Planning and Development (Draft Variation No 343) Consultation Notice 2015

Notifiable instrument NI2015—144

made under the

Planning and Development Act 2007, section 63 (Public consultation—notification) and section 64 (Public consultation—notice of interim effect etc)

Under the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act), section 63(1), the planning and land authority has prepared Draft Variation No 343 to the Territory Plan – Residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme (see Annexure A).

Draft Variation No 343 to the Territory Plan proposes to:

- Reduce the block size for dual occupancy development on the affected blocks from 800m² to 700m²
- Permit subdivision for unit titling of dual occupancy development on the affected blocks
- 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
- Limit the building height to single storey for any dual occupancy dwelling to which a 35% plot ratio will apply
- 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.

The draft variation is available online at **www.act.gov.au/draftvariations** until the closing date for written comments. Further information can be obtained from the Asbestos Response Taskforce website at:

www.asbestostaskforce.act.gov.au

Printed copies of the draft variation are available for inspection and purchase at the Environment and Planning Directorate Customer Service Centre, 16 Challis Street, Dickson, Monday to Friday (except public holidays) between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Please call 6207 1923 to arrange a copy for purchase.

Written comments from the public are invited from the public by **Monday 25 May 2015**.

Comments should include reference to the draft variation, your name and contact details, and be addressed to the Territory Plan Unit.

Comments can be:

- emailed to terrplan@act.gov.au
- mailed to Territory Plan Comments, GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601
- delivered to EPD's Customer Service Centre at 16 Challis Street, Dickson

Copies of written comments will be made publicly available 10 working days after the closing date for no less than 15 working days at EPD's Customer Service Centre in Dickson and may be published on EPD's website.

Comments made available will include personal contact details unless excluded under section 411 or 412 of the Act. A request for exclusion under these sections must be in writing, clearly identifying what you are seeking to exclude and how the request satisfies the exclusion criteria.

Effect of the draft variation

Section 65 of the Act does not apply in relation to the draft variation so it does not have interim effect. The current Territory Plan will continue to apply while the variation remains in draft form.

Ben Ponton
Delegate of the ACT Planning and Land Authority
10 April 2015





Planning and Development Act 2007

Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 343

Residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme

April 2015

Draft variation for public consultation prepared under s60 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The ACT Government is conducting a voluntary buyback of all known houses in the ACT affected by loose fill asbestos insulation so that they can be demolished.

This is being achieved through the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme (the Scheme) under implementation by the Asbestos Response Taskforce (the Taskforce). The demolition program is overseen by regulatory authorities within Access Canberra including WorkSafe ACT and the Environment Protection Authority.

Once affected houses are surrendered, demolished and contaminated soil removed, blocks will be re-sold at market value to defray some of the overall cost of the Scheme.

Opportunities for unit-titling of dual occupancy properties in the RZ1 suburban zone are being considered through this draft variation. Consistent with ACT Planning Strategy 2012 and Transport for Canberra, this is also anticipated to enhance the value of blocks surrendered under the Scheme to assist in managing the cost to the ACT community of the Scheme. However, even after the resale of blocks, the cost to the Territory is an estimated \$400 million.

Affected homeowners will have first right of refusal to repurchase their block back if desired. Stamp duty waivers and Land Rent provisions are available to support homeowners in mitigating increased costs of blocks.

The proposed changes through this draft variation are modest. The existing amenity of surrounding suburbs and streets will be maintained and supported through code requirements also contained in this draft variation.

1.2 Summary of the Proposal

Draft variation DV343 proposes unit-titling for dual occupancy development in order to enhance the value of certain blocks surrendered under the Scheme and is consistent with the ACT Planning Strategy 2012 and Transport for Canberra. DV343 will apply to residential blocks surrendered under the Scheme (surrendered residential blocks) except surrendered residential blocks that are part of a registered heritage place or a provisionally registered heritage place under the Heritage Act 2004. It does not have broader application beyond those blocks surrendered under the Scheme.

Under this draft variation, redevelopment of the surrendered residential blocks would have the capacity to include unit-titling for dual occupancy in the RZ1 Suburban zone. DV343 reduces the current block size requirement where a dual occupancy is permitted in the RZ1 Suburban zone from $800m^2$ to $700m^2$. It also applies building height limitations and a revised plot ratio to development for dual occupancies. This represents a modest increase in the development density potential of the surrendered blocks. Design criteria will require the blocks to be redeveloped in harmony with the surrounding residential amenity.

1.3 Outline of the process

The Commonwealth's *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* allows for the Legislative Assembly to make laws to establish a Territory Planning Authority and for that Authority to prepare and administer a Territory Plan. The *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the Act) establishes the planning and land authority as the Authority which prepares and administers the Territory Plan, including continually reviewing and proposing amendments as necessary. The functions of the planning and land authority are administered by the Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD).

The Territory Plan is comprised of a written statement and a map. The written statement contains a number of parts, namely governance; strategic directions; zones (including objectives and development tables and zone or centre development codes); precinct codes; general codes; overlays; definitions; structure plans, concept plans and development codes for future urban areas.

The Territory Plan Map graphically represents the applicable land use zones (under the categories of residential, commercial, industrial, community facility, urban parks and recreation, transport and services and non urban), precincts and overlays. The zone, precinct and overlay requirements are detailed in the volumes of the Territory Plan.

Draft variations to the Territory Plan are prepared in accordance with the Act. Following the release of the draft variation under section 63 of the Act, submissions from the public are invited. At the conclusion of the consultation period the EPD submits a report on consultation and a recommended final variation to the Minister responsible for planning for approval.

The Minister has the discretion to determine if referral to the Legislative Assembly standing committee responsible for planning is warranted prior to approval, depending on the nature and significance of the proposal. If the draft variation is referred to the committee by the Minister or otherwise, the Minister must consider the findings of the committee before deciding whether to approve the draft variation. If the Minister approves the variation, the variation and associated documents will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Unless disallowed by the Legislative Assembly within five sitting days, the variation commences on a day nominated by the Minister.

1.4 Public Consultation

Written comments about the draft variation are invited from the public by **Monday 25 May 2015.**

Comments should include reference to the draft variation, your name and contact details, and be addressed to the Territory Plan Section.

Comments can be:

- emailed to terrplan@act.gov.au
- mailed to Territory Plan Section, GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601
- delivered to EPD's Customer Service Centre at 16 Challis Street, Dickson

Copies of written comments will be made available (unless excluded) for public inspection for no less than 15 working days starting 10 working days after the closing date for comment. The comments will be available at EPD's customer service centre in Dickson and may be published on EPD's website.

Comments made available will include personal contact details unless excluded under section 411 or 412 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007*. A request for exclusion under these sections must be in writing, clearly identifying what you are seeking to exclude and how the request satisfies the exclusion criteria.

Further Information

The draft variation is available online at **www.act.gov.au/draftvariations** until the closing date for written comments.

Printed copies of the draft variation (this document) and background documents are available for inspection and purchase at the Environment and Planning Customer Service Centre, 16 Challis Street, Dickson, Monday to Friday (except public holidays) between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Please call 6207 1923 to arrange a copy for purchase.

2. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

2.1 Background

On 28 October 2014, following consultation with asbestos experts, and having regard to the findings of asbestos assessments of affected homes conducted since February 2014, the ACT Government reached the conclusion that the ongoing risks posed by the continuing presence of loose fill asbestos insulation in Canberra homes cannot be effectively managed.

The Government accepted the advice of the Asbestos Response Taskforce (the Taskforce) that there is no effective, practical and affordable method to render homes containing loose fill asbestos insulation safe to occupy in the long term.

Eradication of ongoing exposure risks through the demolition of all affected homes and subsequent site remediation is the only enduring solution to the health risks posed to residents, visitors and workers by the continuing presence of loose fill asbestos insulation in Canberra homes, and their attendant social, financial and practical consequences.

Under the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme (the Scheme) the ACT Government has offered to purchase all affected Canberra houses and will then demolish them. The surrendered blocks will be offered for sale in due course, firstly to homeowners and then the broader market, to assist in defraying the overall cost of the Scheme.

2.2 Site Description

The draft variation applies to surrendered residential blocks that:

- are included in the Affected Residential Property Register (to be established proposed under clause 47N of the Dangerous Substances (Loose-fill Asbestos Eradication) Legislation Amendment Act 2015)that was enacted by the Legislative Assembly on 17 March 2015;
- are in the RZ1 suburban zone; and
- are 700m² or larger.

2.3 Current Territory Plan Provisions

The blocks subject to this draft variation are all currently included in the residential RZ1 suburban zone.

2.4 Proposed Changes

2.4.1 Proposed Changes to Territory Plan

The changes to the Territory Plan are detailed in full in Part 3 of this draft variation. It is proposed to amend the provisions of the Territory Plan applying to surrendered residential blocks. The changes will only affect blocks in RZ1 suburban zone which are 700m2 or larger. There will be no changes to blocks currently zoned RZ2 suburban core or above, rural leases or heritage blocks/areas.

Key changes:

- Building two houses on the same block of land is known as dual occupancy. At the moment, this is permitted on any RZ1 block that is 800m² or larger. The Government is proposing to reduce this minimum size to 700m² for residential blocks surrendered under the scheme.
- Another change is to allow unit titling for dual occupancy for residential blocks surrendered under the scheme. At the moment, if two houses are built on the same block, they must be sold as a single item. This will remain the case for dual occupancy in the RZ1 zone, except for the surrendered residential blocks. For the surrendered blocks the change means two houses on the same block can be sold separately.
- The plot ratio has been revised to accommodate the reduction in block size and unit titling for dual occupancy development. The proposed plot ratio is consistent with plot ratios permitted in the RZ2 suburban core zone.
- Building heights for dual occupancy development on the affected blocks has been limited to single storey for any dual occupancy dwelling to which a 35% plot ratio will apply.
- A design criterion for the redevelopment of the residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme has been included to maintain and support amenity of existing areas.

There will be no changes to rules about subdividing blocks other than for unit titling for dual occupancy on the surrendered blocks.

It is important to note that:

- Dual occupancies are already allowed in RZ1 zones but generally the two houses cannot be sold separately (unit titled).
- The proposed changes only apply to blocks on the Affected Residential Property Register.
- Multi-storey units or significantly higher density will not be permitted.
- Affected homeowners have the first right of refusal to buy the affected blocks for owner occupation.
- The existing amenity of streets and suburbs will be maintained through a building height limit and an associated design criterion.

2.5 Reasons for the Proposed Draft Variation

The draft variation is part of a measured response to the 'Mr Fluffy' legacy. It will assist to defray the costs to government. The scheme opens the opportunity for affected homeowners to repurchase their block and redevelop as a unit title if they desire and also provides this opportunity for others to do so, (in cases where an affected homeowner does not elect to repurchase their block). The draft variation will increase housing choice by allowing a modest increase in residential density throughout the suburbs of Canberra.

The potential for negative impact rising from the small increase in residential density is safeguarded through building height limitations and design criteria outlined in this draft variation. The design criterion encourages high quality architectural standards that contribute to visual variety and interest whilst maintaining visually harmonious streetscapes. It is important to note that this draft variation will not allow multi-story unit development, rather it will see modest changes to RZ1 suburban zone only.

The planning grounds for this draft variation are:

- The blocks are widely dispersed through the RZ1 suburban zone of the Canberra suburbs so there will be limited concentrations of redevelopment within any particular neighbourhood.
- There will be a modest increase in density as a result of the redevelopment of the blocks, the impact of which is to be minimised through a single storey building height limit and an associated design criteria.

- The provisions present an opportunity to increase housing choice in the RZ1 suburban zone. This zone constitutes approximately 80% of Canberra residential areas and is dominated by single residential dwellings.
- Dual occupancy and unit titling of blocks 700m² or larger has been successful in the residential RZ2 suburban core zone.
- There will be no change to plot ratio requirements for single dwellings.

2.6 Planning Context

2.6.1 National Capital Plan

The Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 established the National Capital Authority (NCA) with two of its functions being to prepare and administer a National Capital Plan (NCP) and to keep the NCP under constant review and to propose amendments to it when necessary.

The NCP, which was published in the Commonwealth Gazette on 21 January 1990 is required to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance. The *Planning and Land Management Act 1988* also required that the Territory Plan is not inconsistent with the NCP.

2.6.2 Territory Plan

Statement of Strategic Directions

The proposal is consistent with the Territory Plan's statement of strategic directions in terms of environmental, economic and social sustainability and spatial planning and urban design principles including:

- 1.11 policies for environmental planning and management will ensure amenity, minimise pollution and protect public health and safety.
- 1.17 In planning future development and redevelopment, particular emphasis will be placed on cost-effective provision and management of existing and new infrastructure and services, taking into account whole-of-life and whole-of system costs, including the ecological footprint of proposed developments and activities.
- 2.5 A wide range of housing types will be permitted in identified residential areas close to commercial centres and some major transport routes to increase choice; maximise opportunities for affordable housing; and secure some intensification of development consistent with maintaining residential amenity. Outside of these areas, planning policies will protect the typically low density, garden city character of Canberra's suburban areas.

The draft variation achieves the above statement of strategic directions is to deliver a planning policy that will assist in the efficient and effective removal of asbestos from the affected blocks and make them available for redevelopment for single dwellings or unit title dual occupancy. This represents a modest increase density on less than 1% of dwellings in the RZ1 suburban zone the impacts of which can be managed by design criteria also proposed in this draft variation. This will provide an increase in housing choice in existing established suburbs, albeit on a small scale.

2.7 Interim Effect

Section 65 of the Planning and Development Act 2007 does not apply in relation to the draft variation so it does not have interim effect. The current Territory Plan will continue to apply while the variation remains in draft form.

2.8 Consultation with Government Agencies

The EPD is required to, in preparing a draft variation under section 61(b) consult with each of the following in relation to the proposed draft variation:

- the National Capital Authority
- the Conservator of Flora and Fauna
- the Environment Protection Authority
- the Heritage Council
- the land custodian being the Asbestos Response Taskforce.

National Capital Authority

The National Capital Authority provided the following comments on 19 March 2015

The proposed variation is not inconsistent with the principles and policies of the National Capital Plan. The National Capital Authority has no objection to Dv343 proceeding.

Response

Noted.

Conservator of Flora and Fauna

The Conservator of Flora and Fauna made the following comments on 16 March 2015

In accordance with Section 61 (b) of the Planning and Development Act 2007, I advise that I have examined Draft Variation to the Territory Plan no 343, residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme.

There are no issues of concern with the proposed variation noting that any regulated trees on blocks will be taken into consideration during the assessment of the development applications.

Response

Noted.

Environment Protection Authority

The Environment Protection Authority provided the following comments on 18 March 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the draft variation to the Territory Plan, DV343, for the rezoning of residential blocks surrendered under the loose fill asbestos insulation eradication scheme.

I have reviewed the proposal and support the variation.

Response

Noted.

Heritage Council

The Heritage Council provided the following comments on 17 March 2015

It is noted that DV343 proposed to allow subdivision of blocks in RZ1 zones that have been surrendered to the ACT Government under the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme (the Scheme).

While part 2.4.1 of the explanatory statements says that "There will be no changes to blocks currently zoned RZ2, or heritage blocks/areas", the Draft Variation at part 3 of the document does not provide any reference to heritage places to make this clear.

ACT Heritage notes that while the Heritage Guidelines for some precincts do not support subdivision, this is not the case for all of the precincts included in the ACT Heritage Register and is not the case for a number of individual heritage places included in the ACT Heritage Register. Additionally, the planning and land authority may make a decision against the advice of the Heritage Council in some circumstances.

In consideration of this, the Heritage Council requests that the wording of DV343 be amended to ensure that subdivision of surrendered residential blocks that are part of a heritage place is not permitted. The amendments below are suggested to clarify that blocks that form part of heritage places will not be able to be subdivided.

Section 9.4: Rule 38A

Delete: "This rule applies to surrendered residential blocks in RZI."

Add: "This rule applies to surrendered residential blocks in RZ1 that are not part of a registered heritage place or a provisionally registered heritage place under the Heritage Act 2004."

Section 3.2, Rule 6

Delete: "This rule applies to single dwelling blocks in RZ1 unless the block is a surrendered residential block."

Add: "This rule applies to single dwelling blocks in RZ1 unless the block is a surrendered residential block that is not part of a registered heritage place or a provisionally registered heritage place under the Heritage Act 2004."

<u>Response</u>

Noted. Rather than amending the rules as proposed above, the definition of surrendered residential blocks has been amended to exclude blocks that are part of a heritage place or a provisionally registered heritage place under the *Heritage Act* 2004.

Land Custodian - Asbestos Response Taskforce

The land custodian provided the following comments on 31 March 2015.

The Asbestos Response Taskforce notes the proposed variation is consistent with the position outlined in the ACT Government's Preferred Way Forward on Loose Fill Asbestos: Overview as announced on 28 October 2014.

Response

Noted.

3. DRAFT VARIATION

3.1 Variation to the Territory Plan

Variation to the Territory Plan definitions

1. Definitions

Insert

Surrendered residential block – means a block that has been surrendered under the Loose Fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme Buyback Program and included as a surrendered block on the Affected Residential Property Register. It does not mean a surrendered residential block that is part of a registered heritage place or a provisionally registered heritage place under the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Variation to the residential zones development code

2. 9.4 Subdivision of single dwelling blocks - RZ1

Insert

Rules	Criteria	
9.4 Subdivision of single dwelling blocks – RZ1		
R38A		
This rule applies to surrendered residential blocks in RZ1.	This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.	
Subdivision under the Unit Titles Act 2001 is permitted only for dual occupancy development.		

Variation to the multi unit housing development code

3. 1.1 Dual occupancy housing – single dwelling blocks – RZ1

Substitute

1.1 Dual occupancy housing – single dwelling blocks – RZ1				
R1				
In RZ1, the minimum area of <i>single dwelling blocks</i> for <i>dual occupancy housing</i> is as follows: a) For a <i>surrendered residential block</i> - 700m ² b) For all other blocks - 800m ² .	This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.			

4. 3.2 Plot ratio – dual occupancy – single dwelling blocks

Substitute

Rules	Criteria		
3.2 Plot ratio – dual occupancy – single dwelling blocks – RZ1 – except for surrendered residential blocks			
R6			
This rule applies to single dwelling blocks in RZ1 unless the block is a <i>surrendered residential block</i> .	This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.		
The maximum <i>plot ratio</i> for <i>dual occupancy</i> housing is determined by the formula: $P = (140/B + 0.15) \times 100.$			
The maximum <i>plot ratio</i> for any additional new <i>dwelling</i> which is part of a <i>dual occupancy</i> and does not directly front a public road from which vehicular access is permitted is the lesser of: a) the <i>plot ratio</i> determined by the formula $P = (140/B + 0.15) \times 50$ and b) 17.5%.			
For the purpose of calculating <i>plot ratio</i> for this rule, the <i>gross floor area</i> includes 18m ² for each roofed car space provided to meet Territory requirements for resident car parking, but does not include <i>basement</i> car parking.			
For the formulae used in this rule: P is the maximum permissible plot ratio expressed as a percentage B is the block area in square metres.			

5. 3.3 Plot ratio – dual occupancy – single dwelling blocks

Substitute

Rules	Criteria		
3.3 Plot ratio – dual occupancy – single dwelling blocks – RZ2 and surrendered residential blocks – RZ1			
R7			
This rule applies to single dwelling blocks in RZ2 and to blocks defined as a surrendered residential block in RZ1.	This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.		
The maximum plot ratio for dual occupancy housing is:			
 i) where at least one dwelling does not directly front a public road from which vehicular access is permitted – 35% ii) in all other cases – 50% 			
The maximum <i>plot ratio</i> for any additional new <i>dwelling</i> which is part of a <i>dual occupancy</i> and does not directly front a public road from which vehicular access is permitted is 17.5%.			
For the purpose of calculating <i>plot ratio</i> for this rule, the <i>gross floor area</i> includes 18m ² for each roofed car space provided to meet Territory requirements for resident car parking, but does not include <i>basement</i> car parking.			

6. 3.12 Number of storeys – single dwelling blocks – RZ1

Substitute

Rules	Criteria			
3.12 Number of storeys – single dwelling blocks – RZ1				
R16				
In RZ1 on single dwelling blocks buildings comply with all of the following: a) limiting: i) only dual occupancies on surrendered residential blocks >700m² to which the 35% plot ratio applies to one storey ii) 2 storeys for all other single dwelling blocks b) attics or basement car parking are not permitted where they are located directly above or below any 2 storey element of the dwelling.	This is a mandatory requirement. There is no applicable criterion.			

Rules	Criteria
Note : Where 50% plot ratio is permitted, two storey dwellings are also permitted. The single storey rule for dual occupancies applies to blocks where a dwelling does not directly front a public road from which vehicular access is permitted.	

7. Element 5 Building design

Insert

Rules	Criteria			
5.9 Building design – dual occupancy on surrendered residential blocks in RZ1				
There is no applicable rule.	C49A			
	This criterion applies to dual occupancy development on <i>surrendered residential blocks</i> .			
	The design of buildings encourages high quality architectural standards that contribute to a visually harmonious streetscape character with variety and interest, whilst not detrimental to, or overtly detracting from the existing streetscape character.			

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