



ACT Planning &
Land Authority

Structure Plan

West Belconnen

Land Located West of Charnwood and
Macgregor in the District of Belconnen

March 2008

INTRODUCTION

The following principles and policies were originally included in the repealed Territory Plan through Variation as the principles and policies for the development of West Belconnen, identified as 'defined land' in accordance with Subdivision 2.3.4 of the repealed *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*.

To assist in understanding the original application of the principles and policies for the “defined land”, the area identified in this structure plan is the original “defined land” area. Over time, part of the former defined land areas was undefined through statutory processes. The remaining areas to which these principles and policies apply is now identified in the current Territory Plan map as a future urban area, pursuant to section 50(2)(a) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act). This structure plan sets out the principles and policies that apply to the area in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Concept plans may be prepared for all or part of the area subject to the structure plan.

Further information on the area subject to this structure plan can be found in the original Territory Plan Variation, available on the ACTPLA website.

2. PLANNING OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES (Figure 1)

The proposed development area structures have been formulated with regard to a number of general development goals followed by a set of area and subject specific objectives and principles.

Development Goals

The proposed suburbs and neighbourhoods of West Belconnen have been planned to achieve high levels of amenity safety and cost-effectiveness.

Amenity

The developed area should be healthy, safe and pleasant, affording convenience and accessibility for residents. It should create identity, engender privacy and permit freedom of choice.

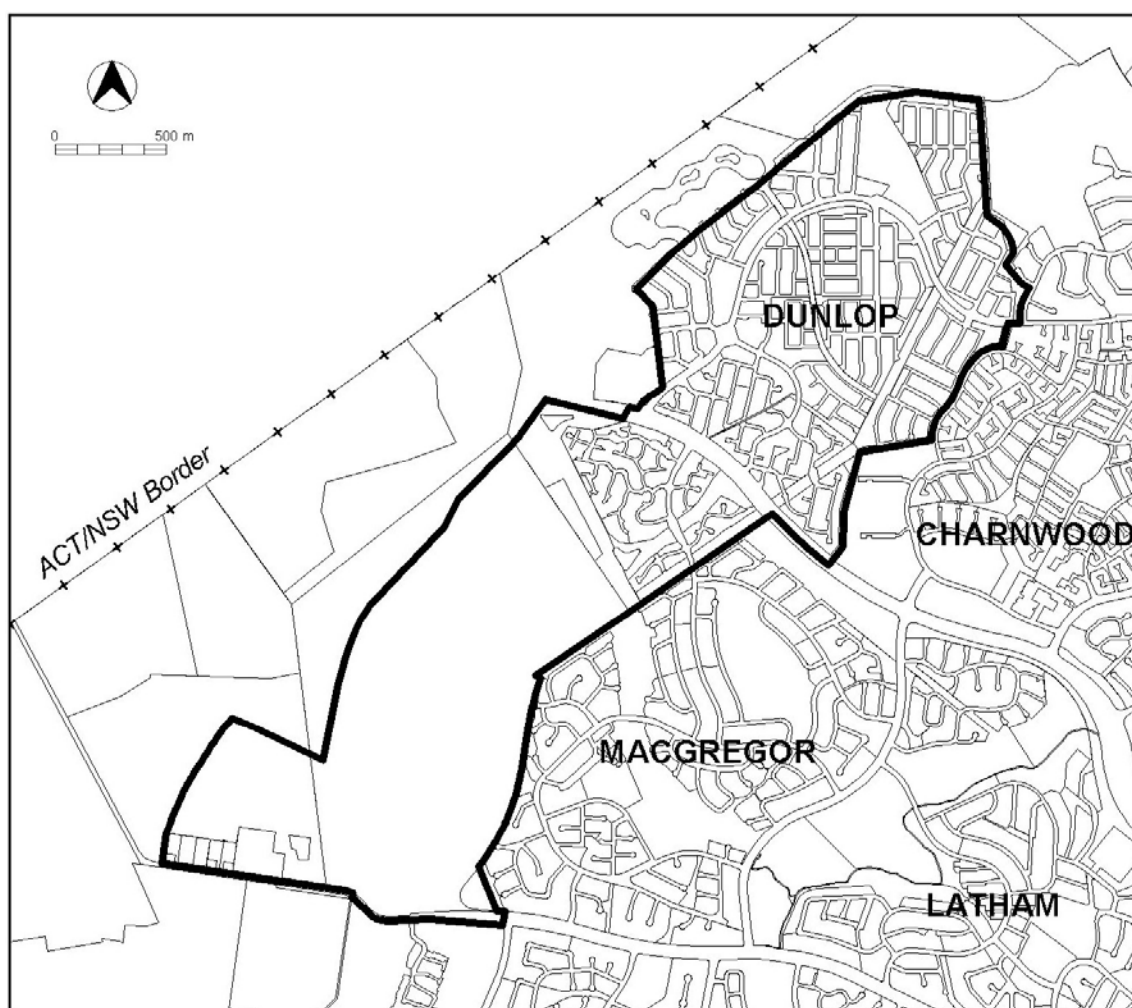
Safety

Hazards and risks to life and property from the natural or built environment should be within established national and international limits.

Cost Effectiveness

The location, connectivity and staging of activities should ensure their most convenient and efficient use. Their implementation should in general achieve the optimum benefit to the community at the least cost.

Figure 1 Area subject to the Structure Plan



Objectives and Principles

Within the parameters of these development goals, planning objectives and principles have been adopted under the following element headings:

- urban structure;

- transport networks;
- residential development;
- open space and landscape;
- schools;
- other community_and commercial_uses;
- conservation;
- drainage;
- utilities.

2.2 URBAN STRUCTURE

- To establish a primary framework of works, open space, off-road movement networks and land uses; which create a strong character and identity for each suburb and neighbourhood, reflecting its position within the West Belconnen context.
- To adopt a pattern of roads and land uses sympathetic to the district's terrain.
- To set down a legible hierarchy of urban spaces which are responsive to community needs.
- To be responsive to market factors where the adoption of development controls to achieve urban design objectives would be commercially feasible and sustainable.

Principles

- Establish development patterns which respond to the varied nature of West Belconnen's topography in a way which avoids the homogeneous characteristics of much of Belconnen.
- Define areas for local centre functions and a road and open space system to serve them, within which an integrated design theme may be developed.
- Utilise plantings and strongly defined off-road movement paths to create strong urban design statements given distinctiveness and identity to each suburb.
- Determine guidelines for street and off-road movement paths which will result in pleasant, attractive streetscapes sustainable over time within acceptable development control and public maintenance criteria.
- Adopt land use arrangements and built form development controls which are cost effective and represent sound returns to the Territory on all land that is leased.

2.3 TRANSPORT NETWORKS

- To provide a hierarchical road system with a clear distinction between major roads serving an arterial function and those serving a suburban function.
- To provide opportunities for effective and safely accessible public transport.
- To provide for a network of streets which are cost-effective in servicing required land uses and which achieve high levels of amenity.
- To provide opportunities for safe and convenient off-road movement systems.
- To create a system of road and off-road networks that are legible, attractive and pleasant to use.

Principles

Arterial Roads

- Provide the framework for corridor studies to establish integrated engineering, landscape, urban design and land use planning of major roads along the suburban edges. Vary the uses and set-backs along major corridors consistent with an integrated corridor design theme.
- Define principal road alignments to fit topography and establish workable underpass and intersection locations.
- By traffic assignment testing, confirm the traffic role of major roads and review their function in relation to the needs to service the suburbs.
- Adopt consistent traffic control treatment in major network intersections as far as possible.
- Adopt arterial road design specifications in accordance with current design standards of the Territory.

Local Roads

- Constrain traffic volumes on distributor roads by:
 - providing access points onto arterial roads adequate in number and location in relation to travel desire lines;
 - locating major uses, attracting traffic from outside the suburb, near the periphery.
- Adopt maximum traffic levels of approximately 4000 vpd for undivided distributor roads with frontage development.
- Adopt a well-defined hierarchical system for suburban streets reflecting purpose and level of usage.

- Control traffic speeds on distributor roads by limiting the uninterrupted travel distance.
- Utilise roundabouts at distributor/distributor junctions as necessary with junction spacings, not generally less than 300m.
- Incorporate special design features within a 'zone of care' to create an improved pedestrian environment where pedestrian activity is increased near schools and the local centre.
- Provide underpasses where major off-road systems cross distributor roads, where practicable, and particularly where they also serve a drainage function.
- Adopt locations and geometry for distributor roads which reflect their role as potential bus routes.
- Adopt design specifications in accordance with current design standards of the Territory.
- Encourage a street layout to allow optimum solar orientation of built form.

Public Transport

- Ensure distributor roads are provided to enable 95% of residences to be within 500m of a bus route.
- Ensure local centres are on bus routes.
- Provide the opportunity for bus stops on no-frontage major roads with safe pedestrian access and egress.
- Provide adequate road space for buses along all bus routes and at intersections.
- Provision be made for the future Intertown Public Transport Route that enters West Belconnen via Ginninderra Drive.

Off-Road Movement Systems

- Define and adopt a hierarchy of off-road paths for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians designed and dimensioned to:
 - accommodate minor and local movements in footpaths and road verges;
 - provide intermediate scale links to points of the suburb focus;
 - achieve major district and regional paths including trunk paths;
 - provide for equestrians in accordance with district equestrian needs;
 - include paths following road corridors.

- Provide underpasses at arterials to serve major inter-suburb off-road links. Provide safe at-grade crossings internally where underpasses are, not practicable or warranted.
- Maximise the degree of segregation of off-road systems from at-grade road and street crossings commensurate with their status in the hierarchy.
- Combine, where practicable, off-road paths with other functions such as drainage and services lines and ridge plantations.
- Create continuous and interconnected off-road systems reinforcing linear park systems.
- Provide varied, interesting and attractively landscaped interfaces between off-road paths and other land uses, particularly residential.

2.4 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- To encourage a diversity of housing forms and environments.
- To provide for a 'whole of life' approach for residential land use.
- To respect intrinsic land capabilities.
- To be sympathetic to the topography.
- To minimise impacts on residential amenity from traffic.
- To maximise the benefits of existing trees and natural features.
- To maximise the opportunity for solar efficiency and minimise adverse climatic impacts.

Principles

- Provide flexibility for the market to determine housing types and densities within acceptable infrastructure and environmental capacities.
- Establish population capacities for precincts by:
 - increasing the proportion of medium density housing near centres, in flat terrain and near major open spaces;
 - relating them to the capacity of the infrastructure;
 - assessing levels necessary to support local community and commercial facilities.
- Provide for a majority of dwellings to be able to be orientated to the north.
- Provide for special housing (e.g. semi rural clusters) where particular locational or environmental attributes require specific controls outside the scope of standard controls.

- Generally confine housing within land capability Classes A to D.
- Utilise natural and landscape features to minimise exposure to north-west winds.
- Adopt planning and design principles in accordance with current planning and design standards of the Territory.
- Adopt the principles of the Draft Model Code for Residential Development where appropriate for ACT conditions.

2.5 OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE

- To develop a total landscape concept sympathetic with land forms and existing landscape character units where existing healthy trees and natural features may be retained and the area enhanced by additional planting of species existing in the area.
- To develop a total landscape concept which establishes a defined edge separating the urban lands and rural lands.
- To establish a bushfire protection zone on the northern-western and western periphery of West Belconnen.
- To develop an open space and planting theme for West Belconnen which continues the native landscape character of Belconnen.
- To develop legible landscape themes along lineal creek open space systems through specific species selection.
- To develop open space and planting theme for the main structure of the suburbs in keeping with concepts for West Belconnen as a whole and creating an individual identity for each area.
- To integrate large scale open spaces, including the environs of the water quality control ponds, into open space planning for the suburb, in both visual and functional terms.
- To ensure the most cost-effective open space system is achieved, resulting in the most useable and efficient spaces. Each part of the open space system should have a specific purpose be affordable in land take and economical to maintain.
- To set criteria for creating attractively landscaped roads and off-road movement paths, playgrounds, parks and playing fields within current standards of design and affordability.
- To create a diversity, of landscape experience which responds to community needs and offers distinct outdoor recreational and educational opportunities.

Principles

- Provision of open space to be on a needs basis, as set out in accordance with current planning and design standards of the Territory. Criteria to include:
 - children's playgrounds to be generally within 400m of dwellings at 0.25 - 0.5ha with a central park convenient to the local centre of between 0.4 - 0.5ha;
 - parks around ponds to be determined by flood levels and space required for landscaped margins, public access, water quality control and the off-road movement system incorporating regional trails.
- Utilise linear parks for major off-road movement systems, giving priority to those in
- drainage lines serving multiple functions. Paths to interconnect children's playgrounds
- and facilitate accessibility to community facilities between adjacent suburbs.
- Utilise planting where appropriate to reinforce ridge lines and prominent knolls, protect skylines and provide windbreaks. Utilise widened road verges or open space to accommodate plantations, paying attention to the needs for maintenance.
- Incorporate the maximum reasonable number of healthy trees within development areas and as far as possible in open space and other public land. Land use and development controls on private land should incorporate provision, where appropriate, for tree retention.
- Utilise landscape design principles in the treatment of medians, earthworks and verges of arterial roads which enhance their identity and attractiveness as movement corridors.
- Adopt theme plantings in public land and in major corridors to create identity. Include differentiation to highlight special areas or building groups.
- Locate electricity lines underground where practicable and other utilities where they will be least obtrusive.
- Revegetate creek systems with locally occurring species particularly where erosion has occurred with theme-based planting schemes to create a series of spaces which vary in character. Casuarina species should be used as a unifying element supplemented by large-scale Eucalyptus species in natural character areas and large scale small-leaf deciduous trees where the surrounding land has been highly modified.

- Develop and implement landscape management plans for bushfire protection zones.

2.6 SCHOOLS

- To assess the future level of demand for school enrolment, from both the proposed development areas and from within adjacent suburbs, to build in sufficient flexibility at existing schools to accommodate potential future changes in enrolment levels and patterns.
- To provide for safe and convenient access for children to existing schools in neighbouring parts of Belconnen.
- To provide a strong focus for future communities of West Belconnen on existing primary schools in adjoining suburbs, as their local schools.

Principles

- To consult with the, Department of Education and Training to assess the need for, and where needed, plan for, provision of additional facilities at existing schools.
- Where appropriate identify areas within West Belconnen development to be included in the catchments of neighbouring schools.
- Plan areas defined as extended catchment for a school to have a design link with the existing catchment to provide for an element of unity within the future total school catchment.
- Plan for a safe access to schools from within extended catchments, by providing for suitable facilities such as safe pedestrian networks.
- Assess the need for, and where necessary plan for additional road safety and pedestrian facilities in neighbouring suburbs.

2.7 OTHER COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL USES

- To provide, where applicable, opportunities for the provision of local shopping and non-retail commercial facilities at a local centre located conveniently for all residents.
- To achieve flexibility of land use such that land not utilised for community facilities and/or commercial activities may be used for other purposes compatible with the location and scale of centre.

Principles

- Define a site, where applicable, for a local shopping centre with direct access from a distributor road, sufficient in size for a small supermarket, other shops, possible commercial non-retail premises and associated parking and circulation space.
- Provide sufficient space for a local playground and amenity park and for community buildings requiring a central place in association with the local centre, sharing common parking and access arrangements.
- Locate the local centre, community facilities and central amenity park within the Commercial Centre, in a manner which integrates them into an attractive, functionally efficient precinct of pedestrian scale.

2.8 CONSERVATION

- To engender a sense of place for each of the development areas through the conservation of examples of Aboriginal and European heritage.
- To indicate how areas of cultural and natural significance may be protected and incorporated into the planned urban fabric.
- To maintain and enhance areas of natural and scenic value such as hills, ridge systems and creek corridors as significant elements contributing to the landscape setting of West Belconnen.
- To maintain and protect areas of ecological value as significant elements contributing to the environment of West Belconnen.

Principles

- Survey, assess, document and where appropriate retain and reinforce the specific characteristics of areas and sites of conservation, cultural heritage and ecological value.
- Where feasible, retain the physical remains of Aboriginal and European heritage sites in a manner which facilitates their continued presence within a sustainable management framework.
- Conserve the specific ecological and sites of significance in a manner which facilitates their continued viability within a sustainable management framework.

2.9 DRAINAGE

- To limit stormwater discharges from development such that flows are within the downstream hydraulic channel constraints.
- To provide flood protection for both proposed and existing development, ensuring public safety and amenity.

- To limit the export of sediment suspended solids, nutrients and bacteria from the area in order to protect the environmental amenity of downstream waters.
- To limit the landtake associated with the stormwater system, within appropriate landscape objectives.
- To provide a cost-effective stormwater system in terms of both capital outlay and operational and maintenance costs.
- To enhance the landscape and recreational quality of the open space system.

Principles

- Contain stormwater flows within a system of channels and permanent water bodies to achieve hydraulic retention in addition to water quality objectives.
- Provide floodways and channels to allow the safe passage of the estimated 1:100 ARI or '100 year flood frequency', within residential and commercial areas.
- Utilise sediment interception ponds to settle and clarify run-off during urban servicing.
- Where practicable, retain creek lines downstream of retarding basins in their natural state with erosion control works in localised unstable areas.

2.10 UTILITIES

- To ensure that designated development areas can be connected to the trunk service networks in a timely, efficient and cost-effective way.
- To provide for the location of public utilities to each allotment and within road reserves and open space corridors in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- To provide an adequate, reliable, safe, efficient and potable supply of water.
- To provide a sewerage system which is adequate for the disposal of effluent in an environmentally responsible manner.
- To ensure that all created allotments are capable of being adequately serviced with electricity, telephone, gas and street lighting.
- To maximise the opportunities for common (shared) trenching and reduce constraints on tree planting and other landscaping within road reserves and open space corridors.

Principles

- Develop a subdivision plan, which takes advantage of the topography and natural drainage system in order to provide for an economical sewerage and stormwater system.
- Provide allowance for trunk facilities, where appropriate, within road verges and open space corridors.
- Co-ordinate the laying of compatible public utilities in common trenching in order to minimise construction costs for underground services.
- Supply electricity to residential blocks maximising, where possible, underground reticulation, by:
 - full undergrounding for all low voltage electricity reticulation to be encouraged particularly in environmentally and visually sensitive areas;
 - undergrounding all 11kV lines within a suburb including routes along off-road movement systems;
 - allowing not more than one overhead 11kV line on the edge of suburbs or within district open space;
- Provide for reticulation of gas and Telecom services to all blocks to acceptable standards of supply and safety, using common trenching where possible.