

## Submission to Legislative Assembly Planning Committee inquiry into

### Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 343

#### Residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme

This territory plan variation is, to the best of my knowledge, the first territory plan variation based explicitly on the ownership of the land. This is not how planning is normally done.

I have read many of the submissions to ACTPLA about the DTPV. Most oppose it, partly because of the arbitrary nature, because of the possible loss of amenity and land value for neighbours and because of the inequity of adjoining blocks having different planning controls and thus values. All of these seem reasonable concerns to me.

Probably the minimal change to partly address these concerns would be to keep the minimum size from dual occupancy at 800m but allow the Mr Fluffy blocks to be unit titled. With this, the government could argue that it was not increasing what could be built on a block, just making the ownership easier. It would still increase the value of the blocks which is the government's aim.

However I don't think the best solution for Canberra as a whole is to just say that there should be no changes in the RZ1 zone. I think that Canberra people as a whole, and of course government policy, supports appropriate urban infill. Some of this should be in suburban zones, not just high rise apartments. It would seem that there is a unmet demand for smaller blocks and smaller houses within existing suburban areas as aging residents want to downsize and younger potential residents want to have smaller mortgages. And of course family sizes are smaller than they were 50 years ago when much of the relevant RZ1 area houses were built.

The first iteration of the omnibus territory plan variation was intended to have a small rezoning of some RZ1 land to I think RZ3 or 4 in Ainslie. This was to be a small number of suburban houses that the Institute of Architects had plans for an innovative medium density redevelopment. This did not proceed which is unfortunate because we clearly need innovation in how we redevelop our suburbs.

The planning committee of the last Assembly (that I was a member of) made a report on the DTPV 306 which included a number of recommendations on ways to make the planning controls for suburban areas more rational. These focused on RZ2 but some are relevant such as:

#### Recommendation 4

4.36 The Committee recommends that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate considers changes which would make development to one edge of the block more feasible so as to eliminate wasted strips of land at both edges of blocks.

#### Recommendation 1 4

11.9 The Committee recommends that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate articulates the reason for unit titling restrictions on dual occupancies in RZ1.

#### Recommendation 1 6

11.60 The Committee recommends that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate introduces a sliding scale for plot ratios for large blocks (greater than 500m<sup>2</sup>).

Recommendation 1 7

11.62 The Committee recommends that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate considers increasing the minimum block size where integrated development is not required.

Recommendation 1 8

11.63 The Committee recommends that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate reviews the interaction of plot ratio and plot size to eliminate anomalies.

Recommendation 2 0

11.80 The Committee recommends that a minimum quantity of biologically active, permeable or green space be required on all blocks.

I think that these concerns are still relevant to DTPV 343.

Looking specifically at the DTPV 343, I make the following comments>

- Encourage block consolidation especially as the location of the Mr Fluffy houses is well known. The consolidated blocks could have sensible redesign with multi storey medium density development. They could be suitable for row houses and townhouses. This would be particularly so in the streets where there a multiple 'Mr Fluffy' houses. It would be desirable if non affected but adjacent blocks could be added into a potential block consolidation. Well designed consolidated blocks could have planning offsets such as reduced visitor parking to encourage them.
- Change the rules for all RZ1 to allow subdivision of dual occupancies if the block is big enough
- For all RZ1 change the plot ratio to allow dual occupancies to say 45% and single occupancies 30%. The current rule of 50% for single houses and 30% for dual occupancies means that we are rebuilding our suburbs as McMansions.
- Allow secondary dwellings to be part of the main dwelling as in NSW
- Require a minimum amount of permeable land to remain on the site- 25%?

#### **Comments on the specific changes in DTPV 343**

**Reduce the block size for dual occupancy development on the affected blocks from 800m<sup>2</sup> to 700m<sup>2</sup>**

This is sensible, particularly in this instance where the block will be cleared so the two dwellings can be sensibly sited.

**Permit subdivision for unit titling of dual occupancy development on the affected blocks**

This is sensible, particularly in this instance where the block will be cleared so the two dwellings can be sensibly sited.

**Alter the plot ratio to accommodate the reduction in block size, consistent with plot ratio provisions currently applying to dual occupancy development in the RZ2 suburban core zone**

The current situation with a higher plot ratio for single residences than dual occupancies in RZ1 is crazy. This change should go further and allow a higher plot ratio for a dual occupancy than a single residence.

**Limit the building height to single storey for any dual occupancy dwelling to which a 35% plot ratio will apply**

Why? We currently allow two storey buildings in RZ1. As long as privacy and solar access issues are considered I can see no reason for this restriction.

**Introduce a design criterion for dual occupancy development on the affected blocks to maintain and support the amenity of existing residential RZ1 suburban zoned areas.**

It is really unclear what this means. If it is a way of supporting high quality design then it seems like a good idea but it seems more likely to be just another box to tick.

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