

QON No. 19

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Treasurer

Redirected to: Suzanne Orr MLA

Reference: CMTEDD Treasury - Environment

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: SUBJECT 1 – SHORT SUMMARY OF QUESTION TEXT

Question received: 30/07/2025

Answer Due: 07/08/2025

(1) Each year for the past five years, which climate and environment budget initiatives (projects, infrastructure, ect.) have Commonwealth funding?

(2) Each year for the forward estimates, which climate and environment budget initiatives (projects, infrastructure, ect.) have Commonwealth funding committed?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) In the last five years, the following projects had Commonwealth Funding:

Name of project	Year	Funding to date
Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin	2021/22 - 2023/24	\$2,600,000
Australian Capital Territory Priority Project: Improving Long Term Water Quality in the ACT and Murrumbidgee River System (Healthy Waterways)	2020-21	\$668,618
On Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate	2020-21 – 2023- 24	\$134,264
Recreational Fishing and Camping Upgrades	2020-21- 2023-24	\$283,000
Regional Drought Resilience Planning	2020-21- 2023-24	\$459,569
Farm Business Resilience Planning	2020-21- 2023-24	\$538,446
Established Pest and Weed Management	2021-22-2023-24	\$750,000

National Forestry Plan	2021-22	\$175,000
Environmental Assessment Systems Upgrade	2021-22	\$300,000
National Plant Health Surveillance Program	2021-22 -2024-25	\$124,000
Transforming Digital Environmental Assessments	2022-23- 2023-24	\$900,000
Water Efficiency Program	2022-23	\$293,840
Sustainable Household Scheme* *Note: This is a Minister Stephen-Smith initiative. The SHS received \$7.5 million in Commonwealth funding, which was appropriated to CMTEDD, who has responsibility for the scheme.	2023/24	\$7,500,000
Vulnerable Household Energy Support scheme (VHESS)* *Note: This is a joint Minister Orr and Minister Berry initiative. Funding was received from the Commonwealth's Household Energy Upgrades Fund (social housing), also referred to as the Social Housing Energy Performance Initiative. Matched co-funding is provided by the VHESS. Commonwealth funding sits with the Health and Community Services Directorate	2023/24 - 2024/25	\$2,456,000
Climate Narrative Scenarios Project	2024-25	\$50,000
Neighbourhood scale batteries	2024-25	\$1,500,000
Solar For Apartments The program is supported by a \$1.8 million grant as part of the Solar Banks initiative of the Commonwealth Government and a \$1.8 million concessional loan as part of the ACT Government's Sustainable Household Scheme (SHS). Funding is for rooftop solar installations on apartment complexes in Canberra where benefits must flow to all residents including renters.	2024/25	\$1,800,000
Complex Buildings Electrification Pathway	2024/25	\$208,000
Integrated River Model Uplift	2023/24	\$867,000
ACT Bridging the Gap Project	2023/24	\$58,830,000
Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin	2024/25	\$780,000
Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River Program	2024/25	\$1,800,000
Boosting HPAI H5N1 biosecurity response capability	2024-25	\$521,737
Pest and Disease Preparedness and Response Programs	2024-25	\$2,691,386

(2) [Budget Outlook](#) pages 195-200 provide a guide to projects that the Commonwealth have committed to for the forward estimates.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No.048

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Mark Parton MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Redirected to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: Redirection to Minister for City and Government Services - Access Canberra

Hearing: 24 July 2025

In relation to: Illegal Tobacco Sales

Question received: 28 July 2025

Answer Due: 12 August 2025

1. Is there any way to accurately measure the level of illegal tobacco sales in the ACT?
2. Is it the belief of government that there has been a strong increase in the sale of illegal tobacco products in the ACT?
3. How do members of the public generally report illegal tobacco sales generally to ACT Government?
4. How many such complaints have been made in the last 12 months?
5. How are such reports dealt with?
6. Which arm of ACT Government is responsible for compliance and enforcement in this space?
7. How many actual officers are used for these compliance checks?
8. Are the police ever called upon to assist in this sort of operation and if so, how often?
9. What are the penalties for selling illegal tobacco products in the ACT?
10. How many infringement notices for the sale of illegal tobacco products were issued in the last financial year and the one prior to that?



Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Australian Government is responsible for the regulation and enforcement of importation and excise duty amounts on tobacco products entering and sold in Australia through the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Border Force. Matters arising under these schemes are directed to the relevant Australian Government agency.

The ACT Government regulates the sale of tobacco products under the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1927* (TOSP Act) to ensure licensed retailers and wholesalers meet requirements for the display and sale of tobacco and smoking products. The Health and Community Services Directorate is responsible for policy matters and Access Canberra within the City and Environment Directorate is responsible for the regulation of the TOSP Act.

All state and territory health and policing agencies work cooperatively with the Australian Government with coordination by the Australian Illicit Tobacco and E-cigarette (ITEC) Commissioner.

2. Access Canberra has no direct evidence of a strong increase in the sale of illegal tobacco products in the ACT.
3. Members of the public can report illegal tobacco sales to Access Canberra by lodging a complaint on the consumer complaint portal or by calling the Access Canberra contact centre.

Members of the public are also encouraged to contact the Australian Taxation Office to report fraudulent activity involving tobacco by visiting their website at www.ato.gov.au or by calling the ATO's tip-off line on: 1800 060 062.

4. In the last 12 months, seven complaints have been made to Access Canberra about the sale of illegal tobacco products. There have also been six complaints made to Access Canberra about vaping products.
5. Reports to Access Canberra about the sale of illegal tobacco products are managed in accordance with Access Canberra's publicly available Accountability Commitment, including the Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Policy. All matters are investigated based on the proportional level of risk or harm to the community, to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately.
6. The Health and Community Services Directorate is responsible for policy matters and Access Canberra within the City and Environment Directorate is responsible for the regulation of the TOSP Act.

All state and territory health and policing agencies work cooperatively with the Australian Government with coordination by the Australian Illicit Tobacco and E-cigarette (ITEC) Commissioner.

7. The Australian Government, the Health and Community Services Directorate, and the City and Environment Directorate all play a role in the compliance and enforcement of illegal tobacco. Officers across agencies work cooperatively to undertake this work.
8. Access Canberra may enquire about police assistance where needed, but this has not occurred within the last 12 months.

9. The Australian Government is responsible for the regulation and enforcement of importation and excise duty amounts on tobacco products entering and sold in Australia through the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Border Force. Matters arising under these schemes are directed to the relevant Australian Government agency.

The ACT Government regulates the sale of tobacco products under the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1927* (TOSP Act) to ensure licensed retailers and wholesalers meet requirements for the display and sale of tobacco and smoking products.

10. Nil issued by Access Canberra in the last financial year and the one prior to that.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne

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QON No. 56



**Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory**

Select Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Shane Rattenbury

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Redirected to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 24 July 2025

In relation to: Air Quality

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: DD: 11 August 2025

1. Is the Government developing a second Air Quality Strategy, given the current one expires in 2025?
2. If so, what is the timeline for releasing the next Air Quality Strategy?
3. Please provide reference to the ANU desktop modelling that investigated the impacts of air quality on the health system – mentioned in the Committee hearing on 24-July.

Minister Suzanne Orr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Government has not made a decision on the requirement of a second Bushfire and Air Quality Strategy.
2. See response to question 1.
3. The study is available online via the following link: [Wood heater smoke and mortality in the Australian Capital Territory: a rapid health impact assessment - PubMed](#)

Commented [LM1]: Input from Health

OFFICIAL

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr
MLA Minister

QON No. 085

**Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory**Select Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Addressed to: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Reference: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission – Budget Statement E

Hearing: 25 July 2025

In relation to: Auditor General Report Recommendations

Question received: 29 July 2025

Answer Due: 11 August 2025

1. What timeline has the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission established to implement the Auditor-General's 14 recommendations in the report on Gaming machine licensee regulation and how will this progress be reported to the assembly.
2. Has the Gambling and Racing Commission undertaken any gap analysis of its own to prioritise recommendations made in the report. If so, what recommendations are identified as most urgent and why.
3. How will the Gambling and Racing Commission collaborate with external stakeholders like training providers and harm reduction groups to implement the report's recommendations.
4. Does the Gambling and Racing Commission anticipate that implementing the recommendations made in the report will require budget adjustments such as more funding or greater allocation of resources.
5. How will the Gambling and Racing Commission ensure accountability in delivering the Auditor-General's recommendations and what oversight arrangements are there for this process.

Laura Beacroft, Chair, ACT Gambling and Racing Commission: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Under section 21 of the *Auditor-General Act 1996*, the Minister for Gaming Reform is required to prepare a written response to the Report within four months of its release. The Government Response must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly by 25 October 2025.

2 – 5. The work to respond to the *ACT Auditor-General's Performance Audit Report, Gaming Machine Licensee Regulation* is currently underway and will be incorporated into the Government Response (as outlined above). Since the audit period, the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission has implemented substantial enhancements to its strategic frameworks, governance frameworks, administrative processes, reporting, stakeholder engagement practices, and overall transparency. The Government will respond to the issues raised above through the established processes.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Chair for the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, Laura Beacroft

QON No. 086

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Reference: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: Gambling Harm Prevention

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: 11 August 2025

1. What other evidence-based harm prevention measures could the ACT government be implementing in the short to medium term to reduce the prevalence of gambling harm due to poker machines in the ACT?
2. Is there evidence that limiting hours of operation for poker machines, particularly after midnight, would assist in reducing gambling harm?

Laura Beacroft, Chair, ACT Gambling and Racing Commission: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Gambling and Racing Commission (the Commission) is responsible for regulating gambling in the ACT and, while consulted on policy matters, its primary role is implementation, with policy development led by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate. The Commission delivers a range of evidence-based initiatives to prevent and reduce gambling harm, including tailored communication resources and training for venues operating poker machines, as well as harm-related training for community sector organisations.

Future policy development may benefit from insights drawn from other jurisdictions and national publications, such as the Commonwealth Government's [You Win Some, You Lose More](#) report.

2. Providing a detailed response to this request would require a significant diversion of resources. However, the Commission notes the findings of a 2023 [New South Wales study](#) on the impact of late-night electronic gaming machine (EGM) play, which suggests that restricting venue access during late hours may reduce the risk of problem gambling and associated harm. Additionally, the [2024 ACT Gambling Survey](#) (p. 11 – 'policy implications') indicates that limiting the availability and convenience of high-risk gambling products, such as EGMs, may be an effective

harm-reduction strategies at the population level. Relevant references are provided in the cited CQUniversity publication.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Chair for the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, Laura Beacroft

QON No. 087

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Reference: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Hearing: 25 July 2025

In relation to: Gambling Harm Prevention 2

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: 11 August 2025

1. Has the program of reducing of Electronic Gaming Machines licences in the ACT resulted in a measurable reduction on gambling harm?
2. Is a program of further reducing licences over two decades likely to have a significant impact on the prevalence of gambling harm due to poker machines in the ACT?

Laura Beacroft, Chair, ACT Gambling and Racing Commission: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- The 2024 ACT Gambling Survey provides a detailed snapshot of gambling behaviours, harms, and attitudes across the ACT.
- While it is difficult to attribute any change in gambling behaviour and harm to one harm reduction measure implemented by Government, the survey highlighted that since 2001, overall gambling participation has dropped from 73 per cent to 53 per cent, and EGM use has halved since 2009, from 30 per cent in 2009 to only 15 per cent in 2024.
- The Government continues to prioritise the reduction of gaming harm in the ACT Community through decreasing EGM authorisations. This approach is consistent with findings from the 2024 ACT Gambling Survey which reported that two-thirds (66%) of ACT adults supported further reductions in the number of EGMs as a harm reduction measure.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Chair for the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, Laura Beacroft

QON No. 088

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Reference: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Hearing: 25 July 2025

In relation to: Gambling Regulation

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: D11 August 2025

1. What changes have been made within the Commission' compliance function to ensure that future investigations are completed promptly?
2. What is the Government doing to improve the resourcing of gambling regulation to ensure venue compliance?

Laura Beacroft, Chair, ACT Gambling and Racing Commission: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1.

The ACT Gambling and Racing Commission (the Commission) remains committed to conducting investigations efficiently, supported by rigorous performance monitoring and case management. As part of this commitment, the Board has reviewed investigation timeliness and endorsed the implementation of a case management approach. Enhanced briefings and performance monitoring have also been established as key indicators under the Commission's Strategic Plan and 2025–26 Statement of Expectations. This focus will also inform the upcoming renegotiation of the Memorandum of Understanding with Access Canberra.

2.

Resourcing is a matter for Government, it is not appropriate for the Commission to comment.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Chair for the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, Laura Beacroft

QON No. 089

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Reference: ACT Gambling and Racing Commission

Hearing: 25 July 2025

In relation to: Cross-Border Exclusions

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: 11 August 2025

1. Have there been any discussions with NSW officials about facilitating cross-border exclusions from gambling venues that includes venues in the ACT plus those in neighbouring areas such as Queanbeyan and Eaglehawk?

Laura Beacroft, Chair, ACT Gambling and Racing Commission: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The ACT Government continues to work collegiately with other jurisdictions on measures to reduce harm related to gambling. Due to privacy considerations and technical differences between jurisdictions, cross-border exclusion is not currently available. *

*advice provided by Justice and Community Safety Directorate.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Chair for ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, Laura Beacroft

QON No. 160

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED Access Canberra

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: ACT Registered Vehicles Database

Question received: 31 July 2025

Answer Due: 15 August 2025

I refer to the publicly accessible database "ACT Registered Vehicles by Make, Year of Manufacture, Motive Power and Postcode" on the Open Data Portal.

- 1) Can data be added for Green Vehicle Rating (ie AAA to D)?
- 2) and car model?

Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Access Canberra will explore including the addition of Green Vehicle Rating to the vehicle datasets available on the Open data Portal to its future workplan. Access Canberra is unable to advise if/when this information will be available.

Due to privacy considerations, the model of vehicles cannot be added to the requested dataset. The reason for this is that it creates a risk that small-count vehicles (often rare or unique vehicles) will be more easily identified and at risk of being targeted for criminal purposes.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED - Access Canberra: Output 1

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: Vehicle Registration Emissions Categories

Question received: 5 August 2025

Answer Due: 15 August 2025

Following the move to emissions- based registration, we have heard from people who own relatively low emission vehicles that their vehicle registration had been based on the wrong category.

1. What degree of confidence do you have in the accuracy of emissions category for the vehicle registration data?
2. How have you made this assessment?
3. How can a member of the public seek to amend the category to correctly reflect the emissions class of the vehicle?
4. How do you handle vehicles that have been modified and may now be in a different category?
5. How are you placed to correctly implement the further changes announced in this Budget?

Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The ACT relies upon the emissions ratings defined under the Australian Design Rules (79 & 81), which are based on internationally agreed testing standards, for emissions-based registration. Information on the emissions rating system is available from the [Green Vehicle Guide](#). This is consistent with the approach that is used for determining motor vehicle duty for light vehicles under ACT's Vehicle Emissions Reduction Scheme.
2. Assessment of individual vehicles is based on the make, model, year and variant.
3. The Determination (DI2025-58) states that in most circumstances the combined carbon dioxide CO₂ emissions results are available through the Green Vehicle Guide, and this is the measure Access Canberra will use where it is applicable. If a member of the public believes the rating needs correcting, they can contact Access Canberra on 132281 and provide other reliable data (such as manufacturer data).

4. The Determination (DI2025-58) states that these may be rated or unrated, depending on the nature of the modification. It may be treated as Unrated when: *“The vehicle has been modified, other than to convert the vehicle to a BEV or HFCEV, under the National Code of Practice for Light Vehicle Construction and Modification to the extent that certification is required, and, if tested, the CO₂ emissions from the vehicle would be expected to have been affected and no testing for CO₂ emissions in line with that required to demonstrate compliance with the ADRs and emission labelling requirements has been undertaken.”*
5. Access Canberra is on track to deliver the registration fees announced as part of this Budget.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne

QON No. 164

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED – Access Canberra

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: Authorised Examiner Repairer and Authorised Inspection Station authorisation fees

Question received: 5 August 2025

Answer Due: 15 August 2025

In relation to Authorised Examiner Repairer and Authorised Inspection Station authorisation fees, please provide a breakdown of what each of the below fees covers:

- a. Annual authorised inspection station fee of \$2,164.60
- b. Annual authorised examiner fee of \$212.10

Why is the ACT Government the only jurisdiction in Australia not to use digital certificates for vehicle inspections?

Is the ACT Government investigating options to move towards the use of digital certificates for vehicle inspections, and if not, why not?

Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The fee for granting or renewing the approval of premises for 12 months to inspect motor vehicles and trailers is not itemised. It is, however, intended to cover, in part, the cost of administering the approved premises arrangements including:

- inspecting premises and equipment proposed to be used for the inspection of motor vehicles and trailers complies with the prescribed requirements for the classes of vehicles proposed to be inspected;
- confirmation that the proprietor (and if the proprietor is a corporation, each director of the corporation) is a suitable person to be a proprietor – has not been convicted or found guilty of an offence the road transport authority considers relevant to the approval and is not disqualified from being a proprietor under the regulations;

- considering and deciding the application, and where approved, providing the certificate of approval and the authorised inspection station sign/notice, that are required to be displayed at the premises, to the proprietor;
- Provide ongoing support of operational requirements for the proprietor as required; and
- maintenance of the computer and administrative systems utilised to administer the arrangements.

The fee for granting or renewing the appointment of an authorised examiner for 12 months to inspect motor vehicles and trailers is not itemised, but is intended to cover, in part, the cost of administering the authorised examiner arrangements including:

- confirming that a person applying to be an authorised examiner holds an acceptable qualification for the cases of vehicles proposed to be inspected;
- confirming that the person has not been convicted or found guilty of an offence the road transport authority considers relevant to the authorisation, is not disqualified from applying for authorisation and is a suitable person to be an authorised examiner;
- considering and deciding the application, and where approved, providing the authorised examiner with the certificate of authorisation prescribed by regulation along with the examiners stamp used in certifying vehicle inspections;
- Provide ongoing support of operational requirements for the examiner as required; and
- Maintenance of the computer and administrative systems utilised to administer the authorised examiner arrangements including the examiner register prescribed by regulation.

The development of a digital process relating to vehicle inspections is not currently under development but may be considered in a future work program.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Acting Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne

QON No. 165

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED – Access Canberra: Output 1

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: Vehicle registrations for heavily modified vehicles

Question received: 5 August 2025

Answer Due: 15 August 2025

1. How does the ACT Government ensure heavily modified vehicles are compliant with the registration standards.
2. Do they need an engineering certificate to be lodged?
3. How many such vehicles have been certified by an engineer?
4. What happens if modifications happen after initial registration?

Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

For noting the process for a heavily modified vehicle, a modified vehicle for performance, a modified vehicle for driver aids and or wheelchair accessible vehicles are the same.

1. All ACT registered modified vehicles must be inspected at the government's Hume Motor Vehicle Inspection Station (HMVIS). Inspections assess the specific vehicle modifications and the corresponding engineering report against the modification standards mentioned in the ACT Road Transport legislation (Vehicle Standards Bulletin 14 or 6), the applicable vehicle safety standards rules and Australian design rules.

Modified vehicles that satisfy the relevant standards will be issued with and be required to fit a modification plate which corresponds to an entry made in the ACT Motor Vehicle registration database and the modification plates register. The relevant engineer reports are retained by the Road Transport Authority for future reference.

2. Registration of a modified vehicle in the ACT requires an engineer to inspect the modifications and produce an engineer report and certification. This accompanies the vehicle to the inspection at the HMVIS.
3. Access Canberra only retains records for vehicles that present to HMVIS and are subsequently approved for which there were 437 instances for the 2024 calendar year.
4. An ACT registered vehicle that subsequently undergoes modifications is required to undergo an inspection at the HMVIS for approval. If a vehicle has unapproved modifications, the operator risks being issued with a defect notice by ACT Vehicle Safety Inspectors using or an ACT Policing officer during on road compliance programs.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for City and Government Services, M Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne

QON No. 170

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference:

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **City Services and Maintenance at Griffith Shops**

Question received: **06 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) Has the Government committed funding to repair the footpaths at Griffith Shops?
- 2) If yes, what is the amount of funding committed. and when will the work commence?
- 3) Has the Government committed funding to repair or replace the shade cloth over the gazebo at the Griffith Shops?
- 4) If yes, what is the amount of funding committed, and when will the work commence?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Yes.
- 2) The 2025-26 budget allocated \$0.750 million for improvements to the Griffith shops over three years. The project is currently in the early planning stages and detail on timing is being considered.
- 3) Traders and local community groups will be engaged to understand how the space at Griffith shops is used and where they see the greatest benefit from improvements, this information will inform design and prioritisation of works and will include the consideration of the shade sail over the gazebo.
- 4) See responses above.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 173

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED Output 2 - City Services

Hearing: **31 July 2025**In relation to: **District Funding**Question received: **08 August 2025**Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) How much funding has been allocated per district under city services, CED Budget output 2?
- 2) How does this compare to the past two previous Budgets?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Budget Statements for the years 2023-24 through 2025-26 provide the following Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation for Output Class 2 – City Services.

Output Class/Output	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget
Output Class 2: City Services ⁽¹⁾	276,592	300,478	288,025
Output 2.1: Roads and Infrastructure	111,192	112,077	112,322
Output 2.2 Library Services ⁽²⁾	17,898	16,783	-
Output 2.2/2.3: Waste and Recycling	46,676	67,458	69,349
Output 2.3/2.4: City Maintenance and Services	100,826	104,160	106,354
Output 2.4/2.5: Capital Linen Service	-	-	-

¹ **Controlled Recurrent Payments**² **Libraries ACT was included in Output Class 2 - City Services in 2023-24 and 2024-25, and was moved to Output Class 1 - Access Canberra in 2025-26.**

Note: Funding is not allocated by districts; funding is provided to CED business units to deliver prioritised services through inhouse and external resourcing. Services are prioritised and delivered by business units in accordance with Government priorities and to service standards through planned, programmed and reactive activities.

2) See response above.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 174

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED - City Services

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Upgrade to Griffith Shops**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

In relation to the 2025-2026 Budget announcement on 14 June 2025, which included funding for upgrades to Griffith Shops, please advise the following:

- 1) What is the total funding committed for upgrades to the Griffiths Shops
- 2) Provide details on what the upgrades include
- 3) What is the timeframe for this work.

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Funding of \$0.75 million is provided through the Asset Renewal Program over three financial years from 2025-26.
- 2) Upgrades will deliver improvements to urban amenity and path connectivity at the local shopping centre. Priority will be given to addressing safety and compliance requirements, as well as filling gaps in existing infrastructure. These works may include a combination of repairs and new provision, to footpaths, community seating and social spaces, landscaping, furniture, stormwater management, lighting and traffic safety measures.
- 3) The project is funded for three years, covering the 2025-2026, 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 financial years, with completion planned no later than the end of the 2027-2028 financial year.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 178

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED - Budget Statement E, CED - Output 2, City Services

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Downer Shops and Public Toilets**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) Can you provide a timeline for the construction start date, and targeted completion date, for the new Downer Shops toilets?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The construction of the new public toilets at the Downer Shops is in the early planning and procurement phase. The funds are committed in the 2025-26 ACT Budget for delivery over two years with completion no later than June 2027. Once the planning and design procurement stage is further progressed an update on timing will be provided to the community.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 180

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritoryjackSelect Committee on Estimates
2025–2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED – City Services

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Waste and Goodies Junction contract compliance**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) What contract compliance is being undertaken with the contractor managing Goodies Junction?
- 2) The contract for managing Goodies Junction says the contractor must maintain an electronic database with detailed tracking on items accepted at the facility.
 - a) Is the contractor maintaining a Reusable Facilities Database?
 - b) Does the Reusable Facilities Database comply with the conditions specified in the contract?
- 3) Can the full Database, or data from the last six months, be provided to the Committee?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Contract compliance and performance management activities undertaken by ACT NoWaste in relation to the reusable facility contract, includes weekly site compliance inspection program, a regular meeting schedule and a monthly contract performance Key Performance Indicator (KPI) compliance framework that is used to measure and track overall contract performance.
- 2)
 - a) The contractor maintains an electronic database that contains weight and category information of incoming and outgoing reusable items for each facility.
 - b) The Reusable Facilities database is compliant with the contract conditions.

- 3) ACT NoWaste cannot share the database as it contains commercially sensitive information. However, key statistics on the items sold through Goodies are available in their 'Do Good' flyer, available at <https://www.goodiesjunction.org.au/do-good>. Goodies will continue to share key statistics and information via their website.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 182

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED Output 2 - City Services

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **School zone speed limits**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) Please provide a list of all schools with an adjoining road where a school zone speed limit does not apply?
- 2) For each case above please provide the justification on why the speed limit is higher than 40km/hr
- 3) What work has the government done to determine best practice for enforcing school zones in terms of traffic calming infrastructure/speed cameras?
- 4) What is the impact of lowering speeds on roads expected to be on maintenance funding for road surfaces?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) As indicated in response to QON 265, developing a list of all roads surrounding the 139 schools without 40km/h zones would be an unreasonable diversion of government resources.
- 2) School zones are not generally placed on all roads surrounding schools. This is primarily due to the varying functions of road types, as well as differences in school frontage and surrounding land use. For example, some roads do not provide direct access to schools, and in many cases, school boundaries are adjacent to urban open spaces such as ovals or nature reserves or are fenced off from the road.

- 3) A cooperative relationship between the City and Environment Directorate, ACT Policing and ACT Education prioritises road safety around schools. The ACT Government established the school safety program, which works closely with schools, parents and the community to deliver infrastructure improvements around schools. Improvements focus on increasing safety and supporting active travel or supporting use of public transport.

Each year a program of works is delivered around schools to support safety and encourage active travel. Improvements include a combination of upgrades to existing infrastructure and new works, focusing on paths, crossings and treatments to slow vehicle speeds.

Access Canberra manages the ACT road safety camera program, which complements police enforcement as part of the Government's speed and road safety management approach. The camera program uses mobile speed camera vans which can be placed at 927 locations in the ACT with many of those included in the school zones.

- 4) Changing speed on a given road does not mean the maintenance burden is reduced. Specifications and guides used in pavement design are predominantly based on traffic volume and expected share of heavy vehicle traffic represented in axle loading based criteria and stresses exerted on the surface at low turning speed when assessing intersections.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 183

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Redirected to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: Redirection to Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water - CED

Hearing: 01 August 2025

In relation to: Environment and Gonacon funding

Question received: 6 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

(1) How much funding has been allocated to the use/implementation of Gonacon, annually for the past 5 years (including 2025-26)?

(2) Does this funding come out of EPSDD/CED base funding?

(3) How many doses of Gonacon have been administered annually for the past 5 years (including 2025-26)?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The funding allocated to the implementation of GonaCon over the past 5 years is presented in the table below. In 2022/23, ongoing funding of \$422,000 per year (indexed) was committed via the *Innovations in macropod management* budget initiative. The initiative includes funding for materials and equipment, a senior ecologist (1 FTE), a project officer (0.5 FTE), the long-term GonaCon research collaboration with CSIRO and veterinary supervision of field operations.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Funding committed to GonaCon implementation	\$ 69,000.00	\$ 422,000.00	\$ 435,000.00	\$448,000.00	\$ 462,000.00

2. Funding for 2021/22 was provided from the Kangaroo Management Program budget. Funding from 2022/23 onwards is provided by the *Innovations in macropod management* budget initiative, which has ongoing funding.
3. Over the past 5 years, 420 GonaCon doses have been administered to female kangaroos and wallabies as follows:

Species	Site	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (so far)
Eastern Grey Kangaroos	Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary	40	22	18	4	0
	Farrer Ridge Nature Reserve	0	42	11	13	0
	Mulanggari Nature Reserve	0	0	53	8	0
	Red Hill Kangaroo Management Unit	0	0	0	0	133
	Long-term small scale research sites	0	0	11	5	0
Red-necked Wallabies	Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary	7	0	5	20	0
	Goorooyarroo Sanctuary	0	0	0	19	3
Swamp Wallabies	Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary	0	0	0	9	0
	TOTAL	47	64	98	78	133

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 184

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED - 2025-26 Budget Statement E, p. 58

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Asset Renewal Program offset criteria**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

A number of City Services line items are offset by the Asset Renewal Program.

- 1) How does the government make the assessment of what qualifies for an ARP offset, vs. what requires specific Budget decisions?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The Asset Renewal Program (ARP) is an annual funding program established to fund capital upgrades such as asset enhancements or other works intended to extend the useful life of existing assets or to improve an asset's service potential. It may include ongoing asset related programs that are vital to delivery of the agency's objectives. ARP funding is intended to provide increased capacity for agencies to improve safety, quality, environmental sustainability and useful life of an agency's physical assets.

Generally, initiatives aiming to upgrade existing assets may be able to be offset from the agency's ARP base allocation, subject to available funding and prioritisation of 'upgrade' works.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 185

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr James Milligan MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Free Annual Kerbside Bulky Waste and Second-hand Sunday Initiative**

Question received: **08 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

Part of the ACT Labor Policy Position Statement prior to the 2024 ACT Election included a promise to trial a free suburb-wide kerbside bulky waste collection in 20 suburbs (10 north and 10 south), along with Second Hand Sunday style community events prior to these bulky waste collections (LAB050). According to the costing for election commitments by ACT Labor, this trial is anticipated to start mid 2025.

- 1) Does the \$1.36 million allocated in 2025–2026 for the election commitment program “Free suburb-wide kerbside bulky waste collection” form part of the total cost of \$90 million listed for 2025–2026 under Output 2.2: Waste and Recycling?
- 2) How will the 20 suburbs (10 northside and 10 southside) be selected for this trial?
 - a) What factors will be considered in the selection of these suburbs?
 - b) Will the level of illegal dumping reported in individual suburbs, as logged through platforms like Fix My Street and Access Canberra, be considered when deciding which suburbs will be included in the trial?
- 3) If 10 suburbs are being trialled during the 2-year pilot program, how many days per week will each suburb have kerbside collections?
- 4) Will there be any variation in the number of collection days between suburbs during the trial?
- 5) How will the Free Annual Kerbside Bulky Waste service be communicated to the residents in the chosen suburbs?
- 6) Will a specific budget be allocated to marketing and notifying residents about this service?
 - a) If YES, how much money is being allocated for advertising this service in each suburb?
 - b) If NO, what is the point of trialing a pilot program if residents are not adequately informed about this free service?

- 7) How will the success of this pilot program be determined?
- 8) How will the program measure success, especially considering that “the cost may vary significantly depending on the actual demand of residents?”
- 9) Is Second-hand Sunday an ACT Government Initiative or is the ACT Government expecting volunteer led community groups in the chosen suburbs to organise this event?
- 10) If this is an ACT Government Initiative, what is the additional cost of advertising and facilitating each one of these second-hand Sundays (20 in total, one in each suburb)?
- 11) If the ACT Government is expecting Second-hand Sunday to be led by volunteers in local community groups, then what support, financial or otherwise, will the ACT Government be providing?
- 12) Where will these Second-hand Sunday initiatives be held in each individual suburb?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

- 1) The \$1.36 million allocated in 2025-2026 as part of the \$90 million listed under Output 2.2 Waste and Recycling is for the current bulky waste service. This includes one free bulky waste collection of up to 2 cubic metres each financial year for Canberran households. No funding has been allocated for the ‘Free suburb-wide kerbside bulky waste collection’ in the 2025-2026 budget.
- 2-12) Funding for this trial will be considered in future budgets. At this stage, planning is underway, and many of the operational details, including suburb selection, collection scheduling, communications, and community engagement are still being finalised. These elements will be informed by service modelling, and stakeholder input.

The Government is committed to ensuring the Second-Hand Sunday trial is well-designed, equitable, and delivers meaningful outcomes for residents and the environment.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 188

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA

Addressed to: Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED

Hearing: **31 July 2025**

In relation to: **Animal welfare prosecutions**

Question received: **8 August 2025**

Answer Due: **15 August 2025**

- 1) Following the amendments to the Animal Welfare Act in 2019 that recognised animals as sentient beings, how many charges of animal cruelty have been laid under the Act?
- 2) How many people have been fined for offences under this Act, and what is the total revenue collected in fines?
- 3) How many people have been charged with each of the following offences under the Act:
 - a) hitting or kicking an animal
 - b) abandonment of an animal
 - c) confinement in a car likely to cause the animal injury, stress or death
 - d) keeping their dogs locked up
 - e) with having an animal unrestrained in a moving vehicle
- 4) How much revenue has been collected in fines for each of the above offences?
- 5) Have any charges under the Act resulted in anyone serving any prison time, and if so, how many and for what length of time?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The RSPCA-ACT prosecutes animal welfare matters on behalf of the Territory. To respond to this question the RSPCA is gathering the data requested however, due to operational requirements was unable to meet current deadlines on this specific request. This data will be provided to you in due course.
- 2) 21 fines have been issued with \$2,500 in fines collected.

- 3) The following fines have been issued and revenue collected for the offences requested:
- a) 2 fines have been issued and \$500 collected.
 - b) Nil.
 - c) For the purposes of this response, we are taking the Members questions 3 c) and 3 d) to be referring to Section 9 of the Act, Unlawful confinement of animal. 5 fines have been issued and \$1,000 collected.
 - d) See above.
 - e) Nil.
- 4) See above.
- 5) No.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the A/g Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 189

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: CED – Access Canberra: Output 1

Hearing: 31 July 2025

In relation to: Vehicle emissions categories for vehicles with no CO2 rating

Question received: 5 August 2025

Answer Due: 15 August 2025

Vehicle over 3.5 tonne (eg large utes) are exempt from CO2 emissions ratings federally and thus under ACT Government policy are rated as Category C.

1. How many vehicles with no CO2 emissions rating and weigh more than 3.5 tonnes are currently registered in ACT?
2. How many vehicles with no CO2 emissions rating and weigh more than 3.5 tonnes incurred stamp duty in 2024-25?
3. Isn't this policy contrary to ACT Government Electric Vehicle Strategy to incentivise up take of lower emissions vehicles?

Mr Chris Steel MLA on behalf of **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA**: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Please refer to the table below regarding number of vehicles with no CO2 emissions rating and weigh more than 3.5 tonnes are currently registered in ACT?

VEHICLE CATEGORY	COUNT
Heavy Trailer	432
Heavy Vehicle	2788
Heavy Electric Vehicle	99
Light Trailer	174
Light Vehicle	3226
Light Electric Vehicle	23
TOTAL	6742

2. There are 805 vehicles with no CO2 emissions rating that were over 3.5 tonnes incurred stamp duty in 2024-25. All vehicles were rated in Category C.
3. No. The Determination (DI2025-58) defines Category AAA (which attract the lowest fees) based on emissions or motive power, regardless of weight: ***“Category AAA vehicle means a motor vehicle with combined carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of zero grams per kilometre or a BEV or HFCEV or a vehicle modified to be a BEV or HFCEV.”***

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for City and Government Services, Mr Chris Steel on behalf of Ms Tara Cheyne

QON No. 213

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chirs Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Planning and Lease variation Majura Block 709

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

QON 146 says that the rent for Block 709 will be reappraised following a DA approval that changes the permissible lease terms on the block.

- (1) Has the rent been appraised?
- (2) If so, what is the rent now and what was it previously?
- (3) Has the lease been formally varied?
- (4) If so, on what date was the lease formally varied?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) Yes. In March 2025, the rent for Block 709 was reappraised in accordance with Section 271 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*.
- (2) Details about a lessee's rent are not disclosed as this is a private matter for the lessee.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The lease was formally varied on 26 March 2025.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 214

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay

Addressed to: Mr Chirs Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Planning and Housing Delivery

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

At the hearing officials advised that in the first three quarters since the Accord commenced the ACT has delivered/approved 3129 dwellings. The Accord commenced in August 2023.

- (1) Do the first three quarters cover the period from September 2023 to June 2024?
- (2) If not, how many dwellings were delivered/approved in the ACT for the period August 2023 to June 2024?
- (3) How many dwellings were delivered/approved from July 2024 to June 2025?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1)(2) In August 2023, the National Cabinet endorsed the Housing Accord that included an aspirational target to build 1.2 million new well-located homes over 5 years from mid-2024. To enable the delivery of these much-needed homes, the National Cabinet agreed to a National Planning Reform Blueprint. The Blueprint comprises of 10 measures and 17 supporting actions.

The Blueprint is part of a package of initiatives governments have announced to support the national target to build 1.2 million well-located homes over five years, from 1 July 2024.

The Commonwealth Government has no specific methodology to measure the progress of the Housing Accord. The ACT Government uses the number of new dwelling completions as a measure to report ACT's progress using the quarterly data release by the ABS in its Building Activity publication.

The September quarter 2024 represented the first 3 months since the Housing Accord commenced on 1 July 2024. Since then, the December quarter 2024 and the March quarter

2025 data has been released – three quarters of data which shows that 3,129 new homes were completed in the ACT since the commencement of the Housing Accord.

Over the September quarter 2023 to June quarter 2024, 3,924 new homes were completed in the ACT.

(3) Over the period from July 2024 to June 2025, 2,731 new dwellings were approved in the ACT.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 216

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Woden Town Centre Planning Urban Design

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Zoning Consistency:

1. Why is Woden zoned for 28 storeys around its town square, while other centres like Civic, Belconnen, and Tuggeranong have lower and more setback zoning near core public spaces?
2. Will the Directorate change the zoning to provide consistency with the rest of Canberra?

Woden Centre Sale:

3. If a development application is submitted for 28 storeys on the Woden Centre site, how will the government ensure it does not repeat the overshadowing and wind tunnelling seen with Grand Central and W2?

West Plaza Design:

4. Why was the new West Plaza in Woden not zoned for active frontages, and why does it lack infrastructure like power for markets?
5. Will the Directorate develop a place plan to consider how it can be further modified to create a destination?

Place Plans:

6. Will the government commit to developing place plans for Woden and other centres, similar to those created by the City Renewal Authority?

Parking Equity:

7. Why is it considered a good outcome for CIT Woden students and teachers to have no onsite parking (noting that the Westfield carpark will be developed), while MLAs and ACT public servants have extensive basement parking in the City?

Arts Centre:

8. Why is there no publicly funded arts centre in Woden, Weston Creek, or Molonglo, while the inner north has multiple facilities?
9. Will you plan for a street theatre/art centre in the core of Woden, the West Plaza?

Indoor Sports Stadium:

10. Why has the government not delivered a publicly funded indoor sports stadium in the south of Canberra?
11. Will you plan for an indoor sports centre in the Woden Town Centre so everyone can access it by public transport from the surrounding districts?

Aquatic Facilities:

12. What is the government's rationale for replacing two 50m pools (Phillip and Oasis) with a 25m pool in a private development?
13. Will you plan for an Aquatic Centre in the Woden Town Centre?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:Zoning consistency

Building height controls in many commercial areas, including across the city centre and town centres, vary due to a number of reasons including their layout, block structure, the location of roads, and the findings from previous master planning work. Accordingly, building heights and other planning controls vary from centre to centre.

For example, heights in the Civic are limited to RL617. This is an overarching provision that applies to Canberra Central in the National Capital Plan. While buildings heights in Civic may vary, in many cases, heights up to RL617 are able to be considered, including around public plazas.

In Belconnen Town Centre, blocks that are permitted for taller building heights are generally located around areas of public interest, including around Westfield Belconnen and close to the Belconnen Community Centre/bus station. Heights are permitted up to 28 storeys in several areas, including on the Westfield Belconnen site. In Belconnen, taller building elements are somewhat separated due to the road layout, block layout and overall structure of the town centre.

The Woden Town Centre has a significantly different structure and layout, which is generally typified by fewer internal roads. Like Belconnen, taller building elements in Woden are centralised in the core town centre, close to areas of public interest. Building heights in other areas of the centre, such as around Woden Town Park, are stepped down to 12 storeys.

In both the Woden and Belconnen Town Centres, these provisions were largely informed by previous master planning process. In the case of the Woden Town Centre, the 2015 master plan underwent extensive community consultation with resulting revisions being made to the Territory Plan in 2018.

Noting the above and the individual considerations that have informed zoning and planning controls in town centres, there are no current intentions to standardise height and setback controls for town centres, including within the Woden Town Centre.

Woden Centre Sale

A development application (DA) is assessed by the independent Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) against the requirements of the Territory Plan and *Planning Act 2023*. If a DA is submitted, the Authority will assess, amongst other things, overshadowing and wind tunnel effects.

Whilst these matters are an important consideration, the Authority will need to consider all aspects of the development against the outcomes in the Territory Plan. For significant development, the proposal will also need to be considered by the National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP). The NCDRP provides advice on a range of design aspects to ensure overall impacts are minimised.

West Plaza Design

Full design specifications, such as the exact location and extent of active frontages (e.g. ground floor commercial spaces), are not always outlined in the Territory Plan prior to a development being proposed. This is the case for West Plaza (Ngalamanyin Dhunimanyin) site, next to the Woden CIT campus. However, the absence of these provisions does not mean certain design features cannot be proposed and will not be delivered.

In the case of Ngalamanyin Dhunimanyin (meaning “we sit down together and talk”), it has been designed as a gathering and ceremony space with features such as native and non-native trees and plants, bench seating with charging ports, featured paving and a shared access road.

The previous planning system was typified by rules that significantly dictated design on many blocks across the Territory, this did not necessarily deliver the best design outcomes. This is a primary reason why the new outcomes-focused planning system was introduced.

Place Plans

Place plans have been used in some areas across the Territory for differing reasons, some to identify placemaking strategies, such as public realm improvements and encouraging street activation activities, while others inform future planning changes in an area.

Place planning and place making was last undertaken in Woden in the recent CIT Woden development and the Town Square through the #WodenExperiment and has been undertaken by Westfield in its Bradley Street developments.

Parking Equity

Parking provision rates are outlined in the technical specifications. These support the Assessment Outcomes in Territory Plan. The rates in the technical specification vary based on the type of development, location, and potentially individual assessment.

For example, in the city centre or in a town centre, the technical specification outlines a minimum car parking rate of 1.5 spaces / 100m² of gross floor area, whereas an adult education establishment in a town centre is always subject to individual assessment.

With regard to future development on many surface car parks in the Woden Town Centre, it should be noted that the Territory Plan requires they contribute to the parking supply of the town centre as well as service the needs of the proposal on the site.

The ACT Government considers a varied parking rate based on these factors, including the need for individual assessment in some cases, to be appropriate.

CIT Woden was built immediately adjacent to a multi-storey car park and public transport interchange. As part of the DA for the Phillip CIT Building, 77 additional car parking spaces were

proposed with 72 of those spaces identified for use by CIT staff. 292 bicycle parking spaces were also proposed. While the technical specification recommends 153 on-site parking spaces, the reduced rate was approved as there is ample availability of off-street parking within 200m of the site and the site is immediately adjacent to the public transport interchange and the future light rail alignment.

Arts Centre

The Government built the Canberra College Performing Arts Centre (CCPAC) in Woden Town Centre in 2012 which includes:

- a 174 seat theatre
- a dance studio
- music studio with two practice rooms and a recording studio
- a Drama Performance/black box studio
- a loading dock
- front-of-house facilities
- full box office, and
- kitchenette facilities.

The Government built CIT Woden with new state of the art facilities with specialist and large multi-purpose spaces to deliver courses in the creative industries in the heart of Woden across:

- Fashion
- Graphic design
- Interior design
- Media
- Music
- Photography
- Visual arts

The Government is also committed to a new Woden Community Centre which is intended to also have large multi-functional space for a range of community activities including the arts.

Funding delivered through the ACT Arts Fund supports artists, groups and organisations to undertake arts activities across all artforms including grassroots and community arts and cultural development activities across Canberra. Consideration is given to the breadth of artform and geographic spread and how gaps can be addressed. Tuggeranong Community Arts Centre and Belconnen Arts Centre are specifically required to deliver community arts and cultural development programs in Woden and Gungahlin respectively. Funding is also provided to Warehouse Circus,

located in the Chifley Health and Wellbeing Hub, to deliver programs and services for circus and physical theatre emerging artists.

The Regional Arts Program seeks applications from eligible organisations to deliver arts and cultural initiatives benefiting communities in the Molonglo, Weston Creek, Woden, and Gungahlin regions, as well as partner with communities, groups, and artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, diverse gender identities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or those living with disability. The 2025-26 round is open for applications until 31 August 2025.

In the 2024-25 Budget, the ACT Government committed to the development of an Arts Assets Needs Analysis (AANA), that will support Government decision making on maintaining current assets to a good condition and inform strategic investment to meet future community demand. Stage one will comprise an audit of arts facilities and spaces in the ACT including services provided and geographical locations; targeted stakeholder consultation; an analysis of utilisation and demand which considers population growth and visitation; and analysis of gaps (or oversupply) in facilities and spaces dedicated to specific artform focus areas.

The AANA fulfils the commitment in the *ACT Infrastructure Plan Update: Entertainment, Arts and Sports* to undertake a needs analysis for arts centres at Gungahlin and Woden over the next five years.

Indoor Sports Centre

The ACT Government has committed to investigate the provision of a new public high school in Woden, including a co-located indoor sports facility. Preliminary investigations including a high-level master plan at a site on Hindmarsh Drive are being undertaken.

In addition, the ACT Government continues to deliver indoor sports facilities as part of new and upgraded ACT Government schools across the city, including a new two court gymnasium as part of the Garran Primary School redevelopment. This facility will be available for community use outside of school hours.

Aquatic facilities

Redevelopment of the Oasis Leisure Centre in Deakin (now Kingswim) was approved in 2011. Prior to this, changes to the Territory Plan were made following the closure of the swimming pool in 2009 due to public safety concerns. At that time the ACT Planning and Land Authority negotiated with the lessee, and to ensure the site was able to continue operating as a pool, a requirement to provide a swimming pool of not less than 25-metres was added to the Territory Plan in 2010.

The rationale around changing the provision for a replacement swimming pool from 50-metres to 25-metres on the Phillip Pool site is outlined in detail in the [ACT Government's response to the Assembly Resolution regarding the Phillip Swimming Pool and Ice Skating Development](#), dated February 2025. This also includes a response around future planning of a 50-metre pool in the Woden District.

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Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 217

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Strategic Planning and ACT Planning Strategy 2018

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

When will the government update the ACT Planning Strategy 2018?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the response to [Question on Notice No. 256](#) (Questions on Notice Paper No. 5) and the response to [Question taken on Notice 183](#) (public hearing on 1 August 2025).

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By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 218

**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Town Planning and Densification, Design & Housing Choice

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

1. **Tree Canopy:** How will the government meet its 30% tree canopy target when the provision in the draft missing middle guide is only 20% for RZ1?
2. **Setbacks & Privacy:** With side and rear setbacks as low as 0m, how will solar access and privacy for neighbours be protected?
3. **Private Open Space:** How does reducing private open space from 40% to 30% improve quality, and what evidence supports this claim?
4. **Housing Diversity:** What planning mechanisms will ensure that in 30 years, Canberrans still have the option of single-storey homes with backyards?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Tree Canopy: As noted in the *Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2025* regarding urban canopy targets, the Territory acknowledges that to achieve 30% canopy cover across the urban footprint both private and public land must contribute. The canopy cover requirements on private blocks do not include the canopy cover in public spaces such as the nature strip and parks, that when added together help to achieve the 30% target.

The Missing Middle Housing Reforms propose to revise the Residential Zones Technical Specification to increase minimum tree canopy coverage requirements for tree canopy coverage that applies to multi-unit housing developments in RZ1 and RZ2, increasing the minimum canopy cover of the block from 15% to 20%. This means that RZ1 and RZ2 land will

make a greater contribution to the ACT's overall canopy cover target. The minimum canopy cover for RZ3, RZ4 and RZ5 blocks is currently proposed to remain at 25%. The reduced rate on RZ1 and RZ2 sites, in comparison, is in recognition of these blocks almost always being constrained by extensive easements, including above ground powerlines, limiting available planting areas across the sites.

2. Setbacks and Privacy: The Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) will assess development applications (DA) for missing middle housing proposals in accordance with the requirements of the Territory Plan and *Planning Act 2023*. Under the legislative requirements, the DA must address all assessment outcomes and assessment requirements in the Territory Plan. Notably, one Assessment Outcome for development in residential zones is that *'the height, bulk and scale of the development is appropriate, noting the desired zone policy outcomes and the streetscape. This includes consideration of building envelope and setbacks'*. In assessing this outcome, the Authority will consider the Missing Middle Housing Design Guide and the relevant technical specifications.

It is noted that setbacks are just one technical specification that support just one assessment outcome. The Authority must assess all other outcomes and requirements, and make other considerations which look at elements such as height, building envelope and solar building envelope, separation, existing and proposed landscaping and open space requirements. These all contribute to the assessment around solar access and privacy, including in minimising impacts on neighbouring blocks.

Importantly, while setbacks, building and solar envelope specifications have been modified to enable increased building area, solar access and privacy requirements for neighbours continue to apply.

3. Private Open Space: While the Missing Middle Housing Reforms propose to reduce the overall private open space control in the Residential Zones Technical Specification for multi-unit developments, from 40% of the site area to 30% of the site area, what makes up this area is proposed to change.

Under the reforms, private open space for missing middle housing must be made up of either communal open space or principal private open space, or a combination of both. The requirements for communal open space have been enhanced. Previously this area only needed to have a minimum dimension of 2.5 metres, under the proposed reforms, this needs to have a minimum dimension of 5 metres and have minimum solar access requirements.

These changes aim to enhance the quality, usability, and overall amenity of open space in multi-unit developments by avoiding communal open space being attributed to areas with low amenity, such as pathways down the side of dwellings. This aim is further supported by additional technical specifications, including a minimum 20% tree canopy cover and 30% planting area, which together contribute to improved site amenity.

4. Housing Diversity: Most homes in established suburbs are detached single dwellings. While some redevelopment of these blocks will occur, single dwellings will remain the predominant housing type in established suburbs over the foreseeable future. New estates

will also continue to provide a range of housing choices, including blocks for single detached homes. In this context, single dwellings on blocks will remain available for those who feel this housing type represents a 'best fit' for their life stage and personal circumstances.

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By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

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**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Chris Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Southern Gateway:

Mint Interchange

1. Is the Mint Interchange included in the light rail design?
2. How do people coming from the west transfer onto public transport to go south?
Interchanging with buses at light rail stops in the Inner South.

Cycle Infrastructure

3. What planning has been undertaken for protected inter-town cycle lanes along Cotter Road and Adelaide Avenue, and when will we see delivery?

Athllon Drive:

4. Please confirm whether the Southern Gateway project includes the Athllon Drive corridor to Farrer/Torrens, and what specific outcomes are being targeted for:
 - Housing
 - Transport: Athllon Drive duplication and light rail
 - Social infrastructure

Yarralumla Creek:

5. What planning controls or land reservations are being put in place to ensure the future naturalisation of Yarralumla Creek remains viable?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Mint Interchange

1. No.

2. Transport Canberra will develop the broader public transport network design closer to when light rail will become operational. The ACT Government will undertake more detailed analysis on light rail-bus transfers will occur once the Light Rail Stage 2B route is confirmed.

Please refer to the response to QTON 213 from the public hearings on 5 August 2025.

Cycle Infrastructure

3. The ACT Government is currently investigating a potential future Woden-City Cycle route as an allied project to light rail. A delivery timeframe is yet to be confirmed.

The Active Travel Planning Tool identifies the eastern part of Cotter Road for a future main active travel route for future consideration.

Athllon Drive

4. Yes, the Southern Gateway includes the Athllon Drive Corridor from the Woden Town Centre to the southern edge of Torrens and Farrer.

The development of the Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework (the framework) will establish an integrated land-use and transport plan for the extension of Canberra's mass-transit light rail line to Woden.

Engagement on the draft framework will guide future development along the corridor.

It will demonstrate design excellence and celebrate Canberra's unique landscape character while placing more value on public places that prioritise pedestrians, cycling and public transport as well as the provision of social infrastructure required for sustainable communities.

This may include more housing, commercial activity, active travel and public transport connections as well as improvements to landscape, streets and public spaces.

Once the draft Framework has been developed for the corridor, the community will have an opportunity to provide input on the draft framework through a consultation process.

Yarralumla Creek:

5. Please refer to the response to QTON to 221 from the public hearings on 5 August 2025.

The Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework and subdivision design work by the Suburban Land Agency will consider the place values of Yarralumla Creek including opportunities for potential naturalisation of parts of Yarralumla Creek.

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By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Chris Steel MLA

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**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritoryFrom Select Committee on Estimates
2025–2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Housing and Infrastructure, Planning and Housing

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

1. How is the government tracking progress toward its 30,000 homes by 2030 target?
2. What is the average processing time for significant DAs, and why is it more than the statutory target?
3. How does the missing middle reform balance housing supply with infrastructure capacity, tree canopy targets, and parking availability?

Mr Chirs Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The ACT Government tracks progress for all commitments through centralised commitments tracking registers which require responsible areas to provide regular progress updates for consideration of the senior executive and responsible ministers.

In addition, housing-related commitments will be reported on through future Report Cards for the ACT Housing Strategy. These Report Cards are prepared on an annual basis. They are tabled in the Legislative Assembly and made available online.

- 2) Please refer to the response to [Question Taken on Notice 176](#) (public hearings on 1 August 2025).

Significant DAs are generally for more complex and larger scale developments. They include mixed use proposals and estates which often require more detailed technical assessment compared to smaller residential developments such as single dwellings or carports.

They include a two-stage referral process which often attracts more public interest. All public representations received are considered as part of the assessment which can contribute to longer assessment timeframes.

Significant DAs often require more requests for further information and amendments as the Authority undertake its assessment and works through technical issues, including matters raised by referral agencies.

It can often take proponents time to respond to the Authority's requests for further information, especially if specialist or technical knowledge is required.

Significant DAs are more likely to go to the National Capital Design Review Panel for review, or internal advisory groups. While these processes assist in providing robust decision making they can add further time to the assessment process.

- 3) The Missing Middle Housing Reform (MMHR) aims to increase housing supply within existing RZ1 and RZ2 residential zones by enabling more compact housing types without increasing the area of the site that buildings can be built on (site coverage). This ensures that new dwellings fit within reasonable building footprints, while providing quality open space and minimising impacts to streetscape character.

To balance this growth with infrastructure capacity, MMHR focuses on infill development, leveraging existing transport, services, and amenities. The ACT Government works with utility providers (e.g., ICON Water, EvoEnergy) to monitor development and assess the need for infrastructure upgrades. City services and community facilities will also be reviewed through existing programs as suburbs evolve.

The Draft Residential Zones Technical Specifications 2025, which were notified during the recent public consultation period for the MMHR, supports living infrastructure targets by proposing an increase to the required tree canopy cover on the site from 15% to 20% for multi-unit housing in RZ1 and RZ2 zones, helping manage urban heat and contribute to ACT's overall canopy cover targets. The Draft Specifications also propose parking reforms which reflect changing car ownership trends, especially in well-connected areas. While minimum on-site parking requirements are reduced, developments are expected to respond to their context by providing adequate and appropriate parking, the suitability of which will be assessed as part of the development application process.

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QON No. 221

**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED – Climate Change and Energy

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Residential Tower Sustainability

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

1. How do you make sure residential towers are sustainable?
2. What sort of energy ratings are they required to have?
3. Are they required to face north, be airtight, have double glazing, EV chargers and solar panels on the roof?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. There are multiple mechanisms and considerations in the planning system that help make sure residential towers are sustainable.

For example, prior to lodging a development application (DA), if the development is 5 or more storeys, referral to the National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) will be required. The NCDRP regularly provides advice on sustainability measures. This advice focuses on the uptake of sustainable design practices, such as maximising natural cross ventilation and passive solar design, and the adoption of a range of sustainable features, such as rooftop solar, electric vehicle (EV) charging and energy efficient fixtures.

For a DA to be approved, the development must meet with requirements of the Territory Plan. For example, the following Assessment Outcomes would need to be met for a residential tower development in a residential zone to be approved:

- *Reasonable solar access to dwellings and private open space within a block and on adjoining residential blocks is achieved. This includes solar access into main living spaces within a dwelling.*

- *The dwelling mix and the internal size, scale and layout of dwellings provide for a comfortable living environment that meets the changing needs of residents. This includes consideration of cross-ventilation and energy efficiency.*
- *The development provides electric vehicle parking and access to charging locations.*

In assessing these Assessment Outcomes, decision-makers must consider advice from the NCDRP and the design guidance in the Housing Design Guide (HDG).

The HDG applies to all residential tower developments and provides a range of guidance around the sustainability of developments. This covers elements such as building orientation, solar and daylight access to dwellings, thermal performance, natural ventilation, electrification and energy efficiency of developments, and more.

The Territory Plan also prohibits new gas connection for residential developments.

2. After development approval is obtained, a development also must receive building approval.

Building approval is contingent on meeting national minimum standards of energy efficiency set in the National Construction Code (NCC).

The ACT adopted improved standards recently set in the NCC at the earliest practical opportunity on 15 January 2024.

- Passive design principles and double glazing are common features of new apartment buildings as they are often cost effective, but the standards set in the NCC are performance-based.
- This means that they may be met in any way which demonstrates the required level of performance, irrespective of specific characteristics such as orientation or glazing type.

The NCC requires apartments to meet a level of performance relating to:

- The thermal efficiency of its envelope (equivalent to an average of 7 stars under the *Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme* (NatHERS) across all combined dwellings with a minimum of 6 stars for each individual dwelling) and
- The efficiency of its regulated services like air-conditioning, lighting, and hot water (equivalent to 50 NatHERS Whole-of-Home points).

The NCC also requires apartment complexes to have features which facilitate the future installation of on-site renewables and EV charging.

- They are required to be equipped with electrical infrastructure to accommodate future EV charging for every car park space.
 - 20% of the roof space is required to be ready to accommodate the easy future retrofit of PV panels.
3. The ACT also has various policies and programs which support the sustainability of existing residential apartments buildings including:

The Solar for Apartments Program which supports apartment complexes by providing financial assistance to install rooftop solar systems, reducing reliance on grid electricity. This helps lower energy bills for both residents (including renters) and the owners corporation's common areas, while also improving the building's energy efficiency rating by cutting operational energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. By making clean energy accessible to multi-unit dwellings, the program promotes sustainability and enhances the overall energy and environmental performance of apartment buildings.

The City and Environment Directorate has secured funding to explore electrification of complex multi-unit residential buildings. This builds on policy work undertaken to identify the role for government in addressing identified barriers, such as access to financing, as well as reviewing, and sharing insights from the Retrofit Readiness / Sustainable Apartments pilot. This project will also include work on a demonstration project.

The *Civil Law (Sale of Residential Property) Act 2003* which includes a requirement for an apartment's Energy Efficiency Rating to be disclosed to prospective buyers or lessees at the time of sale or lease.

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**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Community Land & Concessional Leases

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Community Land & Concessional Leases

Lease Variations: Is it appropriate to continue approving lease variations on community land, given the ongoing loss of land for community use?

Community Groups: Has the government considered a policy to allow financially unviable clubs to relinquish concessional leases so land can be reallocated to new community groups?

New Suburbs: How is the government ensuring that community groups in new suburbs have access to land for community use?

Concessional leases: How many concessional leases exist across Canberra, how are they distributed by district, and what are their uses?

Deconcessionalisation data: How many applications to deconcessionalise leases have been made since 2015 and how many were approved?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Lease Variations: Any lessee on community land is entitled to apply for a lease variation. The Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) must assess and decide any such application in accordance with the *Planning Act 2023* (the Act). Leases on community land may be either market value or concessional, depending on whether it was granted at full market value. A community use or community facility zone location of a lease does not make it a concessional lease.

Community Groups: A lessee can surrender its concessional lease. Once a concessional lease has been surrendered, a community concessional lease can be granted to another organisation under the Act.

New Suburbs: Through the Housing Supply and Land Release Program, the Government identifies land for community facilities to be released in the coming financial year.

The Government's preference is to sell land for community uses is through a two-stage sales process commencing with a request for an expression of interest (REOI). The second stage includes a Request for Tender (RFT) process.

The REOI/RFT is aimed to improve transparency in the sales process, allow the government to hear from all potential community organisations who may be interested in developing the land and to identify an organisation whose development proposal can meet a range of criteria including benefit to the community and financial viability.

Concessional leases: It is not possible to state how many concessional leases exist across Canberra. Concessional leases have been granted as early as 1925 and the statutory requirement to mark a lease 'concessional' was only introduced in 2008.

Statistics of leases presently marked as concessional would not accurately reflect the total number that could fit within this category of a lease. Historically, concessional leases were granted at less than market value to not-for-profit entities for operations such as churches/religious associations, national associations, clubs, sporting organisations and charities. Concessional leases can be in zones other than community facility zones and applications can be made to vary the lease to permit uses that are permitted in their zone.

Concessional leases are currently only able to be granted in accordance with the provisions of the Act, including, for example, over land specifically identified for the purpose of community concessional lease uses. Concessional leases have more restrictive clauses and are more difficult to transfer and vary.

The list of community concessional uses for community concessional leases are limited to the following uses: community activity centre, community theatre, cultural facility, educational establishment, indoor recreation facility, outdoor education establishment, outdoor recreational facility, place of worship, playing field, religious associated use and a community use prescribed by regulation.

Deconcessionalisation data: Since 2015, 23 applications have been made; 19 were approved, 2 were refused and 2 are currently being considered by the Authority.

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**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Building Certifiers

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

1. **Public Certifiers:** When will public certifiers be appointed, and how will their role improve accountability in the building approval process?
2. **Private Certifier Oversight:** How does the Directorate verify the accuracy of DAs signed off by private certifiers, and what rectification happens when errors are discovered?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. **Public Certifiers:** The ACT Government is committed to reintroducing government building certifiers this term.. This will improve accountability by strengthening oversight, preventing defects, and giving consumers confidence that buildings in the ACT are safe and well-built. It is intended that these certifiers would initially focus on high risk building classes.
2. **Private Certifier Oversight:** All development applications (DAs) are approved by the Territory Planning Authority, not private certifiers. Private certifiers have a role in assessing whether proposed building work is exempt from requiring development approval, according to criteria set out in the legislative framework.

Certifiers also issue Building Approvals (BA) for building work. In assessing whether to issue the BA, they are required to ensure that the proposed building work is consistent with any DA that relates to the building work.

Access Canberra audits the work of certifiers, including decisions on DA exemptions, as part of its regulatory role. Access Canberra inspectors and compliance auditors conduct inspections and targeted audits of building works in the Territory to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, including verifying exemptions from DA requirements.

In addition, Access Canberra teams review the documentation submitted to the Territory for all Class 2 buildings (such as multi-unit apartment buildings). While these will typically have a DA, Access Canberra does not assess the merits of that decision. However, if the BA documentation is lacking, the Construction Occupations Registrar or their delegate may request further information to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation or undertake a site inspection to verify elements of the documentation.

Access Canberra inspectors also respond to complaints from the community about allegations that a particular construction is not being undertaken in accordance with the approved plans of a BA or a development approval.

If non-compliance is found, Access Canberra will work with the certifier and the builder to rectify the issues. For example, if an exemption has been granted incorrectly, rectification may involve the landowner submitting a DA.

The Registrar also has powers under the *Building Act 2004* to issue Stop Notices or Rectification Orders where necessary to bring a development into compliance. Disciplinary action may also be taken against construction licensees such as certifiers, as appropriate. The Territory Planning Authority or its delegate may also issue a Controlled Activity Order under the *Planning Act 2023* if a development is undertaken without a DA or other than in accordance with the DA.

Under Section 50 and 50A of the *Building Act 2004*, certifiers must notify the Construction Occupations Registrar if they become aware of contraventions of building and development approvals, or possible non-compliant site work.

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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Mr Chris Steel, Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Development Applications

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Development Applications

DA approval processes: What are the major delays in DA processing?

DA Streamlining: What specific reforms are being considered for implementation to streamline DA approvals without compromising quality or oversight?

Appeal Rights: How is the government protecting community rights when consultation is limited and appeal rights are being reduced?

Checks and Balances: What independent checks and balances exist to ensure development outcomes align with community expectations?

Consultation: How do you ensure the community feels their voice is heard when there is no opportunity for consultation that includes dialogue (submissions are one way).

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

DA Approval Processes: While the Government generally meets or exceeds targets for assessing development applications (DAs), delays can occur for a range of reasons. Complex DAs (e.g. multi-unit and mixed-use developments or new estate subdivisions) by their nature often require a greater level of detailed assessment to ensure compliance with planning and environmental requirements, compared to smaller scale DAs (such as carports or retaining walls). Delays can occur due to further information requests from proponents, entity comments requiring further work to address multiple matters or responding to a large number of representations from the community. Other less common examples may include the timing and availability of technical expertise from the private sector to generate supporting reports or documentation required as part of the DA process.

DA Streamlining: The Government is always looking for opportunities to achieve efficiencies in the development assessment process. The Statutory Planning Division within the City and Environment Directorate (CED) regularly engages with the community and industry and this feedback is regularly considered to streamline processes from time to time. As part of the recent merge to form CED, the directorate is reviewing the whole process to identify areas for improvement. The Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) is also currently undertaking stage 1 of the evaluation process for the new Territory Plan. This is focussed on the usability of the new Territory Plan to identify areas that could be addressed to improve the understanding and ability to address requirements. In addition, approval pathways and assessment processes will be considered as part of the Missing Middle Housing Reform processes.

Appeal Rights: All DAs are required to comply with the requirements of the ACT Territory Plan and Planning Legislation. DAs are assessed independently by the Authority who publicly notify the application and must consider matters raised in the assessment process. It is noted that even proposals exempt from administrative review in the ACAT require public notification, and that there may be other appeal avenues available such as through the ACT Supreme Court.

Checks and Balances: There are a range of mechanisms in place to ensure DAs both comply with planning requirements, but also meet good design outcomes. These include:

- DAs are assessed by at least three different assessing officers with a more senior officer making the actual decision.
- The Authority has internal assessment panels that are triggered for certain types of applications and impacts. These panels consist of senior management who provide guidance on issues raised and on options for the decision to progress.
- The Authority keeps an internal record of relevant planning decisions to ensure good planning outcomes are continuously achieved.
- Audits are undertaken from time to time to review assessment outcomes.
- Multiple rounds of public notification exist for significant developments so that the community can comment on how matters raised were addressed.

Consultation: As described above, the ACT Planning system includes public notification as part of the statutory requirement. All representations received are considered as part of the DA process and provided to the proponent. In addition, matters raised during public notification are addressed in the Notice of Decision. The Authority encourages proponents to consider undertaking their own consultation with the community in addition to the statutory consultation as part of the development assessment process. For significant developments, there is a two-step community consultation process where a proponent is required to address issues raised by the community before progressing to the second round of consultation.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 229

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CCEW

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Sullivans Creek and Re-naturalisation report and funding

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

- (1) Is the Government actively considering implementing opportunities identified in the Sullivans Creek Re-Naturalisation Options Report, released mid last year.
- (2) Why was this project not chosen for funding in this Budget.

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Sullivans Creek Re-Naturalisation Options Report (Report) explored options to implement re-naturalisation efforts for Sullivans Creek. The Report describes an aspirational vision for the Sullivans Creek catchment that was formulated through community consultation.

The ACT Government is using the Report to guide and inform projects associated with the improvement of Sullivans Creek catchment. For example, the Upper Sullivans Creek Connectivity project, which was completed last financial year and involved butterfly connectivity and riparian improvements in the upper reaches of the catchment.

The final version of the Report acts as a signpost to influence further efforts along the catchment by Government and community and is already being used in existing projects.

- (2) Large scale re-naturalisation efforts of Sullivans Creek would require significant investment by the Government. Rough estimates that were provided separate to the Report was that the cost of renaturalising three areas within Sullivans Creek was around \$300 million. These estimates included costs to undertake required works to relocate existing services within the Sullivans Creek corridor, which would be necessary to enable restoration activities. Due to the magnitude of this estimate and other pressing environmental and infrastructure

priorities, the Government is not actively planning large scale renaturalisation opportunities at this time.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 232

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Caitlin Tough MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Climate Change Strategy

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Minister, the budget allocates funding for the new ACT Climate Change Strategy, can you speak to what you think might be some of the focuses within this strategy in the context of a new Climate Change Council which you recently appointed?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The ACT Climate Change Council provides valuable, independent expertise and advice to help guide and inform the development of government climate change and energy policy, including providing advice on the next Climate Change Strategy. Noting work on the new strategy is still under consideration, the new strategy will maintain a strong focus on a just and equitable transition for all Canberrans. The Government will continue to build on and enhance existing work and look at opportunities for additional areas of focus. With the delivery of 100% renewable electricity in 2020, and the implementation of the Integrated Energy Plan underway, emissions reductions from the Territories two largest sources, transport and waste, will continue to be a focus. Climate adaptation and resilience will also be a key focus area, including building on work underway across biodiversity and conservation as well as building resilience within our community organisations, businesses and emergency services.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 233

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Bi-directional charging for off the grid

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Establishing bidirectional charging for EVs and the grid will stabilise ACT electricity and assist in peak demand periods.

1. Is bidirectional charging available to the ACT grid?
2. If not, when will the local grid be set up for bidirectional charging?
3. If not, what steps need to be taken in the ACT and federally to allow bidirectional charging?
4. There are residents in the ACT that use bidirectional charging from their EV to power their homes. In what circumstances is this working in the ACT?
5. Does ACT Government engage in any education programs with the public, stakeholders and car dealers about this issue and if so, what is that engagement?

Minister Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Evoenergy, the ACT's distributed network service provider (DNSP) has indicated that direct current (DC) bidirectional chargers can be installed in the network once the specific charger is certified by the Clean Energy Council. To date, one bidirectional charger, the Sigenergy Sigenstor, has received certification although several others are seeking certification currently. The main barrier to uptake of bidirectional charging in the ACT is vehicle manufacturers do not currently cover vehicle-to-home and vehicle-to-grid bidirectional charging under their battery warranties, although this is expected to change as new models come to market.
2. N/A

3. N/A
4. There are means to allow some circuits in a home to be powered by electric vehicles (EV) that have vehicle-to-load (V2L) capability. Due to the limited power supply of V2L, this does not allow for a whole home to be powered by an EV or for power to be exported from the EV battery to the grid. Bidirectional chargers allow for a greater power supply from an EV battery to enable a home's electricity needs to be partially or fully met by the EV, for example at times where energy is most expensive, as well as allowing energy to be exported to the grid from the EV battery.
5. The ACT Government is engaging with industry including the DNSP, vehicle manufacturers and bidirectional charging providers, to ensure industry readiness for the technology. Education on bidirectional charging has largely been ad-hoc to date given the lack of available technology. The ACT Government has been participating in a trial project of VTG technology through 50 of its fleet vehicles. This ARENA (Federal) funded project is providing real world operational experience of VTG technology and will be used to inform the development of guidance materials on bidirectional charging through online guides, webinars and events as technology becomes available.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 234

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Environmental volunteers – Use of power tools

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

(1) Are environmental volunteers engaged through organisations like Landcare or catchment anagement groups, allowed to use power tools in their activities?

(2) If so:

(a) from what date have volunteers been permitted to use power tools?

(b) Which power tools are permitted?

(c) Was any training provided to volunteers to enable power tool use?

(3) Has the ACT Government reviewed the use of power tools by environmental volunteers since the last decision was made regarding their use?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

1. ACT Parks and Conservation Service ParkCare volunteers that are trained and endorsed by the ACT Government can use power tools to undertake approved activities. The Power Tool Trial Program has been delivered to 49 volunteers.

ParkCare Volunteers are only able to undertake activities approved by ACT Government when using power tools.

2. The Power Tool Trial program is being delivered by ParkCare, ACT Parks and Conservation Service. This process has included:

- a) The trial program formally began on Monday 17 February 2025 with the delivery of the first Power Tool Induction session to 49 volunteers. Participants were nominated by each ParkCare group to be part of the trial).
 - b) Battery operated brush cutters, pruning saws, hedge trimmers, self-propelled mowers and drills are included, and loaned and maintained by the ACT Government.
 - c) Volunteers must complete an induction/training session before they are permitted to use tools. Training includes a theoretical component and practical assessment. Additionally, all required Personal Protective Equipment is provided as part of the loan of tools.
3. Feedback on the use of power tools by ParkCare Volunteers has been gathered on an ongoing basis from participants of the trial program via email/general conversations. A formal in-person feedback session was held on 23 July 2025, and also had attendance from the manager of the Urban Parks and Places Volunteer Program. A final review report is currently being drafted to be finalised in by the end of 2025. The report will make recommendations on how to roll out broader power tool use, in a way that is appropriate for both the ParkCare and Urban Parks and Places volunteering programs.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 235

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: State of Environment Report and Development offsets

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

2023 ACT State of Environment report: "it is unclear whether [development] offsets are truly compensating for the loss of biodiversity permitted under Federal and Territory environmental laws and policy."

(1) What does the Government do to ensure that once land is claimed as an offset, it is adequately maintained and does not degrade.

(2) How is the ongoing quality of land that has been used for environmental offsets monitored and reported on over time.

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) Where the ACT Government is the proponent for a development requiring an environmental offset, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) is normally funded to establish the nature reserve. The establishment phase includes the setup of core infrastructure (e.g. fences, signage and management trails) and ecological management (e.g. baseline monitoring of conservation values, and weed and vertebrate pest management). This enables the future maintenance and restoration of Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) as may be required by the offset commitments in the environmental approval made under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Maintenance and restoration actions are articulated through Offset Management Plans (OMP) to deliver the offset commitments as required by the approval conditions. OMPs are often prepared by PCS on behalf of the ACT Government directorate approval holder, following Commonwealth approval for the offset.

(2) PCS implements a well-established annual monitoring program for each ACT Government environmental offset. The program tracks key indicators relevant to the MNES of each site, such as

vegetation condition and structure, and species abundance. Monitoring data is used to inform ongoing land management activities. Monitoring results are reported on the [ACT Environmental Offsets Register](#) in accordance with the offset commitments as required by the approval conditions under the EPBC Act.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 232

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Caitlin Tough MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Climate Change Strategy

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Minister, the budget allocates funding for the new ACT Climate Change Strategy, can you speak to what you think might be some of the focuses within this strategy in the context of a new Climate Change Council which you recently appointed?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The ACT Climate Change Council provides valuable, independent expertise and advice to help guide and inform the development of government climate change and energy policy, including providing advice on the next Climate Change Strategy. Noting work on the new strategy is still under consideration, the new strategy will maintain a strong focus on a just and equitable transition for all Canberrans. The Government will continue to build on and enhance existing work and look at opportunities for additional areas of focus. With the delivery of 100% renewable electricity in 2020, and the implementation of the Integrated Energy Plan underway, emissions reductions from the Territories two largest sources, transport and waste, will continue to be a focus. Climate adaptation and resilience will also be a key focus area, including building on work underway across biodiversity and conservation as well as building resilience within our community organisations, businesses and emergency services.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 236

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Environment and Environment Group Funding

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

What was the Commonwealth funding source that allowed \$100,000 additional funding to be invested in NatureMapr in 2024-25. Has that funding source been discontinued, or did the ACT government not apply for it for 2025-26.

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

In 2024-25 the Australian Government provided one-off grant funding of \$100,000 through the ACT Government to support to improve community reporting of Weeds of National Significance and threatened species sightings by the community through the use of NatureMapr. The Australian Government did not continue the grant program beyond 2024-25.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 237

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Environment and Bluetts Block 402

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

- (1) Has the ACT Government had any conversations with the ANU about the lease or management of Block 402?
- (2) Has the Conservator begun or completed any ecological investigations on Block 402? If not, when will these be undertaken?
- (3) What additional resources would be required for PCS to enable adequate management of Block 402, should it be designated as a nature reserve?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) In July 2025 the Australian National University contacted the ACT Government about their lease on Block 402 Stromlo. The nature of this contact remains commercial in confidence.
- (2) As part of the Land Management Agreement process, ecological studies have been conducted and compiled to provide guidance for land management. These surveys have identified important values related to threatened ecological communities and species. These include Superb Parrot nesting trees, critically endangered Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland, vulnerable Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, and likely other threatened woodland birds.

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna is assessing the level of ecological information that is currently available for Block 402 to determine if any additional surveys are required.

- (3) The Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) has not completed an assessment of the management requirements and resourcing for Block 402.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 240

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Community Environmental Sector and Funding & Procurement

Question received: 11 August 2025

Answer Due: 18 August 2025

Community Sector Funding & Procurement

1. Will the government table the internal reviews of funding for both the catchment groups and the three major NGOs?
2. How does the government include criteria around local knowledge, local volunteers, and local relationships with the sector to evaluate the value for money of community environmental services?
3. What support is provided to help the catchment groups and NGOs reduce overheads and increase efficiency?
4. How does the move to open tender align with the government's stated commitment to community partnerships and environmental stewardship?

Minister Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Government has no plans to table the outcomes of internal review of funding allocations and methodologies for the catchment groups and three major NGOs noting these will be used to inform future Government procurement process.
2. Criteria about local knowledge, local volunteers, and local relationships with the sector will be considered as part of potential future Government procurement processes.
3. Catchment Groups and NGOs are independent entities to the Government and report to a board. All receive indexed funding to support their operations, and the Government continues to work collaboratively with these groups at their request on options to reduce overheads and

increase efficiency. Under current Deeds of Agreement these groups may allocated up to 10% of the funding received from Government towards Administrative Overheads.

4. The proposal to implement a competitive procurement process seeks to strike a balance between current community partnerships but ultimately remain compliant with the *Government Procurement Act 2001* and the *Administration of Government Grants in the ACT* policy. Moving to a competitive procurement process open tender will continue to enable funding to be provided to community-led environment organisations through a fair, equitable, and transparent procurement process.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 265

**Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory**Select Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Redirected to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: City and Environment Directorate

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Woodlands and Wetlands Trust funding

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

- (1) Was there any new or initiative funding for the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, Mulligans Flat or Wildbark in the 2025-26 Budget?
- (2) What arrangement for ongoing funding or contributions from PCS does the ACT Government have with the Woodland and Wetlands Trust?
- (3) Has an implementation plan for the Mulligans Flat Sanctuary Strategy been developed?
- (4) Has any review or audit of goals and priorities in the Strategy been undertaken?
- (5) What has been achieved under the strategy to date?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) There is no new or initiative funding for the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust or the Wildbark in the 2025-26 budget.

(2) The Woodlands and Wetlands Trust helps manage Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary and Jerrabomberra Wetlands. As the land custodian, the ACT Government maintains a conservation land management team within the ACT Parks and Conservation Service to support the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserve and the Mulligans Flat-Goorooyaroo Nature Reserve and Sanctuary area. This includes a team of Rangers and Field officers as well as a Sanctuary Manager who are responsible for the day to day operations and land management.

In 2024/25, the ACT Parks and Conservations Service allocated 7 staff plus \$275,000, in addition to implementing kangaroo and fire management programs, to deliver a range of land management and conservation outcomes for Mulligans Flat Wildlife Sanctuary.

(3) The implementation plan for "Flourishing Nature, Flourishing Culture" - the Strategy for the Mulligans Flat and Gorooyaroo remains in development with the Australian National University and the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust.

(4) No.

(5) The Strategy recognises a range of achievements of the partnership between the Woodlands and Wetlands trust, the Australian National University and the ACT Government that continue to be managed. The Strategy is publicly available at <https://www.mulligansflat.org.au/strategy>.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Acting Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 266

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates
2025–2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Redirected to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: City and Environment Directorate

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Woodlands and Wetlands Trust funding 2

Question received: 9 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

- (1) Was there any money for the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust in the budget?
- (2) Can you describe the nature of any ongoing funding agreements between the ACT Government and the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust?
- (3) Has an implementation plan for the Mulligans Flat Sanctuary Strategy been developed?
- (4) What progress has been made towards implementing the Strategy?

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the responses provided in QON 265 (Woodlands and Wetlands Trust Funding 1).

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Acting Minister for City and Government Services, Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 267

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 7 August 2025

In relation to: Local food supply chain study

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

The ACT Government contracted Natural Capital Economics to undertake a study of local food supply chains in the ACT as part of the Local Food Strategy. This contract commenced in January and required the delivery of a final report to government in September 2024.

- (1) Has the report been delivered to government?
- (2) If yes, has the directorate briefed the Minister on the findings and recommendations of the report?
- (3) If no to (2), what is the expected timeframe?
- (4) If yes to (1), can the consultant report be provided on notice to the Committee?
- (5) Are there any further actions currently being delivered under the Local Food Strategy?

Ms Suzanne Orr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) Natural Capital Economics was engaged to deliver the Agriculture and Food in the ACT study. The report has been delivered to the Government for consideration.
- (2) I have been briefed on the report and findings.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The report is under consideration by the Government and is therefore not able to be made available to the Committee at this time.

(5) No, due to competing priorities and resource constraints.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 268

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorycleSelect Committee on Estimates
2025–2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Ministers for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 7 August 2025

In relation to: Aperture netting ban

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

ACT Wildlife have raised a number of concerns about the implementation of the ban on aperture netting, including that a number of retailers and many residents are not aware of the ban.

- (1) What steps have been taken to increase public awareness of the ban?
- (2) What steps have to taken to inform retailers who sell netting about the ban?
- (3) Which retailers that sell nets in the ACT have been contacted about the ban?

Which have not?

- (4) What plans are there for compliance and enforcement of the ban?
- (5) When will fines be issued for non-compliance?

Ms Suzanne Orr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) In 2023, the ACT Government entered into a deed of grant with ACT Wildlife for an education program to complement the regulatory changes around fruit tree netting. The program focused on a wildlife-friendly net swap initiative. The \$25,000 grant included demonstrations and opportunities for community members to replace old netting with new, safer alternatives. The program also covered the safe disposal of old netting and operating costs for ACT Wildlife. To complement this, the ACT Government ran a media and

communications campaign to increase public awareness of the ban and promote opportunities to replace fruit-tree netting with ACT Wildlife.

- (2) Consultation with local retailers of fruit netting occurred during the development of the legislation to inform them about the proposed change and understand any concerns. Communications activities described above also included targeted information for retailers.
- (3) Major retailers, such as Bunnings, have been contacted about the ban, along with smaller local retailers, including Yarralumla nursery.
- (4) The Government will action any non-compliance reported.
- (5) The Government's approach to compliance and enforcement is to educate, warn and then take punitive measures which can include fines.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 269

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

Reference: CED

Hearing: 7 August 2025

In relation to: Biosecurity specialised response capability

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

The government has invested \$965,000 for "continuing to maintain a specialised biosecurity response capability" and for "it's obligations under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity". However, it appears the funding is only for one year.

Why does it appear to be planned for this capability to be withdrawn or otherwise ended after June 2026?

Ms Suzanne Orr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Funding for the ACT's biosecurity response capability was provided for 2025-26 only to allow time for the Government to seek additional information about the ACT's longer-term biosecurity capability requirements.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

QON No. 277

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Release of community facility land

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

There was discussion about engaging with the community on the possible use of land to be sold for community uses in 2025-2026. Previously, the Directorate used community assessment work for Gungahlin and Molonglo to help determine the land use on a block in Kambah, without consulting with the local community. From the discussion it was not clear whether there would be discussions just with community organisations, ahead of the release of the land, or with the broader community to understand possible needs, to guide possible use of each block. Can you clarify what the level of community engagement will be?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Identification of land for community facilities is informed through feedback from community organisations, community needs assessments, the Housing Supply and Land Release Program and community feedback on engagement processes for planning projects in each district. While there is no planned consultation with the broader community for each specific community facility site, letters are sent to adjoining lessees to notify them of the expression of interest (EOI) or request for tender (RFT) process, including the proposed land use. Community also have the opportunity to provide comment on development proposals for the land through future development application processes.

The EOI process includes criteria for respondents to demonstrate, among other things, the demand for the facility, community benefit and any potential impact of the surrounding neighbourhood.

A key learning from the 2024-25 EOI process for community facility land is to broaden the permissible uses for the land to allow community organisations the opportunity to demonstrate the need for a particular community use and the benefit to community.

Ahead of the 2025-26 EOI process, the City and Environment Directorate will meet with potential community organisations offering an information session and opportunity to share feedback.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 278

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Release of community facility land

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

The 2025-2026 Land Release Program identifies a number of community facility sites in the Weston Creek and Tuggeranong area that will be released for sale.

(1) Have you worked out what the sites will be used for and if so what evidence and data has been used in determining the proposed purpose?

(2) Have you consulted with adjoining land owners, such as the Education Directorate and ACT Scouts? Also, will the local community be consulted on the proposed use of each site before they are released on the market?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The permissible uses for the 2025-26 sites have not yet been determined. Please refer to the response to QON 277 regarding considerations when determining land use for community facility sites, including consultation with relevant stakeholders, released through the expression of interest (EOI) process.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 279

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritoryDown with Select Committee on
Estimates 2025–2026

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Filtering (Planning)

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

There was discussion about the movement of people through the housing market by downsizing with the process of 'filtering' providing opportunities for more affordable housing to be developed. Reference was made to work that City and Environment Directorate (CED) has been doing to inform Government's position:

- (1) What is the work that CED has been doing and can that be provided?
- (2) Reference was made to 'robust analyses that have been done internationally' and 'there is a bit of literature on this topic' of filtering. Can you provide these?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The City and Environment Directorate has not undertaken a specific program of work on filtering.
2. There are a range of Australian and International research reports on the topic of filtering that are publicly available.

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Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Country and Place

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

The Urban Design Guide and Housing Design Guide recognise that the Ngunnawal people, their culture and relationship to Country are foundational elements for all design projects in the ACT.

(1) When assessing Development Applications what do the assessing officers look for in the Development Assessment Outcome reports that will show how Country and Place are addressed in the design elements?

(2) Have assessing officers engaged with First Nation's representatives to improve their understanding of First Nation's people's interconnection with the land, the landscape and its value?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Matters relating to Country and Place are identified and considered prior to, during and after the development application (DA) process. Development proposals that are likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on the heritage significance of a place or object will either require an Environmental Significance Opinion (ESO) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The purpose of the environmental assessments are to ensure sufficient documentations is prepared by the proponent to inform the DA assessment process. This documentation must be undertaken by suitably qualified persons and engage with the Representative Aboriginal Organisations (RAOs) to identify the impacts and measures to avoid or mitigate the impacts from the proposal.

Once the documentation is submitted for the DA process, the Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) will seek advice from the ACT Heritage Council as the decision makers on heritage places and objects in the ACT pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2004*. In providing their decision, the Council will consider whether the required consultation has been undertaken with the RAOs.

The Authority will then consider the application, including the heritage report, and advice from the Heritage Council and any recommendations to determine the DA. Some recommendations need to be implemented during the construction phase such as an Unanticipated Discovery Plan.

- 2) In the DA process, engagement with First Nation's representatives would usually be undertaken by the proponent in the preparation of their heritage reports. This consultation is undertaken prior to the DA process.

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QON No. 281

**Legislative Assembly** for the
Australian Capital TerritorySelect Committee on Estimates 2025–
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Future planning for the Belconnen Town Centre

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

Officials advised that a range of technical studies were underway for the Belconnen Town Centre.

(1) Can you provide a list of the studies being undertaken?

(2) Will the studies be used to inform possible developments on the key sites identified in the Belconnen District Strategy for the Belconnen Town Centre, such as the site to the north of Lake Ginninderra (Block 1 Section 159 Belconnen)?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1) Studies completed as at 14 August 2025:

- Site Investigation Report Phase 1
- Ecological Values Assessment for Lake Ginninderra sites
- Overland Flow/Flood and Drainage Study for Lake Ginninderra sites
- Bushfire Opportunities and Constraints Assessment for Lake Ginninderra sites

Studies/assessments currently underway:

- Cultural Heritage Assessment
- Detailed Community Facilities Supply and Demand Assessment
- Preliminary Infrastructure Requirements for Lake Ginninderra sites
- Preliminary Tree Assessment

Request for Quote (RFQs) released to market to undertake the following:

- Traffic and Movement assessment for the Town Centre and Surrounds
- Targeted Species Assessment for the lake Ginninderra Sites

Additional RFQ studies are due for release to market in late 2025 are:

- Market and Demographics Analysis for the Town Centre
- Geotechnical and Contamination Study for the Lake Ginninderra sites

2) Yes.

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Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: National Capital Design Review Panel

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

Officials advised that the tender process for the National Capital Design Review Panel (the Panel) will be finalised shortly. Will the names of the members of the new Panel be placed on the www.planning.act.gov.au website?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Yes. Once engaged, a list of panel members will be made available on the website.

[National Capital Design Review Panel - ACT Government](#)

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2025–2026

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Date:

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Mr Chris Steel MLA

QON No. 284

**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Private open space requirements

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

Officials advised that the private open space was part of the trade-offs for the development of a block - 'reduced the overall dimensions but make the quality of that overall open space enhanced.' Reference was made to 'areas on the dead side of a house where you don't spend much time'.

- (1) How was the decision made to reduce the overall amount of open space by 10%?
- (2) Did you look at Development Applications for similar developments and find that the average area of private open space on the 'dead side of a house' was 10 percent?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the response to QON 218 from this Inquiry.

Building controls such as site coverage, building form, and dwelling density were tested alongside site amenity considerations, including open space, planting areas, and tree canopy cover. This integrated approach informed metrics that reflect best-practice design outcomes, as outlined in the draft Missing Middle Housing Design Guide.

Comparative studies of existing and proposed developments, such as the Demonstration Housing Project, and local missing middle exemplars, were also reviewed to inform potential development scenarios and outcomes. While these studies did not look specifically at reducing private open space, they considered dwelling densities and site amenity outcomes to inform the proposed planning controls in the Missing Middle Housing Reform (MMHR) package.

The planning changes proposed in the MMHR aim to balance increasing housing supply and ensuring the delivery of well-designed, diverse, affordable, and sustainable housing options for our growing community. More dwellings on a block means that more of the site will be required to support access and services to those dwellings. In the balancing exercise of using the block most efficiently, the reforms prioritise increasing the canopy cover and improving the usability of the private open space, whilst maintaining the overall site coverage (any covered area) at 45%.

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Date:

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QON No. 286

**Legislative Assembly** for the
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Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

- (1) \$2.239M is identified in the Budget to deliver the next stages of planning reform. Will some of that money go into the new Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework?
- (2) Last year the City and Environment Directorate engaged with the community about the North Curtin Residential area. A consultation report was to be released in 2024 and now it will be released this year. Why hasn't the consultation report been released?
- (3) Have draft Planning Conditions been referred to the National Capital Authority?
- (4) What is happening with the other sites identified in the Woden District Strategy for intensification?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) Yes. Funding for technical studies and analysis needed to inform the planning reform work will also inform the development of the Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework (Framework). This funding will support planning studies and analysis to inform development of the Framework including the work required to meet relevant legislative requirements under the *Planning Act 2023*.
- (2) The North Curtin Listening Report was commissioned by the City and Environment Directorate (CED), the then Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate last year. CED will finalise the Listening Report and the Suburban Land Agency (SLA) will work with them to develop a communications strategy on the release of the Report prior to the public release of North Curtin Detailed Conditions of Planning Design and Development (Planning Conditions) in the final months of this year.

- (3) The North Curtin Detailed Conditions of Planning Design and Development (Planning Conditions) have not yet been submitted to the National Capital Authority (NCA). The SLA has been further developing the conditions in collaboration with NCA over the course of 2025. These conditions will be considered by the NCA at their October 2025 meeting.

The latest draft Planning Conditions consider and respond to the key themes of the listening report.

- Transportation and connections - active travel, light rail, roads and transport network considered wholistically, cross connections between suburbs
- Amenity/Infrastructure/Open space and environ - parks, landscape, community facilities, recreation facilities, cafes, seating, parking etc
- Housing mix of typologies town houses through to Apartments, quality of architecture, solar access, age friendly, affordability
- Accessibility, climate, safety around the creek and crossing, paths, current use
- First Nations - recognising local landscape plant species, first nation history, encourage and funding local artisans, education through signage

- (4) The Woden District Strategy 2023 identifies several key sites and change areas for urban intensification to support housing diversity, employment growth, and sustainable urban renewal. The majority of the change areas relate to planning for growth and change along the future light rail corridor from the City Centre to Woden and along the Athllon Drive corridor. Planning for these locations will be guided by the Southern Gateway Planning and Design Framework.

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Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Cay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED - Planning

Hearing: 1 August 2025

In relation to: Housing delivered

Question received: 12 August 2025

Answer Due: 19 August 2025

In discussion on building data reference was made to how many dwellings had been ‘delivered’ in the Territory and ABS data. Does ‘delivered’ mean ‘Dwellings approved’? Can you provide a link to the relevant ABS data?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

The City and Environment Directorate monitors a range of housing data, mainly sourced from the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In the context of Housing Accord, the word delivery was used to explain the number of dwelling completions in the ACT. This data is published by the ABS in its quarterly **Building Activity** publication. A link to the latest publication can be found below:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/building-and-construction/building-activity-australia/latest-release>.

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