



ACT
Government

Part E

Zone Policies

E7 – Non-Urban
Zones Policy

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Application

The Non-Urban Zones Policy applies to all development in a non-urban zone (NUZ1 to NUZ5 inclusive).

Land Use Table

The following table identifies permissible land uses and development types (marked ‘Y’) in non-urban zones.

The uses listed require development approval unless they meet the ‘exempt development’ definition of the *Planning Act 2023*. Development and land use types listed are defined in the Territory Plan Dictionary.

Uses not listed in the table are prohibited. Development of prohibited uses may be considered under certain limited circumstances as outlined under Part 7.3 of the *Planning Act 2023*.

District policies specify additional types of development and land uses that are permissible or prohibited in specific locations.

Development Type	NUZ1	NUZ2	NUZ3	NUZ4	NUZ5
Agriculture	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ancillary use	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Animal care facility	Y	-	-	-	-
Caravan Park/camping ground	Y	-	-	-	-
Cemetery	Y	-	-	-	-
Communications facility	Y	Y	Y	-	Y
Community activity centre	Y	-	-	-	-
Complementary use	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Consolidation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Data centre	Y	-	-	-	-
Defence installation	Y	-	-	-	-
Demolition	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Distribution reservoir	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Educational establishment	Y	-	-	-	-
Emergency services facility	Y	-	-	-	-
Farm tourism	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Group or organized camp	-	Y	-	-	-
Health facility	Y	-	-	-	-
Intensive animal farming	Y	Y	-	-	-
Land management facility	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Major electricity storage facility	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Major electrical sub-station	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Development Type	NUZ1	NUZ2	NUZ3	NUZ4	NUZ5
Major gross pollutant trap	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Major pump station	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Major road	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Major service conduits	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Minor road	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Minor use	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Municipal depot	Y	-	-	-	-
Nature conservation area	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Outdoor education establishment	-	-	Y	-	-
Outdoor recreation facility	Y	Y	Y	-	-
Overnight camping facility	-	Y	-	-	Y
Parkland	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Place of worship	Y	-	-	-	-
Power generation station	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Residential care accommodation	Y	-	-	-	-
Scientific research establishment	Y	-	Y	-	Y
Service station	Y	-	-	-	-
Sign	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stock/sale yard	-	Y	-	-	-
Subdivision	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Temporary use	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tourist facility	Y	-	-	-	-
Transport depot	Y	-	-	-	-
Treatment plant	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Varying a lease, except where prohibited.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Urban lake, pond and/or retardation basin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Utility hydrogen production facility	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Veterinary hospital	Y	-	-	-	-
Water storage dam	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Woodlot	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Policy Outcomes

Development proposals in non-urban zones will be assessed having regard to the policy outcomes to be achieved for the relevant zone.

NUZ1 – Broadacre Zone

1. Provide for, in a predominantly rural landscape setting, a range of uses which require larger sites and/or a location outside urban area.
2. Provide for activities requiring clearance zones or protection from conflicting development.
3. Promote development that does not adversely impact or visually intrude on the landscape and environmental quality of the locality.
4. Limit, where appropriate, development of uses that undermine the future use of land which may be required for urban and other purposes.

NUZ2 – Rural Zone

1. Conserve the distinctive rural landscape setting of Canberra and maintain its ecological integrity.
2. Conserve sufficient wildlife habitats to adequately protect native plant and animal species.
3. Provide for the productive and sustainable use of land for agriculture.
4. Provide for other uses which are compatible with the use of the land for agriculture.
5. Maintain land parcels that are appropriate in size for their approved uses.
6. Offer leases for time periods which reflect planning intentions for the locality.
7. Reinforce a clear definition between urban and rural land.

NUZ3 – Hills, Ridges and Buffer Zone

1. Conserve the ecological integrity of the hill system as a visual backdrop and a unified landscape setting for Canberra.
2. Provide opportunities for appropriate recreational uses.
3. Conserve the significant cultural and natural heritage resources and a diversity of natural habitats and ecological corridors.
4. Provide predominantly open buffer spaces for the visual separation of towns and to provide residents with easy access to hills, ridges and buffer areas and associated recreation facilities.
5. Provide opportunities for appropriate environmental education and scientific research activities.

NUZ4 – River Corridor Zone

1. Conserve the ecological and cultural values of the ACT's major river corridors.
2. Protect stream flow, water quality and flood plains from adverse impacts.
3. Promote a type and intensity of development that is ecological sustainable.
4. Provide opportunities for a range of ecologically sensitive water and land based recreational activities.
5. Maintain compatibility between land uses, water uses and the general character of the rivers.
6. Provide opportunities for appropriate environmental education and scientific research activities.
7. Prevent development that would significantly increase fire hazard.
8. Prevent development that would impact ecological connectivity.

NUZ5 – Mountains and Bushland Zone

1. Protect the ecological integrity and biodiversity values of the mountains and bushlands surrounding Canberra.
2. Protect ecological resources by conserving vegetation communities in a relatively undisturbed state, maintaining a diversity of plant and animal habitats and assuring the maintenance of ecological functions within land and aquatic habitats.
3. Maintain the mountains and bush lands area as an important visual background to Canberra.
4. Provide opportunities for appropriate recreational use.
5. Protect and conserve the significant cultural and natural heritage resources and their landscape context.
6. Provide and manage access to Namadgi National Park and related areas for recreation and essential management purposes consistent with the objectives.
7. Provide opportunities for the area to be used for appropriate environmental education, research, and scientific study.
8. Maintain compatibility between land uses, water and water catchment uses and the natural character of the mountain and bushland areas.
9. Maintain and enhance the scenic and landscape character of the mountains and bushlands and associated areas and to ensure that any development is unobtrusive and compatible with its surroundings and the intrinsic landscape qualities of the mountains and bushlands.

Assessment Outcomes

Consistent with the zone policy outcomes, development proposals in non-urban zones must demonstrate that they are consistent with the assessment outcomes stated below.

In demonstrating compliance with the assessment outcomes, consideration is to be given to the relevant design guides and may be given to planning technical specifications which may serve as a benchmark. While all assessment outcomes are to be met, not all outcomes are covered by design guidance and/or planning technical specification.

Where a proposed development complies with relevant provisions in the design guide and/or planning technical specification and the development comprehensively addresses the assessment outcome, further assessment regarding that assessment outcome will not be required.

Where a design guide applies to a development, the proposal must demonstrate that it is consistent with the relevant guidance. More information is available in the design guide. Given the nature of the design guides, different design responses are possible to meet the same assessment outcomes.

The Territory Planning Authority may consider advice or written support from a referral entity to demonstrate compliance with a relevant assessment outcome. Where endorsement from an entity is noted as a planning technical specification, entity referral may be required.

The assessment outcomes for proposed development in non-urban zones are:

Assessment outcomes – Non-Urban Zones

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|--|---|
| Urban Structure and Natural Systems | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Biodiversity connectivity is maintained across the landscape.2. Loss of native habitat and biodiversity is avoided and/or minimised.3. The health and functionality of waterways and catchments is maintained, including through application of water sensitive urban design principles. |
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Assessment outcomes – Non-Urban Zones

Site and Land Use	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. The functionality and usability of the development is appropriate for its intended purpose/use.5. The proposed use and scale of development are appropriate to the site and zone.6. Adverse impacts of development on surrounding uses (both within a site and on adjoining sites) is minimised.
Access and Movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. The functionality and layout of the development achieves appropriate connections with the surrounding area. This includes consideration of traffic flow, surveillance and active travel.8. Access to, from and within the site permits safe and legible movement while catering for all users (including pedestrians). This includes consideration of vehicle manoeuvrability and access routes.
Public Space and Amenity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. The development achieves reasonable solar access and microclimate conditions to public areas and streets to support their use by the community.10. Any advertising or signs are suitable for their context and do not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area (for instance, due to size or light emission).
Built Form and Building Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none">11. The height, bulk and scale of the development is appropriate for the desired zone policy outcomes.
Sustainability and Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">12. Roofed areas and hard surfaces aim to reduce urban heat island effects, minimise stormwater run-off and maintain ecosystem services. This includes consideration of water sensitive urban design measures.13. Threats to biodiversity such as noise, light pollution, invasive species incursion or establishment, chemical pollution, or site disturbance are avoided or minimised through good design.14. Minimise cut and fill to protect natural hydrological function and limit soil erosion and site disturbance.15. The development considers and addresses site constraints, including heritage, natural features, topography, infrastructure and utilities.16. Environmental risks, including topography, noise, bushfire, flooding, contamination, air quality or hazardous materials are appropriately considered for the development on the site.
Parking, Services and Utilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">17. Development provides appropriate end-of-trip facilities.18. Vehicle and bicycle parking sufficiently caters for the development while minimising visual impacts from the street or public space. This includes consideration of parking location, dimensions and number of spaces provided.19. Waste is appropriately managed on site without having a detrimental impact on the surrounding area.20. The site is appropriately serviced in terms of infrastructure and utility services and any associated amenity impacts are minimised.

Assessment Requirements

Assessment requirements set the mandatory development controls within specific zones or for specific development types.

District policies also contain assessment requirements. Assessment requirements in district policies will prevail where inconsistencies occur.

Development proposals in non-urban zones must meet the following requirements:

Control	Assessment requirement
Outdoor Recreation Facilities – NUZ2 and NUZ3	1. In NUZ2 and NUZ3 zones, outdoor recreation facility excludes motor sport facilities, racecourses, stadiums, showgrounds.
Gas connections	2. No new gas network connections are allowed to all new or existing Class 1-2 buildings as classified under the National Construction Code including redevelopments.