Curtin Group Centre Master Plan

Community Engagement Report – Stage 1

NOVEMBER 2015
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Executive summary

The ACT Government is preparing a master plan for the Curtin group centre. The centre has been growing over the years and a strategic plan can ensure it remains a vibrant and sustainable urban centre in the future. The ACT Planning Strategy recommends preparing a master plan for the centre that will investigate opportunities for urban intensification.

This report summarises the feedback provided during the first stage of community engagement on the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan. Community input was essential to understand the diverse views, values and concerns of the community, and to explore innovative ideas and opportunities for the centre.

The community responded positively to engagement activities with approximately 780 people providing feedback between 28 April and 10 June 2015. Community input and feedback was gathered through information displays, feedback forms, ‘meet the planners’ sessions, a meeting with lessees and traders, individual written feedback, meetings with individual stakeholders and workshops with local schools.

The key messages that emerged from the first stage of community engagement were:

- Curtin has a very strong sense of community and it was essential that the centre’s ‘village’ feel was protected and enhanced by the master place process.
- The centre’s western open space was highly valued and considered unique to Curtin.
- The Radburn development style was thought to be a great example of successful planning that offers green space as a safe and pleasant place to socialise, exercise and play.
- The majority of people who provided input expressed their interest to continue to provide input into the development of the master plan.
- There were mixed views about the building heights with some support for low-rise development, preferably no taller than three to four storeys, provided it retained solar access, avoided wind tunnel effects and did not compromise green spaces.
- ‘Plan for people first’ and keep buildings to a ‘human scale’ were key messages throughout consultation.
- The shopping centre’s central courtyard should not be compromised with respect to access to sunlight, hence building heights should remain low in that vicinity.
- There were mixed views about the necessity for greater housing diversity; most participants were happy with the diversity of businesses and services available in the centre. Some people requested more housing choice for downsizing and older demographics.
- Many people believed the centre looks tired and needs a facelift.
- Most people said the centre is convenient and vibrant, but were concerned there may be a risk the master plan could change the centre.
Parking and safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists on nearby main roads were raised as issues that would need attention and careful management if further development took place.

There was support for improving walking, cycling and public transport access to the centre and neighbouring suburbs.

Along with technical studies, the community engagement outcomes of stage 1 helped to inform the development of a draft master plan for the Curtin group centre. The draft master plan will be available for community feedback over a period of six weeks at www.act.gov.au/Curtin.
Figure 1: Curtin Group Centre Master Plan study area
1. Introduction

The ACT Government is preparing a master plan for the Curtin group centre (the centre). A master plan is a long-term plan that considers how a particular area could change over time and sets objectives and strategies to manage change and development in that area. Figure 1 shows the master plan study area.

The ACT Planning Strategy identifies the centre as a strategic location for urban intensification and recommends the preparation of a master plan for the centre. The master plan will respond to Curtin’s place-specific needs and help to protect and enhance the centre’s lively retail precinct, open spaces, housing choice and modes of travel. Due to its proximity and linkages, the master plan will complement and consider the outcomes of the Woden Town Centre Master Plan.

This report presents the findings from the first stage of community engagement on the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan, which focused on identifying opportunities and challenges for the centre. Along with technical studies, the engagement outcomes informed the development of a draft master plan for the centre. Stage two of community engagement will enable the public to respond to the draft master plan. Figure 2 illustrates the master plan and community engagement process.

*Curtin’s 50th birthday celebrations in the central courtyard*
1.1 Community engagement approach

The community engagement approach aimed to capture the public aspirations and concerns for the centre prior to developing a draft master plan. The aim was to:

- inform the public on the master planning process and what a master plan can and cannot do
- inform the public on how the master plan will implement key ACT Government policies such as the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and the ACT’s climate change action plan (AP2)
- offer constructive settings for the community to raise their ideas and concerns upfront so it can inform the development of a draft master plan
- communicate and consult with users of the centre and the community surrounding the centre
- consult with the broader Canberra community via online engagement techniques.
The project team consulted with residents, community groups, school students, business and building owners and lessees through face-to-face activities and online engagement opportunities. All comments received have been considered in the master plan process; however, it is not always possible to achieve community consensus or to accommodate every single comment in the plan.


1.2 Community engagement activities
On Tuesday 28 April 2015, Minister for Planning Mick Gentleman MLA announced the start of the first stage of community engagement for the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan, running for a period of six weeks until Wednesday 10 June 2015.

Internet and social media
The internet and social media were used throughout the community engagement to notify the public and provide information about the master plan process. Information on the ACT Government’s Time to Talk website included links to all materials and an online feedback form.

Links to relevant internet pages and social media included:

- Time to Talk – www.timetotalk.act.gov.au
- Email – curtin@act.gov.au
- Twitter - @EPD_Comms
- Facebook – facebook.com/actgovepd

Activities and participation numbers
The community responded positively to the engagement activities, with approximately 780 people providing feedback through information displays, feedback forms, ‘meet the planners’ sessions, a meeting with lessees and traders, individual written feedback, meetings with individual stakeholders and workshops with local schools.

Table 1 provides an overview of all activities undertaken during the first stage of community engagement and numbers of people involved.
Table 1: Activities and numbers of people involved during stage 1 of community engagement for the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities for stage 1 of community engagement</th>
<th>Number of people involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information displays</strong> at Woden Library and Curtin shops 29 April to 10 June</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Letterbox drop</strong> advertising the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan and first stage of community engagement to residences in Curtin, Yarralumla, Deakin, Hughes, Woden and Lyons</td>
<td>7,614 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Letter to lessees and businesses</strong> in the centre advertising the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan and first stage of community engagement</td>
<td>100 letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two ‘meet the planners’ sessions</strong> at the centre Thursday 14 May and Saturday 23 May 2015</td>
<td>293 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback forms</strong> (online and printed) at information displays and ‘meet the planners’ sessions</td>
<td>211 feedback form responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘<strong>Have your say’ postcard</strong> with individual comments</td>
<td>63 postcard comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual submissions</strong> via mail or email</td>
<td>15 submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four workshops with nearby schools</strong> including students from Holy Trinity Primary School, Curtin Primary School and Alfred Deakin High School</td>
<td>168 school students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual meetings</strong> with lessees, traders and key community stakeholders</td>
<td>34 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Community engagement outcomes

2.1 Information displays

A series of information posters on the master plan process, as outlined in Figure 3, were displayed at the Curtin shops and Woden Library from Wednesday 29 April to Wednesday 10 June 2015. Visitors could fill out feedback forms in hard copy at the display or online. The posters were also available online for those unable to attend the displays in person.
2.2 ‘Meet the planners’ sessions

A total of 293 people visited the two ‘meet the planners’ sessions. At these sessions, the community could meet the project team and discuss issues related to the centre. Attendees were encouraged to complete feedback forms or write down their comments on ‘Have your say’ postcards or post-it notes, which were available at the sessions. The numbers of attendees are outlined in Table 2. Key messages from the ‘meet the planners’ sessions are summarised in Table 3.

Table 2: ‘Meet the planners’ sessions during stage one of engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curtin shops</td>
<td>Thursday, 14 May 2015</td>
<td>1 to 4pm</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin Shops</td>
<td>Saturday, 23 May 2015</td>
<td>11.30am - 1.30pm</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Key messages heard at the ‘meet the planners’ sessions for the Curtin centre

‘Village’ feel and strong sense of community
- Curtin has a strong sense of community and ‘village’ feel and it is essential this is protected and enhanced by the master plan process.

Western open space
- Curtin’s western open space is highly valued and unique to Curtin. It is a great example of successful Radburn planning.
- It is essential that the western open space is protected and enhanced by the master plan process.

Car parking
- Retaining and increasing parking is important to the community.
- It is difficult to find parking in the centre, particularly at peak times and when events are on at the local churches and schools.
- Parking has become more difficult since the new gym opened and paid parking was introduced to the Parliamentary Triangle.
- Parking for people with a disability needs to be increased.
**Internal courtyard**
- The internal central courtyard is valued by the community.
- There is support for updating and revitalising the courtyard area.
- Retaining solar access to the courtyard is very important.

**Mix of businesses**
- People would like to see the existing mix of businesses in the centre retained and increased.
- Some people wanted to see more activity on the northern side of the shops along Carruthers Street.

**Low rise nature of Curtin**
- People want to see the low-rise, human-scale nature of Curtin retained.
- Buildings surrounding the courtyard should be limited to one storey, particularly on the western side of the courtyard, to retain the courtyard’s solar access.
- There was more support for height increases on the south-east side of shops to encourage a refresh of older buildings.

**Pedestrian connections**
- Pedestrian connections on the northern side of the centre need improvement.

**Housing diversity**
- There were mixed views about housing diversity.
- Some people wanted to see more high-quality apartments in the centre.
- Others wanted to see more townhouses and semi-detached dwellings.
- Some people thought that new residential opportunities should not be considered in the centre.
2.3 ‘Have your say’ postcards

Postcards for individual comments were available at the ‘meet the planners’ sessions, and collected from stands at Coles and the Woden Library. Overall, 63 postcard comments were collected. The comments were grouped into common themes. The top five themes raised via the postcard responses were:

1. **Open spaces** (total 56 comments)
   Many people appreciate the sunny courtyard at the centre, which provides the opportunity for socialising, community events and community connections. The green spaces, in particular the western green spaces and green corridors, were highly valued and utilised by all age groups. Some people suggested refreshing the play equipment or moving the playground closer to the centre.

2. **Parking** (total 47 comments)
   Demand for parking is high at the centre, but most people value the free parking available and would like to see it retained.

3. **Residential** (total 29 comments)
   There were a mixed range of messages in relation to housing. Some people did not want more apartments or units or felt there was enough choice already. Others specifically asked for more housing options, including more affordable housing and downsizing options for seniors.

4. **Building heights** (total 16 comments)
   The general consensus was to limit building heights to two to three storeys. Some concerns about raising building heights included the loss of solar access, increasing traffic on the roads and the potential negative visual quality of high rise developments.

5. **Traffic and transport** (total 10 comments):
   People wanted improved public transport access and services (bus / light rail) and improved traffic controls to make the areas around the arterial roads safer for pedestrians.

‘Meet the planners’ session
2.4 Feedback form responses

Feedback forms were available for the community to provide their comments either online or in hard copy. The feedback forms gave people the opportunity to have their say on what they value about the centre, how they use the centre, what works well or needs improving.

Overall 211 feedback form responses were submitted, with 50% of the respondents being female and 48% male. The highest percentage of respondents were in the age bracket of more than 60 years (39%) with overall good representation across all ages except the group of under 20 years of age (2% only) as shown in Figure 3. As a response, further consultation with nearby schools was conducted to ensure that the master plan considers the views of the younger generation of the community.

The household composition of the respondents is shown in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 3: Age composition of respondents**

**Figure 4: Household composition of respondents**
How do people use the centre?

Understanding how people currently use the existing services in the centre is important for the master plan process to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. Respondents were able to select more than one option, which enables a more accurate representation of how the respondents use the centre. The key messages from the survey feedback forms are:

- Curtin is an active centre and valued community hub, with 51% of respondents visiting the centre daily and 36% visiting it once or twice a week.
- The centre is used for a variety of services and facilities. Figure 5 shows that people use the centre primarily for shopping (33%), socialising (20%), dining (15%) and visiting health services (14%). Some comments of ‘other uses’ were volunteering and community meetings.

**Figure 5: What do people use the Curtin group centre for?**
How do people access the centre?

Respondents generally drive (52% as a driver) or walk (36%) to the centre. Only 2.9% came by car as a passenger and 4.3% cycled. Comments made in the ‘other’ category indicate respondents who drive, walk, ride or catch the bus would have selected more than one option if they had been given the choice. The bus service and cycling from surrounding suburbs to Curtin does not appear to be a convenient transport choice for most respondents.

**Figure 6: How do people usually access the centre?**

![Pie chart showing mode of transport to the centre]
What works well in the Curtin group centre?

Figure 7 illustrates in a word cloud the key messages from respondents of what works well in the centre. The larger the word, the more frequently this theme was raised. Most people value the diversity of services, the central courtyard and the free parking that makes the centre a popular one-stop-shop for the community.

Table 4 shows the most frequently written responses grouped into common themes. Highly valued were the mix of businesses, both in type and sizes, the central courtyard arrangement and the convenient and friendly environment and cultural diversity.

Table 4: What respondents thought worked well in the Curtin group centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think works well in the Curtin Group centre?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity of businesses, including major supermarket as well as small local businesses</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central courtyard</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of retail and other services</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly environment</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking (free)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What does not work well in the Curtin group centre?

Table 5 shows the most frequent responses to what does not work well in the group centre. Comments were grouped into common themes and ranked by response counts. The biggest concern was the demand for parking and the tired appearance of the centre.

Table 5: What respondents thought does not work well in the Curtin group centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think does not work in the Curtin group centre?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is often difficult to find a carpark</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look of centre—needs a facelift</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of landscaping/green spaces throughout the centre</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough diversity in businesses</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of after-hours activities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian and cycle connections throughout the centre and to surrounding suburbs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All weather access and shelter</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilets</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, including night-time safety and lighting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconnected</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Does the area need greater housing diversity?

The feedback form asked if the idea of more residential housing options near the centre would be supported. Figure 8 shows that, overall, 56% of respondents either strongly support or generally support the idea, while 31% either disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal for greater housing choice.

**Figure 8: Support for greater housing diversity near the centre**

Many survey respondents added other comments, with the following key messages:

- Twenty-nine comments were in support of encouraging retail/businesses and life to the centre.
- The need for greater housing choice was mentioned by 17 participants, which included downsizing and affordability.
- Sixteen participants opposed change and liked the centre the way it is and some of them felt there was already plenty of housing choice available.
- Sixteen participants said that high-quality development would be important with some specifically mentioning they did not want any high rise and that solar access at the centre should not be affected.
- Twelve respondents wanted to retain the green belt and open spaces.
- Other frequently mentioned issues were concerns about a potential lack of quality of new development, increase in noise and criminal activity, lack of parking and the need for more walkable environments and better public transport.
What are appropriate building heights for the centre?

Concerns raised by respondents for building heights in the centre related to solar access and the potential impact on the amenity of public spaces. As shown in Figure 9, the majority of respondents indicated that two storeys could be an acceptable height limit. Less than one third of respondents indicated that three to four storeys would be acceptable. Few people thought that developments of five or more stories were appropriate for Curtin.

**Figure 9: What maximum building heights are appropriate for the centre?**

![Bar chart showing responses to maximum building heights]

What uses should be allowed in the centre?

Figure 10 shows that most respondents indicated that mixed use (retail and office) should be allowed in the centre, followed by retail and a mix of commercial and residential. Residential use was the least popular. ‘Other’ uses specified included developments like New Acton, community/cultural facilities, green space/park, restaurants/cafes and medical/health services.

**Figure 10: What uses should be allowed in the centre?**

![Bar chart showing responses to uses in the centre]
**What are important considerations for future development in the centre?**

Respondents were asked to rank a set of considerations for potential new development from 1 to 7 (with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important). Table 6 shows the average level of importance of the considerations ranked by respondents, with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important.

**Table 6: Average importance of selected considerations for new development in the centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking of considerations for possible new developments in the Curtin group centre</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Landscaping/streetscapes that provide shade and ‘green spaces’ in the centre</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Solar access to avoid overshadowing of public spaces and other residential buildings</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Spaces that allow activities such as dining to ‘spill out’ on to the street and public spaces</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Bulk and scale (the width and height of a building and how it presents onto the public spaces)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Building awnings to shelter people walking along the street</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Variation in the design of the buildings (e.g. through materials) to create interest</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Overlooking from buildings onto public spaces (surveillance and sense of security)</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What could the community be involved with in the future?**

Respondents were asked if they thought the community could contribute to the future of the centre and, if so, what sorts of things could they help with. Similar responses were grouped together and the most frequent are listed in Table 7. More than 50% of those who commented on this question made it clear they wished to continue to be consulted and involved in the future planning for the centre.

**Table 7: How can the community contribute to the future of the Curtin centre?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How can the Curtin community contribute to the future of the Curtin group centre?</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage with the Curtin community and continue to involve them in planning</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage activities that engage the community and encourage community gatherings (e.g. for fundraising, live music, volunteering, schools, seniors, art, gardening and maintenance)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop plans and build using real expertise</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No—leave it to the market</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to use and support the Curtin group centre</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it well maintained</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it as it is—it is unique</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide community facilities for various interests (e.g. book club, community outreach, day care, events that involve seniors etc.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create urban spaces that encourage groups and networks to grow rich and strong and which are available for all age groups</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other comments and suggestions for the centre

The feedback form finished with an open ended question on further comments and suggestions for the centre. Similar responses have been grouped together and the number of responses has been included in Table 8.

Table 8: Further comments and suggestions for the centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other comments and suggestions for the Curtin group centre</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t change, leave the centre like it is</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain/enhance open space – don’t develop it – increase the number of trees</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access (e.g. public transport, shared paths, park and ride, between car parks and the shops, for disabled, improve safety)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin needs more housing diversity</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain and enhance the current unique community atmosphere and vibrancy</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consult with the community to get the best outcome</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No higher than single storey development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve traffic (e.g. Theodore and Carruthers Streets, roundabouts, and main roads)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre only needs a facelift</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking—ensure that it is easy to park, as demand for parking is increasing</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trust with planning</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear about higher density impacts on the shops, centre and local residents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to sunshine is prized (e.g. in the Curtin courtyard and residences). Don’t want overshadowing.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be cognisant of the tradeoffs when developing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more multi-storey buildings/high density</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No higher than two-storey development</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more spaces for people to congregate/sit (for recreation, schools etc)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like / approve of this master plan process/consultation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Radburn Estate is highly valued – don’t change it – protect it</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure new development is of a high quality</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put in a playground – integrate this into the centre</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5 Written submissions

During stage one of community engagement, 15 emails and letters were received providing feedback on the centre and the master plan process. The planning matters raised were similar to those raised in the ‘meet the planners’ sessions and the feedback forms. There was strong focus on protecting the local character and ‘village’ feel of the centre, preserving the western open space, green corridors and solar access to these spaces, and placing restrictions on further development including building heights.

All comments in the submissions were grouped into common themes and are outlined in Table 9. The full written submissions received can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Table 9: Summary of written submissions received during stage 1 of community engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western open space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Local residents highly value Curtin’s western open space and its amenity for walking, cycling, recreation and socialising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The western open space is seen as a unique feature of Curtin and a successful example of Radburn development to separate vehicles from pedestrian and cycle movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Children often play in the space or use it as a thoroughfare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To enhance the space, more trees, wider paths and picnic tables could be provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There was some support for a wetland in the open space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is concern about the potential for ‘over-development’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many thought the centre was currently working well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many did not want to see any new development at the centre as it might restrict sunlight to the central courtyard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some thought there were few sites near the centre appropriate for new development and scope for greater density already existed in the RZ4 zone, or along the rapid transport routes adjacent to Yarra Glen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<td>• The centre is busy, well-utilised and provides a high level of amenity with a good mix of businesses and shops.</td>
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<td>• People value that the centre and its courtyard is located away from vehicles/roads where community activity take place.</td>
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<td>• Local residents highly value the ‘village feel’ and low-rise scale.</td>
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<td>• The diverse mix of businesses in Curtin is valued and any new development must not potentially threaten this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Many would like to see affordable housing and some of the original housing stock in the suburb retained.</td>
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<td>• The courtyard and shops could benefit from a makeover, including some of the austere facades near the car parks.</td>
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### Car parking and traffic management

- The southern carpark is well utilised and not ‘comparatively underutilised’ as the background information poster states.
- Better connectivity could be provided between the east and west carparks and between the carparks and the shops.
- Paid parking and public parking reductions are not supported.
- Better maintenance of carparks is needed and trolley bays could be provided.
- Curtin already has emerging traffic problems with several safety issues for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Increasing density will increase traffic and would need to be carefully managed.
- Consider 40km/hr speed limit around the centre.
- Parking is already tight, especially during peak hours, after school and on weekends.

### Public transport, walking and cycling

- Retain the access to the centre via the green corridors and paths.
- Improve walking and cycling access between the centre and Woden/Yarra Glen, including on-road cycle access, widened paths and formalising ‘goat tracks’ near the shops.
- Improve bicycle parking facilities/amenity.
- Apply best practice standards for bicycle lane markings, access to roundabouts and slip lanes.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle access, particularly access ramps for prams, trolleys and seniors.
- Pedestrian safety could also be improved across Strangways Street.
- Some respondents said the centre already has good cycling and walking connections.
- Improve public transport services.
- A rapid transport stop at the Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen intersection would require a park and ride and good access for pedestrians and cyclists.

### Vegetation, public spaces and playgrounds

- People highly value the parklands/green corridors as a safe space for children to play, adults to socialise/walk or ride away from roads and traffic.
- More shade trees and gardens could enhance the centre and local neighbourhood. People value the mature trees, and dead/dying trees should be replaced.
- Vegetation in the median strip and roundabout on Carruthers Street could improve the entrance to the centre.
- Provide more facilities in the centre, e.g. playgrounds for different ages, fitness station, and picnic tables near the Scout hall/playground could be provided.
2.6 Workshops with school students

To ensure the views of young people were considered in the development of the master plan, the project team ran workshops at Curtin Primary School, Holy Trinity Primary School and Alfred Deakin High School. The workshops focussed on the public spaces in Curtin with the students providing written feedback in groups.

Key messages heard from the school students were:

- There are not enough child-friendly, inclusive and diverse spaces or activities to do in Curtin, especially for older children.
- There are “not enough things to look at and admire in Curtin”.
- The connection between the high school and the Curtin shops is unsafe and unattractive.
- Lighting is inadequate at the underpasses.
- The quality of the pathways is poor, particularly for those with a disability.
- The western open space is pleasant, but lacks facilities and activities such as playgrounds, water features, running tracks, outdoor exercise equipment or amphitheatre.
- More defined cycling tracks through the centre, bike racks, shelter and bubblers would be desirable.
- A lot of people have pets and there are no dog-friendly areas in Curtin.
- There is not enough shade near the oval and public spaces.
- The toilet facilities at the centre are run down, dirty and difficult to use.
- The idea of shop-top housing was supported.
2.7 Individual stakeholder meetings

The project team met with the following key stakeholders to gain first hand insight on matters that could be addressed in the development of the draft master plan. These included:

- Coles supermarket
- St James Uniting Church
- Local lessees
- Statesman Hotel
- Bendigo Bank
- Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd

The project team also gave a presentation to the Woden Valley Community Council on the master plan and community engagement process.

2.8 ACT Government agencies

The following key agencies are responsible for service delivery and consequently the implementation of the master plan in the long term and the project team engages with these on an on-going basis:

- Chief Ministers, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) may identify Territory owned land appropriate to release for sale.
- The Community Services Directorate (CSD) is responsible for public community facilities.
- The Territory and Municipal Services Directorate (TAMS) maintains road infrastructure and urban open spaces, including playgrounds and parkland.
- The Territory Plan unit within the Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) is responsible for translating the final endorsed master plan recommendations into the Territory Plan in the form of a renewed precinct code.
- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) considers noise pollution and relationships between different uses, particularly the interface between residential, commercial and service areas and how we can create appropriate mixed-use development.
- The Education and Training Directorate (ETD) is responsible for public schools in the area.
3. Summary of analysis

The following summary highlights the key messages heard during stage one of community engagement on the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan. These messages and relevant background information helped to inform the preparation of the draft master plan.

Transport and movement

- Curtin group centre is highly valued as a convenient, easily accessible centre for shopping and socialising in a friendly and smaller-scale neighbourhood environment.
- Pedestrian and cycle connections close to the centre could be improved, including pram/trolley/bike access ramps and improved linkages to Hughes (Alfred Deakin High School and St Andrews Retirement Village) and to on-road cycling facilities on Yarra Glen.
- Several people would like to see more choices to combine bus with walking and cycling as alternative travel options.
- The park and ride facility at the shops was not well known.
- Some suggested transit-oriented development around the centre to improve public transport services.
- People valued the free parking and opposed pay parking as this would impact on their convenience.
- Increasing businesses and vibrancy of the centre would increase demand for parking, in particular during peak times after school, after work and on weekends.
- A number of traffic and safety issues for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists should be addressed, in particular on Strangways, Carruthers and Theodore streets. Traffic calming measures, speed limits and safer on-road cycling lane design was suggested.
- Some people mentioned that the underpasses feel unsafe and require better lighting.
Public spaces

- The location of the centre with its landscape setting and connections to open spaces and green corridors was highly valued for its ‘village feel’ and sense of community.
- The central courtyard is a much-loved place providing a sheltered, green and sunny space for a variety of social activities away from traffic, particularly for young children.
- Some people suggested improving or softening the austere walls and facades near the entrances to the courtyard.
- Many people agreed that the centre is looking tired requiring a facelift.
- Improved maintenance of green spaces and public toilets was suggested.
- Many people asked for more play spaces for people of various ages.
- More opportunities for social interaction and activity in the centre are needed, e.g. live music, art, fundraising, volunteering, school involvement, etc.

Housing and retail diversity

There were very mixed views about increasing housing diversity.

- Some people liked the more affordable older units and houses and suggested these should be conserved and their heritage and history respected.
- Other people would like to see high quality development near the centre and want greater diversity in housing choices, in particular for seniors and people who would want to downsize.
- There was reasonable support for more townhouses, semi-detached or age-friendly living near the centre, although some people felt the current diversity was adequate.
- It was proposed there could be an opportunity for more retail activity on the northern side of Carruthers Street near the shops.
- Some proposed transit-oriented development; that is, a mixed-use residential and commercial area designed to maximise access to public transport.
- While many people did not wish to have residential development in the group centre, school students suggested shop-top housing as an option.
- Most people liked the existing mix of small-scale retail, commercial and community facilities available at the centre and many supported maintaining or enhancing this mix.
- There were concerns for over-development and higher density development destroying the currently diversity of shops and activity. Many felt the centre is working well and does not need to change.
New development and building heights

- Many comments reiterated that planning for Curtin should put people first and consider the needs of all age groups.
- There were very mixed views about new development and building heights in the study area. A majority of respondents preferred commercial mixed-use and low-rise development to maintain solar access, in particular near the courtyard of the shops.
- In general, there was a feeling to keep development to a ‘human scale’ with a majority of participants supporting one or two storeys. A smaller group supported three to four storey development. Key concerns included overshadowing, lack of solar access and wind tunnel effects. Additionally, any flow on impacts to traffic congestion, parking and pedestrian and cyclist safety would need to be managed.
- There was hardly any support for development higher than four storeys.
- It was proposed that heights could be increased on the south-east side of the shops.

Green infrastructure and open spaces

- The open spaces and shade trees were highly valued by most people and would need to be retained and enhanced.
- The Radburn development to the west of the centre was considered a highly successful example of planning with great linkages to the open space.
- The open spaces are used by a wide range of people as they are considered to be safe, pleasant and located away from roads and vehicles.
- People appreciated the wildlife in the green corridors and use these spaces for dog walking, jogging, playing, meeting neighbours, and as a route to walk or cycle to the shops. Some would like to see more facilities for active and passive recreation.
- There was support for a wetland, if appropriately located, to add diversity to the landscape.
- Some people wanted to see a dog-friendly space established.
Community involvement in planning

- Many people expressed a strong desire to keep the community informed and involved in the development of the master plan and any other future planning.
- Many people welcomed the opportunity to engage in public consultation at this stage of the project.
- Some people expressed a lack of trust in this consultation process and potential future development plans.
- There was a very strong sense of community and pride about the early design of Curtin and people highly value and appreciate the centre and surrounding neighbourhood.

4. Next stage

Comments and submissions received from the community, stakeholders and government agencies were analysed and helped to inform the development of the draft master plan for the Curtin group centre.

The draft master plan will be released for six weeks of community consultation.

Upon the completion of the master plan, the following may happen:

- Territory Plan variation—a variation is undertaken to introduce a new precinct code for the centre. This is the most likely outcome of a master plan.
- Sale of Territory-owned land—some Territory-owned land may be identified as appropriate to sell for uses that meet the needs of the market and community.
- Public domain upgrades—infrastructure and public space improvements may be identified as part of the master plan process. This will involve various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budgets.
- Industry opportunities—it is up to the business community to take advantage of opportunities identified in a master plan. Where proposed changes are on existing developed sites, market forces will dictate when/if they are redeveloped. Change may therefore take a number of years.

All information on the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan and the master plan process is available at www.act.gov.au/curtin and http://haveyoursay.planning.act.gov.au
Appendix 1 – Written submissions

The following section includes all written submissions during stage one of community engagement for the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan. Please note that personal details have been removed from these submissions and any images or attachments included with the submission have been left out of this report.

Email received 1 May 2015, local resident
Again Action has missed the opportunity to bring more people to Curtin Shops.
Considering the ACT Governments plan to re-vitalise Curtin (Have your say: What could Curtin centre look like in the future).
My suggestion will certainly work and only increase the bus route by 2-3mins and connect Curtin to Yarralumla and Deakin.
This is not possible to do at the moment via one (1) Bus only.
The new Route #1 has isolated Curtin residents/students from the schools and hospitals in Deakin and Yarralumla.
The Deakin schools also include Curtin within their Priority Enrolment Areas.
This is not an ideal bus route option.
An easy fix (temporary or trial) could be to have Route #1 - On Carruthers St go up to the Curtin Shops roundabout and return back on Carruthers then Turn left into Groom St. (similar to what #831 does)
This will possibly add up to 3 minutes to the #1 Route and you are connecting town centres and it will make it more accessible to Curtin residents/students.

Email received 1 May 2015, local resident
My suggestion is to construct a new section of dedicated (preferably off-road) bike path to connect the main bike path (from Woden) to the Curtin shops. Currently it’s a very uneven stretch from the top of the path at Carruthers St along the footpath and across the road to reach shops.

Email received 13 May 2015, local resident
I have just looked at your Improved Time tables. School kids catching the #1 bus at Yarralumla shops will now have to wait an unacceptable 59mins before catching a bus (3.59pm departure). Strangely you also have a bus “on school days only” leaving Yarralumla at 4.19pm. (almost 80mins after school has finished). Currently the wait is 20 mins to board the 3.20 bus to Woden.
This is unacceptable and will certainly result in increased traffic as parents are not willing to let schoolchildren hang around for an hour for a bus.
Action have also not considered my very good suggestion below to link Yarralumla, Deakin and Curtin residents and is in conflict with ACT Govt plans to bring people to Curtin.
Email received 13 May 2015, local resident
I am interested in the frame of reference for the recently identified master plan.

It would be great to have some improvements with respect to some aspects of the Curtin shopping centre but I am concerned about the scope of what I think is called the Curtin Group Centre.

As a resident of the Radburn plan for over 30 years, I am particularly concerned about the reference to increasing population density, especially with respect to legend point 7, which intrudes on the cul de sac ends of Colebatch Place and Nelson Place. While I understand that other Radburn developments have not been successful, this one supports a thriving community for the following reasons:

1. Residents of Curtin use the thoroughfare paths regularly to access the shops and other local amenities;
2. Children play safely in the parkland areas;
3. Children are readily able to be supervised from their homes, fronting as they do onto the nature strip;
4. It facilitates neighbourly communication and promotes neighbourhood get-togethers.

I therefore strongly oppose changes that imperil this aspect of the suburb’s design and community access. I would also ask that a meeting be organised, that allows the community to ask questions of the planners as part of a public forum. As winter is almost here, this would need to be held in one of the suburban halls.

Email received 18 May 2015, local resident
My concern is that the Master Plan in its current version will completely ruin the community ‘green-belt’ through fare that Curtin is famous for and the Radburn development was designed on. It appears to block the natural access to the shops, schools, and is likely to swipe the community wellbeing we take for granted here by simply having neighbours around. What price do we put on the mental health of the elderly residents of Curtin? And some of us young ones too! No doubt it will limit access to those majestic horses trotting down from Lyons, dog walkers (there are some 20 odd dog walkers from the club organised by the local Vet going past here every Saturday morning), plus a myriad of neighbourhood dogs and their resident owners at every hour of the day. The school cross country and walkathon for both schools utilise this space. How many suburbs in Canberra are you able to step out the door and run into neighbours wandering to the shops? We walk each other’s children to school... through the green belts that are tagged for in-filling. This space is unique, special and tranquil. Let develop in a way we can preserve those attributes, and in-fill where it will have a positive effect on the community, not push us out of these beautiful spaces.

I'm against any development which 'plugs' the natural flow of community members passing through the suburb. They will get back in their cars to do the shopping! Let's have planners sit at the local park for a week and give us some statistics on community pedestrian traffic, particularly in Zone 7 in the Master Plan map.
**Email received 27 May 2015, nearby resident**

I am grateful for consultation I would like to point out that those of us with disabilities and caring responsibilities have no time to respond or absorb so we are relying on you to do the planning and the consultation with our community as thoroughly as possible.

I would like to point out that the ‘green spine’ you refer to in Weston is similar to ours but also ours is uniquely significant as it has houses designed to face onto the communal areas, green corridors connecting the ridge and the shops and

I have lived in different areas of Canberra over the 50 odd years I have been here, and I must emphasise from my experience that this is unique. In days to come it may well be recognised as an area with similar cultural and heritage significance to that of Castlecrag in Sydney.

Canberra is renowned for its planning. Please ensure that you do not buckle to modern pressures of budget and developers in any way that would risk this precious lifestyle asset. It is not just a commodity it is what makes some of our Ives possible, those that are marginalised by our status as carers, those with disabilities and those isolated in society who may not have the voice that our more articulate echelons of society may have.

I urge you to ensure that consultation includes forthright and clear communications and letterbox drops as well as digital access to information, this cannot be a one sided debate.

**Email received 28 May 2015, Knight Frank on behalf of a local lessee**

The Curtin Group Centre contains buildings that are dated and the Master Plan provides a great opportunity to inform the policy for the Curtin Group Centre so that redevelopment may proceed with increased certainty, particularly in relation to the height and scale of development. The Master Plan also provides great opportunities for more diverse housing, retail and commercial choices.

**Email received 9 June 2015, The Canberra Institute regarding the Statesman Hotel**

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on site at the Statesman Hotel on Tuesday 12 May 2015.

At that meeting we discussed potential future use of the current Statesman Hotel site and of the adjacent car park to the north west of the Hotel. We also discussed the potential purchase of the car park by the owner of the Statesman Hotel as outlined in page one of the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan - "Sale of Territory-owned land”.

I now offer the following comments regarding design concepts for the two sites:

- the owner of the Statesman Hotel is seeking a variation in the Territory Plan to permit a twelve story and a ten story building on these sites
- the current Statesman Hotel site would retain its allowable land uses i.e. hotel, motel, licensed club and drive through bottle shop (twelve story building)
  - this building would contain a mix of serviced apartments and residential units
  - there will be underground parking for all residential units and serviced apartments
  - there is no intention to include retail outlets in this building
  - it is proposed that this building will be called *The Statesman*
- it is proposed that the current car park site would contain a ten story building including residential units providing for a number of over 55 independent living units
  - the ground floor of this building would be retained for public shopping centre car parking
  - the first floor would be set aside for professional suites and ACT Government Agencies (e.g. ACT Electorate Offices and the like)
  - it is proposed that this building will be called The Curtin

- the proponent will ensure that both buildings meet the Australian Building Neighbours Standard including geothermal and solar energy provision.

The proponent and I look forward to expanding on these issues at a further meeting.

**Email received 9 June 2015, local resident**
- Please do not build apartments in the Shopping Centre Village Square as it is probably only advantageous to the developers and it will block the sunshine light out.
- Please consider developing the Statesman Hotel into a higher rise building of two to three levels of a Hotel/residential area.
- If is absolutely necessary to build apartments in the shopping centre, please consider building them on the Good Shepherd Church side of the shopping centre on top of the existing Travel Agency, Real Estate...etc
- Consider the addition of another Aged Care Facility like Goodwin Homes in Ainslie adjacent to the Curtin Shopping Centre. Perhaps this facility can be well attached to the shopping centre so elderly people can easily do their shopping, have a coffee, see a health professional and catch a bus to say Woden/Civic. This may serve the ageing Curtin Community much better than apartments.
- Consider for the Shopping Centre, all that is required is a general superficial make-over, leaving existing buildings in place as they are.
- Plant more trees, for example, in the car parks.

Finally, please seriously consider people's input and suggestions, rather than just seemingly going through the motions of a 'consultative' Master Plan.

**Written feedback dated 9 June 2015, from three local residents**

**Affordable housing**

We would like to see affordable housing maintained in the Curtin Group Centre. Most of the existing flats are at the cheaper end of the rental market and it means that newly arrived migrant families, single parent families and retired single people can afford to live next to Curtin's green open spaces and also have easy access to the excellent Curtin shops, as well as Woden and Civic via regular bus services.

Recently on James Street, Curtin, four affordable, north-facing, one bedroom flats were demolished to make way for a “stunning boutique complex” of one-bedroom apartments selling for over half a million dollars each. (Some of them face due west.) Curtin residents objected without success to the planning application.

Curtin is a vibrant, mixed community close to the centre of Canberra. Maintaining the suburb’s stock of affordable housing is not only fairer for low income residents of Canberra, but will maintain the diversity of the suburb and the school population, from which we all benefit.
Curtin was named for Prime Minister John Curtin who built a social welfare system for Australia. We think this should be reflected in the master plan.

The Curtin Shops
The Curtin Shops have a unique character, are the historical heart of Curtin and serve very much as a community hub. Part of their character is their 'low-rise' and informal architecture and the diverse collection of small businesses they house. If the master plan proposes any changes to the Group Centre, consideration should be given to any impact of those changes on shop rents.

Traffic
Some of the consultation material referred to 'urban densification'. Curtin already has emerging traffic problems, especially noticeable along Theodore Street which hasn't benefited from the traffic calming work done on McCulloch Street. Any greater urban density would need proper management of the traffic impact.

Heritage protection of some of the housing stock
The flats on the corner of Carruthers and McCulloch Street are a beautiful example of 1960s architecture. We would like to see some of the original Curtin housing stock preserved and believe these flats would be a good choice.

Maintaining the green spaces
We are regular users of the long green corridor along the western edge of the Group Centre. It is heavily used by pedestrians, cyclists and joggers, including as a north/south route through the suburb and also from the west of the suburb along the two green corridors which run east to the shopping centre. Children are able to walk and ride safely to school and the shops from the far north of Curtin as well as the west. It is a much loved and well used play space, and regularly used by the schools for fun runs. Because the spaces are surrounded by houses and other buildings, rather than by roads, it is particularly suitable for very small children.

Protecting the birdlife
The long green corridor on the western side of the Group Centre is full of birdlife. We regularly see gang gangs, galahs, red rumped parrots, eastern rosellas, eastern koels and ducks. A few years ago a family of tawny frog mouthed owls were in residence for a time in the area marked 7 on the map of the Group Centre.

Written feedback dated 9 June 2015, Pedal Power
Improvements in the cycling and walking infrastructure are suggested which, if incorporated in the master plan, and subsequently implemented, would encourage more people to walk and cycle thus contributing to the Government’s active transport objectives.

Curtin Group Centre is a vibrant service centre for the local community and surrounding suburbs. Its appeal rests on it being slightly bigger than a typical suburban shopping centre and yet not as large as other Group Centres. It retains a village-type atmosphere while catering for a wider population.

The general amenity of the Centre is good although now showing its age. Improvements were made to the public realm in 1990’s and the public art pieces installed at that time are greatly appreciated by the local community. However, there are certain elements that could be improved.
The bike racks are of the old style and could be replaced with more modern imaginative designs. We note that the ACT Budget includes a project with the ACT arts community to create new designs for bike racks. The bollards at the entrances to the Centre are ugly and are an obstruction to people walking and cycling. The planners will find many other ways to improve the public amenity of the Centre and we will comment on those that affect cycling when the draft is released.

**Improving access to the Centre**

The early planners of Curtin succeeded in creating an effective network of off-road shared paths along green belts running through Curtin. These paths provide a selection of safe and pleasant routes for people walking and cycling the relative short distance to the Centre. Despite these opportunities, access into the Centre from the shared paths (the last few metres of the journey) could be improved markedly given the barriers represented by the surrounding roads and car parks. Further comment on improving access to the perimeter of the Centre is set out later in this submission.

**Widening the shared paths**

The shared paths in the green belts are typically 1.2metres wide. They cannot cope with people passing and overtaking whilst walking and cycling. The paths should be widened to in the more well-used sections in line with current standards.

**Slowing traffic in the area**

The Centre is surrounded by roads with traffic travelling at up to 60 km/hr which is not conducive to safe pedestrian/cycling access. Consideration should be given to applying a 40 km/hr speed limit on these roads as now applies to other Town and Group Centres.

**Improving access across the surrounding roads**

Two valuable priority crossings exist. One crosses Carruthers St on the north side and is signalised for walking and cycling. The other is a raised crossing on Strangways Street near the Ron Reynolds Centre where current improvements down the hill will result in a wider shared path and improved sight lines around the corner of the Ron Reynolds Centre. The approach to the Strangways Street crossing is normally from the lane way leading up from the Ron Reynolds Centre. An alternative desire line has developed through the trees although this is very steep and the planners may not consider this suitable to be formalised. The planners need to reassess the approaches from the shared paths to the Strangways crossing and come forward with a better solution for cycling and walking.

Scope exists for additional dual-purpose priority crossings to gain access to the Centre.

One such site is across Strangways Street near the service station where a shared path leads up from the green belt and faces fast-moving traffic swinging off the Carruthers Street round-about.

Another site is on Theodore Street near Martin Street where a raised priority crossing would improve access for people living on the eastern side.
**New connection from the north-south trunk route**

A new raised priority crossing on Theodore Street at Martin St could be linked to a new bike route along Martin St leading from the north-south trunk route along the Yarralumla Creek reserve. Such a bike route, with appropriate signage, would provide for a more effective link from the trunk route to the Centre (see the photo below).

The on-road lane on Carruthers Street (west bound) passes by the perimeter of the Centre but no convenient ramp is provided to gain access into the Centre. This could be resolved simply by installing a ramp with a gently curved off-lane.

In summary, this map shows the four points around the perimeter of the Centre where access could be improved for people cycling and walking.

Access could be further enhanced by creating separated cycle lanes from the crossings into the Centre itself.

For example, people entering the Centre over the existing crossing on Strangways Street find themselves on a busy path obstructed by abandoned shopping trolleys, parked cars and lamp posts. Access could be improved by widening the existing shared path at the expense of six car parking spaces to create a separated bike lane.

Other separated lanes to ease access to the Centre entry points could be constructed from new crossings suggested for Strangways Street near the service station and on Theodore St at Martin St.

**Improving the Carruthers Street on-road lane**

The on-road bike lane on Carruthers Street (east bound) is not continuous leading to dangerous pinch points at the ‘T’ intersection with Theodore Street and at the down ramp onto Yarra Glen/Adelaide Avenue. The on-road lane on Carruthers should be redesigned to provide for a continuous bike lane. This may be achieved at Theodore St by a complete re-design of the intersection. The following photos illustrate the problem areas.

**Improving Carruthers Street Roundabout**

The roundabout contains no line markings to aid bikes navigating through the roundabout. Two designs in Austroads provide for line marking and either of these designs could be incorporated to improve safety and alert motorists to the possibility of bikes in the roundabout. They are figure 5.22 on page 77 (physically separated bicycle lanes) and figure 5.23 on page 78 (no physical separation of bicycle lanes).

*In any redesign of the Carruther’s St intersections with Theodore St and Strangways St we ask that no slip lanes be incorporated in line with international best practice.*

**Connection from the Carruthers St on-road lane to the off-road network**

A new ramp is required to allow for seamless access to the off-road network from the Carruthers Street (west bound) on-road lane. This simple addition would obviate the need to ride further on to the ramp at the bus stop and double back.
Written feedback dated 9 June 2015, from 25 local residents

Western open space

The ‘green heart’ of the Radburn area

The area is a successful community open space with mature trees providing a safe and pleasant recreational zone separated from vehicular traffic as intended by the Radburn design. The community comes together in this space. It provides walking and cycling access to the shops and other services in the centre as well as to the neighbourhood schools. This area is in high use by people walking, jogging, cycling, walking dogs, and pushing strollers and prams. It provides a green space for the residents of the nearby flats and aged persons home. It is on the junction of shared paths used by cyclists heading north-south and east-west with links to the arterial bike routes surrounding Curtin. In summary, the western open space is part of the ‘green heart’ of the Radburn area, not incidental to it.

The western open space should be identified in the master plan as an urban recreational area to be protected and enhanced and not to be encroached upon by residential development.

We look forward to seeing, and commenting on, the draft master plan. In the mean time, set out below are our suggestions for your consideration.

People walking and cycling converge on the western open space from a number of directions. At busy times, the existing shared paths are not wide enough to cope with the traffic. The existing width of 1.2 metres should be widened in the busy sections to enable people walking and cycling to pass and overtake safely.

The landscape is limited to trees and grass and could be improved by adding diversity. There are also unsightly dirt tracks running through the space caused by maintenance vehicles and builders’ trucks that enter the zone on an irregular basis. In some places these tracks have caused erosion. A more diligent care and maintenance program and better control over vehicular access would address these problems. Also, where the shared paths are widened there may be scope for the occasional service vehicle to use these paths rather than create dirt tracks.

The area encompassing the scout hall and The Ron Reynolds Centre needs attention. This is the main access route to the shops and yet the path runs between two nondescript buildings and merges with a laneway connecting to Strangways Street suggesting vehicles rather than pedestrians have priority. It is an intimidating space at night. A person new to the area looking for the shops would have difficulty finding their way.

The current work on the Ron Reynolds Centre will widen the path, even out the surfaces and improve the sight lines around the corner of the Centre. The poor connections between the walking/cycling routes and the crossing on Strangways Street need correcting. Desire lines show where people would prefer to access the crossing. However, the desire line through the trees is steep and does not appeal to elderly people or those with prams. The footpath running alongside the lane up to Strangways Streets is broken and covered with gravel. The planners need to reassess this whole area and consider ways to create a seamless, convenient and pleasant link between the open space and the Group Centre.
The pine log barriers are in a very poor state and the gravel car park needs re-grading and filling to remove surface water that accumulates after rain.

Two unsightly shipping containers rest in the zone. The current remodelling of the Ron Reynolds Centre will improve that building and involve the removal of one of the shipping containers. However, much could be done to improve the overall amenity of this area.

The existing play area needs a higher quality surface treatment. There is scope for creating new imaginative play areas elsewhere in the zone and for additional seating to provide for supervising parents and older residents.

The notes issued with the master plan documents refer to the possibility of creating a wetland. Storm water from three directions drains through (and under the ground?) the western open space so it would seem to offer scope for an ephemeral wetland with vegetated swales similar to that established in O’Connor. We can see some benefits in that a wetland would add diversity to the landscape, improve water quality, be a focal point for community contact, and provide exploring opportunities for children including from the neighbouring schools. We look forward to seeing what the expert environmental and water managers have to report about the feasibility of the wetlands idea and how it would be managed in the western open space.

**Housing diversity and population density**

The Master Plan document refers to Curtin being identified for “urban intensification” and compares housing diversity in Curtin with figures for Canberra as a whole. Caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from these figures. Curtin was developed in the 1960s and is essentially suburban in lay out. The figures for proportion of separate housing would be typical for suburbs of that era. Moreover, the statistics might reveal that Curtin has a higher proportion of flats than other similar suburbs. The shopping centre is bigger than most suburban centres but not as big as Group Centres such as Mawson Southlands and Weston Creek. Also, the suburb is in the middle of a demographic change with one or two-person households giving way to younger couples with children. The vitality of the two Curtin primary schools is testament to this demographic change.

That is not to deny the scope to increase housing diversity and population density. The RZ2 zone in Curtin is extensive and already provides opportunities for dual occupancies. The Centre is surrounded by blocks of 1960’s flats zoned as medium density residential (RZ4). As these flats are redeveloped (one has already been demolished and is being rebuilt), scope exists to introduce new housing types and building heights. This intensification should not be at the expense of well-used public spaces such as the western open space.
Written feedback dated 9 June 2015, local resident

While noting that a master plan is not a detailed design but a way of establishing values, priorities and objectives, it is only when broader visions come to be implemented that we discover whether they are, in fact, feasible. Many a dream founders when confronted by reality. Suburban development is no different so I have set down some of my ideas about what appear to be the great expectations implicit in the 2012 ACT Planning Strategy for my home suburb of Curtin.

I have lived in Curtin since early 1966. Curtin works the way it was designed to work; it worked in the 1960s, the 70s, and right up until the present. It still works and is a triumph of 1960s planning. Many of the values built in at the outset, which cannot be added later, are just as relevant today as they were fifty years ago.

Writing in 1970 Hugh Stretton (in Ideas for Australian Cities) appreciated Curtin’s “amiable irregularity” and the almost complete separation between the main road system and the independent radial system of pedestrian pathways. Curtin is a radical suburb. No Canberra suburb since has been designed so comprehensively to incorporate the essential values of safety, child friendliness, visual amenity, and the invitation to get out and about one’s neighbourhood.

As Stretton says: “Radical suburbs ought to be judged by people who live in them”.

The Group Centre reflects the overall character of Curtin: it is accessible and efficient, a pleasant pedestrian space, has a modest village atmosphere, is complex enough to meet the diverse needs of locals and many others, all while staying in touch with its residential setting.

It is important not to over-develop the Centre so that it becomes inconsistent, unrepresentative and dislocated from the feel and function of the suburb as a whole.

Residential housing and amenity

Curtin was planned in the early 1960s, a time when many mothers stayed home enjoying the great Australian dream of suburban living in a free standing home, and older Canberrans often retired to the coast. There is little medium density or courtyard housing in Curtin, a legacy of the NCDC’s planning ethos, but it was not developed as an exclusively low density residential area. In common with Lyons, Hughes, Chifley and other Woden suburbs, Curtin’s planners provided for apartment living, aimed at one or two person households.

The 2012 ACT Planning Strategy identifies Curtin as a location for urban intensification. It is difficult to see where significant intensification might occur: there are already about twenty older apartment buildings close to the Curtin centre and seven recently built blocks, providing between them well over two hundred dwellings.

While some residents look out over parkland most of these blocks have only a minimum amount of open space immediately around them, in most cases their occupants’ car-parking or a public road and its verges. Presumably the Strategy does not envisage further densification to the north-west, north or west of the centre.

Currently less well represented in the Curtin housing stock are smaller courtyard houses, semi-detached housing or clusters of smaller units.
Although the suburb as a whole is not a focus for the current consultation it should be borne in mind that the “Fluffy” redevelopment will generate about eighty new dwellings dotted about the suburb, many of them single storey, which I assume will all be designed for universal living.

If additional supportive and inclusive housing is required closer to the Curtin centre two sites offer good potential:

- the block currently occupied by a playground on Gillies Street next to St James Uniting Church; this does not appear to get a lot of use; a new playground could be created between the Post Office and the veterinary clinic, allowing younger children a fun space within the square;
- part of the block currently allocated to the Presbyterian Church bounded by Carruthers, Theodore and Martin Streets; with suitable encouragement/subsidy the church might be persuaded to develop some supportive housing on this site which has never been used.

**Active travel**

Access to the Curtin centre on foot or by bicycle is already excellent from almost all parts of the suburb. The built-in grade separation which is such a feature of the original planning works just as well now as it did in the mid-1960s. Curtin is already highly child- and age-friendly, as required by the 2012 Planning Strategy.

Residents of the Radburn housing estate need cross only Strangways Street, using a pedestrian crossing. Underpasses ensure that those living to the west or north of Carruthers Street need never cross that busy road and can reach the shops in perfect safety having walked or cycled through attractive parkland. Only Strangways Street near the service station creates a problem and an additional pedestrian crossing there would make for complete safety. This should be taken into consideration when the Carruthers/Strangways intersection is modified.

Access from the Woden town centre is along the cycle path near the Yarralumla creek, under Theodore Street near Fred Ward Gardens and then safely to the shops. However, anyone who continues on along the creek and up onto Carruthers Street finds themselves stranded on the “wrong” side of Theodore Street, close to a very busy intersection.

The north eastern quadrant of Curtin enjoys easy access on road-side footpaths or via short-cut paths. The perimeter shared path is easily accessed from all the peripheral cul-de sacs but needs a link up to the path along the northern side of Carruthers Street near the overpass, to avoid confronting the same problem at Theodore Street. A steep little foot track has developed at this point, indicating the need for a properly surfaced path, preferably sloping gradually between the roadside and the shared path.

The only tricky access is directly from Yarra Glen for riders travelling south and then only because cyclists are directed onto the southern side of the overpass, where the foot/cycle path has been widened. This leads them up to the unfriendly T-junction with Theodore Street instead of taking them up the northern side of Carruthers where they can activate the traffic lights at the crossing near the churches. This could be fixed fairly easily.

Students heading to and from Alfred Deakin High School on foot typically use the northern side of the overpass.
The western open space

This area is at present a relatively passive space but could potentially become the active hub of the active travel network. A “grown-up playground” of fitness equipment for early morning and weekend runners could be spread about the area and/or it could accommodate a challenging playground for older children. The area is open and overlooked but not too close to homes and potentially well-lit and safe for all ages.

This is not the place for a wetland: very little water collects naturally and any ponds etc would need to be regularly supplemented with town water. On the other hand ….

Yarralumla Creek wetlands

Storm water rushing down the Yarralumla Drain at high speed creates a safety hazard and leads to massive erosion of the banks lower down, alongside the North Curtin oval and Equestrian Park. The rubbish which builds up at the barrier at McCulloch Street is testimony to the need for settling ponds and measures to control and clean the water on its way along the creek.

Please consider the feasibility of creating an attractive and effective wetland, progressively replacing the Yarralumla Drain.

Traffic and parking

The Curtin centre is well used much of the time. Even early in the week it is difficult to find a parking space at lunch time; shoppers build up during the afternoon, before and after school comes out, rising to a peak as workers arrive, either locals nearby home or others who stop off at Curtin on their way to other parts of Canberra. Weekends are very busy too.

I’m puzzled by the reference to the “southern car park being comparatively underutilised”. The car park next to the Statesman Hotel is one of the busiest. Is there some confusion here with the car park at the Catholic primary school and church across the road which is a private car park belonging to those institutions?

Car park safety and functioning could be dramatically improved if their designers recognised that a freshly parked car is going to generate one or more pedestrians and, approximately half an hour later, a pedestrian pushing a shopping trolley. Some pathways within each car park, preferably marked as pedestrian crossings, would be a welcome improvement leading people safely into the square or at least to a sidewalk. Some of the discarded trolleys are catered for but none of the pedestrians, especially the elderly and other slow movers such as parents of small children.

The Strangways/Carruthers Streets intersection needs upgrading now (no need to wait for future traffic). Attempting to turn left from Strangways into Carruthers during the evening peak period involves giving way to a steady stream of vehicles “rat-running” through Curtin towards Belconnen or Gungahlin. A seagull lane would be invaluable for those of us who live in the north-western quadrant of Curtin, which after all is the size of half a regular suburb.
The public domain

The discussion paper asserts that the public spaces in the centre are “not well connected”. I cannot see a problem. The centre’s design and layout create a number of distinct corners, each with its own character. The café opposite the churches looks out at the world; the milk bar and deli cafés are part of the busy pulse of the central square.

The open shop front appearance of the businesses along the northern and western sides of the main block welcomes people as they approach the centre, infinitely preferable to the blank walls of the larger shopping malls around Canberra. The austere concrete facades of some centres are now being recognised as an issue and steps taken to soften their impact.

A newcomer to Curtin is led from the car parks into the square, wonders what lies around the corner, goes there and finds an impressive range of businesses, all immediately visible and accessible on one level and all a safe distance from traffic for those with small children.

Public transport

The discussion paper envisages a rapid transport stop at the Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen intersection. Given that the car parks at the shops are fully used already, a dedicated park-and-ride facility would be needed. Curtin residents who face out onto Yarra Glen are unlikely to welcome a large car park displacing their currently leafy view. Alternatively, an additional car park near the shops would need to be at least two storeys plus roof-top parking to make any real difference, a structure completely out of scale with the existing centre.

Retro-fitting the Curtin group centre and its immediate surrounds to generate sufficient population within walking distance to support demand for rapid transport (code for light rail, presumably) would require significant high rise apartment buildings. There are already as many such buildings as Curtin can comfortably accommodate and little space for more than some new low-key supportive housing near the shops.

In addition, there would need to be foot/cycle bridges across the creek to enable Curtin residents to get to Yarra Glen, on the other side of the creek ... at present, hardly anyone in Curtin lives within easy walking distance of the other side of Yarralumla creek, especially in the heat of summer, wet and windy winter weather, or smart shoes.

How many Curtin residents currently use the morning and evening express bus services and where in Curtin do they live?

Community input to the 2012 Strategy supported intensification along the rapid transit route rather than around group centres. This makes more sense than radical changes to an existing and well-functioning centre that would threaten its essential qualities.

Creating economic opportunities

Many of the businesses in Curtin have been here for ten, twenty or more years, indicating a high level of satisfaction with both the location and the nature of the centre. There is a synergy between thriving businesses which attracts others to join them and this is what has happened in Curtin.
As for diversity, there is (in no special order): a real estate agent, a travel agent, a duty free shop, a barber, a ladies’ hairdresser, a chemist, organic fruit and veg, Coles, a post office plus newsagency, an employment agency, dentists, a chiropractor, a medical centre, a veterinary clinic, a bank, three ATMs, a florist, the fish shop, the milk bar and pizzeria, a baker, the deli and café, another café round the corner, a Nepalese restaurant, a large second hand book shop, a wine and spirits shop, the betting shop, a fitness centre, a hotel providing bar services, meals and accommodation plus a drive in bottle shop, a florist. I think that’s everyone! There is one vacant shopfront at present but I would expect it to be snapped up pretty quickly.

There are also three churches and a centre for progressive religious thought.

I don’t know how planners define “vibrant” but Curtin must come close. We are not “rah-rah” vibrant, admittedly, although one person’s vibrant is another person’s noisy and congested. If an investor had considered that Curtin was ripe for a rah-rah level of vibrancy we might now have a lively underground nightlife where the fitness centre has been established, but presumably no-one thought it worth the risk.

Curtin purrs along with a steady hum of energy and purpose, meeting alike the needs of residents and the many others who patronise its businesses, social and cultural activities.

*And lastly, for your consideration,*

**Plan B**

The future planning of Canberra was considered in some detail in the early 1990s when the need for more diverse housing and associated issues of redevelopment, infill and intensification were put firmly on the agenda.

Among the areas designated for future development was the North Curtin horse paddock between the Cotter Road and Yarra Glen. The part of the paddock closer to the Yarralumla Creek would be ideal for a Radburn style cul-de-sac low-rise medium density development. The 2012 Strategy identifies medium-sized low-rise townhouses as the most resource efficient form of housing. Sufficient open space would need to be allowed to avoid the “Charnwood effect”. Shared paths for walkers and cyclists could lead down to the new Yarralumla wetlands (see above) with a couple of bridges connecting users to the existing network of paths through and around north Curtin. Many residents would be within walking distance of Yarra Glen and any future improvements to public transport along the valley.

An access road running above the development could link Yarra Glen to the Cotter Road, forming a cross roads with Lady Denman Drive and taking traffic that now uses McCulloch Street. This need not spoil the amenity of the new housing and could be flanked by generous plantings. Combined with further plantings in the remainder of the (former) horse paddock a dense screen would be created to maintain the sense of a natural buffer between Woden and South Canberra.
Written feedback dated 10 June 2015, local resident

1. RE: The curtin master plan will outline a vision, planning principles and strategies to guide growth and development in the group centre.

It would be ideal if the Curtin group centre master plan were able to ensure that the approval given in 2011 for the change of lease application for the building housing seven small businesses which are under threat of demolition, had a moratorium placed on it...so that any proposed development could be in line with the deliberations creating the Master Plan... as the destruction of the amenity provided by the essential services of these seven small businesses, will undoubtedly result in the decline and death of this shopping centre.

2 RE What is important about the group centre?

a) It is an amenity used by hundreds of adults and children each day, for socialising, shopping in the diverse range of businesses currently operating, accessing services such as chemist, post office, newsagency, bookshop, coffee shops, fitness centre, Canberra Historical Society, hairdressers, medical, dental, vet, travel, bank, real estate and other services, restaurant/milk bar/takeaway food shops etc

b) It is a safe-haven for children waiting or returning home from the neighbouring government and independent primary and high schools, even from Deakin and other suburbs

c) It is light- and sun-filled even during the six months of lesser warmth and sunlight due to the single storey (ground floor) structures which surround the centre, ensuring the sun has access to the quadrangle of the centre, protected from traffic intrusion and noise and strong winds by four buildings’ walls/shops.

d) It is fairly unique in the very safety of the area for members of the public/pedestrians, sequestered from traffic on all sides.

e) It has the last remaining Canberra Milk bar – an icon of this group centre as well as some other rather unique/rare businesses such as the Beyond Q bookshop, Organic produce store etc

f) It is used for charity drives by community groups because of the amenity provided by the main quadrangle of the centre and indeed for public meetings.

3. RE How to enhance its environmental, social and economic sustainability?

a) ensure that no proprietor is given the freedom to destroy the amenity of this precinct by an excessive development (ie beyond ground floor development only) which would block light and sun to the main quadrangle of this group centre. We are close to Woden and do not want such high rise or even 3 floor structures here.

b) ensure that the number and type of businesses is not diminished by planning and development approvals.

c) ensure that the ‘public use’ amenity of this group centre is not diminished by inappropriate development – Coles is already trying to put eg, the Fish and Chicken shop, Florist, Bakery. Organic produce store, out of business, by its well-known trade practices.
d) restore the western car park area so that the footpath is sloped in such a way that trolleys left on the footpath do not roll into cars causing damage.

e) ensure that Coles is forced to put a fee on its trolleys to encourage their return

f) build trolley bays in the two large car park areas (West and South) for this group centre which do not have a single trolley bay at the moment

g) level out the many raised potholed and very irregular areas around the trees in the car parks, which can potentially cause children and older people to fall. Some of these are in such bad condition that they prevent people getting out of their cars.

h) ensure the owner of the building on the west of the group centre is legally obliged to replace the awning which is apparently so unsafe that no seating can be placed under it. If it is too unsafe to sit under, it is unsafe to walk under, and is a constant danger to members of the public.

i) construct bollards in all the wider pedestrian access paths to the group centre to prevent vehicle ram raids by criminals

j) renew/replace the public circular round tables and seating around them which are no longer steady or secure.

k) provide a larger public noticeboard than the one currently on the wall of Coles.

l) the pedestrian way from the Group Centre which crosses the road to the Shell petrol station is an unmarked crossing, is used by mothers wheeling prams, and is unprotected from vehicles which turn left at speed from the roundabout.

m) Construct a traffic pacifier/hump for traffic exiting the car park to Theodore street as a vast number of vehicles exit that car park street at speed as if it were a main road.

4. RE Community engagement is an important part of the master plan process.

Thank you for that sentiment but I am having some difficulty understanding why, as a resident of Curtin, I received no notification in my letterbox from the ACT Govt., which sends rate notices to my address..... whereas real estate agents, members of the ACT Opposition, and other organisations seem to have no trouble letterbox dropping me?

5. People who live or work in or near the centre, or who use the area, have valuable knowledge to contribute to the planning process.

Thank you for that but if that is true why was I not notified by letter box drop or by mail of this important initiative?

How many people will take notes of contact details when they are holding children or shopping bags empty or full?

6. Community involvement will be essential in helping develop a successful and achievable master plan.

Please see my comments in 4 and 5 I was not aware of the consultations on: Thursday 14 May, 1pm to 4pm or Saturday 23 May, 11.30am to 1.30pm Location: Curtin group centre - central plaza and only saw the notices in the Coles window on 5th June
Written feedback dated 10 June 2015, Curtin Shops Garden Group

The Curtin Shops Garden Group is made up of Curtin residents who are keen to improve the public areas and gardens around the Curtin shops. For several years we have kept the ivy under control in the John Curtin garden. (This is the garden with the stone wall which names our suburb, next to the shops on Carruthers Street at the traffic lights.) Over the past twelve months we have gained the support of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) to achieve improvements in the square at the shops - the restoration of the wooden wren sculpture and tree trunk seat; the installation of a new community notice board; and the repair of mosaics. The group initiated and formed the nucleus of the committee that organised the Curtin Turns 50 celebrations at the shops in October 2014.

The group’s current major project is the renovation of the John Curtin garden. With the support of TAMS, we aim to make the garden available for quiet recreation and to give greater visibility to the commemorative plaque and relief of John Curtin, our former Prime Minister, which are on the garden side of the stone wall. We’ve begun work on removing the ivy and in developing design ideas.

Over the medium-longer term we would also like to see improvements in landscaping, trees and gardens in other public areas around the shops and in the main entry points into the suburb, notably on Carruthers Street from Yarra Glen. Our current area of interest and activity in central Curtin is then broadly coincident with the Master Plan study area. The planning exercise is obviously of great interest to our group.

In planning and undertaking our activities we are keen to work with TAMS and as appropriate with the Environment and Planning Directorate. Thus in any new work we plan we will first consult closely with TAMS. In selecting plantings we will respect TAMS guidelines about using native plants but also seek consistency with the existing mix and pattern of shrubs and trees in Curtin, aiming to avoid piecemeal plots of miscellaneous shrubs and trees. To avoid wasted or misdirected effort on our part we would appreciate early advice of the Directorate or TAMS thinking about change of land use.

We have the following comments and suggestions about parks and gardens and other public areas in the study area.

**Entry area into Curtin from Yarra Glen up Carruthers Street to the shops:** this stretch of Carruthers Street, including the median strip, is remarkably wide. It is also remarkably barren - in particular, the median strip is completely devoid of vegetation. There is therefore both scope and need to use this space to mark a more auspicious entry into the suburb.

Shrubs or trees could be planted in the median strip. There are visibility and safety issues to be considered, especially nearer the shops. We note that these issues seem to have been satisfactorily resolved along the median strip in Launceston Street in Phillip with a line of the small and hardy *Crepe Myrtle* with its attractive blossom and leaf. *Prunus*, which has similar features might also be considered. There is also room for a few larger trees on either side of Carruthers Street near to Yarra Glen.

**Roundabout at intersection of Carruthers, McCulloch and Strangways:** this is a large roundabout at the centre of the suburb and which carries much traffic. Yet it is about a bleak a place as one could imagine. Shrubs have been planted over the years but have generally been neglected and
died. To keep down maintenance it may be sensible to put in some hard surfaces but some area of
garden, comprising in the low-level (say less than 30cms) hardy shrubs, is highly desirable. A hardy
variety of rose might be considered.

**Square at Curtin Shops:** the orientation and design of the square and the large trees it
encompasses provide both sun and shade and afford some protection from the wind. The area is
well used and much liked by the community. It offers a sense of ‘village’ which in turn contributes
to the sense of community in the suburb and the commercial success of the shopping centre.

In considering any significant variation to the square, including to the buildings which surround and
define it, great care need be taken to ensure that the square’s valuable features are not
compromised. Most importantly, any building development should not cause any loss of winter
sun on the square. On other sides of the square any increase in building heights should be
respectful of the square eg balconies should be tiered rather than vertically stacked one upon
another. It is critical too that the existing trees be well watered and cared for.

**Other Gardens and Landscaping in the Shopping Centre Precinct:** the group has commenced a
renovation of the John Curtin garden. We also have agreement with TAMS that we might install
gardens or improve landscaping in other areas of the precinct, including the grassed areas adjacent
to Theodore and Strangways Streets. Our priority is the area on Theodore Street as this area is
currently little better than a paddock and over the years has lost several trees. We note however
that parking issues have emerged in your consultations. If more parking spaces are considered
necessary this could impact on the area in question on Theodore Street. So that we do not embark
on new landscaping in an area that might subsequently be taken up with extra car parking spaces
we would appreciate being kept informed of your thinking on this subject. Whatever eventuates,
we believe that gardens and shade trees have an important role to play, even in an area largely
devoted to car parking. Some improvement in these respects are in fact needed in the existing car
parks.

**The Open Space in Shopping Precinct at intersection of Carruthers and Theodore:** this is a
relatively large area, comprising concrete paving, red metal gravel and grass. The advent of the
Red Brick café has brought much life, including young families with children, to this previously quiet
part of the shopping centre. It is, however, very open to the elements and adjacent to busy roads.
We believe this area can be better used and landscaped. A low (shrub?) barrier that separated
young children from road traffic might be considered. There is a case for a few more trees in this
area. Additional features that appeal to children would be desirable, as for example has been
achieved in the square with the wren sculpture and the circular seating and mosaics around the
trees.

**Western Open Space:** the parkland described in the planning document as the Western Open
Space works well as a park. (This includes the areas to the north, adjacent to the flats; and to the
south adjacent to Holy Trinity school and Fred Ward Gardens nursing home.) The area is
frequented by walkers – including people with dogs and people going to and from the shops – but
is also increasingly used by school children, teenagers, family groups and even picnickers. Thought
might in fact be given to installing a couple of picnic tables near the playground and scout hall.
An attractive feature of this area is the number of small copses of trees of different species, including eucalypt, crab-apple, Manchurian pear and pencil pine. TAMS has recently marked some dead and dying trees for removal and replacement. In the central area, however, there are several gaps where copses once existed, including two splendid stands of poplars, but where trees died and have been removed in the past decade or so. These should be replaced, though probably with species more hardy / drought resistant than poplar. Replacement is important to retain the character of the area. There are also some obvious gaps that need rectifying in the parkland further south, opposite Fred Ward Gardens.

You may be aware that this area, which follows the natural water course running north, is prone to flooding.

Park on the Roundabout Opposite the Shops – aside from the playground which is well used, this park is neglected. One of its problems is that it is separated from the shops by a busy road and screened by large trees. The park could however be a valuable asset to the suburb in the future. It might become better known and loved if it was named and some thought put into its design. Seeking suggestions from the community for a name would be one way of engendering greater awareness and interest in the park and indeed in the Master Plan.

Written feedback undated, received 10 June 2015, Woden Valley Community Council

The WVCC welcomes the opportunity to comment on a proposed master plan for the Curtin Group centre. The Curtin Group centre is well patronised by the local community with a variety of local shops including a major supermarket, petrol station and open spaces. It also has a long standing hotel. The ‘Radburn housing design’ is a unique feature of the study area which provides urban amenity, but also separates motor vehicle traffic from pedestrian and cycle movements.

This allows residents particularly children to safely access schools, playgrounds and sports ovals without crossing major collector roads. A design concept that has been used in most of Woden Valleys suburbs yet not used widely in Canberra’s newest suburbs today.

The WVCC would like to see this open space network enhanced by a possible wetland1, and improving walking and cycling networks. Currently the main path is incorrectly marked as a wide shared path in the walking and cycling map. A solution that separates walking and cycling networks could be employed which could increase active travel rates further, also improved connections across Strangways Street to the group centre.

There are general concerns about increased development in the group centre with a lease variation3 some years ago raising concerns. There are limited opportunities for residential development except on the periphery where Block 7 section 63 is already zoned R24. Block 1 section 15 is the most likely site for residential development though not owned by the territory and is zoned for community facilities. Building heights need to be restricted particularly close to the main square with maximum heights around the group centre remaining at three storeys.

The Curtin group centre is also a park n ride location which supports an Action Bus ‘Expresso’ route 7324. This is the only Expresso service on the western side of Woden allowing for peak time direct
service to Civic. The WVCC would like to see the service extended to the other western suburbs of Woden starting from Torrens.

Adelaide Ave Bus stops feasibility project recommended a median Bus station for the Carruthers St Bridge yet no funding has been allocated to this project to date. If this project was to go ahead, more park n ride facilities would have to be considered along with improved walking and cycling connections.

Car parking in the centre could be improved with better access between the east and west sides of the group centre. The WVCC doesn’t support pay parking or reduction in parking bays. The intersection of Theodore and Carruthers Street is designed for high traffic flow and not particularly suited to a local residential area. The WVCC would like to see improvements to this intersection along with improved active travel links across Yarra Glen to Hughes and Deakin.

Curtin is well served by playground facilities having eight playground sites not including the school playgrounds. Yet has no playground in the group centre with the closest located next to the Uniting Church across Carruthers street. A play space facility would be a welcome addition, which would increase patronage to the group centre, like the success of other Woden local group centres like Chifley and Isaacs.

Curtin South Neighbourhood oval is shared by both Holy Trinity and Curtin primary schools as their main sporting oval. This oval could be upgraded to a new synthetic facility similar to the school sports oval in Nicholls, Gungahlin shared between Gold Creek and Holy Spirit primary schools. The WVCC looks forward to the draft master plan and to provide further comment.