HAVE YOUR SAY

The Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) welcomes comments on this draft master plan.

You can make comments on the Curtin draft master plan:


Email: curtin@act.gov.au

Post: Curtin Group Centre Master Plan, PO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

Comments can be made until 05 February 2016

All comments will be taken into consideration when revising the master plan. The master plan will be considered by the ACT Government in mid 2016. If adopted, implementation of the master plan can commence.
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Definitions

Active frontages occur when people can interact between the buildings and the streets and public spaces, such as shop fronts, building entrances and transparent building facades.

Active travel is travel that involves physical activity such as walking and cycling. Active travel can also include the walking and/or cycling involved when using public transport.

Active uses are uses that generate activity at the ground floor. Active uses include cafes, shop fronts and building entrances.

Blocks and sections are how areas of land are identified in the ACT. The city is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks. The Territory Plan zoning determines what activities/uses can occur on the blocks. Blocks are usually leased to one entity.

Built form relates to the buildings, associated structures and surrounding public spaces.

Human scale reflects a sympathetic proportional relationship between the built form and human dimensions where people are not overwhelmed by the built form. Human scale contributes to a person’s perception of buildings or other features in the public domain. It is typically referred to when discussing the bulk and scale of development.

Land use zones, which are allocated by the Territory Plan to all land within the ACT, define what land uses can or cannot occur on a piece of land. Zone categories are residential (RZ), commercial (CZ), community facility (CFZ), industrial (IZ), parks and recreation (PRZ), transport and services (TSZ), and non urban (NUZ). Sub-categories provide more specific controls, for example RZ1 is a residential zone for low density housing in suburban areas while RZ5 is a residential zone for high density housing in urban centres and along major transport routes. See more about the zoning system at www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27

Mixed-use development includes a mix of complementary land uses such as restaurants and small shops at ground level and residences above. Mixed uses can be horizontal or vertical.

Podium or building base refers to the lower storeys of a tall building that people passing by see and interact with. It is designed to present an appropriate human scale to the streets and public spaces. Podiums can be used to transition down to lower-scale buildings, and minimise the impact of parking and servicing areas.

Public domain refers to spaces that belong or are available to the public, including parks, streets and other public spaces such as plazas, courtyards and open spaces.

Shared-use path is a path that is restricted to non-motorised transport with the exception of motorised wheelchairs and power-assisted pedal cycles. Both pedestrians and cyclists share these paths.

Shared zone/shared spaces is a road or place where the road space is shared safely by vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. A shared zone may include the removal of traffic lights, pedestrian barriers, road markings and kerbs to give equal priority to all users and require negotiation between users.

Solar access is the ability of a building or public space to receive sunlight without obstruction from other buildings.

Surveillance or passive surveillance is the ‘eyes on the street’ from residents and people going about their daily activities to create a sense of safety on streets and public spaces.

Transit-oriented development is the creation of compact, walkable communities located around high quality public transit systems.

Urban grain is the street pattern, size and distribution of blocks, scale of buildings and their relationship to each other. Urban grain includes the hierarchy of streets, the pedestrian connections, public places and linkages to public transport.

Visual cues are elements in the public domain that contribute to a person’s understanding of a place. For example, buildings may gradually get taller as you travel closer to the town centre, providing an understanding that you are approaching a major centre.

Water sensitive urban design (WSUD) is the planning, design and/or construction of the built environment to minimise water runoff and ensure any runoff causes the least amount of damage. It is also about wise use of that water to improve our urban environment.

Wind shear refers to the potential for down draughts from taller buildings or accelerated winds from tunnelling between buildings onto public spaces.
Public art and entry sign on Carruthers Street
Executive summary

The ACT Government has prepared a draft master plan for the Curtin group centre to provide a new vision, planning framework, planning principles and planning strategies.

Curtin is located in the north of Woden Valley with the centre core positioned atop a knoll, providing views to the adjacent suburbs of Deakin and Hughes to the east. The Curtin group centre is approximately 3 kilometres north of Woden town centre and services Curtin and the neighbouring suburbs of Yarralumla, Deakin, Hughes and Lyons. While the centre was intended to serve the above suburbs, it operates more like a local centre.

The centre displays a broad range of commercial uses in the centre core precinct including a supermarket and hotel. This mix of commercial and retail activity contribute to the centre’s ‘urban village’ feel and style of development. The central courtyards play an important role, allowing people to relax and enjoy the centre and providing meeting spaces.

Preparation of this draft master plan involved extensive background research and analysis, including:

• consideration of strategic planning directions and policies
• responding to outcomes from community and stakeholder engagement activities that were undertaken as part of the master plan process, and
• consideration of background research, reports and analysis.

The key findings for the Curtin group centre include:

• The centre benefits from a good mix of shops and services and a usable public domain
• There are limited opportunities for new development in the centre. However, potential nearby developments such as the Yarralumla Brickworks and Molonglo Valley could contribute to an increase in visitors to the centre
• There is an inefficient design of parking areas with poor pedestrian amenity
• There are poor connections to the surrounding suburbs, however there is a good network of established open spaces, and
• There is a lack of after hours activity.

In response to these findings, this draft master plan outlines a vision which captures what is valued about the Curtin group centre and sets out what it could become in the future. The new vision for Curtin group centre is:

Curtin group centre is a vibrant and inclusive meeting place for the local community. As a successful urban village, the centre is easily accessible and provides a convenient variety of businesses and services.

The vision is supported by five planning principles, which inform the planning strategies. The principles and strategies provide direction and guidance for the future development of the centre over the long term, considering the broad range of issues identified during community engagement and in the background research and analysis.

Some of the key recommendations proposed by this draft master plan include:

• Reinforcing the vibrant, urban village character and social identity of the centre core precinct as an attractive place for people to relax and enjoy
• Building on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development
• Improving the pedestrian amenity and connections across Strangways Street
• Creating an east–west pedestrian and cyclist link that will better connect the centre to a future rapid public transport hub on Yarra Glen
• Enhancing the western open spaces to incorporate informal recreational uses for the community
• Ensuring public spaces are walkable, safe and attractive, and
• Providing efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies.
Architectural element on one of the central courtyard buildings
1. Introduction

Key strategic planning documents for the ACT were introduced in 2012 including the ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT. The ACT Planning Strategy encourages a more compact city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along major public transport routes. It identified the Curtin group centre (the centre) as an area to be further investigated for urban intensification, associated with the rapid transit route on Yarra Glen. To help achieve this goal, the Environment and Planning Directorate is preparing a master plan for the centre. The master plan study area is shown in Figure 1.

The ACT Government is committed to the renewal and revitalisation of Canberra’s neighbourhood centres, which include suburban group centres such as Curtin. The aim of this master plan is to develop an integrated and community supported vision for the centre.

A set of information posters was released in April 2015 as part of the master planning process. These posters, and associated community engagement activities, outlined some key planning issues for the centre. Feedback was sought from the community and other ACT Government stakeholders to identify further issues, opportunities and challenges that exist in the centre.

This draft master plan provides an overview and background analysis of the study area. It recommends a vision, spatial framework, planning principles and strategies, and recommendations that respond to existing and potential development pressures in the centre. Key strategies and recommendations are based on the background analysis and community engagement feedback received as part of the master plan process.
Figure 1: The Curtin Group Centre Master Plan study area

- Strangways Street
- 8km to City
- 3km to Woden
- Yarralumla Creek
- Carruthers Street
- McCulloch Street
- Yarra Glen
- Theodore Street
- Curtin study area
- Western open space
- Radburn residential precinct
- Curtin South neighbourhood oval
- Holy Trinity Catholic church and school
- Curtin primary school
- Centre core

0 500 100 200 300 400 metres
1.1 Master plan study area

Curtin is approximately 3 kilometres north of Woden town centre and 8 kilometres south-west of Canberra’s city centre. The suburbs of Lyons and Phillip are located to the south of the centre, and Hughes and Deakin are to the east. The centre is the closest group centre for residents in Yarralumla, although the two suburbs are separated by the Cotter Road, a busy arterial road.

The Curtin Group Centre Master Plan study area is shown in Figure 1 by the dashed red line. The study area includes the centre core, community uses, medium density residential development and urban open spaces. It is bounded by the open space corridor to the west, Carruthers Street to the south, Theodore Street to the east and community facilities and land zoned medium density residential along Carruthers Street to the north.

The study area extends east to the Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street intersection to ensure opportunities to connect to the rapid public transport corridor and the employment hub in West Deakin is investigated. The surrounding local context is predominantly comprised of low density residential uses.

1.2 Block and section map

Under the Territory Plan, Canberra is divided into divisions, suburbs, sections and blocks, with blocks usually leased to one entity. Blocks and sections are referred to in this document.

Figure 2 provides a reference to help the reader identify blocks and sections within the master plan area.

1.3 What a master plan does

A master plan defines what is important about a place and identifies opportunities for preserving and enhancing the quality of that place. A master plan offers town and group centres long-term planning frameworks for urban renewal and is guided by key actions and strategies identified in the ACT Planning Strategy for a more compact and efficient city by focussing urban intensification in these areas.

This draft master plan provides a vision, spatial framework and strategies to guide development of the Curtin group centre over the next 20+ years. A master plan is a non-statutory planning document that can recommend the following:

- **Planning policies**
  Potential changes and inclusions in the Territory Plan take the form of a new precinct code. The Territory Plan is the key ACT statutory planning document that provides the policy framework for the administration of land use and planning. It specifies what can and cannot happen on each block of land. A precinct code sits within the Territory Plan and provides place specific planning controls. This master plan is informed by community input and makes recommendations for a new precinct code for the centre about appropriate land use, building heights, building setbacks and location of active frontages.

- **Opportunities for land release**
  Land release is the sale of Territory-owned land. The supply and release of land in the ACT considers factors such as forecast population changes, household changes, demand for land and the capacity to cost effectively deliver key infrastructure and services.

- **Public domain upgrades**
  Infrastructure and public space improvements are required to realise the vision and some of the strategies of this master plan. There are opportunities for the private sector to contribute to the public domain through partnerships with the government or as part of off-site works. Works undertaken by the ACT Government will involve further investigations by various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budget bid processes. Public domain upgrades undertaken by the ACT Government are based on a number of considerations including population growth, the age of existing assets and infrastructure and the wider budget context within the Territory.

- **Further studies**
  These may be required to progress some strategies that are either outside of what a master plan can achieve or may take more time to investigate.
Figure 2: Block and section map

LEGEND
- Section boundary
- Section number
- Block boundary
- Block number

INSET: CENTRE CORE

BLOCK AND SECTION MAP
1.4 Master plan process

The master plan process includes three main stages as illustrated in Figure 3, with opportunities for stakeholders and the public to provide input in stages 1 and 2.

The process commenced with Stage 1 and involved the gathering and analysis of information, including community engagement, to help inform the preparation of this draft master plan. The draft master plan represents Stage 2 of the process. Feedback on this draft master plan is sought from stakeholders, including those from the community. Feedback will be used to inform Stage 3, the development of the final master plan for government consideration.

The implementation of the master plan may include new planning controls in the form of a precinct code in the Territory Plan, potential land release, public domain upgrade recommendations and potential further studies.

Figure 3 shows how the preparation of a precinct code runs concurrently with the master planning process.

1.4.1 Community engagement

Community engagement forms a critical part of the analysis in the early stages of the master planning process and in refining recommendations in the draft master plan.

The background and analysis section of this draft master plan and the Community Engagement Report – Stage 1 provide details of how community engagement has been undertaken and a summary of messages heard from the first stage of community engagement. The community engagement report can be found at [www.act.gov.au/curtin](http://www.act.gov.au/curtin)

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**Figure 3: The master plan process**

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<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background analysis and scope project</td>
<td>Prepare draft Master Plan</td>
<td>Final Master Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project launch. Seek community input for 6 weeks</td>
<td>Community engagement on draft Master Plan, for 12 weeks</td>
<td>Preparation of draft Precinct Code and variation to the Territory Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with key stakeholders and directorates</td>
<td>Prepare final Master Plan considering input from stakeholders and community</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Precinct code, land release, further studies and public domain upgrades which will be subject to future government budget processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. Planning context

### 2.1 Strategic planning

The Curtin Group Centre Draft Master Plan is a strategic policy document that seeks to translate the ACT Government’s broader metropolitan policies at a local level. The following section outlines the policy context that applies to the centre.

#### 2.1.1 ACT Planning Strategy

The ACT Planning Strategy (2012) was prepared in response to changes in the ACT’s economic, demographic and environmental circumstances. The strategy outlines a series of directions that will create a more sustainable city:

- focusing urban intensification in town centres and group centres supported by public transport to improve the vibrancy of centres
- improving the urban quality and liveability of Canberra
- managing the land and natural resources of the area to conserve where appropriate and to manage growth to ensure a prosperous region
- supporting convenient access to a range of facilities, services and opportunities for social interaction by reinforcing the role of group centres as community hubs.

The ACT Planning Strategy’s first direction is of particular relevance to this process and promotes a more compact and efficient city by focussing urban growth in town centres, around group centres and along main transit corridors, as illustrated in Figure 4.

#### 2.1.2 Transport for Canberra

Transport for Canberra (2012) is a companion policy to the ACT Planning Strategy. It seeks to integrate urban planning and transport to ensure that Canberra grows in a way that is sustainable, compact and vibrant and that maximises opportunities for urban renewal. Key policy directions include:

- integrating land use and transport through the Frequent Network of public transit corridors
- making walking and cycling the easiest travel options to encourage active travel
- strategically managing the road network and parking.

In addition, the importance of building an Integrated Transport Network will help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Canberra’s transport network. Integrated transport networks generate economic opportunities and jobs. They are also a catalyst for creating vibrant and attractive urban environments.

![Figure 4: ACT Planning Strategy focuses growth in town centres, around group centres and along transport corridors](image)
2.1.3 Climate change action plan
AP2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT (2012) is the ACT Government’s strategic policy on climate change. AP2 guides the Territory’s strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% of 1990 levels by 2020 and to transition the ACT to zero net emissions by 2060.

AP2 provides a pathway to achieve emission reductions through energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy. It also identifies opportunities for improved environmental performance of buildings and infrastructure.

The projections for the ACT and region are for an increasingly hotter and drier climate with more extreme weather events. Since 2009 the ACT Government has been taking mitigation actions and assisting the community to increase its resilience.

Examples of significant mitigation measures are:

- legislating emission reduction targets for the ACT in 2010: zero by 2060; 80% by 2050; 40% by 2020 (based on 1990 levels)
- investing in renewable energy sources (solar and wind) to meet the ACT’s renewable energy target of 90% by 2020 (introduced in 2013)
- introducing the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme obliging ACT electricity retailers to help customers save energy (introduced in January 2013)
- adopting the Carbon Neutral ACT Government Framework with its target of zero net operational emissions by 2020
- investing in public transport, including Capital Metro light rail, and improving the cycle and pedestrian networks.

2.1.4 ACT water strategy
The ACT Water Strategy 2014–44: Striking the Balance was endorsed by the ACT Government in July 2014. The strategy incorporates three themes and a detailed implementation plan. It will guide the management of the Territory’s water supply, water resources and catchment practices over the next 30 years. It builds on the original ACT Water Strategy, Think Water, Act Water. While the emphasis on the original strategy was on water security following the 2003 bushfires and the Millennium Drought, the new strategy also focuses on improved water quality in lakes and streams and greater community participation in a number of key components, such as improving catchment health.
2.2 Statutory planning

2.2.1 National Capital Plan

The National Capital Plan is the strategic plan for the ACT that is managed by the National Capital Authority. It ensures Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

The National Capital Plan includes ‘designated’ areas, which are areas considered to be of national importance. These areas include the central national area, national institutions, diplomatic areas, Lake Burley Griffin, approach routes to the city and hills, ridges, and buffers.

Although there are no designated areas within the study area, there is designated land immediately to the north-east of the study area reserved for diplomatic missions and hills ridges and buffers to the west of Curtin.

2.2.2 Territory Plan

The Territory Plan is the key statutory planning document in the ACT, providing the policy framework for the administration of land use and planning in the ACT. The purpose of the Territory Plan is to manage land use change in a manner consistent with strategic directions set by the ACT Government, Legislative Assembly and the community.

The centre core of the group centre is zoned commercial and includes Commercial Zone 1: Core Zone (CZ1: Core Zone) and Commercial Zone 2: Business Zone (CZ2: Business Zone) as shown in Figure 5. A small amount of land to the north-west of the centre core is zoned Commercial Zone 3: Services (CZ3: Services). Immediately adjacent to the centre core is a mix of land use zones including: residential, Residential Zone 2: Suburban Core Zone (RZ2: Suburban Core) and Residential Zone 4: Medium Density Residential (RZ4: Medium Density Residential); community (Community Facility Zone: Community Facility Zone (CFZ: Community Facility Zone); and urban parks and recreation (Parks and Recreation Zones 1: Urban Open Space Zone (PRZ1: Urban Open Space Zone). A high proportion of land—approximately 35% of the total study area—is currently zoned for community use (Figure 5).

A Territory Plan variation is a potential outcome of this master plan. The variation will implement a revised precinct code into the Territory Plan to update the current Curtin Precinct Map and Code. A precinct code outlines place specific planning controls such as land use, building heights, building design elements, building setbacks, and where active frontages should be located.

Development applications for development in the centre are submitted and assessed against the Curtin Precinct Map and Code and other statutory codes of the Territory Plan.
Figure 5: Territory Plan land use zones

LEGEND

- **RZ4**: Medium Density Residential
- **CFZ**: Community Facilities
- **CZ1**: Core
- **CZ2**: Business
- **CZ3**: Services
- **PRZ1**: Urban Open Spaces
- **TSZ1**: Transport
- Intertown Public Transport Route

TERRITORY PLAN LAND USE ZONES
2.3 Spatial context

Canberra is a planned city. In the 1960s, the National Capital Development Commission identified several districts outside of the central area for future urban development through the Metropolitan Plan for Canberra. This was known as the ‘Y Plan’ with Tuggeranong at the base of the Y and Belconnen and Gungahlin at the top. The Curtin group centre is located within Woden, one of the first districts to be developed.

Each district was planned with a hierarchy of commercial centres including town, group and local centres. This structure was intended to help develop strong communities that had good access to services and jobs, and to reinforce Canberra’s relationship with its landscape. Town centres generally serve their wider district as the main commercial focus. Group centres provide shops and services for a ‘group’ of suburbs, while local centres typically cater for a single suburb or precinct. The ACT Planning Strategy supports this centres hierarchy approach and encourages a more compact city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along major public transport corridors. This draft master plan considers how urban intensification can be achieved around the Curtin group centre.

Curtin is located in the north of Woden Valley with the centre core positioned atop a knoll, providing natural sightlines to the adjacent suburbs of Deakin and Hughes to the east. The suburb is adjacent to Oakey Hill Nature Reserve in the south-west and close to Red Hill Nature Reserve in the east. A gentle ridge located to the east of Curtin measures approximately 1.2 kilometres and runs from and parallel to Yarralumla Creek.

The spatial context of Curtin group centre is illustrated in Figure 7. Major arterial roads link the centre to Woden town centre (3 kilometres) and the City centre (8 kilometres). Local centres exist in the adjacent suburbs of Yarralumla, Deakin, Hughes and Lyons, as well as a small local centre in Curtin just south of the study area.

The West Deakin office and health precinct lies immediately east of the study area and includes Calvary John James Hospital and a range of ancillary and allied health providers. This precinct, along with the Curtin group centre and the nearby Weston group centre, will help provide essential services and amenities for Molonglo Valley residents until the Molonglo commercial centre is established. The nearest public hospital is The Canberra Hospital in the suburb of Garran, which provides services for Canberra and the greater Canberra region.

Figure 6: Curtin’s fiftieth birthday celebrations held at the centre
Figure 7: Spatial context for the Curtin group centre
2.4 Planning history

The Woden Valley District was the Territory’s first satellite city, and was originally designed as a discrete unit of twelve suburbs in the 1960s. A key driver for its development was to decentralise employment and retail centres. Curtin was designated a group centre to be anchored by a supermarket, have 4000 to 6000 m² of retail floor space, and located to serve between three and five suburbs within walking distance. The centre currently services Curtin and the neighbouring suburbs of Yarralumla, Deakin, Hughes and Lyons. However, it operates more like a local centre.

Curtin is named after John Curtin, the fourteenth Prime Minister of Australia, and celebrated its fiftieth birthday in 2014 (Figure 6). Land in the Curtin area was originally used for sheep grazing prior to the centre’s establishment and gazettal of the suburb in 1962. Families moved into the residential area in 1964 and by 1971 there were 8000 residents in Curtin. Figure 8 and 9 are photographs of the centre core from the early 1960s.

Throughout the 1960s, the National Capital Development Commission experimented with a variety of housing designs.

This included residential estates planned using ‘Radburn’ design principles, which aimed to separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic and face living and sleeping spaces to the rear. Houses were accessed by vehicles via smaller access streets, while pedestrian walkways connected the house frontages to urban parkland and local amenities. Curtin was the first precinct in the ACT to be planned on these principles and was designed by Jack Venn between 1961 and 1962.

Three primary schools, three churches and a supermarket were established in the centre by the mid-1960s. The aged care facility opened in 1986. The North Curtin Primary School was closed in 1990 due to low numbers, and remained vacant until 1993 when the ACT Government Emergency Services Agency moved some of its operations to Curtin. The Queen Elizabeth II Family Centre was established on the old primary school oval in 1995. The centre core has not been upgraded since the late 1990s.

A timeline of major developments in the Curtin group centre is shown at Figure 10.

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**Figure 8: Curtin group centre in the early 1960s**
(courtesy Archives ACT)

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**Figure 9: Curtin group centre in the early 1960s**
(courtesy Archives ACT)

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**Figure 10: Timeline of major developments in the Curtin group centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to 1962</td>
<td>Land used for sheep grazing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Government gazettes suburb of Curtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>First residents move into Curtin, centre opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Primary schools, churches and supermarket established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>8000 Canberrans call Curtin home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Aged care facility opened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>North Curtin Primary School closes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Emergency Services Agency moves to ex-school site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Public domain improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Curtin celebrated 50th anniversary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Master planning process begins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aerial view of Curtin group centre, looking south towards Woden town centre
3. Background and analysis

3.1 Community engagement
Community engagement for the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan involves two main stages. Each stage informs the master plan as it evolves. The release of this draft master plan signifies commencement of Stage 2 of community engagement.

3.1.1 Stage 1 – April to June 2015
Stage 1 identified key issues from the community and other key stakeholders, as well as challenges and opportunities for the centre. A range of engagement activities included:

- two ‘meet the planners’ sessions (Figure 11)
- three workshops with primary and secondary school students
- feedback forms (online and hard copy)
- meetings with individual key stakeholders
- information displays.

Approximately 300 people attended the ‘meet the planners’ sessions and 168 students attended the workshops. Almost 200 feedback forms were received from the community.

Key messages from Stage 1 of community engagement for the Curtin group centre included:

- protect solar access to internal courtyards
- address parking capacity and layout issues
- maintain western open spaces (but opportunities to enhance them would be valued, especially by children)
- a mixture of views regarding provision of diverse housing (some felt that townhouses are required, others would prefer detached dwellings to remain)
- improve bike path connections to the centre
- provide a rapid transit stop in the area
- make the connection between schools and shops safer and more attractive, particularly for people with disabilities
- provide more diverse spaces for older children
- improve street lighting in key public spaces, including courtyards and underpasses
- make the central courtyard smoke free.

Further information on community feedback can be found in the Community Engagement Report – Stage 1 available at www.act.gov.au/curtin. All feedback was considered by the master plan project team. Where appropriate, key messages and relevant background information has informed the development of this draft master plan.

3.1.2 Stage 2 – draft master plan
Stage 2 of community engagement seeks feedback on this draft master plan. This will be used to further refine the final master plan before it is formally presented to government for consideration.

Community engagement will also be undertaken on any changes to the Territory Plan through a separate consultation process after the master plan is released.
3.2 Character and heritage

3.2.1 Character
The existing character of the study area can be divided into three character precincts as shown in Figure 12. These precincts are identifiable by their land use, location, street character and built form:

- **The centre core precinct** is a diverse range of commercial spaces that face inwards onto internal pedestrian-only walkways and paved courtyards. Tenancies in this precinct are generally small and buildings one or two storeys in height, although two of the single storey buildings have an underground basement. This precinct also includes heavily used surface parking.

- **The Carruthers Street community and living precinct** includes mixed uses such as a service station, medium density residential living and a number of community uses such as churches, an early childhood centre and a family centre. This precinct has poor connections to the centre core as Carruthers Street—a busy major collector road—is a significant barrier.

- **The community and open space precinct** contains established community facilities including two schools, an aged care facility, a neighbourhood oval and a church. The western open space network provides good connections to the centre core and residential areas beyond.

3.2.2 Views and vistas
There are a number of key views and vistas that contribute to the character and sense of place in the Curtin group centre. These visual links are identified in Figure 13 and described below:

- Hilltop views to Red Hill and vistas of the adjacent suburbs of Hughes and Deakin from the north-eastern corner of the centre core.

- Views of the Holy Trinity Catholic Church steeple, Australia Post building roof feature and the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd steeple structure are important visual cues.

- Views to Black Mountain and the National Arboretum from the north-western corner of the centre core.

- Vehicular arrival vista of the centre core from the eastern side on Carruthers Street.

Shops fronting on to Carruthers Street
Figure 12: Existing character precincts

EXISTING CHARACTER PRECINCTS

Carruthers Street, community and living precinct
Community and open space precinct
Centre core precinct
McCullough Street
Strangways Street
Carruthers Street
Yarralumla Creek
Western open space
Yarra Glen
Curtin south neighbourhood oval
Curtin Primary School
Statesman Hotel
Radburn residential precinct

HUGHES
CURTIN
THEODORE
Figure 13: Views and vistas

LEGEND
- Landmark features
- Views to Red Hill
- Views to Black Mountain
- Views to landmark features

VIEWS AND VISTAS
3.2.3 Heritage

There are no listed heritage items within the study area. An assessment of buildings, places, objects and artwork was undertaken in March 2015 to assess the potential for new nominations of places or objects with any potential heritage significance. This assessment included consideration of the Radburn residential precinct to the west of the study area.

Two items were determined to have merit and could potentially be new heritage places or objects:

- Holy Trinity Catholic Church and Bell Tower (1975) and Parish Office (2010) at Strangways Street (Figure 14)

Designed by architect Kevin Joseph Curtin in 1975, the Holy Trinity Catholic Church is constructed of brickwork with a steel frame and steeply pitched, pyramid shaped tiled roofs. A parish office was built in 2010 and faithfully replicates the form, materials and details of the church building. The steel bell tower complements the forms of the adjacent structures and completes a pleasing townscape composition. This group of buildings are an architectural landmark in the Curtin area and the site represents social significance due to its value as a functioning church.

The Curtin Radburn Residential Precinct was designed in 1961–62 by Jack Venn, a town planner for the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC). Venn laid out the housing in Curtin as per Radburn planning philosophies that originated from New Jersey, USA in the 1920s. These philosophies encouraged neighbourhoods to segregate vehicular and pedestrian movement, incorporated communal spaces and parkland areas, and provided pedestrian friendly residential houses that faced onto the communal spaces.

The National Capital Development Commission experimented with Radburn planning principles through the 1960s and 1970s in five Canberra suburbs: Hughes, Garran, Curtin, Fisher and Charnwood. Of the five precincts, only the Curtin and Fisher precincts remain significant and intact examples of Radburn neighbourhood planning in Canberra.

These places and objects have not been nominated to the ACT Heritage Register and should be further assessed to determine if they are of heritage value.

There are no Aboriginal heritage sites within the study area, which has experienced significant levels of ground disturbance since European occupation. A thorough archaeological field survey of the survey area was undertaken in March 2015 and identified no new Aboriginal heritage sites or areas with potential to reveal subsurface Aboriginal site deposits.

Figure 14: Holy Trinity Catholic Church
3.3 Demographics

3.3.1 Population

Growth and change in Canberra’s population will generate demand for housing, offices, retailing, services, community facilities and associated infrastructure. At December 2014, the ACT population was estimated to be 387,600 with the population projected to reach 430,400 by 2021 and 493,500 by 2031.

Settlement in Curtin began in 1964 with the suburb’s population peaking at 8000 in 1971. Since then, the population has reduced to an estimated 5384 people in 2004 and 5358 people in 2014. Based on recent trends, Curtin’s population is estimated to increase to 5500 in 2021 and 5600 in 2031.

There is a significantly higher proportion of adults aged 45 and above living in Curtin when compared to the whole of the ACT (Figure 15). There is a significantly lower proportion of adults aged between 20 and 34 when compared to the rest of the ACT.

With an estimated median age of 41 years, Curtin has a much older population than the rest of the ACT, which has an estimated median age of 34 years (Figure 16).

The need to support an older population has implications for the provision of facilities and services. The design of the public domain will need to meet the needs of a diverse population and respond to issues such as mobility and access. Providing housing close to services and facilities is another way an ageing population can be supported.

3.3.2 Employment

The 2011 ABS Census recorded 2767 people in Curtin as being part of the labour force, with a participation rate of 97%. This rate is similar to employment levels across the ACT. In 2011, 51% of Curtin residents in the labour force, worked in Canberra Central and 25% in Woden. There were slightly lower percentages working in other areas of the city with 9% in Fyshwick or Pialligo, 6% in Belconnen, 5% in Tuggeranong, 2% in Weston Creek and 1% in Gungahlin.
Figure 16: Snapshot of Curtin

**Population**
- Curtin (5,175)
- Woden Valley (34,124)
- Curtin Catchment (16,569)

**Projected Population**

**Transport Mode to Work**

**Housing Composition**

**Median Age**
- Curtin Valley
- Tuggeranong
- Belconnen
- Gungahlin
- Canberra Central

** Dwelling Structure**
- Curtin
- Woden Valley
- ACT
3.4 Land use

3.4.1 Land custodianship

Land in the centre is leased by a mix of private leaseholders and the ACT Government (Figure 17). Unleased Territory-owned land is managed by the ACT Government; within the study area it is mainly in the form of large surface carparks.

A key function of this master plan is to provide opportunities for private leaseholders to redevelop and contribute to a better public domain. This master plan identifies where it is appropriate to sell unleased Territory-owned land and what type of land use should occur on those blocks.

3.4.2 Commercial and retail

The centre primarily serves the residents of Curtin. It only partially performs its intended role to partly serve the suburbs of Hughes, Lyons, Yarralumla and Deakin. This potential catchment area has a population of approximately 16,500 people.

Two key commercial and retail uses in the centre core are the supermarket and hotel. Uses within the latter development include motel accommodation, a licensed bistro and bar, and a drive through liquor store.

A diverse range of commercial and retail uses is located along the pedestrian pathways of the centre core and include a post office/newsagent, barber, greengrocer, pharmacist, liquor store, bookshop, duty free store and other general retail uses (Table 1).

Food and beverage outlets in the centre core include three cafes, a bakery, two takeaway shops and a restaurant. These outlets help activate the vibrant centre through active frontages and outdoor seating areas. Other commercial uses in the centre core include a bank, real estate agent, veterinarian, accountant, recruitment agency and home loan agent. Medical and allied health providers are listed in section 3.4.4 Community facilities.

In 2011, the centre had 11,066 m$^2$ of floor space of which 4% (439 m$^2$) was vacant. The main retail outlet is the supermarket, with a floor space of approximately 1444 m$^2$. The hotel development takes up approximately 4340 m$^2$ of floor space. Table 1 lists the types of commercial and retail floor space in Curtin and their total floor space areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of commercial/retail function</th>
<th>Floor space area (m$^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>1736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/cafes</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol station</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other retail</td>
<td>1888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel (and associated functions)</td>
<td>4340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,066</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The group centre attracted $26.9 million of retail expenditure in 2011, of which 76% was on food, reflecting the primary function of the centre. Some 87% of the expenditure was home based expenditure. Of this component, 60% came from Curtin residents, 10% from other Woden residents, and around 5% each from Tuggeranong, Weston Creek, Belconnen and Gungahlin residents. The centre does not attract a great deal of expenditure from adjacent suburbs, likely due to the smaller size of the existing supermarket.

Future increases in expenditure at the centre will be influenced by the overall growth in retail expenditure, the growth in the centre’s catchment area, and the increase in the supply of floor space at competing centres such as Woden town centre.

The per capita retail expenditure in the ACT is estimated to grow by 1.6% per annum between 2011 and 2031, resulting in an overall increase of 38%. Major developments that could affect use of the group centre—as well as potentially increase retail expenditure in Curtin—including the planned Canberra Brickworks redevelopment and Molonglo Valley development (until the Molonglo commercial centre is established).

Having regard to these factors, economic analysis anticipates that a possible expansion of supermarket space in Curtin of 1600 m$^2$ could be viable in the longer term. Retail modelling indicates that should this occur, food expenditure at the centre would increase from $21 million in 2011 to $45 million in 2021 and $52 million in 2031. The variables outlined above will need to be monitored to ensure additional supermarket space is not developed before the demand exists.
Figure 17: Land custodianship

LEGEND
- Leased Territory Land
- Government Lease - Public Land
- Government Lease - Not Public Land
- TAMS - Public Land
- TAMS - Public Places
- TAMS - Other Unleased Assets
- TAMS - Vacant (other)
- TAMS - Roads

LAND CUSTODIANSHIP
3.4.3 Residential
Curtin contains a significantly higher proportion of detached dwellings (84.6%) compared to the whole of the ACT (72.8%), and a significantly lower proportion of semi-detached houses or townhouses (3.6% compared to 14.5%).

Figure 18 shows the proportion of dwelling structures in Curtin, Woden Valley and the ACT, highlighting a particularly low supply of semi-detached dwellings in Curtin.

A number of three-storey residential apartment buildings exist adjacent to the centre core; these developments are located in the RZ4: Medium Density Residential land use zone. Given the centre’s proximity to frequent public transport services and a potential rapid transit stop at the Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street intersection (see section 3.5.1), further residential development and intensification would be appropriate in and around the group centre.

The ACT Government’s Indicative Land Release Program identifies the release of Block 2 Section 99 Curtin for sale in 2017–18. This site is immediately adjacent to the master plan study area and it is intended that it will be redeveloped for medium density residential development to provide opportunities for downsizing and ‘ageing in place’.

3.4.4 Community facilities
Woden town centre plays an important district and regional role, providing essential facilities and services for Woden Valley, Weston Creek and the greater region. Facilities that serve the combined Woden Valley–Weston Creek catchment include Canberra College, Woden Library, Phillip Community Health Centre, CIT Woden and Woden Senior Citizens Club. Curtin group centre plays an important role in providing community facilities at the local and neighbourhood level.

The current demographic of the Curtin catchment area is fairly well provided for by existing community facilities within the study area and the health services precinct in nearby West Deakin. A general practitioner’s office, counselling practice, dentist, optometrist and chiropractor operate out of the centre core, and a specialist family centre is located to the north-west on Carruthers Street.

Young children are well catered for by two primary schools (one public and one Catholic), three preschools or early learning centres, and two child care centres. The two primary schools also offer onsite after-hours care. A high school is located to the east of the study area in the suburb of Deakin.

There are three churches in the study area, all established in the early 1960s. Churches are not only important as places of worship for the community, but have the potential role to act as safe places of refuge and meeting points.

An aged care facility in the study area provides residential care for older people with high support needs as well as respite care. Additional facilities are located in Deakin and Hughes. A number of other non profit community organisations are located within the study area. There is currently no space set aside for community gardens in Curtin or adjacent suburbs.

All the sites within the study area zoned CFZ: Community Facilities Zone are occupied by existing uses. Community facilities located in this zone in the study area are listed in Table 2 and shown in Figure 20.

Figure 18: Dwelling structures in Curtin, Woden Valley and the ACT
Table 2: Community facilities located within the master plan study area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd</td>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>Block 23, Section 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Ward Gardens</td>
<td>Aged care</td>
<td>Block 2, Section 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin Medical Practice</td>
<td>Health and medical</td>
<td>Block 11, Section 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtin Primary School</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Block 1, Section 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity Catholic Church</td>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>Block 8, Section 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity Early Learning Centre</td>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Block 2, Section 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity Primary School</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Block 9, Section 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Arche Genesaret</td>
<td>Community facility</td>
<td>Block 2, Section 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Pan Early Learning Centre</td>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Block 14, Section 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St James Uniting Church</td>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>Block 22, Section 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.5 Sport and recreation facilities

The 2.1 hectare Curtin South Neighbourhood Oval in the southern end of the study area contains a cricket pitch, cricket practice nets and fields to allow for AFL, rugby union and rugby league games. The oval services the suburb and contains a small amenities block with toilet facilities.

The two children’s playgrounds within the study area are located in urban open spaces and are accessible by the public. One playground is on the corner of Carruthers Street and McCulloch Street, adjacent to St James’ Uniting Church (Figure 19). The other is in urban open space behind the Ron Reynolds Training Centre off Strangways Street. A community safety audit in March 2015 observed limited use of both playgrounds, particularly the one next to the church, and recommended they be more appropriately located.

A private gymnasium is located at the basement level of the northern block of shops in the centre core. It is available for use 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a well used facility, with patrons coming from a wide area, some by car or bicycle.

The North Curtin District Playing Fields are approximately 600 metres to the north of the centre core, and the Illoura Horse Holding Paddocks a further 600 metres north. These sport and recreation facilities cater for the broader catchment area.

3.4.6 Services and trades

Three blocks in the centre are zoned CZ3: Services Zone. There is a service station on Block 1 Section 63 but the other two blocks are currently used for residential dwellings or urban open space. No other services or trades uses are contained within the study area. The Phillip service trades precinct, approximately 3 kilometres to the south of Curtin, provides district level services.
Figure 20: Community and recreation facilities

COMMUNITY AND RECREATION FACILITIES

LEGEND
- Aged care
- Childcare
- After school care
- Community services
- Education
- Licensed clubs
- Medical facilities
- Outdoor recreation facilities
- Places of worship
- Playgrounds
- Community facility zoned land

Western open space
Radburn residential precinct
Curtin south neighbourhood oval
Curtin Primary School
Western open space

Carruthers Street
Strangways Street
Statesman Hotel
Yarralumla Creek
Yarra Glen
THEODORE
HUGHES
McGilloch Street
Curtin South
Curtin Group Centre Draft Master Plan
3.5 Transport and movement

3.5.1 Public transport
Action buses provide the primary form of public transport to the centre and offers three bus services: weekday services (Route 2), express peak hour services (Route 732) and weekend services (Route 932). The express peak hour service transfers passengers from Curtin shops to the City in approximately 20 minutes and continues to Dickson, while the travel time to the Woden bus interchange is approximately 15 minutes. The weekend service route extends to the Belconnen town centre.

Buses travel to Woden and the City every 10–15 minutes during morning and afternoon peak periods, and every 30 minutes during the middle of the day. There are longer waiting times (60 minutes or greater) between services in the evenings and on weekends. There are existing bus stops located along Carruthers Street and McCulloch Street. Two bus stops along Theodore Street adjacent to the primary schools are for school buses. Figure 21 illustrates the existing public transport infrastructure within the study area and walking distances to each bus stop.

A study of three pre-identified bus stops along Adelaide Avenue was completed in July 2013 to evaluate their feasibility to be serviced by rapid buses. It recommended a bus stop at the intersection of Kent Street and Novar Street—to the north of Curtin—be constructed utilising a median crossover design. Construction of this intersection upgrade is currently being considered by the ACT Government through the Canberra Brickworks and Environ redevelopment project.

The study recommended further investigation of a second bus stop to service rapid buses at the intersection of Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen, which is within the study area of this master plan. A potential rapid bus stop at this location would better serve commuters in the Curtin group centre catchment area, including workers in the West Deakin office and health precinct.

Transport for Canberra includes targets to increase usage of public transport in journeys to work to 10.5% by 2016. The ABS Census 2011 recorded a 7.2% rate in public transport usage in Curtin compared to 5.6% across the Territory.

3.5.2 Light Rail
Transport for Canberra (2012) establishes a Frequent Network of rapid public transport corridors with high frequency, all day transport services. The Frequent Network is integrated with a coverage bus network, which ensures that all Canberrans have access to public transport. The government is currently investigating how public transport on the rapid Frequent Network can be improved by transitioning the service from buses to light rail as the city grows. These investigations will inform future decision-making about extensions to Capital Metro and deliver on key government policies, including Transport for Canberra, the ACT Planning Strategy and the City Plan.

3.5.3 Active travel
Active travel involves physical activity such as walking, cycling and active connections to public transport. More Canberrans will lead fitter and healthier lives if active travel options are seamlessly integrated into everyday life. The city will also become more vibrant and safer through increased pedestrian activity.

Transport for Canberra includes targets to increase active travel in journeys to work to 6% (cycling) and 6.5% (walking) by 2016. The ABS Census 2011 recorded a 3.5% rate in Curtin compared to 2.4% across the Territory for cycling, and 3.0% rate in Curtin compared to 4.2% across the Territory for walking.

There are good pedestrian connections to the centre core, particularly from the Radburn residential area via the western open space (Figure 22) and from residential areas in the south via the neighbourhood oval. Connections to the eastern residential area and the West Deakin office and health precinct (including the high school) are not as clear and could be enhanced. Figure 24 shows the existing pedestrian network in the group centre.

There is reasonable pedestrian amenity within the centre core with provision of shaded seating areas and pedestrian only zones. However, there is poor connectivity between adjacent surface parking spaces and the shopping area, as well as surrounding land uses (such as the churches, schools and aged care facility) and the shopping area. A number of level changes, uneven paths and car-prioritised road crossings detract from the centre’s accessibility for people with disabilities, the elderly and parents with prams (Figure 23).
Figure 21: Public transport infrastructure

LEGEND
- Bus stops
- Park and Ride
- Bus routes
- Rapid transit route
- 1-250m walk to bus stop
- 251-500m walk to bus stop
- 501-750m walk to bus stop

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE
Cyclists riding to the centre core are reasonably well catered for, with a shared use path running north–south through the western open space and along Carruthers Street, connecting to a cycle network that leads to both the City and Woden (Figure 25). However, bicycle parking is lacking in the centre, particularly in the vicinity of high activity land uses such as the core shopping area, local schools and churches.

Figure 26 illustrates the various pedestrian and cyclist barriers that detract from active travel amenity. Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street are major roads that act as physical barriers to residents accessing the centre from outer areas. There are poor connections between the centre core and adjacent land uses due to level changes, crossings that prioritise vehicles, lack of street lighting and disconnected footpaths.
Figure 24: Existing pedestrian network

LEGEND
- Shared spaces
- Formal pedestrian crossings
- Shared-use paths
- Formal pedestrian paths
- Underpasses
- Signalised intersection (with pedestrian crossing)

EXISTING PEDESTRIAN NETWORK
Figure 25: Existing cycle network

LEGEND
- On-road cycle lanes
- Shared-use paths
- Shared spaces
- Underpasses
- Signalised intersection (with pedestrian crossing)

EXISTING CYCLE NETWORK
Figure 26: Pedestrian and cyclist barriers

LEGEND
- Arterial and local roads
- Informal dirt tracks
- Poor connections
- Level changes
- Underpasses

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST BARRIERS
3.5.4 Road network and traffic
Curtin group centre is convenient for people to drive to by private car. The feedback from stage 1 community engagement found that 55.3% of people normally travel to the centre by car.

Yarra Glen is an arterial road that provides access between Woden town centre and the city centre. Carruthers Street and Theodore Street are the only major collector roads within the study area. All other streets are access streets with lower vehicle speed limits.

The ACT Government recently introduced additional traffic calming devices along McCulloch Street as part of the Cotter Road duplication project. This included a raised pedestrian crossing on the corner of Reynolds Street and McCulloch Street, servicing the bus stops on both sides of the road. The purpose of these devices, along with the existing roundabouts, is to reduce the usage of McCulloch Street as a ‘rat run’ between Tuggeranong Parkway or Cotter Road and the Woden area.

A 2012 study recommended the upgrading of two intersections within the study area to meet future demands. The first is the Carruthers Street and Theodore Street intersection, and the second is the Carruthers Street and Strangways Street roundabout.

3.5.5 Car parking
A parking study completed in April 2015 found that a considerable amount of parking capacity in the centre is onstreet parking or in areas that are far away from shops and not well utilised. The more central surface carparks are well used.

For parts of the study area outside the core area, typical utilisation of parking was 10–30%, which indicates there should be no significant operational issues. However, utilisation in the core area was close to 90% for some time periods, particularly in the eastern and western carparks.

Figure 27 indicates that offstreet parking in the core area peaks in the range of 70–100% during the weekday daytime period. During the weekday evening peak period, carparks in this area operate at 60–80%. Figure 27 also shows that most carparks in the study area are not well used during the day on a weekend, with the exception of the eastern and western carparks in the core area and onstreet parking on Theodore Street and Carruthers Street.

There is limited lighting and poor visibility of line marking in the southern carpark. The layout of this carpark also does not allow for internal circulation, and southbound vehicles must exit the carpark onto Strangways Street to search both aisles.
Figure 27: Parking utilisation in Curtin group centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MAXIMUM USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEKDAY DAYTIME</td>
<td>90 to 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEKEND DAYTIME</td>
<td>80 to 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEKDAY EVENING</td>
<td>70 to 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEKEND EVENING</td>
<td>50 to 70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXISTING CAR PARKING DEMAND

WEEKDAY DAYTIME

WEEKEND DAYTIME

WEEKDAY EVENING

WEEKEND EVENING
3.6 Public domain

3.6.1 Streets, parks and public spaces
The centre’s open space network includes a public park north of the centre core, the western open space and a number of courtyards, grassed areas and established gardens through the centre core. However, these parks and public spaces are poorly connected and some are inaccessible to people with disabilities or the elderly. The open space network is illustrated in Figure 30.

Curtin group centre is a well-used community hub and a vibrant meeting place. The diversity of land and building uses, shaded central plaza, subsidiary green spaces with good solar orientation and strong sense of community help enhance this character. It is a convenient place to run personal errands but is a popular destination—particularly on weekends—for people to spend time relaxing in the courtyards or in one of the cafes.

The western open space is comparatively underutilised but encourages pedestrians and cyclists to access the group centre from nearby areas. This pedestrian connectivity could be further enhanced.

3.6.2 Public, furniture, art and sculpture
The central plaza of the centre was rejuvenated in 1999 as part of a government initiative to improve Canberra’s public spaces. Playful and sculptured seating and metal craftworks of birds perched on lighting poles were installed. Motifs of Australian birds were integrated in the public furniture, pavement and artworks, which were designed using colourful mosaic tiles, as shown in Figure 28.

A memorial to former Prime Minister John Curtin—after whom the suburb is named—is located at the northern entry point to the centre core and doubles as an entry sign.

3.6.3 Landscape character
The Curtin group centre is heavily urbanised, however there are some mature deciduous trees in the centre core that provide optimal shade and pleasant visual connections to nature.

The grassed open space to the west includes a number of native and exotic trees. Species include eucalypt, conifer, ornamental cherries and liquidambar. Trees in this space are informally staggered but create an informal pedestrian track to adjacent land uses, including the centre core (Figure 29).

Some discrete stands of trees provide good opportunities for shade, and the mature eucalypt trees contribute to the local character due to their size and consistency.

Figure 28: Public furniture, art and sculpture in Curtin

Figure 29: Informal pedestrian track through the western open space
Figure 30: Open space network

LEGEND
- Public open spaces and grassed areas
- Parks and ovals
- Tree coverage
- Pedestrian-only courtyards

Western open space
Radburn residential precinct
Curtin south neighbourhood oval
Curtin Primary School

OPEN SPACE NETWORK
3.7 Building design and height

The Curtin shopping centre was opened in 1964 and features a central courtyard measuring 26 by 24 metres, providing a public area away from traffic. A supermarket was located on the southern side of the internal court to block the cold southerly winds, the ‘food group’ buildings were placed on the western side of the court to provide shade from the late summer sun, while a post office, banks and shops completed the other sides of the courtyard.

Many of these buildings still exist, and are constructed of painted or rendered brick masonry and corrugated iron roofs. Shopfront facades are predominantly aluminium-framed glazing. The wide cantilevered eaves, up to 3 metres in depth, are characteristic to the centre and provide good opportunities for outdoor seating and protection from the elements.

The centre contains predominantly one-storey buildings. There are two buildings in the north-western corner of the centre that are two-storeys, and two one-storey buildings that include an underground basement. The hotel to the south is two storeys while the nearby aged care facility and two primary schools are single storey.

A number of three-storey residential buildings are located immediately north-east, north-west and west of the centre core; these developments are located within the master plan study area. The surrounding residential dwellings are mostly one-storey detached dwellings with some two-storey units and a very small amount of semi-detached dwellings.

These existing building heights are illustrated in Figure 31.
Figure 31: Existing building heights

EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS

LEGEND
- 3 storeys
- 2 storeys
- 1 storey
3.8 Public safety

The frontages in the centre core are well activated; however, the internal pedestrian walkways and outer frontages do not provide good opportunities for passive surveillance. Additionally, the commercial uses within the centre mostly operate during business hours only. The supermarket, private gymnasium and hotel are the only uses open after usual business hours. Two takeaway shops in the centre core have limited opening hours after 5.00pm on weekdays. Figure 33 illustrates the active frontages in the centre core and buildings with night time uses.

Generally, Curtin is a safe place to visit. ACT Policing recorded 12 offences against people during 2014 in the entire suburb. However, the perception of safety in and around the centre core is diminished by potential entrapment areas (particularly around rubbish areas and behind the medical centre), poor lighting in the southern carpark, pedestrian underpasses on Carruthers Street (Figure 32), and minimal passive surveillance of the internal courtyard after dark and of the children’s playgrounds at all times of the day.

A number of community stakeholders have expressed concern regarding the speed of traffic on Theodore Street. In addition, there are currently no convenient formal pedestrian crossings for people needing to cross this street. There are pedestrian safety issues associated with access between the schools to the south and the core area, with no direct and safe crossing points between them.

The ACT Government started introducing 40 km/h speed limit precincts in Canberra’s town centres in 2011. The low speed zones have now been successfully introduced in Woden, Gungahlin, Tuggeranong, Belconnen and the City. From 2015, the government extended this project to include 40km/h speed limit precincts in 18 group centres, including the Curtin group centre. The extent of the speed limit precinct in Curtin includes the centre core parking areas and the entire length of Strangways Street.

Figure 32: Underpass at Carruthers Street near western open space
Figure 33: Active frontages in the centre core
3.9 Environmental sustainability

Sustainability is critical to the landscaped and built environment. ACT Government policies and strategies provide guidance for integrating sustainability measures into the urban environment.

The following are key environmental sustainability principles to be considered in the Curtin Group Centre Master Plan and its implementation.

Climate change
Responding to climate change takes two forms:

- Mitigation – reduce greenhouse gas emissions by minimising use of fossil fuels for heating, cooling and transport, and increase the efficiency of energy use.
- Adaptation – is taking action to be resilient to the risk of a changing climate.

Resources consumption

- Reduce the amount of land used for the growing city with urban renewal and intensification.
- Reduce the amount of energy and water used in urban environments and invest in living (green) infrastructure.
- Respect and conserve natural and cultural heritage.
- Respect and conserve the significant landscapes and its features.
- Enhance biodiversity with habitat connectivity.

Buildings

- Improve the design and construction of buildings.
- Increase choice in housing to meet diverse needs.

Urban planning and design

- Reduce reliance on private vehicles.
- Create opportunities for social interactions.
- Integrate passive solar design principles into building and site design.
- Reduce the heat island effect in urban areas and improve microclimate through landscape design.

Master plans provide opportunities to address climate change adaptation at a place specific scale. The projections for the ACT and region are for an increasingly hotter and drier climate with more extreme weather events. The place-based risks to people and assets from a hotter and drier climate are heat, severe storms (flash flooding) and bushfire.

Options to address these risks may include:

1. Reduce city heat and increase amenity in outdoor spaces for healthy living
   - Increase shade trees to roadways and carparks.
   - Use light coloured pavements.
   - Increase shade to pathways and parklands for human comfort and wellbeing.
   - Include seats and drinking fountains with water bottle recharge taps.
   - Increase use of vegetation.

2. Reduce city heat and achieve cooler buildings
   - Design buildings, streets and parks to be ‘climate wise’. This means improving the design and choice of materials for the built environment to lessen the effects of climate change.
   - Use passive solar design.
   - Use light coloured materials.
   - Introduce green infrastructure such as green roofs and walls.

3. Flooding
   - Reduce runoff from hard surfaces within the sub-catchment.
   - Capture and use rainwater in redevelopment projects.
   - Retrofit roadside kerb and gutter systems using water-sensitive urban design (WSUD).

4. Reduce the risk of bushfire in urban areas
   - Initiate an asset protection zone.
   - Ensure no continuity of fuel from the ground to the crown of the tree.
   - Plan for emergency service access.
The following opportunities were identified to incorporate environmental sustainability measures in the master plan.

### 3.9.1 Energy

The stated objectives of the ACT Sustainable Energy Policy 2011–2020 are to achieve reliable and affordable energy, smarter use of energy, cleaner energy and growth in the clean economy.

A district energy system could contribute to achieving these objectives and could be commercially viable with a commercial/residential development or expansion. District energy systems produce electrical energy locally and use ‘waste heat’ from electricity generation to heat and cool buildings.

Electricity and/or thermal energy are generated close to where it is used. Energy systems such as co-generation (electricity and heat) or trigeneration (electricity, heat and cooling) need the combination of commercial and residential uses to be efficient, as the load for commercial is during the day and the load for residential is generally out of hours.

The use of such energy systems can achieve social, economic and environmental benefits. A district energy system in Woden Valley could provide an alternative cleaner energy for the centre and contribute to a sustainable future. Further investigations would be required to determine if a district energy system would be viable, how it could be delivered, and in context of future budgets.

### 3.9.2 Water

Water is an important natural resource that is under significant pressure from population growth and climatic conditions. There is also a need to reduce broader social, economic and environmental costs associated with potable water distribution.

Systems such as the Sullivan’s Creek and Inner North Reticulation Network is Canberra’s first neighbourhood-scale stormwater harvesting and managed aquifer recharge system. The scheme captures and treats urban stormwater in constructed wetlands before pumping though a reticulation network for irrigation of urban green spaces.

For Curtin, the reuse of stormwater and rainwater, could reduce the use of potable water for irrigation and domestic and commercial uses that do not require treated water, such as toilet flushing or clothes washing.

### 3.9.3 Heat island effect

An urban heat island is a metropolitan area which is significantly warmer than its surrounding areas. The main cause of the heat island effect is from the use of materials which store and radiate heat into the surrounding areas such as concrete and bitumen.

Thermal comfort can significantly change the way we use outdoor areas. Urban environments, such as the Curtin group centre, contain significant areas of concrete and asphalt in the roads and footpaths. Higher temperatures may be acceptable in the cooler months, but some urban environments can become uncomfortable in summer.

The built environment can be designed to reduce the urban heat island effect with the use of lighter building materials, shade structures and permeable surfaces. Large canopy trees can provide shade in the warmer months and cooling through transpiration.

### 3.10 Civil infrastructure

The Woden zone substation is the supply source for the feeders and distribution substations feeding electrical load to the study area. Additional load demands would need to be met by the Molonglo zone substation.

Gas and telecommunications infrastructure service the study area and there are no major constraints to note. Sewerage from the study area discharges north into the Woden Trunk Sewer main located near Cotter Road.

Water mains in the core shopping area may need to be upgraded in future development. A 20 metre-wide exclusion corridor also needs to be provided over two trunk mains measuring 450 millimetre diameter and 750 millimetre diameter running east–west through the study area. These pipes run through the western open space and centre core and across to the Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street intersection.

The centre is located within a stormwater catchment area of approximately 104 hectares. Piped and overland flows are conveyed from the south of the catchment through the western open space in a northerly direction. Stormwater is eventually discharged into Yarralumla Creek near the intersection of McCulloch Street and Cotter Road. Currently, Yarralumla Creek is one of six priority catchments being investigated as part of the Basin Priority Project.
4. Challenges and opportunities

The main challenges and opportunities identified for Curtin group centre are outlined below and in Figure 34 and Figure 35. This list is not exhaustive, but provides a basis for the development of the draft master plan.

4.1 Challenges

4.1.1 Limited opportunities for new development

There is a limited amount of unleased land in the centre that could be considered for alternative uses. Many commercial buildings in the centre core and adjacent residential apartment blocks have multiple leases or are managed by a body corporate. These two factors make it difficult to consolidate land and intensify urban development in and around the centre.

4.1.2 Poor connections to surrounding residential areas

The group centre exists with a number of community facilities and public spaces that do not provide easy or continuous access to the centre core. Although residential areas to the west have reasonable connections to the centre core, major roads such as Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen are significant barriers to residential areas to the north and east. Other than the signalised pedestrian crossing on Carruthers Street into the centre itself, these roads offer few safe and attractive connections for pedestrians and cyclists. There are also a number of places through the centre where level changes make it difficult or impossible for pedestrians and cyclists to pass (Figure 34).

4.1.3 Lack of activity outside of the central courtyard and after hours

There are currently some vacant tenancies in the centre core at the northern end along Carruthers Street. Although the village square is highly activated during the day, a number of inactive frontages leading to this area make the group centre appear unsafe and unattractive.

There is a very limited amount of night time activity in the centre core with only the supermarket and a single restaurant open and staffed in the evenings. Two takeaway shops are also open for a limited time after general business hours. A private gymnasium is open 24 hours a day but is not staffed after business hours. The combination of these factors can create public spaces that are perceived to be unsafe after dark.

With no residential development in the centre core, opportunities for passive surveillance of public areas after usual business hours is limited.

4.1.4 Lack of visual identity for the centre

Curtin exhibits a strong sense of community. However, the centre itself looks tired and lacks a presence from the street, particularly when approaching the centre from Yarra Glen. The low buildings and lack of distinctive entry signage and arrival markers further exacerbates this issue. Within the centre core area, there are level changes and no clear pedestrian walkways through the parking areas that make it difficult for people to easily find their way between the public spaces.

4.1.5 Inefficient car parking layout and design

The centre is surrounded by large areas of surface parking, making it very convenient for people to access. The eastern and western carparks often reach capacity during peak periods while the southern carpark exhibits much lower usage, even though it is conveniently located. Inadequate street lighting and poor pedestrian access may contribute to this inefficient use of parking. The multiple entry and exit points, tight manoeuvring points and lack of well-located accessible parking spaces are also important issues to consider.

The areas of green space at the edges of the surface parking on Strangways and Theodore Streets are not well used. These green spaces are large enough to allow recreational uses, such as a small playground, but are not well located for visitors to the centre.
Figure 34: Challenges

LEGEND
- Pedestrian and cyclist barriers
- Major intersections
- Poor connections
- Inactive frontages
- Limited night-time surveillance
- Parking layout issues
- Level changes

Curtin Group Centre Draft Master Plan
4.2 Opportunities

4.2.1 Attractive and appropriate location for some increased residential development

The ACT Planning Strategy supports the introduction of residential development into Canberra's commercial centres to encourage activity in the evenings, provide new commercial opportunities and housing choice, and grow a more compact and energy-efficient city.

While it is not anticipated that the Curtin population will rapidly grow up to 2031, the centre will become more attractive and accessible if the rapid transport stop is built near the intersection of Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen. This will provide new long-term opportunities for the centre, including a more diverse range of housing to meet the changing needs of the Woden Valley population. This may include housing to support ageing in place and younger people, and diverse family compositions.

4.2.2 Diverse economic opportunities in the centre

A key objective of the master plan is to consider how the group centre could support jobs and a diverse range of economic opportunities. New opportunities for commercial developments in the centre core that are in keeping with the centre’s character will allow for the centre to grow and introduce new shops and services over time (Figure 35). This could be supported with upgrades to the public domain as new development is introduced.

As Curtin is close to Woden, the centre must not try to directly compete with the town centre. Rather, the centre’s role is to complement the town centre by maintaining its convenience, diverse retail and commercial uses, and village-style atmosphere.

The high level of convenience was consistently mentioned in community and stakeholder engagement. It is important that the centre retains a level of convenience to support local businesses so the centre can continue to be an attractive option for the local community.

4.2.3 Attractive and well-used public spaces

There are a number of attractive but disconnected public spaces in the centre. These spaces include formal parks, open parkland, informal green spaces and paved courtyards that could be enhanced through better connectivity and cohesion.

Urban design elements such as signage, lighting, pavement, building design, landscaping and street character could be improved to create a stronger sense of place. Such improvements should also consider how to make Curtin a safe place for residents and visitors.

The surface carparks and informal areas of unused open space offer the opportunity to rationalise the design of these spaces to provide a higher quality of usable spaces for people visiting the centre. If the surface parking is re-designed, it should include large canopy shade tree plantings in improved soils and growing conditions.

Curtin’s urban design quality will also be improved through better pedestrian and cyclist connections. The pedestrian and cyclist network could be better integrated into an improved green space network, making it a more attractive experience to use the centre. For example, the trunk water mains running east–west through the centre could be used as an opportunity to create a pedestrian and cyclist axis, instead of being perceived as a constraint to redevelopment (Figure 35).

4.2.4 Sustainable development and design to reduce energy, water and private vehicle usage

Opportunities for water-sensitive urban design in the centre will help filter pollution out of stormwater and irrigate new plantings. These could include potential urban wetlands in the western open space and stormwater harvesting measures throughout the centre.

The built environment can be designed to reduce urban heat island effects with the use of light-coloured materials and permeable paving materials. Shading structures and large trees should also be integrated on main pedestrian routes and in public spaces to increase opportunities for shade on hot days.

Consideration of the Carruthers Street and Yarra Glen intersection as a rapid transit stop will make public transport more accessible and convenient to a wider range of the community. This, together with improved pedestrian and cycle networks, could have flow-on effects to reduce private vehicle usage and traffic congestion, as well as improve air quality.
Figure 35: Opportunities

LEGEND
- Potential mixed-use development
- Community, sport and recreation attractors
- Rapid transit route
- Establish rapid transit stop
- Improve pedestrian connections
- Improve public domain
- Potential redevelopment opportunities
- Redesign public space and parking
- Enhance recreational space
- Improve intersections for pedestrians

Potential redevelopment opportunities:
- Curtin south neighbourhood oval
- Yarralumla Creek
- Yarra Glen
- Hughes

Curtin Group Centre Draft Master Plan
Colourful flags used for Curtin’s birthday celebrations
Pedestrian path on Stranways Street
5. The master plan

5.1 Master plan structure
The master plan structure indicates how the planning strategies and policies support achievement of the vision and principles (Figure 36).

Figure 37 indicates some of the key master plan assumptions that were used to develop the principles and planning strategies.

5.2 Vision
The vision for the Curtin group centre has been developed with feedback from the community. It captures what is valued about the centre and sets out what the centre could be in the future.

*Curtin group centre is a vibrant and inclusive meeting place for the local community. As a successful urban village, the centre is easily accessible and provides a convenient variety of businesses and services.*
### POPULATION

**Population growth in Curtin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>5,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2031</td>
<td>5,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*242 people* between 2014 and 2031

**Population in Woden Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>35,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2031</td>
<td>37,350</td>
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</table>

**Population in ACT**

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<tr>
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<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2031</td>
<td>493,500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### RETAIL

**Employment** in the ACT/Queanbeyan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2031</td>
<td>280,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Current retail catchment of Curtin group centre** is approx 16,500 people

**Additional supermarket** retail floor space (up to 1600m²) could be viable in the long term

### ENVIRONMENT

**0.7% increase in temperature** in the near future (2020–2039)

*ACT Climate Change Snapshot (2014)*

**Reduce** greenhouse gas emissions *40%* from 1990 levels, *by 2020* 

*AP2 (2012)*
5.3 Character statement

The Curtin group centre is a busy community hub that offers a broad range of services and facilities to diverse user groups in the catchment area. Sustainable and high quality housing options attract residents to the area, while local businesses and retailers see the centre as an attractive place to do business. There are opportunities for night time activities, as well as informal recreation and leisure uses.

Pedestrians and cyclists are able to access the centre safely and efficiently and are connected to nearby facilities such as schools, aged care accommodation and the rapid transit network on Yarra Glen.

As the community’s needs change over time, there is opportunity to reinforce and enhance the following three character precincts (Figure 38).

- **Centre core precinct**
  Retaining the maximum allowable building height (two storeys) for existing buildings will protect the human scale of this area and preserve solar access to the courtyards. Some opportunity for increased height will provide more diversity in the built form and the type of uses that could occur in this precinct. It will ensure the centre’s character, which is highly valued by the community, is retained. Adjacent areas will provide a higher density of development to encourage a greater mix of commercial uses.

- **Carruthers Street community and living precinct**
  Carruthers Street will be an important gateway to the Curtin group centre. It will also provide residential development opportunities to increase demand for the rapid transit network on Yarra Glen. These opportunities could include medium density housing and supportive housing. Existing community facilities will be protected and encouraged to diversify their services as community needs change over time.

- **Community and open space precinct**
  This precinct will retain its formal outdoor sporting facilities. The western open space will provide adjacent community uses with safe and efficient access to the centre. Proposed improvements to the public domain will strengthen these linkages and make the open spaces more functional and attractive to users. The surrounding residential areas will continue to provide opportunities for passive surveillance over the area and further activate this precinct.

5.4 Planning principles

The following planning principles are applied to guide the implementation of this master plan, its vision and strategies. The principles reflect the future desired outcomes for the centre. Table 3 shows how the planning principles are supported by the planning strategies.

- **5.4.1 Support varied lifestyle options for a diverse community**
  Continue to provide for the diverse needs of young and old, singles and families, and the most vulnerable in the community by encouraging a range of residential housing options close to shops, services and outdoor recreation.

- **5.4.2 Promote the centre as a convenient and accessible place for people of all abilities.**
  Build on the centre’s strengths, such as the central courtyard and pedestrian walkways, to create an attractive and walkable public domain. Ensure the centre is easy to access by walking and cycling from surrounding suburban areas through improvements to the public domain and the design of new developments.

- **Provide safe areas of parking with direct access to shops and services. Improve the connections to public transport to ensure the centre is a safe, connected and convenient place for people to shop and enjoy.**

- **5.4.3 Ensure the group centre is resilient to a changing climate**
  Provide new opportunities for redevelopment in the centre for people to live and work in a more sustainable urban environment. Better connect Curtin residents to efficient public transit options. Ensure the centre adapts to a changing climate through improved design of the public domain, including large canopy trees for shade.

- **5.4.4 Celebrate the centre core area as an attractive low scale urban village**
  Encourage nighttime activities to make the centre feel safer and be more vibrant after dark, particularly the central courtyard and its connections. Increase development opportunities and complementary mix of uses such as residential, commercial, health services, retail and hospitality in the centre where possible. The sunlit central courtyard is an important social meeting space for the community and will be further improved.
Figure 38: Proposed character precincts

LEGEND
1 Centre core precinct
2 Carruthers Street community and living precinct
3 Community and open space precinct

PROPOSED CHARACTER PRECINCTS
5.4.5 Strengthen the sense of community and pride of place

Build on the existing use of the centre’s public spaces by providing new opportunities for incidental social interaction and recreation.

This should be retained and strengthened by protecting courtyard spaces, providing good quality public domain and encouraging people to walk and cycle to and through the centre.

The existing large trees in and around the centre should be retained and incorporated as part of any public domain upgrades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Principles</th>
<th>Planning strategies that support the planning principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Support varied lifestyle options for a diverse community. | • Reinforce the vibrant, urban village character and social identity of the centre core precinct.  
• Build on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development.  
• Improve pedestrian amenity and connections across Strangways Street.  
• Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community.  
• Implement efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies. |
| Promote the centre as a convenient and accessible place for people of all abilities. | • Improve pedestrian amenity and connections across Strangways Street.  
• Create an east–west pedestrian and cyclist link to Yarra Glen and Deakin.  
• Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community.  
• Ensure public spaces are walkable, safe and attractive. |
| Ensure the group centre is resilient to a changing climate. | • Build on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development.  
• Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community.  
• Ensure public spaces are walkable, safe and attractive.  
• Implement efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies.  
• Incorporate environmentally sustainable design measures in the future buildings and public spaces of the centre. |
| Celebrate the centre core area as an attractive low scale urban village. | • Reinforce the vibrant, urban village character and social identity of the centre core precinct.  
• Build on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development.  
• Improve pedestrian amenity and connections across Strangways Street.  
• Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community.  
• Implement efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies. |
| Strengthen the sense of community and pride of place. | • Reinforce the vibrant, urban village character and social identity of the centre core precinct.  
• Build on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development.  
• Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community.  
• Incorporate environmentally sustainable design measures in the future buildings and public spaces of the centre. |

5.5 Spatial framework

The spatial framework (Figure 39) sets out how the broad structure of the centre could be arranged in the long term. It shows how land use, public domain and connections could be arranged and delivered.

The spatial framework recognises the challenges in the centre and brings together the opportunities, vision and planning principles to illustrate how the centre could change over the lifetime of this master plan.
Figure 39: Spatial framework

LEGEND
- On-road cycle lane
- Shared paths
- Potential redevelopment opportunities
- Enhance entry to Curtin
- Potential housing
- Enhanced open space
- Central courtyard
- Entry marker
- Potential rapid transit stop
- Existing surface car parks to remain

Carruthers Street, community and living precinct
Community and open space precinct
Centre core precinct
Radburn residential precinct
Community and open space precinct
Curtin south neighbourhood oval
Western open space
Curtin Primary School

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK
5.6 Planning strategies

These planning strategies are informed by the vision and planning principles in the previous section. They provide direction and guidance for the future development of the centre over the long term, considering the broad range of issues identified in the background and analysis.

The planning strategies will be achieved through private sector investment and provisions to be included in the Territory Plan, land releases, public domain upgrades (which will be subject to consideration by the ACT Government through future budget processes) and completion of further studies.

5.6.1 Reinforce the vibrant, urban village character and social identity of the centre core precinct

Curtin group centre is an attractive urban village. It is compact and walkable with a mixture of vibrant uses. As the centre and its surrounding community ages, it will be important to attract new residents to the area to maintain its viability. The group centre could include new design elements in the centre that promote a unique branding of its urban village identity.

Feedback from the Curtin community indicated that the village-style atmosphere of Curtin shops is valued for its intimacy, sun-lit courtyards, pedestrian amenity and opportunities for social interaction. Essentially, the centre operates more like a suburban local centre than a typical Canberra group centre and the internal courtyards are attractive spaces that should be preserved and maintained into the future. They also provide good opportunities for outdoor dining.

The human scale of the existing centre core could be protected by staggering building heights and ensuring solar access to public spaces is protected. The large trees that exist in the central courtyard and surrounding open space areas should be retained and made a feature as the public spaces are incrementally upgraded over time. The centre should remain attractive to small businesses.

Recommended planning policies

- Reaffirm the existing three character precincts shown in Figures 38 and 39 through the proposed land uses (Figure 40) and recommendations outlined in this draft master plan.
- Require a minimum front setback of 3 metres for storeys above the first floor.
- Require that individual development proposals demonstrate how solar access to public spaces and surrounding residential developments is provided.
- Require active uses such as shops, restaurants and cafes on the ground floor in the centre core precinct (Figures 38 and 42).
- Residential development is to be limited to commercial accommodation use in the centre core precinct. This will ensure the centre core precinct can more easily adapt to changes in the commercial market over the longer-term.
- Provide a building setback from Theodore Street to protect the large eucalypts on Blocks 6 and 24, Section 62. These large trees contribute to the centre’s character and provide a green ‘buffer’ to nearby residential development.
- Rezone Block 7 Section 63 from Services Zone (CZ3) to Urban Open space (PRZ1) to recognise this block as an important extension of the centre’s pedestrian network (Figure 40).

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Upgrade public domain elements in the central courtyard and connecting pathways and public spaces and incorporate seating, lighting, signage, rubbish bins, pavement and landscaping.
- Provide entry plantings between Yarra Glen and Theodore Street, including in the median, to provide an improved entry to the suburb of Curtin and reduce the scale of the road reserve.
- Provide entry markers, such as signage or public artwork, at the intersections of Carruthers Street/ Theodore Street and Theodore Street/Curtin Place.

Recommended further studies

- Prepare detailed heritage assessments for the Holy Trinity Catholic Church and the Radburn residential precinct. Identify ways the heritage and history of Curtin can be celebrated, such as historical information signage and public art.
Figure 40: Proposed land uses

PROPOSED LAND USE ZONES
5.6.2 Build on the centre’s attractive ‘urban village’ style of development

The existing mix of uses in the centre core is working well and is valued by the community. This master plan seeks to encourage a greater mix of uses that are staged to promote sustainable growth and caters for future community needs. Active uses such as shops, restaurants, cafes and community uses should be retained at the ground floor.

Night time uses such as restaurants and small-scale entertainment venues could be appropriate uses in the centre core and new development on Strangways Street. These uses could help to activate the centre after dark, improve the attractiveness of Curtin and increase perceptions of safety by having more ‘eyes on the street’. The Statesman Hotel site has been identified in this draft master plan as an opportunity to provide a greater range of night-time uses and to provide surveillance across the centre in the evenings.

A strong sense of community exists in Curtin, and the centre offers informal gathering spaces where people can meet. Stage 1 community engagement found that a more formalised community ‘hub’ is desired in the centre. This could be provided through an indoor shared community space or an outdoor amphitheatre style public space.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring a diverse choice of housing is available toCanberrans. This policy has been supported by a number of Curtin residents who expressed interest during community engagement activities for medium-density housing. This draft master plan identifies some sites that have opportunity to provide additional housing choices in Curtin.

Recommended planning policies

- Permit building heights for the centre, shown in Figure 41, to allow for a diverse range of land uses.
- Permit building heights up to six storeys (up to 22 metres) on Block 6 Section 62 (Statesman Hotel site) to encourage redevelopment of this site, provide night-time activity and promote passive surveillance across the centre. Any proposed redevelopments must consider overshadowing impacts on adjacent developments. A maximum building height of 4 storeys is recommended facing onto Theodore Street to provide a more appropriate interface with the adjacent residential development.
- New buildings fronting primary active frontages, as shown in Figure 42, will:
  » be oriented towards the street
  » be required to incorporate transparent frontages, at least 70%
  » be required to have active uses such as shops, restaurants, cafes and community facilities fronting the primary active frontage
  » restrict residential use on the ground floor
  » provide awnings designed to shelter pedestrians and create a sense of human scale and enclosure.
- New buildings fronting secondary active frontages, as shown in Figure 42, will:
  » be oriented towards the street
  » be adapted at the ground floor for commercial uses. For example new buildings will have a floor to ceiling height that is suitable for commercial use
  » be permitted to include residential use on the ground floor provided there are many individual entries at street level and allow for visual interaction and passive surveillance of the street.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Improve existing street lighting and increase the amount of street lighting generally around the centre core, oriented to increase perceptions of safety.
Figure 41: Proposed building heights

LEGEND
- Medium rise areas (6 storeys)
- Low to medium rise areas (4 storeys)
- Low rise areas (2 storeys)
Figure 42: Proposed active frontages

LEGEND
- Primary active frontage
- Secondary active frontage
- Key pedestrian routes
- Pedestrian-only area
- Key public spaces

PROPOSED ACTIVE FRONTAGES
5.6.3 Improve pedestrian amenity and connections across Strangways Street

As the centre grows over time, there may be a need to allow for staged development of additional retail and commercial uses. Curtin has a group centre role and, as such, provides for the needs of adjacent suburbs such as Deakin and Yarralumla, which may expand in the future.

Strangways Street was established as a low speed vehicle environment (40 km/h) in early 2015. This has helped improve safety for all road users and will draw more pedestrian activity to the area. Strangways Street could be further emphasised as a pedestrian-oriented street by introducing additional vibrant ground floor uses and activity, improving the pedestrian amenity and introducing traffic-calming measures.

Recommended planning policies

• Provide new development opportunities onto Strangways Street that incorporates commercial frontages on to the street. This will include upgraded street verges as part of any new development (Figures 42).

Recommended public domain upgrades

• Enhance pedestrian safety and provide direct and easy pedestrian access across Strangways Street by constructing a raised pedestrian crossing south of the roundabout at Carruthers and Strangways Street.

• Improve pedestrian amenity along Strangways Street through new tree plantings, seating, signage and landscaping.

• Provide a new pedestrian crossing near the intersection of Strangways Street and Theodore Street (Figure 44).

• Upgrade and widen the north-south connection from Strangways Street to the pedestrian only area to provide for pedestrian and cyclists.

5.6.4 Create an east–west pedestrian and cyclist link to Yarra Glen and Deakin

There is opportunity to provide a direct east-west connection across the centre that links the residential development to the west, through the Curtin group centre to the public transport on Yarra Glen.

Two water trunk mains measuring 450 millimetres diameter and 750 millimetres diameter run east–west through the study area, requiring a 20 metre wide exclusion corridor. This physical constraint provides an opportunity to create an east–west pedestrian and cyclist link from the Radburn residential precinct through to the Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street intersection.

This new link would provide a thoroughfare for residents accessing the Curtin shops, potential rapid transit stop on Yarra Glen, and health and education facilities in West Deakin (Figure 44).

New land uses—such as appropriately located residential housing—and active ground floor retail uses in the centre could also complement this link and increase passenger demand for the potential rapid transit stop.
Recommended planning policies

- Encourage development of community uses (such as supportive or community housing or other community facilities) on under utilised land in Block 1 Section 15 at the corner of Theodore and Carruthers Streets.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Establish an east–west link for pedestrians and cyclists through the centre to the Yarra Glen and Carruthers Street intersection (Figure 44).
- Improve pedestrian amenity along the east–west pedestrian and cyclist link to Yarra Glen and Deakin by providing co-ordinated landscaping and tree planting, improving street lighting, and providing public seating and informal rest areas.
- Provide attractive landscaping and shade trees along Carruthers Street to make it more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists. Tree plantings and landscaping along Carruthers Street should contribute to the sense of arrival when driving from the east of the centre (Figure 43).
- Improve the pedestrian crossing at the Carruthers and Theodore Street intersection to provide safe and convenient access to the east of the centre. This will be particularly important if a new rapid transport hub is built on Yarra Glen. The design of the Carruthers Street slip lane should be investigated to slow turning traffic into Theodore Street (Figure 44).
- Upgrade the pocket park on the corner of McCulloch and Carruthers Streets to create a safer and more accessible park. The park will need to be visible from adjacent residential development and from the street.

5.6.5 Enhance the western open spaces for the greater community

The open spaces to the west of the centre core are a valued community asset in Curtin. There was consensus from the community that the green corridors and pedestrian-friendly networks be protected into the future. This master plan provides an opportunity to preserve what is valued by the community and investigate opportunities to improve these spaces to further benefit the greater community.

Design workshops with primary school and high school students in May 2015 revealed that the open spaces could be upgraded to be more functional and accessible, particularly for people with disabilities, cyclists and elderly people.

There is an opportunity to create attractive destinations appropriate to the demographic profile of Curtin: young families and older people. There is also opportunity to improve the pedestrian and cycling networks by formalising some of the informal pathways and providing separate cycleways to increase pedestrian safety.

Recommended planning policies

- Protect the western open spaces by maintaining the existing PRZ1: Urban Open Space land use zoning and providing new recreation uses.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Provide active outdoor uses, such as outdoor fitness equipment, along the green corridor near the existing residential apartments and Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School (Figure 43).
- Ensure the future design of the western open space area considers facilities for the community such as covered picnic areas, public seating and sheltered performance spaces (Figure 43).
- The design of the western open space should provide activities for a broad range of the community. To ensure creation of a child-friendly space, the open space should allow for incidental play through the use of landscaping and/or high quality public art.
- Ensure the shared-path network is retained and enhanced in this space through additional shade tree plantings, wider paths and directional signage.
Proposed network of open spaces

LEGEND

1. Improve pedestrian amenity on Strangways Street
2. Network of green spaces
3. Improved entry plantings
4. Enhance central courtyard
5. Opportunity for children’s play area
6. Enhance off-leash dog area
7. New entry ‘markers’
8. Opportunity for additional recreational uses

NETWORK OF OPEN SPACE
Figure 44: Proposed pedestrian and cycle networks

PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN/CYCLIST NETWORK

LEGEND
- Pedestrianised ‘heart’ of the centre
- Enhance entry to Curtin
- On-road cycle lane
- Existing shared path
- Proposed shared path
- Key public spaces
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist crossing points
- Underpass

Figure 44: Proposed pedestrian and cycle networks
5.6.6 Ensure public spaces are walkable, safe and attractive

Public spaces in the Curtin group centre are major attractors for residents and visitors. They include green spaces, paved courtyards, streets, parks and playgrounds. This draft master plan proposes to better connect public spaces and ensure they are walkable, safe and attractive.

The central courtyard in the centre core embodies a vibrant ‘village square’ atmosphere. Uses such as busking, community events and market stalls are encouraged in this square.

A children’s playground could be provided in the centre core, allowing greater visibility through co-location with other attractive uses such as cafes and shops. A shaded outdoor performance space could also be provided in the centre core to encourage informal community interactions, performances and music. Some consideration could also be given to encourage a more pet-friendly centre, as suggested by some members of the community. This could include simple solutions such as dog tie-up areas near the shops integrated with any upgrades for the centre.

Pedestrian pathways and cycleways to adjacent residential areas could be improved through better lighting, signage and infrastructure. Formalised pedestrian crossings are also recommended at key locations to improve pedestrian safety, particularly for children and older people in the area.

**Recommended planning policies**

- Protect public spaces and green spaces by maintaining existing zoning of public land and urban open spaces.
- Allow for new development to occur in the centre that promotes additional evening activity. This could include new commercial development and redevelopment of large sites, such as the Statesman Hotel site.

**Recommended public domain upgrades**

- Provide better lighting, signage and infrastructure along key pedestrian pathways and cycleways through the centre.
- Provide additional formalised pedestrian crossings along Theodore Street and Strangways Street (Figure 44).
- Provide additional lighting in pedestrian underpasses.
- Improve connections into the centre from surrounding suburbs.

5.6.7 Implement efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies

Group centres in Canberra are valued for their convenience and car parking. Responses to a survey conducted in April and May 2015 revealed that while an unusually high proportion (40%) of respondents normally walked or biked to the centre, over 50% of respondents normally use a car as either a driver or passenger.

The government is committed to encouraging more sustainable transport options into the future. Providing efficient and safe traffic and parking strategies will remain an important consideration for the centre.

As the centre grows and develops, it may be necessary to upgrade intersection controls in the centre core. Two intersections—Carruthers Street/Theodore Street and Carruthers Street/Strangways Street—may need to be upgraded to ensure efficient and safe traffic movements in the future. This will also provide an opportunity to improve pedestrian crossings at these intersections.

Community feedback from stage 1 engagement found that traffic on Theodore Street needs to be slowed down, particularly as there are two primary schools and an aged care facility located on the street. Traffic calming measures and formalised pedestrian crossings could help reduce vehicular speeds on this street.

The eastern carpark could be extended to the south-east to meet increasing parking demands. The southern carpark could be improved through clearer line marking and additional street lighting.

There is opportunity to improve pedestrian connectivity and accessibility between both the eastern and southern carparks and adjacent land uses. This includes the provision of additional accessible parking spaces to cater for an ageing population.
Recommended planning policies

- Require future development of Block 6 Section 62 (Statesman Hotel) to incorporate passive surveillance opportunities over the southern carpark, such as balconies overlooking these areas.
- Retain areas of on-street parking on Theodore and Carruthers Streets.
- Provide formalised on-street parking onto sections of Strangways Street to further calm traffic speeds and support business on the western side of the centre.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Investigate signalising the Carruthers Street and Theodore Street intersection. This will improve traffic and pedestrian safety.
- Provide clearer line marking and additional street lighting in the southern carpark.
- Extend the eastern carpark to the south-east and provide additional shade trees. Retention of the three large eucalypts parallel to Theodore Street is required. This parking area should provide for accessible and short stay parking.
- Provide additional accessible parking spaces and pick-up and drop-off in the eastern carpark.
- Redesign surface parking areas to the west of the centre to provide more parking spaces and allow for additional commercial development on Strangways Street.
- Provide accessible, legible and safe pedestrian routes through the eastern and southern carparks.

Further studies

- Investigate the potential to upgrade the large roundabout on the intersection of Carruthers and Strangways Streets to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the centre and better manage through traffic.

5.6.8 Incorporate environmentally sustainable design measures in the future buildings and public spaces of the centre

Improving the centre’s environmental sustainability will enhance the local economy and further strengthen the sense of pride in Curtin. New development and redevelopment provides opportunity to improve the overall sustainability of the centre. New buildings can be designed to provide good northerly orientation for solar access and to capture cooling breezes. The use of more sustainable building materials, energy efficient fittings and water efficient innovations can also be incorporated in new developments and the redevelopment of existing buildings.

Curtin group centre offers an attractive variety of green spaces, which could be better connected through improved pedestrian and cycling connections.

Protecting the green spaces in the centre, as well as increasing shade trees on main pedestrian routes and public spaces, will help reduce the urban heat island effect. New development or redevelopment should also be encouraged to use lighter building materials and permeable paving materials.

Water-sensitive urban design is an approach to urban planning and design that aims to integrate the management of the urban water cycle into the urban development process. Key measures include minimising disruption to natural drainage pathways, minimising impervious areas, incorporating rainwater retention capacity and reducing stormwater runoff.

Recommended planning policies

- Provide new planning controls to mitigate impacts on the centre’s microclimate, such as over shadowing of residential development and internal courtyards.
- Require residential development to be oriented and designed to maximise the benefits of solar passive design. This includes providing solar access to living spaces in winter and shade in summer through landscaping and sun-shading devices.

Recommended public domain upgrades

- Provide shade trees along Strangways Street, Carruthers Street and along other major pedestrian networks.
- Improve amenity for pedestrians and cyclists through provision of rest areas and seating along major cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Capture stormwater runoff and improve water quality through the design of the public spaces including tree pits and rain gardens.
Public art in the Curtin centre
6. Recommendations for implementation

6.1 The process of change

This draft master plan is being released for public comment. Following community engagement and feedback, a final master plan will be produced for consideration by the ACT Government. Implementation will be through:

- a Territory Plan variation, including a new precinct code for the centre
- sale of Territory-owned land, otherwise known as land release
- public domain upgrades
- commercial opportunities
- further studies

Implementation of the master plan will be progressive over the longer term as implementation is dependent on investment decisions by private business, land availability and capital works funding for public domain upgrades from the ACT Government. The ways the master plan can be implemented are described in more detail below.

6.2 Territory Plan variation

A variation to the Territory Plan to revise the existing Curtin Precinct Code will realise some of the planning policy recommendations outlined by the master plan. The precinct code will provide the opportunity for the building heights, setbacks and land uses outlined in the master plan to be realised as development and redevelopment occurs.

There will be opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the precinct code through a separate community engagement process.

6.3 Land release

Block 2 Section 99 (adjacent to the study area) is nominated for land release on the ACT Government’s Indicative Land Release Program. Figure 48 illustrates a possible development sequence beyond that outlined in the Indicative Land Release Program. The development sequence could vary as circumstances and needs change for the centre.

6.4 Public domain upgrades

Infrastructure and public space improvements are required to realise the vision and some of the strategies of this master plan. There are opportunities for the private sector to contribute to the public domain through partnerships with the government or as part of off-site works.

Works undertaken by the ACT Government will involve further investigations by various government agencies and funding consideration through future government budget processes. Public domain upgrades that are undertaken by the ACT Government are based on a number of considerations including population growth, the age of existing assets and infrastructure and the wider budget context within the Territory.

6.5 Commercial opportunities

Business, commercial developers and the wider community are responsible for taking advantage of opportunities identified within the master plan. A number of changes indicated in the master plan are on existing developed sites or require substantial investment. Therefore, implementation of the master plan will be progressive over the longer term as investment opportunities are realised.

6.6 Further studies

Potential further studies include:

6.6.1 Heritage assessment and public works

Complete heritage assessments and investigate opportunities for information signage for the Holy Trinity Catholic Church and the Radburn residential precinct.

6.6.2 Cycle and pedestrian upgrades - feasibility

Prepare a feasibility study that further investigates improvements to the cycle and pedestrian networks, to prioritise and cost the proposed works. This includes assessment of public domain upgrades in the centre core area and the park on the corner of Carruthers and McCulloch Streets.

6.6.3 Intersection upgrades - feasibility

Prepare a feasibility study that investigates upgrades to the Carruthers Street intersections with Theodore Street and Strangways Street (the large roundabout).
Figure 45: Indicative development sequence

**LEGEND**

1. Stage 1 Potential new development
2. Stage 2 Potential redevelopment
3. Stage 3 Potential redevelopment

Block 2 Section 99 Possible land release outside of study area

INDICATIVE DEVELOPMENT SEQUENCE

- Theodore Street
- Carruthers Street
- Strangways Street
- McCulloch Street
- Theodore Street
- McCulloch Street
- Yarralumla Creek