QTON No. 16

Legislative Assembly for the **Australian Capital Territory**
Select Committee on Estimates 2026-2027

Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Chris Steel MLA

Redirected to: Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

In relation to: Relocation of Access Canberra – Cosmopolitan Building

Hearing: 21 July 2026
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Transcript provided: 22 July 2026
Answer Due: 29 July 2026

Chris Steel MLA took on notice the following question:

MS CARRICK: And Treasurer, through this process was the owner of the Cosmopolitan Building asked for what rent they would accept? Did you ask them, like, if they would sort of meet the proposal that you are looking at?

Mr Steel: Again, yes, look, I will take that on notice, similarly to direct it to the appropriate minister.

MS CARRICK: Because how do you know if you have got value for money if you did not ask the current owner whether they would meet the—

Mr Steel: Yes, look, I will take that on notice for Minister Cheyne and Minister Stephen-Smith to come back to you.

[…]

MS CARRICK: So, then, here we have the treasury officers, and can you not tell your assessment of this business case and the value for money?

Ms Dowdell: I do not have that here. We would have to take on notice what we could provide.

Mr Steel: But it is part of the cabinet in confidence process.

Ms Dowdell: So, we could not provide the treasury briefing.

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Infrastructure Canberra (iCBR) continues to work with Directorates on the most efficient allocation of government accommodation, including leased and owned buildings, to support cost efficiency as well as co-location of staff and services. This includes reviewing accommodation arrangements in advance of leases expiring.

iCBR has engaged with the landlords of the Cosmopolitan Building; however, these conversations are held in a commercial in confidence environment to maintain the negotiating position of government and ensure value for money.

The preferred option of relocating the Access Canberra shopfront to the Woden Library not only supports efficiency in consolidating accommodation and services; it also reflects the recommendations of the Independent Working Group Report into Libraries ACT in supporting co-location in services as well as the ACTPS 25 Report.

The relocation delivers a range of strategic and community benefits, while also ensuring the integrity of the two service spaces—the library and service centre—remain. These benefits include:

- Enhanced community access to services through the co-location of government services, providing customers with a more integrated and convenient service experience.
- Introducing up to 80,000 Service Centre customers a year to the Woden Library, including increasing awareness of programs and services.
- Retaining community facilities – including meeting rooms and podcast space.
- Investment in government-owned assets, supporting the sustainability and utilisation of public infrastructure into the future.
- Optimisation of the ACT Government's accommodation footprint through a reduction in leased office space, better aligning accommodation requirements with current and future utilisation levels.

Overall, the proposal supports the Government's objectives of improving customer service delivery, achieving greater efficiencies in accommodation costs, and maximising the use of government owned facilities.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026-2027

Signature: Date: 30/7/26

By the Minister for the Public Service, Rachel Stephen-Smith