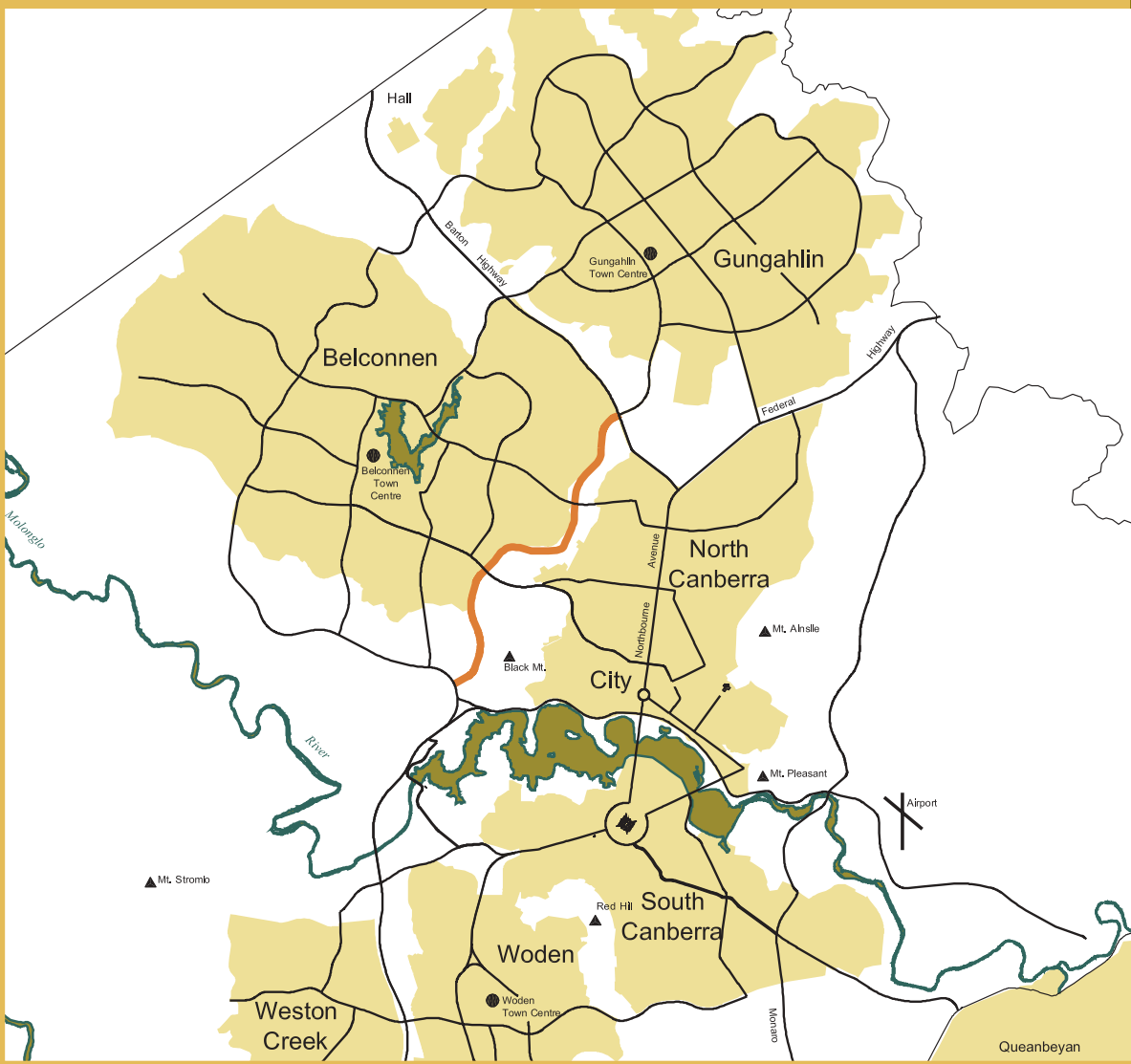


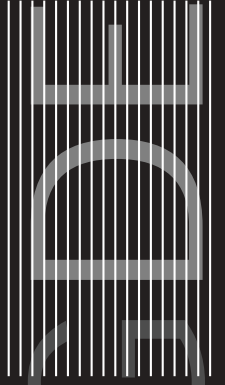


# Gungahlin Drive Extension Assessment

DECEMBER  
2002



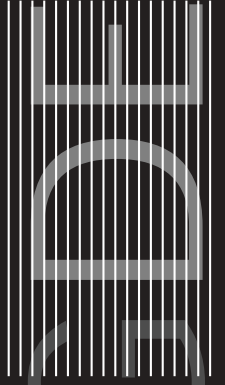
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# GDE Information Kit

## Fact Sheets

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a Commonwealth statutory agency
- 2** Background
- 3** The Consultants
- 4** Consultant Executive Summary
- 5** The National Capital Authority Position



## 1 National Capital Authority— a Commonwealth statutory agency

The National Capital Authority secures the continuing Commonwealth interest in the planning and development of Canberra and the Territory as the National Capital.

The National Capital Authority, a statutory authority established under the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 (the Act), has prepared and administers the National Capital Plan to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.

The National Capital Plan (the Plan) sets out the broad planning framework for all of the Australian Capital Territory, and provides detailed planning policies and guidelines for areas designated as having the special characteristics of the National Capital. Works in Designated Areas requires the approval of the National Capital Authority.

The Act specifically requires the Plan to set out policies in relation to the planning of national and arterial road systems throughout the Territory.

The Australian Institute of Sport is a national institution with a particular status in the National Capital Plan which requires a development control plan agreed by the Authority.

The Plan recognises the importance of the natural setting of the Capital including provisions for the National Capital Open Space System (NCOSS). The Hills Ridges and Buffer Spaces are a landuse category of the NCOSS. They are intended for multiple use appropriate to the location and character of each hill area, including

use as wildlife and access corridors. O'Connor Ridge and Black Mountain Nature Reserve are part of these spaces. Black Mountain Nature Reserve has particular status as a gazetted Nature Reserve.

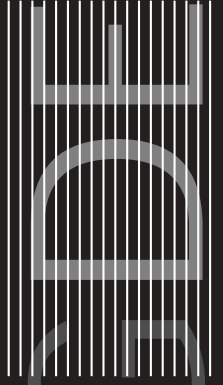
Consequently, the Authority has a planning responsibility for:

- the planning policies for Gungahlin Drive Extension as an arterial road
- the planning policies that affect national institutions (such as the Australian Institute of Sport which trains and houses Australia's high performing athletes and is a centre of excellence in research and training in sports coaching, sports science and sports medicine)
- maintaining the integrity of the National Capital Open Space System (such as Black Mountain Nature Reserve) and in approving works in these areas.

### **Amendments to the National Capital Plan:**

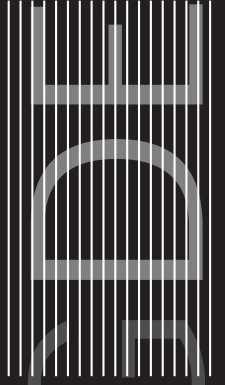
The functions of the National Capital Authority (set out under section 6 of the Act) provide for the Authority to make amendments to the National Capital Plan when necessary. The Act also sets out the processes, including consultation with the ACT planning authority, for amendments to the Plan (set out under sections 14–24 of the Act).

The Gungahlin Drive Extension (GDE) must be planned in accordance with the National Capital Plan. The Authority is required to amend the National Capital Plan to confirm the GDE alignment. The Authority is also responsible for works approval of the GDE where the road falls within the Designated Area of the National Capital Plan.

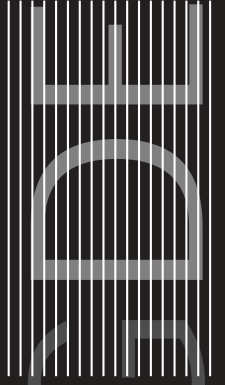


## 2 Background

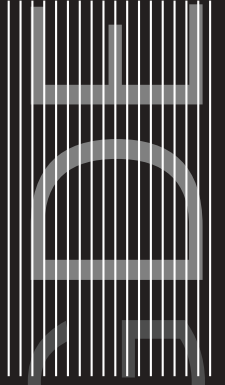
- The Gungahlin Drive Extension (GDE), formerly the John Dedman Parkway, forms an important element in the metropolitan system of peripheral parkways. The purpose of the road is to provide access to and from Gungahlin for people wishing to access South Canberra (including the Parliamentary Zone, Woden, Weston Creek or Tuggeranong) without passing through Central Canberra.
- The road was the subject of a Parliamentary Joint Committee Inquiry in 1991 and an Inquiry by the ACT Government Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Services in 2000/1. Subsequently, the (then) ACT Government sought to build the road on what has become known as the eastern alignment (as the GDE passes the AIS), and in 2001 requested an amendment to the National Capital Plan to reflect that decision and confirm the preferred alignment.
- The functions of the National Capital Authority set out under section 6 of the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 provide for the Authority to make amendments to the National Capital Plan when necessary.
- The National Capital Authority prepared a Draft Amendment (DA 41) to the National Capital Plan, which sought to confirm the eastern alignment and to delete a spur that linked into Barry Drive across the O'Connor Ridge. (DA 41 relates only to the GDE between the Barton Highway and Belconnen Way).



- DA41 was published for public consultation on 28 July 2001. The public comment period ended on 7 September 2001.
- The proposals in DA41 to the National Capital Plan were consistent with the eastern road alignment released by the ACT Government in May 2001 in Draft Variation No 138 to the Territory Plan. The ACT Government gazetted Draft Variation 138 to the Territory Plan for the eastern alignment in September 2001.
- The process to finalise DA41 to the National Capital Plan had not been completed before the October 2001 ACT Assembly elections, which resulted in a change in the ACT Government.
- Following the ACT elections the National Capital Authority on the 22 November 2001 formally sought the views of the new ACT Government, which had indicated a preference for a western alignment adjacent to the Australian Sports Institute (AIS). The Authority also requested an assessment of environmental impacts of the western alignment, as well as assurances that any impacts on the current and likely future operations of the AIS had been identified and addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Institute.
- On 18 January 2002, the Territory planning agency, ACT Planning and Land Management (PALM), advised the Authority that studies were being commissioned into the western alignment (which is the new Government's preferred alignment). Studies were expected to be completed early in April 2002 after which their preferred route for the western alignment would be advised.

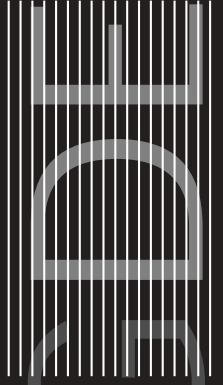


- In February 2002 the Authority reiterated to PALM the need to satisfactorily resolve issues in relation to the AIS for the western alignment.
- In March 2002 representations were made to the Authority by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) (representing the interest of the AIS) reiterating its concern (previously expressed in its submission on DA 41) that it was opposed to the western alignment of the road due to likely impacts on resident and visiting athletes, the operations of the AIS and the long term planning for the campus at Bruce.
- Between July and September 2002 the ACT Government undertook community consultation on the western alignment. The consultation included the ASC and Aranda residents. The ACT Government also commissioned engineering feasibility and environmental studies, and the 'Fitch report' on potential environmental health impacts of the proposed western alignment for the GDE on high performance athletes living and training at the AIS.
- On 2 October 2002 the ACT Government announced that it planned to proceed with the western alignment adjacent to the AIS with a number of changes aimed at addressing the impact on the AIS. The route also had improved provisions adjacent to Kaleen, and moved the road alignment into the Black Mountain Nature Reserve. Accordingly Minister Corbell requested an Amendment to the National Capital Plan be initiated in tandem with the Territory Plan Variation.
- On 10 October 2002 the ASC wrote to the National Capital Authority advising it remained strongly opposed to a western alignment as the issues raised by the ASC had not been satisfactorily resolved.



- At its meeting of 16 October 2002 the National Capital Authority considered the ACT Government's October announcement regarding the GDE and resolved that it was not in a position to support the proposal. A number of important issues remain unresolved and the comparative planning merits of the eastern and western Alignment had not been explored. The Authority decided that a comparative assessment needed to be completed on the eastern and western alignments in order to determine the best planning and transport solution.
- In October 2002 the National Capital Authority commissioned an independent assessment to inform its decision regarding the necessary amendment to the National Capital Plan. The consultants' work was to include an appraisal of the planning merits of the eastern and western alignments and the assumptions underlying the need, nature and scale of the GDE. (Refer to attached media releases). In the interests of meeting the transport needs of the residents of Gungahlin, the National Capital Authority required the consultants' comparative assessments to be completed by the end of the 2002 calendar year. Given the ACT Government's own processes this would mean no delay for the overall project.
- On the 5 November 2002 the National Capital Authority informed the ACT Government that the it was undertaking a comparative assessment of the impacts of the western and eastern Alignments.
- On 30 November 2002 the ACT Government released a Preliminary Assessment (PA) based on the western alignment for public consultation. That PA is currently open for public comment until 16 January 2003.

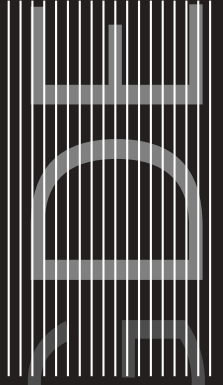




### Consultation:

Consultation by the National Capital Authority on the Gungahlin Drive Extension has included:

- Full public consultation on Draft Amendment 41 in accordance with the Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act, and processes required for amending the National Capital Plan. The time for formal comment was extended by the Authority to accommodate late submissions.
- Ongoing consultation with PALM.
- A site inspection with PALM.
- Liaison with the Australian Sports Commission (ASC).
- Public announcement of the Authority's decision to engage consultants and details of the consultants.
- Consideration of written submissions and verbal comments received from interest groups during the consultant's assessment.
- A meeting with the Aranda Resident Group representatives and a separate meeting with the ASC.
- A requirement that the consultants liaise with relevant ACT Government agencies and the ASC. The consultants were provided with copies of the written submissions received by the Authority during their study period.
- Consideration of the outcomes of community discussions, carried out by the Department of Urban Services, and set out in their Preliminary Assessment for the western alignment including: that the majority concerns were about the broader ACT transport and traffic framework of which the GDE is a part; that the most contentious issues in relation to the proposed alignment are its potential impacts on the AIS and on residents of Aranda (Attachment 4: Stakeholder Group Consultations).



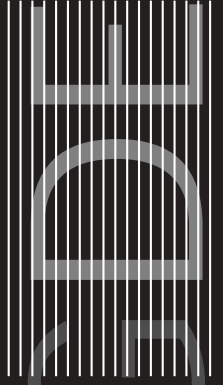
### 3 The Consultants

On 25 October 2002 the National Capital Authority commissioned Young Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd to undertake an independent assessment of the GDE proposals. It also commissioned Professor John Black to undertake a peer review of this assessment.

Young Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd, a Civil Engineering consultancy based in Canberra, provides services in transportation infrastructure with projects such as Gungahlin External Transport Study, Gundaroo Drive, Gungahlin Drive, (between Mitchell and Gundaroo Drive), Barton Highway/Gundaroo Drive/William Slim Drive roundabout, William Hovell Drive Duplication and Glenloch Interchange upgrade as examples of projects delivered by the Company. Young Consulting Engineers engaged sub-consultants to assist with this work : Scott Wilson Nairn Pty Ltd and DBA Landscape Architects.

Professor John Black, Principal Consultant and Director, Black Miller Wilmont and Associates, is the company's transport and public health consultant. He was the former Head of the Department of Transport Engineering at the University of New South Wales from 1981–1998. He was also the Head of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of New South Wales. He has 30 years academic and professional experience in the areas of transport planning, land-use and transport modelling, project appraisal and evaluation, and the economic, social, health and environmental impacts of transport.

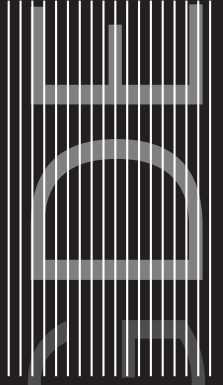
Professor John Black has published several books and monographs on the topic of landuse, transport and environment, which have been published by international book companies and are used internationally for instructing undergraduate, postgraduate, and professionals working in the field of transport planning and modelling. Key publications include The Land-Use/Transport System,



and Urban Transport Planning: Theory and Practice. He has international public standing and is also on scientific editorial boards of international transport journals such as the Transportation Research–Transport and Environment.

Since 1986 Professor John Black has been on the International Scientific Committee of the World Conference of Transport Research Society, a paramount organisation for transport professionals, academics and policy makers. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia since 1984 and is a member of the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority Environment Council.

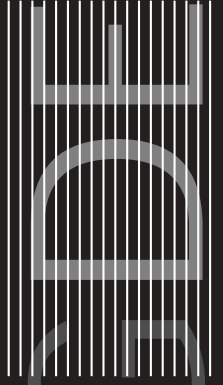
Currently Professor Black has an involvement in the Canberra Public Transport Futures Feasibility Study



## 4 Consultants Executive Summaries

The Executive Summary Reports prepared by Young Consulting Engineers and Professor John Black are attached.

Diagrams have been extracted from the Young Consulting report (GDE eastern and western alignments comparative evaluation and impact assessment report Australian Institute of Sport Precinct) and have been cross-referenced in the table provided in the executive summary.

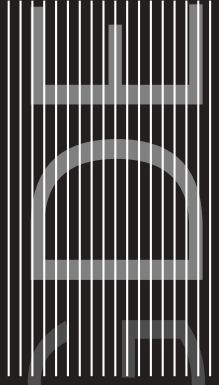


## 5 The National Capital Authority Position

The National Capital Authority met on 22 December 2002.

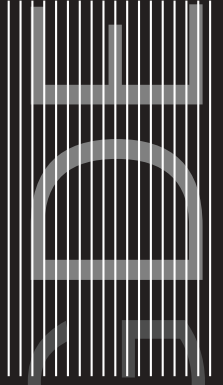
*The Authority:*

- Noted the advice in the consultant reports on Gungahlin Drive Extension, that:
  - The consultants agreed with the ACT Government's assessment that the Gungahlin Drive Extension is necessary and it is required as a four-lane parkway;
  - The consultant's comparative assessment showed that the eastern alignment of the GDE has significantly less impact on the operations and further planning of the AIS. These impacts would be important for the continuing success of the AIS as an internationally renowned sporting facility. It is also preferred as it has less overall environmental impact; and
  - The consultants agreed with the ACT Government's assessment that the Gungahlin Drive Extension will require some intrusion into Black Mountain Nature Reserve. (An alternative concept, which requires a similar intrusion, has been developed by Young Consulting Engineers which it considered would achieve good outcomes for Aranda residents and should be referred for further design analysis to the ACT Government. This concept downgrades the function and scale of Caswell Drive into a local collector street with its own junction with Belconnen Way and provides dedicated northbound and southbound ramp connections between GDE and Belconnen Way).



- Noted that Professor John Black's peer review endorsed the conclusions of the other consultants' assessments.
- Agreed to refer Draft Amendment (DA41) of the National Capital Plan to Minister Tuckey for approval without change. This confirms the alignment of the Gungahlin Drive Extension to the east of the AIS and deletes the link road connection across the O'Connor Ridge to Barry Drive.
- Agreed to prepare a new Draft Amendment (DA46) to the National Capital Plan to redefine the western boundary of the Black Mountain Nature Reserve (Figure 24 of the Plan) to an extent generally in accordance with the ACT Government's current proposal for the road reserve. This will enable the construction of Gungahlin Drive Extension at a parkway standard to be finalised outside the Designated Area of the Black Mountain Nature Reserve. The actual form of the parkway may be as the ACT Government has currently proposed, or it may wish to consider the alternative proposal by the Authority consultants together with the Aranda residents. This Draft Amendment (DA46) would be issued for public consultation as a priority.

The Chairman of the National Capital Authority, Air Marshal David Evans, declared that he is a resident of Aranda. In reaching its position related to the road adjacent to Aranda the Authority was mindful that no final recommendation for the new Draft Amendment to the National Capital Plan (DA46) could be made to the Minister until all statutory processes associated public comment on DA46 were complete. The Chairman declared that he would not be a party to any of these determinations.

**Benefits:**

There are a number of benefits of adopting the eastern alignment of the Gungahlin Drive extension adjacent to the AIS:

***The Australian Institute of Sport***

There will be significantly less impact on the ongoing operations and future master planning of the AIS, and less impact from noise and air pollution.

***Planning Processes***

As the eastern alignment is consistent with the current Territory Plan and the proposed Draft Amendment (DA41) to the National Capital Plan, planning processes can be progressed. Subject to DA41 being approved by Minister Tuckey, and not subsequently disallowed by the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, DA41 could be in effect early in 2003. (The submission to the Minister for approval will include the views of the Territory planning authority on DA41).

***Timing***

It is expected that there would be a shorter construction time for the eastern alignment

***Services***

There will be significantly less disruption to existing infrastructure and less new infrastructure with the eastern alignment.

***Cost***

The Authority position will not incur additional costs. The cost of the GDE is entirely a matter for the ACT Government. However, the consultants estimate in the order of \$10 million less for construction cost for the eastern alignment.