

Transport Canberra and City Services
 Urban Open Space Land Management Plan
 communityengagement@act.gov.au.

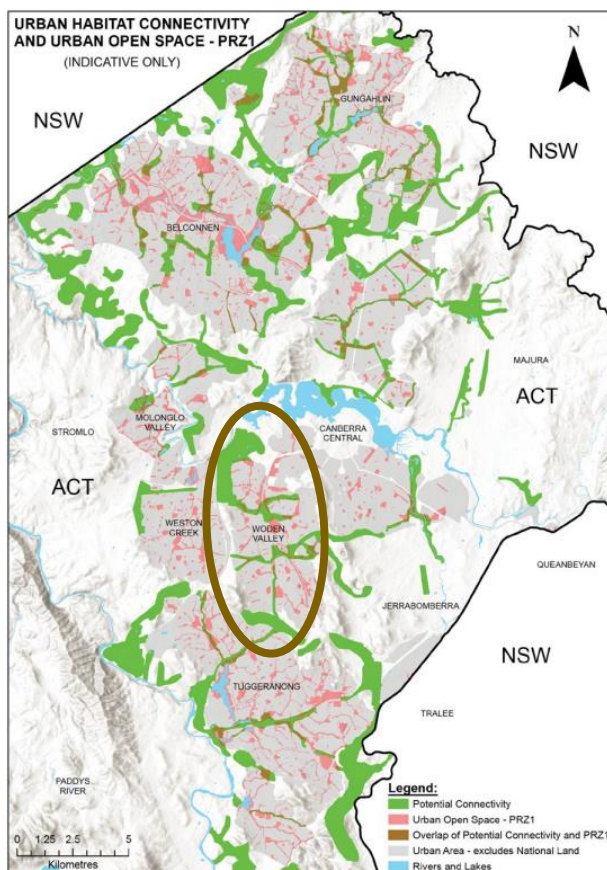
Submission - draft Urban Open Space Land Management Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Urban Open Space Land Management Plan. The Woden Valley Community Council (WVCC) recognises the challenges and opportunities associated with the ongoing planning, management, and maintenance of public open spaces. The impacts of densification require planning to find the balance between the social, economic and environmental (including climate change) needs of the community to contribute to our quality of life.

Our urban open spaces offer potential habitat that contributes to the rich biodiversity of the city. The WVCC supports ‘rewilding’, regenerating areas for creating habitat and biodiversity.

We also support environmentally sensitive place-making, underpinned by rejuvenated urban open spaces that people love to visit, live or do business — contributing to the activation of urban open spaces by creating places that are:

- accessible and well connected, attract people and are enjoyable to be in
- sustain local businesses and generate a sense of attachment and community.



Urban Open space connects urban habitat.

Yarralumla Creek collects the water from across the district which drains into the Molonglo River in the north. Through greenbelts, this important corridor connects wildlife from the surrounding hills and ridges, including Farrer Ridge in the south, Mt Taylor, Oakey Hill, Isaac Ridge and Red Hill.

Unfortunately, habitat loss and fragmentation has led to environmental degradation of the Creek and a loss of biodiversity. The constant mowing and the invasion of exotic grasses and weeds keeps it in an ecologically simple state with little habitat value. However, there are patches of high diversity native grasses and forbs which if allowed to regenerate, would improve the overall conservation value of the area.

Recommendation 1 – undertake an assessment of the area to determine the location of high-quality native grasslands and determine whether these can be left unmown.

PRZ1 - Urban Open Space Zone Objectives

The WVCC will work with the ACT Government to achieve the following objectives for Woden residents.

- a) Provide an appropriate quality, quantity and distribution of parks and open spaces that will contribute to the recreational and social needs of the community
- b) Establish a variety of settings that will support a range of recreational and leisure activities as well as protect flora and fauna habitats and corridors, natural and cultural features and landscape character
- c) Allow for stormwater drainage and the protection of water quality, stream flows and stream environs in a sustainable, environmentally responsible manner and which provides opportunities for the community to interact with and interpret the natural environment
- d) Allow for ancillary uses that support the care, management and enjoyment of these open spaces including park maintenance depots, small-scale community activity centres
- e) Ensure that development does not unacceptably affect the landscape or scenic quality of the area, adequacy of open space for other purposes, or users, access to open space, or amenity of adjoining residents
- f) Provide for integrated land and water planning and management
- g) Provide safe pedestrian and cycling access to urban open space to promote active living.

Yarralumla Creek

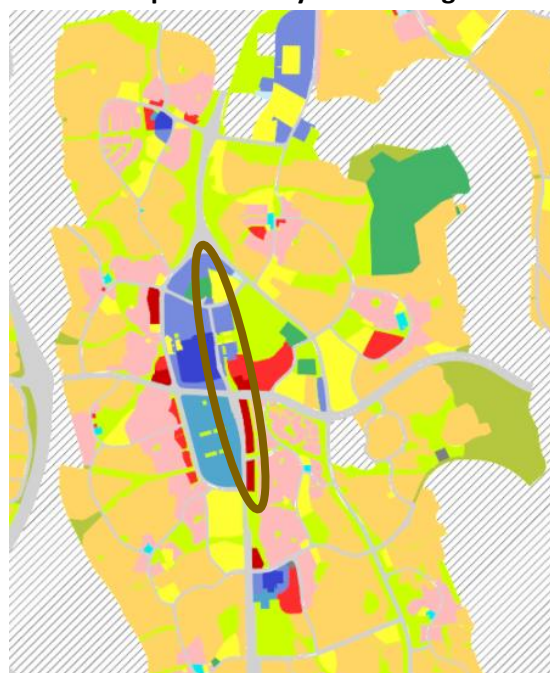
Yarralumla Creek, the major watercourse through the district, is adjacent to Yamba and Athllon drives and an important riparian corridor.

Yarralumla Creek could be re-imagined as an urban waterway as it travels from Mawson, through the Woden town centre to north Curtin and the area beyond. This could include continuous landscape features, improved public access, landscape amenity, habitat opportunities and water quality improvements. The Woden town centre, new CIT Woden campus, transport interchange and new mixed-use development on existing surface carparks would benefit by fronting onto a revitalised green watercourse and boulevard.

Blue green network – draft Woden District Strategy



ACTmapi – Territory Plan zoning



Unfortunately the zoning for the corridor does not provide for adequate urban open space to complement the renewal of Yarralumla Creek as a riparian waterway and green corridors from Yarralumla Creek along Athllon Drive and Yamba Drive, including connectivity with Farrer Ridge at the head of the creek.

Recommendation 2 – rezone the Yarralumla Creek corridor to include adequate urban open space to renew the creek corridor with continuous riparian landscape features for biodiversity, water quality improvements and landscape/social amenity for people to meet and socialise.

Woden Town Square and West Plaza

The vision for the heart of Woden should be more inspiring. The Town Square and the West Plaza should have active fronts that sustain local businesses and attract people to enjoy the area with art, music and outdoor dining.

Unfortunately the Woden Town Square is zoned for 28 storey buildings on its perimeter and does not host a café, restaurant or pub to attract people to enjoy the space and give life to the core of Woden. It is particularly quiet outside of public servant working hours even though the population living in the town centre has significantly increased.

Sadly, the West Plaza will be focussed on a new road moving through it to the detriment of better uses for the people.

Recommendation 3 – collaborate with key stakeholders on how we can make the heart of the Woden Town Centre attractive to local businesses and people of ages and abilities.

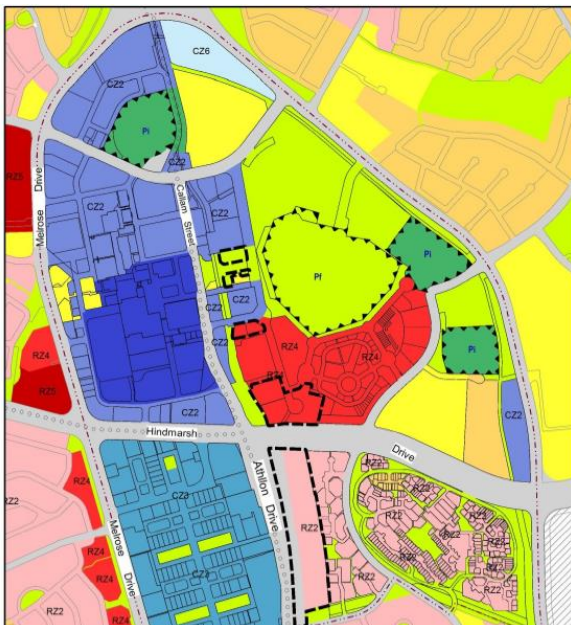
Woden Town Park

While Woden’s population is significantly increasing, draft Variation 344 to the Territory Plan led to a significant loss of urban open space in the Woden Town Park.

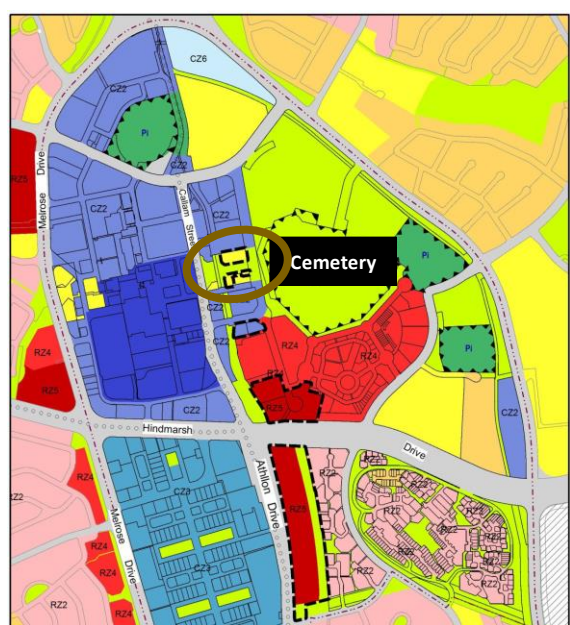
The light rail station in Woden has also significantly impinged on the Town Park along Callam St reducing the urban open space between the proposed light rail station and the concrete drain that is Yarralumla Creek.

Sadly, The Woden Town Park has been reduced to the Woden Town Path.

Before Draft variation 344



After Draft variation 344

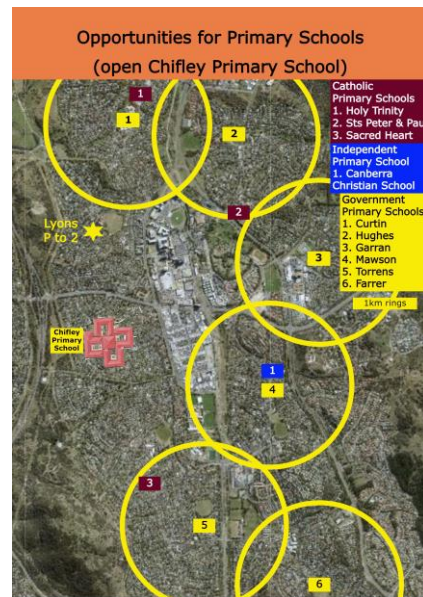
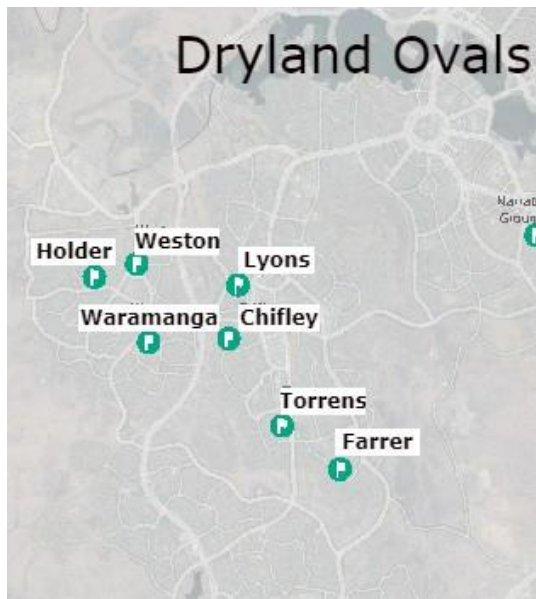


Recommendation 4 – return Woden Town Park to urban open space and collaborate with key stakeholders – to work out how to increase its biodiversity and activate it with surrounding social and economic development.

Dryland Ovals

Woden's dryland ovals should be retained and considered in the context of town planning that looks holistically at the community's requirements for homes, jobs, services, public spaces and community facilities.

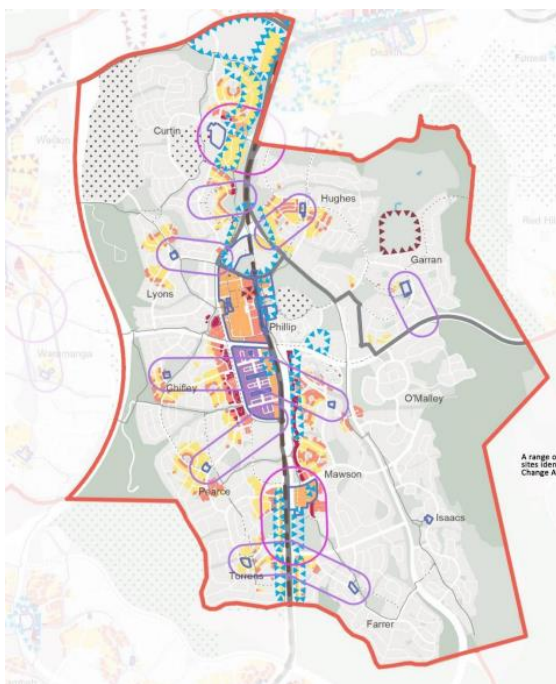
- The ovals opposite the tertiary hospital for south east NSW may be required for health purposes in the future which means the exiting dryland ovals will be required for sport
- The Lyons oval may be required by AFL and cricket to complement Phillip Oval
- The Chifley school should be re-opened and the oval irrigated for school activities.



Densification

Sustainable neighbourhoods – draft Woden District Strategy - detailed analysis and planning will be undertaken for Woden's future investigation areas to accommodate future housing .

Recommendation 5 – apply the zone objectives to ensure we have adequate urban open space to provide for our tree canopy, biodiversity and social amenity for our residents to meet and socialise.



Typical activities within our urban open space:

- adventure play
- community events
- commercial events
- markets, festivals
- picnics and barbecues
- community gardens
- social gatherings
- recreational walking and cycling
- formal sporting activities
- skateboarding
- nature study
- exercise at a fitness station
- equestrian activities
- dog park or off leash area
- legal graffiti at a practice graffiti site

We would like to work with the ACT Government to improve our urban open spaces, to rewild Yarralumla Creek, support our tree canopy, biodiversity, and social amenity.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fiona Carrick". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a faint horizontal line.

Fiona Carrick
President
Woden Valley Community Council
15 August 2023