



ANDREW BARR^{MLA}
CHIEF MINISTER, ACT LABOR

Christine Lawrence
President
ACT Equestrian Association
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5 October 2016

Dear Ms Lawrence

Thank you for your letter regarding the maintenance and development of equestrian infrastructure in the ACT. Labor both acknowledges and appreciates the contribution of the equestrian sport and recreation sector in the ACT. I welcome the opportunity to provide the following response to you, on behalf of the Labor Party.

1. Equestrian Park, Curtin, Canberra's elite community competition facility, will be maintained and supported.

ACT Labor will continue to support the important role the Equestrian Park in Curtin provides to the community. The ACT Labor Government has consistently supported maintenance and management of Equestrian Park through annual funding to the Equestrian Association and in 2016 through a grant of \$8,800 for a new arena maintenance tractor. Labor will continue to work with ACTEA, as with all local sporting bodies, to assist in the management of facilities for safe and enjoyable use by participants.

2. The Bicentennial National Trail will remain open and safe at all times and will be integrated into any planning processes which might impact upon it.

ACT Labor will keep the Bicentennial National Trail open. Labor recognises the significant potential that horse riding offers in attracting visitors to the Territory and this will feature in the new nature-based tourism strategy we are committed to develop if re-elected.

3. An overall concept plan will be adopted that:

- **links equestrian trails, safely, to existing facilities including the Bicentennial National Trail, Equestrian Park Curtin, pony club grounds, government horse paddocks and private agistment centres;**
- **closes the disconnect between the Molonglo River corridor and Stromlo Forest Park;**
- **provides for inclusion of equestrian access through new urban areas in Canberra; and**
- **includes specific provisions and infrastructure including signage to enable equestrians continued safe access through existing urban such as public open space and shared underpasses on major roads.**

ACT Labor is committed to full and comprehensive consultation on master planning which aims to better connect our infrastructure and balances the demands of a growing population with the need to retain shared public spaces. A re-elected Labor government would seek to convene key



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ACT recreation users and representative bodies around access to land and other priorities. The Active 2020 strategy – A Strategic Plan for Sport and Active Recreation in the ACT and Region 2011–2020 – released by the government in 2015 stressed the importance of these user groups and government working together on key issues such as management of and access to parks and reserves.

- 4. The overall existing government paddock space will be retained, including replacement where it becomes essential to convert paddock space to another use.**

ACT Labor will consult with ACTEA on any planning proposals which impact on existing paddock space. Labor has no plans to reduce paddock space, and proposals for dual-purpose zones and other suggestions from the equestrian community will be considered.

I thank you for your organisation's ongoing advocacy and support for horse riders.

Yours Sincerely

Andrew Barr MLA
ACT Chief Minister