

# Appendix D: Additional Comments by Ms Jo Clay MLA

## Emissions from waste and transport

- 1.1. We are in a climate emergency. We are reducing emissions in some areas, like electricity and fossil fuel gas. But in other areas our emissions are increasing, like transport and waste. What we are doing is not working. We need a different approach.
- 1.2. At the time of the Annual Report hearings, emissions from waste and wastewater sat at about 9.3 % of Canberra's tracked climate emissions and around 153 kilotonnes. The latest inventory shows these have risen to 11.1 % and around 180 kilotonnes.
- 1.3. Similarly, at the time of the hearings transport emissions sat at around 63.6 % and around 1,047 kilotonnes. They have since risen to 1,170 kilotonnes and around 68.8 %.
- 1.4. Meanwhile, other emissions have dropped in recent years. For instance, a decade ago ACT emissions from fossil fuel gas, stationary energy and electricity were 2,734 kilotonnes and around 68.4 % of our emissions. Now these are only 374 kilotonnes and around 30% of our emissions. That is very effective action.
- 1.5. We have only recently announced policy and programs to phase out fossil fuel gas. Emissions from fossil fuel gas dropped over the past year. Again, this is effective action.
- 1.6. But the climate action we are taking for transport and waste is not working. Our transport and waste emissions are going up, not down.
- 1.7. Emissions from waste in landfill primarily come from organic material like food and wood waste. ACT Government committed to reducing food waste and emissions by delivering a Canberra-wide food waste service by 2023. This was going to be delivered via a large composting facility. It has been delayed to 2026 at the earliest.
- 1.8. Because of these delays, we will still be sending food waste to landfill in 2026. That waste will still be generating emissions in 2046. How does this match up with the ACT's goal of net zero emissions by 2045? Why are we comfortable to delay action on something that affects over 10% of our climate emissions? How is this an appropriate response to a declared emergency?
- 1.9. The ACT has a thriving local compost sector. We have solid results from the ACT Government's collection and processing food waste pilot in Belconnen. We could reduce food waste going to landfill earlier if we looked at interim options that don't rely on building a large composter in an environment where capital works are constantly being delayed. The City of Sydney is exploring innovative solutions to prevent FOGO going to landfill via insect farming. But here in the ACT, Government continues to procure contracts that will see no action until late this decade. It is not a crisis response. It is business as usual.
- 1.10. We could take real climate action now by expanding the Belconnen pilot. We could also use our existing composting and insect-farm sector or new services to recycle food

waste. We could do both of these things right now, before 2026. They would mean less food waste going to landfill and less emissions locked in for the next two decades. They would also create more jobs. We might even find we don't need the industrial composter and we might save Canberrans the cost of it. But ACT Government is not taking these steps.

- 1.11. Similarly, ACT Government has not taken any effective steps in the overall transport policy to reduce transport emissions. Light Rail stage one is effective public transport. It has high uptake and people like using it. But we are not seeing other stages of Light Rail delivered quickly enough in the face of a climate emergency, and we are not seeing enough action to improve our buses, footpaths and cycle paths. If what we were doing was working, our emissions would be going down. But transport emissions are rising.
- 1.12. One of the issues with the current approach is that there is no KPI or measure for the Minister in charge of the emissions. The City Services Minister and Transport Minister are not held responsible for ACT's overall waste emissions and transport emissions, despite the fact that they are responsible for delivering the policy, programs and services that address these. They report against internal emissions from their directorate activities, but not against ACT-wide emissions. These Ministers are also failing to model or report on the impact of delays on major projects and how these affect our climate emissions.
- 1.13. Our committee has made some recommendations on these issues but in the face of a climate emergency, I do not think they go far enough. I make these additional recommendations.

### **Recommendation 1**

That the ACT Government model the emissions impact of the delayed rollout of the Canberra-wide FOGO household services and report on this by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

### **Recommendation 2**

That the ACT Government consider ways to deliver food waste services to Canberra ahead of 2026, including an extension of the Belconnen pilot, delivery of food waste recovery via the existing sector and delivery of food waste recovery via a service model rather than only looking at delivery via a large capital project that has been delayed.

### **Recommendation 3**

That ACT Government reduce the emissions from the waste and transport sectors and do so with urgency, commensurate with the declared climate emergency.

#### **Recommendation 4**

That ACT Government set reduction targets for waste and transport emissions and report against them annually, with responsibility for reporting against targets and explaining why policies and programs have delivered or failed to deliver falling clearly with the responsible Minister (Minister for Transport and Minister for City Services).

Ms Jo Clay MLA

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