

Comments from Weston Creek Community Council

Territory Plan Variation 306

ADDITIONAL COMMENT

Secondary residences

Repeat that we consider 75 sqm could be inappropriate on some blocks and support the requirement that the building be built to the adaptable standard.

RZ2 Areas

There has been some comment about the proposed car parking arrangements and the endeavour to break up the built form and limit density in RZ2 areas. Again we support the effort to maintain a balance with respect to maintaining neighbourhood character in these areas and that any development will be more consistent with the streetscape overall.

Height restrictions

Within the Weston Creek area most comment has been made about RZ1 and 2 areas which are the predominant zones. Consequently the fixing of a 2 storey limit on height in these zones is applauded by the community.

However it is noted that flexibility of building height has been introduced in zones RZ3, RZ4 and RZ5 by the use of criteria and a requirement to demonstrate compliance with these criteria. It is understood that an extra storey can be approved if the overall built form objectives are achieved and it can be shown that the neighbours are not going to be affected. Our concern is that a high quality of design be maintained and further that the streetscape is not adversely affected.

Solar orientation

It is noted that the minimum sunlight penetration rules have been re-instated and applies as it did previously in that all single and multi unit housing has to have at least 3 hours of sunlight at the winter solstice. This is considered a positive outcome.

However there is some concern about solar access on some of the narrow very small blocks that have been designed in the Molonglo development. The proposed standards could provide a very strong design challenge for developers, may result in inappropriate design and not provide sufficient sunlit open space and residential amenity for residents

Neighbourhood Plans

Comments from Weston Creek Community Council

We understand that you received considerable comment about neighbourhood plans with rather polarised opinions. Although these plans were not mentioned in DV 306 we consider that they remain of considerable importance to residents particularly in identifying the design character of a neighbourhood. It is noted that you consider zone objectives should be distilled from what the precinct code says is the desired character and this will be considered when a Development Application is made. However what happens when there is neither a precinct code or a neighbourhood plan as is the case in Weston Creek ?

We understand that you are intending to have a precinct code for each suburb and that the community could request a statement of design character built into this code.

Appropriate community consultation is essential to ensure that the character is adequately described and agreed. Further over time it will be necessary to revisit being mindful of both demographic and social changes to a neighbourhood and other government priorities.

The process by which a Master Plan could evolve into a precinct code has not been adequately explained to the community and reflects the complicated nature of “planning legislation” which is not fully understood by the community. This is of considerable concern as a Master Plan is currently being designed for Weston Creek neighbourhood centre.

Weston Creek Community Council urges the ACT Government makes a concerted effort to both simplify and explain in clear terms the full gamut of planning law.