

Dear Committee members

My original submission was recently acknowledged, and I was invited to submit another to your Committee by today's date. My comments on DV 343 follow. I do not own a Mr Fluffy home, but feel great concern for those who do.

Whilst this draft may be greeted as positive for Canberra as a whole, there are certainly losers – the owners who will have surrendered their properties (as there is no other sensible choice open to them), and who also wish to remain and re-build on their block.

These people have established their home and family in that location. That is where they have friends, schools, enjoyment of their local amenities and a sense of pride and belonging in their chosen area. After taking the only reasonable option, they are faced with increased costs when re-buying and then rebuilding.

Section 1, 1.i states that after surrendering their block, affected home owners will have first right of refusal to repurchase their block. The Section says that some financial allowances will be made to support home owners in mitigating the increased costs of the blocks. The government is not alone in realising that costs of the blocks will increase. Newspaper and social media reports agree that the value of these blocks will rise once strata title is enabled through DV 343.

Enthusiastic reports of urban renewal and greater development opportunities feed into the popularity of the blocks, and strong demand is predicted. Competition for these blocks will be greater and it is clear that developers will be enthusiastic.

This is completely unfair to those who choose to continue with the advantages they have at their present address, and the small compensations allowed for in 1,1.i are insufficient.

Special consideration is required for those who wish to rebuild on their own land. The Variation should be amended to allow for those owners who do not wish to take advantage of strata title and build dual occupancies: those whose only wish is to rebuild a single family home. They should be allowed to do so at the land value applicable before the Variation becomes part of the Territory Plan.

This seems fairly simple, for example, the cost of the land included in the Government's buyback price could be withheld from the compensation given to owners, and those families could then be allowed to rebuild once demolition has taken place. If this is too simple for your planning officials, I'm sure you could arrange things in a suitable way – but it is something that must be done to provide fairness to those who wish to stay in their familiar and loved surroundings, at no extra financial burden on top of the very great emotional and financial burdens they must currently deal with.

Yours sincerely
Carolyn Fielden