



ACT
Government

Suburban Land
Agency

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY: Creating the Canberra of the Future 2019–2020



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ACT Government, GPO Box 158,
Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: (02) 6205 0600

Website: suburbanland.act.gov.au

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This Sustainability Strategy: Creating the Canberra of the Future 2019–2020 (Strategy) has been developed for the Suburban Land Agency (the Agency) to provide a framework for delivering more sustainable suburban and urban development for the ACT.

The Strategy provides context for the activities and objectives of the Agency, sets out what we are currently doing, and establishes goals for the delivery of socially and environmentally sustainable developments. The Strategy also establishes a longer-term vision for the creation of sustainable suburbs, to align with the ACT Government’s commitment to net zero emissions by 2045 at the latest.



WHO ARE WE?

The Agency is a statutory authority established in July 2017, under the *City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act 2017* (the Act). The Agency is responsible for delivering a suburban and urban development program that meets the objects as set out in Section 38 of the Act. The Agency is to encourage and promote inclusive communities, through the delivery of people-focussed neighbourhoods, and suburban development that supports:

- > affordable living;
- > a safe and healthy population;
- > social inclusion;
- > housing choice; and
- > environmental sustainability.

The Agency also has responsibility to encourage and promote:

- > urban renewal outside declared urban renewal precincts;
- > growth and diversification of the Territory’s economy; and
- > social and environmental sustainability.



WHAT IS DRIVING US TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE?

OUR CHANGING CLIMATE

We are already seeing the effects of climate change in the Canberra region and in communities around the world. We not only need to adapt to a changing climate, where we can expect to see hotter summers and more extreme weather events, but we also need to continue reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. The sooner we can do this, the more likely it is that we will be able to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

It is also important that we consider our impact on the natural environment beyond the changing climate, and consider how we can create strong and resilient communities with good quality of life.

ACT GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PLANS

The Agency is delivering a suburban and urban development program on behalf of the ACT Government. As such, the Agency operates within the current context of policies and plans that set out objectives for the ACT. Key features for the Agency to consider include:

- > integrating land use, planning and transport;
- > the ACT is aiming for net zero emissions by 2045 at the latest, and is on track for all electricity to come from renewable sources by 2020, leaving transport and natural gas as the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions;
- > living infrastructure to reduce the urban heat island effect and assist in adapting to climate change;
- > water sensitive urban design;
- > improved diversity of housing available for the community including increased access to affordable housing and growing the social housing portfolio;
- > a focus on a more compact and sustainable city with integrated transport options;
- > active travel to reduce transport emissions, maintain a healthy population, and be the cycling capital and most walkable city in Australia;
- > electric vehicles to reduce emissions from the transport sector;
- > investigate collection of garden and food organic waste; and
- > demonstration housing projects to showcase innovation.



WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

The Agency is developing and selling land within a range of suburbs and other sites throughout the ACT. In these developments, we strive to deliver a sustainable outcome. However, in order to deliver a city of net zero emissions by 2045 at the latest, and to ensure social and environmental sustainability remains at the core of new developments, the Agency needs to do more. We will measure our progress against the following categories:

CORPORATE

- > Maintaining Actsmart Business Accreditation

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- > Conserving and enhancing biodiversity
- > Reducing emissions from waste and reusing materials
- > Reducing water use and improving water quality
- > Reducing energy use and encouraging renewable energy
- > Improving transport outcomes
- > Adapting to a changing climate

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- > Creating people-focussed neighbourhoods and communities
- > Supporting affordable living
- > Encouraging safe and healthy people
- > Promoting social inclusion
- > Providing housing choice



WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

THROSBY, SUPERB PARROTS AND NATURE NEXT DOOR

The suburb of Throsby is located next to the Gorooyaroo Nature Reserve and Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve in Gungahlin. These nature reserves are home to breeding habitat for the Superb Parrot, a vulnerable bird species with a distinctive bright green colour.

To ensure the Superb Parrot is celebrated in the suburb of Throsby, and to protect the surrounding nature reserves, we have taken the following steps:

- > As many remnant trees as possible were retained as part of the open space network, with native trees planted to provide the next generation of trees. Trees were retained and planted no more than 100 metres apart to ensure foraging habitat for the Superb Parrot.
- > Lighting at the edge of the suburb near Superb Parrot breeding trees was limited with the use of full cut off luminaires.
- > Construction works were limited around trees identified as being used by Superb Parrots for breeding.
- > The walking networks in the suburb were developed in a figure eight pattern to discourage residents from walking their pets in the nature reserves.
- > A contribution was provided to extend the predator proof fence that protects the nearby nature reserves.
- > A one hectare site has been set aside for a future learning centre for the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust.

- > The importance of the Superb Parrot has been reflected in the landscaping such as the entrance features and playgrounds, as well as in the marketing of the new suburb. The suburb has naming conventions based on native fauna.
- > The Mingle Program partners with the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary and Woodlands and Wetlands Trust through its community development activities.

MEETING, CONNECTING AND CREATING AT STROMLO COTTAGE

Stromlo Cottage, located in Coombs, was built in 1926 and was originally the home of Charles Gibbs, the caretaker of the former Weston Creek sewerage works. The cottage is heritage-listed and the Agency undertook a refurbishment of the building to allow it to be used as a community facility. The building now provides an accessible and welcoming space for community activities and events held as part of the Mingle Program. Adaptive reuse of this building offered great opportunities for the surrounding community.

ENHANCING LIVING INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATER QUALITY AT THE AMAROO GROUP CENTRE

The Amaroo Group Centre has trialled a range of measures to improve water quality and enhance tree growth and living infrastructure.

The Amaroo Group Centre includes mixed use development, medium-density residential development and car parking. This project used rain gardens and permeable pavers to filter stormwater runoff. It also used Stratacell technology from Citygreen to help filter stormwater runoff and enhance tree growth.





GINNINDERRY – A GREEN STAR COMMUNITY

Ginninderry has achieved a 6 star Green Star – Communities rating, the highest rating possible under the Green Building Council of Australia’s national rating tool. This internationally recognised certification demonstrates excellence in sustainability and is based on assessment of planning, design and construction across the categories of governance, liveability, economic prosperity, environment, design and innovation.

Located in West Belconnen, Ginninderry is a joint venture between the ACT and Riverview Developments (ACT) Pty Ltd, Reid & Stevens Pty Ltd and Corkhill Bros Pty Ltd. Some of the initiatives that have been incorporated into this development include:

- > introducing the Spark Program for training and employment
- > providing funding to restore the Belconnen Farmhouse and to remediate Ginninderry Falls
- > planning a commuter cycle path on the main boulevard
- > establishing education and information programs about Aboriginal heritage
- > planning community gardens and introducing edible verges, orchards and a herb garden
- > providing wi-fi and encouraging work hub environments
- > incorporating a network of bioretention swales, wetlands and ponds and using stormwater for irrigation

- > increasing water tank requirements for some blocks
- > trialling an all-electric greenfield development and requiring solar panels and energy demand management systems for all homes
- > promoting flexi-living options to encourage sustainable and affordable housing
- > setting aside more than a third of the land as a conservation corridor
- > undergoing independent design review
- > undertaking extensive community engagement

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND IMPROVING WATER QUALITY AT CAMPBELL 5

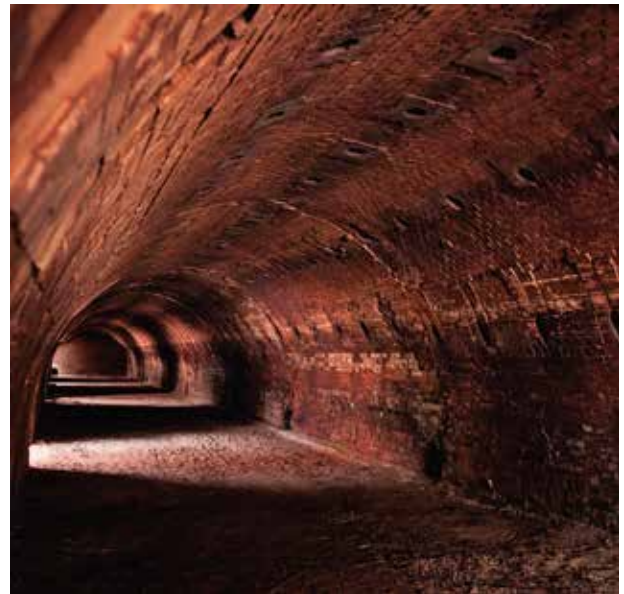
Campbell 5 is a major mixed use development on Constitution Avenue to the east of Anzac Parade. A significant amount of the site was retained as open space with an extensive network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists and the new Hassett Park including grassed terraces, kid’s play spaces and exercise equipment. In the open space area, a detention basin and a central grassed swale have also been included. This living infrastructure provides space for the community to gather and interact, encourages active living, will provide a cooling effect during warmer weather and filters stormwater to improve the quality of water entering Lake Burley Griffin. The filtered stormwater is also captured in a large underground storage tank (under the bridge) and is used to irrigate Hassett Park.

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY AND CELEBRATING HERITAGE AT THE CANBERRA BRICKWORKS

The Canberra Brickworks is located in Yarralumla, and is a significant urban renewal project that will restore and revitalise a former industrial site. The Canberra Brickworks operated between 1913 and 1976 and was the first industrial manufacturing facility in the city. The Yarralumla Brickworks Railway Remnants are the remaining elements of a former railway which transported bricks in the 1920s for construction of many of Canberra's prominent buildings including Old Parliament House.

The Canberra Brickworks renewal project will include adaptation of the old Brickworks and will include Quarry Park and Railway Remnants Park, to preserve and celebrate these significant aspects of Canberra's heritage.

The community was involved in determining the outcomes for this site through an extensive consultation process which included a community panel with representatives of key community groups. The process was open to other community members who could attend and observe the process. The



community panel was involved in developing precinct objectives which were incorporated into the procurement process. The community panel was also involved in shortlisting and reviewing development proposals, and provided advice to the ACT Government which informed the tender evaluation process.



WHAT WILL WE DO BETTER?

Environmental Sustainability

How do we reduce our impact on the natural environment and adapt to a changing climate?

Environmental sustainability focuses on the impact of our activities on the natural environment and climate, considering how we can reduce our use of critical resources and maintain the quality of our surrounds. As part of our environmental sustainability, we also consider how we can adapt to a changing climate. We want to sustain a quality environment into the future.

What is our long-term vision through to 2045?

New communities in both established areas and new developments will be energy efficient, and connected to nature and renewable energy, with low levels of waste produced. They will have an abundance of green spaces, and be pleasant to be in, even in hot weather. Reused, recycled and natural materials will be the norm in designing and developing the public realm, and reduced potable water will be used during construction and landscaping activities. Water quality in new developments will be of a high standard and construction and landscaping activities will be carbon neutral. Most people will walk, cycle and use electric bikes and public transport to get around, and where cars are used these will be electric. New communities will be highly connected and able to cope with a changing climate.

What will we be doing by mid-2020?

From 2019 onwards, the Agency will:

- > develop internal planning, civil works and landscaping guidance to ensure consistency across all projects in delivering sustainable development. This will include benchmarking and setting targets.
- > develop standard requirements to apply to all sites sold by the Agency, to provide clarity for the public about sustainability requirements if they purchase land from the Agency, including mandatory requirements and incentives.



- > investigate options and implement solutions to support:
 - tree canopy development in new developments and replacement of ageing trees in established areas
 - contractors and staff to further reduce cut and fill, water and energy use during planning, civil works and landscaping, and to ensure public assets are designed for a changing climate
 - purchasers and builders to create green spaces, reduce cut and fill, increase recycling, and implement sediment and erosion control on their sites
- > focus on activities and events through the Mingle Program to support biodiversity, waste reduction and recycling, climate-wise and energy efficient buildings, reduced water use and active travel
- > work to deliver a display village or demonstration housing project to showcase sustainable building design, whole-of-life costs and the benefits of renewable energy
- > hold an internal vision workshop for all projects of 300 or more dwellings to identify important place-based features and create a coherent vision for each project
- > maintain liaison with other ACT Government agencies



Social Sustainability

How do we create a vibrant, cohesive and resilient community?

Social sustainability focuses on the people that make up our community, and the creation of new communities, considering how we can design the physical environment and social infrastructure to ensure vibrancy, diversity, strength, cohesion and resilience. We want to sustain a good quality of life into the future.



What is our long-term vision through to 2045?

People living and working in new communities in both established areas and new developments will feel connected with each other and will be proud of the places in which they live and work, having had the opportunity to shape the future of their area. Cultural heritage will be celebrated and everybody will have easy access to fresh food, facilities and safe and accessible open spaces for recreation and social activities. There will be a diversity of housing choices on offer, with affordable, community and public housing a normal part of a socially inclusive community. The Agency will be considered a leader

in sustainable land development. New communities will be diverse and resilient, with a high quality of life.

What will we be doing by mid-2020?

From 2019 onwards, the Agency will:

- > expand the scope of Agency's stakeholder engagement strategy
- > implement initiatives to support affordable, community and public housing in new developments
- > better communicate how the following have been applied to each project:
 - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code
 - the active travel requirements of the Territory Plan
 - universal design
 - the requirements of the Access and Mobility General Code
- > investigate expanding the scope of the Mingle Program
- > identify opportunities to celebrate cultural heritage and communicate information in languages other than English
- > undertake an industry partnership
- > investigate options and implement solutions to support:
 - ways to encourage connectivity in public areas of new developments
 - initiatives to support participation in employment
- > support at least one charitable homelessness initiative
- > maintain liaison with other ACT Government agencies

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

KEEPING TRACK OF PROGRESS

In order to deliver these actions and meet the objectives outlined in the Act, the Agency will set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which will be incorporated into the Agency's annual Statement of Intent. The Agency will report against these KPIs through the annual reporting process for the 2019–20 financial year.

REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

This Strategy has been established to cover the initial period from 2019 to 2020. During that time a longer term strategy will be developed and the actions in this Strategy will be reviewed.

