

The purpose of this brochure is to invite Canberra residents, particularly those in the older inner areas, to take part in a study of urban change over the next ten years. The brochure has been prepared by the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC), which is responsible for the planning and development of Canberra and by the Department of the Capital Territory (DCT), the city's leasing and administrative authority.

The Commission and the Department started investigating the need for change in the older areas of Canberra in January 1974. As a first step the two organisations set up a study group, which has undertaken an exploratory survey of needs and objectives based on discussions with a number of community and business organisations.

The Commission and the Department now want to involve members of the community in considering broad policies to guide urban change in Canberra.

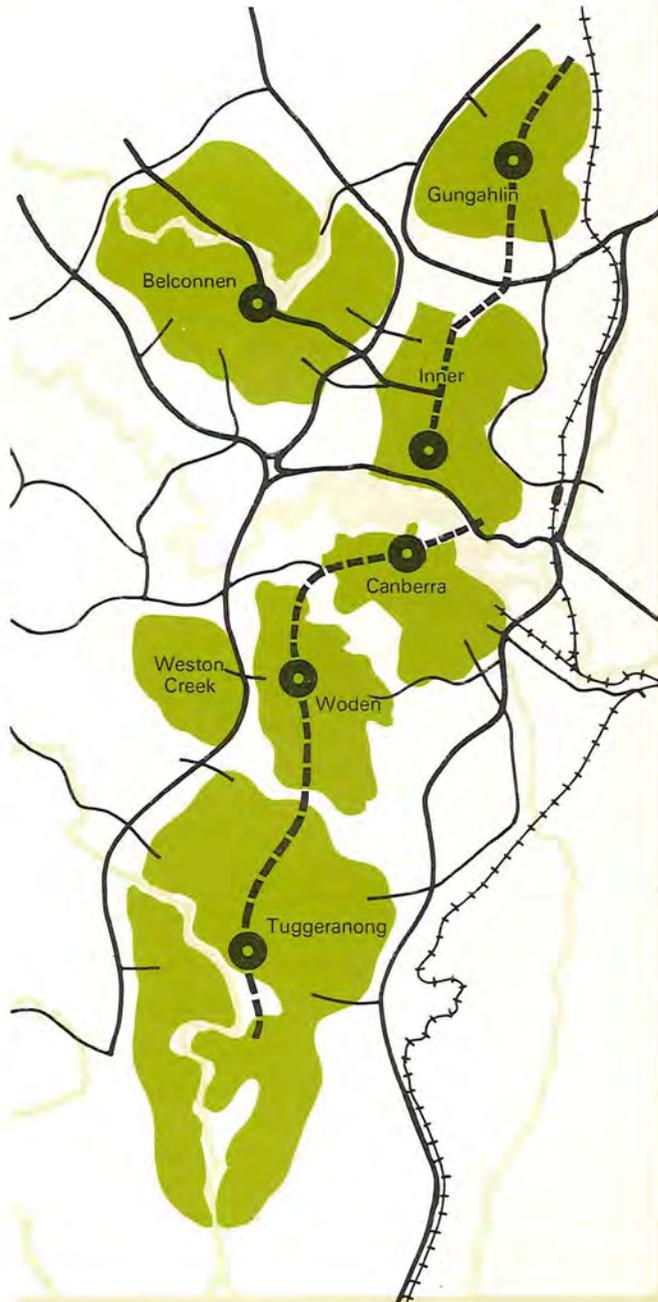
To do this they need to know what the people think about urban change and what they want to happen in their own areas.

At this stage the areas involved in possible urban change are confined to north and south inner Canberra, with the exception of some areas developed since 1960.

Urban change in Canberra

National Capital Development Commission
Department of the Capital Territory





What is urban change?

At some time or another urban change can involve everyone — it is a process which is going on all the time in most cities and towns. It can be as simple as adding a second storey to the house, or a flat at the back for a relative, but it can also mean the clearing of a whole block of houses for a large development of flats and town houses. It may involve change such as converting a house into an art gallery or a restaurant.

Change does not necessarily mean wholesale destruction but it does mean a change of some sort to the character of the area.

Change happens because people's needs change: they grow older, children grow up and move away, large gardens and houses become difficult and expensive to maintain and the inner roads carry increased volumes of traffic from outer areas, disturbing existing residents.

In Canberra, probably the basic need is to reconsider the existing policies so that people can have a wider choice of life style.

It should be emphasised, however, that although there are reasons for introducing more flexible planning and administrative policies, there is no need — or intention — to introduce large scale changes in inner Canberra within the next ten years.

Why urban change in Canberra?

The present arrangements do not encourage residents to make a wide range of changes to their dwellings as their life style changes.

Apart from this there are a number of reasons why the development of new and more flexible policies could be desirable so that change may proceed gradually. It could:

☐ Provide more medium density housing near City Centre rather than in the new towns.

The inner areas have a larger proportion of single person households than the newer area. While many people in this group — the widowed, divorced, separated or unmarried — might prefer smaller houses but they may be reluctant to move to new areas.

☐ To some, the high proportion of single and two member households in the inner areas may seem an uneconomic use of existing housing which could be available for families or groups if there were the opportunities for existing residents to obtain smaller accommodation in the same area.

☐ Provide an alternative to increasingly expensive detached housing in the outer suburbs.

☐ Give a more clearly defined urban core — 'downtown area' — which Canberra at present lacks. This could include increased retail, entertainment and tourist facilities, possibly some light industry, and associated medium and high-density housing similar to that being provided near town centres in Canberra's new towns.



Tugwell Tetley Hardy — Architects, Adelaide

Suggested guidelines for urban change.

Initial discussions with groups and organisations have enabled the NCDG and the DCT to list a number of important points which people think must be considered and given priority in future planning. They will also reassure people who may be disturbed at the prospect of urban change. Some of these points are:

☐ The rights of existing residents are most important: they should not be compelled to move away from their neighbourhood and friends. Those who do leave should be assisted to relocate and should receive at least market value for their leases.

☐ Those who need to live in the inner areas, but who may not be able to compete in the market for housing, should not be penalised and forced to move to outer areas where transport costs for instance are higher. This probably means the preservation of low cost public housing, or possibly the provision of new low cost housing.

☐ The character of an area should be protected. Change will usually result in some alteration of an area's character, for instance some loss of private garden space. Similarly the type of housing — high rise developments, flats, town houses, etc — will also affect privacy. These and other issues should be determined in consultation with residents.

☐ The garden landscape character of inner Canberra should be preserved as one of its most significant characteristics. It should not be destroyed by wholesale clearance of areas although it is inevitable that some vegetation will be removed.

☐ Canberra has few sites and areas of historic importance but what there are should be preserved as they are typical of certain phases of Canberra's development. It is also essential that premature demolition is not encouraged as this could temporarily worsen the accommodation situation.

☐ Residential areas might be improved by a greater variety of activities. At present occupational activities in these areas are only allowed conditionally provided the lessee lives on the site. There has been some pressure for non-residential activities to locate in residential areas because there is little low rent space in the commercial centres.

☐ Urban change is unlikely to occur unless there is some incentive for residents. But, opportunities for speculative gain should be limited.

☐ In other cities, all ratepayers have borne the costs of reconstruction of existing water and sewerage pipes. Those who directly benefit should pay these costs.



ArchivesACT How residents can help.

The study group set up by the NCDG and the DCT is seeking the help of residents in preparing policy recommendations to guide urban in Canberra.

The group would like to hear from residents what changes they would like to see in their neighbourhoods, such as more shops, more work opportunities, better transport, children's playgrounds, the possible subdivision of housing or land, greater housing variety or how (if at all) they would like to change their way of life. The group would also like to hear which features should be preserved.

At a later stage displays, public meetings and other forms of community participation are envisaged. These are an important part of the project.

This process will take about 18 months, during which time the study group will also be conducting a number of investigations which will be summarised and publicised. Because of the length of the study it may be necessary to develop interim policies.

In response to community involvement and as ideas crystallise, proposals will become more specific. During this process it will be necessary to look at each area separately and residents will be asked to give their ideas and opinions and all conclusions will be explained to them.

It must be emphasised that at this time there is no intention to permit any redevelopment other than at Kingston.

If you have views on urban change or want information, please contact a member of the study group.

The people working on this project are:

Name	Office	Telephone
Mrs. A. Sands	National Capital Development Commission	46 8211
Mrs. H. Hardman	National Capital Department Commission	46 8211
Miss E. Hunter	Department of the Capital Territory	46 2211

Please contact any of them by telephone or letter in the first instance. They will be willing to discuss the issues with you but would appreciate it if you would make an appointment before visiting.

A.C.T. Organisations talked to:

A.C.T. Advisory Council
 Canberra Council of Social Services
 Women's Electoral Lobby — A.C.T.
 National Council of Women of Australian Capital Territory (Inc.)
 Planning for People
 Society for Social Responsibility in Science
 Historic Sites and Buildings Committee
 A.C.T. Trades and Labour Council
 A.C.T. Real Estate Institute
 Canberra Chamber of Commerce
 Chamber of Manufactures
 A.C.T. Finance Conference
 Association of Co-operative Building Societies
 Representatives of the Trading Banks
 Australian Institute of Urban Studies
 Ginninderra Community Council
 Weetangera Progress Association
 Weston Creek Community Association
 Hall and District Progress Association
 Kingston Residents Association
 Torrens Development Association Inc.
 Curtin Progress Association
 Turner Progress Association
 Narrabundah Progress Association
 Narrabundah Health Management Committee
 Tenants Action Group
 Weetangera Community Council
 Belconnen Community Service
 Northside Community Council