

MEDIA RELEASE

New road closure fees risk driving up ACT housing costs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canberra, ACT | Thursday, 25 June 2026

Master Builders ACT has warned that new road and pathway closure fees will pile further costs onto local builders and homeowners at the very time the Territory needs more housing delivered faster.

Significant increases to building and planning fees and charges were included in the 2026-27 ACT Budget, adding another hidden cost to the local building and construction industry.

'These charges were a surprise to industry and will add thousands of dollars to building and construction costs when builders and homeowners can least afford it,' said Master Builders ACT CEO Anna Neelagama.

'The ACT Government promised to consult with industry before introducing these fees, but so far it has been crickets from the Minister and officials,' she said.

Road and pathway closures are an unavoidable part of building new homes, particularly in established suburbs. Delivering Missing Middle housing will require builders to work on tighter, more complex sites where temporary closures are often essential.

'The ACT Government wants local builders to deliver more complex infill housing and help reduce pressure on the environment, but these fees charge a premium for delivering the very homes the Government says it wants,' said Ms Neelagama.

The proposed fee structure will add further costs for local builders and homeowners already facing a constrained operating environment, including pressure from higher fuel and materials costs.

'Industry is being asked to pay more while receiving fewer services, with around 100 redundancies proposed in the very areas responsible for building approvals and assessments,' said Ms Neelagama.

'Builders have had to recalculate margins and project costs to absorb these surprise charges, which risks further delays and higher housing costs. The ACT Government needs to take a common-sense approach so building projects remain financially viable for industry and homeowners alike.

'Master Builders ACT is calling on the ACT Government to reconsider the proposed fees and genuinely engage with industry before adding new costs to the delivery of the housing Canberra urgently needs.'

Master Builders ACT remains committed to working constructively with Government to ensure regulatory settings support the delivery of much-needed housing and infrastructure across the Territory.

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