



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Ms Clay: To ask the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Ref: Budget Statement F (page 3)

In relation to: Future School needs in the Belconnen Town Centre

Noting the 2019 ACT Government Infrastructure Plan stated that “The Government is also undertaking feasibility studies to inform future school infrastructure needs arising from further urban renewal in the Belconnen and Woden Town Centres.”

1. Are the feasibility studies from 2019 complete?
2. Are new feasibility studies underway as per the budget line “Undertaking feasibility and master planning for future new school infrastructure in Gungahlin, Woden, Belconnen, Molonglo, Inner North and Inner South;”
3. What Master planning work has occurred for the Belconnen district?
4. When might feasibility studies and master planning work for the Belconnen district and town centre complete and will these studies be published?
5. Has a list of potential sites for a future Belconnen Town Centre school been identified?
6. Given the additional challenges for developing in town centres to do with community consultation, land acquisition and site preparation, what indicative timeframes has education anticipated it will need to go from planning to completion for an infill school in Belconnen town centre?
7. What data is used to determine future population forecasts for the purposes of school enrolment within Education ACT? Is this sourced from the ABS, EPSDD, existing school enrolments or elsewhere?
8. Given historical underestimations of Canberra’s population growth, including the Belconnen Town Centre Masterplan from 2016 now being 10 years ahead of forecast population, when might public consultation on a future school for the Belconnen town centre be expected?

Minister Yvette Berry The answer to the Member’s question is as follows: –

1. Feasibility work specifically referenced in the 2019 ACT Infrastructure Plan has been completed, based on the information that was available at that time.
2. Yes.
3. The Education Directorate undertakes iterative demand analysis, feasibility and planning studies, driven by forecast future public education demand across all regions of the ACT, including Belconnen. This work is highly iterative in nature as it comprises scenario analysis

to test planning and policy outcomes, such as modelling the impact of permanent and temporary expansion of existing schools in the region, exploring enrolment policy options to accommodate enrolment growth, as well as assessing potential sites for new school infrastructure.

4. Please refer to answer 3.

This work forms a key input into Business Case development to inform deliberations and future investment decisions of Government, which become public once those infrastructure and investment decisions are taken.

5. Please refer to answer 3.
6. The ACT Government has not made a decision on a new school in the Belconnen Town Centre. Please refer to answer 3, planning work is continuing.
7. Student demand forecasts are undertaken using the Student Transition Estimation and Projection (STEP) model, in collaboration with the ANU School of Demography. Forecasts incorporate a range of underlying assumptions based on observed behaviour, including the historical preference for public schools, catchment areas, and underlying demographics. Significant data inputs include ABS Birth and Estimated Resident Population data, ACT Education Census results and ACT Treasury (CMTEDD) ACT Population projections.
8. Future community consultation will be driven by forecast needs. Planning work is continuing. Please refer to answer 3.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature:

Date:

13/09/22

By the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Yvette Berry