

Mr Tom Duncan
Clerk
ACT Legislative Assembly
Via email: Tom.Duncan@parliament.act.gov.au

Our ref: CMTEDD2025/5298

Dear Mr Duncan *Tom*

Thank you for your letter about the petition No. E-PET-063-25, lodged by Mr Thomas Emerson MLA, in regard to the lack of indoor sporting facilities on Canberra's northside.

The Government notes the matters raised in the petition and provides the following advice.

The provision of facilities to support sport and active recreation opportunities for the Canberra community is a priority for the ACT Government, consistent with the CBR Next Move Strategy. To help address growing participation requirements for indoor sporting groups, the Government has and will continue to deliver additional gymnasiums (indoor courts) at ACT Government schools across the city, including Canberra's northside. The below tables (Table 1 and Table 2) detail new school gymnasiums that have recently been delivered or will soon be delivered on Canberra's northside.

Table 1 – New Facilities Provided on the Northside

School	Year opened	Number of full-sized courts	Notes
Amaroo School	2018	2 (increased from 1 in 2018)	Gymnasium was expanded from a single court to a double court in 2018.
Margaret Hendry School (Taylor)	2019	1	
Franklin School	2020	1	Was originally the Franklin Early Childhood School before being expanded in 2020 and renamed.
Throsby School	2022	2	
Shirley Smith School (Kenny)	2024	2	
Aunty Agnes Shea School (Taylor)	2025	2	

Table 2 – Additional Facilities Anticipated to be Provided on the Northside by 2030

School	Expected opening	Number of full-sized courts	Notes
Strathnairn School	Late 2026	1	Expected opening timeframe relates to new gymnasium.
Second Gungahlin College (Nicholls)	2030	Minimum of 1, possibly 2	

Beyond the provision of indoor courts at ACT Government schools, the Government is also progressing a number of other indoor sport facility projects. Projects relating to the northside include the following:

- The proposed expansion of the Belconnen Basketball Stadium (BBS), in partnership with Basketball ACT. The ACT Government has allocated funding to engage a consultant to progress the planning and preliminary design phase. This work has commenced and is due for completion in 2026.
- A dedicated indoor sport facility (4 courts) is planned to be provided in Casey, Gungahlin. The Territory Planning Authority approved the subdivision of two blocks (Casey Section 132, Blocks 12 and 13) in the Casey Group Centre in December 2025 (DA No. 20244320) and the Government has allocated funding to undertake early civil construction work to prepare the Casey Precinct for future development that enables community use and delivery of new health, emergency and sports facilities.

Several other major indoor sport facilities are also located on the northside of Canberra, including BBS, the ACT Netball Centre, National Tennis Centre, National Hockey Centre, Australian Institute of Sport, ANU, University of Canberra and some other private school facilities that support a mix of community activities (i.e. Radford College).

In relation to the potential demolition of the Dickson Squash Courts, the ACT Government is aware that a Development Application for the site of the existing courts is currently under assessment by the Territory Planning Authority. The Government also notes that the Dickson Squash Club has lodged a submission to the current *Inquiry into barrier and opportunities for participation in community sports in the ACT* being conducted by the ACT Legislative Assembly, with a report on this Inquiry expected in 2026. Taking these factors into account, the ACT Government is currently reviewing the matter.

Yours sincerely



Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Sport and Recreation
26 February 2026