

Submission pertaining to residential requirements for The Elderly

Proposal

Provided block sizes meet RZ2 requirements and are within a reasonable distance of shopping areas and public transport, elderly persons who wish to do so, should be permitted to subdivide existing RZ1 blocks

Background information

1. Extract from “Aging in place”

“One of the most difficult issues for most aging seniors is adapting to radical changes in their lives. Creature comforts they’ve come to rely on and the security of familiar surroundings can help retain vigour and mental acuity and may become the basis for maintaining a routine of good health”.

2. Residential zones

The present residential zoning is arbitrary:

- What justification is there for blocks on one side of a street to be classed as RZ2 and the opposite side (some with larger blocks) to be RZ1?
- If dual occupancy is permitted in RZ1 zones why prohibit sub-division?

Zoning rules conflict with the stated RZ2 objectives to -

- “Create a wide range of affordable and sustainable housing choices to accommodate population growth and *meet changing household and community needs*”(my italics)

3. Submissions by the Canberra Charter of the Institute of Architects indicated that-

- “The current requirements of the Territory Plan for additional dwellings on residential blocks reflect a narrow view of the use of Canberra’s suburbs.
- Permitting only one of certain uses per section is inappropriate and very limiting. *It does not reflect the diverse needs of many residents and does not allow for the more suitable location of many residents with special needs. (My Italics)*

Justification:

Preliminary discussions indicate that neighbours who have lived in the Pearce /Torrens area for a number of years would overwhelmingly opt to remain in their present location if permitted to sub-divide in preference to downsizing at a different location

The table below draws a comparison between our current location and a nearby subdivision in Chifley highlights the advantages of downsizing “in-situ

Present location Pearce/Torrens	New development in Chifley
<i>Facilities:</i>	<i>Facilities:</i>
5 min walk to 2 local shopping centres at Pearce & Torrens	Adjacent to a local shopping centre with limited facilities at the Chifley shops
A 6minute walk to Southlands which has a major supermarket plus a post office and bank	No equivalent
Transport	Transport
4 local loop bus services	Identical services
14 additional busses within a 5 minute walk servicing Direct busses to Civic Woden and Tuggeranong	No additional bus service
Value for money	Value for money
Building to designed suit individual needs and safety requirements	Must take what is available. Most locations visited had no private area of any significance and poor solar orientation
Cost neutral or profitable	Additional expenses of about 30-35k

Commonsense would dictate that downsizing in-situ is a far better option. Not only would this :

- satisfy “aging in place requirements”
- provide accommodation tailored to individual needs,
- be in harmony with the surrounding
- be financially beneficial to householders

Conclusion

I have no doubt that this matter would receive wholehearted support if *correctly* canvassed amongst the elderly in other suburbs. I suspect that an earlier negative response (so I am told) to sub-divisions, was due to the manner in which in which the question was posed. It probably conjured up visions of the current indiscriminate “building for profit” trend. For example DA for **fourteen townhouses** on a **947sq m block** in Eggleston Crescent in Chifley.

As an aside, the total sale price of this development is 7.21million. A modest 20% profit would equate to a gain of about \$1.4 million!

Recommendation

Existing restrictions on RZ1 residential blocks greater than 800 sq metres be altered to permit subdivision, provided they are located within a reasonable distance of transport and services

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