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# COOMBS & WRIGHT VILLAGE

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June 2021

*Design & Place  
Framework*



**ACT**  
Government

**Suburban Land**  
Agency

*Prepared by Hill Thalys Architecture + Urban Projects  
for  
ACT Suburban Land Agency*

*June 2021*

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*“A well designed, high quality central village district where residents can eat, shop, live and play is what the suburbs of Coombs and Wright desperately need”*

*- Community Panel*



## (i) Introduction

*The Suburban Land Agency (SLA) has prepared a Coombs and Wright Village Design and Place Framework to ensure the realisation of a vibrant and successful urban centre that fulfils the community aspirations expressed during recent extensive community engagement program.*

The SLA are releasing the final mixed use and commercial sites in Coombs and Wright through an EOI and Design Based Tender process.

The sites are located on a prominent intersection of John Gorton Drive and Fred Daly and Steve Irwin Avenue. shown in Figure AA and include:

- Block 1 Section 39, Steve Irwin Avenue, Wright (CZ5 Mixed Use)
- Block 2 Section 36, Blackmore Street, Coombs (CZ4 Local Centre)
- Block 1 Section 21, Fred Daly Avenue, Coombs (CZ5 Mixed Use)

The community expressed clear views on ground floor commercial uses, green spaces, pedestrian connectivity, linkages to adjacent parks, and a community facilities. There is strong preference for:

- Food and beverage; retail and recreation facilities
- Outdoor dining, community gatherings, celebrations, markets
- Green and comfortable outdoor spaces, and
- A community activity centre within the village centre undertaken by the SLA prior to completion of sale.



## (ii) Coombs & Wright Vision and Place Principles

*In response to these community aspirations the SLA have prepared the Coombs and Wright Village Design and Place Framework.*

### Vision

The SLA will ensure Coombs and Wright Village centre is designed and developed as a distinctive, mixed use precinct that embodies the best of contemporary Canberra, builds on its memorable landscape setting and incorporates spaces and activities that ensure its ongoing success.

Coombs and Wright Village Centre will have:

- A complementary mix of uses, activities and events
- An integrated, permeable network of well-designed public spaces, paths and streets that support vibrant public life and high connectivity
- Buildings and structures of high architectural quality and environmental performance

### Place Principles

Coombs and Wright will be a place that is:

#### **Distinctive**

*Engages with the site's context, its landscape and its central location within the communities of Coombs and Wright.*

#### **Connected**

*Design public spaces and streets that encourage and support walking, cycling and public transport over cars.  
Make a continuous public pathway network that connects to the wider network of paths and streets.*

#### **Vibrant**

*Define a mixture of land uses, building types, spaces and facilities with a density of residents, workers and visitors that will support a vibrant community.*

#### **High quality**

*Design buildings and spaces that have a distinctive character and environmental and design excellence.*

#### **Green and urban**

*Define a variety of high quality public spaces and landscapes that are attractive and support a range of activities and public events.*

***The Village Design and Place Framework includes urban design requirements for each site provide building envelopes, landscape controls and other criteria associated with the amenity of individual apartments such as visual privacy, sunlight access and ventilation against which designs will be assessed***

## Village Design and Place Strategies

The Village framework includes an overall urban design strategy and architectural form that clearly lays out the expectations for future development and the relationship with the public domain. It is based on strategies which:

- improve the public domain network with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Coombs central park and a new public plaza fronting Steve Irwin Avenue
- incorporate a mix of uses to support a vibrant central place for Coombs and Wright residents to meet and engage in community life
- integrate important views within the site and to the surrounding landscape
- provide for high amenity and environmental performing apartments with diverse housing types and sizes
- provide for a new community activity centre fronting Coombs central park and the corner of Fred Daly Avenue and Beecroft Street
- deliver Steve Irwin and Fred Daly Avenues as a green and shaded main street with integrated stormwater management and waste water recycling

Whilst re-imagining the overall urban design will not be supported, alternate solutions and design refinement may be pursued where this results in a greater level of design excellence, with the metrics in the urban design requirements being delivered.

## Public Domain Improvements

As part of the development of these sites the SLA will fund and oversee the construction of a package of major public domain improvements and building of community facilities including:

- The transformation of Steve Irwin and Fred Daly Avenues into a gracious and pedestrian friendly main street and Beecroft Street into a shared zone as well as the delivering of public plaza fronting Steve Irwin Avenue and a network of lanes
- Enhancing Coombs central park with major shade structure and toilets, child play space and a package of off-site works to greatly improve public amenity.
- The construction of a community activity centre on the corner of Fred Daly Avenue and Beecroft Street overlooking the central park. The community activity centre will be made available to community groups under the management and ownership of ACT Property Group.

Minor adjustments to block boundaries and street reserves are shown in the 'specific block requirements' section of this document.

These adjustments to the deposited plan will be undertaken by the Suburban Land Agency (SLA) prior to the completion of sale.





**The Village  
Within Canberra**

**01**

## 1.1 A Prime Location

*Coombs and Wright Village Centre is less than 10km from both Civic and the Parliamentary zone and sits above the beautiful Molonglo River Valley with its rugged terrain and extensive nature trails.*

The Coombs and Wright village forms a critical junction both north and south of John Gorton Drive, at Fred Daly and Steve Irwin Avenues. Connecting from this centre are some of Canberra's most loved natural attractions - The National Arboretum and Mt Stromlo Forest Park, all accessible by foot or bike.

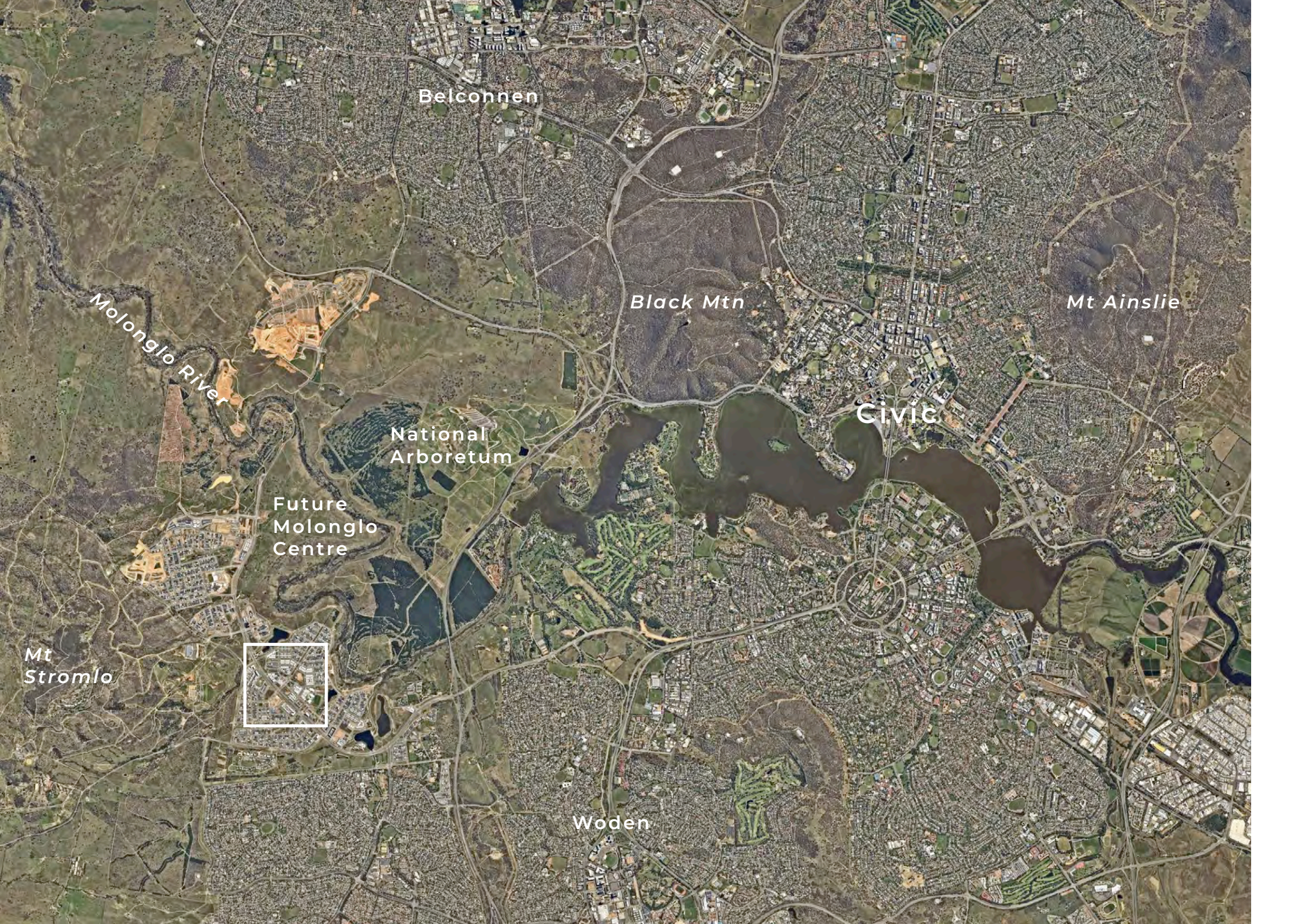
In its own right Coombs and Wright Village will form a significant local centre well placed to support the local community with a variety of retail and community offerings which promote walking, cycling and local trips over the need to venture further afield for daily activities.

Over time and as part of this concept it is anticipated that John Gorton Drive will accommodate improved public transport and landscape works enhancing connection of the centre to metropolitan Canberra.



key views to landscape

major transport connections



Belconnen

Molonglo River

Black Mtn

Mt Ainslie

National Arboretum

Civic

Future Molonglo Centre

Mt Stromlo



Woden



# The Design and Place Framework

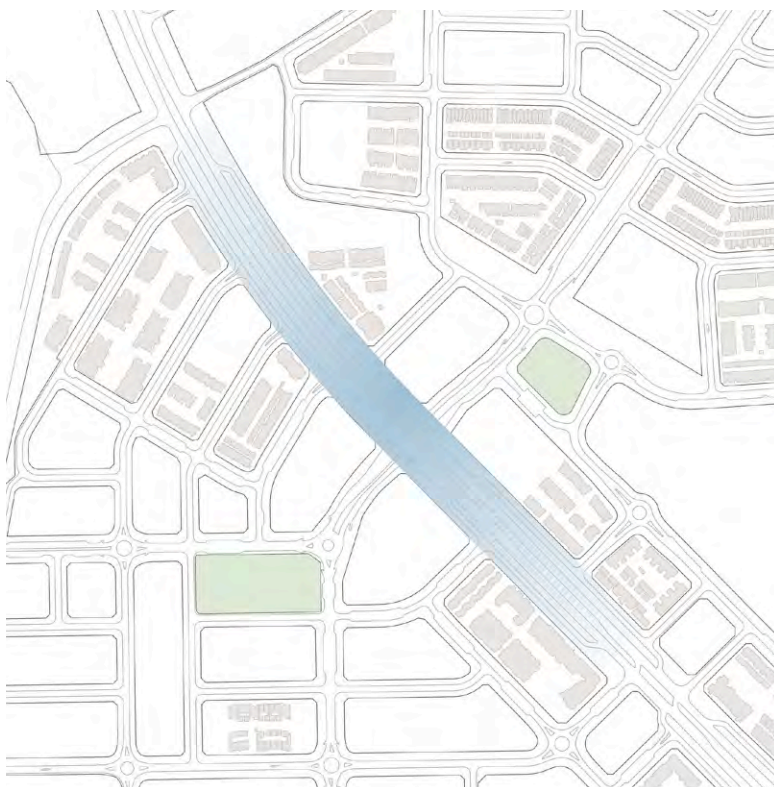
# 02

## 2.1 Urban Design Strategies

*The following design principles have been established to inform all stages of the Coombs and Wright Village Framework, ensuring a cohesive realisation of the public domain, private development and special moments in between.*

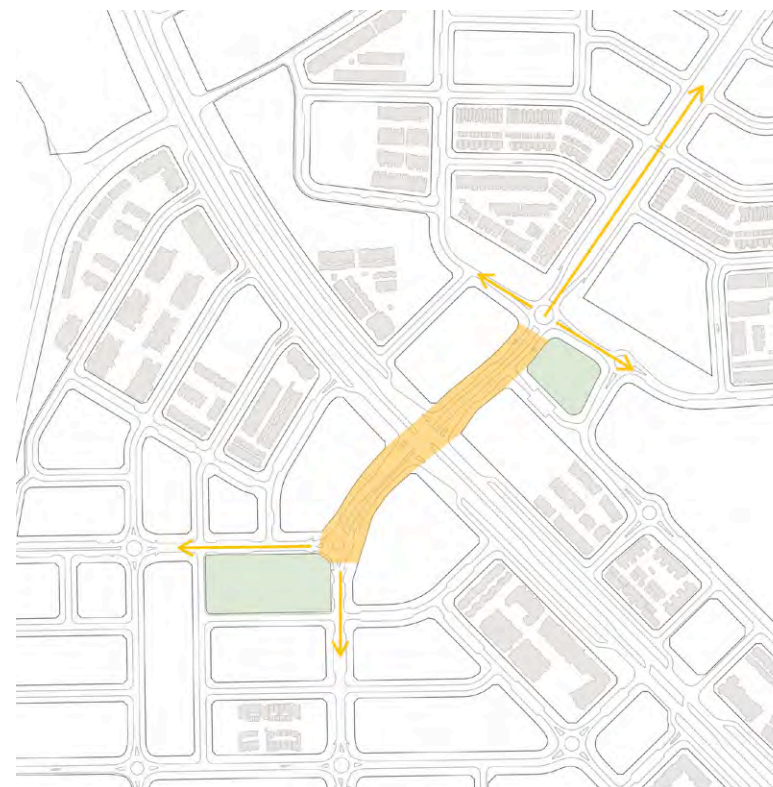
### Strategy 01

Re-imagine John Gorton Drive as a 'transit boulevard', with high-quality landscape and public domain, and future-proofing light rail



### Strategy 02

Unify Coombs and Wright by creating a high-quality and pedestrian-friendly main street environment in Steve Irwin and Fred Daly Avenues



## *“Slow the traffic down in this area to support pedestrian use”*

- Community Panel

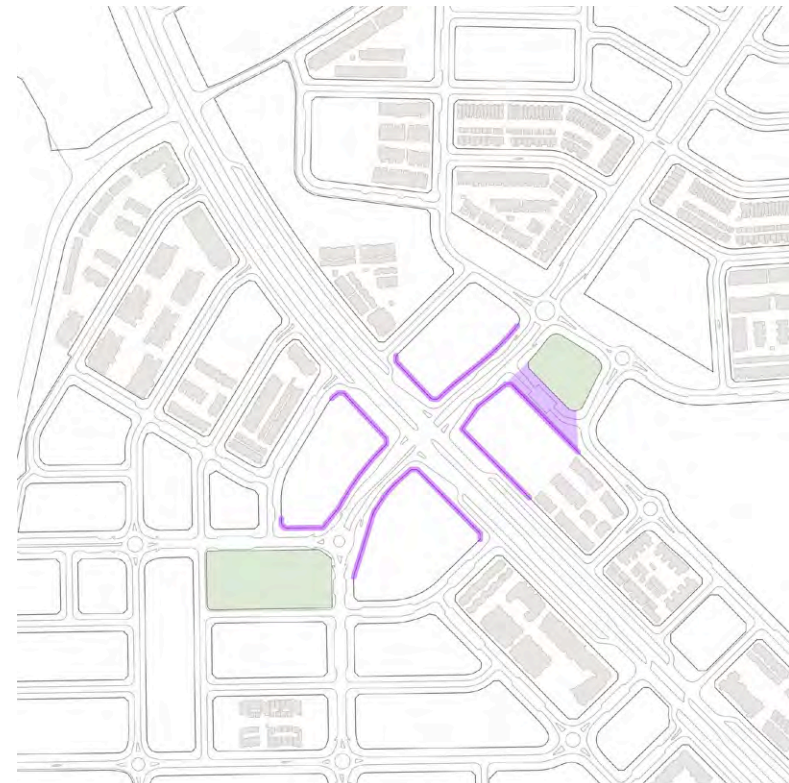
### Strategy 03

Provide a diverse and fine grain built form with green streets, ‘sticky’ places and courtyards



### Strategy 04

Realise a vibrant mixed-use urban precinct with a range of retail and commercial offerings



## 2.2 The Design & Place Framework

A comprehensive Urban Design Strategy has been prepared to coordinate the public domain and built form of the village around John Gorton Drive, Fred Daly and Steve Irwin Avenues. A range of public domain upgrades are proposed to increase amenity and establish a memorable landscape and place character.

### Key Moves

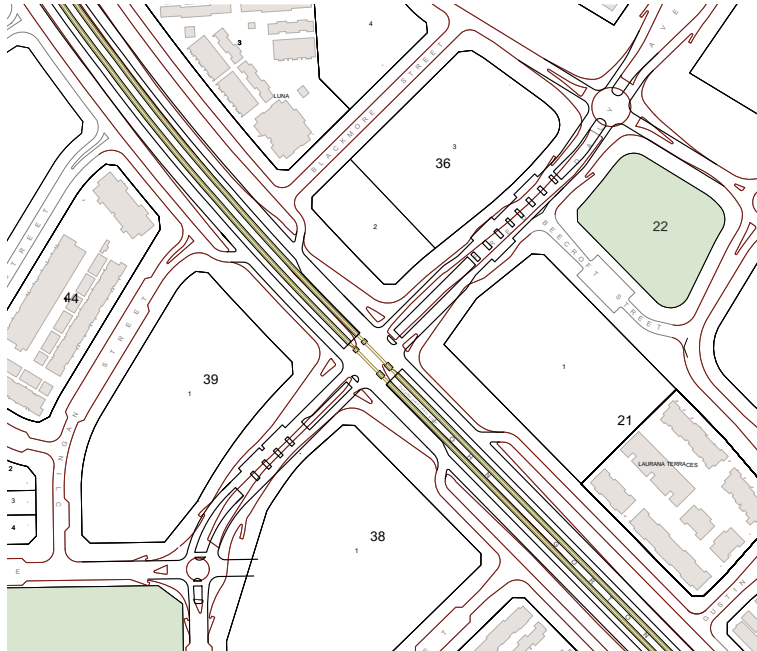
6 key moves underpin the strategy as noted on the plan, right, which are:

1. The re-making of streets in Coombs and Wright to maintain traffic capacity whilst calming the local environment for increased pedestrian and cyclist safety and enjoyment within an urban forest
2. The addition of more than 70 on-street parking places on Steve Irwin Ave, Fred Daly Ave and Beecroft Street
3. The creation of a new public plaza opening to Steve Irwin Avenue linking west through Section 39 Wright to Clingan Street

4. The creation of a 'market square' on Beecroft street - to operate as a shared zone with parking outside of events
5. The reworking of the southern edge of Coombs Park to improve access, including a new amenities building and shade canopy as well as water-play
6. The creation of a new multi-purpose community anchor building at the north west corner of Section 21

NB: It should be noted that the re-making of John Gorton Drive is not within the scope of this project. Designs shown here are provided for the purposes of context and future-proofing potential light rail, and the like.

*Proposed kerb lines, medians and parking bays to win back pedestrian and cycle space whilst maintaining traffic capacity.*



*Additional street space will allow the creation of an urban forest.*





3 storeys    4 storeys    6 storeys  
8 storeys    10 storeys    Community



## Transforming Public Space

The Design and Place Framework is underpinned by the upgrade of the public domain to provide for the activities and social life that a vibrant village centre displays.

The re-making of Beecroft Street from its existing form (below) into the dynamic focal space of the village is proposed (right), with major tree plantings, kerb-less shared zone, weekend markets, water treatment beds and new public amenities and water-play in the park.



*Beecroft Street re-imagined, with markets, a new community building, canopy cafe and water-play*



## Key Relationships

*The Design and Place Framework responds to Community Panel Consultation expectations by providing high quality and robust urban design outcomes which create a vibrant and lively village.*

The image, right, depicts in perspective the key relationships desired between street, built form and courtyards of Sections 21 and 36, Coombs.

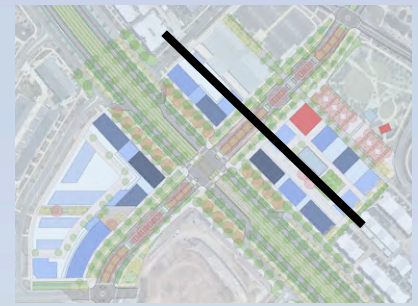
**“There should be a diversity of size and spaces, including spaces, pauses and landscaping between buildings”**

- Community Panel



**“Development should be permeable to foster connection with surrounding spaces”**

- Community Panel



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“all new buildings be limited to a maximum length of 55 metres”  
- Community Panel



Fred Daly Avenue re-made

(Section 36, Coombs)

## 2.3 Urban Design Requirements

The SLA has used the NSW Government's Apartment Design Guide (ADG) in the preparation of the Village Design and Place Plan and tenders will be evaluated using the current ADG objectives, guidelines and requirements. Further requirements stipulated in this document will override the ADG where there is any inconsistency. <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/apartmentdesignguide>

### Building Height

Building heights are to respond to the scale of development on John Gorton Drive and transition down to the established residential urban form.

Building heights are to comply with those shown in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this document, excluding cores to roof terraces, shade canopies or architectural roof forms.

Minor departures from heights shown in this document will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the mass and bulk of buildings is not significantly increased, and where it enhances the architectural quality of the building, and fosters energy efficiency, indoor amenity, appropriate urban scale, and adds visual interest to the skyline.

Building design is to take advantage of natural light and orientation for occupants and visitors.



Campbell 5 - heights vary and transition from Constitution Avenue to Campbell  
Source: Hill Thalix / Photographer: Dianna Snape

### Building Depth

Building designs are to provide controlled solar gain and cross-ventilation, to reduce energy consumption and improve the amenity for building occupants.

The maximum permissible building depths for residential buildings as measured across the floorplate as shown in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this document.

Minor departures are permitted where it can be demonstrated that optimum solar gain and cross ventilation is achieved and where it can be demonstrated to improve the public domain.



Victoria Park - slim footprint cross-ventillated garden apartments  
Source: Nearmap

## Building Amenity

All internal common areas and corridors are to be naturally lit and ventilated, with at least one window visible from any point in the space.

A maximum of 5 apartments per core is permitted, up to 6 in limited locations where it can be demonstrated that the proposed amenity is equal to that of 5 apartments per core.

Living rooms and private open spaces of at least 70% of apartments in a building receive a minimum of 2 hours direct sunlight between 9 am and 3 pm at mid winter.

A maximum of 10% of apartments in a building receive no direct sunlight between 9 am and 3 pm at mid winter.



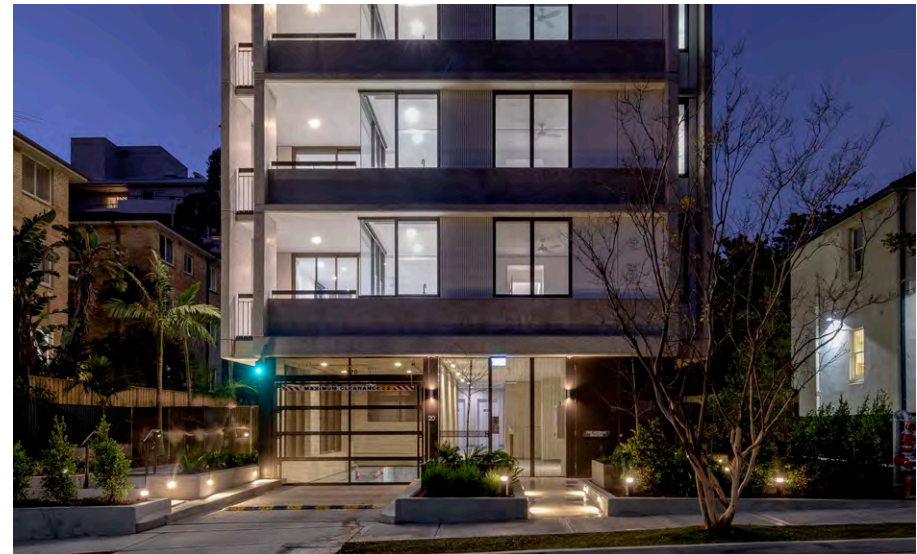
Living areas & balcony receiving optimal sunlight with louvres for summer protection  
Source: Hill Thalys / Photographer: Ben Guthrie

## Basement & Waste Vehicle Access

Basement and waste vehicle access are to be located, integrated and designed to minimise their impact on the public domain and main pedestrian areas.

Electrical sub-stations and service rooms should be integrated into building designs and screened to minimise adverse impacts on public space.

Parking is to be provided in basements as shown in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this document. Above ground structure parking is not permitted.



Basement entry integrated into the form and language of the ground floor  
Source: Hill Thalys / Photographer: Ben Guthrie

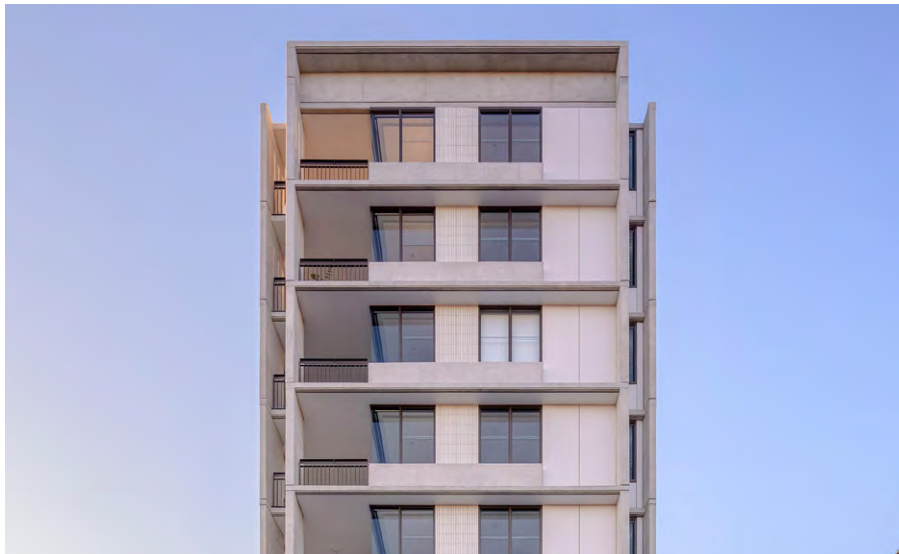
## Building Facades

Facades should be designed with a holistic and considered composition of framing, proportions and articulation.

Street corners are to be expressed by giving visual prominence to parts of the building façade such as a change in articulation, material or colour, roof expression and/or increased height.

The use of built form elements such as balconies, projections, awnings and hoods are encouraged to provide shelter and ameliorate wind and downdraft in public spaces.

Building entries to lobbies, mixed uses and apartments should be provided from the street or public space and are to be clearly identified through building form, material and colour.



*Facade composition with consideration of framing, proportion and texture  
Source: Hill Thalys / Photographer: Ben Guthrie*

## Diversity

A diversity of building types and dwelling sizes should be provided, including studios, 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom apartments, terraces and flexible home/office (SOHO type) arrangements.

Design and type selection should be responsive to the orientation, frontage and particular qualities of each component of the site, and where appropriate allow for flexibility over time.



*Diversity reflected in building type, orientation and architectural language  
Source: Hill Thalys / Photographer: Brett Boardman*



***The overall character of Coombs and Wright Village centre will be high quality and contemporary. This should be reinforced though a simple and limited palette of materials that is harmonious with the natural local landscape.***

## Materials

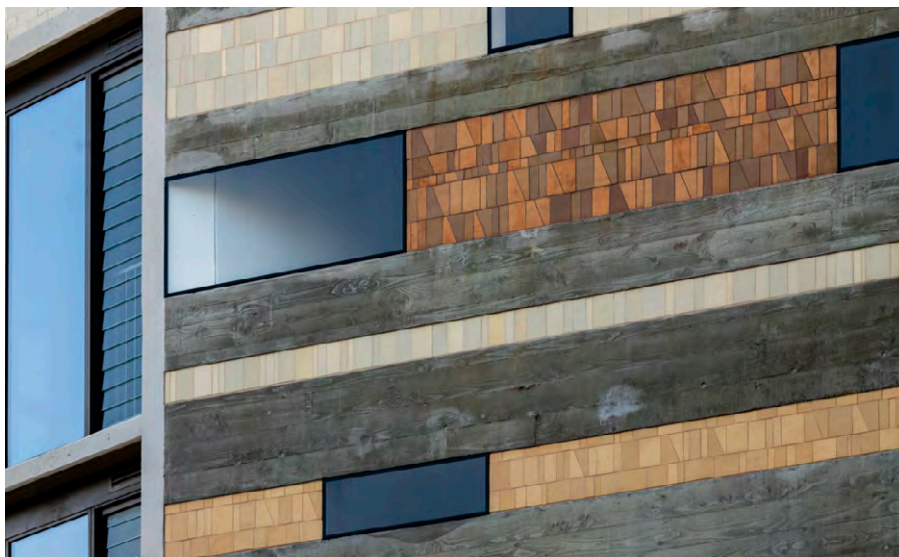
Materials should be selected for their permanence and durability – materials that improve with age.

Materials that have solid mass are supported, not just surface colour treatment and superficial finishes. Colour bonded sheet products on walls will not be permitted.

Building materials used should have a balance of transparent and solid elements, with a high portion of glass facing the public realm, especially at the ground floor.

Low levels of reflectivity must be achieved in addition to the use of sunshades and balconies to visually break up areas of the façade.

Materials must be low maintenance - materials, design elements and treatments with known negative maintenance and or public use issues will not be permitted.



*Robust materials integrating public art and permanence*  
Source: Hill Thalys / Photographer: Brett Boardman

## Active Frontages

Individual buildings will contribute to the definition of blocks and streets, with the greatest levels of public activity, shops and building entrances on main avenues, streets and public spaces.

Blank façades to public spaces and primary streets will not be permitted unless justified by an overall composition and architectural merit.

Active streets should be a priority along Fred Daly and Steve Irwin Avenues and John Gorton Drive, Beecroft Street and new public plaza fronting Steve Irwin Avenue, with new development generally incorporating active ground level frontages and entry lobbies to enliven public streets and spaces and provide passive surveillance.

Pedestrian entries should be clearly visible from the public domain, including those from through-block links or arcades.



*Casba - permeable ground floor with active edges to street and courtyard*  
Source: SJB

## Floor to Ceiling heights

Minimum floor-to-ceiling heights within buildings are to be as follows:

Ground Floors (non residential)		4.2m
Ground Floors (Residential) *		3.8m
Residential (generally)	- all habitable rooms	2.7m
	- Kitchens, bathrooms & laundry	2.4m

\* A 3.8m minimum ceiling height for ground floors is required to allow conversion to non residential uses over time. Where residential use is envisaged, a false floor of up to 600mm is permissible to provide elevation and privacy from the street - providing a minimum floor to ceiling height of 3.2m.

No floor level is to be below the finish level of the adjacent public domain frontage.



Generous ceiling heights exploiting natural light  
Source: Candalepas

## Landscape and Deep Soil Zones

The landscape zone within blocks is consolidated to provide for substantial mature plantings that will afford privacy to neighbours, provide shade in summer and maintain winter sunlight to properties, where available.

Landscape plantings within each block must include a selection of large scale trees as follows, measured in plan:

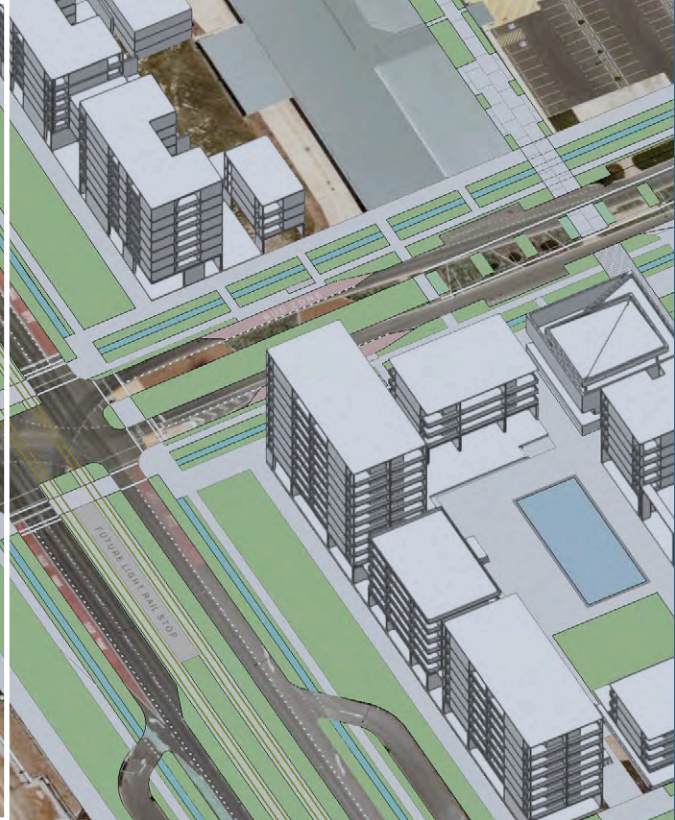
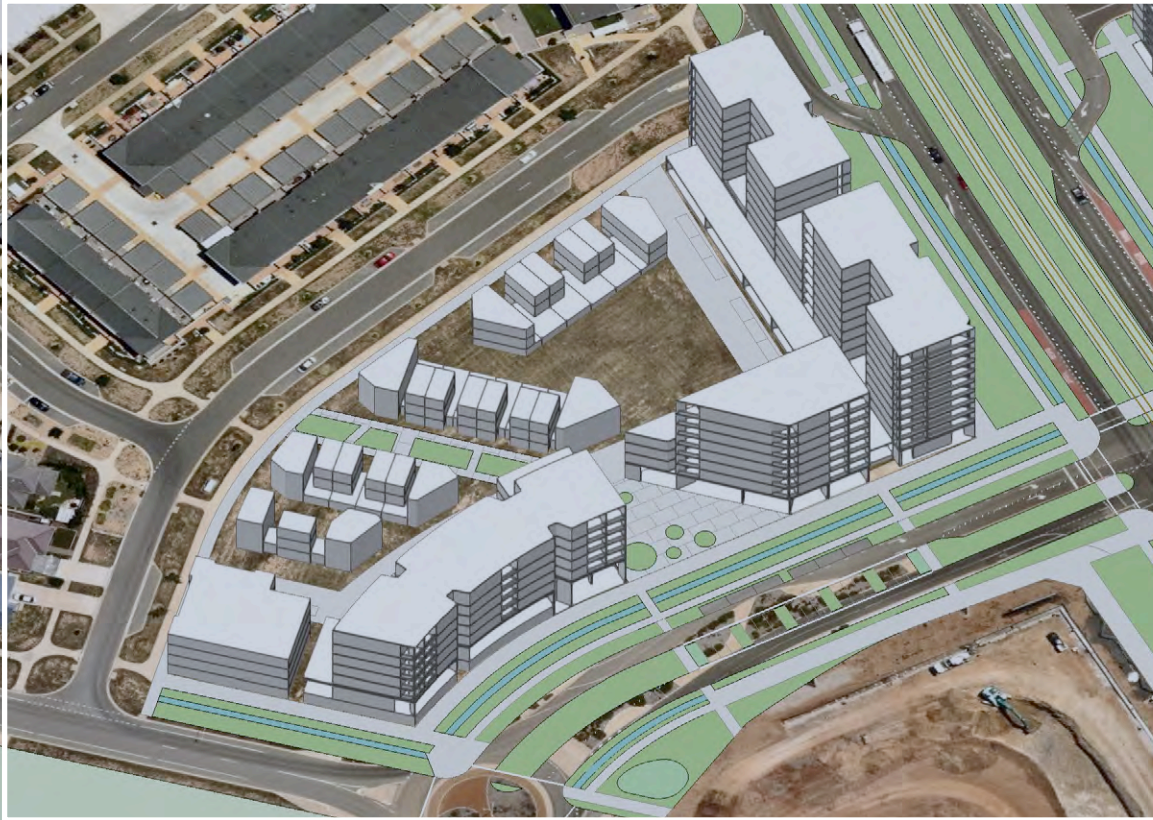
- 1x large tree, min. 15m mature height x spread per 80sqm of deep soil
- 1x medium tree, min. 12m mature height x spread per 35sqm of deep soil

Deep Soil is defined as ground which is unimpeded - not paved, and with no construction above or below, allowing water to infiltrate and percolate naturally, to be provided as shown in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this document.



Apartments enjoying the amenity of mature plantings from deep soil in courtyard  
Source: Hill Thalys





# Section 39, Wright Specific Block Requirements

# 03

## 3.1 Block 1, Section 39 - Steve Irwin Ave, Wright

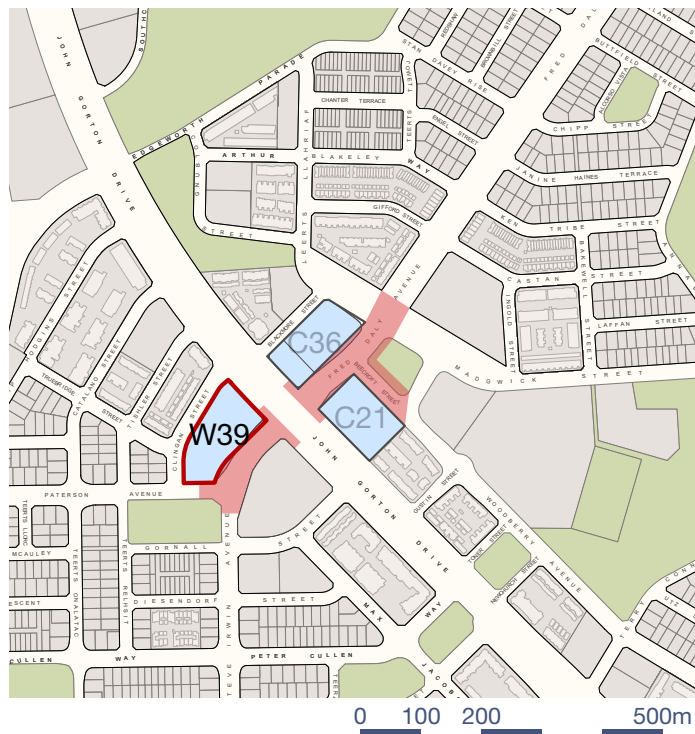
The following diagrams outline the requirements for any development proposals at this location.

### Urban Structure

Section 39, Wright is bounded by John Gorton Drive, Steve Irwin Avenue, Paterson Avenue and Clingan Street and is more than 190m in length along its western boundary.

Primary frontages occur to its northern and eastern boundaries reinforcing John Gorton Drive and Steve Irwin Avenue respectively.

Areas shaded red show the approx. area of public domain works to be delivered by the SLA

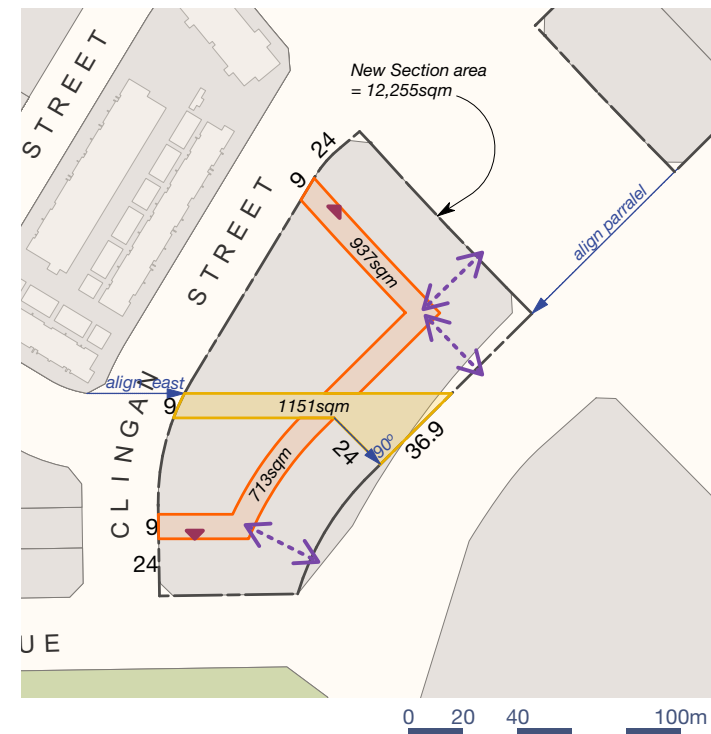


### Section & Block Structure

The Section 39 boundary will be adjusted to improve its geometry and frontage alignments as noted in **blue**. These adjustments to the existing deposited plan will be undertaken by the SLA prior to sale completion.

A **public laneway and plaza** connecting Truebridge Street to Steve Irwin Avenue is shown - to be constructed by the developer to SLA design and documentation, and handed back to The Territory upon completion. A **central laneway easement** is also to be provided, complemented by a number of **through-block-links** at the ground floor, each a min. width of 3m.

▲ Permitted basement entry location



## Key provisions:

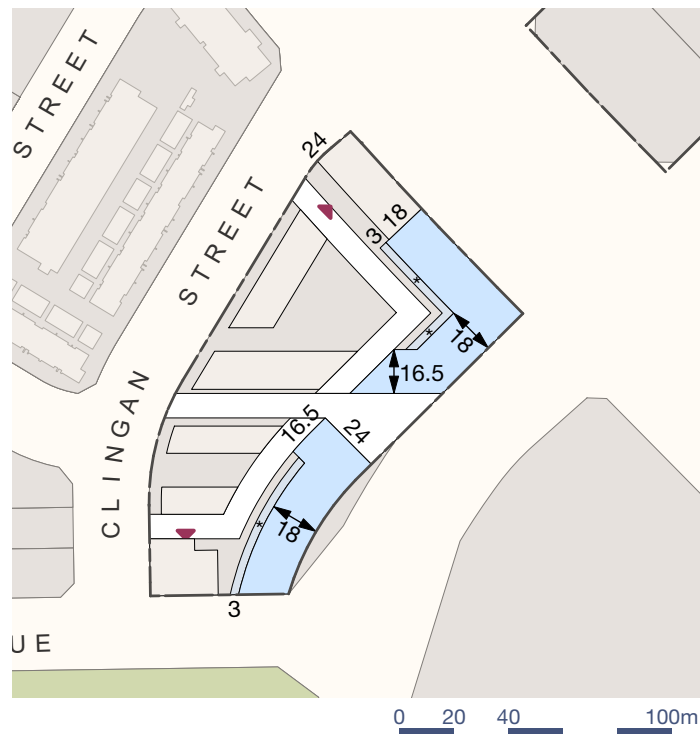
- **The maximum number of dwellings is 237.**
- **The minimum ground floor commercial NLA to be provided is 2100sqm.**  
(includes office, retail, food and beverage and the like)

## Ground Floor

Ground level envelopes vary as noted on the plan below as a maximum, in metres.

An additional 3m articulation zone is noted with \* and denotes opportunities for back of house elements to be screened, canopies for outdoor dining and other ancillary structures. A maximum of 40% of this area in plan can be occupied.

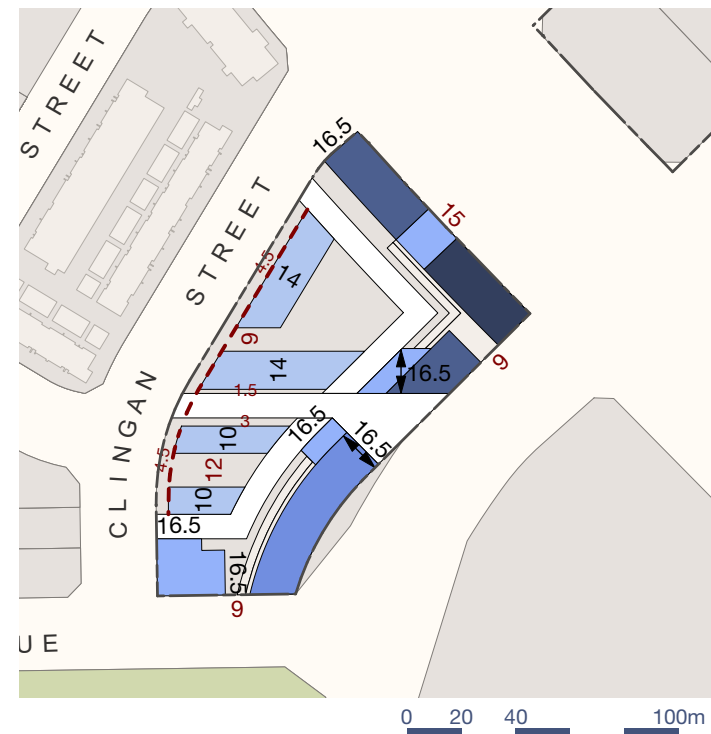
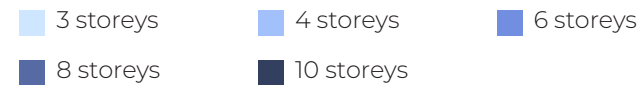
Ground Floor non-residential envelope



## Upper Levels




Upper level envelopes vary as noted on the plan below as a maximum, in metres. Setbacks and building separations are shown **maroon** as a minimum, in metres.

Building heights are noted in storeys as a maximum



## Basement & Deep Soil



Basements are permitted within the envelopes as noted in the plan below, in metres. Landscape is to be provided to all other areas with the following requirements:

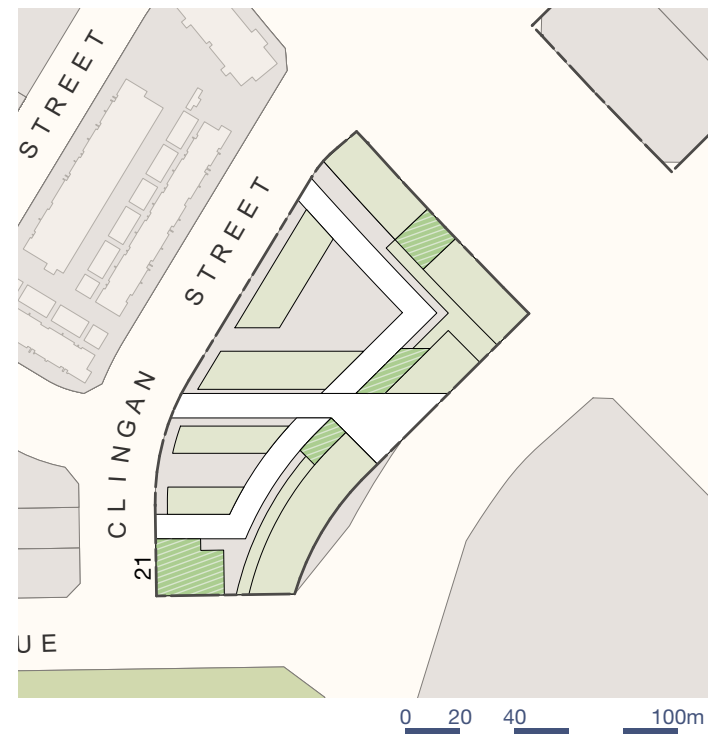
-  Landscape zone A  
- minimum 50% deep soil. No basement below.
-  Landscape zone B  
- minimum 60% deep soil. No basement below.
-  Landscape zone C  
- minimum 20% deep soil. Basement permitted below.



## Podium & Roof Landscape

Podium and rooftops are to provide additional communal space as well as vegetation for cooling, with species be selected to suit the micro-climate. All planting must provide a minimum soil depth of 600mm to the following requirements:

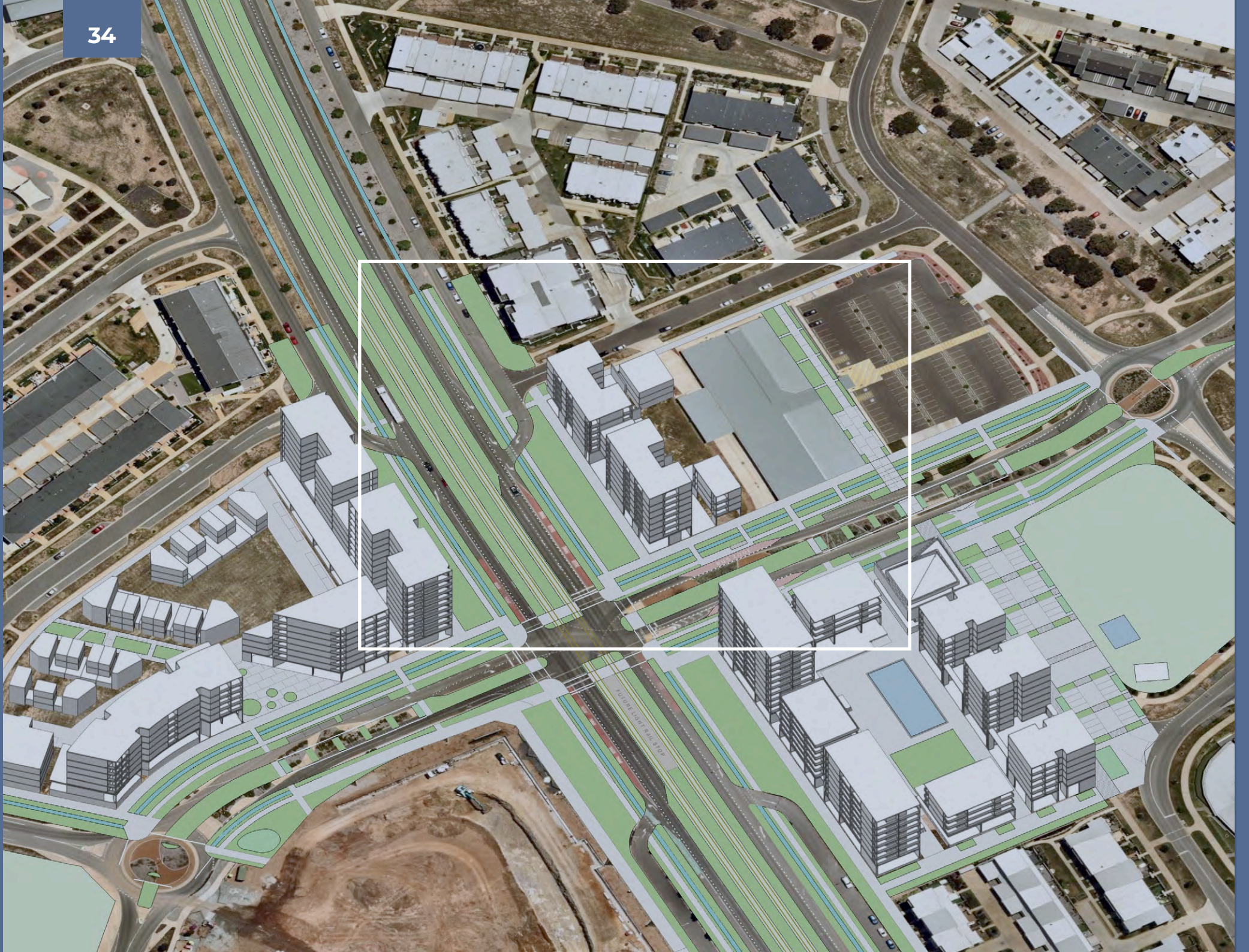
-  Communal Rooftops  
- Accessible required, minimum 40% planted
-  Other Rooftops  
- Accessible preferred, minimum 25% planted







*The new public square and laneway opening onto Steve Irwin Avenue*



# Section 36, Coombs Specific Block Requirements

# 04

## 4.1 Block 2, Section 36 - Blackmore Street,

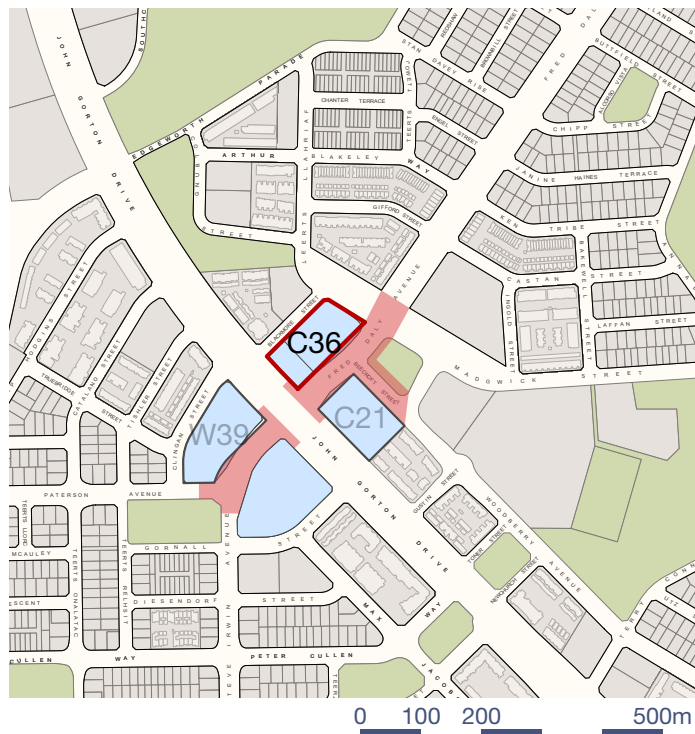
The following diagrams outline the requirements for any development proposals at this location.

### Urban Structure

Section 36, Coombs is bounded by John Gorton Drive, Fred Daly Avenue, Blackmore and Fairhall Streets and is approx. 150m in length along the Fred Daly frontage.

Primary frontages occur to its southern and eastern boundaries reinforcing John Gorton Drive and Fred Daly Avenue respectively.

Areas shaded red show the approx. area of public domain works to be delivered by the SLA.

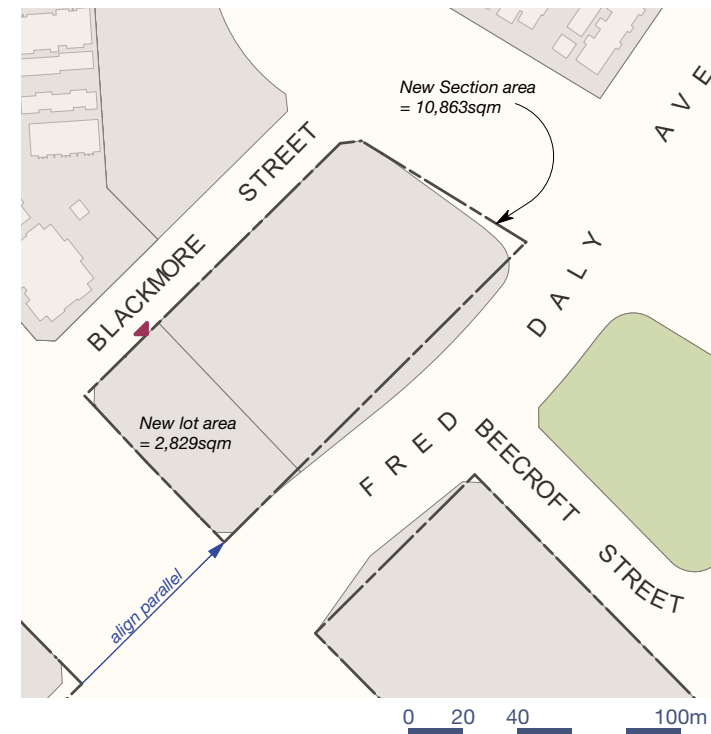


### Section & Block Structure

The Section 36 boundary will be adjusted to improve its geometry and frontage alignments as noted in blue. These adjustments to the existing deposited plan will be undertaken by the SLA prior to sale completion.

Should the existing centre at Block 2, Section 39 redevelop over time, any proposals are to provide a dedicated public laneway connecting Blackmore Street to Fred Daly Avenue.

▲ Permitted basement entry location



**Key provisions:**

- **The maximum number of dwellings is 70.**
- **The minimum ground floor commercial NLA to be provided is 800sqm.**  
(includes office, retail, food and beverage and the like)

**Ground Floor**

Ground level envelopes vary as noted on the plan below as a maximum, in metres.

An additional 3m articulation zone is noted with \* and denotes opportunities for back of house elements to be screened, canopies for outdoor dining and other ancillary structures. A maximum of 40% of this area in plan can be occupied.

Ground Floor non-residential envelope

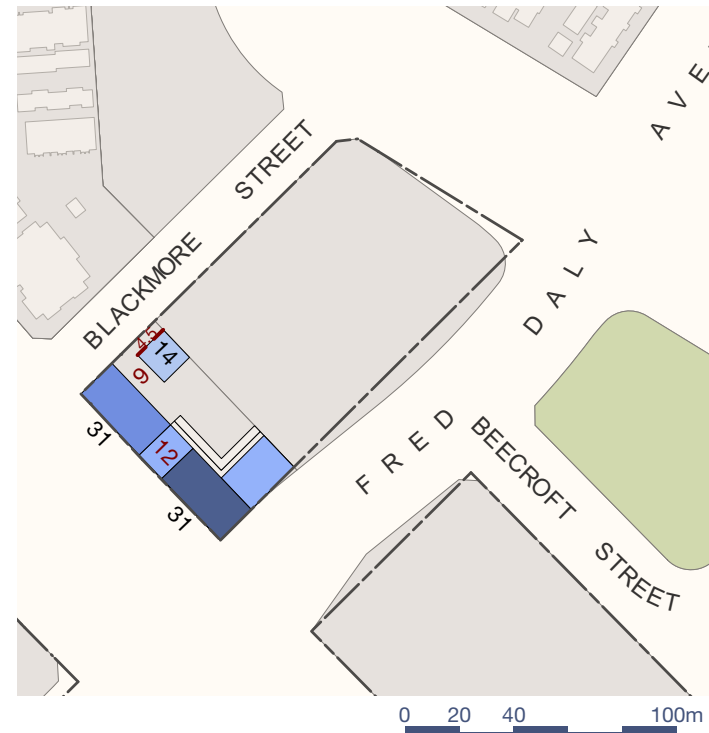


**Upper Levels**

Upper level envelopes vary as noted on the plan below as a maximum, in metres. Setbacks and building separations are shown maroon as a minimum, in metres.




Building heights are noted in storeys as a maximum

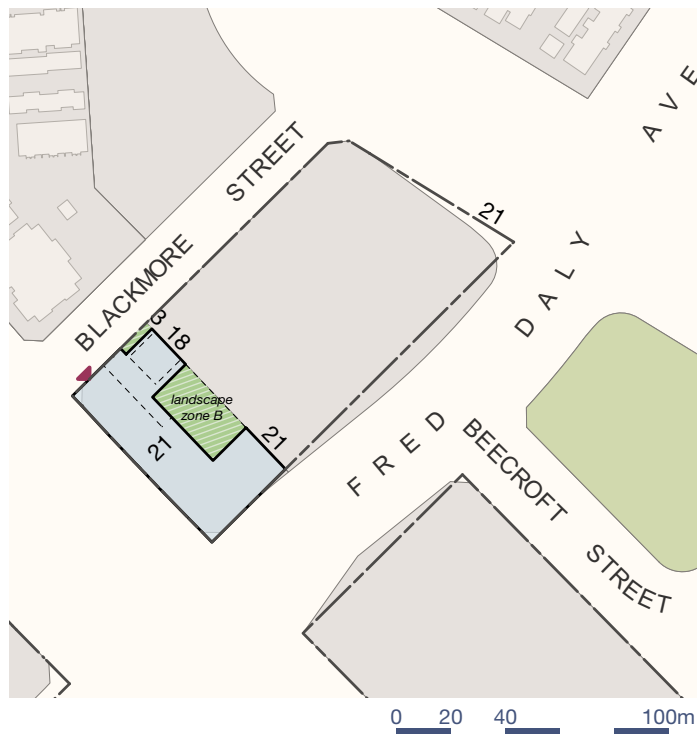
- 3 storeys
- 4 storeys
- 6 storeys
- 8 storeys
- 10 storeys



## Basement & Deep Soil



Basements are permitted within the envelopes as noted in the plan below, in metres. Landscape is to be provided to all other areas with the following requirements:

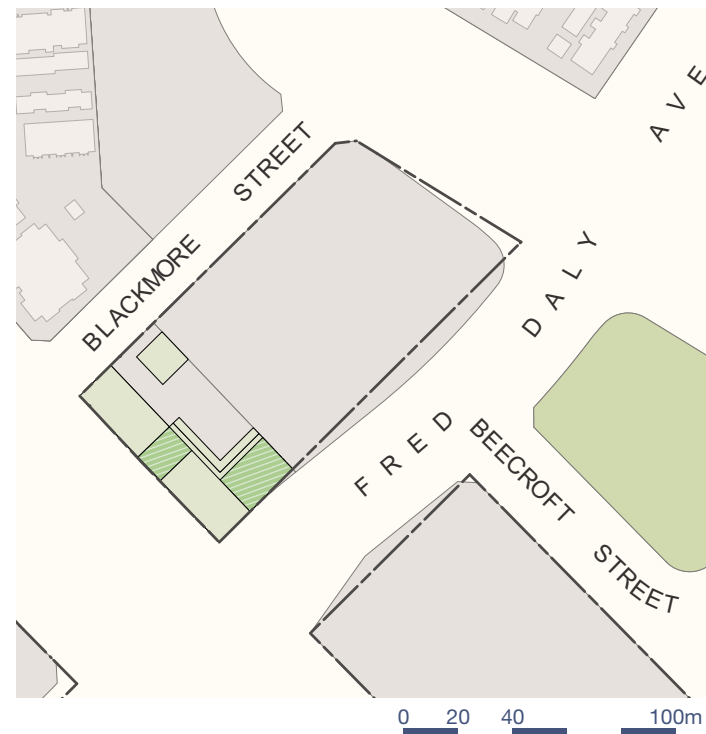
-  Landscape zone A  
- minimum 50% deep soil. No basement below.
-  Landscape zone B  
- minimum 60% deep soil. No basement below.
-  Landscape zone C  
- minimum 20% deep soil. Basement permitted below.

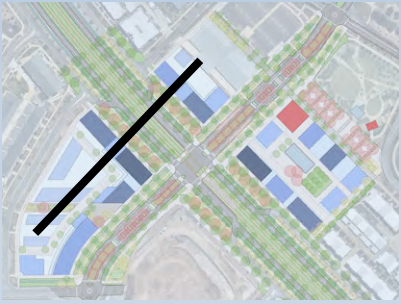


## Podium & Roof Landscape

Podium and rooftops are to provide additional communal space as well as vegetation for cooling, with species be selected to suit the micro-climate. All planting must provide a minimum soil depth of 600mm to the following requirements:

-  Communal Rooftops  
- Accessible required, minimum 40% planted
-  Other Rooftops  
- Accessible preferred, minimum 25% planted





**“Ensure lots of natural (living) green space including vertical plantings, landscaping and opportunities for deep-root plantings”**

- Community Panel

(Section 36, Coombs)

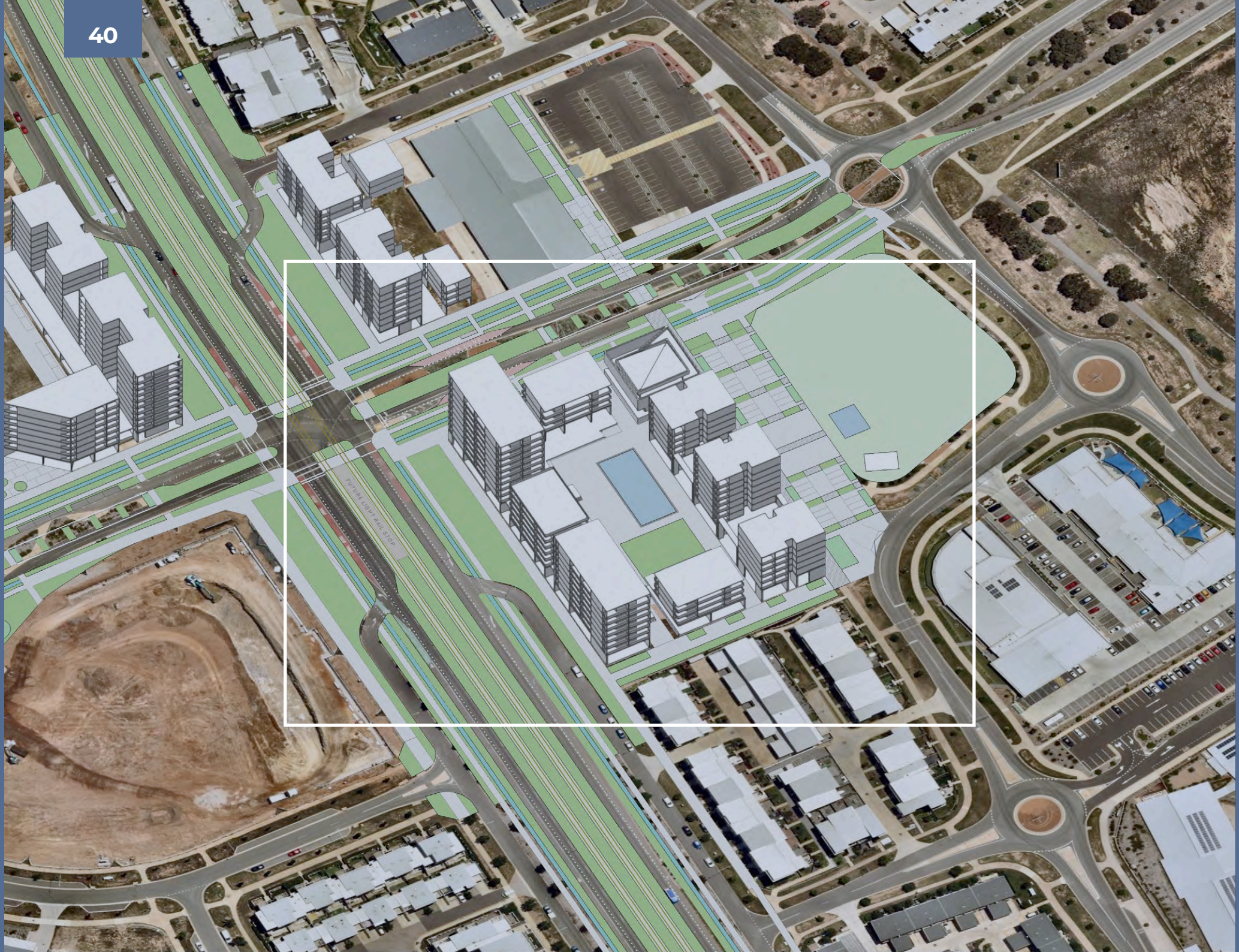
New Plaza to Steve Irwin Ave



(Section 39, Wright)

**“Slow the traffic down in this area to support pedestrian use”**

- Community Panel





# Section 21, Coombs Specific Block Requirements

# 05

## 3.1 Block 1, Section 21 - Beecroft Street, Coombs

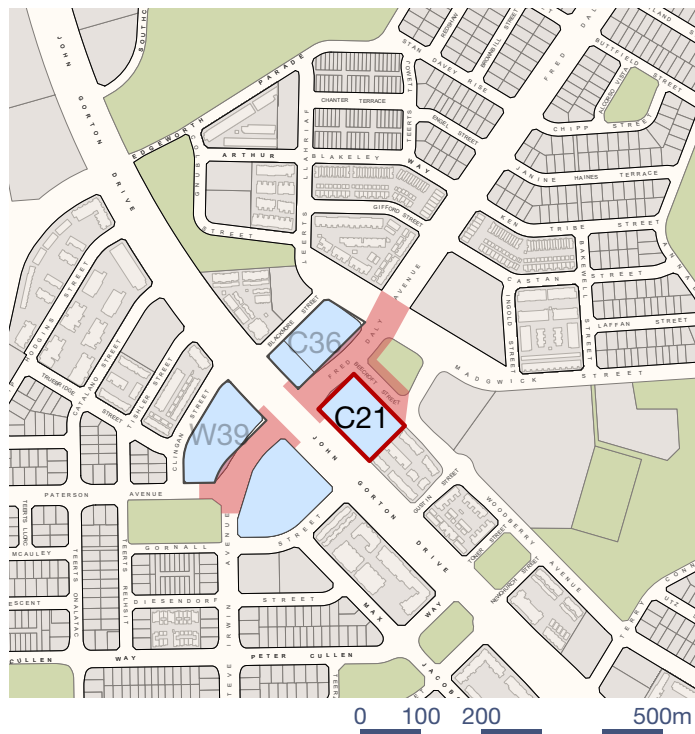
The following diagrams outline the requirements for any development proposals at this location. The nominated site of the community building to the northern corner of the block must be integrated with, but is EXCLUDED from these works.

### Urban Structure

Section 21, Coombs is bounded by John Gorton Drive, Fred Daly Avenue and Beecroft Street and is 120m in length along its northern boundary.

Primary frontages occur to its southern and western and northern boundaries reinforcing John Gorton Drive, Fred Daly Avenue and Beecroft Street, respectively.

Areas shaded red show the approx. area of public domain works to be delivered by the SLA.



### Block Structure

The Section 39 boundary will be adjusted to improve its geometry and frontage alignments as noted in blue. These adjustments to the existing deposited plan will be undertaken by the SLA prior to sale completion.

A **public laneway** connecting John Gorton Drive and Beecroft St is shown - to be constructed by the developer to SLA design and documentation, and handed back to The Territory upon completion.

A **central easement** is also to be provided, complemented by a number of **through-block-links** at the ground floor, each a min. width of 3m.



▲ Permitted basement entry location





## Basement & Deep Soil



Basements are permitted within the envelopes as noted in the plan below, in metres. Landscape is to be provided to all other areas with the following requirements:

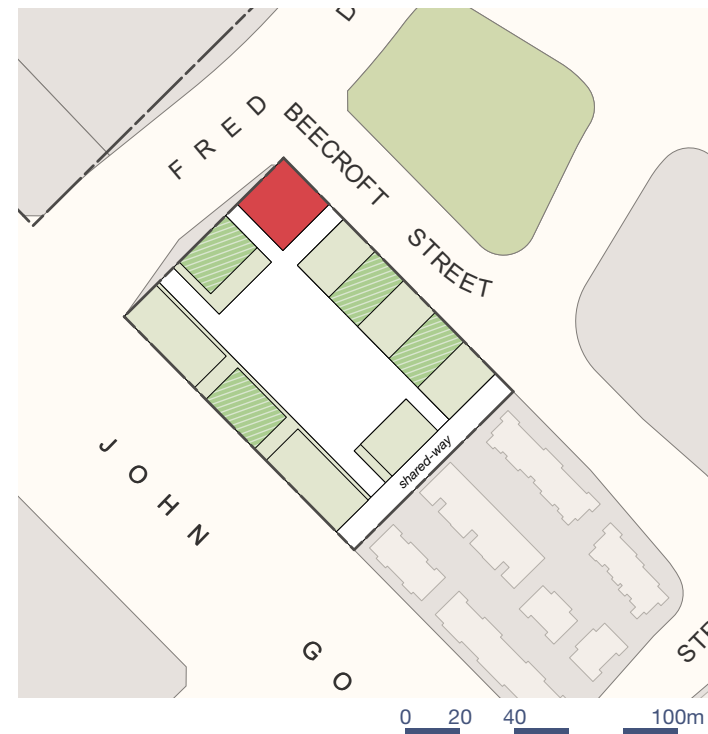
-  Landscape zone A  
- minimum 40% deep soil. No basement below.
-  Landscape zone B  
- minimum 50% deep soil. No basement below.



## Podium & Roof Landscape

Podium and rooftops are to provide additional communal space as well as vegetation for cooling, with species be selected to suit the micro-climate. All planting must provide a minimum soil depth of 600mm to the following requirements:

-  Communal Rooftops  
- Accessible required, minimum 40% planted
-  Other Rooftops  
- Accessible preferred, minimum 25% planted





*The potential terraced public courtyard of Section 21, Coombs, with new community building in the northern corner*



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