



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: Planning – City and Environment Directorate

Hearing: 23 July 2026

In relation to: Manuka Hotel - compliance with the DA

Question received: 31 July 2026

Answer Due: 7 August 2026

In the case of DA 202038142:

1. Which government Directorate or Agency independently checked that the Building Approval plans approved by the private certifier included the cinemas approved by the Planning Authority, and when was that check undertaken?
2. On what date did the ACT Government first become aware that the approved cinemas may not be included in the development being constructed?
3. Which agency first became aware of the issue, the Planning Authority, Access Canberra, the certifier, or another agency?
4. How did the Government become aware of the issue?
5. What actions were taken immediately after the issue was identified?
6. Was legal advice sought?
7. Did the Government consider that the omission of cinemas constituted development other than in accordance with DA 202038142?
8. Was a stop-work order, controlled activity investigation or enforcement action considered? If not, why not?
9. Who made the decision not to require construction of the approved cinemas?
10. Was the Minister briefed on the development not having cinemas? If so, when?

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

I am advised by the Territory Planning Authority and Access Canberra of the following:

1. A comprehensive desktop review was conducted by delegates of the Construction Occupations Registrar on 15 August 2025, including analysis of relevant planning approvals (DA), Building Approvals (BA), and Crown lease documentation. This review confirmed that the DA202038142 Notice of Decision (NOD) does not explicitly state the number of cinemas to be constructed.
2. 6 November 2024.
3. It was notified to Access Canberra by the certifier.
4. Correspondence from the certifier outlining changes to the development was received by Access Canberra on 6 November 2024.
5. An audit and inspection were undertaken of the development. Initial assessment was by the Construction and Planning Compliance Team. No breaches of the development changes were identified.
6. This information is privileged. The Registrar or Access Canberra as delegates of the Territory Planning Authority will seek advice from a range of sources in making decisions on regulatory matters.
7. This matter remains an active investigation and no further comment can be made at this stage.
8. At this stage, there has been no breach of the legislation as outlined in the answers above, however the matter remains under investigation.
9. The developer modified the layout and has stated publicly that commercial cinema operators were unwilling to invest in a multi-screen commercial multiplex at the site. This was a commercial decision by the developer, was determined to be compliant with exempt provisions of the *Planning Act 2023*, and is not subject to regulatory action.
10. A Question Time Brief was provided for the 23-25 September 2025 sitting week.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

Signature:



Date:

10/8/26

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

