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Manager of Government Business
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Mr Tom Duncan
Clerk
ACT Legislative Assembly
London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601

3 March 2026

Dear Mr Duncan

Thank you for your letter concerning petition E-PET-032-25, lodged by Ms Fiona Carrick MLA regarding an upgrade to the Fisher community playground.

The ACT Government manages over 500 public play spaces located across the ACT, including four in Fisher. It does so in accordance with the objectives of the ACT Play space Strategy, which are to keep playgrounds safe and welcoming for better health, wellbeing and connectedness of the ACT community.

The ACT Government's Play Space Strategy helps guide a strategic approach to investment across the entire play space network to ensure Canberrans have equitable access to a mix of district (larger, destination playgrounds like John Knight Memorial Park), central (play spaces located near community hubs, like at Holt or Cook shops), and local playgrounds (play spaces near homes with basic structured play equipment).

Feedback from the community through consultation on the Play Space Strategy highlighted a greater desire for investment in higher quality, larger play spaces in central locations.

In particular:

The ACT community supports a 'quality over quantity' approach to improving the play space network. In the Canberra Destination Play Space Study, 84% of participants said they would prefer fewer but higher quality play spaces in their suburbs. This support for quality reflects how play spaces are used across Canberra, with many more people visiting district and central play spaces than local play spaces.

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The citizen-led Better Suburbs Statement 2030 concluded: “The focus should be on quality over quantity in play spaces and... we should use the existing budget to concentrate efforts on a smaller range of better facilities.” This recognises that simply seeking to maintain all ageing, under-used play spaces does not enhance the play value within our network or help us to meet community aspirations for quality play experiences.

ACT Play Space Strategy, page 27

For this reason, the key focus area for the ACT Government is prioritising district and central play areas and spaces for investment, including refresh and major upgrades. What this looks like is continuing to strengthen the quality and availability of public amenities around district play spaces, prioritising delivery of central play spaces to older suburbs that currently do not have these, and generally directing investment in local play spaces towards safety maintenance and minor refurbishments. The ACT Play Space Strategy identifies that ideally there is one central play space per two or three suburbs.

The *ACT Labor – Weston Creek and Woden Plan* outlines the commitments the ACT Government took to the election, including in relation to new and upgraded playgrounds. I note that a central play space was constructed at the Waramanga local shops in 2021, which is adjacent to Fisher.

The Araluen Street neighbourhood playground in Fisher is classified as a local neighbourhood playground. Local neighbourhood playgrounds generally contain basic structured play equipment to support local residences (as most residences are located within 400 metres of a local playground).

The most recent playground audit found that the equipment in the playground on Araluen Street remains fit for purpose. However, I recognise that the existing play space could be a good candidate for renewal due to complementary benefits such as the proximity to the Fisher local shops and surrounding urban open space.

Whilst there are no immediate plans to upgrade the Araluen Street playground, these suggestions have been noted and will inform future consideration of capital works priorities.

Further information in relation to ACT’s investment towards playground improvements in older suburbs is available on the City Services website, which includes eight playground upgrades funded through the 2025-26 Budget (City Services website: <https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/Infrastructure-Projects/programs/playspace-upgrades>)

Thank you for raising this matter with me. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Tara Cheyne MLA
Minister for City and Government Services