

# GARRAN

## Neighbourhood Plan

A sustainable future for Garran



ACT Government



building our city  
building our community

ACT Government



ACT Planning &  
Land Authority

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A sustainable future for Garran



Prepared by the  
ACT Planning and Land Authority



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## What this Plan aims to achieve

The Garran 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 Garran resident or considering being a Garran resident;
- A Garran business owner or tenant;
- An investor or investor's agent (for example an architect) interested in Garran;
- An ACT Planning and Land Authority officer responsible for the assessment of development applications in Garran 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 Garran Neighbourhood Plan, along with the Neighbourhood Plans for Hughes and Yarralumla, 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 three 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 the 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 Garran Neighbourhood Character Study took all photographs appearing in this document.

## ACT Planning and Land Authority

September 2004

## The Garran Neighbourhood Plan at a glance

### The Neighbourhood Vision

*Garran in the future will be a safe, peaceful and socially diverse neighbourhood comprised of a high quality sustainable residential area and a health care district of the highest standard serving the ACT and surrounding region. It will be a neighbourhood with a strong community spirit and a vibrant commercial heart, characterised by accessible green open spaces, bushland and recreational areas.*

### Key strategies for achieving the vision

#### **Garran Local Centre:**

- Reinforce Garran's ability to offer a strong commercial and community heart in order to provide convenient local shopping and meeting places for the neighbourhood.

#### **Residential Areas:**

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

#### **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

Garran is an established South Canberra garden suburb (refer to Drawing No. 1 – Garran in context). It is popular for its large blocks, mature gardens, proximity to the Woden Town Centre and Red Hill Nature Reserve. The suburb was first gazetted as a Division name on 12 May 1966. The suburb is named after Sir Robert Randolph Garran, Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St George. Sir Robert was responsible for the establishment of Canberra University College, helped establish the Australian National University and was recipient of its first degree (Honorary Doctor of Laws). The 51 streets in Garran are named after Australian writers and commemorate such writers as Rosa Caroline Praed, whose first novel *An Australian Heroine* was published in 1880, and the poet George Gordon McCrae whose poems, dating back to 1867, are among the earliest Australian poems on Aboriginal themes.

Garran has a generally flat terrain to the west and undulating topography to the east of Gilmore Crescent increasing in height towards Red Hill Nature Reserve. Much of Garran enjoys spectacular views to Mount Taylor, the Brindabella Ranges and the Red Hill Nature Reserve. A distinctive element of the Garran neighbourhood is that a number of blocks back onto open space providing peace and quiet and visual and recreational amenity.

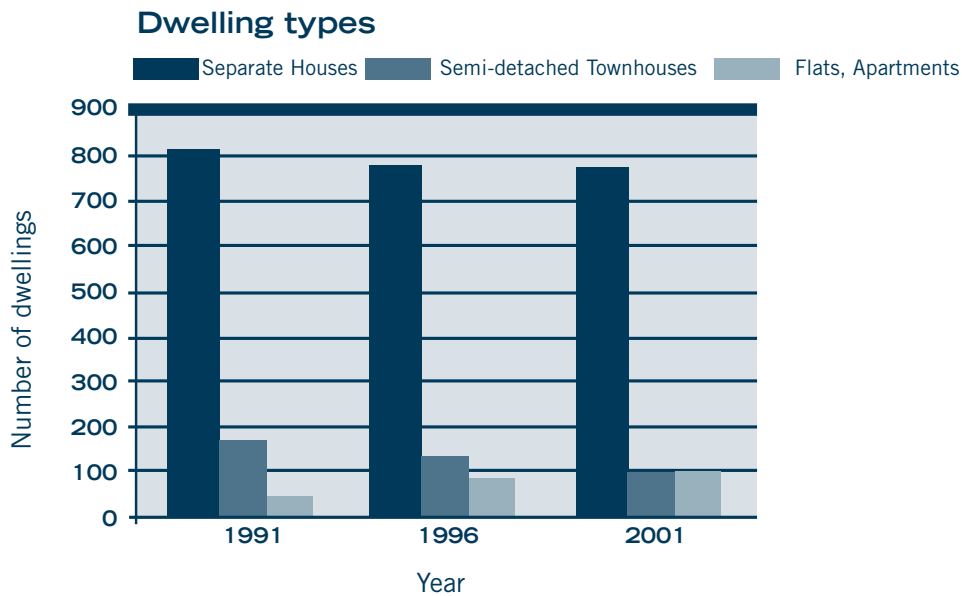


Spectacular views of the Brindabella Ranges and Woden

The Garran shops have a vibrant atmosphere, with a mix of retail and professional facilities. The Canberra Hospital and the National Capital Hospital are located in the south-west corner of the suburb. The Canberra Hospital underwent major development following the amalgamation of the former Royal Canberra Hospital and Woden Valley Hospital in 1991. This acute care teaching hospital of approximately 500 beds is the principal hospital for the ACT and southeast region of NSW, incorporating the Canberra Clinical School, the Health library and numerous other facilities. As such, the large hospital complex is the dominant built feature of the suburb. The Hospital campus' imposing presence includes Building 12 - the hospital's diagnostic and treatment building whose roofline is symbolic of the Brindabella Mountains. Snowy Hydro SouthCare, which operates from a heli-pad at the Hospital, provides the aero-medical and rescue helicopter service to the ACT and surrounding region.

Garran enjoys three neighbourhood parks scattered throughout the suburb, as well as the Garran Oval, which is centrally placed next to Garran Primary School, and Red Hill Nature Reserve on the eastern edge of the suburb.

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

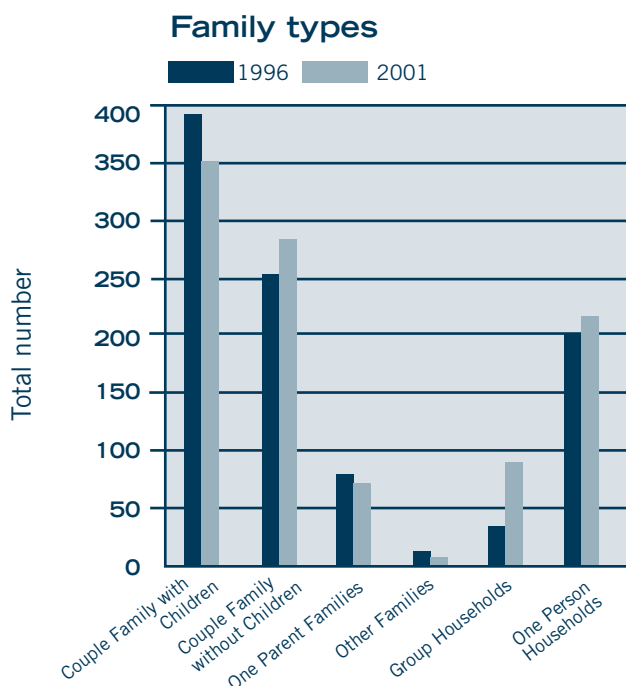


For more information refer to Drawing 1 – Garran’s Context.

### The People

In 2001 Garran’s population was 3,130 persons a small decrease from 3,277 in 1996 and 3,370 in 1991. The median age of the Garran population is 40 years, an increase of 3 years since 1996 when the median age was 37 years. In 1991 the median age was 34 years. In 2001 18% of Garran’s population was aged 65 years and over, compared to 18.5% for Hughes and 15.5% for Yarralumla.

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



The above table is in accordance with common nationwide trends, including the decrease in the number of coupled families with children, and the increases in coupled families without children, one-parent families and one person households. 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 Garran at present the median house price is \$530 000 (obtained from the current market. source: [www.allhomes.com.au](http://www.allhomes.com.au)) compared to the ACT's median of \$305,000 (source: *The Canberra Plan*, 2004). This represents a dramatic increase since 1999, when the median property price for Garran was \$205 000.

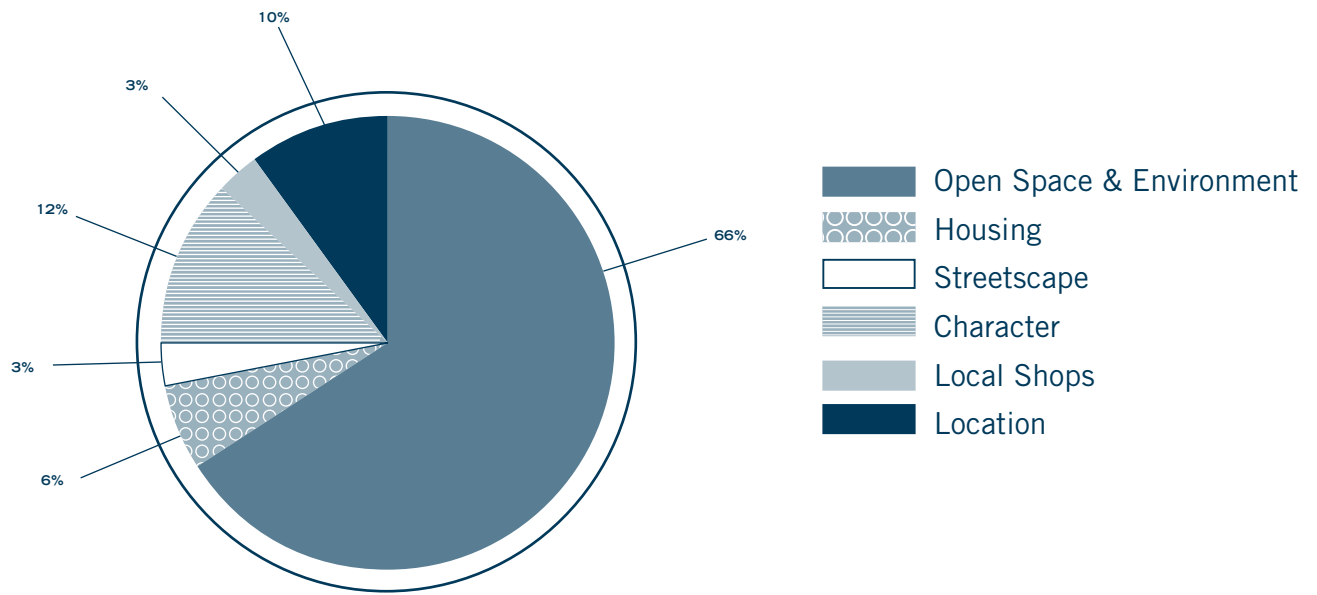
### Values of the Garran community

Those that attended the 'Planning for the Future' workshop valued Garran's environment, in particular the open space, trees, gardens and Red Hill Nature Reserve. Also valued was the Garran Local Centre and the friendly people in the neighbourhood.

Garran residents who responded to the Values Survey, valued, above all else, its open space and environment, in terms of the amount of open space and the diversity of plants, birds and native animals. Also highly valued is the suburbs 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; and Location.

### Garran's values



The following chart indicates which of the values listed in the survey were regarded as most important by respondents.

**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 twelve most common responses.

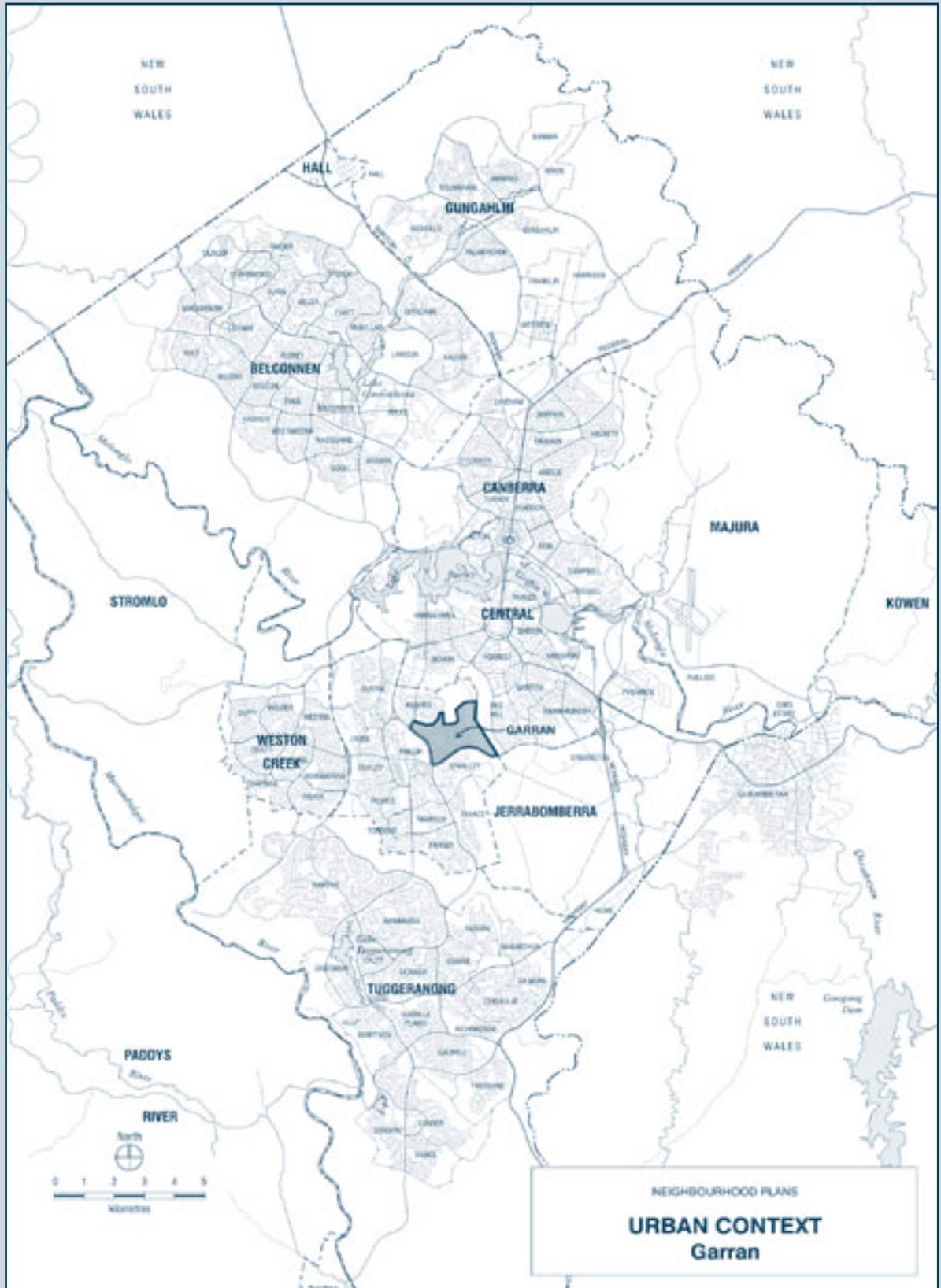
### Garran’s top twelve community values

Specific Values	Percentage
View and Vista	97
Green Space and Mature Trees	89
Visually Appealing Built Environment	89
Peace and Privacy	89
Safety	87
Close to Shops	87
Established Gardens	84
Diversity of Plants, Birds and Native animals	82
Green buffers between built forms	80
Established suburb	80
Mature Trees on Verges	80
Easy to move around	80

### What are Garran’s favourite places?

- **Red Hill Nature Reserve** (especially for walking, jogging and enjoying the view)
- **Urban Open Space** (particularly Garran Oval and the green belt linking the Oval, Garran Local Centre, and the open space between Hindmarsh Drive and Curlewis/Rusden Streets)
- **Garran Local Centre**

Drawing 1 - Garran'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 Garran 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 Garran**

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

- In Garran's Residential Core Area associated with the Garran Local Centre.

# C Garran in the future

This section provides planning strategies for the future of the local shopping centre, open spaces, residential areas, community facilities and transport 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 No. 2 – Garran in the future.

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

- *Garran in the future will be a safe, peaceful and socially diverse neighbourhood comprised of a high quality sustainable residential area and a health care district of the highest standard serving the ACT and surrounding region. It will be a neighbourhood with a strong community spirit and a vibrant commercial heart, characterised by accessible green open spaces, bushland and recreational areas.*

## Garran Local Centre

### Existing Character

The Garran Local Centre (Section 34) has a lively village atmosphere, and provides a central meeting point for the neighbourhood. It currently contains a variety of commercial services located in two separate buildings. Services include a supermarket, bakery, café, restaurant, real estate agent, butcher, dry cleaners, newsagent, professional services and the Woden Valley Specialist Centre. The front of the Local Shopping Centre is lined with mature plantings of the shade tree *Gleditsia triacanthos* (Honey locust). A Service Station is located on a separate block adjacent and to the north of the Local Centre. The green space (Section 54) opposite the shopping centre is designated Urban Open Space under the Territory Plan and is scattered with tree plantings. Parking is located at the front of the shops and is at capacity or beyond at peak periods.



The Garran Local Centre

The Commercial land-use aims to provide for convenience retailing and other accessible, convenient shopping and community and business services to meet the daily needs of the local population. This land-use allows for businesses, offices, community facilities, and light industry as well as residential.

### **Future Character**

The Garran Local Centre in the future will continue to be a unique centre that offers a vibrant and vital commercial and community facility to the local community and nearby Canberra Hospital. It will include a mixed-use community and commercial facility, appropriate to the needs of the Garran neighbourhood and complementing and building on the relationship with the nearby Hughes Local Centre and the Woden Town Centre. The Garran Local Centre, because of its location, will also provide a range of services to patients, visitors and staff from the nearby Canberra Hospital. It will provide a range of places and spaces that will provide a focal point for the community to meet and enjoy the central location and high-quality landscape environment.

The Local Centre will possibly including a second storey for professional suites or residential accommodation – all serviced with appropriate parking. The centre will be commercially viable in the long term.

### **Strategies for the future of Garran’s Local Centre**

#### **Key strategy:**

- Reinforce Garran’s ability to offer a strong commercial and community heart in order to provide convenient local shopping and meeting places for the neighbourhood.

#### **General strategies:**

- Recognise the close relationship between the Garran Local Centre, the Woden Town Centre and the nearby Canberra Hospital.
- Encourage a unique Local Centre offering a variety of services for the neighbourhood possibly including a supermarket, professional office suites, cafes/restaurants, community facilities as well as a range of public places and spaces.
- Reinforce the physical relationship between the Garran Local Centre and the surrounding Residential Core Areas, particularly in terms of built form, tree planting and pedestrian movement.
- Prioritise the needs of people with special mobility needs.
- Encourage a diversity of community, commercial and residential opportunities.
- 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 both commercial and domestic collection vehicles.

- Future works to be coordinated with Canberra Urban Parks and Places Forward Design Study, opportunities exist to:
  - Improve the landscape qualities and community use of the open space adjacent to Gilmore Crescent (Block 1, Section 54);
  - Provide seating and art elements to enhance the centre as a community meeting place;
  - Maintain and enhance physical facilities for community-based activities;
  - Explore opportunities to provide outdoor eating/meeting places;
  - Reduce the visual impact of the existing carparking whilst on balance retaining the amount of carparking.
- Maximise accessibility to a commercial heart to promote community and commercial viability, including the improvement of connections to the shops for people with limited mobility.
- Create better visual and physical linkages with the surrounding residential areas, including the aged person units (Hartigan Gardens).
- The Centre's buildings could be renovated or developed to include shop-top housing on the upper floor (redevelopment will be a maximum of two storeys). Development should be of an integrated design, sympathetic to the existing shops and their uses and fully fit the purpose intended.
- Second storey (re)development should address the rear of the shops to provide an active frontage and thereby increase the usage of the existing car park located at the rear of the shops which is typically under-utilised.
- Local centre redevelopment will not encroach on adjacent Urban Open Space.
- The area adjacent to the medical centre should be landscaped to integrate with the adjacent urban open space.
- Enhance views to Red Hill.
- Explore opportunities for the provision of a mix of long- and short-stay parking and ensure that adequate parking is provided.
- Consideration will need to be given to the ACT Government's Graffiti Management Strategy in the provision of assets such as seats, lights, walls etc.
- Reference should also be made to the *ACT Crime Prevention and Urban Design Resource Manual (2000)*.

### **Principles for best-practice Urban Design**

The following is provided as a guide to possible new development associated with Garran's local centre facilities. It is not a definitive list.

## **Character**

Place making should respond to the existing natural and developed features of the environmental context. A place that enhances the distinctive local landscapes, sense of place and history whilst providing a quality living environment will establish a rich environmental character unique to its locality. A response context analysis will identify:

- distinctive landscapes
- natural features
- locally distinctive built form
- street patterns which respond to the context
- special spaces of natural or cultural significance
- skylines and roofscapes
- building materials
- local culture and traditions
- avoiding standard solutions

## **Continuity and enclosure**

The form and fabric of a place define the living environment and establish a hierarchy of both public and private spaces providing clarity of function and movement:

- streets, footpaths and open spaces overlooked by buildings.
- clear distinction between public and private space.
- avoiding gaps in the lines of buildings.
- enclosing streets and other spaces by buildings and trees of a scale that feels comfortable and appropriate to the character of the space.
- No leftover spaces unused and uncared for.

## **Quality of the ‘public realm’**

Good urban design promotes a sense of well-being and amenity by ensuring recognition of the natural context and the functional requirements of the community and responding with:

- public spaces and routes that are lively and pleasant to use.
- a feeling of safety and security.
- uncluttered and easily maintained streets and public places and carefully detailed with integrated public art and functional elements.
- well-designed lighting and street furniture.
- places suited to the needs of everyone, including those with particular mobility needs.
- attractive and robust planting appropriate to the locality.

## **Legibility**

Legibility principles establish an understanding of place and way finding for residents and visitors. A discernable planning structure and complementary place making ensure that the living environment has a clear image and is easy to understand. Enhancing the legibility of a place will include the identification and incorporation into planning of such components as:

- natural landmarks and focal points.

- views and view corridors.
- clear and easily navigatable routes.
- discernable gathering places.
- gateways to particular areas.
- edges and buffers.
- lighting.
- works of art and craft.
- signage and way-markers.

### **Diversity**

Diversity of space and function provides our community with a range of experience and choice. This can be achieved through:

- place making to provide for variety of function and land use.
- provision for a broad cross-section of community and cultural values.
- variety of built form and development character which is sensitive to context.
- opportunities for biodiversity.

## **Residential Areas**

### **Current Character**

The dominant residential character of Garran is comprised of low-density, detached single storey family dwellings. Though to the eastern undulating edge of the neighbourhood double storey dwellings with a garage situated in the lower storey are prevalent. Streetscapes are planted with a mix of exotic and native tree plantings of average quality. In general, dwellings are brick and tile in construction, some of which have been modernised through renovation or rebuilding. For the most part, setbacks (the distance between the property boundary and the front face of the building) are generous as is the distance between houses, two factors that contribute significantly to the garden suburb nature of the neighbourhood. There is medium density housing located to the west along Robson Street, to the south along Gilmore Crescent and to the south east along Hartigan Street, of the Garran Local Centre. The medium density housing (zone B1 urban housing) along Gilmore Crescent, Hopegood Place and Eldridge Crescent is in the form of a relatively new apartment and townhouse complex. The complex overlooks Garran Oval and the open space corridor running from the Oval to the Garran Local Centre, which provides an important visual and recreational amenity.

An Aboriginal scarred tree exists on a property in Stephens Place (Block 19 Section 14) and has been nominated on the Interim Heritage Places Register.



O'Dowd Street

### **Future Character**

This Plan proposes that the majority of the suburb will remain predominantly detached single dwellings on generous blocks. It also proposes the retention, though reduction in extent of the Residential Core Area (otherwise known as A10 according to Variation to the Territory Plan No. 200 – The Garden City Variation) on blocks associated with the Garran Local Centre. For more information refer Drawing 2 – Garran in the Future and Drawing 3 – Residential Core Area Analysis. As a result, Garran will contain three distinct residential areas:

- Suburban Area – the majority of the neighbourhood; and a
- Residential Core Area (A10 land-use policy) – associated with the Garran Local Centre.
- Urban Housing Area (B1 land use policy) - along Gilmore Crescent in the vicinity of Hopegood Place and Eldridge Crescent

It is important to note that changes allowed for by the A10 Land Use Policy, will occur over time. In many cases it will be dependent on current lessees deciding to either redevelop the blocks themselves or to sell to another lessee with the intention to develop.

### **Future character of the Suburban Areas**

The Suburban Area of Griffith 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 Garran 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 800m<sup>2</sup>. 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 to 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. The Residential Core Area is located on blocks associated with the Garran Local Centre 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 applies 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 is not permitted on blocks less than 800m<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Future Character of the Urban Housing Area (B1 land use policy)**

This land use policy currently applies to the area along Gilmore Crescent in the vicinity of Hopegood Place and Eldridge Crescent (Sections 59, 60, 61, and 64). This is a relatively new apartment and townhouse complex with the design and aesthetics reflecting current trends. It is unlikely to undergo significant change in the foreseeable future.

It is not proposed to increase the extent of the B1 land use policy in Garran.

### **Strategies for the future of the Residential Areas**

#### **Key strategies for all residential areas:**

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

#### **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' suburban identity and distinctive character.
- Retain existing view corridors to Mount Taylor and the Brindabella Ranges.
- Retain the mix of public and private housing.
- Conserve heritage places, spaces and objects.
- Maximise permeable surfaces to reduce run-off and erosion and assist hydration.



Curlewis Street

- Safeguard privacy and maximise and maintain light and sun access to dwellings.
- Protect, maintain and replace street trees.
- 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.

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

- Modify the Residential Core Area as it is currently depicted in the Territory Plans. The following Sections will no longer be part of the Residential Core Area 15, 19 and 22. Section 12 will be added to the Residential Core Area.
- Maintain landscape setting and protect street trees (note: significant trees are addressed by the *ACT Tree Protection (Interim Scheme) Act 2001*).
- Setback from the street frontage and side boundaries to be appropriate to the streetscape character, the efficient use of the site and the amenity of residents.
- The built forms are innovative and responsive to the distinct quality of Garran, the street and neighbouring buildings.
- The privacy of dwellings and private outdoor spaces are to be protected.
- Retain verge widths and soft landscape surfaces to create open space areas 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.
- Building should fit with existing street patterns.
- The faces of buildings should be articulated and avoid continuous “walls of development” (i.e. long, uninterrupted and unbroken building frontages produced by redevelopments).

- Interesting, place appropriate and environmentally sensitive design and innovation should be encouraged in new developments.
- Encourage residential redevelopment around parks to front onto the parks and laneways to increase passive surveillance and family-friendly environments.
- 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

Garran is bordered on the northern edge by bushland connected to the Red Hill Nature Reserve, which separates it from its neighbouring suburb, Hughes. The Red Hill Nature 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. Garran also contains an open space corridor running through the suburb from the Garran Local Centre to the Garran Oval. The open space corridor contains a concrete footpath and mix of tree plantings, predominately Eucalypts.

Three pocket parks are evenly placed throughout the quiet, suburban parts of the neighbourhood. These parks vary in size, but in general are small spaces containing dryland grass and scattered plantings of trees. A couple of parks contain playground facilities. Whilst the parks are used for informal recreation, such as children's play and dog walking, they also provide a visual resource for the neighbourhood.

Garran Oval is located in the centre of the suburb, adjacent the Garran Primary School and is a well-utilised community facility. It is used for formal and informal sporting activities as well as other passive recreations such as dog walking.



A part of the open space network

## Future Character

The Garran Neighbourhood Plan proposes the retention of all Urban Open Space. However, the Neighbourhood Plan recommends that Urban Open Space in the future will be better augmented with elements such as seating, lighting (for safety and orientation) and footpaths to ensure that they continue to serve the community well, particularly as the population gradually changes and increases. The Urban Open Spaces could also be planted with a more diverse range of indigenous and native vegetation to maximise Garran's contribution to the biodiversity of the city. This is particularly relevant due to the suburb's proximity to the Red Hill Nature Reserve. 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 Garran's Urban Open Spaces.
- Emphasise existing view corridors to Mount Taylor, Red Hill and the Brindabellas by ensuring new buildings respond to the views that are currently afforded from various vantage points in the neighbourhood.
- Create a friendly and useable environment by providing Urban Open Spaces with appropriate assets such as seating and lighting.
- The area adjacent to the ACT Scouts Headquarters will be formalised as designated urban open space (ie X overlay removed from the Territory Plan).
- 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 suburb by providing suitable habitats where appropriate.
- Residents close to the nature reserve should choose plants that do not have the potential to become "bushland weeds".
- Residents to participate in activities designed to protect the natural environment for example the Red Hill Regenerators. ACT Government agencies to provide assistance as appropriate.

- Use a coordinated suite of facilities and installations, such as barbecue, seats and lighting, to create cohesive Urban Open Space. Consideration will need to be given to the ACT Government's Graffiti Management Strategy.
- Retain the theme of current street tree plantings wherever possible.
- 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 Garran together.

## Community Facilities

### Current Character

The community facilities in Garran are clustered around the Local Centre and to the west of the suburb. Garran Preschool, Pinocchio Day Care Centre and Pewsey Vale Court (aged persons units) are located on Robson Street behind the shopping centre.

The suburb is well served by medical and health facilities, predominately located in the southwest corner of the neighbourhood, including the Canberra Hospital and National Capital Private Hospital on Gilmore Crescent, the Brindabella Specialist Centre and Red Cross House on Dann Close and the Gaunt Place Health Care Units. The Garran Primary School is located opposite the Canberra Hospital on Gilmore Crescent. There are two Scout halls in the suburb, one on the northern corner of the Garran Oval and the other off Kitchener Street between the residential areas of Garran and Hughes. Hartigan Gardens (aged persons units) are located on Hartigan Street and the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints on Gilmore Crescent adjacent to the Local Centre. Sts Peter and Paul Primary and Catholic Church and Malkara School are situated on Boake Place.

Community land-use makes provision for the health, educational, intellectual, religious, cultural and welfare needs of the ACT community.

### Future Character

Garran will continue to enjoy a range of community facilities. Community facilities throughout the suburb will be retained and enhanced, for example, there is scope for the Hartigan Gardens aged persons residences to be improved to provide high quality sustainability housing options for elderly residences. Garran will provide facilities appropriate for both an ageing population and for younger families. Accessibility for all, particularly those with mobility issues 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:

- The integrity of Garran's Community Facility land use areas will be protected, offering a diverse range of facilities for the neighbourhood.
- Opportunities for the Canberra Hospital to landscape its periphery could be explored (particularly in the vicinity of Kitchener Street, Gilmore Crescent and Palmer Street) improving the facility's visual amenity.
- It is recommended that the neighbourhood be involved in the development of any future Master Plan for the Canberra Hospital.
- The impacts of future development at the Canberra Hospital on the adjacent areas should be carefully managed and ameliorated wherever possible. This includes impacts related to traffic, parking, noise, light, safety and visual amenity.
- 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.



Garran Primary School

# Movement Networks

## Current Situation

Garran'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 Kitchener and Palmer Streets and Gilmore Crescent that in turn feed traffic into the major arterial roads such as Yamba and Hindmarsh Drives. 'Collector streets' by design collect vehicles from nearby local streets and are often used by buses.

Many of Garran's footpaths 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 also can damage footpaths. Much of the street lighting in Garran is considered to be inadequate.

Some of the neighbourhood is well serviced by public transport, with bus stops placed on Gilmore Crescent, Kitchener and Palmer Streets, Yamba Drive and Bateson Road providing convenient access to the Canberra Hospital, Woden Town Centre and Civic.



Providing bus services to Woden and the city

Garran does not have its own dedicated cycle paths and connections to adjacent neighbourhoods, are lacking. However, at the south west corner of the neighbourhood there is a connection available to Weston Creek and the Woden Town Centre, which in turn provides access to Yarralumla, Civic and towards Belconnen.

## Future Situation

Garran 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 Garran's bus routes and stops, particularly those closest to the Garran Local Centre, Gilmore Crescent and Kitchener Street. For commuting cyclists, Garran will be connected to Civic and Woden by the Woden to Dickson On-road Cycle Path (due for completion in mid-2004).

Garran's footpaths will be well maintained, linking the suburban areas with Urban Open Spaces and the Garran Local Centre, community facilities 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 Garran's Movement Networks**

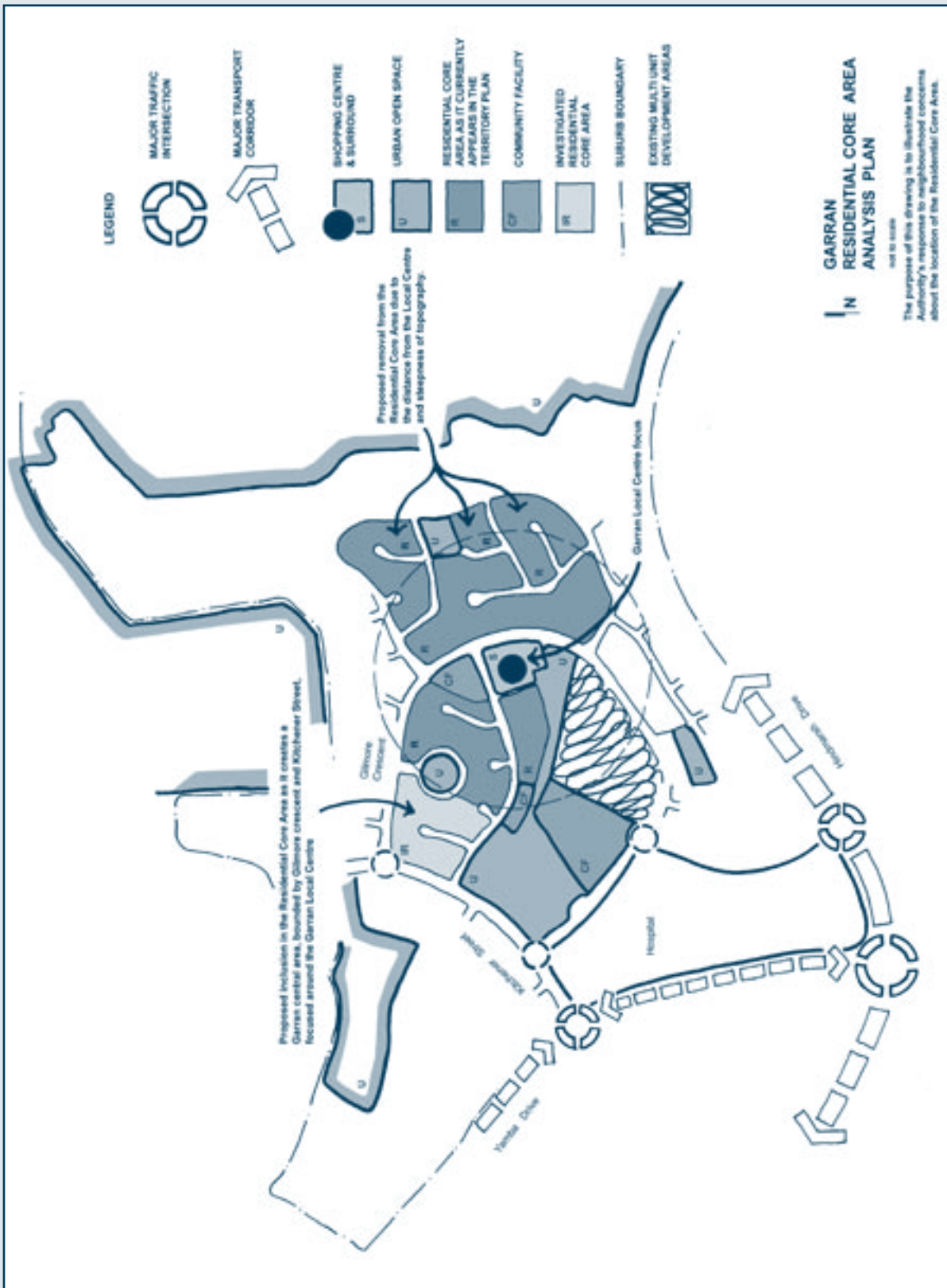
#### **Key Strategy:**

- Provide a diversity of accessible transport options.

#### **General Strategies:**

- Discourage through traffic.
- Provide appropriate lighting levels for pedestrians and vehicles 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 policies.
- Provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to Yamba Drive and Woden Valley Town Centre.
- In due course and should funding be available, Roads ACT to review the Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Study for Garran and Hughes (1995) and implement capital works as necessary. The LATM should be undertaken with appropriate input from the community.

Drawing 2 - Residential Core Area analysis



## How the Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented

The Garran Neighbourhood Plan recommends the implementation of the following key action:

- **Key Action:** The ACT Planning and Land Authority to undertake the process of **varying the Territory Plan to adjust the Residential Core Area** as per Drawing 2 – Garran in the Future.
- **Key Action:** The ACT Planning and Land Authority to undertake the process of **varying the Territory Plan to remove the X overlay from Block 74 Section 10**, which will allow formalisation of the Urban Open Space.
- **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 review the **Local Area Traffic Management Study for Garran and Hughes (1995)** and, if necessary, undertake additional investigations to resolve current and future traffic management requirements. Study to include investigation of parking problems at the shops and provision of pedestrian crossing or traffic island on Gilmore Crescent to provide easy access to the local centre bus stop
- **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 Garran Neighbourhood Plan will be conducted seven (7) years after the Plan has been placed on ACT Planning and Land Authority's Register of Planning Guidelines. The review process will seek to ensure that the Garran 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.

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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 Garran 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 Hughes Neighbourhood Plan (2004)
- The Yarralumla Neighbourhood Plan (2004)
- 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 4 - Garran in the future

