

Structure Plan

Gungahlin Central Area

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Introduction

The following principles and policies were originally included in the repealed Territory Plan through a Territory Plan Variation as the principles and policies for the development of the Gungahlin Town Centre and Central Suburbs, identified as 'defined land' in accordance with Subdivision 2.3.4 of the repealed *Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*.

To assist in understanding the original application of the principles and policies for the “defined land”, the area identified in this structure plan is the original “defined land” area, with several exclusions. Over time, parts of the former defined land area were undefined through statutory processes. The remaining areas to which these principles and policies apply are now identified in the current Territory Plan map as a future urban area, pursuant to section 50(2)(a) of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act). This structure plan sets out the principles and policies that apply to the area in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Concept plans may be prepared for all or part of the area subject to the structure plan.

As part of the Territory Plan Variation No. 300, the town centre components have been removed from this structure plan and included in a dedicated structure plan for the town centre. This structure plan now only applies to the suburbs around the town centre. Further information on the area subject to this structure plan can be found in following Figure 1.1 and the Territory Plan map, available on the ACTPLA website.

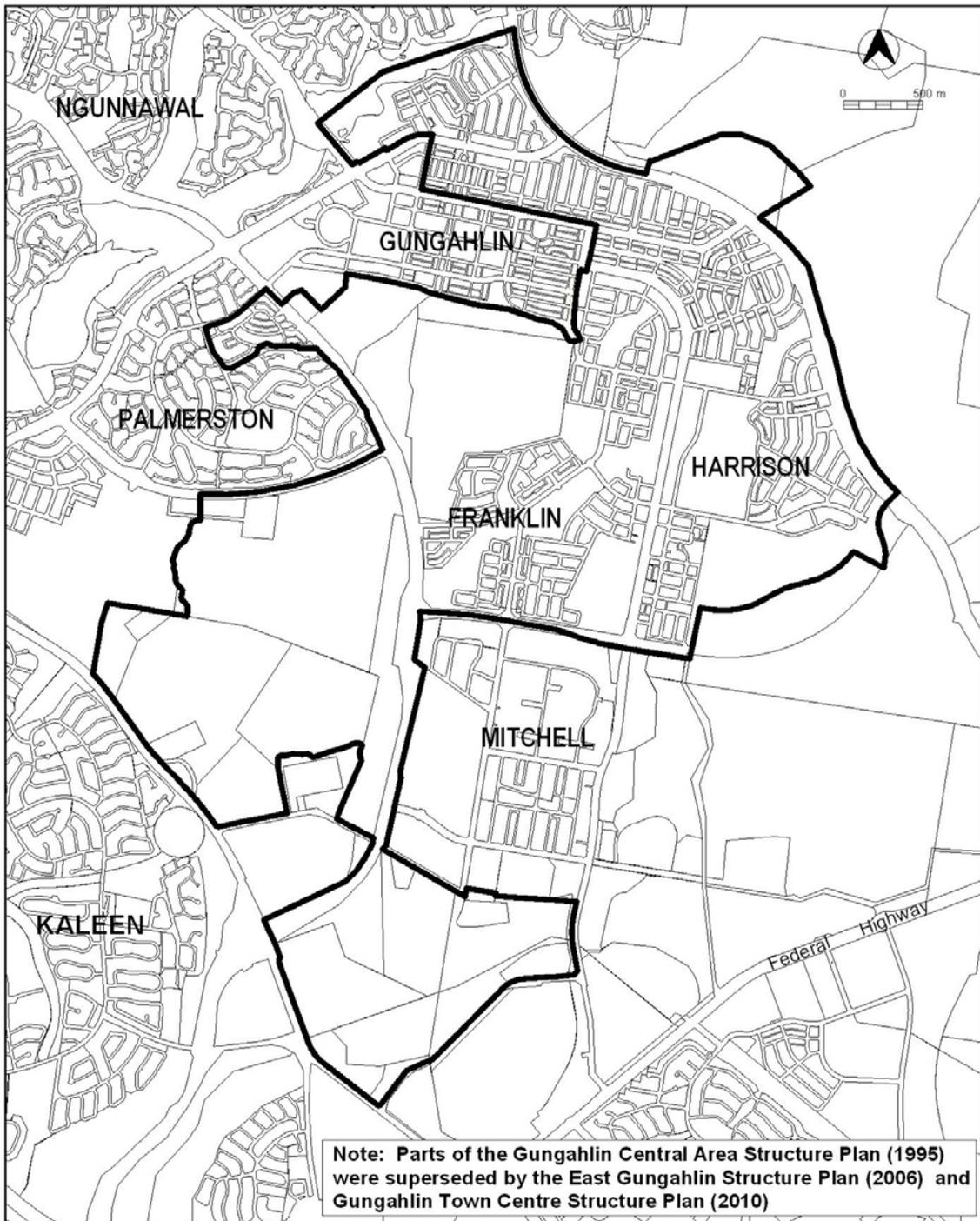


Figure 1.1 Area subject to the Structure Plan

Principles and Policies

Objectives

Central Suburbs

To provide a series of connected, overlapping residential areas around a series of local centres, schools, community facilities and open space.

To provide an urban structure that is simple, legible and flexible.

To encourage a mix of land uses, including appropriate commercial, retail and other uses that contribute to a diverse character.

To maintain and enhance natural systems and areas of conservation value.

To provide residential areas that are walkable, permeable and compact.

To encourage development that is ecologically sustainable, and minimises pollution through design and technology of stormwater, waste water, sewerage, traffic and other systems.

To limit the use of resources, discourage the use of non-renewable resources, and minimise the production of ozone depleting and greenhouse gas producing materials and practices.

To limit the consumption of energy and encourage the use of passive and active solar systems and energy efficient building design.

To provide a variety of housing types to meet housing needs at the present time and in the future.

To ensure housing densities support a viable, accessible, frequent and energy efficient public transport system.

To develop a landscape which is sympathetic to the cultural and heritage values of the area and conducive to a variety of uses and experiences, with a character that retains the inherent site values and cultural associations.

To create a landscape pattern that brings the open space network close to all urban development, providing access and amenity, and that correlates closely with the broader natural landscape setting.

To protect native grassland communities and habitats for threatened species through establishing and providing for the management of conservation areas. Those grassland conservation areas will establish the overall landscape character for the area, preserving the pastoral nature of the site, reinforcing the existing openness and broad scale, and allowing views to distant hills and recognisable features that identify the area with Canberra.

To maintain and create an open space system which is representative of local natural environments, e.g. forest on protected hills and valleys, woodland on hill slopes, grassland on lowlands and wetlands in valleys and drainage lines.

General Principles

Set out below are broad principles that are to guide the development of Gungahlin Central Suburbs. Development is to be in accordance with these broad principles. However, all of these principles should have equal weighting and none should be pre-eminent or interpreted in isolation of the planning context determined by the suite of principles.

Environment

Biodiversity

Provide for the conservation and enhancement of local biodiversity and natural habitats.

Provide for the protection of threatened species and their native grasslands habitats.

Energy

Make provision for the public transport system to be an integral part of the structure of the Central Suburbs.

Facilitate the use of natural energy systems (solar and other alternative energy sources) in building design and public infrastructure, including street lighting.

Facilitate pedestrian and bicycle movement within the Town Centre and Central Suburbs and from adjacent areas.

Encourage reduction in energy use in the construction and operation of infrastructure.

Water

Facilitate a reduction of water consumption by design and increased recycling of waste water.

Encourage reduction in water consumption by the use where appropriate of plant species indigenous to Gungahlin.

Control runoff from urban areas, both during and after the development phase in order to protect down stream water quality.

Building

Facilitate recycling of waste products and use of recycle products.

Give preference for materials which:

Cause minimum environmental impact and use of energy in terms of their extraction, manufacture and assembly;

Reduce the effects of indoor air pollution and sick building syndrome;

Can be reused, recycled and which minimise site contaminations; and

Have a minimum life cycle cost.

Encourage the use of low energy systems for lighting, heating and cooling, and appliances.

Provide for solar efficiency in buildings through orientation and design.

Ensure residential uses within mixed use areas incorporate acoustic design measures to ensure that the provisions of the Environment Protection Act are met.

Heritage

Conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the site.

Encourage public appreciation of the heritage of the site through appropriate interpretation.

Cultural Planning

Reflect the cultural significance of the Gungahlin area, including its landscape, ecosystem and history of occupation, in the design of the Central Suburbs, including residential areas and open spaces.

In the planning process facilitate community cultural development that reinforces the role of the site in providing and developing identity for the community, particularly with regard to the interaction between:

Natural heritage;

Aboriginal heritage;

European heritage;

Open space systems;

Contemporary cultural diversity among residents;

Built form and streetscape design; and

Contemporary visual, craft, performing and community arts practice.

Social

Access

Provide sites for community facilities amongst other uses where this enhances their access and community safety, and where their permanence can be assured.

Provide independent disability access within and to buildings, and throughout public places, in consultation with disability groups, especially wheelchair users, with particular attention being paid to kerb access, street surfaces and gradients.

Provide convenient bicycle and pedestrian access between transport nodes (public transport facilities and car parking) and retail, community and recreational facilities, and to adjoining suburbs.

Discourage through traffic where it provides a barrier to pedestrians, by the provision of convenient alternatives and by street design that calms traffic.

Make ample provision for car access by people with disabilities.

Enhance access and reduce costs and seek opportunities for co-location or joint provision of community and recreation facilities, or their inclusion in joint ventures.

Equity

Provide sites for the equitable distribution of services and facilities having regard to the level of provision in other Town Centres and residential areas, and to the needs of different groups in the population.

Consider inter-generational equity in respect to planning for services and facilities.

Provide for a variety of affordable housing types and retirement housing, including public tenure.

Amenity

Provide a legible layout, with appropriate “landmarks” and adequate signage.

Community safety

Where practicable, provide natural surveillance of public areas through active frontages in the ground level of buildings with particular reference to our-of-hours use.

Flexibility

Provide for long term flexibility in planning the urban area and in community use building design to accommodate different uses as needs change.

Provide opportunities collaborative and coordinated management of facilities.

Economic

Stage retail development to complement the growth in population of Gungahlin.

Encourage mixed use developments which provide for home-based employment and small scale workplaces,

Facilitate the development of viable local centres in the residential sectors which contain an appropriate mixture or residential development with other land uses.

Facilitate the development of local cultural industries at Gungahlin through the broad interaction of heritage, sustainable ecosystem, leisure/recreational, and creatively-based activities.

Transport

Streets

Provide an appropriate hierarchy of streets and other movement systems.

Provide a street system that is clear in use, character and connectivity.

Provide slow speed street environments where necessary, to ensure a high level of pedestrian amenity.

Provide direct connections for pedestrians and cyclists to the metropolitan and district pedestrian and cycle network.

Discourage unnecessary through traffic in the Central Suburbs.

Parking

Ensure car parking does not visually or functionally dominate other land uses.

Encourage on-street parking.

Encourage the multiple use of parking areas by providing public parking rather than private on-site parking.

Provide ample parking for people with disabilities adjacent to their destinations.

Public transport

Locate public transport routes and stops within easy walking distances with numerous opportunities for boarding and alighting.

Ensure that the Inter-Town Public Transport System is compatible with light rail.

Ensure that the residential sectors are conveniently served by public transport.

Pedestrians

Provide functional, convenient, safe and attractive pedestrian routes for both access and recreation.

Ensure that pedestrian routes are safe for all users.

Provide convenient pedestrian access from housing to shops, workplaces, facilities, schools and public transport stops.

Bicycles

Encourage the use of bicycles for transport by providing functional, convenient, safe and attractive cycle routes connecting major destinations and linking to district and metropolitan cycle ways, as well as providing bicycle racks and locking facilities in public areas.

Facilitate the use of bicycles for recreation by providing attractive and safe cycle ways integrated with the open space system.

Public Spaces

Provide major public spaces with a high level of environmental amenity, including provision for an adequate distribution of public toilets and public telephones. Ensure that public spaces remain publicly accessible at all times and that they are safe to use.

Ensure that public spaces have edges that are sufficiently developed to provide appropriate surveillance and liveliness.

Encourage community ownership of public spaces by providing for site-specific public art, community art projects, communities vents and performances, and land-care groups.

Have regard for whole-of-life costing of facilities in the planning and design of public spaces.

Provide a variety of public spaces that are capable of both formal and informal use.

Create a variety of spaces that provide areas for large and small gatherings.

Provide a high quality of urban design, landscape, street furniture and lighting in all public spaces.

Stormwater

Develop a stormwater control and treatment system that encompasses principles of sustainability.

Integrate the stormwater system into the general open space network.

Provide for a diverse range of vegetation types and wildlife habitats within the stormwater system and use this system to provide wildlife links.

Where possible, reuse stormwater for irrigation (e.g. to adjacent ovals, community gardens and school playgrounds).

Encourage the development of individual or group on-site stormwater storage and control systems.

Integrate overland stormwater control systems into site developments, and limit the piping of stormwater, wherever practicable, by designing residential streets and lanes with swales to cater for stormwater runoff.

Urban Design

Develop an urban form that is walkable, permeable and compact.

Provide for development that is mixed use with a significant proportion of residential development and a variety of housing types.

Develop an urban form which is robust and enables incremental development and flexibility.

Ensure that developments respond to the natural and cultural features of the site and preserve and enhance these where appropriate.

Base the urban form on a hierarchical network of streets that restrict vehicular speeds.

Provide residential sectors which have a distinct urban character and which are visually harmonious and legible.

Provide an urban form which is legible and has direct connections for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles to adjoining areas.

Define the edges of the residential sector by peripheral streets, distinctive landscape treatment and appropriate building forms.

Ensure that the ground floor levels of buildings are integrated with adjoining verge or finished site levels for easy access, with any necessary level changes occurring within property boundaries.

Urban Structure Principles Central Suburbs

The following diagrams illustrate a framework for development that is based on a number of urban structure principles. Detailed planning in the Central Suburbs should generally conform to this planning framework and be consistent with its basic intent.

Central Suburbs Land Use

Central Suburbs land use is based on principles that:

Provide a gradient of residential densities which respond to the location of the housing.

Provide flexibility for change over time.

Ensure that all areas are served with necessary facilities and services within walking distance of housing.

Mix land uses as appropriate.

Integrate housing and on-residential land uses as far as appropriate.

Outside the Town Centre, provide for the location and integration of adequate community facilities within or adjacent to local centres or for their co-location with schools. Such community facility sites are to be allocated in implementation plans and may have a Community Facility Zone.

Land situated immediately north and north-east of Mitchell between Wells Station Drive and Mitchell are shown on the Territory Plan Map as retaining the existing Residential and Industrial Zones. These Zones are to be reviewed following surveys of the distribution of *Delma impar* in Kenny and Jerrabomberra Valley and a decision on the need for a grassland conservation area in the Kenny/North Mitchell area. Subject to the outcome of the review the policy may change to Industrial and/or Hills Ridges and Buffer Zones – Public Land nature conservation.

The residential areas of Throsby are shown as having Residential R1 Zone. Areas within Throsby may change to Residential R2 or R3 where they are part of an approved Estate Development Plan.

Provision may be made for a site for a service station on land with Broadacre Zone west of Mitchell at land release stage.

Central Suburbs Conservation

Provision is made for the conservation of threatened species and ecological communities through a series of conservation areas which encompass a variety of habitats and in which the area to perimeter ratio of maximised. The main principles are:

Establish conservation areas which are large enough and sufficiently buffered from development to ensure appropriate conservation will occur without undue policing.

Establish conservation areas and provide for management arrangements which are sufficient to conserve the threatened fauna and grasslands which they are designed to protect.

Make provision for necessary infrastructure development whilst ensuring such infrastructure development, including the provision of access, does not have significant adverse impact on the conservation.

Ensure land uses adjacent to conservation areas do not have a significant adverse impact on threatened species and native grassland.

Make the conservation areas part of the overall landscape character of Gungahlin by ensuring their visual integration into the open space system of Gungahlin.

The road indicated crossing the south eastern corner of the Gungahlin/Crace conservation area is included to ensure this plan is consistent with the National Capital Plan. The need for and alignment of this road will be reviewed, and if there is a proposal for its construction in Hills, ridges and Buffers Zone, it will be subject to further environmental impact assessment. Additionally, as public land, any proposed road within a conservation area would be subject to the concurrence of the Conservator.

Central Suburbs Street and Movement System

The street and movement system is based on principles that:

Provide a hierarchy of streets and roads that are safe and appropriate to their function.

Integrate the street system with the natural features of the site, and use the streets as a means of enhancing and conserving the site's characteristics.

Use the design of the street system as a means of reinforcing the overall character of the area and its component parts.

Ensure that the street system is fully integrated with the existing and proposed system for the remainder of Gungahlin and the metropolitan area.

Improve safety, and limit vehicle speeds where appropriate, through road design.

Ensure that the pedestrian and cycle systems are an integral part of the overall transport system for the area.

Provide a street system that facilitates economical and convenient public transport provision.

Make provision for the future introduction of an Intertown Public Transport system.

Ensure that the urban form dictates the character and design of the street system, and not vice versa.

Central Suburbs Urban Open Space

The Central Suburbs urban open space system is based on principles that:

Create a hierarchy of open space, beginning with the streets as part of the open space system, and continuing through the local parks generally within two minutes' walk of dwellings, the watercourse parks system, the large urban parks, and the conservation areas.

Provide a safe, convenient open space network that links residential areas to community facilities and other destination points.

Ensure that the open space network is readily accessible from residential areas.

Provide for pedestrian linkages where appropriate into adjacent flora and fauna reserves.

Ensure that the open space network can function as carefully designed wildlife corridors and linkages.

Provide for the incorporation of a variety of experiences and uses within the open space system to enhance user amenity and cultural identity, including cycle and pedestrian paths, space for formal and informal sport and play, cultural events, and picnic and barbecue facilities.

Open spaces are planted with appropriate local native species, including grasses, where practicable.

Provide for the creation of a variety of appropriate flora and fauna habitats which will encourage bio-diversity.

Provide for the use of the open space system as a major non-vehicular circulation system by provision of safe and convenient links.

Encourage local residents to develop “ownership” of open space by directly relating housing and community facilities to the open space, and by ensuring that housing faces onto open space.

Ensure high levels of public access to and surveillance of open space by the provision of edge avenues with development facing across them to the open space.

Encourage the community to be involved in the planning, development and maintenance of appropriate parts of the open space system.

Provide ample and appropriate open space buffers to heritage sites of significance that aid in their interpretation and characterisation.

Develop and enhance the cultural, natural, and heritage features and characteristics of the open space system.

Establish appropriate uses compatible with conservation requirements where necessary.

Make provision for necessary public infrastructure including sewer and floodways.

Central Suburbs Urban Form

The main principles that underlie and create the urban form of the Central Suburbs are:

The reserves, watercourse park and open space system respond to the natural landscape form and the cultural values of the site, creating a generally north-east to south-west pattern of landscaped space.

This diagonal system is overlaid with a slightly modified rectangular grid or urban boulevards and east-west connector streets, providing an urban counterpoint to the natural diagonal.

The system defines the residential development areas which is of a readily walkable scale.

The urban boulevards are the location for denser residential development with a possibility of other mixed uses (in buildings of two to four storeys, mainly apartments), which gives the boulevards an urban character, This is reinforced by the location of the local centres on the boulevards at public transport stops.

Within the residential sectors, the street system is generally oriented east west, with wide road reserves and rear lane access to parking, and with densities decreasing away from the boulevards.

Where the residential areas front the park system, protection and visual access is provided by edge avenues, these are fronted by housing, dense where the avenues run east-west, and less dense where they run in other orientations.

Central Suburbs Landscape

The Central Suburbs landscape is based on principles that:

General

Establish a landscape that relates to the natural environment and promotes biodiversity by the use of local plant material and the incorporation of a variety of plant communities and habitats.

Establish culturally meaningful landscape settings for Aboriginal and post-contact sites of significance which enhance their preservation and interpretation.

Walking paths

Provide safe and accessible walking path systems that links residential areas with community facilities and the open space system.

Provide crossings of major roads by underpasses along the major watercourse park system and at-grade crossings, and ensure that all walking paths link to such crossings.

Ensure that underpasses have a high level of through visibility.

Provide all-weather surfaces on walking paths.

Separate commuter cycling routes from the walking paths.

Extend the walking path network to link the existing Gungahlin neighbourhoods.

Cycleways

Establish a safe and convenient two tier cycleway system;

A commuter system based on designated roadway lanes adjacent to the boulevards and arterials, linking the major facilities and surrounding districts; and

A recreational system based on the open space network linking residential areas with facilities such as schools and shops.

Roads

Establish a formal street system interlaced with the natural landscape patterns and the open space network.

Make the residential streets an integral part of the open space system and use them to provide for safe and convenient pedestrian circulation.

Use the streets to provide views to local open space and major external landscape features.

Design the landscape to deal effectively with road noise abatement to residential areas.

Conservation Areas

Make the conservation areas part of the overall landscape character of the Central Suburbs by ensuring their visual integration into the open space system of the area.

Watercourse Parks

Use the stormwater management and resultant open space system as a formative element in the design of the Central Suburbs.

Provide a linear park system running through the residential sectors which fulfils multiple functions

Provide a low environmental impact system for managing stormwater runoff.

Use this system to provide visual improvement and added environmental amenity of the area and potential for use as wildlife corridors.

Ensure that parks created to manage stormwater and the features within them, are located, sized and designed to be part of the total open space system of the Central Suburbs.

Local parks

Provide local parks in residential areas where private open space is limited and the distance to the public open space network is greater than 200m

Provide opportunities for productive community gardens and/or playgrounds within local parks

Community gardens

Encourage community gardens in higher density residential areas for use by local residents for growing flowers or vegetables.

Encourage composting facilities at each community garden area.

Re-use stormwater for irrigation of community gardens where practicable.

Central Suburbs Heritage

Use the landscape system to conserve and reinforce the cultural and heritage values of the Central Suburbs by inclusion of all significant heritage sites into landscape areas and the use of appropriate landscape measures to reinforce the significance of those sites.

Incorporate into an informal woodland park adjoining and linked to the Town Centre an area that includes two of the superficial chert sites and the ruins of "The Valley" homestead.

Incorporate the Red Hill Ochre quarry into an open space sufficiently large to protect it from intrusion and any potential damage.

Incorporate the line of the historic Wells Station road into the Central Suburbs urban structure and allow development adjacent to it only in a manner sympathetic to its heritage nature but befitting its location in a densely developed urban area.

Incorporate Wells Station and Gungaharra homesteads into the landscape system to ensure an appropriate visual curtilage.

Provide a site adjacent to the informal woodland park for a Heritage and Discovery Centre which can facilitate activities, education, exhibition and interpretation related to the natural cultural and heritage values of the area.

Incorporate the Inglewood homestead site in urban open space and provide an open space link to the historic tree lanes in Mulligans Flat.

Central Suburbs Utilities

Services provision in the Central Suburbs is governed by principles that:

Locate all utilities, including telecommunication utilities where practicable, underground.

Establish trunk utilities easements in the master planning of each development area. Where practicable, these easements are not to be in conservation areas.

Where practicable locate utilities in common trenches.

Where practicable locate utilities in the road verge on one side only with common conduits at regular intervals under the carriageway to service the other side.

Central Suburbs Staging

Staging of development is based on the principles that:

The layout allows for staged growth whilst still maintaining a sense of completeness between stages.

The staging ensures a cohesive community structure and appropriate services at each stage of growth.

Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing adjacent suburbs are provided early in the development.

The broad landscape structure is established from the first stages of the development and includes open space and street planting.

Street construction is coordinated with other development, and phased to ensure efficient public transport access from the outset.

Progressive stabilisation is allowed for by reducing the area disturbed at any one time thus reducing the risk of soil erosion.