

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 10

19 September 2025

Question No. 618

Ms Jo Clay MLA: To ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation

Following the announcement that the ACT Government will conduct a trial to re-irrigate Melba dryland oval, what community consultation has the ACT Government undertaken this term for dryland ovals and how they can be reactivated, whether through irrigation, or other uses such as the Belconnen wetland at Belconnen oval.

YVETTE BERRY MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

In 2022, the ACT Government conducted a desktop review of 32 informal use (dryland) ovals. This review recommended that 14 ovals be retained for potential future sporting use, with the remaining sites proposed for transfer to other ACT Government agencies for alternative community purposes. After consulting with the Belconnen United Sharks Junior Rugby Football Club, Melba District Playing Fields is currently being investigated for potential reactivation as a pilot, which may not necessarily include full reinstatement of irrigation infrastructure. The site's future use is still under consideration and subject to feasibility and demand.

To date, no formal community consultation has been undertaken regarding the reactivation of dryland ovals this term, including Melba or other sites such as the Belconnen oval, which has been repurposed for wetland development. The ACT Government continues to assess opportunities for community sport infrastructure based on demand, strategic planning, and environmental considerations. Please refer to QON 155.

Reactivation of dryland ovals in any capacity would require significant infrastructure investment and planning. Given the availability of alternative venues, underutilisation of existing assets, and recent operational improvements, the ACT Government is prioritising more cost-effective and sustainable approaches to meeting community sport needs.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.

Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Sport and Recreation

Date:

14/10/25

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This response required 2 hrs 10 mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$244.87