

ACT Planning System Review and Reform

November 2020



OVERVIEW



Acknowledgement of Country

Yuma

Dhawura Nguna Dhawura Ngunnawal
Yanggu ngalawiri dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari
dhawurawari

Nginggada Dindi yindumaralidjinyin
Dhawura Ngunnawal yindumaralidjinyin

Hello,

This is Ngunnawal Country

Today we are meeting on Ngunnawal country

We always respect Elders, male and female

We always respect Ngunnawal Country

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as Canberra's first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians. We recognise the special relationship and connection that Ngunnawal peoples have with this Country. Prior to the dislocation of Ngunnawal people from their land, they were a thriving people whose life and culture was connected unequivocally to this land in a way that only they understand and know, and is core to their physical and spiritual being. The disconnection of the Ngunnawal people from Culture and Country has had long-lasting, profound and ongoing health and well-being effects on their life, cultural practices, families and continuation of their law/lore. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the historic dispossession of the Ngunnawal people of Canberra and their surrounding regions. We recognise the significant contribution the Ngunnawal people have played in caring for Country as for time immemorial they have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual and economic connection to these lands and waters.

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ACT Planning System Review and Reform



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1. Introduction



1.1 The ACT Planning System Review and Reform Project

The *Planning and Development Act 2007* requires the planning and land authority to consider the appropriateness of the Territory Plan and its various development controls every five years. In determining whether a review is necessary, the planning and land authority considers whether the Territory Plan promotes the Planning Strategy and meets the expectations of industry and community.

In the 10 years since the last major review of the Territory Plan the long-term aspirations for Canberra have evolved. Industry has questioned the contemporary fit of certain aspects of the system, and the community has expressed concern about the quality of development, impacts on landscape character and the ability to participate in the planning process.

In the same period, the Chief Minister released his Statement of Ambition for Canberra and the Minister for Planning and Land Management released his Statement of Planning Intent. The Government has also released several other major policy papers which connect with planning such as the Climate Change Strategy, Housing Strategy and the Transport Strategy. Together with the 2018 Planning Strategy, this has changed the strategic context of the Territory that frames the planning system.

This feedback and contextual change creates an opportunity to undertake a review of the planning system. The broad aims of the ACT Planning System Review and Reform project (the Project) are to:

- simplify the planning system
- improve the balance between certainty and flexibility in the system
- incorporate character, context and design as key elements of the system.

The Project aims to deliver a **clear, easy to use** planning system that encourages **improved spatial and built outcomes** across the Territory. The Project will deliver a proactive and responsive planning system that enhances Canberra's strong reputation as a great place to live and work.





1.2 The Project scope and approach

The ACT Government recognised the need for change to the planning system and agreed to the broad scope of the Project in March 2019. It is neither a ‘light-touch’ approach to reform nor a full-scale ‘start from scratch’ approach. It is a holistic review and proposed reform that will deliver a more ‘spatially-led’ and ‘outcomes-focused’ planning system. This means a greater emphasis on strategic planning and spatial direction for the Territory at different scales, from the city level to the local-area and site levels of planning, as well as improved planning and built form outcomes.

The purpose and objectives of the Project are described in Figure 1.

The scope covers a holistic review of the whole planning system. An overarching methodology that maps out how the Project is being undertaken is summarised in Figure 2. This identifies where the Project is currently at.

In establishing the scope, the following were identified as not being considered as part of the Project:

- the structure and role of ACT Government planning bodies
- incorporating the National Capital Plan into the Territory Plan¹
- a developer contribution scheme
- incentive schemes
- the creation of separate suburb-specific plans
- removal of the leasehold system
- an additional/alternative development approval model, such as planning panels
- changes to the ACT Planning Strategy 2018².

1 <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ni/2008-27/default.asp>

2 https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1285972/2018-ACT-Planning-Strategy.pdf



Figure 1: Project purpose and objectives

Project purpose

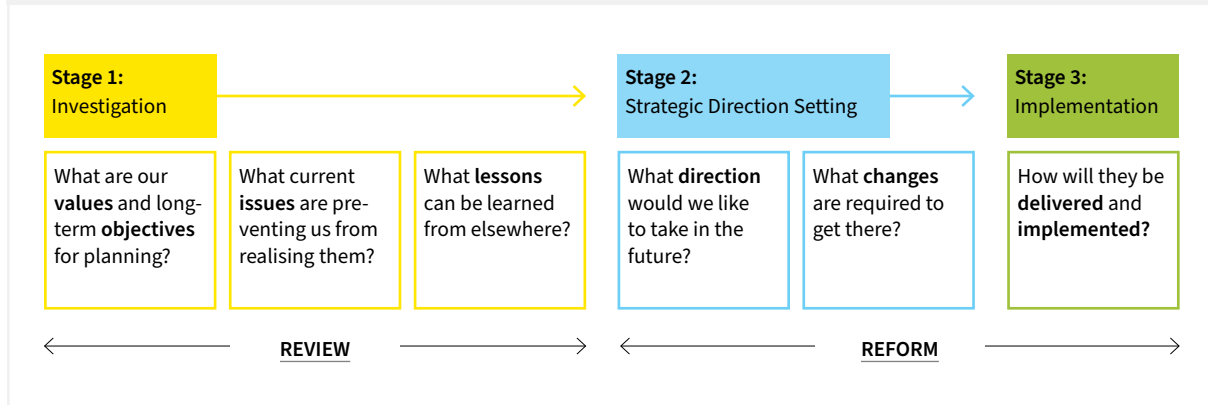
To deliver a planning system that is clear, easy to use and that facilitates the realisation of long-term aspirations for the growth and development of Canberra while maintaining its valued character.

Project objectives

- Enabling the sustainable growth of the city without compromising its valued character
- Providing clarity of processes, roles and outcomes for the city's community
- Providing flexible assessment pathways that are appropriate to the scale and scope of development



Figure 2: Project stages



1.3 Project stages

The Project has been structured around a three-stage process that progressively defines and implements the proposed future direction for the ACT planning system (see Figure 2).

Stage 1: Investigation was undertaken in 2019. This included community and industry engagement and benchmarking of the existing system against contemporary examples from states and cities elsewhere in Australia and internationally. This jurisdiction analysis considered key elements of planning systems and challenges. This enabled the team to investigate a range of approaches to respond to the issues and challenges currently faced in the ACT.

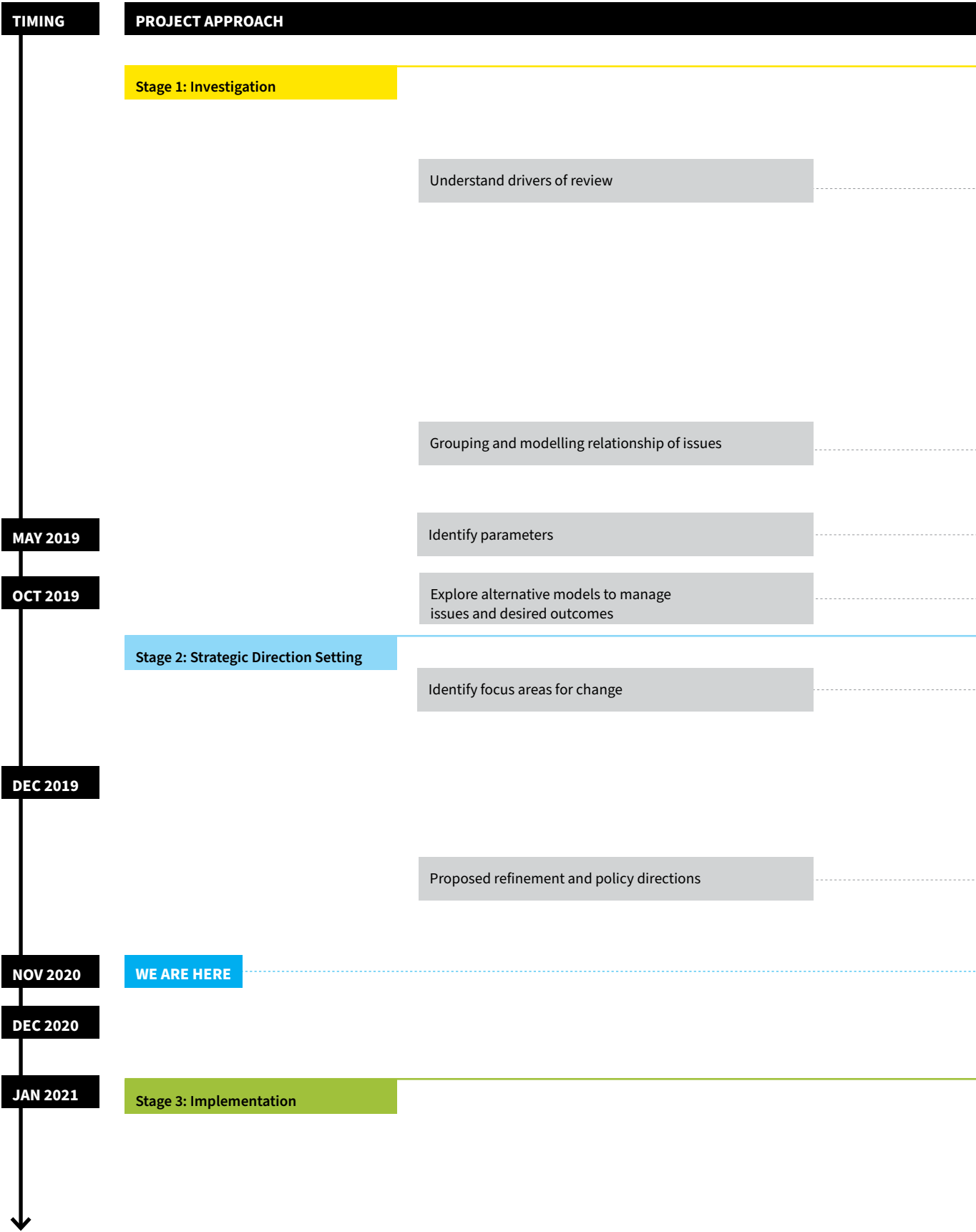
The Project is currently within Stage 2: Strategic direction setting. This stage involves the development of preferred approaches for the future ACT planning system in line with the proposed directions and changes outlined around five focus areas (see Figure 3).

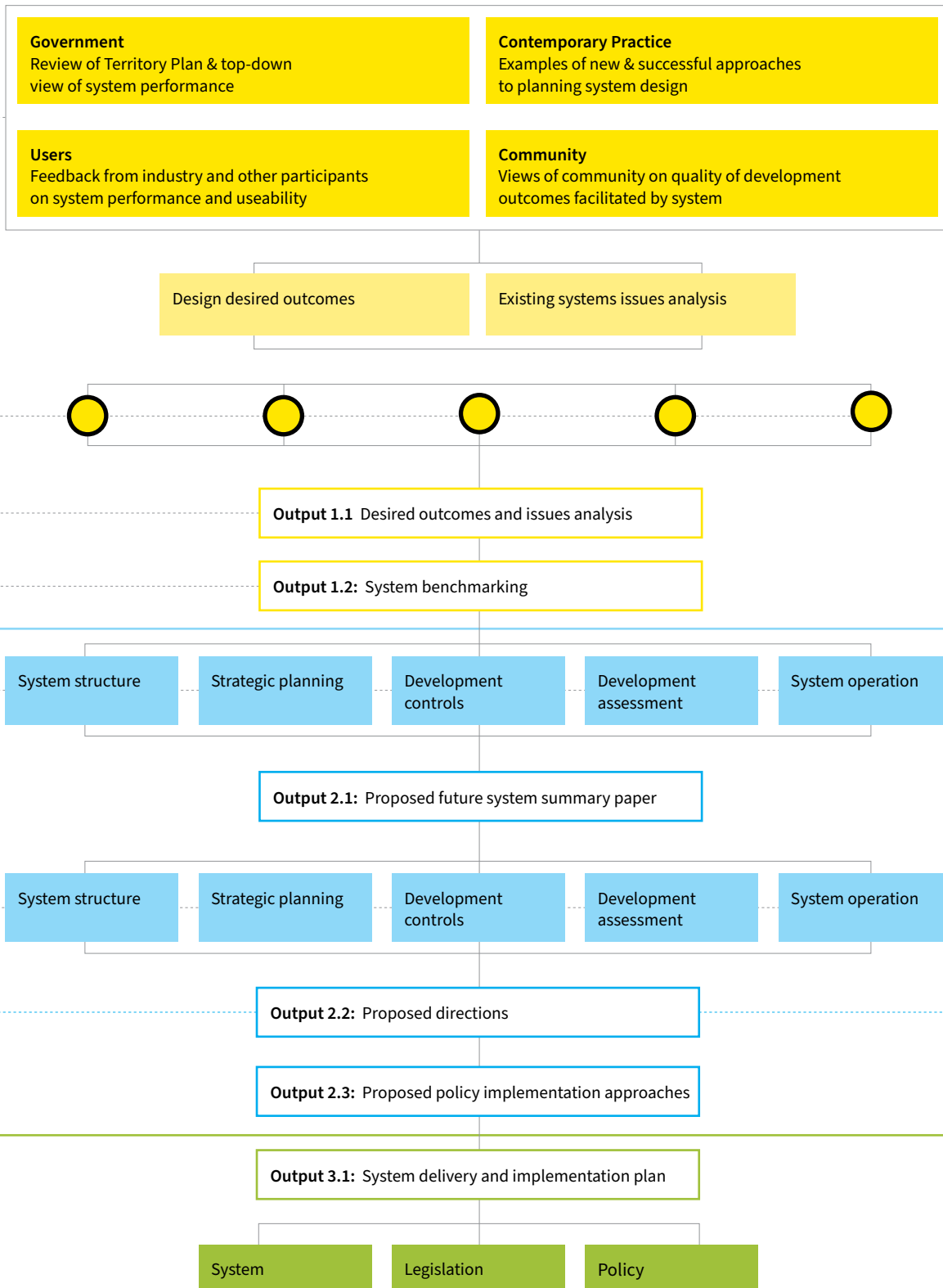
Stage 3: Implementation will explore how to deliver and implement the proposed reforms.

1.4 This document

This overview document provides the context of the Project and work undertaken to date. It also sets the scene for five separate papers (around the five focus areas) which provide further detail on the next stage of work, including proposed directions and potential changes for reform.

Figure 3: Project pathway for each focus area





2. Planning in the ACT



Over the next 20 years Canberra's population is expected to increase by more than 40 per cent. The city needs a planning system that can facilitate this growth without compromising the characteristics of the city that its residents value. It must deliver on the long-term vision for Canberra to be a city that is liveable, sustainable, resilient and diverse. While the current planning system is working, the Project presents an opportunity to evolve the system in line with contemporary best practice. The Project will produce a **clear, easy to use** planning system that delivers **improved spatial and built outcomes** across the Territory.

2.1 Current ACT planning system

The ACT currently has what would be considered a prescriptive system. The Minister for Planning and Land Management's 2015 Statement of Planning Intent identified his desire for an outcomes-focused and outcome driven system. The current system does not readily facilitate this.

The current structure of the ACT planning system is discussed in detail in Paper 1 – System Structure, noting the National Capital Authority is responsible for planning, design and development within 'Designated Areas'³ of the ACT given their importance to the special character of the nation's capital.

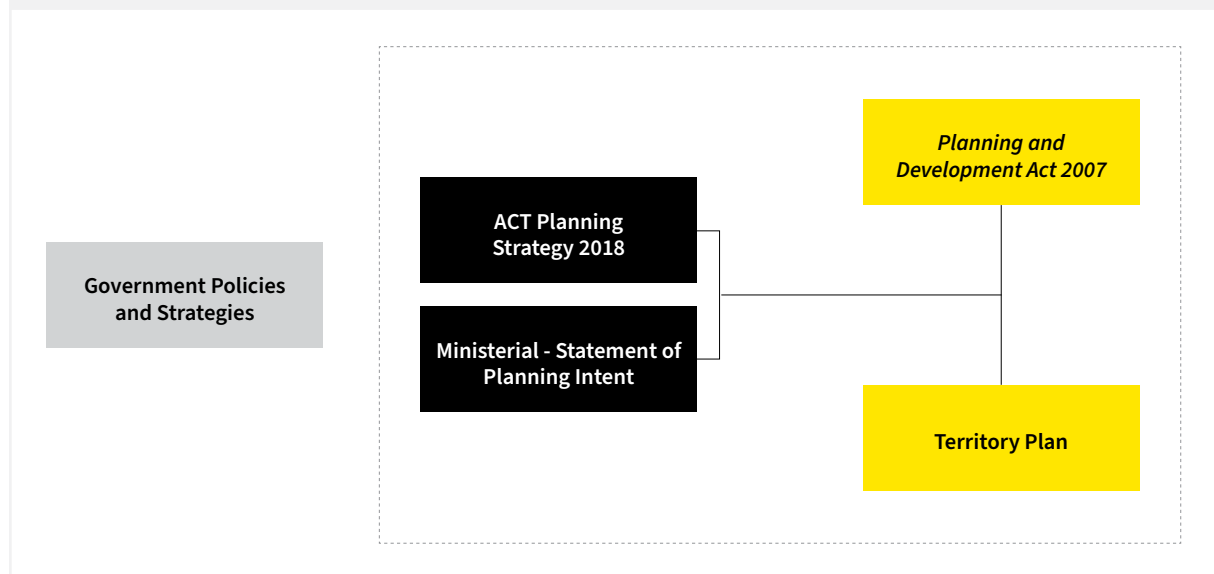
Five key components form the planning system (see Figure 4):

1. The **ACT Planning Strategy 2018** sets out the desired long-term directions for the city.
2. The **2015 Minister for Planning and Land Management's Statement of Planning Intent** sets out the main principles that are to govern planning and land development in the ACT.

3. The *Planning and Development Act 2007* is the **primary legislation**. It defines the system framework, its individual parts, the interrelationships between them and the way in which they operate.
4. The **Territory Plan** is the planning scheme/instrument and the ACT's key statutory planning document that guides how planning and development is to occur. Its controls establish the grounds for development.
5. Other broader government policies and strategies directly relate to planning and are impacted by the planning system and urban development. They include the ACT Housing Strategy 2018⁴, Moving Canberra: ACT Transport Strategy 2020⁵, ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019–25⁶, Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City 2019⁷, Infrastructure Plan⁸, Planning for the Future 2019⁹ and Nature Conservation Strategy 2012–2023¹⁰.

The planning system also involves the community (including development proponents and industry), and their interaction with it and relevant government agencies.

Figure 4: ACT planning system



3 <https://www.nca.gov.au/planning-heritage/about-planning-act/designated-areas>

4 <https://www.act.gov.au/homes-housing/act-housing-strategy>

5 https://www.transport.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1613302/200601-ACT-Transport-Strategy_web.pdf

6 <https://www.environment.act.gov.au/cc/act-climate-change-strategy>

7 https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1413771/Canberras-Living-Infrastructure-Plan-Summary.pdf

8 https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1432449/act-infrastructure-plan.pdf

9 https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1432449/act-infrastructure-plan.pdf

10 https://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation-strategies/nature_conservation_strategy

2.2 Proposed policy directions

The Minister for Planning and Land Management, and the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) maintain ongoing dialogue with the Canberra community and other stakeholders, including the planning and development industry and other government directorates.

Engagement on a range of planning related projects over recent years revealed while our planning system is not broken, structural and operational challenges are compromising the extent to which the system is able to contribute to the realisation of the government's broader policy objectives and long-term vision for the ACT in the contemporary context.

Figure 5 provides an illustrative representation of some of the feedback we have received and how

Figure 5: Illustrative representation of feedback, key themes and focus areas

GROUP ISSUES: WHAT WE HEARD WAS WANTED

- Clear and consistent definitions that are easy to interpret
- Structure of Territory Plan to be simpler, more flexible, provide greater certainty
- Processes to be simpler, more flexible, provide greater certainty
- Review exempt development
- Consistent interpretation across government

- Flexibility in the assessment process
- Requirements in the planning system delivering certainty and flexibility
- Improved design quality
- Strategic policy that facilitates quality spatial outcomes and respects character
- Cleaner planning policy intent

- Compact and efficient city
- Diverse Canberra
- Sustainable and resilient
- Liveable Canberra
- District planning approach

- Clarify the role of the public land overlays
- Clear and consistent definitions that are easy to interpret
- Statement of strategic directions to align with directions of Planning Strategy
- Clarify the role of zones and zone objectives
- Simplify the Territory Plan

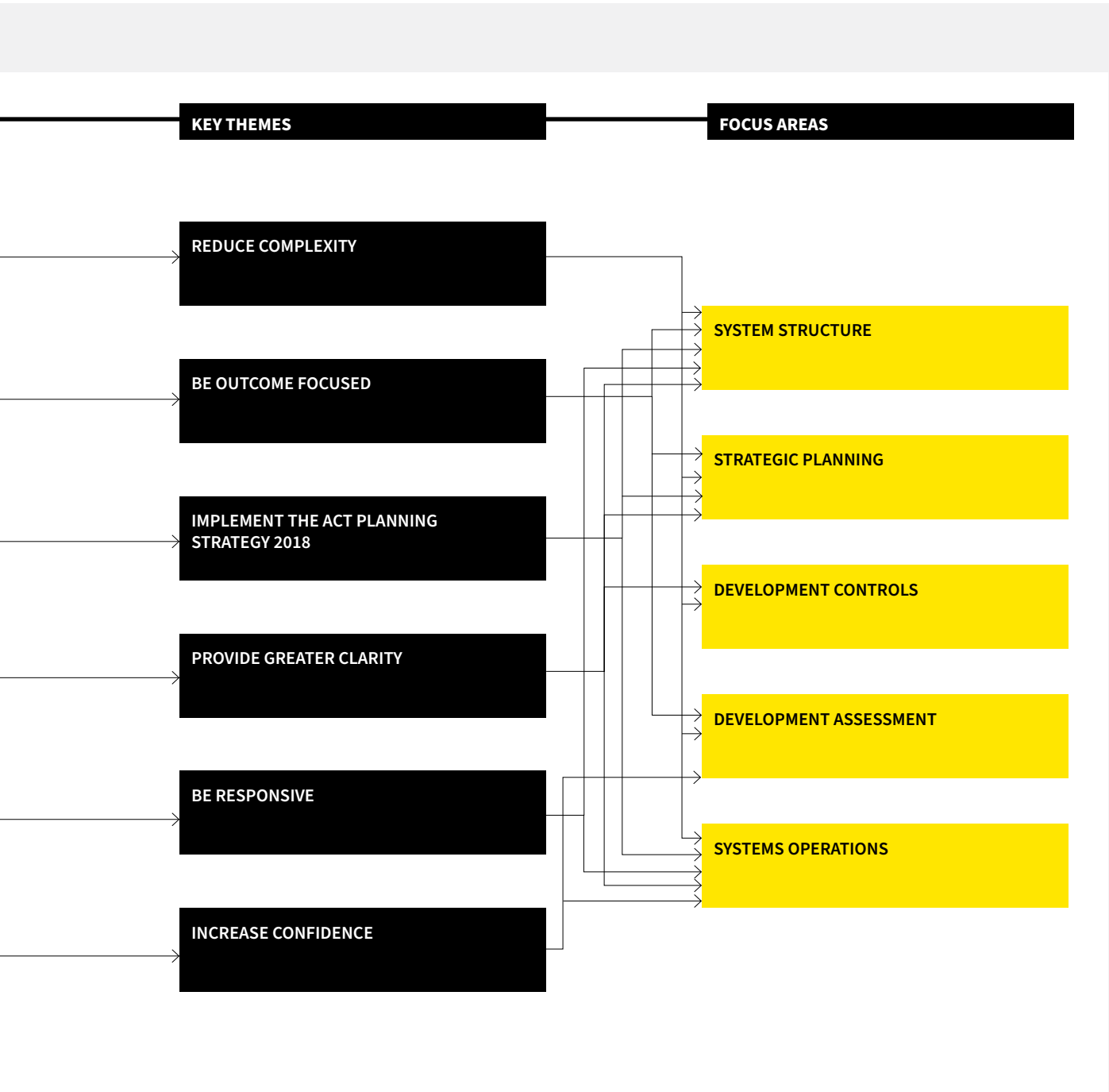
- District-based planning to implement the city's strategic plan
- Accommodate and utilise new technology in the planning system
- Flexible and responsive policy that deliver housing choice
- Encourage innovative use and activity
- Be adaptable to environment, community, and commercial changes

- Consistent interpretation across government
- Enforcement of and compliance with planning decisions and approvals
- Update general codes to reflect best practice and have consistent format
- Ensure adequate decision review processes
- Ongoing engagement in the planning system

that has been grouped around themes and key focus areas for the Project.

We heard that the community is generally supportive of the 2018 Planning Strategy but is less confident about the practical implementation of the strategy’s directions and its influence on development, particularly built form outcomes. Further, we heard the community feels a ‘one size fits all approach’ does not work

and that the Planning Strategy and system more broadly should reflect the special character of towns, centres and certain areas across Canberra. Character was noted as what makes an area distinctive and contributes to the identity of the place; it encompasses the way a place looks and feels. It was noted as being created by a combination of landscape, people, built environment, history, culture and tradition, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.







2.3 How we have engaged the Canberra community

In addition to reviewing feedback across a range of planning related projects (noted above), the community engagement activities in 2019 and 2020 have formed part of the Project to date.

Activities include:

- YourSay Community Panel Places and Spaces survey which received almost 1,000 responses from all districts across Canberra.
- Workshops with 102 people representing the eight districts in Canberra to identify unique characteristics of different areas in Canberra.
- Workshops in May 2019 with representatives from industry, peak groups and community groups provided feedback on the draft scope and informed the engagement process.
- Input to the Canberra Wellbeing Indicators¹¹ and consideration of how wellbeing integrates with our planning system.
- Manuka Stakeholder Panel on 29 July 2019 and associated Kingston Drop-in Session to capture the characteristics of the Inner South and test strategies for future engagement across Canberra.
- Stakeholder roundtable and workshop on an Entertainment Action Plan to inform policy on entertainment areas in Canberra¹².
- Liaison with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify involvement in the Project.
- Liaison with ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS) on engagement opportunities that focus on social inclusion.

¹¹ <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/wellbeing>

¹² <https://www.planning.act.gov.au/planning-our-city/planning-projects/entertainment-areas>

2.4 Challenges, gaps and opportunities

Based on the feedback and review work undertaken in Stage one of the Project, three key messages are noted for attention.

Key Message 1

The current system does not adequately accommodate consideration of design quality or development appropriateness, putting at risk the valued character of Canberra and its suburbs.

Key Message 2

The disconnect between strategic and statutory planning means the system is not well placed to address future planning challenges and aspirations of the long-term Planning Strategy.

Key Message 3

These issues, along with the general complexity of the system, is compromising the community's confidence in the system and their ability to fully participate in planning and development.

The Stage one work included consideration of challenges, gaps and opportunities in the ACT planning system and how these could best be addressed to deliver improvements and better outcomes. This also provided some focus for examination of other jurisdictions which is outlined in the following section.



3. Planning systems – benchmarking

3.1. Benchmarking overview

National and international examples were chosen for examination with a view to identifying best practice and approaches that might assist in improving the ACT system. The systems reviewed in other jurisdictions were from Australia as well as Asia, Europe and North America (see Figure 6). While other systems will continue to be considered throughout the Project, these jurisdictions were considered to provide a range of approaches (prescriptive/regulatory to discretionary) and governance. These systems were reformed recently and addressed common challenges and opportunities around growth and sustainability.

The benchmarking analysis identified that some challenges faced in the ACT are not uncommon. Australian systems tend to be prescriptive, with an emphasis on controlling development and approving it where it meets a certain set of agreed norms. International systems are increasingly taking a performance-based

approach to development, providing broad discretion to approve projects as long as they meet desired objectives. New South Wales and South Australia are starting to follow this trend.

While the benchmarking exercise examined a range of matters the analysis focused around six broad areas, as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 6: Benchmark systems reviewed

BENCHMARK SYSTEMS	
National	International
City of Yarra (Victoria)	Singapore
City of Ballarat (Victoria)	City of Toronto (Ontario, Canada)
City of Parramatta (New South Wales)	City of Minneapolis (Minnesota, United States)
City of Newcastle (New South Wales)	London Borough of Camden (United Kingdom)
City of Adelaide (South Australia)	

Figure 7: Broad areas of planning systems benchmark analysis

System structure and intent: the planning system's stated purpose, its objectives, and what aspects of development it seeks to govern.	Regulations and policies: how development controls are structured, what topics they address, and how they are applied.	Development assessment processes: the types of applications considered and the process through which they are assessed.
Decision-making: what parties make decisions and on what basis those decisions are made.	Compliance and enforcement: the processes in place to ensure conditions of approval are adhered to.	Operation and use: the tools made available to facilitate participation in the system.

3.2 Benchmarking – learning from other systems

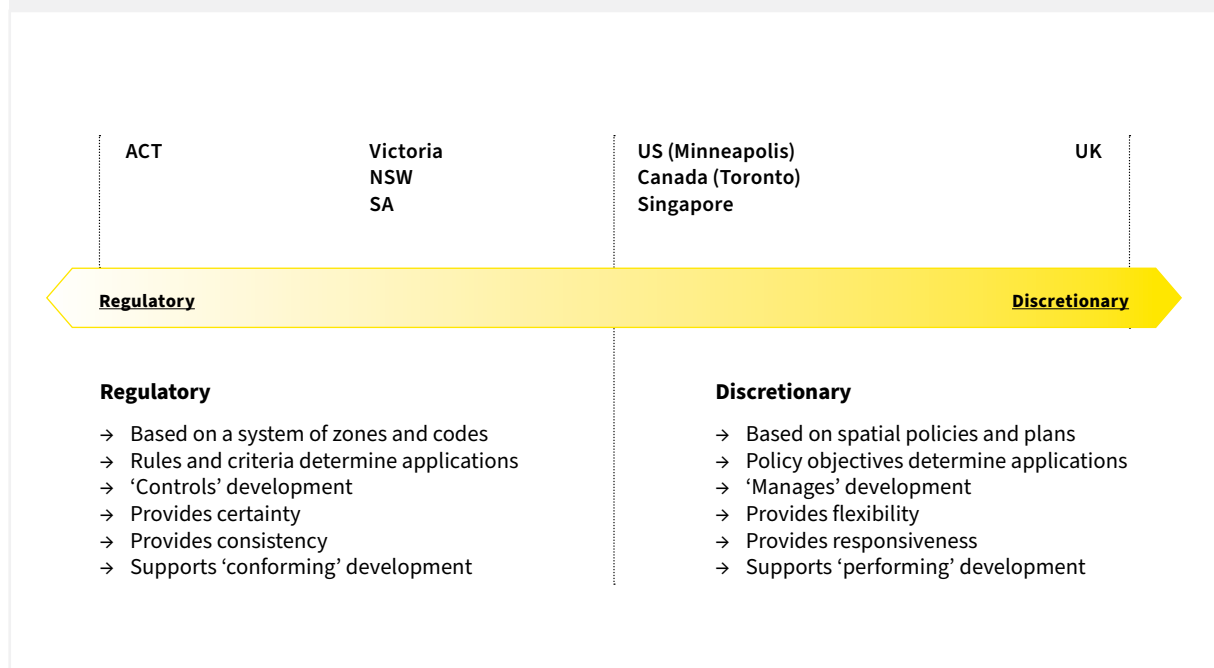
The systems reviewed, and the point they sit on the regulatory to discretionary spectrum, are shown in Figure 8.

When compared to other contemporary planning systems, the current ACT planning system is regulatory, not as progressive and behind in the growing trend toward outcomes-focused planning. Other jurisdictions are increasingly structuring their planning systems around a set of clear objectives identified through long-term strategies or spatial plans. (See Paper 1 — System Structure for more detail.)

Conclusions from the comparison exercise showed that the nine benchmark jurisdictions:

- offer greater clarity of the purpose of planning in shaping a city's character and the types of planning and built form outcomes the system seeks to facilitate
- place long-term planning strategies at the centre of the system, informing the shape and content of development controls and providing greater certainty on where land use change is acceptable
- offer much clearer line-of-sight between the different tools that make up the planning system, their individual roles and their interrelationship
- offer greater flexibility in the way development applications are assessed, allowing discretion to be exercised in facilitating complex or integrated development proposals

Figure 8: Regulatory versus discretionary planning approaches for benchmark jurisdictions



- contain a greater range of tools and strategies to implement the directions of planning strategies and to accommodate urban renewal and intensification
- foster innovation and high-quality design through strong incentive programs that reward development proponents willing to go beyond minimum standards and requirements
- provide linkages between development approvals and other government consents, providing a stronger basis for ensuring compliance with the conditions placed on individual projects.

The analysis of benchmark jurisdictions provided insight to a range of potential interventions or changes to the current system. The spectrum of regulatory to discretionary was applied to consider what that might mean for the approach

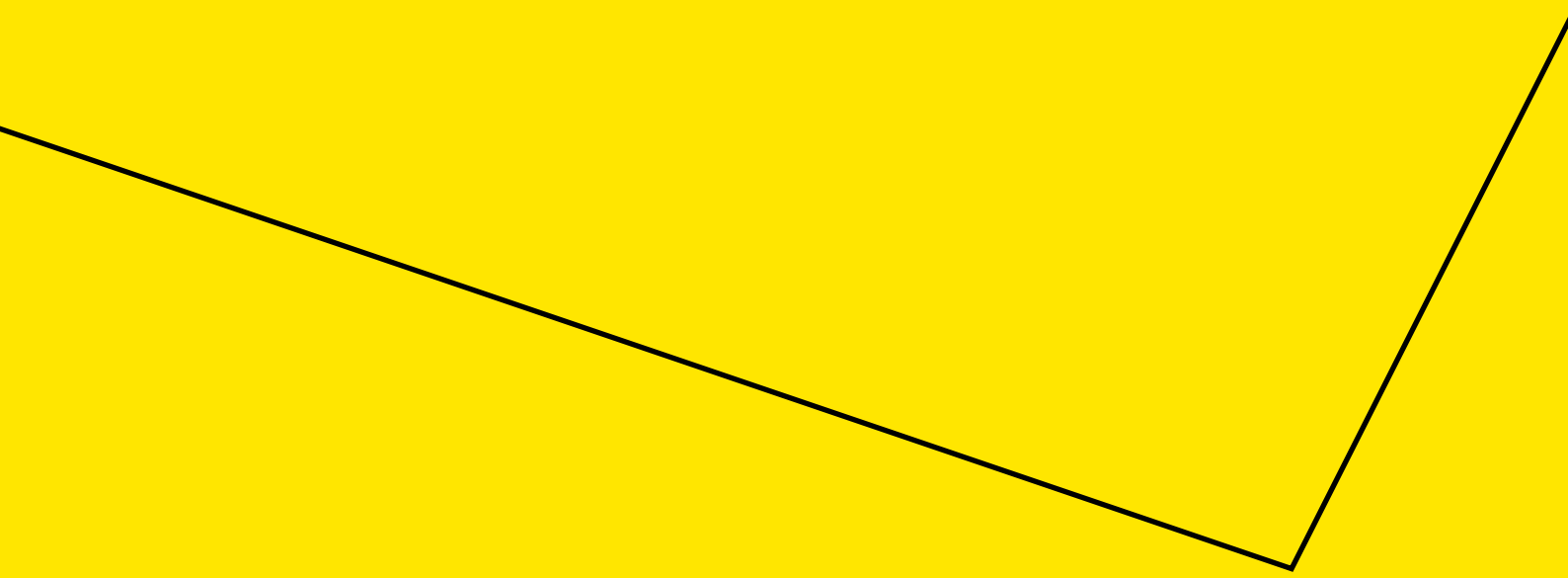
to reform for the ACT system. Figure 9 identifies this across four potential ‘models’ based on the extent to which they departed from the ACT’s current approach and could change the system.

To arrive at a preferred direction, these models were considered against their respective ability to realise the objectives of the Project, and potential to implement. Approach 3 was considered to best meet objectives, improving the system and delivering an improved outcomes-focused system for the ACT.

Figure 9: Potential approaches or ‘models’ of change for the ACT system

Regulatory		Discretionary	
Approach 1	Approach 2	Approach 3	Approach 4
Enhance the existing system Comparable systems: No change	Strengthen the existing system Comparable systems: Victoria, NSW	A new spatially-led system Comparable systems: US, Canada, Singapore	A new discretionary system Comparable system: UK
Expand available guidance on desired character and built form outcomes as well as simplifying the presentation of land use zones and codes.	Provide stronger links between the ACT Planning Strategy and Territory Plan and emphasise the role of planning in promoting high quality design and the protection of Canberra’s valued character.	Expand the breadth of planning strategies to provide strong direction on the desired future form and character of Canberra. Use these strategies to guide the formation of development controls and the assessment of development applications.	Transition to a more facilitative system where development is directed toward the most suitable locations and designed in the most appropriate form. Replace traditional regulations with a set of spatial policies that capture the long-term aspirations of Canberra.

4. Reform and change for the ACT planning system



4.1 Approach to change – setting the direction

The benchmarking exercise helped identify that working on one part of the system wouldn't make the needed improvements. For example, updating current development controls in isolation of other changes would be unlikely to realise the objectives of the Project.



The exercise found the following:

- Changes to the Territory Plan alone would be unlikely to improve the quality of planning and built form outcomes. Instead, substantive changes to the *Planning and Development Act 2007* are likely to be required, as is further development of strategic planning and associated spatial planning at a more local level.
- A spatially-led system is most aligned with the objectives of the Project. It has a stronger emphasis on long-term, principles-based strategic planning. Development of extra policy support is needed to take advantage of this approach.

The review work found that change would be required to the *Planning and Development Act* and the Territory Plan, but the changes need to be staged over time and around specific topics. The five focus areas provide the basis for this work to progress.

4.2 Focus areas for change

Significant and integrated reform to the planning system is needed to create a clear, easy to use planning system that delivers improved spatial and built outcomes across the Territory.

A phased approach to reform is proposed, through the five focus areas noted in Stage 1 and in Figure 10. These are: system structure; strategic planning; development controls; development assessment; and system operation. This requires an integrated approach with an initial strengthening of the current planning framework that enables a long-term transition toward a simpler and more flexible planning system.

The future system would see strategic planning having a greater influence on the Territory Plan and development assessment. The Planning Strategy and associated more detailed local area planning would provide long-term direction and desired outcomes for the city, with development controls shaped to facilitate these outcomes.

Five papers accompany this Project overview paper. Each paper outlines the context of the project; how that particular focus area relates to the Project and other focus areas; challenges, opportunities and gaps; and considerations relevant from the benchmarking. The papers identify key directions for next steps as part of an integrated approach to improving the planning system.

A brief summary of the focus for each paper is noted below. It is recommended that all papers should be read to provide a holistic view of the directions for the proposed reform.

Figure 10: Focus areas for reform

FOCUS AREA 1 / SYSTEM STRUCTURE

The hierarchy of the various components of the system as well as their individual roles and interrelationships

FOCUS AREA 2 / STRATEGIC PLANNING

The long-term strategic or policy objectives that describe the purpose and direction of the planning system

FOCUS AREA 3 / DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

The interpretation of strategic and policy objectives into regulations that define and shape development

FOCUS AREA 4 / DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT

The processes through which development applications are assessed and determined

FOCUS AREA 5 / SYSTEM OPERATION

The useability of the system from the perspective of applicants, agencies, and other interested parties

Focus Area 1 – System Structure

- The paper focuses on the current planning system and what it achieves in terms of planning and development outcomes. It considers how the resultant structure influences decision making and the realisation of long-term objectives for Canberra set out in the Planning Strategy. The connection with interfacing government policy such as the Climate Change Strategy, the Housing Strategy and the Transport Strategy is considered.
- The paper outlines proposed directions to improve the connection between elements of the system and move the system toward a more spatially led and strategic planning focused system.

Focus Area 2 – Strategic Planning

- The paper focuses on how strategic planning, through the Planning Strategy and other tools, influences decision making and the realisation of long-term objectives for Canberra. It also considers the extent to which the Planning Strategy is supporting the implementation of other policies such as the Climate Change Strategy, the Housing Strategy and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan.
- The paper identifies ways to improve how strategic planning supports the overall operation of the planning system.

Focus Area 3 – Development Control

- The paper focuses on development controls which are the main operational component of the planning system. They address what types of development can go where and what it should look like. Development controls should clearly translate broad policy directions into a set of practical standards for development. This would facilitate development outcomes consistent with long-term policy directions that respond to the expectations of the community. This paper proposes improvements for development controls to encourage innovation and high-quality design.

Focus Area 4 – Development Assessment

- The paper focuses on the types of applications that can be made, the assessment pathways, their appropriateness considering major trends in development, and the factors considered in reaching a determination. The paper explores challenges with the existing processes and proposed approaches to improve this.

Focus Area 5 – System Operation

- The paper focuses on the useability of the Planning System and how to enable the community to participate meaningfully in the system and processes. The paper explores how improvements could be made in relation to integration and useability of the system for people.

4.3 Next steps

Within each of the five focus area papers several key proposed directions are noted, setting the path for a range of tasks and work to progress over the coming year. These include:

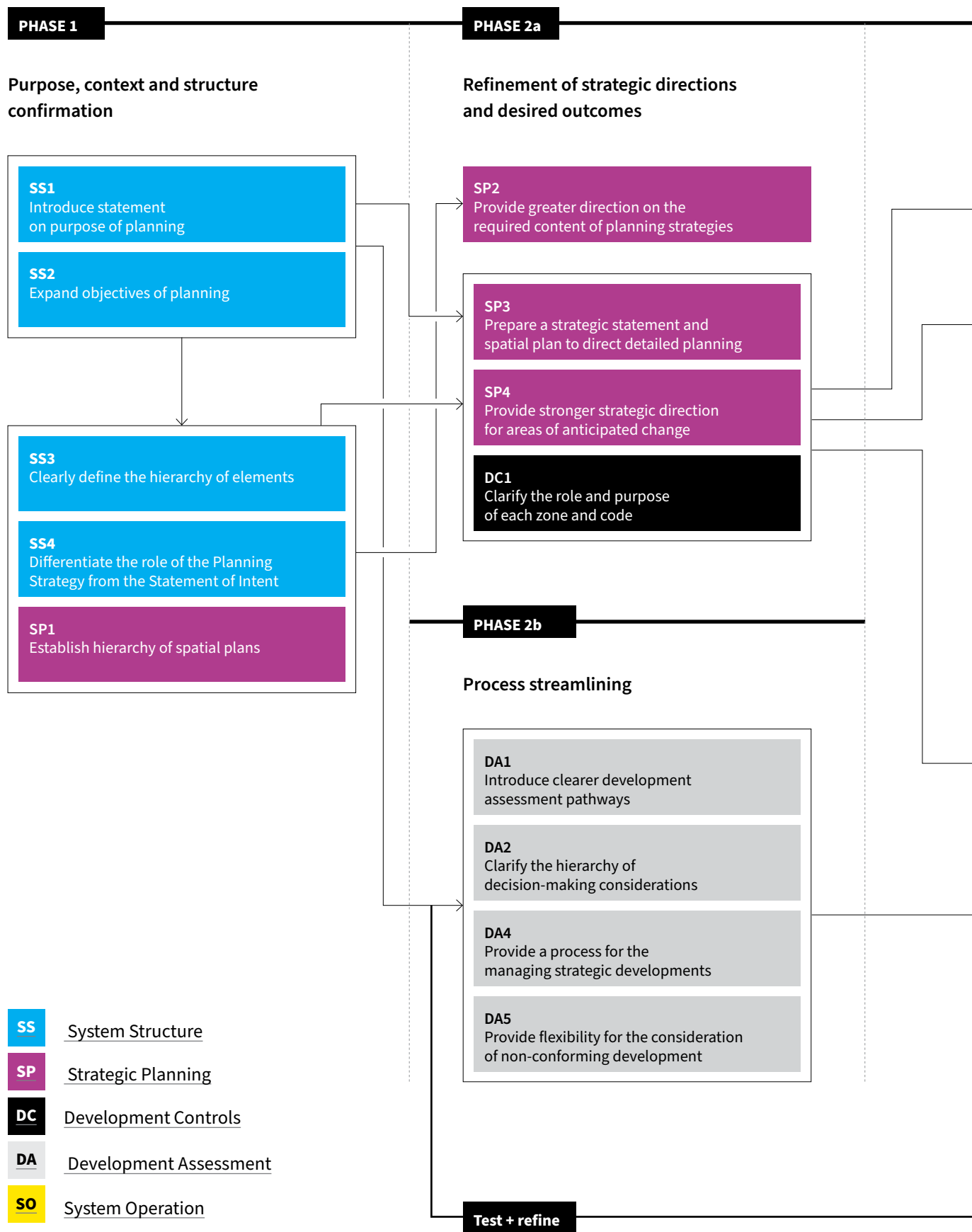
- work to clearly articulate the purpose hierarchy and structure of the planning system
- refinement of strategic directions and desired outcomes to guide the streamlining of planning processes
- review of development controls
- general information and guidance documents to make the planning system easier to understand for the Canberra community.

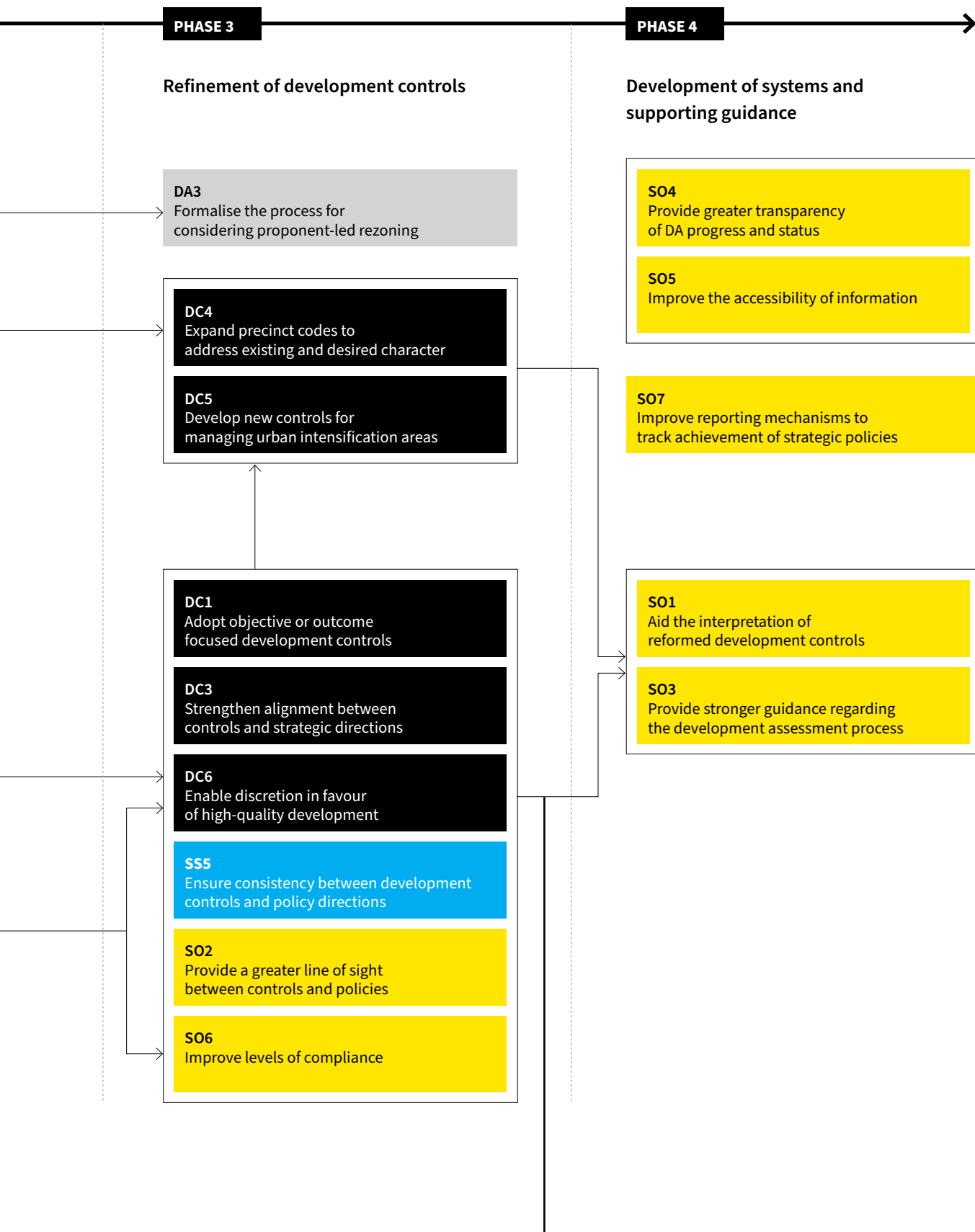
Work has commenced on a range of technical tasks and will continue through 2021. The proposed directions for each focus area are mapped out sequentially in the Project pathway in Figure 11 and in more detail in the five focus area papers. Further community consultation and engagement will be undertaken in 2021.





Figure 11: Project pathway for each focus area





Glossary of terms

ACT planning and land authority: The Chief Planning Executive of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is the ACT planning and land authority.

ACT Planning Strategy: The strategy produced by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate titled ACT Planning Strategy 2018¹³.

ACT planning system: Legislation, policies, rules, plans and strategies that control and inform planning and development in the ACT.

Area planning: Planning at a district level to bridge the gap between ACT-wide and local area planning to provide an opportunity to build on existing and emerging government policies, plans and strategies.

Built environment: The structures and places in which we live, work and play, all of which are integral to improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life of our community as a whole.

Character: Character makes an area distinctive and contributes to the identity of the place.

Codes: A series of policies and instructions relating to planning. Three types of planning codes in the Territory Plan are: precinct, development and general codes.

Concept plan: A precinct code under the Territory Plan that guides the preparation and assessment of development in future urban areas.

Design principles: A set of design ideas that enable the consistent consideration of a range of design related issues including at a broader city, neighbourhood or site-specific scale.

Development application: The information package lodged with the planning and land authority to enable an assessment of a given proposed development to be conducted.

Development assessment: The processes through which development applications are assessed and considered. They are either approved, refused or required to resubmit with further detail.

Development code: A set of detailed rules and criteria which applies to a set of developments as outlined in the Territory Plan¹⁴.

Development controls: Are documented in the Territory Plan¹⁴ in the various codes and development tables. They are the policies that are used to control or manage development in line with planning objectives.

Exempt development: The development proposed is exempt from requiring development approval under a development table or by regulation.

General code: Planning provisions that address particular planning and design issues which may relate to any kind of development across any of the zones within the Territory Plan¹⁴.

Greenfield: Greenfield areas are undeveloped land often located on the edge of existing urban areas and usually identified by a future urban area overlay in the Territory Plan.

¹³ https://www.planning.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1285972/2018-ACT-Planning-Strategy.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/nj/2008-27>

Guidelines: Documents that provide guidance on how to implement official advice but do not include specific development controls.

Land use: The way in which a piece of land is used which includes the activities that are undertaken on it such as residential, industrial, community facility, recreational and commercial.

Leasehold: System of land ownership that applies to all land in the ACT, other than National land.

Living infrastructure: Refers to all the interconnected ecosystems within an urban catchment, including trees, gardens, green walls and roofs, parks, reserves, lakes, wetlands and open spaces.

Master plan: Non-statutory document that outlines a vision to guide growth and development of a centre over the next 20-30 years.

National Capital Plan: The metropolitan plan for Canberra and the Territory that requires 'Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance'. It is prepared and administered by the National Capital Authority¹⁵.

Outcomes-focused planning: A system that focuses on the substantive matters to be addressed without specifying in detail how that will be achieved. It is one that is centred on the quality, results and performance of planning system outcomes, rather than rule compliance.

Overlays: Territory Plan overlays are a set of planning instructions that apply to areas which have special controls in place; e.g. Public Land Reserves, Future Urban Areas.

Planning: Also called urban or regional planning, is the process of making decisions to guide future action and is specifically concerned with shaping cities, towns and regions by managing development, infrastructure and services to improve social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Planning and Development Act 2007 (the Act): The legislation which provides the framework for the ACT planning system¹⁶.

Precinct code: A set of planning instructions which sets out the requirements that apply to individual suburbs or geographical areas (precincts).

Rules: A series of provisions which provide definitive controls for development. In relation to a code, means the rules set out in the code.

Spatial plan: A document which provides the direction for a specific area within the planning system and is used to inform the outcomes of development applications.

Spatially-led planning: Planning that places a greater emphasis on strategic spatial planning and physical direction of the Territory at different scales, from the city level to the local-area and site levels of planning, as well as improved planning and built form outcomes.

Stakeholder: Any person, institution, organisation, agency, department, authority, club, association or the like which is directly involved in the planning process.

Statement of Planning Intent: A statement prepared by the Minister for Planning which sets out the main principles that are to govern planning and land development in the ACT.¹⁷

¹⁵ <https://www.nca.gov.au>

¹⁶ <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2007-24/>

¹⁷ http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/865482/Canberra-A-Statement-of-Ambition.pdf

Statement of Strategic Directions: A series of broad strategic principles to guide long term planning for the ACT in the Territory Plan¹⁴.

Statutory planning: The part of the planning process that is concerned with the regulation and management of changes to land use and development which includes act of controlling land uses within an area covered by a land use plan.

Strategic planning: The long-term strategic or policy objectives that describe the purpose and direction of the planning system.

Structure plan: A document which sets out the principles and policies for development of future urban areas.

Territory Plan: The key statutory planning document in the ACT¹⁴.

Urban Footprint: The geographic extent of the existing urban area.

Urban infill: Development of unused or underutilised land in existing urban areas. It involves increasing the capacity of our existing urban area to support growth.

Urban intensification areas: Targeted areas where development and redevelopment is directed and is aligned with supporting infrastructure and provides the opportunity for renewal and investment.

Urban renewal: The process of improving the economic, social and environmental sustainability of a particular urban area through redevelopment of underutilised urban areas.

Zones: Areas defined within the Territory Plan¹⁴ which determine the appropriate land uses for an area.



