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Jo Clay MLA

Chair

Standing Committee on Environment and Planning

ACT Legislative Assembly

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LcommitteeEnvironment@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Chair *Jo*

INQUIRY INTO DPA-04 – MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING REFORM

Thank you for your letters of 6 and 7 November 2025 regarding Draft Major Plan Amendment 04 – Missing Middle Housing Reform (DPA-04) and the decision by the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning (the Committee) to undertake an inquiry.

I acknowledge the importance of Assembly oversight and inquiry, and effective public participation in parliamentary scrutiny. The Government believes that the Missing Middle Housing Reforms are substantial changes that deserve an inquiry.

However, I am writing to request that the Committee reconsider its decision to take the maximum allowable timeframe available for its inquiry and adopt a shortened timeframe to report on DPA-04.

I draw the Committee's attention to the effect the decision to report back by 30 April 2026 will have on delaying the implementation these reforms and unlocking crucial housing supply and meeting housing targets. The Committee has chosen to take the maximum time allowable under the Act, being six months, to report on DPA-04 which could delay the implementation of these significant reforms to September 2026.

When considering the time required for appropriate due diligence in the Government considering any recommendations by the Committee, the Territory Planning Authority (Authority) in making any revisions to DPA-04 in response to these, and time for me as Planning Minister to consider the revised draft amendment in accordance with section 75 of the Act, it is reasonable to assume the major plan amendment would not be presented to the Legislative Assembly until the June 2026 sitting week. The Act

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also provides five sitting days after the major plan is presented for a notice of motion for a rejection motion to be given, which, even if the major amendment were presented on the first sitting of June, would carry-over to the September sitting.

I note that under the *Planning Act* 2023, section 71 (5) enables me as Minister to request that a report be completed within a stated period between three and six months after the date the draft amendment is referred to the Committee under section 70. Section 74 would then allow me to take action on the draft amendment under section 75 if the Committee had not reported on the amendment by this stated date.

In respect to the Committee, I did not exercise these powers to determine your reporting period, in order to provide the Committee with some flexibility to manage your inquiry over the holiday period. However, in my letter of 28 October 2025 referring DPA-04 to the Committee, I did request that the Committee provide a report back at the earliest opportunity given the extensive community engagement undertaken in developing the Missing Middle Housing reforms.

I can also confirm the ACT Government does not shut down outside of the period between 25 December 2025 – 1 January and officials are ready and available to support the Committee during this time to ensure the inquiry can progress in a timely manner.

I therefore respectfully request that the Committee reconsiders the timeframe for its inquiry into DPA-04 to ensure that these reforms can be implemented and more homes built sooner.

Sincerely



Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development
18 November 2025