



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Homes and New Suburbs

In relation to: Territory Priority Project Applications

Hearing: 11 February 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 50-52

Transcript provided: 14 February 2025

Answer Due: 21 February 2025 5.00 pm

Minister Berry took on notice the following question(s):

MS CLAY: I wonder, given that we already have some provisions, though, can you tell me how many times has housing ACT applied to the minister to have public housing declared to be a territory priority project?

Ms Berry: I will take that one on notice.

MS CLAY: Okay, excellent. And I am wondering, when you take that on notice—you might not be able to answer any of these questions. I am wondering when Housing ACT asked for a declaration, what happened? Was it declared? Was it dismissed? Like, what happened with the outcome there?

Ms Berry: We will take that one on notice as well.

MS CLAY: Okay, okay. I am also interested in knowing how many development applications Housing ACT has submitted for additions to public housing. Part of the legislation we have on the table is to change the existing provisions, and that would also be to change the existing provisions so that territory priority projects can be declared for housing maintenance and for housing additions. So can you tell me how many times you have lodged?

Ms Rule: When you say "addition", do you mean like an extension to an existing property and extra bedrooms and—

MS CLAY: I believe so. So we have a bill before us at the moment which would allow Housing ACT to have additions declared as a territory priority project, and would allow Housing ACT to have declared maintenance. I am interested in knowing how often Housing ACT right now has to lodge DAs for additions and for maintenance.

Ms Rule: It is not typically part of our housing mix is to do additions to existing properties.

MS CLAY: No, I was interested to see it in the legislation myself. Can you check? I actually do not mind what range, like the last year or the last three years or whatever it is, but we have some legislation that would enable this. Can you tell me how many times that has come up?

Ms Rule: Certainly in the last year it has not come up, so we either repair and enhance existing properties, so your kitchens, bathrooms, all that sort of stuff, or we make a decision about whether we make different use of that stock. So we might demolish and build something new. We might sell that stock, whatever it might be, or we acquire new land and build new dwellings. It is not part of the housing mix. Because we are building so quickly, we can look at what the requirements are on the wait list of three bedrooms or one bedroom or two bedrooms, so adding onto existing property is not part of the mix.

MS CLAY: It is not something you—no, that is fine. So you are not actually lodging DAs for extensions because you do not do it?

Ms Berry: No. Ms Clay, we have just checked with the team and they have advised there has been done.

MS CLAY: Yes. No, that sounds pretty reasonable. Can I then just check, can you tell me how many times since 2019 you have had to lodge DAs for repairs and maintenance?

Ms Rule: None.

MS CLAY: You would not? Excellent. That tallies up. So that is all right. I am interested to see that we have some legislation to allow you to do that more easily in the future, given that you have never had to do it in the past, since 2019. That is fine.

Ms Rule: I guess the nature of our housing stock is changing, though, so we are doing a lot of new builds and that is meeting current need, or aiming to meet current need, but it does not mean that there will not be flexibility required in the future, as that need may change. So as the population ages or young families move into different areas, there is different demand for stock in different parts of the city, depending on the age profile, level of disability, all those sorts of things.

So as the city kind of changes over time, it does not mean that that kind of flexibility will not be required. It just has not been part of our current—our current focus has been on increasing overall stock numbers, but as that stock increases and over time hopefully stabilises, then maintaining that stock and making best use of that stock may mean that those things are required in the future.

MS CLAY: I might close. I think I have actually got the information I need, but I might close with this. I do not know if you, when you are going back and checking whether—I think you have either confirmed that you have never asked for a territory priority project, but you will check and find out about that.

Ms Rule: No, no, we did not say that. The question was, had we asked. So the minister took on notice the territory priority projects. We will take that on notice.

Minister Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

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Housing ACT have submitted Territory Priority Projects (TPP) applications for seven projects (112 dwellings). These applications were submitted to the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development and the Chief Minister between May and June 2024. EPSDD and CSD advised that consideration of individual public housing projects as Territory Priority Projects should be paused while they developed advice regarding a more appropriate process for public housing. Following the provision of that advice, the ACT Government developed the Planning (Territory Priority Project) Amendment Bill 2025 to provide that public housing projects are captured within the definition of a Territory Priority Project, ensuring greater transparency for the community.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

By the Minister for Homes and New Suburbs, Yvette Berry MLA

Date:

04/03/25