



GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE PLANNING REFRESH

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - STAGE 1

MAY 2018

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2018

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development
Directorate, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.planning.act.gov.au

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, please phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at EPSDDComms@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 13 14 50.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment, and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION.....	6
THE PLANNING REFRESH.....	7
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH.....	7
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	7
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.....	8
INDIVIDUAL STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS	9
ACT GOVERNMENT	9
INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA.....	10
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES.....	11
INFORMATION DISPLAYS.....	11
‘PLANNING IN THE PUB’ AND ‘MEET THE PLANNERS’ SESSIONS.....	12
STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP	12
YOUTH WORKSHOPS	14
YOUR SAY SURVEY RESPONSES.....	16
QUICK POLLS	20
FACEBOOK.....	21
WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS.....	22
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS	24
NEXT STEPS	25



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STAGE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (2017)

The introduction of light rail within the Gungahlin town centre is attracting development, business and investment at a great rate. In order to guide continued growth in the area, the ACT Government is undertaking a ‘planning refresh’ of the *2010 Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Report*. The planning refresh will be used to determine if changes to planning requirements within the Territory Plan are necessary. If changes are required, they will be made through a variation to the Territory Plan where an additional opportunity for community engagement would be provided.

The planning refresh for the Gungahlin town centre has focused on three key issues:

- building height and character;
- upgrading and enhancing public spaces; and
- walking, cycling and road transport.

A critical step in undertaking this planning refresh was an extensive engagement process with the community, which commenced on 1 March 2017 and concluded on 4 May 2017. This community engagement report documents the engagement activities undertaken and summarises the feedback and key messages received from the community. A variety of activities were undertaken to gain an understanding of the community’s concerns, views and aspirations related to the three key issues. The ACT Government acknowledges and values the feedback provided by the community and key stakeholders in this first stage of engagement.

Key messages from stage 1 community engagement included:

- mixed views about the potential for increasing building heights in the town centre. Concerns about increases in building height related to traffic congestion, bulk and scale, overshadowing, privacy and the interface with existing development. Support for increases in building height noted the changing character of the town centre, the need for marker buildings and the strong demand for residential development,
- strong support for the provision of additional green space/pocket parks in the centre that support a range of interests (e.g. passive, active, for all age groups) – particularly near new high rise development,
- Strong support for improved conditions for walking and cycling and to make these routes safer and more attractive (e.g. improve amenity – shade, space for safe coexistence and more direct links),
- concern about traffic congestion, safety and the potential increase in demand for parking associated with future development,
- development should be of high quality (design and materials) and consider bulk and scale, overshadowing, privacy, and
- Public spaces and open space in the town centre should have improved amenity with more landscaping, seating and active and passive recreation and activity.

The key messages and outcomes of technical analysis will inform the development of the Gungahlin Town Centre Draft Planning Refresh Report.

INTRODUCTION

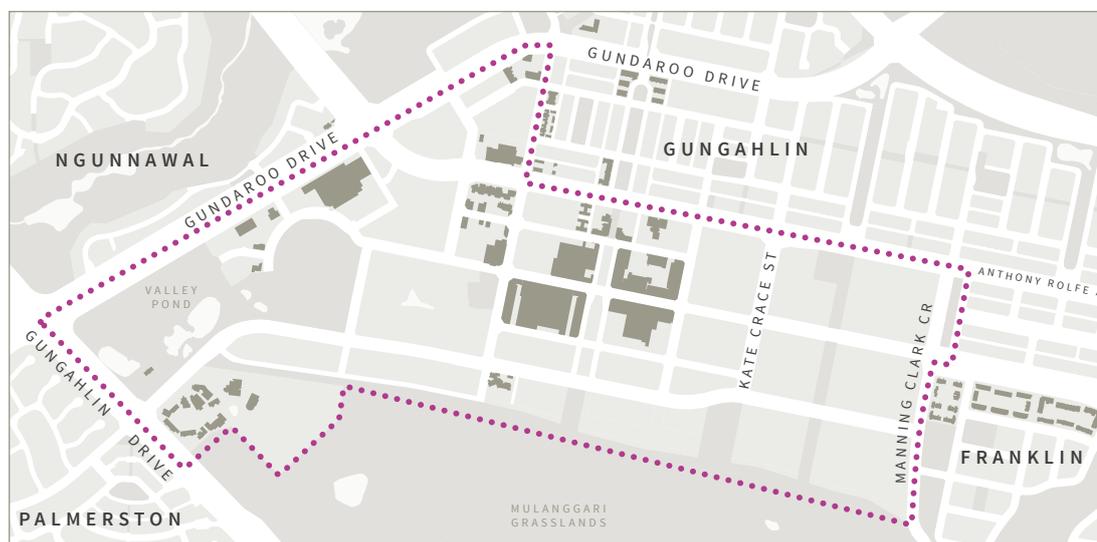
In 2010, the ACT Government released the 2010 Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Report that defined the future planning for the Gungahlin town centre. Since then, the centre has attracted new residents, businesses and investment at a great rate, particularly with the introduction of light rail. There has also been a number of high rise development proposals in recent years that have tested the planning of the original 'urban village' identity that was planned for the centre. Additionally, several key strategic planning documents for the ACT have been introduced since the 2010 planning report, including the 2012 release of the *ACT Planning Strategy, Transport for Canberra and Action Plan 2: A New Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for the ACT*.

In response to the development pressures at the Gungahlin town centre, the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is undertaking a planning refresh for the town centre (the centre). The planning refresh is an opportunity to review the Territory Plan requirements for the centre, and to seek community input as an important part of the information required to inform any potential changes. If changes are required, they will be made through a variation to the Territory Plan where an additional opportunity for community engagement would be provided.

A first stage of community engagement on the planning refresh commenced on 1 March 2017 and concluded on 4 May 2017. This period of consultation was extended from the original closing date of 14 April 2017 to provide an opportunity for further engagement.

A broad range of community engagement activities were undertaken to gather input from local residents, businesses, those who use the centre and also the wider Canberra community. This engagement report presents the findings from this first stage of community engagement for the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. It summarises the activities undertaken and the key outcomes that will inform the development of the Gungahlin Town Centre Draft Planning Refresh Report. The planning refresh study area is shown in **Map 1**.

Map 1: Gungahlin town centre planning refresh study area



THE PLANNING REFRESH

The Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh (the planning refresh) aims to respond to the growth and change that is occurring within the centre and to reassess the community's needs and aspirations for the centre.

The planning refresh focuses around three key issues as indicated below:

- **Building height and character:** With strong demand for living in the centre and major investment proposals emerging, it is important to have a community conversation about the style, height and bulk of future development. The planning refresh will consider the impact of taller development in the centre particularly in relation to the introduction of light rail.
- **Upgrading and enhancing public spaces:** As the centre and surrounding suburbs evolve, public spaces and places that meet community needs are required. Identifying what exactly are the most important aspects of public spaces is an important element of the planning refresh.
- **Walking, cycling and road transport:** The design of the centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods influences how safe, accessible, enjoyable and convenient it is to travel through the town centre by walking, cycling, public transport and cars. The planning refresh will consider how the active travel connections and the road network could be improved for better connectivity.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The community engagement process for the planning refresh aimed to inform, consult and involve key stakeholders and the community at important stages of the planning process.

The planning refresh project team engaged with businesses, building owners and lessees, community groups and residents to ensure concerns and aspirations were understood for the development of the planning refresh. Consultation provided the community with an opportunity to meet with government and planners face-to-face to discuss issues and ideas for the centre and to respond to the current planning conversations taking place. While all feedback was considered, it should be noted that consensus could not always be achieved and not every comment could be accommodated within the planning refresh.

All engagement activities reflect the ACT Government's policies and guidelines on community engagement. Please refer to <http://yoursay.act.gov.au> for information on our approach to engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of community engagement on the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh have been to:

- identify and consult with all key stakeholders
- inform the community about the planning refresh and what the planning refresh can and cannot do
- gather information from the community to inform the preparation of the planning refresh
- focus discussion on the three key issues:
 - > building height and character
 - > upgrading and enhancing public spaces and
 - > walking, cycling and road transport
- communicate and consult with residents and users of the centre and the surrounding community
- provide an opportunity to consult with the broader Canberra community via online engagement techniques, and
- offer the opportunity to raise ideas and concerns upfront, so the planning refresh is informed by community input.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A variety of engagement activities and tools were used during the community engagement period in an attempt to reach the broader cross section of the key stakeholders and community members with an interest in the Gungahlin town centre.

Table 1 provides an overview of the different engagement activities undertaken during community engagement.

Table 1: Overview of the community engagement activities

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	DATE	PARTICIPANTS
Commencement of community consultation by media release	1 March 2017	
Meet the Planners	8 March 2017	40+ visitors
Planning in the pub	11 April 2017	Approximately 40 people
Stakeholder workshop	4 May 2017	20 people
Youth engagement events	Three events held during March and April 2017	Approximately 102 youth
Your Say survey	1 March – 17 April 2017	935 responses
Quick poll #1	3 March – 16 March 2017	131 responses
Quick poll #2	17 March – 17 April 2017	145 responses
EPSDD Facebook page – Four posts	Facebook posts made between 1 March – 17 April 2017	3,624 reached
EPSDD Facebook page – Live feed	4 April 2017	11,478 reached 5,002 views 170 comments, likes and shares
EPSDD Twitter account – Four posts	Tweets made between 1 March – 17 April 2017	6,362 impressions 140 engagements including 27 link clicks, 6 retweets and 2 likes
Email submissions	Received in response to community engagement	16 submissions

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	DATE	PARTICIPANTS
Your Say webpage	24 March - 4 May 2017	1963 unique visits (total number of individuals)
EPSDD project webpage	24 March - 4 May 2017	297 unique visits (total number of individuals)

INDIVIDUAL STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Meetings were held with key stakeholders to gain further insight into issues that could be addressed in the planning refresh.

Table 2: Individual key stakeholders meetings

DATE	PARTICIPANT	# MEETINGS
12 April 2017	Gungahlin Community Council	1
15 May 2017	Empire Global	6

ACT GOVERNMENT

Agencies responsible for service delivery and consequently the implementation of the Gungahlin town centre planning refresh in the long term include the following:

- Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) identifies Territory-owned land appropriate to release for sale.
- Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) maintain path and road infrastructure and urban open spaces, including playgrounds, parkland, and libraries.
- The Territory Plan unit within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) translates the final endorsed planning recommendations into the Territory Plan in the form of renewed precinct codes.
- The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) considers noise pollution and relationships between different uses, particularly the interface between residential, commercial and service areas.
- The Education and Training Directorate (ETD) is responsible for public schools in the area.
- The Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS) is responsible for the Emergency Services infrastructure and crime prevention.
- Health Directorate provides a comprehensive range of health services and sets policy and plans the delivery of health services to ensure these services meet community needs.



INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The internet and social media were used throughout the community engagement process to provide project information, 'meet the planners' session details and opportunities for engagement and feedback.

Engagement material was available to the public on the ACT Government's engagement website 'Your Say' that became available on 24 March 2017. The 'Your Say' website enabled discussion by providing users with interactive tools such as surveys and public forums. Information on this website included discussion on the three key issues, background, key development site map, study area map and discussion quick polls.

Information was also provided on the ACT Government's planning website which included a link to the engagement website.

Links to relevant engagement websites included:

- EPSDD project web page www.planning.act.gov.au/Gungahlin
- Engagement HQ web page <http://yoursay.act.gov.au/gungahlin-town-centre-planning-refresh>
- Facebook [facebook.com/actgovepsdd](https://www.facebook.com/actgovepsdd)
- Twitter [@EPSSD_Comms](https://twitter.com/EPSSD_Comms)
- Project email Gungahlin@act.gov.au



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The outcomes of all community engagement activities are summarised below.

Some comments may not be able to be resolved through the planning refresh process and require EPSDD to discuss further with the responsible ACT Government directorates. Therefore, not all community feedback received throughout the process may be directly reflected in the planning for Gungahlin town centre refresh.

Table 3: Community engagement activities

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	DATES	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Information displays	Gungahlin Library	1 March – 17 April 2017	unknown
Planning in the Pub	siren Bar	11 April 2017	Approximately 40 people
Meet the Planners	Gungahlin town centre	8 April 2017	40+ visitors
Stakeholder workshop	Gungahlin Library	4 May 2017	20 people

INFORMATION DISPLAYS

Information displays included a series of posters illustrating the key issues for consideration in the planning refresh. The displays also provided information about the various options available to provide feedback and hard copy feedback forms were made available on site.

‘PLANNING IN THE PUB’ AND ‘MEET THE PLANNERS’ SESSIONS

The Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mick Gentleman MLA and the Minister for Transport Canberra and City Services, Meegan Fitzharris MLA, hosted a ‘Planning in the Pub’ session on 11 April 2017. EPSDD also hosted a ‘Meet the Planners’ session on 8 March 2017 in the centre.

The key messages from these sessions are summarised below:

- Building height/shape may not be as important as quality.
- Look at how people feel when standing next to a building.
- Look at distance views – what does that say about a place?
- Why go above 20 storeys?
- 26 storeys would look into my backyard.
- Looking at towers from backyards is undesirable.
- Capacity of high rise buildings would mean a suburb next to my backyard.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

A stakeholder workshop was held on 4 May 2017 at the Gungahlin Library to obtain input into the planning refresh and to facilitate discussion about the future of the centre. The stakeholders represented at the workshop included residents, local business owners, developers and the Gungahlin Community Council.

The stakeholder workshop included a variety of engagement activities to gain feedback from attendees. Activities included developing word clouds for strengths and weaknesses, world cafes on the planning refresh themes and a visioning exercise. The stakeholder workshop report is provided at **Appendix A**.

The key messages from the stakeholder workshop are summarised below:

GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE’S STRENGTHS

- its potential to become a destination like other centres
- experiencing continuous growth and businesses are benefiting from this
- its proximity to Yerrabi Pond
- its sense of community and its role as a cultural hub

GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE’S WEAKNESSES

- barriers to accessing the centre and traffic congestion
- insufficient green spaces and landscaping
- Gungahlin Oval should be open to the public
- inadequate lighting and connections to surrounding suburbs
- population growth causing infrastructure issues
- lack of integrated planning and planning legacy issues from past decisions
- lack of design and construction quality in buildings
- insufficient cycling facilities
- insufficient jobs in the town centre resulting in the need to commute from Gungahlin for work.

BUILDING HEIGHT AND CHARACTER

- There were a variety of views provided about what building heights are appropriate for the town centre. While some attendees thought that new development has created a new precedent for building heights and character, other attendees supported the lower building heights in the Territory Plan. Some attendees thought that high rise development is most appropriately located closer to the core of the town centre, rather than at the edges.
- There were concerns about the appropriateness, interface and overshadowing between precincts with higher buildings and low rise suburban areas. There were concerns about the impact of higher density on traffic congestion and road access to the centre. It was suggested that high rise development should step down towards suburban areas.
- Support for high rise development noted that height is not as much of a concern if light and vistas are retained and that building design should focus on better design rather than height.

UPGRADING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SPACES

- Much of the discussion focused on Gungahlin Place as one of the main public open spaces in the town centre. Attendees noted that it has limited seating, tables and recreational activities (including for a range of age groups and passive and active recreation). It also requires better access and connections so it is easily accessible to everyone.
- More generally, green spaces should be improved with landscaping, greenery and shade.
- Community activity in public open spaces should be encouraged through pop-ups, cafes and coffee carts.

WALKING, CYCLING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

- Attendees noted the need for ensure good access to a range of community, recreational and transport facilities (e.g. Yerrabi Pond, light rail, schools).
- For cycling, attendees noted that paths should be connected as they are currently disjointed, they should be separated for walkers and cyclists, and safer access across Gundaroo Drive and the roundabouts should be provided. Other suggestions included providing safe and secure bicycle parking/storage and introducing a bike hire scheme.
- For walking, attendees thought more age-friendly walking infrastructure (e.g. seating and light) was needed, along with improving the permeability and legibility of paths through the town centre.
- For road/vehicular access to the centre, concerns included traffic management, the need for a mix of long and short term parking, increasing traffic on narrow streets, and that traffic flow needs to be managed.
- Suggestions included decreasing speed limits and provide traffic calming measures on streets in and around the town centre and diverting traffic to the periphery of the town centre to avoid Hibberson Street.

The majority of comments made in the vision exercise reflected the desire for Gungahlin to become a more inclusive, vibrant and entertaining centre and ensuring the place is inclusive and has a sense of community.



'I DON'T HAVE AN ISSUE (...) WITH THE
LOOK OF TALL BUILDINGS. ALTHOUGH
THEY HAVE TO LOOK BETTER THAN
STACKED SQUARE BOXES (...)
MY CONCERNS ARE WITH THEM
BLOCKING OUT THE SUN (...)
ESPECIALLY IN WINTER"...

FEMALE, YEAR 11

YOUTH WORKSHOPS

Three youth engagement events were undertaken with students from Burgmann Anglican School, Gungahlin College, Palmerston Primary and Amaroo School. The workshops aimed to help young people understand key aspects of the planning refresh, workshop the issues and obtain their views/feedback.

Table 4: Youth workshops

LOCATION	DATES	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Burgmann Anglican School (years 10, 11 and 12)	28 March 2017	32 Students
Gungahlin College (years 11 and 12)	30 March 2017	23 Students
Palmerston District Primary School (years 5 and 6)	4 April 2017	47 Students



“HAVING TOWERS LIKE IN BELCONNEN WILL MAKE THE TOWN CENTRE LOOK OVERCROWDED AND MAY PUT PEOPLE OFF COMING THERE (GUNG AHLIN)”.

MALE, YEAR 11

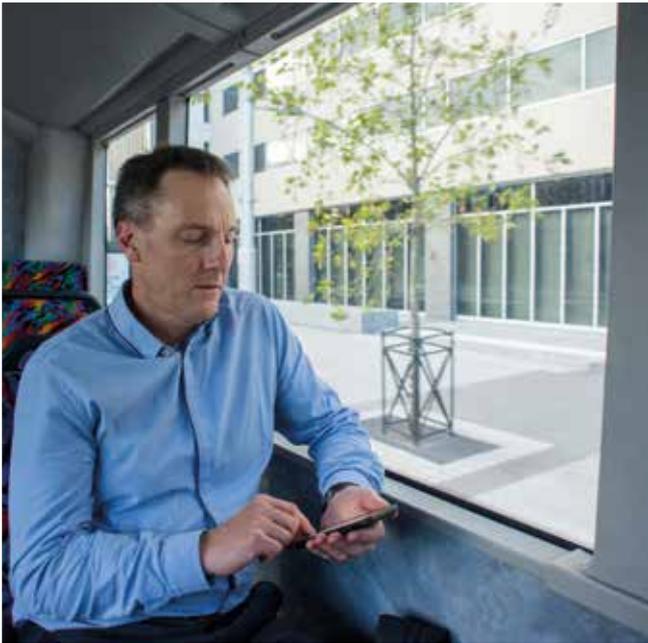
KEY MESSAGES

BUILDING HEIGHTS AND CHARACTER

There were a variety of views expressed about building heights, however the majority of young people supported an increase in building heights of up to 10 storeys, primarily outside the town centre itself, as there were concerns about overshadowing of public spaces in the town centre. The majority supported increasing building heights within the town centre between four to six storeys along Hibberson Street.

UPGRADING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SPACES

The majority of young people supported the idea of greening the town centre, however had mixed opinions as to where the green spaces should be. For some, the idea of having smaller green open spaces around the outskirts of the town centre so that people can have a shopping experience in the centre and relax when they leave the centre would be ideal. These open spaces could be near where park and ride is located. Other young people supported the idea of replacing one of the town centre squares (Gungahlin Place) with a large fenced open area where children could play and parents could relax after shopping or eating out. There was also general consensus that, when an apartment complex is built, there must be access to green open spaces close by.



WALKING, CYCLING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

Transport was a primary concern for the majority of young people. Depending on their daily circumstances, young people utilise all modes of transport to travel in and out of the town centre. Interestingly, many indicated that they seldom use ‘mixed’ modes of transport. The majority of young people experience issues with bus frequency, traffic congestion and for those driving, the difficulty of finding long stay parking and parking in general. Furthermore, young people noted that it is difficult for everyone to get in and out of the centre from 3.30pm onwards, noting there are long waits for buses and traffic congestion, which also made it more difficult for pedestrians.

In summary, young people felt that if the development of high rise apartments continues, Hibberson Street should be closed to vehicular traffic. New park and ride facilities should be provided to support light rail because high rise development may increase congestion and safety. There was general consensus for the need to improve/build upon existing walking and cycling paths in and around the town centre to improve permeability and connections with the neighbouring suburbs.



“ I LIVE (...) OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE, TRAFFIC IS SO BAD AFTER 3.30PM THAT WE SOMETIMES CAN’T GET OUT OF OUR DRIVEWAY.

MY PARENTS ARE WORRIED (...) WHEN MORE AND MORE PEOPLE LIVE IN GUNGAHLIN, ESPECIALLY IF THERE WILL BE MORE CARS”.

FEMALE, YEAR 11

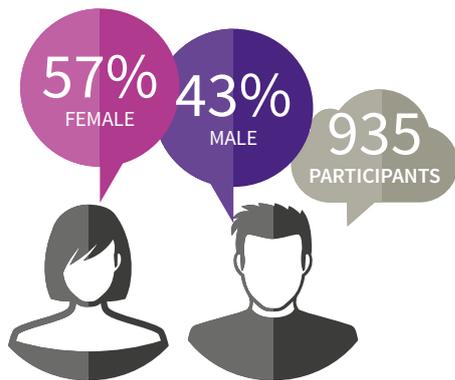
YOUR SAY SURVEY RESPONSES

Feedback forms were made available in paper copy format to the public at the 'Meet the Planners' and as an online survey through the ACT Government's 'Your Say' website. Not all questions were mandatory so not all questions have been answered by the participants. Some questions were also open to multiple responses. The survey results are outlined in the following section. A total of 935 people completed the survey. The Your Say survey results are provided in **Appendix B**.

BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHICS

More females (57%) than males (43%) participated in the survey.

Figure 1: Gender of respondents



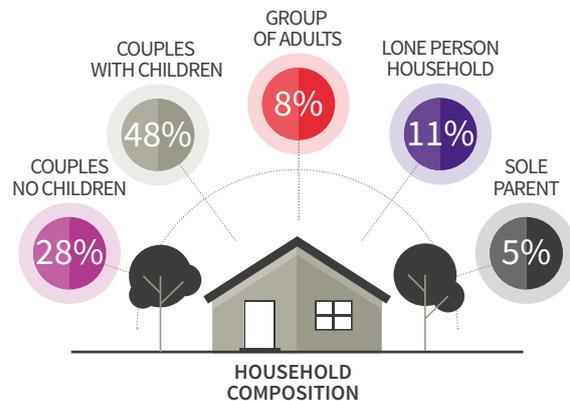
The greatest response was received from the 20 to 39 year age bracket (46%), followed by the 40 to 59 age bracket (38%), the 60+ age bracket (10%) and those up to 19 years of age (6%).

Figure 2: Age of respondents



Almost half the surveys were completed by couples with children (48%), followed by couples without children (28%), single person household (11%), group of adults (8%) and sole parents (5%).

Figure 3: Household composition of respondents



"I DO NOT WANT THE TOWN CENTRE TO BE 'LIKE THE CITY', BIG ENOUGH TO BE INTERESTING AND HAVE THINGS TO DO BUT NOT TOO BIG TO GET LOST IN".

MALE, YEAR 11

YOUR USE OF GUNGAHLIN TOWN CENTRE

QUESTION: *How often do you visit the Gungahlin town centre? What did you typically do at your last few trips to the Gungahlin town centre? How do you usually travel to and from the centre?*

728 people responded to this question. 57% indicated they visit once or twice a week, 30% indicated they visit daily, 8% just once or twice a month, 4% occasionally and 1% never visit it the centre.

Over half (54%) of responses visited the centre for shopping and supermarkets, while restaurants, cafes, and take away are the second most common use at 19%.

The majority of respondents travel to Gungahlin town centre by car, as a driver (56%), and 17% as a passenger. The other modes used are as follows: walking (10%), bus (9%), bicycle (5%) and motorcycle (3%).

BUILDING HEIGHT AND CHARACTER

QUESTION: *What are your views on building heights in the town centre? What building height and scale do you think would be appropriate in the Gungahlin town centre?*

A number of options were provided which respondents could choose from, and more than one option could be selected. 933 responses were provided to this question.

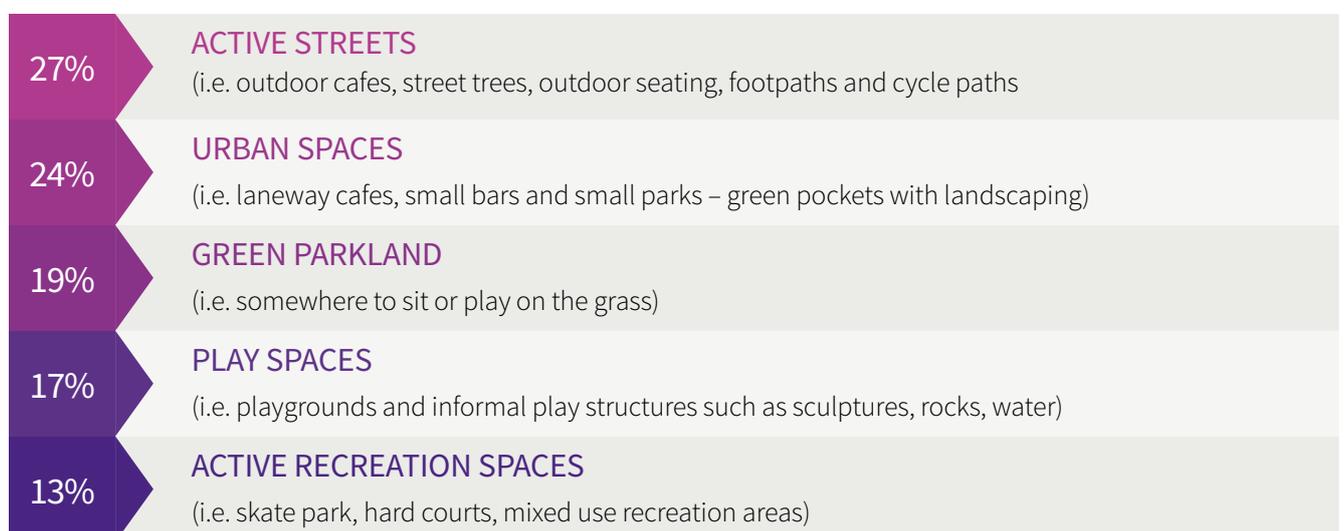
One third (32%) of these indicated that good design was more important than the height of the building. 11% said they would be happy with high rise buildings in Precinct 2B. One quarter (25%) of respondents didn't want high rise buildings nearby, while 18% of respondents felt that the building heights identified in the Territory Plan (4-12 storeys) are appropriate for Gungahlin town centre. Of those who were happy with high rise buildings, 22% of respondents indicated that these were appropriate for the town centre.

Five photos were also presented in the survey to provide examples of different building heights and designs and survey participants were asked what would be appropriate for the Gungahlin town centre. Whilst there was a mix of views, of the 932 responses provided, half of the respondents supported building heights of 5 storeys (23%) and 8 storeys (22%). Of those who selected the option of "Other", the quality of design was seen to be an important factor in deciding height.

UPGRADING AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SPACES

QUESTION: *What public spaces do you most enjoy in the town centre? In the town centre with denser buildings, what are the most important public space features for you? What is important to you for our public spaces?*

Respondents were asked to rank five written statements about what they most enjoyed in the town centre:



Survey participants were also asked to rank the following statements about what are the most important features of public space? There were 630 responses and to this question, the following shows how they ranked these statements:



Respondents were asked what they thought was important for the town centre's public spaces. 489 people responded to this open ended question:

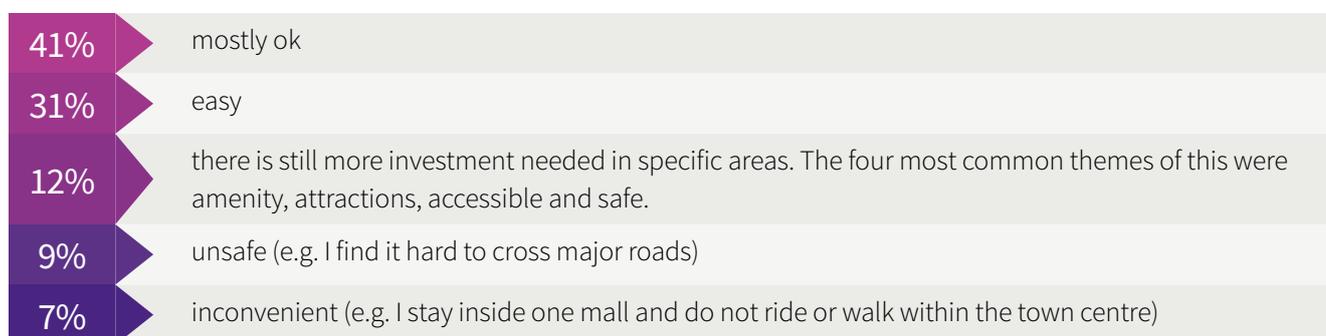


A variety of other responses made up the remaining 58% of responses – including vibrant and active space; lighting and safety; cafes, restaurants and outdoor seating; attractive and interesting design; seating and facilities; solar access, shade, wind and rain protection; clean and well maintained; less traffic, noise; and parking.

WALKING, CYCLING AND ROAD TRANSPORT

QUESTION: How easy do you find it to walk or cycle within the town centre? What do you think would encourage more people to ride or walk to the centre? What do you think would encourage more people to use public transport?

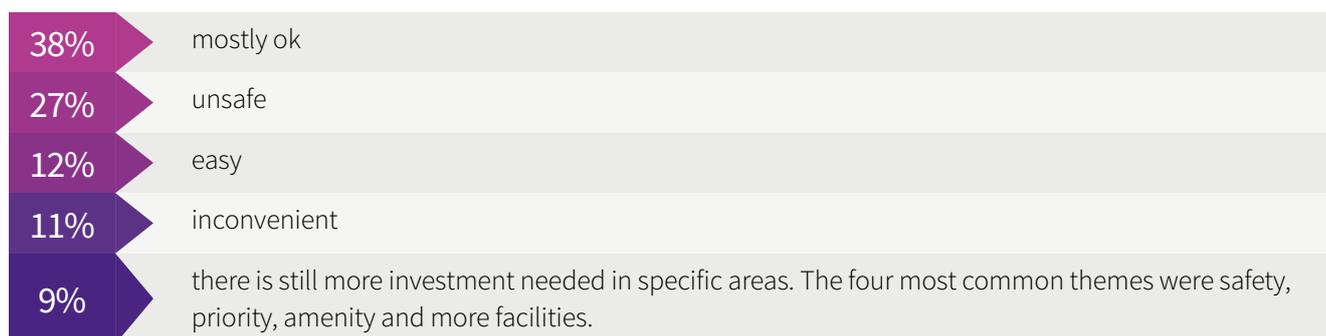
Respondents were asked to choose the option which describes how easy it is to walk within the town centre. There were 629 responses to this question as follows:



Further comments on walking included:

- Close Hibberson Street to traffic
- More pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures
- Sheltered connections between shopping centres
- Problems with traffic, congestion and speeding

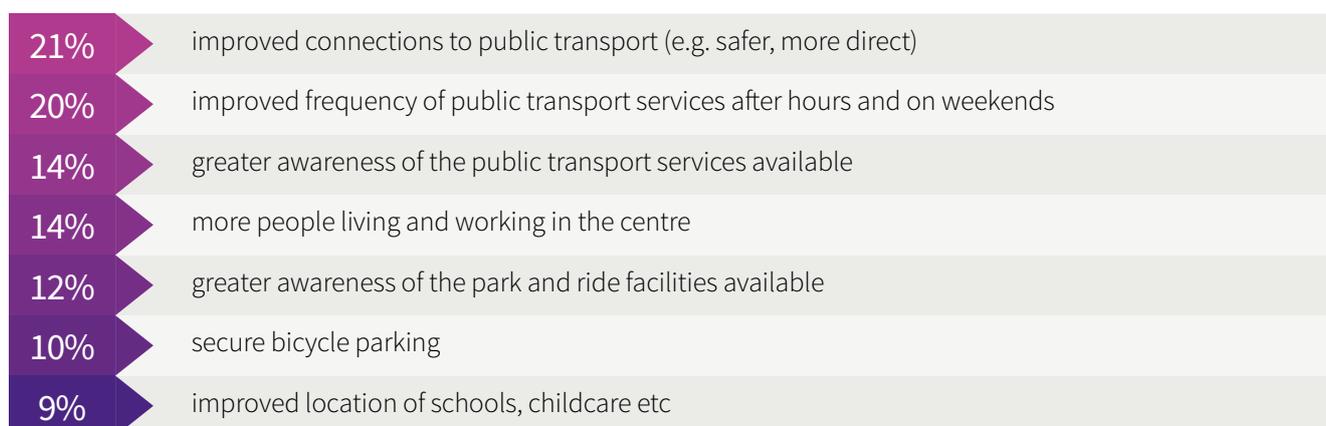
Respondents were asked to choose the option which describes how easy it is to cycle within the town centre. There were 454 responses to this question as follows:



Respondents were asked what they thought would encourage more people to ride or walk to the centre. More than one option could be selected. There were 383 responses to this question as follows:



Respondents were asked what they thought would encourage more people to use public transport. There were 561 responses to this question as follows:





QUICK POLLS

Two quick polls were conducted on the Your Say website.

QUESTION: *Quick Poll 1 – Do you think marker buildings (24 – 27 storeys) could be appropriate in the town centre?*

258 responses were received, of which 200 supported marker buildings, and 58 did not. During the analysis of this data, large numbers of responses were identified from the same IP addresses¹, suggesting the same people had voted multiple times. Consequently, to ensure the integrity of the process and reduce the impact of bias, duplicate responses received from a single IP address were removed from the results.

Once the duplicate responses had been removed, 131 responses remained, of which 60% were in support of marker buildings and 40% were against marker buildings as shown in **Figure 4**.

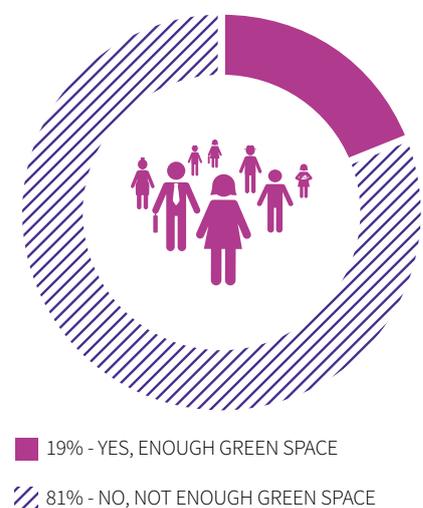
QUESTION: *Quick poll 2 – Is there enough green space in the town centre?*

182 responses were received, of which 36 voted 'yes' and 146 voted 'no'. Once responses from duplicate IP addresses¹ were removed, 145 responses remained, of which 19% voted 'yes' and 81% voted 'no' as shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 4: Quick poll #1 results



Figure 5: Quick poll #2 results



1 - An IP address is a number that identifies each computer using the internet.

FACEBOOK

The community had the opportunity to contribute to the planning refresh discussion through the social media site, Facebook (both through the EPSDD Facebook page and the Gungahlin Community Council’s Facebook page).

Table 6 summarises into themes and key messages all of the online responses on the Facebook pages.

Table 6: Summary of all online response on the EPSDD and Gungahlin Community Council Facebook pages

THEME	KEY MESSAGES
Development/ building heights (raised 9 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Opposition to high rise. → Concern that with more residential, there would be a need to expand the CBD to service the local community. → Concern that what is currently unfolding in Gungahlin is not consistent with what the community wants.
Traffic, congestion, parking – accessibility (raised 6 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Increased residential density will add to existing traffic congestion. → Need to improve roads to cope with the traffic, many are already congested. → Concerns about the lack of visitor parking in new developments. → Concerns that traffic surveys are not robust enough/reflective of the impact of future developments – needs to be comprehensive and look at development potential across the whole centre. → Anticipating and concerned that residents in these new apartments will work outside Gungahlin and this will lead to traffic chaos.
Sceptical (raised 6 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Concerns about the integrity of EPSDD’s online Your Say survey. → Feel the government doesn’t listen to what the community wants. → The survey questions are leading/limiting.
Consultation (raised 4 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use vox pops² to get a broad range of views. → Meeting the Planner sessions not convenient for those who don’t work in Gungahlin.
Commercial/retail (raised 2 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Need more diversity (e.g. JB Hi-Fi, weekend markets). → Need more local employment opportunities.
Residential development (raised 2 times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Concerns that there are high vacancy rates (e.g. along Flemington Road) and who would move into the new developments. → Concerns there are too many apartment blocks.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Questions about the cinema.

2 - Vox pop comes from the Latin phrase vox populi, meaning ‘voice of the people’. The vox pop is a tool used in many forms of media to provide a snapshot of public opinion.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

16 written submissions were received and the main themes of the comments are summarised in **Table 7**. Submissions can be viewed at **Appendix C**. Where a number of feedback items were repeatedly raised by separate individuals, these numbers have been identified under the ‘common response’ column.

Table 7: Key messages from submissions

THEME	COMMENT	COMMON RESPONSE
Active travel	<p>One submission specifically supported pedestrianising Hibberson Street. Several submissions offered a variety of suggestions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ensure easy walking/cycling connections linking various precincts/ destinations e.g. to open space, neighbouring suburbs; → ensure light rail and bus networks are accessible/connected; and → improve safety for pedestrians, prioritise active travel within certain distances of the centre e.g. 400m for walking, 800m for cycling. 	9
Building heights and residential development	<p>Most comments offered a range of suggestions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → impose height limits; → consider overshadowing on existing buildings and streets; → ensure high quality design and amenity; and → encourage residential developments with cafes/restaurants through transit oriented development e.g. densities over 100 dwellings per hectare. <p>Just a few submissions expressed support for tall buildings e.g. 27 storeys as marker buildings and some a maximum of 8 to 10 storeys.</p> <p>One submission was specifically opposed to tall tower buildings stating clear opposition to any more after the completion of the Infinity Towers.</p>	9
Traffic, transport and parking	<p>Most of these comments were either suggestions or concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → consider improving the flow of traffic around the centre, including on cross streets and entrances/exits to car parks; → traffic calming measures to make streets safer for all users (vehicles, pedestrians/cyclists); → improve road connections to neighbouring suburbs as many major roads are congested; → ensure adequate parking for differing needs e.g. seniors, families, consider parking in terms of Transit Oriented Development principles; and → need to strongly encourage sustainable travel. 	8
Engagement	<p>About half of the comments on engagement reflected concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → some engagement events are not convenient and require more advertising; → the survey has limitations; → improve definitions; and → the other half specifically welcomed the planning refresh. 	7

THEME	COMMENT	COMMON RESPONSE
Planning	<p>Most of these comments offered suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → allow flexibility in the sequencing of development to enable investor interest to be captured; → facilitate authentic Transit Oriented Development; → consider wider crown lease incentives to encourage investment/additional land uses. <p>One concern was raised that the current approach to building approvals in the industrial and retail areas is chaotic.</p>	5
Public/open spaces	<p>Almost all comments made were suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → plan for quality public realm and investment at street level; → improve the existing public spaces/parks; → provide more high quality green public spaces in the town centre – such as pocket parks – particularly near new developments; and → create an urban square, integrate open space, paths and public transport infrastructure to ensure they are well connected and limit overshadowing of open space – do a benchmarking exercise. 	5
Character	<p>Most comments were suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → consider a mix of uses with taller buildings so that it remains vibrant, interactive and engaging; → incentivise excellence in built form; → manage the transition to neighbouring lower height residential areas; → integrate a spaces and places strategy; → preserve solar access to streets and opens space; and → evolve a unique character for Gungahlin. 	4
Community facilities	<p>Suggestions that community facilities will need to increase and concerns that with rapid development, the options for available land will become very limited, so space should be reserved for future community facilities.</p>	2

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

The following summary highlights the key messages heard during stage 1 community engagement on the planning refresh for the Gungahlin town centre. These messages together with the outcomes of technical analysis will inform the preparation of the draft planning refresh report.

Overall, the feedback received during this stage of engagement was predominantly supportive for the continued considered development of the Gungahlin town centre, however there was some concern regarding the increase in building heights within the centre and the potential impact on the road, pedestrian and open space network.

Table 9: Key messages from community engagement and response

KEY MESSAGES FROM ENGAGEMENT	PLANNING REFRESH RESPONSE
<p>Building height and character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → There were mixed views about the potential for increasing building heights in the town centre. → Support for retaining the current building heights noted concern about traffic congestion, bulk and scale, overshadowing, privacy and the interface with existing development. → Support for increasing building heights noted that the town centre character was changing, design quality was more important than building height, the need for additional marker buildings and the strong demand for residential development. 	<p>The planning refresh will consider the evolving character of the town centre.</p> <p>The impacts of changes to the building height and character will be assessed using the 3D Canberra model and Canberra Strategic Transport Model (CSTM).</p> <p>Ways to improve design quality will also be considered.</p>
<p>Upgrading and enhancing public spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → More public spaces and open space are wanted by the community in the town centre, including active and passive recreation spaces and pocket parks. → Public spaces should have high quality design and amenity including landscaping, seating, shade, recreational activities, playgrounds and opportunities for community activities and good access. → The need for improvements to the amenity of Gungahlin Place was identified, including landscaping, seating and shade. 	<p>The planning refresh will consider how the town centre’s public spaces and surrounding open space can be improved and better utilised through place audits.</p> <p>Improving connections to public spaces and surrounding open space will be a key consideration in looking at the active travel network.</p>
<p>Walking, cycling and road transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → There was significant concern about increasing traffic congestion as a result of the continuing growth of the town centre. Traffic flow and intersections also need to be improved. → There are concerns that parking supply is not meeting short and long term demand. → Safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorist needs to be improved. → There is strong support to improve the pedestrian and cycling network both within and into the town centre. 	<p>The impacts of the growth of the town centre will be assessed using CSTM.</p> <p>Where these impacts can be managed, intersection and road upgrades will be identified.</p> <p>The active travel network will be assessed to identify where additional connections and improvements can be made.</p>

NEXT STEPS

All comments and submissions received from the community and stakeholders in this first stage of community engagement have been considered in the development of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh. The Planning Refresh snapshot has been released concurrently with this report.

Information on the planning refresh is available at:
<https://yoursay.act.gov.au/gungahlin-town-centre-planning-refresh>



© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2018

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment and Planning Directorate,
ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.environment.act.gov.au