

Community Engagement
Your Say – ACT Government

KAMBAH GROUP CENTRE UPGRADE CONSULTATION

Dear Community Engagement team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the revitalisation of the Kambah Group Centre. The draft preliminary design features many of the design elements I consider to be essential for the creation of inviting, functional and sustainable urban spaces.

To further strengthen the proposed plans, the Kambah upgrade should acknowledge and incorporate climate change adaptation measures in its design. While *the Kambah Group Centre Master Plan* notes various actions under Sustainability, these points are complimentary to yet distinct from climate change adaptation actions. Noting the expected future local climate scenario detailed in the *ACT Climate Change Adaptation Strategy* of higher average temperatures and incidence of heat waves, and increasingly sporadic rainfall events, it is essential that designs account for these expected climate trends to ensure our urban spaces remain functional.

In accordance with my role as Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, I encourage the ACT Government to consider the following points in the planning and development of the Kambah Group Centre.

Climate change adaptation considerations

Urban forest

Trees are an essential part of the streetscape. They reduce temperatures through shade and evapotranspiration (trees ‘breathe’ which cools the air), reducing the Urban Heat Island Effect – this will be increasingly important as our local climate changes. Street trees provide habitat and support biodiversity, and of course add beauty and character to our environment.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

Pervious pavement reduces the volume of storm water ‘surges’ during heavy rain. Rain water collecting gardens also limit surges and reduce pollutant flows into nearby water bodies. Gross pollutant traps such as drain baskets, trash racks and pipe nets prevent litter from entering our waterways.

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This Office is independent of, but funded by, the ACT Government.

General sustainability-focused design considerations

Use of native species

Native plant species increase biodiversity and provide habitat in areas where they are planted. There are several opportunities to use natives in raised garden beds, rain gardens and for planted median strips.

Waste and recycling bins

Generous placement of waste and recycling bins contribute to sustainable streetscapes by reducing litter. Bins with signage provide an additional benefit as they can be used to inform the community about what can be recycled.

Cycle facilities

Wide, well marked cycle paths can promote active transport. Ample parking near entrances to retail spaces and co-located with bus stops can promote use of public transport services. More cyclists means less vehicle traffic, benefitting all users of the transport system.

Connectivity

Street signage and cycle path markings that indicate distances to local attractions, public transport hubs and shopping centres connect the street with the transport network.

Inviting retail spaces

Open frontage ensures retail spaces contribute to street vibrancy and provide a level of security through surveillance.

Recycled and sustainable materials

Locally sourced, reclaimed or recycled construction materials minimise the environmental impact of redevelopment. These materials can be used for landscaping, shop frontage and other elements of the streetscape. Recycling demolition waste reduces landfill, encourages efficiencies and stimulates life cycle thinking.

Community spaces and public art

Public artworks, community events, container gardens, pop-up galleries, performance art and the like all help to build community pride and identity, inspire civic participation, improve local economies, and promote better health and well being. Spaces should be pro-actively provided for such activities.

Safety

Reduced speed limits, ample LED street lighting, open frontage in retail spaces and line-of-sight surveillance to the street from residential buildings all contribute to safer streets.

Pedestrian friendly areas

A streetscape that places the emphasis on people through wide footpaths, frequent road crossings and traffic calming measures. Comfortable, sheltered areas to rest and socialise also contribute to making community and family friendly spaces. Care should be taken to ensure that street design considers older users.

Amenity features

Seating areas, water bottle refilling stations and bubblers, pet tie-up points and drinking bowls, free entertainment such as interactive art, and interpretive signage are all features that would contribute to a vibrant streetscape - a streetscape that is a destination, not just transit.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Kambah Group Centre Upgrade.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Auty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Kate Auty
Commissioner for Sustainability
and the Environment

20 October 2016