

Molonglo Town Centre

and Surrounds Master Plan

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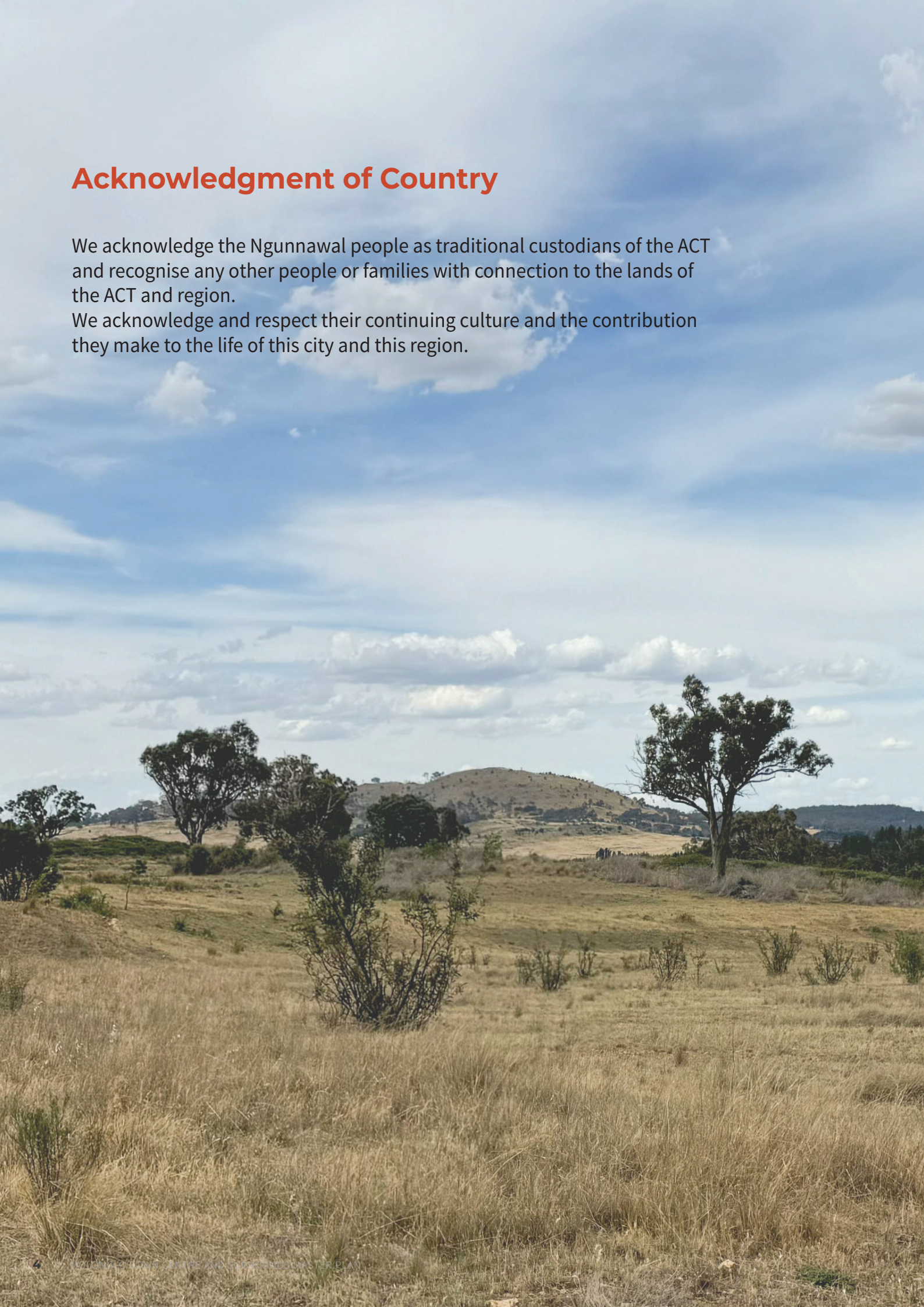
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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.





1

Introduction

This Master Plan provides a high-level, long-term vision to guide how the Molonglo Town Centre may evolve over time. It outlines indicative ideas for the layout, character and function of areas within the Town Centre and its surrounds, drawing on planning investigations and community feedback to date.

Within the broader planning framework, this Master Plan sits as a non-statutory, place-based document that supports the directions established in relevant district strategies. It is intended to elaborate on those strategic directions by illustrating how they could be expressed at a local level, rather than determining specific outcomes.

The Master Plan is designed to inform future planning, design and decision-making processes, including Subdivision Design Applications (SDAs) as land is progressively released. However, it does not have binding effect, and its content will be considered alongside applicable statutory requirements, detailed technical investigations and further community engagement.

As a point-in-time document, the Master Plan is expected to be adaptable. Its ideas may be refined or revisited over time to respond to changes in policy, infrastructure planning, market conditions and community expectations.

Molonglo Town Centre (MTC) will be Canberra's sixth Town Centre, supporting the development of Molonglo Valley, which is expected to accommodate 70,000 people by 2050. MTC is envisioned to be the heart, commercial hub and meeting place of the Molonglo Valley, set to deliver 7,000 dwellings. These new homes will be supported by commercial uses, community facilities, including an education campus, and a connected open space and street network.

The Master Plan has been developed following extensive community engagement (more detail on pages 16-17) and inter-agency collaboration.

2

Evolution of the Master Plan

Evolution of the Master Plan

Response to Constraints

Key findings of the site analysis are summarised below and demonstrated on the Site Analysis Summary Plan on the following page. This analysis has identified significant opportunities and constraints that have informed the Master Plan. In addition to the physical attributes of the site, the changing policy context has significantly influenced the evolution and direction of the Master Plan. This is discussed further in the following section, 'A Changing Environment.'

Topography, Orientation and Slope

- The project site is characterised by significant topography challenges, with the level difference ranging 15-58m between a high point on site and the edge of the Molonglo River Reserve.
- The site has a north, east and south-east orientation. It slopes down towards the river and is bound by John Gorton Drive from the west.

Landscape Characteristics and Vegetation

- The site's landscape is characterised by native and exotic grasslands, with sparsely located trees.
- A tree survey for MTC identified over 1,600 trees on site.
- The ecology survey identifies the tree species and locations of hollow-bearing, habitat and priority trees across the site.

Views Into And From The Site

- The site's location and orientation provide panoramic views of the surrounding landscape in all directions. The main landmarks visible from the site include:

- Molonglo River Reserve
- Black Mountain (north-east direction)
- Dairy Farmers Hill (north-east direction)
- Mount Painter (north-east direction)
- Mount Stromlo (south-west direction)
- The Pinnacle (north-west direction)

There are also views into the site from nearby and distant viewpoints:

- Views from the eastern and southern sides of the Molonglo River (from multiple locations). These areas are hill ranges that step down towards the Molonglo River and incorporate trails and active travel routes with panoramic views towards the site.
- Dairy Farmers Hill. The site is visible from the public viewpoint and tracks at the top of Dairy Farmers Hill.
- Views from Coombs Peninsula. There are tracks and a shaded viewpoint adjoining Edgeworth Parade, providing panoramic views towards the site (towards the north and north-west).
- Views towards the site from Barrer Hill.

Site Access Opportunities

- John Gorton Drive (JGD) is an arterial road extending from Cotter Road to Coppins Crossing Road, featuring dual carriageways with traffic, bicycle, and bus lanes, and a 70 km/h speed limit. Holborow Avenue, another arterial road, extends from JGD into Denman Prospect and will connect to future developments. The area has two existing signalized intersections (JGD/Holborow Avenue and JGD/Wyndham Avenue).

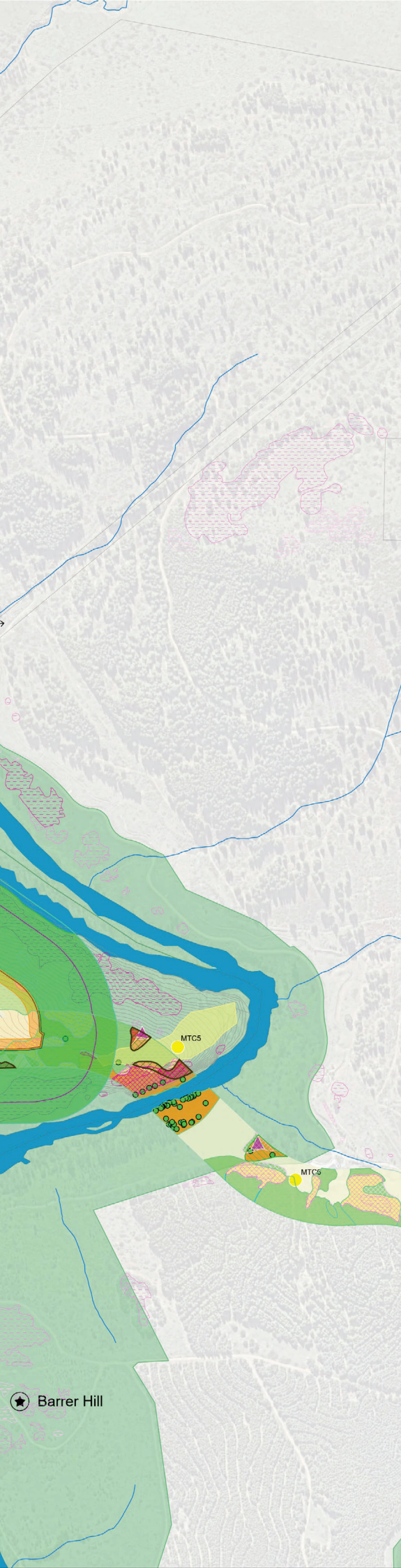
Existing Engineering Service Provision

- The existing water infrastructure for the MTC development includes several key reservoirs and mains including the Oddie Reservoir, located west of Denman Prospect and the Duffy Reservoir at Narrabundah Hill.
- There is no existing electrical infrastructure within the project. Electrical supply to the development is dependent on the laying of additional conduits, completion of the Molonglo River Bridge crossing (which will carry conduits across the river from the new zone substation currently being planned by Evo Energy).
- There are existing gas mains located along the John Gorton Drive. There will be no gas mains proposed in the MTC.
- Communications services are provided including Telstra, TPG, Intra-Governmental Communications Network (ICON) Fibre and NBN cables are located along the eastern verge of JGD in various shared trenches; Digital, Data and Technology Solutions cable located on JGD. TPG and Telstra cables are located along Holborow Avenue.
- Three main sewer sub-catchments were identified for the site that generally are directed towards the Molonglo River Bridge, Cravens Creek and towards the existing sewer at the intersection of Coaldrake Ave and John Gorton Drive.
- Three stormwater catchments are identified for the site, located in the southern portion of MTC; the central section of MTC, covering the Commercial Core, education campus, and adjoining residential areas; and finally the western section of MTC, covering a residential area near the river and adjacent to the future Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector.

Active Travel and Public Transport

The MTC area has limited active travel infrastructure, with minor paths along John Gorton Drive and Holborow Avenue, and suburban streets in Denman Prospect. Fire trails are used for recreation by walkers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. John Gorton Drive features on-road cycle lanes, with ongoing construction to add more lanes and a new bridge over the Molonglo River. This road serves as a key cycling route linking Belconnen and North Canberra to major destinations like Stromlo Forest Park and the Cotter-Uriarra loop. Additionally, there is an equestrian route through Namarag parkland and an informal track (Woodland Track) extending through Molonglo River Corridor from Coombs into the MTC area.





Legend

- Project Boundary (Indicative)
- SDP 1 Boundary (Indicative)
- SDP 2 Boundary (Indicative)
- Cadastre
- ★ Hill Top
- > Viewlines
- Environmental Offset Boundary
- Molonglo River Reserve Boundary
- School Site
- Newly Exposed Surface Rock
- Rocky Outcrop

Existing Waterbodies

- Molonglo River
- Existing Dams / Waterbodies
- Existing Drainage Network

Ecological Constraint Category

- Very High Constraint
- High Constraint
- Moderate Constraint
- Low Constraint
- No Constraint

Pink-tailed Worm-lizard Habitat Quality

- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Not Habitat

Remnant Tree Survey - Hollow Bearing Tree

- Hollow Bearing Tree
- Non-Hollow Bearing Tree
- Possible Hollow Bearing Tree

Heartwood Habitat Survey (2025): Gang Gang Cockatoo Hollow Categorisation

- Priority 1 and Nest Preparation
- Priority 1*
- Priority 1
- Priority 2 and Recruitment

Native Vegetation

- NC Act Native Vegetation

Threatened Ecological Communities

- EPBC Act Box-Gum Woodland
- NC Act Box-Gum Woodland

Threatened Fauna Records

- Pink-tailed Worm-lizard
- Superb Parrot

Heritage Findings

- Sites within and surrounding the Project Site
- MRC PAD 1

Bushfire Hazard Assessment - Asset Protection Zone

- Residential APZ (Stage 1 = 12-20 m, Stage 2 = 13-20 m)
- Sensitive-use APZ (Stage 1 = 40-60 m, Stage 2 = 45 - 60 m)
- Temporary 100 m APZ
- Hazard - Grassland
- Hazard - Woodland
- Hazard - Pine Plantation (Forest)
- 100m Slope Assessment Buffer
- 140m Vegetation Assessment Buffer
- Interfaces

PTWL Habitat Quality (ACTMapi)

- High
- Moderate
- Low

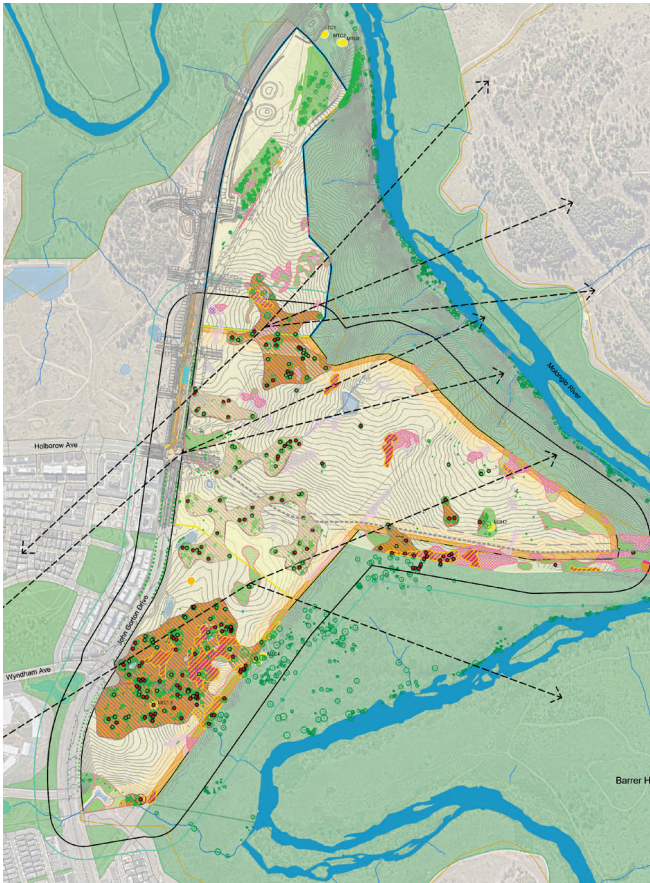
Evolution of the Master Plan

A Changing Environment

The MTC Vision and Principles have been interpreted within the master plan whilst balancing a response to more recent and specific policy and context changes including:

- ACT Government's commitment to deliver 7,000 dwellings at MTC to contribute to enabling 30,000 homes by 2030.
- Incorporation of increased population projections for the ACT with Molonglo Valley forecast to be home to 70,000 people by 2050. Previous population projections forecast a population of 55,000 people in the Molonglo Valley by 2050. This increase to the forecast population in the Molonglo Valley resulted in the ACT Government pursuing an uplift of the Molonglo Group Centre to Town Centre classification.
- A reduced development footprint resulting from a desire to balance tree retention, biodiversity corridors and conservation outcomes and to protect and enhance the urban forest.
- Incorporation of demographic analysis indicating growing demand for larger apartment sizes to accommodate more family friendly multi-unit dwellings.
- Incorporating commercial feedback and preferences informed by market analysis, including the need for more stand-alone commercial tenancies across the region. The condensed urban core is strategically positioned for success over the short, medium and long-term responding through spatial design and commercial viability. A shared framework of Country, protected view corridors, and a character-based height strategy helps people understand the area and gives it a clear, unified identity.

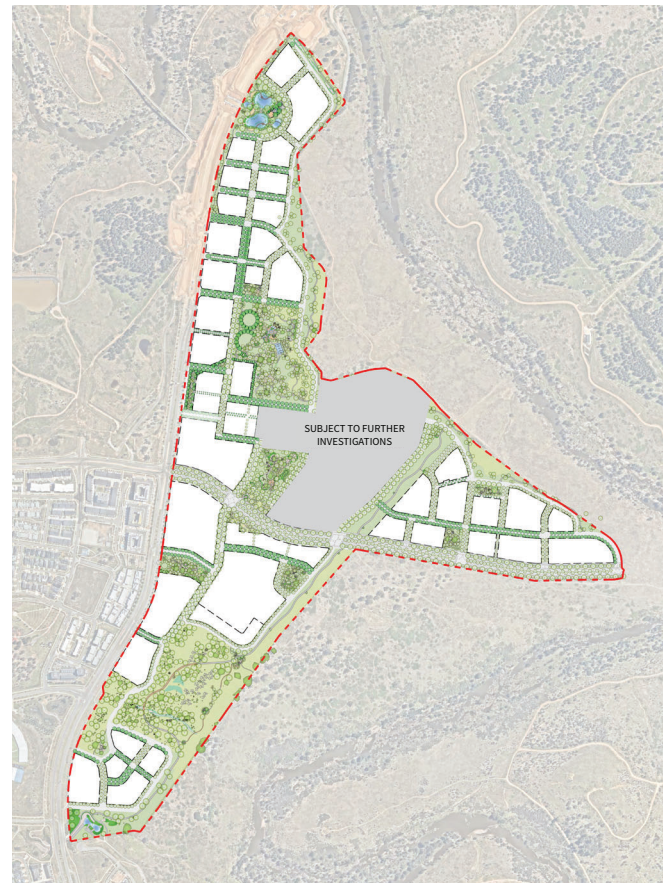
ENVIRONMENTAL MAPPING/ BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY



Rigorous environmental mapping, surveys and assessments were undertaken to identify the optimal biodiversity strategy for MTC which is a three-tiered approach encompassing ecological values, tree quality and hollow-bearing and habitat surveys:

- Remnant Tree Retention and Gang-Gang Habitat Corridors
- Small Clusters and Biodiversity 'Lilypads'
- Individual High Value Trees

A BALANCED DESIGN



A balanced approach to the developable area that meets housing targets, delivers a commercially viable project and endeavours to meet conservation objectives results in approximately 4 ha less of developable area (600 dwellings), in comparison to the previous concept master plan developed by Stuart Mackenzie Design, and requires additional height to achieve the 7,000 dwelling target.

3

Vision and Principles

Molonglo Town Centre

Place Vision

MTC VISION:

Molonglo Town Centre will be the new meeting place and hub for a community of around 70,000 people from across Molonglo Valley—where people, businesses and diverse communities come together. It will be built with respect for culture, past and future. It will showcase the best of urban life in the natural landscape, where people can live a rich daily life. It will be built for the future – innovation and sustainability will drive better built form outcomes. Molonglo's Vision can be realised through five key themes, each setting the scene to realise Molonglo's opportunities.

Placemaking + Urban Design Priorities

The Suburban Land Agency (SLA) undertook a suite of community consultation activities in 2024 and 2025 to guide development of the master plan. This engagement shaped the community vision for MTC, and established five main themes to underpin future urban design and place outcomes for MTC:

– Theme 1: Respect For Culture: Past And Future:

- Connection to Place and Country
- Original, Ngunnawal story of the place
- A place to learn and discover

– Theme 2: Connected and Comfortable Movement

- Emphasis on active travel
- Encouraging a car-free mode shift

– Theme 3: The Best Of Urban Life In The Natural Landscape

- A rich daily life
- Showcase the best of urban life
- Living with nature
- Urban Living in the landscape
- Multifunctional outdoor spaces

– Theme 4: A Meeting Place for Molonglo Valley

- A distinctive destination
- A vibrant hub of activity
- Well-being, happiness and play
- A connected experience
- Public life and community

– Theme 5: Built For The Future

- Green and sustainable
- Inclusive and accessible
- Future ready mixed-use

Sustainability Ambitions

The sustainable design of the Molonglo Town Centre will enable it to be more resilient, liveable and accessible. Prioritisation will be given to walkability, resource efficiency, culture and education in balance with the site's topography and ecosystems, and community housing and economic needs. The precinct will enable community connection through exemplary activation and foster community stewardship of the natural environment. The Town Centre will be planned, designed and constructed in a way that enables the community to act in an environmentally conscious manner, while preserving resources for future generations. The precinct is targeting Green Star Communities certification to ensure it embeds best practice principles and metrics.

Engagement

Community and stakeholder input was sought to help share the community vision for MTC. Engagement activities held across November and December 2024 included community pop-up stalls, a drop-in information centre, school incursions, online information sessions and an online survey. First Nations Community feedback sessions were held in February 2025, and a Community Panel workshop was held in March 2025.

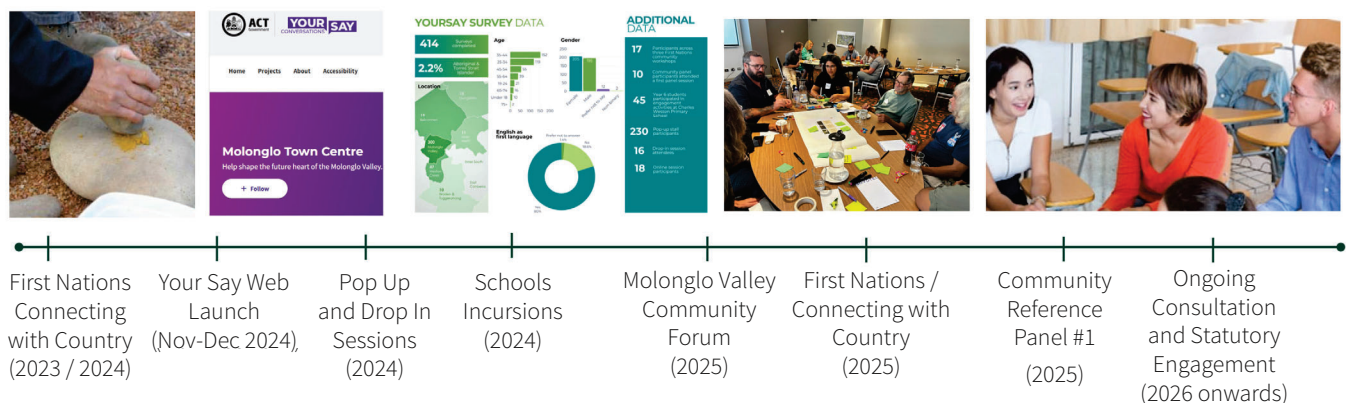
The engagement sessions helped to shape the vision for MTC, and identified the following key aspirations for this project:

- Celebration and retention of natural landform- the preferred height strategy for MTC rejects the idea of excessive earthworks and embraces building heights that reinforces the natural topography of the site.
- Tree and biodiversity retention - a balance is achieved through the provision of critical housing and protection of environmental values.
- Smaller footprint and high density- community and a review by the National Capital Design Review Panel expressed a preference for higher density delivered in a smaller footprint to promote retention of nature and generous provision of open space and amenity within an urban environment.

- Public benefit- high density urban living and affordable lifestyle options in response to a significant gap in the Canberra market that needs to accommodate families and multicultural living arrangements. Whilst the larger family units will require additional heights; welcoming a broader spectrum of community members to the MTC is a priority.

The timeline opposite captures the extensive engagement that has been undertaken for MTC.

MTC Community Engagement Timeline



MTC Vision And Principles



MTC Sustainability Ambitions

MTC Design Principles

Overview

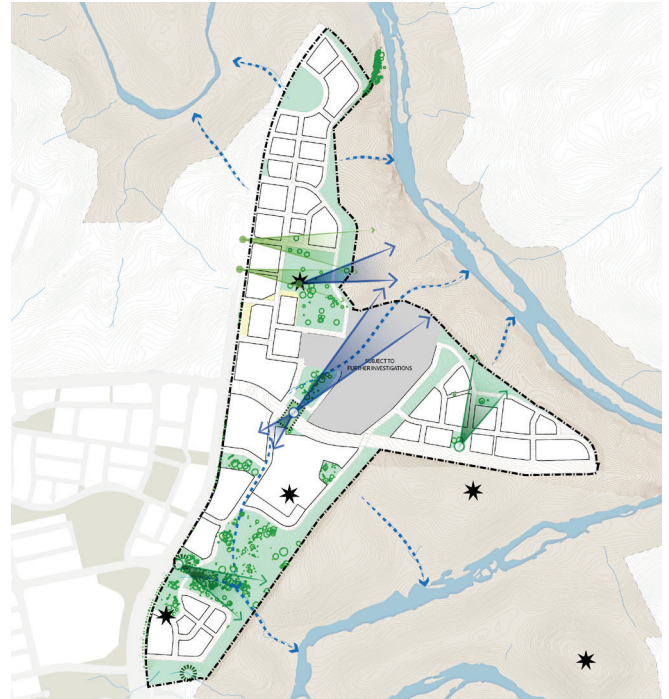
MTC is envisioned as the civic, social and commercial heart of the Molonglo Valley district — a vibrant focal point that brings community life together while supporting long-term growth and investment. Centrally located and directly connected to the Molonglo River Reserve and surrounding landscapes, the Town Centre benefits from its outlook, topography and proximity to nature, creating a distinctive setting for living, working and gathering.

This strong position means Molonglo Town Centre can deliver a mix of services and opportunities for the community, working with government and private partners. This includes early delivery of a community centre and library, as well as education, recreation, local jobs in trades and services, health services, and a range of shops and destinations. These will be supported by welcoming public spaces and well-connected streets.

Safe and easy transport options, including walking and cycling routes, along with quality streets and open spaces, will help make the Town Centre an inclusive place where people can move around easily, connect with others, and access what they need.

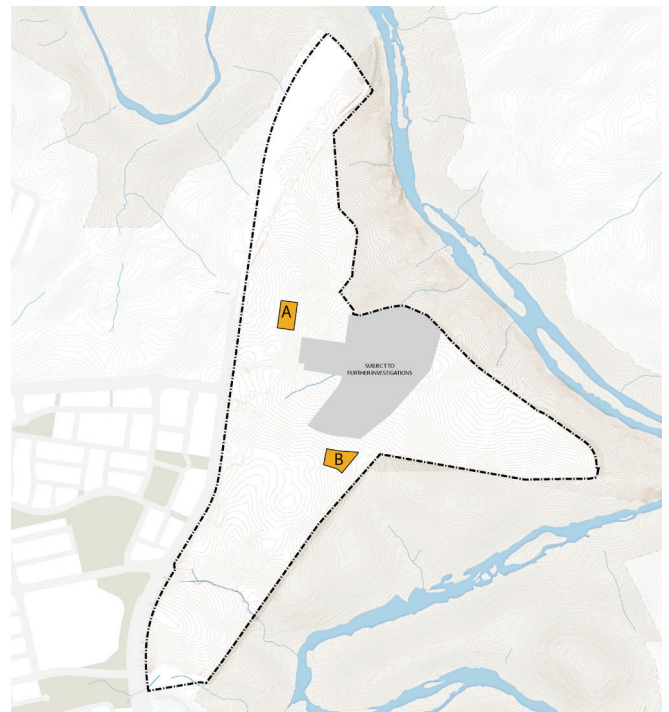
The above services, amenity and public benefit justify and support the proposed residential density that will contribute to the vibrancy and critical mass commensurate with a modern Town Centre. This critical mass and vibrancy may include apartment living, public and community housing and key worker housing, build-to-rent, retirement living and/or student housing.

By embedding healthy living, environmental stewardship and cultural connection into its public spaces, stormwater systems and view corridors, MTC will not only enhance everyday community life but also enable resilient infrastructure delivery and sustainable development outcomes. In doing so, the Town Centre will play a central role in supporting the continued growth, identity and liveability of the wider Molonglo Valley.



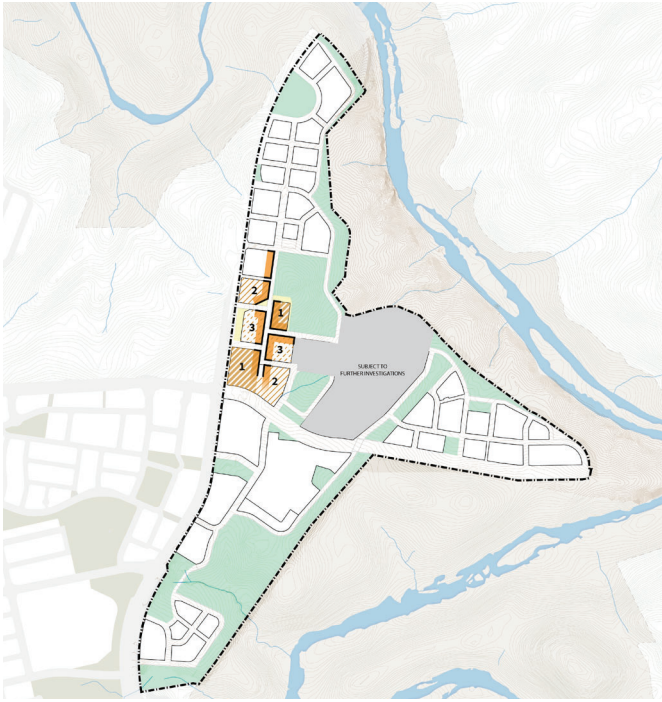
DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

The natural blue-green grid of Molonglo River and retained trees and biodiversity is connected and realised as the convergence of Sky Country, Water Country and Deep Country; enhanced by retained view lines within MTC and outwards to Black Mountain and beyond.



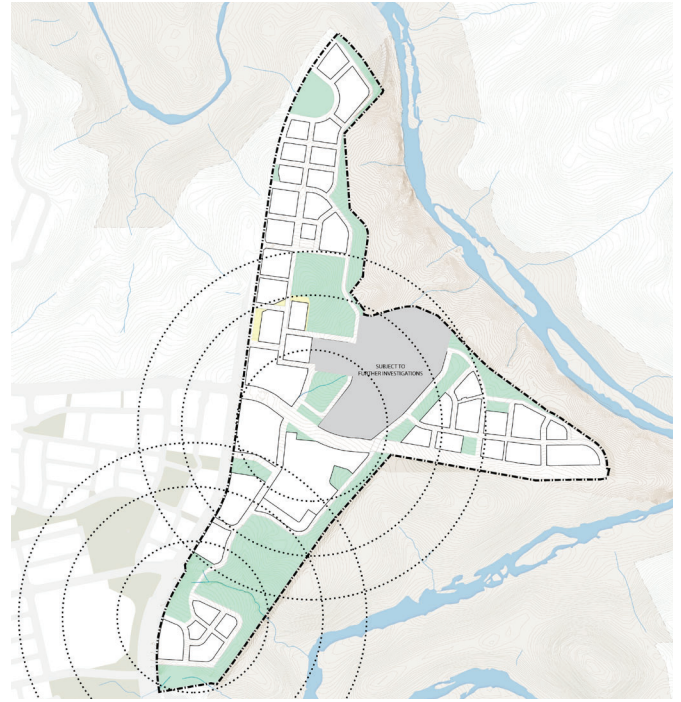
EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY HEART

The Education, Recreation and Community Facilities are strategically clustered together and co-located with the main street to build early momentum and seed community.



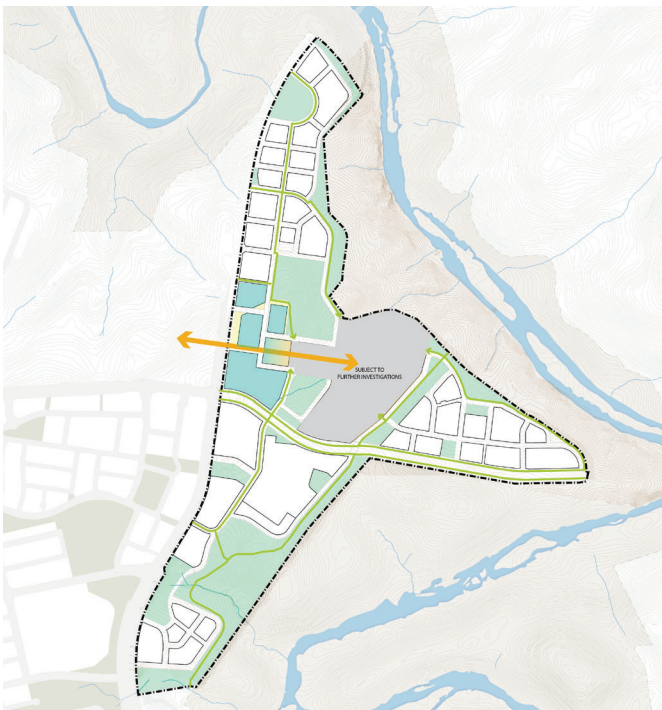
A PLAN FOR ITERATIVE GROWTH

A vibrant and direct main street anchored by commercial uses and community facilities will provide a traditional and robust Town Centre structure. MTC has a clear growth strategy enabling it to feel active and well-used in the short, medium and long-term.



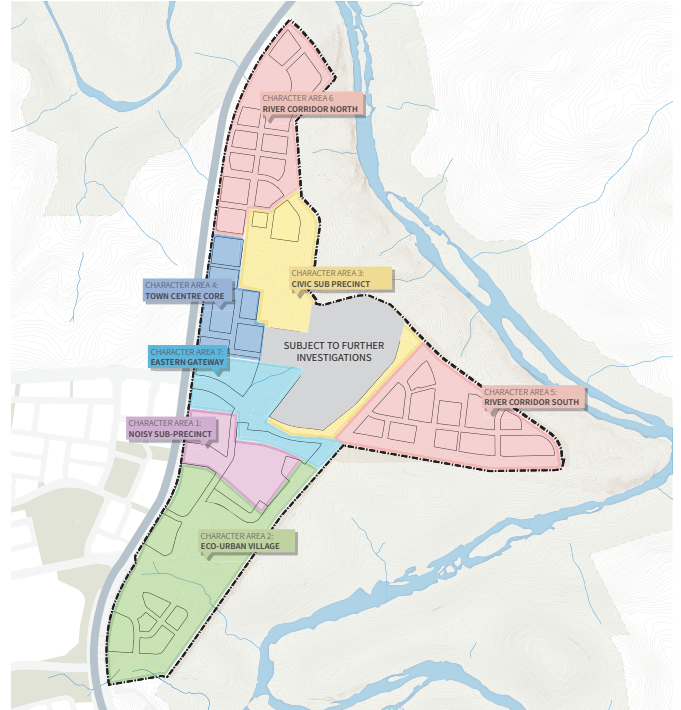
STAGING AS A CATALYST FOR GROWTH

Commencing in the south, much need residential development is accelerated and supported by commercial, community, transport and employment opportunities; matching density with public benefit.



CONNECTING COMMERCIAL CORE AND COMMUNITY

An integrated recreation and mixed use precinct will provide a critical link between the Commercial Core and the Education Site; extending the activation beyond land use boundaries as a main active travel and pedestrian connector.



CHARACTER AREA- LED HEIGHTS

Character Areas are not defined solely by land use or density; they are intended to reflect the experience that future residents will have at MTC; ground in the unique characteristics of the site. Building heights are a critical part of reinforcing intended character.

Designing with Country Framework

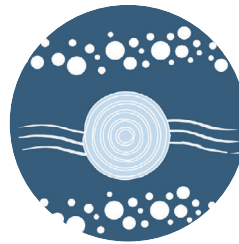
A Framework for Design

The MTC Master Plan has been driven by the Key Design Moves articulated by Yerrabingin on behalf of the First Nations Community. The design moves are included as key drivers of our Master Plan:

- The cultural significance of water and seeking all opportunities to pull water into the urban environment acknowledging that direct access to the river is challenging. Natural drainage and waterlines will be expressed at MTC in the form of wetlands and ephemeral zones.
- The retention and celebration of the natural landform including localised high points, valleys and distant views; aiming to minimise earthworks wherever possible. High points are retained as key public spaces with a particular focus on Summit Commons hilltop park. The arrival experience has been curated to celebrate the views across the Valley Verge Park and River Corridor towards Black Mountain.
- Retention of trees within the public realm consistent with the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design principles and tree retention strategy for MTC retains large clusters of quality and habitat trees within public parks.

This Master Plan translates the conceptual response to Country into clear ground-plane outcomes supported by landscape strategies that celebrate the site's natural qualities and strengthen cultural and ecological resilience. Native ecological zones, remnant vegetation and culturally significant trees structure the open-space network and maintain connection to the Molonglo River corridor.

Through analysis of the ecosystems of place and definition of ecosystem opportunities we are now able to understand the key Outcomes for Country that can form the framework for the design of all open space typologies.



1. Protecting Water Country

- Celebrating Deep Country
- Environmental Health
- Embracing the Topography



2. Embedding Custodianship

- Respecting Sky Country
- Supporting Non-Human Kin
- Cultural Practice



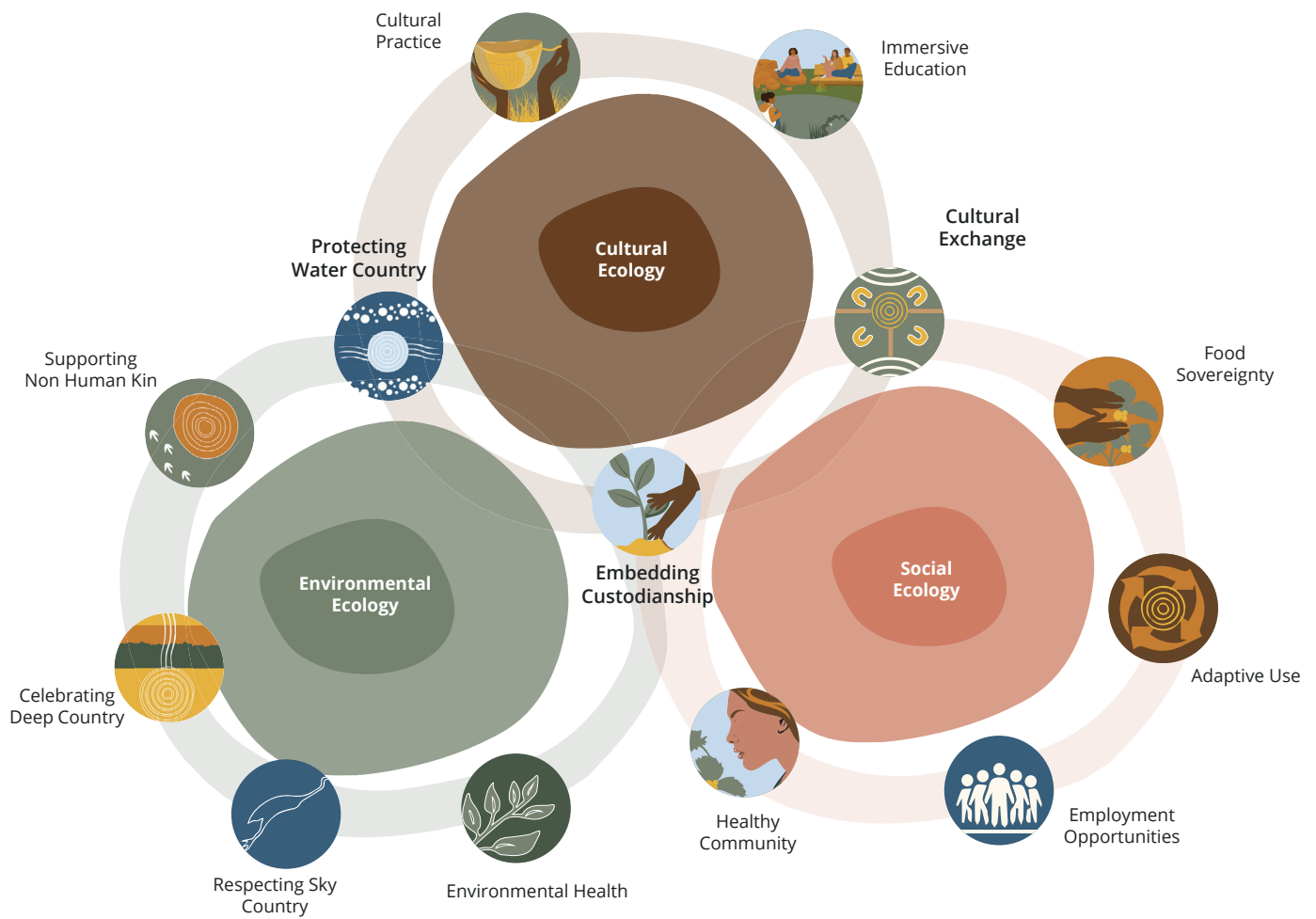
3. Finding Balance

- Healthy Community
- Employment Opportunities
- Adaptive Use



4. Cultural Exchange

- Immersive Education
- Food Sovereignty
- Arts and Performance



DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY ECOSYSTEM FRAMEWORK

The above diagram summarises the MTC First Nations ecosystem opportunities that form the framework for the design of all open space typologies.

Height Strategy and Principles

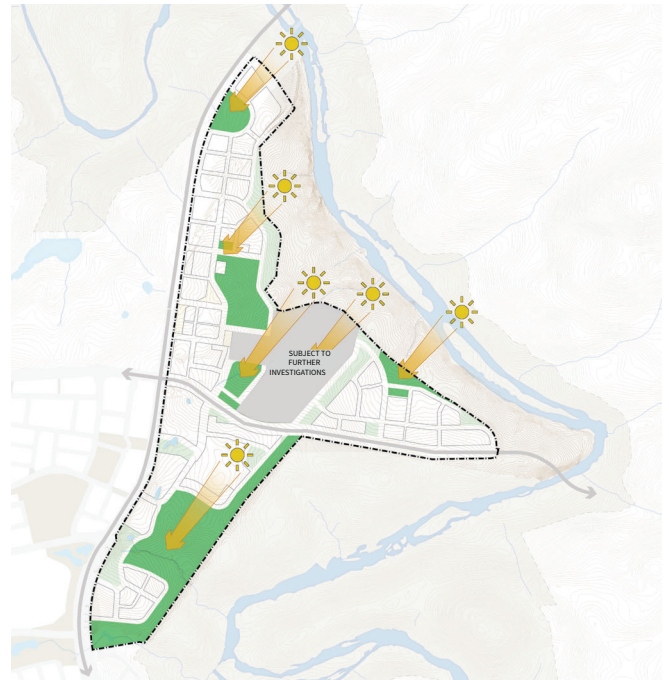
The preferred height strategy establishes the framework for a diverse and well-balanced residential community, creating the critical mass needed to support a thriving Town Centre and long-term district success. Rather than being driven solely by numeric limits, building heights have been deliberately positioned to maximise housing choice, outlook and access to light, while reinforcing strong connections to the surrounding landscape and Country.

Taller forms are strategically located to capture views, support density where it is most beneficial, and enable a wide range of housing types that respond to different life stages and community needs. This approach ensures that residents benefit from proximity to nature, strong visual connections across the Molonglo Valley, and access to high-quality open spaces woven through the urban fabric.

By establishing a clear and logical height structure early in the Master Planning process, the strategy provides certainty for future development, enabling government investment in social, transport and civic infrastructure, while also creating the conditions for retail, commercial and mixed-use activity to flourish. Together with the Character Areas, the Preferred Height Strategy supports a resilient, attractive and sustainable Town Centre that underpins growth across the wider Molonglo District.

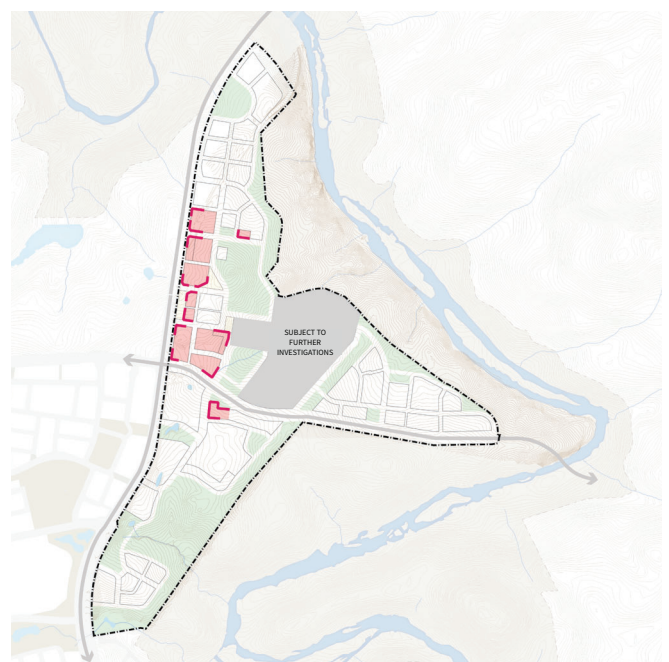
The height strategy and principles prioritise considerations for increased height and densification at the Commercial Core. As illustrated within the diagrams opposite; legibility and vibrancy must be facilitated through the design of the built form. Whilst this can occur, and be developed in many ways, within the Commercial Core, these principles must be demonstrated in parallel with short, medium and long-term viability.

RETAIN SOLAR ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE



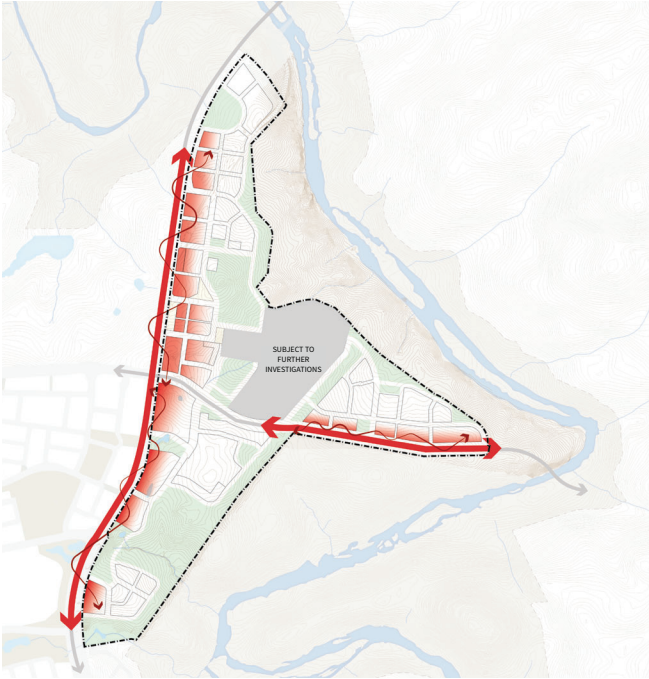
To locate taller buildings to the south and southwest of key open spaces.

MARK THE CORNERS



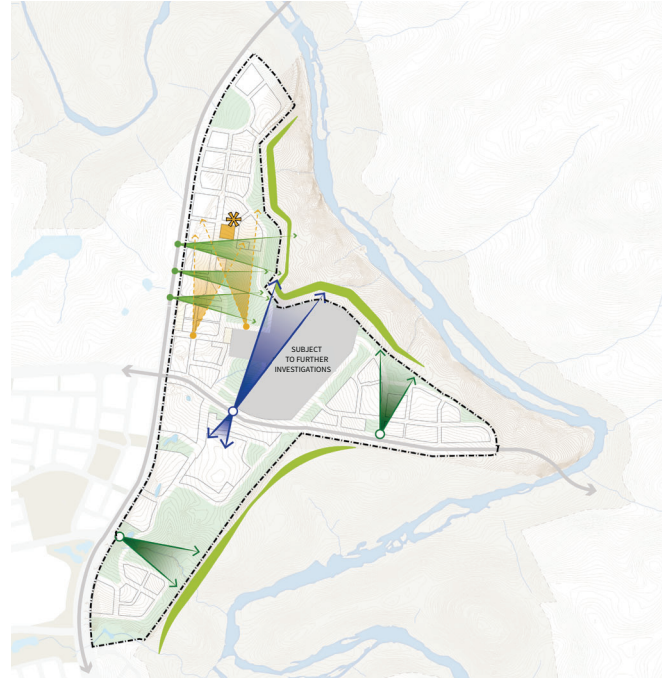
To contribute to the overall wayfinding, place experience and journey within and around the MTC.

LOCATE HEIGHT ALONG JOHN GORTON DRIVE (JGD) AND MOLONGLO PARKWAY DRIVE CONNECTOR (MPDC)



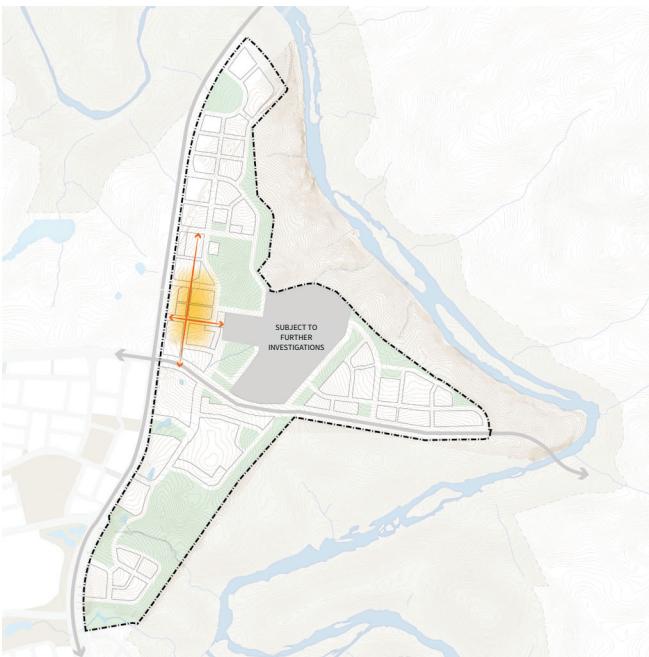
To provide a presence and address onto key boulevards and to leverage the amenity of the River Corridor.

FRAME VIEW CORRIDORS



To celebrate and reinforce key view lines, both local and regional.

STRENGTHEN THE COMMERCIAL CORE



To provide legibility and critical mass to maximise activation of the Commercial Core.

4

The Master Plan

Land Use Master Plan

Overview

The MTC will be the new meeting place for a community with an anticipated population of 70,000 people across Molonglo Valley, where people, businesses and communities come together. This Vision can be realised through five themes:

Respect For Culture: This is interpreted in the Master Plan through community led principles expressed within the First Nations Listening Report/ Designing with Country Framework and will be expressed from the Structure Planning scale through to tangible ground plane outcomes.

Connected and Comfortable Movement: The movement network for MTC prioritises the following modes, in order of mention, pedestrian, active travel, public transport and the private vehicle to facilitate equitable and healthy access.

The thoroughfare network is permeable and connected comprising a combination of public thoroughfares and developer curated thoroughfares.

To ensure a comfortable movement network; microclimate has been considered whereby tree planting patterns and species are specific to street orientation and wind testing, and are included in the subdivision design to ensure that buildings are not contributing to uncomfortable environments.

Best of Urban Life in the Natural Landscape: From a landscape perspective the Master Plan demonstrates how the key principles shape spatial, landscape and movement outcomes. The design works with natural topography to maintain long views and express landform, establishes an interconnected open-space network for people and wildlife, and distributes fine-grained green spaces across the neighbourhood. Significant remnant trees are retained as important

ecological and cultural anchors, and urban edges are treated as porous transitions where the qualities of the river corridor extend into the built environment.

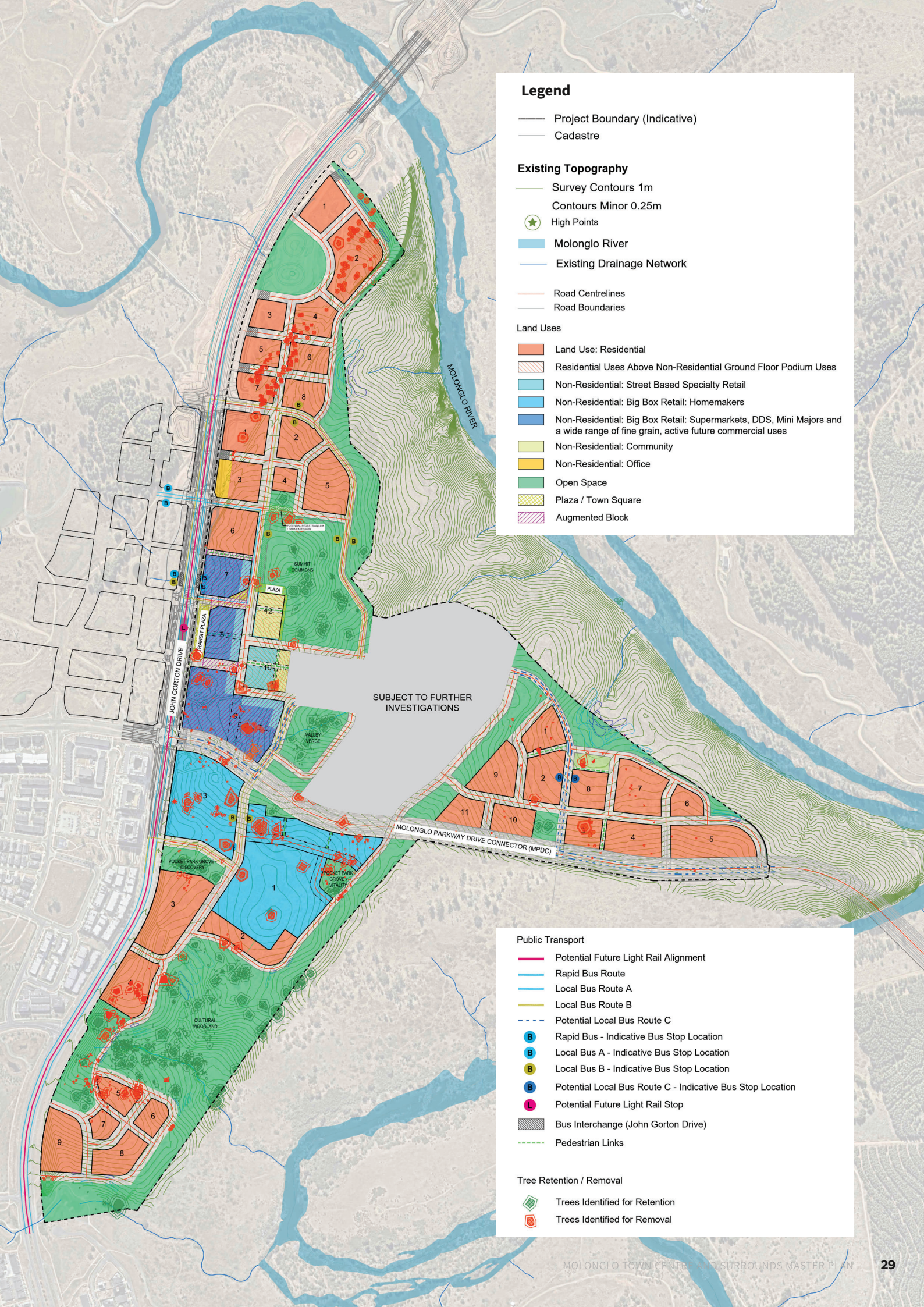
A Meeting Place for Molonglo: The Master Plan concentrates commercial and community uses and high quality public realm within the Commercial Core and immediate surrounds. The Commercial Core, as the key community gathering place, is co-located with the high point (Summit Commons) promoting the best views for all residents and visitors as the most public part of the plan.

Community facilities, cultural opportunities and the Education Precinct are clustered at the convergence of Sky Country, Water Country and Deep Country promoting MTC as a meeting place for all.

This significant services and amenity offering provides support for a range of lifestyle options within MTC. The residential land uses opposite provide the opportunity for urban lifestyle diversity that may include apartment living, affordable and key worker housing,

Built For the Future: The Master Plan considers the realisation of MTC at 2060 and future proofs it by:

- Establishing a movement network that facilitates modal shift, micromobility, potential future light rail alignment implementation and zero emission bus infrastructure.
- Future connection to the suburb of Bandler, on the opposite side of the Molonglo River.
- A commercial strategy that facilitates organic growth and densification over time including change of use scenarios.
- Flexible spaces and places for youth and multicultural activities.
- Living models and tenures to respond to demographic and market demands and shifts.



Legend

- Project Boundary (Indicative)
- Cadastral

Existing Topography

- Survey Contours 1m
- Contours Minor 0.25m
- High Points
- Molonglo River
- Existing Drainage Network

- Road Centrelines
- Road Boundaries

Land Uses

- Land Use: Residential
- Residential Uses Above Non-Residential Ground Floor Podium Uses
- Non-Residential: Street Based Specialty Retail
- Non-Residential: Big Box Retail: Homemakers
- Non-Residential: Big Box Retail: Supermarkets, DDS, Mini Majors and a wide range of fine grain, active future commercial uses
- Non-Residential: Community
- Non-Residential: Office
- Open Space
- Plaza / Town Square
- Augmented Block

Public Transport

- Potential Future Light Rail Alignment
- Rapid Bus Route
- Local Bus Route A
- Local Bus Route B
- Potential Local Bus Route C
- Rapid Bus - Indicative Bus Stop Location
- Local Bus A - Indicative Bus Stop Location
- Local Bus B - Indicative Bus Stop Location
- Potential Local Bus Route C - Indicative Bus Stop Location
- Potential Future Light Rail Stop
- Bus Interchange (John Gorton Drive)
- Pedestrian Links

Tree Retention / Removal

- Trees Identified for Retention
- Trees Identified for Removal

Commercial Core Planning

The MTC Master Plan sets out a long-term vision for a lively, people-focused heart of the community—one that grows alongside the neighbourhood and responds to what residents value most: convenient services, employment opportunities, local shops, and an active place to meet, shop and spend time. While the plan looks ahead over several decades, its focus is firmly on creating a vibrant and engaging Commercial Core from the very beginning, with the ability to evolve and expand as demand grows.

At the centre of MTC is a strong and welcoming main street designed to feel active, safe and full of life. Flexible shopfronts, community facilities and activated ground floors are arranged to support specialty retail, commercial space, cafés and everyday services - creating a place that feels lively and local. This traditional and proven main street and Town Centre structure is enriched by the unique qualities of Molonglo: Connection to Country, views to the river and surrounding hills, retained trees and topography, and a landscape-led public realm that reinforces MTC as a unique destination.

The Commercial Core has been deliberately designed to support early activation and a sense of vibrancy from day one.

Streets, plazas and shopfronts are sized to encourage specialty retail and small businesses to establish early, alongside community uses and pop-up activities that bring energy and life to the Town Centre. As the community grows, this same structure can comfortably support a larger and more complete shopping centre offer.

Economic analysis shows strong early demand for services, commercial, specialty retail and large-format stores that support daily life, with supermarkets and higher-order retail typically following as the local population increases. Importantly, the Master Plan does not rule out a fuller shopping centre earlier than anticipated. Instead, it provides the flexibility to go to market at key points to test interest and respond to genuine demand—allowing the Commercial Core to develop as the community and market are ready.

A clear growth strategy underpins the Commercial Core, enabling it to feel active and well-used in the early years while being ready to intensify over time including adapting to changes in demand for office and other commercial space. The commercial zones provide flexibility to accommodate a range of commercial uses. Interim uses—such as events and meanwhile uses—are planned as opportunities for place activation.

Commercial anchors help establish early momentum and confidence, while flexibility is maintained to support a diverse mix of specialty retail, food and beverage, commercial space and local services. Residential amenity and liveability are carefully balanced with commercial activity, ensuring MTC becomes a place where people enjoy spending time—not just shopping.

The Rouse Hill story exemplifies a short, medium and long-term strategy for development realised in parallel with community maturity.



Rouse Hill (2009)- Shopping Centre



*Rouse Hill (2017)
- Residential Catchment*



*Rouse Hill (2024) - Mixed Use Sleeve
of Shopping Centre*

Implementation

The implementation for MTC takes into consideration the following:

- The ACT Government's commitment to enabling 30,000 homes by 2030
- ACT Government Indicative Land Release Program target of 7,000 dwellings at MTC, underpinned by a mix of larger family friendly dwellings and accommodation diversity including apartment living, affordable and key worker housing, build-to-rent, retirement living and student housing
- Delivery of community catalysts such as the Education Site, Sport and Recreation Facility, Community Centre and Library, Police Station and Child and Family Centre
- Delivery of urbanity not just density; being the principle of delivering public benefit that matches density including high quality public spaces, amenity and services to support increased yields applying the following built form and height principles:

Varied and Interesting Building Heights

Buildings are designed with a mix of heights rather than a uniform edge, helping the Town Centre feel diverse, visually appealing and more like a collection of streets and places than a single large block.

Gentle Transitions Between Buildings

Building heights step up or down gradually, ensuring smooth transitions between different areas of activity and density, and avoiding sudden changes in scale.

People-Friendly Streets

Street-level building heights are designed to feel comfortable and welcoming, with good sunlight, weather protection and active shopfronts that bring life to the street - no matter how tall the building above may be streets function through both movement and place, which must be considered together as an integrated system, as defined by the Movement and Place Framework.

Slim, Well-Spaced Taller Buildings

Where taller buildings are included, they are slim and well-spaced to allow sunlight, views and airflow to reach streets, homes and public spaces.

Height That Gives Something Back

Any additional height must deliver clear public benefits—such as better design, greener buildings, improved public spaces or added community amenities—so it positively contributes to the Town Centre experience. Increased height may also be used to accommodate larger, family-friendly dwellings, supporting housing diversity and reinforcing the Town Centre as a place for long-term living.



Community Clustering

Community Clustering

The MTC Master Plan intentionally consolidates the Commercial Core uses with clustered community uses; with a particular focus and frontage of both onto a strong, clear and legible main street.

This will strengthen the viability of the Commercial Core and strengthen community connections by inherently delivering critical mass to help build momentum, investment and forming meaning and attachment for residents.

As referenced within the Design Principles- Connecting Commercial Core and Community (opposite); the Commercial Core and Education Site can be linked; extending the activation beyond land use boundaries as a main active travel and pedestrian connector.

1. Site A represents the preferred location for a Community Centre and Library with residential above and potential for additional government services.
2. Site B is identified as the Police Station site as it meets all of the site requirements for size, safety, security, access and appropriate proximity to the mixed use centre.

Education Precinct and Sport and Recreational Facilities

Consistent with The Molonglo Valley District Policy, a 9.3ha Education Site will be provided to accommodate a college, high school, integrated college auditorium/ district level sport and recreation facility and a town/ school oval of at least 1.9 hectares in area. The district level multi-purpose indoor Sport and Recreation Facility will have a gross floor area of 5,300m² shared with the college school campus.

This area and surrounds are subject to further investigations and optioneering that may include:

- Other compatible uses
- A second playing field, in addition to the town oval, within Molonglo Valley
- A district level multi-purpose indoor Sport and Recreation Facility as part of an integrated development block with additional community and cafe ground floor activation and Cultural Space

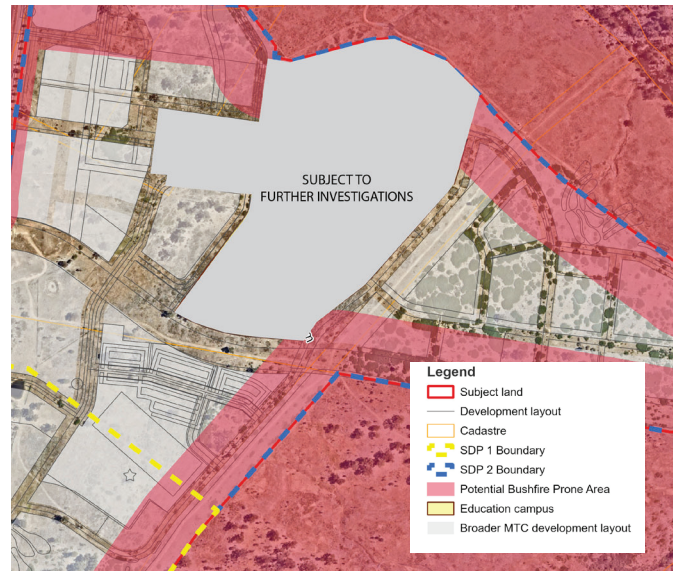
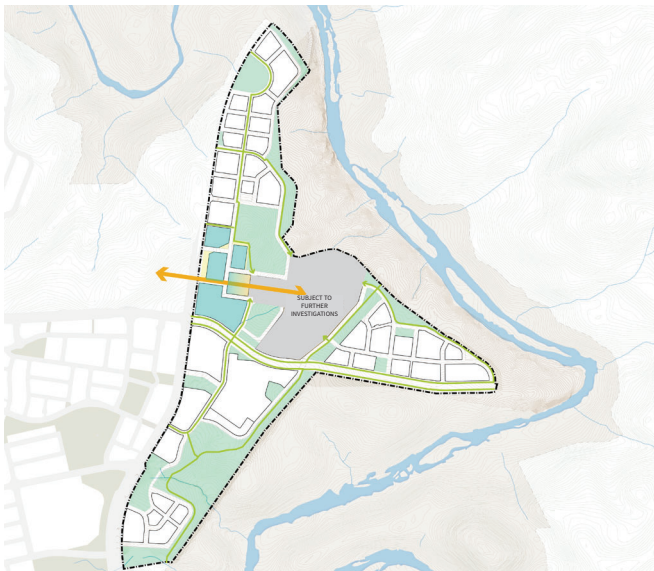
Consideration will be given for any Sport and Recreation location to have a western entry and be accessible to the public, including sporting clubs and groups during and outside of school hours.

A 9.3ha sloping Education Site was investigated as part of the Bushfire Constraints & Opportunities Analysis (BOCA) 2026 and identified small areas that are impacted as a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA), illustrated opposite. As the northeast and southeast corner areas fall within the BPA, buildings in these locations would be subject to higher construction standards. Sensitive Use Asset Protection Zones (APZs) are within the surrounding open space and road reserve and these do not encroach onto the Education campus.

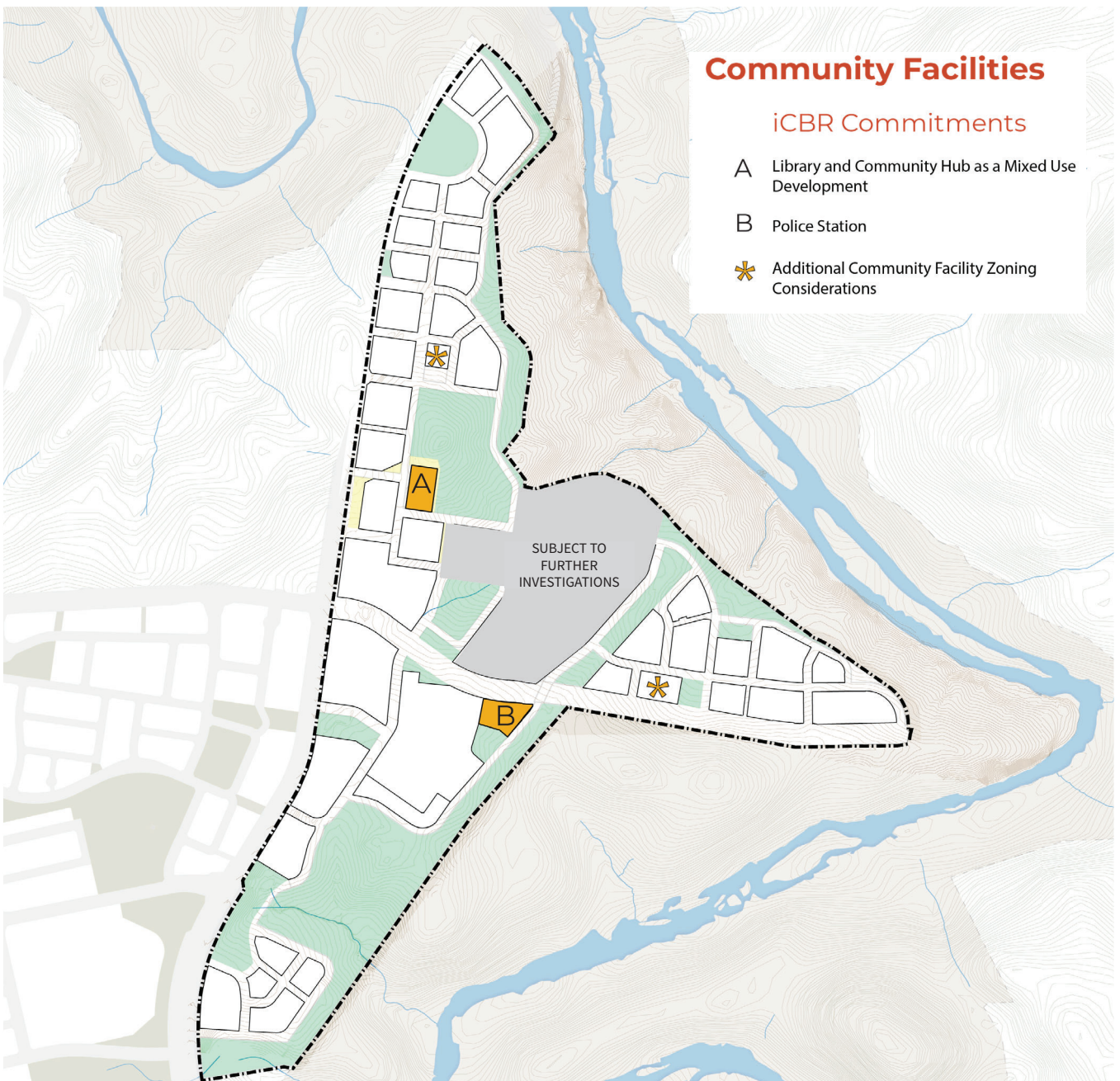
Sites to the north and east, as identified on the plan opposite with a yellow asterisk are earmarked to accommodate a range of community uses under a Community Facility Zoning such as:

- Standalone Place of Religious Worship
- Child and Family Centre
- Social Support Services

A number of arts and culture uses are also considered to be co-located in the trades and services zone as they can be complementary to noisy, non-residential warehouse areas (dance studios, music recording spaces, maker spaces etc). This is discussed further within the Character Area section of this document.



Bushfire Constraints & Opportunities (BOCA) 2026



Character Areas

MTC Character Areas are unique sub-precincts that work together to deliver the holistic Vision and experience of MTC.

Character Areas promote meaningful attachment to place and support individual sense of self whilst establishing community solidarity and community resilience. Through a deep understanding of site, made possible through community engagement, site and place analysis and collaborative visioning, the Character Areas are able to build upon previous work resulting in critical layers of granularity, placemaking and unique identities for MTC.

Character Areas are not defined solely by land use or density. They do not need to be all things to all people and the strength is in the composite and interdependencies.

The Character Areas for MTC are identified based on the following unique characteristics:

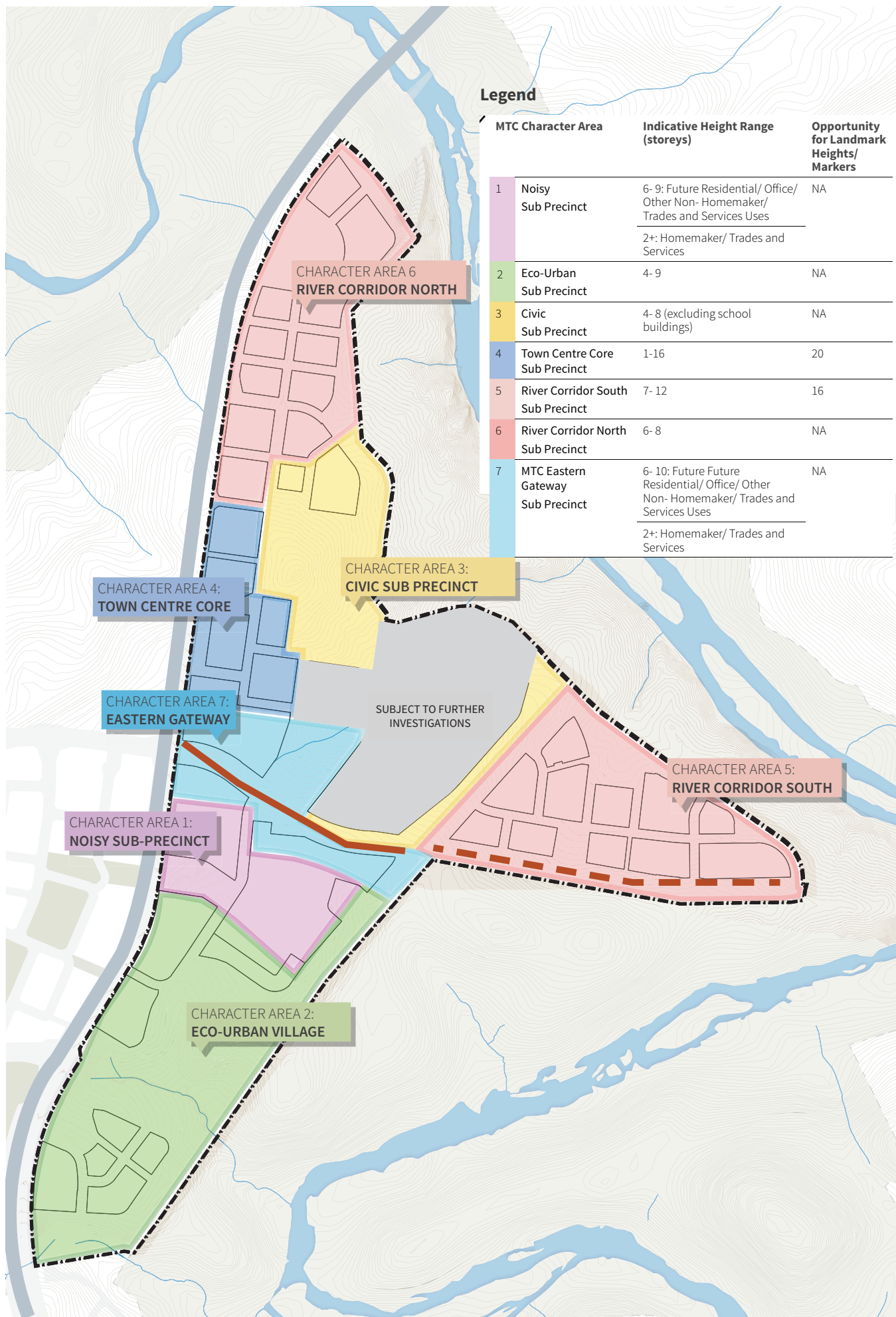
- Unique site characteristics or place features
- Interface conditions
- Destinations
- Perceptions of feeling welcome
- Connectivity and accessibility
- Land use in terms of how people experience and behave within the space
- Brand and investment opportunity

The following character areas were identified for the MTC:

1. Character Area 1: **Noisy Sub-precinct**
2. Character Area 2: **Eco-Urban Sub-precinct**
3. Character Area 3: **Civic Sub-precinct**
4. Character Area 4: **Town Centre Core Sub-precinct**
5. Character Area 5: **River Corridor South Sub-precinct**
6. Character Area 6: **River Corridor North Sub-precinct**
7. Character Area 7: **Eastern Gateway Sub-precinct**

The Character Area- Led Heights Strategy, shown on the opposite page, builds on the overarching preferred height strategy and provides further granularity of height intent whilst acknowledging the importance of building height as it contributes to place character and matches public benefit and housing diversity aspirations.

The rationale (as outlined in this Master Plan) for increased heights and the approach to amending these heights in a transparent and logical manner that aligns with intended zoning has been part of ongoing engagement with other relevant government agencies.



Character Area 1

Noisy Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

The 'Noisy Sub-Precinct' is proposed as a 24 hour precinct. Daytime activities may focus on trades, services and homemaker convenience while the night-time economy would thrive within this funky warehouse arts and cultural precinct. A system of laneways will support the employment servicing, access and parking requirements while also providing spillover spaces for events, dance and recording studios, maker spaces, food trucks laneway specific markets and activations.



Community Benefit

- Controlled access opportunities into select areas of the River Corridor.
- A range of arts and culture uses dance studios, music recording spaces, maker spaces etc. are considered here as they are complimentary to noisy, non-residential warehouse areas.

Private Realm Character

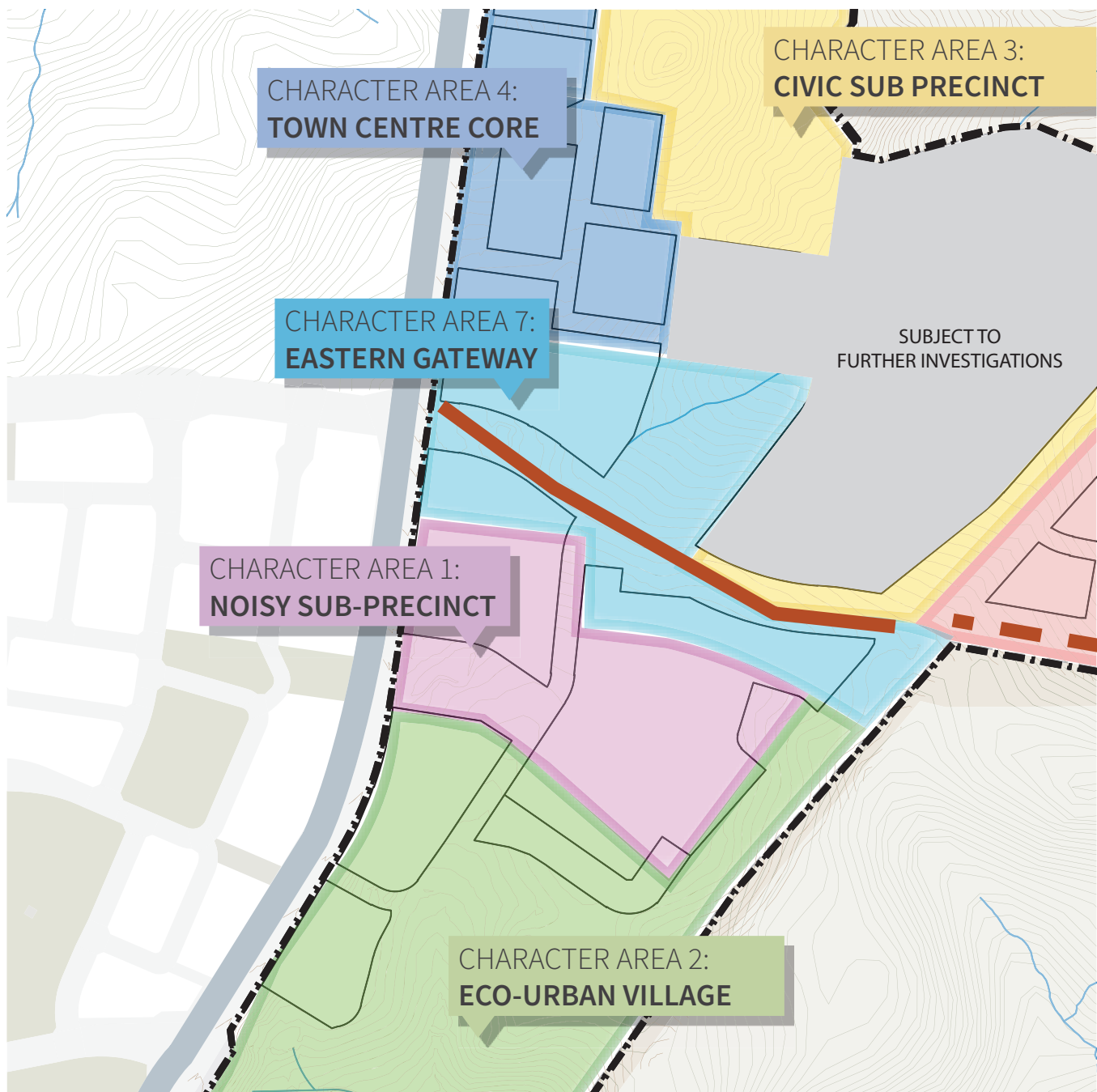
- Private on-site spaces such as squares, courtyards, laneways and parking to be flexible and capable of catering for temporary activation and events including market, food truck zones and pop-us.
- Flexible furnishings that can be rearranged to accommodate different activities and events.
- Sound and acoustics solutions that respond to both day and night activities.
- Warehouse-style built form identity with possibility of change over time for buildings and parking.

Public Realm Character

- **Event Spaces:** Designate areas for pop-up events, food trucks, markets, and other temporary activities. Ensure these spaces have the necessary infrastructure, such as power outlets, water supply, and waste disposal.
- **Flexible zones:** Designate specific areas for flexible and adaptable interfaces between public and private spaces, such as squares, streets, and laneways. Create zones that allow for activities to spill out onto the street such as makers markets, design spaces, and areas for shared energy and waste.
- **Public Transport Access:** Ensure, through good urban design, convenient and safe access to public transport by integrating bus stops, active travel routes, and pedestrian pathways to and from the town centre to facilitate safe movements to late night events.
- **Wayfinding:** Provide clear signage and pathways to connect bus stops and active travel infrastructure with key destinations.

Connecting With Country

- **Celebrating First Nations history, heritage and culture** through events, pop-up art and entertainment events.
- **Visual and physical connection to Eco-Park.** Maintain visual and physical connections to the Eco-Park precinct.
- **Visual connection to the sky surrounding landscapes** (connection to Sky Country and Deep Country)
- **Interpretative design elements** throughout the public and private domain, including murals, artworks, as well as building design and material choices.



Key Urban Design Features



**TRADES AND
SERVICES**



**ENTERTAINMENT,
ARTS AND
CULTURE**



EMPLOYMENT



**POP-UP
EVENTS**



**FLEXIBLE PUBLIC
/ PRIVATE SPACE
DELINEATION**



**WAREHOUSE-STYLE
BUILDING IDENTITY**

Character Area 2

Eco-Urban

Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

The southern Sub-Precinct contains significant and valuable environmental and cultural values and provides the opportunity for a unique ecologically sensitive urban typology. Medium to high density residential wraps around the Eco-Park to provide a transition from the adjacent commercial and noisy precinct and maintain separation to protect natural values. The Eco-Park is also an extension of the River Corridor providing critical human and non-human kin connectivity and corridors. The Eco-Park will retain large clusters of trees, including remnant, high quality, hollow-bearing and Aboriginal Cultural Trees. In order to protect these low lying trees and enable the hydrology of the precinct to support the urban development, creative solutions will be required. The street network will be rationalised and focus on light imprint, small footprint and permeable solutions to minimise street runoff.



Community Benefit

- River Corridor gateway access, via the high amenity and high value Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design Park (Cultural Woodland).
- The Cultural Woodland will provide adventure play, cultural exchange areas, viewing decks, picnic and bike facilities and cultural artwork.
- Dedicated cycleway and shared paths along the River Corridor edge, through the Cultural Woodland elevated paths system and connecting into the regional network.
- Dedicated community floorspace will be delivered as part of the integrated mixed use development fronting the Cultural Woodland and in close proximity to the bus stop.

Private Realm Character

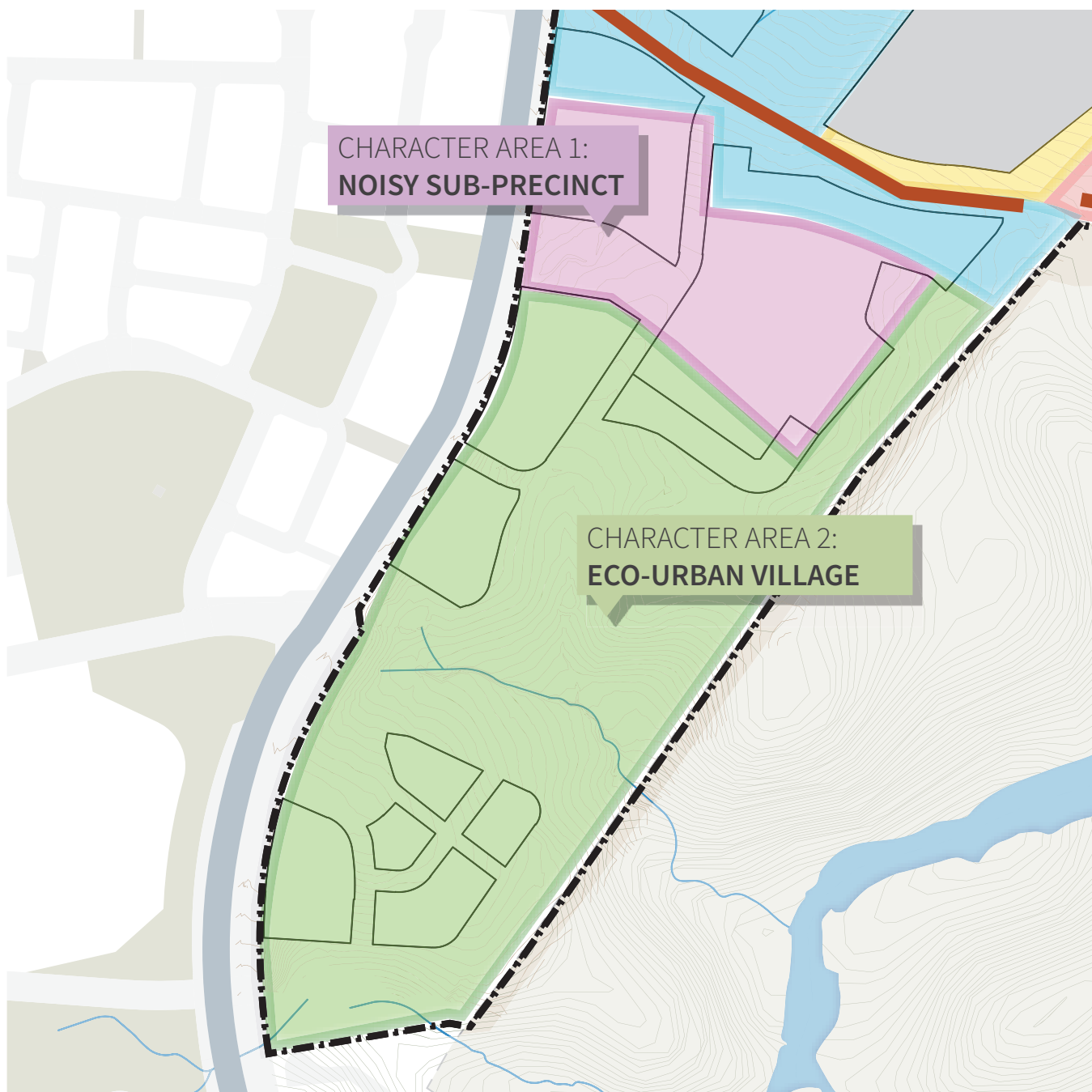
- On-block trees are retained and integration with block planning, where possible.
- Internal courtyards as communal open space but including solutions dedicated to enhance the environmental character of the area: communal gardens, energy generation / water collection.

Public Realm Character

- Narrow, light, and permeable streets:
 - Retention of significant remnant trees. Bespoke street section solutions will be required in these locations.
 - Permeable Paving: Allows water to seep through, reducing runoff and promoting groundwater recharge.
 - Green Infrastructure: Includes rain gardens, bio-swales, to absorb and filter rainwater, easing drainage systems.
 - Tree Canopy: Planting street trees for shade, air quality improvement, and runoff reduction.
- BSUD retaining remnant vegetation and providing ecological corridor connectivity.

Connecting With Country

- **Tree Protection and Management:** Implement guidelines for the preservation of remnant, high-quality, hollow-bearing, and Aboriginal Cultural Trees. Develop a tree management plan that includes regular monitoring and maintenance to ensure the health and longevity of these trees.
- **Cultural Heritage Integration:** identify and protect culturally significant sites and practices. Incorporate Indigenous knowledge and cultural values into the design and management of the Eco-Park and surrounding areas.



CHARACTER AREA 1:
NOISY SUB-PRECINCT

CHARACTER AREA 2:
ECO-URBAN VILLAGE

Key Urban Design Features



ECOLOGICALLY
SENSITIVE



ECOLOGY
RETENTION



ECO-PARK



HABITAT & RIVER
CORRIDOR
CONNECTIVITY



ACCESS TO THE
RIVER CORRIDOR



MEDIUM -
HIGH DENSITY

Character Area 3

Civic Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

This Sub-Precinct fosters social connections for MTC and the surrounding area and provides important education, community, recreation, cultural and art places and spaces for residents and visitors. The mix of uses and facilities will have direct frontage to a number of open spaces including the River Corridor, Hilltop Park and Town Park and Oval. Pedestrian access within and across this Sub-Precinct is prioritised; understanding that a balance must be achieved between universal access and the desire to maintain natural land form, views, trees and rocky outcrops. Multi purpose, flexible and co-located civic activities will promote this Sub-Precinct as a genuine Community Centre focusing on public use and ‘power of free principles.’



Community Benefit

- Direct connectivity between the Commercial Core and Education, Community and Recreation uses.
- College, high school, integrated high school auditorium/ local sport and recreation facility and a town oval of at least 1.9 hectares in area.
- Potential second playing field.
- The Summit Commons hilltop park will provide all abilities play space, nature play, picnic and cycle facilities, artwork, cricket nets, kickabout area, skate park, water play and an urban plaza attached to the Main Street.

Private Realm Character

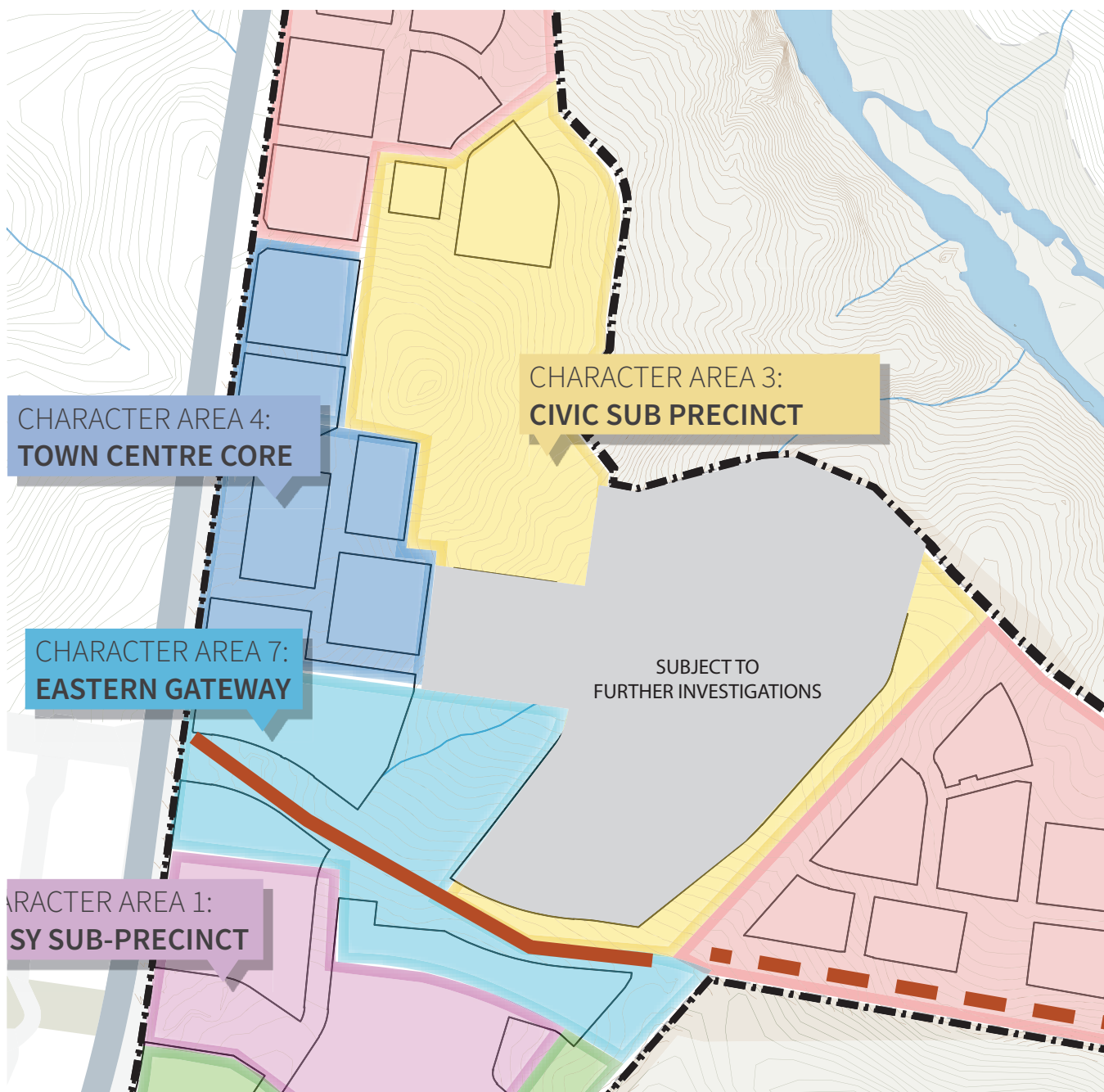
- Internal courtyards and space with strong community activity, recreational and cultural focus: designed for gathering, interaction, cultural activities and lingering.
- Delineation of public and private separation through use topography and level difference to provide sense over fences and physical barriers, where possible.
- Maximise opportunities for private spaces and courtyards to have views of the River Corridor and broader views.
- Considered building setbacks that facilitate well articulated building entries, mobility hubs, tree canopy and shaded areas.

Public Realm Character

- Integration of significant vegetation clusters into street and public domain design.
- Strategically located active frontages to enable a sense of activation whilst achieving safety and control of building access points (civic, and education buildings).
- Streets design for priority of pedestrian movements, active travel and use of public transport.
- Parks, squares, ovals and other public community spaces to maximise views to the Molonglo River corridor and surrounding landscape.
- Connected network of community-focused open spaces including hilltop park, town oval with controls to ensure quality views, solar access, wind comfort and shade.
- Places for First Nations cultural exchange/ practice.

Connecting With Country

- **Cultural Heritage and Engagement:** Collaborate with Indigenous communities to incorporate cultural values and practices into the design and programming of education, community, recreation, cultural, and art spaces.
- **Designate areas for Indigenous art installations,** performances, and cultural events to celebrate and share Indigenous heritage.
- **Connection to the river corridor** as a strong theme through the public domain design.



Key Urban Design Features



COMMUNITY
CENTRES



EDUCATION
PRECINCT



RECREATION



CULTURAL AND
ART PRECINCT



VIEWS TO RIVER
CORRIDOR AND
SURROUNDS



SPORTS AND
CIVIC
ACTIVITIES



PEDESTRIAN AND
ACTIVE TRAVEL
PRIORITY

Character Area 4

Town Centre Core

Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

The Town Centre core is more than just commercial and retail. It features active ground floor uses, proximate residential to support and activated ground plane, creating a vibrant urban realm in Molonglo Valley. Continuous fine-grain retail frontages are supported by subterranean and rear laneway access, prioritising pedestrians, potential future light rail, buses, cyclists, micro-mobility, and pedestrians converge at the Transit Plaza to meet, gather, and move. Buildings with podiums and slender towers offer a high-amenity environment with sunlight, wind mitigation, and green walls and roofs. The urban greenery strategy softens the hardscape and provides seasonal protection and amenity.



Community Benefit

- Community Centre and Library with residential above.
- Dedicated sites will be considered for a community organisation to build a Place of Worship and a site for a Child and Family Centre.
- Potential for complimentary uses such as health facility and medical centre and social support services.

Private Realm Character

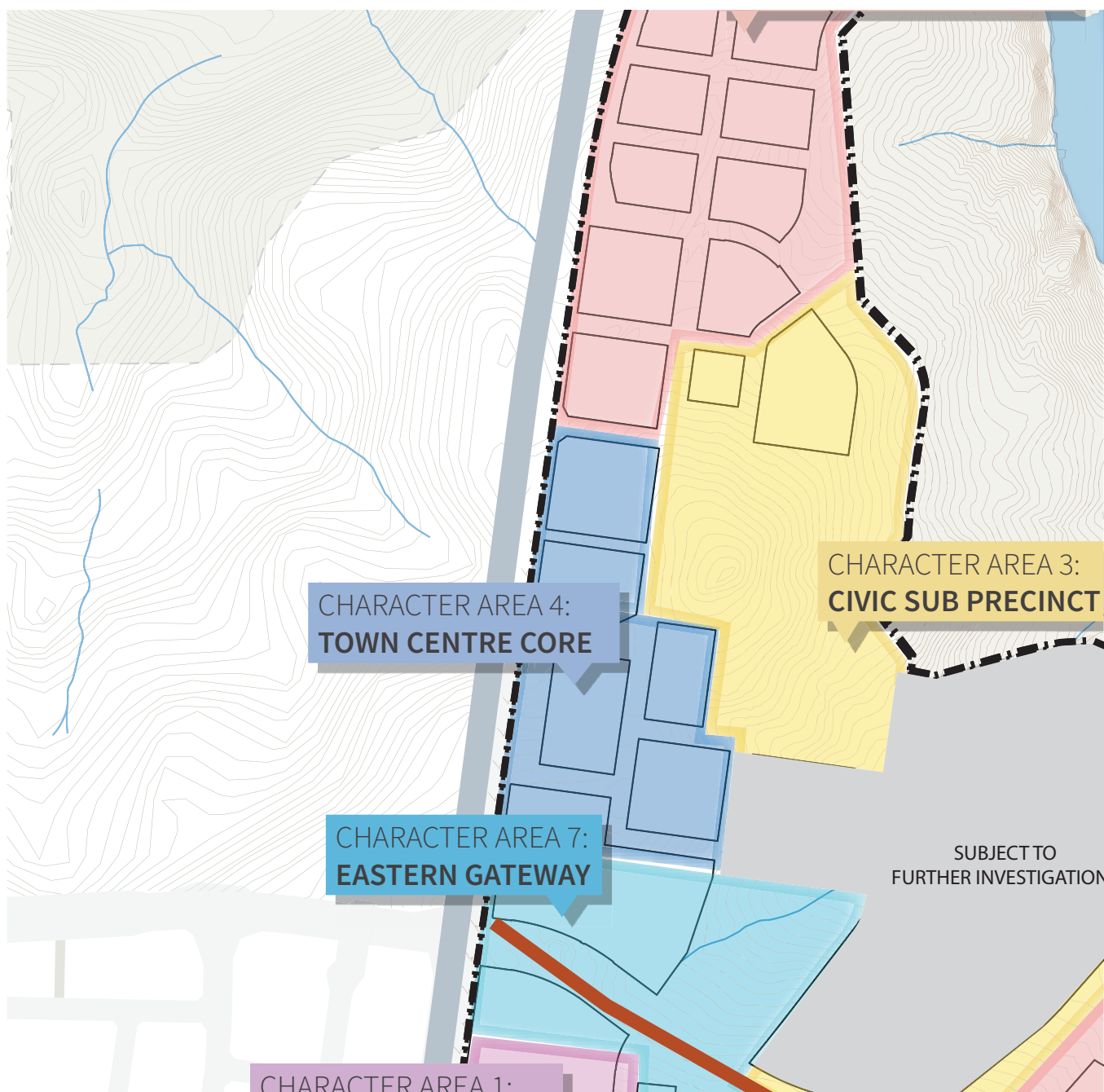
- Buildings are positioned close to the street, with defined building blocks and street walls, and minimal setbacks.
- There is a high degree of site coverage. Communal and shared spaces are incorporated into vertical elements of buildings, such as rooftops and podiums.
- Appropriate tower separation controls are in place to ensure solar access to buildings and public spaces, and to create visual interest and wayfinding across the precinct.
- Internal courtyards and private spaces are designed to support ground floor commercial and retail activity.
- Opportunities are maximised for private spaces and courtyards to have views to the Molonglo River corridor and broader surroundings.

Public Realm Character

- Active frontages create a vibrant urban environment. Ground floor uses extend onto the streets (e.g., foodscapes, outdoor dining) and are managed through controls, such as the number of entries per linear frontage.
- Fine-grain built form articulation and a variety of building forms facilitate visual interest and a sense of activity and exploration within the urban environment.
- Streets prioritise pedestrian activity, offering convenient access to the adjoining civic sub-precinct, public transport options, and the Transit Plaza along John Gorton Drive. Shared zones and pedestrian-only connections are incorporated.
- Streets, lanes, and public spaces have a highly urban character that supports the active urban nature of the precinct, while also incorporating tree canopy and WSUD (Water Sensitive Urban Design) to soften the urban character.

Connecting With Country

- Connecting with Country is conveyed through themes such as embracing the topography, building a healthy community, and reflecting Country in design and material choices.



Key Urban Design Features



**ACTIVE
FRONTAGES**



**SHOP TOP
HOUSING**



**URBAN
GREENERY**



**INTEGRATED
MOBILITY**



VIBRANT



**PUBLIC
PLACES**

Character Area 5 River Corridor South Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

Residents of the River Corridor South Sub-Precinct will identify with the River Corridor due to its numerous Gateway Entries and Nodes. They will feel connected to the Corridor, whether they live directly on it or a few blocks away. Perpendicular connections to the Corridor and MPDC will be prioritized to ensure physical and visual connectivity. These locations will feature art and wayfinding. The landscape and engineering treatment of the MPDC will integrate the natural characteristics of the River Corridor into the Sub-Precinct through greenways, appropriate species selection, and biodiversity corridors.



Community Benefit

- Designated Active Travel Principal Route along the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector (MPDC) to and from John Gorton Drive and across the MPDC bridge to the east.
- Controlled access opportunities into select areas of the River Corridor.
- Bus stop and route extension future- proofed.

Private Realm Character

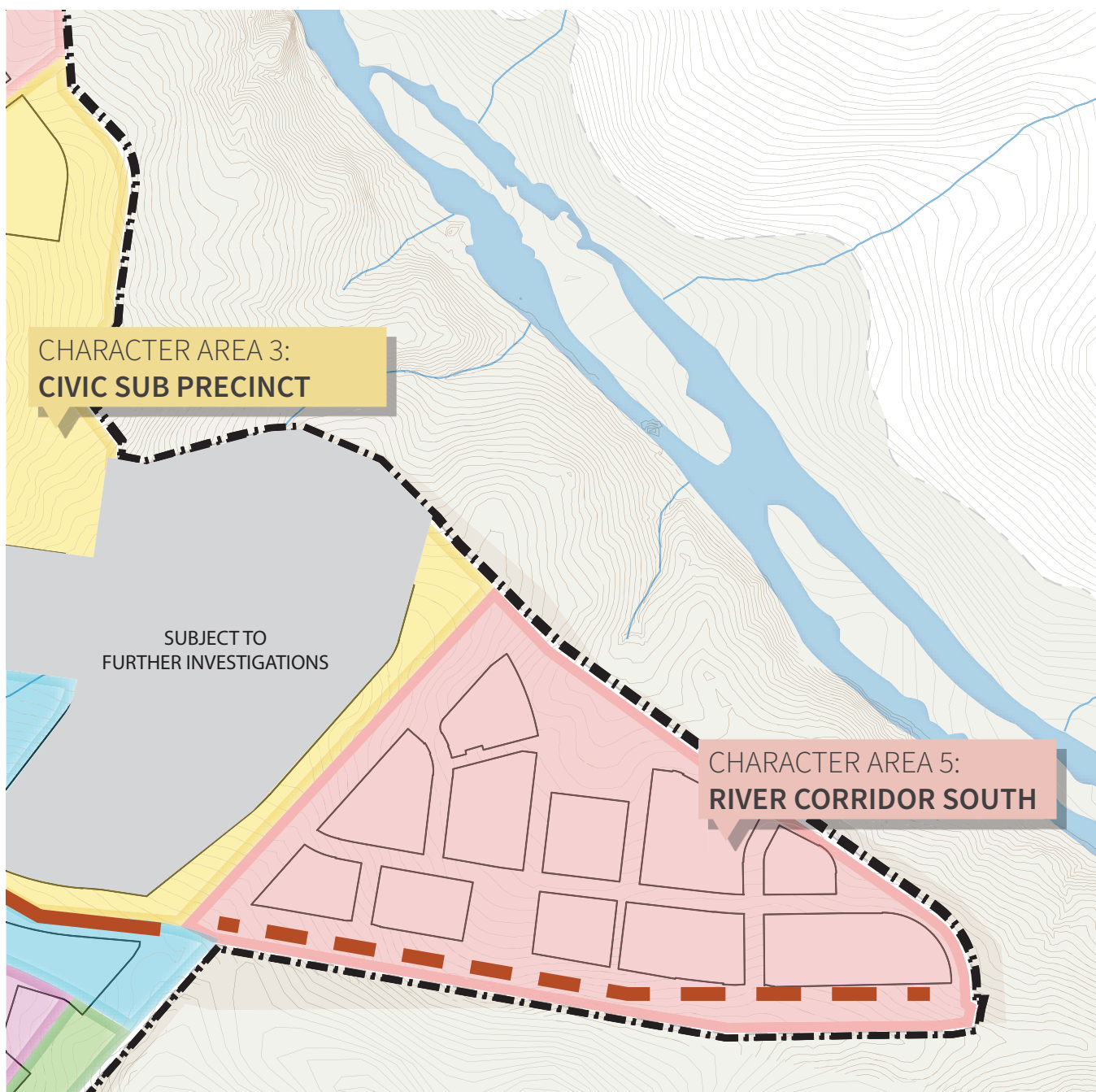
- The area is predominantly residential. Continuous defined street setbacks allow for ground floors to incorporate front yards, gardens, and verandahs with outlooks to the street and Molonglo River corridor.
- Front gardens will complement the quiet, leafy character of local residential streets.
- Internal courtyards are predominantly utilised as communal open spaces and playgrounds for residents' use.
- Buildings with outlooks to the Molonglo River reserve will incorporate architectural features that maximise views of the river and surrounding landscape.

Public Realm Character

- Street Orientation: Maximise street orientation perpendicular to Molonglo River Reserve and MPDC to create biodiversity corridors.
- Northern River Reserve Edge Street: Incorporate bespoke design elements, materiality, and tree species to enhance the interface with Molonglo River Corridor. Include street furniture and outdoor breakout spaces for river corridor views.
- Tree Retention: Aim to retain significant trees where possible and incorporate them into streetscapes and biodiversity corridors.
- Pond Park: Include spaces for community activities such as seating and viewing platforms.
- Open Spaces: Develop a series of smaller, programmed pocket parks.
- Art Installations and Wayfinding: Place art installations and wayfinding elements in strategic locations along the edge road by the river corridor and MPDC (gateway locations).

Connecting With Country

- Expression of Connecting with Country through the themes of respecting sky country, respecting topography, supporting non-human kin in streetscapes and open spaces, celebrating deep country and embedding custodianship of the interface with the river corridor.



Key Urban Design Features



**RESIDENTIAL
PRECINCT
(3-6 STOREYS)**



**GATEWAY
PRECINCT**



**GREENWAYS /
BIODIVERSITY
CORRIDOR/S**



**CONNECTED TO THE
RIVER CORRIDOR**



**WAYFINDING
& LEGIBILITY**



**PERMEABLE
BLOCKS**

Character Area 6

River Corridor

North Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

Residents of 'River Corridor North Sub-Precinct' will be stewards of the environment. This part of the River Corridor has the highest quality ecological habitats and the streets, open spaces and drainage will need to be sensitively designed to promote early treatment before getting to the River. Perimeter streets will need to provide bushfire protection whilst exploring creative, low impact solutions that minimise earthworks. North facing apartments and communal open spaces should be maximised to take advantage of the solar access, distant mountain views and localized River Corridor views. Pedestrian breaks in development blocks running perpendicular to the River Corridor are encouraged to provide permeability and activation whilst minimising noise and lightspill from vehicular traffic.



Community Benefit

- Safe pedestrian access to Denman Prospect, Butters Bridge and Cravens Creek Trail.
- Controlled access opportunities into select areas of the River Corridor.
- Bus stop and route extension future- proofed.

Private Realm Character

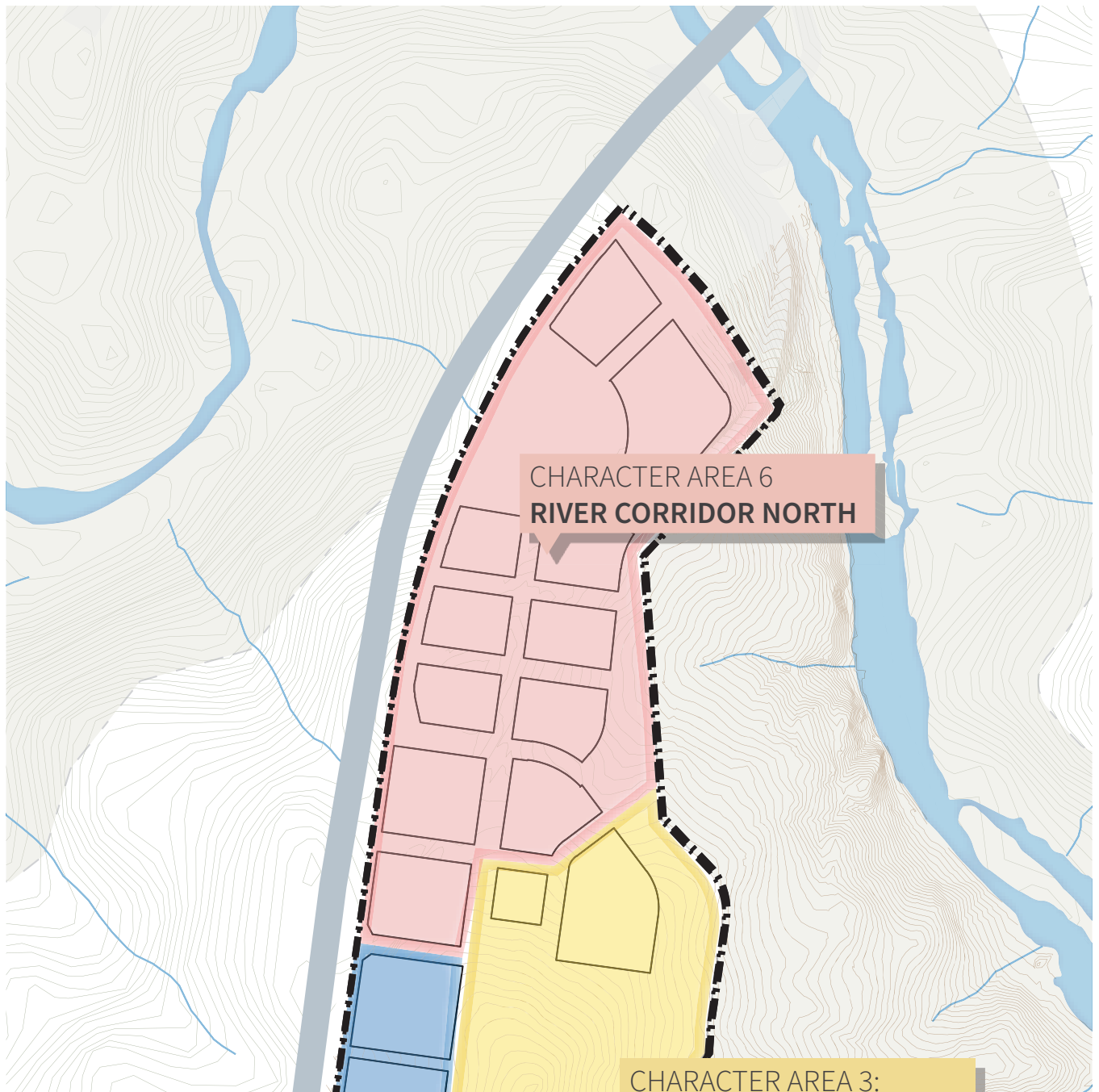
- **Building design:** maximize solar access, especially for north-facing apartments and communal spaces.
- **Setbacks:** Create buffer zones that help manage the interface between private and public spaces, providing a gradual transition that enhances visual and physical connectivity.
- **Terraced Landscaping:** In steep areas, setbacks can be used for terraced landscaping, which stabilises the slope but also creates attractive, usable outdoor spaces that blend with the natural terrain.
- **Views and Architectural Features:** Incorporate features to maximise views of the Molonglo River reserve and surrounding landscape.
- **Gateway Design:** Consider architectural treatment for the interface with John Gorton Drive, addressing a gateway experience to the MTC, and managing western sun and noise exposure.

Public Realm Character

- **Pedestrian Breaks and Connectivity:** Create pedestrian breaks in development blocks to enhance permeability and encourage walking and access to the river corridor.
- **Visual and Physical Connectivity:** Use setbacks and buffer zones to create a gradual transition between private and public spaces, enhancing visual and physical connectivity.

Connecting With Country

- **Community Engagement and Stewardship:** Foster a sense of environmental stewardship among residents through first nations initiatives programs and community initiatives. Develop communal spaces that promote social interaction and connection with nature.



Key Urban Design Features



**RESIDENTIAL
PRECINCT**



**COMMUNAL
OPEN SPACE**



**HIGH QUALITY
STREET**



**ECOLOGICAL
HABITAT**



**WATER
TREATMENT**



**PERMEABLE
BLOCKS**

Character Area 7

Eastern Gateway Sub-Precinct

Character Intent

Upon entering the MTC from John Gorton Drive and travelling along the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector (MPDC), visitors will experience a slow zone designed to calm traffic and prioritise pedestrian movements from north to south. Irrespective of the land use zone to the north and south, fine grain mixed use ground floor is permitted along both sides of the street. The cycle highway on the southern side of the MPDC becomes a widened verge separating pedestrian and commercial activation from the cyclist and facilitating canopy planting with optimal solar access. An at-grade 'grand pedestrian crossing' will signal arrival into the Commercial Core and heart of MTC as well as connecting the Eco- Urban Sub-Precinct north to the Civic Sub-Precinct. It will be co-designed, prioritising a safe, active connection that promotes modal shift away from private vehicle reliance.



Community Benefit

- Provision of Police Station.
- The Valley Verge park will provide Micro Forest, fitness areas, running track, bush tucker gardens, discovery playspace, sculpture trail and picnic and bike facilities.

Private Realm Character

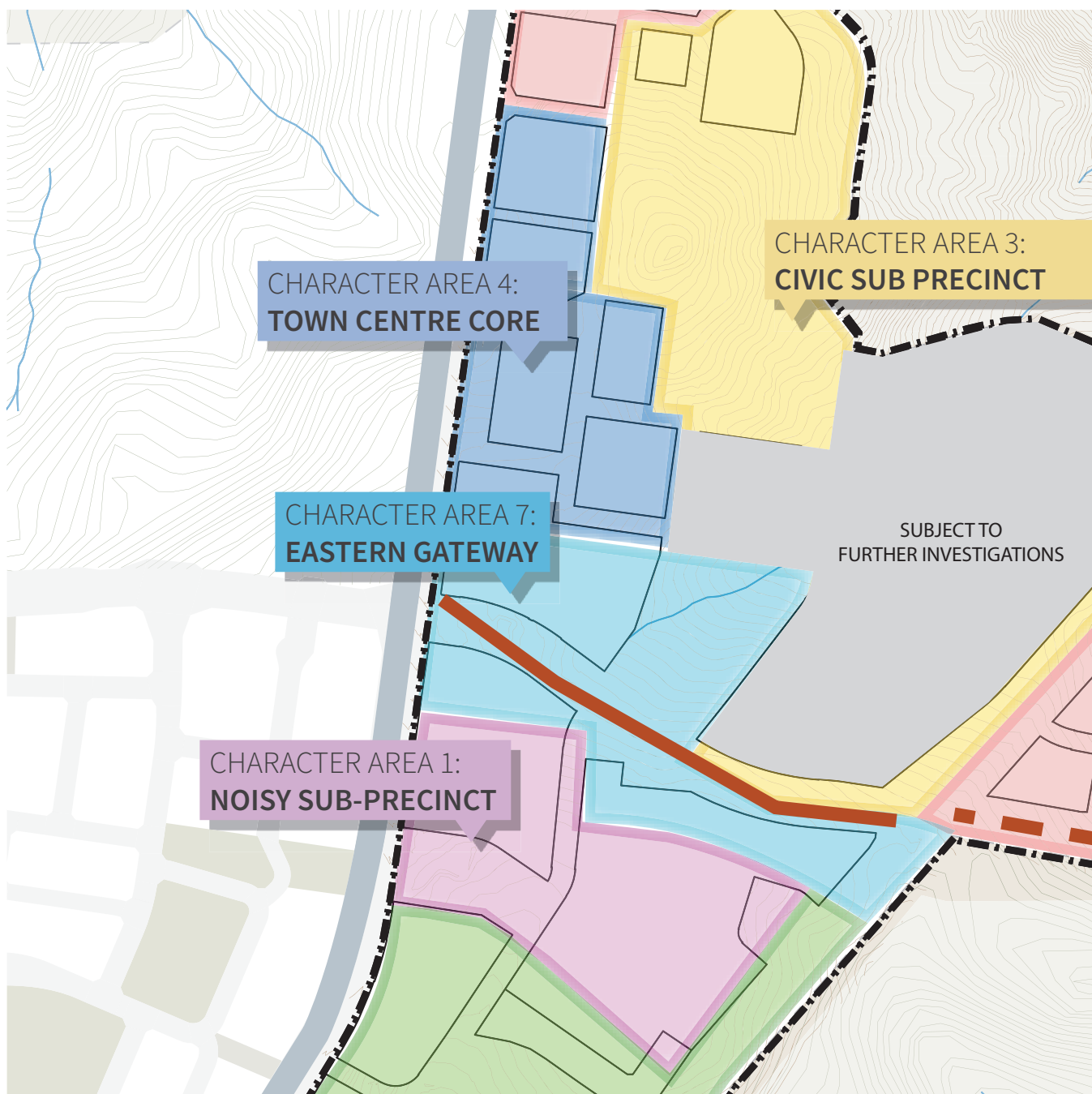
- **Gateway Building Design:** Ensure buildings at the intersections of major roads reflect a gateway character.
- **Building Typology:** Future proof sites and buildings to intensify, densify and change over time as MTC matures.
- **Setbacks:** Generous leafy setbacks to screen large format uses. This design should also facilitate the movement of cyclists and active travel users.

Public Realm Character

- **Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Prioritization**
Implementing slow zones helps to reduce vehicle speeds, making the crossing MPDC safer for pedestrians. Techniques such as narrowing lanes, adding medians, and necking down intersections can be used.
- **Pedestrian Crossings:** Clearly marked pedestrian crossings and raised crosswalks can further prioritize pedestrian movements.
- **Green Buffers:** Incorporate green buffers between the road and cycling paths to enhance visual appeal and provide a natural barrier.
- **Tree Canopy** along the verges to provide shade and improve the micro-climate, while incorporating native and drought-resistant plants to reduce maintenance and support local biodiversity.

Connecting With Country

- Incorporation and Respecting Deep Country in a Gateway Location:
 - Material Choices: Use locally sourced materials that hold cultural significance for Indigenous communities.
 - Vegetation: Incorporate native, drought-resistant plants that are important to the local Indigenous culture.
 - Public Art: Introduce public art installations that reflect the cultural heritage and stories of the local Indigenous communities, creating a sense of place and arrival.



Key Urban Design Features



**PEDESTRIAN
ORIENTED**



**CALM
TRAFFIC**



**FINE GRAIN
FRONTAGE**



MIX USE



**CYCLE
HIGHWAY**



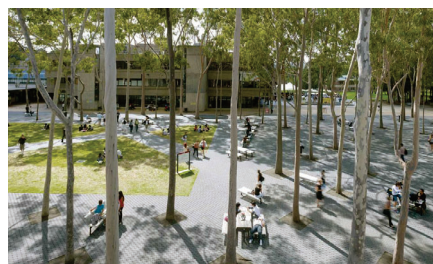
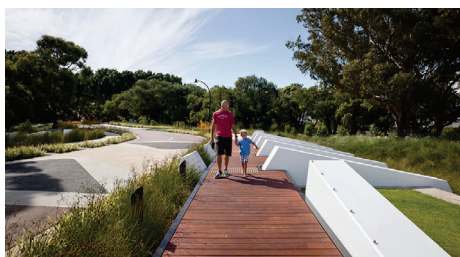
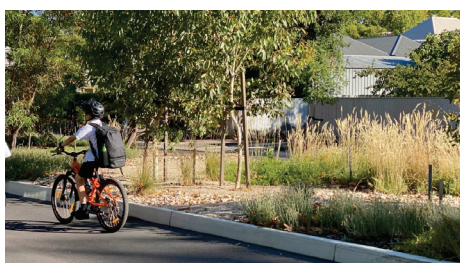
**STREET
CANOPY**

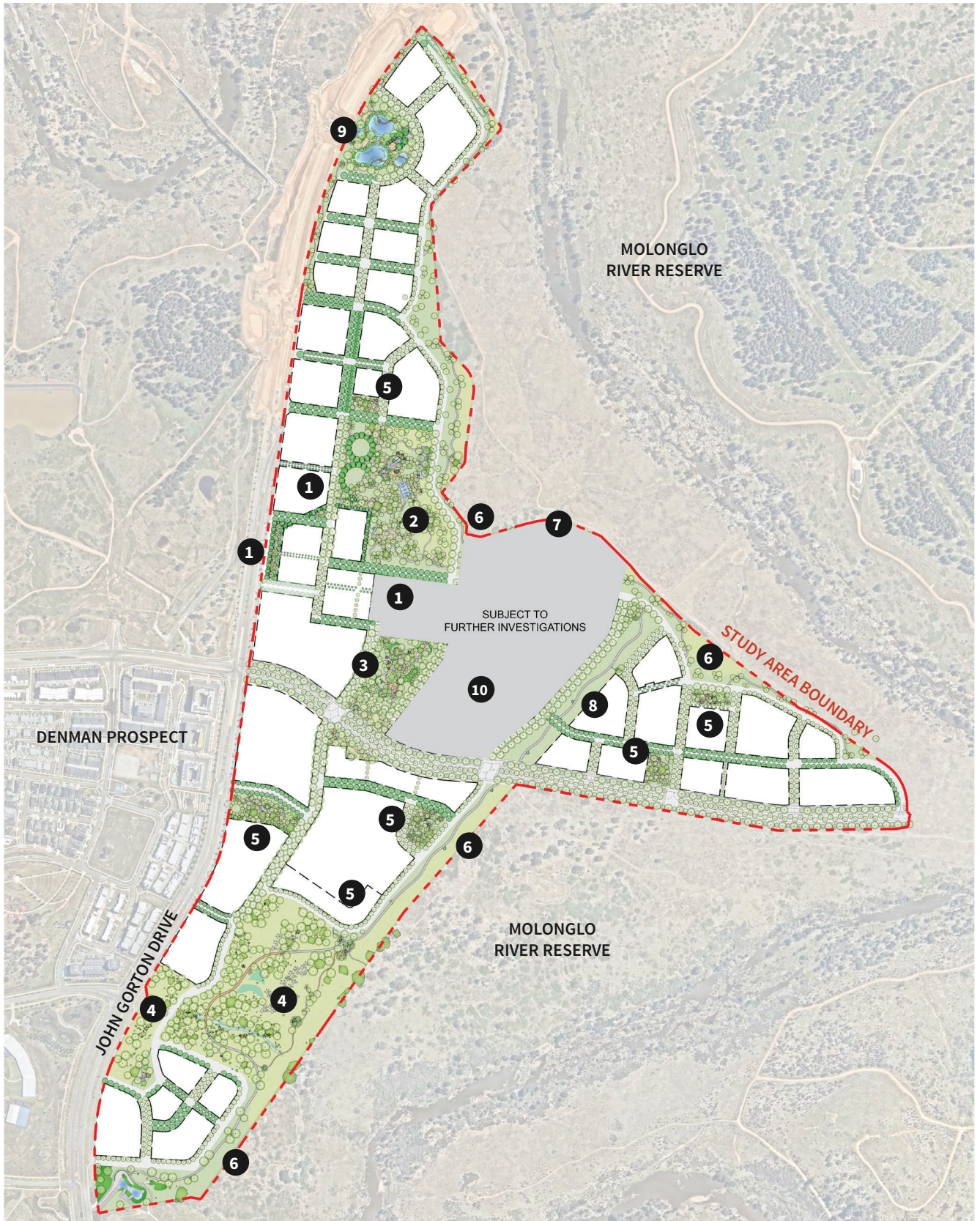
Landscape Master Planning

Molonglo Town Centre public realm reimagines urban life through a landscape that protects habitat, celebrates Country, and connects people with water and nature.

MTC's Landscape Planning sets out a vision for a resilient, culturally grounded environment that integrates ecology, water and community. Open spaces preserve significant remnant eucalypt groups, serving as defining anchors of the design. These tree groups are both ecologically and culturally significant, providing vital habitat for local species, and protecting Aboriginal Cultural Trees that reflect deep cultural connections. Water-sensitive urban design and thematic water elements celebrate the site's relationship to the Molonglo River, reinforcing identity and shaping a cohesive landscape experience.

The open space forms a living green network, linking north and south, flowing into streetscapes, and connecting key destinations through pedestrian paths and biodiversity corridors. Pocket parks will act as ecological "lily pads," supporting pollinators and small remnant tree groups. Public spaces will invite inclusivity and safety, designed for diverse users, abilities, and seasonal, community-led activities, while movement networks remain legible, walkable, and encourage healthy living. Together, these approaches create a layered, vibrant environment that balances urban life with ecological richness and cultural depth.





Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Urban Plaza/ Civic Square | 6 River View Retreats (Urban Edge) |
| 2 Summit Commons (Central Destination Park) | 7 WSUD Ponds |
| 3 Valley Verge | 8 Pedestrian Parklands |
| 4 Cultural Woodlands | 9 Local Neighbourhood Park with Play, Sports Facilities etc |
| 5 Pocket Park Groves | 10 School Site with Oval |

Scale 1:15,000

0m 150 300 450 600 750m

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Valley Verge

Valley Verge will be a green corridor linking the north and south of Molonglo Town Centre, blending nature, recreation, and cultural expression in a landscape that prioritises people, habitat, and connection across urban and ecological systems.

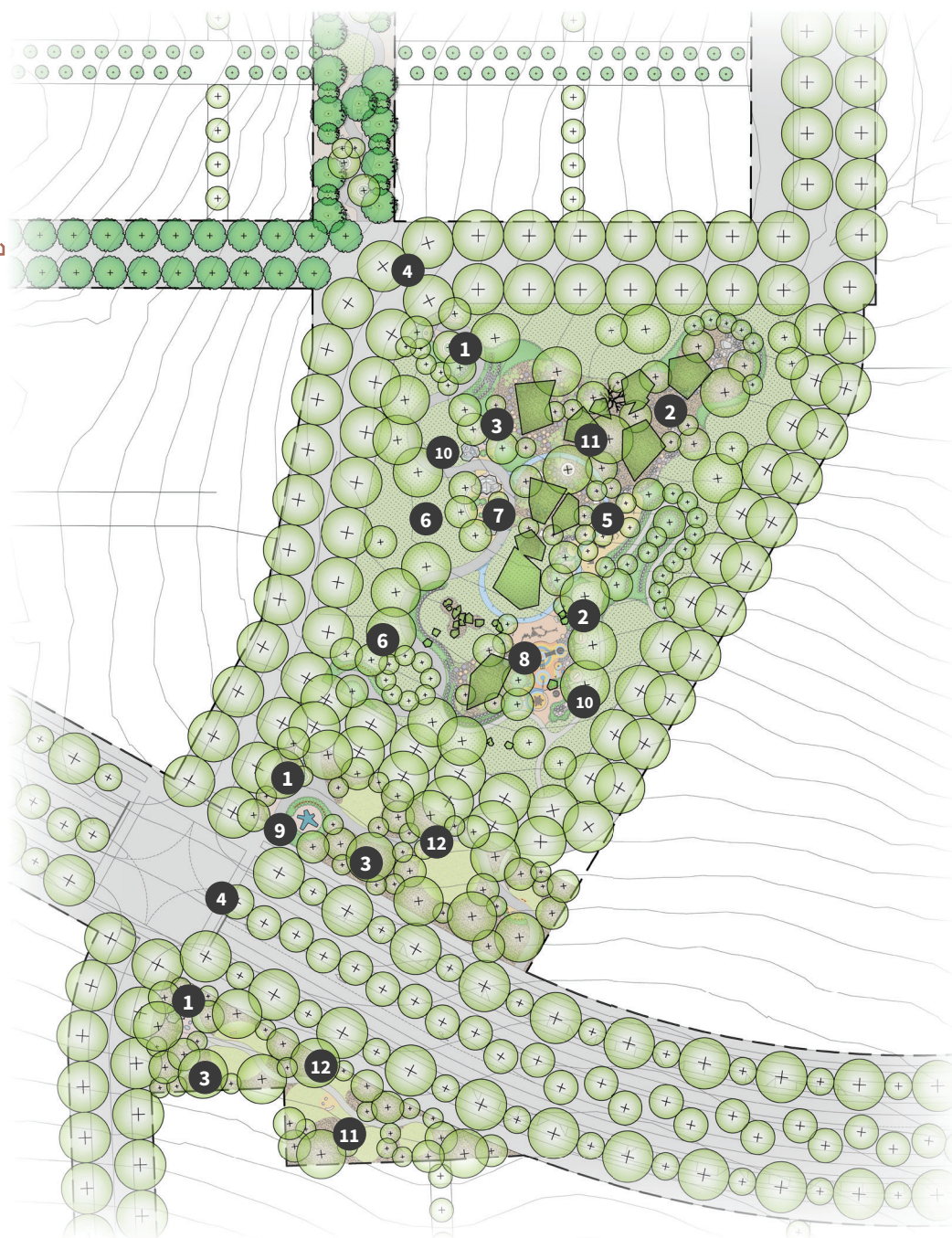
The Valley Verge will be a dynamic open space that forms a vital green link between the northern and southern parts of Molonglo, visually connecting across the MPDC. At this intersection, special paving will bleed into the roadway emphasising pedestrian priority while a large-scale public artwork act as a marker visible from the road. The design protects significant remnant eucalyptus and habitat trees, weaving paths and spaces around them to maintain natural gradients and create an intimate, immersive experience.

Bush tucker plantings and urban foraging areas encourage cultural connection and sustainable practices, while picnic facilities foster social interaction. Play opportunities include loose parts play, discovery play, and small-scale nature play equipment, alongside fitness elements for all ages. A natural swale and dry creek bed will provide an accessible water feature, inviting residents to engage with the landscape and reinforcing Valley Verge as a place of movement, ecology, and community.





KEY PLAN



Scale
1:2,000



0m 20 40 60 80 100m

Connecting with Country Alignment

Ecosystems/Perspectives

-  Environmental
-  Social
-  Cultural

Key Themes

-  Protecting Water Country
-  Embedding Custodianship
-  Finding Balance
-  Cultural Exchange

Legend

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 Urban Plaza with Cultural Meeting / Gathering Area and Entry Point | 5 Fitness Zone and Running Track | 9 Artwork/ Sculpture Opportunities |
| 2 Dry Creek Bed / drainage swale | 6 Informal Use Lawns | 10 Picnic Facilities with Shelters, Bike Racks, etc |
| 3 Urban Micro Forest Plantings | 7 Bush Tucker and Urban Foraging | 11 Retained Existing Trees |
| 4 Pedestrian Connections | 8 Nature / Discovery Playspace | 12 Urban Grassland Meadow Plantings |

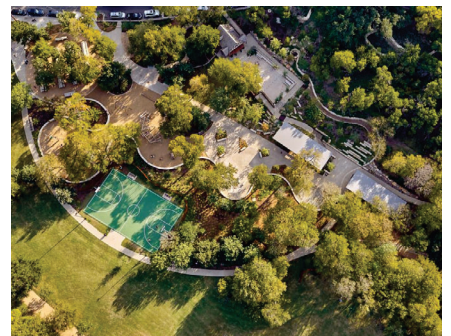
Summit Commons

Summit Commons will be the Molonglo Town Centre's central destination park, where urban density meets nature and culture in a vibrant hilltop landscape of recreation, play, and community connection.

Summit Commons is the heart of Molonglo Town Centre's open space network, shaped by its proximity to the Molonglo River. Water inspires the design theming, with pathways that ripple across natural topography and flow around remnant trees, creating movement and connection. Positioned beside the Commercial Core, it will link the urban plaza to the river corridor, merging urban life with nature and cultural expression. This key destination will offer intergeneration recreation and plays for all abilities, including a skate park, multi-sport courts,

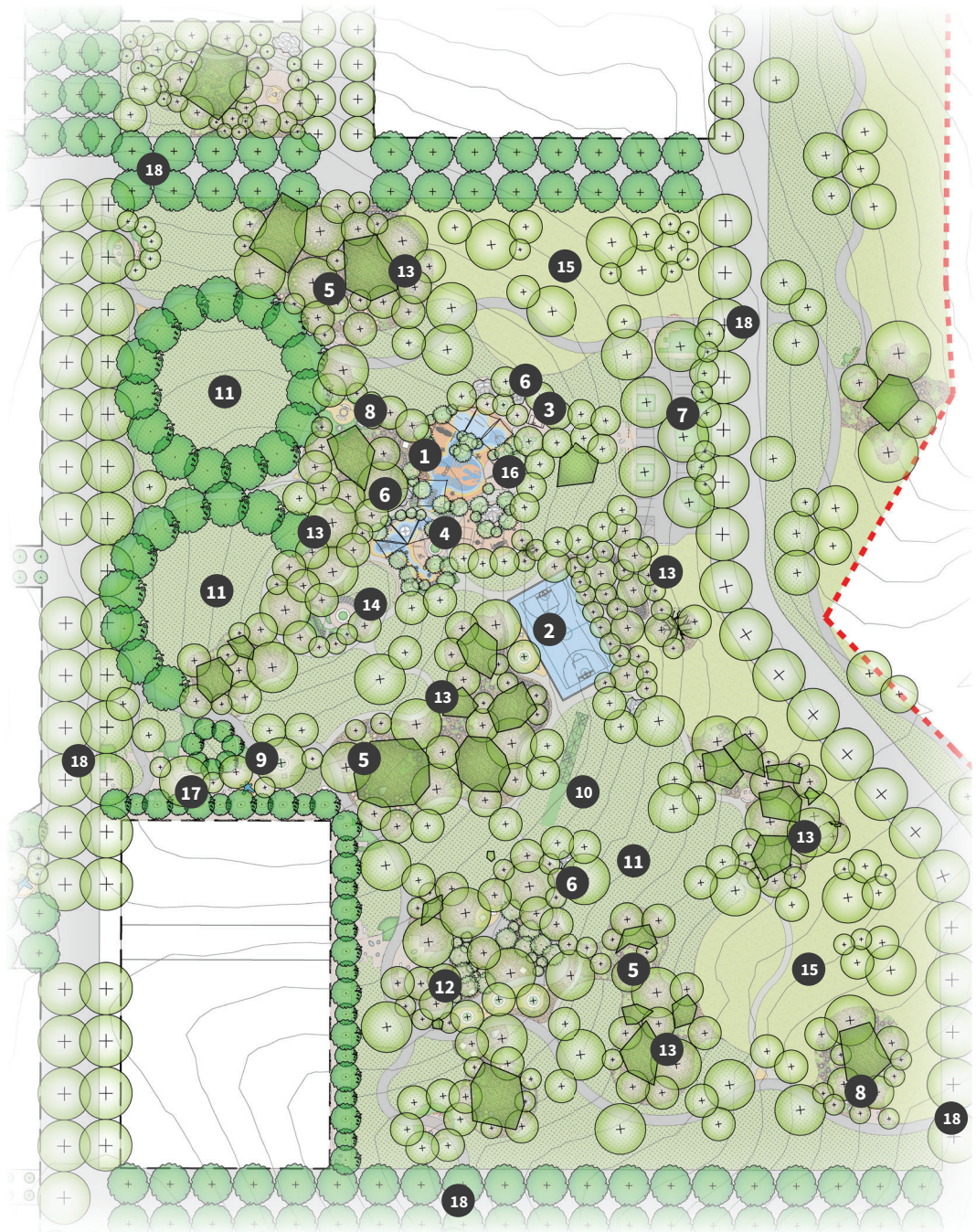
cricket nets, and variety of play experiences. Play equipment, shelters, and amenities will be distinctive, incorporating art, natural materials, and forms that reflect the park's design theme and provide co-design opportunities, while cultural gathering spaces invite storytelling and community events. At its summit, a lookout frames panoramic views of the river and sky, offering moments of reflection and celebration.

Summit Commons will be an inclusive, safe landscape where recreation, culture, and nature converge to shape the identity of Molonglo Town Centre.





KEY PLAN



Connecting with Country Alignment

Scale
1:2,000



0m 20 40 60 80 100m

Ecosystems/Perspectives

- Environmental
- Social
- Cultural

Key Themes

- Protecting Water Country
- Embedding Custodianship
- Finding Balance
- Cultural Exchange

Legend

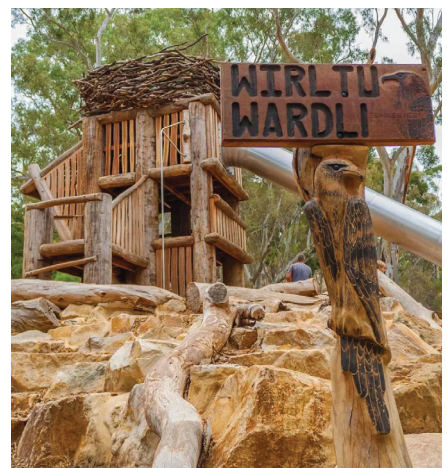
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|--|--|---|
| 1 Intergenerational/ All Abilities Play Space | 7 Carpark | 13 Urban Micro-Forest Plantings |
| 2 Multi-sports Court | 8 Cultural Exchange Point/ Seating Node | 14 Lookout |
| 3 Toilet / Amenity Block | 9 Sculpture / Artwork Opportunities | 15 Urban Grassland Meadow Plantings (Unmown) |
| 4 Junior Play Space with Swing Bank, etc | 10 Cricket Net | 16 Water Play |
| 5 Discovery / Nature Play | 11 Irrigated Grassed Kickabout | 17 Urban Plaza |
| 6 Picnic Facilities with BBQ, Shelters, Bike Racks, etc | 12 Skate Park/ BMX Pump Track | 18 Pedestrian Connections |

Cultural Woodland

The Cultural Woodland will preserve rare Box-Gum Woodland while creating spaces for cultural exchange, art, and learning, where pathways and boardwalks connect nature with community without disturbing ecology.

The Cultural Woodland is a unique landscape that protects Box Gum Woodland and critical habitats of the Gang-gang Cockatoo, Superb Parrot and Pink-tailed Worm-lizard. Aboriginal Cultural Trees of cultural significance highlight the site's deep connection to Country. The design adopts a light-touch approach, carefully using only pockets of land with low habitat value to avoid disturbing sensitive ecology. Raised boardwalks and pathways thread through the woodland, linking open spaces to river reserve trails while maintaining habitat integrity.

The space invites strong Indigenous input, featuring cultural gathering points, sculpture, and play elements enriched with Indigenous art and design. Interpretive signage and bird hides will encourage learning about local flora and fauna, while minimal landscaping ensures conservation. Native tree planting provides shade for facilities, and succession planting around habitat trees supports future hollows and biodiversity. Cultural Woodland is where conservation, culture, and community coexist in harmony.





KEY PLAN



Scale
1:3,000



0m 30 60 90 120 150m

Connecting with Country Alignment

Ecosystems/Perspectives

-  Environmental
-  Social
-  Cultural

Key Themes

-  Protecting Water Country
-  Embedding Custodianship
-  Finding Balance
-  Cultural Exchange

Legend

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Woodland Inspired Nature Playspace | 5 Regenerated Creek/ Drainage Line | 9 Habitat Connectors |
| 2 Elevated Platform/ Boardwalk | 6 Bird Hide | 10 Connection to the River Corridor |
| 3 Cultural Exchange Point/ Seating Node | 7 Retained Rocky Outcrop Zone | 11 Preserved Box-Gum Woodland/Grasslands |
| 4 Viewing Deck with Furniture, Interpretive Signage, etc | 8 Picnic Facilities with Shelters, Furniture, Bike Racks etc | 12 Cultural Gathering Space with Artwork Opportunities |

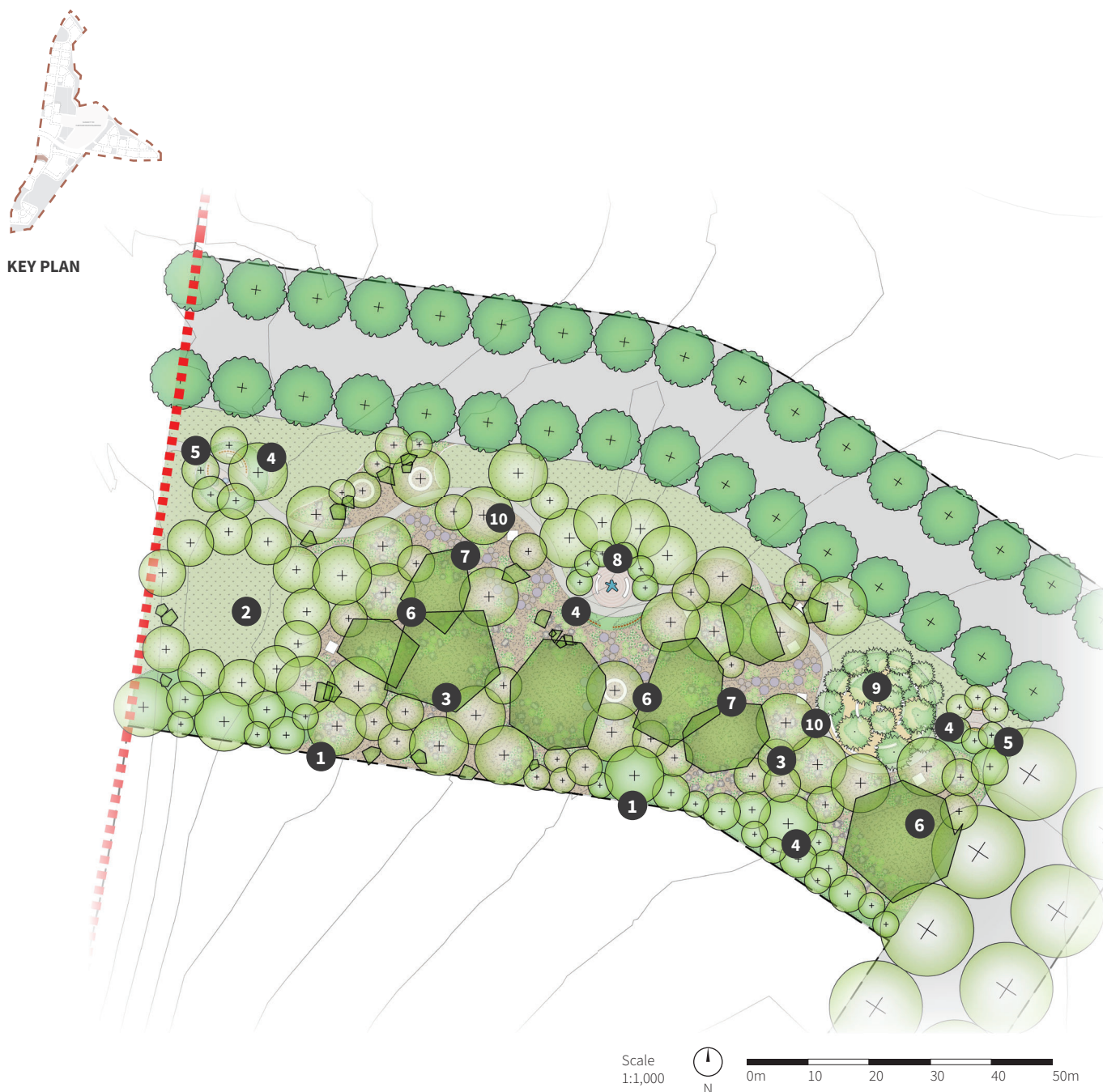
Pocket Park Grove - Discovery

Pocket Park Groves will create linked green sanctuaries, acting as lily pads of remnant vegetation that offer refuge, sensory-rich experiences, and community connection within the urban landscape.

Pocket Park Groves are restorative landscapes designed to reconnect people with nature within the urban environment. Acting as communal backyards, they provide shade, seating, and quiet spaces for reflection and social interaction. Meandering paths follow natural contours, while low-impact infrastructure protects remnant trees. In larger parcels, groves serve as green gateways between neighbourhoods, using dense planting and art screens to create privacy and a sense of arrival.

Therapeutic features such as mindfulness trails and fitness equipment encourage active and mindful engagement, while natural boulders, logs, and steppers offer informal play and habitat opportunities. Native planting enhances biodiversity, while integrated art opportunities encourage cultural engagement and foster community stewardship of the space. Pocket Park Groves are healing landscapes where ecology, culture, and community thrive together.





Connecting with Country Alignment

Ecosystems/Perspectives

-  Environmental
-  Social
-  Cultural

Key Themes

-  Protecting Water Country
-  Embedding Custodianship
-  Finding Balance
-  Cultural Exchange

Legend

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1 Buffer / Screening Plantings | 5 Entry Marker with Seating | 9 Therapeutic/ Mindfulness Maze |
| 2 Informal Grassed Kick-about | 6 Retained Existing Trees | 10 Recreation Opportunities (E.g. Chess Tables, Charging Points etc) |
| 3 Urban Micro Forest Plantings with Informal Seating Opportunities, etc | 7 Informal Nature / Discovery Play | |
| 4 Planting Zones with Sensory Plantings | 8 Artwork/ Sculpture opportunity | |

Pocket Park Grove

- Vitality

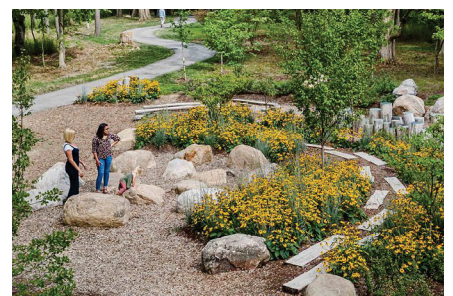
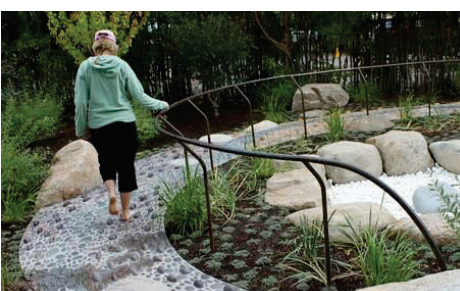
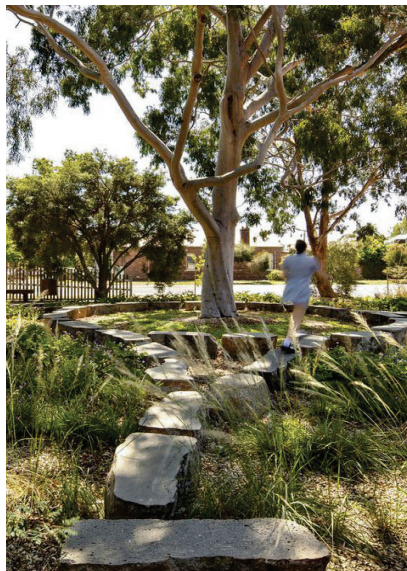
Pocket Park Groves will transform compact, steep sites into intimate sanctuaries, retaining remnant eucalypts and embracing natural topography to create immersive, multi-sensory spaces for play, reflection, and connection to Country.

Pocket Park Groves celebrate existing ecology by retaining remnant eucalypts and working with natural landform.

These spaces will use low-impact paths, boardwalks, and informal seating to protect mature trees while creating opportunities for discovery and habitat. Steep level changes become features, offering informal play through natural boulders, logs, and steppers. Each grove promotes physical, mental, and emotional well-being through sensory-rich design, incorporating

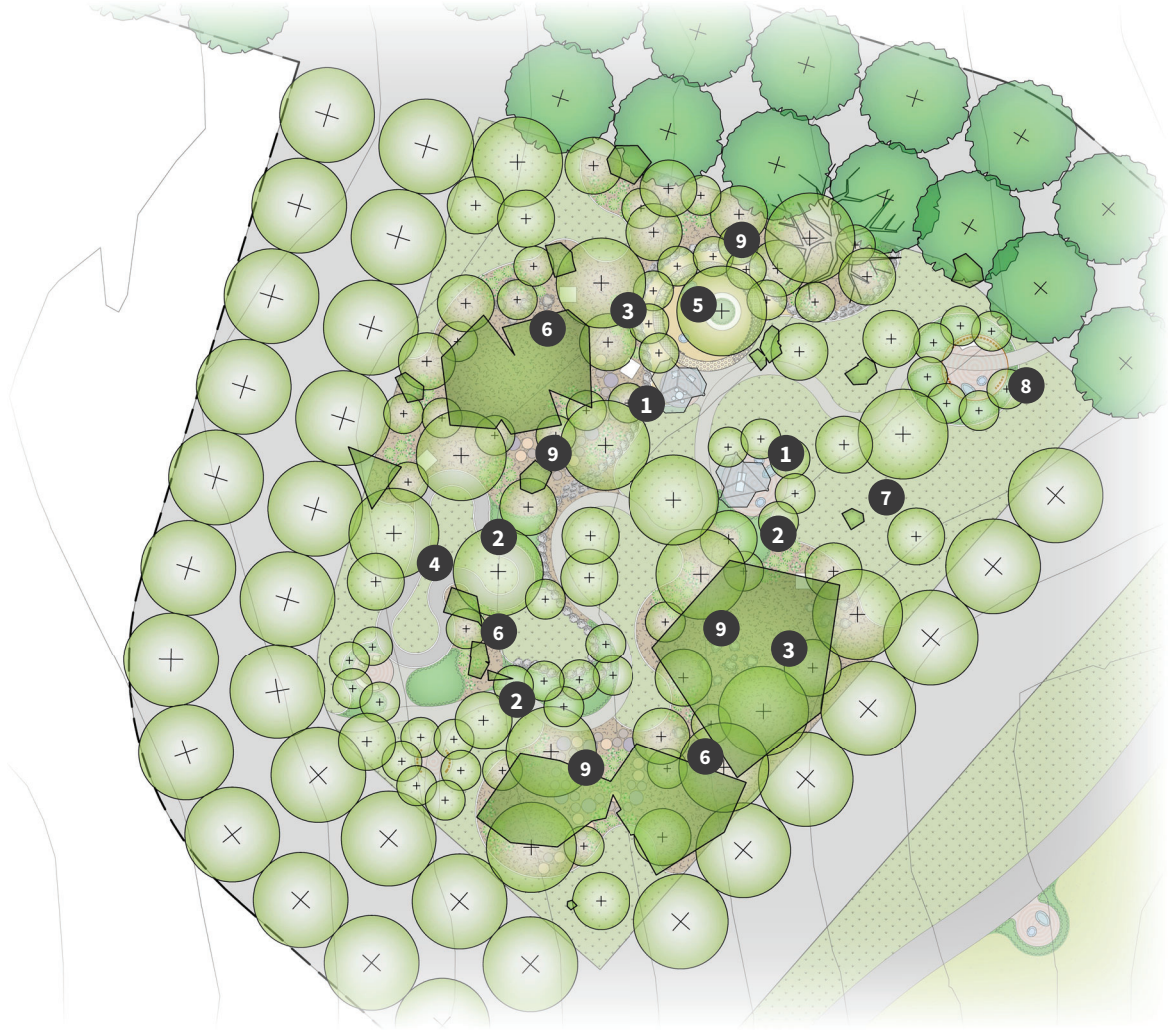
textures, scents, sounds, and colours.

Quiet areas encourage reflection, while therapeutic elements such as labyrinths and reflexology circuits invite mindful engagement. Native halo and succession planting strengthen habitat value, while integrated art opportunities encourage cultural engagement and foster community stewardship of the space. Pocket Park Groves are healing landscapes for everyday life, where nature and community coexist in harmony.





KEY PLAN



Scale 1:500 0m 5 10 15 20 25m

Connecting with Country Alignment

Ecosystems/Perspectives

-  Environmental
-  Social
-  Cultural

Key Themes

-  Protecting Water Country
-  Embedding Custodianship
-  Finding Balance
-  Cultural Exchange

Legend

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1 Picnic Area with Shade and Seating | 4 Pump Track | 7 Informal Grassed Kickabout |
| 2 Planting Zones with Sensory Plantings | 5 Therapeutic/ Reflexology Circuit | 8 Entry Marker with Seating |
| 3 Urban Micro Forest Plantings with Informal Seating Opportunities, etc | 6 Retained Existing Trees | 9 Balance Circuit/Discovery Play |

River View Retreats

River View Retreats will offer calm spaces for rest and reflection, provide visual links to the Molonglo River and celebrate Sky and Water County.

River View Retreats are a series of seating nodes and lookouts positioned along the development's edge, providing visual and physical connections to the Molonglo River Reserve. These spaces will invite people to pause, enjoy sweeping views of the adjacent landscape, and appreciate the cultural and ecological significance of the Molonglo River. Interpretive signage will offer opportunities for learning, while special paving and markings on the shared path alert cyclists to slow down and watch for pedestrians, ensuring

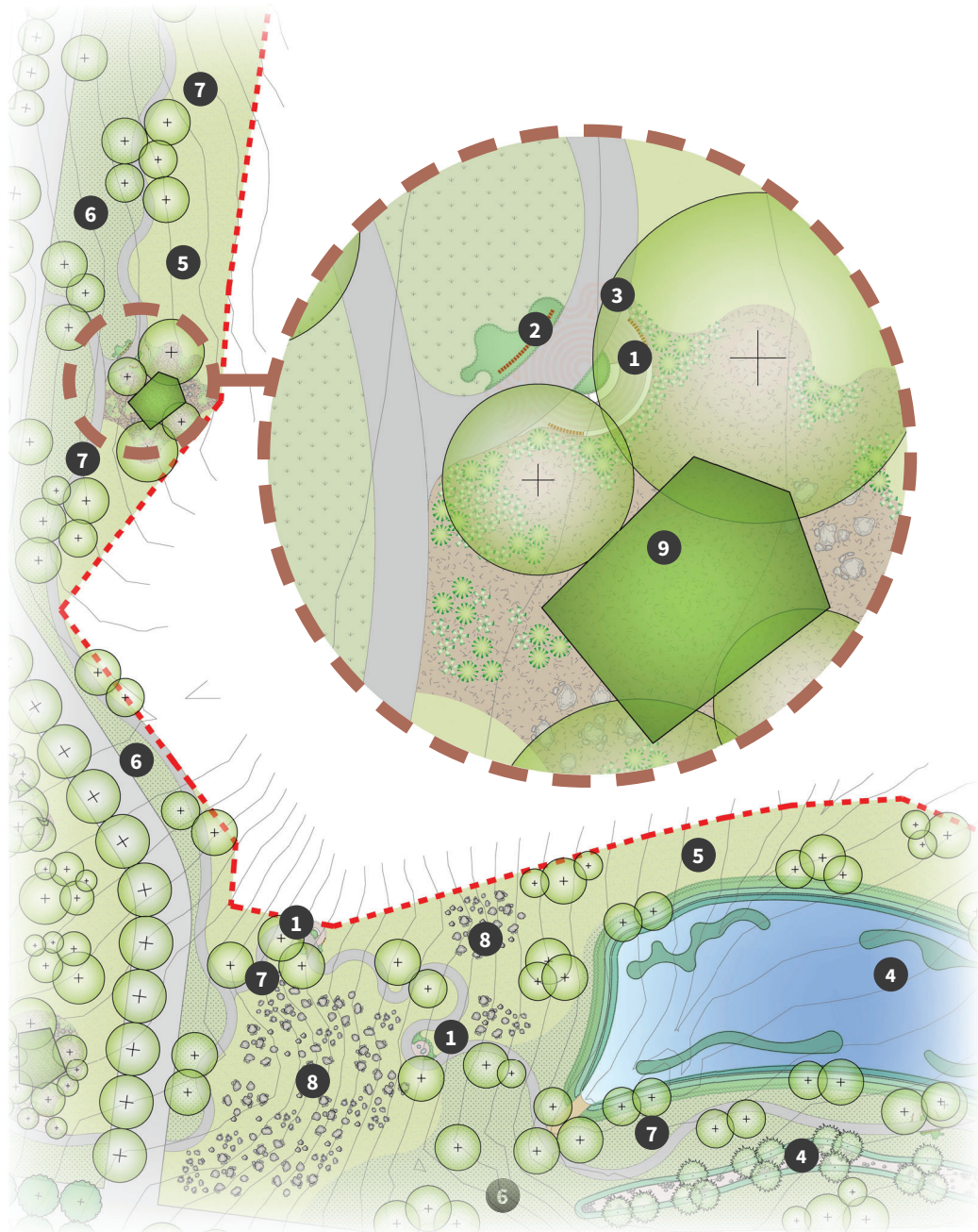
safety and comfort. Each retreat is designed to feel immersed in nature rather than suburbia, using screening and planting to frame views and block visual clutter. Seating, shade, and natural materials enhance the experience, while cultural and artistic elements add identity and meaning.

River View Retreats are places for rest, reflection, and connection, where movement and passive recreation meet moments of stillness and reflection.





KEY PLAN



Scale 1:500 0m 5 10 15 20 25m

Connecting with Country Alignment

Ecosystems/Perspectives

- Environmental
- Social
- Cultural

Key Themes

- Protecting Water Country
- Embedding Custodianship
- Finding Balance
- Cultural Exchange

Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Seating Node/ Lookout with Interpretive Signage, Seating, Art Screens etc | 6 Traditional Maintenance Zone (Mown Grass) |
| 2 Screening/ Buffer Planting | 7 Native Shade Tree Plantings |
| 3 Decorative Paving/ Wayfinding, Slow Point | 8 Retained Rocky Outcrop Zone |
| 4 WSUD Basins, Swales, etc | 9 Retained Existing Tree with Native Succession Plantings |
| 5 Untraditional Maintenance Zone (Unmown Grass) | |

Biodiversity, Tree Retention and Sustainability

The approach to biodiversity and remnant tree retention for MTC establishes a layered framework of tree management and maintenance approaches to preserve ecological values, protect cultural features, and create a safe, functional public realm.

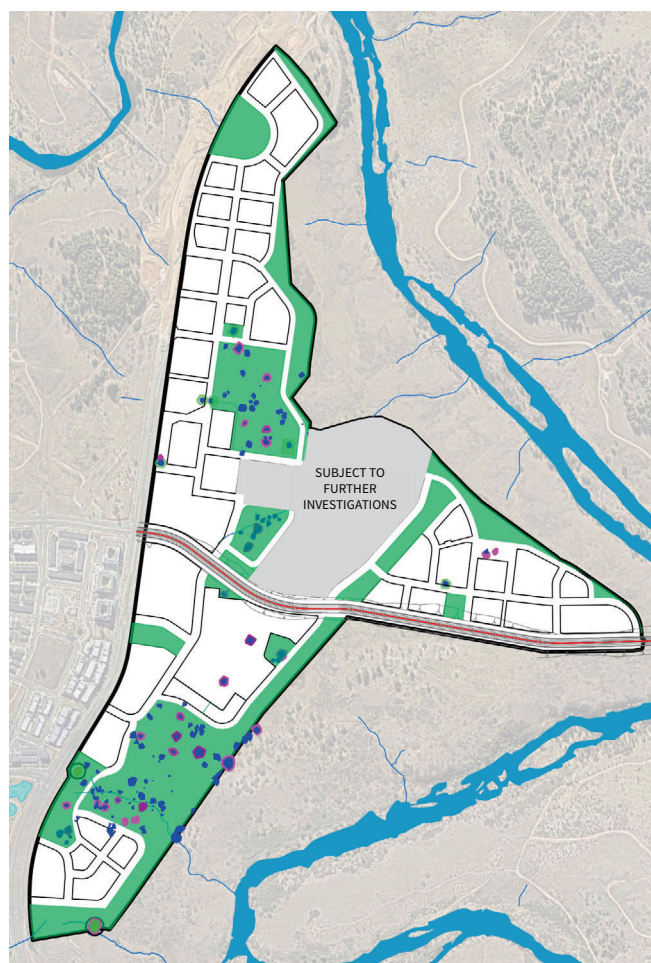
Tree retention and removals in MTC focus on ecological and cultural priorities, safeguarding habitat clusters, culturally significant trees, and endangered species while balancing development requirements.

Sustainability is being delivered through an integrated, place-led approach that complements this framework. The Master Plan prioritises significant tree retention, minimisation of cut and fill, and climate responsive street networks and building orientation, alongside integration

with potential future light rail, bus services and high-quality active travel networks.

Social sustainability is embedded through acknowledgement of Country and the application of Designing with Country frameworks, delivery of a diverse range of community facilities, family-friendly and adaptable apartment typologies, and a structure that supports iterative growth and evolution of the Town Centre over time.

This framework will act as the overarching mechanism to integrate environmental, transport and social sustainability initiatives into the Master Plan, providing a clear pathway for delivery and independent verification of outcomes.



Biodiversity Sensitive Design Urban Design (BSUD) Strategy

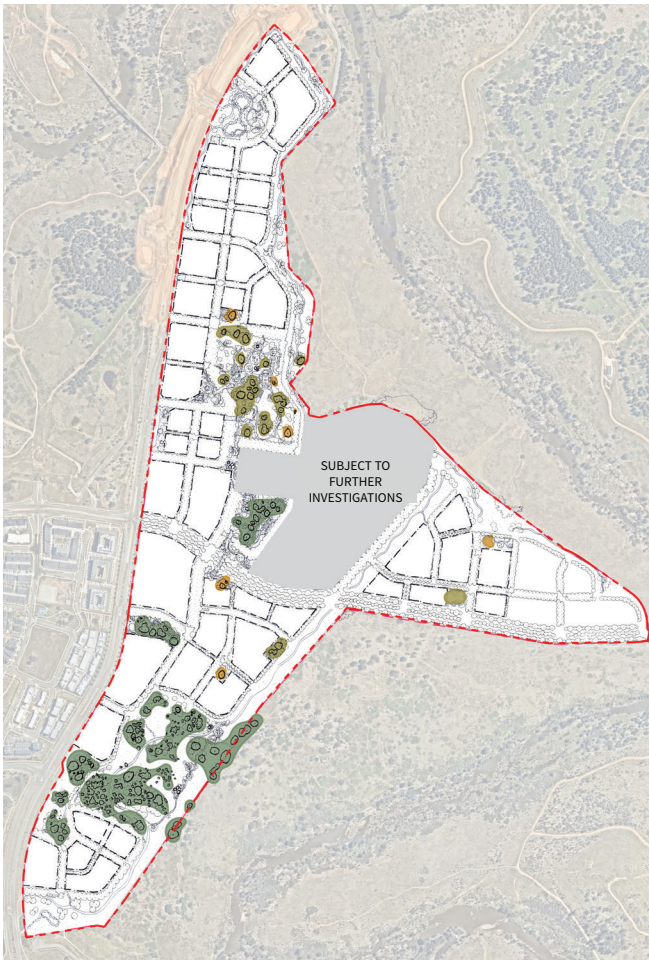
The above demonstrates a three tiered approach to the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design and associated tree retention.

This strategy responds to the extensive environmental mapping, surveys and assessment of the site encompassing ecological values, tree quality and hollow-bearing and habitat surveys.

To balance ecological priorities with urban design, three tree retention typologies have been developed:

- Large Integrated Tree Clusters with Ecological Overlays
- Small Tree Clusters with Alternative Understorey Treatments
- Single Remnant Trees in Open Space Pockets

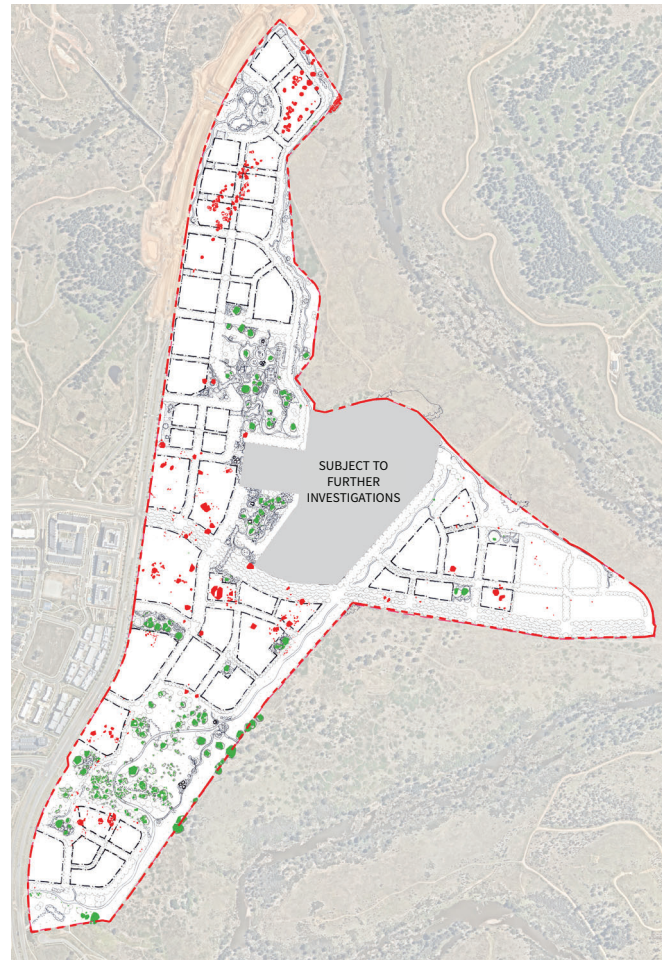
Together, these approaches integrate biodiversity and green infrastructure into the urban environment while supporting the evolving identity of Molonglo Town Centre.



Approach to Remnant Tree Retention

The approach to landscape design at MTC establishes a framework for managing remnant trees, focusing on ecological integrity, cultural significance, and public amenity while setting clear principles for retention, removal, and long-term stewardship.

The landscape design approach considers climate-conscious practices, reuse of tree material, alternative understorey treatments, and cultural access for Traditional Custodians. Key aspirations include ensuring that all removed tree material remains on-site, with half used for habitat enhancement and half re-purposed within public spaces. The strategy also aims to maintain soil permeability beneath retained trees, establish minimum five-metre Tree Protection Zones wherever practicable, and apply a forest-informed approach to new planting and succession planning.



Tree Retention

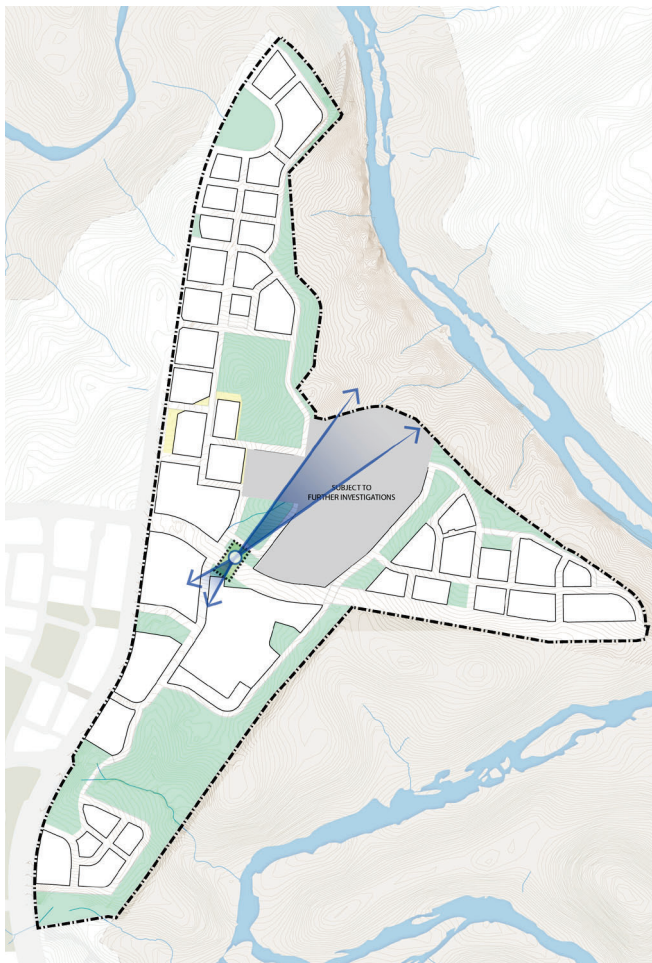
The Molonglo Town Centre Master Plan prioritises ecological and cultural values over aesthetics. Rather than focusing on visual qualities of individual trees such as habit or form, the Master Plan prioritises preserving large clusters of high-quality habitat, including nesting and hollow-bearing trees, regardless of their visual appeal. Registered and Aboriginal Cultural Trees have been located within open space parcels, away from roads and civil infrastructure, to ensure they are not negatively impacted by development.

This approach ensures the continuity of biodiversity corridors, protects habitat for endangered species such as the Gang-gang Cockatoo and Superb Parrot, and maintains culturally significant landscape features.

Activation

Overview

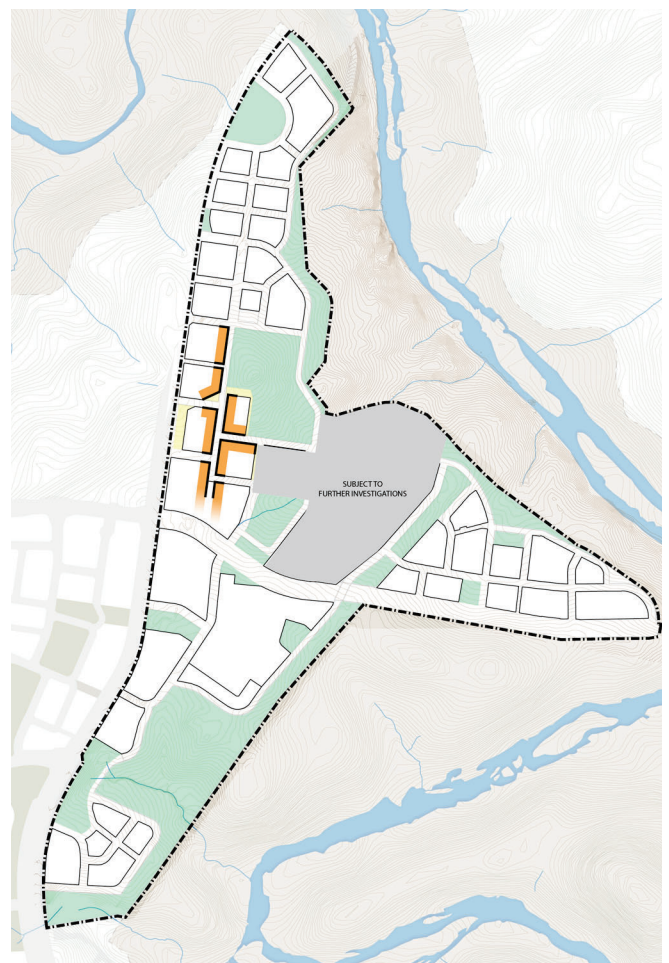
The Placemaking and Activation Strategy for MTC is built on the following foundations that are both aspirational in acknowledging the role of social connectedness in community activation but also practical in commercial realisation.



The Arrival Experience

Rather than forcing an active edge to achieve a 'front door' arrival experience; the MTC Master Plan leverages the natural assets of the site to curate the arrival experience to follow where natural and genuine activation will occur in the short to long-term development of MTC.

As a response to this, the Master Plan intentionally establishes an arrival experience just to the east of this intersection where the systems of Place, landscape and Country come together.



Main Street and Active Frontages

A concentration of active ground floor commercial, retail and community uses will provide a diverse and active main street and east-west community connector aligned with the MTC Design Principles rather than distributing it and/or focusing on car-based thoroughfares such as John Gorton Drive and the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector. To further support the Master Plan activation, committed community uses and facilities are leveraged as an early activation technique with a focus on the Community Centre and Library attached to the Main Street and the Summit Commons Park and the Sport and Recreation Facility linking the Main Street to the Education Precinct.

Movement & Place

Overview

The components of a street are often understood through the dual concepts of movement and place, articulated in the widely adopted Movement and Place Framework and must be considered as part of a single system rather than in isolation.

Street character extends beyond its legal boundaries. It blurs into the private domain, where elements such as building frontages, setbacks, and landscaping contribute to the overall identity of the street. The relationship between public and private realms is therefore fundamental in shaping the experience and character of the street.

The performance of a street is not only determined by the presence of individual elements, but also by the quantum and configuration of those elements.

For example, movement functions directly influence place qualities. The way people travel through an area, like safe walking and cycling routes, public transport and lower traffic speeds, influences how the place is experienced. When more people are encouraged to walk, there is increased demand for wider footpaths and improved public spaces. In turn, this creates opportunities for street activity, which enhance the overall quality and usability of the place.

The proposed transport networks ensure streets are designed as both movement corridors and places for people. Transport decisions—such as street design, travel priorities and key connections—have been shaped to support vibrant, safe and accessible public spaces. By integrating these elements, the plan ensures that how people move through the area directly contributes to the quality, character and liveability of its places.

The master plan explicitly links movement decisions—such as speed, priority and street design—to desired place outcomes, showing how they contribute to safer, more comfortable, and vibrant environments that support social and economic activity. Design speeds are clearly translated into on-the-ground street conditions, demonstrating how they influence user behaviour, street character and everyday experience.

Character Area- Led Design Speeds

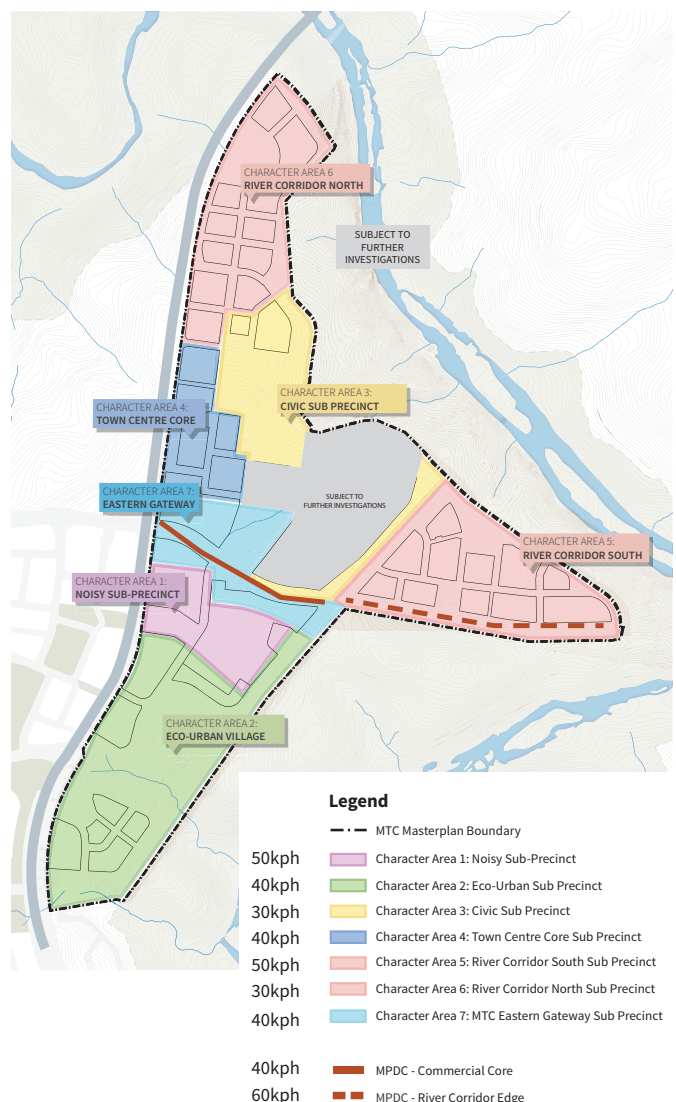
The Character Areas provide a framework to guide and drive posted/ design speeds that contribute to the intended experience of MTC and are directly linked to the Movement and Place Principles.

Generally, a 40kph baseline to promote walking, safety, gathering and activation will be adopted in the MTC.

30kph is proposed for the Civic Sub-Precinct which includes the schools, sport and recreation and community uses and River Corridor North Sub-Precinct to create Active Travel Street environments where there are higher concentrations of residential apartments/ density in the fringe of high amenity.

50kph is recommended for the Noisy Precinct to support uses such as the police station.

The River Corridor South Sub-Precinct and MPDC adjoining the River Corridor South Sub-Precinct are proposed to provide 60kph as a transitional speed to the 40kph Eastern Gateway segment of the Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector (MPDC). These design speeds have been proposed in consultation with ACT Government's City and Environment Directorate and Infrastructure Canberra.



Active Travel

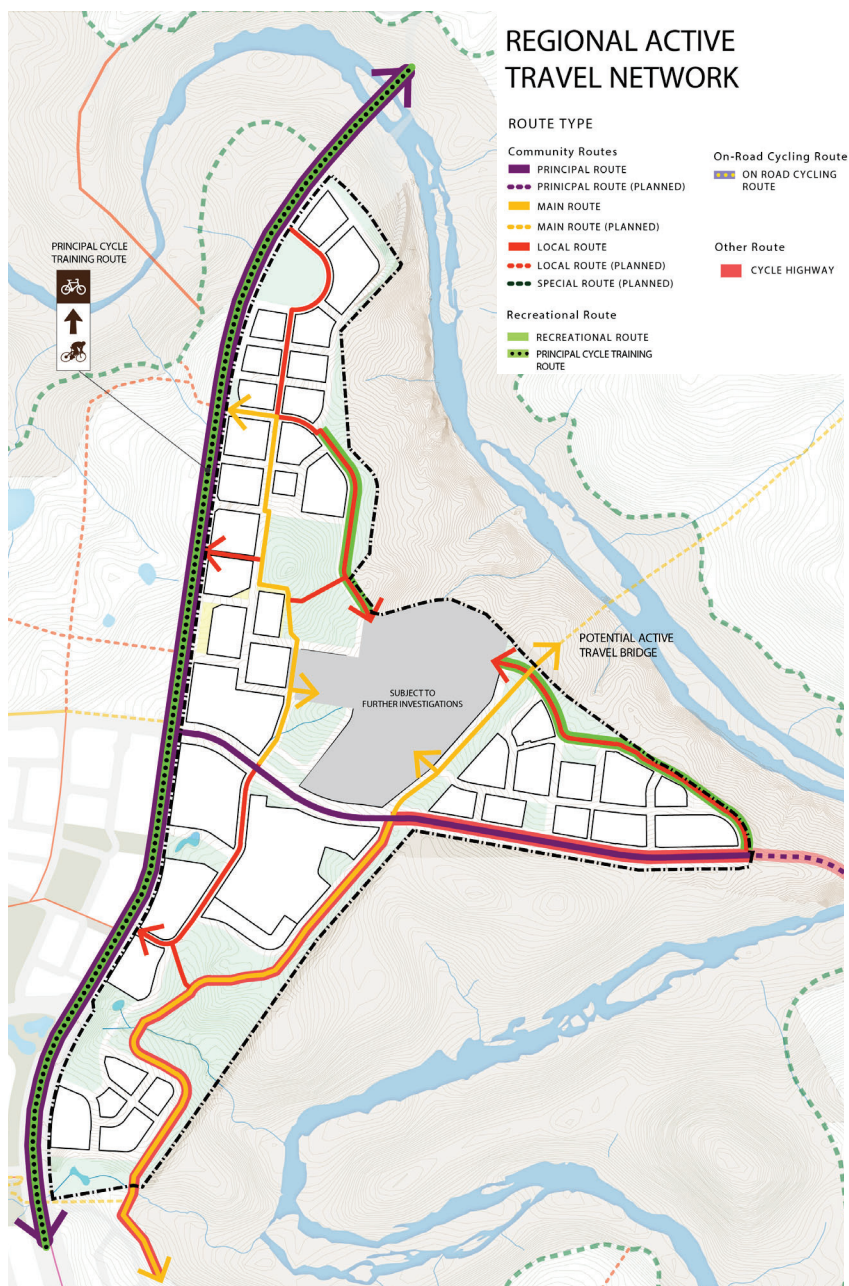
Overview

The approach to active travel plays a key role in the development of the multi-modal strategy for the MTC, with the understanding that pedestrian, cyclist and public transport uses will be interconnected with the road corridors across the network.

Active Travel Plan

The following principles are established for MTC to create a strong active transport network:

- Continuity of, and connection to, the Regional Community Routes, Classification and Hierarchy.
- Connect residents and visitors to key destinations including the Commercial Core, Sport and Recreation Facility, Community Facilities, Education Precinct, River Corridor and high amenity open spaces.
- Contribute to a Multi Modal Transport Network linking to potential future light rail and bus stops.
- The Principal Route runs along the northern side of Molonglo Parkway Drive Connector through to John Gorton Drive.
- Remove pedestrian and cycle path facility redundancies whilst prioritising separated and designated single and bi-directional routes in high activity areas such as around the Commercial Core and community areas.



Public Transport

Overview

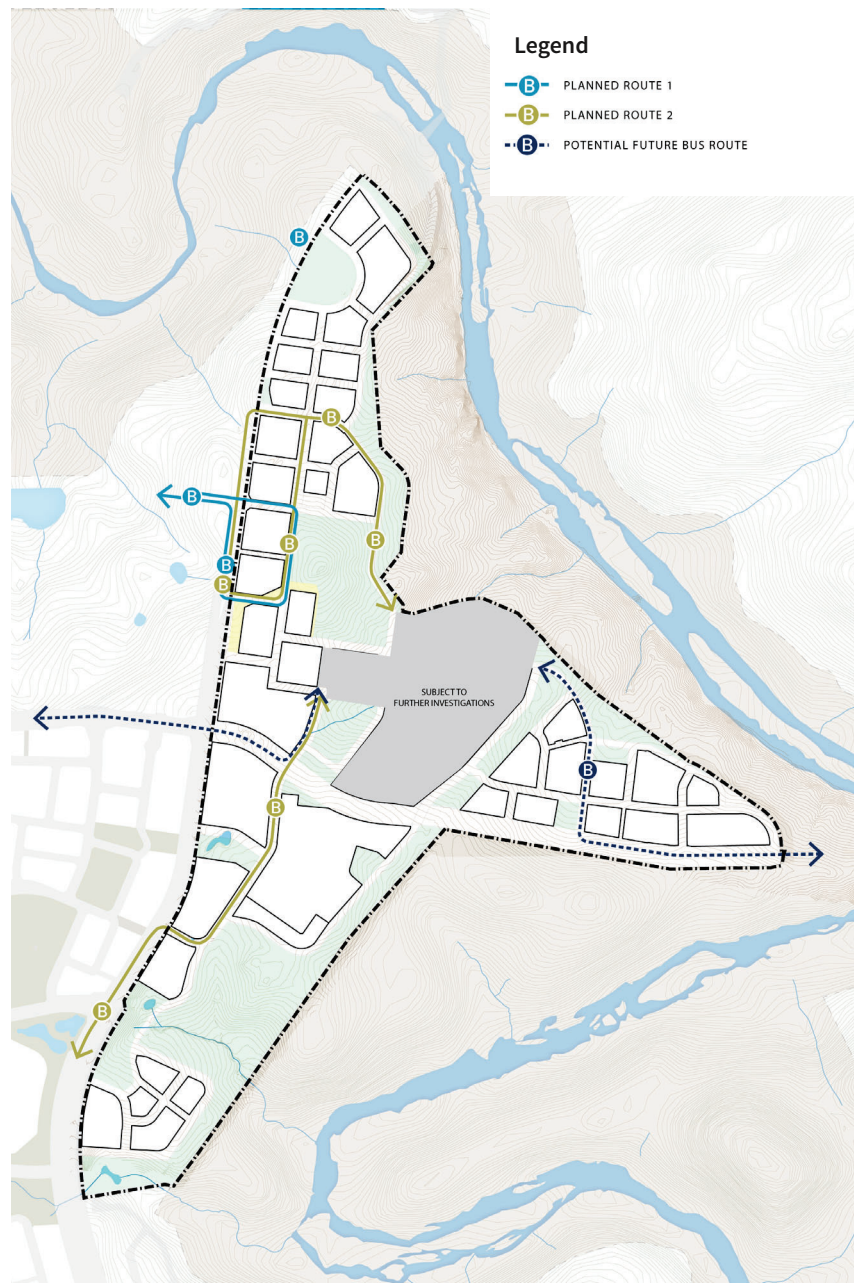
A balanced public transport plan aims to ensure that all ages and abilities have direct access to key destinations and to the Main Street, linking into the broader regional network and future- proofing long term expansion provisions to align with growing population catchment.

The Multi Modal and Public Transport Plan gives particular attention to the grading challenges at MTC, noting that there is a significant level change of approximately 14m (or the equivalent of 4 storeys) from the outer edge of Summit Commons Park to the Main Street).

Public Transport Plan

Bus movements which run through the site will aim to terminate at a bus interchange along John Gorton Drive, which will provide connectivity to rapid bus routes which are set to run along John Gorton Drive and the MPDC. The local bus route planning retains the access to, and co-location of, the potential future light rail and bus interchange on John Gorton Drive and access to the main street whilst liberating the main street from heavy infrastructure requirements that may take away from the aspirations of human scale and urbanity.

Eventually, rapid bus routes are planned to be replaced with a future potential future light rail route which will run along John Gorton Drive. With a stop planned immediately adjacent to the Commercial Core of the Molonglo Town Centre, this stop will be within convenient walking distance to the bus interchange, allowing for easy transfer between local and inter-regional travel.





Molonglo Town Centre Place Vision

The Master Plan presents an exciting milestone and foundational work to progress the preparation of Subdivision Design and Detailed Design for MTC aligned with the MTC Vision.

SUBJECT TO
FURTHER
INVESTIGATIONS





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