





# Part Two

## East Canberra District Strategy

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<b>1. Metropolitan and district context</b> .....	<b>4</b>	<b>3. Initiatives for the five big drivers</b> .....	<b>22</b>
What people value about the East Canberra District.....	7	Initiatives for East Canberra.....	23
District snapshot – current and future.....	8	Blue-green network.....	24
Opportunities and challenges for gradual transformation.....	9	Economic access and opportunity across the city.....	27
<b>2. District Strategy for East Canberra</b> .....	<b>12</b>	Future jobs – for further investigation.....	28
Vision for 2038 and beyond to 2050.....	12	Strategic movement to support city growth.....	29
District strategy plan.....	12	Inclusive local centres and communities.....	31
Change areas and key sites.....	14	Sustainable neighbourhoods.....	31
Potential urban regeneration areas.....	19	Oaks Estate village.....	32
5 big drivers, 10 targets and key directions.....	20	Pialligo.....	32
		<b>4. Supporting infrastructure required</b> .....	<b>33</b>



# 1. Metropolitan and district context

East Canberra district (Figure 1) comprises the Majura Valley, Jerrabomberra Valley, Oaks Estate, Pialligo, Symonston, Hume, Beard, the Canberra Airport and the area generally known as Eastern Broadacre (Figure 2). East Canberra has an ACT-wide strategic objective of enhancing employment opportunities. However, any future development and employment enhancement will need a modest footprint while protecting and prioritising environmentally sensitive areas and threatened flora, fauna and ecological communities.

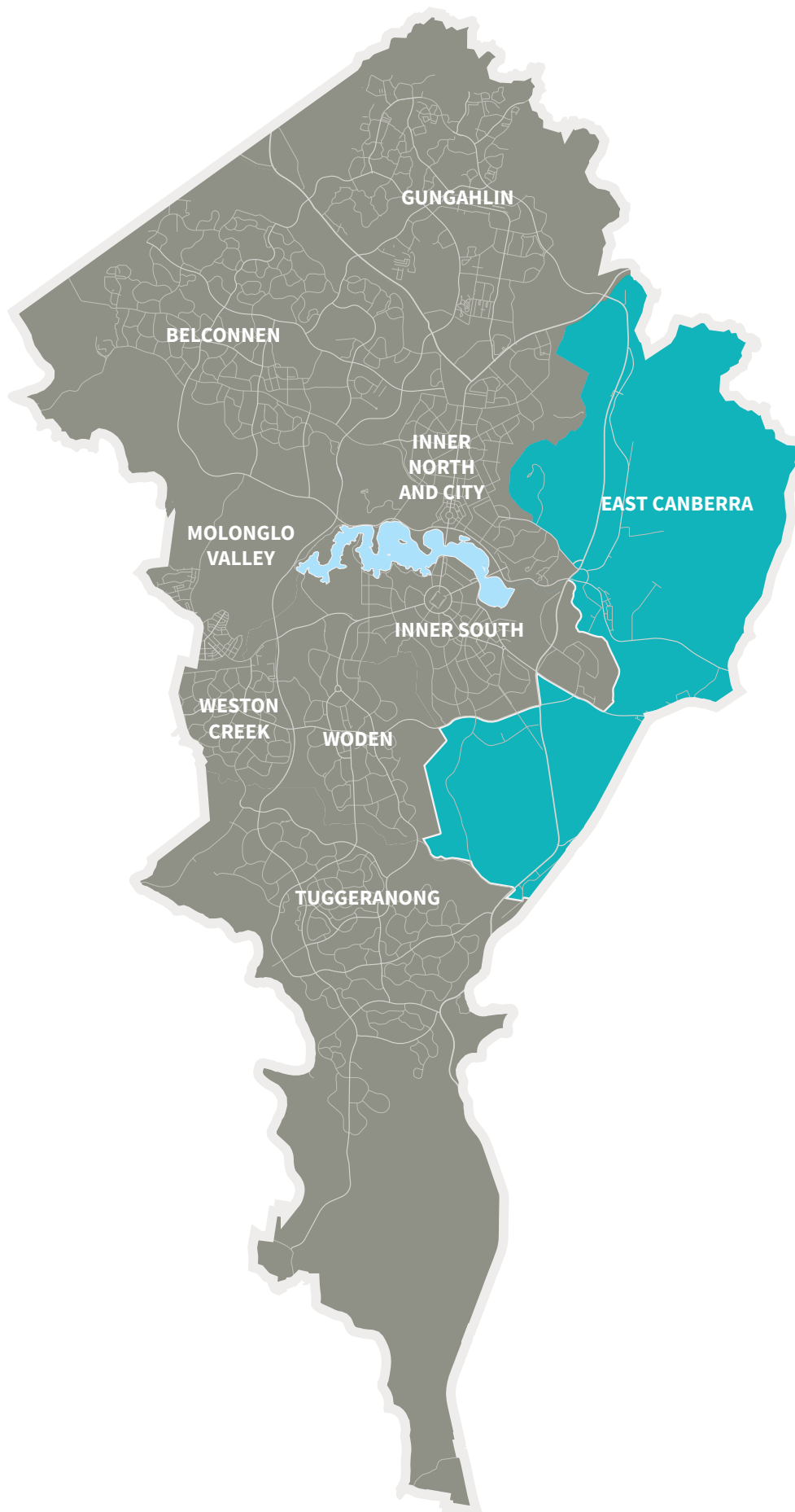
East Canberra, which contains the important aviation, freight and business hub of Canberra Airport, has an ACT-wide strategic role for employment as well as serving parts of the wider Canberra Region in NSW.

The Eastern Broadacre area (shown in red in Figure 2) is subject to a strategic assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) to assess the potential impacts on nationally significant environmental values of proposed development in parts of the area. The strategic assessment will inform the future planning and potential rezoning of the district.

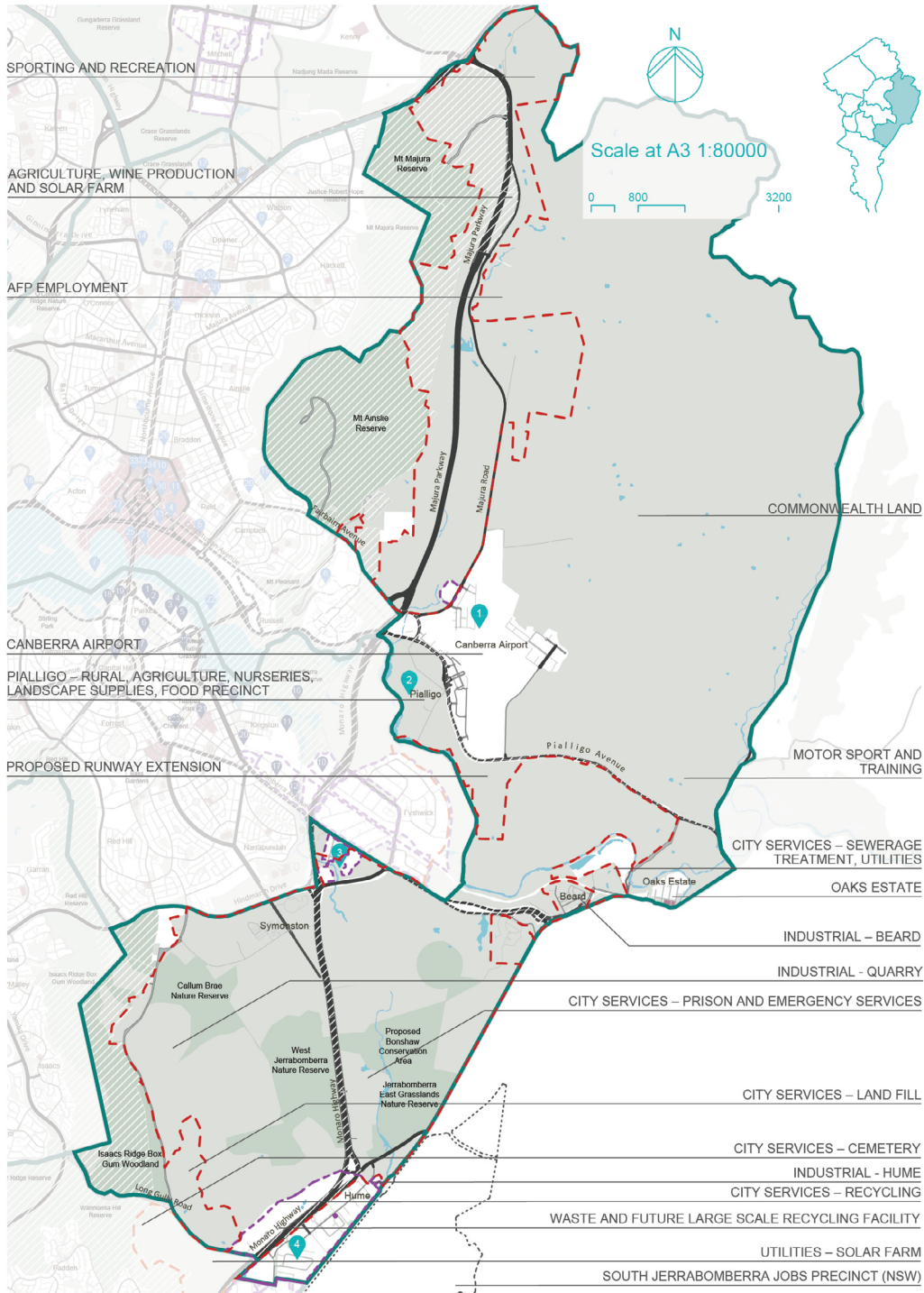
**Note:** While Oaks Estate is located in East Canberra for the purposes of district strategies, it is acknowledged that the Oaks Estate Residents Association identifies with the Inner South District and the Inner South Community Council. Other communities within East Canberra such as the Symonston community also identify with the Inner South District.

The district strategies are planning documents and therefore include planning terminology. See the glossary at Volume 5 for definitions of planning terms.

**Figure 1 :** East Canberra District context in the city



**Figure 2: East Canberra District context**



**Legend**

- District boundary
- Open space
- Nature reserve
- Water bodies
- Sportsfields
- Designated area under National Capital Plan
- City/town/group/local centre and other commercial areas
- Industrial/service trades
- Eastern Broadacre study area

Road hierarchy



Destinations

- 1 Canberra Airport
- 2 Pialligo
- 3 Symonston
- 4 Hume

## What people value about the East Canberra District

Since the original Griffin Plan, the ACT was set out with a City Centre and districts. As each district developed, it took on its own distinctive character; a character that is valued by its residents. As the district continues to evolve as part of a modern sustainable city, the district strategy will guide development through the lens of the district's defining characteristics.

The community has played a vital role in the development of the district strategies. This district strategy is shaped by the views of the people who live and work in, or frequently visit, East Canberra District. Community engagement began in 2019 and continued in 2021 with district planning workshops that identified what people want for their district. Consultation on the draft district strategies from November 2022 to March 2023 offered further opportunities to comment on the important values and direction for this district. (See Volume 4 – Background Material)

Across Canberra, the most valued things are natural space, liveability and diversity of lifestyle choice. Canberrans value the need for the city to become more sustainable and compact while getting the right balance between community, environment and economic needs.

East Canberra District has a predominantly rural, transport and industrial character with residential uses in Pialligo, Oaks Estate and Symonston. While home to a small population, much of East Canberra's lifestyle and cultural qualities relate to its broader strategic functions and visitor attractions, which cement the role of East Canberra as a district with a focus on employment, niche businesses, large format retail and related uses. Its agricultural uses provide for local food production, while contributing to the landscape setting of Canberra and supporting biodiversity values.

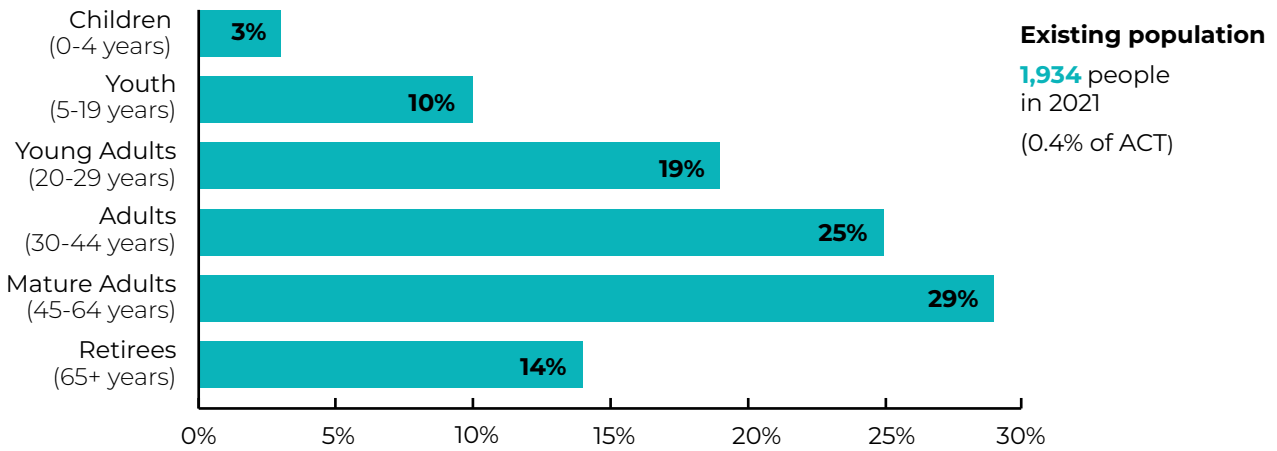
There is much to value in East Canberra District that makes it a great place to live and visit. Throughout community engagement, the government heard people particularly value:

- the area's Aboriginal heritage
- committed farmers and/or business owners, residents and individuals who are passionate about protecting, sharing and promoting the area's strengths and attributes
- farming land that offers agribusiness, agritourism and educational experiences that could be further developed into sustainable, niche opportunities for the enjoyment of the Canberra community
- Pialligo as a destination for nurseries, cafes, markets, orchards, vineyards and olive groves
- Oaks Estate's historic value as a highly intact early 20th century urban village
- the strong and diverse community with a creative and artistic vibe
- the endangered species of the Majura Valley
- parks and walking trails that are great for activity and views
- Callum Brae Nature Reserve with its green open space and trees
- recreational opportunities including mountain biking at Mount Majura Pines
- the important role of the northern part of Majura Valley as a landscaped entry point to the ACT
- rural vistas across the Molonglo River and Queanbeyan River
- Majura Park Shopping Centre
- economic opportunities afforded by the presence of Canberra Airport, national freight routes and connectivity to the surrounding region of NSW.

## District snapshot – current and future

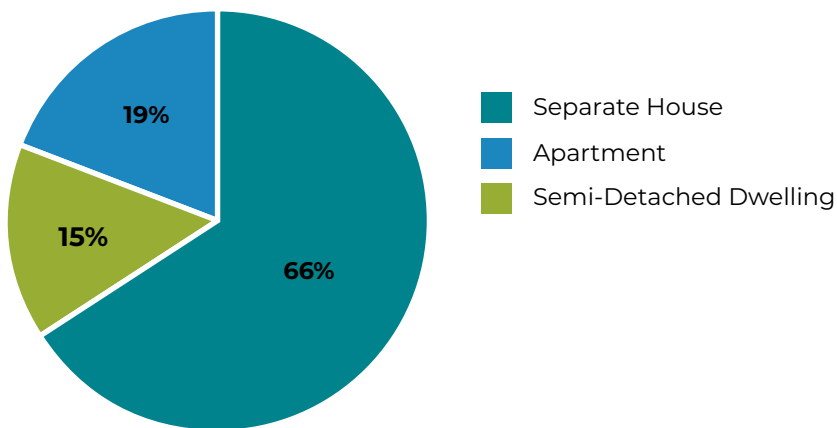
### East Canberra District population

**Figure 3: Age profile, 2021**



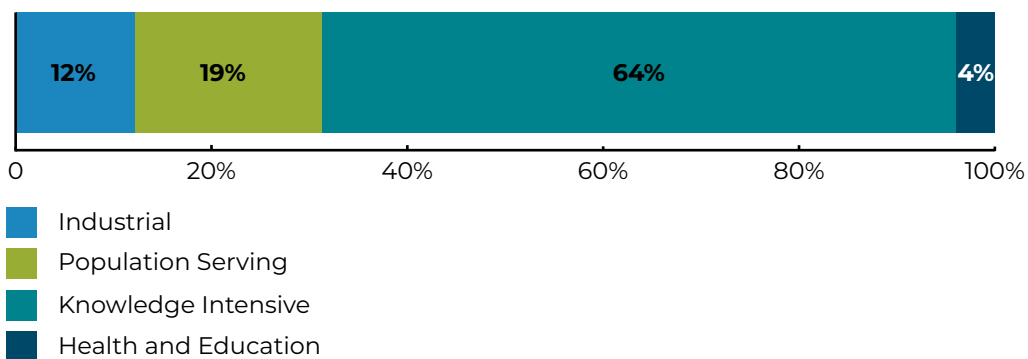
### East Canberra District housing

**Figure 4: Housing types, 2021 – proportion of dwellings**



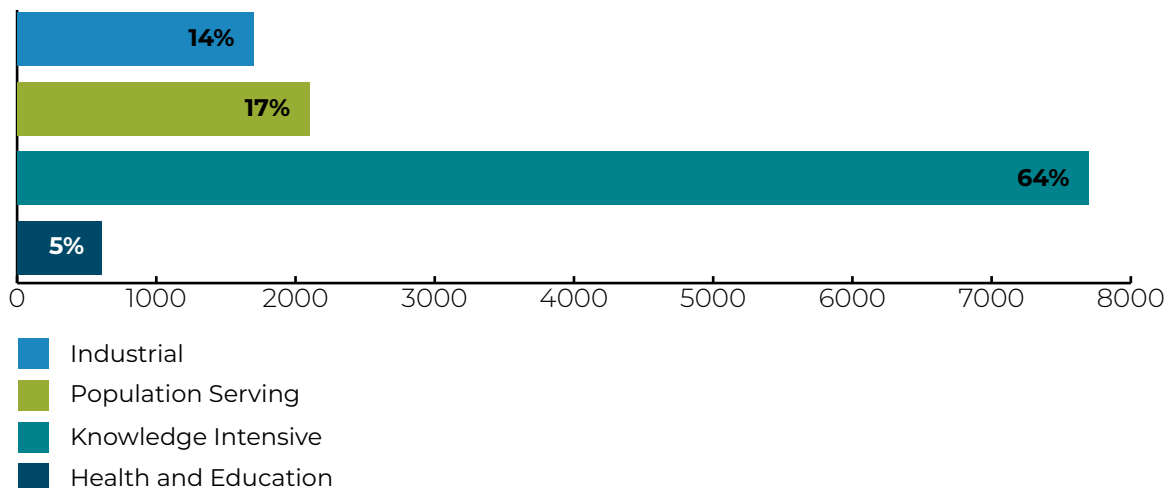
### East Canberra District employment

**Figure 5: Proportion of jobs by industry type, 2021**



23,340 jobs in 2016 (9% of ACT)

**Figure 6: Potential future employment – additional jobs 2050**



## Opportunities and challenges for gradual transformation

### Transforming Canberra for a growing population

Canberra will be a city of about 695,000 people by 2050. As at 2021 East Canberra’s population was 1,934 (Figure 3). Over the next 25 years this population will continue to increase. The district strategies are strategic planning documents designed to guide this growth, so Canberra maintains its distinct character and is still a great place to live.

The ACT has only a limited amount of available land left for new suburbs. Future growth will mean gradually transforming current suburbs to use the city’s finite land more efficiently and effectively. This means increased density. Quality can come with quantity. Excellent social, economic and community benefits can flow from density done well. Increased density is not all high-rise towers, although that is appropriate in some locations; part of the solution is introducing more townhouse and terrace house options that suit the needs of people at different stages of life.

However, there are no future plans for residential development in East Canberra District. The district will be important in providing future jobs for the growing city through existing and new employment lands, together with rural and other uses.

### Natural features, connections and heritage

East Canberra has extensive areas with sensitive and protected environmental values and connectivity corridors including the Mount Majura, Mount Ainslie, Callum Brae, Isaacs Ridge, Mount Mugga Mugga, Jerrabomberra East Grasslands and West Jerrabomberra nature reserves. These reserves are managed in accordance with the Canberra Nature Park Management Plan 2021. Other important areas are actively managed to achieve conservation objectives, including ecological connectivity, based on findings within the Draft Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment. The many threatened species in the district include the Grassland Earless Dragon, Striped Legless Lizard, Rosenberg’s Goanna, Perunga Grasshopper, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Murray Cod, *Eucalyptus aggregata*, Canberra Spider Orchid, Button Wrinklewort and Pale Pomaderris. There are also substantial areas of nationally threatened ecological communities of Natural Temperate Grassland and Yellow Box – Red Gum Grassy Woodland.

The woodland reserves, particularly Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie, are popular recreational destinations.

Significant waterways pass through the district including Jerrabomberra Creek, Woolshed Creek and Molonglo River and their tributaries. Careful management of this catchment according to the principles of Water Sensitive Urban Design is therefore critical to maintain and improve environmental outcomes and recreational amenity, including through improved water quality in Lake Burley Griffin and the Molonglo River.

The agricultural lands in parts of East Canberra extend from the Majura Valley in the north to the Jerrabomberra Valley in the south. These areas provide opportunities for agribusiness and agritourism, local food production and other rural uses and ecological connectivity. They may also provide landscape, cultural, heritage and social benefits. The arable land in Pialligo plays an important agricultural production role for the ACT. It is a destination for small-scale urban farming, landscape supplies and nurseries. The challenges of climate change, natural disasters and supply chain issues highlight the importance of local food production in contributing to food security.

East Canberra District contains a wealth of heritage places and objects. The Majura Valley has been nominated to the ACT Heritage Register as a cultural landscape complex of Aboriginal and settler places. Within this, there are a range of individually nominated and recorded places, including Aboriginal cultural trees, historic border markers and Gladefield. Registered heritage places in the district include 'The Oaks' and 'Robertson House' (at Oaks Estate) and numerous Aboriginal places, including a corroboree ground and cultural area near Oaks Estate.

## Employment hubs and economic activity

East Canberra District has a diverse economy that supports local employment and economic development in the areas of agriculture and food production, public administration and professional services, strategic transport, large format retail and tourism and hospitality.

East Canberra includes important employment precincts that accounted for around 8.5% of the ACT's employment in 2021. Key precincts include Canberra Airport, which is privately leased and under the planning jurisdiction of the Australian Government. The airport and Brindabella Business Park accommodate many office-based and business service sectors. Knowledge intensive jobs make up the largest share of employment in the district (64% as of 2021).

East Canberra is the district with the largest share of its jobs in industrial sectors (12%) as shown in Figure 5.

Majura Park shopping precinct, with its large format retail offerings and office employment, is part of Canberra Airport. Industrial land uses for the ACT are accommodated in Hume and Beard, which border Tuggeranong to the south and NSW Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council to the east respectively. East Canberra borders the Fyshwick industrial area (Inner South District) and South Jerrabomberra (NSW) residential and employment areas and regional jobs precinct.

The district is home to many facilities that are important to the functioning of Canberra as a city, but which are not able to be accommodated in urban areas. This includes facilities for managing utilities, waste, emergency services and large Commonwealth land holdings.

Subject to the outcomes of the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment, existing and potentially new employment precincts have the potential to accommodate a range of industries (such as manufacturing, logistics, warehousing). Future potential employment (additional jobs to 2050) is shown in Figure 6.

## Transport and travel

The district is well-served by Canberra's strategic movement network, which connects the district to other parts of the ACT through the major road network, rapid and local bus services, and integrated active travel.

The district is important for its freight routes. The Majura Parkway and Monaro Highway are key routes servicing the district and, in turn, the rest of the city and surrounding NSW in delivering goods. This proximity makes East Canberra ideally suited to light industrial uses, warehousing, distribution and freight support facilities.

The Monaro Highway is the key route to the growing Monaro region of NSW that draws significant tourist traffic to the Snowy Mountains, south coast and beyond. East Canberra serves as the gateway for access and road connections for commuter flows from Queanbeyan and Googong in the east, Cooma in the south and Bungendore in the north.

The district is serviced by a rapid bus corridor from Belconnen through the City Centre to Canberra Airport. Local services connect to Majura Park and Hume. Bus services to Oaks Estate currently operate through the Queanbeyan bus network. Public transport from Queanbeyan travels through the district.

The existing heavy rail corridor to Sydney and other areas runs through the district to Canberra Railway Station in Kingston.

Expansion of Canberra's light rail network is planned to extend into the district. Long-term opportunities for faster rail or high-speed rail connections will likely travel through East Canberra.

Canberra Airport is a significant travel hub with direct flights to all Australian capital cities and some regional centres on the east coast. The airport has international status, with direct international links starting to Fiji in 2023 and previously operating to Singapore, Wellington and Nadi.

### **Community facilities and local and group centres**

Being largely an employment area, East Canberra does not have the same hierarchy of town, group and local centres or community facilities as the other districts. Oaks Estate and Hume have the only small local centre zoned precincts. The district includes recreational facilities that service broader catchments, such as the gun clubs and mountain biking in the north. The preferred site for the relocated RSPCA facility is in Pialligo.

### **Housing and affordability**

East Canberra has a relatively small existing residential population at just under 2,000 as of 2021. Residential areas include Oaks Estate, rural blocks in Pialligo and parts of Symonston.

The district reported a higher proportion of rental households in housing stress as of 2021 (29.5% compared to the ACT's 23%), though this is influenced by its larger share of social housing dwellings.

Due to the impact of noise from Canberra Airport and its flight paths and the presence of sensitive and protected environmental areas there are no future plans for new residential development in East Canberra District. New housing and the district's residential population is not proposed to significantly grow.

## 2. District Strategy for East Canberra

### Vision for 2038 and beyond to 2050

In 2050, East Canberra will remain largely undeveloped. The significant environmental and landscape features of East Canberra, with many sites rich in meaning to the Ngunnawal people, will create a precious eastern landscaped edge to the city. Residential development will be constrained to minimal selected areas and complement the district's existing heritage values and landscape character.

East Canberra's urban function will be largely centred around its critical economic role. It is the primary location for aviation, freight and other business activities serving a city-wide and regional function.

New employment precincts and economic diversification will build on the district's strengths and assets in agribusiness, tourism, defence and other emerging sectors, as well as connections to Queanbeyan. Remaining future opportunities for economic development will take advantage of major transport corridors such as the Monaro Highway and long-term options for faster rail.

Residents of East Canberra in Oaks Estate, Pialligo and Symonston will have enhanced transport linkages and access to facilities and services in the surrounding districts.

### District strategy plan

The East Canberra District Strategy Plan (Figure 7) highlights the key structural elements and directions for the district based on each of the five big drivers (see Volume 1 and below). The district strategy plan highlights the following elements (though for some districts including East Canberra not all elements are relevant or shown in the maps):

- Current and possible future blue-green values and network connections
- Current and proposed new transport corridors and links, and others for strategic investigation
- Centres and locations requiring a particular focus on economic development and employment
- Existing and future proposed group and local centres that are a focus for consideration of planning and non-planning initiatives to support their ongoing viability and role as a community meeting place (with the centres to be confirmed though further investigation)
- Any new or future proposed community and recreational facilities
- Sites and precincts that are identified for future development through existing estate development planning, the Indicative Land Release Program or development proposals; they include an estimate of the number of dwellings they may deliver.

The East Canberra District Strategy Plan (Figure 7) is different from other districts' plans. East Canberra's future development will be primarily for city-wide focussed employment. Not all the five big drivers are relevant for planning for the district. Future development in East Canberra will be determined by the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment, including the identification of areas to be retained for environmental conservation and their current use.

Figure 7 outlines areas that may be considered for change for new employment uses, building on existing specialisations in different parts of the district, and areas that will need to be maintained and managed appropriately to protect environmental and heritage values and landscape character.



## Change areas and key sites

The East Canberra District Strategy Plan (Figure 7) identifies change areas that may be suitable for a range of uses and what might be needed to support that change.

**It is important to note that district strategies do not regulate uses, nor do they zone or rezone land. Identification of sites in this section are subject to planning investigations including environmental, heritage, land use and other assessments. The outcomes of the work undertaken through the district strategy initiatives will inform future Territory Plan amendments. These are statutory processes that involve supporting reports and necessary assessments to make available land that is 'planning ready' in a clear and coordinated way.**

The change areas are included in three categories based on current knowledge of the individual sites and their immediate surrounding areas in terms of:

- proposals by Government and/or the private sector including Territory Plan variations
- sites identified in the indicative land release program for future development
- ongoing estate development planning in greenfield areas
- a range of new sites required to meet projected population, housing demand, employment locations, community facilities, services, sport and recreations uses and retail commercial and entertainment opportunities.

Change areas and key sites may shift between categories in response to new information from existing and ongoing projects or where there is need to stimulate development to meet community needs. In this regard, some projects may 'move' from one category to another depending on progress and timing. This would include projects that respond to housing demand, affordability and diversity including missing middle housing. In other situations, some projects may be delayed pending submission of documentation from external proponents or the Commonwealth Government. For some projects, initial site investigations might identify the need for more detailed investigations or specific studies. This is standard practice and highlights the iterative nature of planning for growth and change.

- Category 1 (Figure 8) – Change areas where detailed planning can proceed, consultation needs to occur, and change could happen within 0–5 years.

Category 1 change areas have been identified in the district strategies because they have either been confirmed by Government for future development or have well-progressed proposals that have been determined to have strong planning merits.

In East Canberra the category 1 areas include a site at Oaks Estate that is subject to a Territory Plan variation and another site at Symonston that is on the Indicative Land Release Program.

- Category 2 (Figure 9) – Change areas where detailed planning can proceed, consultation needs to occur, and change could happen within 0–10 years.

Category 2 change areas include sites that may have current conceptual high-level planning proposals or for which there are potential planning merits. Further planning and investigations are required to determine the development that could occur in these locations. Having regard to the five drivers and the need for infrastructure and services, it is noted that these change areas may not result in development across entire sites.

In East Canberra the category 2 change areas include five locations that may have potential for future change subject to the outcomes of the Eastern Broadacre studies and the Strategic Assessment of environmental values.

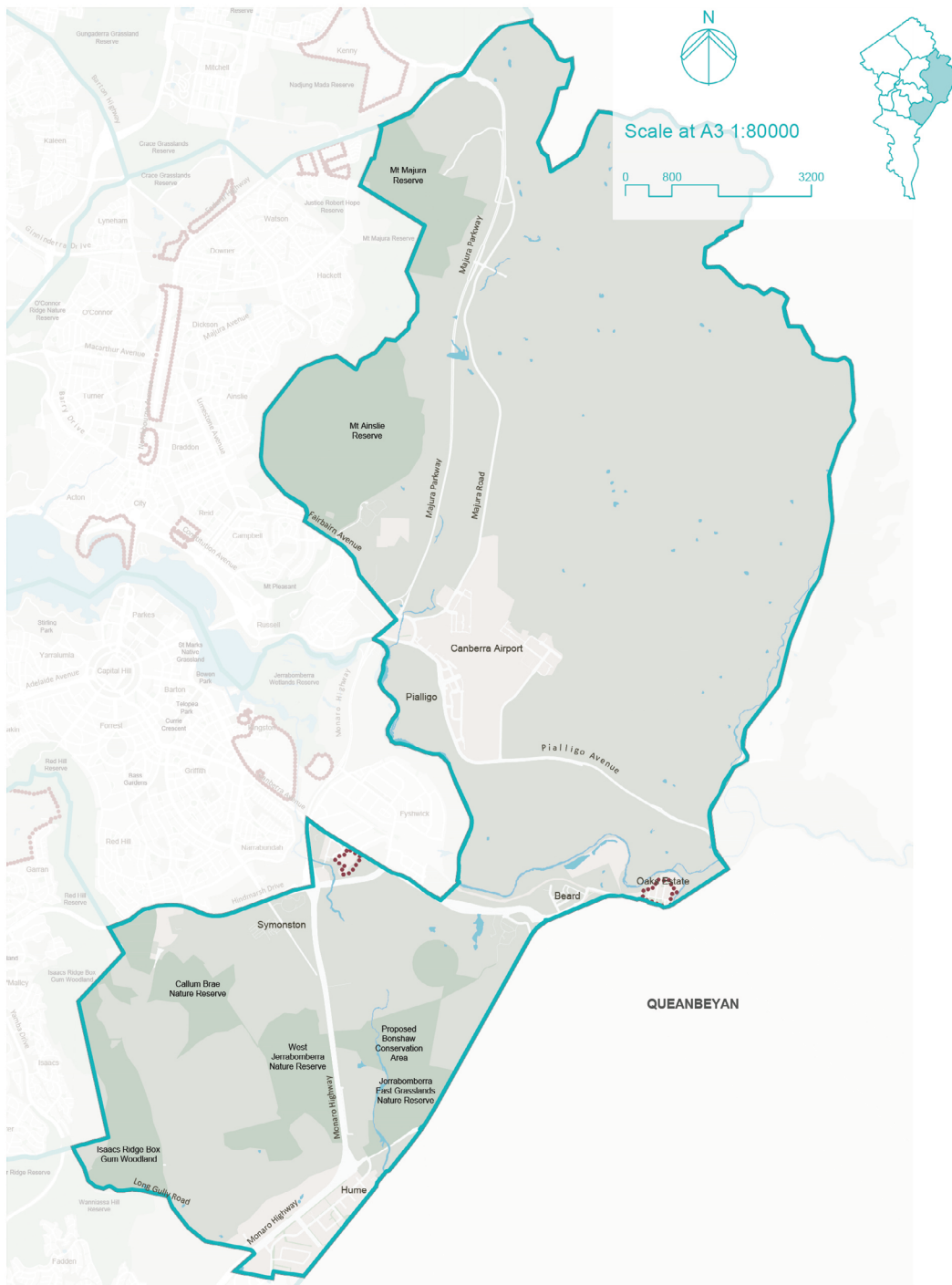
- Category 3 (Figure 10) – Change areas where detailed planning can be considered, consultation needs to occur, and change could happen within 0–15 years.

Category 3 change areas may be considered for future development, but require extensive further investigation, analysis and feedback to determine their suitability for development. These change areas also identify some sites that are part of ongoing development through an existing program or plan. Having regard to the five drivers and the need for infrastructure and services, it is noted that these change areas may not result in development across entire sites.

In East Canberra the category 3 change areas include one site in Symonston for further investigation.

There are currently no key sites in the East Canberra District.

**Figure 8: East Canberra – Category 1 change areas map**



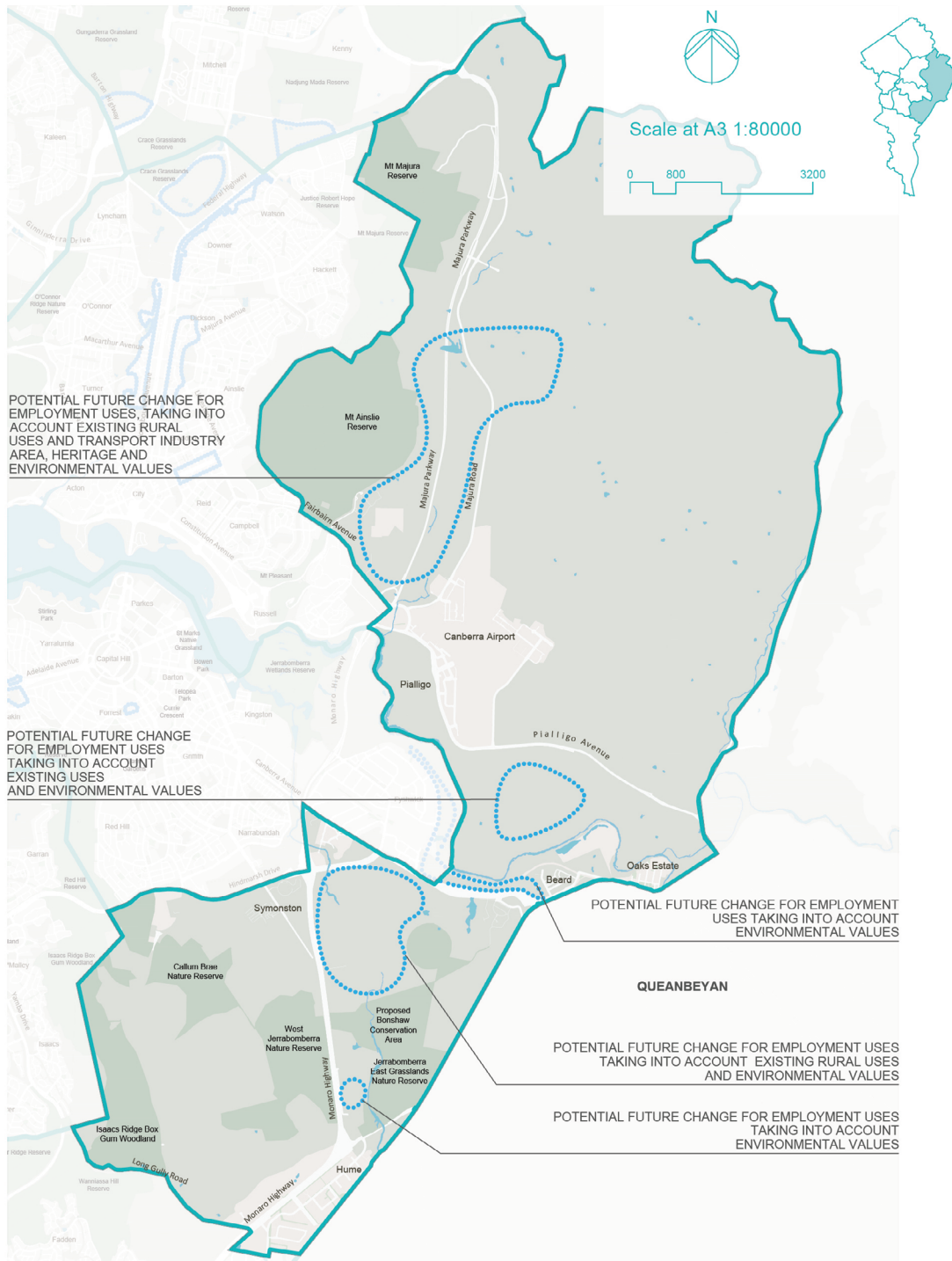
**Legend**

- District boundary
- Open space
- Nature reserve
- Water bodies

**Sustainable neighbourhoods**

- Category 1 - Change could happen within 0-5 years
- Category 2 - Change could happen within 0-10 years
- Category 3 - Change could happen within 0-15 years

**Figure 9: East Canberra – Category 2 change areas map**



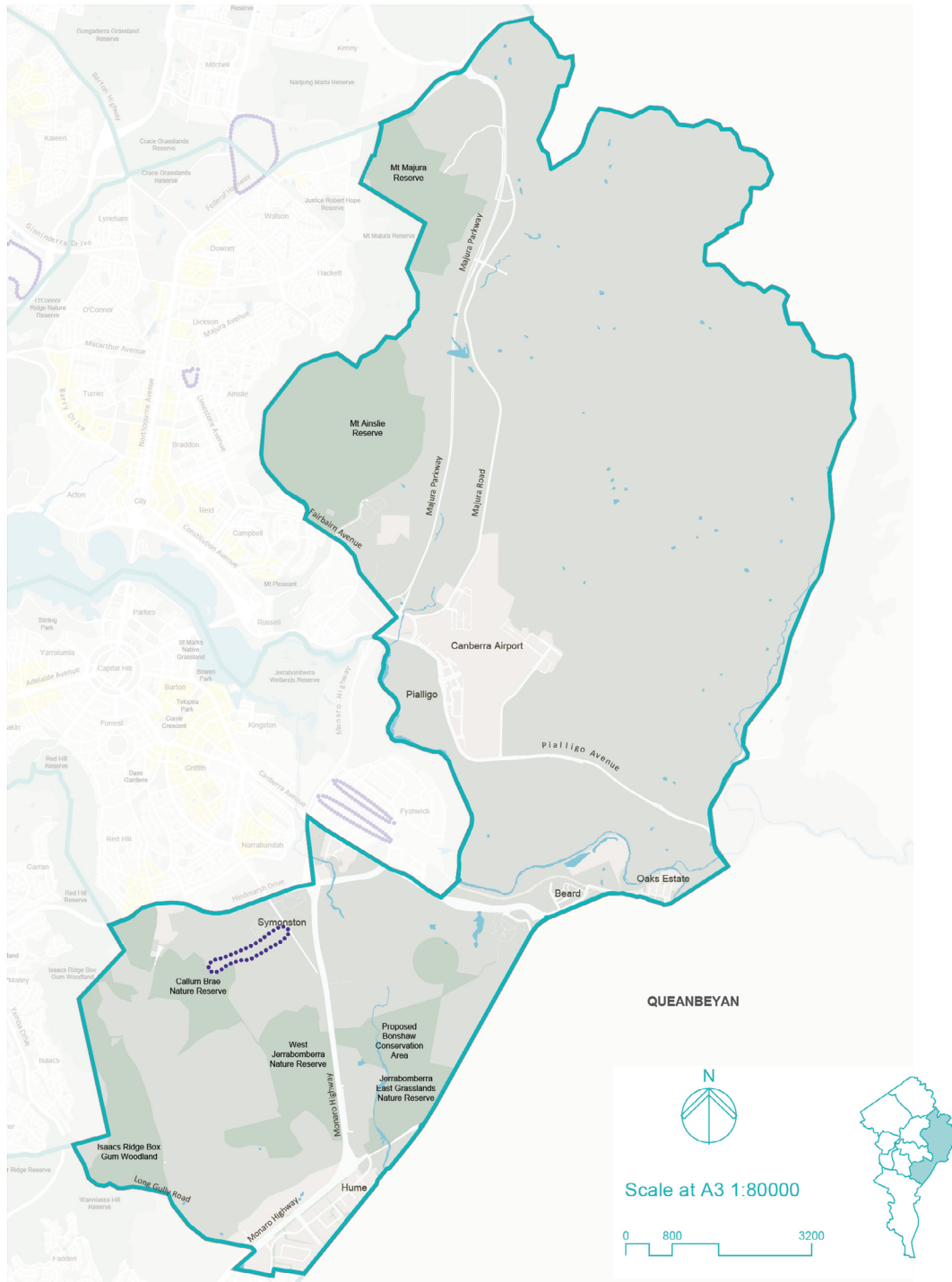
**Legend**

- District boundary
- Open space
- Nature reserve
- Water bodies





**Sustainable neighbourhoods**

- Category 1 - Change could happen within 0-5 years
- Category 2 - Change could happen within 0-10 years
- Category 3 - Change could happen within 0-15 years




**Figure 10: East Canberra – Category 3 change areas map**



**Legend**

-  District boundary
-  Open space
-  Nature reserve
-  Water bodies

**Sustainable neighbourhoods**

-  Category 1 - Change could happen within 0-5 years
-  Category 2 - Change could happen within 0-10 years
-  Category 3 - Change could happen within 0-15 years

## Potential urban regeneration areas

New land releases and the redevelopment of large brownfield sites will not provide enough housing to cater for the projected growth in the population to 2050. Initial investigations have been undertaken to identify the potential suitability of different parts of Canberra for future increased housing density within existing urban areas. In the future, there will be need to undertake further investigations into potential urban regeneration areas that may be suited to redevelopment for housing. Investigations would include consideration of a range of matters such as existing character, heritage and environmental values, natural hazards, the practicalities of redevelopment and available infrastructure.




Initial investigations have been undertaken to identify the potential suitability of different parts of Canberra for future increased housing density and diversity. A desktop analysis assessed all parts of the ACT against proximity to retail centres, public amenities and public transport nodes, the three important elements of medium-density areas to ensure continued liveability in these areas. The results of this work are detailed in Volume 4 – Background Material.


In the future, there will be need to undertake further investigations into potential urban regeneration areas that may be suited to redevelopment for housing. Investigations would include consideration of a range of matters such as existing character, heritage and environmental values, natural hazards, the practicalities of redevelopment and available infrastructure. Any areas being considered for rezoning to a higher density would involve community engagement.

East Canberra District does not have any areas that will be investigated for potential urban regeneration.

## 5 big drivers, 10 targets and key directions

The following key directions for the 5 big drivers and 10 targets highlight the future vision for East Canberra District. The targets are in Volume 1 with a detailed explanation.

5 big drivers	10 targets	Directions for East Canberra
 <p><b>Blue-green network</b></p> <p>A protected network of natural and semi-natural areas is vital in providing clean air, water and visual amenity to suburbs, serving as native plant and animal habitat and supporting liveability and community wellbeing. The network supports land uses that protect and enhance ecosystem function, maintaining intrinsic cultural value and capacity to mitigate current and future climate risks.</p>	<p>More nature and water retention in the city.</p> <p>Expand liveable blue-green network connections.</p>	<p>Protect and enhance heritage and priority environmental and cultural values within grasslands and woodlands and consider the establishment of fauna-friendly road crossings throughout the Majura and Jerrabomberra valleys.</p> <p>Protect and restore aquatic-riparian corridors and their catchment through the application of water sensitive urban design, including along the Molonglo River and Jerrabomberra and Woolshed creeks.</p>
 <p><b>Economic access and opportunity across the city</b></p> <p>Selected major economic hubs and group and town centres across Canberra are a focus to strengthen the city's role in the national economy, but also to provide greater economic diversity and expanded access to employment opportunities for residents.</p>	<p>Improve economic opportunities in districts with a shortage of jobs.</p> <p>More jobs accessible to home.</p>	<p>Develop new employment precincts, capitalising on proximity to Canberra Airport, national freight routes, heavy rail and existing employment precincts (subject to outcomes of the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment).</p> <p>Retain capacity and opportunities within the district for rural uses, agribusiness and agritourism.</p>
 <p><b>Strategic movement to support city growth</b></p> <p>The developing public transport network provides access to employment centres and is a focus for future high quality infill development. The road network increasingly provides for multiple travel modes as well as dedicated movement corridors for private/public and commercial vehicular traffic. Land-use planning will be informed by transport planning and traffic modelling to address existing and potential traffic and parking issues.</p>	<p>Reduce car dependence.</p> <p>More active transport.</p>	<p>Protect and preserve function and capacity of key transport corridors for freight and public transport, including potential future faster rail and/or high-speed rail corridor.</p>

5 big drivers	10 targets	Directions for East Canberra
 <p><b>Inclusive centres and communities</b></p> <p>Group and local centres provide accessibility for active travel and walkable access to daily necessities for surrounding communities. Possible centres are identified for investigation of appropriate planning and non-planning initiatives to support their ongoing viability and role as a community meeting place (this is mainly in relation to existing suburban areas of Canberra). This could include communities where social stresses may be in evidence, however the actual centres are to be confirmed through further analysis. In addition, new community facilities support growth and underpin wellbeing across Canberra.</p>	<p>Greater activation of group and local centres.</p> <p>Improved community wellbeing.</p>	<p>Enhance accessibility of services and facilities for Oaks Estate, Pialligo and Symonston residents.</p>
 <p><b>Sustainable neighbourhoods</b></p> <p>New residential development is of a height and density appropriate to neighbourhood characteristics and amenities, provides a mix of housing types and is a means for sustainable transformation, including enhanced active travel and walkability and better connections to centres, net zero emissions initiatives, and social and affordable housing.</p>	<p>Greater housing choice and affordability to meet community needs</p> <p>More inclusive and fair communities.</p>	<p>Limit new housing development in East Canberra consistent with the zoning requirements of the Territory Plan.</p>

# 3. Initiatives for the five big drivers

A series of initiatives will support delivery of the directions of the East Canberra District Strategy. The initiatives are related to each of the five big drivers and their associated planning objectives. The following sections document these initiatives under each big driver, and their implementation through 12 pathways:

## 1 Blue-green network preservation and expansion

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Maintain and enhance a protected network of natural and semi-natural areas to support liveability, cultural values, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation and resilience, and community wellbeing.

## 2 Detailed planning for future housing and employment

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Undertake further analysis, research and investigations to inform more detailed planning for future employment floorspace and housing.

## 3 Territory Plan – applying urban character and design principles

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Make changes through the statutory planning system and Territory Plan, such as rezoning or implementation by district policies or zone policies.

## 4 Transport and land-use integration

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Integrate land uses in planning for infrastructure projects like light rail and transport network development.

## 5 Employment and economic focus areas

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Select centres to be a focus for enhanced economic development and employment outcomes through targeted planning and policy initiatives.

## 6 Establish new innovation precincts

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Enhance the economic contribution of geographic areas where high value industry, research, health and education institutions and elite institutions are clustered together by enhancing physical and networking connections through targeted planning, asset development and management, and coordination initiatives.

## 7 Group and local centres initiatives

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Provide targeted interventions to address declining group and local centres in established urban areas including some centres where socio-economic indicators are below the Canberra average.

## 8 City making and urban improvement

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Develop key precincts to contribute to remaking the city through ‘urban improvement’, which means improving streets and public domain with more connections and greenery to encourage active travel and walking and enhance local liveability.

## 9 Facilitate the net zero emissions transition

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Provide the infrastructure needed to deliver the transition, as well as supporting and encouraging building owners and development proponents to transition.

## 10 Integrated infrastructure planning

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Integrate planning and delivery of infrastructure to support growth, including civil infrastructure, environmental upgrades and management, and community and recreational facilities.

## 11 Investigate an innovative approach to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment

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Investigate a new ‘urbanising agent’ or governance models to facilitate significant redevelopment and urban improvement.

## 12 Social and affordable housing contributions

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Investigate future initiatives to support increased social and affordable housing in Canberra.

While some initiatives are already planned or underway, the potential timing for delivery is shown, based on the following indicative timeframes:

- Short term – next 5 years
- Medium term – next 10 years
- Long term – next 20 years
- Longer term – 20+ years
- Ongoing – action has commenced and is progressing as part of a rolling or continuing commitment.

Further details on implementation are provided in Volume 3 – Implementation.

## Initiatives for East Canberra

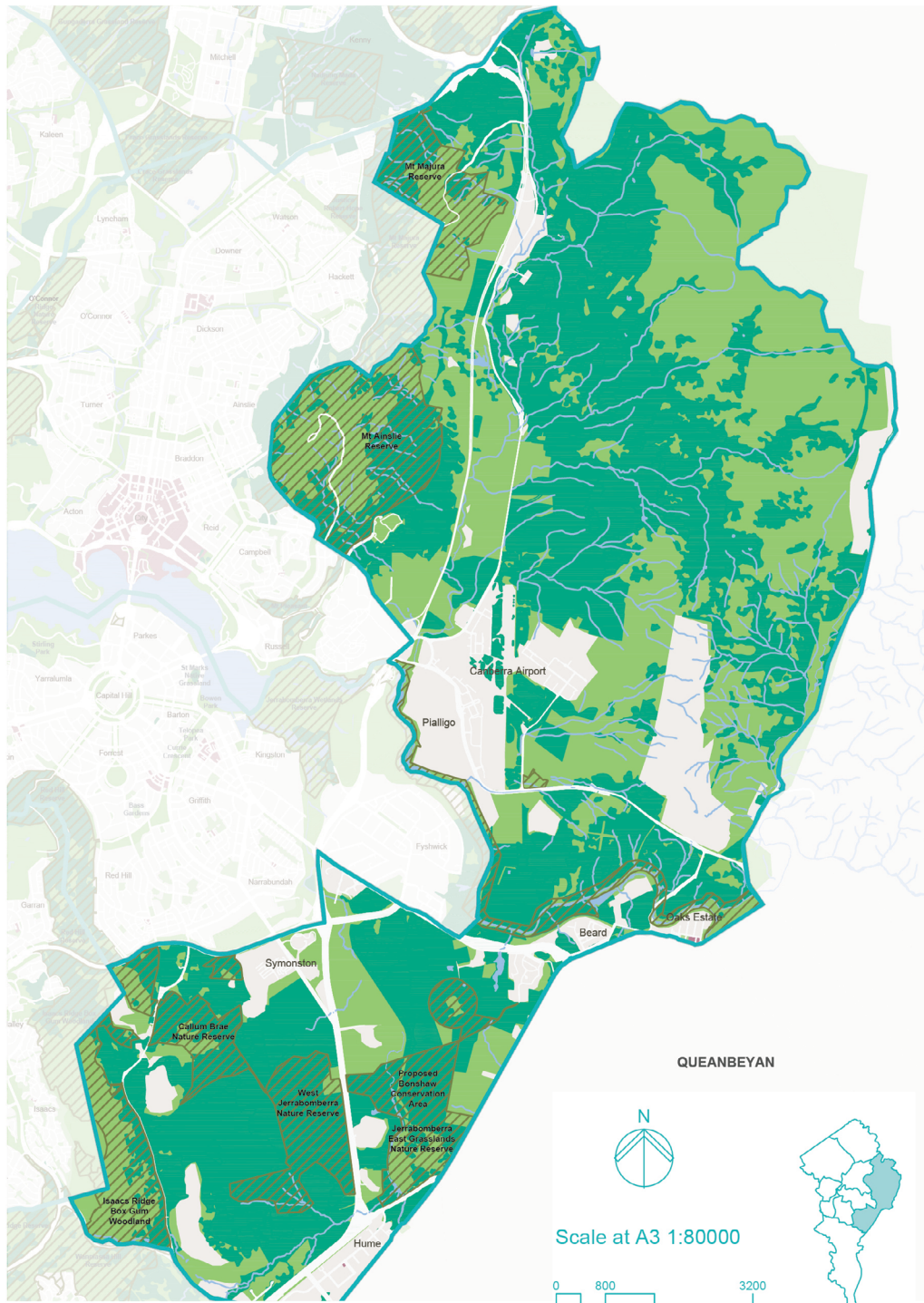
A range of initiatives will be needed over time to guide change in the district. Initially this will focus on more detailed planning and analysis, including the following:

- Completion of the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment process to provide greater certainty regarding the future of the area.
- Identification of a program of forward actions arising from the Eastern Broadacre Strategic Assessment, such as any changes to planning policies or zoning, development of an employment lands program and other planning responses.
- Consideration of the key policies including the National Airports Safeguarding Framework to make sure that land uses and other activities in the east protect the current and future operations of Canberra Airport and its flight paths.
- Partnerships and collaboration with the NSW Government and Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council (as relevant) to investigate infrastructure provision and transport connection opportunities between the ACT and NSW; if determined feasible, appropriate delivery to support employment and housing in South Jerrabomberra including the South Jerrabomberra Regional Job Precinct.

The following sections consider, at a high level, the early thinking around the potential uses and character for different parts of East Canberra, focusing on the blue-green network, economic access and opportunity across the city, and strategic movement to support city growth drivers.

# Blue-green network

**Figure 11:** East Canberra – Blue-green network



## Legend

- District boundary
- City/town/group/local centres and other commercial areas
- Water bodies
- Creek lines
- Sensitive ecological communities
- Urban open space
- Protected conservation areas
- Data not available

As future development prospects are explored in more detail for East Canberra, protecting environmental and cultural values and enhancing their sustainability and resilience to climate change will be prioritised. Figure 11 highlights areas with such values and where future connections and enhanced biodiversity outcomes can be considered. East Canberra includes substantial Aboriginal and European heritage that is to be acknowledged and respected.

Priority areas for conserving and restoring grassland, woodland and aquatic habitats and connections between them are highlighted in the map (Figure 11). The riparian corridors of the Molonglo River and Jerrabomberra Creek are environmentally and culturally significant and form important connective elements across and into adjoining districts. It is important to preserve these waterways' floodplains for their flood conveyance function; certain development is to be excluded to protect life and property.

While the threatened species and ecosystems areas are currently protected by legislation, planning and new development in East Canberra must consider how to best protect and enhance these natural and cultural values, and to restore broader habitats, habitat connectivity and ecosystem functions. There are also opportunities for rural areas to contribute to the blue-green network.

The blue-green network can be further enhanced through living infrastructure initiatives that will result in greater canopy cover and permeability at the time of development.

Any development planning must respect the heritage qualities of the district. Heritage values are protected under the *ACT Heritage Act 2004* and identified in full on the [ACT Heritage Register](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage_register) [https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage\\_register](https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage_register).

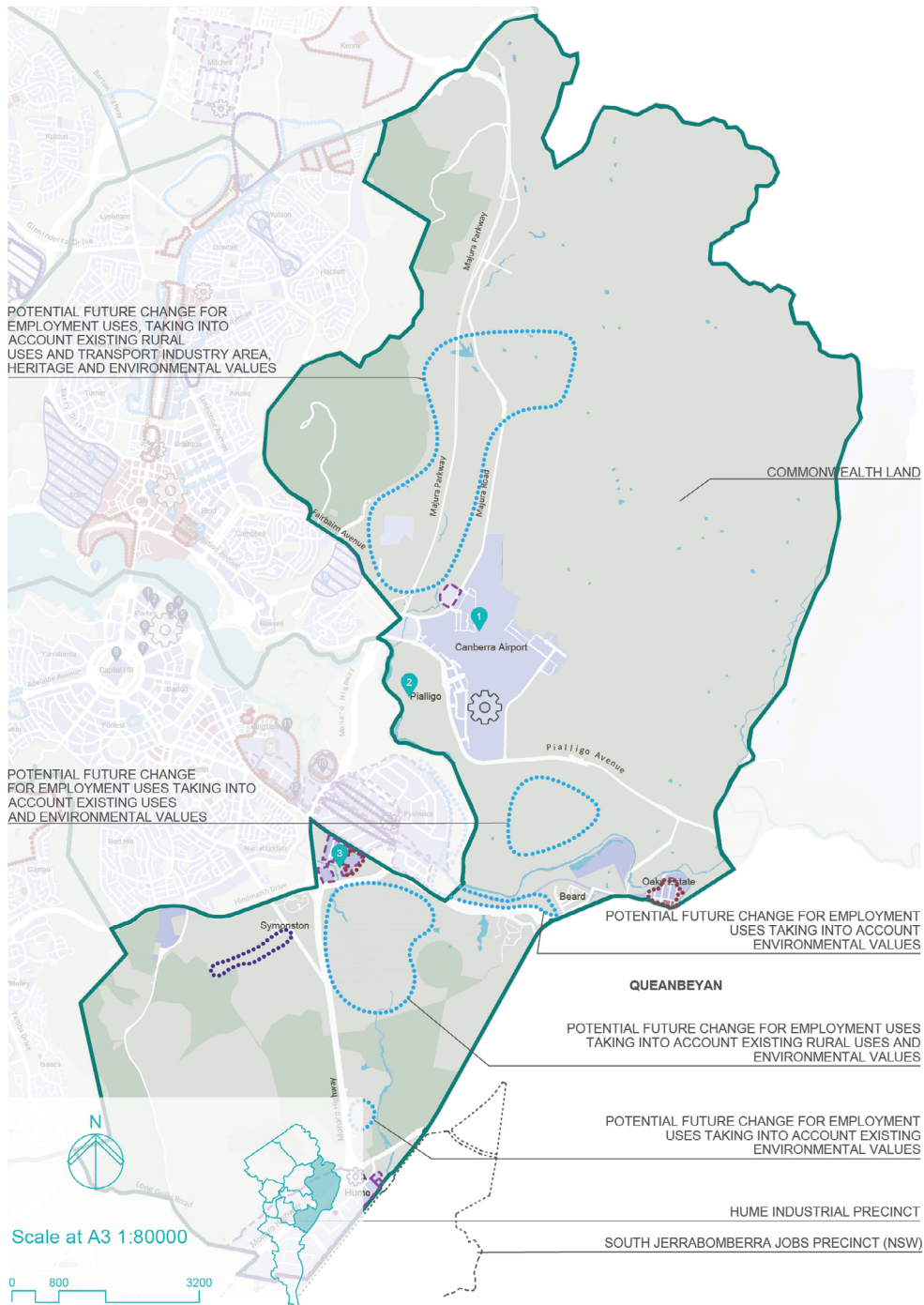
The initiatives for the blue-green network and implementation pathways and timeframes are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** East Canberra initiatives – Blue-green network

Initiatives	Implementation pathway	Timeframe
1.1 Protect, enhance and re-connect high value areas of grassland, particularly through the Majura Valley and Jerrabomberra Valley, and with linkages to reserves in other districts and native grasslands in NSW.	1	Ongoing
1.2 Protect, restore and re-connect priority areas of woodland, particularly around Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura across to Commonwealth land in the east, as well as habitat connections into the Inner North and City and Gungahlin districts. Consider fauna-friendly road crossings to achieve ecological connectivity outcomes.	1	Ongoing
1.3 Protect and restore priority woodland habitat and ecological connectivity, including mature native trees in their ecological context, between Callum Brae, Isaacs Ridge, Mount Mugga Mugga and West Jerrabomberra nature reserves and their connections into the Inner South and Tuggeranong districts.	1	Ongoing
1.4 Protect and restore Woolshed Creek, Jerrabomberra Creek, Woden Creek and Scrivener Creek riparian corridors, along with their tributaries and catchments, including linkages to the Jerrabomberra Wetlands and Narrabundah Wetlands while recognising their role in water quality and flood mitigation.	1	Short term
1.5 Protect the ecological integrity of the Molonglo River Corridor by ensuring that reserve boundaries, management zones and environmental buffers adequately protect ecological and cultural values present, including threatened species and communities.	1	Short term
1.6 Consider fauna-friendly road crossing opportunities for the Majura Parkway, Canberra Avenue, Federal Highway and Monaro Highway to re-establish connectivity between critically endangered woodland and grassland habitats.	1 4	Medium term

# Economic access and opportunity across the city

**Figure 12:** East Canberra – Economic access and opportunity across the city



## Legend

- District boundary
- Open space
- Nature reserve
- Water bodies

### Economic drivers

- Economic and employment focus
- City/town/group/local centres and other commercial areas
- Industrial/service trades

### Relative access to jobs

- High Low

### Destinations

- Canberra Airport
- Pialligo
- Symonston

### Key sites and change areas

- Category 1 - Change could happen within 0-5 years
- Category 2 - Change could happen within 0-10 years
- Category 3 - Change could happen within 0-15 years

Prospective development in East Canberra District is focussed on employment opportunities where appropriate (Figure 12). The existing key employment precincts will be the basis for future growth, catalysing around the specialities of particular areas and proximity to Canberra Airport and national freight routes. Research will be undertaken to understand the capacity and need for employment lands across the ACT to also inform detailed planning at the place level for East Canberra. All future development in the district will also need to align with the National Airports Safeguarding Framework to protect the operations of Canberra Airport. Environmental and other investigations will also be required in future planning for these sites.

### Future jobs – for further investigation

The total baseline potential future employment across the district in 2050 is around 35,800 jobs. The Canberra Airport Master Plan (2020) forecasts 36,000 jobs on the airport site alone (including Brindabella Business Park and the airport itself) by 2040, which is more than the baseline projection for East Canberra District mentioned above.

This discrepancy highlights the need for ACT-wide employment futures research that realistically apportions future employment by location, leading to a centres and employment lands strategy. This would include the future jobs potential for the business park and the airport site, taking into account aviation as well as retail and office expansion prospects, all overlaid by strategic planning perspectives about a desirable distribution of employment across the ACT. Some new employment precincts may be needed in the district to accommodate the projected employment, subject to the outcomes of the strategic assessment.

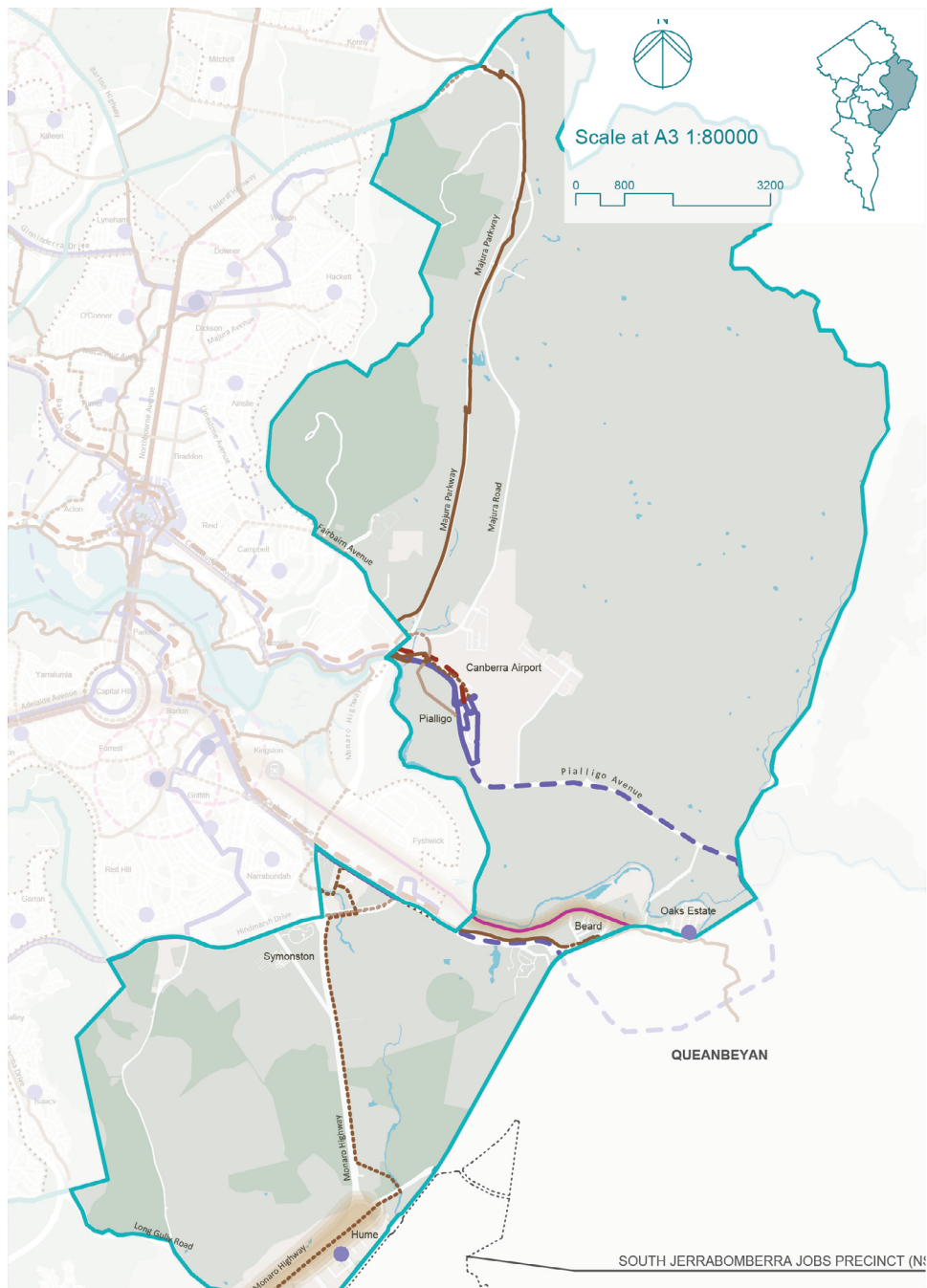
The initiatives for economic access and opportunity across the city and implementation pathways and timeframes are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: East Canberra initiatives – Economic access and opportunity across the city**

Initiatives	Implementation pathway	Timeframe
2.1 Consider opportunities for parts of Eastern Broadacre to be developed for industrial and related uses, given proximity to national freight routes, Canberra Airport and existing industrial areas at Fyshwick, Symonston and Hume.	2 4	Short term
2.2 Partner and collaborate with the NSW Government and Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council to investigate a coordinated, strategic approach to cross-border infrastructure and road connectivity to accommodate anticipated employment and housing growth in South Jerrabomberra (NSW) including the South Jerrabomberra Regional Job Precinct.	2	Short term
2.3 Plan for economic diversity, growth and innovation, using the planning system to (where possible) support a range of employment uses including innovative clean waste industries, industrial ecology, airport-supportive uses, agribusiness and tourism, and other emerging sectors.	2 3	Medium term
2.4 Identify and provide buffers to key and sensitive land uses that have special needs (such as corrective and emergency services sites and Commonwealth uses).	3 10	Short term
2.5 Retain capacity and opportunities within the district for rural uses, agribusiness and agritourism.	2 3	Short term

# Strategic movement to support city growth

**Figure 13:** East Canberra – Strategic movement to support city growth



## Legend

- |                   |                                      |                                       |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| District boundary | <b>Rapid transit network</b>         | <b>Non-vehicular movement</b>         |
| Open space        | Potential future light rail corridor | Current principal active travel route |
| Nature reserve    | Current rapid transit corridor       | Future principal active travel route  |
| Water bodies      | Proposed rapid transit corridor      | Current main active travel route      |
|                   | Strategic investigation corridor     | Future main active travel route       |
|                   | Passenger rail and freight rail      | Current active travel works           |
|                   |                                      | Current micromobility area            |
|                   |                                      | <b>Centres</b>                        |
|                   |                                      | Local centre                          |

Transport connectivity is a key feature of East Canberra (Figure 13). The district is important for freight, logistics and the facilitation of economic activity across the ACT and region given its gateway role to key industrial areas like Fyshwick and Hume, Canberra Airport and the rest of the city.

As a city and region-wide transport asset, the Canberra Airport adds to this connectivity, bringing both people and freight to the national capital and opportunities for businesses. The district is an important movement corridor for people, with strong commuter flows from NSW.

Planning for East Canberra will need to prioritise the protection of these key corridors while considering opportunities for their enhancement, particularly for public transport and freight (Figure 13). A proposed future stage of light rail to connect Canberra Airport to the City Centre and Belconnen would be a significant initiative, improving the accessibility of the district. Monaro Highway is funded for significant improvements that will strengthen this north–south corridor for freight, inter-regional travel and commuter traffic. Pialligo Avenue is identified for major upgrades from the airport to the NSW border.

Refer to the ACT Transport Strategy and Planning Strategy for information on high speed rail alignment options.

### **National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy**

The ACT is a party to the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy (2019), which includes directions to:

- understand the value, needs and characteristics of freight movement and incorporate in strategic and statutory transport and land planning
- safeguard the resilience of all major freight handling facilities and freight corridors within and between neighbouring jurisdictions, including local government areas
- identify and plan areas for new freight facilities and freight-intensive land uses
- plan for efficient freight movements and complementary land uses around freight facilities and precincts, including intermodal terminals
- promote building and precinct design and usage that takes into account freight needs
- respond to changes in freight movements, including smaller scale freight movement and emerging technologies.

The initiatives for strategic movement to support city growth and implementation pathways and timeframes are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: East Canberra initiatives – Strategic movement to support city growth

Initiatives	Implementation pathway	Timeframe
3.1 Identify and protect major transport corridors – both rail and road – and planning for surrounding land uses and planning controls which benefit these assets and support their function.	3 4	Short term
3.2 Continue planning for a future expansion of the light rail network and associated operational facilities (such as sub-stations, depots and layovers).	4	Medium term
3.3 Investigate improvements to public transport access to East Canberra, from the Inner South Hume and the Tuggeranong district, subject to further detailed analysis consistent with the ACT Transport Strategy.	4	Medium term
3.4 Partner and collaborate with the NSW Government and Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council to investigate a coordinated, strategic approach to cross-border infrastructure and road connectivity to accommodate anticipated employment and housing growth in South Jerrabomberra (NSW) including the South Jerrabomberra Regional Job Precinct.	4 10	Short term
3.5 Support the functions of Canberra Airport by considering and implementing (where relevant) the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF).	4	Ongoing
3.6 Investigate the potential for a high-speed rail connection through the district (over the longer-term) including the best means of protecting the corridor through leasing arrangements and planning provisions.	3 4	Longer term

### Inclusive local centres and communities

Alongside the services provided in the district (such as at Majura Park), Oaks Estate and Pialligo residents will continue to rely on services in other areas within the ACT such as Inner South District and some services over the border in NSW. This is particularly the case for business services, health, retail and community and recreation services including schools and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC – including child care). This needs to be factored into planning for facilities and transport accessibility to these areas and, more broadly, as part of metropolitan planning.

The district has many existing clubs, providing for a range of ongoing community needs and interests. The Government has made a series of commitments to reduce harm from gambling while supporting sustainable clubs. This includes facilitating planning and other processes to allow clubs to diversify to other revenue generating streams, especially development of available land, where supported by the community.

### Sustainable neighbourhoods

The presence of critically endangered flora and fauna in the district, as well as the impacts of aircraft noise and operations from Canberra Airport, mean that new residential uses are not suited to the district. Existing residential communities at Pialligo and Oaks Estate have master plans that uphold the character of each place while providing for limited growth and change. The key initiatives of the Pialligo Master Plan and the Oaks Estate Master Plan were incorporated into the Territory Plan in 2015 and September 2022 respectively. The Territory Plan determines the types of land uses that may occur in the district, including any future low-scaled residential uses.

## Oaks Estate village

Oaks Estate is one of the ACT's five villages. It is adjacent to the ACT and NSW border, with access to many services and transport provided in Queanbeyan–Palerang Local Government Area.

Oaks Estate sits at the confluence of the Molonglo River and Queanbeyan River. It served as a significant travel route for the Ngunnawal, Ngarigo and Walgalu peoples and other peoples with connection to the land, and later, as a workers' settlement during the development of Canberra. The Molonglo River corridor and adjacent lands include significant Aboriginal places and objects, including a corroboree ground and cultural area. In addition, 'The Oaks' and 'Robertson House' are significant registered heritage places.

There are three distinct precincts within Oaks Estate:

- the village core
- the historic residential area
- the river landscape

Oaks Estate is largely a residential area. Detached low-density housing types and 3–4 storey walk-up flats are alongside small-scale commercial, light industrial, community and rural land uses. Twelve vacant sites within the village are identified for future land release.

The Oaks Estate Master Plan (2014) defined what was important about the estate and identified opportunities for preserving and enhancing the quality of the place. A number of the master plan's recommendations were implemented through amendments to the Territory Plan in September 2022. The amendments seek to provide opportunities for limited growth and change while preserving the area's history and character.

It is also important to improve connectivity between Oaks Estate and the ACT and Queanbeyan.

Service upgrades will be required to accommodate any further growth in Oaks Estate, particularly for sewerage and electricity. Encouraging WSUD in any future development is important given the proximity of the village to the Molonglo River corridor.

Sites need to be reserved for utility-scale battery storage facilities connected to the electricity transmission (Transgrid) nodes, one of which is at Railway Street Jerrabomberra, close to Oaks Estate.

## Pialligo

Pialligo is a unique and historic part of Canberra, with a rural landscape character and a mix of commercial traders and lifestyle residential blocks.

Pialligo is bounded by Molonglo River and Canberra Airport. It is a traditional meeting place for Aboriginal people, has a rich archaeological record, and is one of the most significant Aboriginal heritage areas in the ACT.

Recognising the value of the fertile floodplain, the area later became a 'food bowl' for Canberra with a focus on agricultural production and self-sufficiency farming.

Pialligo is the only area in the ACT with a mix of agricultural and residential blocks in a semi-rural landscape setting. The landscape character and heritage are key attractors for businesses, residents and tourists. Land uses include nurseries, agriculture, cafes, art and craft shops, galleries, landscape supplies, orchards and animal husbandry.

The Pialligo Master Plan (2013) outlined a vision and planning framework for the area, the key aspects of which were implemented through changes to the Territory Plan.

The landscape is the predominant feature in Pialligo, with development that respects the natural surface hydrology, agricultural potential and heritage significance. Small-scale shops, craft stores, restaurants and cafes are close to Beltana Road, reducing the need to develop at the rear of blocks.

Beltana Road is an intimate, walkable and connected rural streetscape that encourages visitors to Pialligo to walk and cycle. The areas of Pialligo behind and beyond Beltana Road are a rural landscape setting with low-scale built form that is sympathetic to the environment.

There is a need to balance competing land use pressures to allow for commercial growth while ensuring continuation of the agricultural uses and protection of the fertile soils and riparian corridors.

The Australian Government and ACT Government have committed funds to undertake road safety upgrades in Pialligo, with the work anticipated to be completed by late 2023. This includes streetscape and active travel improvements to Beltana Road and Kallaroo Road to improve safety and amenity for the precinct as a tourism destination.

Pialligo is positioned to champion sustainability principles by promoting and demonstrating sustainable land use practices. Farm tourism and rural produce activities are key opportunities for the precinct, with consideration of public access to the river corridor.

## 4. Supporting infrastructure required

Any change areas in East Canberra will need to consider infrastructure requirements to service the future development. This would cover upgraded or new infrastructure including the road and path networks, water sensitive urban design, stormwater, sewer, water supply and electricity.

In addition, there are a number of significant considerations in respect to existing infrastructure. These include the airport, sewage treatment plants, pump stations, major pipelines, zone substations and transmission lines.