

**2025**

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY**

**Belconnen Town Centre – Primary and secondary school – Proposed establishment -**

**Assembly Resolution of 15 May 2024**

**Government Response**

**Presented by  
Yvette Berry MLA  
Minister for Education and Early Childhood  
May 2025**

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On 15 May 2024, the ACT Legislative Assembly passed a resolution on **Belconnen Town Centre – Primary and secondary school – Proposed establishment** (the Resolution). The Resolution calls on the Government to undertake feasibility work for a new primary and secondary school in Belconnen Town Centre, including investigation of potential sites and exploration of a ‘vertical school’ model.

The Minister for Education and Early Childhood, and the Education Directorate are taking steps to address the actions called for in the Resolution.

**Action (a): Commit to undertaking feasibility work for a new primary and secondary school in the Belconnen Town Centre, including investigation of potential sites.**

**Response to (a):**

The ACT Government, through the Education Directorate, is working with the University of Canberra (UC) to implement this commitment through a feasibility study to identify options for a possible future public primary school site on the UC campus.

In collaboration with the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, the Education Directorate has also been exploring alternative site options on surrounding land within the Town Centre, to meet forecast future enrolment demand in central Belconnen.

The objectives of the study are to identify a preferred location for a future public primary school and analyse the feasibility at that location.

The study seeks to analyse potential sites against an agreed set of site selection criteria and the existing UC Campus Masterplan and explore a ‘compact school’ built form.

The study will be underpinned by a governance structure being negotiated with UC, outlining the Education Directorate and the UC’s roles and responsibilities in preparing and delivering the study.

The study will support the strong partnership the ACT Government has with UC through the Affiliated Schools Program to improve learning outcomes through strengthening teaching practice. Subject to future decisions, a future public primary school may have the potential to incorporate elements of the Affiliated Schools Program along with opportunities to enliven *Inclusive Education: A Disability Inclusion Strategy for ACT public schools* in the context of a new, inclusive primary school.

As modelling and forecasting suggests that there is no immediate, medium or long-term demand for a new public high school in central Belconnen, the feasibility study will focus on feasibility for a public primary school only.

The feasibility study will be delivered within existing Education Directorate resources and is expected to be completed within the 2025-26 financial year.

**Action (b): Commit to exploring a ‘vertical school’ model which prioritises maximising ground space on campus for sports facilities and provides ample green space and outdoor playground areas.**

**Response to (b):**

As outlined in the Government’s response to Report No.9 of the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion *Inquiry into the Future of School Infrastructure in the ACT*, the ACT Government will consider the development of schools with increased density and higher built form as necessary, considering a broad range of relevant considerations particularly the age of student cohorts. This could include multi-storey facilities where suitable and practicable, particularly for high school and college-age students.

The built form of ACT public schools takes into consideration health and safety matters as well as a range of other issues including the age cohorts of students, available land, best practice approaches to school infrastructure, access to outdoor play space and value for money outcomes. Significantly, the design of schools is required to be consistent with the

provisions of the Territory Plan; schools are ordinarily located in a Community Facility Zone and provisions apply for the height, bulk, and scale of development.

The feasibility study will consider whether a more compact built form could be suitable for a potential future school to service the Belconnen Town Centre.

**Action (c): Commit to delivering a new primary and secondary school in the Belconnen Town Centre, subject to outcomes of the feasibility work and identification of a suitable site.**

**Response to (c):**

Any future Government decision on delivering a new school in the Belconnen Town Centre will be subject to the outcomes of the feasibility study, identification of a suitable site, future pace of residential development and occupation, future student demand analysis and future budget decisions.