

# Gungahlin Smoke



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**Next meeting:** Wednesday 08 May 7.30pm - Gungahlin Library  
**Guest speaker:** Minister Shane Rattenbury MLA

# About the GCC & Who can attend

The Gungahlin Community Council is an organisation operated by volunteers (elected by the community) to provide a conduit between the residents & businesses in Gungahlin & the ACT Government. Its activities are supported by a small annual grant from the ACT Government.

The objective of the Council: To preserve and improve the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of Gungahlin and the Gungahlin Community.

To achieve this objective the Council undertakes to:

- ▶ provide a local forum in a non-political environment for Gungahlin residents & businesses to express their aspirations, concerns and suggestions;
- ▶ provide a strong local voice; address matters of local concern;
- ▶ ensure that legislators and officials are informed of community needs and expectations;
- ▶ foster a community identity;
- ▶ communicate issues locally and regionally;
- ▶ initiate, support or undertake any appropriate action advantageous for the community;
- ▶ continue to represent for all facilities and services expected by the community;
- ▶ seek to maintain and improve the quality of life in Gungahlin; and

- ▶ provide a deterrent against party politics impeding or overriding community wishes.

Membership of the Council is open to any person at least 16 years of age and one of:

- (a) lives in the Gungahlin district;
- (b) owns property in the Gungahlin district;
- (c) works in the Gungahlin district;
- (d) conducts a business in the Gungahlin district; or
- (e) has been duly appointed to represent a social organisation or interest group servicing the Gungahlin district.

So if you fit into any of the above categories you can participate in GCC activities including attending monthly meetings, joining Facebook, going on the email list for GunSmoke (newsletter) updates & participating in surveys that we may conduct from time to time.

If you are keen you can advise your interest in joining the Committee.

GunSmoke is also published online, limited printed copies available through key shopping centres

To subscribe to the online edition, go to: [gcc.asn.au](http://gcc.asn.au)

To advertise your business or organisation in GunSmoke, please visit our website.

**Disclaimer:**

GunSmoke is produced to allow residents to keep in touch with their local community.

It enables people to express views on a range of topics that do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editor, or members of the Gungahlin Community Council Inc.

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# Gungahlin Smoke Signals

From the President

**T**here is a lot of activity in Gungahlin at present, including new buildings at different stages of development around the Town Centre, a new school under construction, extensions to suburban developments, roadworks for the aged persons project at Gold Creek Homestead & the ongoing developments along Flemington Road. Many more projects are due to commence or be announced in the next few months, including the new Government office block, progress on the siting of the much needed cinema, a site for a new club (above Hinder Street), extensions to the Raiders Club, the Bunnings store & the fenced-off Geocon site at the top of the Town Centre.

We have yet to be advised of the developments on the Woolworth's carpark (with whispers of under-road connections between the two sides of Hibberson Street), the Park'n'Ride facility on the block behind Big W and the upgrading of the pedestrian precinct along Hibberson Street through the Town Centre. Some news may be released on the state of play with the mosque as well.

There are still some outstanding issues from the last column. No response has been received on the issue of the size

of the 1st Choice Liquor sign on Hinder Street nor has there been any solution provided for the ongoing problems experienced at the Hinder/Hibberson Streets intersection. Parking issues along Anthony Rolfe Avenue have not been raised lately but the problems have not been resolved.

There was a strong body of concern/objection to the proposed Bunnings development on the block opposite the Gungahlin College. The sentiment was not against Bunnings (as many would welcome their presence in the region) but most questioned why it had to be located so close to the Town Centre.

The environmental developments will result in a substantial reduction in the projected population of Gungahlin (expect a total of about 90,000) if translated into the expected loss of dwelling sites. The GCC is advocating greater densification in & around the Town Centre to contribute towards the critical mass of population necessary to justify the full range of services & amenities we need in the district. It makes sense to go higher (perhaps up to 10 stories) to consolidate the case for more employment hubs & enhanced public transport facilities.

## Contribute to Your Community by joining the GCC Committee

With the continued progress in developments in Gungahlin we are experiencing increasing busy periods in the community council. We are urgently seeking more volunteers to help to contribute to the continued effectiveness of the local community council.

## **We have an immediate need for non-working or retired people to join our Executive Committee.**

We need people with the capacity to contribute & to help share the workload with some involvement in policy. With a strong focus on communications we will be seeking to keep the community advised on what is happening (or not happening) around the district.

A well-informed community is likely to be more content with developments if they know what is going on.

The Gunsmoke magazine production is now in electronic format, with a very small hard copy print run. We plan to produce six editions in 2013 before evaluating the success of this decision. With no advertising local distribution of printed copies puts a significant drain on GCC funds.

## **Articles & local content to suit the needs of Gungahlin residents are welcome.**

GCC will continue to encourage greater use of Facebook as a means of communication

to steer Gunsmoke readers to the online version over time (particularly when we get NBN connections) so we can produce more regular electronic versions & reduce manual distribution costs.

## **We would like to see more input from residents of newer suburbs!**

Many of our issues focus on the Town Centre. It would be good to see more residents of each suburb feeding in issues affecting their suburb. That would give us far greater & more even coverage of the issues facing the broader community. We would like to focus more on specific topics/functions such as schools, amenities & sporting facilities.

If you are interested in contributing to developments in the Gungahlin district please contact Ewan Brown (President) 0418 486 471 or [president@gcc.asn.au](mailto:president@gcc.asn.au) or Peter Elford (Vice President) [vicepresident@gcc.asn.au](mailto:vicepresident@gcc.asn.au)

# Planning and Development update

**T**he Development Application (DA) is about to be lodged in early May for the new ACT Government office block. The site is bounded by Efkarpidis Street, Gungahlin Place, The Valley Ave & Hinder Street. The entry, featuring a café, retail & public space, will be from the corner opposite Gungahlin Place with car parking towards the Hinder Street end & some along The Valley Ave. The building will be 4 stories tall & will incorporate a child care centre & an ACT Government Shopfront.

Construction is planned to commence in late 2013 with completion expected in early 2015. Work is underway or planned for extensions of Horse Park Drive from Amaroo School to Mirrabai Drive & from Mirrabai Drive to Burrumurra Ave.

The EIS for Moncrief is due to close in August/September thus opening the way for about 2000 dwellings, a Government school & a small group centre.

**Jacka** – The LDA has completed the 1st stage for about 300 dwellings across from Amaroo School. All blocks have been sold.

**Bonner** – nearly all the blocks available have been sold. Some residual landscaping needs to be completed.

**Amaroo Group Centre** – the EOI has closed so some provisional plans should be expected soon.

In the Town Centre the extension of O'Brien Place has been completed. The Leisure Centre is on schedule with expected completion in April 2014. Two organisations have responded to RFPs to manage the centre. The Oval parking is due for completion in May 2013 followed by the grandstand (with 550 covered seats) in January 2014.

The new environmental proposals (see next item) have resulted in the 'neck' of Throsby being retained as reserve. Work will commence on the substantial playing fields with remaining plans for residential development to the South West. Entry to this smaller suburban area will be opposite the Anthony Rolfe Ave intersection.

Plans are underway to complete two more access roads off Flemington Road to allow continuation of more development in the remaining area of Harrison.

Franklin will have a new public sports space similar to the site in Crace, to be used as a community park.

A DA has been lodged for the Harrison Shopping Centre (off Nullarbor Ave). It will include a supermarket (1500m<sup>2</sup> max) & speciality shops.

Landscaping is complete in Harrison IV. The cinema is getting closer with EOI closed & now RFTs going out this month with a close off end June.

A DA by Geocon has been approved for a childcare centre. See their website for plans on what they want to put on the site in the upper level of the Town Centre.

## Environmental Issues

**G**ungahlin residents may not be fully aware that a number of conservation groups have been actively engaged in ensuring that proper consideration is given to environmental & conservation issues in the Gungahlin district. This results in our community being a better place to live, in the longer term, because important assets are not destroyed in the development process. You can't get restoration of hundred year old trees in your lifetime. The diverse elements of nature are a key drawcard for people wishing to live in Gungahlin. The Gungahlin Bush on the Boundary Group has played an important role in seeking to preserve the natural environment for future generations of Gungahlin residents, most of who have been or will be impacted by issues relating to the following principles.

### Management Principles for Bush on the Boundary Developments

#### Domestic Animal Management

- cat containment
- recreation with dogs (leashed & unleashed)

#### Invasive plant species

- education of appropriate species
- management of potentially invasive species

#### Mature Trees

- retention in residential areas
- maintenance of health and safety

#### Fire Management

- bushfire asset protection zone
- appropriate hazard reduction techniques

#### Roads & Infrastructure

- design principles
- management issues (weeds, runoff)

#### Access & Recreation Use

- passive
- active (biking, horses etc.)
- community playing fields

continued >

### **Connectivity**

- maintenance and enhancement of connectivity

### **Water**

- urban & road runoff
- maintenance of natural flows & quality

### **Residential and Industrial Development**

- planning principles
- design principles

### **Rural Leases**

- conservation management principles

## **North Gungahlin Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

The draft North Gungahlin Strategic Environment Assessment was released for public comment in March. The Terms of Agreement between the ACT & the Commonwealth require a six week public consultation timeframe. The ACT Government has prepared a final Assessment and associated NES Plan which is then considered by the Commonwealth. The Federal Minister will most likely endorse a NES Plan which will set out conditions for development within the entire SEA area.

The Conservation Council had been pushing for a strategic approach rather than having to look at each suburb in isolation. Previously processes had been put in place for five individual Environmental Impact Assessments.

### **Key issues included:**

- offsets calculators and offsets policy
- the ecological values of North Gungahlin,
- NES Plans / implementation and enforcement.

### **Specific issues of major interest are:**

- appropriate protection of the superb parrots nesting habitat particularly in Throsby, &
- areas protected must contribute to achieving the required whole-of-landscape approach to conservation & development planning, so that reserve & off-reserve lands have a high degree of ecological connectivity, the best possible perimeter/edge ratios, & do not represent a series of isolated patches.

## **Protecting the Ecological Values of North Gungahlin**

The Strategic Environment Assessment of urban development at North Gungahlin was open for public consultation & comment from 23 March to 19 April. Hard copies may still be available in the Gungahlin Library for viewing.

Electronic copies: ACT Government website (Economic Development Directorate) [http://www.economicdevelopment.act.gov.au/community\\_engagement/current\\_activities/gungahlin](http://www.economicdevelopment.act.gov.au/community_engagement/current_activities/gungahlin)

There were some positive recommendations from this process. It allows for economic assessments to be done for the remainder of proposed development areas in North Gungahlin to be done in one go rather than by a suburb-by-suburb basis which causes delays & costs much more for all concerned.

### **The proposed net results are:**

Loss of areas for residential development in:

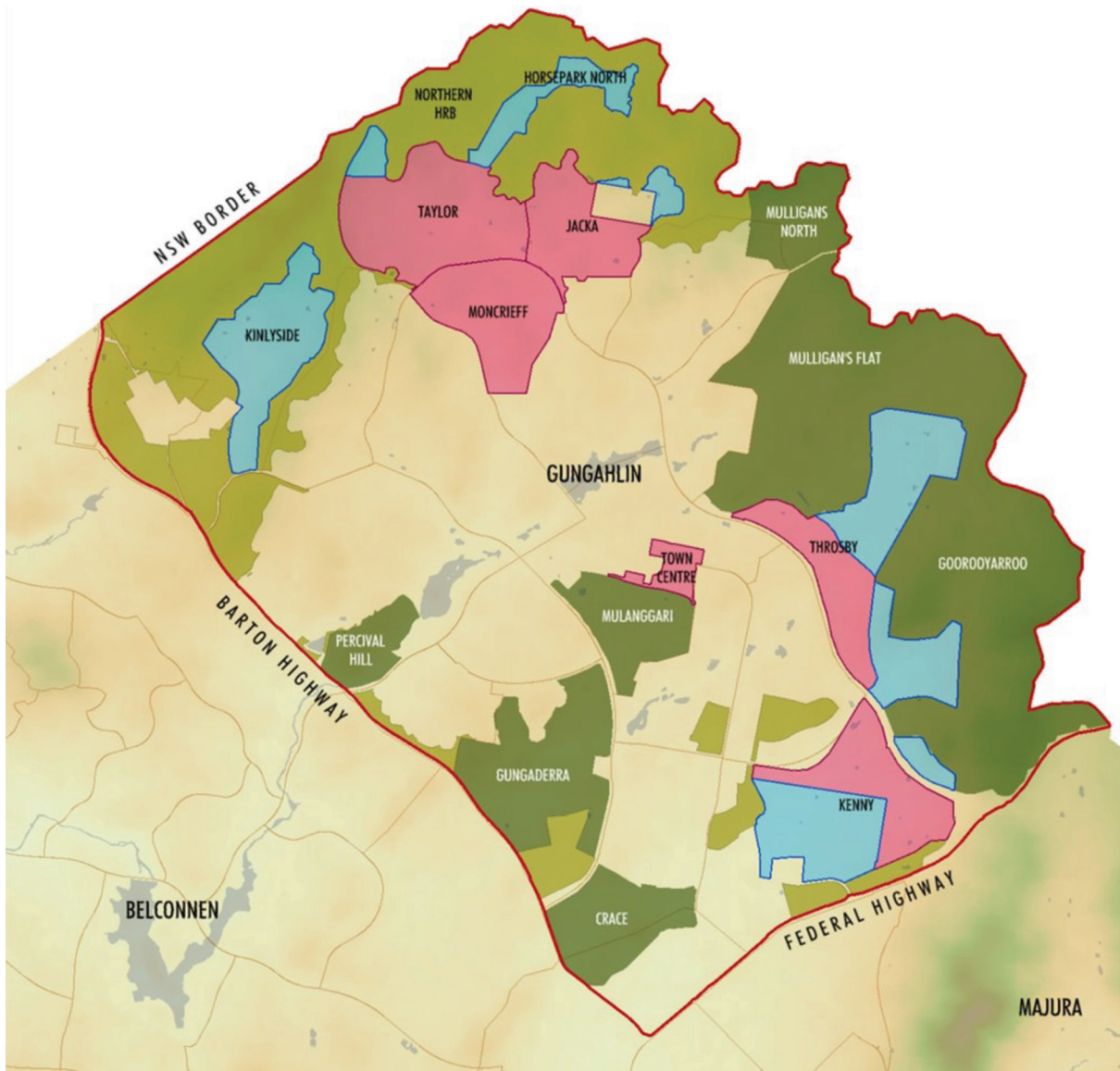
- the neck of Throsby,
- all of Kinlyside,
- the lower part of Kenny, Horse Park North,
- an area to the north of Horse Park Drive above Kenny.

Significant additions to existing reserves & creation of new reserves at Kinlyside, Kenny & Horse Park North.

Maintenance of wooded hills along the northern & western borders of the ACT.

### **Outcomes for MNES (Matters of National Environmental Significance)**

- No removal of moderate or high quality box gum woodland
- Avoidance of striped legless lizard habitat in Kenny
- Avoidance of known superb parrot nesting trees (+100 metres)
- Avoidance of golden sun moth where practicable
- Avoidance of areas of high ecological value
- Significantly improves landscape connectivity and reserve function



## Conservation Actions

4 direct actions, creation of reserves:

- i. Additions to Mulligan's Flat & Goorooyarroo Reserves;
- ii. Kenny – new reserve;
- iii. Kinlyside – new reserve; &
- iv. Establishment of other avoidance areas.

13 indirect actions headed by the establishment of a 'Plan Implementation Team' to oversee, manage and implement the Plan.

## Offsets

- Considers the additional benefit demonstrated through the strategic approach;
- direct offsets in habitat enhancement in areas identified as being of strategic importance; &

- indirect offset actions for the benefit of the MNES affected by the Gungahlin development and biodiversity in general in the ACT.

What's Next? The Commonwealth Government has to approve the process but was actively involved in the planning so agreement can be predicted with a reasonable degree of confidence.

Gungahlin will lose a significant number of potential residential sites but this will be more than offset by the increase in or retention of important areas of natural woodlands & grasslands. Although not specified in the report there will be substantial green spaces in developable areas. (This will require significant vigilance by the community & interested parties as plans for developments are produced!)

It is clear that the NBN build is more complicated than previously thought. Much thicker cabling is needed for the fast speeds we have been promised, greater care is needed for the glass fibre, splicing of optical fibre requires extra specialisation & the roll-out involves a total replacement of infrastructure.

## The latest update on Crace (Gungahlin district) construction is:

- ▶ Crace 1 (Amaroo) – Complete.
- ▶ Crace 2 (Ngunnawal) – End of June 2013
- ▶ Crace 3 (Gungahlin) – Complete
- ▶ Crace 4 (Palmerston) – End of June
- ▶ Crace 5 (Mitchell) – Complete
- ▶ Crace 6 (Harrison, Parts of Franklin) – Complete
- ▶ Crace 7, 8 and 9 are all TransACT areas and are not part of the current builds.

The Crace Exchange involves 6 DSLAMs (as listed above) serviced by the thickest cable & each DSLAM involves 20-30+ FDAs (these are the small boxes that are now appearing in the streets). A smaller cable runs from the FDA up the streets for the final connection to the premises. A whole suburb or set of suburbs has to be cabled before a notice of connection is sent out. Note that Gungahlin so far has recorded the highest rate of take-up of any area in Australia. We should aim to increase the gap by adopting the NBN as soon as it becomes available in our respective suburbs.

Don't wait until the end of the year – it may not be a surprise but it is likely to be nasty!

## Connecting Your New Services

This is a reprint of a blog by Alan Kerlin, long-term Gungahlin community activist & highly motivated former President of the GCC

outlining his experiences with getting the NBN connected!

*“We are now connected to the NBN. Here's a run-down on the install. And the speed!”*

Today was the long-awaited connect to the National Broadband Network day. After being involved for years in the community campaign to get Gungahlin's parlous internet access upgraded, it was lovely to be able to see the end result.

We've been paying Telstra the same price as someone in Sydney pays for an ADSL2+ service running at 20Mbps, but getting only an 8Mbps service. Except what it really ran like was this (speedtest.net):



And that was at a good time, with low congestion.

We went looking a while back for the NBN package that seemed the best-rounded solution of the well-respected major providers, so we'd already changed our internet & phone service to iiNet in preparation.

So as soon as we knew the NBN was ready in our area we got the install booked through iiNet, for "between 8 & 10am" today. The process of the install kicked off well, with a reminder call the day before from the





contractor, who I found out later has been brought in from Melbourne because NBN Co has been having troubles with their prime contractor. I'll explain the whole process here so you know what is involved & can plan your conversion without surprises. This morning we got a call at 7:30am—they'd be here in 30 minutes. There's a timeliness and service you don't get with too many Canberra tradies!

When they arrived, I explained about the mashed conduit under the courtyard wall due to the original Telstra phone line installer not bothering to put the line deep enough. Consternation ensued...Could they get a line through my gaffer tape repair job, now buried under a garden bed? If not, it would be a deal-breaker, making it a "non-standard installation", come back another time, & fees to be paid by us... But pull through it did.

Next concern was that on the other side of the wall was an ensuite - not somewhere for electrical boxes, & due to a design fault in our house build, there was no way to get a fibre line through to the garage at the other end of the house - where the hub is that distributes CAT5 cabling to most rooms in the house, & where we wanted all the ugly boxes & things to be mounted. The solution was to instead mount the required boxes up near the ceiling in the nearby walk-in wardrobe. I had a sparky arranged for the same day to replace a failed greywater pump & to cover any NBN-needs, so he could install a powerpoint in the WIR & then we could use the existing CAT5 cable that ran from the Telstra junction to connect the NBN gear to the hub at the other end of the house. This would also allow us to shift the modem/router/wireless unit to the same location, ensuring much better wireless reception for all our various portable devices (8!) than when it was shut in a steel box inside the garage!

The box that goes on the outside wall near the existing Telstra phone junction box is much bigger than the phone line one because they need to wrap some spare fibre cable in there & it can't be bent too tight—it is glass after all. I wanted the Telstra box removed but "laws" prevent them from removing this now redundant fixture...



The conduit takes the fibre up to the ceiling space, & is snug behind a downpipe so is minimally ugly, less so after a lick of house paint. Inside this cable is the actual fibre-optic "cable" that carries this incredibly fast bandwidth. What does this look like?



continued >

# NBN Update

This: Nothing bigger than a human hair! To be handled with great care, because it could easily stick in you & break off, becoming extremely hard to dig out... And this is what the internal NBN install looked like when finished, just two hours after they started:



Top left is a junction box, on the right is the power supply, including a battery backup so you can still call out in a blackout, & the bottom box is the Network Termination Unit - a box that converts the digital light signal into a digital electrical signal. So as you can guess, there's a fair bit more in the way of "phantom" electricity consumption there, making us thankful for those solar panels & the roof & electricity bills that say "do not pay". Unfortunately this NTU box isn't also a router, so you need to add your own but they are cheap these days. Remember it means you need two powerpoints.

This is what it looked like after the sparky added the powerpoints and relocated the router, with CAT5 (blue) cable coming out of the NTU, into the router, and another out of the router, back into the wall and down to the

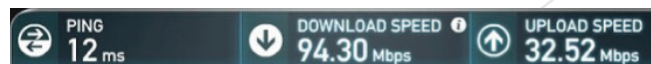
garage to feed into an 8-port switch and then the patch panels that allow us to select which of the various data sockets around the house are live, depending on changing layouts and computer/TV/PVR/network drive/printer needs:



The finished product is a bit ugly, but essentially tidy & stashed away behind stuff on the top shelf in the wardrobe. I show you what's involved, so that you can plan for all the bits to include in your own install. This is not something you want on your lounge room wall!

I'm yet to sort out the conversion of the old voice landline to VOIP, it's been ordered, & will probably mean we have a phone base station plugged into the router too. But the old landline is history!

What happened with the speed? This:





Yes that's a big grin you can hear! Websites now snap onto the screen, scrolling through your Flickr photostream involves a couple of seconds per high resolution photo. Podcasts download in no time, even mobile devices using the wireless are responding snappily. No doubt we'll get a better idea over time, but so far, so wonderful!

I can only hope now that the NBN roll-out continues & the rest of Canberra & indeed Australia get to experience what really fast internet access is like. Meanwhile, if your area comes online, get in & get it—while the connection is free. Because later it will cost you to get the connection done.

## GCC advises readers to do some homework well before the connection date is booked.

**1<sup>st</sup>** decide which supplier (ISP) is your preferred provider for your internet service. It is advisable to consider combining internet (data) & telephone (voice) services as some good deals are on offer.

**2<sup>nd</sup>** work out your expected usage over the next 12 months or so to select the ideal download level. This level should not be based on your current (perhaps slow) usage as the far greater speeds offer a broader range of services, the opportunity to connect more devices & the likelihood that your new download rates will far exceed those at present.

**3<sup>rd</sup>** work out where you want the NBN equipment to be located (see earlier article).

**4<sup>th</sup>** consider how you will connect the various devices in your home/business. Tech-savvy people may have pre-cabled their premises but most of us did not. You can run thick Cat5 cable between the modem & connected devices or rely on a wireless system (or a combination of the two). This will affect your choice of modem (check what type may be supplied as part of some ISP packages).

***Then get ready to experience the long awaited benefits of very fast broadband & feel superior to most other people in Australia!***

***Don't forget to check out the Digital Hub programs at Gungahlin Library to become more aware of what you can do with your connection to the NBN.***

## AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE

Here is an artist's impression of the new Gungahlin Office block, facing Gungahlin Square.

