

Your local voice

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The Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
ACT Legislative Assembly
G.P.O. Box 1020
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Submission in Relation to the Inquiry into Proposed Appropriation [Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication] Bill 2014-15

I am writing on behalf of the Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) in relation to this Inquiry. Last night we held our normal Public Meeting and we had been asked to listen to Mr Fluffy home owners and some 30 to 40 Mr Fluffy homeowners, mainly from Weston Creek, attended.

I am aware that Submissions have closed and that the hearing is tomorrow but having listened to these homeowners last night I wanted to make the following points to the Committee:

1. Many are struggling with understanding the information that has been received from the Task Force set up by the Government and remain confused;
2. It is clear that these people are struggling and seem to have been left on their own. Many coming together for the first time last night;
3. Many feel rushed by time frames set for decisions;
4. Elderly people, who attended, can't understand why they can't live their life out in their present home. One couple is in their 80's. If there is a 5 year time limit to vacate houses why can't this be extended for individual situations such as this one;
5. Some want to stay where they live and be able to buy the block back at the price they were valued at on 28 October 2014 after it has been demolished and cleared. Is this a possibility?
6. Some of these people, at the moment, are wanting to stay where they are and not leave their homes unless they can maintain their block; and

7. There are concerns for some Mr Fluffy owners who were not present last night and are believed to be traumatized by the whole situation and that there is a need by the community to reach out to them to assist but the community is unable to as they can't be identified.

Council would also like to make the following general points:

1. Council is struggling to understand the detail of what is happening in our community as we are unable to reach those affected by this situation. We are unable to have a list of homeowners to enable contact to be made;
2. There is concern in the Community with the statement of ,where possible, blocks once remediated will be subdivided and sold on the market. Council raises the question of what thought has been given to the change in character of neighbourhoods where these are RZ1 zoned blocks.
3. Will legislation be introduced to allow the sub-division of these blocks in RZ1 locations.
4. This is another hit for the Weston Creek community after the fires of 2003. Here we are comparing the way these people are being treated with the way that those who lost houses in the fires were treated. The situation is not that different. In 2003 there were around 400 homes lost in Weston Creek while we now have 196 Mr Fluffy home owners [courtesy of the Canberra Times].

Council would be pleased to discuss this submission at any time but does not see it necessary to appear before the Committee.

Tom Anderson
Chairman
Weston Creek Community Council