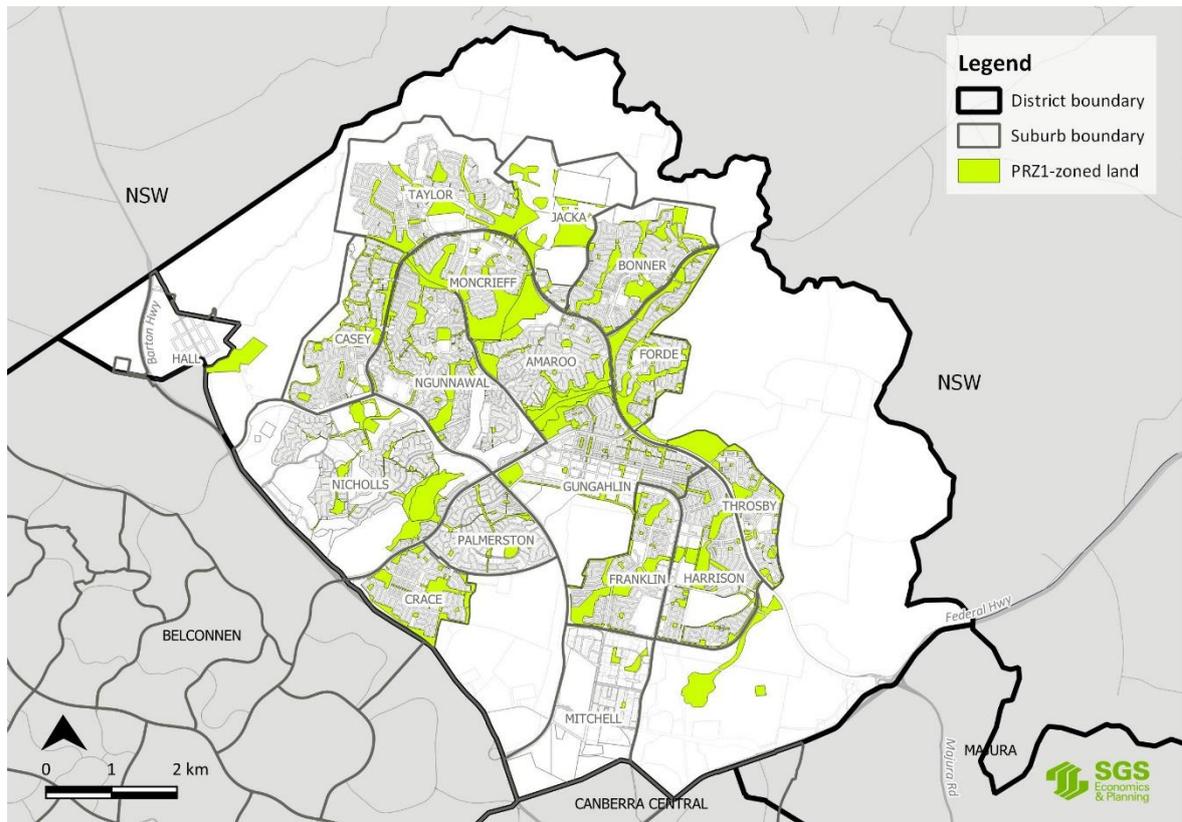
Source: SGS, 2021.

Consultation identified that the two swim schools are currently over-subscribed and that there is significant demand for swimming lessons given the younger demographics of the district. The operator of the existing facilities has indicated in the past that a third facility may be viable given the level of demand. Any consideration to provide an additional learn to swim facility in Gungahlin will be a matter for the private sector to consider, as provision is driven by market factors and can be located in areas other than community facilities zoned land.

Open space

In addition to outdoor sports facilities, the Gungahlin district also has access to parks and passive open spaces. Figure 19 below shows the location of land which is zoned PRZ1 Urban Open Space Zone within the district. Across the district there is around 824 hectares of land zoned for open space.

FIGURE 19: EXISTING PRZ1 LAND, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT

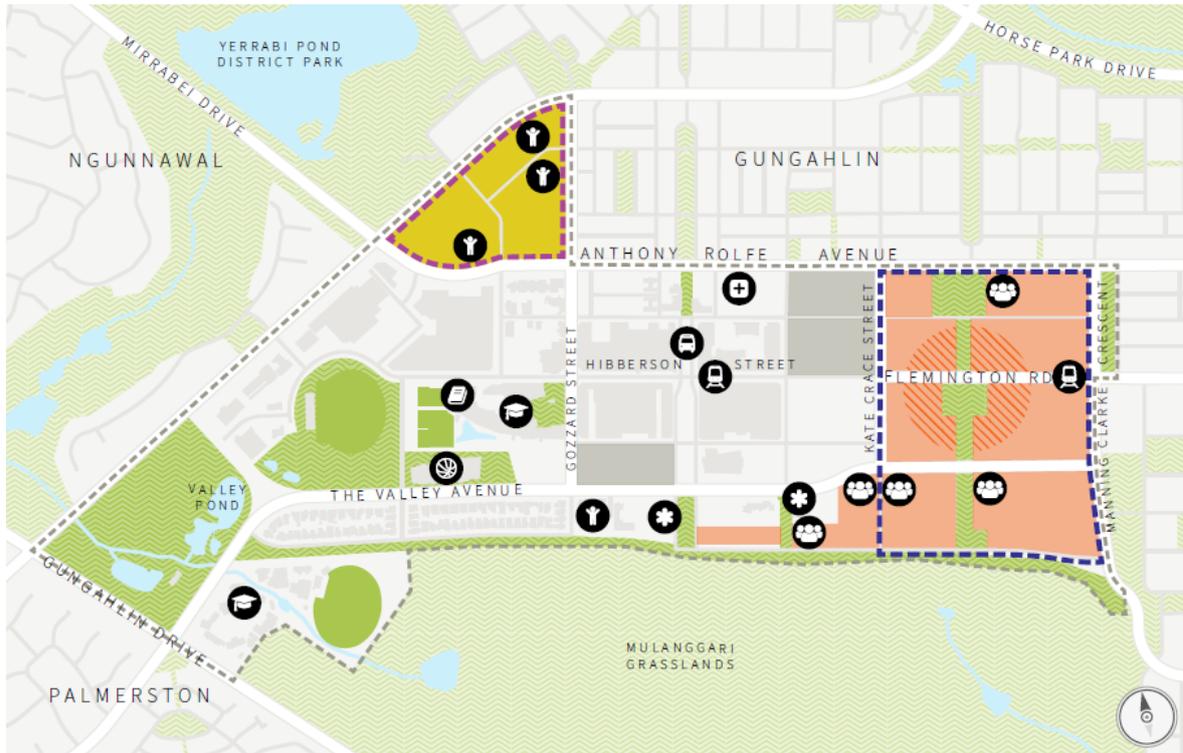


Source: SGS, 2021.

Currently, there is limited formalised or developed open space within the Gungahlin Town Centre. The ACT Government has developed plans for a linear park, located on the eastern side of the Town Centre (see Figure 20 below), as part of the changes proposed under Territory Plan Variation 364. While the Mulangarri Grasslands Reserve is close by to the Town Centre to the south and covers a large area (currently zoned NUZ3 – Hills, Ridges and Buffers), there are restrictions on its usage for recreational purposes, due to the presence of endangered species and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Issues concerning open space raised in the stakeholder consultation included the quality and how usable many of the open spaces are, and suggestions that it would be better to have a smaller number of parks that are higher quality and maintained to a higher standard (preferred over having a large number of small spaces that aren't well-maintained).

FIGURE 20: COMMUNITY FACILITIES, GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE



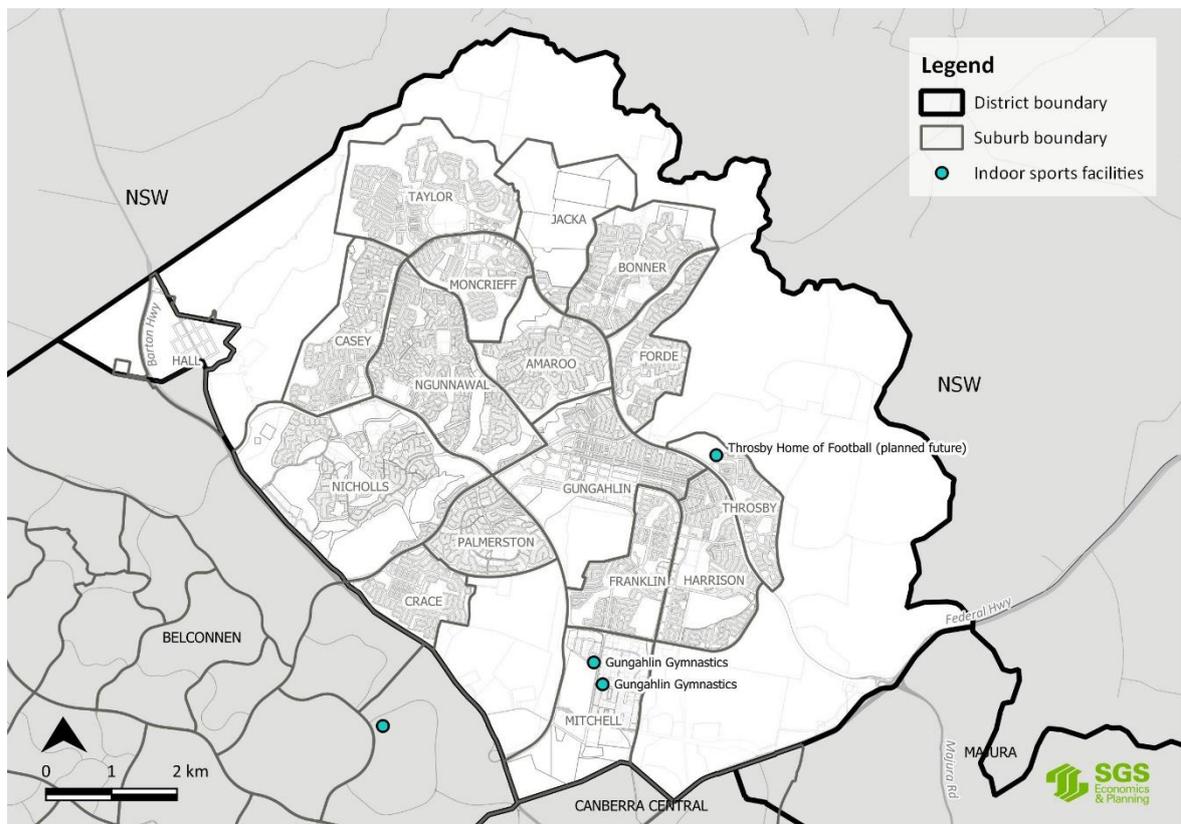
LEGEND	
	Study area
	Urban residential precinct
	Gungahlin east precinct
Land Use	
	Urban residential and mixed use
	Office employment and retail mixed use
	Mixed use residential and commercial incl. community use
	Community facilities location subject to future investigation
	Territory Plan identified locations for community facilities
	Gungahlin bus station
	Light rail station (under construction)
	Education
	Library
	Indoor recreation
	Health centre
	Child care
	Religious

Source: ACT Government, 2018

Indoor sports facilities

There is an identified need for more indoor sports facilities within the district, which was reinforced by the stakeholder consultation. There are currently two indoor sports facilities both used for gymnastics and provided by the private sector in Mitchell. While most indoor sports facilities in the ACT are commercially owned, some ACT public school facilities (i.e. gymnasiums) are also available for community use outside of school hours for indoor sports – noted above in Table 10 (not shown in map).

FIGURE 21: EXISTING INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT (EXCLUDING SCHOOL FACILITIES)



Source: SGS, 2021.

There is demand for particular types of indoor sports, linked to the demographics of Gungahlin, such as badminton. ACT Badminton currently uses school facilities, such as at Gungahlin College and Amaroo High School.⁵⁵ As noted above, the design of new school facilities has taken into account aspects that will assist in making the school facilities more suitable for use by sports such as badminton. High school gymnasiums generally provide for two indoor courts, and primary school halls for one court.

The stakeholder consultation noted that there could be demand for an indoor sports centre, perhaps similar to Kaleen Indoor Sports or Southern Cross stadium in Tuggeranong,⁵⁶ that would be adaptable for use by multiple indoor sports. The high-performance football facility planned for Throsby, to be run by Capital Football, is expected to have several outdoor sport fields, as well as two indoor futsal courts that can be used as four community sports courts, which may assist with meeting some of the demand in the district for indoor facilities.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ See <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6632132/were-bursting-at-the-seams-badminton-seek-new-facility/>

⁵⁶ Noting that Kaleen Indoor Sports Centre is privately owned and is undertaking a draft variation to the Territory Plan to enable residential development on the site and rezoning from PR22 Restricted Access Recreation to CZ5 Mixed Use.

⁵⁷ See <https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2020/february/design-kicks-off-for-canberras-home-of-football-at-throsby>

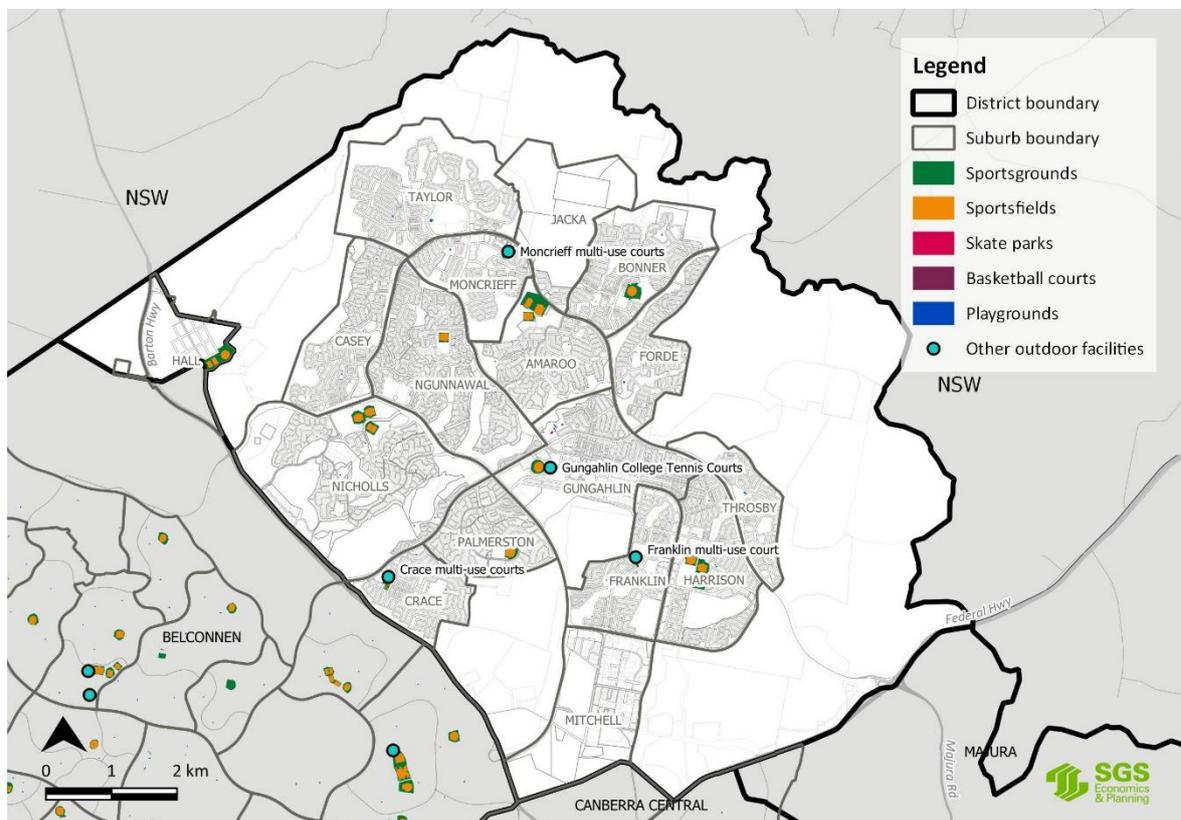
Outdoor sports facilities

There are range of different outdoor sports and recreational facilities in the Gungahlin district. District playing fields are located in Amaroo, Nicholls and Harrison. Enclosed ovals are located in the Gungahlin Town Centre and Nicholls. Many suburbs also have access to informal use and neighbourhood ovals which tend to serve a smaller catchment. Play areas are dispersed across the district and co-located with local parks. More specialised recreational facilities are located in Crace, Moncrieff, Franklin and Gungahlin, which include multi-use courts and tennis courts. Funding was also announced in the 2021-22 ACT Budget (\$3.0 million) to provide a Community Recreation Irrigated Park (CRIP) in Casey, located between Yeend Avenue, Plimsoll Drive and David Miller Crescent.

The district also has a number of skating facilities including the Crace skate park, Franklin skate bowl and Gungahlin skate park and BMX dirt track. Single basketball courts are located in Gungahlin, Throsby, and Nicholls, and half courts are provided in Forde, Ngunnawal, and Harrison.

Many of the schools in the district also provide outdoor sports courts.

FIGURE 22: EXISTING OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES, GUNGAHLIN DISTRIC



Source: SGS, 2021.

There is a new tennis centre being planned in Amaroo which will provide approximately 10-12 full-size courts available for community use.⁵⁸ Consultation with ACT Sport and Recreation suggested that the

⁵⁸ See <https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2021/february/designs-for-new-sporting-facilities-get-underway>

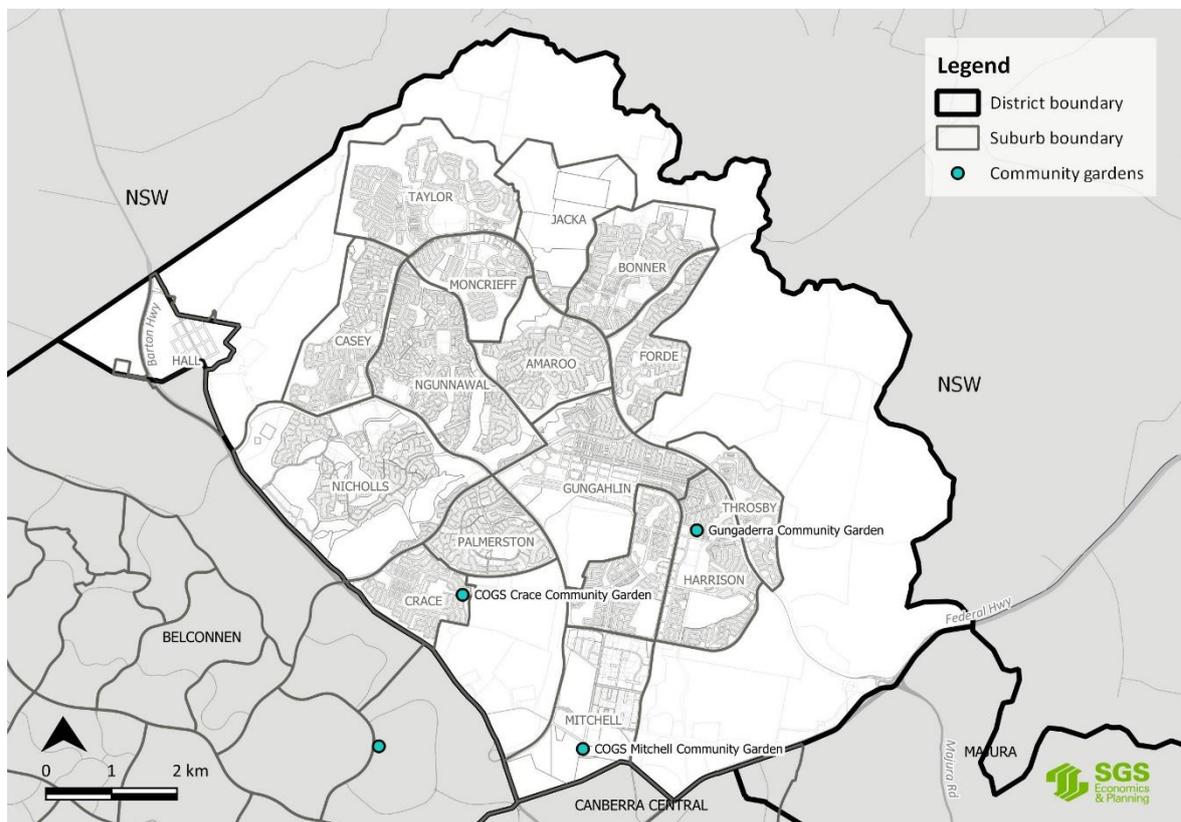
development of this facility is expected to meet future demand for tennis courts in the district for at least the medium term.

In the suburbs that are still being developed, the Taylor District Playing Fields are being expanded, and playing fields are earmarked for Jacka alongside outdoor netball courts. As noted above, the Throsby Home of Football will provide new outdoor fields. The ACT Government is also making upgrades to lighting, parking and other infrastructure at the Amaroo District Playing Fields and Ngunnawal neighbourhood oval. The stakeholder consultation identified that with limited land availability, the provision of future outdoor sports facilities is likely to require co-location with schools, rather than these being provided as stand-alone facilities.

Community gardens

There are currently three community garden facilities in the district, shown in Figure 23 below. There are two Canberra Organic Growers Society (COGS) operated gardens in Crace and Mitchell respectively. The third is a small garden at the Gungaherra Homestead in Harrison with nine garden beds.

FIGURE 23: EXISTING COMMUNITY GARDENS, GUNGAHLIN DISTRICT



Source: SGS, 2021.

As well as the three existing sites there are also plans for another garden in Throsby. Based on the current plans, this facility would be located adjacent to the Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ See <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/throsby-community-garden>

06

Future demand for facilities



6. Future demand for facilities

This section outlines the projected future demand for facilities in the Gungahlin district, and considers the potential gaps in provision for different facility types.

6.1 Public consultation undertaken by EPSDD

In July 2021, EPSDD undertook engagement with the broader community through a survey on the YourSay platform. The survey included the following questions and opportunities for input:

- “What facilities or recreations spaces would you like to see more of in your area?”
- Thinking about the next 5,10, or 15 years and your evolving lifestyle, what types of venues, facilities or spaces do you think you will have a need for?
- What types of venues, facilities or spaces do you currently use and how often?
- We’ve asked some local community organisations about facilities and spaces in Gungahlin. Rank the list of venues with the highest priority at the top of the scale and the lowest at the bottom.
- Let us know where you think community facilities and areas for recreation are needed in Gungahlin.”

Additional detailed submissions were also provided through this process from some organisations.

In summary, many of the key themes raised through the engagement reflect the identified gaps above, and included preferences for:

- Indoor sports facilities to cater to multiple sports such as badminton, basketball, cricket.
- Outdoor sport and recreation spaces, with tennis, netball and basketball consistently mentioned, as well as comments around the need for quality open space in general.
- General community facilities, like halls and rooms for hire, and for a multi-purpose community centre.
- Suggestions for the location of potential facilities included the Town Centre, Casey Group Centre, Throsby in general, and potential opportunities to build on or expand existing facilities.

The results of this engagement have been used, alongside the above analysis of existing facilities, application of benchmarks, and stakeholder consultation to identify future demand and potential gaps below.

6.2 Future demand and potential gaps

Table 11 below provides a summary of the facilities that may be needed and require further investigation by the ACT Government for the Gungahlin district. The table shows facility types in red where there is a gap or need for further investigation, green where provision is likely to be sufficient, and yellow where provision is likely to be sufficient subject to particular considerations (such as the

delivery of planned facilities). Noting that there is a diminishing supply of sites, future releases of community facilities land should take account of the possible gaps in the provision of these facilities.

Further discussion of each facility type is provided in the following sections.

TABLE 11: POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR FACILITIES BY 2045

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Libraries	No (subject to considerations)	Likely to be sufficient, however, long term the management of access to spaces that are being used by Gungahlin College will need to be resolved to allow for the Library to deliver full capacity of programs and services.
Schools		
Public primary	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Some public primary schools experiencing enrolment pressure. Under further investigation by Education Directorate.
Non-government primary	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Public secondary	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient with delivery of new high schools in district.
Non-government secondary	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Public college	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Gungahlin College experiencing enrolment pressure. The ACT Government has committed to new northside college capacity, which is under further investigation by Education Directorate.
Non-government college	No (provision likely sufficient)	May be some demand, but no current plans for additional non-government schools.
Early childhood	No (subject to considerations)	ACT Government model shifting to co-location of early childhood facilities as part of primary school campuses. Affordability remains an issue to be addressed.
General community spaces		

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Neighbourhood hall	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be provided as part of proposed community centre in Town Centre, but smaller neighbourhood halls may also be needed in newer suburbs.
Community centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	As well as the proposed community centre in Town Centre there may be a need for an additional community centre for the future population, potentially to service north of the district.
Community health facilities		
Hospitals	No (provision likely sufficient)	Hospitals are not provided in every district. ACT Health has committed to the construction of a new Northside Hospital with careful planning and consideration currently occurring.
Community health centre	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. A new Walk-in centre for the northern suburbs of Gungahlin is also planned.
Child and Family Centre	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. Child and Family Centres are targeted to be provided to areas based on specific needs.
Aged care		
Nursing homes/places	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be growing need in Gungahlin as the population ages. Likely to be a need for multiple facilities as there is only one planned residential aged care facility for the district (part of Gold Creek Homestead Precinct). Higher density housing forms (e.g. units) and/or co-location with retirement communities could be considered.
Aged day care (respite) centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be growing need as the population ages. Could be co-located with aged care or other community facilities.
Targeted facilities		
Religious facilities	No (subject to considerations)	Practice is moving away from stand-alone religious facilities. However, as a consequence will be important that general meeting spaces are made available for use for religious purposes.

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Youth centre	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Need for permanent spaces for youth activities but not necessarily as a stand-alone facility, and could be co-located with the proposed Town Centre community centre.
Senior citizens club	No (subject to considerations)	Practice is moving away from stand-alone facilities, however, will be important for general meeting spaces to be made available for use for seniors activities. Demand may increase as population ages.
Aquatic facilities	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient. Additional swim schools may be delivered by private market.
Indoor sports		
Multi-purpose courts (e.g. basketball, volleyball, netball, futsal, badminton, etc.)	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely need for indoor facility with 3-4 courts able to be used for multiple sports and flexible to respond to changes in participation. Some sports may be best suited to utilise school facilities.
Gymnastics	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient with facilities in Mitchell.
Outdoor sports and recreation		
Skate park/BMX facility	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision may be sufficient, but small facilities could be considered for integration with new parks in northern suburbs for spatial distribution across the district.
Outdoor courts (e.g. netball, basketball)	Yes (gap/further investigation needed)	Likely to be a need for some additional outdoor courts. May be opportunities for these to be co-located with future schools.
Lawn bowls and croquet	No (provision likely sufficient)	Not likely to be sufficient demand to justify provision of a facility.
Tennis	No (subject to considerations)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient for short-medium term with delivery of the new Amaroo facility.

Facility	Identified gap and further investigation needed for Gungahlin	Notes
Sportsfields	No (subject to considerations)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient, subject to continued management of access at peak times. Future sportsfield facilities are likely to be co-located with new schools.
Open space (ha)	No (subject to considerations)	Likely to be sufficient provision of open space in total, however the quality of spaces and their accompanying facilities and features is also an important consideration.
Community gardens	No (provision likely sufficient)	Existing provision likely to be sufficient, including new planned facility for Throsby.

Source: SGS, 2021.

Libraries

Libraries ACT undertakes its own detailed planning for library facilities across the ACT. For this assessment, potential demand for library facilities has utilised the State Library of NSW floorspace calculator. However, there are different components to the calculator, and only the population-based calculator has been used to obtain a high level understanding of the potential overall need for library floorspace for this assessment. Based on the calculator and the estimated current population of the Gungahlin district, there is a need for around 3,200 square metres of library floorspace while the current Gungahlin Library has around 3,100 square metres of space.

As noted above, consultation with Libraries ACT identified that Gungahlin Library was designed to act as a regional library and cater to a future population in the district of 100,000 (including collection, activity spaces, computer access and other floorspace and factoring in more detailed consideration of the library collection). Based on this, there is not likely to be a need to provide for additional library floorspace in the district to meet the future demand. However, some of this space is also being used by students of Gungahlin College, which is impacting on the full capacity for Library operations.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There likely won't be a need for specific additional floorspace within the district to be set aside for a new library. However, over the long term the management of access to spaces that are being used by Gungahlin College will need to be resolved to allow for the Library to operate and deliver its full capacity of programs and services.

Schools

As noted above, schools in the ACT are planned for by the Education Directorate, taking into account a range of factors in addition to total population, including demographics and enrolment patterns. As such, the use of simple benchmarks to identify the need for different types of schools should be considered indicative only. The Education Directorate is actively planning for school needs in the district in response to forecast enrolment demand.

Public primary schools

Enrolment demand for public primary schools is particularly affecting the central and northern parts of the Gungahlin district. The application of the benchmarks also suggests there may be a need for additional public primary schools in future. Further consideration is being given to long term schools planning including primary school capacity in the region by the Education Directorate.

Public high schools

There are currently four high schools in the Gungahlin district, with a further two planned (Kenny for 2023 and Taylor for 2024). The application of the benchmarks suggests the provision of high schools are likely to be sufficient for the district, noting that the current primary school student age cohorts where there is most demand for places at the moment will move into these high schools in coming years.

Public colleges

There is currently one public college in the district. The ACT Government has committed funding toward expanding northside college capacity, and work is underway to consider potential responses.

Non-government schools

Besides the relocated Islamic Taqwa School in Moncrieff, there are currently no additional non-government schools proposed in the district, as at February 2022.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There may be a demand for additional sites or capacity for public primary schools in the district in the future given likely growth of the population, existing enrolment pressures across the district, and shifts in affiliation preferences towards attendance at public schools. There is also a need for additional northside college capacity.

Education and care centres

There are currently around 27 long day care facilities in the district, which based on the benchmarks suggests that current provision is unlikely to be sufficient, with additional facilities also planned. Other education and care services are also offered through preschools. Demand for education and care centres can also be influenced by other factors besides residential population size, such as proximity to major employment centres (parents may prefer to use a centre close to their work), which may affect demand. In recent times, education and care centres have typically been provided by the market, and can be located in commercial zones, and as such don't require community facility sites to be set aside specifically. The potential long term shift in the age profile of Gungahlin as the resident population ages may also see a reduced level of demand for facilities like education and care centres that cater to younger families.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is not likely to be a specific need for additional sites for education and care centres in the Gungahlin district though affordability factors need to be considered further. Future changes to demand will likely be responded to by the market.

General community facilities

There are currently five neighbourhood halls in the district, suggesting the need for some additional halls to be provided based on the benchmarks. In addition, the spatial distribution of halls needs to be considered, as the existing facilities are concentrated in the southern half of the district with no facilities within the newer suburbs in the north, and ideally would be co-located with other facilities. Some of this demand may be able to be met by school facilities. There are three existing community centre spaces in the district. With the inclusion of the proposed community centre for the Gungahlin Town Centre, there may still be a need for an additional community centre in the future, with these types of centres particularly important to have in new suburbs.

While there are some existing meeting room spaces available in the district (including at facilities like Gungahlin Library and licensed clubs), the consultation clearly identified a strong need for meeting rooms, halls, and similar spaces, with existing spaces and venues heavily in demand.

The consultation also identified a number of persistent broader issues with access to the type of general community spaces (which are common issues for other parts of Canberra too), including the affordability or hiring spaces and administrative burdens that are often part of the process, which particularly affect small groups and organisations that are not incorporated.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

In addition to providing a new community centre in the Town Centre, there is likely to be a need for an additional community centre facility and additional neighbourhood halls in the district, particularly in the northern and newly established suburbs which are still being developed. Based on the current level of demand indicated from the consultation, there is a need to provide for more general meeting spaces that can be used by the community across the district, ideally co-located in centres or with other facilities. Consideration will also need to be given to appropriate models for the ongoing management and provision of spaces, whether provided by the ACT Government or the private sector.

Community health facilities

Hospitals

Hospitals are significant pieces of infrastructure, and are generally provided to serve very large catchments where they can best serve a population – and are not necessarily provided at a district level. As noted above, ACT Health is currently investigating and planning for a new Northside Hospital to address service demand on the northside of Canberra.

Community health centres

The existing Gungahlin Community Health Centre in the Town Centre is likely to be sufficient to meet future demand across the district based on the benchmarks, alongside the existing Gungahlin Walk-in Centre. As noted above, there are also plans for a new Walk-in Centre in the north of the district which will cater to demand specifically from the newer suburbs.

Child and Family Centres

These Centres are not necessarily provided in all districts, and are targeted to areas with specific needs and as such another facility is not likely to be needed for the district. Consultation with staff at the existing Centre suggested consideration may need to be given in future to catering to demand in the newer northern suburbs of the district.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is not likely to be a specific need for sites to be set aside for additional community health or Child and Family Centres in the district, though consideration may need to be given to how to service some areas (such as the northern suburbs) in future. ACT Health is currently investigating and planning for a new Northside Hospital.

Aged care

Residential aged care

Responsibility for the aged care sector rests with the Commonwealth Government, with facilities also delivered by private providers. However, because these facilities also generally require larger land areas it is important to be able to plan for them and allocate suitable sites. As noted above, the assessment has considered the need for residential aged care and nursing home facilities, for which the Commonwealth has a target level of provision of 78 places per 1,000 people aged over 70.⁶⁰

As noted above, there are currently no residential aged care facilities located in the Gungahlin district, with the closest being in the Inner North, though as noted above the planned aged care facility as part of the Gold Creek Homestead Precinct is expected to provide around 100 residential aged care places. Even with this capacity, there is still likely to be a need for additional aged care places and facilities to service the district, particularly as the population gets older.

Many residential aged care facilities are often co-located with retirement villages, and additional spaces could be incorporated through future developments potentially be delivered through these, though this would require larger land areas. Though most residential aged care facilities are made up of generally lower density housing forms, they can also be provided as units which could reduce the site area needed.

Aged day care (respite centres)

Aged day care centres provide respite care for older people, which is different from the function of nursing homes. There are currently no facilities of this type in the district.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is a need for the provision of residential aged care in the district, demand for which is likely to increase further with the projected demographic shift towards an older population over time. The availability of suitably large sites is likely to be a challenge to future provision, unless delivered as medium or higher density housing forms, as has been the trend in the Canberra context in recent times. Some of the demand for places in Gungahlin may need to be met by facilities in nearby districts. There is also likely a need for at least one aged day care centre in the district.

Arts facilities

It is important to recognise that arts facilities can be of very different scale and cater to a range of uses. As noted above, there are currently no dedicated public arts facilities in the Gungahlin district, though programs are currently being delivered through the Gungahlin Arts program, and theatre space is available through Gungahlin College.

The consultation undertaken for this study identified that there is not likely to be the need for a large facility catering to professional artists (e.g. in the same way that the Belconnen Arts Centre does), or even a stand-alone facility necessarily. Rather, providing dedicated arts space for community-based

⁶⁰ See Aged Care Financing Authority, 2020, 'Eighth report on the Funding and Financing of the Aged Care Industry,' July 2020, https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/07/eighth-report-on-the-funding-and-financing-of-the-aged-care-industry-july-2020-eighth-report-on-the-funding-and-financing-of-the-aged-care-industry-may-2020_0.pdf

practice as part of a community centre may be sufficient to cater to the type of demand in the district. However, it would be important that the spaces that are provided are designed to have the appropriate features to support making and practicing art in particular (rather than just exhibiting), giving consideration to things like having wet areas, appropriate ventilation, space to leave materials (e.g. easels, space for drying works), appropriate acoustics, and so on. The inclusion of these features would not preclude the spaces being used for other purposes at different times as well (e.g. for meetings or workshops). Exhibition space could also be incorporated as part of a community centre.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is a need for the provision of dedicated arts spaces in Gungahlin, and demand may be able to be met through providing dedicated community-based arts spaces as part of a larger community centre (e.g. proposed for the Town Centre). It is important that these spaces include the appropriate features to make them suitable for arts uses, but could also be designed to be flexible and host other activities (e.g. general meetings or workshops).

Targeted facilities

Youth centres

There are currently no dedicated youth centres in the district, with programs run through other community spaces or on a temporary basis (e.g. Gunners Place). Though the practice of the provision of community spaces has begun to shift away from providing stand-alone facilities for particular cohorts, the consultation identified a particular need for youth-based services and activities in Gungahlin. A more permanent space for youth activities could be incorporated into the proposed community centre in the Town Centre. Another opportunity is to site a youth centre adjacent to relevant recreational facilities such as the Gungahlin Skate Park. As well as providing space, there is also a need for sustained programming to match and deliver activities.

Seniors centres

With practice moving away from providing seniors centres as stand-alone facilities, activities for seniors can be run through general community spaces, subject to being physically accessible. Activities specifically for seniors may be able to be accommodated as part of programming at the proposed Town Centre community centre using general flexible meeting spaces or activity rooms. The demand for seniors-based activities and services in Gungahlin is also likely to increase as the population ages.

Religious facilities

It is important to note that more recent trends, such as the growth of larger mega-churches, the use of multi-purpose facilities for religious uses, more diversity in religious observance, and a decline overall in religious affiliation, are affecting the need for specific stand-alone religious facilities. Religious facilities can be important in providing meeting rooms and halls for community uses, and there are currently around 14 religious facilities in the district. Because religious activities can also be undertaken in general community spaces, there is not likely to be a need for sites to specifically be set aside for religious uses, and as noted above, some religious organisations have also purchased sites on their own. However, it will be important that general/flexible spaces that may be provided for community use are also made available and able to be used for religious purposes.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is a need for youth-based services and activities in the district. While this may not warrant a stand-alone facility, a youth-focused space could be incorporated into the proposed Town Centre community centre. Consideration would also need to be given to ongoing programming and activities. Similarly, the community centre should be designed to be able to cater to demand for spaces and activities for seniors, and ensure accessibility of the facility for older and disabled people. Any general meeting spaces or halls that are provided for community uses should also be flexible to allow for use for religious purposes.

Aquatic facilities

In addition to having access to the Gungahlin Leisure Centre, Gungahlin is also relatively close to both the AIS and CISAC pools in Belconnen, facilities designed to service larger than district catchments. Provision of major infrastructure such as a district level pool also requires large land areas, which are limited in the Gungahlin district, and substantial consideration of and commitments to the capital and ongoing operation costs would also need to be addressed.

The consultation undertaken for this study suggested that there is significant existing demand for swim school services, with potentially enough demand for a third facility in the district. However, the provision of these types of facilities is generally through the private market without the need to set aside sites specifically.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

Gungahlin currently has a district-level swimming pool facility, and also has relatively close access to larger indoor pool facilities nearby in Belconnen. There may be demand for another swim school facility in the district, however, this is likely to be delivered by the private sector.

Indoor sports

Outside of the indoor sports facilities provided by public schools, there are currently two gymnastics facilities in Mitchell which are privately run, and the future planned indoor futsal courts that will be part of the Throsby Home of Football is expected to be able to be used as four community indoor sports courts. Facilities at public schools also provide access to indoor facilities for a range of sports which may also increase with the establishment of new schools in the district in coming years, though noting there can sometimes be limitations as to when school facilities are available to the public. For indoor sports, typically it is preferred that multiple courts be provided together to allow for competition – for example, the Belconnen and Tuggeranong basketball facilities have four and five indoor courts respectively. These can also be designed as multi-purpose facilities that are able to host other sports.

The consultation undertaken for this study has suggested that the two existing gymnastics facilities in Mitchell are likely to be sufficient for Gungahlin. However, it also identified that there is strong demand for indoor sports such as basketball across the ACT, and in Gungahlin particularly for sports such as badminton, some of which currently utilise school facilities. As noted above, while school facilities can be used for some of these activities, halls and the like are not necessarily suitable for competition level events (e.g. badminton requires higher ceilings, basketball requires multiple courts), though where possible these requirements are increasingly being factored into the design of school facilities.

The consultation has also identified a strong interest from the community in having an indoor sports facility for the district. This could be along the lines of the Kaleen Indoor Sports facility in the Belconnen district, which provides a number of flexible courts that can be used for a range of different sports in one place (e.g. indoor basketball, cricket, futsal, volleyball, badminton), or Southern Cross Stadium in Tuggeranong which can also be used for multiple sports and competition level activities. Multi-purpose courts are likely to be beneficial in being able to adapt to change in participation patterns over time. The limited availability of land in Gungahlin means that stand-alone facilities dedicated to one sport are unlikely to be provided. However, it is also important that the operational implications of delivering a new indoor sports facility are also considered. There are likely to be considerable capital costs involved in developing a centre, as well as a need to have a sound operating model that doesn't necessarily rely on government funding. There may also be a need for third party operator (similar to the model used for ACT Government swimming pools at the moment) to be secured to deliver this type of facility for the district, as the ACT Government has historically not owned or managed dedicated indoor sports court facilities (besides those in schools). Alternatively, consideration could be given to a lead sport owning and/or operating the facility directly. Decisions concerning management models would need to be considered as part of any future detailed feasibility study.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is likely to be demand for an indoor sports facility in the Gungahlin district. This is likely to be 3-4 multi-purpose courts that can cater to a range of different sports at different times, to respond to changes in participation. However, it will be important to consider the capital costs and sources of funding for this type of facility, and have a clear operating model and operator able to deliver this. Some sports will likely be best suited to utilise school facilities, while gymnastics is provided for through two existing privately-run facilities.

Outdoor sports and recreation

Outdoor courts and facilities

Based on the benchmarking and consultation there is potentially additional demand in the Gungahlin district for several netball courts and tennis courts by 2045, when factoring in access to facilities available at schools. The consultation also identified that there are existing pressures on the current outdoor sports facilities in the district.

Future demand for tennis courts is likely to be met by the future Amaroo Tennis Centre, which is expected to provide 10-12 new courts when complete. Regarding netball and basketball courts, while a number of individual multi-use courts have been provided around the district alongside parks (such as in Franklin, Moncrieff and Crace), there is also a need to consider the practicality of these from the perspective of sports organisations – competitions cannot be run with only one court. At the same time, land availability for larger facilities with multiple courts may be limited, other than opportunities to be co-located with school campuses which are now being designed to ensure they are accessible to the community outside of school hours (i.e. not being fenced in). Some outdoor netball facilities may be provided in Jacka. The Gungahlin district is also adjacent to the netball facilities in Lyneham (12 outdoor and four indoor courts) which serves a larger than district catchment and could service some of the demand. The consultation undertaken for this study noted that approaches to managing demand, such as working with sports to alter their training schedules and times for competitions, is helping to better disperse the use of facilities across the week to increase their capacity, and may be a way of reducing the need to provide additional court facilities in the district.

Recent ACT Government investigations have determined that there is not likely to be sufficient demand for lawn bowls to justify a site being dedicated to this type of facility in the area. Croquet is also a very niche sport, with only one club in Canberra (located in Yarralumla), which has indicated it is looking to expand but that this is not likely for the north of Canberra given the younger existing demographics.⁶¹

Other facilities, such as mountain biking and disc golf, are anecdotally growing in popularity, and could be considered for integration in the district, without requiring a large amount of infrastructure.

Fields and ovals

Based on the existing number of sportsfields across the district, the benchmarks suggest that the total number of fields may be sufficient for the future population. New fields may also be provided in the suburbs currently being developed (such as Taylor),⁶² and potentially at the Throsby Home of Football (though not all fields delivered there may be available for community use). The consultation for this study identified that with a younger demographic there is more current demand from junior sports participation, and a lot of competition for access to sportsfields, particularly at peak times. As above for other forms of outdoor sports and recreation, the ACT Government is working with sports organisations to disperse the use of facilities across the week and balance demand for facilities. Similarly, the limited availability of large land areas will make the provision of new sportsfields a challenge in Gungahlin. Other considerations are also important for fields, including topography, which can further restrict provision opportunities. Realistically, sportsfields are likely to need to be co-located with future schools.

Broader trends noted above, such as the casualisation of sports participation, may also be shifting how people utilise sportsfields and related infrastructure, potentially increasing the need for spaces that can support passive outdoor recreation rather than needing formal fields.

BMX/skate park facilities

Based on the benchmarks, the Gungahlin skate park and BMX track likely satisfies demand for the district, and there are also two smaller skate park facilities in Franklin and Crace respectively. While the overall provision is likely to be sufficient, smaller facilities could also be considered for integration with parks delivered in the newer suburbs in the north to disperse access across the district.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

There is likely to be a need for additional outdoor sports courts in the district. However, land availability may mean that these will be provided through co-location with future school campuses. The provision of sportsfields across the district may be sufficient with continued management of access at peak times, and any future provision will also likely need to be co-located with schools. There is unlikely to be a need for specific additional BMX or skate park facilities, but small skate park or BMX features could be considered for incorporation in parks in the newer suburbs to the north as the existing facilities are concentrated in the south of the district.

⁶¹ See Lindell, 2021, 'Canberra's heritage croquet club looking for room to grow,' *The Canberra Times*, 2 May 2021, <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7213387/canberras-heritage-croquet-club-looking-for-room-to-grow/?cs=14225>

⁶² See <https://mygungahlin.com.au/home-of-football-a-win-for-community-sport/5293/>

Open space

There are currently around 824 hectares of land in the district zoned as PRZ1 in the Gungahlin district, which based on the benchmarks, indicates that there may not be a need for additional open space in the district based on the future population. However, it is also important to consider the spatial distribution of this space – particularly in the new and developing suburbs in the north – and usability of space for the community. As well as providing the space, there is also a need for green space to be maintained over time to allow for their use by the community, as well as providing accompanying amenities. The consultation noted some issues raised by the community around the usability and attractiveness of smaller open spaces, including in some instances the quality of children’s play equipment and shading, and a perception that they are not maintained well-enough. There was a suggestion that focus should be given to having a smaller number but higher quality/destination parks (such as the Moncrieff CRIP).

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

The amount of PRZ1 zoned land across the district is likely to be sufficient, based on the future population for the Gungahlin district. However, consideration also needs to be given to the ongoing management and accessibility of open space to ensure that parks and open space are maintained and able to be used by the community, and that facilities and amenities provided in these spaces are also adequately maintained over time. Local provision of open space will also be needed in the newer suburbs, though this would be accounted for through estate development planning processes.

Community gardens

With three existing sites, and another proposed in Throsby, there is not likely to be a need for another site specifically for community gardens in the Gungahlin district. The consultation identified some feedback from the community around the appropriateness of the location of the Throsby facility, however, this is being managed through a separate process. Small community gardens could also be provided as part of private developments or alongside other community facilities if there is particular local demand in some locations.

Implications and recommendations for Gungahlin

Given the existing provision in the district there may not be a need for sites to be set aside specifically for community gardens. Small gardens may be able to be provided alongside other facilities if there is specific local demand.

6.3 Other considerations

There are a number of other important elements relating to the provision of community and recreational facilities that will need to be considered in delivering new facilities for the district, including:

- The ongoing operation and maintenance of new facilities is a key consideration for how new facilities will be delivered, managed and maintained over the long term to best meet the needs of the community that are in locations that the community can access, while also keeping facilities affordable.

- There is a need to work with sports and community organisations to deliver and continue to operate facilities over time and identify ways that compatible uses can be co-located to increase affordability for clubs and other organisations – recognising there are financial realities that accompany any new facilities, and that stand-alone facilities for individual activities or sports may not necessarily be possible due to costs and the availability of land.
- While there are potential challenges with delivering community facilities in mixed use environments, there are many benefits that can come from including facilities in mixed use precincts, from the perspective of co-locating with compatible resources, making facilities accessible in central locations, making use of limited land supply, and allowing government to deliver more facilities without the need to fund their development. There is a need to develop a clear policy and arrangements for lease back of private facilities to ensure that these facilities accessible to the community.

Appendix A: Existing facilities

TABLE 12: EXISTING FACILITIES IN GUNGALHIN DISTRICT (EXCLUDING SCHOOL FACILITIES)

Facility name	Suburb/Division	Block	Section
<i>Libraries</i>			
Gungahlin Library	Gungahlin	6	223
<i>Community facilities</i>			
Hall Pavilion	Hall	2	20
Nicholls Community Hall	Nicholls	21	73
Palmerston Community Centre	Palmerston	7	140
Gungahlin Birrale Scout Hall	Gungahlin	1	19
Ngunnawal Neighbourhood Centre	Ngunnawal	10	44
Gungaderra Homestead	Harrison	12	4
Forde Community Centre	Forde	1	32
Communities@Work	Gungahlin	2	60
<i>Schools</i>			
Palmerston District Primary School	Palmerston	12	154
Neville Bonner Primary School	Bonner	6	26
Harrison School P-6	Harrison	22	2
Ngunnawal Primary School	Ngunnawal	74	134
Amaroo School P-6	Amaroo	3	93
Gold Creek School P-6	Nicholls	21	73
Margaret Hendry School	Taylor	8	40
Gold Creek School 7-10	Nicholls	11	78
Harrison School 7-10	Harrison	12	4
Amaroo School 7-10	Amaroo	3	93
Gungahlin College	Gungahlin	6	223
Franklin School	Franklin	6	125

Facility name	Suburb/Division	Block	Section
Burgmann Anglican School Forde Campus	Gungahlin	1	20
Good Shepherd Primary School	Amaroo	2	93
St John Paul II College	Nichols	12	78
Holy Spirit Primary School	Nicholls	10	73
Mother Teresa School	Harrison	16	2
<i>Education and care</i>			
Lavender Lane Gungahlin	Gungahlin	7	200
Blooming Buds Early Learning Centre	Gungahlin	7	58
Burgmann School Early Learning Centre	Gungahlin	1	20
Guardian Childcare and Education Gungahlin	Gungahlin	11	18
Gungahlin Children's Centre	Gungahlin	3	28
Gungahlin Kinder Haven	Gungahlin	6	209
Winyu Early Childhood Service	Gungahlin	4	226
Yerrabi Ponds by Busy Bees	Gungahlin	5	88
YMCA Gungahlin Early Learning Centre	Gungahlin	3	224
Nicholls Early Childhood Centre	Nicholls	21	73
Bright Bees Early Learning	Nicholls	5	39
Gold Creek World of Learning	Nicholls	12	83
Holy Spirit Early Learning Centre	Nicholls	10	73
Snow Gum Early Childhood Learning Centre	Nicholls	11	86
Springbank Rise by Busy Bees	Casey	15	63

Facility name	Suburb/Division	Block	Section
Busy Bees at Crace	Crace	5	26
Anglicare at Franklin School	Franklin	6	125
Nido Early School Franklin	Franklin	5	31
Harrison Early Childhood Centre	Harrison	21	2
Mother Teresa Early Learning Centre	Harrison	16	2
Insight Early Learning Throsby	Throsby	1	60
Wonderschool Throsby	Throsby	6	10
Gungahlin Childcare and Education Forde	Forde	4	32
Nido Early School Amaroo	Amaroo	1	112
The Imagination Play Station Child Development Centre	Amaroo	8	8
Ngunnawal Child Care and Education Centre	Ngunnawal	74	134
Little Penguins Early Education Ngunnawal	Ngunnawal	20	44
<i>Community health facilities</i>			
Gungahlin Community Health Centre	Gungahlin	8	58
Gungahlin Walk-in Centre	Gungahlin	8	58
Gungahlin Child and Family Centre	Gungahlin	1	59
Ngunnawal Child Health Clinic	Ngunnawal	71	134
<i>Targeted facilities</i>			
The Chapel at Gold Creek	Nicholls	1	2
St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Church Hall	Hall	299	0
Seven Streams International Church	Mitchell	14	1

Facility name	Suburb/Division	Block	Section
Mosaic Baptist Church	Mitchell	52	18
Fusion City Church	Mitchell	8	58
Gungahlin Mosque	Gungahlin	2	235
Gungahlin Uniting Church	Gungahlin	2	29
Holy Spirit Catholic Parish Gungahlin	Amaroo	229	93
New Life Presbyterian Church	Ngunnawal	79	134
Gungahlin Anglican Church (Gungahlin)	Gungahlin	1	20
Gungahlin Anglican Church (Forde)	Forde	1	23
Northside Salvos	Gungahlin	1	29
Hu Guo Bao En Temple	Nicholls	19	73
Hindu Temple (planned future)	Moncrieff	5	23
<i>Aquatic facilities</i>			
Gungahlin Leisure Centre	Gungahlin	4	223
Aquatots Swim Centre Forde	Forde	2	32
Aquatots Swim Centre Gold Creek	Nicholls	11	86
<i>Indoor sports facilities</i>			
Gungahlin Gymnastics	Mitchell	5	59
Gungahlin Gymnastics	Mitchell	51	18
Throsby Home of Football (planned future)	Throsby	1	65
<i>Outdoor sports facilities</i>			
Gungahlin Skate Park and BMX dirt track	Gungahlin	1	181
Gungahlin College Tennis Courts	Gungahlin	6	223
Crace Recreation Park	Crace	2	45

Facility name	Suburb/Division	Block	Section
Moncrieff Community Recreation Park	Moncrieff	2	32
Franklin Recreational Playground	Franklin	4	125
Hall playing fields	Hall	-	20
Perce Douglas Memorial Playing Fields	Nicholls	8	78
Nicholls Synthetic Football Field	Nicholls	3	73
Palmerston District Playing Fields	Palmerston	7	154
Harrison District Playing Fields	Harrison	15	2
Gungahlin Enclosed Oval	Gungahlin	1	17
Bonner District Playing Fields	Bonner	12	26
Amaroo District Playing Fields	Amaroo	4	109
Ngunnawal Sports Ground	Ngunnawal	75	134
<i>Community gardens</i>			
Crace Community Garden	Crace	28	55
Mitchell Community Garden	Mitchell	5	42
Gungahlin Community Garden	Harrison	12	4

Note: Does not include school facilities, which have also be considered as part of the study.

Appendix B: Benchmarks

Note: The use of the benchmarks in this study have been used as a first step in the assessment, recognising that the application of population-based benchmarks does not necessarily account for important considerations such as the quality of facilities and existing usage patterns. These benchmarks have been derived from different sources (noted in the table), but are primarily based on population ratios previously established for the ACT and used in a number of community needs assessments. Demand for some types of sports facilities has been calculated using a method based on estimated participation rates for different activities in metropolitan areas. It is important to note that benchmarks for the provision of different facilities can change over time, and there may be need to review the existing benchmarks to reflect standards as they evolve.

TABLE 13: BENCHMARKING APPROACH AND ASSUMPTIONS USED IN ASSESSMENT

Facility Type	Hierarchy of provision	Benchmark used (ratio to population unless otherwise stated)	Source for benchmark	Estimated land area or floorspace required per facility	Source for floorspace estimate/s
General community spaces					
Meeting rooms	Local	1: 2,500	Previous ACT benchmarks	200-300sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment ⁶³
Religious facility	Sub-district	1: 2,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	200-300sqm floorspace	Equivalent to hall/meeting rooms (below)
Neighbourhood hall	Sub-district	1: 10,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	200-300sqm floorspace	Average of existing halls in ACT
Community centre	Sub-district	1: 20,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	2,000-2,500sqm land area, 600-800sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment
Cultural facilities					
Community arts centre/theatre	Sub-district	1: 30,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	Min. 2,800sqm site, 600sqm floorspace	Existing ArtsACT facilities, Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment
Library	District	State Library of NSW population based calculator	State Library of NSW ⁶⁴	N/A (defined by calculator)	N/A (defined by calculator)
Educational and children's facilities					
Public pre/primary school	Local	1: 7,500	Previous ACT benchmarks	5ha site, 4,000sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment, average of existing schools
Non-government pre/primary school	Local	1: 5,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	5ha site, 4,000sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment, average of existing schools

⁶³ <https://ginninderry.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/20180525-Ginninderry-Community-Needs-Assessment-190130.pdf>

⁶⁴ <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/population-based-library-calculator>

Facility Type	Hierarchy of provision	Benchmark used (ratio to population unless otherwise stated)	Source for benchmark	Estimated land area or floorspace required per facility	Source for floorspace estimate/s
Public high school	Sub-district	1: 20,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	5-10ha site, 11,000sqm floorspace	ILRP sites, average of existing schools
Non-government high school	Sub-district	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	5-10ha site, 11,000sqm floorspace	ILRP sites, average of existing schools
Public secondary college	District	1: 30,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	5-10ha site, 11,000sqm floorspace	ILRP sites, average of existing schools
Non-government secondary college	District	1: 30,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	5-10ha site, 11,000sqm floorspace	ILRP sites, average of existing schools
Early childhood school	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	2-3ha site, 3,000sqm floorspace	Average of existing schools
Child care	Sub-district	1: 4,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	2,500sqm site, 800sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment
Child and family centre	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	4,000sqm site	Current West Belconnen site
Youth centre	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	500-750sqm site, 200sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment
Health facilities					
Hospitals	District/ACT-wide	1:100,000-200,000	Victorian Growth Councils benchmarks for community infrastructure ⁶⁵	Min. 5ha up to 14ha site	Current hospital sites in ACT
Community Health Centre	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	1.6ha site, 2,000-4,000sqm floorspace	Ginninderry Community Needs Assessment
Services for older people					
Nursing home	Sub-district	78 places per 1,000 people aged 70+	Commonwealth Government target, Aged Care	Approx. 3,100-3,300sqm site for a 30-bed facility	Victorian Aged Care Residential Services Generic Brief ⁶⁷

⁶⁵ <https://vpa-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Planning-for-Community-Infrastructure-in-Growth-Areas-%E2%80%93-April-2008.pdf>

⁶⁷ <https://www.priorityhealthcare.com.au/files/Victorian%20Government%20Aged%20Care%20Brief.pdf>

Facility Type	Hierarchy of provision	Benchmark used (ratio to population unless otherwise stated)	Source for benchmark	Estimated land area or floorspace required per facility	Source for floorspace estimate/s
			Financing Authority ⁶⁶		
Aged day care centre	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	800sqm floorspace	Current site in Belconnen
Senior Citizens Club	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	500sqm floorspace	Approximate from other seniors centres ⁶⁸
Sports facilities and open space					
Aquatic facilities	District	1:>30,000	ACT Government Aquatic Facilities Framework ⁶⁹	2-3ha site	ACT Government Aquatic Facilities Framework
Indoor sports and recreation	Varies	Based on assumed participation rates, hours of use, etc. and population	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies	Varies	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies
Outdoor courts/facilities	Varies	Based on assumed participation rates, hours of use, etc. and population	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies	Varies	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies
Fields and ovals (multiple sports)	Varies	Based on assumed participation rates, hours of use, etc. and population	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies	Varies	Previous SGS open spaces and recreation studies
Skate park/BMX facility	District	1:50,000	Epping Social Infrastructure Study ⁷⁰	7,000-8,500sqm site	Approximate from current sites in Belconnen

⁶⁶ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/eighth-report-on-the-funding-and-financing-of-the-aged-care-industry-july-2020>

⁶⁸ <https://canberraseniors.org.au/here/hire-our-venue/>;
<https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/2018-07/Appendix%206%20-%20NRPP%20Building%20Audit%20Report.pdf>

⁶⁹ <https://issuu.com/wvcc/docs/final-report>

⁷⁰ <https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/inline-files/3%20-%20Epping%20Social%20Infrastructure%20Study.pdf>

Facility Type	Hierarchy of provision	Benchmark used (ratio to population unless otherwise stated)	Source for benchmark	Estimated land area or floorspace required per facility	Source for floorspace estimate/s
Open space (PRZ1 zoned land)	N/A	2.83 ha per 1,000 people	SGS benchmark applied in Open Space strategies	N/A	N/A
Community Gardens	District	1: 60,000	Previous ACT benchmarks	2,500sqm site	ACT Government Guideline for Community Gardens ⁷¹

Source: compiled by SGS, 2020.

⁷¹ ACT Government, 2016, 'Guide to Community Gardens in the ACT,' February 2016, https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/898443/Guide_to_Community_Gardens_in_the_ACT_-_ACCESS.pdf

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