ACT Information request

1.1 Inquiry overview

The PC is conducting an inquiry into regulatory barriers to housing supply (Housing supply regulation inquiry).

We have been asked to consider areas of regulation that restrict the supply of new housing, which may include planning and zoning, development and building approvals processes, regulation of housing-enabling infrastructure, and any other relevant regulation.

Our interim report outlining our initial reform directions was publicly released on Monday 27th July. For the final report, we have also been asked to:

- evaluate regulatory systems across jurisdictions against established best practice, with reference to existing reform efforts underway
- include an assessment of how advanced states and territories are in their reform efforts, against the features of a best practice system, and assess the expected impact on housing supply of planning and other relevant regulatory reforms taken by states and territories since 1 July 2024.

To inform this work, we have produced a list of recent initiatives for each state and territory, primarily based on National Planning Reform Blueprint Progress Reports (September 2025). Appendix A provides this list for the ACT.

1.2 Best practice principles

Our draft best practice principles outlined in the interim report that initiatives will be considered against are as listed.

- **adopt a 'build' mindset:** only restrict the location and form of development where the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs, including the impact on housing supply and affordability
- **only regulate when necessary:** only regulate housing design features when there are clear market failures, and allow households to choose and pay for other features they value
- **coordinate with infrastructure:** plan housing and infrastructure together so new development is supported by the infrastructure it needs, with clear and efficient rules for developer contributions
- **keep the process simple:** make planning decisions timely, predictable and simple by setting clear decision pathways, limiting discretion where possible and aligning with broader housing goals. Information request.

Contact: | <housing.supply@pc.gov.au> | www.pc.gov.au

1.3 Information we are seeking

This information request will help inform our evidence base for the final report. We may send subsequent requests for information as we refine and develop our research.

Reform initiatives and best practice

We are collaborating with state and territories to gather relevant information available to inform our assessment. We kindly request you review the list below and provide information on:

- any of your existing reform initiatives we may have missed from appendix A
- planned future initiatives
- any underlying work (such as modelling) that was done to inform which reform initiatives to implement and progress
- evidence of progress made or outcomes achieved for the reform initiatives.
  - Evidence could include cost benefit analysis or program estimates completed prior to an initiative's implementation, or evaluation of implemented reforms.
  - If the evidence cannot be published, it could be considered confidentially by the PC team. Its existence could be noted in our assessment without specifics being published.
- a specific case study for 1-2 reform initiatives that you think align with best practice or where lessons could be learned.

Infrastructure and strategic planning

- **What is the process in the ACT for ensuring undeveloped residential land is infrastructure-enabled and ready for new housing to be built? Who is responsible for each part of the process?**

In the ACT, ensuring undeveloped residential land is infrastructure-enabled and ready for housing delivery is a staged process involving planning (strategic planning and estate planning), servicing, subdivision and land release.

The ACT broadly seeks to align land release, infrastructure planning and housing delivery through a combination of strategic planning, land release programming, infrastructure planning, estate development and development assessment processes. The process begins with strategic land use planning. The ACT Planning Strategy, District Strategies and associated planning studies identify areas suitable for future growth and redevelopment and seek to align housing supply with transport, infrastructure and service provision. The District Strategies also identify where future infrastructure investment, and capacity upgrades may be required to accommodate long-term growth.

- The Woden District Strategy provides an example of how the ACT's strategic planning framework identifies areas for substantial future housing growth and links that growth to major transport and infrastructure investment, including light rail, active travel networks and supporting utility infrastructure. The strategy has subsequently informed district-level infrastructure capacity studies

being undertaken by the ACT Government and utility providers to identify network constraints and upgrade requirements needed to accommodate projected growth to 2050
- The ACT Government's March 2025 National Planning Reform Blueprint progress report advised that "The ACT Government and utility companies are undertaking a program of infrastructure capacity studies for each urban district, commencing with Woden (Southern Gateway), Belconnen and Inner North and City. These will identify infrastructure network capacity issues and upgrade priorities for development to 2050 as identified in the District Strategies and other planning and development proposals."

The ACT Government identifies Territory-owned land for potential release through the Housing Supply and Land Release Program (HSLRP), formerly the Indicative Land Release Program. Reviewed annually, the HSLRP provides a rolling five-year pipeline of residential, mixed-use, commercial, industrial and community land releases to maintain a steady supply of development-ready land through the planning, development and construction pipeline and support the Territory's housing and population growth objectives. The program is aligned with the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 and the ACT Housing Strategy 2018 (and its 2026 implementation update), which seek to deliver an equitable, diverse and sustainable housing supply while supporting a liveable, compact and efficient city, including the objective of delivering up to 70 per cent of new dwellings within the existing urban footprint. Development of the HSLRP involves modelling future housing demand based on population projections, assessing required dwelling supply, determining the volume and timing of land releases, identifying potential land supply options, and undertaking early due diligence to confirm the suitability of sites for inclusion in the program.

The Suburban Land Agency (SLA) delivers the estate development of greenfield land parcels to enable new housing opportunities across the ACT. Land is typically sold off the plan, with all necessary planning approvals secured prior to sale. Obtaining these approvals ensures that the development has progressed through the required statutory assessment and approval processes. SLA then procures industry partners through competitive tender processes to undertake the civil infrastructure, and landscape construction works. Once construction is completed, inspected, and accepted by the relevant utility providers and municipal authorities, a Crown lease is prepared to facilitate settlement of the land. Following settlement, the land is ready for housing construction, enabling builders and purchasers to commence development in accordance with the approved planning framework. All infrastructure investment decisions that enable the development and release of land, and ultimately support housing supply outcomes, are funded and managed by SLA.

Infill development sites released by Government are subject to 'Prescribed Conditions' and 'Notice of Development' that includes conditions/ requirements for infrastructure connections and, if necessary, infrastructure external to the site(s)

- Responsibility for key stages is currently distributed as follows:

Function	Primary responsibility
Strategic planning, district strategies and identification of growth areas	City and Environment Directorate / Territory Planning Authority
Preparation of Housing Supply and Land Release Program	ACT Government (City and Environment Directorate and Suburban Land Agency)
Estate planning, subdivision development and delivery of new suburb infrastructure	Suburban Land Agency
Delivery and operation of utility infrastructure	Relevant utility providers and infrastructure agencies (for example water, sewer, electricity and telecommunications providers)
Delivery of major transport and community infrastructure	Relevant ACT Government directorates and agencies through the ACT Infrastructure Plan and capital works programs
Development applications, detailed servicing and site-specific requirements	Territory Planning Authority and proponents through development assessment processes
Land Release	Suburban Land Agency

The City and Environment Directorate (CED) is also in the process of preparing and formalising an allocation framework for unleased land for ACT Government agencies/directorates. The framework aims to support evidence-based planning and achieve optimal land use and planning outcomes for the Territory.

The ACT has also stated that it is progressively strengthening the integration of land use planning and infrastructure planning. The Government is undertaking infrastructure capacity studies for urban districts to identify network capacity constraints and future upgrade requirements associated with planned growth.

- How do you monitor how much undeveloped residential land is already supported by housing-enabling infrastructure (ready for housing construction) and how much of this land is waiting on housing-enabling infrastructure to proceed with housing construction? How much land in Canberra falls into each of these categories?

  The ACT monitors housing supply and development readiness through a range of mechanisms including:
  - The Housing Supply and Land Release Program (HSLRP);
  - The ACT Land and Property Report (published on June and December)
  - annual reporting on land release pipelines;
  - District Strategy implementation and housing capacity analysis; and
  - Reporting under the National Planning Reform Blueprint, including a "development ready land stocktake".

  The City and Environment Directorate (CED) monitors and coordinates with SLA to compile a greenfield pipeline. The pipeline provides a status of which stage of the development delivery the dwellings are at (planners, developers and builders) and is reflected in the ACT Land and Property Report. This tool measures the amount of land moving through the planning and development stages, helping track future housing supply. Dwellings in the builders' pipeline is defined as '*when a dwelling site is serviced and a lease for the site has been issued'.* As of December 2025, 4,019 dwellings were identified as being withing the greenfield dwelling pipeline (includes vacant and under construction). CED publishes this table in its ACT Land and Property Report released twice annually in June and December. This report is available on ACT Government's Planning website.

  Publicly available ACT Government documents identify planned dwelling yields from future land releases. For example:
  - the 2025-26 to 2029-30 land release program targeted land releases supporting approximately 25,948 dwellings; and
  - the 2026-27 to 2030-31 Housing Supply and Land Release Program identifies land releases supporting approximately 25,794 dwellings over five years.

  Infrastructure provision is an important part of land delivery but is only one of a number of factors influencing supply. Other factors include land purchase/ownership, environmental and heritage clearances, Territory Plan rezoning and, demand for housing types in each location.

- **What are the main constraints that you face in coordinating infrastructure with housing (i.e. to prevent a situation where residential land sits undeveloped while awaiting supporting infrastructure)?**

The ACT Government's primary challenge is coordinating multiple interdependent infrastructure, planning, funding and development processes so that residential land becomes available for housing construction when it is needed. Delivering housing-ready land requires the timely provision of

transport, water, sewer, stormwater, electricity, telecommunications and community infrastructure, often involving multiple government agencies, utility providers and private sector delivery partners.

Infrastructure sequencing, funding and intergovernmental alignment

- The ACT has recognised the need to better understand the relationship between population growth, infrastructure capacity, infrastructure augmentation and funding responsibilities. A key challenge is that major infrastructure funding, particularly Commonwealth programs and grants, is often allocated through national policy priorities, competitive funding processes or broader transport and economic objectives rather than being directly aligned with the ACT's strategic land release and housing sequencing. As a result, the timing of major infrastructure investments does not always coincide with planned land release or housing delivery programs. Infrastructure upgrades frequently require coordination across multiple agencies, service providers and levels of government, each operating under different planning, budget and delivery cycles, creating challenges in aligning infrastructure provision with growth and housing outcomes.

Integration of land use, transport and infrastructure planning

- The ACT has acknowledged that while strategic planning is well established, integration between land use planning, transport planning and infrastructure planning is still evolving and remains an area for improvement. The development of an integrated planning and transport strategy will help to alleviate this.

Infrastructure capacity uncertainty

- The Government has commenced district-by-district infrastructure capacity studies specifically to identify network constraints and future upgrade priorities associated with planned growth. The need for these studies indicates that understanding and sequencing infrastructure upgrades remains an ongoing challenge.

Infrastructure sequencing and funding

- The ACT has recognised the need to better understand the relationship between growth, infrastructure capacity, infrastructure augmentation and funding responsibilities. Infrastructure upgrades frequently require coordination across multiple agencies and service providers and may occur on different timeframes to housing development.

Coordination across multiple delivery agencies

- Land release and infrastructure delivery involve multiple entities, including the Territory Planning Authority, City and Environment Directorate, Suburban Land Agency, utility providers and infrastructure agencies. The ACT has recently introduced new governance arrangements to improve whole-of-government consideration of land supply and release decisions.

Dependence on private sector development

The ACT's housing supply strategy increasingly relies on housing within the existing urban footprint and on privately owned land. While Government can influence planning settings and release Territory-owned land, actual construction timing depends on market conditions, financial feasibility

and industry capacity. Fluctuations in construction cost and project viability impacts land release and housing delivery schedules for developers. The ACT has expressly noted that enabling housing does not necessarily result in immediate housing delivery.

Workforce, construction and supply chain capacity

- Competition for labour, materials and construction resources can affect both infrastructure delivery and housing construction, particularly during periods of strong growth

Keeping the process simple

The Development and Planning Process Reset (DaPPR) initiative aims to simplify planning and development assessment processes. This is by identifying bottlenecks and embedding more efficient, risk-aware processes, aligned with best practice, which are more streamlined and coordinated, with better documentation, providing transparency and engagement with stakeholders.

DaPPR is using a range of data sources to identify bottlenecks within the system and then work with subject-matter experts and 'process owners' to identify more streamlined alternatives.

Examples of reforms from DaPPR's first phase are below.

- Streamlined Development Assessment:
  - Simplifying notices of decision to make them shorter, clearer and more targeted.
  - Introducing internal processes to ensure proponents have advice from all relevant referral entities during pre-application meetings.
  - Streamlining the current unit titling endorsement and registration processes.
- Exempt Development Reforms:
  - Streamlining endorsements for Development Approval (DA) exempt residential developments on heritage blocks.
  - Waiving driveway inspections for DA exempt and approved developments up to three dwellings, other than for second and subsequent driveways.
- Industry Time and Cost Savings
  - Removing the requirement for submission of a Construction Waste Management Plan for demolition, excavation and construction works at Development Assessment stage.
  - Streamlining internal reviews of waste collection proposals within Development Applications to speed up approvals.
- Digital and Process Modernisation
  - Implementing consistent use of digital tools create a single front door for all development assessment matters. This will support all parts of the planning process, from lodging and checking applications to advice, notifications and inspections.
  - Promoting SmartForm submissions on development proposals to improve clarity and accessibility for Canberrans, while reducing staff time spent on administration.

The key constraint facing SLA over the medium term (approximately five years) is securing sustainable funding to support the continuation of its current development pipeline and enable the timely delivery of land supply. Increased access to external debt financing, or alternative capital funding mechanisms supported by the ACT Government, will be critical to ensuring land can be developed and released at the scale required to meet the ACT Government's housing supply objectives.

Other data

Approvals data

- Thank you for directing us to the ACT-reported data on Development Application Statistics. We would appreciate any additional approvals data or information you could provide us.
  - This includes data on development approval metrics (e.g. timeframes, stop-clocks, requests for further information, appeal, referrals, outcomes) or on other approvals (e.g. fast-track planning approvals, rezoning approvals, subdivision approvals, building approvals).

CED analyses building approvals data released by the ABS in its Building Approvals publication. The analysis is reported in the ACT Land and Property Report.

Zoned residential land supply information (years, dwelling, area) is published in the HSLRP publication (for land release) available on ACT Government's Planning website.

Share of greenfield vs brownfield supply information is published in the HSLRP (for land releases) and the ACT Land and Property Report publication available on ACT Government's Planning website.

Minor and Major Plan Amendments (current and completed) are also published on the Planning Website.

Land use reforms

- Do you have data you can share on how commercial feasibility of possible developments is or has been factored into decisions to upzone or otherwise change land-use controls to facilitate an increase in zoned capacity?
- How much zoned residential undeveloped land does Canberra have in supply? Please provide a response in years, dwellings and area.
  - What is the share of your jurisdictions land supply for development that comes from greenfield versus brownfield or other commercial or residential redevelopment?
- Do you have any evidence on which land-use controls might be the greatest constraint on housing supply in ACT?
- Are you able to share parcel-level planning data in a consolidated format?
- Are you able to share any spatial models of your planning system that can help test potential reforms? If you have a model but are unable to provide it to us, can you provide us with an explanation of how the model works, including any key assumptions?

In 2024, planning consultants Purdon undertook a planning and economic feasibility assessment to inform the ACT Government on the feasibility of integrating missing middle housing in some residential zones (RZ1 and RZ2) in the ACT. '**Planning and Economic Feasibility Analysis – Integrating the Missing Middle in RZ1 and RZ2**'

The purpose of the study was to identify opportunities and constraints for government consideration for integrating missing middle development in RZ1 and RZ2 areas to increase the diversity of housing typologies and increase the number of homes closer to shops and services.

The study looked at strategic and statutory planning policy factors to determine if a development is feasible and non-planning factors like incentives, market and economic matters. This study was not a feasibility assessment of the reform proposal. Rather, the study has informed the missing middle housing reforms and other policy work.

The ACT Government is integrating feasibility considerations as part of future planning reforms, however this has not been an explicit driver for the determination of current policy settings.

The missing middle reforms enable greater housing opportunities within existing RZ1 and RZ2 residential zones. The reforms enable greater dwelling density, block consolidation, and block subdivision.

RZ1, the 'Suburban Zone', makes up 79.7% of Canberra's residential land, and typically includes mainly single houses.

RZ2, the 'Suburban Core', (around 12.9% of the city's residential land) is usually located closer to local shops or services and allows for a greater mix of single houses and low density.

The missing middle housing reforms have significantly increased zoned capacity for new dwellings to be provided across over 90% of residential zoned land in the Territory. For RZ1 zoned land, previous rules often restricted these blocks to single dwellings only, with the changes now allowing for more dwellings on these blocks. This represents zoned capacity to meet new dwelling demand in existing residential areas for decades to come. It is difficult to quantify with more certainty given the varied outcomes which may be unlocked from block subdivision and consolidation. The ACT has at least theoretically doubled zoned capacity in the RZ1 and RZ2 areas through the missing middle housing reforms.

Appendix A: Recent ACT housing reforms - based on National Planning Reform Blueprint Progress Reports (September 2025)

Initiative	Start	End	National Planning Reform Blueprint Measure	Description
Framework for government land requests	Mar-25	ongoing	3	A framework is being created to use when considering government land requests.
National Competition Policy reforms	Nov-25	ongoing	5, 6, 7	The ACT entered a bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth, committing to implement National Competition Policy Principles, lower the barriers to modern methods of construction, liberalise and standardise anti-competitive commercial zoning rules and to review planning requirements to ensure they do not distort competition.
Territory priority projects	May-25	ongoing	6	Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development and the Chief Minister can declare certain development proposals (for example social housing and public health facilities) as a Territory Priority Project. This removes third party appeal rights.
Data sharing	Not specified	Launched November 2024	6, 1	The ACT supports the sharing of data, where available, across jurisdictions. This includes reporting through the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness, Report on Government Services, and Housing Support Program Priority Works stream.
Lease variation charge	Jul-25	ongoing	2	The variation charge for varying a crown lease to "specify the number of dwellings" was amended to $46,000 per dwelling. This is an increase to the LVC

Initiative	Start	End	National Planning Reform Blueprint Measure	Description
				applicable for specifying the number of units in a crown lease to permit unit titling, where the crown lease does not already. Codified LVC fees have also been updated for variations to increase the number of residential dwellings permitted in the Crown lease and variations to increase the maximum gross floor area (GFA) of building on the land under a commercial or industrial lease. Amounts are now expressed to provide the net charge of 75 per cent of the value uplift by including the reductions previously provided under the Planning (Reduction of Lease Variation Charges) Determination 2023. The ACT Government is reviewing its value sharing framework- the Lease Variation Charge (LVC) - to ensure it remains fair, transparent and fit for purpose while continuing to return a share of increased land value to the community. The review will examine whether the framework supports housing supply, urban renewal and broader planning objectives without unnecessarily constraining development feasibility. It will identify practical reforms to improve the consistency, predictability and efficiency of LVC assessments, valuation and review processes, while preserving the integrity of the Territory's value-capture system.
Minister for Planning Statement of Planning priorities	Oct-25	2028	2	The priorities of the Minister are: • plan for more housing near high frequency public transport stops • plan for more housing near commercial centres, reinvigorating shops • enable diverse housing choices including 'missing middle' housing • support the delivery of social and affordable housing • prepare the housing supply and land release pipeline • plan Canberra's future employment areas • support community needs across the ACT • protect the environment and enhance the city's landscape • ensure design quality and productivity • administration and delivery of priorities.

Initiative	Start	End	National Planning Reform Blueprint Measure	Description
Housing Australia Future Fund projects	Jan-25	ongoing	2	ACT Government is participating in Round Two and Round Three of the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility and will continue to liaise with Housing Australia for future rounds.
Housing supply and land release program (Indicative land release program (ILRP))	2026-27	2030-31	2,3,4	The ILRP is indicative in nature and identifies ACT Government land which may be released for a range of uses over the next 5-years. It is reviewed each year and may change year-to-year as the Government's priorities change to better respond to the circumstances impacting the Canberra community.
Missing middle housing reform	May-25	2026	5	Amendments are being activated by the proposed Planning (Missing middle Housing) Amendment Bill to make it easier to build more medium-density homes in existing suburbs. A design guide has been created to support the delivery of missing middle housing typologies, such as multi-occupancy, townhouses, terraces and apartment buildings up to three storeys in height. Future Missing Middle Housing Reforms phases will consider areas for potential zoning uplift, responding to locational suitability and feasibility, and the development of a Canberra House Pattern Book through a national design competition.
Location-specific planning reform	Jul-25	ongoing	2	Rezoning sites and through associated planning provisions, increasing the availability of highly suitable land that can effectively contribute to housing supply.

Initiative	Start	End	National Planning Reform Blueprint Measure	Description
Affordable Housing Project Fund	2024	2029	2,4	ACT is progressing projects through the Affordable Housing Project Fund to achieve its National Housing Accord target of 5,000 additional public, community and affordable rental dwellings in Canberra by the end of 2030. The fund was established to grow the supply of affordable rentals and strengthen the community housing sector.
Stamp duty exemption	2024	ongoing	5	The ACT Government introduced a stamp duty exemption for dual occupancies on suburban residential blocks to encourage take-up of new provisions that allow for unit titling of a second dwelling on low density (RZ1) blocks over 800m^2.
Land tax exemption scheme	2025	ongoing	7	The ACT Government also offers a land tax exemption for homeowners who rent their properties at an affordable rate (75% or less of market rent) to eligible households via a community housing provider. As part of the 2025-26 Budget, the property cap has been increased from 250 to 1,000 properties, and the government has plans to further promote the scheme. There are more than 250 properties actively participating in the scheme.
ACT-Federal deal	2026	ongoing	Not specified	Infrastructure for First Home Buyers supply. The federal and ACT governments announced they would spend $250 million to support enabling works on infrastructure for first home buyers.
Development and Planning Process Reset	2025	ongoing	5	An initiative to streamline planning and development assessment in the ACT. The focus is to identify bottlenecks and embed more efficient, risk-aware processes, aligned with best practice, which are more streamlined and coordinated, with better documentation, providing transparency and engagement with stakeholders.

Initiative	Start	End	National Planning Reform Blueprint Measure	Description
Planning Amendment Bill	2026	2026	6	Amendment to permit concurrent DA and MPA process. Allow future urban area overlay boundaries to be amended through a minor amendment where the overlay is aligned with the boundary of an existing leasehold.
Planning Amendment Bill (the MM Bill)	2026	2026	6	Fast-track lease variation process for changes to the number of dwellings, to add a secondary residence (to leases other than single dwelling leases), and to allow changes to easement and other matters prescribed by regulation. Automatically permit a secondary residence on all single dwelling leases Remove smaller-scale residential subdivisions from the definition of significant development, reducing consultation timeframes.
Exempt Development Regulation	2026	2026	6	Amendments that expand the types of low impact development that can access exempt and fast-tracked approval pathways