

Western Edge

WESTON CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Presented by ACT Minister and Member for Murrumbidgee Emma Davidson



- Elected to ACT Parliament 2020
- Minister for Mental Health
- Minister for Justice Health
- Minister for Disability
- Minister for Veterans and Seniors
- Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services: carers, youth justice, volunteers, emergency relief (eg social recovery from bushfires and storms), community recovery from COVID

CLIMATE CRISIS, EXTINCTION CRISIS & HOUSING CRISIS



- Extinction Crisis
- Habitat loss
- Climate crisis
- Housing crisis
- Inequality crisis
- Competing priorities, pressure to solve it all at once.
- There's no time left not to do everything

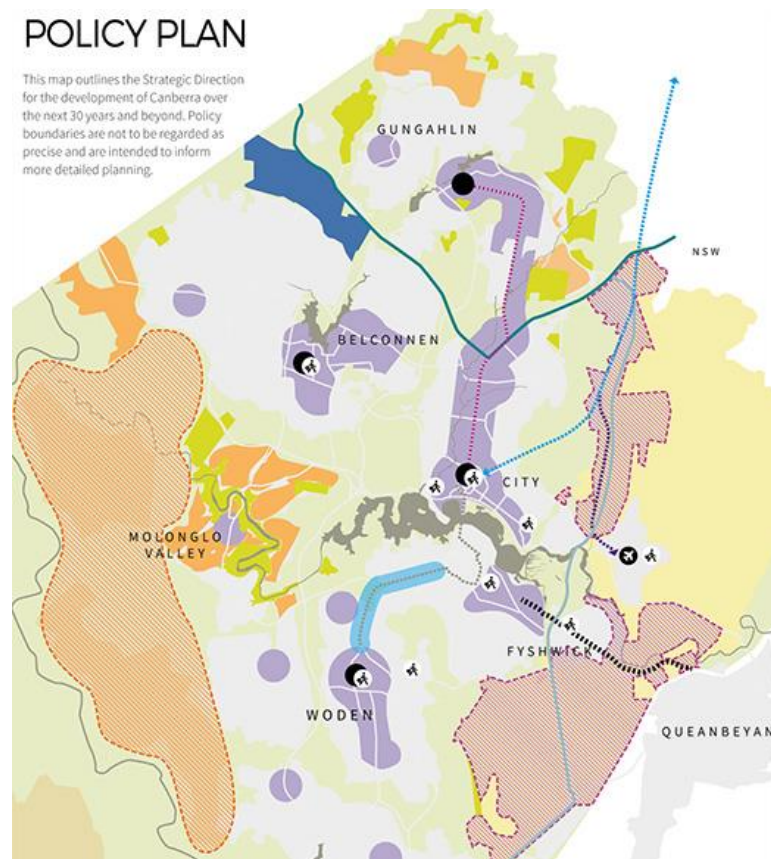


WHAT IS THE WESTERN EDGE?

- Identified in 2012 and 2018 Planning Strategies for investigation.
- 9,800 hectares bordered by Murrumbidgee River, Weston Creek, Molonglo Valley & Belconnen
- Orange cross-hatch is Western Edge Investigation area.

POLICY PLAN

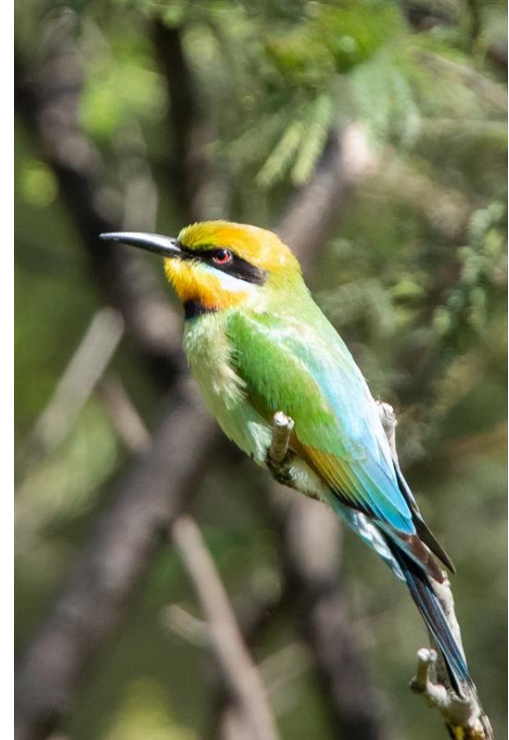
This map outlines the Strategic Direction for the development of Canberra over the next 30 years and beyond. Policy boundaries are not to be regarded as precise and are intended to inform more detailed planning.



INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED



- Contamination Assessment
- Preliminary Geotechnical and Hydrological Assessment
- Water Values and Environmental Hydrology Assessment
- Landscape Character Values and Visual Assessment
- Preliminary Bushfire Risk Assessment
- Preliminary Air Quality Assessment
- Preliminary Assessment of Engineering Infrastructure
- Cultural Heritage Assessment



INVESTIGATIONS NOT YET COMPLETE



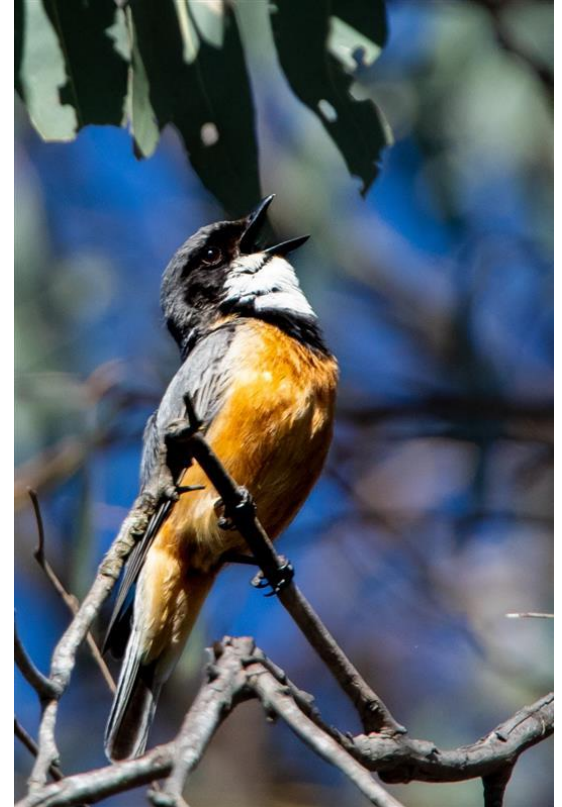
- Further surveys still to come. Full investigations = 17 years to complete.
- 'IF urban development is proposed in the Western Edge, it may be at least 10 years away' - subject to: completion of detailed studies; Government decisions; community engagement; budget funding; Commonwealth & ACT statutory planning & environmental approvals (June 2022)



WHERE CAN I SEE WESTERN EDGE INVESTIGATIONS ALREADY DONE?



- 2020 and 2021 studies:
<https://www.planning.act.gov.au/planning-our-city/planning-studies/western-edge-investigation>
- 2022 small native mammal survey:
https://www.environment.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2090091/research-report-a-preliminary-survey-of-small-native-mammals-and-their-habitat-at-stromlo-east-and-west.pdf



DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FOR LAND ADJACENT TO BLUETT'S BLOCK



- <https://www.planning.act.gov.au/development-applications-assessments/development-applications/da-details?da-number=202341900&amendment-version=>
- Submissions close 19 October 2023



- Greens campaigned in 2020 to protect Bluetts Block and move it into the Molonglo River Nature Reserve. Remains our policy
- Bluetts needs protection
- Area needing protection much bigger than Bluetts alone so we need to run the environmental investigations and properly protect the full wildlife corridors and buffers.
- Complementary work is identifying new values: recent small mammal survey



HOW WILL WE LOOK AFTER OUR PEOPLE IF WE DON'T DEVELOP WESTERN EDGE?



- Build smaller dwellings.
- Compact city & urban density.
- IPCC & climate-smart development.



HOW WILL WE LOOK AFTER OUR PEOPLE IF WE DON'T DEVELOP WESTERN EDGE?



- Build smaller dwellings. (58.4% of ACT households are 1 or 2 people, 70.6% of dwellings are 3 or more bedrooms).
- Compact city & urban density, townhouses, duplexes and low-rise apartments.
- IPCC & climate-smart development.
- Existing pipeline of greenfield housing (Table).
- Also tens of thousands of new infill dwellings across Canberra. Belconnen town centre current pipeline is >3,000. Also Eastlake, Acton Waterfront, Northbourne, Woden Town Centre.

District	Current (21 Census)	Future
Molonglo	4,601 Dwellings	22,000 (~ 17,399 new) (draft district strategy)
Ginninderry	283 Dwellings	11,500 (~11,217 new) (Ginninderry Masterplan)
Gungahlin	31,952	3,780 new dwellings (ILRP 2022-27) 5,900 new dwellings (Draft District Strategy)
Lawson Stage 2	0	940 new dwellings (ACT Government)
CSIRO Ginninderra (potential)	0	3,500 new dwellings (2019 ACT Land and Property Report)
North Weston	0	800 (ACT Land and Property Report)
North Lawson (DHA)	0	416 (Defence Housing Australia)

GREENS POLICIES TO REPAIR THE LAND



- Government agree to 70/30 split. Greens say 80/20 with a view to no more urban sprawl. City limits.
- Wildlife corridor protection.
- Protect remnant woodlands & grasslands.
- Protect environmentally significant areas in West Molonglo.
- No development West Murrumbidgee.



- Where do we put our people?
- How do we protect our environment?
- How do we reduce emissions?
- What kind of city do we want? What kind of world?



- Jo Clay MLA – working to secure better nature protection for places like Bluetts Block, Lawson grasslands, Coombs Peninsula, Ainslie Volcanics etc
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