

## Review of the Territory Plan

The ACT Government has made a clear commitment to make changes to the current planning system to make it simpler to use, faster and more effective for residents, industry, business and the community.

### The four key planning areas that will be addressed in the reform are:

- The development assessment system;
- The Territory Plan and other planning instruments;
- Environmental impact assessment; and
- The leasehold system.

### Why is there a need for reform of the Territory Plan?

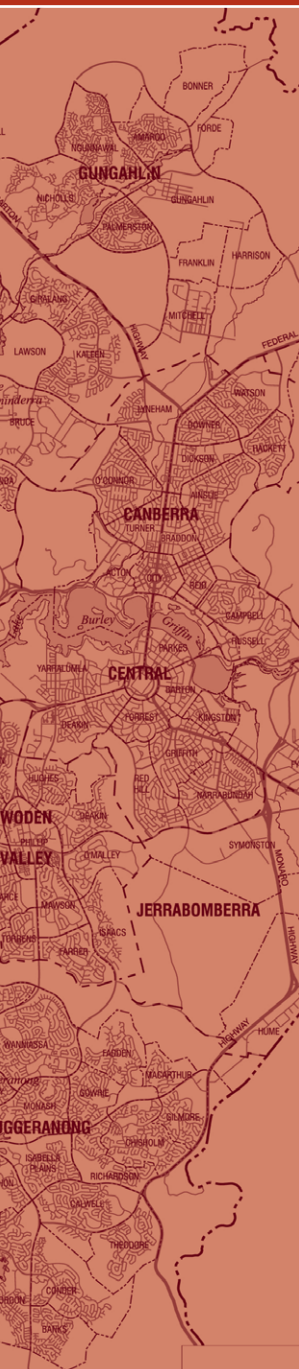
- The process of varying the Territory Plan is complex and lengthy, even for minor proposals, and can seriously delay or jeopardise needed developments;
- The Territory Plan no longer has the flexibility needed to meet the changing needs and growth of the ACT;
- Under the current system, there are multiple layers and types of planning guidelines to be considered when preparing or assessing a development proposal. This has caused confusion and can lead to lengthy delays in decision-making; and
- To establish a clear and consistent hierarchy of planning instruments.

### What reforms are proposed?

- A range of administrative matters currently in the Territory Plan will be removed and placed more appropriately in legislation, regulations or codes;
- The restructure of the Territory Plan, guidelines and codes will include changing some planning terminology consistent with definitions used around Australia, including the introduction of 'zones';
- Current land use policies and development codes will be consolidated and simplified to provide greater clarity on what is allowable within the 'zones';
- The community will contribute to the development of planning policies and codes up-front;
- Variations to the Plan will be minimised by providing an extended range of appropriate land uses in a particular zone;
- The leasehold system will remain in the ACT and none of the reforms will affect rights under existing leases; and
- The lease will continue to clearly provide direction on what the land can be used for, but development controls will be more appropriately integrated into the Territory Plan, including codes and guidelines.

### What does this mean for me as an individual or a community group?

- A new planning system will make the policies and rules that need to be complied with a lot easier to understand;
- There will be opportunities in the early stages of planning to participate in the development of policies and codes that will govern decision-making on development proposals;
- Neighbourhoods will continue to be protected by more easily understood policies and rules and more consistent decision making on development proposals;
- Where development proposals may cause changes within a neighbourhood, planning codes will clearly define the levels of acceptable change. These codes will be released for public consultation before they are adopted, to ensure they meet present and future community needs;
- Community interests will be protected through continued processes relating to community land allocation, social impact and needs assessments; and
- Existing environmental protection zones will continue to be protected.



## What does this mean for me as an industry, business or professional organisation?

- The proposed changes to the planning system will clarify the rules and guidelines applicable to development in the ACT;
- Clarification of the relationship between the Territory Plan and non-residential leases will also create greater certainty for the business sector when making decisions about development and redevelopment across the ACT; and
- Proposed improvements to the structure and content of the Territory Plan will remove the need to undertake as many Plan variations.

## Where do I get more information?

These proposed changes are detailed in the Review of the Territory Plan Technical Paper, supported by a Directions paper and three additional technical papers addressing each of the priority planning areas. These papers have been released for public consultation for an eight-week period, giving the Canberra community an opportunity to comment on the reforms proposed in each paper.

Copies of the papers are available at all ACT Government and ACT Planning and Land Authority customer service centre, ACT Libraries and on the ACT Planning and Land Authority website. For further information, contact the ACT Planning and Land Authority on 02 6207 1923 or visit our website: [www.actpla.act.gov.au](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au)

## How do I contribute to the new planning system?

Community consultation is taking place over an eight-week period from 27 May to 22 July 2005. Public comment can be provided through submissions to the ACT Planning and Land Authority via email: [planning.systemreform@act.gov.au](mailto:planning.systemreform@act.gov.au) or posted to The Planning System Reform Project, GPO Box 1908 Canberra ACT 2601. Submissions close on Friday 22 July 2005.

Persons making submissions should be aware that all submissions will be made public.

For further details please refer to the Planning System Reform Project Directions paper.

### Indicative timetable for the reform process:

May – July 2005	Public release of the Directions paper, with an eight-week community consultation period
February 2006	Exposure draft legislation tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly
August 2006	Legislation introduced to the ACT Legislative Assembly to make reforms to the current planning system
2007/2008	Implementation of the new planning system

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