

2026

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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Standing Committee on Environment and Planning - Report No. 5 -

DPA-B: Forrest Section 19 Blocks 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12

Government Response

**Presented by
Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development
May 2026**



Chris Steel MLA

Treasurer

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Minister for Heritage

Minister for Transport

Member for Murrumbidgee

Our ref: 26/101

Ms Jo Clay MLA
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Planning
LACommitteeEnvironment@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Ms Clay

Government Response to Committee Report into DPA-B: Forrest Section 19 Blocks 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12

Thank you for providing the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning (the Committee) Report 5 into DPA-B: Forrest Section 19 Blocks 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12 (the Report). The ACT Government thanks the Committee for its Inquiry and recommendation. I provide the ACT Government's response below.

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that when the ACT Government considers or initiates Major Plan Amendments, it ensures there is sufficient information accompanying publicly notified documents to allow the community to see implications on key issues such as security, traffic management, parking, solar access, trees and green space, and environmental considerations.

Government Response: AGREED IN PRINCIPLE

The ACT Government is committed to providing the community with sufficient information to understand and make comments on proposed changes to the Territory Plan, which may include rezoning and planning policy changes. The ACT Government also agrees to outline how key issues are already captured in other parts of the Territory Plan and how they will be considered through other statutory planning processes.

In determining what information is appropriate to accompany a Major Plan Amendment (MPA), it is important to note the purpose of the MPA process and how this differs from other statutory planning processes.

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The Territory Plan is the ACT’s key planning policy document – it sets zoning, assessment outcomes and assessment requirements that enable and prohibit certain land uses and development. The Territory Plan does this through its District, Zone and Other Policies. Importantly, the Zone Policies effectively require all development to consider privacy, traffic, parking, solar access, trees and green space and environmental impacts.

Ultimately, the purpose of a MPA is to make strategic planning amendments, such as changing the type of developments or land uses that could occur, where they could occur, and the outcomes or requirements that they need to meet. During this process it is considered whether a site is appropriate to accommodate any future land uses and development types that would be permitted and/or prohibited as a result of the change.

For example, in the case of DPA-B, some blocks were proposed to be rezoned from Leisure and Accommodation (CZ6) to Mixed Use (CZ5). This results in several land use changes, including those outlined in Table 1 below. DPA-B was progressed and considered on the premise of all possible land uses and developments that may result from the amendments being appropriate for the site.

Table 1: Changes in land uses as a result of DPA-B

No longer permitted	Now permitted
Club	Boarding house
Caravan park	Co-housing
Serviced apartments	Community housing
Craft workshop	Financial establishment
Camping areas	Multi-unit housing
Tourist facilities	Office
	Public agency
	Retirement village
	Supportive housing

While concept plans of a proposed development may be released with an MPA, as was the case with DPA-B where plans of a residential development were presented, this is not a final development proposal and is indicative of a potential outcome to provide context of what may be possible. Several other development types and scenarios would also be permitted as a result of the policy changes. With this, concept plans for all MPAs should only be considered as indicative or illustrative.

A development application (DA) is where a specific development proposal is put forward and assessed against the relevant statutory requirements, including the Territory Plan. This is where the implications a development would have on privacy, traffic, parking, solar access, trees and green space and environmental impacts are (and are most appropriately) assessed.

Noting this, the ACT Government agrees that MPAs will provide sufficient information to make the necessary strategic planning decisions, including differentiating what will be required and considered as part of other statutory planning processes, such as DAs.

As noted by the Committee, DPA-B is the first MPA under the new planning system that an Inquiry has been conducted on. It is acknowledged that many stakeholders may still becoming familiar with the new planning system and further education may be required.

Clarification on elements of the MPA process

With this, it is noted that the Report included some misunderstandings of the MPA process that I wish to clarify. These include:

- **Paragraph 1.2** – This outlines that the Territory Planning Authority (the Authority) prepares a supporting report for all MPAs, irrespective of how it is initiated. It should be noted that under section 57 (1) of the *Planning Act 2023* (the Act), the proponent is required to provide a supporting report for a proponent-initiated MPA.
- **Paragraph 1.3** – This outlines that if the Minister approves the draft MPA, it is referred to the Committee for consideration. Referral of a draft MPA to the Committee occurs before the Minister can make a decision. Section 75 of the Act, outlines that it is not until the Committee reports on the draft MPA (if they prepare one) that the Minister can make a decision.
- **Paragraph 1.9** – Pursuant to section 67 of the Act (rather than s 57), the Authority provided DPA-B to the Minister, who then referred it to the Committee. As outlined above, the Minister does not make a decision on a draft MPA until the Committee reports and any recommendations are considered.
- **Paragraph 1.23 and 1.24** – In addition to the entities outlined in paragraph 1.23, all draft MPAs are required to be referred to the National Capital Authority under section 62 of the Act. Referral of DPA-B to the NCA was not due to the site's proximity to designated areas, as outlined in paragraph 1.24.

To assist the Committee's understanding for future MPA processes, I would be pleased to offer the Committee a briefing with officials on the new planning system, the Territory Plan and the amendment processes.

Further engagement with notable stakeholders

During the Committee hearings, potential impacts on the National Jewish Memorial Centre were raised including security concerns (i.e. potential overlooking from future development enabled by DPA-B). Following the release of the Report on 19 January 2026, the Planning Authority reached out to the ACT Jewish Community on 29 January 2026 with an offer to discuss the remaining elements of the DPA process and any security concerns. Following additional correspondence on 10 April 2026, CED is coordinating with the ACT Jewish Community to arrange a further meeting to discuss any outstanding concerns and to highlight opportunities for further input provided through the Development Application/Works Approval process.

If the Committee would like to arrange a briefing, please contact my office who will arrange a time with representatives from the Territory Planning Authority.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Steel', written in a cursive style.

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