

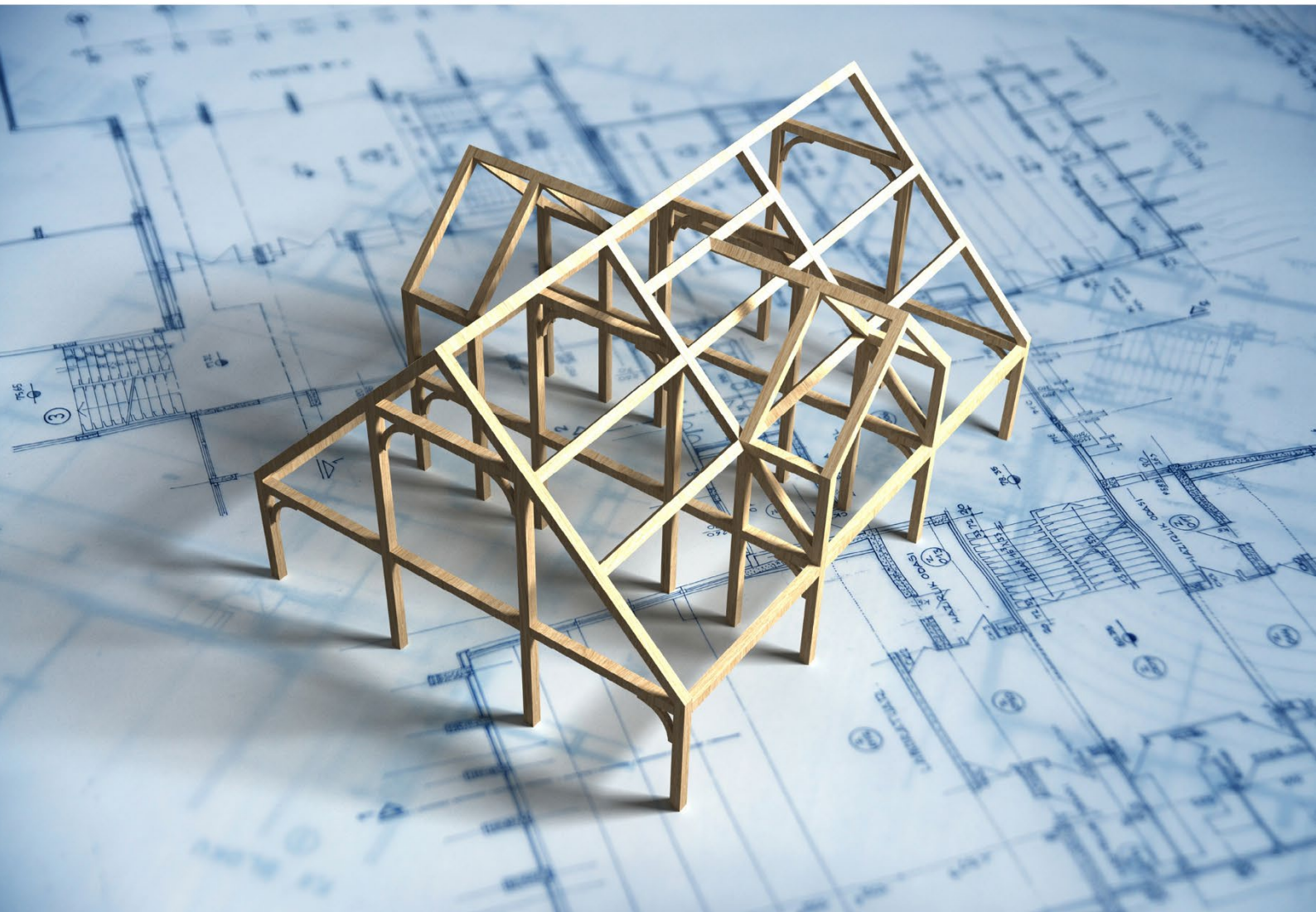


ACT
Government

National Planning Reform Blueprint

Australian Capital Territory

January 2024 progress report



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Measure 2

Planning Ministers will report to National Cabinet on state, regional and local strategic plans before 1 March 2024 that reflect their jurisdiction's share of housing supply targets agreed by National Cabinet and links with infrastructure pipelines.

National housing supply targets

The National Housing Accord included an initial target to deliver one million new, well-located homes across Australia over five years from mid-2024. This was increased in August 2023 to 1.2 million new well-located homes over five years from mid-2024. This equates to approximately 4,300 dwellings per year for the ACT, between 2024 and 2029.

The key role for the States and Territories under the Accord is to facilitate delivery of 20,000 affordable dwellings in collaboration with the Commonwealth (10,000 to be delivered by the Commonwealth and 10,000 by the States/Territories), support the development of the Community Housing Sector, and progress land and zoning reforms.

The ACT's share of the 10,000 affordable dwellings under the Accord is 350 dwellings. Of this, 175 dwellings will be funded and delivered by the ACT Government, and 175 dwellings will be funded by the Commonwealth and delivered by the community housing sector. The ACT Government is working closely with the community housing sector to support them in accessing Commonwealth funding to deliver on their share of the commitment.

Details about plans for delivering against the ACT Government's 175 dwelling allocation are detailed in the National Housing Accord [implementation schedule](#).

Planning and housing supply in the ACT

Planning in the ACT has to consider and work together with the National Capital Plan administered by the Commonwealth National Capital Authority. Noting that the ACT performs equivalent state and local government functions the following information represents planning for all of the ACT. Consideration of regional growth and development is also monitored in surrounding local councils outside of the ACT. The ACT is also closely connected to the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan and is important in considering regional employment, housing and infrastructure.

In the ACT, planning for growth including residential development is set out in the [ACT Planning Strategy](#) (2018). The ACT Planning Strategy's vision is to be a sustainable, competitive and equitable city that respects Canberra as a city in the landscape and the National Capital, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change. The Strategy includes a target for at least 70 per cent of new housing to be within the existing urban footprint indicating that greenfield growth will be limited into the future.

The ACT has in recent years undertaken a review of the planning system and introduced reforms and new planning system through 2023. This includes a new [Planning Act 2023 and more detailed strategic planning for the urban areas of the ACT through new District Strategies](#).

The District Strategies set out where and how much housing can be accommodated in the best locations across the city to meet the projected population of 695,000 people in the ACT with 100,000 new homes by 2050. The District Strategies have included analysis of current capacity (under planning provisions in place) and identify areas most suitable and where changes could occur to deliver future housing. As part of the implementation of the District Strategies, the ACT will continue to investigate opportunities and requirements to deliver housing supply and choice in the key sites and change areas identified in the strategies.

Housing demand modelling in the District Strategies suggests that 100,000 additional dwellings in the ACT will be needed by about 2050. Consistent with the Planning Strategy and the [ACT Housing Strategy](#), 70 per cent of the new dwellings will be delivered within the existing urban boundary and 30 per cent in greenfield precincts.

The table below shows the estimated opportunities for new housing in each district, that is, the potential pipeline of new supply if work is undertaken to investigate and facilitate the change particularly for change areas and potential urban regeneration areas.

Table 1 – Opportunities for future housing: Indicative potential pipeline of supply and capacity (dwellings)

District	Expected development under existing plans	Potential capacity in Category 1-3 change areas and selected key sites	Potential capacity in potential urban regeneration areas (based on urban character)	Total	District's Share of total
Belconnen	12,500 – 14,000	1,500 – 2,000	14,000 – 15,500	28,000 – 31,500	21 – 24%
Woden	4,000 – 5,000	12,000 – 13,000	5,000 – 5,500	21,000 – 23,500	16 – 18%
Molonglo Valley	20,000 – 24,000	N/A	N/A	20,000 – 24,000	15 – 18%
Tuggeranong	300 – 500	3,500 – 4,000	12,500 – 14,000	16,350 – 18,500	12 – 14%
Inner North and City	7,000 – 7,500	1,500 – 11,000	6,000 – 7,000	14,500 – 25,500	11 – 19%
Inner South	3,500 – 4,000	1,000 – 5,500	3,500 – 4,000	8,000 – 13,500	6 – 10%
Gungahlin	3,500 – 4,000	N/A	2,000 – 2,500	5,500 – 6,500	4 – 5%
Weston Creek	1,000 – 1,500	N/A	3,500 – 4,000	4,500 – 5,500	3 – 4%
Total	51,800 – 60,500	19,500 – 35,500	45,500 - 52500	117,800 – 148,500	

In addition, the [Indicative Land Release Program 2023-24 to 2027-28](#) includes a snapshot of residential land releases from 2023 to 2028 of 16,935 dwellings, plus an estimated 1,000 to 1,500 dwellings per year on privately owned land.

The Planning Strategy and District Strategies indicate areas where supporting infrastructure and investment will be required to support and facilitate growth including housing.

The ACT Housing Strategy 2018 set a policy that 15% of government residential land release each year will be for affordable, community and public housing.

These targets are set on particular release sites and indicated through the Indicative Land Release Program released annually.

Links with infrastructure pipelines

The Territory is one of the fastest growing jurisdictions and is expected to reach half a million residents by 2027. As Canberra's population grows, the government will invest in enabling infrastructure and seek to drive private sector investment into renewal precincts, as well as new housing and commercial and employment opportunities.

The [ACT Infrastructure Plan](#) provides a framework for how the Government will renew established infrastructure and create new infrastructure to meet the needs of 500,000+ people. The ACT Infrastructure Plan Indicative Project Pipeline shows the timing and indicative costs of future works.

Planning is underway for a range of infrastructure to support land release for future housing. This includes enabling works for new and significant redevelopment of infill areas, as well as residential estate (greenfield) development works. Enabling works encompass major roads, light rail, other transport infrastructure, education facilities, trunk drainage, water supply, sewerage and energy supply for development areas. Residential estate development involves similar infrastructure at the local and smaller scale in addition to playgrounds, shops and other infrastructure for community uses.

For example, recent infrastructure works for greenfield developments in Molonglo includes John Gorton Drive, bridges over the Molonglo River, trunk water supply system upgrades, trunk sewers and odour control works, water quality dams and ponds, relocation of major electricity transmission lines and a new zone substation. Key infrastructure work to support urban infill development includes the undergrounding of electrical lines and the decommissioning and removal of an electrical sub-station as part of a strategic focus on unlocking new land.

The ACT Government is also undertaking a program of district level infrastructure capacity studies. These studies will consider existing infrastructure networks and their capacity to provide for new housing and population growth in each district to 2050. Importantly, the capacity studies also integrate and build on analysis that was undertaken to inform preparation of the District Strategies, which were released on 27 November 2023 as part of the new ACT planning system. These inputs include district level population projections, housing supply capacity, future land use, priority areas for change and renewal, and transport planning.

Affordable housing

Delivery against the ACT's affordable rental targets under the Accord, is being progressed as part of a collective response involving ACT Government agencies and community housing sector delivery partners.

The ACT will deliver the first 35 dwellings (against its 175 affordable dwelling commitment) in 2024-25 and will continue to deliver at least 35 dwellings per year for five years, concluding with the delivery of the final 35 dwellings in 2028-29. In addition to direct delivery, which will be informed by strategic analysis embedded within the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 and District Strategies 2023), the ACT's contribution will be achieved through mechanisms such as up-front grants and ongoing

payments to community housing organisations. Refer to Measure 3 for information about the ACT's new planning system (including District Strategies) that commenced on 27 November 2023.

Housing Australia Future Fund

The ACT will facilitate delivery under the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) of 1,200 social and affordable dwellings over the five years of the Accord (2024 to 2029).

The ACT will work with project proponents (including Housing ACT, CHPs and other not-for-profit providers), Housing Australia and other financiers (where necessary) to help to develop the delivery models including commercial and funding/financing structures. This could include Housing Australia availability payments to Housing ACT to support whole of life costs associated with delivering additional public housing in the ACT.

Measure 3

Planning Ministers will undertake planning, zoning, land release and other reforms, such as increasing density, to meet their jurisdiction share of housing supply targets agreed by National Cabinet.

Summary of planning reforms

On 27 November 2023, the ACT introduced a [new planning system](#). The new planning system comprises:

- the [Planning Act 2023](#) - sets the legislative framework that underpins the new system.
- [District Strategies](#) - establish a new strategic level of planning that provides greater detail on where change could occur in consideration of a range of factors.
- the [Territory Plan](#) - the statutory plan that sets out zoning and planning requirements and facilitates the spatially led and outcomes focussed objectives of the new system.

The new planning system aligns with the strategic focus that was established through the ACT Planning Strategy in 2018, and establishes the structure that sets the direction for growth and change in the ACT over the coming decades. This is balanced by key principles which value protecting the natural environment, living standards, and the many qualities and attributes that are valued in Canberra and the ACT.

The District Strategies

The District Strategies provide an indication for the future to accommodate growth and factor in a range of important considerations. They identify where change might occur, what that change might look like and what might be needed to support and deliver that change.

The District Strategies consider what the Government has heard from communities that is important and valued by them. They identify the housing needed for future growth and indicate where that is best accommodated and what infrastructure and actions may be needed to facilitate that.

The strategies are made up of several volumes:

- Metropolitan Context and Big Drivers (outlines the underpinning analysis and directions)
- District focused strategy document (there are nine – one for each district)
- Indicative Implementation Plan
- Background Material
- Glossary of Terms

District Strategies will help guide how Canberra will change and grow towards 2038 and beyond to 2050.

The (nine) District Strategies articulate how the ACT will grow from its current population of 460,000 residents to an anticipated population of more than 695,000 by 2050. Functioning as both strategic planning and policy documents, District Strategies are place-based and tailored to respond to future growth at a metropolitan and district scales.

District Strategies identify 'change areas' and 'key sites' that are suitable locations for new housing close to services, amenities and major transport corridors. Principles to guide the change are indicated for some of these sites.

Criteria that indicate potential urban regeneration areas is also included (largely for areas around centres, transport corridors, access to services) and that indicate there are areas that may have the capacity to support change, such as through increased density.

As part of the implementation of the District Strategies, the ACT Government will investigate further planning for expanding/increasing housing supply and choice in the ACT, including progressing planning for 'key sites' and 'change areas' and potential changes in areas where density could be increased.

District Strategies also consider future infrastructure needs to support growth projections in each district and indicate where housing should be located (on the basis of set criteria) and what interventions might be needed to direct and support growth.

The Territory Plan

The Territory Plan is the statutory mechanism that will support delivery of quality outcomes through the new planning system. Assessment applications will still have to comply with specific requirements, however assessment processes will now also consider how developments respond to their setting and how proponents intend to meet desired development outcomes.

The new Territory Plan is outcomes focused and not rules based.

The Territory Plan includes assessment outcomes that align with a series of key themes. Proponents must address the assessment outcomes and provide clear plans and documentation to demonstrate how proposals will respond to the key themes.

The new Territory Plan is supported by new design guides: Urban Design Guide, Housing Design Guide, and Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Guide. The design guides provide clear guidance and examples to support proponents to deliver positive design outcomes, which also achieve the Territory Plan's assessment outcomes.

The design guides are triggered by development thresholds and will help to improve the planning, design and quality of streets, public spaces and residential development in the ACT.

The new Territory Plan establishes statutory settings which encourage and incentivise new housing supply, particularly in low-density residential suburbs, through relaxing planning restrictions which previously limited or hindered new supply in existing suburbs. These changes aim to increase supply, density and housing choice, whilst protecting suburb character and amenity for existing residents.

The housing design guide, in particular, will assist with achieving consistent standards for the quality and amenity of new residential development through articulating ways developers can incorporate good design into denser housing developments. This includes elements such as apartment size and layout, ceiling heights, solar access, natural ventilation and private open spaces like balconies.

Summary of land release reforms

The ACT Government releases an Indicative Land Release Program (ILRP) every year with the budget. The ILRP has a 5 year forward program and is for Territory land. The ACT Housing Strategy 2018 set a policy that 15% of government residential land release each year will be for affordable, community and public housing. These targets are set on particular release sites and indicated through the Indicative Land Release Program released annually.

Consideration is underway within the ACT Government about changes to improve ACT [land release](#) and delivery processes.

Consideration is being given to opportunities to address coordination between ACT Government agencies (particularly in the context of the new planning system), investing in developing a longer and medium term pipeline of land (for a variety of uses) to support Canberra's continued growth and liveability, and to maximise infill opportunities.

Land release and delivery reforms are considering what is required to support long term strategic planning and progress to detailed planning to support a pipeline of land.

Identification of government held land available for a range of uses including options for community housing is being considered. A framework for consideration of government land requests and use is also underway.

Measure 4

Planning Ministers will identify well-located 'development ready' land before 1 March 2024, having appropriate regard to the protection of land with key attributes e.g. environmental or economic.

Key findings from a development ready land stocktake¹

Land for release/sale

This is based on the ACT Government [Indicative Land Release Program](#), which accompanies the Territory Budget annually. The Program is indicative in nature and identifies ACT Government land which may be released for a range of uses over the next 5 years.

- The five-year Indicative Land Release Program (2023-24 to 2027-28) includes residential land releases to support approximately 16,935 dwellings (across a range of typologies).
- The residential program for the first year of the program (2023-24) proposes land release to support 1,883 dwellings. This includes land releases to support 280 dwellings being carried over from the 2022-23 program - due to project delays.
- Note that if larger sites are released on an englobo basis (for example Molonglo greenfield areas), this may require a developer to install essential infrastructure to support the development.
- Additionally historical data shows that the private sector generally delivers between 1,000 and 1,500 dwellings annually, this is largely through infill development.
- Collectively ACT Government land releases and private sector delivery could account for almost 4000 dwellings annually.
- The [June 2023 ACT Land and Property Report](#) indicates that 1,169 new dwellings were approved, and 2,296 new dwellings were completed in the six months to June 2023. The multi-unit planning and development pipeline includes 16,082 units across 334 sites, with 5,956 units under construction and 1,699 units completed as of June 2023. The ACT greenfield dwelling pipeline includes 7,160 release ready dwelling sites in the planners' pipeline, 4,590 sites in the developers' pipeline and 4,114 in the builders' pipeline.

¹ The ACT considers that 'development ready' land has infrastructure in place, and is subject to statutory planning, development application and building processes.

Affordable/community housing sites

The ACT has developed a pipeline of current and potential community housing sites that could be made available to community housing providers to boost the supply of affordable rental dwellings under the National Housing Accord. Some of these sites are on the Indicative Land Release Program (discussed above), and other sites have already been released or are in private ownership.

- Ginninderry Women's Housing Initiative – a pilot 'build to rent to buy' development of approximately 22 dwellings. The aim of this project is to support participants to transition from rental accommodation to home ownership.
- Taylor community housing – the release of 59 single dwelling blocks in Taylor for the construction of community housing.
- Community housing provider build-to-rent request for proposal – proposals for a build-to-rent development that includes a mix of public housing, affordable rentals and market rent units.
- CatholicCare affordable rental proposal – a proposal to build approximately 30 to 40 affordable rental units on existing church land.
- North Wright Compact Housing - delivery of 20 affordable townhouses through compact and flexible floorplans with 'room to grow' combined with environmental features, such as energy-efficient building envelope, photovoltaic system and battery storage, maximum green space, and living infrastructure.

Measure 5

Planning Ministers will streamline approval pathways and prioritise planning control amendments to support diverse housing across a range of areas, including promoting medium and high-density housing in well-located areas close to existing public transport infrastructure connections, amenities and employment.

Summary of zoning, planning and other amendments to support high and medium density, well located housing

The ACT considers that identifying ‘well-located’ areas includes an assessment of need and amenities, including proximity to services such as schools, transport, employment centres, and public open space.

The *Planning Act 2023* sets out the planning approval process and pathways. The new Act is focussed on good planning and development outcomes, including consideration of the surrounding community and impacts on wellbeing, health, recreation and the environment.

Population projections show that Canberra needs 100,000 new homes by 2050. The new Act will support this growth while delivering better outcomes for people, by enabling Canberrans to live close to shops, transport, parks, and services. That will also be balanced with protecting the natural environment and supporting communities.

The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 and the recently introduced (November 2023) District Strategies identify areas where growth and change is proposed for the future and based on consideration of five key drivers (blue-green network, economic access and opportunity, strategic movement, inclusive centres and communities, and sustainable neighbourhoods). This indicates where future change including housing is best located to occur.

New Territory Plan reforms

The new Territory Plan establishes statutory settings which encourage and incentivise new housing supply, particularly in low-density areas, through relaxing planning restrictions that previously limited or hindered new supply in existing suburbs. These changes aim to increase housing supply, density and choice, whilst protecting suburb character and amenity for existing residents, they include:

Creating new sub-elements of housing

Summary of planning, zoning and other reforms to encourage high and medium density in well located areas	Expected impacts on housing supply	Other comments
Creating new sub-elements of housing, such as build-to-rent, community housing and co-housing.	Encourage uptake of more diverse ways to deliver greater housing and rental stock.	
Allowing a block in RZ2 (Suburban Core), RZ3 (Urban Residential), RZ4 (Medium Density Residential) and RZ5 (High Density Residential) to be subdivided without a requirement to construct a new dwelling first	Greater supply of blocks that will help deliver (primarily) more low-rise or small-scale townhouse and apartment developments	Change removes the upfront costs of subdividing a block (no longer mandating the cost of construction to be borne by the owner prior to the sale of a subdivided block) and provides opportunity for the purchaser of the new block to design a dwelling that meets their needs and preferences (rather than having that determined by the original owner).
Multi-unit housing in RZ2 zones are able to have more dwellings as part of the development	Increases dwelling supply, particularly two-level townhouse and apartment developments	
Allowing apartments (limited to two storeys) in RZ2 zones, rather than only townhouses	Expected to deliver more single level dwellings that are more suitable for residents to age in place	
Removing mandatory plot ratio (floor space ratio) for multi-unit developments	Removes the restrictive size requirements for multi-unit developments, providing greater flexibility and making redevelopment more viable.	
Community housing (affordable rentals) are able to be constructed in Community Facility Zones when associated with a place or worship or supportive housing.	Allows for community organisations to diversify their offerings whilst also contributing to the supply of affordable rentals	Restrictions on where community housing is permitted helps preserve land for other community uses.
Introduction of several design guides, including a Housing Design Guide that promotes and facilitates well designed multi-unit development proposals.		While this will not directly impact housing stock, it facilitates good design outcomes – supporting the initiatives above.
The District Strategies contain implementation pathways and actions to inform more detailed planning for housing. These actions are proposed as ongoing work for budget support to implement. This includes:	More detailed planning will provide opportunities for greater housing supply and diversity in the best locations across the nine districts of the ACT.	

Summary of planning, zoning and other reforms to encourage high and medium density in well located areas	Expected impacts on housing supply	Other comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress investigations of key sites and short-, medium- and long-term change areas identified to help meet housing supply needs.• Investigate the RZ2 (Suburban Core Zone) to determine why the existing built form does not demonstrate the intended variation of housing typologies between RZ1 (Suburban Zone) and RZ2 zone.• Undertake further detailed analysis and modelling to identify future housing needs not able to be met by change areas across districts.• Investigate potential urban regeneration areas & what is needed to deliver change.• Investigate planning and design provisions that encourage supply of affordable housing.		

District Strategies reforms

The [District Strategies](#) contain implementation pathways and actions to inform more detailed planning for housing. These actions are proposed as ongoing work for budget support to implement. This includes:

- Progress investigations of key sites and short, medium and long-term change areas identified to help meet housing supply needs.
- Investigate the RZ2 (Suburban Core Zone) to determine why the existing built form does not demonstrate the intended variation of housing typologies between RZ1 (Suburban Zone) and RZ2 zone.
- Undertake further detailed analysis and modelling to identify future housing needs not able to be met by change areas across districts.
- Investigate potential urban regeneration areas & what is needed to deliver change.
- Investigate planning and design provisions that encourage supply of affordable housing

More detailed planning will provide opportunities for greater housing supply and diversity in the best locations across the nine districts of the ACT.

Summary of reforms to non-planning barriers which prevent a diversity of housing stock

The ACT Government has introduced a [stamp duty exemption](#) for dual occupancies on suburban residential blocks to encourage take-up of new provisions that allow for unit titling of a second dwelling on low density (RZ1) blocks over 800m².

The Government is also introducing changes to the lease variation charge (LVC) – a windfall gains tax – to support the development of more dual occupancy homes in Canberra.

Both the stamp duty exemption and LVC changes will encourage property owners to capitalise on the planning provisions that allow for more dual-occupancy homes in existing suburbs.

Analysis from September 2023 indicates that there are 44,709 RZ1 blocks over 800m² in the ACT. This demonstrates the potential for RZ1 land to contribute to new housing supply and greater housing diversity. Noting though that it is difficult to quantify expected impacts, given that the majority of RZ1 blocks are in private ownership.

Measure 6

Planning Ministers will create accelerated development pathways and streamline approval processes for eligible development types, particularly in well-located areas, including to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing.

Reforms to development approval pathways

Territory priority projects

The Minister for Planning and Land Management and the Chief Minister are able to declare certain development proposals (including for social and public housing) as a Territory Priority Project.

The expected impact of this reform includes the removal of third party appeal rights – often social and public housing developments are subject to heavy community scrutiny and appeals in the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Appeal timeframes can span up to and beyond three months.

More information is available here: [Territory Priority Projects](#).

Subdividing

Allowing R22 to R25 zoned blocks to be subdivided without being required to construct the new dwellings first.

This provides greater flexibility for development, particularly in relation to:

- removing the upfront costs of subdividing a block (no longer mandating the cost of construction to be borne by the lessee prior to the sale of a subdivided block).
- providing opportunity for the purchaser of the new block to design a dwelling that meets their needs and preferences (rather than having that determined by the original lessee).

This will enable those with land in these zones to consider further development on their land which could support families, ageing in place and diversity of housing supply.

Build-to-rent

Permitting build-to-rent and community housing in all residential zones. This will provide more options and flexibility for community housing providers to partner with the private sector or other not-for-profits to develop social housing projects.

This will eventually lead to diversity of supply and increased rental assets in the housing market.

Existing pathways exemptions

Development Approval (DA) exemptions for single dwelling housing. This will continue to streamline the delivery of single dwelling housing. For decades the ACT has offered an exemption pathway for single dwelling development proposals that allows them to bypass the need for a DA. This saves approximately two to three months of assessment time.

Existing development approvals which have not been acted upon, and barriers to delivering approved housing

Barriers include having the infrastructure in place to support new development, the capacity and ability of the development sector to deliver projects, financial modelling and the impact of interest rate rises, and the incentive to hold on to sites due to increasing land values.

Sites for community and affordable housing are largely being targeted for sites with infrastructure in place. A Housing Coordinator General role has been established and coordinates programs and initiatives and consultation with the housing, development and community sector.

Reforms to social and affordable housing approval pathways

The reforms mentioned above in relation to Territory Priority Projects and build-to-rent will help to improve the approval pathways for social and affordable housing.

Key barriers to the timely issuing of development approvals, and reforms to address them

As part of the development assessment process the referrals to other entities has been flagged as a barrier in that it can take time (beyond the statutory timeframe) and raises matters that conflict with others and require resolution for example, environmental considerations, conditions and timing for utility provision. Consultation with key stakeholders such as the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, ACT Heritage, utilities, and the community have the potential to delay development approvals.

Initiatives to share planning data and analysis across jurisdiction to identify data gaps and opportunities and improve national visibility of factors that may be supporting and/or delaying delivery of housing

The ACT is supporting a range of initiatives to share planning data and analysis across jurisdictions. For example:

- the ACT works with the NSW Government and provides input to the regional planning work (South east and Tablelands Regional Plan)
- the ACT is an active member of the Geospatial Council of Australia
- The ACT contributed to the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors submission to the National Housing and Homelessness Plan

Jurisdiction positions on the phased introduction of inclusionary zoning and planning to support permanent affordable, social and other specialist housing in developments, where appropriate and where such zoning and planning does not add to construction costs e.g., through the use of incentives such as density bonuses

The ACT planning system does not incorporate inclusionary zoning or incentives such as density bonuses. The ACT Government has previously considered the potential to introduce inclusionary zoning, and concluded that the planning system includes several existing mechanisms that achieve the same objectives.

The ACT approach to planning for increased housing supply (including social and affordable housing), greater housing diversity, improved housing affordability is through embedding these priorities within the ACT's new planning system (through a combination of strategic planning (district strategies), statutory planning provisions, and design guides).

The ACT Government sets targets for public, community and affordable housing for government land releases, as part of development of the [Indicative Land Release Program](#). Developers who buy land that is subject to housing targets must construct some or all of the dwellings as public, community or affordable housing, and sell or transfer the dwellings to Housing ACT, community housing providers or low-income families.

Measure 10

All levels of government will ensure the efficient use of government land, including the identification of surplus land suitable for housing and the delivery of best practice projects to support housing supply, diversity and affordability.

The ACT Government actively identifies surplus government land suitable for a range of uses including housing, and utilises this land to test best practice examples of different housing models, to support housing supply, diversity and affordability.

Best practice examples

Case Study 1 - North Wright Compact Housing precinct



The North Wright Compact Housing precinct utilised government land to deliver a best practice project to test the compact housing model.

We are designing and constructing a showcase sustainable housing precinct that sets the future for local living. This 'missing middle' style, landscape-oriented townhouse precinct differs in a range of beneficial ways from the local market offering.

The precinct is located in North Wright within the Molonglo Valley approximately 14 kilometres west of Canberra City Centre. Close to Stromlo Forest Park and Leisure Centre, the site comprises five parcels of land on the south side of Thwaites Crescent. The land surrounding these parcels are either recently constructed residential dwellings or vacant development land, the suburb is set to evolve into an active residential community anchored by shops, recreation facilities, and open spaces.

The project supports housing supply, by delivering 43 separately titled blocks of 200sqm to 250sqm within a single, integrated precinct. The precinct aims to create a sense of community with a design that supports the wellbeing of residents of different ages, income levels and cultural backgrounds.

The replicable design typologies include a range of two-bedroom townhouses with 'room to grow' for a third bedroom, as well as three-bedroom townhouses. Selected blocks include both a townhouse and a 'surveillance unit' as a separate rear-lane, self-contained flat as required by statutory planning controls for the precinct.

The project supports housing affordability, through high quality housing at a lower cost, both to purchase and to live in. This is achieved through reduced energy, materials and land use, and landscape-oriented and accessible design solutions with a healthy indoor air quality are prioritised, leading to 7- and 8-Star Passive Solar Design or Passivhaus homes.

The project is informed by a Stakeholder Advisor Group with industry and community sector representatives to provide input into the Place and Design Brief for the Project and to review the design documentation at key decision making points in the project. The project won an award at the 2023 Planning Institute of Australia ACT Awards for Planning Excellence in the category of climate change and resilience.

Further information on the North Wright Compact Housing precinct is available here: [North Wright Compact Housing | Suburban Land Agency](#)

Case Study 2 - Section 76 Watson



Section 76 Watson was identified as an urban infill site for housing, a park and open space. The project will support housing supply, diversity and affordability, with approximately 200 new dwellings to be built. This includes plans for a Demonstration Housing Project of 20 to 30 dwellings, that and tests innovative housing typologies and models to increase housing choice, such as co-housing.

The project also includes a local neighbourhood park to provide Watson residents with good quality, public open space with activities for people of a range of ages, abilities and play styles. Existing trees will be retained, which are important for wildlife and to reduce the urban heat island effect.

Community consultation was held on a draft place plan and development concept guide, with consultation including information sessions, workshops, online presentations, and engagement with local primary schools and the Dhawura Ngunnawal Caring for Country Committee.

The consultation expressed a need for more affordable housing and homes that prioritised marginalised communities. A variety of housing types, transport options and opportunities for social interaction was also important to the community.

The final place plan and development concept will reflect the community's desire for development that is sensitive to the environment, reflects the local character of the suburb, and is sustainable, inclusive, resilient, leafy and active.

Further information on Section 76 Watson is available here: [Urban renewal in north Watson | YourSay ACT](#)