



Environment and Planning Update

December 2021

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Message from Ben Ponton

**Director-General, Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate,
ACT Government**



Yuma—Welcome

As we come to the end of another extraordinary year, I'd like to thank you for being with us on the journey and continuing to contribute to the ACT Government's delivery of a better city, despite our COVID challenges.

We are gradually starting to consult and engage again following the disruptions in 2020–21. I look forward to a busy 2022, particularly in the planning space with the Planning System Review and Reform work, including the development of new planning legislation, and release of an exposure draft of the proposed new Planning Bill in early 2022 for engagement. We will also

continue to deliver on key items within the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly.

Thank you for your positive feedback last month about our new EPF Update format. This December update captures recent news, community engagement, major notifications and Legislative Assembly committee inquiries. However, as always, I encourage you and your members to also keep an eye on all ACT Government consultations through the [Your Say](#) website—and to follow ACT Government social media channels for content and alerts.

May I wish you all a relaxing holiday period and hope you are able to spend time to 're-charge'. Given the holidays, and the community's desire not to be engaged during the December–January holiday months, we will issue the next EPF Update in February 2022.

Ben

News and events

New rules for DA notifications over Christmas and New Year period

Development applications (DAs) open for public comment between Monday 20 December 2021 and Monday 10 January 2022 (inclusive) will have 13 additional working days added to their public notification period.

The new rules follow recent changes to the [Planning and Development Regulation 2008](#) that state the days around the Christmas and New Year period are no longer counted as working days for the purposes of public notification of DAs.

DAs will NOT commence notification between Monday 20 December 2021 and Monday 10 January 2022 inclusive.

For more information visit [Access Canberra](#).

Canberra wins Sustainable Transport Achievement Award



Canberra has won the Sustainable Transport Achievement Award at the [fourth annual Cities Power Partnership Climate Awards](#).

The award has been conferred for Canberra's progress towards a zero-emissions government fleet. With more than 170 zero emissions vehicles, electric bus and truck trials, investments in fast chargers, Australia's first electric fire truck (which is set to arrive next year), and the first public hydrogen vehicle refuelling station, Canberra is well on its way to achieving this big transition.

A range of incentives is available to help the public purchase a zero-emissions vehicle. Learn more at <https://www.environment.act.gov.au/cc/zero-emissions-vehicles>

Landscape plan released for Franklin nature reserve

The final landscape plan for Budjan Galindji Nature Reserve, previously known as Franklin Grasslands, has been released. The plan outlines the ways to protect the conservation values of the reserve and manage appropriate access and use of the area.

Budjan Galindji Nature Reserve was formally declared a Canberra Nature Park reserve in early 2020. The primary objective is to protect and conserve natural and cultural values while meeting environmental offset commitments.



The grasslands protect and support many wildflowers and animals. Threatened species such as the Golden Sun Moth, Striped Legless Lizard, Perunga Grasshopper and Superb Parrot all live or forage in the reserve. It is also the richest area in the world for the Ginninderra Peppercross, which is only found in the ACT.

Find out more at [YourSay Conservations website](#).

New community tool for reporting wombat sightings

Canberrans have a new [web portal](#) for reporting wombat sightings to help map wombat abundance and distribution across the ACT, including the prevalence of wombat mange.

The portal asks details about the location and the wombat's health. Volunteers from Wombat Rescue and ACT Wildlife monitor the portal and aim to assess the sick wombats quickly. Where possible, they provide treatment.



The portal also helps government collect information on wombat distribution.

The portal is part of a joint community and government project to better understand and deal with wombat mange. Find out more on the [ACT Environment website](#).

Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan 2021 released

The new [Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan](#) will guide management of Canberra Nature Park's 39 nature reserves in and around Canberra over the next 10 years.

Canberra Nature Park is located on the lands of the Ngunnawal people and provides the Ngunnawal Traditional Custodians important opportunities to connect with Country and, in partnership with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, manage Country together for the benefit of future generations.

The plan further enables land managers and community to protect important forest, woodland and grassland ecosystems and provide habitat for our native wildlife, including many threatened species. The reserves also protect significant cultural heritage sites.

Find out more information on the [YourSay Conversations website](#).

Be asbestos safe

Every year in Australia, an estimated 4,000 people die from asbestos-related diseases because of past exposure, including from the incurable cancer mesothelioma. Across the country, asbestos can still be found in as many as 1 in 3 homes and in many commercial properties.

With an increase in the rate of DIY home renovation and improvement works during the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk of asbestos exposure has increased.



We are asking everyone to stay safe when fixing up their place by following these three steps:

- 'Get in the know' by researching where asbestos could be located around your home.
- 'Take it slow' and be careful not to disturb or damage asbestos.
- 'Get a pro'—know your limits and hire a licensed asbestos professional who is trained to locate, manage or remove asbestos from a property.

For more information on the management of asbestos in the ACT, visit the [Worksafe ACT website](#).

In the media

[Upgraded IT system to support ACT planning system reform](#)

The ACT Government's reform of the Territory's planning system will include an upgraded IT system to make the planning processes simpler and more accessible to Canberrans. (10 December 2021)

[Improving access to zero emissions vehicles](#)

The ACT Government is opening applications for Canberrans to access zero interest loans for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles. (6 December 2021)

[Ensure your pool is safe this summer](#)

Canberrans with backyard pools are encouraged to be extra vigilant this summer and to check if their pool fencing and barriers meet current standards. (30 November 2021)

[ACTESA and PCS personnel recognised for their dedication and long service](#)

ACT Emergency Services Agency volunteers and ACT Parks and Conservation Service staff have been recognised for their continued efforts to support the community. (26 November 2021)

[Government declares first plastic-free events ahead of next plastic phase-out](#)

In an Australian first the ACT Government has declared public events as 'plastic-free' under the *Plastic Reduction Act 2021*. The Government is also engaging with the community and industry on the phase-out of the second tranche of single-use plastic items from 1 July 2022. (25 November 2021)

[Help shape new public places and green spaces for Woden Town Centre](#)

The ACT Government is calling for community input on the new Woden CIT precinct and public transport interchange, which will create new public places and green spaces to enliven Woden Town Centre. (18 November 2021)

[World-leading sustainability endorsement for Ginninderry](#)

The Ginninderry development has again received a 6-Star Green Star – Communities rating, proving its world-class leadership in environmental, social and economic sustainability. (17 November 2021)

[ACT explores new emissions reduction opportunities beyond borders](#)

The ACT has become the first jurisdiction in Australia to calculate the community's indirect greenhouse gas emissions from the goods and services that we buy. (11 November 2021)

[ACT signs COP26 declaration to accelerate the transition to 100% zero emission vehicles](#)

The ACT Government has signed onto the COP26 declaration to end the sale of petrol cars in developed countries by 2035 and work towards all sales of new cars and vans being zero emission globally by 2040. (11 November 2021)

[ACT Government introduces Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy](#)

A new Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy will set up a whole-of-government approach to managing smoke from significant bushfire events and household woodfires. (11 November 2021)

[New changes provide 'hands on' demonstration of co-housing in Ainslie](#)

An approved variation to the Territory Plan will pave the way for co-housing to be built on a block of land in Ainslie. (11 November 2021)

[Build-to-rent: more homes, longer rental periods and greater housing security for Canberrans](#)

The ACT Government is committed to bringing more housing options to the ACT. (10 November 2021)

[Increased protections for buying off the plan](#)

Canberrans purchasing residential properties off-the-plan will have greater protection under proposed changes to the use of sunset and development delay clauses. (9 November 2021)

[Consultation opens for insulation requirements for rental properties](#)

Rental properties across the Territory will be required to meet a minimum standard for ceiling insulation under a proposal from the ACT Government that is open for consultation. (8 November 2021)

[ACT, SA and NSW to be founding members of Net Zero Emissions Policy Forum at Glasgow](#)

The ACT, South Australian and New South Wales governments have started a collaboration designed to help sub-national jurisdictions address the practical challenges of achieving net zero emissions. (8 November 2021)

[ACT joins global call to accelerate the transition away from coal](#)

The ACT Government has signed onto the Global Coal to Clean Power Transition statement, reaffirming its commitment to accelerate a transition away from coal power generation. (5 November 2021)

Community engagement

The following Directorate community consultations are currently active on the ACT Government's YourSay Conversations website. The following consultations have had activity in the last month.

[Capital Food and Fibre Strategy](#)

Despite a thriving local farmers market scene and an increasing number of community gardens across Canberra, the ACT is reliant on food produced elsewhere. Hence, the development of the Capital Food and Fibre Strategy will provide an exciting opportunity to shape our future agriculture industry.

Status: Community and industry consultation commenced on 3 December 2021 where the participants can have their say by reading the [Capital Food and Fibre Strategy - Discussion paper](#) and completing the survey. The insight used from our surveys will be used to craft the Draft Capital Food and Fibre Strategy.

[Inner North Play Space](#)

Canberra Technology Park in Watson will be revitalised and its green space protected and enhanced, under [an agreement between the ACT Government and the Academy of Interactive Entertainment \(AIE\)](#). The project will help create local jobs, support the economic recovery from COVID-19 and further cement Canberra as the knowledge capital with another world-class higher education facility to be established in the ACT.

Status: Currently the feedback has been sought on the draft strategy before it is finalised. Consultation closes on 14 December 2021.

[Urban renewal in north Watson](#)

Section 76 in north Watson, between Aspinall Street and the Federal Highway, has been identified for housing and a park and to protect habitat for wildlife.

Status: Consultation has closed. Community views will be used to finalise the Place Plan and Development Concept, which will provide a concept for the new neighbourhood park and guide future development. We will release the final place plan in the coming months.

[ACT Planning System Review and Reform Project](#)

This project will deliver a planning system that is clear, easy to use and that facilitates the realisation of long-term aspirations for the growth and development of Canberra while maintaining its valued character.

Status: The listening reports for the district planning workshops have been published. Community feedback is shaping the desired future outcomes of the districts as part of eight distinct district strategies. We are currently considering how the work on district planning can be incorporated within the reformed planning system. An exposure draft of the proposed new Planning Act is expected to be released for comment in the first quarter of 2022.

[CBR Be Bushfire Ready—The next 5 years](#)

The Regional Fire Management Plan (RFMP) outlines how bushfire fuel management will be conducted on ACT Government-managed land over the next 10 years. The RFMP balances fire fuel management with the other values that the natural estate is managed for in the ACT.

Status: The final RFMP and the consultation report have been published.

[Minimum energy efficiency standards for rental homes](#)

Energy inefficient rental properties make for higher energy bills and cold homes and can have negative impacts on the comfort and health of renters. The Government has committed to the goal of introducing minimum energy efficiency standards for rental homes.

Status: Phase 2 of consultation is open until 19 December so we can hear from Canberrans, including renters and rental providers, on how best to roll out a new regulation for a minimum standard for ceiling insulation.

[Franklin Grasslands \(budjan galindji\)](#)

We asked the community to help shape a landscape plan that manages and conserves the natural environment while providing visitors the chance to engage with the site.

Status: Consultation has closed, and a listening report has been released. The final landscape plan for the Franklin Grasslands was released on 12 November 2021.

[Draft Hazardous Materials Environment Protection Policy](#)

The draft hazardous materials environment protection policy aims to help people understand regulations that apply to the management of hazardous materials so the risk of adverse impacts to the environment and human health are minimised.

Status: The draft policy is now open for public feedback until 4 January 2021.

Territory Plan variations

[Draft variations](#)

Public submissions are being considered for the following draft variations.

DV375 Demonstration Housing—Manor House

The draft variation supports the development of a demonstration housing proposal for a new type of housing development called a 'manor house' at Griffith section 31 block 6. Changes are proposed to the Griffith Precinct Map and Code, and the Multi Unit Housing Development Code. See the submissions and the [Consultation notice](#).

DV368 City and Gateway

Draft Variation 368 implements the key planning recommendations of the City and Gateway Urban Design Framework from Barry Drive/ Cooyong Street to Mouat/ Antill Street and modernises and clarifies the existing provisions of the Inner North Precinct Code. See the [Consultation notice](#).

DV328 Oaks Estate

Draft Variation 328 is a revised draft variation to the Territory Plan and implements the recommendations of the endorsed Oaks Estate Master Plan 2014, as well as responding to concerns raised during initial public consultation undertaken in early 2015. Consultation closed on 29 October. See the [Consultation notice](#).

DV357 End-of-Trip Facilities

The draft variation proposes to replace the Bicycle Parking General Code in the Territory Plan with a new End-of-Trip Facilities General Code. The aim of the code is to provide adequate facilities for bicycle riders and other active travel users at the end of a trip (either origin or destination). See the [Consultation notice](#).

[Recommended variations](#)

The following Territory Plan draft variations have been recommended to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. The Minister refers all recommended draft variations to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services for its decision whether to proceed with an inquiry.

DV372 Watson Section 76

Draft Variation 372 proposes to make the following changes to the Territory Plan for Watson Section 76:

- Rezone from Commercial CZ6 Leisure and Accommodation to RZ4 Medium Density Residential and Parks and Recreation PRZ1 Urban Open Space.

See the [recommended draft variation](#).

DV369 Living Infrastructure in Residential Zones

Draft Variation 369 responds to the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan. DV369 will assist in working towards achieving 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30% permeable surfaces in urban areas by 2045 by making changes related to site coverage and planting area requirements on private land in all residential zones (RZ1 to RZ5).

See the [recommended draft variation](#)

DV364 Gungahlin Town Centre

Draft Variation 364 incorporates the recommendations of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh into the Territory Plan to provide guidance on the desired built form and character of the centre as it develops.

An [inquiry](#) into DV364 is being held by the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services.

DV365 Housing Choices—Boarding Houses and Co-Housing

Draft Variation 365 proposes changes to implement some of the Housing Choices Collaboration Hub's recommendations on ways to improve housing choices in the ACT through amendments to existing boarding house provisions, and by introducing new provisions for 'co-housing'. The draft variation proposes changes to deliver greater diversity in dwelling types. These changes will be made through amendments to the residential codes and the definitions of the Territory Plan.

See the [recommended draft variation](#)

DV381 Local Centre shop size

Draft Variation 381 proposes to increase the maximum gross floor area (GFA) for shops in local centres from 1000m² to 1500m².

See the [recommended draft variation](#)

Approved variations

The following variations to Territory Plan have been approved by the Minister.

Number 378: Amendment to the Bruce Precinct Map and Code to permit a supermarket of up to 1,000m² on section 32 blocks 3 and 8.

- See the approved plan variation is on the ACT Legislation Register [Notifiable Instrument NI2021-660](#)
- Commencement date: TBD

Number 376: Demonstration Housing, Co-housing, Ainslie section 25 block 6

- See the approved variation on the ACT Legislation Register [Notifiable Instrument NI2021-654](#)
- Commencement date: TBD

Number 370: East Yowani Estate, Lyneham section 67-part block 7. Zone change and amendments to the Lyneham precinct map and code

- Approved plan variation is on the ACT Legislation Register [Notifiable Instrument NI2021-574](#)
- Commencement date: TBD

Legislative Assembly Committees

The [ACT Legislative Assembly website](#) has details of what's happening in both the standing and select committees. It also has the [status of Assembly inquiries](#), including which are open for submissions.

Current inquiries relevant to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate are:

- [Inquiry into Renewable Energy Innovation in the ACT](#)
- [Inquiry into Giralang shops](#)
- [Inquiry into Auditor-General Report:1/2021-Land Management Agreements](#)

Recent Committee reports:

- [Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2021-2022](#)
- [Draft Land Management Plan: Canberra Urban Lakes and Ponds \(Revised report\)](#)
- [DV 365 - Housing Choices - Co-Housing and Boarding Houses](#)
- [DV 364 Gungahlin Town Centre Amendments to the Gungahlin Precinct Map and Code](#)
- [Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2021-2022](#)

Statutory notifications

Development applications

Development applications are open for public notification for a minimum of 10–15 working days. We encourage you to keep an eye on the website or download the DA Finder App, which is currently being upgraded, to be notified of developments near you.

Development applications are an important part of our statutory planning process and we welcome representations from individuals, organisations, groups and industry.

Your role in promoting resources in your community is valued and we ask that you continue to encourage your membership to keep up to date on major developments in their area through the planning website or the DA Finder App. Download the DA Finder app on the [Google Play store](#) and the [iTunes store](#) for a quick and easy way to check out Development Applications on your mobile device.

Pre-DA notifications

Developers undertaking significant development proposals are required to undertake pre-DA consultation for a minimum of two weeks to involve the community in the early stages of a development. The ACT Government hosts the consultation information on the EPSDD website as a central location for information for the community in relation to these projects.

These consultations are undertaken prior to any formal application to Government. Many consultations involve your member groups, and we encourage you to engage with the proponents and their consultants during this stage of planning. Pre-DA community consultation does not replace the statutory planning requirement undertaken once an application is lodged with the planning and land authority.

You can see [Pre-DA consultations](#) on the ACT Government Planning website.

Open consultations include:

- Block 1 Section 17 Watson (Corner of Gwynne, Windeyer and Burton Streets, Watson)

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and EIS exemptions

An EIS or an EIS exemption is an information gathering exercise undertaken to understand the environmental consequences of a proposed development. An EIS or EIS exemption then supports an impact track development application.

You can see how the ACT processes EISs at [Environmental Impact Statement](#) and current EIS exemptions at [Exemption from requiring an EIS](#) on the ACT Government Planning website. These website pages include details of current scoping documents (outlining matters to be addressed in an EIS), draft applications and completed applications. EPSDD also notify relevant community groups directly, via email, when EISs and EIS exemptions open for public comment.

Current draft EIS and EIS exemption applications:

The minimum notification period for an EIS is 20 working days and the minimum period to comment on an EIS exemption is 15 working days. However, if an EIS or EIS exemption is lodged with a concurrent application (i.e. development application) is lodged, the minimum period is 35 working days. The period can be extended for complex proposals.

At present there are no EISs or EIS exemption applications open for comment. We encourage you to keep an eye on the website for notifications of interest to you and your members.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as Canberra's first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians. We recognise the special relationship and connection that Ngunnawal people have with this Country. Prior to the displacement of Ngunnawal people from their land, they were a thriving people whose life and culture was connected unequivocally to this land in a way that only they understand and know and is core to their physical and spiritual being. The segregation of the Ngunnawal people from Culture and Country has had long-lasting, profound, and ongoing health

and well-being effects on their life, cultural practices, families, and continuation of their law/lore. We acknowledge the historic interruption of the Ngunnawal people of Canberra and their surrounding regions. We recognise the significant contribution the Ngunnawal people have played in caring for Country. For time immemorial they have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual, and economic connection to these lands and waters.

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COLLABORATION
INNOVATION**