

CED Input/DLO/CE request

Topic Canberra Brave use of Phillip ice rink

Requested by: DLO/Other directorate

Date Requested: 13/08/2025

Due Date: 13/08/2025

Tracking Number *Objective Reference*

Action Officer: Dominic Riches

Cleared by: George Cilliers

Action Required

Extension Canberra Brave's deed of licence to access the Phillip Ice Rink

Response

- The Canberra Brave has indicated that their deed of licence to access the Phillip Ice Rink expires on 31 March 2026.
- The subject deed is a private agreement between the lessee (Geocon) and the Canberra Brave club where it has been indicated that the deed would not be extended.
- The Brave is expecting to commence use of the AIS facility on 1 May 2026 and therefore will not have a facility available in April 2026.
- This request has asked whether the ACT Government is able to intervene and mandate the lessee to extend the use of the Phillip facility (Block 2 Section 22 Phillip).
- In summary, the ACT Government has limited options to intervene in relation to the private agreement with a particular club or institution.
- The current Crown lease (Attached) requires the site to be used for the purpose of public heated swimming pools and ice-skating rink.
- The lease also includes an 'Exclusive Use' clause (i.e. section 4 (d) (iii)) which states that the lessee make provision as the Territory requires for the admission to and exclusive use of the premises or any part of by:
 - a group of children and their instructors
 - a group of school children and

- a club or institution.
- The Territory Planning Authority has considered the Crown lease, in particular in relation to section 4 (d) (iii), and is of the view that the Territory cannot mandate the lessee to make the premises available to a particular club or institution.
- The decision for the use of the premises for a particular club or institution is a commercial decision for the lessee.
- Failing to comply with a provision of a lease is a Controlled Activity under the *Planning Act 2023*. In the event of non-compliance with the lease, action may be undertaken by Access Canberra as delegates for the Territory Planning Authority.

From: [STEEL](#)
To: [CED, Directorate Liaison Officer](#)
Subject: MIN RESPONSE: Redevelopment of Phillip Pool
Date: Friday, 19 December 2025 11:09:25 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

Hi Liana
For Min response please.
Cheers
James

From: BERRY
Sent: Friday, 19 December 2025 10:25 AM
To: STEEL
Cc: Walthati, Harini
Subject: FW: Redevelopment of Phillip Pool

Hi Emily
Can you please confirm carriage?
Kind regards
Sam Bessey
Office Manager
Office of Yvette Berry MLA | Member for Ginninderra
Deputy Chief Minister
Minister for Education and Early Childhood
Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Phone: +61 2 6205 0233 | Email: berry@act.gov.au
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | www.yvetteberry.com.au

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I acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. I acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Please consider the environment before printing this email. If printing is necessary, print double-sided and black and white.

Please note that from 1 January 2018 ACT Government ministerial diaries are subject to publication on the ACT Government's open access website under section 23 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*.

From: Sch 2.2(a)(i) >
Sent: Wednesday, 17 December 2025 4:46 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Redevelopment of Phillip Pool

You don't often get email from Sch 2.2(a)(ii) [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email originated from outside of the ACT Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Yvette,

I am writing to express my strong disapproval at the decision to grant a permit to GeoCon's redevelopment of the Phillip Pool and Skating Rink site.

My objections to the planning approval revolve around two issues. First, Phillip Pool is one of only two open-air pools left in the ACT and it is the only public pool in the Woden Valley, an area that has suffered a steady loss of public leisure and sporting facilities over the past two decades. I have been a regular user of the Phillip pool for 25 years, and, although the facilities are run down, it is still well patronised and meets a clear demand for such a facility in the Valley. The proposed 25-metre indoor pool is a miserable replacement for a proper 50-metre public pool. I find your and the government's arguments in support of the new 25-metre pool completely unconvincing, if not risible. It is nothing less than a significant downgrading of sporting amenities within your own electorate.

Second, the proposed GeoCon redevelopment will only add the aesthetic blight of overcrowded apartment buildings in the Phillip area. The Wova GeoCon buildings opposite the Phillip pool is a prime example of this kind of bleak, crammed-in development.

I am so dismayed by this planning decision that it will be, I feel sure, impact heavily on my voting intention at the next ACT Election. I have been a Labor voter all my life but will seriously consider voting independent as a result of these kinds of Barr government policies.

Your sincerely,

Sch 2.2(a)(ii)

Sch 2.2(a)(ii)

From: [STEEL](#)
To: [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#)
Cc: [BERRY](#); [PATERSON](#)
Subject: Correspondence from Minister Steel
Date: Monday, 2 February 2026 9:28:21 AM
Attachments: [Response - Steel - Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)_0457413.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

Good morning [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

Please see attached correspondence from Minister Steel.

Kind regards,

Emily Byass

Office Manager

Office of Chris Steel MLA

Labor Member for Murrumbidgee

Treasurer

Minister for Transport

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Minister for Heritage

ACT Legislative Assembly

GPO Box 1020, CANBERRA ACT 2601

www.chrissteel.com.au



Our ref: 25/0457413

Sch 2.2(a)(ii)

Sch 2.2(a)(ii)

Dear Sch 2.2(a)(ii)

Thank you for your email of 17 December 2025 to myself, Marisa Paterson MLA and Yvette Berry MLA regarding the decision to approve DA-202443325. I am replying on behalf of the Government as this falls in my portfolio responsibilities as Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development.

As you are aware, the *Territory Plan 2023*, that was approved by the Assembly last term, incorporated the existing indoor pool requirement on the site, as well as replacing the requirement of a 50m pool in the previous Territory Plan, with a requirement to provide a 25m publicly accessible pool and additional aquatic facilities. The requirements for the pool are in place to ensure that an indoor swimming facility is provided to allow for use all year round, in all-weather conditions, and include requirements for additional amenities and facilities to also provide services to a wider portion of the community.

The current Territory Plan currently contains specific provisions for the redevelopment of the site, requiring a publicly accessible indoor facility that includes all of the following, at a minimum:

a 25 x 20 metre, 8-lane swimming pool with water depths of 1.35 - 2.0 metres;

- a warm water program pool with the minimum dimensions of 20 x 10 metres;
- a toddlers/leisure pool, learn to swim pool and/or water play splash pad that is a minimum of 500 square metres in area;
- a transition to the outdoors (including to external gardens, decks and outdoor eating areas to support indoor/outdoor activities; and
- associated amenities to support the operation of the pool facilities.

The assessment and determination of development applications are a matter for the independent Territory Planning Authority, which operates under clear legislated responsibilities as outlined in the *Planning Act 2023* and *Territory Plan 2023*. The Authority must assess applications against the legislation and policies that are in effect at the time of the application.

On 16 December 2025, the DA (DA-202443325) was approved as it was determined that the application met the requirements of the Territory Plan and *Planning Act 2023*. Given the Authority is an independent assessing body, I am not in a position to change or revoke the Authority's decision on the development for this site.

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That said, the ACT Government will continue to consider provision for sports and recreational facilities within this area and across the ACT. I acknowledge that these facilities are valued by you and the ACT community and as such the ACT Government will endeavour to capture a variety of different needs.

I am also pleased to update you on our Labor Government's work on a new Aquatic Strategy for Canberra. The new Aquatic Strategy will include a commitment to build a new 50 metre outdoor public pool in Woden, in addition to the new public indoor 25 metre pool, program pool and splash facility already approved on the current Phillip Pool site.

This new 50m outdoor pool will be built and owned by the ACT Government on a separate site and is intended to serve the needs of the Woden community as the population grows, and to replace tired and ageing recreational facilities.

The proposed pool is envisioned to be a high-quality, accessible, and inclusive community asset that supports recreation, health and wellbeing including lap swimming and other aquatic activities. The Government has conducted early work on potential sites in Woden for the new pool, and will continue the work on site options that meet the community's needs and technical requirements, before progressing to design and construction.

Feedback from the community will play an important role to ensure that the pool design reflects local needs, priorities, and aspirations.

The broader Aquatic Strategy for Canberra will also go out for consultation later this year and we encourage the community to have their say.

Thank you for raising this with me. I trust this information provides further context on the statutory considerations, requirements and provides an update on the Governments new Aquatic Strategy.

Yours sincerely



Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development
30 January 2026

Cc: Yvette Berry MLA

Cc: Marissa Paterson MLA