Australian Capital Territory

Planning (Non-Urban Zones) Technical Specifications 2026

Notifiable instrument NI2026–525

made under the

Planning Act 2023, s 51 (Technical specifications)

---

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Planning (Non-Urban Zones) Technical Specifications 2026*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after its notification day.

3 Technical specifications

I make the technical specifications at schedule 1.

4 Revocation

This instrument revokes the *Planning (Non-Urban Zones) Technical Specifications 2024* (NI2024-545).

George Cilliers
Chief Planner
6 November 2026

Schedule 1

ACT Government

ZS7 – Non-Urban Zones Specifications

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 3

Non-Urban Zones planning technical specifications 5

Urban Structure and Natural Systems 6

Assessment Outcome 1 6

Assessment Outcome 2 6

Assessment Outcome 3 6

Site and Land Use 6

Assessment Outcome 4 6

Assessment Outcome 5 6

Assessment Outcome 6 6

Access and Movement 7

Assessment Outcome 7 7

Accessible car parking spaces 7

Safety 7

Pedestrian and cyclist access 7

Accessible path of travel 7

Road network 7

Assessment Outcome 8 8

Public Space and Amenity 8

Assessment Outcome 9 8

Assessment Outcome 10 8

Signs 8

Built Form and Building Design 9

Assessment Outcome 11 9

Building height 9

Sustainability and Environment 9

Assessment Outcome 12 9

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Site permeability 9
Water sensitive urban design 9
Assessment Outcome 13 9
Assessment Outcome 14 10
Site disturbance 10
Assessment Outcome 15 10
Assessment Outcome 16 10
Bushfire prone area 10
Flood risk 10
Stormwater retention and detention 10
Stormwater management 11
Stormwater quality 11
Site contamination 11
Hazardous materials 11
Demolition 11
Parking, Services and Utilities 11
Assessment Outcome 17 12
Assessment Outcome 18 12
Parking and vehicle manoeuvring 12
Dimensions and access for car parking spaces 12
Assessment Outcome 19 12
Waste facilities 12
Assessment Outcome 20 12
Servicing and infrastructure 12
Battery storage 12
Demolition – utility endorsement 12
External lighting 13
Encroachment of easements and rights-of-way 13

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Non-Urban Zones planning technical specifications

The primary assessment consideration for a development application is the assessment outcomes in the Territory Plan. In demonstrating compliance with the assessment outcomes, consideration may be given to the relevant planning technical specifications which may serve as a benchmark. While all assessment outcomes are to be met, not all outcomes are covered by a specification.

Planning technical specifications are used as a possible solution or to provide guidance for identified aspects of a development proposal. The specifications may also be used as a reference or benchmark in the preparation and assessment of development proposals to demonstrate compliance with the assessment outcomes, and the Territory Plan.

Where a proposed development complies with a relevant provision in the planning technical specifications and the development comprehensively addresses the assessment outcome, further assessment regarding those specific provisions will not be required.

The Territory Planning Authority may consider advice or written support from a referral entity to demonstrate compliance with a relevant assessment outcome. Where endorsement from an entity is noted as a planning specification, entity referral may be required.

Consistent with the Non-Urban Zones Policy, this Non-Urban Zones Specification comprises specifications under seven categories:

- Urban Structure and Site;
- Access and Movement;
- Public Space and Amenity;
- Land Use and Development;
- Built Form and Building Form;
- Sustainability and Environment; and
- Parking, Services and Utilities.

These specifications will primarily be for development within Non-Urban zones. However, these specifications may also be used in other circumstances where considered relevant.

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Urban Structure and Natural Systems

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in the planning of a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	1.	Biodiversity connectivity is maintained across the landscape.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Assessment Outcome	2.	Loss of native habitat and biodiversity is avoided and/or minimised.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Assessment Outcome	3.	The health and functionality of waterways and catchments is maintained, including through application of water sensitive urban design principles.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Site and Land Use

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in the planning of a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	4.	The functionality and usability of the development is appropriate for its intended purpose/use.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Assessment Outcome	5.	The proposed use and scale of development are appropriate to the site and zone.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Assessment Outcome	6.	Adverse impacts of development on surrounding uses (both within a site and on adjoining sites) is minimised.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Access and Movement

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in relation to access, travel modes and movement to and within a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	**7. The functionality and layout of the development is well connected to the surrounding area. This includes consideration of traffic flow, passive surveillance and active travel.**
Specification	
Accessible car parking spaces	7.1. Development complies with the following: a) Parking spaces for people with disabilities in public car parks of more than 10 spaces comprise a minimum of 3% (rounded up to the nearest whole number) of the total number of parking spaces required for the development. b) Car parking spaces provided for people with disabilities have vertical clearance for the entire width of the space and the adjacent shared area of not less than 2.5m - as described in AS2890.
Safety	7.2. Verge crossings and Internal driveways are designed to be safely used by both pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, such as through the use of vehicle speed reduction measures
Pedestrian and cyclist access	7.3. Development complies with the following: a) Pedestrian and cyclist entrances, and driveways to the site are clearly visible from the front boundary, provided through the site to increase permeability, feed into and provides connections to existing path networks and on-road cycle routes. b) Priority is provided for pedestrian and cyclist access.
Accessible path of travel	7.4. Development complies with the following: a) A continuous accessible path of travel is provided that complies with: i) AS 1428*.1 – Design for Access and Mobility*; ii) *AS* 1428*.4 – Tactile ground surface indicators for the orientation of people; with vision impairment to highlight hazards or provide direction*; iii) *AS 4586 – Slip Resistant Classification of New Pedestrian Surface Materials for external paving and ground surfaces*; and iv) Designed so that the placement of facilities does not intrude into the continuous accessible path of travel. b) Walkways and glass adjacent to walkways achieve compliance with *AS1428.1* and *AS1428.2.* c) Internal lighting along the whole of the continuous accessible path of travel designed to meet *AS1680.0.* d) External lighting along the whole of the continuous accessible path of travel meets *AS1158.3.1.* e) Directional signage or other wayfinding methods, e.g., tactile indicators, to be in accordance with *AS1428.1* and *AS1428.4* and must identify the continuous accessible path of travel, accessible parts of buildings and all accessible facilities. f) Doorways and doors are designed to meet *AS 1428.1- Design for Access and* Mobility *for pedestrian entrances and exits; public circulation areas; and any common use areas.*
Road network	7.5. Endorsement by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) to confirm the road network can accommodate additional traffic likely to be generated by the development. Offsite works may be required to support additional traffic from a development.

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Assessment Outcome	8.	Access to, from and within the site permits safe and legible movement while catering for all users (including pedestrians). This includes consideration of vehicle manoeuvrability and access routes.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Public Space and Amenity

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in relation to public areas (areas accessible to residents, visitors and community) and amenity outcomes associated with a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	9.	The development achieves reasonable solar access and microclimate conditions to public areas and streets to support their use by the community
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.		

Assessment Outcome	10.	Any advertising or signs are suitable for their context and do not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area (for instance due to size or light emission).
Specification		
Signs	10.1. Signs associated with each building are: a) Limited to one per frontage. b) Are no higher than the first storey. c) Setback a minimum of 1200mm from the kerb. d) No larger than 6m². e) Not illuminated. f) Are identification of the building/service on site/agency or the like.	

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Built Form and Building Design

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in relation to building design and built form, including height, bulk and scale of buildings and structures associated with a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	**11. The height, bulk and scale of the development is appropriate, noting the desired zone policy outcomes.**
Specification	
Building height	11.1. Building height is not more than 2 storeys.

Sustainability and Environment

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in relation to the sustainability and environmental outcomes associated with a proposed development:

Assessment Outcome	**12. Roofed areas and hard surfaces aim to reduce urban heat island effects and minimise stormwater run-off. This includes consideration of water sensitive urban design measures.**
Specification	
Site permeability	12.1. For development on sites greater than 2,000m² involving works that have the potential to alter the stormwater regime of the site; or development within existing urban areas which increases impervious area by 100m², development achieves a minimum of 20% of the site area to be permeable.
Water sensitive urban design	12.2. The development incorporates water sensitive urban design measures, demonstrated by a report from a suitably qualified person consistent with the methods outlined in the *ACT Practice Guidelines for Water Sensitive Urban Design*. Evidence is provided that the development achieves a minimum 40% reduction in mains water consumption compared to an equivalent development constructed in 2003, using the online Waterways calculators or another tool. Notes: • Online Waterways calculators can be found at: https://www.planning.act.gov.au/professionals/regulation-and-responsibilities/responsibilities/water-efficiency.

Assessment Outcome	**13. Threats to biodiversity such as noise, light pollution, invasive species incursion or establishment, chemical pollution, or site disturbance are avoided or minimised through good design**
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.	

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Assessment Outcome	14. Minimise cut and fill to protect natural hydrological function and limit soil erosion and site disturbance.
Specification	
Site disturbance	14.1. For sites less than 3,000m², the development complies with the Environment Protection Authority requirements regarding construction and land development. For sites 3,000m² or greater, the development prepares an erosion and sediment control plan and obtains endorsed by the ACT Environment Protection Authority.

Assessment Outcome	15. The development considers and addresses site constraints, including heritage, natural features, topography, infrastructure and utilities.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.	

Assessment Outcome	16. Environmental risks, including noise, bushfire, flooding, contamination, air quality or hazardous materials are appropriately considered for the development on the site.
Specification	
Bushfire prone area	16.1. All development in the bushfire prone area (identified by the Emergency Services Authority) to comply with the ACT Bushfire Management Standards
Flood risk	16.2. Development is to comply with: a) Residential and commercial buildings are to be excluded from flood liable areas up to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) Flood. b) Habitable floor levels are to be above the 1% AEP level plus a suitable freeboard (usually 300mm) c) In flood liable areas up to the 0.2% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) Flood, large developments and those with more sensitive uses* are to be referred to ESA, TCCS and EPSDD for endorsement. Note: *Sensitive uses include developments such as hospitals, nursing homes, childcare centres, prisons, archives, libraries and emergency response centres.
Stormwater retention and detention	16.3. For development on sites greater than 2,000m² (other than major roads) involving works that have the potential to alter the stormwater regime of the site, a report from a suitably qualified person is provided demonstrating that the development complies with: a) At least one of the following: i) Stormwater retention management measures are provided and achieve all of the following: A. Stormwater storage capacity of 1.4kl per 100m² of the total impervious area of the site is provided specifically to retain and reuse stormwater generated on site as a whole. B. Retained stormwater is used on site. ii) Development captures, stores and uses the first 15mm of rainfall falling on the site; and Note: on-site stormwater retention is defined as the storage and use of stormwater on site. b) Stormwater detention measures are provided and achieve all of the following: i) Capture and direct runoff from the entire site

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

	ii) Stormwater storage capacity of 1kl per 100m² of impervious area is provided to specifically detain stormwater generated on site iii) The detained stormwater is designed to be released over a period of 6 hours after the storm event. For this rule on-site stormwater detention is defined as the short-term storage and release downstream of stormwater runoff. Note: Calculating on-site detention can include 50% of the volume of rainwater tanks where stormwater is used on-site.
Stormwater management	16.4. For development of roads on sites greater than 2,000m² development meets all of the following: a) The capacity of existing pipe (minor) stormwater connection to the site is not exceeded in the 1 in 10-year storm event. b) The capacity of the existing overland (major) stormwater system to the site is not exceeded in the 1 in 100-year storm event.
Stormwater quality	16.5. For development on sites greater than 2,000m² (other than major roads) involving works that have the potential to alter the stormwater regime of the site, a MUSIC model prepared by a suitably qualified person is provided demonstrating the average annual stormwater pollutant export is reduced when compared with an urban catchment of the same area with no water quality management controls for all of the following: a) Gross pollutants by at least 90%. b) Suspended solids by at least 60%. c) Total phosphorous by at least 45%. d) Total nitrogen by at least 40%. Notes: • If a tool other than the MUSIC model is used then a report by an independent suitably qualified person must be submitted demonstrating and confirming compliance. • If parameters that are non-compliant are used then a report must also be submitted by an independent suitably qualified person stating how and why the parameters are appropriate.
Site contamination	16.6. Where development is proposed on a site impacted or potentially impacted by contamination, the development and proposed methods of responding to the contamination is endorsed by the ACT Environment Protection Authority.
Hazardous materials	16.7. Where development is proposed on a site impacted by hazardous materials, the development and proposed methods of managing the hazardous materials is endorsed by the ACT Environment Protection Authority.
Demolition	16.8. Where demolition of commercial or industrial premises for which a certificate of occupancy was issued before 2005 is proposed, demolition is undertaken in accordance with hazardous materials survey (including an asbestos survey) prepared by a suitably qualified person and endorsed by the Environment Protection Authority.

Parking, Services and Utilities

The following specifications provide possible solutions that should be considered in relation to vehicle parking, access and site servicing (including possible requirements by utility providers) for a proposed development:

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

Assessment Outcome	17. Development provides appropriate end-of-trip facilities.
No applicable specification for this assessment outcome. Application must respond to the assessment outcome.	

Assessment Outcome	18. Vehicle and bicycle parking sufficiently caters for the development while minimising visual impacts from the street or public space. This includes consideration of parking location, dimensions and number of spaces provided.
Specification	
Parking and vehicle manoeuvring	18.1. Parking and vehicle manoeuvring is provided on-site, subject to individual assessment.
Dimensions and access for car parking spaces	18.2. Dimensions of car parking spaces, layout and vehicle manoeuvring meet: a) *AS 2890.1:2004, the Australian Standard for Parking Facilities, Part 1: Off-street Car Parking including manoeuvring to and from and within the development, sightlines and gradients*. *b)* Australian *Standard AS/NZS 2890.6:2009 Parking Facilities – Part 6: Off-street parking for people with disabilities.*

Assessment Outcome	19. Waste is appropriately managed on site without having a detrimental impact on users and the surrounding area.
Specification	
Waste facilities	19.1. Developments that propose post occupancy waste management facilities achieve endorsement from Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS).

Assessment Outcome	20. The site is appropriately serviced in terms of infrastructure and utility services and any associated amenity impacts are minimised.
Specification	
Servicing and infrastructure	20.1. Proposed development can be sufficiently serviced in terms of infrastructure and utility services. Endorsement is achieved from relevant utility providers (electricity, water, gas, sewerage and stormwater) to confirm that the location and nature of earthworks, utility connections, proposed buildings, pavements and landscape features comply with utility standards, access provisions and asset clearance zones
Battery storage	20.2. Where development includes a battery over 30kW, the development is endorsed by the Emergency Services Agency.
Demolition – utility endorsement	20.3. For demolition works, endorsement is achieved from relevant utility providers (electricity, water, gas, sewerage and stormwater) stating that: a) All network infrastructure on or immediately adjacent the site has been identified on the plan. b) All potentially hazardous substances and conditions (associated with or resulting from the demolition process) that may constitute a risk to utility services have been identified. c) All required network disconnections have been identified and the disconnection works comply with utility requirements.

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

	d) All works associated with the demolition comply with and are in accordance with utility asset access and protection requirements
External lighting	20.4. Development complies with the following: a) External lighting is provided to building frontages, to all pathways, roads, laneways and car-parking areas in accordance with *Australian Standard AS1158.3.1 Pedestrian Lighting.* b) All external lighting provided is in accordance with *Australian Standard AS4282 - Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting.*
Encroachment of easements and rights-of-way	20.5. Buildings do not encroach over easements or rights of way, unless the proposed encroachment is approved in writing by the relevant service provider.

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au