



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**QON No. 29**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT, AND CITY SERVICES  
JO CLAY MLA (CHAIR), SUZANNE ORR MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MARK PARTON MLA

**Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder MLA:**

In relation to:

- 1) I note that in June 2020 new infrastructure was installed at Mugga Lane Resource Centre to reduce gas emissions and generate electricity. Has this infrastructure lead to a reduction in residential complaints about the smell from the tip?
- 2) In 2020, how many complaints were lodged by residents regarding the smell from Mugga Lane Resource Centre?
- 3) What changes have been made recently for the approval of the environmental authorisation? Is the landfill site still covered with a tarpaulin at night?
- 4) Has there been any evaluation or report on these changes and are you able to provide it?
- 5) How long is the Mugga Lane Resource Centre expected to be operational for? Is there a plan in place for when it reaches capacity? Will the centre be expanded again, or will an alternative site be considered?
- 6) Regarding the Southern Memorial Park, has the odour from the tip been considered in terms of whether the smell makes it unappealing to have a cemetery at that site?

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

- 1) Although there is no direct correlation established between the installation of the new landfill gas infrastructure and odour complaints, this new infrastructure is expected to maximise the extraction and capture of landfill gas, particularly methane, and in doing so minimise odours emitted to the environment. It is expected the new infrastructure will be able to power the equivalent of 5,700 homes, an increase from the previous gas extraction system of 4,600 homes.
- 2) In 2020, Access Canberra received nine complaints regarding odour detected in suburbs around the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre. On all of these occasions the ACT Environment Protection Authority was unable to determine the precise cause of the reported odour, but due to the climatic conditions at the time of each complaint, it was unlikely that the Mugga Lane landfill was the cause of the odour.
- 3) There have been no changes to the environmental authorisation on the site. The tarpaulin trial on the current active landfill cells has been approved to be extended by an additional 12 months (until the end of 2021) by the ACT EPA. This tarpaulin system is designed to reduce odour and vermin as compared to the use of soil day cover only.
- 4) An evaluation of the tarpaulin trial will be completed in May 2021 and this report can be provided to you, once available.



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- 5) Landfill expansion through the construction of additional landfill cells at the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre (MLRMC) commenced in May 2019 and was completed in August 2020 and is expected to provide landfilling capacity through to 2030, based on current levels of demand. The entire MLRMC precinct has a further 20 years landfill design capacity, based on current levels of demand, taking capacity to approximately 2050.

Initiatives such as the food organic and garden organics (FOGO) collection service for households will divert a portion of organic waste from landfill, further increasing the lifespan of the landfill site.

- 6) City Services and ACT NoWaste are proactively working with the designers and stakeholders associated with the Southern Memorial Park development on impacts related to the Mugga Lane landfill site including traffic management, noise, dust and odour.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport, and City Services

Signature:

Date:

12/3/21

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA