

Your local voice



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**Submission in Relation to Draft Variation to the Territory Plan
– Draft Variation No 303**

The Weston Creek Community Council would like to make the following comments in relation to Draft Variation No 303 to the Territory Plan.

Council has strong concerns with this proposed variation to the Territory Plan. The variation was released in June for consultation and allowed only a two month Consultation period for what appears to be a dramatic change to the Territory Plan. The issue for Council and the community is that the proposals are complex and it is difficult for non-planners to understand the full impact of the changes. Council is also concerned that ACTPLA did not engage in discussion with community groups prior to developing the new proposals.

There already is great concern amongst residents across Canberra's older areas in relation to the number of large multi unit developments being built in their neighbourhoods. This is a growing issue and yet these ACTPLA proposals for changes to the residential codes in the Territory Plan will allow even more of these developments to proceed.

Council understands that the present position under current planning rules is that over 58% of current blocks in RZ1 and 56% of RZ2 are eligible for redevelopment. This proposal to reduce the block size for redevelopment from 800 Sq metres to 700 Sq metres will mean that this will create a huge increase in the number of blocks available for redevelopment from 56% and 58% to approximately 85%. Council has not seen any reasoned argument for this change to occur, particularly when almost 60% of blocks now are able to be redeveloped under current planning laws and when smaller blocks are combined this percentage figure rises.

Council questions the need for such an increase in the number of blocks

available for re-development to occur, particularly at a time when the Community is really starting to question and raise this whole issue of planning and multi-unit development. The Community is now seeing proposals for re-development at the end of cul-de-sacs and alongside their homes that in effect destroy their way of “home life”. Many of these proposals are poorly planned and designed, are over scale and come with little or no consultation. These proposals are also ad hoc, occurring at the whim of developers and seem to pop up all over neighbourhoods without any overall plan on how these developments fit into the “grand scheme of things”. To top it all off, this proposed variation has not incorporated any provisions to minimise the impact of such developments on neighbouring residents

There is a strong belief in Council that there is a need in all of this to maintain an Australian way of life as a heritage and community value. This value is one of suburban living through maintaining some single dwellings that includes a restriction on re-development. In contrast to this view, Council understands that the Zone modifications will weaken the requirements to comply with existing neighbourhood character.

While Council acknowledges and supports suburban re-development or infill, it is unable to support proposals which appear to make this whole issue worse.

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