

**2018**

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

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN RENEWAL  
REPORT NO 5**

**REPORT ON ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2016-2017**

**Presented by  
Mr Andrew Barr MLA  
Chief Minister**

## **Introduction**

On 26 October 2017, the Assembly referred the annual and financial reports for the calendar year 2016 and the financial year 2016—2017 to Assembly committees for inquiry and report by the last sitting day in March 2018.

The following annual reports, or sections of annual reports were referred to the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal (the Committee):

- Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate - Architects Board of the ACT; Public Housing Renewal Taskforce and Affordable Housing; Land Release Policy; Urban Renewal (Planning);
- Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Planning; Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme; and
- Land Development Agency.

## **Response to Committee Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

3.18 The committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that ongoing support is provided to residents and owners affected by Mr Fluffy during the remainder of the Asbestos Response Taskforce operations and after it concludes.

#### **Government Response - Agreed**

The Taskforce continues to work with residents, owners and other appropriate stakeholders to ensure that ongoing support will be available to those affected by loose fill asbestos.

### **Recommendation 2**

3.30 The committee recommends that the ACT Government update the functionality of the Development Applications website as a matter of urgency so that interested members of the public can sign up to receive notifications of development applications in a selected area, consistent with the facilities available in the DA Finder App V2.

#### **Government Response – Agreed in Principle**

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is continually seeking opportunities to upgrade its web based services. The Development Application App Finder was specifically designed to provide functions that cannot yet be achieved using a static website.

### **Recommendation 3**

3.31 The committee recommends that the ACT Government prioritise improving storage capacity so that all Development Applications can be made permanently available online with appropriate information as to their status such as: open for comment; under consideration; approved; or rejected.

#### **Government Response – Agreed in Principle**

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will continue to explore options for providing development applications permanently online. This may include functionality arising from the upgrade of the eDevelopment system.

### **Recommendation 4**

3.32 The committee recommends that, if it will be more efficient to do so, the ACT Government considers integrating the work on increasing Development storage capabilities and improving Development Application notification systems with the e-Development upgrade, in order to improve the accessibility of information related to current and historical Development Application processes.

#### **Government Response – Agreed in Principle**

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will continue to explore options for its web based services and notification systems, and improved access to Development Applications on line.

The upgrade of the EDevelopment system in current and future releases, may provide opportunities for implementing this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 5**

3.35 The committee recommends that the ACT Government conduct an audit on Development Application signage placement to determine whether signs are consistently meeting requirements and whether those requirements achieve the intended outcome of signs being clearly visible to passers-by.

### **Government Response – Agreed**

Since October 2017 the signage contractor has been required to send photos of all signage placement after installation to allow scrutiny as to whether signs have been appropriately placed.

### **Recommendation 6**

3.36 The committee recommends that the ACT Government further improve Development Application notification signage, and use the changes adopted by the city of Vancouver in 2013 as guidance in how to effectively limit jargon, use everyday language and include images to make the signs easier to read and understand.

### **Government Response – Agreed**

Since mid-2017 descriptions of proposals have been made user-friendly and clearer, without the use of any abbreviation. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is giving consideration to including plans and images as part of signage.

### **Recommendation 7**

3.43 The committee recommends that ACT Government ensure that future Territory Plan Variations in respect of suburban local centres and group centres include controls addressing overshadowing, where these are currently not explicitly stated.

### **Government Response – Agreed in Principle**

During the development of future Territory Plan variations relating to local and group centres, consideration will be given to the extent of overshadowing created by increasing development and whether specific precinct code provisions are required.

### **Recommendation 8**

3.50 The committee recommends that the ACT Government, in its response to this report, provide a timeline for finalising the Gungahlin Town Centre Refresh.

### **Government Response – Agreed**

It is anticipated the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning refresh will be finalised following consultation in June-July 2018. Community engagement of the Gungahlin Town Centre Planning refresh occurred between March and May 2017. Traffic and urban form modelling are informing the planning refresh outcomes.

### **Recommendation 9**

4.18 The committee recommends that the ACT Government updates the way the indicative land release map is presented so that the map reflects the level of detail available in the indicative land release table, and is clear and easy to use.

#### **Government Response – Agreed**

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will be uploading the next land release program in Actmapi. This will allow users to easily identify land releases in a way that a single map cannot.

### **Recommendation 10**

4.19 The committee recommends that the ACT Government considers alternative ways of updating the community with regard to the status of land releases. For example, in instances where the release of a block of land is delayed for a significant period of time, consideration should be given to ways of flagging the site for future release, while letting the community know that the release is not imminent.

#### **Government Response – Agreed**

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will consider alternative ways to provide information to the community on changes to the timing of specific land releases, including releases with revised timeframes.

### **Recommendation 11**

4.41 The committee recommends that the ACT Government consider requiring architects registered by the Architects Board to undertake regular professional development to maintain their registration.

#### **Government Response - Noted**

The Government is considering better ways to regulate people who design buildings and prepare plans and specifications, including architects, under the Government's *Improving the ACT Building Regulatory System*.

### **Recommendation 12**

5.9 The committee recommends that the ACT Government cease buying rural leases for 'strategic purposes' until the Auditor General has completed her investigation into rural land purchases by Land Development Agency.

#### **Government Response – Agreed in Principle**

The ACT Government agrees with the intent of the recommendation and will not enter into any new contracts for land zoned as Broadacre under the Territory Plan ahead of the release of the Auditor General's Report into rural acquisitions. The government notes, however, the need to honour contracts entered in to prior to the commencement of the Auditor General's investigation in May 2017 and the need not to prejudice current or future negotiations.