

Australian Capital Territory

Planning and Development (Plan Variation No 289) Notice 2008

Notifiable Instrument NI2008-339

made under the

Planning and Development Act 2007, section 76(3)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Planning and Development (Plan Variation No 293) Notice 2008*.

2 Plan Variation No 289

On 7 August 2008, the Minister for Planning approved a draft of the attached plan variation under s 76 (3).

Jacqui Lavis
Delegate of the Planning and Land Authority
11 August 2008



Planning and Development Act 2007

Variation to the Territory Plan No. 289

BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE
Changes to the Road Network, Inter-Town
Public Transport Route and other Zone
Changes

August 2008



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1. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1.1 Background

Located close to the geographic centre of the Belconnen District, the Belconnen Town Centre can be described as the area bounded by Ginninderra Drive to the north, Coulter Drive to the west, Belconnen Way to the south and Eastern Valley Way/Aikman Drive to the east. It surrounds Lake Ginninderra, which is formed on the course of Ginninderra Creek.

In August 2001, the ACT Government released the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan, which can be accessed on the Authority's website at http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/programs_projects/infrastructure_works/belconnen_to_wn_centre

Since the publication of the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan further studies have been undertaken to investigate the feasibility of a number of proposals outlined in the Master Plan. These proposals include changes to roads and the public transport network and the replacement of the single bus interchange with new bus stations that are better linked to the main destinations within the town centre.

In 2003 the ACT Government undertook investigations to confirm the suitability of a proposal for the redevelopment of the Belconnen Town Centre bus interchange and replacement with a bus network that would comprise a major bus station, two "far-side" termini (where some bus routes would terminate) and a series of secondary stops en-route through the town centre. If considered appropriate, the concept was to be developed to a stage which would allow a number of related activities in the town centre to proceed; enable the sale and development of the surface parking area to the west of the Belconnen Mall; resolve the future of the existing bus interchange; resolve the Cohen Street Extension concept, and identify other sites and facilities required for public transport in the town centre.

In 2004, the ACT Government announced its intention to redevelop the existing interchange and replace it with a new bus network. This decision was the culmination of earlier investigations into alternative route planning for bus operations within and through the town centre, and more recent and intensive work involved with the planning and design of an improved public transport system for Belconnen.

In March 2008, the Territory finalised the Design Concept Report for Belconnen Town Centre Public Transport Improvements and Transit Oriented Development. The report documents the cumulative impacts of a range of public and private sector development proposals and provides more detailed background information to support this variation.

The document is available on the ACTPLA website at: http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/8427/btc_design_concept_report.pdf

The Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan (2001) was developed as a result of the first comprehensive review of the 1986 National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) 'blueprint' for Belconnen Town Centre, the Belconnen Town Centre Policy Plan and

Development Plan. The current Territory Plan essentially reflects the land use policies set out in the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan.

1.2 Summary of the Proposal

The draft variation is concerned with the central area of Belconnen Town Centre and reflects a proposal to link an extension of Cohen Street between Lathlain Street and Emu Bank through the existing bus interchange. In conjunction with the Cohen Street extension, it is also proposed to close part of Joynton Smith Drive and replace the existing bus interchange with a series of bus stations including a major new station integrated with an extension to the western side of Belconnen Mall. The Intertown Public Transport (IPT) route is proposed to be realigned to this new transport corridor, to improve public transport access to major town centre destinations.

The major new bus station and extension to the western side of the mall is proposed to occupy land between the existing mall and Lathlain Street that is currently used as surface car parking and the parts of the Joynton Smith Drive corridor and the existing bus way which are proposed to be closed. The extension to the mall will provide new development opportunities, increase the retail and business activity addressing the streets, and enhance the presentation of the town centre as a safe, commercially vibrant place.

The changes create a more direct public transport link from east to west that will be used by all buses, and not just the limited number of services that currently operate on the existing bus way. The result will be improved travel time for bus services through the town centre. The proposal includes a new retail precinct bus station that directly links into level 3 of the south west corner of the mall. Also proposed is a new pedestrian, cycle and public transport corridor through the existing interchange with a new bus station providing direct address to the ABS building, Margaret Timpson Park and the community facilities precinct that includes the health centre, library and Belconnen Community Services. A new bus station will also be constructed on the eastern edge of the town centre adjacent to Lake Ginninderra College.

1.3 The National Capital Plan

Under the National Capital Plan the subject site falls within the Urban Area classification and is identified as a Town Centre. Under Section 4.3 Principles for Urban Areas in the National Capital Plan paragraph (2) states that:

“A hierarchy of centres will be maintained, with each town having a centre acting as a focal point for higher order retail functions, commercial services, offices and community facilities.”

It is considered that the proposed changes in the draft variation and the resultant development will help reinforce this principle and is therefore consistent with the provisions of the National Capital Plan.

1.4 Site Description

The draft Variation is concerned with multiple sites that together aim to improve transport and urban design outcomes in Belconnen Town Centre. The changes are focused on a new east west street along an extension of Cohen Street between Lathlain Street and Emu Bank. This new transport corridor includes new bus stations and allows buses to operate from the eastern to the western sides of the town centre and enjoy more convenient access to major destinations such as the shopping mall, community facilities, major employment nodes and the mixed services area.

This new transport corridor includes dedicated bus lanes, landscaped and well-lit pedestrian paths and cycleways and bus stations that are integrated with other town centre activities. The capital works and changes in infrastructure creates opportunities for other developments, including an extension of level 3 retailing from the mall to Lathlain Street, new residential and office opportunities fronting Benjamin Way in the area currently occupied by the bus layover area, and residential and mixed use development fronting Emu Bank.

Temporary bus facilities and traffic and access arrangements need to be constructed before any changes are made to the existing interchange. The new transport corridor and its associated developments such as the bus station integrated with the mall, will have a construction period of at least two years. During this construction period it is proposed that temporary bus stations be constructed in Lathlain Street and Cameron Avenue. Lighting and paths that link these temporary stops to major town centre destinations will be upgraded to meet the full range of disability access requirements. A diagram of the area subject to the variation is at **Figure 1.1**.

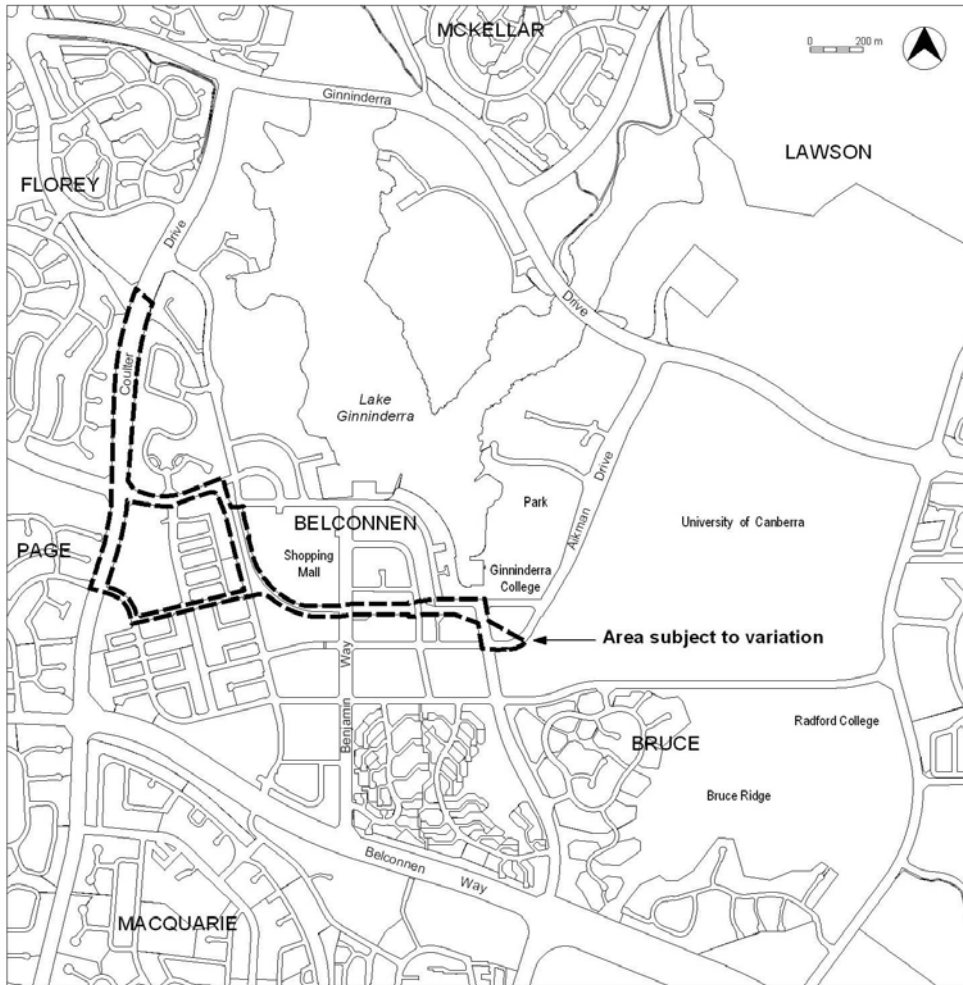


Figure 1.1 Site Plan

1.5 Territory Plan Zones Map

The Territory Plan Map zones for the area subject to this variation is shown in **Figure 1.2**.

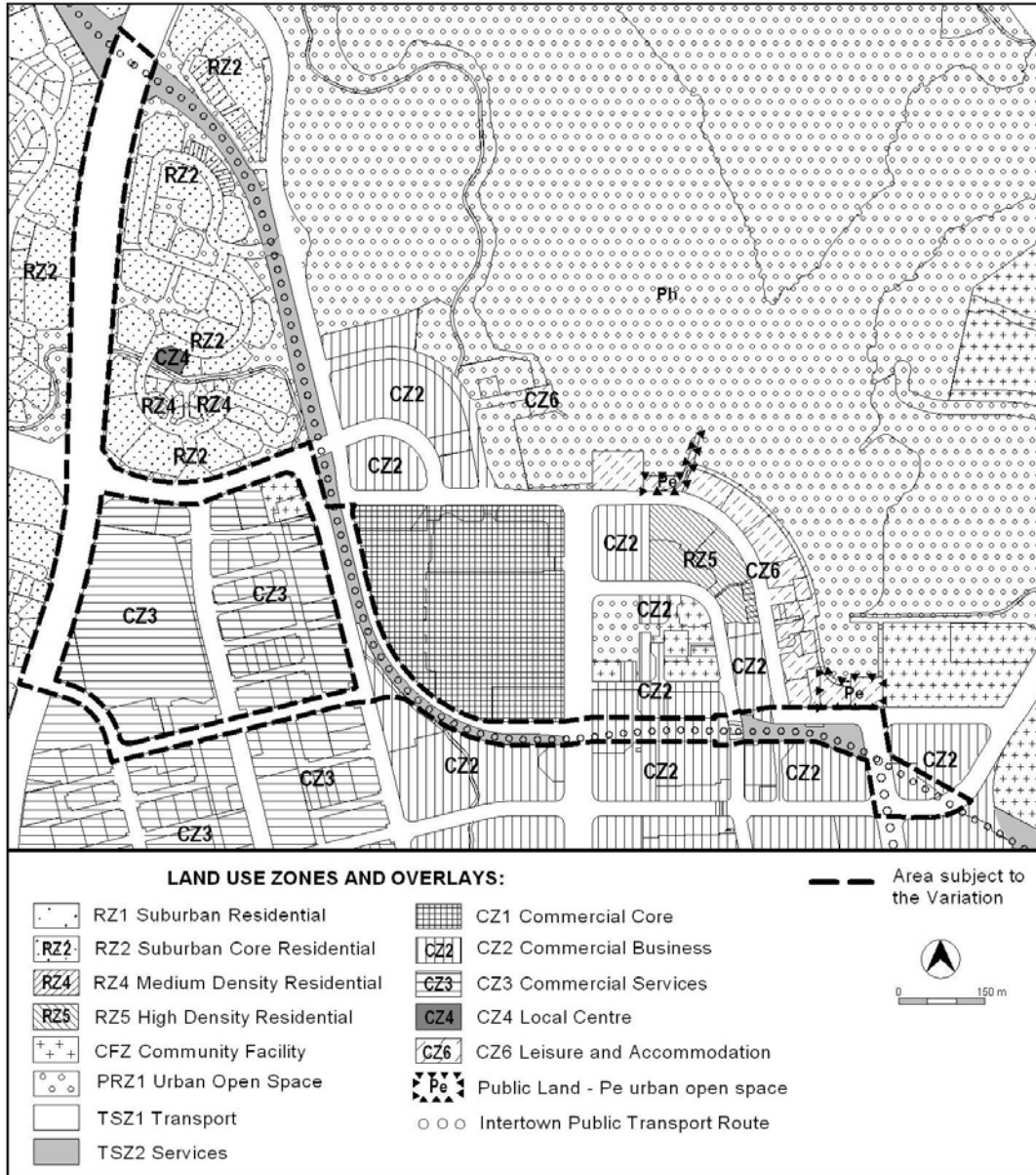


Figure 1.2 Territory Plan Zones Map

1.6 Changes to the Territory Plan

The changes to the Territory Plan Map and Written Statement are detailed in section 2 of this document.

1.7 Consultation on the Exhibited Draft Variation

Draft Variation No. 289 was released for public comment on 6 June 2008 and a consultation notice under section 63 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* was placed in the ACT Legislation Register on 6 June 2008 and a notice published in the Canberra Times on 7 June 2008 and in the Chronicle on 10 June 2008.

Written comments were invited by 21 July 2008 and a total of six (6) written submissions were received from the public as a result of the consultation process.

Main issues raised by submitters related to:

- Parking, vehicle access and noise levels
- IPT route changes
- Compatibility with future expansion of ACT public transport system and light rail
- Bus stations in place of the existing interchange
- Westfield Belconnen Shopping Centre expansion
- Traffic conditions
- Inadequate public/stakeholder consultation
- Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan
- High density residential/office blocks
- Provision for community organisations.

These issues were addressed in the 'Report on Consultation' that was prepared by the Authority in conjunction with this plan variation document submitted to the Minister.

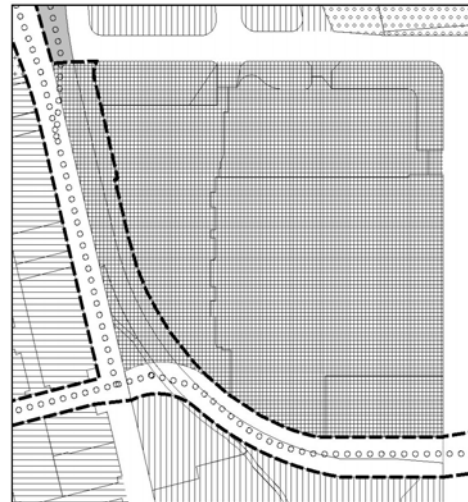
1.8 Revisions to the Exhibited Draft Variation

Minor changes were made to the exhibited draft plan variation to improve the clarity of the document. These are:

- Changes to wording of Section 1.4 Site Description to include reference to temporary transport, traffic and access arrangements. These changes are part of the Explanatory Statement of the Variation and will not alter the Territory Plan.
- Changes to the diagrams in the document to more accurately represent the IPT route and expected bus movements west of the shopping mall along Lathlain Street. Minor revisions have been made to Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1 in this document. These changes are related to the portion of the IPT route as shown in Figures 1.3 and 1.4 as follows.



**Figure 1.3 Proposed Territory Plan
(Publicly notified version of Draft
Variation)**



**Figure 1.4 Proposed Territory Plan (as
per Figure 2.1 in this document)**

1.9 Interim Effect

Section 72 applies in relation to the draft plan variation.

The variation has interim effect from 8 August 2008 to 7 August 2009 or until the end of the “defined period”, whichever is shorter. Under the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, section 72(3) “defined period” for a draft plan variation means the period -

- (a) starting on the day (the *notification day*) when the draft plan variation given to the Minister is notified under the Legislation Act (see s70); and
- (b) ending on the earliest of the following days:
 - (i) the day the corresponding plan variation, or part of it, commences;
 - (ii) the day the corresponding plan variation is rejected by the Legislative Assembly;
 - (iii) the day the corresponding plan variation is withdrawn in accordance with a requirement under section 76(3) (b) (v) or section 84 (3) (b);
 - (iv) the period of 1 year after notification day ends.

The Territory, the Executive, a Minister or a territory authority must not, during the defined period, do or approve the doing of anything that would be inconsistent with the territory plan if it were varied in accordance with the draft plan variation.

2. VARIATION

2.1 Variation to the Territory Plan Map

The Territory Plan map for the Division of Belconnen is varied as shown in Figure 2.1 for the area shown as subject to the variation as follows:

- Remove TSZ1 from the part of the Joynton Smith Drive road corridor between Emu Bank and the proposed Cohen Street extension and replace with CZ1.
- Remove TSZ2 from the part of Block 6 Section 50 (the existing bus way) between Emu Bank and the proposed Cohen Street extension and replace with CZ1.
- Remove TSZ2 from the part of Block 6 Section 50 (the existing bus way) between the proposed Cohen Street extension and Benjamin Way and replace with TSZ1.
- Remove CZ2 from part of Block 1 Section 152 (existing bus interchange) and replace with TSZ1.
- Remove CZ2 from Block 53 Section 55 and replace with TSZ1.
- Remove TSZ2 from part of Block 12 Section 48 Belconnen and replace with TSZ1.
- Remove TSZ2 from part of Block 12 and Block 4 Section 48 Belconnen and replace with CZ2.
- Establish a new alignment for the Inter-town Public Transport Route (IPT) overlay to follow the new Cohen Street extension, Cohen Street, Nettlefold Street and Coulter Drive where it will continue on its current designated alignment.
- Establish a new alignment for the Inter-town Public Transport overlay to follow Coulter Drive, Luxton Street, Lathlain Street and the new Cohen Street alignment from Lathlain Street to Emu Bank, and then Emu Bank to Aikman Drive and through the proposed layover site east of Aikman Drive where it will continue on its current designated alignment.
- Provide a link between the new IPT overlay on Lathlain Street to the remaining part of the existing IPT overlay that follows the bus way adjacent to Joynton Smith Drive up to Coulter Drive.

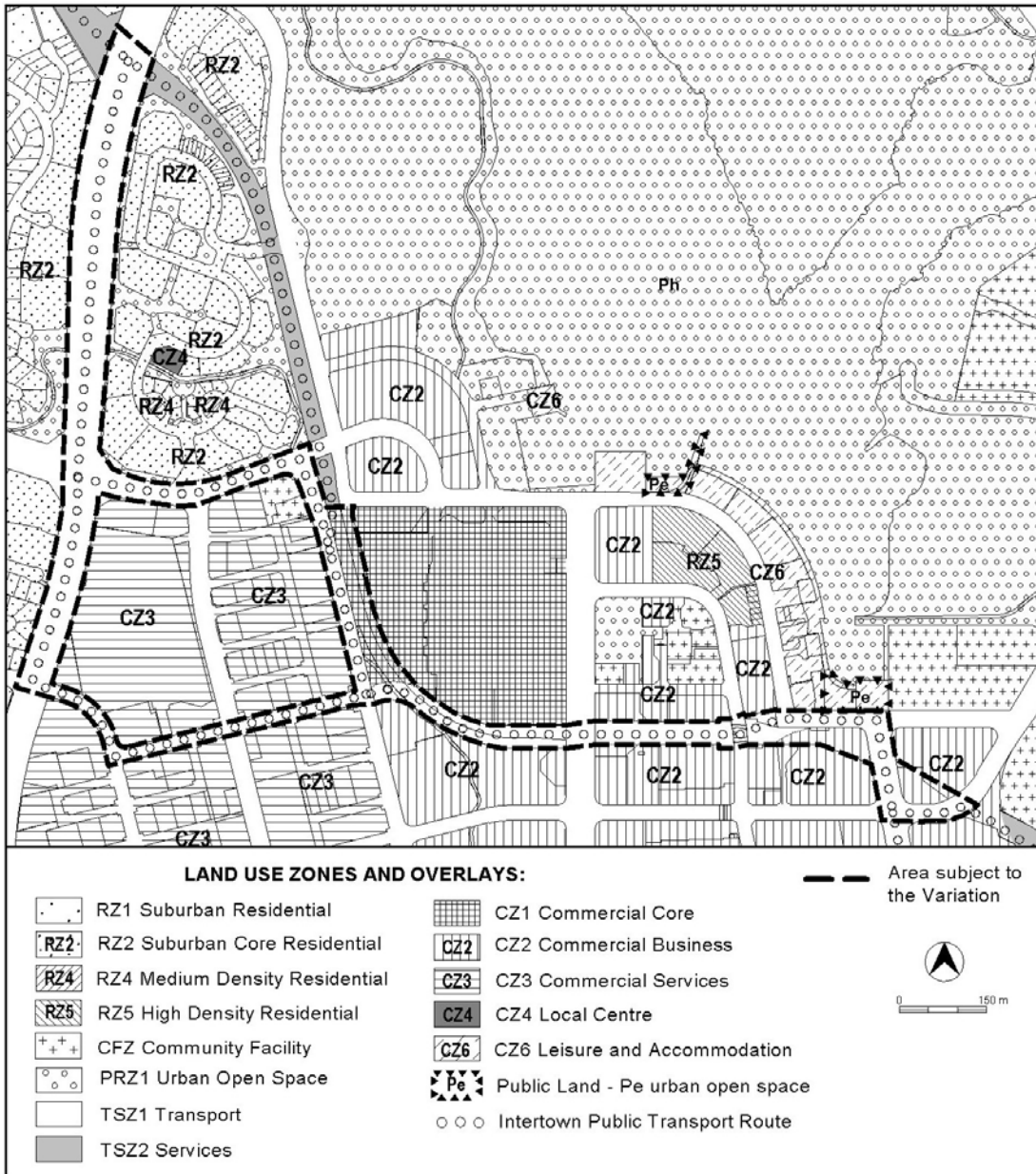
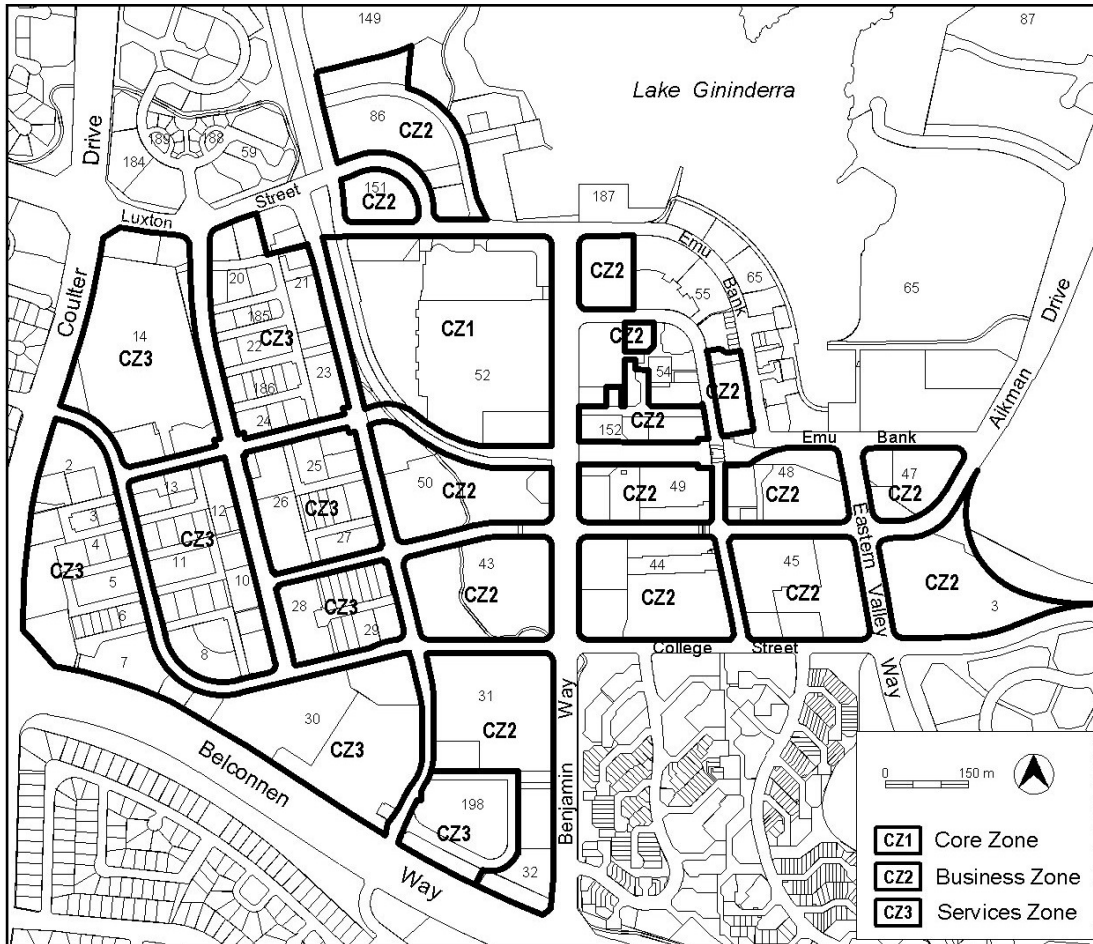


Figure 2.1 Proposed Territory Plan Map

2.2 Variation to the Territory Plan Written Statement

The **Town Centres Precinct Code** at Part 4.3 of Volume 1 of the Territory Plan Written Statement is varied by replacing the existing **Figure A1: Belconnen Town Centre** with the new Figure A1 below:

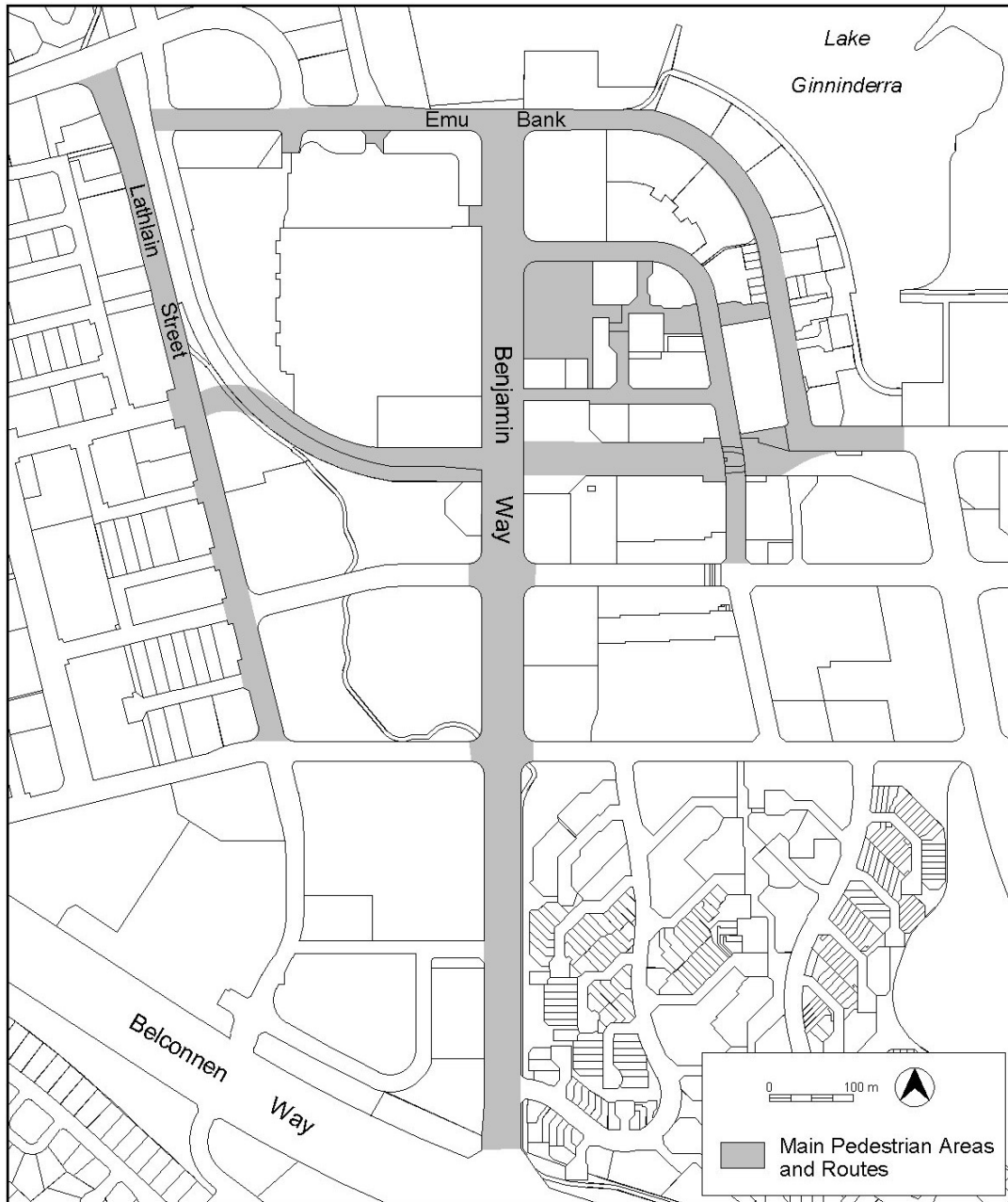
Figure A1: Belconnen Town Centre



And;

The **Town Centres Precinct Code** at Part 4.3 of Volume 1 of the Territory Plan Written Statement is varied by replacing the existing **Figure A5: Belconnen – Main pedestrian areas and routes** with the new Figure A5 below:

Figure A5: Belconnen – Main pedestrian areas and routes



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