

2025

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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Tabling Statement

Richardson Shops Improvement

Response to Assembly Resolution of 24 June 2025

**Presented by
Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development
December 2025**

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to table the Government Response to the Assembly Resolution of 24 June 2025 – Richardson Shops Improvement.

Like many members of the community, I want to see vibrant local shopping centres and share the community's frustration that Richardson remains untenanted. As Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development I have been a strong advocate for more housing and better shops for Canberrans and want to see vibrant local hubs offering Canberrans a local and conveniently located option for shopping.

The Government has been working closely with the owners, where appropriate, to try and ensure the shops are activated. I acknowledge that market forces can sometimes create challenges in attracting and retaining commercial tenants. I understand that the owner has been working hard to secure a tenancy but unfortunately has not yet been successful. While I am assured that the owners are working to secure a tenancy, I am disappointed that this has unfortunately not yet been successful.

Mr Speaker the motion discusses changes to the leasing system and planning controls. As with any site in the ACT, the decision to add more uses to the crown lease or undertake a development application or rezoning application is a matter for the lessee. However, I can confirm that there are robust processes under planning legislation that outline the considerations and pathways any

such applications would take, including consultation with the Canberra Community. I understand that officers within the City and Environment Directorate are available to provide any support regarding planning advice and planning processes for any proponent in the Canberra community.

I understand that at this stage, there are no proposals before the Territory Planning Authority relating to this site. However, the Government will continue to consider compliance actions and any potential opportunities to ensure the planning system continues to deliver good outcomes for the community.

It is noted that there have been two petitions presented to the ACT legislative assembly, which have raised similar themes to this motion and that earlier this year, a government response to these petitions was tabled in previously and is available on the ACT Legislative Assembly website.

Mr Speaker, the Government remains committed to working with the lessee, where appropriate to support the re-opening of the site.