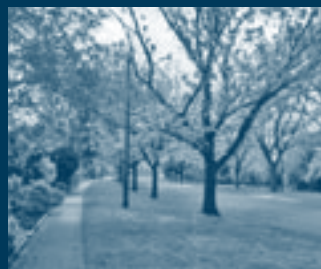


FORREST

Neighbourhood Plan

A sustainable future for Forrest



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A sustainable future for Forrest



Prepared by the
ACT Planning and Land Authority



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What this Plan aims to achieve

The Forrest Neighbourhood Plan guides this established garden suburb as it meets the challenges of both contemporary life and those that are predicted to arise over the next fifteen years. The Plan outlines the future character of the neighbourhood whilst protecting and enhancing the features currently valued. This Neighbourhood Plan provides planning strategies for the future of the local shopping centre, open spaces, residential areas, community facilities and movement networks (roads, footpaths etc).

The strategies documented in this Neighbourhood Plan and illustrated in the accompanying drawings must be read in conjunction with the Territory Plan and any other relevant ACT Government standards, policies and guidelines. No part of this Neighbourhood Plan overrides the Territory Plan. Where relevant, policies to implement strategies in this Neighbourhood Plan will be proposed for incorporation in the Territory Plan through the draft Variation process.

Similarly this Neighbourhood Plan cannot override the National Capital Plan, which is prepared and administered by the National Capital Authority under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*. The National Capital Plan establishes a broad framework for land use and development throughout the Territory. At a more detailed level, it also controls the planning, design and development of Designated Areas. These areas are considered by the Commonwealth to be of particular importance to maintaining the special characteristics of the National Capital. Within Designated Areas responsibility for development controls rests with the National Capital Authority. Designated Areas comprise Canberra's system of Inner Hills and Ridges, the Main Avenues and Approach Routes to the city, and the Central National Area, including the Parliamentary Zones and environs, the diplomatic areas, Lake Burley Griffin and its foreshores, and the main national institutions and symbols of Commonwealth governance. All development and works proposed within the Designated Areas require approval by the National Capital Authority.

Who this Plan is for

The Plan is particularly relevant if you are:

- An existing Forrest resident or considering being a Forrest resident;
- A Forrest business owner or tenant;
- An investor or investor's agent (for example an architect) interested in Forrest;
- An ACT Planning and Land Authority officer responsible for the assessment of development applications in Forrest and surrounding suburbs; or
- A provider and/or user of the neighbourhood's community facilities and services.

How this Plan was developed

The development of the Forrest Neighbourhood Plan, along with that of the Griffith, Narrabundah and Red Hill Neighbourhood Plans, commenced in September 2003 and has been a participatory exercise. Participation was invited from all those who live, work, learn, play and invest in the suburb. The following key events held for all four suburbs have been important steps in the production of the Neighbourhood Plans:

- A values survey letterboxed to all residents;
- A Neighbourhood Character Discovery (residents using disposable cameras to tell ACT Planning and Land Authority about what is valued);
- A major open-forum 'Planning for the Future' Workshop;
- Workshops with local community service groups and organisations, business organisations and ACT Government agencies;
- A future character survey letterboxed to all residents;
- The establishment of a Neighbourhood Reference Group (comprising members of resident/community associations, other residents and business representatives);
- A five-day Design Workshop, including three community sessions providing opportunity for participation by neighbourhood representatives, and one session providing opportunity for participation by ACT Government stakeholders;
- An information evening, providing the community with an opportunity to comment on the draft concept sketches developed during the design workshop prior to their refinement for inclusion in the draft Neighbourhood Plan; and
- A six-week formal public comment period.

The ACT Planning and Land Authority, through its Neighbourhood Planning Team, thanks all those who participated. We particularly acknowledge the inputs of the Neighbourhood Reference Group. We also wish to thank the staff of the various ACT Government agencies that have participated in the program, including the Department of Urban Services, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, Department of Education and Training, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, ACT Health, the Chief Minister's Department, and Department of Justice and Community Safety.

As this Neighbourhood Plan aims to strike a balance between the diversity of values and aspirations that exist in the neighbourhood it will inevitably not be consistent with all ideas for the future. However, in the spirit of transparency, the ACT Planning and Land Authority undertakes to inform both the Minister for Planning and the community where this Plan differs from broad public opinion.

Unless otherwise noted, participants in the Forrest Neighbourhood Character Study took all photographs appearing in this document.

ACT Planning and Land Authority

September 2004

Forrest Neighbourhood Plan at a glance

The Neighbourhood Vision

Forrest will be a neighbourhood that respects its rich garden suburb legacy and its inner south location offering lifestyles suitable for all age groups. The historical significance and “garden suburb” character of its streetscapes, open spaces and parkland will be valued and will not only be conserved but also enhanced.

Key strategies for achieving the vision

Residential Areas:

- Promote high-quality residential development that is sympathetic to the existing garden suburb neighbourhood character in terms of scale, form and landscape setting.
- Provide a diversity of housing choice for singles, couples and families of different sizes and ages in appropriate locations.

Urban Open Space:

- Redevelopment will not encroach on areas designated as Urban Open Space under the Territory Plan.

Community Facilities:

- Retain the integrity of land defined under the Territory Plan as Community Facility.
- Ensure that adequate Community Facility land is available for the needs of current and future residents.

Movement Networks:

- Provide a diversity of accessible transport options.

Note: unless otherwise stated, all statistical information contained in this section is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – Census of Population and Housing.

The Place

The suburb was first gazetted as a Division name on 20 September 1928. The suburb is named after two brothers, the Right Honourable John Forrest and Alexander Forrest. John Forrest was one of the founders of the Constitution, the first premier of Western Australia and held the Prime Minister portfolio in 1907. Alexander Forrest was a Legislator, surveyor and explorer, leading an expedition to the country east and south of the Hampton Plains in 1871 and was also a member of the Western Australian Legislative Assembly from 1890 to 1901. Forrest is highly valued for its location and proximity to the City and sights of significance, i.e. Parliament House and National Gallery and the Red Hill Nature Reserve (refer to Drawing 1 – Forrest’s context).



View of Parliament House and Black Mountain from Collins Park

Forrest’s streets are named after Australia’s explorers and governors. For example, Arthur Circle is named in honour of Colonel Sir George Arthur who was Governor of Tasmania from 1824-36. Dampier Crescent is named after William Dampier a British navigator who discovered the Eastern coast of Australia in 1688 and was the first to realise that Australia was a separate continent.

Forrest is nestled at the base of Red Hill – a dominant landform feature that can be viewed from a number of vantage points within the neighbourhood. Capital Hill and Parliament House are two prominent built features, which can also be viewed from a number of places within the suburb. Much of Forrest also enjoys views to Mount Ainslie, Black Mountain and Red Hill Nature Reserve. The northeast part of the suburb, from Sydney Avenue and New South Wales Crescent and heading west towards Collins Park is generally a flat terrain with height gently increasing towards Collins Park and continuing to the neighbouring suburb, Red Hill and the Nature Park.

The neighbourhood enjoys three neighbourhood parks including Rous Crescent Park and Collins Park (both the triangular and circular park located at the end of Hobart Avenue forms Collins Park). Collins Park is a favourite amongst the residents of Forrest and is encircled by Tasmania Circle. Collins Park is also designated as National Capital Land.

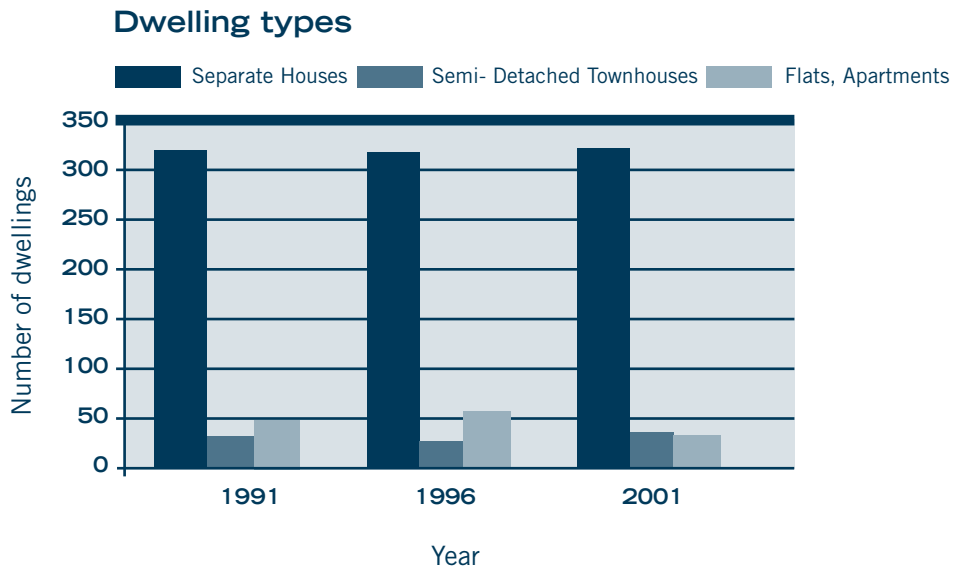
The streets of Forrest are characterised by large gardens and wide verges with a mixture of exotic and native streetscapes including a wide variety of Eucalyptus (White Brittle Gum, Grey Box, Blue Gum, Paddys River Box, Snappy Gum, Candle Bark, and Yellow Box). Excellent examples of White Brittle Gum are located on Empire Circuit and Dampier Crescent providing spectacular streetscapes. A beautiful selection of *Grevillea Robusta* (Silky Oak) is found on Manuka Circle, Boudin Street and Canberra Avenue. In spring a variety of *Prunus* (Cherry, Plum, Apricot) are enjoyed on streets such as Arthur Circle, Canberra Avenue and Hobart Avenue. *Fraxinus Oxycarpa* and *Oxycarpa 'Raywood'* (Desert Ash and Claret Ash) provide wonderful autumnal colour and are enjoyed on Canberra Avenue, Manuka Circle, State Circle and Tasmania Circle. National Circuit is a fine example of the established streetscapes found in Forrest, displaying wide verges and lined with mature oak trees. Collins Park has a distinct arcadian character with tree clumps and spaces, complete with a variety of tree form and colour due to the tree species selection.



National Circuit – typical example of wide verges, established tree-lined streetscapes, hedges and gardens

Forrest does not have its own Local Centre. However, the Manuka Group Centre located on the south eastern corner of the boundary between Forrest and Griffith services the Forrest neighbourhood. Manuka is highly valued as a centre for professional services, shopping, socialising and entertainment. Residents of Forrest also enjoy the nearby Deakin Local Centre, a vibrant local centre with a diversity of shops and facilities.

The dominant residential character of Forrest is comprised of single storey, detached family dwellings, as illustrated by the following table:

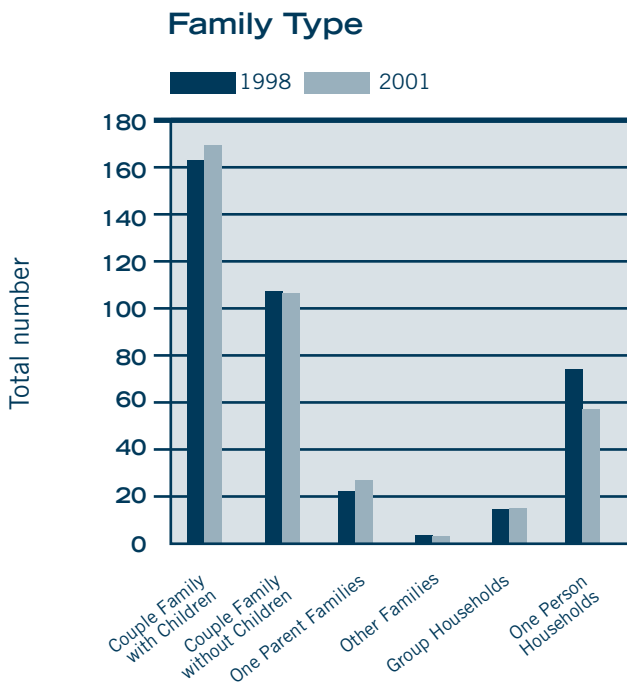


For more information refer to Drawing 1 – Forrest’s context, on page 11.

The People

In 2001 Forrest's population was 1421 persons – in 1996 it was 1365. The median age of the Forrest population is 42 years, a two year increase since 1996 when the median age was 40 years. In 2001, 11.6% of Forrest's population was aged 65 years and over, compared to 11.5% for Griffith, 15.4% for Narrabundah and 17.7 for Red Hill.

The range of family types in Forrest is illustrated by the following:



The above table indicates an increase in the number of coupled families with children, a slight increase in coupled families without children, an increase in one-parent families and a decrease in one-person households. It is worth noting that this is different to nationwide trends, which show an increase in one-person households and a decrease in the number of coupled families with children. For the ACT as a whole, it is predicted that the average household size will decrease from 2.6 persons currently to 2.2 persons by 2032.

In Forrest at present the median house price is \$960,000 (source: www.allhomes.com.au) compared to the ACT's median of \$305,000 (source: *The Canberra Plan*, 2004). This represents a dramatic increase in Forrest's house prices since 1999, when the median property price was \$590,000.

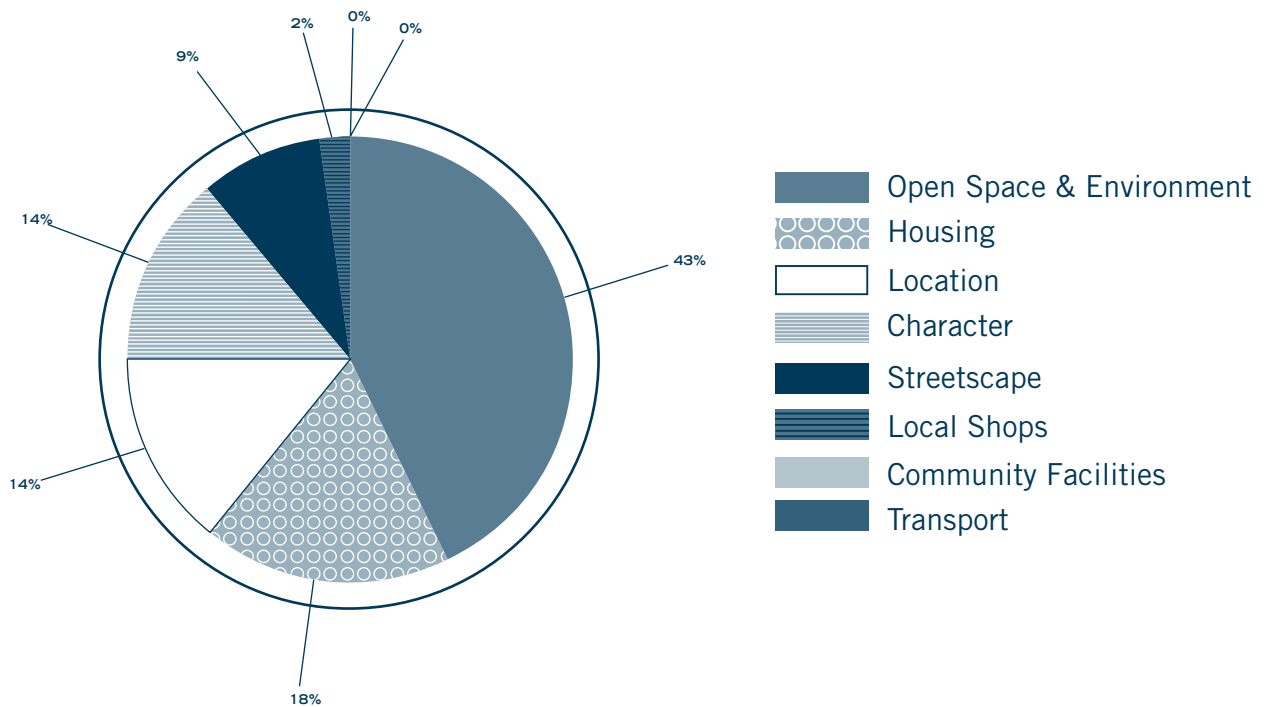
The values of the Forrest community

Those that attended the 'Planning for the Future' workshop stated they valued the large blocks with detached houses and that there was no high rise density in the area. Also valued was the garden character, trees and landscape plus its central location and proximity to all facilities.

Forrest residents that responded to the Values Survey, valued, above all else, its Open Space and Environment, in terms of the amount of open space, mature trees and the diversity of plants, birds and native animals. Also highly valued is Housing, which is generally of a low density and the built environment that is visually attractive; Character, in particular the peace and privacy, safety and community feeling; and Location, specifically its centrality to other parts of Canberra.

Respondents to the Values Survey were asked to choose one value out of eight that they considered the most important. The eight values listed were: Open Space and Environment; Housing; Streetscape; Character; Transport; Community Facilities; Local Shops; Location. The following chart indicates which of the values listed in the survey were regarded as most important by respondents

Forrest's values



Key

Open Space (Parks, ovals, bushland for recreation)

Housing (Low density, large blocks, single detached dwelling, limited high density)

Streetscape (Street trees, vegetation, gardens, wide streets)

Character (Well planned, peaceful, safe community feeling)

Transport (Access to transport, including public transport)

Community Facilities (Access to schools, churches, medical etc.)

Local Shops (Proximity to and variety of)

Location (Central location to other parts of Canberra and investment potential, employment, friends and family, services & facilities)

The following table illustrates the specific values of the neighbourhood. The values survey requested respondents provide information in terms of “which aspects of your neighbourhood do you value most?” There were thirty-eight specific values listed, ranging from: good investment, single blocks of land, access to buses, churches, bike paths, play equipment and a variety of others. Of these thirty-eight options, the following table shows the ten considered the most important.

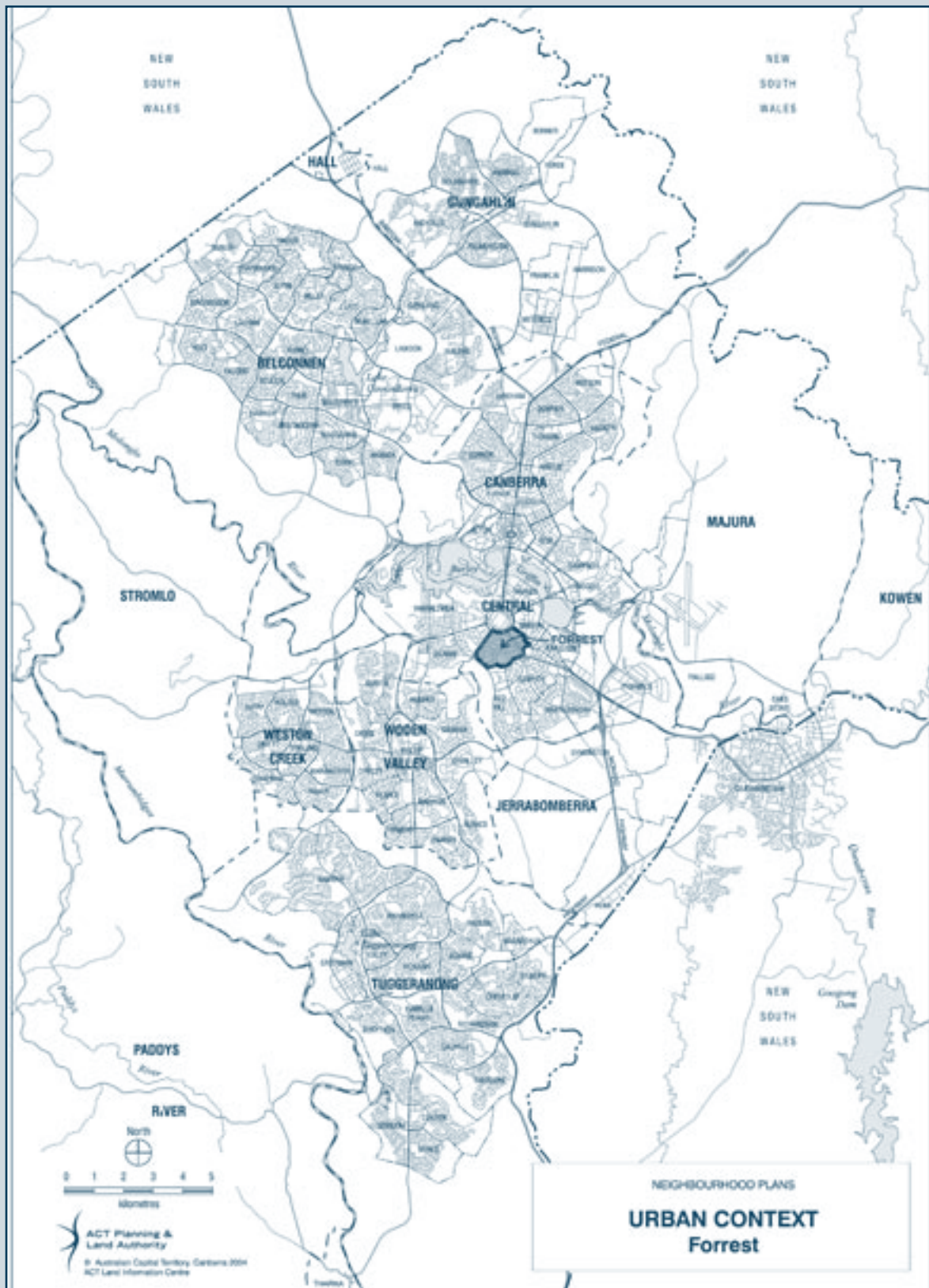
Forrest’s top ten community values

| Specific Value | Percentage of respondents |
|---|---------------------------|
| Mature Trees on Verges | 89 |
| Green Spaces and Mature Trees | 86 |
| Visually Appealing Built Environment | 86 |
| Peace and Privacy | 86 |
| Established Gardens | 85 |
| Central to Other Parts of Canberra | 85 |
| Well Planned, Well Laid Out | 81 |
| Older and More Established Suburb | 80 |
| Easy Mobility, Excellent Roads and Good Network | 80 |
| Safety | 78 |

What are Forrest’s favourite places?

- **Collins Park** (especially for walking, and the park itself)
- **Manuka Shops** (shops, cafes, the friendly community atmosphere and its walking distance)
- **Red Hill Nature Reserve** (especially for walking and enjoying the view)

Drawing 1 – Forrest’s context



The Canberra Plan

The Plan for Canberra in the 21st century will guide the city's growth and development for this generation, and beyond. It provides a clear direction that will ensure Canberra retains the character that has been central to our first 90 years. As a framework for action by community and governments, *The Canberra Plan* has several major components. These include *The Canberra Social Plan*, *The Economic White Paper* and *The Canberra Spatial Plan*. *The Canberra Plan* envisages the following – a city:

- Confident in its role as national capital.
- With a high-quality built environment that celebrates Canberra's planning legacy and national role.
- Uplifting and inspiring, with liveable neighbourhoods and an extraordinary range of public spaces that attract us to meet, relax and celebrate.
- Respecting our magnificent natural environment and cultural heritage.
- The model of sustainable urban development in the 21st century.

The Canberra Spatial Plan

The Canberra Spatial Plan's Strategic Direction responds to changes that will occur within the community of Canberra over the next 30 years and beyond. Population growth, demographic change and household change underpin the need to plan for growth and change in Canberra. In order to ensure that we can sustainably provide for this community of the future, *The Canberra Spatial Plan* puts in place a framework to accommodate a range of population growth scenarios, up to half a million for the Canberra-Queanbeyan metropolitan area. The key initiatives that are critical to achieve the Strategic Direction include:

- Higher density residential development within the existing urban area, providing easy access between home and places of work, education, community services and cultural activities. Primarily this increased population will occur within Central Canberra in Civic, along Northbourne Avenue, Constitution Avenue, in Barton, Kingston and around the town centres with limited change to existing suburban areas. People will enjoy a choice of housing.
- Future residential settlement will continue to take place in Gungahlin, and subject to detailed suitability and feasibility investigations followed by necessary policy amendments, will also commence in the Molonglo Valley in the short to medium term. If the city continues to grow in population beyond the capacity of these areas, further settlement will be accommodated on the Kowen Plateau.

- Civic and the central area will form a strong dynamic heart to the Territory and surrounding NSW – a centre of culture, business, ideas and creativity; retaining and attracting jobs, people and important events.
- Civic and existing centres will be the focus of employment growth, with existing corridors of employment being reinforced by clustering at nodes along transport corridors (additional district activity nodes will be located in the Molonglo Valley and the Kowen Plateau when these areas are developed).
- Future industrial, broadacre and transport related employment growth will be accommodated within existing industrial areas and the corridor comprising Majura and Symonston valleys including the airport and Hume.
- Nature reserves and other land which provides significant habitats for wildlife within the urban and non-urban areas will be managed for biodiversity conservation and linked together with the region by corridors that enable wildlife movement.
- Major transport connections, including public transport, will link the town centres to Civic, and link future urban settlement in the Molonglo Valley and the Kowen Plateau to major employment corridors; Majura Highway will be upgraded to form part of a critical regional transport link and together with Gungahlin Drive will form the major outer by-passes of Civic, keeping through traffic away from the heart of the city.
- A Bushfire Abatement Zone will be declared and managed to protect the city from the possible impacts of major bushfire events.
- The non-urban areas that form the rural setting of the city (outside of nature conservation areas) will be primarily used for sustainable agriculture (including forestry west of the Murrumbidgee River). Historical rural settlements form part of the rural setting.
- The water catchments for the existing dams supplying water to Canberra and the catchment of possible future potable water supply dams for the ACT and its region will be protected from any development that would adversely affect the quality of that water. The sub-catchments of the ACT watercourses will be managed to protect water quality.
- The elements that contribute to the national capital significance of the ACT will be preserved. These include the Central National Area, the landscape setting including the National Capital Open Space System, major approach routes (Barton Highway, Federal Highway, Majura Highway and Monaro Highway) and the roads connecting them to the Central National Area (described as National Capital Vista Routes).
- Significant assets that provide opportunities for future economic growth of the Territory will be protected. These include the Mount Stromlo Observatory and Canberra International Airport. An Aircraft Noise Protection Corridor is identified for the Majura-Symonston Valleys. The Territory will not locate any residential development within these valleys where residents would be unacceptably impacted by airport noise. A low light zone is established around Mount Stromlo Observatory to enable the continued operation of this facility as the Molonglo Valley is developed.

- Development in the region is the responsibility of the NSW Government and surrounding local government. *The Canberra Spatial Plan* introduces strategic policies to input to the sustainable development of the ACT and region particularly with regard to water, biodiversity conservation, urban form and employment location, transport and service delivery.

Elements of the Strategic Direction to realise *The Canberra Spatial Plan* that are particularly relevant to Forrest are as follows:

- Higher density residential development within the existing urban area, providing easy access between home and places of work, education, community services and cultural activities. Primarily this increased population will occur within Central Canberra in Civic, along Northbourne Avenue, Constitution Avenue, in Barton, Kingston and around the town centres with limited change to existing suburban areas.
- Nature reserves and other land which provides significant habitats for wildlife within the urban and non-urban areas will be managed for biodiversity conservation and linked together with the region by corridors that enable wildlife movement.
- The elements that contribute to the national capital significance of the ACT will be preserved. These include the Central National Area, the landscape setting including the National Capital Open Space System, major approach routes (Barton Highway, Federal Highway, Majura Highway and Monaro Highway) and the roads connecting them to the Central National Area (described as National Capital Vista Routes).

Implications for Forrest

The Canberra Spatial Plan's Strategic Direction requires Forrest to provide a diverse range of housing choice at strategic locations, in particular:

- Along key transport corridors such as Canberra Avenue; and
- In Forrest's Residential Core Area associated with the Manuka Group Centre and Corridors and Office Sites.

D Forrest in the future

This section provides planning strategies for the future of open spaces, residential areas, community facilities and movement networks (roads, footpaths etc). A statement of existing character is provided for each of these neighbourhood elements, followed by a statement of the likely **future** character.

This section should be read in conjunction with Drawing 2 – Forrest in the future.

The future character of each element is driven by a **neighbourhood vision**:

Forrest will be a neighbourhood that respects its rich garden suburb legacy and its inner south location offering lifestyles suitable for all age groups. The historical significance and “garden suburb” character of its streetscapes, open spaces and parkland will be valued and will not only be conserved but also enhanced.

Shopping centres serving Forrest

Forrest does not have its own Local Centre. However, the Manuka shopping centre located on the south eastern corner of the boundary between Forrest and Griffith services the Forrest Neighbourhood. Manuka has a vibrant atmosphere and is highly valued as a centre for professional services, shopping, restaurants and cafes, socialising and entertainment.

Residents of Forrest also enjoy the nearby Deakin Local Centre, a vibrant local centre with a diversity of shops and facilities.

Manuka Group Centre is part of the suburb of Griffith and is addressed in the Griffith Neighbourhood Plan.



Cinema, shops and restaurants on Franklin Street, Manuka

Residential Areas

Current Character

The dominant residential character of Forrest is comprised of low-density, detached family dwellings. In general, dwellings are brick and tile in construction, some of which have been modernised through renovating or rebuilding. There are some apartment, townhouse and unit developments located on Tasmania Circle and close to Manuka and Canberra Avenue.

The blocks within Forrest are larger than average for Canberra particularly those that are located to the west, northwest, southwest and adjacent Collins Park. Setbacks (the distance between the property boundary and the front face of the building) are very generous allowing for beautifully landscaped gardens, generous landscaped verges containing prominent hedges, substantial street trees and footpaths. Distances between houses are also generous, both factors contributing significantly to the garden suburb nature of the neighbourhood.



Forrest Housing Precinct
(Photograph from the Australian Heritage Photo Library, taken by K. Charlton)

The Forrest Housing Precinct, Section 3, 4, 8 and adjacent road reservations bounded by Melbourne Avenue, National Circuit, Hobart Avenue, Arthur Circle and Empire Circuit is entered onto the ACT Heritage Places Register and is historically important for its innovative architecture and landscape elements, which contribute to the character of early Territorial town planning. It achieves the goals of the Garden City movement to provide picturesque streetscapes with natural and built features of high quality and innovation in design. The majority of the precinct was constructed in 1926-27 and are culturally significant because they represent an early design competition conducted by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee to provide 'quality accommodation at a reasonable cost' encouraging public servants to participate in the transfer of services from Melbourne to Canberra prior to the opening of the provisional Parliament House in 1927. The winning architects, Oakley, Parkes and Scarborough produced a series of four styles resulting in 57 houses. These homes are the first specially designed residences for Canberra. The street layout is directly derived from Griffin's 1913 Plan, which defined the major axes of Melbourne and Hobart Avenues radiating from Capital Hill and concentric circles.

Forrest is listed on the ACT Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (ACT) register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture (it should be noted that this register is not a statutory register). Designs by Malcolm Moir (Moir House) and Ken Oliphant (24 Arthur Circle) are good examples of early and late inter-war functionalist architecture with their asymmetrical cubic massing, roofs concealed by parapets, metal framed corner and ribbon windows and cantilevered balconies and hoods. Manning Clarke House, designed by Robin Boyd in 1952 and listed on the Heritage Places Register, is typical of the post war Melbourne regional style and is an early example of the Boyd Peninsula House Design, with its low pitched gable roof, widely projecting eaves and large areas of timber framed glazing. The Forrest Townhouses on Tasmania Circle are an important group of townhouses designed by Roy Grounds in 1959 and are a combination of post-war Melbourne regional style with their cubiform overall shape and large areas of glazing. The townhouses also exhibit aspects of the post-war international styles through the curtain-walled, reinforced concrete office block and the flat roofed, cubiform glass walled design.

Forrest has some excellent examples of 1920s and 1930s residential architecture. There is a mixture of elements from the Arts and Crafts movement, Mediterranean and Georgian styles. The result is known as the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) style and is unique to Canberra. The house and its landscape setting on Block 10 Section 21 Forrest (designed in 1926) is an example of this style and is the only example of a FCC Type 15 residence to have been built in Canberra, being rare as both a two-storey residence and demonstrating the architectural style of the English Arts and Crafts movement. The FCC Type 15 was one of four FCC designs that demonstrate the strong influence of the English Arts and Crafts movement. This heritage-listed residence exhibits characteristic features of the style, including a steeply pitched roof to accommodate loft rooms, the use of face brickwork in construction, prominent gables emanating from a ridgeline across the shortest axis of the building, a large tiled window hood across the gable, and a verandah integrated under the roof.

Other areas of heritage significance include:

Blocks 7-12 Section 23 Forrest falls within the Blandfordia 5 Garden City Heritage Precinct and is on the ACT Heritage Places Register. This precinct is significant as an exemplar of the early twentieth century planned garden city suburban precinct. Blandfordia 5 reflects a distinct pattern of housing development and landscape demonstrating early Federal Capital planning philosophy, and comprises historic remnants of the original street furniture (street signs, fire hydrants, footpath lighting etc) as well as mature public and private treescape of historic, aesthetic, natural and amenity values.

Sections 1, 2, 9, 11 and 37-47 Forrest falls within the Blandfordia 4 Housing Precinct and is nominated for inclusion on the interim ACT Heritage Places Register (with exception of Block 4 Section 44, Manning Clarke House, which is listed on the Heritage Places Register). Blandfordia 4 is based upon Griffin's 1913 Plan for Canberra and influenced by Garden City Planning principles – dwellings set within a landscape setting, mix of dwellings, wide verges planted with trees etc. It is an area that is recognised for its combination of streetscape and landscape values and mix of architectural styling (early Department of the Interior (DOI), Federal Capital Commission (FCC) and privately built residences).

Forrest Fire Station Precinct - Blocks 2 to 10 and 12 Section 35 is a strategic landmark site along Canberra Venue, an important axis leading to Capital Hill. The Precinct comprises a Fire Station building, seven residences organised around the fire station, associated landscaping and original planting in Fitzroy Street, street trees, verges and remaining hedges. The Station, designed by E H Henderson, Chief Architect from the Department of Works and Services, is a significant example of the Inter-War Functionalist style inherited from the European modern architecture of the 1920s and 1930s and exhibits a high quality of architectural design and composition. In addition to Residential land use, an A6 Area Specific Policy allows for community use and offices to Blocks 2-7 and part Block 8-10. This Precinct is on the ACT Heritage Places Register.

Other sites of heritage interest include St Christopher's Cathedral Precinct, St Andrew's Church, Wesley Uniting Church, Burns Memorial and several bus shelters. For a detailed listing of the heritage sites in Forrest please refer to the ACT Heritage Places listing, ACT Heritage Council website, at: <http://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritagelist.html>

Area Specific Policy B4 applies to Section 34 Blocks 1-5 and 7-11 (bounded by Fitzroy Street, Dominion Circuit and New South Wales Crescent). This Area Specific Policy allows maximum height of three storeys for residential buildings and permits small scale offices with maximum height of two storeys on Blocks 7-9.

Future Character

This Plan proposes that the majority of the suburb will remain predominantly low density, single dwellings on generous blocks. However, it does propose the retention of the Residential Core Area (otherwise known as A10 according to the Territory Plan) on blocks associated with the Manuka Group Centre and Corridors and Office Sites. As a result, Forrest will contain three distinct residential areas:

- Suburban Area – the majority of the neighbourhood;
- Residential Core Area (A10 land-use policy) – associated with the Manuka Group Centre and with the Corridors and Office Sites; and the
- Urban Housing Area (B4 land-use policy) – blocks bounded by Fitzroy Street, Dominion Circuit and New South Wales Crescent and up to the laneway, opposite the tennis courts. This Land Use Policy allows a maximum height of three storeys for residential buildings and permits small scale offices with a maximum height of two storeys.

All new residential development is to be of high quality and be sympathetic to the existing streetscape. It is important to note that changes allowed for in the Residential Core Area will occur over time. In many cases it will be dependent on current lessees deciding either to redevelop the blocks themselves or to sell to another lessee with the intention to develop.

While the Neighbourhood Plan will help to guide the future of Forrest, areas within Forrest including Canberra Avenue, Hobart Avenue, Collins Park and areas north of National Circuit to the Parliamentary Triangle are identified as Designated Areas and fall within the responsibility of the National Capital Authority which administers and implements the National Capital Plan. For land identified as being within a designated area under the National Capital Plan, National Capital Authority approval is required prior to the carrying out of any 'works' (including construction, alteration, extension or demolition of buildings or structures). The object of the National Capital Plan is to "ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned in accordance with their national significance". Any future development in the designated areas must not be inconsistent with the National Capital Plan.

Future character of the Suburban Areas

The Suburban Area of Forrest is the residential area that will change the least over time. However, as has been the trend over the last decade or so, some of the existing dwellings in the Suburban Area will be renovated to varying degrees to modernise or to adapt to contemporary ways of life. Some residents may elect to demolish their dwellings altogether and rebuild new houses that better suit their needs; some will elect to build dual occupancies. Whatever the change, the low-density character, established street trees and mature garden setting will remain.

The rules applying to the Suburban Area, in accordance with the Garden City provisions of the Territory Plan, preserve the existing 'garden city' character of the majority of the Forrest neighbourhood by restricting redevelopment. Developments **prohibited** in Suburban areas are: apartments, townhouses and triple occupancy housing development on blocks originally used for single dwellings. The redevelopment of new single dwellings and dual occupancies must be in keeping with the existing suburban character. Dual occupancies are subject to significantly tighter controls on the overall size of both houses. This reduces the impact of dual occupancy development and ensures the retention of significant areas for trees and gardens. Dual occupancy dwellings at the rear of blocks are subject to additional specific height and size controls; the maximum height of buildings is two storeys (8.5 metres). In order to further limit the impact of dual occupancy development the minimum block size for such developments in Suburban Areas (as well as Residential Core Areas) is 800m². Unit titling is only allowed for supportive housing (accommodation for those requiring care provided by a Territory-approved organisation).

This Neighbourhood Plan encourages those wishing to renovate or redevelop residential buildings adjacent parks to take advantage of these highly valued neighbourhood assets - this could be achieved, for example, by ensuring liveable rooms and/or decks and/or windows overlook parks. A similar approach could be taken to improve the safety of laneways.

Future character of the Residential Core Area

The Residential Core Area is identified in the Territory Plan as Area Specific Policy A10. This policy allows opportunities for medium density housing in areas immediately around Town, Group and Local Centres and Corridors and Office Sites. The Residential Core Area is located on blocks associated with the Manuka Group Centre and the Corridors and Office Sites and over time will offer a diverse range of dwelling types, including one and two-storey dual-occupancies and town houses of no more than two storeys (8.5 metres). Despite the modest increase in density the established street trees and mature garden setting will remain.

In addition to the maximum building height of two storeys, attics and basements may also be permitted. A maximum 50% plot ratio will apply to street-based layouts (dual occupancy developments where the building is to the front of blocks). The two units of a dual occupancy development cannot exceed 35% coverage of the block. Subdivision of single blocks will not be permitted on blocks less than 800m².

Urban Housing Area (B4 land-use policy)

The height of buildings shall be a maximum of three storeys for residential buildings with some two storey small scale offices. It is not proposed to increase the extent of the B4 land use policy in Forrest.

Strategies for the future of the Residential Areas

Key strategies for all residential areas:

- Promote high-quality residential development that is sympathetic to the existing garden suburb neighbourhood character in terms of scale, form and landscape setting.
- Provide a diversity of housing choice for singles, couples and families of different sizes and ages in appropriate locations.

General strategies:

- Maintain the high-quality landscape setting and abundance of mature and healthy street trees on both public and private land.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate housing for the aged, retired and disabled in central rather than peripheral locations within easy access to shops, public transport and community facilities.
- Maintain and enhance the existing street pattern by ensuring buildings relate to the street rather than detract from it.
- Identify, recognise and protect the qualities that establish the neighbourhoods' inner south suburban identity and distinctive character.
- Retain views to Black Mountain, Mount Ainslie, Red Hill, Capital Hill, Lake Burley Griffin and the Brindabella Ranges.
- Retain a mix of public and private housing.
- Conserve heritage places and spaces.
- Maximise permeable surfaces to reduce run-off and erosion and assist hydration.
- Safeguard privacy and maximise and maintain light and sun access to dwellings.
- Protect, maintain and replace street trees.
- Landscape design associated with new development should include the replacement of existing trees in order to maximise tree canopy. The dripline of existing significant trees is to be respected.
- Promote residential development that facilitates a reduction in water and energy consumption.
- Ensure any future developments have an acceptable Waste Management Plan and adhere to the Development Control Code for Best Practice Waste Management so that waste and recycling is stored correctly and separately within lease boundaries, and access is provided for domestic collection vehicles.
- Encourage residential redevelopment around parks and laneways to focus on these assets in order to increase passive surveillance and family-friendly environments.
- Explore adaptable housing opportunities.
- Streetscapes in Forrest that are recognised by the ACT Planning and Land Authority as significant are as follows: Arthur Circle, Barkly Crescent, Baudin Street, Bougainville Street, Collins Park Precinct, Dampier Crescent, Davey Crescent, Dominion Circuit, Empire Circuit, Franklin Street, Hobart Avenue, Moresby Street, Rous Crescent, Nares Crescent, National Circuit, Ord Street, Somers Crescent, Sorrell Street, Talbot Streets, Tennyson Crescent and Wilmot Crescent. (Please note that the ACT Planning and Land Authority reserves the right to reconsider the above listing should circumstances change).

Strategies for residential development in Residential Core Areas in addition to the above:

- Maintain landscape setting and protect street trees (note: significant trees are addressed by the *ACT Tree Protection (Interim Scheme) Act 2001*).
- Retain verge widths and soft landscape surfaces to create open space, opportunity to improve privacy between dwellings and assist with absorption of water.
- Siting and design of buildings should address the street to maximise views to the street and pedestrian/cycle paths.
- Buildings should reinforce existing street patterns.
- The faces of buildings should be articulated and avoid continuous “walls of development” (ie long, uninterrupted and unbroken building frontages produced by redevelopments).
- Interesting, place appropriate and environmentally sensitive design and innovation should be encouraged in new developments.
- Reference should be made to the *ACT Crime Prevention and Urban Design Resource Manual (2000)*.

Principles for best-practice Residential Redevelopment

Good design...

- **...responds to and reinforces the quality and identity of the area context.** Context can be defined as the key natural, built and social features of an area. Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of a location’s current character or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, the desired future character as stated in planning and design policies.
- **...appropriately arranges buildings and spaces - this is also part of the development context and will influence the quality of the residential environment.** Issues include building footprint and envelope, private open space, semi-public open space (setting for dwellings), setbacks for amenity, street appearance, access and parking, and services and facilities.
- **...aims to deliver an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings.** Establishing an appropriate scale requires a considered response to the scale of existing development. In precincts undergoing a transition, proposed bulk and height needs to achieve the scale identified for the desired future character of the area.
- **...achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building’s purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of building elements.** Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.

- **...delivers a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields (number of residents and functions).** Appropriate densities are sustainable and consistent with the existing density in an area or, in precincts undergoing a transition, are consistent with the stated desired future density. Sustainable densities respond to the regional context, availability of infrastructure, public transport, community facilities and environmental quality.
- **...integrates landscape and buildings to achieve greater amenity, sustainability and aesthetic quality for occupants, neighbours and the adjoining public realm.** Landscape design builds on the existing site's natural and cultural features in responsible and creative ways. It enhances the development's natural environmental performance by coordinating water and soil management, solar access, microclimate, tree canopy and habitat values. It contributes to the positive image and contextual fit of development through respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character. Landscape design should optimise usability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity, and provide for practical establishment and long-term management.
- **...ensures amenity in relation to physical, spatial and environmental qualities.** Optimising amenity requires appropriate room dimensions and proportions, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, outlook and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.
- **...optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public realm.** Optimising safety and security is achieved by maximising internal privacy, avoiding dark and non visible areas, maximising activity on streets, providing clear, safe access points, providing quality public spaces, lighting and clear definition between public and private spaces.
- **...responds to the social context and the aspirations of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability and access to social facilities.** Development should be responsive to the existing social context and the needs of the neighbourhood or provide for future desired community needs in the case of redevelopment areas.
- **...incorporates good design principles that establish the aesthetic quality of the development in the composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours, and the integration of function, structure and enclosure elements.** Development of design principles should incorporate a response to the environment and context, particularly to the desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area.

Urban Open Space

Current Character

Red Hill Nature Reserve borders Forrest on the western edge. The Reserve is designated land under the National Capital Plan and is predominately characterised by native and indigenous vegetation with some areas of deciduous/exotic vegetation.

Three neighbourhood parks are located in the quiet, suburban parts of the neighbourhood. These include Rous Crescent Park and Collins Park. These parks vary in size and contain dryland grass and plantings of trees. Parents with young children are the main users. Local neighbourhood parks are integral to the design of a residential neighbourhood where its smaller size provides a site for safe play by children under surveillance by adults. Whilst the parks are used for informal recreation, such as children's play and dog walking, they also provide a highly valued visual resource for the neighbourhood.

Both the circular and triangular park located at southern end of Hobart Avenue and encompassed by Tasmania Circle forms Collins Park. The park is socially significant as a recreation venue, and is a well utilised community facility. Collins Park is a favourite amongst residents and has a distinct arcadian character with tree clumps and spaces, a variety of tree form and colour due to the tree species selection. The park is designated as National Capital Land and is nominated for inclusion in an interim ACT Heritage Places Register.



Collins Park

Future Character

The Forrest Plan proposes no change to the existing Urban Open Space network in Forrest – parks (as per the Territory Plan) will remain parks. However, the Neighbourhood Plan recommends that the Urban Open Spaces in the future will be better augmented with elements such as seating, lighting and footpaths to ensure that they continue to serve the community well. The Urban Open Spaces will also be planted with a more diverse range of indigenous and native vegetation to maximise Forrest's contribution to the biodiversity of the city. This is particularly relevant due to the suburb's proximity to the Red Hill Nature Reserve. High-quality landscaping, including the careful selection of appropriate tree species, will knit together the areas of Urban Open Space and help link the various parts of Forrest together. Accessibility for all, particularly those with special mobility needs, will be made a priority.

Strategies for the future of the Urban Open Space

Key Strategy:

- Redevelopment will not encroach on areas designated as Urban Open Space under the Territory Plan.

General Strategies:

- Maintain and enhance the quality of each of the neighbourhood's Urban Open Spaces.
- Retain views to Black Mountain, Mount Ainslie, Red Hill, Capital Hill, Lake Burley Griffin and the Brindabella Ranges.
- Create a friendly and useable environment by providing Urban Open Spaces with appropriate assets such as seating and lighting.
- Enhance biodiversity by planting appropriate species and creating diverse habitats on appropriate Urban Open Spaces. (Consideration will need to be given to the ACT Government's Strategic Fire Management Plan.)
- Encourage wildlife into the suburb by providing suitable habitats, where appropriate.
- Use a coordinated suite of facilities and installations, such as barbecues, seats and lighting, to create cohesive open space. (Consideration will need to be given to the ACT Government's Graffiti Management Plan.)

Community Facilities

Current Character

Community Facility land-use makes provision for the health, educational, intellectual, religious, cultural and welfare needs of the ACT community. Forrest contains a number of educational facilities including Forrest Primary School, ACT Jewish Community School and Serbian Language School, all on National Circuit. The suburb is also served by the Italo Australian Club on Franklin Street, the Canberra Contemporary Art Space Gallery 3 on Bougainville Street, Canberra Bowling Club on Hobart Avenue, and Manuka Football Club on Fitzroy Street.

A number of religious facilities exist within Forrest. The National Jewish Centre, Wesley Uniting Church and St George Free Serbian Orthodox Church are located on National Circuit, St Christopher's Cathedral on Franklin Street and St Andrew's Presbyterian Church on State Circle. The suburb also has a number of sporting facilities including Canberra Bowling Club, Forrest Tennis Courts, and an outdoor Tennis Centre located at the Wesley Uniting Church. Forrest is well served by health and welfare community services facilities including Medical Surgeries located on Bougainville Street and on Arthur Circle, Community Centre located at the Wesley Uniting Church, and the Catholic Social Services Centre at the Haydon Centre. Forrest provides a number of aged persons accommodation near Manuka Group Centre including Forrest Aged Persons Units on Franklin Street, and on Bougainville Street exist the Carthona Court and Glenrock Court and Woodley Court aged persons units.



St Andrews Presbyterian Church,
State Circle

The Free Serbian Orthodox Church comprising the church and murals, are a product of a distinct phase in Australia's history – the mass migration post World War II and arrival in Australia of people with differing cultures and faiths. The simplicity of the external architectural treatment contrasts with the internal complexity and richness of the display of the paintings and religious furniture, which highly reflect the influence of the traditional eastern ecclesiastic style / traditional Serbian church planning.

Other sites of heritage interest include St Christopher's Cathedral Precinct, St Andrew's Church, and Wesley Uniting Church, Burns Memorial and several bus shelters). For a detailed listing of the heritage sites in Forrest, please refer to the ACT Heritage Places listing, ACT Heritage Council website, at: www.environment.act.gov.au/heritageheritagelist.html.

Future Character

Forrest will continue to enjoy a range of community facilities. In particular, it will provide facilities appropriate for both an ageing population and for younger families. Accessibility for all, particularly those with special mobility needs will be made a priority.

Strategies for the future of the Community Facilities

Key Strategies:

- Retain the integrity of land defined under the Territory Plan as Community Facility.
- Ensure that adequate Community Facility land is available for the needs of current and future residents.

General Strategies:

- Allow for the increased use and development of adaptable buildings that meet current needs and can adapt for the changing needs of the future.
- Support the provision of a range of aged care facilities to meet the needs of a diverse community.
- Any redevelopment on Community Facility land should respect the landscape qualities of the area.
- Encourage a diversity of community uses on the larger areas of Community Facility land.
- Retain significant trees on Community Facility land.

Movement Networks

Current Situation

Forrest's street layout comprises curvilinear symmetrical lines with its concentric and radiating streets generated by Capital Hill. Melbourne Avenue forms a radial spine with the concentric routes of National, Dominion and Empire Circuits clearly shown. The street patterns reflect both the landform and important elements of Walter Burley Griffin's Plan for Canberra. The National Capital Authority manages Collins Park, Hobart Avenue and all sections north of National Circuit.

Forrest's movement networks consist of roads, footpaths, and public transport routes. In terms of roads, the neighbourhood has a street hierarchy of 'access roads' servicing the subdivisions, connecting to 'collector streets' such as Empire Circuit, National Circuit, Mugga Way, Arthur Circle, and Hobart Avenue, that in turn feed traffic into the major arterial roads such as State Circle, Canberra Avenue and Manuka Circle. 'Collector streets' by design collect vehicles from nearby local streets and are often used by buses.



Barkly Crescent

The suburb is well provided for in terms of footpaths. However, many are in need of some repair due to their age and effects of tree roots. Street trees, whilst providing important visual amenity, can reduce the effectiveness of facilities such as street lighting and signage; they can also damage footpaths.

Some of the neighbourhood is well serviced by public transport, with the main concentration of bus stops placed on Melbourne Avenue, Empire Circuit, Canberra Avenue, Manuka Circle, Furneaux Street, and Arthur Circle. Bus stops are not provided to the north of Dominion Circuit and up to State Circle. Bus stops have been placed at Manuka Group Centre on Manuka Circle and Franklin Street that are easily accessible for residents.

Although Forrest does not have its own dedicated cycle paths and connections to adjacent neighbourhoods, a cycle path is available on Mugga Way at the south western boundary of the suburb and on Flinders Way on the south eastern boundary. The cycle path connects to Telopea Park and Lake Burley Griffin where the path links to various directions including Civic and the northern suburbs, Russell, Fyshwick and Queanbeyan.

Future Situation

Forrest in the future will continue to offer a diverse range of accessible transport options, including car-based travel, public transport, cycle routes and pedestrian footpaths. In general, roads will be free of through traffic originating from adjacent neighbourhoods. Residential redevelopment will take advantage of Forrest's bus routes and stops, particularly those closest to the Manuka Group Centre and Canberra Avenue. Forrest's footpaths will be well maintained, linking the suburban areas with Urban Open Spaces and the Manuka Group Centre as well as the surrounding neighbourhoods. People will be able to move through the suburb safely and easily, enjoying the benefits of mature street trees on verges as well as good lighting and pathways free from hazard.

Strategies for the future of Forrest's Movement Networks

Key Strategy:

- Provide a diversity of accessible transport options.

General Strategies:

- Prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Discourage through traffic.
- Provide appropriate pedestrian and vehicle lighting and safe routes of travel for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles; provide an accessible route of travel to accommodate those with special mobility needs.
- Promote and support the use of public transport.
- Provide appropriate lighting and footpaths.
- Provide a safe and accessible route of travel for residents to facilities.
- Ensure any traffic problems are not exacerbated by the implementation of Residential Core Area.

How the Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented

The Forrest Neighbourhood Plan recommends the implementation of the following key actions:

- **Key Action:** In due course and should funding become available, the ACT Planning and Land Authority to **review the schedule of significant streetscapes** nominated in the Development Application Process Guidelines, place revised schedule on the ACT Planning and Land Authority website and revise references in the Development Application process booklets.
- **Key Action:** The ACT Planning and Land Authority to prepare a **companion guideline document** to the Good Design guideline series, to provide direction for the developer, the community and the development assessment officers, as to what will be sympathetic and complementary design for the type of development permitted to occur within **Residential Core Areas (A10)**.
- **Key Action:** In due course and should funding become available, Roads ACT to undertake a **Local Area Traffic Management Study** for Forrest.
- **Key Action:** In due course and should funding become available, Roads ACT and Canberra Urban Parks and Places to develop **network plans for cycle and pedestrian paths and street lighting**. Scope of works to include investigation of the conflict between assets (e.g. lighting and pavement) and street trees and how to ensure people are able to move through the suburb safely and easily, enjoying the benefits of mature street trees on verges as well as good lighting and pathways free from hazard.

How the Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed

A major and comprehensive review of the Forrest Neighbourhood Plan will be conducted seven (7) years after the Plan has been placed on the ACT Planning and Land Authority's Register of Planning Guidelines. The review process will seek to ensure that the Forrest Neighbourhood Plan remains responsive to the changing physical, social, environmental and demographic characteristics of the neighbourhood. The review process is critical, as the development of the neighbourhood needs to remain consistent with the vision and strategies set out in this Plan and *The Canberra Spatial Plan*. Minor reviews will be conducted prior to the seven-year time frame, although this will be dependent on major changes in policy framework and will only be conducted by an agreed process.

For more information visit the ACT Planning and Land Authority.

Website: <http://www.actpla.act.gov.au>

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Summary reports are available for each of the activities undertaken in order to develop this Neighbourhood Plan – they are available on the ACT Planning and Land Authority website or by telephoning 6205 0087.

Documents relevant to the Forrest Neighbourhood Plan include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Territory Plan (updated regularly)
- The National Capital Plan
- The Canberra Plan (2004)
- The Canberra Spatial Plan (2004)
- The Sustainable Transport Plan (2004)
- The Guide to Good Design (2004)
- The Sustainability Guide (2004)
- The Griffith Neighbourhood Plan (2004)
- The Narrabundah Neighbourhood Plan (2004)
- The Red Hill Neighbourhood Plan (2004)
- The Deakin Neighbourhood Plan (2002)
- People, Place and Prosperity: A Policy for Sustainability in the ACT (2003)
- Safe Routes Pilot Study (2001)
- ACT Parking and Vehicular Access Guidelines (2000)
- ACT Crime Prevention and Urban Design Resource Manual (2000)
- Canberra Bicycle 2000 – A Bicycle Strategy for the ACT

Drawing 2 - Forrest in the future

