

2025

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

ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY

Big Splash – Response to Assembly Resolution of 13 May 2025

Government Response

**Presented by
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Minister for Planning & Sustainable Development
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On 13 May 2025, the ACT Legislative Assembly passed a resolution regarding the Big Splash water park in Macquarie. In particular, the Assembly Resolution calls on Government to take compliance action in relation to the operation of the facility, outline any other steps to ensure the facility stays open, provide an update on the progress of actions, ensure zoning remains PRZ2 – Restricted Access Recreation Zone and future developments are consistent with this zone and retain a pool on the site. The Government Response addresses each of the calls on the Government within the resolution. It is noted that some matters raised have already been addressed through a [previous Government Response](#) to petitions E-PET-049-24 and PET-010-25.

Future compliance action - Block 1 Section 53 Macquarie

The centre is currently closed and is privately leased to Translink Property Management Pty Ltd. The current Crown lease was granted on 3 May 2006 for a term of 99 years, ending on 2 May 2105, and currently allows for the purpose of *an aquatic and indoor sports and recreation centre and an unlicensed family restaurant*. The ACT Government has been in contact with the lessee who has advised that they are planning on continuing the operation of the facility. However, they are working through significant rectification and maintenance works required for the safe operation of the facility.

Access Canberra has investigated potential breaches and engaged with the business to advise of their obligations. In June 2025, and as a result of ongoing concerns with safety, Access Canberra commenced further compliance actions. As this is an ongoing matter, no further information can be provided at this stage.

Access Canberra will consider any regulatory action in relation to the relevant breach, including consideration of risk and harm to the community, and consider the most appropriate and effective course of action to resolve the matter.

Any other future steps to ensure future operation – Big Splash

Other options for the ACT Government to mandate or apply a timeframe on the lessee to open the site are limited. There are legislative mechanisms under the Planning Act 2023 to ensure operation is continued, however, a reasonable period must be provided when undertaking maintenance on a site. In terms of a temporary closures, it is noted that closure for on-site maintenance and pursuing any additional facilities is a matter for the lessee.

That said, the ACT Government is committed to ensuring the site is utilised appropriately and in accordance with legislative requirements. As outlined in the [previous Government Response](#), the ACT Government has been in contact with the lessee and will continue to assist, where appropriate.

Table a further update by 16 September 2025

The Resolution calls on Government to commit to *keeping the community informed of action on Big Splash, including tabling a further update report by 16 September 2025*. The ACT Government has noted this as part of this response.

Maintain PRZ2 - Restricted Access Recreation Zone for the site

The Resolution calls on Government to commit to maintaining the current PRZ2 - Restricted Access Recreation Zone zoning for Block 1 Section 53 Macquarie. As outlined in the [previous Government Response](#), the current planning system includes processes or options to increase opportunities for this site. These include an application for a development application, lease variation or an application to amend the territory plan.

Although there is currently no application for a territory plan amendment for the facility, the ACT Government cannot guarantee that zone changes for the site will not be pursued by the lessee in the future.

Ensure future development proposals meet the PRZ2 - Restricted Access Recreation Zone and retain a pool on the site

The Resolution calls on Government to commit to *ensuring future development proposals are assessed with regards to policy outcomes to be achieved for the PRZ2 - Restricted Access Recreation Zone in accordance with the Territory Plan 2023 that will retain a pool on the site.*

If a development application (DA) is pursued, the application will be assessed by the independent Territory Planning Authority (the Authority). The Authority must assess each application in accordance with the requirements of the Territory Plan and *Planning Act 2023*. The subject site is located in the PRZ2 Restricted Access Recreation Zone and therefore the provisions relating to the PRZ2 already apply to a DA at this site.

However, as outlined above and in the [previous Government Response](#), the ACT Government cannot guarantee that zone changes for the site will not be pursued by the lessee in the future. Should any changes be proposed to the zoning on the Big Splash site, it would require a major plan amendment which includes all of the following:

- consideration by the Territory Planning Authority, who will consider the ACT Planning Strategy and Belconnen District Strategy.
- a minimum of 30 working days of public consultation.
- entity consultation, including to ACT Government agencies.

- consideration by the relevant Legislative Assembly committee, which may involve an Inquiry.
- decision by the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development (the Minister).
- if approved by the Minister, presentation and tabling in the Legislative Assembly who may move to reject the rezoning.

The Authority is not aware of any proposal for a Territory Plan amendment for the facility.