

Chris Steel MLA

Treasurer

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Minister for Heritage

Minister for Transport

Member for Murrumbidgee

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Questions on Notice Paper No 2

7 February 2025

Question No. 145

MR CAIN MLA - To ask the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development:

- (1) Has a fence been erected on the boundaries of Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin; if so, why.
- (2) Has the Directorate received any development application for Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin anytime since 2014/15; if so, what is/was the decision on the development application.
- (3) Does the ACT Revenue Office currently collect commercial rates from the leaseholders of Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin; if so, (a) how much has been collected in commercial rates from the leaseholders since 2014/15 to present and (b) why are commercial rates charged if the land is not used for commercial purposes.
- (4) Have Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin been considered for inclusion as part of the Red Hill Nature Reserve; if not, why not.
- (5) Has the ACT Government taken any steps towards acquiring Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin; if so, has the ACT Government negotiated with the current leaseholder about such an outcome, and when did the most recent negotiation occur; if not, why not.

MINISTER STEEL MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Crown Lessee of the Blocks has become aware that the land was being traversed by the local community, some members of which had also constructed a series of informal "jumps"



for bicycles on the land. To protect the land and itself from any potential public liability insurance claims (in case of injuries resulting from the use of the informal “jumps”) the Crown lessee has erected a temporary fence to prevent access to its leased land.

- (2) On 16 April 2018, a development application (DA) was lodged for Blocks 7 & 8 Section 66 Deakin. The DA (DA-201833473) was lodged for a lease variation to increase the gross floor area and update the definition of *store*, in accordance with the Territory Plan Definitions. On 17 April 2019, the then planning and land authority refused the application. See attached Notice of Decision.

The Territory Planning Authority has advised that there were no further DAs on record, in relation to Blocks 7 & 8 Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin, since 2014.

- (3) Under tax secrecy and privacy laws, information about the rates collected from the leaseholders of Blocks 7-8 Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin cannot be disclosed.
- (4) Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin were considered for inclusion in the Red Hill Nature Reserve as a part of the *Red Hill Integrated Plan for Red Hill Nature Reserve and Surrounds* (June 2021). The ACT Government prepared the Integrated Plan primarily in response to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of 25 October 2017 which called for an integrated approach for the planning of the area.

Investigations found that Blocks 7-8, Section 66 and Block 13 Section 78 Deakin contain ecological values and serve as an informal buffer between the Red Hill Nature Reserve and the development on adjoining blocks. Recommendation 1 of the Integrated Plan recommended the ongoing protection and management of the Red Hill Nature reserve, and part (ii) of the recommendation suggested that options be investigated to incorporate high ecological values at Deakin Section 66 into the adjoining nature reserve. Recommendation 6 also relates to Deakin Section 66 and recommended that the blocks mentioned above be rezoned to Urban Open Space.

Variation 380 (to the Territory Plan) was prepared to implement the Integrated Plan which relate to Deakin and is available at [Planning and Development \(Plan Variation 380\) Approval 2023 | Notifiable instruments](#). The variation included rezoning the site to Urban Open Space and commenced on 6 April 2023. There is an intention to incorporate the site into nature reserve should the existing leases be surrendered. Noting that actions under variation 380 do not preclude further development applications being considered that are consistent with the uses stipulated in the current lease.

- (5) The Territory is in discussions with the Crown Lessee (the owner of the land) in relation to the acquisition of the Crown lease.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Date: 27/2/25

This response required 5hrs 5mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$568.32.