



**PLANNING AND LAND AUTHORITY  
ACT Government**

**PPN6**

**GUIDELINES  
FOR  
MULTI-UNIT REDEVELOPMENT  
INCLUDING DUAL OCCUPANCY  
IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

**(As amended September 2003)**

"These Guidelines do not apply to applications approved after 5 September 2003 except for any application lodged before 1 September 2002 and for which an application has been made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for review of the decision."

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

These draft Guidelines are included on the [Register of Planning Guidelines](#). The land to which the Guidelines apply comprises the residential areas excluding the Residential 'B1' and 'B2' Areas in the Territory Plan.

Under the provisions of Clause 9.2 (b) of Part A3 of the Territory Plan

*9.2 The relevant authority shall, in relation to an application to undertake a development or a proposal to use land, carefully consider the following matters:*

*(b) any relevant planning guideline or interim planning guideline contained in the Register of Planning Guidelines.*

The Guidelines were prepared as part of the Government's response to the Report to the Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning by Mr Robert Lansdown AO CBE – "Residential Redevelopment Review" dated November 1994.

Where the provisions of the Territory Plan are different from any Guideline then the Territory Plan provision will apply and override any guideline.

The Guidelines apply to all Design and Siting applications for multi-unit redevelopment, including dual occupancies which were lodged with the Authority after 21 August 1994.

The Guidelines are to be read in conjunction with:

- the Residential Design and Siting Code for Multi-dwelling Developments in the ACT (Code) in Appendix III.2 of the Territory Plan;
- other guidelines which may be adopted by the ACT Planning Authority from time to time.

Note: The "Guidelines for Residential Development Forrest/Red Hill/Deakin/Griffith Historic Areas" applies to part of the area to which these Guidelines apply and the Authority will consider those locality specific Guidelines in preference to these generally applicable Guidelines where there is discrepancy between the two.

The Residential Redevelopment Review undertaken in 1994 identified three categories of land to which the Territory Plan applies which are of relevance to these Guidelines:

Areas of Territorial Significance (to include precincts from both the Interim Heritage Places Register and indicative heritage lists); areas which are relatively new and areas of environmental concern.

The areas of Territorial Significance are located in the older residential areas and include major parts of the following suburbs: Ainslie, Braddon, O'Connor, Reid and Turner in North Canberra, and Barton, Forrest, Griffith, Red Hill and Yarralumla in South Canberra.

Whilst residential consolidation is appropriate in these inner areas, the Guidelines complement the existing Code with an emphasis on those Objectives and Performance Criteria which are of particular relevance to residential redevelopment Design and Siting issues in these areas.

The areas of environmental concern are residential areas which have been established for some time and where there is some potential pressure for redevelopment and consolidation in the longer term.

The areas, which are relatively new residential areas, are currently under development or have been recently developed. As they become more established, they are more readily identified as having the characteristics of the areas of environmental concern.

The aim of the Guidelines is to achieve a high standard of urban design and to integrate small scale multi-unit redevelopments with existing residential areas by providing for an increased number of dwellings without changing the existing character of a neighbourhood in terms of streetscape, architectural character, privacy and amenity of residents.

The Guidelines are intended to advise the public and lessees of the matters in the Territory Plan which the Authority will address in more detail in considering and determining Design and Siting applications for multi-unit residential redevelopment.

The Authority will monitor the type and form of residential redevelopment projects and the spatial distribution and overall densities of residential development that are being achieved in response to the Guidelines and will revise them if necessary.

In recognition of the variety of factors which may be relevant to individual proposals, the Authority will exercise some discretion in applying the guidelines.

## **2.0 APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES**

Subject to the provisions of the Territory Plan (e.g. which exclude residential areas at Hall and Tharwa) the Guidelines apply to all applications in residential areas except for the Residential 'B1' and 'B2' areas for residential redevelopment and dual occupancy including:

- the redevelopment of an additional dwelling or additional dwellings on a block;
- the conversion of an existing dwelling into two or more dwellings by adding to or refurbishing the original dwelling;
- the erection of two or more dwellings in place of an existing dwelling.

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These Guidelines are not intended to reduce development opportunities previously exercised on a parcel of land. For example, these Guidelines are not intended to prevent a 7 dwelling redevelopment which would replace 7 dwellings on the site.

## **3.0 DUAL OCCUPANCY DEVELOPMENT**

Residential blocks vary considerably in size from suburb to suburb and within suburbs. In order to provide adequately for two dwellings on a block which previously had a single dwelling, associated private open space, privacy, vehicle access and parking, it is generally considered impractical to develop a second dwelling on a block having an area less than 800m<sup>2</sup>. However, in some cases a

800m<sup>2</sup> block may not be suitable to accommodate a second dwelling because of its unusual shape, its exposed boundaries, its topography, etc. The size of the block alone is not sufficient reason to approve a second dwelling.

#### **4.0 OTHER MULTI-UNIT REDEVELOPMENT**

Developments comprising three or more dwellings on a single existing block may be considered where the area of the existing block is at least 1,400m<sup>2</sup> and 50% greater than the average area of adjoining existing residential blocks having single dwelling occupations.

Other developments comprising three or more dwellings require the amalgamation of at least two existing blocks and a total minimum area of at least 1,400m<sup>2</sup>.

The number of dwellings which may be permitted on a parcel of land is based on the area of the existing block or blocks.

As a guide, where an existing block (before amalgamation) has:

- an area of 4,000m<sup>2</sup> or less; one dwelling is permissible for each 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of the area of that existing block.

#### **5.0 FLOOR SPACE RATIO**

The objective of a floor space ratio as an upper limit to development is to provide for low density development which is compatible with surrounding single dwelling development.

As a guide, the ratio of the gross floor area of all existing and proposed development to the area of the block on which that development is to be situated should not exceed 0.35:1. This may also be expressed as the gross floor area not exceeding 35% of the site area.

Other conditions and requirements such as the provision of Private Open Space and setbacks from the street boundary also apply.

## **6.0 SETBACKS**

The Performance Criteria in the Code provide for the setback from the street frontage to be appropriate to the streetscape character, the efficient use of the site and the amenity of residents.

Under these Guidelines, the existing streetscape character is of particular relevance and the front boundary setback will respect existing building lines of adjacent properties on each side.

## **7.0 BUILDING HEIGHT**

Existing buildings in residential areas are predominantly single storey. The height of new buildings should be similar to the height of adjacent and nearby buildings and a two storey development will only be permissible if a direct visual relationship to a relevant adjacent two storey building can be demonstrated.

An attic will generally be treated on the same basis as an upper storey unless proposed attic windows are to be screened to avoid overlooking of adjacent and nearby properties.

## **8.0 AREAS OF TERRITORIAL SIGNIFICANCE (see Figure 1)**

### **8.1 Architectural Appearance**

Before a proposed new development is designed in an area of Territorial Significance, the designer should consult any applicable Interim Heritage Places Register, then study the architectural character of the surrounding development with particular emphasis on the bulk, massing, proportion, shape of roof, fenestration, materials and colours.

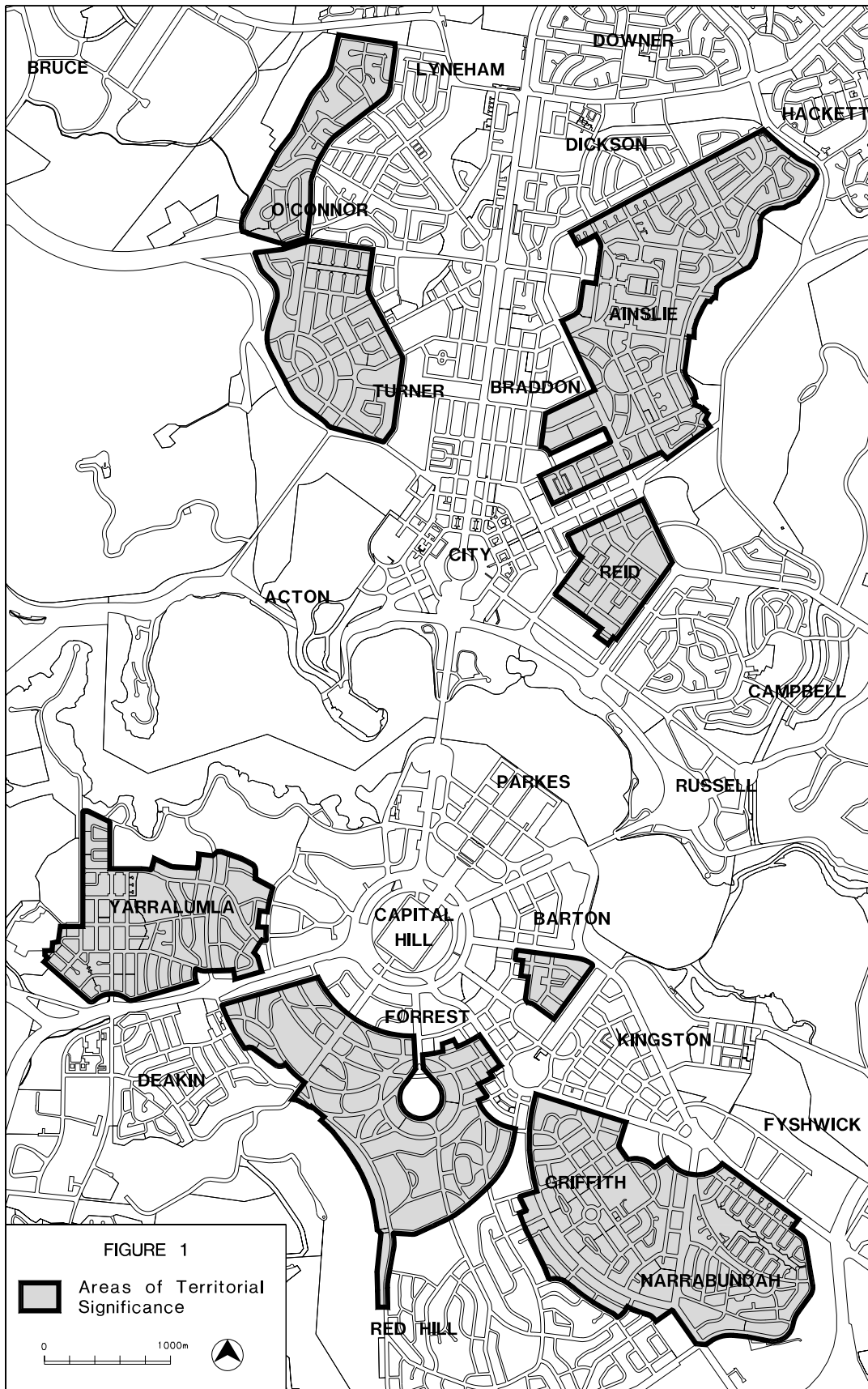
The design of the proposed new development should reflect the character and style of the surrounding development and the application should demonstrate that the new development is architecturally compatible with the existing built environment.

### **8.2 Urban Design**

Applications for multi-unit development in these areas should demonstrate that the proposed new development is sympathetic with the urban design of the locality.

### **8.3 Streetscape**

New development should be sympathetic with the existing streetscape. All existing street trees should be retained and protected during construction if so required. The character of existing driveways is to be retained and structures will generally not be permissible between the building line and the front boundary.



## **9.0 PRIVATE OPEN SPACE**

Whilst the conditions of the Code apply, Private Open Space should not be provided forward of the building line and courtyard walls and screens may not be appropriate forward of the building line in the context of the existing streetscape.

## **10.0 VEHICLE PARKING**

The Code provides for parking. In the application of these Guidelines particular emphasis is placed on the objectives in the Code which ensure that:

- parking facilities do not detract from streetscape amenity and surveillance of the street;
- streets and access ways provide safe and convenient vehicle access to dwellings and provide for service vehicles.

Shared driveways and access ways are encouraged in developments of two dwellings. The visual character of existing driveways is to be retained.

## **11.0 LANDSCAPING**

The design of new landscaping components in a strong and mature landscape environment is of critical importance. New plant material should be compatible with the existing surrounding landscape and the introduction of new species should be avoided.

Each application for new development should include a comprehensive landscape design indicating size and type of species proposed for the block and the adjacent verge. A survey of all existing trees on or adjacent to the site is to be provided.

Significant existing trees on and adjacent to the site are to be retained unless prior agreement in writing has been obtained from the Territory.

All existing trees to be retained should be maintained and protected during construction to the satisfaction of the Territory.

## **12.0 CONSULTATION**

The most desirable approach to development proposals is one which involves a pro-active relationship with the community to ensure that their needs are fully considered in the development of the details of a specific project. Experience has shown that this is most effective when it commences and is perceived to commence before planning work begins to ensure that the community does not see itself as being presented with a finished product.

Two phases of consultation are required. Phase 1 is conducted by the lessee/developer/builder prior to lodgement of an application and Phase 2 comprises the statutory consultation phase which is conducted by the Authority prior to assessment of the application.



## **CONSULTATION PHASE 1**

A first phase of consultation is conducted to assess neighbours' aspirations subject to the proposal. This may include:

- face to face meetings with residents and lessees of adjacent and nearby blocks;
- advertising in the local paper for submissions (relevant for larger multi-unit proposals);
- face to face meetings with relevant community groups (relevant for larger multi-unit proposals).

A report will be prepared by the applicant on the outcome of this consultation detailing all of the expressed views and summarising the issues raised. Copies of this report are to be supplied to the Authority and relevant participants.

The preliminary design should be discussed with the Authority as it is being developed to ensure that physical, environmental and community requirements are being met.

## **CONSULTATION PHASE 2 (STATUTORY REQUIREMENT)**

Multi-unit redevelopment proposals generally involve two approvals: Lease Variation and Design and Siting approval. Each of these requires public notification and third party appeal rights prevail. To avoid public confusion both applications should be lodged with the Department of the Environment, Land and Planning so that public notification may then be conducted concurrently. Outcomes of the consultation will be taken into consideration in the decision making process.

The application is lodged, together with technical studies and documentation of pre-application consultation.

According to the provisions in the Territory Plan, the Authority publicly notifies the application, receives comments and makes a decision on the application. The applicant and objectors are notified of the decision and may lodge an appeal to review the decision.

## **13.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

It is suggested that additional items be included in the requirements for all multi-unit applications as listed below, where practicable:

- (a) The Site Plan should show proposed buildings and/or buildings to be retained and should also show relevant adjacent residences, particularly those along either side at street frontage. This will enable the evaluation regarding front setbacks and assist with the evaluation of the impact of the proposed new development on existing adjacent houses and associated Private Open Space.
- (b) The Site Plan should include a section through the site showing all proposed development in relation to structures to be retained and relevant adjacent structures.

- (c) Applicants will be required to show what impact building or demolition proposals will have on adjacent properties. In particular, the proposed location of vehicle access, parking areas and landscaping will be assessed in relation to adjacent development.

A statement of environmental effects should be included in the application which addresses the issues raised in these Guidelines and describes how the various requirements are to be met.

Development proposals in Areas of Territorial Significance and areas identified on the Indicative Heritage list should also include:

- (d) An elevation of the proposed development including an elevation of adjacent houses on each side to assist with the evaluation of architectural character. This elevation is to be taken from the street side and is to include major existing and new landscaping. An alternative which the Authority may accept is a photographic study which demonstrates compliance with the above.

## **14.0 DEFINITIONS**

“Authority”	means the ACT Planning Authority
“Code”	means the Residential Design and Siting Code for Multi-dwelling Developments in the ACT which forms Appendix III.2 in the Territory Plan and any amendment.
“Existing Block”	means the parcel of land for which the first residential lease was issued.
“Floor Space Ratio”	means the ratio of the gross floor area of all existing and proposed development, including an attic, to the area of the block on which the development is to be situated. In the event of no garage being shown on the plan, there shall be included in the calculation of the floor space, 18m <sup>2</sup> floor space for the first 150m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor area shown on the plan and 1m <sup>2</sup> of floor space for every 10m <sup>2</sup> over 150m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor area.

Except as specifically provided for above, the definitions in Appendix VI of the Territory Plan apply.